

DOWNTOWN TIFFIN

STRATEGIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT PLAN

CITY OF TIFFIN, OHIO

MAY 2016



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our design and planning team would like to thank the Steering Committee, as well as SIEDC leadership and staff for their support of this planning initiative.

The community's continued focus on the importance of a healthy downtown is paying dividends as evidenced by the number of real estate investments and new business openings currently underway. Renewed interest from the public and private sectors in downtown is on the rise and the Steering Committee's leadership and passion for a vibrant downtown is a critical part of this movement. When local leadership voices a positive statements regarding the community and in particular downtown, investors listen.

Thank you for your commitment to making downtown Tiffin a special place today and exemplary place in the future.

STEERING COMMITTEE

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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Tiffin's Downtown is on the rise. The Downtown Tiffin Strategic Plan prepared in 2010 has served as an excellent roadmap for the community and has been endorsed by the downtown stakeholders. As we have heard during our work in numerous Midwestern communities and as we have read in various urban demographic publications, the younger professionals are highly mobile and are looking for urban living, walkable neighborhoods, and communities with a strong sense of "place." They want to see more restaurants, services and things to do, and they want to live in vibrant downtowns. But a vibrant downtown is not just for a select demographic or generation. It should appeal to multi-generational residents, young families, young professionals, empty nesters and seniors.

Our consulting team's work in the Northwest Ohio region over the past 15 years has us convinced there is a great untapped potential for downtown Tiffin. This Growth & Development Plan echoes previous Greater Tiffin comprehensive and downtown plans from the past: take advantage of the key assets – the Sandusky River, landmark businesses, the classic Ritz Theater, the nearby Tiffin & Heidelberg Universities and the historic neighborhoods surrounding the downtown.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Downtown Growth & Development Plan is to:

- Identify public and private catalytic development opportunities in and adjacent to downtown Tiffin
- Prepare conceptual development plans and exhibits to frame the development potential
- Engage real estate developers, property owners and equity investors to consider real estate development in downtown Tiffin
- Provide new Architectural Design Guidelines for the Downtown Historic Districts
- Serve as a living document for marketing opportunities



Seneca County Farmer's Market



Ritz Theater



Historic Homes



Downtown Tiffin

“If you don’t know where you’re going you might not get there.” -Yogi Bera

This document identifies places where redevelopment should be concentrated to spark additional economic development activity. This document contains specific concepts for key sites and economic development metrics for demonstration projects to implement the vision. As important as the private development initiatives are to a successful redevelopment program, it can often times be public improvements that catalyze investment into the urban core. Development of creative public realm enhancements, streetscapes, and green spaces will spark renewed interest in downtown. A vibrant downtown will encourage people to live nearby and frequent quality retail businesses and restaurants within and adjacent to the core of downtown Tiffin.

This Growth & Development Plan complements the previously created action-oriented 2010 Strategic Downtown Tiffin Plan. The 2010 Plan addresses key issues, builds upon previous work, and input from stakeholders to implement catalytic project development. This plan addresses:

- Direction on the right mix of land uses based on the residential and commercial market information provided by SIEDC.
- Recommendations for future zoning adjustments based on the proposed land-use strategies.
- Urban living including housing and entertainment for a vibrant downtown.
- Uses at a scale to transition to the adjoining stable neighborhoods.
- A physical framework for downtown form including building locations and height, streetscape, parking, public space and pedestrian amenities.
- A design plan and transportation concept directions that complements the planned catalytic development.
- Targeted redevelopment strategies for certain properties (i.e. catalytic projects).



PROCESS

The process employed by our team started with a review of the 2010 Downtown Tiffin Strategic Plan to determine what initiatives were started and or completed as discussed in the recommendations section of the document. Understanding the Strategic Plan has been implemented through the efforts of select committees as determined by SIEDC, we wanted to focus our work on specific private & public sector projects that we believed could be catalytic and attract further investment dollars into downtown. To that end, our process included the following steps:

- Review of the 2010 Downtown Tiffin Strategic Plan
- Strategic planning sessions with the Steering Committee
- Interactive Downtown Summit
- Downtown quality of life survey
- Downtown planning charrette
- Key stakeholder individual interviews
- Discussions with real estate professionals
- Review of current Architectural Design Guidelines
- Review of market data
- Discussions with SIEDC staff

P L A N N I N G P R O C E S S



RELATIONSHIP TO 2010 PLAN

The intent of the Downtown Strategic Growth & Development Plan is to identify near term catalytic opportunities and long-term public realm investment to catalyze additional downtown investment. The initiative is NOT an update to the 2010 Strategic Downtown Plan nor is it our intention to rewrite the fundamental strategies and design principles outlined in the previous plan.

Summary

In 2010, Tiffin’s strategic downtown plan was created. It was put together with the Main Street Principles in mind and follows the Main Street four-point system. The Main Street Program, a brand of Heritage Ohio which was developed from the National Historic Trust to focus on the long-term revitalization of America’s downtowns.

Main Street is a comprehensive program that focuses on multiple aspects of the revitalization of the downtown at one time, called the four point approach. The four points of focus are: Operations, Design, Marketing, and Business Enhancement. These committees were formed in September of 2014 and immediately began assessing the downtown plan for direction and to prioritize and implement the recommendations.

This plan can be used as a guide for the revitalization of downtown Tiffin. There are strategies and action tasks within that plan that each committee is working on to this day, but there is also need for specific development plans to allow the community to continue moving forward. At the time of publication of this document, 70% of the recommended tasks are either underway, ongoing or have been completed.

To meet this need, Tiffin City Council approved funding for the Growth and Development Plan in 2014.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE RECENT PAST

There has been much accomplished in the pursuit of a healthy and vibrant downtown. Below we have listed activities and accomplishments that have taken place in the recent past.

Early Accomplishments

- The Architectural Board of Review was created in 2001 which allows the City to apply for downtown redevelopment grants, strengthen the downtown economy and increase property values. This is also an opportunity to increase awareness of the historic value of the downtown.
- Over five years ago, Tiffin Tomorrow was created to focus on the revitalization of downtown Tiffin as well as promoting and encouraging the economic development of downtown.
- The Downtown Strategic Plan (Phases I and II) developed during 2008-2010.
- Jazzin Tiffin Festival implemented in 2009.
- Downtown banners and hanging baskets installed in 2011.
- Downtown Streetscape (Phase I) was started.



Melissa Perry Photography storefront

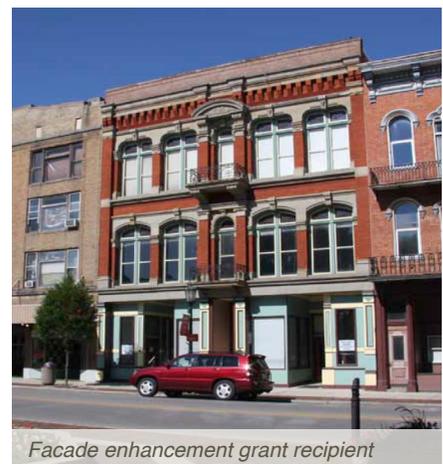


Surge storefront

- Downtown liquor license district implemented.
- Downtown Tiffin Farmer’s Market created.

Accomplishments in 2014:

- Hired a dedicated (30 hrs per week) Downtown Development Coordinator in June of 2014.
- Façade Enhancement Program implemented in September, 2014. This is a 50% reimbursement of eligible storefront improvements on facades in historic downtown. There were 11 different approvals over approximately 3 months in the last quarter of 2014 and over \$150,000 worth of reinvestment in the downtown.
- Three new businesses opened downtown in 2014 including: The Beehive Cafe, Surge Staffing, and Gem Yoga.
- All four committees from the Main Street four-point approach created.
- Successful “passing of the torch” of the Jazzin Tiffin Festival from Tiffin Tomorrow to SIEDC

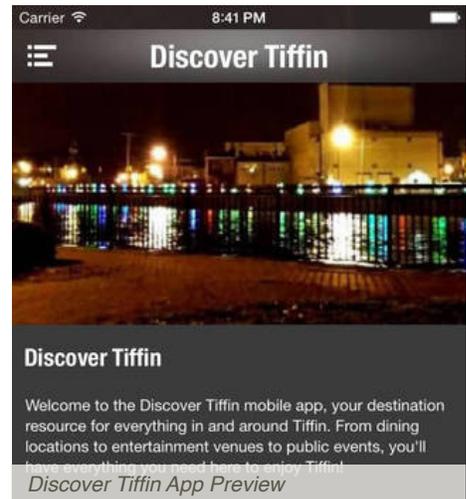


Accomplishments in 2015/2016:

- 12 new businesses opened downtown including: JT’s Bagel Bar, Melissa Perry Photography, Northwest Ohio Knights Of Columbus Insurance, Another Man’s Treasure, KKR Consult, Simply Susan’s, Paks Karate, Family and Community Services (Laird), Vintage Chick, Weathered Shack, RE/MAX Realty, and Ma Chere Claire Boutique.
- The City increased the façade grant budget from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for the façade Enhancement Program in 2015
- 17 façade approvals in 2015 resulted in over \$700,000 of investment. This program generated 28 approvals and a total investment of over \$850,000 from 2014-2015.
- Tiffin was selected to join the Heritage Ohio Main Street Program in December 2015. The City first expressed interest in joining this program in 1977.
- Successful implementation of the six top events for 2015: Farmer’s Markets, Art Walk/Art Fair, Around the Town for Students, Jazzin’ Tiffin, Winterfest and Young Professionals Historic Bar Tour.



- The Jazzin’ Tiffin Festival grew with the addition of the Thursday Jazz nights at the Pioneer Mill and the Friday night Educational Workshop for university students.
- “Discover Tiffin” phone app developed.
- The Farmer’s Market experience was enhanced with new activities, vendors, and music, as well as doubling the frequency that they take place.
- Main Street Committees were established and are actively implementing tasks from the 2010 plan.
- Urban Audit completed by SIEDC.
- The Downtown Growth and Development Planning initiative was begun by SIEDC and the City of Tiffin. This will identify and guide catalytic project development in the downtown.
- A downtown signage program was undertaken including kiosks, wayfinding and signage to enhance the downtown customer experience.
- Outreach visits to 140+ downtown businesses were made to help these companies succeed and grow.
- An initial draft of the new Architectural Board of Review Guidelines was developed in 2015 with an intention of the guidelines being finalized and implemented in the first half of 2016.
- Improvements to the relationship between the college students and the downtown are underway through the implementation of a downtown discount card with 28 businesses participating. In conjunction with that, a successful “Around the Town” networking event was created with 1,000+ students and 60+ businesses participating on the courthouse lawn.
- The Fire Department, City Engineer, the Architectural Board of Review and Richland County collaborated to create a brochure to ease the daunting process of building rehabilitation.



SECTION TWO: MARKET CONDITIONS

GENERAL MARKET TRENDS

“Recent demographic and lifestyle shifts show that consumers of all ages increasingly want to live in walkable, mixed-use, transit rich communities. The most recent economic downturn confirmed this trend: the places that best held their value were compact areas that offered mobility choices, local parks and nearby retail and transit. Banks and insurers, once hesitant to underwrite unproven development models, are now increasingly aware of the value of these communities.” --Excerpt, 2010 Strategic Plan

The preferential shift toward walkable communities with a sense of place represents an enormous opportunity for the development community. Compact, walkable communities provide economic benefits to developers through higher real estate sale prices, enhanced marketability and faster sales or leases than conventional development, according to a 2010 report by Active Living Research.

Two of the largest and most sought after market segments – millennials and baby boomers – are increasingly choosing vibrant, walkable communities. Study after study shows that millennials place less value in cars or car ownership, instead spending money on shared experiences such as food and music and art.

The appeal also extends to baby boomers. Although surveys show that the majority of the 55-64 year old demographic prefers to “age in place,” those who do move increasingly want to live in areas where they can walk and bike to amenities such as restaurants, libraries, parks and cultural activities.

