



STRATEGIC DOWNTOWN PLANNING INITIATIVE PHASE II



TIFFIN, OHIO

MARCH 2010



Prepared for:
City of Tiffin, Ohio
Seneca Industrial Economic
Development Corporation
"Tiffin Tomorrow" Steering Committee

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Tiffin Tomorrow!

TIFFIN'S DEFINING STRENGTHS:



The Heart of Tiffin

The Downtown is the emotional heart of the community - the center of character that defines Tiffin and sets it apart from other communities. As retail strips grow more generic - our Downtowns become our identifying features.

River City

The Sandusky River is the spine of the Tiffin. History has turned its back on Tiffin's Riverfront - it is time to embrace this unique character of Downtown Tiffin.



College Town

Tiffin is certainly a "town with colleges" but perhaps not a "College Town". The civic energy of students and the positive influence of higher education can be a defining (not overwhelming) trait for Tiffin's future.



The Arts

The Ritz Theater provides a unique spring board for Tiffin to become a magnet for arts in northwest Ohio. Following its high standard for artistic expression and design could transform Tiffin.



MASTER PLAN



Guiding Principals:

1. Create "Place" and Destination with Brand Identity
2. Market Downtown's History and Vitality
3. Celebrate the Riverfront
4. Encourage Pedestrian-Oriented Connections and Connect Downtown Anchors
5. Promote Context Sensitive Infill Development
6. Provide Selective On-Street Parking and Promote Shared Parking at Rear of Buildings
7. Development of Regulatory Environment, Review Process and Enforcement
8. Promote Effective General Maintenance
9. Improve Public Realm Spaces and Enhance Streetscape Character
10. Enhance Gateways and Promote Efficient Signage and Wayfinding System
11. Leverage the Art and Culture Oriented Community
12. Collaborative Operation and Physical Management Initiatives



Recommendations

ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- O-1 Promote revitalization according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street program
- O-2 Put the necessary organization, funding and staffing in place to implement the strategic plan
- O-3 Create a Special Improvement District
- O-4 Create a Limited Liability Company
- O-5 Involve and collaborate with the City and County departments

PROMOTIONS OBJECTIVES:

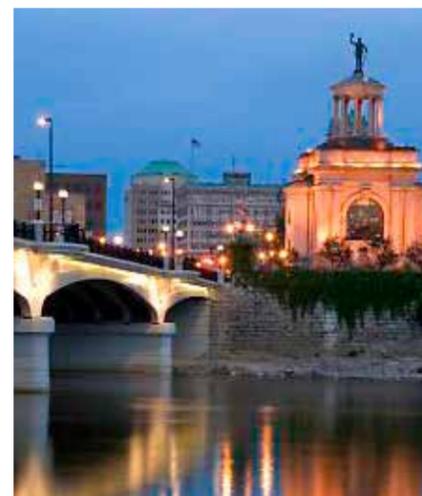
- P-1 Create a "Cultural Community" in Northern Ohio
- P-2 Promote upper floor housing
- P-3 Build trust in investment community
- P-4 Increase local market penetration
- P-5 Develop marketing information for promotional campaign

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING OBJECTIVES:

- E-1 Retain and strengthen existing retail / commercial / office / housing uses
- E-2 Add appropriate new retail and other Downtown uses

DESIGN OBJECTIVES:

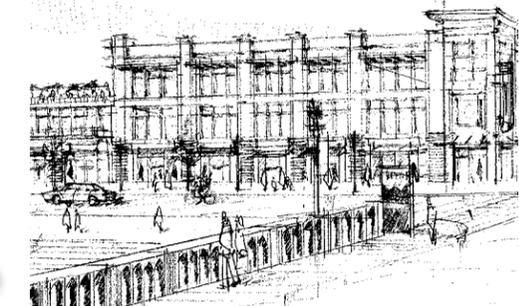
- D-1 Update regulatory framework and documentation
- D-2 Establish Design & Development Guidelines
- D-3 Expand the historic district designation and utilize specific historic redevelopment tools
- D-4 Enhance streetscape and public realm spaces within Downtown areas
- D-5 Promote infrastructure improvements within Downtown areas



Community Call to Action



COLLABORATION



IDENTITY



SUSTAINABILITY



Acknowledgements

City of Tiffin

Mayor James Boroff
City Council

Seneca Industrial Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC)

Rich Focht, President
Board of Directors

Tiffin Chamber of Commerce

John Detwiler, President
Board of Directors

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Project Understanding

Market Analysis

Introduction



Project Understanding



The City of Tiffin, the county seat for Seneca County is located in northwest Ohio



Downtown Tiffin

The process of strategic planning allows the residents, business owners and public officials to challenge themselves through self-examination and to craft a preferred mode of operation for revitalization through suggested physical, organizational and socio-economic changes. The purpose of the strategic planning initiative is to create urban design solutions with policy recommendations to invigorate the urban core and community as a whole with a revitalized and enhanced Downtown. Phase I of the Downtown Strategic Plan for Tiffin provided strategic planning opportunities based on physical analysis and micro-level market understanding. The intent of the Phase I planning process set the stage for subsequent Phases of the Master Plan.

The multi-disciplinary planning, market analysis and design firm, Kinzelman Kline Gossman (KKG) was contracted by Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) and the City of Tiffin in August 2008 to prepare the Downtown Strategic Plan (Phase I) to guide economic growth of Downtown Tiffin through market analysis and preliminary redevelopment concepts. The Phase I Plan was completed in December 2008.

The City of Tiffin is the county seat of Seneca County and is the largest city in the county. Downtown serves as the government center for both the city and county. The core study area of Downtown Tiffin is bounded on the north and west side by the Sandusky River and is located between the campuses of Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. The study area is also bounded on the south by the intersection of Washington Street and the four-way intersection with Melmore Street, Sycamore Street and Coe Street.

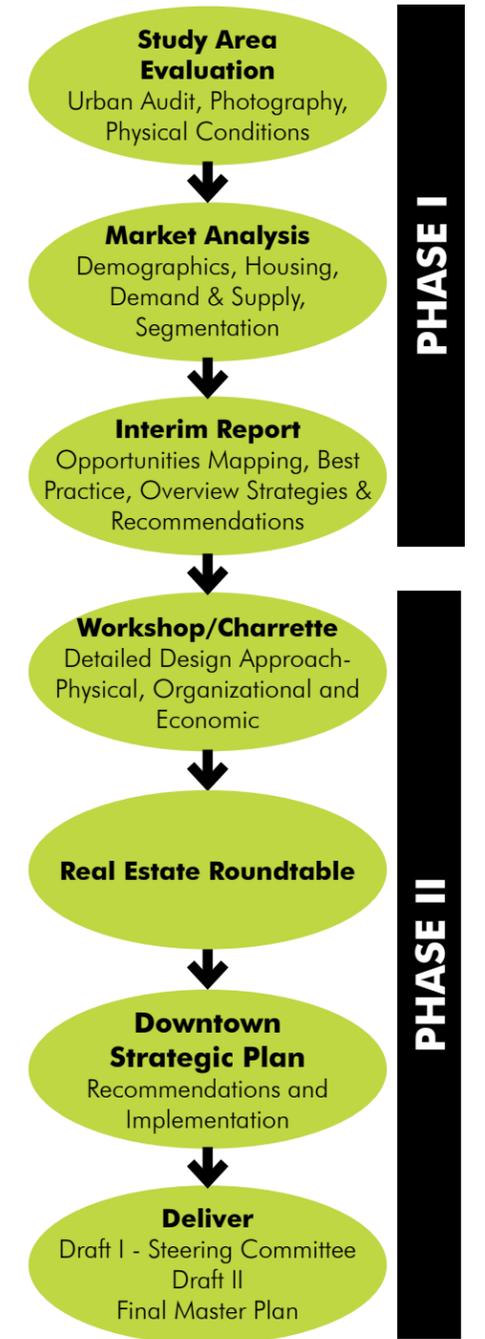
The Phase I planning process provided an inventory of existing conditions including land uses, historical resources, open space/recreational areas, built form and a thorough understanding of market conditions prevailing downtown Tiffin.

Specific strategies that were discussed in the Phase I Plan are further addressed in Phase II. The planning process for both Phases had the guidance of a steering committee and was organized around a public consensus building process.

Existing planning related documents were also reviewed to help form the recommendations for this plan including the Downtown Strategic Plan, 1994 Comprehensive Plan Update for City of Tiffin, and Tiffin Zoning Code (Effective September 4, 2002).

The Phase II planning process further explored detailed design and development initiatives and implementation strategies based on the recommendations from the Phase I initiative.

Planning Process



Market Analysis

Located in Northwest Ohio, the City of Tiffin is the county seat for Seneca County and its largest population center. Understanding the Market for Downtown Tiffin, Ohio involves inspection of both the local and regional context. The vitality and economic prosperity of Downtown Tiffin is based largely on competitive relationships within the downtown, the City, Seneca County and the surrounding Northwest Ohio region.

Market Analysis Summary

The market analysis provides a detailed understanding of the demographics, housing, retail supply-demand and consumer profile of downtown Tiffin. We have highlighted the findings that exhibits positive influences which can be harnessed towards better economic growth and development. **Further market analysis data is located in the Appendix of this document.** These findings subsequently paved the way towards formulating a revitalization strategy.

Student Influences

The higher learning institutions provide the student and younger population presence. Downtown has the opportunity to align with the younger population with opportunities for increasing traffic into downtown, retail such as bookstore, music store, etc. and housing in upper floors.

Retail Market to serve Student Population (Eateries, Entertainment, Specialty Retail)

Strong Income/Housing Growth

With significant growth in median household income, downtown Tiffin has the ability to cater to additional demands for housing growth.

Older Housing Stock

Although downtown has a great historic housing stock, general vacancy and lack of maintenance is exhibiting a state of disrepair that is detrimental to the image of a downtown. Selective facade improvements and upper floor occupancy are key factors towards successful reinvestment strategies.

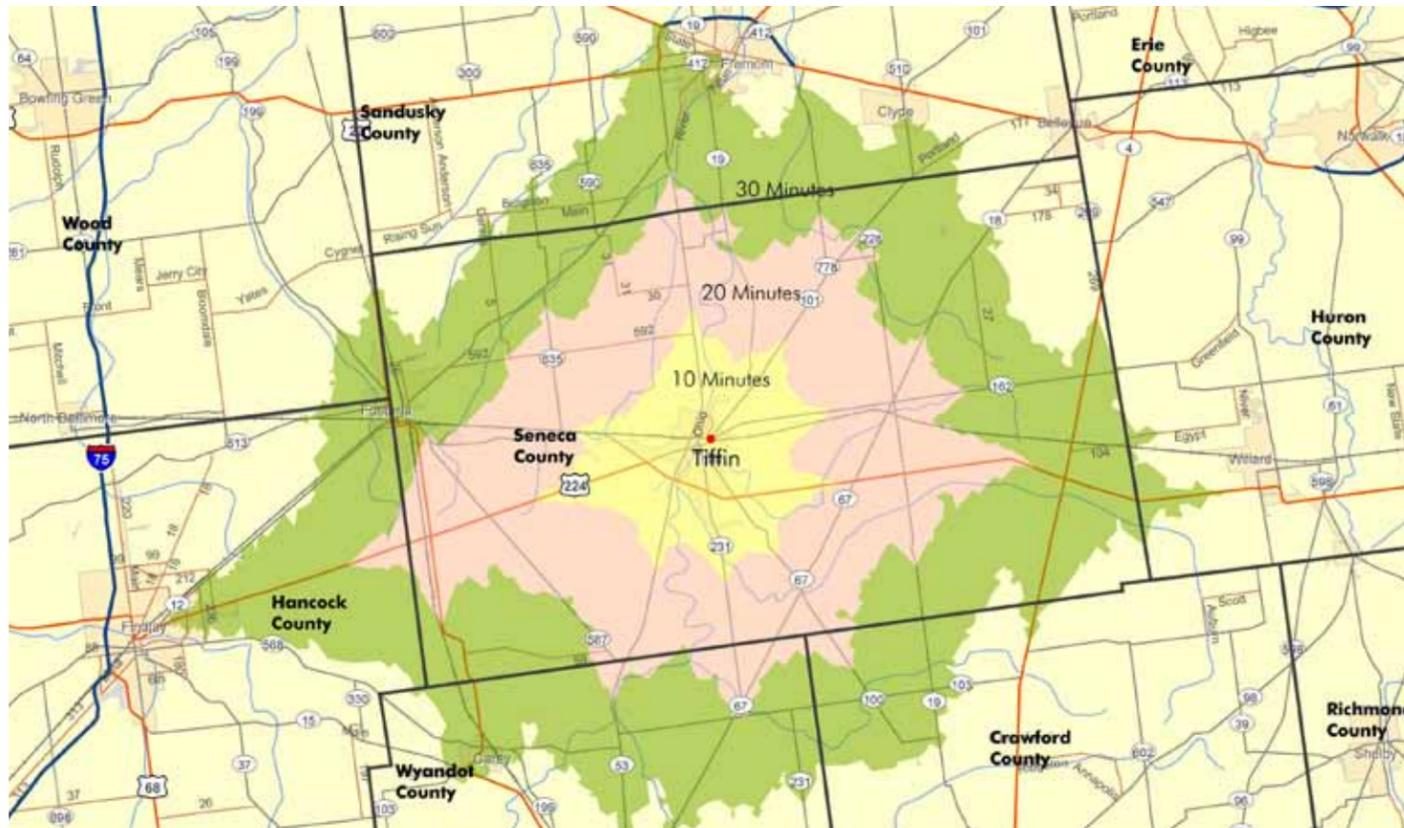
Housing Absorption/Pricing/Amenity

Encourage downtown housing based on market demands that reflect appropriate price points and leverage available amenities for successful implementation.

Downtown Retail/Strategic Recruitment

Instead of competing with area shopping centers, downtown Tiffin has the opportunity to provide niche retailing and offerings that caters to the immediate needs of the neighborhoods, college/university, industries and local professional office spaces.

Regional Marketplace



Community Assets
Existing Conditions
Urban Fabric
Issues and
Opportunities

Existing Conditions



Community Assets

Downtown Tiffin has some compelling physical characteristics and potential economic development aspects. These assets include the urban design character with its streetscape, architectural character and , the built form, essential services, presence of institutes of higher education, significant employers such as National Machinery and Mercy Hospital, business entrepreneurs, various for-profit, non-profit and public organizations provides the strength of the community that can be utilized strategically and effectively to enhance the quality of Downtown and reposition it for a better future. Some of Tiffin’s community assets are illustrated in the following pages.

Urban Design Character

The urban design character of Downtown Tiffin with respect to the road network, built form and architectural quality rivals that of many European Downtowns, as illustrated here. The reason for comparison is to highlight the underlying theme of human settlement pattern and development trends within Tiffin. The street grid is the most popular layout pattern employed by U.S. cities due to the desire of most cities to be laid out and built out fast. Washington, D.C. being the exception as one of the most beautiful in the U.S. as a well thought out city layout.

Strategic marketing initiatives that takes cues for improving the quality of life through the art and culture theme inherent in the European counterparts can help to communicate the unique Tiffin experience.



Tiffin, Ohio



Berlin, Germany



Prague, Czech Republic



Dublin, Ireland



Washington, D.C.



Downtown Tiffin



Downtown District

Downtown has many significant historic structures adding to the rich character within the urban context of the region. Downtown Tiffin’s architectural landmark buildings include the Seneca County Courthouse and the Ritz Theatre.

Services

The City of Tiffin has an abundance of services that include quality public schools, Seneca County Library and the Mercy Hospital among others. Public transportation options are available from Seneca County Area Transportation. The presence of significant community employers such as National Machinery LLC, and Mercy Hospital provide opportunities for potential partnerships with the public for future development in Downtown Tiffin.

Culture & Entertainment

The Ritz Theater and the Tiffin Art Guild along with the art departments of both Tiffin University and Heidelberg College contributes to the art and culture movement in the City, Seneca County and the region as a whole. The Ritz Theater offers an annual performance program and entertainment that rivals that of metropolitan theaters. The Tiffin-Seneca Heritage Festival and the Seneca County Fair are some of the community cultural and entertainment offerings. Tiffin also plays a significant role in tableware glass history. The Tiffin Glass Museum preserves this history of the “Glass House” factory that was open from 1889 to 1984.



The New Mercy Hospital of Tiffin



Tiffin-Seneca Public Library

The Ritz Theater



Pioneer Mill





Tiffin University



Heidelberg University



Higher Education

Tiffin is a vibrant educational community that is home to Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. These exceptional institutions attract distinguished scholars and students to the City bringing diversity and a number of research opportunities drawing in the outside world to Tiffin. Both universities take pride in Tiffin and feel that it is mutually beneficial to invest in the City.

Public Space

The Downtown and adjoining areas provide a collection of public parks and recreational opportunities such as Hedges-Boyer Park, Riverfront Park, public green spaces along the riverfront that extend opportunities for bike and trail connectivity in and through neighborhoods Downtown.

Gateways & Identity

Bridges across the Sandusky River on the north and west sides of Downtown Tiffin marks the gateway into the urban core area. The unique five point intersection at the south end of Washington Street serves as a southern gateway into Downtown. A Downtown-wide identity system in the form of banners and limited number of mural and artwork provides a definite sense of place that can be further improved through a coordinated way-finding sign system, landscape and facade enhancements to mark the distinctive districts.



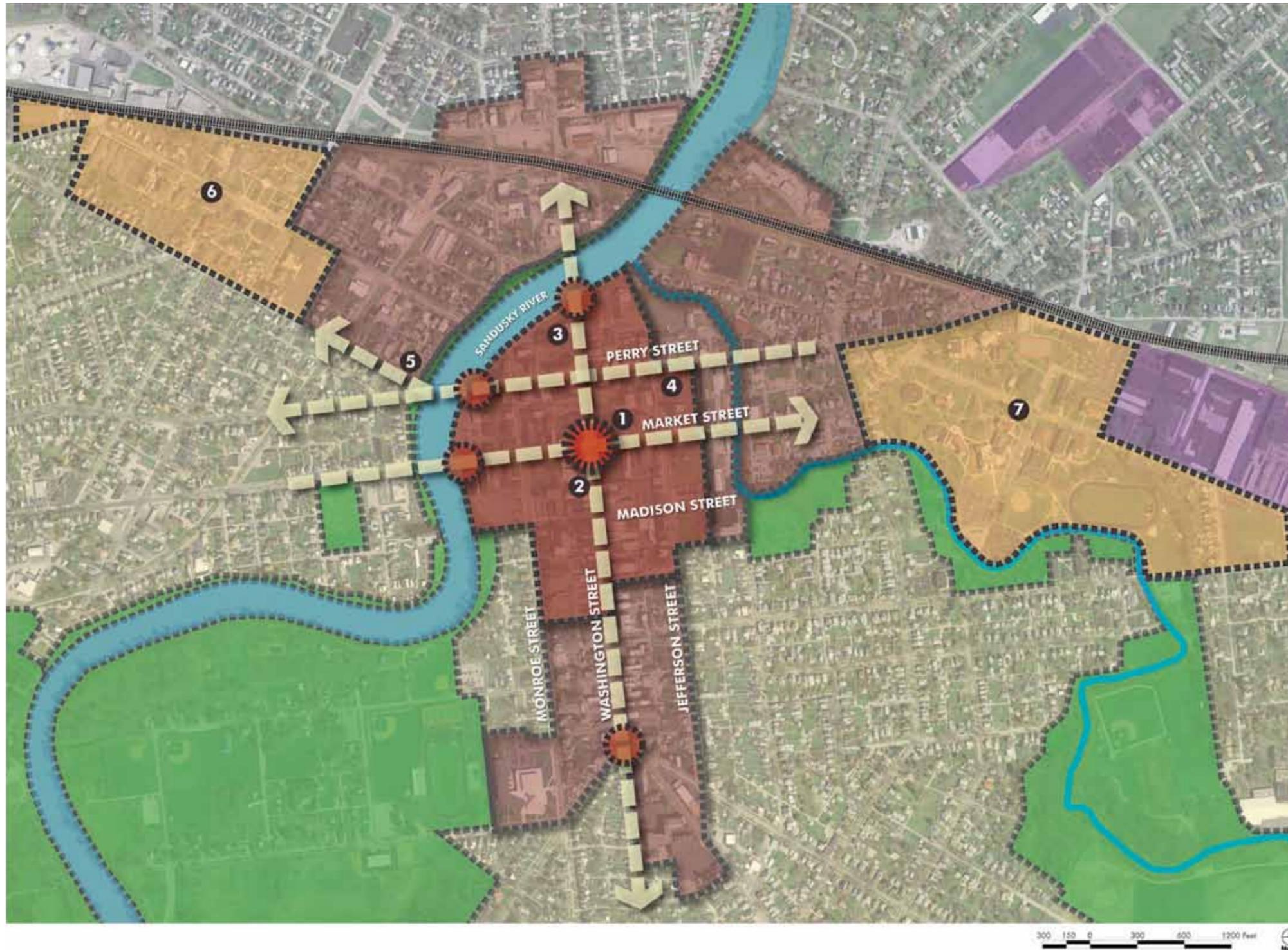
Riverwalk along the Sandusky River



Bridges over the Sandusky River



Existing Conditions



The Existing Conditions Map illustrates the physical assessment of Downtown areas with respect to its location and attractions. The Downtown area has been sub-divided into specific zones based on the primary focus area; which is highlighted as the “Urban Core”. The urban core transitions into the residential areas easily with secondary commercial areas. Connectivity of this urban core with the university area is crucial to the Downtown and needs to be enhanced.

- Urban Core
 - Secondary Commercial Areas
 - University Area
 - Industrial Areas
 - Residential Areas
 - Green/Open Space
-
- 1** Seneca County Courthouse
 - 2** Seneca County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
 - 3** Ritz Theater
 - 4** Tiffin-Seneca Public Library
 - 5** Seneca County Museum
 - 6** Tiffin University
 - 7** Heidelberg University
 - Nodes/Gateways

Physical Assessment and Needs

Downtown Tiffin is characterized by the quality built form of the City and historic structures, public open spaces and business offerings as shown through the urban audit and market analysis. For the physical analysis of the Downtown Tiffin the study area has been subdivided into a core area that is complemented with adjacent opportunity zones. Improvement to the Downtown core area will provide the necessary impact for repositioning which will be further enhanced through strategic development of the opportunity areas.

Land Uses and Character

Land use is predominantly commercial/retail and professional offices with clusters of residential development on the south and southeast areas. The Downtown character is enriched with the presence of landmark buildings such as the Seneca County Courthouse and the Tiffin-Seneca Public Library, Ritz Theater and Seneca County Museum.

There are infill opportunities along with façade improvements, predominantly on Washington Street and Jefferson Street. Much of the rich architectural and historical character of the Downtown’s remaining buildings is either concealed behind obscuring facade improvements or has fallen into disrepair. Upper floors are primarily vacant in the Downtown area and requires proper maintenance and renovation to return to service.

The presence of Tiffin University and Heidelberg University, have enhanced the students, staff and residents relationship to art and culture. The Downtown is positioned strategically for enhanced connectivity between the universities creating opportunities for improved gateways at entrance nodes into Downtown.

Land Use Needs

- Infill Opportunities
- First Floor Retail
- Upper Floor Housing/Professional Office
- Public Realm Improvements
- Façade Improvement
- Appropriate Tenanting
- Historic Preservation
- Districting and Cluster of Complementary Uses

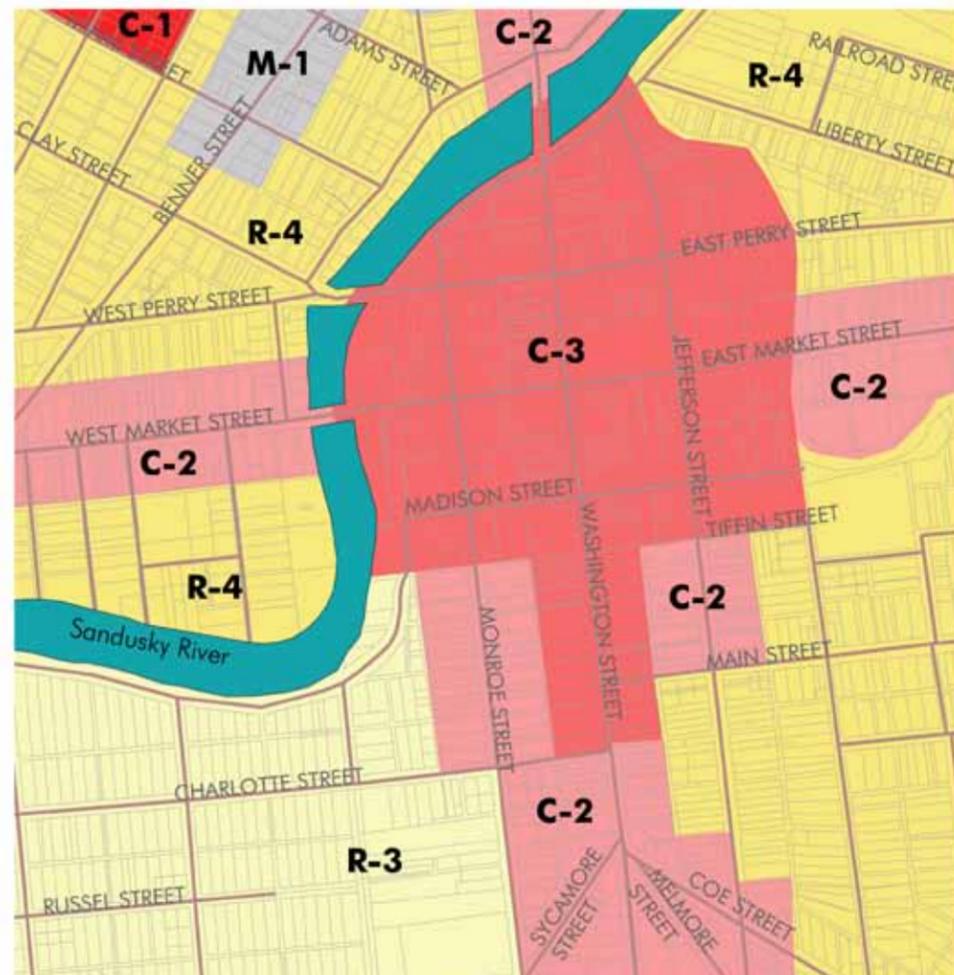
Regulatory Framework

The zoning districts vary from Business, Commercial, Industrial and Residential Districts. There is an opportunity to consolidate the zoning districts specifically along Washington Street and Market Street to provide specific development controls and to provide additional opportunities for mix of uses.

Downtown Design and Development Guidelines should be established with strict enforcement. Appropriate consultants should be involved to craft the Design and Development Guidelines. As an alternative toolkit, Form-Based Codes could be developed for enhancing the character of Downtown as envisioned in this Downtown Strategic Plan. Design and Development Standards and/or Form-Based Code will help the private property owners/developers in following the vision of the Plan and provide quicker turn-around of the development approval process. These standards will also help the public entities in the proper enforcement of the rules and regulations.

Regulatory Needs

- Consolidated Zoning
- Overlay Zones
- Design Guidelines
- Form-Based Code



Zoning Legend

- R-3 Single Family Dwelling
- R-4 Multiple Dwelling
- C-1 Local Commercial
- C-2 General Commercial
- C-3 Central Business
- M-1 Light Industrial

Zoning categories reflect the areas within and adjacent to downtown Tiffin. Information based on data provided by City Building & Zoning Department.

Current Downtown Zoning Map
Source: City of Tiffin



Rock Creek



Sandusky River

Streetscape and Public Realm

Existing streetscape character for Downtown Tiffin reflects enhancements to a few areas without real coordination of key activity areas in the Downtown. Downtown Tiffin is in need of more effective landscaping to soften the harsh appearance of the urban environment and to increase the “curb appeal” of Downtown as a shopping and business destination. Walkability of Downtown should be enhanced through better streetscape amenities and improved storefronts.

Opportunities such as consolidated parking in a one block area with singular access through side streets, with proper wayfinding/signage, should be further explored. Pedestrian oriented streetscape along alleys leading to parking lots at the rear of the buildings should be developed to provide a safe and welcoming environment to consolidated parking areas.

Streetscape Needs

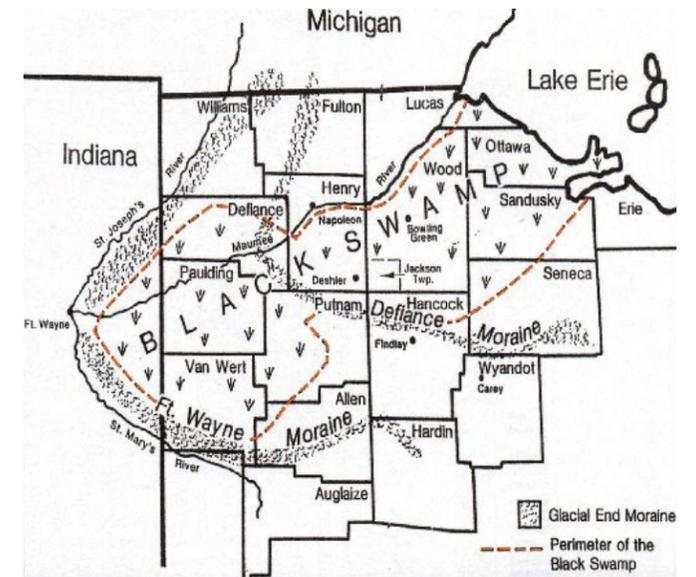
- Consolidated Parking
- Stronger Wayfinding System
- Integrated Streetscape Design and Development
- Walkability
- Bike Access

Environmental Considerations

The most prominent natural feature in Tiffin is the Sandusky Rivers and is designated as a Ohio scenic river. It is a great natural resource for Tiffin creating the unique physical boundary of Downtown allowing captivating views all along the river. Another waterway, the Rock Creek, is a tributary of the Sandusky River creating the east boundary of Downtown. The winding creek flows all along the edge of Downtown through Heidelberg University and Hedges-Boyer Park and continues on to connect to other creeks just southeast of Downtown.

Due to a number of flooding issues in the early and mid-century flood walls were built to protect Downtown. According to the National Weather Service, flood stage in Tiffin is 8 feet with the flood wall to allow flooding to reach 16 feet before it overlaps the flood wall into Downtown. The flood wall serves its purpose but is aesthetically unpleasing to the eye.