There have not been major changes in the market conditions for Greater Tiffin over the past five years or significant shifts in the population or demographic characteristics of the community since the release of the 2010 Strategic Plan. However, new downtown business openings, release of redevelopment plans for the former courthouse site, evidence of interest in private market rate downtown housing and additional investments by both universities into their campuses are all

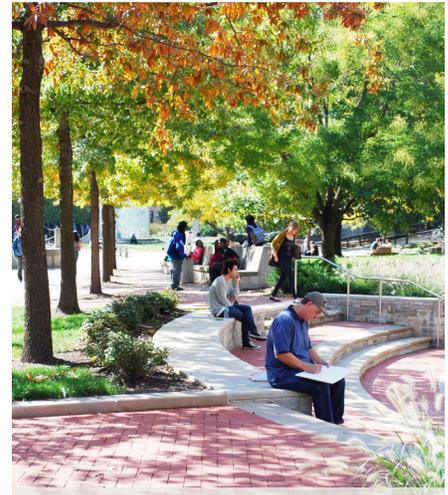


positive indicators regarding the future health of downtown Tiffin. In addition, the City of Tiffin has made downtown a priority with discussions regarding the development of city owner real estate and prioritization of downtown public infrastructure investments. If additional market information is desired, SIEDC and/or the Chamber of Commerce can provide relevant market information.

DOWNTOWN SUMMIT

A Downtown Summit community event was held in the Great Hall on Heidelberg’s campus in May as a part of the consulting team’s research and community engagement process. The event was designed to bring experts to Tiffin to share their perspectives on urban development issues facing communities such as Tiffin today. Over 150 people attended The Summit from the community. The event was well received by the attendees and sparked meaningful dialogue among the participants both during the event and after.

Speakers included members of the Gossman Group and Edge Planning & Design team, as well as two additional experts who spoke regarding university/community relations and urban housing. There is now a desire to hold an annual Downtown Summit to review progress, discuss strategy, celebrate the successes of downtown redevelopment efforts and hear about trends in downtown development. The next summit is scheduled for May 2016.



Columbus State Community College, Edge



Craig Gossman moderates



Lisa Patt McDaniel on Housing



Tedd Hardesty on Placemaking

The Program

- Craig Gossman, AIA, Gossman Group - Moderator
- David Zak & Amy Reinhart, SIEDC – Current Market Understanding
- Tedd Hardesty, ASLA, Edge Landscape Architecture – Urban Placemaking
- Brad Strader, AICP, LSL Planning – Urban Transportation Issues
- Lisa Patt McDaniel, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Director of Community Development – Downtown Housing
- Terry Foegler, Terry Foegler & Associates – University / Community Relations

KEY POINTS TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE SUMMIT

Placemaking

- Successful downtown revitalization programs have recognized the value of quality placemaking.
- Communities that can reinvent themselves and provide great civic places for all demographics of people will gain a competitive advantage
- Placemaking can create a stronger business district regardless of the business theme by linking destinations, landmarks and downtown amenities for an enhanced customer experience.
- History can play a critical role in telling a story of place
- Well-designed and placed amenities can provide the “creature comforts” that are often overlooked.
- A well thought out wayfinding signing system can add a level of sophistication to downtown while helping visitors navigate the urban environment.
- Developing financing opportunities for the private sector to help fund placemaking enhancements is important to ascertain government is not the sole means of paying for these investments.



Transportation

- Transportation concerns go beyond traffic and parking.
- Modern downtowns are looking for ways to enhance the visitors experience through traffic calming and alternative modes of transportation.
- Integrating opportunities for pedestrians & bicyclists to migrate the urban environment efficiently and safely are critical to the health of downtowns. This is perhaps even more critical in College towns where students try to find the cheapest and safest means to travel from campus to downtown destinations.
- Creating pedestrian and bicyclist amenities demonstrates a community’s commitment to elevating their urban environment and to embrace modern city business and living values for their residents and visitors alike.

Downtown Housing

- Downtown housing in smaller and medium sized communities is growing faster than seen over the last 20 years.
- Most housing occurring is be developed with a public/private partnership finance component. (New Market tax credits, historic tax credits, CRA incentives to mention a few).

- Renovation of historic buildings into mixed-use projects that include upper story housing is a popular approach for most urban developers.
- Utilization of historic tax credits often times can make a red-lined project economically feasibly.
- New in-fill development is possible today when public/private partnerships can help buy-down the land costs.
- In addition to downtown housing, historic edge neighborhoods are excellent areas for a community to focus new investment. First-time home buyers, homesteading or energy upgrade programs are excellent ways to incentivize new buyers or existing homeowners to invest into these terrific neighborhoods.

University / Community Relations

- “Town Gown” issues are not a new phenomenon.
- Each community and university relationship is unique.
- Areas of concern regarding edge of campus housing typically are related to property maintenance, building code compliance, resident noise and unruliness.
- Safety of students is an on-going concern in light of the chain of tragic events that have taken place on college and high school campuses. Safe and well lit pedestrian routes are crucial components of university/community physical connections.
- Some communities have some concern over the real estate tax exemption status of university property however strong arguments can be made for the community benefit of having a college or university within the corporate limits of the town. Local developers, restaurateurs, retailers and other community services benefit greatly from the students, faculty and staff of the institutions.
- This benefit can be greatly enhanced when adjacent commercial districts or close-by downtowns take on a dual personality of campus & town. The brand identity of the town is raised when visitors and consumers sense an association between the institution and town.

SECTION THREE: URBAN FRAMEWORK PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Refining the Urban Design Framework Plan as previously developed in the 2010 Strategic Plan was an important task in our current planning effort. In order to address this, our team investigated changes in the development activities in downtown Tiffin over the past five years and discussed increase in development interest by business owners and real estate investors. We also explored the downtown in a level of detail not performed during the creation of the 2010 plan with an emphasis on opportunity sites and public realm opportunities.

Of major consideration during the five year period was the demolition of the historic Seneca County Courthouse and the government authorities' vision for a new Joint County/City Justice Center to be built on the former courthouse site at Washington & Market Streets. This site is a critical piece of urban fabric in downtown and could be a tremendous downtown asset if developed properly. Properties located adjacent to the new JJC could see a significant increase in value if an urban design plan is executed to create a "campus" for the county and city civic buildings and services while linking other key assets in the civic core of downtown such as the Library, historic East Tower, and potential public realm enhancements.

While the Civic Core is important to unite government services in a high quality campus environment, additional downtown development opportunities exist as well in other areas such as the transitional neighborhoods between downtown and the Heidelberg & University of Tiffin campuses. Development opportunities also exist along Washington Street, the Sandusky River, Rock Creek and near-by neighborhoods. Our team feels strongly that identifying development opportunities that focus on housing, urban livability, and pedestrian amenities will help to create a distinguishable brand for downtown Tiffin and set it apart from competing communities.

The Urban Design Framework Plan as developed in the 2010 plan is shown on the next page and recalls the primary focus areas under consideration at that time. The revised Urban Framework Plan illustrates the focus areas under consideration today. While the Civic Core area remains a key area of focus, it has been expanded slightly to the east and south to include the historic East Tower. We have also included the trail head near Calvert School at Josiah Hedges Park. We have broadened the riverfront development zones to include the Fort Ball area to the north as well as the riverfront area south of Perry down to front street. Additional illustrations and recommendations can be found in the Implementation section of this plan.



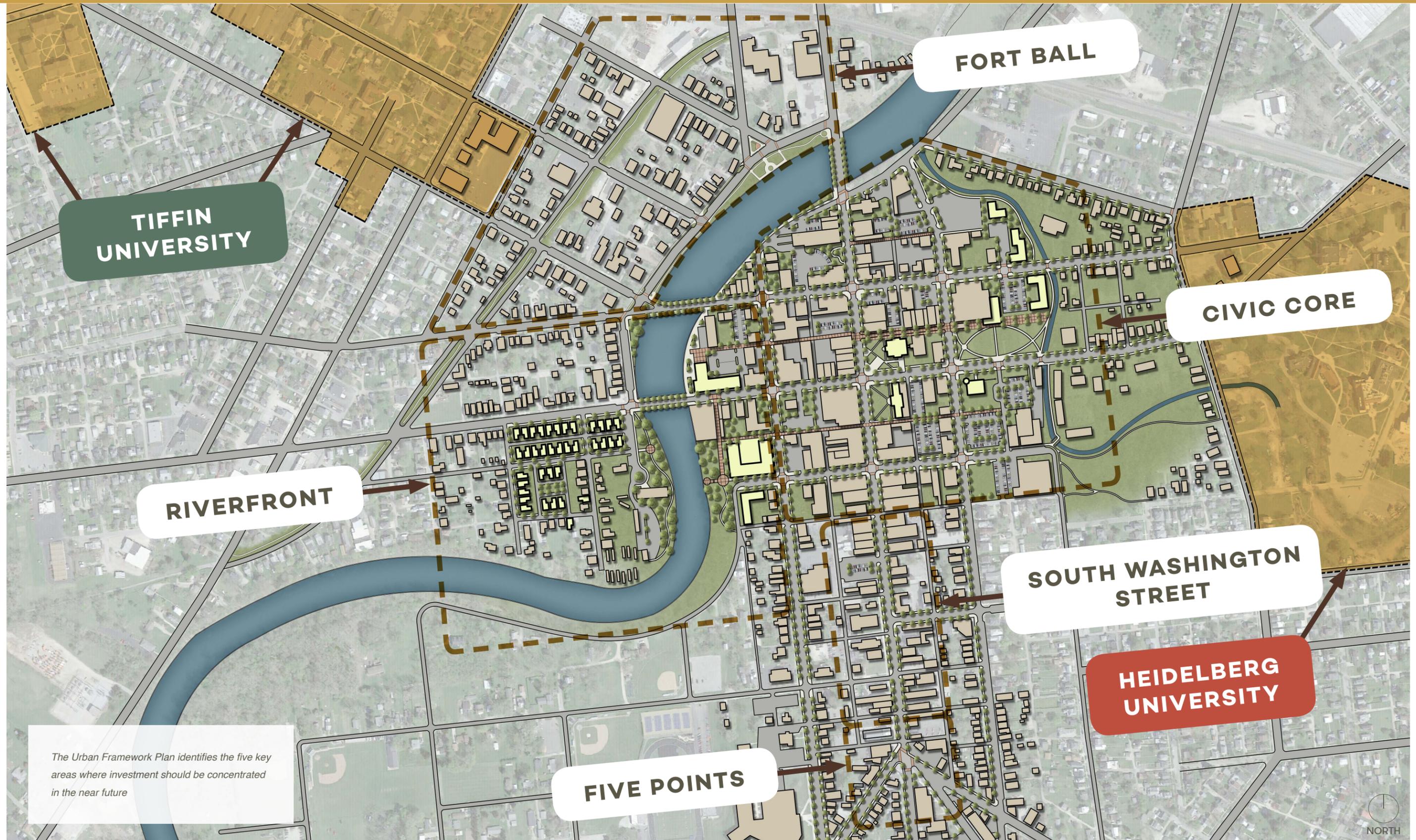
REDEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INITIATIVES

PLACEMAKING

The economic opportunity for great placemaking is not limited to large cities. As the tide of the housing collapse recedes, many small towns, suburbs and rural communities find themselves in competition with one another. Communities that can reinvent themselves and provide great civic places for all demographics of people will gain a competitive advantage. Using great placemaking is a way to attract investment into the community, foster growth and increase revenues. Communities as small as Soldotna, Alaska (population 4,163, 16% growth since 2000) and as large as Philadelphia and Orlando are being recognized for their innovative approaches to placemaking and the tangible benefits that it is having to the communities' growth (cf. Smart Growth America, 2014.)

Great placemaking is the result of coordinated planning, urban design, visioning, implementation and management efforts that capitalize on a community's assets, inspiration, and potential and market opportunities. A vibrant, walkable downtown district is a memorable place.





The Urban Framework Plan identifies the five key areas where investment should be concentrated in the near future



Beautiful streets, thriving commercial spaces, desirable homes and apartments, parks and green spaces, and cultural amenities together provide a community identity and brand.

Placemaking has gained such credibility among developers because it also generates a better return on investment. In summary, great public spaces have many real and measurable economic benefits.

TOWN/GOWN

What does the term “Town / Gown” mean? Simply stated, it acknowledges the relationship between Institutions of higher learning and the communities in which they reside. From the beginning, when universities and colleges were first placed into towns around the world, a certain tension was created between the institution and community. Driven by assumption and fueled by misconception, camps from both sides have debated over issues regarding community values, property ownership, interface with neighborhoods, taxation, social behavior, and the list goes on.

Today the City of Tiffin and its partnering institutions, Heidelberg University and Tiffin University, seem to recognize the value and benefit to having two fine institutions within the town and the universities appreciate the small town charm Tiffin offers their students and visitors.

An interesting question was posed to attendees at a community forum during the 2010 planning initiative: *Do you consider Tiffin to be a College Town or a Town with Colleges in it?* The consensus at that time was that Tiffin is a town with colleges in it, as opposed to a college town.

TOWN / GOWN DEVELOPMENT

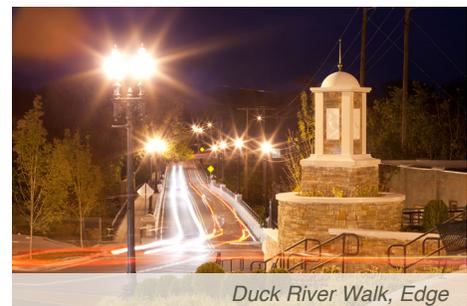
As, Heidelberg University, Tiffin University and the city look to the future, opportunities for collaboration should continue to be explored. Policies and programs are of major importance to facilitate dialogue, partnerships and community interface. However, physical development that benefits all concerned speaks volumes regarding Tiffin’s evolution as a college town.



Cheapside Pavilion, Gossman Group



Cheapside Pavilion, Gossman Group



Duck River Walk, Edge

Opportunities to physically link the campuses with directly to downtown through redevelopment of transitional adjacent areas, such as the Fort Ball neighborhood or the properties that border Rock Creek, should be investigated.

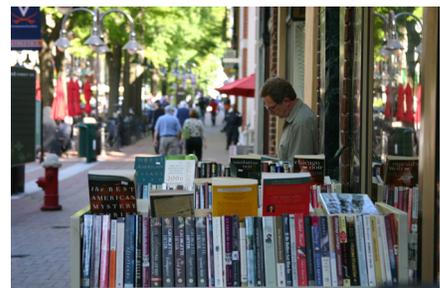
Ultimately, a collaborative town/gown effort to develop a project in downtown for university, community and visitor use would be a major achievement. Imagine a downtown cultural/education center where students, residents and visitors could come together in a unique setting where the diversity of the community could be celebrated.

Perhaps a common retail or food establishment for both Heidelberg and Tiffin Universities could be explored, setting the stage for other complimentary development such as a home for the International Cultural Center, student housing and a business/technology incubator. Visitors frequenting the center could take advantage of downtown’s retail and food services offerings and perhaps develop new businesses for Tiffin through a business incubator.

The City’s motto, *An Education Community*, speaks to the importance of this community value. Without question, Tiffin can become a nationally acclaimed community by blending local values and their unique educational environment.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS / HOUSING / REINVESTMENT

Housing choices that appeal to different lifestyles, ages, and income levels are needed to support the Downtown. A variety of choices are currently provided in and near downtown, including upper floor apartment units downtown and single and multi-family family housing in near-by neighborhoods around the downtown core. However, the quality level of much of the housing stock does not match up to the demands of the new wave of demographic renters or buyers. A variety of quality housing choices should include rental and ownership opportunities for young professionals first-time homebuyers, families, students, retirees and empty-nesters. Condominium housing is another option to consider as the economy strengthens



Coordinated planning of these neighborhoods in and around downtown will help achieve the following goals:

- Provide affordable housing and rental opportunities for students.
- Provide attractive housing opportunities for professionals and families.
- Preserve and maintain historic and affordable housing choices.
- Create funding opportunities for rehabilitation of existing homes.
- Infill vacant sites with residential and mixed use developments.
- Redevelop unattractive and obsolete sites.
- Create pedestrian amenities to link neighborhoods and Downtown.

Strategies should include:

Infill

Neighborhoods around downtown have vacant lots that serve as opportunities for infill housing. The city of Tiffin owns properties within downtown that serve as in-fill housing development opportunities as well. Filling empty lots is a way to build up the neighborhood and bump existing home values. New construction should be similar in massing, scale and materials to adjacent existing homes. Often times, real estate developers use programs such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits to create affordable housing for low-income families and first-time homebuyers. Creative financing options will help the developer accomplish his financial objectives while bringing a modern & competitive project to the marketplace.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of existing neighborhoods is a critical component of community development especially when an imbalance between rental and home ownership exists. Finding incentives to help underwrite the costs of rehabilitation and assist families with the goals of home ownership can be extremely beneficial to the physical condition of the neighborhoods and to the economics for the municipality through increased real estate and income tax from the qualified buyers.



Covington Center City, Gossman Group



Greene Town Center, Edge



It is worth exploring opportunities to provide state and federal funds or private foundation funds to help support neighborhood revitalization. Public/private partnering can secure funds to maintain current neighborhood values while promoting new or rehabilitated high quality housing.

Municipalities and/or utility companies can also offer energy incentive programs for upgrades to appliances, windows & doors, insulation and other winterization improvements. Some communities offer incentives to lure fresh homebuyers to older neighborhoods by offering tax abatements to first time homebuyers

Targeted Neighborhoods

Fort Ball

Between Tiffin University and downtown, Fort Ball neighborhood is named for the historic military depot memorialized by The Indian Maiden statue on Frost Parkway. The homes in this neighborhood are larger, historic single-family homes of which some have been converted into multi-family. This district is mixed with industrial development that is concentrated to the north east. Preserving the historic homes with rehabilitation, it is important to buffer residential uses from the industrial uses with landscaping and appropriate infill development.

Little Italy

Locals refer to the neighborhood that was once home to a number of Italian-American families. The neighborhood is adjacent to Tiffin University and has Served the university and industrial areas over the years. this neighborhood consists of traditional early twentieth-century, single-family housing.

Riverfront

The area adjacent to the river to the west of Downtown is the Riverfront District. Currently an uncoordinated mix of multi-story commercial buildings, single-family houses, a high-rise apartment complex and a few single-story commercial buildings, this area has many opportunities for redevelopment and infill. From fine-crafted Georgian architecture to prefabricated trailers, this eclectic mix provides a variety of housing choices that should be supplemented with infill development, including townhomes, single-family housing and mixed-use.

Downtown

Young adults want to live in walkable communities that provide convenient access to amenities. Elevating the quality and options for downtown housing will attract the demographic most interesting in residing in downtown and contribute to the vibrancy of the central core of Tiffin. More residents living in downtown will trigger more commercial development bringing more retail and restaurant choices to the community. It is said that one couple can have an annual economic impact on the downtown of over \$18,000 with access to convenient goods and services.

SECTION FOUR: LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

The provision of public services and the design of public infrastructure direct land use patterns. With careful consideration, Tiffin will direct that development to create a lively, well-designed downtown.

LAND USE

Since the 2010 plan, several new businesses such as Phat Cakes, Level Up game store, and Bailiwicks Coffee have moved into existing buildings. These businesses have helped liven consumer interest in the downtown. However, there are still underutilized buildings and vacant sites. Opportunity remains to enhance the downtown experience with more entertainment, restaurant, specialty retail and services. One tactic is to activate the first floor of buildings with more retail and restaurants. Upper floors could be filled with residential and office uses. Thoughtful restoration of facades and streetscape improvements would freshen the look of the downtown and infuse energy into the majestic but neglected historic buildings.



FUTURE LAND USE

Campus Extension

Uniquely situated between two campuses, Downtown benefits from Tiffin and Heidelberg Universities that have increased their engagement in downtown activities as they also invest in their respective campuses. Technology advancements in the 21st century have altered the roles of the university as an anchor institution by influencing the knowledge-based economy. By increasing connections, the universities can play an effective role in business assistance, startups, and technology transfer supporting the economic vitality of Tiffin.

Implementation:

- Create downtown university hub, such as bookstore or business incubator.
- Activate first floors along Washington, Market, Perry, and other strong commercial corridors with commercial uses.
- Recruit more restaurants and night time businesses to promote downtown as “the place” in Seneca County for food and beverage choices.
- Encourage upper floor residential through continued education of property owners regarding the use of historic tax credits.



Civic Core

As the County seat, Downtown Tiffin supports a significant number of public buildings and employees. Market Street carries most of the civic space, including city and county offices, courts, and a large public park where the old court house once stood in the center of town. In February 2015, County Commissioners chose the former court site for the development of a new court house. Centrally located and regionally significant, this site has the opportunity to serve as a lively town square that provides pedestrian amenities and promotes public gathering.

Two- to three-story narrow buildings with glass storefronts line Court Street, located along the north side of the court block. These buildings serve as a great transition from the public buildings, offering office space for lawyers and support services and upper floor residential space. Redesign of Court Street to be more pedestrian friendly, potentially closing the road to traffic, would enhance this transition by connecting the public space and commercial strip.

- Develop the court site with public open space, benches, pedestrian pathways, and attractive landscaping.
- Improve Court Street with wide sidewalks, street trees, and decorative street lighting.

South Washington Retail – Five Points

On the southern end of Downtown, South Washington is situated with attractive buildings and storefronts that currently house a variety of uses. This area, between Market Street and Five Points, has the highest concentration of commercial uses in Downtown. This corridor extends almost 2,000 feet. Successful retail strips are typically a maximum of 1,000 feet. Longer retail strips best function with anchor businesses or attractors at 1,000 foot increments. Along South Washington, the American Civil War Museum of Ohio sits in the middle of the corridor. A vacant lawn on the north side of this grand building is an ideal location to transform the passive space into a mini-park where the public can gather and rest.

To better accommodate pedestrians, the City should improve this corridor with pedestrian street crossings, street trees, decorative light posts, and benches. Those streetscape elements are currently provided on the northern end, between Market Street and the alleyway north of Main Street, but need to be extended south. On-street parking provides quick access to buildings, but hidden lots, unattractive public parking, and poor wayfinding make parking a difficult task for business patrons along this corridor.

- A wayfinding signing program is underway to address
- Continue Washington streetscape improvements south to Five Points.
- Develop a quality green space on the north side of the American Civil War Museum.
- Encourage awnings of quality design and materials per the Architectural Design Guidelines



Gateways and Public Realm

Transitions into the downtown should provide a visual experience to travelers that are positive and impressionable. As the east/west streets are one-ways, there are three main gateways to downtown: Perry Street at Rock Creek, Market Street at the bridge, and South Washington at the bridge.

Gateways are not always signing and landscaping. They can be high quality architecture within a dense entry point. The Ritz Theater and adjacent buildings on North Washington Street are good examples of this. Saint Joseph Catholic Church on South Washington Street is an excellent example of a landmark building serving as a gateway into a district or downtown. The most obvious example of non-architecture gateways into downtown Tiffin are the bridges spanning the Sandusky River and Rock Creek. Examples of ways to enhance several of these gateway elements in Tiffin are shown in Section Five; Implementation.

Beyond gateways, public realm improvements provide an opportunity to create safe and attractive spaces that increase accessibility for cars, pedestrians and bicycles and create vibrant areas. Public realm improvements may include:

- Alley improvements to create safe, attractive connections between parking and businesses.
- Continue the façade enhancement program to assist building owners in updates.
- Include proposed pathways in City Capital Improvements (CIP) planning.
- One-way to two-way street conversion analysis and planning. See Transportation section.
- Bridge improvements, including lighting, landscaping, murals, and structural improvement planning.
- Create a riverfront promenade to improve the connection between downtown, the river and the neighborhoods.

TRANSPORTATION

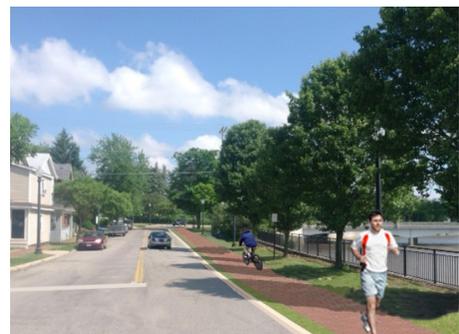
Land uses and transportation systems function interdependently. Establishing a link between transportation and planning practices ensures the protection of community character and a minimum level of service that is expected to move people and goods. This balance and good planning ensures a properly functioning transportation network.