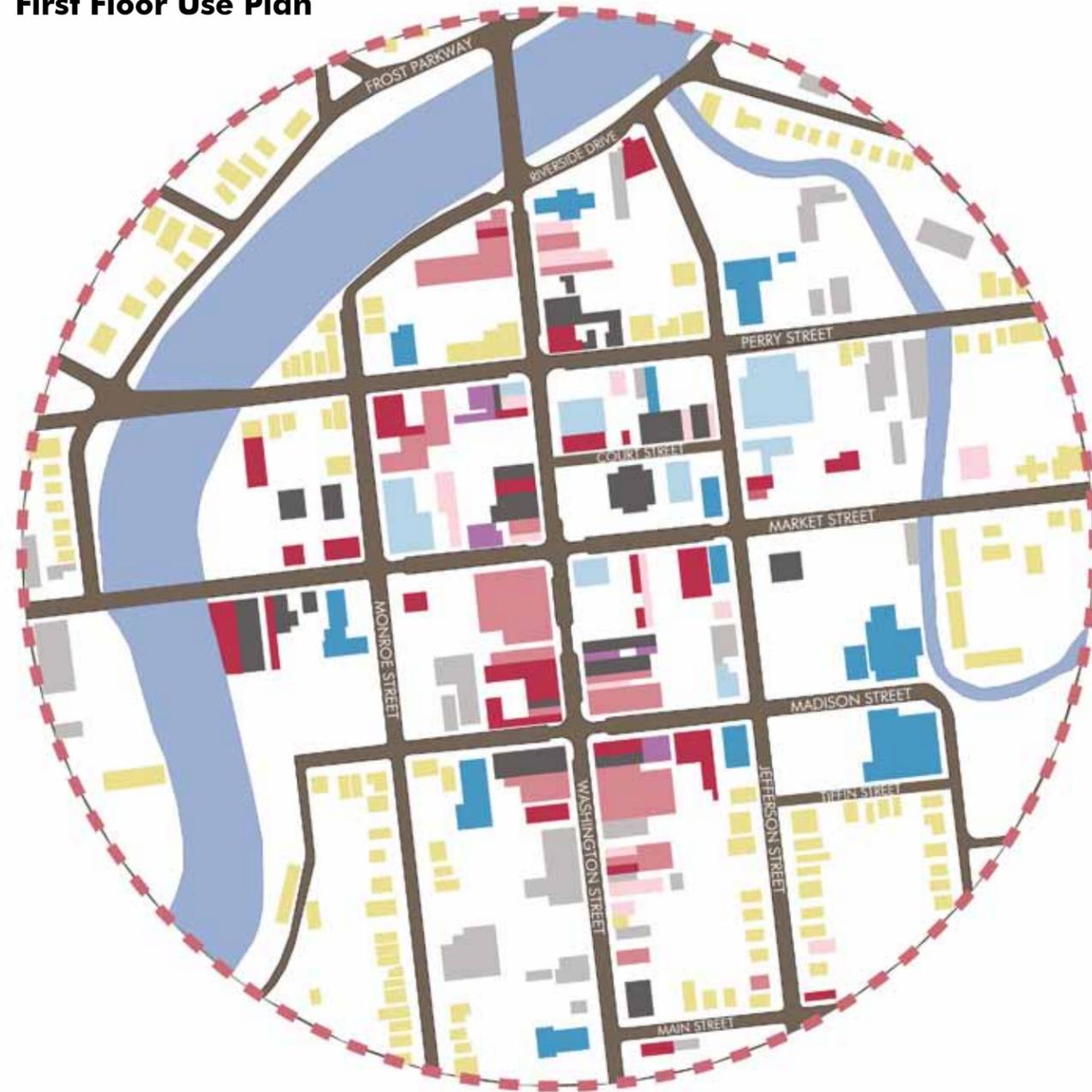
Tiffin is located in the “Lake Plains” which consists of the area along Lake Erie and to the west of Cleveland. It was once the bottom of ancient Lake Maumee creating the flat plains that exist today. This western region of the “Lake Plains” has rich, black soils and poor drainage. (Source: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us>). Before 1900 the area was covered by the Great Black Swamp as shown in the map to the right.



The Great Black Swamp once covered all or part of 12 counties in northwest Ohio as well as part of Indiana. Source: www.blackswamp.org

Urban Fabric

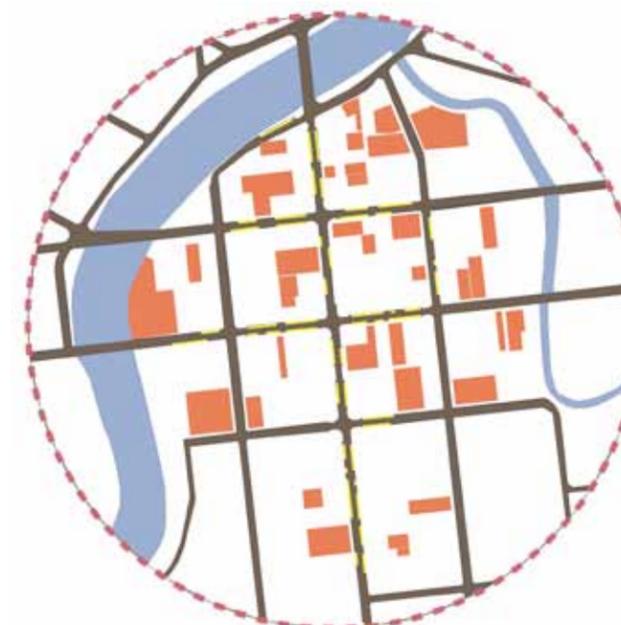
First Floor Use Plan



Street Layout and Green Space Plan



Parking Plan
Off-Street and Marked On-Street



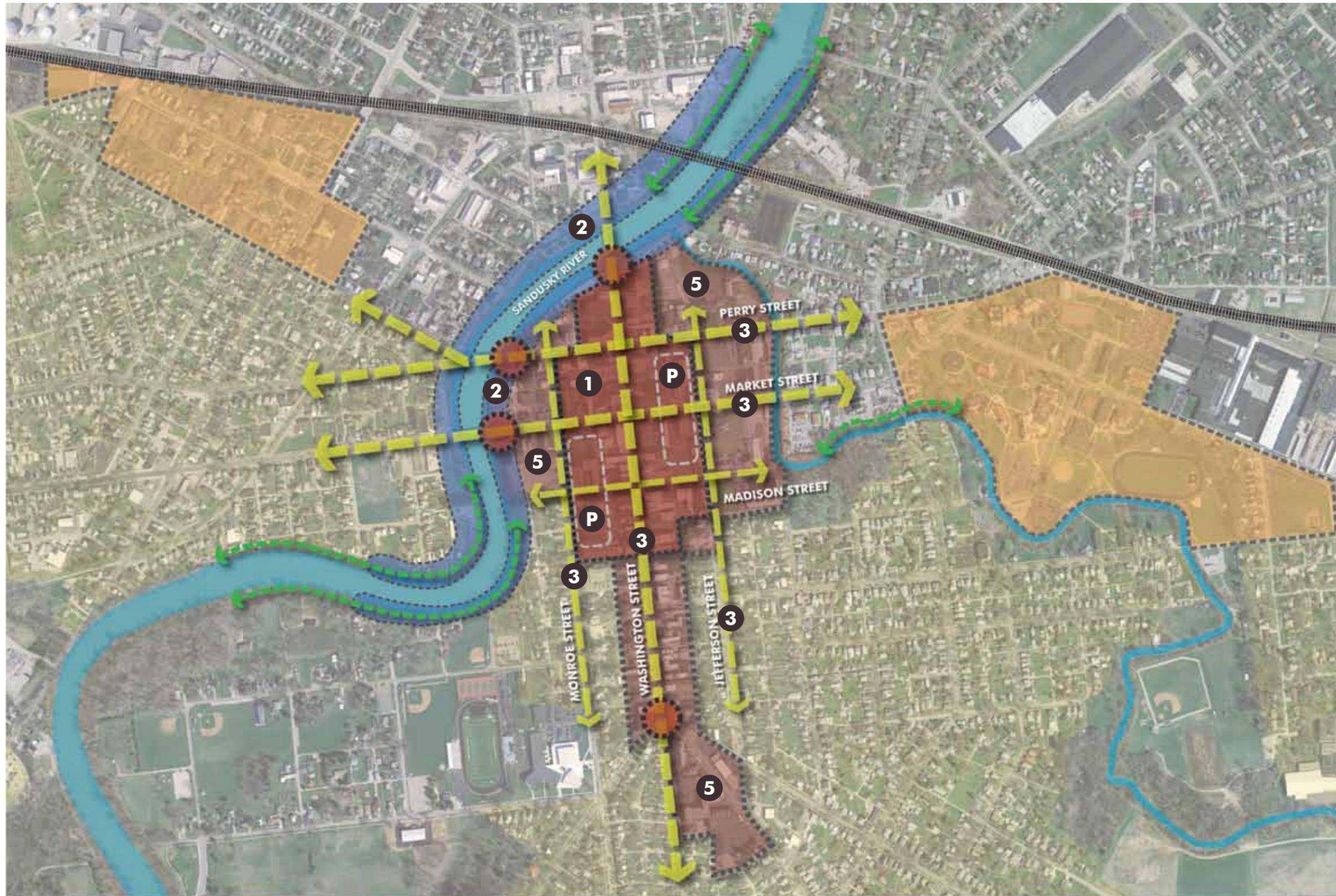
Building/Open Space Plan



The Urban Fabric maps show where the Downtown is lacking open space, parking, green space and first floor uses. These maps exhibit the core area within downtown that is within 1/4-mile radius i.e. 5-minute walking distance from the intersection of Washington and Market Street. By focusing on one physical feature at a time one is able to clearly see where there is an over and under abundance of that particular feature.

The **first floor use map** focuses on the general use and not what specific business is occupying the first floor. Residential uses surround the Downtown while there is a large concentration of specialty retail along Washington Street. There is also a number of properties that were observed as vacant as of April 2009.

Issues and Opportunities



The Opportunities map provides an overview of the potential redevelopment corridors and specific focus areas. The existing conditions analysis and the market summary form a basis for this opportunities analysis. Opportunities vary from catalytic redevelopment along the riverfront, gateway enhancements, improved connectivity to all major access points into Downtown, and consolidated parking among other recommended initiatives.

- Urban Core
- Riverfront Development
- Secondary Commercial Areas
- College/University
- Residential Areas
- Improved Connections
- Streetscape Enhancement
- Trails, Bikeway Connections
- Gateway Enhancements

FOCUS AREAS

- 1** Urban Core
- 2** Riverfront Development
- 3** Enhanced Corridors
 - Streetscape Improvements
 - Gateways
 - Wayfinding
 - Signage
- 4** Historic "Main Street" Character
 - Mixed Use
 - Tenanting
 - Upper Story Re-use
- 5** Secondary Areas
- P** Parking Areas
 - Shared Parking at Rear of Buildings with Alley Access
 - Potential Parking Deck Areas



Master Plan

Introduction

Guiding Principles

Concepts

Design Precedents



Introduction

What is Urban Design?

Urban design is the art of making places with the arrangement of buildings, streets, public parks and plazas and the amenities that connect or compliment the primary elements. Special attention to the riverfront, public realm related uses, landscape enhancements, streets and building character were a priority in creating urban design concepts for Downtown Tiffin.

Introduction

The urban framework of Downtown Tiffin consists of valuable assets such as the interconnected grid of streets, historic building stock collection and the river all of which contribute to a character that rivals that of similar sized European cities. The character of Tiffin is not only defined by the Downtown but also by the strength of the residential neighborhoods, the service oriented industries, the universities and the fringe commercial areas. This character along with the existing brand recognition of “an educational community”, and locations of strong anchors such as the Ritz Theatre enrich the “sense of place” of the community and the importance of Downtown.

Throughout the document we have used different terms to clearly articulate the appropriate territory being discussed. Downtown relates to the area immediately around the historic core of the Downtown. Central City references the immediate neighborhoods, universities and contiguous institutional and/or industrial areas adjacent to Downtown.

At the risk of losing the essence of the “educational community” and the art and culture environment, community leaders formed a Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee that will focus on the revitalization of Downtown Tiffin. Their mission is to create a better Tiffin in the future through a strategic planning initiative acting as a blueprint for revitalization.

The Phase I planning process identified the following “big picture” guidelines which are critical from the philosophical sense of “place making”, and socio-economic growth:

- Create a “cultural community” of recognition within the northern Ohio region
- Build trust in the investment community regarding Downtown Tiffin
- Strengthen relationships and connectivity between Downtown and the universities
- Create quality place/destinations and brand identity for Downtown
- Market the Downtown’s history and vitality
- Collaborative operation and physical management initiatives

The market conditions, existing conditions and opportunities analysis and discussions with the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee, stakeholders, citizens, property/business owners, students, staff and scholars provided an understanding of the physical framework of Downtown Tiffin and adjoining areas. In an effort to illustrate urban design concepts that reflect community values voiced during the community Design Charrette and community stakeholder & focus group discussions, the following chapter of work was created. The major components of this chapter include:

- Guiding Design and Development Principles
- Broad Physical Framework Concepts
- Conceptual Urban Design Plan and Project Specific Concepts
- Best Practices

A brief description of each concept is provided to give the reader insight into each component. It is the intention of this entire document to assist the City Council, Architectural Historic Design Review Board and others to make informed decisions regarding the future physical conditions of Downtown Tiffin.

Following is a brief description of each component of this chapter:

Guiding Principles

This contains the “big-picture” objectives and guiding principles, which are provided to help guide organizations and government officials involved in the revitalization of Downtown to make informed decisions. As project specific infill, adaptive re-use or historic preservation projects come under consideration, reference to the basic Guiding Principles within this section will provide a checklist of important values to integrate into the projects. All of the principles will not apply to all projects, and it is up to those regulatory groups to use the principles with discretion in their work. As development projects come forward, consideration of appropriateness is hoped to be framed around the Guiding Principles to ensure any proposed development incorporates Tiffin’s community development values. It is also recommended to follow these guiding principles during the modifications of the regulatory documents.

Broad Physical Framework Concepts

During the course of development of the Downtown Tiffin Strategic Plan, the consulting team performed physical analysis on the urban center of Tiffin and its contiguous neighborhoods. The purpose of this exploration was to gain understanding of the systems which support commerce and livability in Tiffin. Stakeholder interviews, town hall meetings and interactive design charrette provided the design team with additional insight into Tiffin resident’s desires

for an improved central city and Downtown. Understanding that, the design team developed twelve Guiding Principles to serve as parameters for future urban design and placemaking.

This section explores overarching repositioning concepts for Tiffin with specific attention on the Downtown area. These broader concepts and recommendations for an improved physical framework served as “touch stones” for the design team in further visioning of the preferred urban design plan for the entire Downtown.

Conceptual Urban Design Plan and Project Specific Concepts

The Conceptual Urban Design Plan section consists of numerous concepts for repositioning of Downtown Tiffin. They also strive to help the City visualize how the Guiding Principles would apply to the development of the revived physical framework. These concepts are not prescriptive, but rather a “broad brush” vision of how the Downtown might evolve. Overview development type and building use are prescribed further in the recommendations chapter.

The purpose of the illustrations is to reinforce the importance of the fundamentals of quality land development when located adjacent to existing historic areas, anchor, destinations and important public amenities offered in Downtown Tiffin. Natural features, logical street grid integration, vehicular access, community connectivity, context sensitivity of new architecture through materials, massing and scale of new buildings, public realm improvements, and pedestrian linkages to other destinations within the Downtown are all important elements to consider when dealing with the new infill development and adaptive reuse opportunity sites and/or buildings identified in this planning initiative.

It should be noted that the Conceptual Urban Design Plan and its components are truly concepts to serve as a starting point for property owners, public officials and developers to begin thinking about specific development

projects identified as opportunities within this initiative. Design and Development Guidelines should be prepared to offer further guidance to those engaged in specific projects. The final urban design plan should be vetted in a transparent process with input from the community, representatives of property and business owners, civic organizations, private development interests and public officials.

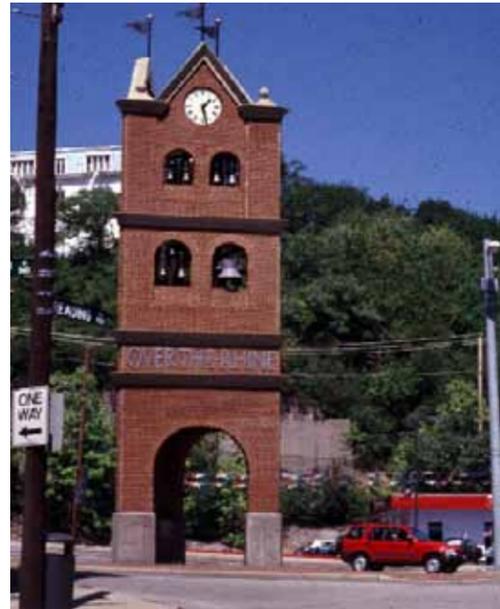
Design Precedents

This section illustrates the different aspects of character elements and best practice examples which have been included to reflect the overarching revitalization philosophy that other places, programs and people have adopted for their particular communities. The images are provided to suggest specific cues for revitalization of Downtown Tiffin.

Guiding Design and Development Principles

1. Create "Place" and Destination with Brand Identity

- Creation of gateways into the Downtown at the Sandusky River crossings and the 5-point intersection at St. Joseph's Catholic Church
- Create a strong sense of identification and entry into the Downtown Tiffin with establishment of a comprehensive vehicular and pedestrian directional/wayfinding system
- Promote the addition of public art, adequate maintenance, tree planting, banner program, addition of artwork (murals and sculpture) to further enhance the image of the City
- Create destination oriented mix of uses in a unique, welcoming environment
- Promote creation of "place" within the Central City not just the historic core
- Build on the on-going activities and events within Downtown and coordinate the programs for local and regional culture with appropriate marketing initiatives
- Promote the preservation of landmarks within the urban fabric
- Promote eco-friendly technology, energy efficient guidelines and design solutions



2. Market Downtown's History and Vitality

- Promote Downtown marketing campaign geared towards educational, art and culture-oriented destination theme
- Promote regional tourism by collaborating with area universities and tourism related destinations
- Provide amenities for everyone
- Market the Downtown to a wide variety of existing and visiting demographics



3. Celebrate the Riverfront

- Connect Downtown with a distinctive riverfront
- Encourage pedestrian-oriented activities, events and public access
- Create refined public spaces along the river
- Renovate existing historic buildings and create new context-sensitive infill development oriented toward the Sandusky River corridor
- Promote creative design solutions to balance between public river access and flood protection



4. Encourage Pedestrian-Oriented Connections and Connect Downtown "Anchors"

- Promote connections between "anchor destinations": Historic Core, Riverfront and Activity Centers within the Central City area
- Promote safe and secure environment, day and night
- Promote circulation along streets and alleyways
- Promote pedestrian friendly streetscape with tree-lined streets, upgraded and maintained storefronts, signage, street furniture (benches, trash cans, planters, banners, lighting, etc.)



5. Promote Context Sensitive Infill Development

- Encourage complementary new infill buildings in street voids
- Promote catalytic development opportunities for underutilized parcels and/or buildings for further reinvestment
- Promote context sensitive scale/massing of buildings/architectural elements and materials
- Promote mixed uses in the Downtown area specifically retail/hospitality/entertainment on first floors and professional offices and housing on upper floors



6. Provide Selective On-Street Parking and Promote Shared Parking at the Rear of Buildings

- Promote combining public parking
- Consolidate the access systems
- Buffer parking lots from surrounding uses with landscape enhancements
- Provide adequate lighting for a safe environment



7. Development of Regulatory Environment, Review Process and Enforcement

- Update zoning code based on strategic plan principles and recommendations
- Establish Design and Development Guidelines to guide and promote quality character of the area for an enhanced Downtown
- Streamline building plan review process
- Demonstrate strict enforcement of building regulations and property maintenance



8. Promote Effective General Maintenance

- Property and business owners should be pro-active in general maintenance of their immediate exterior spaces such as exterior façade clean-up, removal of weeds from sidewalks, cleaning and sweeping of sidewalks, and trash removal
- Install planters, flower pots, sidewalk signage and similar exterior elements
- Promote Downtown-wide clean-up drives



Guiding Principles

9. Improve Public Realm Spaces and Enhance Streetscape Character

- Improve public realm spaces and enhance connections between the anchors/spaces to encourage pedestrian mobility
- Create “outdoor rooms” for public and private use
- Promote physical linkages such as streetscape, sidewalks, trails, bikeways and green space and a seamless connection from Downtown to the neighborhoods, universities, fringe commercial areas, regional trails and bikeway systems
- Enhance existing streetscape by establishing standards for amenities, furniture, building façade, signage, and other appropriate streetscape elements through detailed design and implementation



10. Enhance Gateways and Promote Efficient Signage and Wayfinding System

- Promote enhancement of existing gateways such as the riverfront gateway near Market Street
- Develop quality wayfinding and public arts programs throughout this Central City area
- Efficient signage promoting primary destinations, knowledge of the public amenities and location of districts and parking spaces



11. Leverage the Art and Culture Oriented Community

- Encourage development of art and culture environment with the efforts of the universities, Art Guild, Museum and Ritz Theater.
- Celebrate arts within the public realm
- Weave the arts into gateways and signage (traditional and contemporary)



12. Collaborative Operation and Physical Management Initiatives

- Collaboration between different organizations to perform simultaneous activities – both public and private
- The City, County, Chamber, CVB, SIEDC, Tiffin Tomorrow, Strategic Plan Steering Committee and related Tiffin organizations to “champion” the strategic plan implementation process
- Promote joint promotions and marketing initiatives to provide a unified voice
- Consideration of BID (Business Improvement District) for additional operations, management and promotion of Downtown



Impact of the Arts



Embracing the arts as an economic platform for Downtown Tiffin grows from the history the arts have played in the evolution of Tiffin. From the art glass industry to the university's cultural contribution to Tiffin to the success story of the Ritz Theatre, arts and culture have always been a significant part of the City. The economic impact of the arts on Tiffin is significant and should not be thought of as only entertainment. Statistics support the theory of how arts and cultural development has a major impact in the area of business retention and recruitment.

There are a number of destinations and organizations that enliven Tiffin's entertainment and cultural character. Based on the guiding principles, these destination and assets should be leveraged to develop a creative industry for Tiffin. The following are highlights taken from two studies concluded on the creative industry and the impact on economic development.

What are Creative Industries?

They create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases.

"Every single human being is creative. The biggest challenge of the creative age is to lift the bottom up and encourage a prosperous, vibrant and sustainable community for all."
-Richard Florida.

These industries also provide an array of other benefits, such as infusing other industries with creative insight for their products and services and preparing workers to participate in the contemporary workforce. In addition, because they enhance quality of life, the arts and culture are an important complement to community development, enriching local amenities and attracting young professionals to an area.

Source: *Arts & the Economy: Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development* NGA Center for Best Practices

The Creative Industries include:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Art and antiques markets
- Computer and video games
- Crafts
- Design
- Designer fashion
- Film and video
- Music
- Performing arts
- Publishing
- Software
- Television and radio
- Green Technology

Creative Industries as Economic Assets

- Provide Jobs
- Attract Investments
- Stimulate through Tourism
- Consumer Purchases
- Tax Revenues

Strategy Development

- Target specific sectors (based on existing strengths)
- Strengthen non-profit arts and cultural infrastructure
 - Incubators, provide essential design, communications, training
 - Not always counted towards indirect economic development

- Support individual businesses
- Public-Private partnerships
 - Public agency partners with key area industries for training, workforce development
- Collaboration between artists and traditional industries, e.g. product design

Incorporate arts into community plans

- Provide grants and training
- Cultural enterprise zones (cultural districts)
- Support Development of art space

Central for Regional Development Study

A study conducted by Bowling Green State University, Center for Regional Development, in 2007 explored the impact of creative industries in Northwest Ohio. The study is based on the industries selected as identified by the Americans for The Arts. The industries generally fall into six main classifications:

- Museums and Collections
- Performing Arts
- Visual Arts/Photography
- Film, Radio, and Television
- Design and Publishing
- Schools and Services

The study concludes that wages in creative industries are higher than the state average and every dollar spent by creative industries creates \$1.62 for economic development.

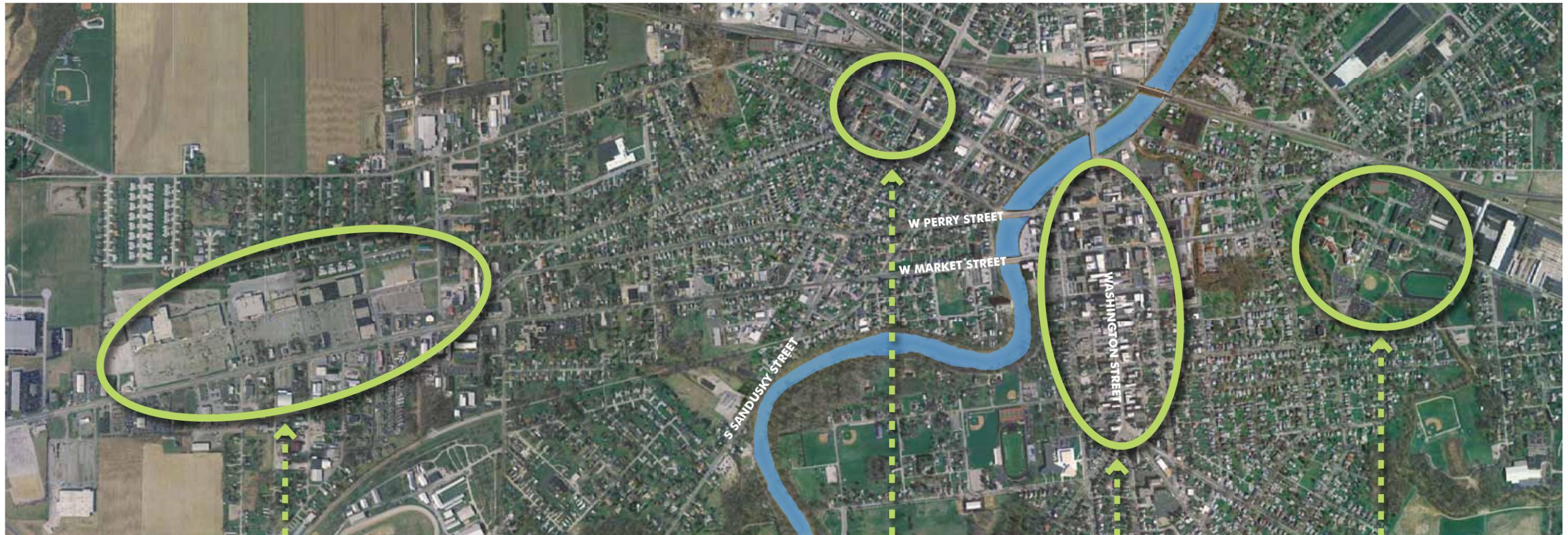


Highlights from the Central for Regional Development Study

	NORTHWEST OHIO (27 COUNTIES)	OHIO
ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	2.4 BILLION (1.5 DIRECT & 928.6 INDIRECT)	25 BILLION
JOBS SUPPORTED	33,426	231,200
STATE & LOCAL TAX REVENUE	\$96,960,484	\$1.06 BILLION
FEDERAL TAX REVENUE	\$150,976,684	\$1.78 BILLION

Overall Urban Design Framework

This exhibits the overall physical framework and the four main focal points around which the revitalization of Tiffin is recommended.



- Primary Gateway**
- Reposition and enhance
 - Selective tenants (healthcare and housing)
 - Mixed-use

- Tiffin University**
- Enhanced connection
 - Assist in downtown incubator

- Downtown**
- 4-Pronged Main Street approach
 - Riverfront, multi-modal transit, industrial reclamation, upkeep and maintenance

- Heidelberg University**
- Enhanced connection
 - Assist in downtown incubator

Downtown Urban Design Framework

This exhibits the critical physical repositioning elements as they relate to revitalization of downtown Tiffin.

- New Urbanist Community**
- Mixed housing around central green
 - Pedestrian-friendly neighborhood
 - Sustainable design elements

- Corridor Enhancements**
- Upkeep and maintenance
 - Build around existing "anchors"
 - Facade improvement
 - Streetscape



- Industrial Revitalization**
- Brownfield reclamation
 - Adaptive reuse
 - Use synergy with Ralph's Joy of Living
 - Potential "Under One Roof" location - Chamber of Commerce, CVB
 - "Green" initiatives start-ups

- Multi-Modal Transit Facility**
- Library extension
 - Terminus (downtown loop, regional transit) & parking garage
 - Trail connections with Rock Creek

- Riverfront Gateway**
- Enhance view corridors
 - Public realm - Mixed-use
 - Waterfront/river activity

Downtown Urban Design Concept Plan

- Existing Buildings
- New Infill
- Green/Open Spaces

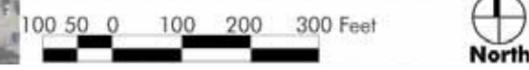


CONCEPTS

- Districting opportunity - riverfront, civic
- New infill development to fill voids along main roadways
- Enhanced waterfront public spaces and linkages
- Improved connectivity (trails, walkways) of Downtown with college and university
- Enhanced signage and wayfinding elements
- Enhanced gateways and nodes of activity
- Opportunity for upper story housing and/or office spaces
- Potential for two-way street conversions
- Incorporation of public green and/or gathering places
- Shared parking behind buildings and improved alleyways for parking access

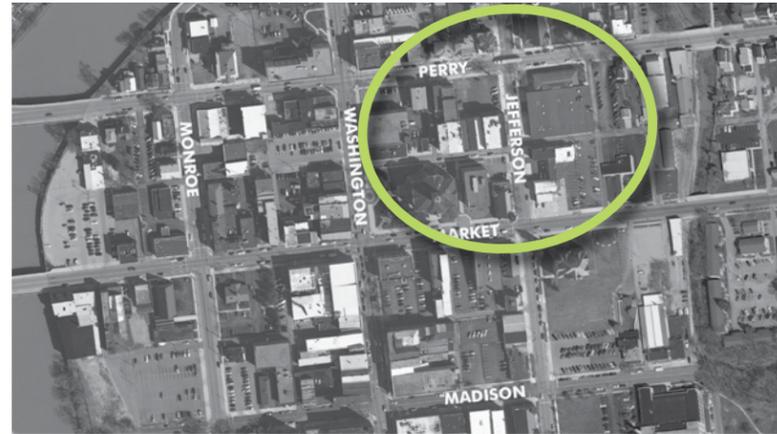
- Public plazas and viewing areas
- Potential redevelopment - selective infill (retail, professional office, etc.)
- Potential pedestrian only street
- Potential mixed-use project with parking structure
- Residential townhomes/mixed use along riverfront gateway
- Potential redevelopment - selective infill (retail, professional office, etc.)

- Potential mixed-use project with parking structure
- Enhancement of public realm around courthouse area
- New public green across from the courthouse





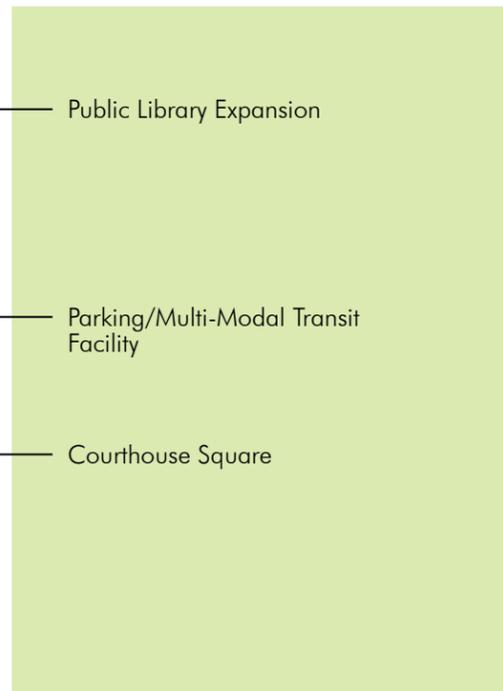
Enhance Civic Areas



As the County Commissioners continue to explore options for the Seneca County Courthouse, it is abundantly clear that regardless of whether the existing courthouse is restored or a new courthouse is built, the County government offices and facilities will remain as a significant anchor for Downtown Tiffin. The adjacency of these offices presents an opportunity to develop the public realm space connecting the buildings as a Civic Center campus. The benefit of this would be to help create a “Town Center” in the heart of Downtown and deliver an urban/architectural order to these government destinations.

Descriptions of the major components of the Civic Center and opportunities to enhance the civic awareness of the district have been provided on the following pages.

- + Courthouse Town Square
- + Public Library Expansion
- + Parking/Multi-Modal Transit Facility



Create Town Square



Due to its location at the heart of downtown, the Courthouse square is recommended to be repositioned as the "Town Square" with enhanced public realm spaces and opportunities to induce public gathering. This means upgraded storefronts, filling in the vacant spaces with appropriate tenants, encourage pedestrian activity and in turn transform into a vibrant urban area.

Consideration should be given to relocate offices currently housed at the building at the southeast corner of Washington and Market Street. This space could be freed up to become an expanded public courthouse square. The space could enhance real estate values of adjacent buildings while providing a desperately needed public gathering space in the heart of Downtown.



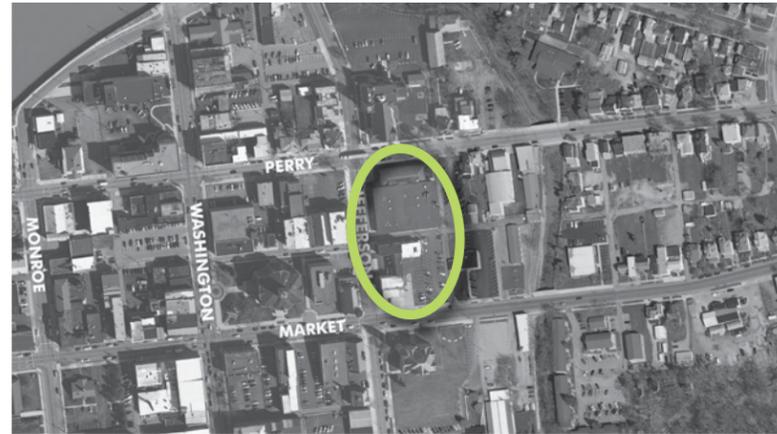
Before - Along Court Street



After - Artist's Rendering
Enhancing the extensive historical stock of buildings can help build excitement and trust in the community.



Expand Public Services



Public Library Expansion

As the economy returns to a sense of normalcy in the coming years, every effort should be made to retain the Seneca County Library in Downtown. Without question the Library is a major benefit to Downtown Tiffin's economy. Finding ways to expand the Library to provide even more services would give more reason for citizens to visit the Library and in turn visit shops and restaurants throughout the Downtown.

Parking/Multi Modal Transit Facility

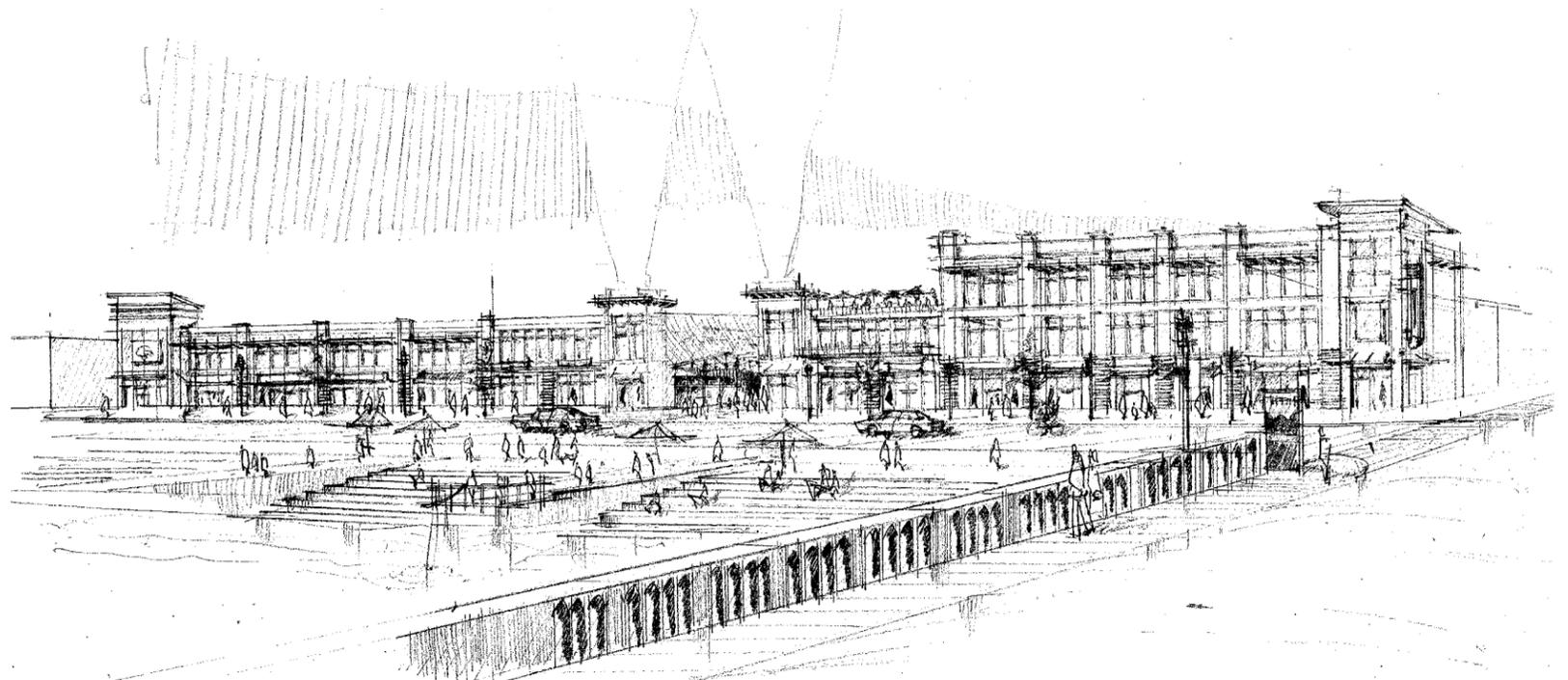
Overtime the expanded service offerings of the County government and the Library will create more demand for parking. Additional parking demand will be felt from renovations to upper stories of Downtown buildings returning residential and commercial occupancy to these locations, which is currently dormant in Downtown. Government could play a major role in the development of a multi-faceted parking facility for Downtown. The facility could be designed to serve as a central parking center for Downtown as well as a transit hub for several alternative transportation options including a "campus to campus" shuttle system connecting Tiffin University and Heidelberg University to Downtown and City/County public transportation system.



Enhance Riverfront Gateway



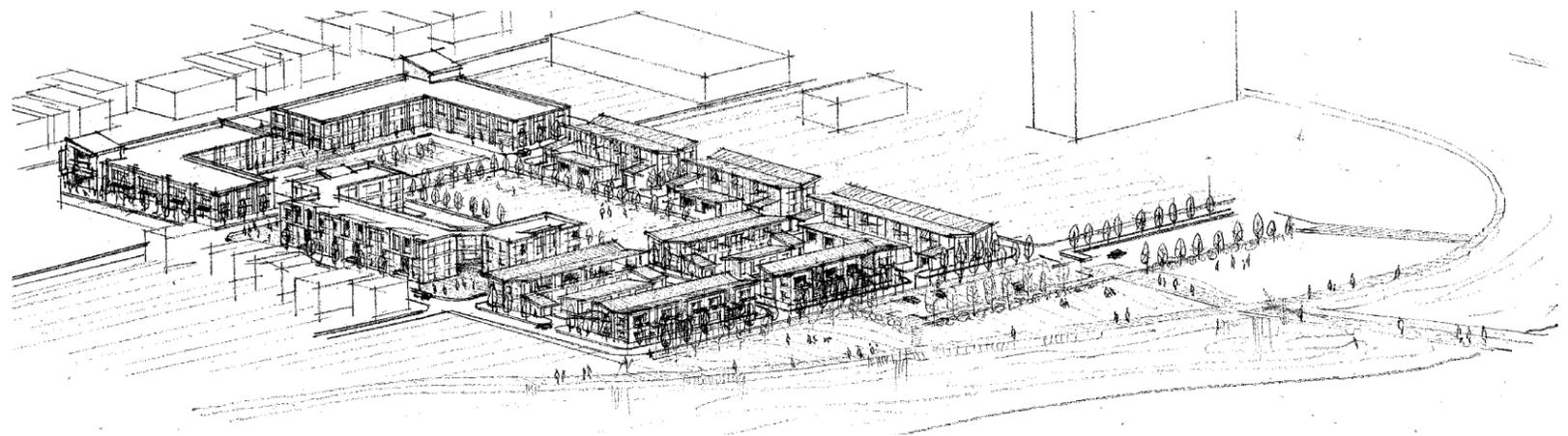
The Sandusky River, the greenways along its banks and the bridges connecting downtown Tiffin with the residential neighborhoods creates a powerful gateway into downtown Tiffin. Enhancements to these gateways are recommended to improve the appearance of these unique entrance points into downtown for the visitors and residents alike. The by-product of this effort is to create value in the surrounding real estate bordering the river and to encourage investment into these dormant sites. Although the existing floodwalls are merely functional units, opportunities exist to creatively carve out public realm spaces and provide pedestrian access to the river. Interplay of mixed use built form with green open spaces along the riverfront will create an urban fabric that will help to balance the differing needs of the community whether it is for retail-commercial demands or for upper story residential units or simply for recreational uses. Riverside Drive between Washington and Perry is recommended to be converted to pedestrian connection to cater to public gathering opportunities along the Ritz and National Theater that can be extended provide a continuity of the public realm space. This area can also be utilized for various festival related events. Bridges are recommended to be aesthetically treated with lighting and street furniture such as memorabilia/plaques depicting the river's history. Creating appropriate resting areas for viewing pleasure of the river would create a special signature amenity for downtown.



Create Sustainable Neighborhood



The site along Market Street near the gateway to downtown on the east side of the Sandusky River provides an excellent opportunity to create a neo-traditional mixed housing and mixed-income neighborhood along with neighborhood serving retail opportunities. This is conceptualized to be developed with a neighborhood green at it's center. The existing green space created from the demolished school building provides a wonderful opportunity to serve this function and help to refine the urban form of the neighborhood. Tree-lined pedestrian-friendly neighborhood connections link the compact development of townhomes and single family units with retail spaces located along Market Street. Alley-loaded garages and utility corridors along with enhanced public realm opens out to the green space located along the river that provides accessibility to ample recreational opportunities. Sustainable site design elements such as heat island reduction, porous pavers, bio-retention areas and rain gardens along sidewalks with alternative energy utilization are recommended. Sustainable building design utilizing green technologies such as geothermal heating & cooling to take advantage of the adjacency to the river along with proper building alignment for passive & active solar energy opportunities are highly recommended to develop a new standard for central city neighborhood infill residential building.



Revitalize Industrial Sites



The industrial sites along Hudson and Harrison Street near Washington Street to the north of the Sandusky River and downtown Tiffin is recommended to be explored for adaptive re-uses appropriate for the type of facilities currently available. A modern industrial mixed-use urban area replete with green technology initiatives, art glass artisans & manufacturers, perhaps a local business incubator for entrepreneurs & start-up companies will provide a common ground that ties both the universities and the downtown. This modern technology/industrial development area will augment the retail and restaurant opportunities of downtown while contributing to the viability of the urban core and the central city. The existing warehouse facilities and their connection to utilities and relevant infrastructure, positions this area as one of the vital component towards revitalization of the greater Tiffin community. Appropriate brownfield revitalization policies, techniques and funding should be explored carefully to implement a plan of action for revitalization. Alternative energy sources should be researched and implemented and can act as testing ground for wider implementation. Sustainable design elements to develop sites and rehabilitating the warehouse buildings should be explored and implemented accordingly.



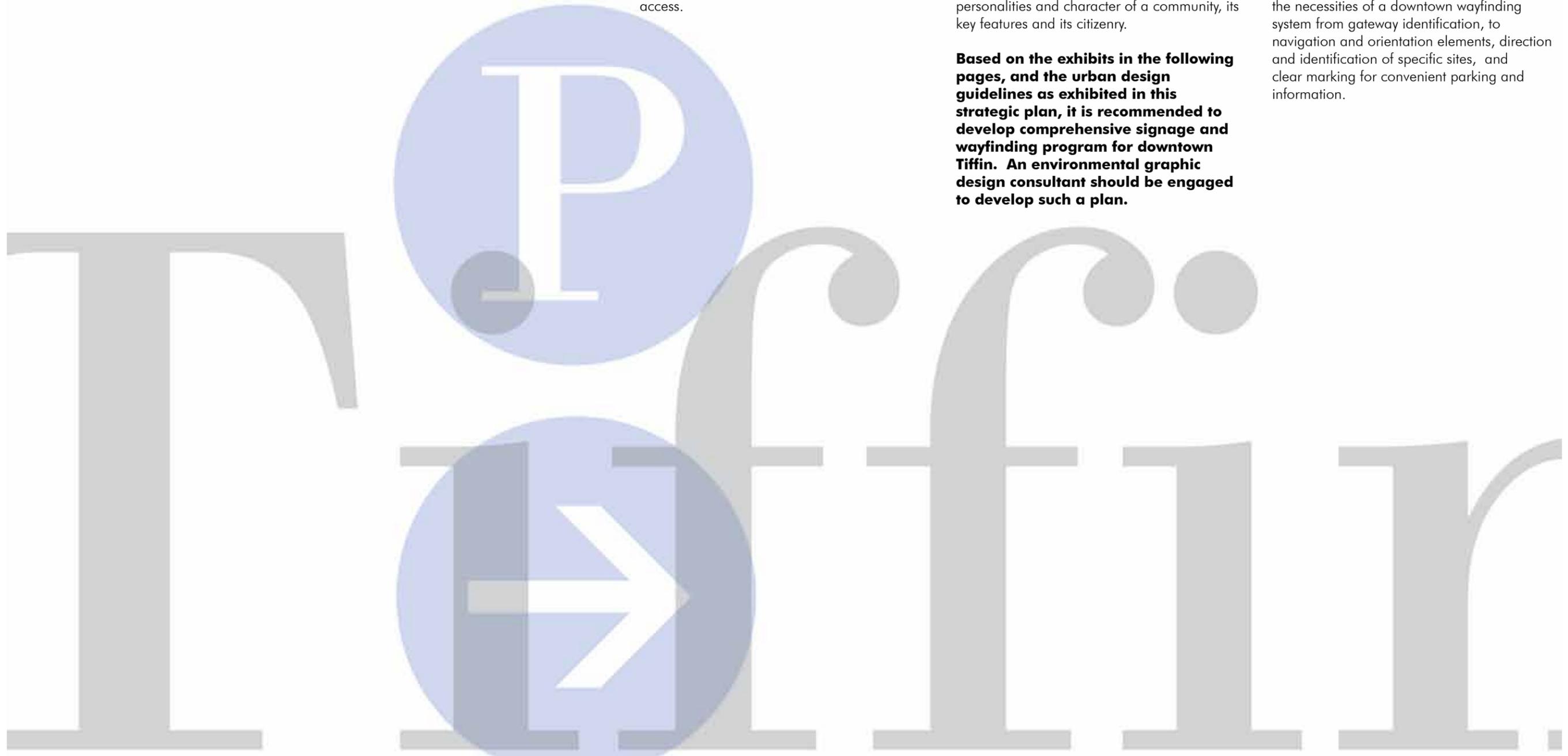
Signage, Graphics and Wayfinding

Tiffin offers a rich variety of architectural and cultural elements that can be drawn upon to represent the strengths and character of Downtown Tiffin-further creating a sense of place, defining key regions and destination points, and facilitating easier orientation and access.

The basic purpose of a wayfinding system is to identify a region, direct traffic-both vehicular and pedestrian-from one point to another and provide the means for an overall orientation within the region. A successful wayfinding system also visually communicates the distinct personalities and character of a community, its key features and its citizenry.

The following concept design study briefly addresses the considerations and potential of a signage and wayfinding program for the City of Tiffin. The approach shown in this concept study combines the crafting of a consistent visual approach while addressing the necessities of a downtown wayfinding system from gateway identification, to navigation and orientation elements, direction and identification of specific sites, and clear marking for convenient parking and information.

Based on the exhibits in the following pages, and the urban design guidelines as exhibited in this strategic plan, it is recommended to develop comprehensive signage and wayfinding program for downtown Tiffin. An environmental graphic design consultant should be engaged to develop such a plan.



The announcement and welcoming upon arrival to a community can establish basic visual points of reference for an overall signage program.

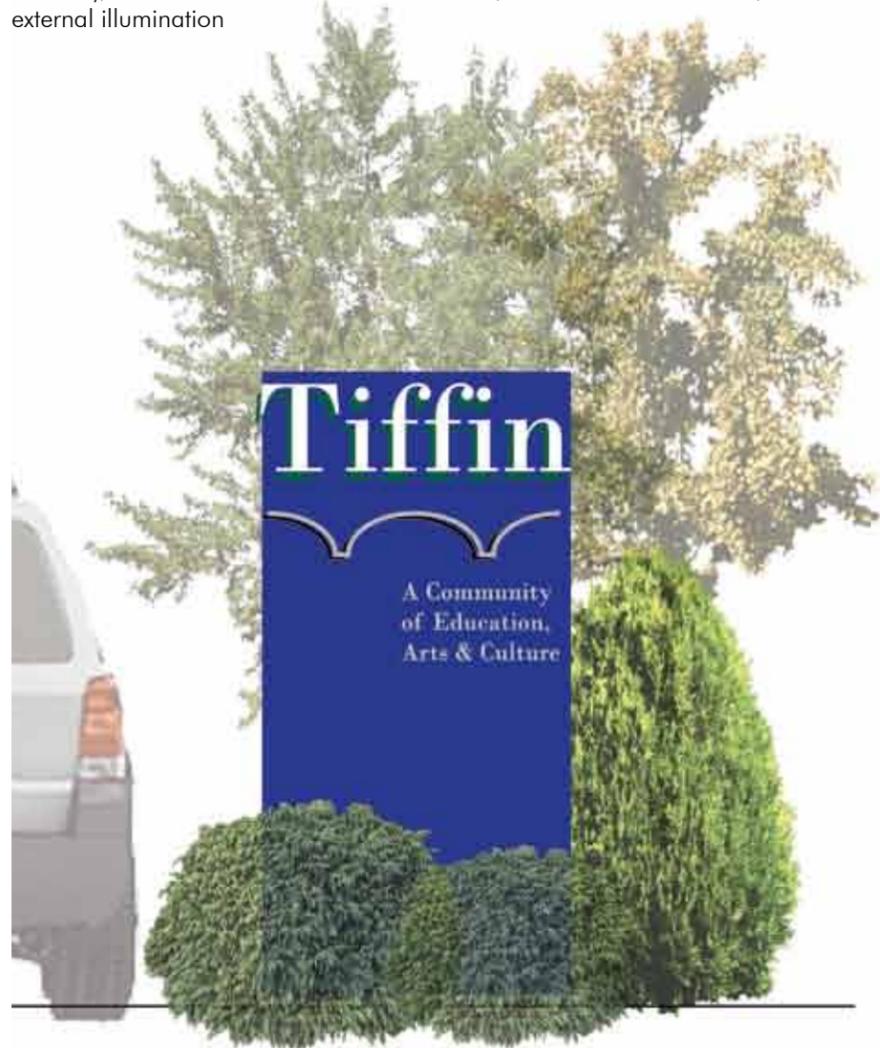
Graphic elements that are drawn from specific landmark/cultural features of the community bring a distinct, recognizable element that can be incorporated into a comprehensive signage and wayfinding program.

For purposes of this schematic concept, the arcs from one of the bridges was referenced for a graphic element to be included into the signage/wayfinding program as an element that could be distinct to Tiffin and the surrounding region. It also demonstrates how a simple element offers the flexibility to maintain a connection to an overall program in a variety of different contexts and applications.



Monument style gateway sign

Masonry, cut/welded metal base & framework, dimensional letterforms, external illumination



Horizontal style gateway sign



Pedestrian-scale gateway sign

Cut/welded metal base & framework, cut letterforms attach to solid metal panel, finish to contrasting color, external illumination



A designated color palette and typeface create the basis for a consistent family of elements that can be combined to accommodate the various signage needs

Color & form can be utilized to represent and designate areas and attractions

Selection and consistent application of a typeface family are a vital, basic element of a comprehensive signage and wayfinding system.

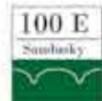
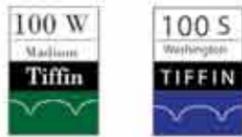


Typefaces have distinct characteristics that can be assigned to them (traditional, progressive, vital, historical-sometimes a combination of characteristics), that can be matched to the image that a community wishes to portray about itself. The typeface chosen for a community signage and wayfinding program needs to maintain legibility in a variety of contexts and applications.



Use of graphic element as a 'signature' to community/civic-based events & promotions

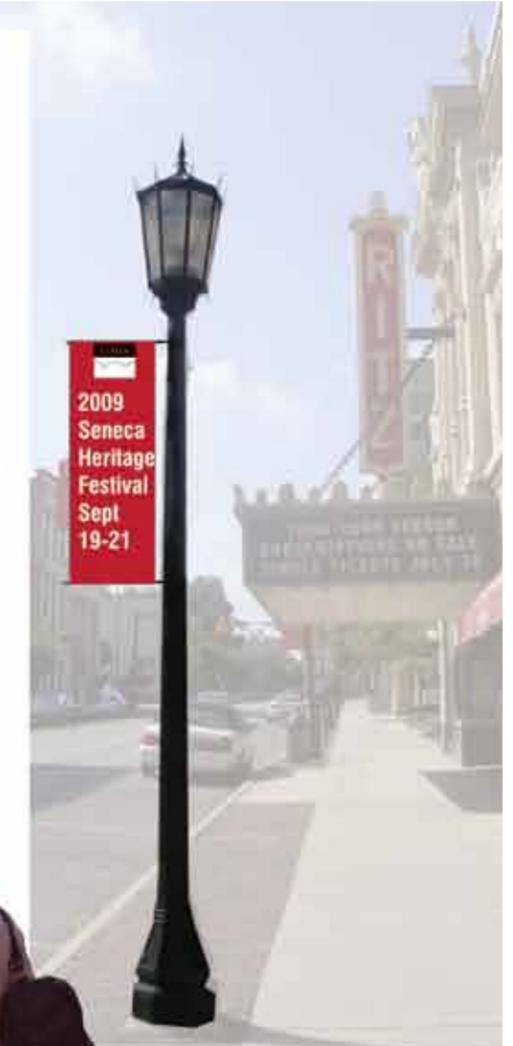
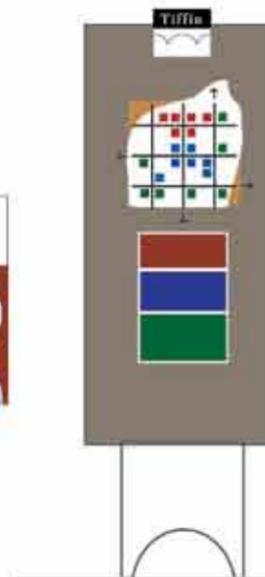
Prominent display enables easy reading of block/street numbers- a basic reference for wayfinding and orientation



Lower groupings without Tiffin component demonstrate color graphic element as wayfinding key



Pedestrian-scale kiosk with map and color-coded destinations, sites listed in corresponding color fields



Design Precedents

The following best practice examples have been included to reflect the overarching revitalization philosophy that other places, programs and people have adopted for their particular communities. The images are provided to suggest specific cues for revitalization of Downtown Tiffin. These cues have been incorporated and duly exhibited in the overview recommendations. All of the examples are of compact downtowns, are a main governmental entity such as being a county seat or have local universities that add to the vibrancy of downtown.

Georgetown, KY



Located just north of Lexington, KY and directly off of I-75, Georgetown has a thriving Downtown and entertaining festivals including the International Kite and Culture Festival and the Festival of the Horse. This small town takes pride and emphasizes the horse culture of Kentucky while boasting a manufacturing industry and a educational community with Georgetown College.

Granville, OH



Granville is a quaint, New England-style community located in east central Ohio just an hour east of Columbus. It is the home of Denison University that has about 2,000 students each year. The village has retained its small town charm with quaint, locally-owned retail shops, historic homes and churches, tree-lined boulevards, and stately buildings.

Fredericksburg, VA



Fredericksburg is a small historically rich city half way between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, VA. Its large Downtown historic district is laid out in a walkable traditional grid system with Colonial structures opening the door to the past. The town embodies its Civil War heritage with its festival and battle reenactments at the major National Park nearby. It is also home to Mary Washington University.

Oberlin, OH



Oberlin is vibrant arts community located southwest of Cleveland, OH. There are many locally owned businesses Downtown catering to the residents and students. Oberlin College provides a pristine educational institution that adds to the richness of the town and feeds the arts and culture community. The town embraces the College providing opportunities for residents and students to help one another.

Recommendations

Recommendations
Potential Tenant Mix
Funding



Recommendations Introduction

Tiffin Tomorrow!



SIEDC

Welcome To The
Tiffin Area Chamber of Commerce Since 1914
 62 S. Washington St. • Tiffin, Ohio 44883 • 419-447-4141

Based on the market research, existing conditions analysis and findings of the charrette/workshop, a revitalization strategy has been put forth to capitalize on Tiffin’s educational, art and cultural related assets. Organizations such as the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee, City of Tiffin, Chamber of Commerce, Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation bring community-wide leadership to oversee the plan implementation. This can be accomplished by public-private partnerships, exploring and qualifying for federal, state and local funding opportunities and following the phased plan of implementation for the development strategies.

A strong and vibrant art and cultural focus will help in holistic revitalization and allow Downtown Tiffin to develop a quality environment unique to the region. This can have a positive impact on **economic development for Tiffin in several ways:**

- **Arts and Cultural Destination Visitation**
- **Quality of Life Enhancements**
- **Stronger Population Base**
- **Educational Opportunities and Quality Enrollment**
- **Job Creation**
- **Business Retention and Recruitment**

These headings for the recommendations are based on the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Main Street Program as listed below.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended for Tiffin to become a certified Main Street Program which will assist in the organization and strategic implementation of the development guidelines.

The recommendations are organized in a way to identify a numbered Objective Statement which is followed by highlights of Strategies with explanations of the objective and the recommended Action Tasks for implementation.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE:
O-1 PROMOTE REVITALIZATION ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION’S NATIONAL MAIN STREET PROGRAM

STRATEGIES

To make certain that the strategic repositioning and revitalization objectives outlined in this plan are accomplished and efforts gain momentum, the Main Street Program as administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation should be followed to coordinate with the strategic vision of this Plan.

The “Four Point” approaches for Main Street revitalization are:

- **Organization:** Coordination of all interested parties and individuals towards the revitalization goals. The recommended organizational approach as mentioned in this plan (O-2) should be followed for better implementation.

- **Promotion:** Selling the positive images of the Downtown and Tiffin area as a whole. The Chamber, Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, “Little Box Shops” and others are involved in promotional materials but collaborative promotions should be carried out for Downtown and Tiffin-wide (refer to the “Promotional Recommendations” for detailed objectives and action tasks).
- **Design:** Promotes the physical attributes of the study area such as an inviting atmosphere, historic preservation, maintenance, etc. This Master Plan section will provide further guidance for future strategic initiatives along with the “Design Recommendations” section.
- **Economic Restructuring:** Available funding sources should be researched along with the recommended Federal, State and Local institutions. Also, aggressive business retention, expansion and new recruitments should be carried out according to recommended policies mentioned under “E-1: Retain and Strengthen Existing Businesses and E-2 : Promote New Ones”.

The principles of the Main Street philosophy are the following:

Comprehensive and Appropriate: All aspects of the study area and surroundings must be considered when designing a revitalization program. The program must also be appropriately scaled, taking into account the community’s resources and local conditions.

Incremental: The Main Street Approach does not produce instant change; it manages change over time.

Self-help: Revitalization of the Downtown areas should be initiated by local leaders who must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. This includes educational initiatives, convincing residents and business owners of the rewards for investing time and money in Downtown - the heart of their community.



Main Street

NATIONAL TRUST FOR
HISTORIC PRESERVATION™



Presentation about the Main Street Program by Joyce Barrett and Jeff Ziegler of Heritage Ohio.

Partnership: In order for the Downtown revitalization program to be successful, both the public and private sectors must be involved and committed.

Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets: Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique and serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.

Quality: The Main Street Approach emphasizes quality – taking the time and care to make changes in a “quality” way.

Education: The negative attitudes prevailing in the Downtown area need to be changed through education and awareness. Projects should be chosen which are doable in nature so that their success may be promoted. People need to be constantly made aware and reminded of the assets that exist in the Downtown area and why they are important to the overall community.

Implementation: Once a community is committed to conducting revitalization program, implementation is critical. The Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee is committed to the implementation of the goals and visions within the study area and should continue to follow the Main Street approach and the recommended policies in this Strategic Plan.

ACTION TASKS

- Utilize the Downtown strategic plan as a marketing, educational and information tool to generate broad-based local interest and support for creation of the Main Street program.
- Use the information obtained from Heritage Ohio presentation regarding Main Street Program (conducted by Joyce Barrett and Jeff Ziegler on June 10th, 2009) as a starting point and contact Heritage Ohio to gain knowledge about the application process and designation.
- Contact local Main Street designated communities for additional information and invite their representatives to Tiffin to share their thoughts and ideas.

- Continue to work with local/regional newspaper, radio/TV stations to promote the strategic plan and the revitalization process
- Refer to the guidelines as stated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street guidelines for designation steps. Refer to following website for additional information. National Main Street: <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/getting-started/>
Heritage Ohio: <http://www.heritageohio.org/main-street-program/becoming-a-main-street-community/>
- Form a Board of Trustees for the new organization that is comprised of experienced, dedicated and decisive individuals representing the major constituencies that are involved with or affected by Downtown.
- Establish and fund a three-year operating budget for the organization. The budget should include sufficient amounts, for at least three years, to cover operating expenses and ongoing events and provide a limited amount of seed money for special projects such as façade enhancement, building assessment and technical assistance for individual development proposals.

OBJECTIVE:

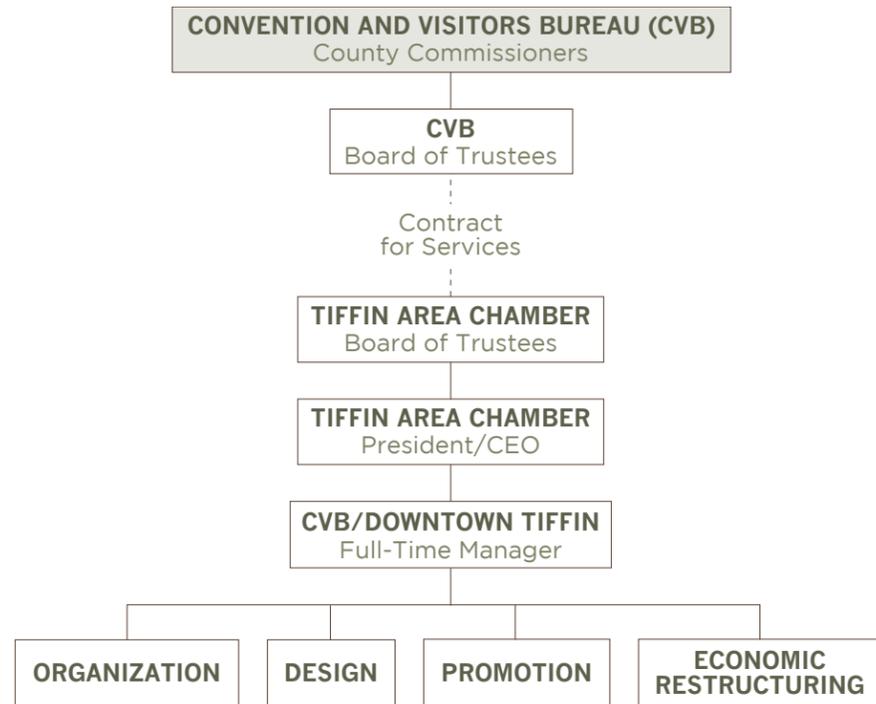
O-2 PUT THE NECESSARY ORGANIZATION, FUNDING AND STAFFING IN PLACE TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIES

At the initiation and throughout the implementation process, it is recommended to gain feedback from existing boards and organizations. An action plan task force will assist towards better implementation of the recommended strategies.

ACTION TASKS

- Members of the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee and other stakeholder organization representatives should engage themselves in the implementation process to provide continuity and buy-in for plan implementation as they have been engaged in the strategic plan process.
 - It is recommended that 2-3 members of the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee members to be appointed to head the individual action groups based on the strategic plan.
 - Action groups should be divided on Main Street 4-point approach – Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring
 - Members of each action group will be responsible to recruit additional stakeholders, interested individuals and volunteers to champion the strategies and action items.
 - Such members should be represented by political officials, residents, business leaders, community groups, merchants, and property owners who are all united in their revitalization vision.
- As the implementation process takes shape under the Chamber President and the City positions itself for the Main Street designation, it is recommended to employ a Main Street Manager.
 - Employ the Chamber President in coordination with Tiffin Tomorrow, Tiffin Area Chamber of Commerce and SIEDC, to research appropriate funding for a Main Street Manager. This position will overlook the responsibilities of the entire municipal jurisdiction of the City.
 - This position will be responsible for implementation of the Downtown strategic plan recommendations based on the prioritized implementation matrix. The position will work under



Reorganization of the CVB and Chamber similar to the matrix, as shown above, would help efficient downtown management initiatives and implementation of the recommendations of this plan.