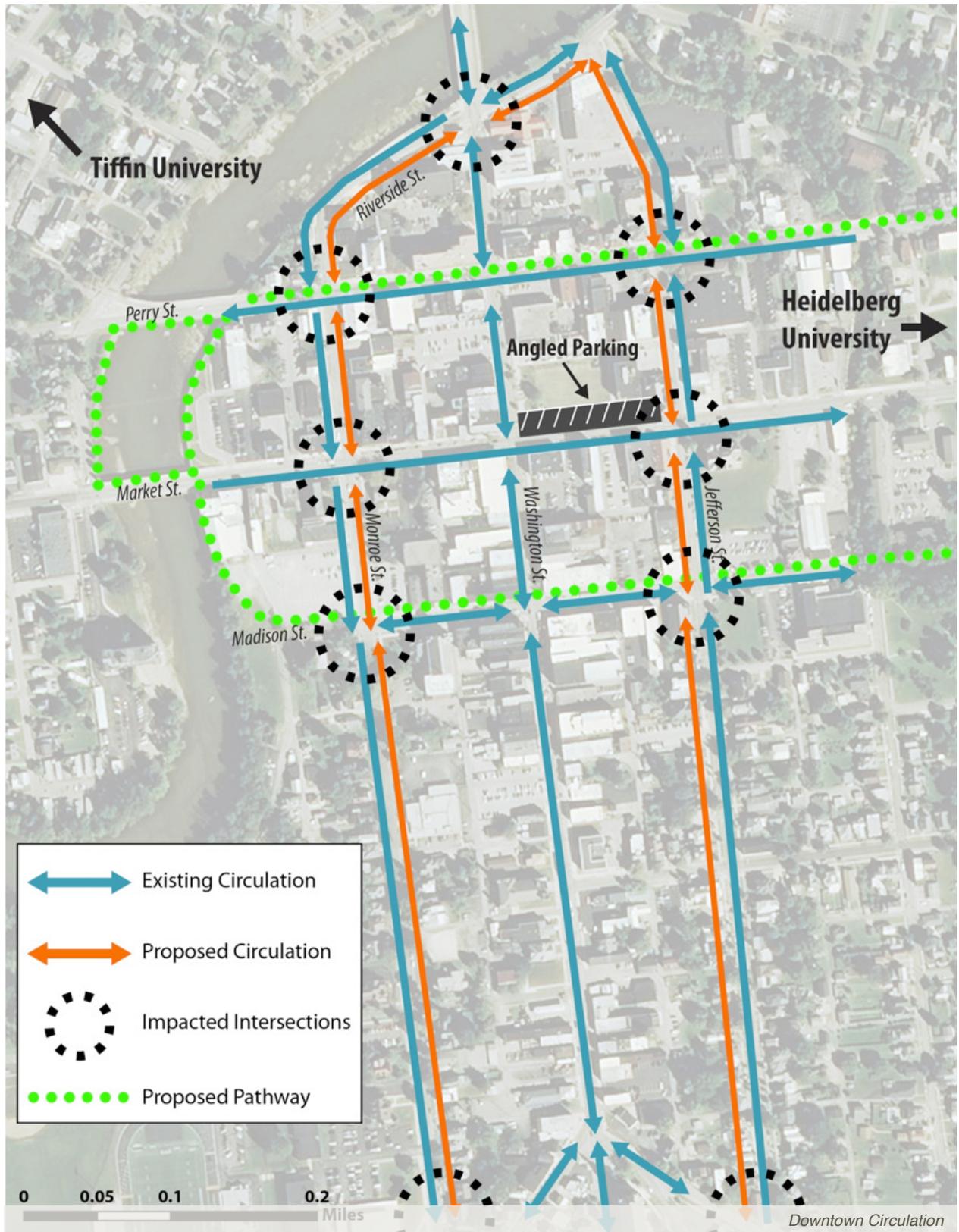
Three state routes carry the majority of traffic Downtown. The major streets are one-ways with the exception of Washington Street (the northern end of State Route 100) which carries two-way traffic north and south. Visitors from the west and north must cross the Sandusky River to enter downtown. Alleys support the grid-like traffic system by offering circulation and loading space for delivery trucks, pedestrian shortcuts, and access for vehicles in search of parking spots.

Together, the streets, alleys and sidewalks provided an effective means for pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The following recommendations are based on an analysis of existing conditions by transportation planners to more efficiently use this public space to provide a balanced network that meets the needs of all users, including autos, trucks, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Pedestrian Amenities

Visitors are more likely to stroll the streets of Downtown when they feel safe, are engaged, and are provided with amenities such as benches. Increasing the amount of pedestrian activity piques curiosity of drivers passing by and is generally good for business. The existing pathway along Frost Parkway





provides a nice opportunity for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy a stroll along the river while the existing streetscape provides a captivating experience through the downtown. However, both could benefit from improvements.

The riverfront is an underutilized downtown asset. Enhancing pedestrian access to and along the river while increasing the views of the river (bridge enhancements and streetscape) could create a stronger connection between neighborhoods and the downtown.

Replication of a pathway along the east side of the river would enhance the connection between downtown businesses and the river. Future commercial and residential developments should include entrances, patios, and landscaping on the riverfront. Additionally, a riverfront plaza with a shared road that accommodate pedestrians and cars would enhance that connection.

Suggested enhancements include continuing the following streetscape improvements where not already implemented:

- Continue streetscape improvements along Washington.
- Improve alleyways with paving, lighting, artwork, utility improvements, and landscaping.
- Use mid-block crossings and bumpouts at intersections to improve pedestrian crossings.
- Create engaging window displays along commercial corridors.
- Provide benches and waste receptacles along sidewalks.
- Create walkable riverfront and riverfront plaza.
- Erect a pedestrian bridge to connect Perry and Miami Streets and increase connectivity of downtown to Tiffin University and the Fort Ball neighborhood.
- Connect universities and downtown with pathways, enhanced streetscape, and pedestrian planning.



Bike Amenities

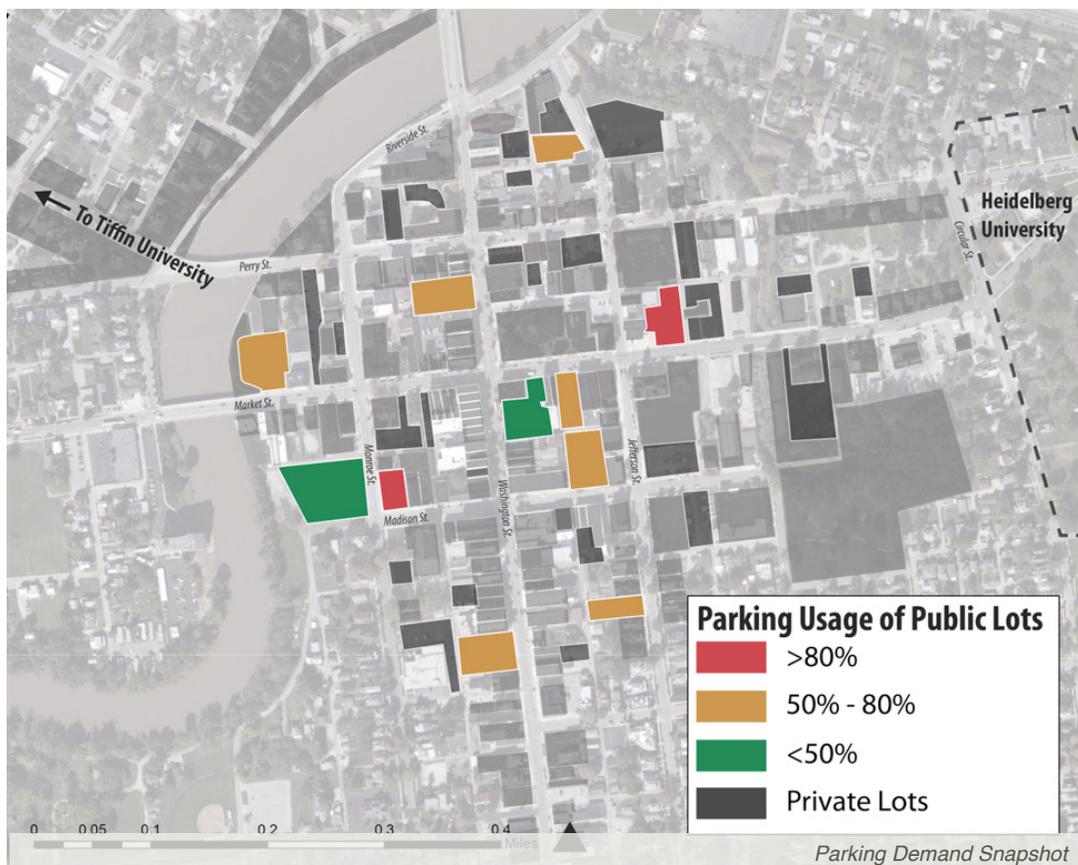
With the university anchored on both sides of Downtown, encouraging bicycle and pedestrian traffic between campuses and the Downtown is an easy strategy for increasing activity. Dedicated bike lanes on Perry and Market Streets would provide the most direct route between the two universities, make users feel safe, and create a linkage among cultural amenities including the Ritz, library, and civic area.