Special Improvement Districts help to maintain the image of Downtown areas by complimenting the City's public works and safety departments through maintenance and clean-up.

the guidance of the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee and action groups.

- Responsibilities for this position will also include researching for additional funding opportunities and pioneer the PR campaign for the Main Street tenanting and district marketing.
- The position should be filled by an individual who is able to influence property owners and developers and has the qualities of an aggressive salesperson.

OBJECTIVE:
O-3 CREATION OF A SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

STRATEGIES

A Special Improvement District (SID) is a quasi-public organization formed by property owners who have agreed to an assessment on their property in order to generate revenue for services and capital improvements provided within a defined district. Special Improvement Districts provide a long-term financial base for marketing, capital improvements and management programs. They spell out the services and improvements to be delivered in a contract between the property owners and the organization charged with managing the Special Improvement District. This contractual arrangement increases accountability and keeps the focus of the organization on achieving the stated goals of property owners.

ACTION TASKS

- As the Downtown is gradually revitalized, consideration should be given to the creation of a Special Improvement District (SID) to sustain the improvements.
 - Sixty percent of property owners, or those representing roughly seventy-five percent of the linear footage, must agree to the assessment (amount to be determined by local area). The

process of recruiting the property owners to agree to an assessment and how it will be spent is a time consuming effort requiring a high level of commitment from leadership at all levels in the Downtown and the surrounding community.

- Other responsibilities such as streetscape maintenance, litter control, sidewalk snow removal and parking enforcement and lot management, could also be placed under the Special Improvement District.

OBJECTIVE:
O-4 CREATE A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY AND BUSINESS INCUBATOR

STRATEGIES

A Downtown with so many critical properties and non-motivated owners negligent in maintenance and upkeep of such properties presents a challenge in the revitalization process. It is even more difficult for municipalities to find appropriate funding to take control of such real estate either to maintain or to redevelop and invigorate. As such, it is recommended that a for-profit LLC to be established to have access to available funding to secure these parcels. Alternatively they should have the borrowing power to acquire funds and/or place options on properties for future buying.

It is also recommended to initiate partnerships where public sector agencies join the private sector entities and enter into a business relationship (Business Incubator) to share risk and attain a commonly shared goal that also achieves the objective of individual partners. This will help in quicker delivery of projects, access to funds, cost savings and creates new tax revenues. It draws innovators to the specific area of application, allows for businesses to have a safe haven in order to get started or refocused, and generates synergy of networking and counseling. It also provides access to

capital and training programs and helps to better utilize community resources. A number of attempts have been made over the years by Tiffin organizations to create a mechanism to help new and existing business overcome the challenges (funding, marketing, budgeting) that face businesses of all sizes. A report entitled Seneca County Enterprise Incubator written by Henry G. Rennie in April 2008 was drafted for the purpose of securing funding from the Ohio Department of Development's Ohio Thomas Edison Program. Although the funding request was unsuccessful, the document provides the details of the business incubator program.

ACTION TASKS

Downtown Tiffin LLC

- A broad-based community reinvestment group should be formed to support the redevelopment plan for downtown Tiffin. The community reinvestment group would raise private funds to revitalize the historic buildings in downtown Tiffin.
- The group could enhance its operations and maintenance of its properties through enhanced efficiency due to multiple property ownership.
- The community reinvestment or its subsidiaries, could acquire property in the downtown area from owners who are willing to sell conditioned on being able to defer taxable gains.
- The group should work cooperatively with other private, public, and governmental entities to find long-term solutions to the riverfront development.
- To properly manage these objectives, create a board of 12 members, 2/3 of which will be elected by unit holders (9 managers) and the balance represented by various political and interested organizations (Ex-Officio Members). Each member of the board of managers should be elected for three years.



The Rawson Building Findlay, Ohio - Before



The Rawson Building Findlay, Ohio - After
Revitalizing Downtown buildings can be assisted by following the Alternative Building Code.

Business Incubator

- It is strongly recommended that the leaders of the Tiffin Area Chamber of Commerce, Seneca Industrial & Economic Development, Tiffin University and Heidelberg University review this document and determine how with the cooperation of all four organizations they can bring this important part of the future of Tiffin and Seneca County to reality.

Objective:

0-5 INVOLVE AND COLLABORATE BETWEEN THE CITY AND COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

STRATEGIES

Collaboration between the City and County departments is essential for both short-term and long term implementation measures. Currently the City is responsible for review of development plan applications (zoning and engineering) within its jurisdictions and enforcement of zoning regulations. The County reviews building permit applications and also acts as the regional planning agency. The County Engineer, Auditor and Recorder maintain property records. Better coordination between these public agencies will help to ease the process of development plan application review to building construction phase. Also it will help property/business owners, residents and general applicants to gather information at a one-stop shop.

ACTION TASKS

- The City shall review and officially adopt the strategic plan and follow the action items on a timely basis.
- The City shall modify the zoning ordinance based on the visions and the guiding principles of the strategic plan. Refer to "Design Recommendations" for additional information on regulatory modifications.
- Enforcement efforts to comply with applicable codes and regulations should be performed by the City officials in

collaboration with the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee and task groups that will systematically address each property within the Downtown area.

- The County building and planning staff should be familiar with the "Existing Structures" section (Chapter 34) of the Ohio Basic Building Code and its beneficial uses. Following Section 3410, "Compliance Alternatives", may help make renovations more easily and cost effectively possible while substantially meeting life safety concerns. This code uses a point system to establish an acceptable level of safety in the building and awards points for life safety features not common in modern buildings but inherent in many older structures. Fire safety measures such as extra emergency lighting and more exit signs might, for example, be used to offset the number of exits that would otherwise be required. The local building official shall assist permit seekers (investor) by touring the potential renovation site and working cooperatively with developers and their design team during early design phases to interpret relevant code issues and discuss available options.
- The City officials and staff should assist developers/property owners with historic tax credit applications.
- The City should maintain and follow a Capital Improvements Plan for infrastructure improvements.
- The City should make proactive arrangements to approach potential developers and interested investors. For proposed redevelopment and infill construction to happen in the Downtown area it is vital to engage the real estate development community. It is also cost effective for both the City and the developer for evaluation of credentials through a "Request for Qualifications" (RFQ) process to check whether the developer has satisfactory experience and resources to perform a specific project. Responses through "Request for

Proposals" (RFP) are not entirely feasible as the submitted and subsequently elected proposal is not achievable from a variety of grounds including funding. So the evaluation of credentials through an RFQ process will help eliminate the shortcomings of the RFP process, as discussed above, and eventually build a relationship for a public and private partnership for holistic revitalization efforts of the Downtown area.

- As the planning and zoning review is performed separately from building permit review, often times it adds to the time and investment of a property owner/builder/developer. To create a pro-development environment, these impediments should be reduced to ease the application review process. Additional coordination between City and County review departments will help the applicants.
- Create a Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which is a redevelopment tool authorized by State statute and used by cities and development authorities to finance certain public redevelopment costs. This effort must be researched by Tiffin Tomorrow Committee along with Chamber President/Main Street Manager and implemented in collaboration with the City of Tiffin. Projects financed with TIF must serve a public purpose such as redeveloping underutilized properties, rehabilitating publicly owned non-municipal structures, relocating occupants, and constructing public improvements. When a TIF district is established, the tax capacity of the properties located within the district is "frozen". For the district's duration, which varies depending on the type of district, the property taxes resulting from any increase in the tax capacity above the frozen level are available to City of Tiffin or the Main Street to finance public project costs. Property taxes generated from the "frozen" tax capacity continue to be paid to the various tax jurisdictions.



Tiffin has much to offer as a “cultural community” with the Ritz Theater, Tiffin and Heidelberg Universities, and the Tiffin Art Guild. These assets need to be promoted to the region as a culture and entertainment destination in northern Ohio.



PROMOTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE:
P-1 CREATE A “CULTURAL COMMUNITY” IN THE NORTHERN OHIO REGION

STRATEGIES

The presence of art related culture in Tiffin is apparent through a variety of entertainment choices available through the Ritz Theater and college-university resources. This is recommended to be used as an incentive to create extended opportunities to involve the residents and engage the urban core of Downtown Tiffin. The Sandusky River provides a geographical source for increased connectivity with linear parks, greenways and trails. Enhanced streetscape and additional retail offerings at the nodes of this “connective tissue” of road network and rivers that create vibrant public spaces will entice both shoppers and visitors to visit Downtown. It will also help to increase the interaction of the students, professors, staff and resident population surrounding the institutions adjacent to Downtown. Proper collaboration between the Downtown festivities along with the cultural events held in the institutions and the theater will help create opportunities for joint events and marketing programs. This will help enhance the identity of the city and generate excitement among residents who can enjoy the rich cultural heritage.

ACTION TASKS

- Tiffin Tomorrow action group for promotion and subsequently the potential Chamber President/Main Street Manager should review the on-going promotional events specifically related to the on-going efforts of “Little Box Shops”, Downtown events, etc. for educational purpose and better coordination for future events/promotions.

- Prepare a strategy to unify art related programs and instituting a “city beautiful” movement through addition of public art, adequate maintenance, tree planting, banner program, addition of artwork (murals and sculpture) which will further enhance the image of the city.
- Initiatives with an overall identity of the Downtown can give a face to the City that it is a vibrant cultural, shopping and entertainment destination. The Tiffin Tomorrow action group, the City and Chamber of Commerce should team with other city organizations to create a Downtown marketing campaign designed to attract customers and visitors to the Downtown. These marketing efforts can be broadened to promote regional tourism in working with other cities and regional institutions of higher learning. With so many universities in the NW Ohio region, there is also an opportunity to promote connection with other local university and college towns to coordinate the retail, entertainment and cultural offerings of each. Promotion of this exchange would bring students and educational professionals from other universities to Tiffin and experience what the City has to offer.
- Additional options for promotions include art and culture related events such as outdoor performance and exhibits, additional public gathering opportunities through festivals and events. Real estate development opportunities supporting the art and culture development program includes retail uses such as design studios, galleries and restaurants. Artist’s loft housing should also be considered.
- Organize promotional events and educational programs within Downtown. Regular monthly clean-up drives should be held with the help of volunteers to clean Downtown-wide sidewalks, and public spaces. Ultimately this effort should be transferred over to the recommended Special Improvement District.

- Create a strong sense of identification and entry into Downtown Tiffin with establishment of a comprehensive vehicular and pedestrian directional/wayfinding system. This effort should be coordinated with the development of a graphic signage and wayfinding system, as recommended under objective D-4.

OBJECTIVE:
P-2 PROMOTE UPPER FLOOR HOUSING

STRATEGIES

Promote Downtown Tiffin as an exciting, convenient, intimate place to live among target population groups including students, young professionals and aging local residents. Downtown, with its historic architecture, and proximity to amenities, offers a tremendous opportunity to create a unique and appealing living environment. Experiences in other communities have shown that office and retail development will follow the development of a meaningful housing component in an attractive, historic neighborhood. An emphasis on Downtown housing, mainly on the upper floors, will ultimately promote retail development.

ACTION TASKS

- Vacant upper floors should be inspected by authorized personnel for compliance with Alternative Building Code (refer Objective O-5) and accordingly maintained by the property owner.
- Example pro-formas should be developed to evaluate the benefits of applying several incentives, such as historic tax credits and new market tax credits, for rehabilitation of a building to make way for loft style apartments with retail on first floor space. The cost of improvements should be tallied with expected rent rates to evaluate the investment potential of upper floor housing.



Before - Along Washington Street



After - Artist's Rendering

Enhancing the extensive historical stock of buildings can help build excitement and trust in the community.

OBJECTIVE:
P-3 BUILD TRUST IN INVESTMENT COMMUNITY

STRATEGIES

A comprehensive business retention and recruitment program will not only help to reposition existing and future businesses in Downtown Tiffin but also provide critical tools to give existing businesses more confidence in making expansion decisions, providing extra profit margin and creating a safety net for newly recruited business. Retention of existing businesses, recruitment of new businesses, provision of incentive based development such as reduced rents/taxes for the initial period, municipal provided financial incentives (TIF, BID programs) and provision of business incubators will help in creation of vibrant cultural, shopping and entertainment destination and holistic revitalization of the Downtown.

ACTION TASKS

- Strategies should be formulated by the Tiffin Tomorrow action group based on the following components:
 - **Enhance the impressive collection of building stock in Downtown-** Downtown Tiffin has one of the best historic building collections in the State. Although some of the structures are affected by lack of maintenance and upkeep, selective façade improvements and reduction of vacancy through first floor retail/business offerings and upper floor professional office space and/or residential will help maintain the 24-hour vibrancy.
 - **Infill development opportunities** Wherever possible research infill development opportunities in the Downtown core area. Fifty plus years of neglect has encouraged property owners and/or developers to “top buildings” and demolish buildings to

avoid reinvestment. However, as the desire to return to the city increases construction of new infill development will occur.

- Ultimately added enthusiasm of public agencies not only in marketing and financing but also through public realm improvements will generate excitement among the private development community. **Catalytic development opportunities** should be explored that will spur further reinvestment and a healthier economic model of the city. In order to take advantage of potential redevelopment opportunities one of the following directions is recommended for current property owners:
 - + Current property owners carry out the redevelopment of the existing properties themselves.
 - + Current property owners elect to partner with a real estate development company with the development expertise, financial capacity and appetite for risk to develop. The property owners and real estate developer would form an LLC partnership each with ownership commensurate with equity brought to the partnership and both agreeing to certain terms and conditions for the life of the relationship.
 - + Current property owners elect to sell their properties allowing other interests to step in and implement a redevelopment vision. This might include a private developer to bring in equity and financial strength to the struggling real estate development ownership. Partnering with institutional stakeholder (Tiffin/Heidelberg) or with industrial interests, local to Tiffin, can also provide credibility and financial strength.

Economic hardships of catalytic development opportunities can be offset through the following recommended approaches:

- + Strategize on realistic property acquisition cost
- + Partnerships with creative payout plan
- + Deferred acquisition pay-out
- + Public subsidy for acquisition
- + City resources should help with acquisition, demolition and public realm upgrade through the utilization of potential TIF dollars and other financial resources.
- Additional improvement options include mixed use development, healthcare expansion, university/college facilities, art and culture related developments.

OBJECTIVE:
P-4 INCREASE LOCAL MARKET PENETRATION

STRATEGIES

Development of promotional activities for Downtown Tiffin and marketing the initiatives to the local and regional market will provide an understanding of the repositioning of Tiffin as a community and encourage additional visitors to frequent Downtown Tiffin. This translates into additional pedestrian/auto traffic, additional commerce for Downtown retail and engagement of shoppers, visitors, residents into Downtown-wide activities.

ACTION TASKS

- **Expand hours of operation** – Increase penetration in the local market by an expansion of and consistency in hours of operation through a combination of standardized lease clauses and gradual introduction of evening hours.



Promotional materials, such as these from other cities, can provide marketing for the entire Downtown.



Scioto River, Columbus, OH Riverfront Arts Festival and Water Fire

Extension of existing Downtown festivities and events will generate excitement while engaging the community and region.

- **Joint Promotions/Marketing** – Merchants could work together, in coordination with Chamber of Commerce and/or the City of Tiffin to sponsor joint promotions. Examples could include special sale events, periodic cooperative advertising circulars, and discount coupons at participating merchants.
- **Marketing Fund Clause** – Downtown property owners could be encouraged to put a standard marketing fund clause in future leases and controlled by Chamber of Commerce or by any centralized management group.
- **Public Relations** – Maintain the current schedule of regular press releases to local and regional media announcing planned activities and promotions, as well as new initiatives started or successfully completed as part of the strategic plan.
- **Special Events/Festivals** – Consideration should be given to expanding existing festivals and special events to appeal to a broader market and to bring a Farmer’s Market. Corporate and media sponsorships could be solicited to fund expansion of existing events, in terms of size, quality and perhaps duration. Examples of ways for individual merchants to take advantage of special events include extended hours, sponsorships, coupons or sales, food carts, banner signage and sidewalk seating or sales.
- A coordinated retail and leasing support program should bring property owners, retailers, Tiffin Tomorrow action group, Chamber of Commerce and the City together. The program should offer:
 - Loan Programs – Develop a low interest revolving loan fund in conjunction with local banks. The funds can be used for renovations and/or startup working capital.
 - Rent Abatement – Persuade landlords to offer free rent or rent discounts for limited period to new entrepreneurs whose business interest matches with the vision of the Strategic Plan.

- Easy Entry Rents – Rental rates in Downtown Tiffin are already very reasonable however; this kind of package helps new entry retailers. This can include as an option three months free rent to allow the retailer time to pay for their first inventory turnover or approximately 5% of sales for the first year as a percentage of rent with rent increases over the remainder of the lease to approximate 10% of gross sales to ensure a profitable start and finally increase to market rate. The Chamber of Commerce along with the potential Main Street Manager should assist and work with the merchants group for various promotional events.

- General information and photos of the Tiffin community highlighting its assets.
- Wish list of new businesses supported by market demand and supply data.
- New developments demonstrating investment in Downtown Tiffin.
- Information on past openings and closings of businesses.
- Trade area geographic definition and demographic and lifestyle data (refer market analysis section).
- Trade area economic data including actual and potential sales data (including available sales area).
- Nonresident consumer data (including daytime population and tourism visitation).
- Descriptions of target market segments specific for Downtown Tiffin (refer market analysis section).
- Business inventory should include names and addresses, property owner information, leasable area, terms of lease (including rental rates), dimensions and possibly an image of the property.
- Significant employers and the institutions (schools, Tiffin and Heidelberg University).
- Vehicle and pedestrian traffic volume.
- Mix of existing retail, service, dining, housing, office and lodging in the district and adjoining areas.
- Press coverage and testimonials highlighting success stories.
- Summary of incentives and other business assistance available in Downtown Tiffin.
- It is recommended that Downtown Tiffin budget for and prepare professionally produced recruitment literature. Before a promotional brochure is prepared, the leasing activities of Downtown Tiffin’s

OBJECTIVE:
P-5 DEVELOP MARKETING INFORMATION FOR PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

STRATEGIES

Developing the marketing information for promotional campaign in conjunction with the on-going efforts, most notably the initiatives undertaken by the “Little Box Shops” will assist to spread the potential improved image of Downtown Tiffin to the local and regional market.

ACTION TASKS

- The Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Tiffin Tomorrow action group and the Main Street Manager is recommended to develop a database of information on local statistics, available spaces, maps and promotional materials for use in creating a strong leasing package to send or give to potential recruits. Some effective ways of marketing are producing informational pamphlets that highlight the following:
 - Letter of introduction including compelling reasons why Downtown Tiffin makes economic sense for a particular store.



Examples of professional marketing and promotional brochures specifically focused on retail.

competing resources should be examined. This does not mean that Downtown has to provide the similar kind of shops as in other surrounding City and their Downtowns; rather create niche retail within the Downtown and cater to its strengths. Generate mailings on a regular basis to tenant prospects identified through the above efforts. Each mailing could, for example, focus on a different feature or benefit of locating in Downtown Tiffin. These mailings could range from postcards to videotapes or incentive gifts.

- Promotional opportunities and strategies on the Internet should be pursued by the Tiffin Tomorrow action group, Chamber and potential Main Street. The current Chamber website should be utilized for promotional and related activities. Those most likely to be affected will be convenient and price driven commodities. The website should be maintained and upgraded to enhance the vision of the Strategic Plan.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE: D-1 UPDATE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND DOCUMENTATION

STRATEGIES

It is recommended to update zoning district language and introduce overlay districts, as necessary, for efficient enforcement and administration based on the Downtown strategic plan. To apply the tenets of mixed use development with first floor retail and upper floor office and residential spaces, appropriate zoning text should be in place for lots within Downtown, specifically in the core area. For interior lots zoning should regulate placement of strategic infill buildings and public parking spaces. Such parking spaces should be combined within one block area and should direct consolidation of access.

ACTION TASKS

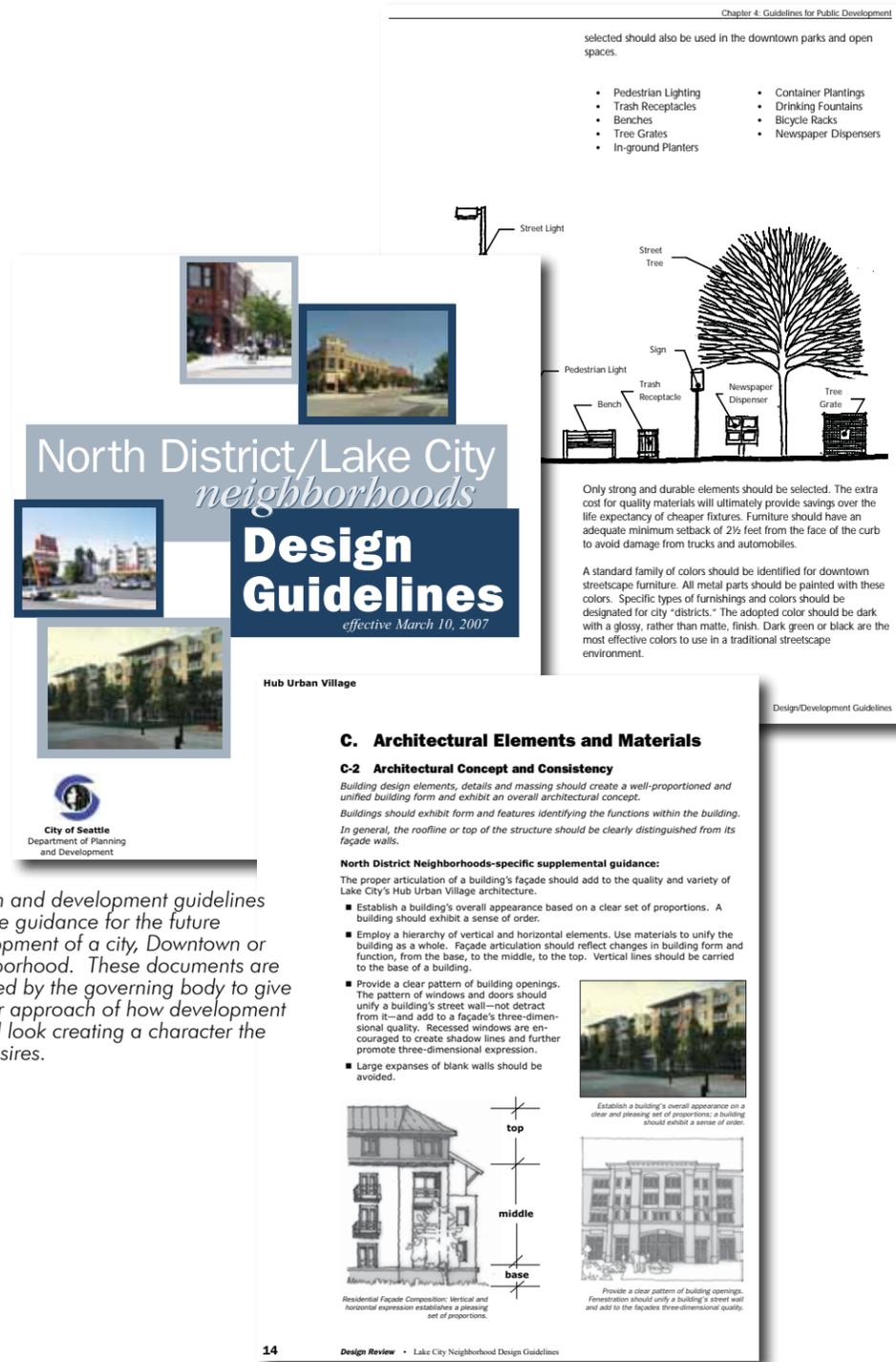
- The City of Tiffin zoning ordinance should be modified and such modification should follow the urban design concepts and urban design guidelines.
- For better guidance, appropriate consultants should be employed by the City to help in the drafting of the modified zoning resolution.
- It is recommended to have stricter enforcement, administration and policing actions by the City not only to have better maintenance and upkeep but also for accurate realization of the goals of the Downtown strategic plan and the updated zoning and other regulatory framework.
- All new construction/redevelopment applications in the Downtown area should include landscaping plans to implement the vision of the strategic plan. Such requirements are recommended to be included in the revisions of the zoning ordinance.
- Plan Downtown clean-up events once a month with the help of the Tiffin Tomorrow action groups, volunteers, business/property owners and involve students and staff from the schools and universities to instill Tiffin pride. Also encourage Downtown property and business owners for maintenance and upkeep of their storefronts. This can be accomplished through Downtown promotional events and educational programs.
- Adopt a Property Maintenance Code to provide both the property owners within Downtown Tiffin and City of Tiffin officials some guidelines of ways to maintain properties. For more information refer: International Code Council website (<http://www.iccsafe.org/>)
- Property owners should be encouraged to keep upper floor windows clean and free of debris and add blinds to dramatically reduce the appearance of vacancy. Empty (vacant) first floor storefronts should be active, containing marketing schemes for potential merchants.

OBJECTIVE: D-2 ESTABLISH DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

STRATEGIES

Infill development and redevelopment is recommended to create the distinct character which will complement the existing structures in the Downtown area. Redevelopment of the Downtown area should create an environment that is inviting and walkable. There should be mixed-uses within buildings to create strong synergy of multiple uses with 24-hour activity. Development guidelines should include but not limited to location of buildings, setback, height, size, color, landscaping and parking requirements. The guidelines should be crafted in a way to preserve historic features while allowing commercial building owners to creatively market their properties. The following items will provide some basics on design and development guidelines. Some aspects of the design guidelines are mentioned below:

- Building Design and Placement:** Redevelopment of existing buildings and development of infill buildings should be designed to follow an overall strategic direction. Buildings should be oriented toward their primary street. Scale, massing, and size should be compatible with adjacent structures. Site planning standards should be adopted that will eliminate or provide context-sensitive building setback requirements within Downtown that break-up the integrity of the street wall and introduce an inappropriate suburban condition. Pedestrian friendly features (awnings, canopies and display windows) should be incorporated on the first floor of the buildings and entrances to help relate the buildings to the streetscape.
- Building Height:** Varied building heights are recommended to properly frame the streets and provide massing consistent with the existing scale of the streetscape. Buildings should step back from the street



Design and development guidelines provide guidance for the future development of a city, Downtown or neighborhood. These documents are adopted by the governing body to give a clear approach of how development should look creating a character the city desires.

at the higher stories, specifically above three stories, to preserve the scale of the surrounding buildings and pedestrian focus.

- **Public Open Space:** Opportunities should be created for integrating public plazas and open spaces as a part of redevelopment, when appropriate. This will include small plazas on individual sites which will not only provide recreation but will also help to establish the pedestrian connection between surrounding neighborhoods. It is also recommended to redevelop existing public parks with active recreational elements as exhibited in the urban design concepts.
- **Identity and Wayfinding:** A coordinated system of public and private signs, as exhibited in the urban design concepts, will uniquely identify and direct visitors within and around the Downtown area. Signs will complement the City's established signage regulations.
- **Circulation:** Improvements to streets and intersections highlighted in the master plan concepts will help to increase visibility to the storefronts, improve safety for vehicles and pedestrians and ensure proper access to businesses and residences.
- **Parking:** Parking needs to be provided more efficiently than the current configuration of disjointed surface parking lots. More effective use of shared parking facilities will allow for redevelopment that is more pedestrian oriented and less dominated by parking lots. Redevelopment should also incorporate multi-level parking structures and maximize the use of on-street parking throughout the Downtown area.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Public works such as replacement of traffic lights with mast arms and relocation of streetlight conductor underground in the Downtown area will help augment the revitalized character. Design directives should also be provided for other infrastructure elements

including water, sewer and storm water. A public-private partnership is essential to achieve the goals of the strategic plan.

ACTION TASKS

- It is recommended that the design and development guidelines should be developed by urban planning consultant/designer who would work with the Tiffin Tomorrow Committee, City of Tiffin, Chamber President and Main Street Manager.
- Flexible and incentive/bonus based design standards should encourage the tenants and property owners to maintain a positive image of the Downtown area. Such design development standards should be followed and new applications should be carefully reviewed by the City and existing boards such as the Historic Design Review Board.
- These design standards are recommended to be developed further into a Downtown Area form-based code for detailed design directives for both the property owners and business owners. Development of the form-based codes, if and when applicable, is recommended to be developed by appropriate professional consultants. The codes will address the following in a more detailed manner:
 - Lot configurations and setback requirements
 - Buildings (height and color)
 - Parking
 - Mixed use architectural requirements (front façade, windows and doors, roof design, building materials, awnings, corner building design etc.),
 - Single family and town home design requirements
 - Streetscape design requirements (sidewalks, street trees/planters, street lights, alleys, street furniture, bicycle facilities etc.)

OBJECTIVE:
D-3 EXPAND THE HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION AND UTILIZE SPECIFIC HISTORIC REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS

STRATEGIES

Downtown Tiffin currently contains an overlay historic district designation within which any new construction and redevelopment is reviewed by the Historic Design Review Board for compliance with the associated guidelines. Expansion of the district would provide additional area within Downtown to be reviewed for appropriate compliance promoting a harmonized character. Different historic redevelopment toolkits should also be utilized.

ACTION TASKS

- Define a target area for expanded Historic District within Downtown areas. The overall goal of the historic district is to preserve the architectural design elements that give Downtown Tiffin its character. An architectural survey should be completed to assess the physical and social significance of all the buildings within the district to establish an expanded Historic District. This procedure will outline an area that will be the focus of heightened design review procedures. A rating system should be developed to evaluate the current condition of buildings, its heritage, preservation initiatives and current tenancing. Please refer to the "Urban Audit" conducted by the planning and design team that will provide directions to conduct this assessment for the entire Downtown areas. The assessment should include but not be limited to the following:
 - Value-Quality of construction, age, architectural style etc. based on the Downtown Tiffin character
 - Building Condition-Whether the building is new and/ or maintained or needs repair



Examples of a Facade Enhancement Program at work in Harrisonburg, Virginia.
 Façade enhancement programs can substantially improve the appearance of Downtown buildings and helps to enhance overall environment.



Example of creative treatment of vacant storefront from Franklin, Tennessee
 Promotional and public informational materials reduce the appearance of vacancy and encourage pedestrian activity

- Tenanting-Whether the building and/or floors of buildings are vacant, appropriate tenants based on the characters etc.
- The assessment will help in decision making with respect to façade improvements, tenant relocation, retention and recruitment, maintenance and redevelopment of buildings.
- Prepare and submit an application to the appropriate federal authorities for historic district designation expansion. Buildings within the district that could be considered historic should not be removed or replaced without a careful and complete building survey by a qualified historic reuse professional. Indiscriminate destruction may overlook adaptive reuse possibilities, harm the historic character of Downtown Tiffin. Any new structures should complement and enforce the historic architectural character of Downtown. Add additional historic structures to extend the existing historic district.
 - The Tiffin Tomorrow action group should explore possibilities of the City of Tiffin to participate in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. As a CLG, the City will be eligible to apply for federal matching grants for preservation activities. Additional information is available at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg>.
 - Establish a “Historic Easement Program” for Downtown Tiffin area to protect the intrinsic value of historically and architecturally significant buildings, settings, and scenic and natural resources and enable historic property owners to obtain a substantial tax deduction on their easement contribution. An entire historic structure or just the facade or interior may qualify. Once recorded, an easement becomes part of the property’s chain of title and usually “runs with the land” in perpetuity, thus binding not only the owner who grants the easement but all future owners as well. Additional information can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/history/>

[hps/tps/tax/easement.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/easement.htm). A directory of historic preservation easement holding organizations can be referenced from <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/download/easements.pdf>.