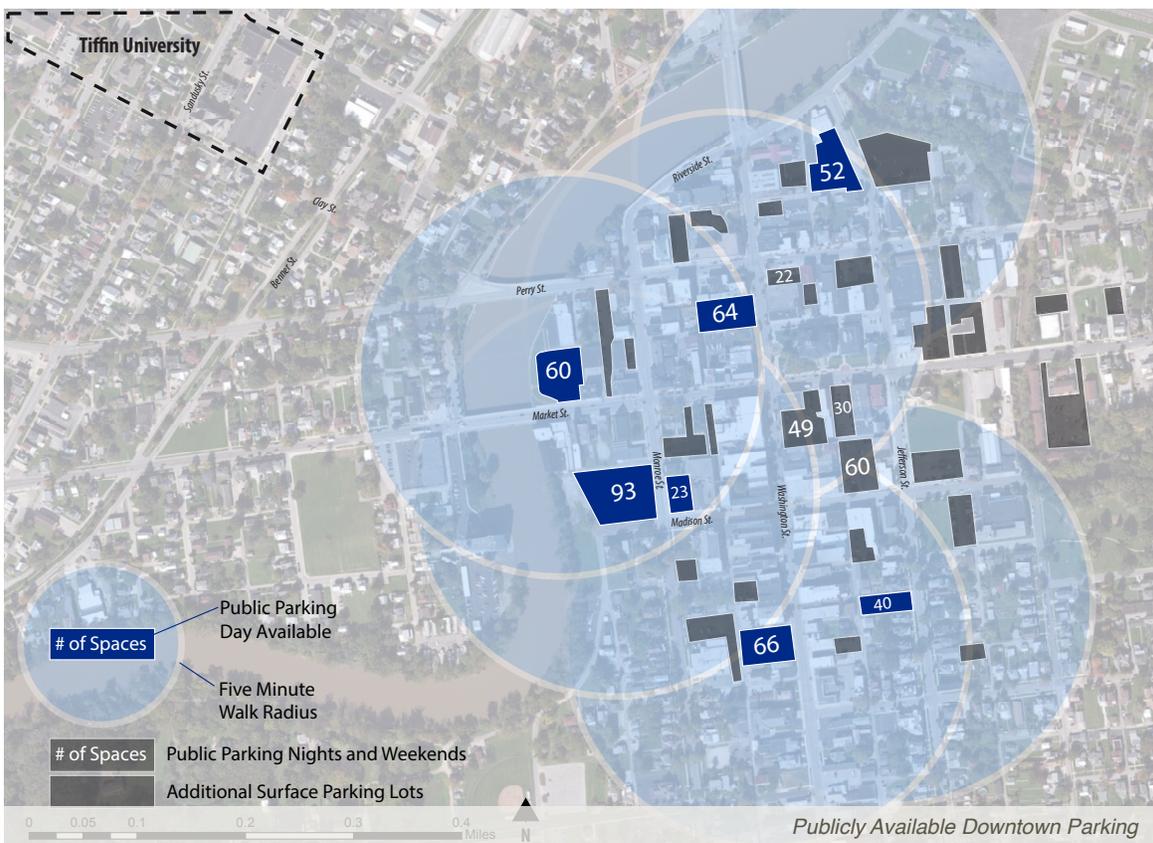
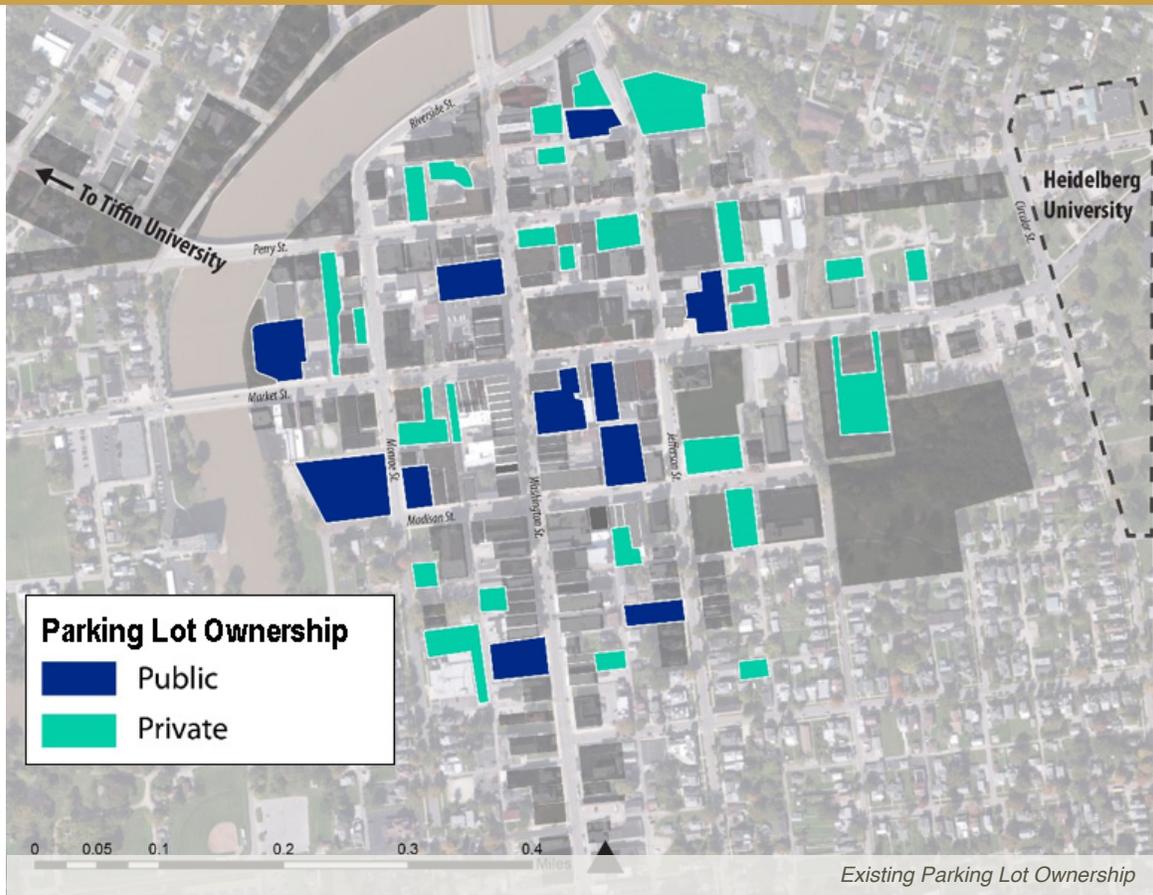
A bike share program could increase Downtown accessibility, reduce automotive traffic, and increase healthy lifestyles among the student population. Bike share programs typically include a stock of bicycles that are located on publicly accessible racks for a small cost to the user. Bike share programs can be costly, but may work with a collaboration of the universities and City.

- Make convenient, safe, attractive links for students to access Downtown.
- Provide public bicycle parking in lots and on sidewalks and require new developments to provide bike parking.
- Include sharrows and consider bike lanes during road reconstruction and re-striping plans.
- Create bike share program.

Parking

Existing parking facilities are distributed throughout Downtown with ample parking for current demand. On-street parking is provided throughout downtown, with a total of about 360 spaces. Eleven public parking lots provide about 600 spaces. A daytime ‘snapshot’ analysis of existing parking facilities performed in May 2015 revealed that nine out of eleven of the parking lots had capacity for about 255 vehicles. The majority of lots were only 50% to 80% full. This glimpse shows that Downtown has parking capacity to support up to 90,000 square feet of new retail or office uses or about 250 new residents.





Unfortunately, parking problems persist beyond simple supply and demand. Car culture has bred a behavior that has caused people to insist on parking in a close location, preferably with their destination entrance within sight. Customers most prefer on-street parking. However, using signage can show that a quick five-minute walk from a parking lot can get pedestrians to many destinations.

Implementation of parking strategies can help relieve congestion during times of high demand, provide convenient and easy-to-find parking for shoppers, and ensure efficient use of parking infrastructure. The current downtown parking supply is sufficient to meet the current demand. However, certain parking lots are underutilized.

- Incentivize employees to park outside prime parking spots to ensure higher turnover by those visiting downtown.
- Make parking lots and destinations easy to find with wayfinding signage.
- Provide attractive pedestrian routes and visually link parking to destinations.
- Provide adequate lighting in parking lots and along pedestrian routes between lots and stores.
- Consider enhancing the aesthetic of the parking lots with low height landscaping, decorative fencing, attractive signage, and public art.
- Increase parking supply in Civic Core over time as demand grows. A new public or private parking deck should be considered if and is available.
- Create angled parking by courthouse on Market Street.



One-Way To Two-Way Conversion With On-Street Parking

Street Conversion

As noted, the idea of converting Downtown Tiffin's one-way streets to two-way traffic was first raised in the 2010 Strategic Plan. Retailers and restaurateurs are not typically in favor of one-way streets because of the circuitous route customers are forced to take to navigate streets to get to their places of business. After a more careful observation in Tiffin and discussion with the Steering Committee regarding priorities and Return on Investment, it was determined that converting Market Street & Perry Street was not extremely important at this point in time for several reasons:

1. Currently these streets have limited retail / restaurant businesses.
2. These streets handle state route 18 & 101 traffic which would force in depth analysis and extended periods of time to gain necessary approvals.
3. The majority of east & west bound traffic through downtown Tiffin is traveling to destinations outside of downtown such as Heidelberg University, Tiffin University or National Machine. Downtown nor these destinations would benefit from impeding traffic flow on these two arterials.

However, it was determined that converting two key north/south streets from one-way to two way would be of great benefit to the downtown while not needing any interface with the State of Ohio Department of Transportation. So we think converting Monroe and Jefferson Streets to two-way traffic should be considered.

ZONING

While there are many programs and activities important to the overall implementation of this plan, zoning is one of the most significant mechanisms for maintaining the desired land use pattern and quality of development advocated for in the downtown. The existing ordinance allows developers to erect buildings that are compatible to the existing traditional building style. However, it does not require it. The following adjustments to the zoning ordinance would help ensure that future development is consistent in architectural style, building placement, and protects the safety of pedestrians and traffic movements.

- Create build-to line to maintain street frontage.
- Remove minimum lot area per family.
- Require a minimum window coverage along.
- Require quality building materials that are consistent with existing buildings.
- Allow new modern uses.
- Make vehicle related uses conditional in C-3.
- Treat the river as a frontage, with front yard rather than rear yard standards.
- Consider converting to a form based code or creating a form-based overlay for Downtown.

Parking standards:

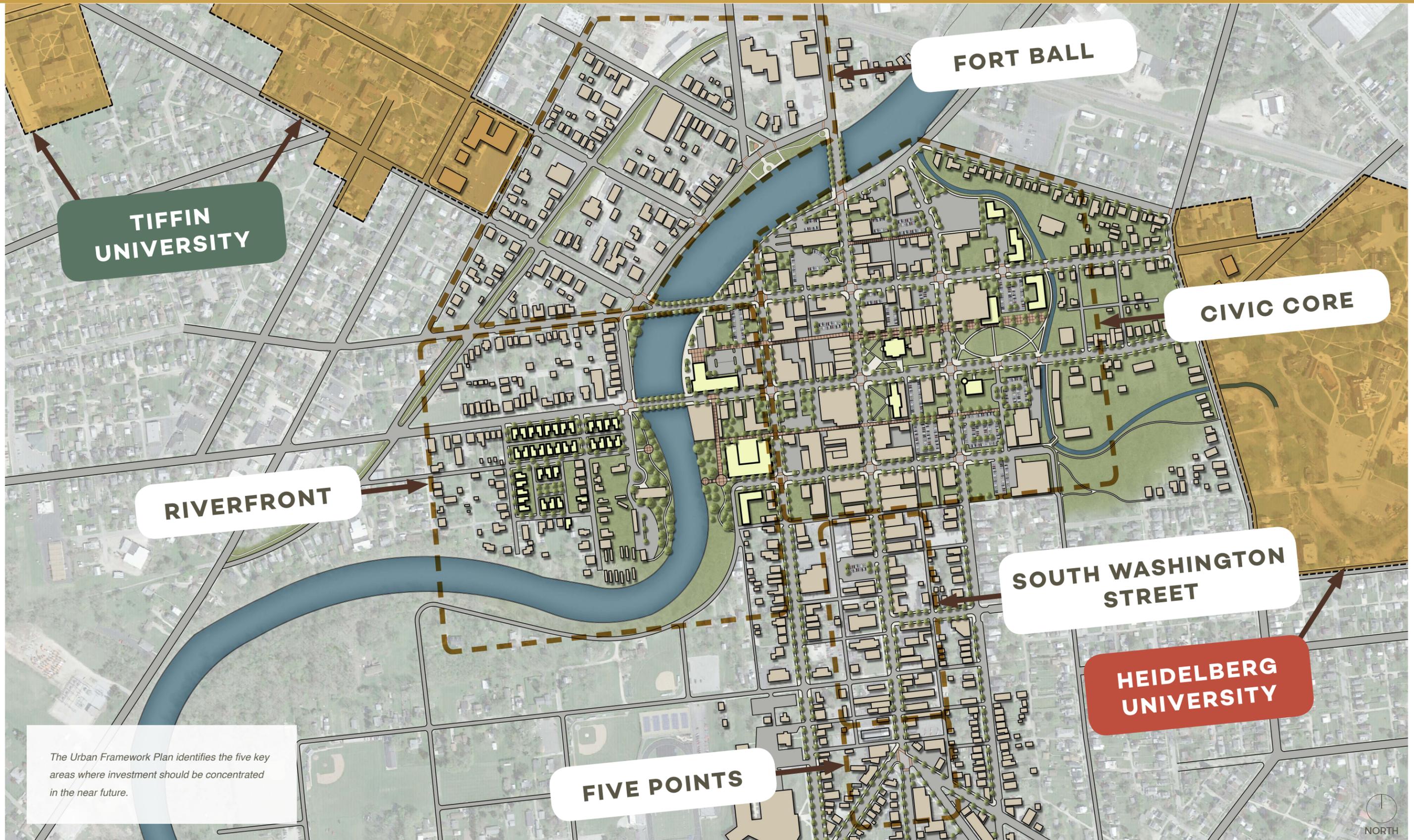
- Do not allow parking in front yard
- Create maximum parking standards
- Require the provision of bicycle parking in addition to vehicular parking standards
- Consider electric charging stations in select municipal locations

SECTION FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

As stated earlier, this document identifies places where redevelopment should be concentrated to spark additional economic development activity. This document contains specific concepts for key sites and economic development metrics for demonstration projects to implement the vision. As important as the private development initiatives are to a successful redevelopment program, it can often times be public improvements that catalyze investment into the urban core. Development of creative public realm enhancements, streetscapes, and green spaces will spark renewed interest in downtown. A vibrant downtown will encourage people to live nearby and frequent quality retail businesses and restaurants within and adjacent to the core of downtown Tiffin.

To that end, we have prepared a revised Urban Framework Plan that identifies the most significant neighborhoods and key areas of central Tiffin relevant to this planning initiative and that support the Guiding Principles of the 2010 Downtown Strategic Plan. Several public and private catalytic projects have been showcased to demonstrate what we believe to be the most effective use of investment funds. Concentrating investment and revitalization efforts into these select areas will encourage additional investment by the real estate development interests.



The Urban Framework Plan identifies the five key areas where investment should be concentrated in the near future.





3D view of the Urban Framework Plan



RIVERFRONT

The riverfront area is deserving of development to help promote this important community asset. Public enhancements along the shores of both sides of the river will not only bring enhanced public realm to the community but will also catalyze private real estate development along the edges of the green space and river.

1. Riverfront Promenade

Create a pedestrian promenade along the east bank of the Sandusky River that connects Perry Street to Market Street. Establish a pedestrian walkway along the top of the river wall with overlooks, specialty pavements, lighting, planters and benches.

2. Bridge Enhancements

Improve the pedestrian zones along the Perry Street and Market Street bridges. This may include widening the pedestrian walks zones, specialty planters, and lighting. These bridge improvements will enhance the pedestrian connections from west of the river including Tiffin University. In addition, these improvements along with east riverfront improvements will help establish walking loops along the riverfront of varying distances. Consider adding LED up-lighting with various color options to accent the bridges after dark.



Market Street Bridge Enhancements and Riverfront Promenade

3. Riverfront Green

Continue the riverfront pedestrian experience south of Market Street through the creation of a unique riverfront park with river access. Utilize the existing north/south alley as a shared pedestrian and vehicular corridor to access the green space. Explore alternatives to extend this green space south to Columbian High School and the associated athletic fields. Connectivity may include a multi-purpose path connection along Front Street.

4. Mixed-Use Infill

Create a mixed-use development opportunity along the north side of Market Street along the Riverfront Promenade. Provide retail at the ground floor with residential, office or lodging above. Parking should be provided behind the building and screened from Market Street.

5. Residential Infill and Parking

Replace the existing public parking lot with a building containing three floors of residential above one level of parking. The parking level may include a combination of public parking spaces and spaces for the residents within the building. Provide access to the parking deck via adjacent alleys. The north/south alley provides a critical pedestrian connection back to Market Street and should include specialty paving and lighting to reinforce it as a shared pedestrian and vehicular access point.

6. Townhome Residential Infill

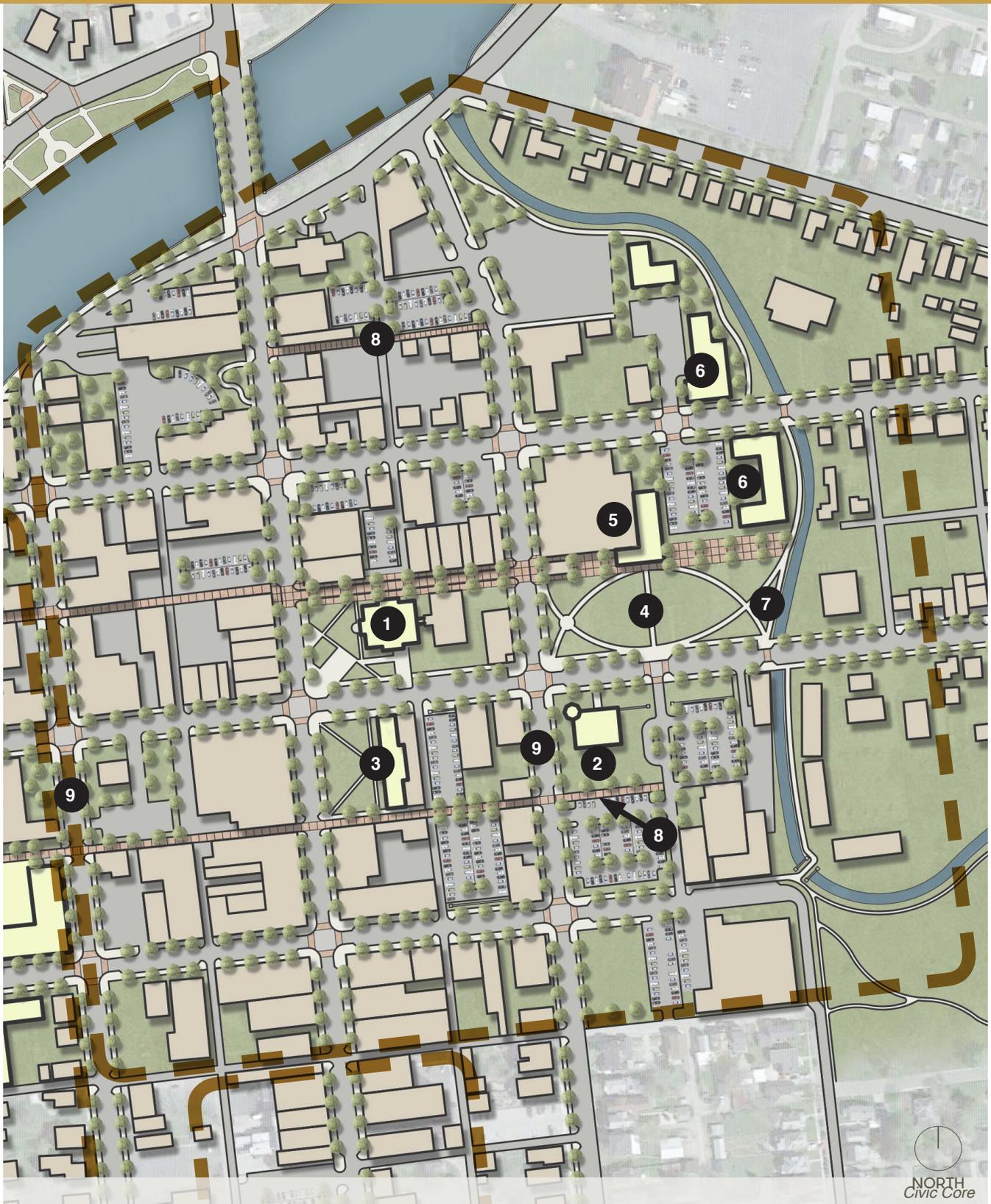
Infill with an attached residential building(s) south of Madison Street. These buildings should not exceed two stories to provide a transition to the single family residential building masses to the south.

7. Single Family Residential Infill

Create a traditional urban housing neighborhood west of the river along the south side of Market Street. Single family detached homes could provide entry level home ownership opportunities and/or downsizing opportunities for empty nesters. The neighborhood should include traditional neighborhood characteristics including front porches, alley access to rear garages, and walkable tree-lined streets.



Proposed traditional urban housing neighborhood and riverfront development.



CIVIC CORE

The Civic Core of downtown Tiffin represents the most important area in the Central Core of the City. Traditionally known as the Government Center for the county, it remains as important today in an expanded role to serve as the city's central gathering place to launch significant catalytic changes



Joint Justice Center and Town Green

1. Joint Justice Center & Town Green

Place this new civic building a minimum of 75-feet east of the Washington Street vehicular curb to establish a new edge for the Town Green. The Town Green should be traditional in form to respond to the significant adjacent architecture while anticipating the future expansion of the green to the south across Market Street (see RTA Demolition/Town Green Extension). Reinforce Court Street as a shared vehicular and pedestrian street with specialty paving, lighting, and street trees.

2. Joint Government Center

Preserve and renovate the East Tower building into a Joint Government Center for Seneca County and the City of Tiffin. Create a consistent green setback along Market Street and provide additional parking for staff and visitors.

3. RTA Demolition/Town Green Extension

Following the relocation of County Offices to the Joint Government Center, remove the existing RTA building and extend the Town Green to the south. The Town Green should A traditional form to respond to the significant adjacent architecture, while being open and flexible to accommodate various programming opportunities. Provide areas of sun and shade to maximize use.

4. East Green

Establish a community gathering place along Market Street that accommodates a wide variety of programs including larger community events. The open space will serve as the “front yard” for the Joint Government Center and the library. A future expansion to the library will enhance the visibility



Town Green Extension and Urban Infill Development



East Green, Library Expansion and Rock Creek Enhancements

and prominence of this important civic building along the north side of the new green space. Court Street should be extended to the east as a pedestrian plaza with a terminus at Rock Creek. This significant open space will also enhance the pedestrian connectivity for Heidelberg students and staff to the downtown core.

5. Library Expansion

As the library considers future opportunities for expansion, acquisition of adjacent properties to the east will allow for building expansion along East Green as well as additional parking. Additional parking will not only serve the library, but will also provide convenient parking for community events at the East Green.

6. Residential Infill

Provide new downtown housing opportunities with infill development along the north and south sides of Perry Street. These parcels represent unique opportunities for modern apartments or condominiums in the core of downtown with access to Rock Creek and the new East Green.

7. Rock Creek Trail

Incrementally implement portions of the Rock Creek Trail to provide connectivity from Hedges Park to the Sandusky River. Implement sections of trail as part of the East Green improvements and pursue grant funding for other sections. Remove invasive plant species throughout the corridor with grant funding and/or volunteer labor.

8. Alley Improvements

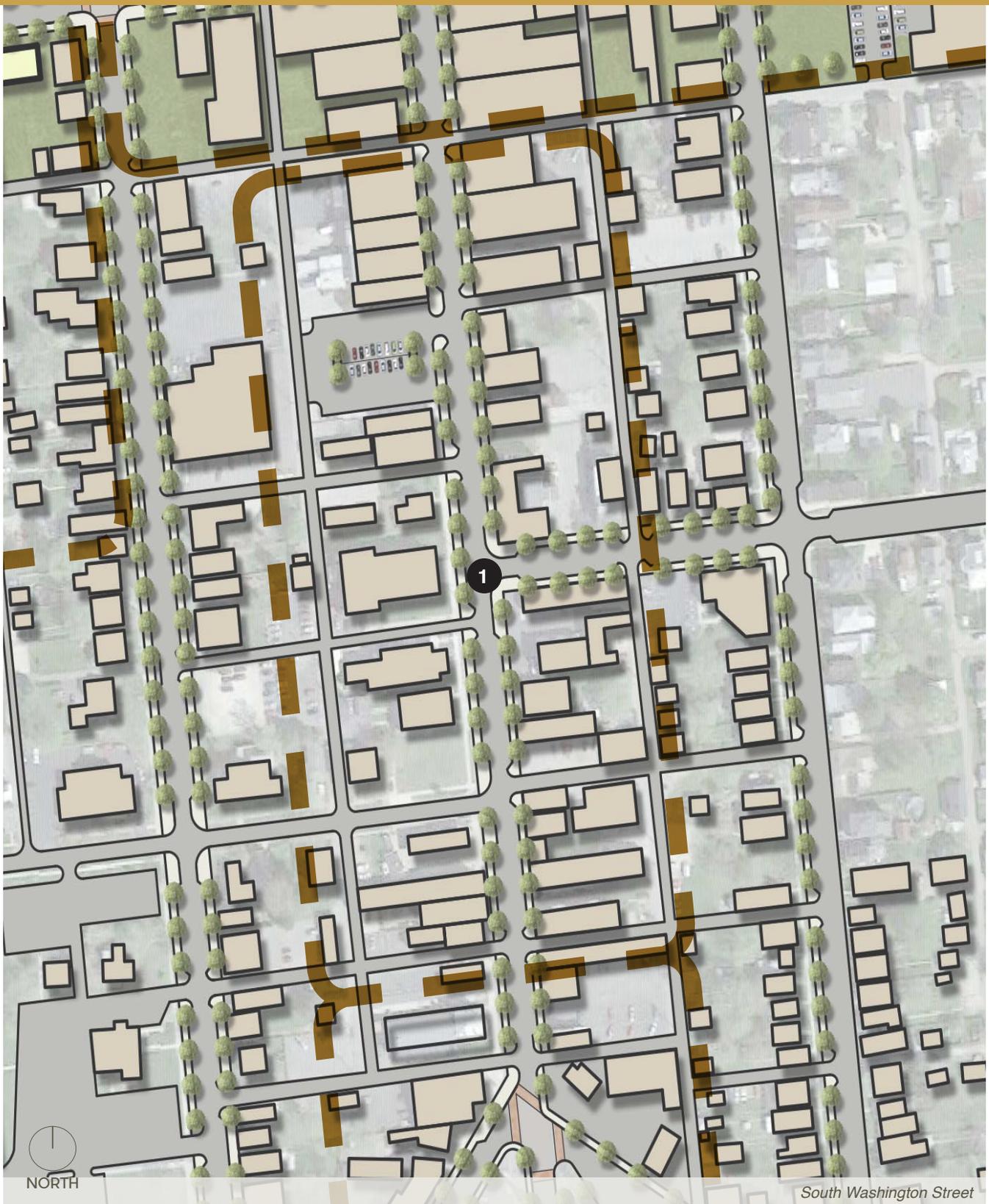
Improve key alleys that provide critical vehicular and pedestrian connections with specialty pavement and enhanced lighting. These alleys represent connections from primary parking areas to destinations such as Washington Street retailers and the Riverfront. These alleys can also be used to manage stormwater through the use of permeable pavements and other stormwater best management practices. Suggested alleys to be completed first are illustrated and key noted on the Updated Civic Core Urban Framework Plan (p.38).