- The Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee in consultation with Chamber President/Main Street Manager should create a package of incentives, strict code enforcement and assistance programs for Downtown property owners. Property owners and developers often perceive that preservation is too expensive, especially in comparison to new construction. In actuality when historic preservation methods are properly understood and applied, such developments can actually cost less and earn a higher rate of return than new construction. It capitalizes on over-looked and underutilized assets, encourages imagination, sharpening of entrepreneurial skills, and strong participation by the private sector.
- Implement a “Facade Enhancement Program” sponsored by the Chamber/Main Street. This would be an excellent way to achieve dramatic improvements in Downtown’s appearance at relatively low cost. In some communities, grants are made available to a select number of property and these grants will cover fifty percent of the cost of the enhancement up to a fixed dollar amount of a few thousand dollars per facade. It is a way to address such situations as covered over or painted facades and windows, holes from old signs, unattractive signage, etc.
- Involve existing historic design review board. Establish standards and extend the review process to Downtown properties that supports a positive, cooperative redevelopment process. The design standards can be broken up into two broad concepts: a) maximum retention of historic building materials, and b) avoiding the creation of a false historic appearance. The review goals would be to achieve an appropriate balance between historic and aesthetic considerations and

the economic realities facing property owners and developers. Also the design and development guidelines should assist the Historic Design Review Board to assess development/redevelopment plans in the light of the visions of the Strategic Plan.

OBJECTIVE:
D-4 ENHANCE STREETScape AND PUBLIC REALM SPACES WITHIN DOWNTOWN AREAS

STRATEGIES

To provide a welcoming appearance to visitors, shoppers, residents, students and staff, it is important that Downtown areas are not only well maintained with regular clean-up but it is also recommended to enhance the public realm spaces and streetscape features. Inviting public open spaces within the built form provides the relief within the urban framework. Presence of public amenities, appropriate lighting, other streetscape elements, improved storefronts, proper signage and wayfinding elements will help to instill an environment of safety and will generate confidence within shoppers and visitors to frequent Downtown.

Downtown Tiffin is poised to thrive from the enhanced connectivity between the college-university campuses that will call for diversity of uses and retail offerings. Physical linkages such as streetscape, trails, bikeways and green space promote alternative transportation to connect Downtown and the universities. Opportunity prevails for creation of gateways into the Downtown across the Sandusky River. Additional linear park spaces and recreational opportunities lined with retail/restaurant offerings based on the market needs will create yet another stronghold for sustainability of Downtown core. Along with entertainment offerings to enhance connectivity, the extension of higher learning uses to Downtown would promote an intermix of those with the universities and the rest of the community. This could be off-campus classrooms or labs, housing, bookstore or a conference center



Development of inviting streetscape features including sidewalk cafes, provide improved identity and increases pedestrian activity.



Opportunity to implement sustainable approaches by using rain gardens to help with stormwater runoff from streets.

to bring students Downtown. It will also help to increase the interaction of the students, professors, staff and resident population surrounding the institutions into the Downtown area.

ACTION TASKS

- Enhance existing streetscape within Downtown with the following measures.

- Addition of planters – To soften the streetscape, planters are recommended along with tree lawns within the limited right-of-way currently existing on main thoroughfares of Washington, Market, Perry Monroe and Jefferson streets.

- Increase efforts to manage trees near storefronts – Addition of tree lawns is recommended along the cross streets. New trees should be placed near building edges and old ones should be pruned to prevent the storefront from being blocked.

- Establish new streetscape design standards for the future - New streetscape design standards should be established incorporating trees, planters, banners, appropriate lighting and street furniture as recommended in the strategic plan concepts. Implementation policies should be discussed with City departments and the Tiffin Tomorrow committee.

- Sustainable streetscape elements should be explored, including:

- Rain gardens and rain water harvesting
- Permeable and recycled pavers (light colors to reduce heat island effect)
- Optimum amount of trees and green spaces to reduce heat island
- Solar powered accent lighting
- Recycled materials for street furnishings
- Local materials to reduce transportation cost
- Energy star related fixtures

- Maintenance of the streetscape elements should be funded by the City for the initial term until the responsibility is handed over to a Special Improvement District, potentially after three years of the initiation of the revitalization process.

- A public art program should be instituted within the Downtown area that showcases the heritage and art-oriented culture of Tiffin.

- Increase storefront activity through implementation of outside dining in front of restaurants within Downtown areas.

- Create a strong sense of identification and entry into the Downtown Tiffin. Clear and attractive signage should be installed in appropriate locations to direct visitors to destinations including buildings and public parking areas. A comprehensive vehicular and pedestrian directional/ wayfinding system with a sign schedule defining exact locations and a list of destinations and attractions should be developed and implemented. The signage system should be respectful of the character and heritage of Tiffin. Please refer to the signage and wayfinding concepts as developed within this strategic plan for additional guidance. Additional signage located in the public parking areas should clearly explain the zoned parking policy.

- Upgrade and sign the major entrances leading into Downtown Tiffin. A gateway image should be developed using a combination of signage, landscaping, and architectural elements. Signage should be designed as part of the recommended comprehensive directional/wayfinding program.

- It is recommended to create an illustrative map of Downtown Tiffin (central business district) and post it at strategic locations along with signage/ wayfinding elements for reference by consumers, customers and visitors to the district. The maps should reflect the broad uses and/or shops (retail

mix), parking and miscellaneous amenities to guide pedestrians to their destinations with reference to “You are Here” designations based on the location of a specific map within the Downtown areas.

- A comprehensive streetscape master plan and signage wayfinding program should be developed with an urban design consultant and environmental graphic designer who would work with the City of Tiffin, Engineering Department and the Ohio Department of Transportation. The proposed streetscape master plan and graphic signage & wayfinding program should be developed along the preliminary design thoughts as developed during this Strategic Plan initiative and as exhibited the Master Plan section.

- As the City of Tiffin prepares capital improvement plans in the coming years, every effort should be taken to convert one-way pair street system to a two-way traffic system. Research supports the theory that two-way traffic pattern promotes more sustainable retail development as well as ease of circulation resulting in traffic calming and management.

- Explore opportunities to creatively engage the riverfront with the Downtown areas. Although the existing floodwall is serving the needs for flood protection, but it is recommended to seek opportunities to create setbacks with incorporation of specific elements including steps, public walkways, murals on floodwalls, etc. at specific locations to encourage activities along the river.

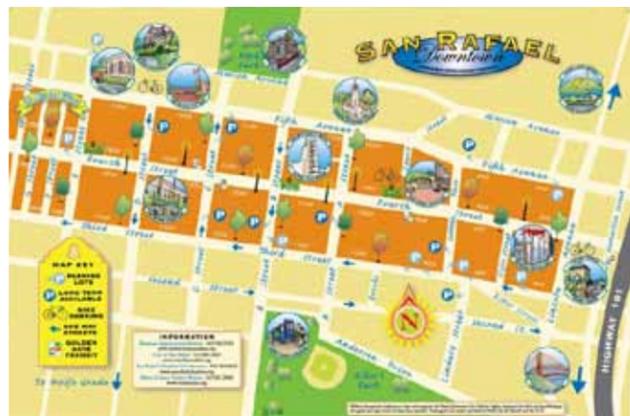
- The existing bridges act as gateways into Downtown. Opportunities should be explored to celebrate the bridges with gateway elements, lighting, and other elements as may be necessary to highlight them. This effort is recommended to be discussed during the subsequent signage and wayfinding initiative.

- It is recommended to seek opportunities to connect Tiffin and Heidelberg University to



Bridge in Hamilton, Ohio.

Celebrate bridges as gateway into Downtown.



Downtown San Rafael, California map provides visitors easy directions to attractions and parking.



Provision of Downtown-wide WI-FI access helps to generate excitement and bring in additional customers

Downtown through improved streetscape, bikepaths, pedestrian trails, etc. On-going improvements should be taken into account while visioning and designing for the enhanced connectivity approach and should be led by the Tiffin Tomorrow action group, the City and the institutional stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE:
D-5 PROMOTE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN DOWNTOWN AREAS

STRATEGIES

The recommended development directions according to the strategic plan are anticipated to create additional demand for public infrastructure. The goal for infrastructure improvements is to maintain the inventory listing of the items, develop and maintain the infrastructure plan. The City currently maintains the infrastructure utilities according to existing capital improvements plan. The strategies for inventory, upgrade and maintenance should be further discussed and detailed out by the City Engineer in conjunction with the County Engineer, the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee and other responsible stakeholder organizations.

ACTION TASKS

- Develop and maintain the existing Capital Improvements Plan which includes the infrastructure and facilities requirements needed to support the Downtown Strategic Plan.
- Review level of service standards and identify service deficiencies in Downtown’s infrastructure, including road, sidewalk, water, sewer, school, public safety and recreational facility systems.
- Commit sufficient City resources to properly plan, maintain, rehabilitate and expand the infrastructure and facilities to satisfy the demands of the Downtown’s future.

- Maintain an accurate and complete inventory of roads, sidewalks, sewer, water, storm water, electric and other existing utility infrastructure in the Downtown area for reference in any future repair and maintenance programs.
- Identify and prioritize all of Downtown’s capital improvement requirements and capital funding opportunities; annually budget capital projects consistent with this plan.
- Establish a useful life for each of the capital investments and program their replacement or rehabilitation accordingly.
- Revise the capital improvement process to budget annually for phased implementation process and reports on project feasibility, site evaluation, concept plans, designs and cost estimates for construction and operation for major capital projects.
- Detailed feasibility analysis should be performed on a site-by-site basis with respect to infrastructure improvements related to new development/ redevelopment that will include parking, water, sewer, electric, lighting, and storm water drainage. It is recommended to relocate the electric power conduits underground along with other utility infrastructure lines along the major road corridor in Downtown area in addition to the already relocated sections. Additionally, research should be performed to explore the feasibility of installing fiber-optic system in the Washington Street corridor to support WI-FI concept that can be available to be used in the public plazas and Downtown stores including café, bistros, restaurants etc.
- Develop a financial plan to fund the capital plan identifying funding levels and sources proposed to fund the plan:
 - This can include grants, impact fees, property taxes, bond proceeds etc.
 - Additional sources of funding may be through Ohio Department of Transportation, Public Utilities

Commission of Ohio and other state and federal agencies specifically for road and public infrastructure maintenance programs.

- Efforts should be made to connect to the existing bikepath along the Sandusky River. Opportunities to create public amenities such as bike hub stations with parking lots, restrooms and bike racks should be explored. The revitalization efforts should build strength with the connection of the bike path system. Available grants from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources should be explored for eligibility for such improvements. (ODNR Grant Information Site: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/grants/tabid/10762/Default.aspx>)
- Fundraising and sponsorship opportunities provide for generous ways to collect funds to be earmarked for special projects in the Downtown. Purchase of personalized brick pavers used in public plazas, park bench plaques, public art, naming rights program for plaza or park area or special events held in the Downtown are examples of fundraising techniques. All funds should be reinvested into the Downtown area for tree plantings, bench purchases, patio installations etc. Setup of a revolving fund for revitalization efforts is recommended.
- Opportunity for a bus transit hub should be explored based on the demand for such need. Cost estimates, routing, corporate interest and public funding potential should be evaluated. Transit stops and other related amenities should be provided in such case. Seneca County Agency Transportation (SCAT) currently operates a transit route based on demand and on call. This program should be extended to a Downtown circulator that connects the universities with the Downtown.



Opportunities should be explored to extend the current bikepath system and integrate with existing bikepath/trail infrastructure.



An example of a redeveloped alleyway inviting to both pedestrians and cars.



Opportunities should be explored to locate a transit hub along with potential extension of library.

Subsequent phases should include transit to neighborhoods based on demand and finally connection with regional systems.

- Parking meters along Washington, Perry, Market, Jefferson and Monroe should be used effectively both for efficient time limited spots for customers and also for collection of money to be used as a fund to help recover operating and construction costs of parking structures, which are proposed once the development density supports such use. The parking meters that are available on the above-mentioned streets should be used for short term parking and clear directional signage should direct visitors and workers to long-term parking lots that are and will be located behind the buildings with access from alleys. Some percentage of fees collected from meters can also be channeled into the revolving account devoted to revitalization efforts of the Downtown area.
- A parking consultant is recommended to perform a detailed parking analysis. Alternatively the appropriate staffing should be appointed to perform such analysis. The analysis will provide for required parking counts for the entire Downtown area and subsequent recommendations for number of on-street parking, consolidated parking behind Downtown commercial buildings etc. As the density of development grows, a parking structure is recommended to meet the needs of the consumers, visitors and business owners alike.
- To make the option of parking at the rear of buildings more appealing, consideration and support should be given to enhancing the appearance of the back sides of buildings visible from these lots and upgrading the alleys. Efforts should also be made to combine the parking areas for multiple buildings along one block and consolidating access to reduce confusion and traffic congestion.
- It is recommended that the alleys be upgraded to include landscaping, seating areas, pocket parks, specialty lighting and

many other features to make it a safe and appealing environment for pedestrians. These improvements can help play a major role strengthening the link between shoppers and merchants, as well as help generate increasing sustainability to the district.

- Tax increment financing is recommended to be implemented as a mechanism to provide a funding source for public infrastructure improvements. As discussed under O-5, TIF is a tool that allows use of future gains in taxes to finance the current improvements that will create those gains. Alternatively, the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee, the City and other appropriate agencies personnel should continue to review the fiscal capability to meet infrastructure expansion needs and impose impact fees if it finds that its fiscal capability has been exceeded.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

E-1 RETAIN AND STRENGTHEN EXISTING RETAIL/COMMERCIAL/OFFICE/ HOUSING USES

STRATEGIES

The presence of a large number of college/ university towns within and around Tiffin opens up potential for serving the needs of college/ university students, staff and faculty. Downtown Tiffin destinations such as the Ritz Theater, Library and other office/retail/commercial establishments serve an important purpose of bringing consumers/customers into the Downtown area that could then be introduced to Downtown retail establishments. It requires buy-in to the vision of the Downtown Strategic Plan by political leadership and stakeholders and providing for retail/commercial/ housing needs based on the vision. It also means facade improvement, maintenance

and upkeep of great historic building stock, upgrade of existing shops and recruiting new establishments to cater to a wide array of the market segments. There is opportunity to build upon the existing retail establishments and find a niche retail market to serve the residents of Tiffin and surrounding communities.

ACTION TASKS

- The “urban audit” enclosed in the appendix section, provides preliminary analysis about the Downtown properties, owners, tenants and other relevant information. Those charts are recommended to be referred and further developed (addition of building, lot area, transfer history and tax information) during the implementation process for proper business retention and recruitment strategies. Floor area information, when added, will be relevant to either existing tenants or potential businesses in evaluating their respective needs for doing their business or expansion of store area to cater to greater demands.
- A comprehensive business retention program will not only help to reposition existing and future businesses in the Downtown Tiffin area but also provide critical tools to give existing businesses more confidence in making expansion decisions, providing extra profit margin, and creating a safety net for newly recruited business. The following tasks, as highlighted by the Main Street News Vol. 193, should be followed and developed upon for better business retention program:
 - Establish a business retention team: A business retention sub-committee should be created under the guidance of the Tiffin Tomorrow action group, SIEDC, Chamber and the potential Main Street Manager and will have the primary responsibility for developing appropriate retention strategies and activities related to business assistance.



Strong and welcoming retailers and businesses are vital to the livelihood of Downtown providing residents and visitors with the services that they need.

- Knowing the market: To help the Downtown businesses become more market savvy and niche-oriented, the retention team needs to know about the following:
 - + Type of business, location, complementary uses, business clusters and profile of owners
 - + Basic demographic and psychographic information (such as the market analysis charts included in the appendix), where customers reside, access to Downtown and how information is being received by customers
 - + Trade area maps, analysis of competition, Downtown's current retail sales capture, potential retail sales, surplus and leakage
 - + Current trends and market opportunities, impact of state, regional and national economic factors and other indicators
- Create market positioning statement and market-driven strategies: Market positioning statement and retail mix recommendations should be followed from the recommendations of the Downtown Strategic Plan.
- Identify key businesses: Businesses should be identified which help create the street life, pedestrian traffic, and sense of vitality that are hallmarks of a successful commercial business district. Strategies should be shared within the retention committee and successful business owners to help other businesses sustain and grow. Refer to the Section: Potential Uses for additional information.
- Offer needed business assistance: One of the retention team's primary responsibilities is to determine what services individual businesses need and match them with the appropriate resources. The typical resources include store presentation and window display, merchandise selection and presentation, locating buying groups, developing/changing business plan according to current needs, accounting and record keeping, compliance with local, state and federal regulations, inventory control, computer usage and website development, personnel management and training, improving advertising and promotion, identifying and capturing new markets and planning for business expansion.
- Promote Downtown businesses to targeted markets: The retention team needs to work with the promotion committee to ensure Downtown's promotional activities are driven by market positioning strategies. Progressive and participatory retail events such as gallery walk, cooking demonstrations should be coordinated with live music and food with collaboration from Downtown restaurants and local musicians.
- Help businesses identify and develop opportunities for growth and expansion: The following are some typical recommendations-attracting more customers from same market niche, building repeat customer base, motivating existing customers to spend more, identifying new markets for current product lines, adding new product lines or services to capture a wider market range, repositioning the business by changing its image and product mix to capture new markets, expanding existing space or relocation within Downtown Tiffin, opening under one ownership "companion" shops that support each other.
- Recognize early warning signs of business failure: A struggling business should be identified by the retention team for strategic repositioning and/or changing products and/or services. Such signs may include low inventory, poor interior and exterior maintenance, slow payment and other banker's records.
- Plan for business transition: The retention team's role in the business transition can vary according to situation, including:
 - + Serving as a liaison between business owner and potential buyer/broker
 - + Identifying potential buyers
 - + Developing financial incentives for purchase
 - + Helping set-up employee buy-in
 - + Providing information and resources to business owners
 - + Helping with marketing and working with media on advertising and public relations during the transition.
- Support Downtown businesses personally: Becoming active participants in the Downtown marketplace by the SIEDC, Chamber, the City officials and staff, and the retention team will provide additional opportunities for visual monitoring, keep communication channels open, and builds relationship that are tangible but essential key to successful business retention efforts.
- A series of seminars could be offered to Downtown merchants dealing with such topics as visual merchandising, window displays, customer service, marketing and promotions, inventory control, etc. These seminars could be supplemented with individual consultation and support services such as design assistance and a micro-loan program for businesses that wish to invest in maintaining and enhancing the viability of their operations.



The addition of “Tiffin Appropriate” retail can fill in the voids that are needed by Tiffin residents. New retail in Downtown could be small clothing shops and restaurants that are appropriate for a small Downtown. Leave the big box and national name plates for the outskirts of the City.

- Add appropriate new retail through a collaborative approach within SIEDC, the Chamber and the City. These organizations can assist in the promotion, marketing and recruitment of new and appropriate retail according to the vision of the Downtown Strategic Plan.

OBJECTIVE:
E-2 ADD APPROPRIATE NEW RETAIL AND OTHER DOWNTOWN USES

STRATEGIES

As the implementation of the strategic plan is underway, concentrated efforts should be focused not only on retention of existing businesses but also addition of appropriate uses in the Downtown vacant spaces/locations. This initiative should be initiated through efforts of SIEDC and Chamber and later assisted by the potential Main Street Manager. These organizations can assist in the promotion, marketing and recruitment of new and appropriate retail according to the vision of the Downtown Strategic Plan. Retail recruitment should follow the “niche” retail strategies as highlighted in this Strategic Plan initiative. Regardless of the store type, successful Downtown Tiffin merchants will offer superior customer service and product knowledge, unique specialty items, convenience, a pleasant atmosphere, and support for community causes.

ACTION TASKS

- Adjacent communities should be researched to explore prospective successful retailers who might be interested in and capable of opening additional locations, specifically in the context of Downtown Tiffin. The marketing information, Downtown character visions and database of promotional campaign should be used to this purpose.
- To the extent possible, concentrate retail on the first floor and keep it contiguous

as recommended by the character of the Downtown area (primary core area and secondary area). Retail uses spread all over the Downtown dilute the impact and image of Downtown as a place to shop, eat, and relax. First priority should be given to filling first floor space in the buildings located in the retail concentrated area.

- Also, a clustering policy should be implemented in locating retail such as book store with music store and coffee shop etc. Another example can be in the form of a cluster of uses such as entertainment venues along with restaurants, ice-cream shop etc.



Key anchors such as Decker's, The Ritz Theater, Burns Electric and the Government Annex help bring people to the Downtown.



Potential Tenant Mixes and Opportunities

As the downtown Tiffin area seeks to optimize its tenant mix, it is important that a strategic and opportunistic approach be taken in filling any vacancies that arise over the coming years. This will require a targeted retail recruitment program that is aligned with the long term vision for the area. The current anchors and their strengths should be leveraged for potential retail recruitment and development of the tenant mix.

The current downtown anchors include the following:

- Ralph's Joy of Living
- Burns Electric
- Reno's
- Clover Club
- Decker's Furniture
- Crystal Traditions
- Ritz Theater
- Government Center
- Library
- Churches
- Glass Museum

These anchors help to bring in customers, visitors, shoppers and residents within downtown areas. Opportunities should be explored to provide additional options to these shoppers and visitors. Based on these principles, a variety of retail categories have been identified for recruitment.

Uses Desired

- Internet café/coffee house
- "Tiffin Bake Shop"-quality bakery needed
- Diner (Micro-brewery, pool, barbecue)
- Health Food-Organic Food
- Tiffin Nutrition Center
- Day Spa/Higher end salon
- University Bookstore
- Specialty Grocery (or individual shops-beer/wine, pre-prepared)
- Produce
- Meats and Seafood ("Surf and Turf")
- Bakery
- Farmer's Market
- B&B's/Historic Inn
- "Casual Elegance" Restaurants
- Urban Outfitters (Steve and Barry's Type)
- Art Galleries/Art Supply/Gifts/Antiques ("Tiffin Art Guild")
- Special/Seasonal
- Costumes
- Christmas
- Urban Gardener ("Rogers Flowers")
- Specialty Hardware (Restoration Hardware type)
- Home/Technology Retailers ("Deckers")
- Music/Instruments
- Quality Crafts

Funding Sources

In order to capitalize on current interest and momentum, this plan should be actively used in the recruitment of potential private developers and investors. These potential development partners should receive assistance in gaining an understanding of the benefits of public / private partnering. Strategies that reduce risk to private investors are key to successful redevelopment. Project financing and programs that support start-up business are key inducements.

The potential funding sources should be researched by the Chamber President in coordination with City and County to check the eligibility and applicability for downtown projects. Also it is recommended to form a delegation group from the "Tiffin Tomorrow" Steering Committee, the City, the County, SIEDC, the Chamber and interested stakeholders to contact and present to local, State and Federal officials regarding the visions of downtown Tiffin based on the Strategic Planning initiative. This will assist to spread the word about the excitement generated within the community and its eagerness to follow-up on the visions for the enhanced downtown and the community as a whole. Also this will assist in garnering potential funding sources and subsequent allocations for different opportunities.

Potential sources of investment and business development funding include the following:

1. Tax Incentives for Historic Preservation

The Historic Preservation Tax Incentives reward private investment in rehabilitating historic properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. Current tax incentives for preservation include:

(1) Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit

The Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit (OHPTC) program provides a tax credit for the rehabilitation expenses to owners of historically significant buildings. The tax credit subsidy is 25% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures (QRE: QRE are hard construction costs that meet the requirements of the US Secretary of

Interior's standards for rehabilitation of Historic Properties)

(2) Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit

Federal tax law offers a 20% tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, and a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic buildings built before 1936. The credits are dollar-for-dollar reductions of taxes owed. The 20% rehabilitation investment tax credit equals 20% of qualified expenditures in a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure.

For more information on tax credit programs, refer:

<http://www.ohiohistory.org/resource/histpres/yourtown/tax/>

<http://www.development.ohio.gov/edd/OHPTC/>

All tax incentive programs, applicable to Main Street area, are administered by:

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

Ohio Historical Society

567 E. Hudson Street

Columbus, Ohio 43211-1030

Telephone: (614) 298-2000

Fax: (614) 298-2037

E-mail: ohpo@ohiohistory.org

2. Housing Development Incentives

2.1. Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

Tax credit available over a 10-year period. Available to developers of rental projects who reserve a set percentage of units for low-income persons over a minimum 15 year term. Additional information may be obtained through U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (<http://www.huduser.org/datasets/lihtc.html>)

2.2. HUD Programs

Home Grants - New Construction & Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing

Hope VI Grants - Funds for redevelopment of existing public housing

Section 202 Financing - Low income senior housing

Home Investment Partnership Program Information regarding all of the above grants can be researched at the website of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at (<http://www.hud.gov/>).

3. Commercial Development Incentives

3.1. Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) loans

This is intended to encourage depository institutions to help meet the credit needs of the communities in which they operate, including low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, consistent with safe and sound banking operations. For additional information, eligibility and guidelines refer to (<http://www.ffiec.gov/cra/default.htm>).

3.2. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

It is a redevelopment tool TIF to use future gains in taxes to finance the current improvements that will create those gains. Refer Objective O-5 for additional explanation.

3.3. Special Improvement District (SID)

SID's are special assessment districts designed to direct revenues to a variety of supportive services including security, maintenance, marketing, economic development, parking, and special events. Refer Objective O-3 for additional information.

3.4. Emergency Building Repair Assistance

- A program of assistance for emergency repairs to existing buildings would help to prevent further deterioration. Some combination of strict code enforcement and financial assistance or incentives should be put in place to address this situation.

3.5. Establish a storefront renovation program

- The objective of this program is to rehabilitate and upgrade Main Street commercial/retail buildings. The program is designed to offer property and business owners low-interest loans or grants,

and personalized design and technical assistance.

3.6. Low Interest Loans – Local financial institutions could be approached to jointly create a low interest loan pool for building stabilization, facade enhancement, and even redevelopment and new construction projects located in the Main Street area.

4. The following funding programs are administered by the Ohio Department of Development

77 South High Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215-6130

P. O. Box address: Box 1001,

Columbus, Ohio 43216-1001

1-800-848-1300

For additional information, refer to the website address beside respective programs.

4.1. Ohio Enterprise Zone Programs

It is for local and state tax incentives for businesses that expand or locate in Ohio. Local guidelines regulate the type of business and investment eligible for incentive. (<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/edd/ez/>)

4.2. Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit Program (JCTC)

The program provides a refundable tax credit against a company's corporate franchise or income tax based on the state income tax withheld from new, full-time employees. (<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/EDD/jctc/>)

4.3. Business Incentives Loans and Grants (http://www.odod.state.oh.us/EDD/Loans_Grants.htm)

4.4. Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund

Provides loans for land and building acquisition, construction, expansion or renovation and equipment purchases for eligible businesses.

4.5. 166 Direct Loan

Provides loans for land and building acquisition, expansion or renovation, and equipment purchase.

4.6. Regional 166 Direct Loans

Provides loans for land and building acquisition, construction, expansion or renovation and equipment purchases for eligible businesses. Twelve local economic development agencies administer the program.

4.7. Urban Redevelopment Loan

Removes development barriers from urban core property so that private sector job opportunities can be created.

4.8. Economic Development Program

The Economic Development Program provides funds to units of local government to provide gap financing for local business development. Except for local infrastructure needs, Economic Development Program funds are repaid to the local community's Revolving Loan Fund to provide funding for additional business assistance activities. (<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/ohcp/edp1.htm>)

Comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Program

The Community Development Program provides funding to Ohio's non-entitlement counties and cities for housing rehabilitation, economic development and public works improvements that meet federal and state objectives to benefit low- and moderate-income persons and/or eliminate blighted areas.

For additional information refer to <http://www.development.ohio.gov/cdd/ohcp/cdp.htm>

Microenterprise Business Development Program

The Microenterprise Business Development Program provides grants to eligible cities and counties and nonprofit organizations to assist in the development of local

microenterprise businesses and to create and retain long-term jobs in the private sector. Microenterprises are defined as for-profit entities with five or fewer employees, one of whom owns the business.

4.9. Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund

The Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund is a key financial component to help a community build economic capacity by providing funding for brownfield redevelopment. Brownfield redevelopment allows a community to reclaim and improve its lands, making property viable for new development. (<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/ud/>)

5. The following funding programs are administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration

SBA provides a number of financial assistance programs for small businesses.

5.1. CDC/504 Loans

The CDC/504 loan program is a long-term financing tool for economic development within a community. The 504 Program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. (<http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/sbaloantopics/cdc504/index.html>)

5.2. Basic 7(a) Loan Program

(<http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/sbaloantopics/7a/index.html>)

5.3. Micro Loan Program

The Micro loan Program provides very small loans to start-up, newly established, or growing small business concerns. (<http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/sbaloantopics/microloans/index.html>)

6. The following funding programs are administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation

These funds provide for transportation related projects.

Local Transportation Improvement (LTIP) Funds

State Infrastructure Bank

SAFETEA-LU

7. The following funding program is administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Nature Works Grants

The NatureWorks grant program provides up to 75% reimbursement assistance for local government subdivisions (townships, villages, cities, counties, park districts, joint recreation districts, and conservancy districts) to for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of recreational areas. (<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/tabid/11089/default.aspx>)

Also, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City should be referenced for additional funding opportunities for parks, bikeways and recreation-oriented use.

The National Trust Community Investment Corporation (NTCIC) makes equity investments in real estate projects that qualify for federal historic tax credits and when available, state historic and New Markets Tax Credits. NTCIC works with a wide variety of property owners including for-profit developers, nonprofit organizations and local governments. Its focus is on projects that have a strong economic revitalization impact on the surrounding community.

8. The following funding program is administered by the State of Ohio under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Implementation

Short Term Goals
Catalytic Projects
Public and Private
Development
Opportunities
Implementation
Matrix



Implementation Matrix

The Downtown Strategic Plan is the beginning of a process through which a public-private partnership is created in the ongoing revitalization effort for Downtown Tiffin.

It is recommended to revisit and modify the Strategic Plan on a timely basis to make necessary adjustments as the market conditions dictate. Initially semi-annual reviews are recommended for first and second years after adoption of the strategic plan. It is recommended to follow with annual reviews for the third and fourth years. It should be revisited and, if required, modified on a 5-year basis.

Short Term Goals

- The City of Tiffin should officially adopt the Downtown Strategic Plan. This will not only help in the implementation process but also will pave the way towards eligibility for application for different funding sources.
- Members of the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee and other stakeholder organization representatives should engage themselves in the implementation process for sake of continuity and buy-in for plan implementation as they have been engaged in the strategic plan process. It is recommended to create 4 “action groups” that will engage themselves towards implementation of the recommended guidelines as outlined under “organization”, “promotion”, “design” and “economic restructuring”. Ultimately this Strategic Plan should be utilized for Downtown Design and Development Guidelines and subsequently can be included as a component into a comprehensive plan for the community of Tiffin.
- The City should utilize land use controls, efficient administration and enforcement procedures to guide code enforcement, maintenance and upkeep. It will also help to guide the location, nature and character of private development.
- The Chamber President should act as the “gate-keeper” for the initial implementation process along with the guidance of the Tiffin Tomorrow Committee. This position should follow the recommendations and the implementation strategies as mentioned within this document. This position should represent the Downtown and initiate the marketing and recruitment activities for appropriate tenants. One of the many responsibilities of this position will be to reach out to a 50-mile radius to find targeted tenants and developers. This position will be assisted by the Tiffin Tomorrow, SIEDC, City, County and eventually these responsibilities will be taken over by the Main Street Manager position. This position will be responsible for daily activities related to marketing, tenant strategies, researching additional funding opportunities among other related activities concentrated on Downtown revitalization. Assisting in the creation of a Special Improvement District (SID) within three years of the initiation of the phased implementation is also a responsibility of the Main Street Manager.
- Work in collaboration with the private sector and public organizations to create a pro-development framework. Meet with regional/local developers to create relationship for potential development projects.
- Create public awareness campaign through PR liaison, use opportunities to educate the public during special events and through local media to showcase Downtown accomplishments.
- Identify land purchase/option opportunities for future development through a broker and develop relationship with developers, landlords and City to communicate the tenancing strategy.
- Create a for-profit Limited Liability Company (LLC) that will be responsible for acquiring funding for the real estate transfer of unmaintained properties and buildings. Also implement the business incubator strategy to help leverage the strengths of the existing anchors industrial and institutional stakeholders.
- Strengthen existing retail and increase local market penetration through innovative marketing procedures such as seminars conducted by Chamber/SIEDC/Tiffin Tomorrow highlighting the potential of the Downtown area.
- Establish future tenancing strategy and business retention policy.
- Develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and associated funding opportunities for public investment projects consistent with the concepts and strategic recommendations. A high priority should be placed for projects within the Downtown area. Maintain an accurate and complete inventory of infrastructure amenities within the Downtown area.
- Expand the historic district list under the National Register of Historic Places for easier redevelopment process. Follow alternative building code guidelines for ease of historic structure renovation/development. The City shall assist property owners/developers with Historic Tax Credit Applications.
- Explore possibilities of the City to participate in the Certified Local Government program.
- Hire a signage and wayfinding consultant to assist in the development of a signage and wayfinding program. Additionally work with an urban design consultant to assist in the design and implementation process of a streetscape master plan.
- Work in collaboration with Chamber, SIEDC and County Visitor’s and Conventions Bureau to locate the three organizations within a unified location.

- Create Downtown and riverfront public gathering spaces and enhanced pedestrian access to connect institutions, riverfront and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Appropriate tenancing recommendations should be followed to fill upper floors of Downtown buildings with residential and/or professional office spaces.

The short term ideas in most instances will be the initiation of the revitalization process and will contribute to future return-on-investment for the City. These are good investments to build confidence in the reinvestment community including current property owners, business owners and others who support the Downtown Tiffin philosophy.

Identify a catalytic development project

As the Tiffin Tomorrow Steering Committee, City Officials, Chamber of Commerce and SIEDC officials convene to discuss next steps and implementation of the strategic plan, physical catalytic projects will undoubtedly be of significant interest. Although organizational, financial and managerial efforts should be implemented as well, clearly physical improvements in the Downtown area will send an important message to property owners, merchants and business owners that the plan is in the process of being implemented. Numerous physical projects have been identified in the master plan concepts which are more apt to be implemented through City of Tiffin stewardship while others have been included to represent opportunities for the private sector.

The City can induce real estate investment and development by the private sector by identifying a public project for early implementation. The project should be chosen with the ability of the project to leverage other private investment for maximum benefit. The following are some of the opportunities that can act as key projects of the Strategic Plan categorized by public improvement or private opportunity.

Public Improvement Opportunities

- Streetscape of Washington, Market, Perry, Jefferson and Monroe
- Branding, Signage and Wayfinding Program for Downtown Tiffin
- Public Park/Plaza Opportunities at the following locations
 - Recreational space to develop a riverfront park at the gateway to downtown through Market Street
 - Current parking lot along northeastern corner of Market Street and Sandusky River
 - Along Rock Creek
 - Riverfront linear public gathering space along Riverside Drive west of Washington Street and adjacent to Ritz Theater.
 - Redevelopment of courthouse square
- Potential Farmer's Market opportunity along Court Street. As opportunities arise the vendors can occupy vacant first floor spaces within the Court Street buildings thus revitalizing this important area and also to promote a "town square" concept around the revitalized courthouse lawn.

Private Development Opportunities

- Development of 17 N Washington Street site for retail and office space (potential for Chamber, SIEDC and CVB)
- Redevelopment of Laird Building - facade improvements, tenancing, internal circulation system, housing)
- Context Sensitive Facade improvement of Court Street buildings and select Downtown buildings
- Appropriate infill opportunities - mixed use buildings
- Riverfront development (mixed use, housing, hospitality)

Implementation Matrix

An implementation matrix has been provided for better interpretation of the detailed strategic recommendations. The implementation table consists of four (4) columns as below:

- **Number**
Relates to the recommendation number as denoted in the “Strategic Recommendations” chapter
- **Tasks**
Relates to the specific implementation techniques
- **Assisting Agency**
Shows the responsible party that will oversee/assist in the implementation of the specific task
- **% Completed**
Shows the level of completion of the specific task
- **Funding**
Shows the potential funding sources
- **Priority Level**
Shows the priority of the tasks to be undertaken for successful implementation of the master plan. The priority level has been categorized as “short term” (0-2 year), “medium term” (2-5 years), “long term” (5 - 20 years and above)

The implementation techniques have been subdivided into the following categories based on Man Street’s 4-point approach:

- Organization
- Promotion
- Design
- Economic Restructuring

The **“Organization”** category addresses organization related issues such as identification of primary organization of implementation, formation of coalition to guide/oversee the recommendations, additional position responsible for daily activities and stakeholders.

The **“Promotion”** category highlights the marketing and promotional materials in order to enhance the image of the City as well as attract tenants, consumers, shoppers and visitors.

The **“Design”** category prioritizes design related issues such as future modifications of zoning and other applicable regulations, possible development of a design and development standards for architectural, streetscape, branding and wayfinding techniques.

The **“Economic Restructuring”** category exhibits the task items related to retention of existing businesses and attracting new tenants for economic viability of Downtown Tiffin.

It has to be noted that the items are not listed chronologically – implementation tasks will be prioritized based on the availability of different forms of resources at appropriate times. These resources vary from organizational initiatives to availability of funding/financing.

The implementation matrix is a live documentation of initiatives in progress or those will be accomplished in an approximate time frame. Information for columns “% completed” and “funding” will be entered as and when those become available and are discussed by the Chamber President and the Tiffin Tomorrow Committee.

Organization

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
O-1 Promote revitalization according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street program	Utilize the Downtown strategic plan as a marketing, educational and information tool to generate local interest and support.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City	On-going	City	Short Term
	Contact Heritage Ohio about the application process and designation for Main Street community.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager		City/Chamber	Short Term
	Contact local Main Street designated communities for additional information and invite their representatives.	Main Street Manager		City/Chamber	Short Term
	Continue to work with local/regional newspaper, radio/TV stations to promote the plan and revitalization.	Chamber of Commerce, City		City	Short Term
	Use the guidelines as stated by the National Trust for designation steps.	Main Street Manager			Short Term
	Form a Board of Trustees for a Main Street organization.	Chamber of Commerce, City			Short Term
	Establish and fund a three-year operating budget for the organization.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		Chamber	Short Term
O-2 Put the necessary organization, funding and staffing in place to implement the strategic plan	Engage in the implementation process.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, City	On-going		Short Term
	Research appropriate funding for a Main Street Manager.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, City		Chamber	Short Term
	Employ a Main Street Manager.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, City		Chamber, City	Short Term

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
O-3 As the Downtown Tiffin area is gradually revitalized, consideration should be given to the creation of a Special Improvement District	Create a Special Improvement District (SID) after three years to sustain the improvements.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		Main Street, Chamber	Medium Term
	Recruit 60% of property owners, or those representing roughly 75% of the linear footage, to agree to an assessment.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		Chamber/SIEDC, Downtown Property Owners	Medium Term
	Give future consideration to other responsibilities that could be placed under the control of the Special Improvement District.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		SID, Chamber/SIEDC	Medium Term
O-4 Create a Limited Liability Company	Create a Limited Liability Company	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		Downtown Property Owners	Medium Term

Organization and Promotions

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
O-5 Involve and collaborate between the City and County departments	Review and officially adopt the Downtown Strategic Planning Initiative.	City		City	Short Term
	Modify the zoning ordinance based on the visions and the guiding principles of the strategic plan.	City		City	Short Term
	Enforcement efforts to comply with applicable codes and regulations should be performed.	City		City	Short Term
	Become familiar with the "Existing Structures" section (Ch 34) of the Ohio Basic Building Code.	City			Short Term
	Following Section 3410, "Compliance Alternatives", to make renovations more easily and cost effective.	City			Short Term
	Assist permit seekers (investor) to interpret relevant code issues and discuss available options.	City			Short Term
	Assist developers/property owners with historic tax credit applications.	Main Street Manager, City			Short to Long Term
	Maintain and follow a Capital Improvements Plan.	SIEDC, City			Short to Medium Term
	Approach potential developers and interested investors.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
	Engage the real estate development community.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Medium Term
	Interested developers go through a "Request for Qualifications" (RFQ) process.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Medium Term
	Streamline review process	City			Short to Medium Term
	Create a Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	City			Medium Term

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
P-1 Create a "Cultural Community" in the Northern Ohio Region	Review the on-going promotional events for better coordination.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short Term
	Prepare a strategy to unify art related programs and instituting a "city beautiful" movement.	Chamber of Commerce, City, Tiffin Art Guild			Long Term
	All initiatives should be unified with an overall identity of the Downtown.	Chamber of Commerce, City			Medium to Long Term
	Create a Downtown marketing campaign.	Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
	Promote regional tourism in working with other cities and regional institutions of higher learning.	Chamber of Commerce, Seneca Co. Visitors Bureau			Long Term
	Promote connection with other local university and college towns to coordinate the retail, entertainment and cultural offerings of each.	Main Street Manager, Tiffin University, Heidelberg University			Medium to Long Term
	Explore additional options for promotions.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, Little Box Shops			Medium Term
	Explore real estate development opportunities supporting the art and culture development program.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Long Term
	Organize promotional events and educational programs within Downtown.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Medium Term
	Create a comprehensive vehicular and pedestrian directional/wayfinding system.	Main Street Manager, City			Medium Term
	P-2 Promote upper floor housing	Vacant upper floors inspected by authorized personnel for compliance with Alternative Building Code and accordingly maintained by the property owner.	City		
Develop pro-forma to evaluate the benefits of applying several incentives.		City			Long Term

Promotions

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
P-3 Build trust in investment community	Enhance the impressive collection of building stock in Downtown	City		Facade Improvement Grants, City/County	Medium to Long Term
	Infill development opportunities	City		Private Property Owner, Developer	Medium to Long Term
	Catalytic development opportunities	SIEDC, City		Private	Short to Long Term
P-4 Increase local market penetration	Expand hours of operation.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, Merchants			Short Term
	Create joint promotions/marketing.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City, Merchants		Downtown Business Owners, Chamber, SIEDC	Short to Medium Term
	Create a marketing fund clause in future leases.	Main Street Manager, City			Long Term
	Maintain the current schedule of regular press releases.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short Term
	Expand existing festivals and special events to appeal to a broader market.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Long Term
	Bring a Farmer's Market.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short Term
	Solicit corporate and media sponsorships to fund expansion of existing events.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Long Term
	Create a coordinated retail and leasing support program.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Medium Term

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
P-5 Develop marketing information for promotional campaign	Develop a database of information on local statistics, available spaces, maps and promotional materials.	City, Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
	Downtown Tiffin budget for and prepare professionally produced marketing materials.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Short to Long Term
	Examine the leasing activities of Downtown Tiffin's competing resources.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Long Term
	Generate mailings on a regular basis to tenant prospects identified through the above efforts.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
	Pursue promotional opportunities and strategies on the Internet.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
	The current Chamber website should be utilized for promotional and related activities.	Chamber of Commerce			Short Term
P-5 Develop marketing information for promotional campaign	Maintain and upgrade the website to enhance the vision of the Downtown Strategic Planning Initiative.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short Term

Promotions

Promotions

Design

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level	
D-1 Update regulatory framework and documentation	Modify the zoning ordinance to follow the urban design concepts and urban design guidelines.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		City	Short Term	
	Employ consultants to help in the drafting of the modified zoning resolution.	City		City	Short Term	
	Implement stricter enforcement, administration and policing actions to have better maintenance and upkeep.	City		City	Short Term	
	All new construction/redevelopment applications in the Downtown area should include landscaping plans.	City			Short Term	
	Plan Downtown clean-up events.	Main Street Manager, City		SID, Downtown Property Owners	Short Term	
	Encourage Downtown property and business owners for maintenance and upkeep of their storefronts.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City		Downtown Property Owners, SID, Chamber	Short Term	
	Adopt a Property Maintenance Code.	City		City	Medium Term	
	Encourage property owners to keep upper floor windows clean and free of debris and add blinds.	Main Street Manager, City			Short Term	
	D-2 Establish Design & Development Guidelines	Explore prospective successful retailers to open additional locations.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Medium to Long Term
		Concentrate retail on the first floor.	City			Short Term
A clustering policy should be implemented in locating complimentary uses.		City			Long Term	
Develop design and development guidelines.		City			Medium Term	
Encourage tenants and property owners to maintain a positive image of the through flexible and incentive/bonus based design standards.		Main Street Manager, City			Medium Term	
Review new applications and enforce design development standards should be followed.		City			Medium Term	
Develop further into a Downtown Area form-based code.		City			Long Term	

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
D-3 Expand the historic district designation and utilize specific historic redevelopment tools	Define a target area for expanded Historic District within Downtown areas.	City			Short Term
	Complete an architectural survey to establish an expanded Historic District.	City			Short Term
	Develop a rating system to evaluate the current condition of buildings, its heritage, preservation initiatives and current tenanting.	City			Short Term
	Prepare and submit an application to the appropriate federal authorities for historic district designation expansion.	City			Medium Term
	Review all buildings within the district that could be considered historic.	City			Short Term
	Any new structures should complement and enforce the historic architectural character of Downtown.	City			Short to Long Term
	Explore possibilities of the City of Tiffin to participate in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program.	City			Short Term
	Establish a "Historic Easement Program"	City			Medium Term
	Create a package of incentives, strict code enforcement and assistance programs for Downtown property owners.	City			Short Term
	Implement a "Facade Enhancement Program".	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City			Medium Term
	Establish standards and extend the review process to Downtown properties.	City			Medium Term

Design

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
D-4 Enhance streetscape and public realm spaces within Downtown areas	Explore sustainable streetscape elements.	City			Medium Term
	Create a maintenance program to be funded by the City for the initial term until the responsibility is handed over to a Special Improvement District.	City			Short to Medium Term
	A public art program should be instituted within the Downtown area that showcases the heritage and art-oriented culture of Tiffin.	Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager, City, Tiffin Art Guild			Long Term
	Implementation of outside dining in front of restaurants within Downtown areas.	City			Medium Term
	Create a strong sense of identification and entry into the Downtown Tiffin.	City			Medium Term
	Upgrade and sign the major entrances leading into Downtown Tiffin.	City			Medium to Long Term
	A gateway image should be developed using a combination of signage, landscaping, and architectural elements.	City			Medium Term
	Create an illustrative map of Downtown Tiffin.	Main Street Manager			Medium Term
	Develop a comprehensive streetscape master plan and signage wayfinding program.	City			Medium Term
	Explore opportunities to creatively engage the riverfront with the Downtown areas.	City			Medium Term
	Seek opportunities to create setbacks with incorporation of public elements to encourage activities along the river.	City			Medium to Long Term
	Explore opportunities to celebrate the bridges as a gateway.	City			Medium to Long Term
	Seek opportunities to connect Tiffin and Heidelberg University to Downtown through improved streetscape, bikepaths, pedestrian trails, etc.	City			Medium to Long Term

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
D-5 Promote infrastructure improvements within Downtown areas	Develop and maintain the existing Capital Improvements Plan.	City			Short to Long Term
	Review level of service standards and identify service deficiencies in Downtown's infrastructure.	City			Medium Term
	Commit sufficient City resources to properly plan, maintain, rehabilitate and expand the infrastructure and facilities.	City		Capital Improvement Funds	Medium Term
	Maintain an accurate and complete inventory of existing utility infrastructure.	City			Medium Term
	Identify and prioritize all of Downtown's capital improvement requirements and capital funding opportunities.	City			Medium Term
	Establish a useful life for each of the capital investments and program their replacement or rehabilitation.	City			Medium Term
	Revise the capital improvement process to budget annually for phased implementation process, reports and cost estimates for construction and operation for major capital projects.	City			Short to Long Term
	Detailed feasibility analysis should be performed on a site-by-site basis with respect to infrastructure improvements related to new development/redevelopment.	City			Medium Term
	Relocate the electric power conduits underground along with other utility infrastructure lines.	City		Capital Improvement Funds	Medium Term
	Explore the feasibility of installing fiber-optic system in the Washington Street corridor to support WI-FI concept.	City			Long Term
	Develop a financial plan to fund the capital plan identifying funding levels and sources proposed to fund the plan	City			Medium Term
	Evaluate cost estimates, routing, corporate interest and public funding for bus transit.	City		Transportation Grants (Federal, Local)	Medium Term

Design and Economic Restructuring

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
D-5 Promote infrastructure improvements within Downtown areas	Extend existing transit to a Downtown circulator that connects the universities with the Downtown. Explore subsequent phases.	City		Transportation Grants (Federal - SAFETEA-LU; Local)	Medium Term
	Enforce parking meters should be used for efficient time limited spots for customers.	City			Short Term
	Parking meter collection of money to be used as a fund to help recover operating and construction costs of parking structures.	City			Medium Term
	Incorporate clear directional signage to direct to long-term parking lots.	City			Medium Term
	Perform a detailed parking analysis.	City			Medium Term
	Explore the need for a parking structure to meet needs.	City			Long Term
	Enhance the appearance of the back sides of buildings visible from these lots and upgrading the alleys.	City			Medium Term
	Combine the parking areas for multiple buildings along one block and consolidating access.	City			Long Term
	Upgrade alleys to make it a safe and appealing environment for pedestrians.	City			Medium Term
	Implement tax increment financing as a mechanism to provide a funding source for public infrastructure improvements.	City			Short to Long Term
	Continue to review the fiscal capability to meet infrastructure expansion needs and impose impact fees if it finds that its fiscal capability has been exceeded.	City			Long Term

Number	Task	Assisting Agency	% Completed	Funding	Priority Level
E-1 Retain and strengthen existing retail/commercial/office/housing uses	Refer and develop the "urban audit" enclosed in the appendix section during the implementation process.	City			Short Term
	Create a comprehensive business retention program to reposition existing and future businesses in the Downtown Tiffin area.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short to Medium Term
E-2 Add appropriate new retail and other Downtown uses	Explore prospective successful retailers to open additional locations.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Medium to Long Term
	Concentrate retail on the first floor.	SIEDC, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Manager			Short to Long Term
	A clustering policy should be implemented in locating complimentary uses.	Main Street Manager, City			Short to Long Term





Appendix

Meetings

**Additional Market
Analysis**

Survey Results

Urban Audit

Glossary of Terms



Meetings



Steering Committee

The Steering Committee met with the Planning and Design Team during March 2009 to initiate the planning review process through the study of the initial urban audit work. The Steering Committee members were nominated by the Mayor and other City officials. It included property owners from both inside and outside of the study area and representatives from various organizations and business owners.

Focus Group Interviews

The Planning and Design Team conducted specific Focus Group interviews to gain insight into the issues and opportunities of the study area through the comments, ideas and suggestions from representatives of the following groups:

1. Tiffin Rotary;
2. Little Box Shops;
3. Downtown Property Owners;
4. Chamber of Commerce;
5. City of Tiffin; and
6. Seneca County

The interviews were held on April 14 and 15, 2009 at the Community Civic Center.

Town Hall Meeting

The Town Hall Meeting was held on June 9, 2009 at Heidelberg University and was open to the public. There were 83 participants that came to hear a brief overview of Phase I and what the Planning Team had completed to date. Topics included:

- + Review the findings of the Phase I study conducted by the Planning Team including issues and analysis of the study area, demographics research, market conditions and guiding principles.
- + The Planning Team also presented the findings of the important and relevant issues.

- + Further steps were explained along with how the community could stay involved in the planning process including the Break-Out Groups that took place right after the Town Hall Meeting.

The Break-Out Groups divided the participants into 3 groups for a more focused investigation of issues and opportunities. Each group commented on the top recommendations that were expressed in survey's and interviews to date. These recommendations were categorized in four categories: Organization, Design, Promotions and Economic Restructuring. Group participants were encouraged to add their own recommendations and everyone voted on what they thought were the most important at the end.

The Planning Team also conducted a visual exercise with the participants of the Break Out Groups which included images of similar revitalized areas and successful downtown re-invention efforts. Examples were presented for the participants to visualize and vote on their favorite in each category.

Design Charrette and Focus Groups

The Planning and Design Team conducted a Design Charrette during the same week as the Town Hall Meeting. The Design Charrette was open to invited stakeholders from the community and the Steering Committee. During that time the Planning Team also conducted more Focus Group Interviews as well as hosting an informational presentation on the Main Street Program by Heritage Ohio.

The Charrette was a collaborative effort that allowed participants to give their ideas to create preliminary plan concepts that would represent future development and redevelopment opportunities. These ideas are supported in the visions and goals of the Downtown Strategic Planning Initiative. The Charrette helped to initiate the creative planning process to arrive at sustainable and context sensitive design solutions.

The Charrette also acted as a work-in-progress for the Planning and Design Team members as they were involved with the participants of the Charrette in sketching various alternatives of development and redevelopment opportunities. Comments were solicited from the participants and addressed in the conceptual designs.

Market Analysis

Population and Household Growth

Population household counts in Tiffin are declining while the State of Ohio is increasing. Current year estimates place the population of Tiffin at 17,219 persons in 7,272 households. The area around Tiffin, including Seneca County is also decreasing in population.

Population and Household Growth							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
2000 Total Population	18,135	23,783	36,469	76,194	58,683	11,353,140	281,421,906
2008 Total Population	17,497	23,153	35,980	75,088	57,592	11,633,295	309,299,265
2013 Total Population	17,219	22,838	35,612	74,480	56,899	11,805,800	328,770,749
2008 - 2013 Annual Rate	-0.32%	-0.27%	-0.21%	-0.16%	-0.24%	0.29%	1.23%
2000 Households	7,330	9,486	13,964	29,251	22,292	4,445,773	105,480,101
2008 Households	7,272	9,496	14,163	29,697	22,511	4,630,430	116,384,754
2013 Households	7,231	9,465	14,164	29,772	22,472	4,726,135	123,932,585
2008 - 2013 Annual Rate	-0.11%	-0.07%	0.00%	0.05%	-0.03%	0.41%	1.26%
2008 Average Family Size	2.88	2.87	2.96	2.96	2.99	3.02	3.17

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

Race and Ethnicity

Tiffin, including the surrounding areas, is less racially diverse than the entire population of Ohio. Ninety-five percent of the population in Tiffin is classified racially as 'white' along with Seneca County which is at 94%.

Race and Ethnicity - 2008 Estimates							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
Total	17,496	23,152	35,980	75,089	57,592	11,633,295	309,299,265
White Alone	95%	96%	96%	94%	94%	83%	72%
Black Alone	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	12%	13%
American Indian Alone	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Asian or Pacific Islander Alone	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Some Other Race Alone	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	7%
Two or More Races	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Hispanic Origin	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	2%	15%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

Educational Attainment

Compared to the State of Ohio, Tiffin has a lower percentage of population with education beyond high school.

Educational Attainment - 2008 Estimates							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
Total	11,456	15,384	24,064	50,557	38,412	7,752,906	203,637,143
Less than 9th Grade	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	7%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%	10%	10%
High School Graduate	43%	42%	45%	46%	48%	37%	30%
Some College, No Degree	19%	18%	18%	18%	18%	19%	20%
Associate Degree	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%
Bachelor's Degree	12%	12%	11%	10%	9%	15%	17%
Graduate/Professional Degree	7%	7%	6%	5%	5%	8%	10%
High School or Less	56%	55%	57%	60%	62%	51%	46%
More than High School	44%	45%	43%	40%	39%	49%	54%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

Household Income by Range

Tiffin has a lower mean household income compared to Seneca County and the State of Ohio. Income growth for Tiffin is strong - expected to exceed the rate for Ohio and Seneca County over the next five years.

Median Household Income - 2008 Estimates							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
Household Income Base	7,272	9,493	14,163	29,697	22,511	4,630,409	116,383,605
Median Household Income							
2000 Census	\$33,503	\$35,978	\$38,962	\$38,733	\$37,782	\$40,998	\$42,164
2008 Estimate	\$43,356	\$44,966	\$48,260	\$47,886	\$46,173	\$52,391	\$54,749
Growth 2000-2008	29%	25%	24%	24%	22%	28%	30%
2013 Projection	\$51,526	\$52,844	\$55,927	\$55,707	\$53,493	\$61,999	\$64,042
Growth 2007-2013	19%	18%	16%	16%	16%	18%	17%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

Households by Type

Tiffin, like most communities, is a mixture of households with various composition - some families, some singles, children and seniors. About two-thirds of the households are 'families' - almost half of these have children.

Just over one-quarter of the households have people over the age of 65.

Households by Type							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
Total	7,330	9,487	13,964	29,251	22,292	4,445,773	105,480,101
Family Households	61%	65%	70%	71%	71%	67%	68%
Married-couple Family	46%	51%	57%	57%	56%	51%	52%
With Related Children	20%	22%	25%	25%	25%	24%	25%
Other Family (No Spouse)	15%	14%	13%	14%	15%	16%	16%
With Related Children	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%
Nonfamily Households	39%	35%	31%	29%	29%	33%	32%
Householder Living Alone	33%	29%	26%	25%	25%	27%	26%
Householder Not Living Alone	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Households with Related Children	30%	31%	34%	35%	35%	34%	36%
Households with Persons 65+	28%	28%	27%	26%	26%	24%	23%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.



Existing Housing near Downtown Tiffin



Census Housing Statistics

Tiffin has a higher incidence for rental housing relative to Seneca County and the State of Ohio. The median home value for Tiffin is \$94,401 and is expected to grow at a moderate rate of 30% through 2013 - this projected to be slightly higher than the State of Ohio.

U.S. Census Housing Statistics							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
2008 Housing Units	7,989	10,310	15,226	32,101	24,434	5,120,376	129,997,839
Owner Occupied Housing Units	61%	65%	70%	71%	70%	63%	61%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	30%	28%	23%	21%	22%	27%	29%
Vacant Housing Units	9%	8%	7%	8%	8%	10%	11%
Median Home Value							
2000	\$75,838	\$83,096	\$87,334	\$83,411	\$81,074	\$100,501	\$111,833
2008	\$94,401	\$100,391	\$105,510	\$102,058	\$98,488	\$122,720	\$182,960
2013	\$98,453	\$105,606	\$110,019	\$106,454	\$102,921	\$129,075	\$192,192
Growth 2000-2013	30%	27%	26%	28%	27%	28%	72%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

U.S. Census Housing Statistics							
	City of Tiffin	10-Minutes	20-Minutes	30-Minutes	Seneca County	State of Ohio	USA
2000 Housing Units by Year Structure Built							
Total	7,868	10,087	14,755	30,985	23,692	4,783,051	115,904,641
1999 to March 2000	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
1995 to 1998	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%	7%
1990 to 1994	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%	7%
1980 to 1989	4%	5%	6%	7%	6%	10%	16%
1970 to 1979	10%	13%	15%	15%	14%	16%	19%
1969 or Earlier	80%	73%	69%	70%	72%	61%	49%
Median Year Structure Built	1946	1952	1953	1952	1951	1962	1971

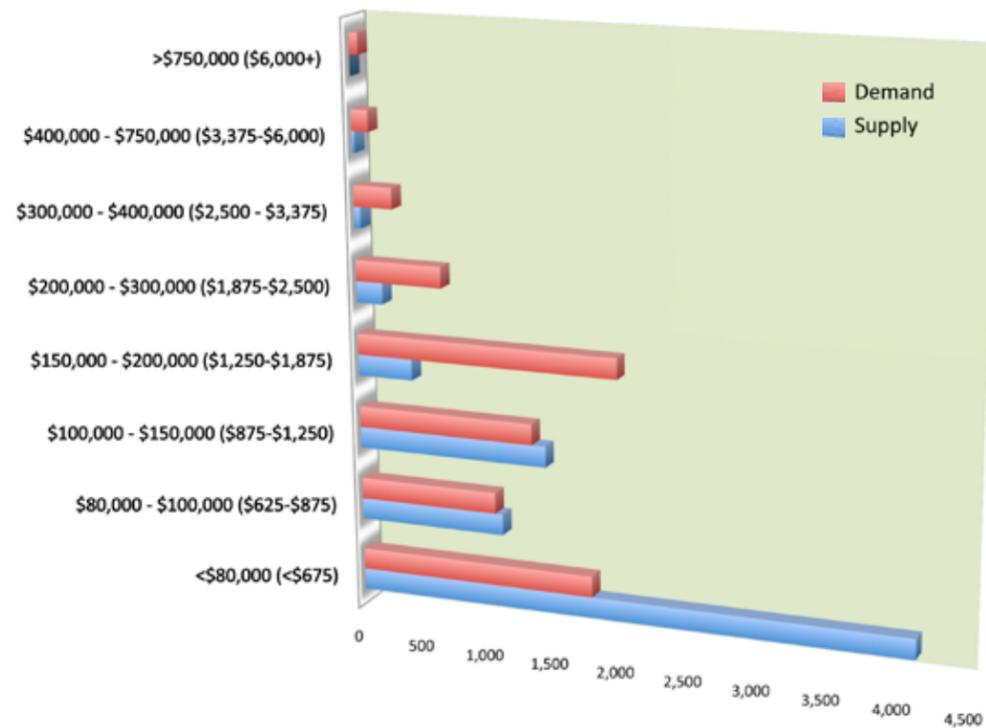
Source: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI Current Year Estimates and 5-year Projections.

Housing Supply and Demand

By comparing the supply of homes by price to the household income of Tiffin residents, a preliminary assessment of housing supply and demand can be determined. Since housing choice (and price) depends largely on income, we would expect a relationship between the income of a community’s residential population and the supply of available homes by price.

Consequently, we find that Tiffin appears to have the ability to absorb additional homes priced above \$150,000 with a high demand for homes prices within the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range.

This assessment, while preliminary in nature, is based on an analysis of the number of households at various income levels and an assumption of home affordability.



Retail Supply and Demand Analysis

Understanding the opportunity for retail in Downtown Tiffin begins with an assessment of local and regional competitive pressures. Where residents shop is based on a variety of factors - convenience, price, quality, shopping environment, etc.

Retail located downtown must survive on its own unique merits within a wider competitive environment by providing neighborhood based services, college/university resources and development of a niche market to compete with larger retail destinations such as the Tiffin and Findlay Mall areas.

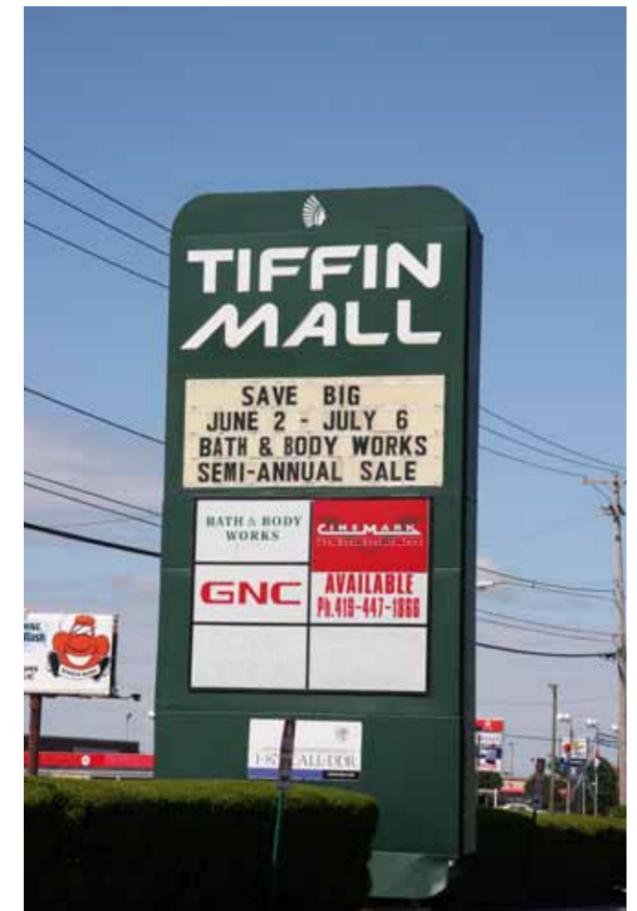
Analyzing the behaviors of consumers relative to demands for goods and services against the backdrop of providers yields a picture of opportunities for potential expansion. Some of these opportunities might be appropriate for Downtown location - Restaurants, Appliances, Specialty Food Stores, etc.