9. Monroe Street & Jefferson Street Two-way Conversions

Convert these two north/south streets from one-way to two-way operation. Provide parallel on-street parking along both sides of these streets where the dimension is sufficient. See (Transportation Section) for more recommendations.

10. General Streetscape Improvements

Extend the downtown Tiffin streetscape improvements, including curb bump outs, crosswalks, specialty pavements and street lighting, throughout unimproved areas of downtown. Every catalytic opportunity listed above should improve the adjacent public streetscapes to match the existing standards. Our assumption on streetscape priorities is that streets should be improved where anticipated private investment is being focused. An exception to this would be improvements to a poor land-use corridor where public investment can incentivize private reinvestment. South Washington to the Five Points area is an important street to provide extended streetscape improvements because it has never occurred. However, streetscape improvements should be prioritized as key projects are identified. For example, when The Joint Justice Center construction is underway, the East Tower & East Green projects will undoubtedly follow. If this occurs, Market Street would become a priority for streetscape.

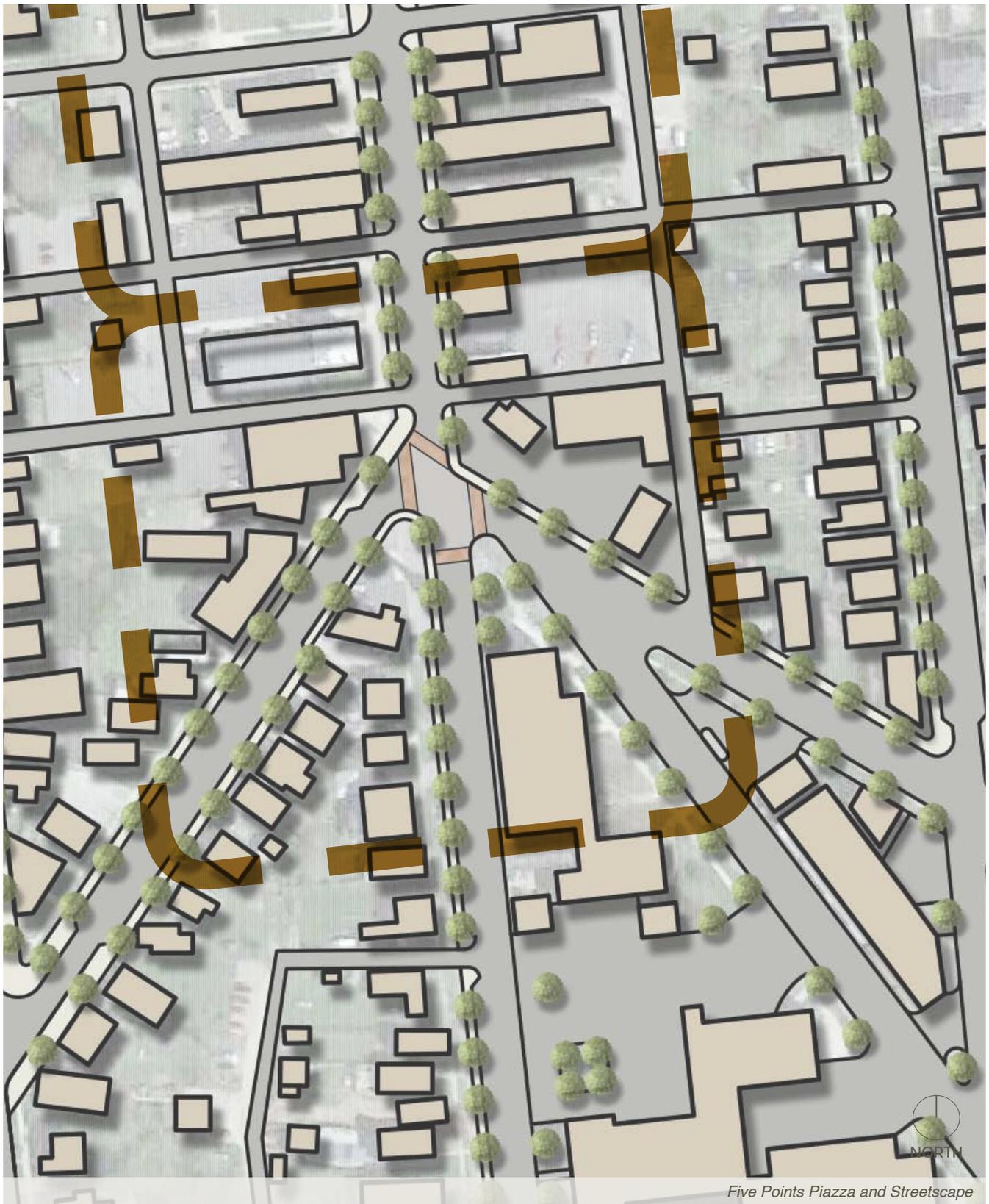


SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET

Streetscape enhancements that have been completed in the core of downtown should be implemented further south along Washington Street to the Five Points intersection. Improvements should include curb bump outs to minimize pedestrian crossing distances at intersections, decorative street lights, specialty pavements, street trees and furniture. Coordinate with existing property owners on the design of the streetscape improvements. In addition, coordinate with property owners on the elimination or reduction of vehicular access points along the streetscape. Where surface parking lots exist along the corridor, provide a 4-foot high screen consisting of a masonry wall, decorative fence, evergreen hedge or combination thereof.



South Washington Street and Five Points Improvements Character Rendering



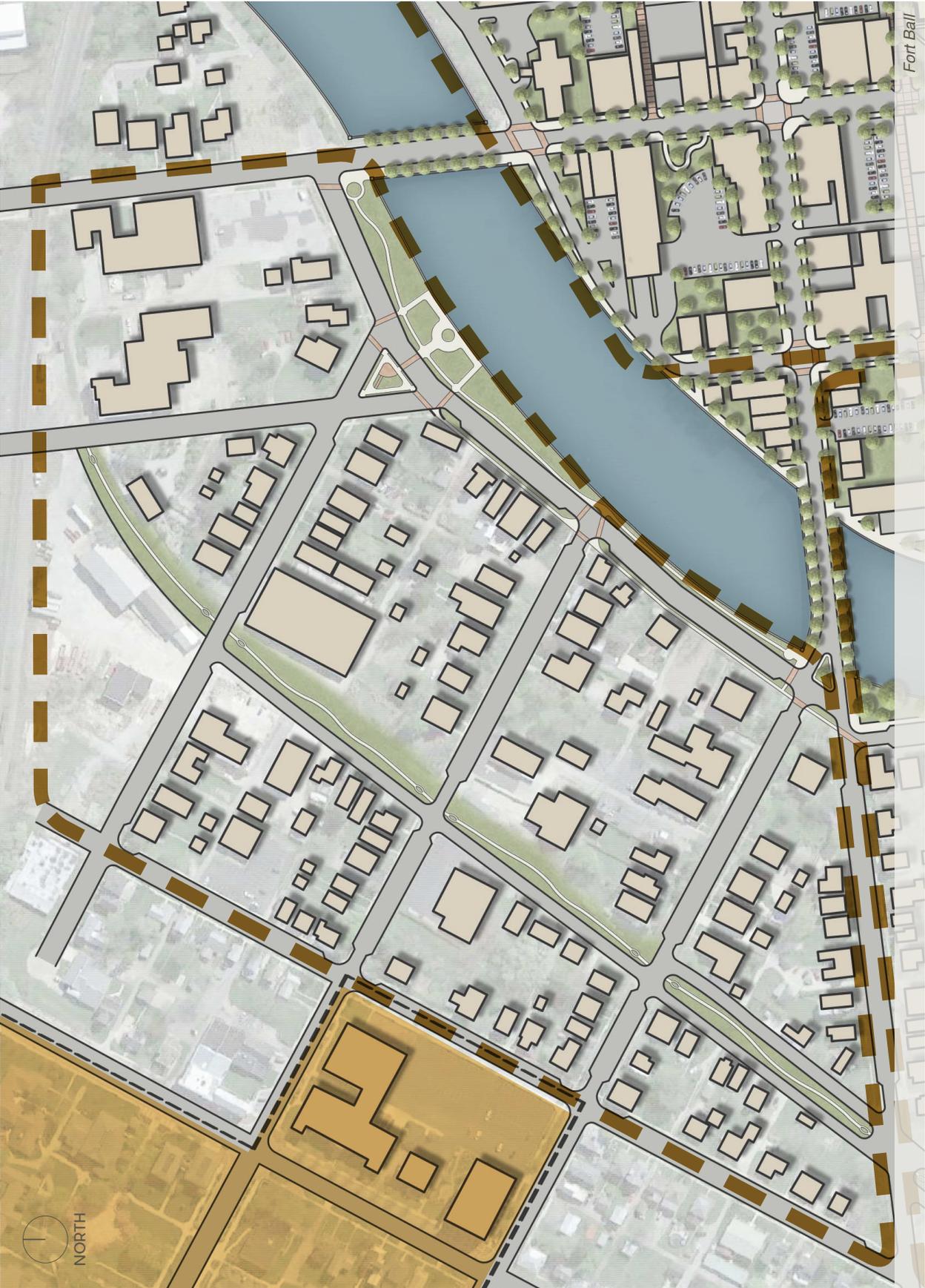
Five Points Piazza and Streetscape

FIVE POINTS IMPROVEMENTS

The Five Points intersection serves as a psychological gateway for those arriving to downtown Tiffin from the south. As such, several enhancements should be implemented at this intersection including the following:

- Enhance the intersection in the spirit of a European piazza. Utilize specialty paved crosswalks and infield area that matches the downtown streetscape accent paver. Consider vehicular turning movements and truck traffic in the materials selection and design of the roadway section.
- Replace existing signal poles and wires with decorative signal mast arms.
- Provide decorative light fixtures to match the downtown lighting standard.
- Repair and replace pedestrian pavements and provide specialty paving and patterns to match the streetscape standards.
- Provide planters at key locations to screen surface parking areas at various corners. Provide street trees in these planter locations.
- Enhance the historic facade of St. Joseph Catholic Church with accent lighting.





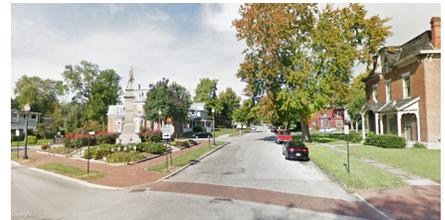
FORT BALL

The Fort Ball neighborhood has seen significant changes over the years. From the early days as the site of Fort Ball during the War of 1812 to Tiffin's first settlement along the Sandusky River to a prominent address in the late 1800's / early 1900's for Tiffin residents. Flooding issues over the years were not too kind to a select portion of the housing stock in the neighborhood and consequently the historic charm and prestige of some of the homes diminished allowing speculators to buy-up properties for rental conversions targeting University students. As the Tiffin University campus grew, additional parking needs targeted neglected properties for surface parking contributing to the decline of the historic qualities of the neighborhood.

Today as a neighborhood in transition, several real estate developers have started to reverse the decline by purchasing & renovating homes and in some cases, converting them back to single-family homes or upscale apartments.