Existing Retail in Downtown Tiffin

Retail Supply and Demand Analysis		
Tiffin, Ohio		
	Supply	Demand
Automobile Dealers	\$27,105,179	\$26,559,305
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$396,601	\$2,555,399
Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Stores	\$1,739,677	\$1,499,151
Furniture Stores	\$319,758	\$2,913,239
Home Furnishings Stores	\$1,625,070	\$1,575,379
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$2,481,112	\$3,709,010
Building Material and Supplies Dealers	\$1,730,588	\$4,611,773
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores	\$96,228	\$557,222
Grocery Stores	\$29,349,823	\$22,565,436
Specialty Food Stores	\$203,135	\$346,260
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	\$3,187,039	\$1,766,053
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$10,991,263	\$5,542,612
Gasoline Stations	\$20,807,032	\$23,431,833
Clothing Stores	\$939,742	\$2,150,187
Shoe Stores	\$1,261,099	\$778,977
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Stores	\$936,899	\$761,697
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores	\$659,665	\$1,128,718
Book, Periodical, and Music Stores	\$473,140	\$1,337,722
General Merchandise Stores	\$34,052,246	\$15,929,052
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$15,648,457	\$15,929,052
Florists	\$86,644	\$631,234
Office Supplies, Stationery, and Gift Stores	\$1,603,219	\$1,292,904
Used Merchandise Stores	\$227,244	\$327,671
Full-Service Restaurants	\$10,024,135	\$17,622,070
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$14,123,953	\$2,650,530
Special Food Services	\$494,496	\$235,665
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$2,062,052	\$223,050

Source: InfoUSA, ESRI, Survey of Consumer Spending, KKG.



Existing Retail west of Downtown Tiffin

Community Testimonials

To understand the relationship between human behaviors and the neighborhood structure, the KKG Planning Team utilized the Community Tapestry Segmentation system as developed by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). The community tapestry has been developed by analyzing and sorting more than 60 attributes including income, employment, home value, housing type, education, household composition, age, and other key determinants of consumer behavior of each U.S. neighborhood. U.S. consumer markets are multidimensional and diverse. Using a large array of attributes captures this diversity with the most powerful data available. Data sources include Census, ESRI proprietary demographic updates, the InfoBase-X™ consumer database from Acxiom Corporation, and other sources to capture the subtlety and vibrancy of the U.S. marketplace. Based on the data, ESRI Community Tapestry system identifies over 200,000 U.S. neighborhoods (census block groups) by one of 65 unique residential segments.

Consumer segmentation is utilized for the following aspects:

- Explain neighborhood variation
- Describe resident lifestyles
- Analyze population diversity
- Pinpoint marketing opportunity

Although numerous segments are available in the Tiffin market, the Planning Team selected the first 5 categories for further analysis of market understanding and strategic policy recommendations. The information is grounded in the community tapestry to help illuminate the situation and opportunities in Tiffin. The segments are described with demographic tenets, general lifestyle behaviors and purchase preferences at the top of each column while a character statement is made for each segment to give a better understanding towards the bottom of each column.

Single Mother/Elementary Student

- Mainstay of older, industrial cities – manufacturing and transportation industry
- Modest owner-occupied homes – median value of \$93,000
- Median age of 26 – mixture of families, single-parents and singles
- Median income of \$43,800 – financially conservative
- Home and garden maintenance – bowling and fishing
- Television is important – cable – sports



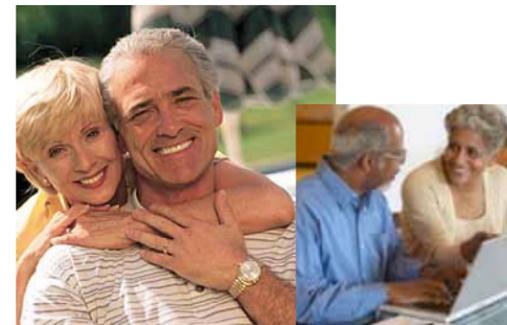
Married Couple with Children

- Hardworking families in small communities
- Manufacturing, retail and service employment
- Owner-occupied homes – median value of \$139,000
- Median age of 42 – married coupled with children
- Median income of \$50,500 – financially conservative
- Enjoy gardening and other outdoor projects and sports
- Own 2 or more cats and dogs



Retirees, Married Couple, No Children

- Senior lifestyles by income, age and housing type
- Older homes on the urban fringe of metro areas
- Do-It-Yourself home improvement and discount shopping
- Belong to fraternal orders, unions, veteran’s clubs, etc.
- Watch QVC, game shows and news programs



Married Couple, No Children

- Middle-aged, middle income – Middle America
- 67 percent owner-occupied homes – median value of \$153,300
- Median age of 42 – half married couples
- Watch classic movies on DVD
- Enjoy fishing and softball
- Attend country music concerts and auto races



Undergraduate Student at Heidelberg University

- Younger resident finishing college or starting their career
- Many do not have families
- Affordable housing including apartments and townhomes
- Enjoy going out to eat, going to the movies, and hanging out with friends



Extensive quantitative and qualitative research was compiled and interpreted to uncover the community’s needs based on each character as shown below.

Single Mother/Elementary Student Community Needs

- Neighborhood Patrol
- Safe Public Spaces
- Family Friendly Activities

Married Couple with Children Community Needs

- Affordable Housing
- Family Activity Options

Retirees, Married Couple, No Children Community Needs

- Arts and Culture
- Connection to Downtown
- Restaurants & Entertainment

Married Couple, No Children Community Needs

- Shopping Alternatives
- Local Businesses
- Connect to Downtown

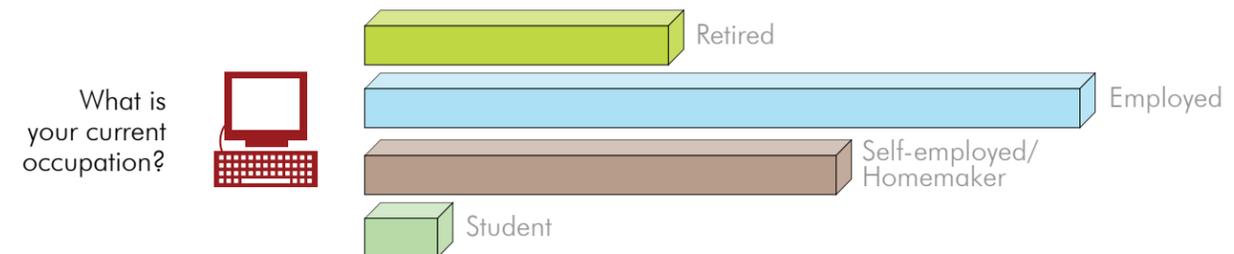
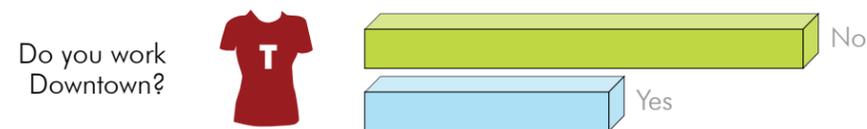
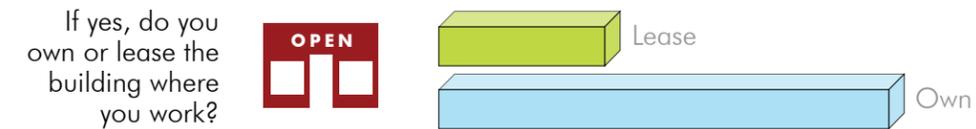
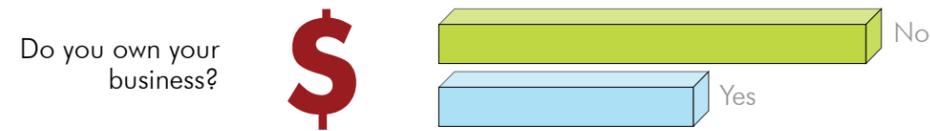
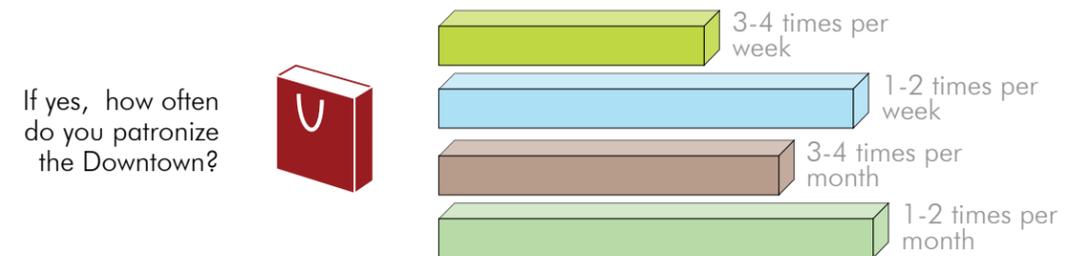
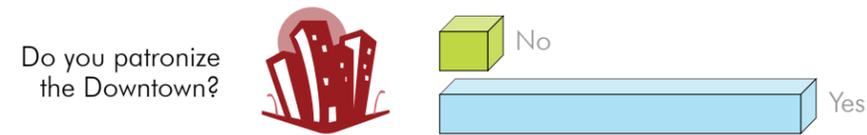
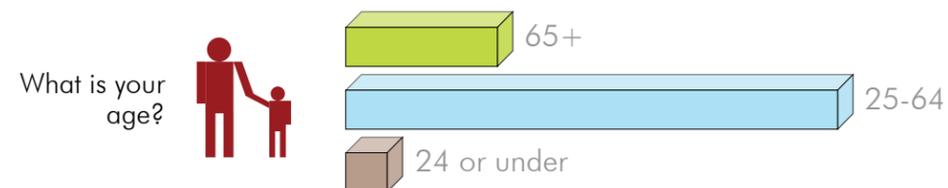
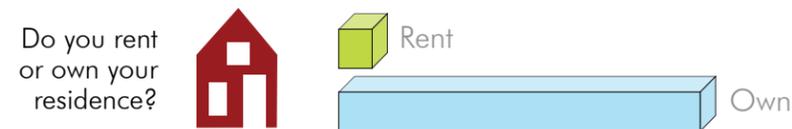
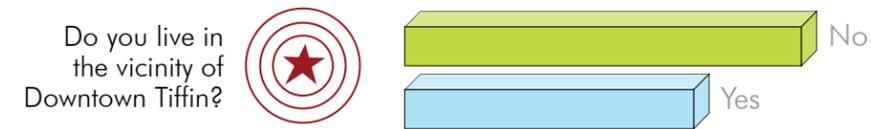
Undergraduate Student Community Needs

- Housing Alternatives
- Connect the Campuses
- Public Transportation

The survey conducted was distributed both in paper and electronic format during April-July 2009. The paper survey was available at various locations throughout the City and handed out at all of the public meetings. The electronic version was available through the Chamber of Commerce website. There was a total of 184 respondents.

This information allowed the Planning and Design Team to better understand the needs of Tiffin residents, business and property owners. The results were addressed in the Master Plan concepts and recommendations. The survey results are listed in the following pages.

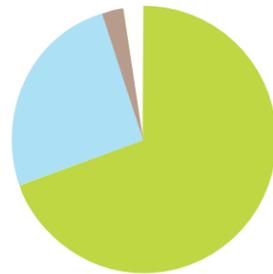
Survey Results



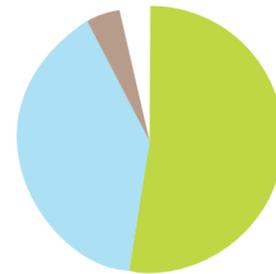
Amenities

How important do you think the following issues are for the revitalization of the Downtown Tiffin?

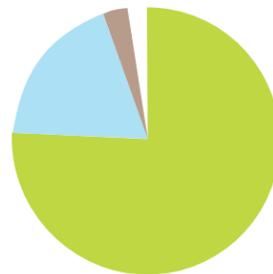
Special/Cultural Events



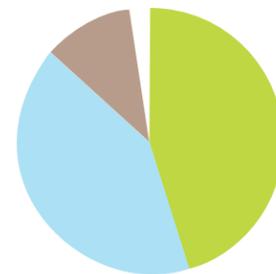
Appropriate infill & facade improvements



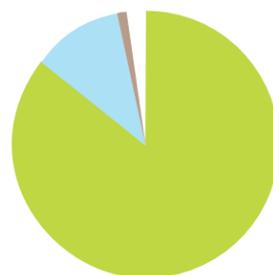
Marketing the Assets of Downtown



Enhancing the historic character of buildings



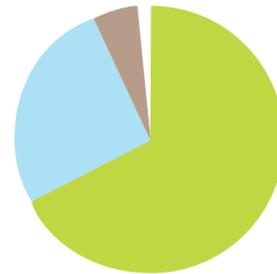
Business Recruitment



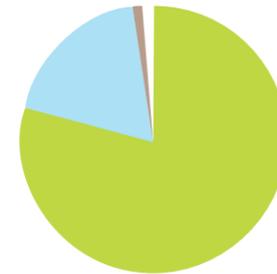
District Integrity & Appearance

How important do you feel the following are for improving Downtown streets and district environment?

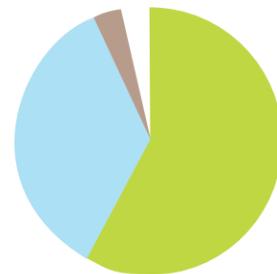
Neighborhood Services



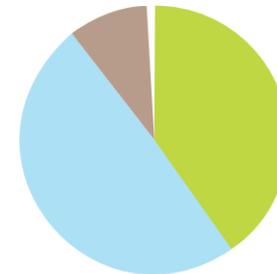
Entertainment/Restaurant Choices



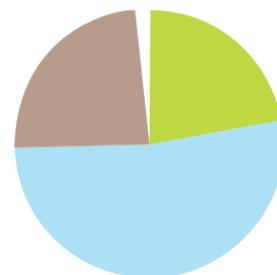
More Specialty Retail Choices



Public Green Spaces



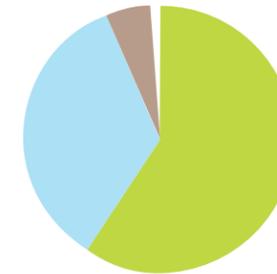
Housing Opportunities



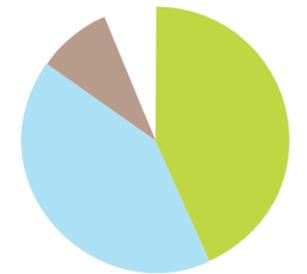
Economic Vitality & Development

How important do you think the following issues are for the future development of Downtown Tiffin?

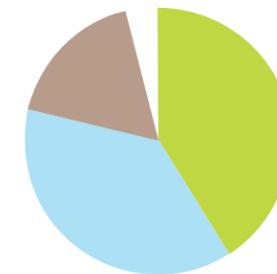
Streetscape & Pedestrian Enhancements



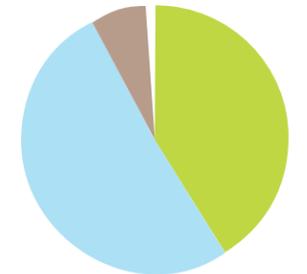
Preservation of Historic Structures



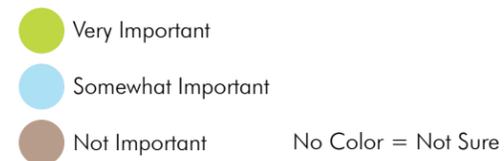
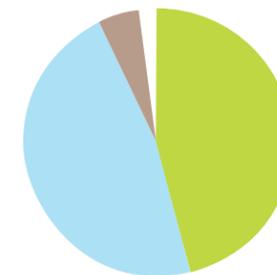
Wayfinding & Signage System



Downtown District Brand Identity



Safe Integration of Bikeways/Sidewalks with Roads



What would you like to see changed about Downtown Tiffin?

(Responses to this survey question is categorized according to Main Street's 4-point approach)

Organization

Clean up the fronts of stores, sidewalks, storefronts
Remove deteriorating, non-historic building elements (meal awnings). Clean the downtown. Even the rundown buildings could look better clean.
Clean it up, remove weeds, etc.
Buildings renovated and kept clean
Someway to get and keep the sidewalks and storefronts clean and free of litter
Need building owners to take pride in downtown & fix their buildings.
Buildings must be better maintained.
The city taking away some restrictions, but still maintaining an attractive downtown
Cleaner sidewalks, etc. seating, building façade & occupying old buildings
Enforcement of maintenance code
Buildings renovated to the best of their ability
Get store owners to clean-up their space, more retail and restaurants
Cleanliness of town. One way streets.
Owners and employees park off street
Clean it up!
The attitude needs to be positive. Everyone working together.
The city needs to fairly support their ordinances.
Have every business to have there front sidewalks cleaned up. Too much trash in front of store.
Better snow removal
Clean up, brighten up, fix up, make more attractive river walk, add college corridor between schools and downtown
Clean up gold bond

Design

Would love to see the rivers edge cleaned up (rid of brush on river road) plus clean "looking" river
New Courthouse building, removal of vehicles in the entire block surround the courthouse
Tear down the courthouse. Have a picnic area until a new court house can be built
Remove old Court House and old Columbian high school building
Updated appearance, clean landscape
Less empty, old, boring looking buildings. The white 70's "national city bank building" should be removed immediately. Looks way out of place in downtown
Tear down courthouse - use space for green space
Get rid of one way streets
Create a pedestrian mall - divert drive through traffic, develop parkway along the river
One way streets should be reduced/eliminated, just not friendly to out-of towners.
More attractive sidewalk areas with seating.
Fix the sidewalks - very hard to push a stroller down with being so uneven
Beautification - buildings, space, streets
More parking, walkability for students to come downtown after school,
More parking
Better parking for all of downtown and the Ritz.
More stores.
Parking - improving appearance of downtown.
Curb appeal! Image is "everything." Make it attractive and they will come.
More parking (garages)
Lack of Parking, Lack of Parking
Vacant buildings filled, courthouse in use!
Courthouse with water fountains for attractions
No "old" courthouse replaced with a park, fountain, seating
New impressive courthouse,
Courthouse can go, always hear of lack of parking
Get rid of the courthouse, more parking, rehab/paint the buildings (starting to look rundown),
Add pocket parks and green spaces.

Promotions

People to change their attitude and be proud of Tiffin. People need to step up and help out.
College Integration
Downtown Tiffin needs an image
Visitor friendly signage. Street numbers on buildings. Clean-up - gutters, have old leaves from last fall.
General knowledge of shops available.
Use the riverfront (just visited Reno - loved the River walk) green spaces more obvious
Define the character of this area - develop this character in an intuitional over time
Increase in the number of people living downtown
Friendly atmosphere
More areas where kids can hangout - things for them to do

Economic Restructuring

The colleges working together to have business for students to enhance their education as part of their education
Made into a college town
Need more specialized shops to attract outside interest. Use colleges to create incubator businesses with unique opportunities for new investors
Change the nature of these stores that cook 2nd Hand
Need specialty businesses - coffee shop, music/books, restaurants - that entice people to come downtown
More businesses needed
Not so many empty buildings, instead of building new all the time, use what we got
More Restaurants, parking for current retail stores, improve riverfront
Lots of exciting retail destination stores.
More stores, Improve look of building
Places to shop, dine, receive services, attractive to residents, students and outsiders
More residents downtown would provide more customers for more retail
Need new businesses
Bring courthouse issue to conclusion soon, better parking opportunities.
For TU and Heidelberg - restaurant, coffee houses, specialty & clothing shops, high end restaurant near the city
More retail, restaurants,
Restaurants, etc. reason to come downtown
Make it a shopping destination of small unique shops with unique places to eat
More retail
Shopping, restaurants, youth involvement/place for youth to gather
Restoration of Washington St. shopping, more entertainment opportunities
Consistent look and feel with multiple travel and easy access
In order to develop the residential aspect, a public elementary school and outdoor/indoor recreational facilities are needed in close proximity
It's run down, businesses are marginal,
It needs more to attract people to it, it is run down in some places and doesn't have a lot of places that people will go to a lot other than restaurants and bars on weekends
All the above

What would you like to see preserved in Downtown Tiffin?

(Responses to this survey question is categorized according to Main Street's 4-point approach)

Organization

Stores & shops open some evenings & weekends to entice more people to come downtown & shop

Revitalize the storefronts and foster a greater sense of community among business owners. Whatever plans are made, follow through and make progress

Design

The River

River Walls

Architecturally interesting details preserved

I would like to see the buildings preserved that are worth preserving, otherwise, tear down, like the courthouse.

The buildings

Love the architecture- bring buildings back to original as possible

Facade of buildings

Architecture is the most important - especially the facade. What goes on behind them can be modernized, in fact removed - rebuilt - but keep the facade's original!

Architecture of building fronts on Washington St.

The unique types of architecture

Historic buildings

The cohesive feel to most of the architecture. Not all buildings can be preserved, but new construction should fit in.

Some buildings

Some stone buildings

Green space - restore historic facades

Buildings and green space - small park to lunch at and hold small concerts. Utilize river scenery as well.

Court House

The court house needs to be preserved as the historic anchor of the downtown

East Jr High School, Old Gold Bond Building, old Post Office, esp.

Courthouse. Can't have a vision for downtown Tiffin without addressing the Courthouse and the potential it brings to Tiffin for revitalization.

I think it is important to preserve the Courthouse and keep the historic districts, keep downtown clean and bring more retail and quality apartments.

Not the Court House

Tear down court house - it is a physical & psychological blemish to our community

Cover up old "marshmallow bank"

Tear down courthouse and create "town square" with gazebo for community events.

Install a walkway from Washington Street to Huss Street, both sides of river.

City center - cultural or arts area, develop niche or identity - city square with green space. Replacing courthouse. Parking garage.

Promotions

Keep small town charm

People friendliness

Quaint streets, trees on streets, old facades

A more friendly environment by all. Letting people know they are wanted

Unique appeal - "change what needs to be changed"

Character

Preserve only what fits your vision for the character of the area.

Historic integrity

Historic nature

Historic character as long as it is feasible for economic growth

The history

Historic character. Small city feel. Local businesses.

Historic charm

History should be embraced. It's unique to us. May mean save Courthouse or other ways to use the past to springboard to the future.

Economic Restructuring

Create opportunities on upper floors.

Upper lofts with building above businesses.

Anything that's economical

Incentives to move business to the downtown area, "mall area" stinks. Get those businesses back downtown.

Have some modern retails stores like High Street in Columbus

Nothing specific

Visual Preference Survey

RIVERFRONT



STREETSCAPE



During the Town Hall Meeting and the Focus Groups, the Planning and Design Team asked participants, "What is your favorite for Downtown Tiffin?" This question was focused towards eleven different topics included as a part of a Visual Preference Survey. This is a tool for the public to give feedback on planning and design alternatives and to directly participate in the visioning of the Downtown Strategic Plan. Participants were asked to indicate their preference among a series of images used to illustrate various options for development or public space. Images were selected to demonstrate a range of design possibilities, from subtle to aggressive. 87 people participated in the Visual Preference Survey during the Town Hall Meeting and the Focus Groups.

The following pages show each category and their corresponding images. The percentage of how many participants chose/favored each image is also listed.

The responses as indicated within the paper based and visual preference survey has been considered by the Planning and Design Team while providing recommendations, action items and implementation measures, included within the Strategic Planning Initiative. It is further recommended to review these responses while preparing further studies and implementation of development initiatives. This will provide an approximate gauge to judge citizen response and needs as indicated by the respondents.

PUBLIC ART



STOREFRONT



PUBLIC SPACES



BIKEWAYS



PARKING



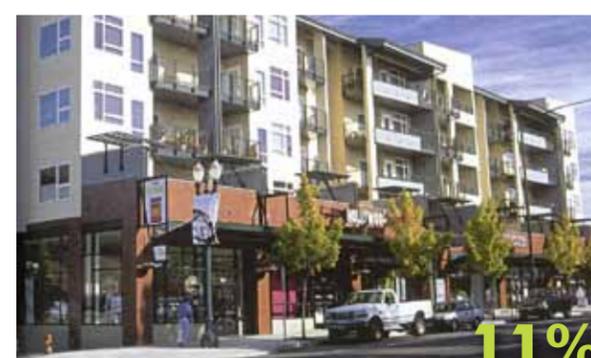
INFILL



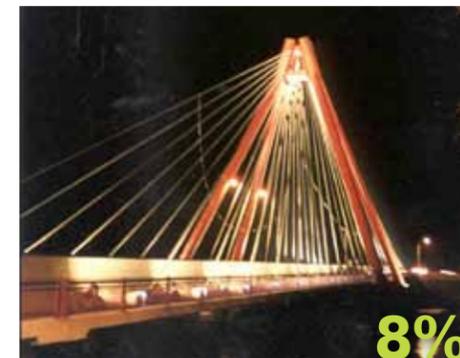
SIGNAGE



BUILDING CHARACTER



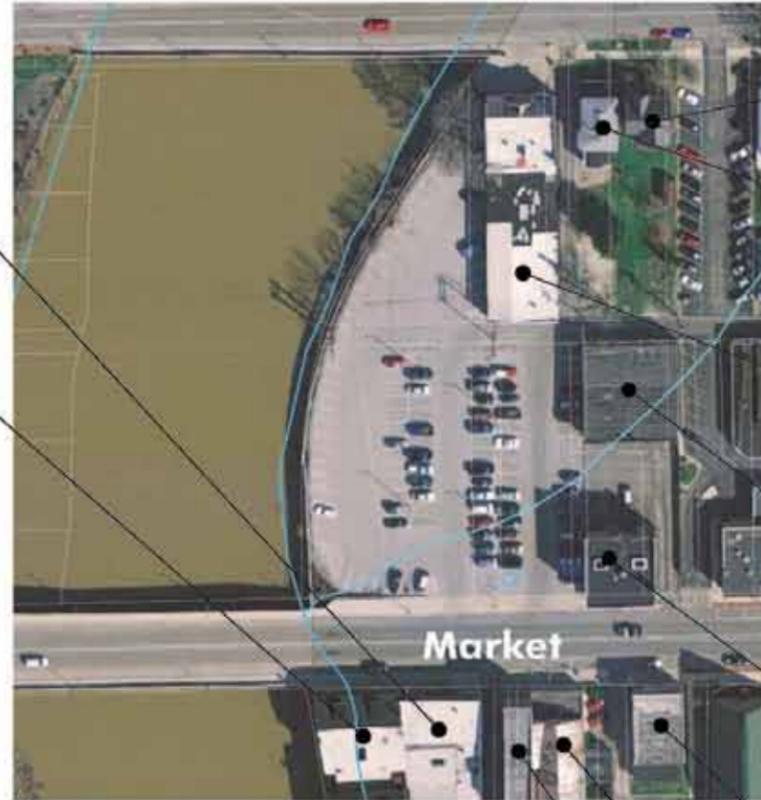
GATEWAY



Urban Audit

Block A

	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Vacant	On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M	
	How many Stories: 3 What is it: Kears Speed Shop	On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M	



	How many Stories: What is it: Residential	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:		
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:		
	How many Stories: 1 What is it: Tiffin Service Taxicab	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: P Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P		
	How many Stories: 1 What is it:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb : Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P		
	How many Stories: 3 What is it: The Pryzm Nightclub & Hotel	On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M		
	How many Stories: What is it: Vacant	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:		
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Vacant	On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P		
	How many Stories: 4 What is it: WVB Photography	On-Street Parking: 0 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:	
	Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: G		

Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block B

	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G	On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Apartments Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: P Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P	On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: K of C Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G	On-Street Parking: 4 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks: :
	How many Stories: What is it: Residential Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 3 What is it: Antiquus Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G	On-Street Parking: 3 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 1 What is it: Tony's A/C Heating & Plumbing Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G	On-Street Parking: 3 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Salvation Army Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P	On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:

Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block C

 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Antiques Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Electro Alarms Co. Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks: Had some bad renters in upper level apartments</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Bair Brothers Sporting Goods Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks: Awning in bad condition</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: The Ritz Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 1 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Meeting Space, Seneca Co. Commission on Aging Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: 20 Curb Cuts: 1 Addl. Remarks: Access on Riverside</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Donald S. Bennett Attorney at Law Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 3 What is it: Tiffin Glass Museum Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 3 What is it: Heritage Computer, Law office of James Gucker & Kent Nord Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: 12 Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks: Attorney's at Law</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 3 What is it: Seneca Co. Homeless Coalition Thrift Store Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: 12 Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks: Boarded up windows on upper floors</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Vacant Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: P Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: 20 Curb Cuts: 1 Addl. Remarks: Private Parking</p>

Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block D



How many Stories: 1
What is it: Rush
Graphics
Arch. Quality: P
Tenant Quality: G
Storefront Quality: G
Building Quality: G

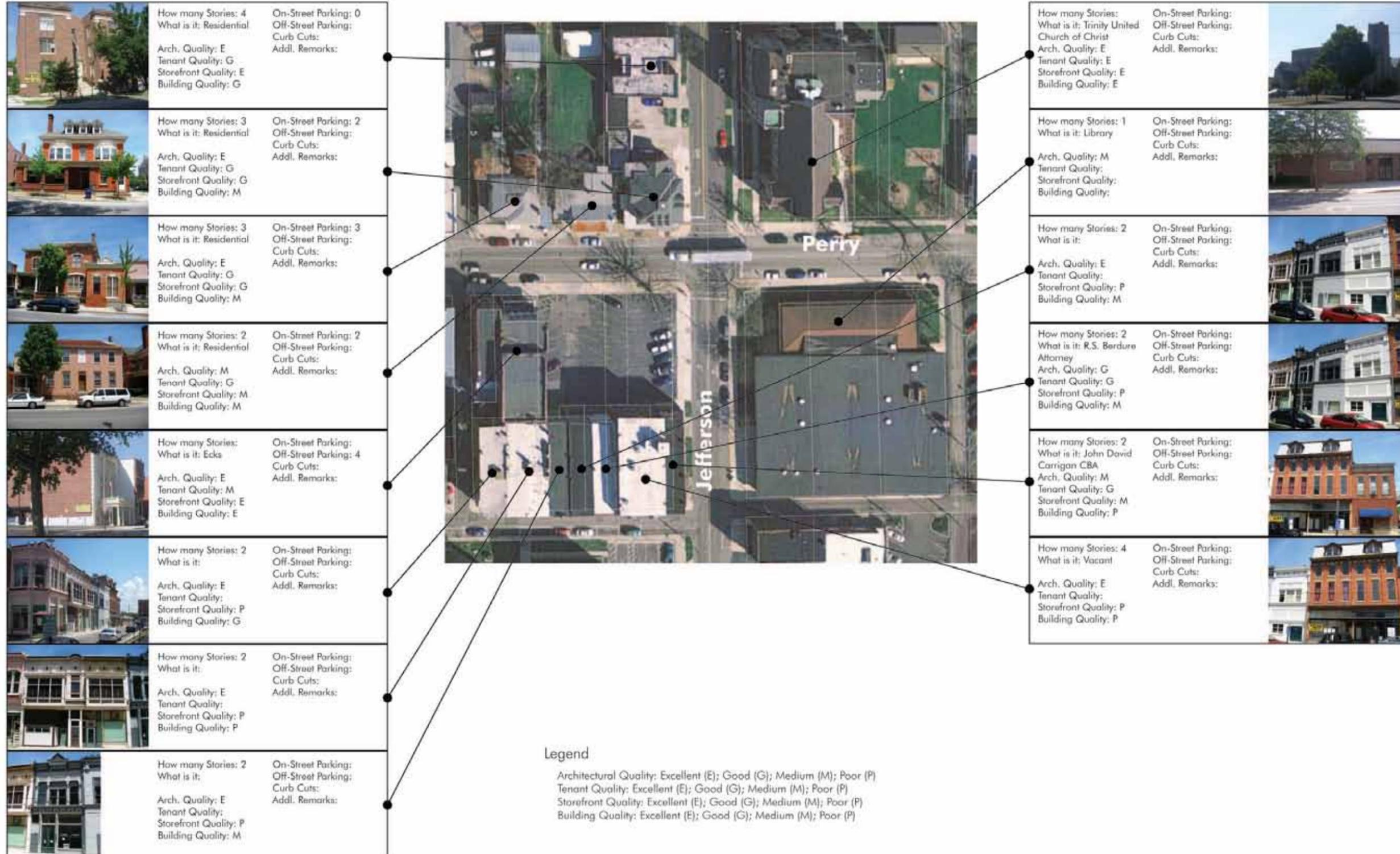
On-Street Parking:
Off-Street Parking:
Curb Cuts:
Addl. Remarks:



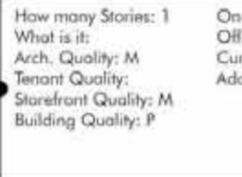
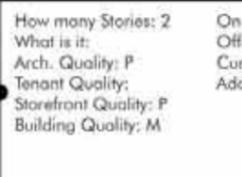
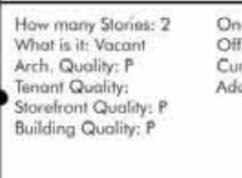
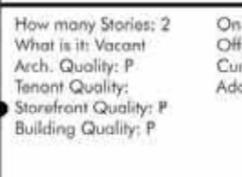
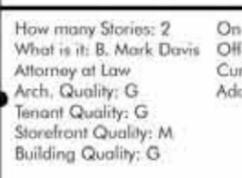
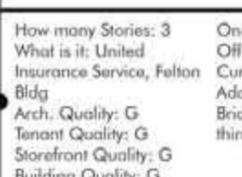
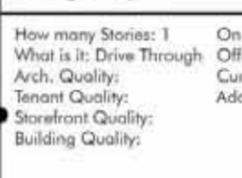
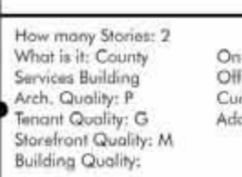
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Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block F

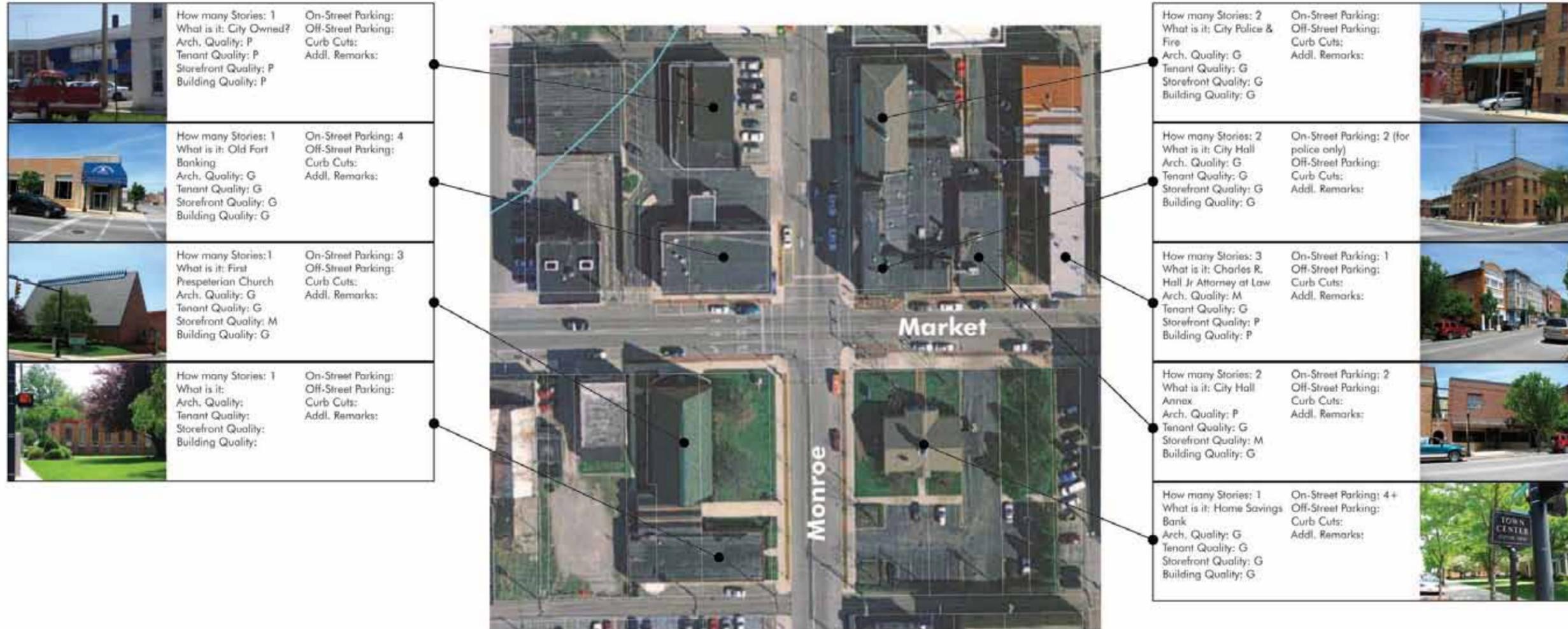


Block G

 <p>How many Stories: 5 What is it: Elmwood Assisted Living Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 10 Off-Street Parking: 22 Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Tiffin Area COC Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Arch. Quality: P 1st flr, G 2nd flr Tenant Quality: - Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P 1st flr, G 2nd flr</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Tiffin Charitable Foundation, Area Title Agency of Tiffin Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: The ink spot Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: 0 Curb Cuts: - Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: 5/3 Bank Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: - Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Arch. Quality: M Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: P</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Vacant Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Vacant Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: P</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 2 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: B. Mark Davis Attorney at Law Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: - Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 3 What is it: United Insurance Service, Felton Bldg Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: G</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: 1 Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: 0 Addl. Remarks: Bricked-in windows on third floor</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Drive Through Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>
 <p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: County Services Building Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>

Legend
 Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

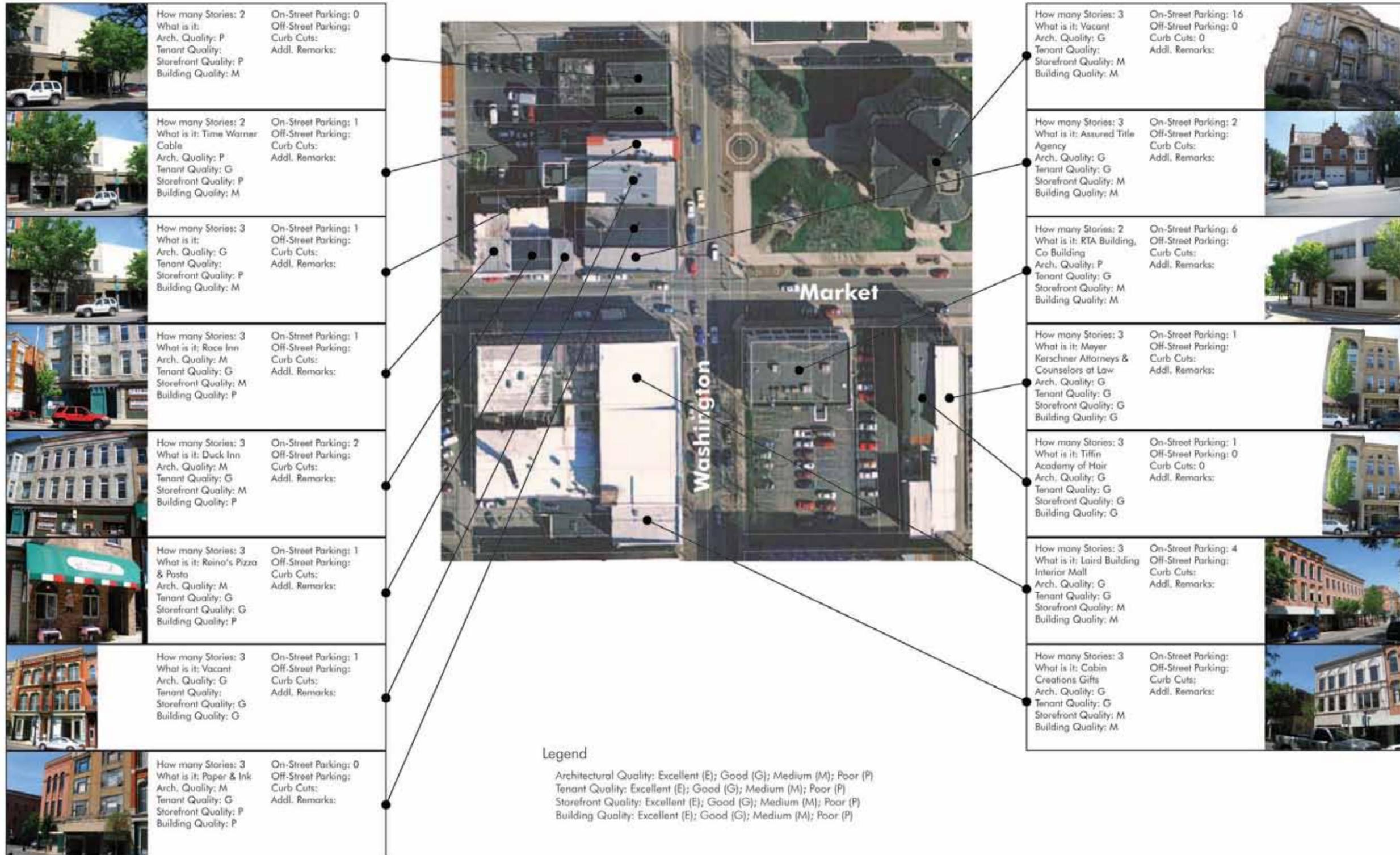
Block H



Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block I



Legend
 Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block J

	How many Stories: What is it: County Annex Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Church Arch. Quality: E Tenant Quality: E Storefront Quality: E Building Quality: E	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Seneca County Probate Courts Arch. Quality: E Tenant Quality: E Storefront Quality: E Building Quality: E	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: 12+/- Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Burns Elect Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: E Storefront Quality: E Building Quality: E	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: 12+/- Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Barga Jones Attorneys Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: E Storefront Quality: E Building Quality: E	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: What is it: Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 2 What is it: Seneca Massage Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 1 What is it: The Wax Shack Arch. Quality: P Tenant Quality: M Storefront Quality: P Building Quality: M	Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:
	How many Stories: 4 What is it: Vacant Arch. Quality: E Tenant Quality: P Storefront Quality: G Building Quality: P	On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:

Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

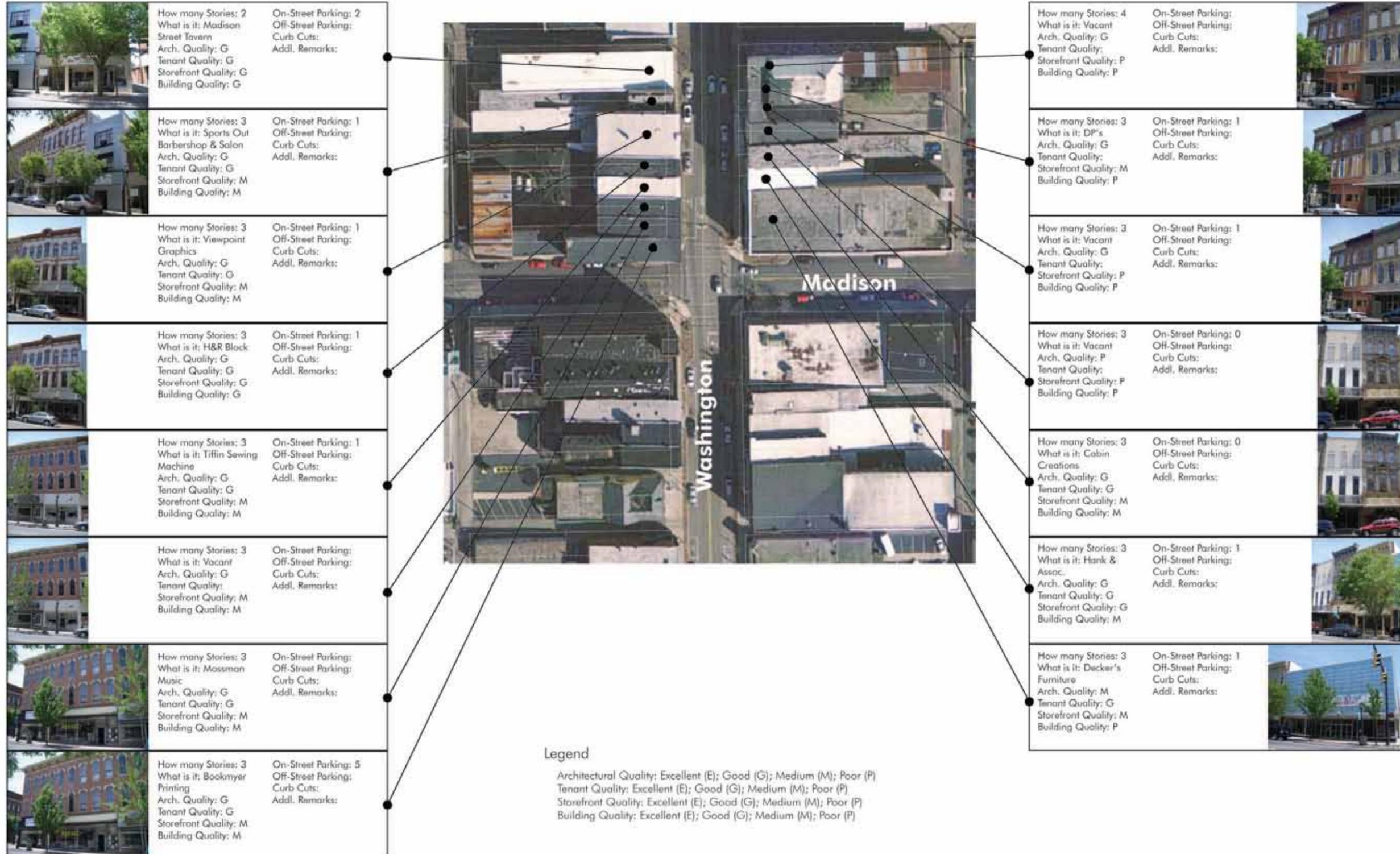
Block M

	<p>How many Stories: 1 What is it: Commissioners Office</p> <p>Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	
	<p>How many Stories: What is it:</p> <p>Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	
	<p>How many Stories: What is it: 2nd Church of Christ</p> <p>Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	
	<p>How many Stories: What is it: Kenra Haircare</p> <p>Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p> <p>On-Street Parking:</p>	<p>Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	
	<p>How many Stories: 2 What is it: Stein Hospice</p> <p>Arch. Quality: G Tenant Quality: G Storefront Quality: M Building Quality: E</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	
	<p>How many Stories: What is it:</p> <p>Arch. Quality: Tenant Quality: Storefront Quality: Building Quality:</p>	<p>On-Street Parking: Off-Street Parking: Curb Cuts: Addl. Remarks:</p>	

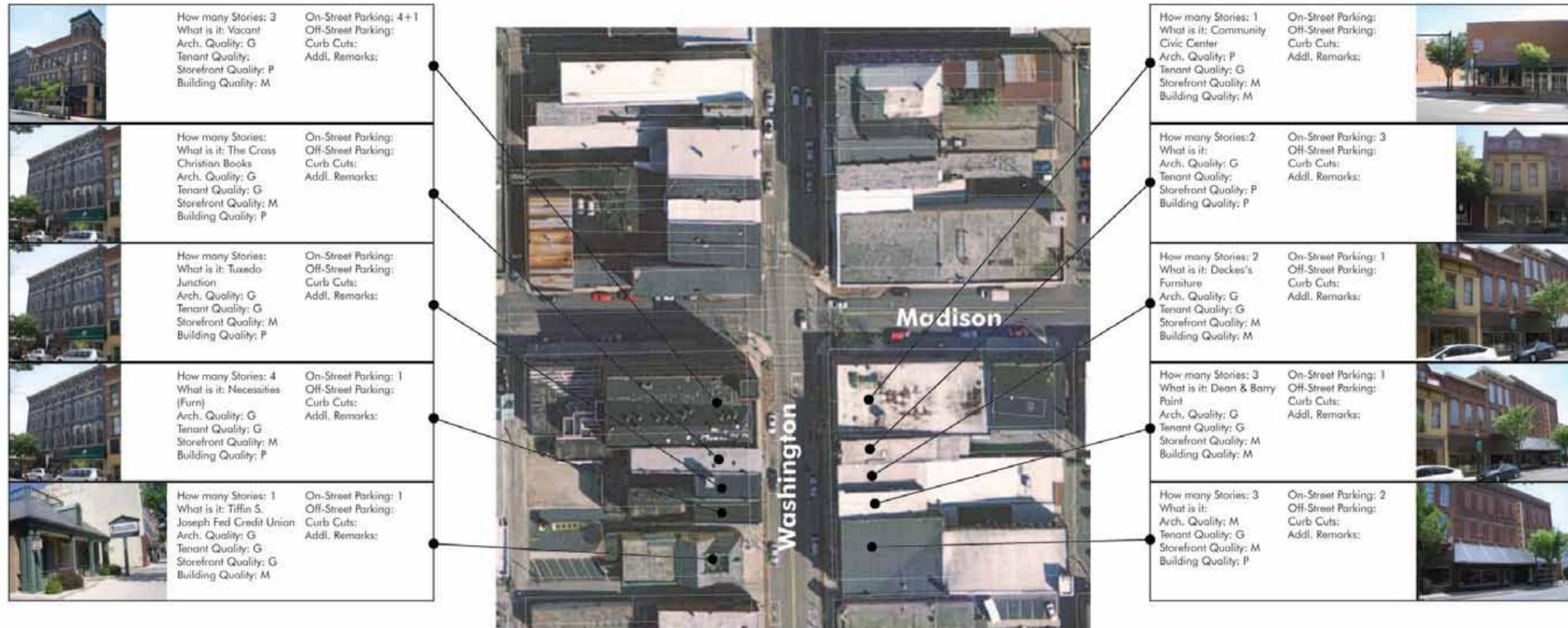
Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Block N1



Block N2



Legend

Architectural Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Tenant Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Storefront Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)
 Building Quality: Excellent (E); Good (G); Medium (M); Poor (P)

Glossary of Terms

A

Accessory Use: This is a secondary use of property, which is in addition to, and secondary to another, primary land use. An example is a garage on a single family lot.

Adaptive Reuse: A building that is modified for a different purpose or use. A warehouse converted into apartments or condominiums is an example.

Affordable Housing: A housing unit (owned or rented) for individuals who qualify with income that is below the Federal Government Section 8 income limits. The qualifying individuals pay no more than 30% of their income for principal, interest, taxes and insurance.

Alternative Transportation: Forms of travel that are different than using a car such as walking, bicycling and public transportation including buses, streetcars, light rail and commuter rail.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Architectural Character: The distinguishing appearance of a building or structure's architectural features, such as roof slope, materials, openings, color and scale. The character is based on historical and cultural influences.

Auto-Oriented Design: A form of development that depends on exposure to auto traffic and presumes people will use cars to travel to and from a site.

Assessed Value: The value of real estate or personal property as determined by a government unit, such as a city, for the purpose of determining taxes.

B

Best Management Practices (BMP): BMPs minimize the impact of development and other land use activities on the natural environment, such as reducing storm water.

Blight: Physical and economic conditions within an area that cause a lack of proper utilization of that area. A blighted area is one that has deteriorated by physical, economic, or social forces.

Brownfield: Abandoned, idled, or underutilized industrial and commercial property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination from past business practices.

Buffer: A type of landscaping treatment in which varied plant materials, including trees and evergreens and earthen mounds buffer land uses from each other or from other impacting uses (i.e. roadway, parking lot, etc.).

Buildable Land: Land which lacks constraints that prevent it from being developed or redeveloped. This includes all vacant, partially used, or underutilized land zoned for commercial, industrial, or residential use. A single-family home built on a lot zoned for multi-family housing is an example of underutilized land. Parcels intended for public use or lots with limited building potential are not considered buildable lands.

Building Codes: Municipal regulations that prescribe minimum standards for the construction and maintenance of buildings.

Building Permit: A permit issued for various types of building activity that authorizes structural, electrical, heating and cooling, plumbing, or demolition work.

Built Environment: The part of the environment formed and shaped by humans, including buildings, structures, landscaping, earth forms, roads, signs, trails and utilities.

C

Central Business District (CBD): A term generally used to describe the heart of a downtown.

Charrette: An intensive design session (typically one week or less) to brainstorm and visualize solutions conducted in a community interactive workshop atmosphere.

Clutter (Visual, Roadway): The proliferation of sign posts, utility lines and poles, regulatory signs, signals, advertising and lighting. The result is usually so visually confusing that the communicative intent is seriously undermined.

Community Character: The features that define the built and natural environment within the community and help to create its character. These include the historic buildings in the Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, themed architecture, natural waterways or landforms that define parts of the City, woodlands, residential neighborhoods of different types, building density and the scale and quantity of signage.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Federal government funded programs and projects that include a wide range of community and economic development activities aimed at revitalizing decayed urban areas and benefiting low- and moderate-income persons.

Community Reinvestment Area (CRA): A CRA refers to areas designated by the legislative authorities of municipalities within which abatement of real estate taxes is available for remodeling of existing structures or new construction within the area.

Connections: It is critical for a community to build connections as it grows. Examples of connections are streets, sidewalks and bike paths that interlink neighborhoods, and that link neighborhoods with schools, parks, retail areas, and businesses. Major parts of the community should be linked to ensure a whole community is being developed.

Corridors: A corridor is a path used by people as they travel through the community. Corridors can include roads, sidewalks, bike paths, rivers and streams. The quality of the experience of the traveler along these corridors helps to define the image of the community.

D

Density: For non-residential development, density may be expressed either as the gross square footage of a building per acre or as the floor area ratio (See Floor Area Ratio). For residential development, density is measured by the number of housing units per acre and may be expressed in terms of either gross or net density.

Design Standards: Design standards or guidelines can serve as a community's desire to control its appearance through a series of standards that govern site planning policies, densities, building heights, scale, massing and architecture.

District: Districts are unique parts of a community in which the uses, buildings and landscape share common features. The features of these districts that support their viability should be protected and enhanced.

Dwelling Units: A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

E

Economic Base: The economic base of the City is defined by the variety of businesses and employers located in the community. A broad base of businesses and employers is critical to minimize impacts on the community from economic downturns, as well as the potential of businesses leaving the community.

Eminent Domain: The legal right of a government entity to take private property for public use, provided the owner is offered just compensation for the taking of property.

F

Facade: The exterior walls of a building.

Floodplain: The land adjacent to a stream, river or lake that is subject to flooding by storms whose severity and flooding effects can be measured. That is, a 100-year storm will occur on the average of once every 100 years and will be associated with a certain amount of rainfall and flooding and generate a 100-year floodplain that constitutes both the floodway and the floodway fringe.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The floor area ratio is the numerical value obtained by dividing the gross floor area of building or buildings by the total area of the lot or tract, less any public street right-of-way. It measures the intensity of development without regard to building height. Example: A FAR of 1.0 allows a 43,560 square foot building on a one-acre parcel. The building could be a two-story building with a 21,780 square foot footprint or a three-story building with a 14,520 square foot footprint.

G

Gateways: A gateway is a point at which someone enters community, neighborhood or district, typically by automobile. Gateways are very important because the condition of the road, landscape, buildings and signage help to establish an identity.

Geographic Information System (GIS):

A means of producing, analyzing and storing computerized maps and related data.

Green Building: The United States Environmental Protection Agency defines green buildings as "...the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort. Green building is also known as a sustainable or high performance building."

Greenfield: A site that has not been developed; typically it is under cultivation or a woodland.

Greenway: This can be a natural area or a pedestrian and bicycle path within a natural corridor, often associated with a stream. Frequently greenways provide a pedestrian network, which connects neighborhoods and parks in all parts of the City. The greenway system is also designed to limit inappropriate development in natural areas, protect floodplains, limit damage associated with flooding and protect the wildlife and plant life associated with these natural areas.

H

Historic District: An area designated by the City to be of historic value. Local districts are regulated through overlay zoning in such a way as to preserve its historic character. Exterior alterations are permitted only if they are in keeping with the historic character of the district. The National Register of Historic Places includes nationally recognized historic districts and places.

Household: A household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families

living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

I

Impervious surfaces: Surfaces that hinder or block the absorption of water such as a roof, road, sidewalk or paved parking lot. Large amounts of impervious surfaces increases drainage demand.

Infill: The development of vacant or underdeveloped land in areas that are otherwise partially or fully developed. This may range from the construction of a new house on a vacant lot in an older subdivision to a new commercial building on a vacant lot in the Downtown.

Infrastructure: The underlying foundation or basic framework of a City, including streets, parks, bridges, sewers, streetlights and other utilities.

Incentives: Reward for a specific behavior, designed to encourage that behavior.

J**K****L**

Land Use Transitions: A means of buffering between higher and lower intensity uses. It is generally considered desirable to shield residential areas from the effects of intense land uses, such as noise, bright lights and traffic congestion. This goal can often be achieved by locating a transitional land use between intense and less intense land uses, such as low intensity offices between a shopping center and single-family houses, or through buffering and screening, and additional setbacks.

Landmark: Distinctive natural or built feature which provides orientation or recognition, helping to give a location some distinction from other places.

M

Mixed Use: A building can include mixed uses either horizontally (for example: first floor-retail, second floor-office, third floor-residential) or vertically (individual tenant spaces dedicated to retail, office, and residential uses).

Multi-use Paths: Trails that usually paved to allow use by all forms of non-motorized transportation, such as bicycles, pedestrians and skaters.

N

Natural Buffer Areas: Areas where stream valleys, vegetation and/or grade changes are naturally occurring and not the result of planting or earth moving. These areas provide separation between land uses, particularly between land uses of differing intensity, such as residential and nonresidential uses.

Natural Corridors: Linear land areas left in a natural state, especially associated with streams and rivers. See also Greenway.

Natural Environment: Land characterized by having minimal to no alteration of appearance by people.

Natural Resource Areas and Preserves:

Natural resource areas and preserves are open spaces or parkland that are set aside for preservation due to significant natural characteristics, as an open space buffer for other development, or to save remnants of landscapes that are unique to a particular place.

Neo-traditional: A design approach based on the characteristics of traditional neighborhood and community planning. This includes higher densities, smaller lots, shallow front yards, front porches, detached garages,

and alleys. Retail and civic uses are clustered in nodes walkable from neighborhoods. Open space is formally set aside as centrally located parks. See Traditional Neighborhood Design.

O

Open Space: Land reserved from development as a relief from the effects of urbanization. It is often intended to be used for passive recreation purposes, but may also include pedestrian plazas or active recreation areas.

Overlay Zoning: A type of zoning district that modifies another, underlying zoning district. All property that has an overlay zoning district also has an underlying, basic zoning designation. Overlay zoning districts are usually concerned with only a few regulatory aspects of the total zoning of the property.

P**Pedestrian-Oriented Development:**

A kind of urban form and land development pattern that is conducive to pedestrian access and circulation rather than or in addition to automobile or transit service. Buildings connect to the sidewalk system and provide facilities for bikes. Density is often higher than suburban environments. These developments are typically higher in density to ensure there is sufficient development to encourage walking. Most people will not walk further than 10-minutes, which is about a distance of a ¼ to ½ mile.

Planned Unit Development: A project consisting of individually owned parcels of land together with common areas and facilities that are owned by an association of which the owners of all the parcels are members.

Public Art: Art that is owned by the public or a non-profit organization and displayed in a public space. Public art is often utilized to add character to a community, emphasize something special or the history of a community or location, and can use a host of mediums (sculpture, landscaping, pavers, painted murals, etc.).

Q

Quality of Life: The attributes or amenities that combine to make an area a good place to live. Examples include the availability of political, educational, and social support systems; good relations among constituent groups; healthy built and natural environments; and economic opportunities for individuals and businesses.

R

Regulatory: The control of something by rules or governing actions controlled by the law originating from policy.

Retail, Big Box: A single-tenant, freestanding retail building that can range in size from 50,000 square feet to over 125,000 square feet in gross floor area.

Retail, Medium Box: A single-tenant, freestanding retail building that can range in size from 15,000 square feet to 50,000 square feet in gross floor area.

Retail, Small Box: A single-tenant, freestanding retail building in size less than 15,000 square feet in gross floor area.

Rezoning: A process whereby the zoning of a piece of property changes by City Council from one district to another.

Right of Way (ROW): The ROW is the total public strip of land within which there is public control and common right of passage and within which pavement, sidewalks, bike paths and some utility lines are located.

Roundabouts: Modern traffic circles that apply engineering principles to a circular intersection as opposed to a traffic signal controlled intersection. Provides for continuous traffic movement that is self-monitored to ensure safety. Roundabouts can result in fewer collisions and pedestrian conflicts than signalized intersections.

S

Scale: The size of a building or structure in relation to a human, varying from intimate to monumental.

Smart Growth: Environmentally-sensitive land development with the goals of minimizing dependence on auto transportation, reducing air pollution, and making infrastructure investments more efficient.

Strip Development: The tendency of land next to major roadways to develop commercially, on an individual, lot-by-lot basis, with few other land uses. Strip development may be small business, such as automobile shops, convenience stores and fast-food restaurants, one after another for blocks, or rows of shopping centers or combinations of the two. Usually strip development is associated with direct automobile access and visibility from the thoroughfare.

Sustainability: (1) A concept that allows for a comfortable way of living by achieving a realistic and achievable balance between the resource demands of environmental, economic and social requirements. (2) An aspect of development and land use that minimizes the use of resources, conserves ecosystems, and creates healthy built environments and landscapes for present and future generations.

Sustainable Development: Development with the goal of preserving environmental quality, natural resources and livability for present and future generations. Sustainable initiatives work to ensure efficient use of resources.

T

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): An infrastructure funding mechanism by which the net increase in property taxes resulting from private development is captured for a limited period of time and used to fund related public infrastructure, such as road and utility improvements.

TIF District: TIF districts are aimed at eliminating blight, rehabilitating declining property values and promoting industry.

Town Gown: A term used by planners and urban designers to illuminate the relationship between institutions of higher learning and the towns or cities in which they are located.

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND): TND is a design approach that borrows from traditional city planning concepts, particularly those of the years 1900-1920, and applies them to modern living. New urbanism embodies these characteristics with housing, shops, workplaces, parks, and civic facilities integrated into close knit communities that are walkable and have ready access to transit. Also referred to as Neo-Traditionalism.

Traffic Calming: Usually a component of traditional neighborhood design, traffic calming uses physical design features, such as street trees, landscaping bump outs and textured pavement to slow automobile traffic passing through neighborhoods. The intention is to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods and to make them more pedestrian friendly by slowing or discouraging traffic.

Traffic Impact Study (TIS): An analysis of certain new developments to determine the impact on the surrounding transportation system.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): A program that allows landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a more suitable parcel of land within the same jurisdiction. TDR programs establish "sending areas" and "receiving areas" for development rights.

Transit: The conveyance of people locally from one place to another in multi-passenger vehicles along determined routes on a fixed schedule. Usually this term applies to ground transportation other than the automobile.

Buses, trains and trolleys are forms of transit. Autos and vans can also be used to provide transit service such as car pooling, if those vehicles contain more than one occupant.

Transit-Oriented Design (TOD): A kind of urban form and land development pattern that is conducive to being served by transit, rather than by the automobile. Usually transit-oriented development implies higher density, mixed-use developments within walking distance (usually within ½ mile) from a transit stop. To make transit operate efficiently, the number of people riding transit must be maximized, and transit-oriented development must emphasize pedestrian accessibility. Consequently, high density residential uses and concentrations of nonresidential uses, particularly high employment generating uses, are grouped within a ½ mile of transit stops, with land use intensity increasing with closeness to the stop.

U

Urban sprawl: Urban sprawl is a term used to describe a pattern of low density, decentralized development spread over a wide area. Sprawl usually involves automobile dependent development patterns and less efficient use of land or capital facilities. It is costlier to maintain infrastructure and provide services to lower density development than to higher density development.

V

Variance: Exceptions to zoning laws.

Viewshed: The landscape or topography visible from a geographic point, especially that having aesthetic value.

W

Watershed: The area that drains into a particular river, stream or lake.

Wayfinding: Wayfinding is the ability of a person to find his or her way to a given destination.

Wetlands: Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Some wetlands are not easily recognized, often because they are dry during part of the year. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

X

Y

Z

Zoning: Zoning is a map-based system of guiding land use development that divides a city into land-use zones. It specifies the types of land use, setbacks, lot sizes, and restrictions for each piece of property, and affects what an individual can do with the land and the way a neighborhood develops. For example, land can be zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial uses.