The historic train station has been rescued by a local owner and creatively converted into an event center that hosts numerous functions. Convenient access to the Nickel Plate Bike Trail, Tiffin University, Sandusky River and Downtown, make the Fort Ball neighborhood a strategically located place to live.

We encourage the city and Tiffin University to support this renewed interest in the neighborhood and work with the new property owners and developers to revitalize the historic area and to encourage single-family home ownership along with hospitality uses such as the event center and Bed and Breakfast lodging.



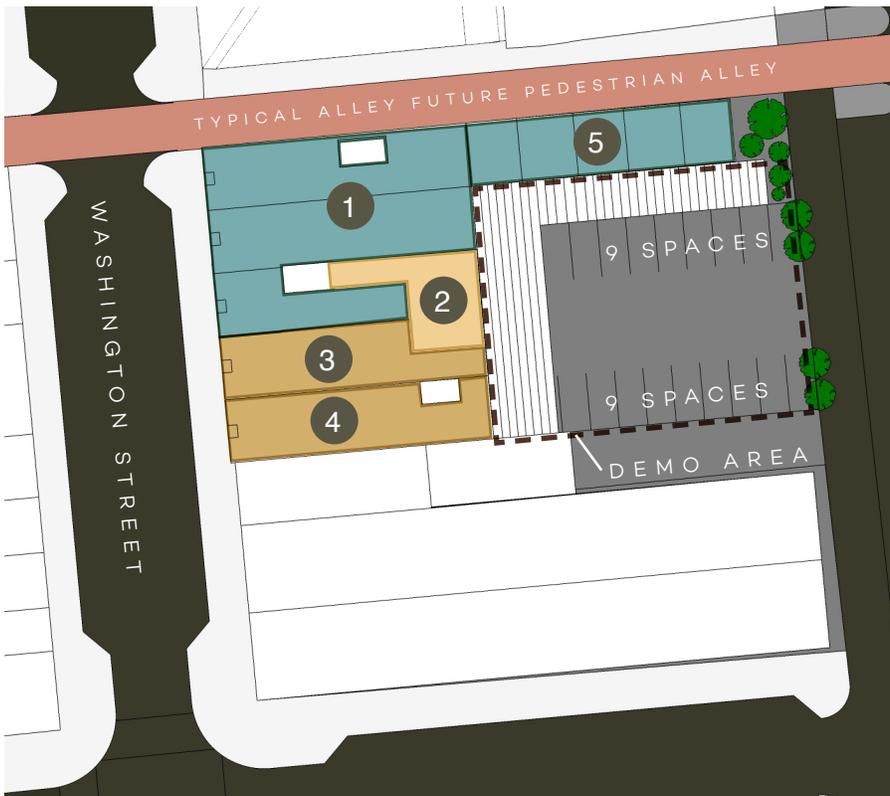
PRIVATE INVESTMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT 1



UNIVERSITY COMMONS

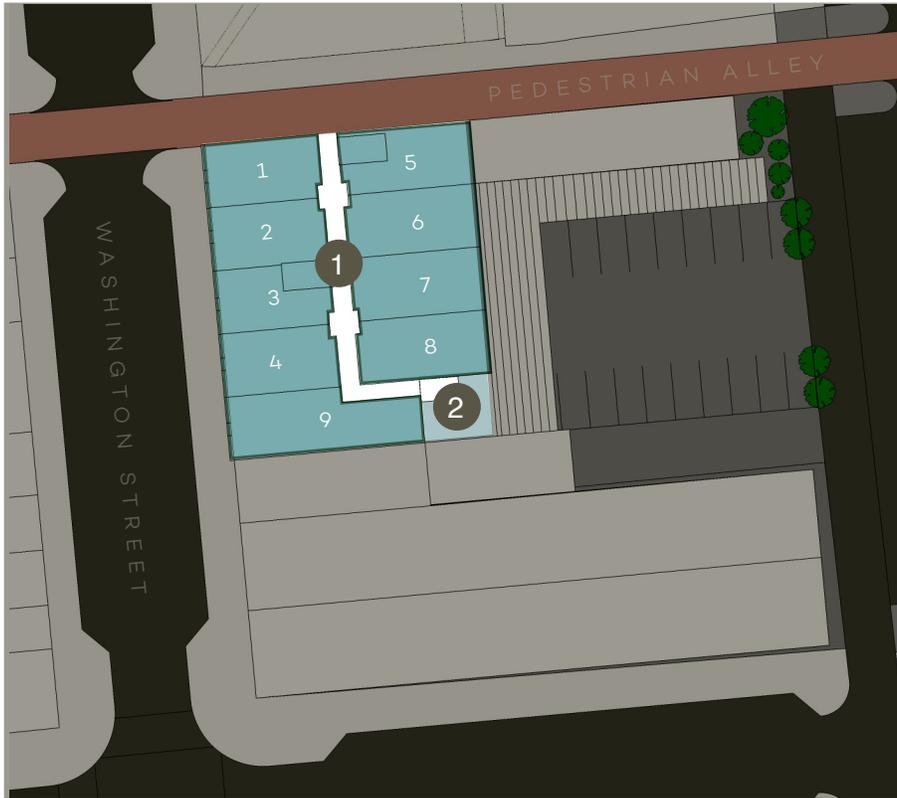
The Opportunity: Based on feedback from stakeholders wanting Downtown Tiffin to provide more university focused destinations and activities, we have explored a joint public/private mixed-use development opportunity. The project could include University related retail, food operation, technology/business incubator/ retail, office and upper story apartment units. There is evidence that an abundance of underutilized non-historic building additions exist throughout downtown, primarily on the rear of Washington Street. The strategy would be to demolish non-contributing additions to gain daylighting for apartments, green space, parking or other uses, while focusing redevelopment efforts on the historic buildings that front Washington Street.

The Challenge: Developing a collection of adjacent historic properties to take advantage of Historic Tax Credits. Tax Credits can allow a developer to justify the substantial rehabilitation expenses to be incurred in most historic building mixed-use developments.



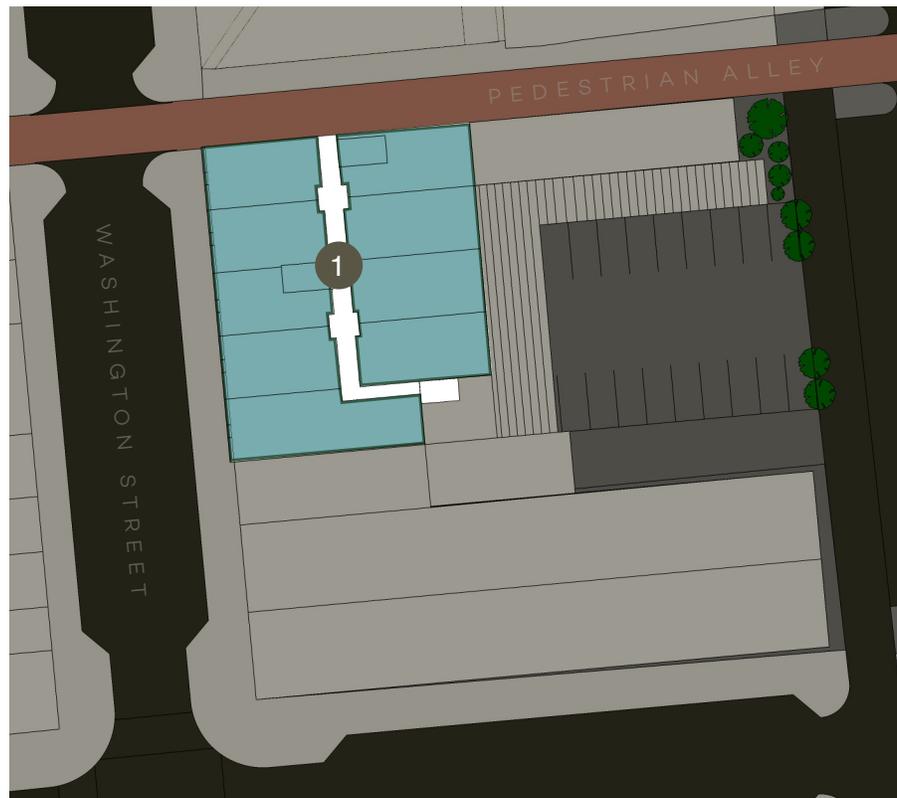
Ground Floor - 9560 SF

1. University Commons
 - University Related Retail
 - Technology Center
 - Modest Food Establishment
2. Residential Community
 - Lobby
 - Workout room
 - Storage areas
3. Retail /Office
4. Retail/ Office
5. 15' x 20' Entrepreneur Spaces



Second Floor - 6760 SF

1. Apartment Units
2. Roof Terrace



Third Floor - 6760 SF

1. Apartment Units

South Washington Redevelopment Project

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Acquisition / Predevelopment		\$265,000.00									
Construction Cost		\$2,933,750.00									
Soft Cost		\$733,437.50									
Cost Total		\$3,932,187.50									
Leasable Space											
	SF										
University Commons	3150		3150	3150	3150	3150	3150	3150	3150	3150	3150
Entrepreneur Space	1800		1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800
Apartment Units	14000		7000	10500	10500	10500	10500	10500	10500	10500	10500
Office Space	2920		1460	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190
Total SF	21870										
Cost / SF											
University Commons Revenue	\$0.50		\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00	\$18,900.00
Entrepreneur Space Revenue	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Apartment Revenue	\$0.85		\$71,400.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00	\$107,100.00
Office Revenue	\$7.00		\$122,640.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00	\$183,960.00
Annual Revenue Total		-\$3,932,187.50	\$194,040.00	\$291,060.00							
Estimated Expenses	15%		\$29,106.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00	\$43,659.00
Mortgage Payment*			\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00	\$156,799.00
Cash Flow Summary			\$8,135.00	\$90,602.00							
Tax Credits											
State of Ohio at 25%			\$983,046.88								
Federal at 20%			\$786,437.50								
Total			\$1,769,484.38								

*Based on \$1.5 million at 6.5%

Note: This Financial Proforma assumes acquisition and all construction will take place in year 1. All lease revenue is based off of 50% occupants in year 1 and 75% occupants each year after.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT 2



EAST TOWER: MARKET & JEFFERSON STREETS

The Opportunity: Discussions have gone on for years regarding the potential adaptive re-use of the historic East Tower building. The former Columbian High School represents a style and sophistication of architecture no longer found in public buildings. East Tower is a landmark building of national stature and now, with the eradication of the historic Seneca County Courthouse, the edifice is the tallest and most visually dominate structure (architecturally speaking) downtown.

The Challenge: Like most historic property developments, the East Tower project will demand the use of Historic Tax Credits to be feasible. The current East Tower owner, who remains interested in developing the building into a Joint Government Center, provided the following information for consideration.

Renovation of the East Tower into a Joint Government Center would compliment the Joint Justice Center, extend the Civic Core Campus and bring efficiencies to the county & city government services. The result of which is the retention of perhaps Tiffin's most iconic historic structure.



Multi-Tenant Office Development Concept

Historic Building:	Area:	Unit Cost:	Cost:
Ground Floor	6,000 sf	\$180/sf	\$ 1,080,000
1st Floor	6,000		1,080,000
2nd Floor	<u>6,000</u>		<u>1,080,000</u>
Sub Total:	18,000 sf		\$ 3,240,000

Building Addition:

Ground Floor	4,800 sf	\$210/sf	\$ 1,008,000
1st Floor	4,800		1,008,000
2nd Floor	4,800		<u>1,008,000</u>
Sub Total:	14,400 sf		\$ 3,024,000

TOTAL:	32,400 sf	\$193/sf	\$ 6,246,000
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Site Utilities	\$ 100,000
FF&E	615,000
Parking On Site	<u>210,000</u>

Total Construction Cost*	\$7,189,000
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Historic Tax Credits (HTC)
 @ 45% of Building Renovation Cost:
 (assumes federal and state credits, and 15% discounted fees)

$3,240,000 \times .45 \times .85 = \$1,239,300$ (based on renovation costs only)

Historic Tax Credits (HTC)	\$7,189,000
	<u>- 1,239,300</u>

*Construction cost (hard costs) only. Soft cost additional 20% +/-

Adjusted Construction Cost	\$5,949,700
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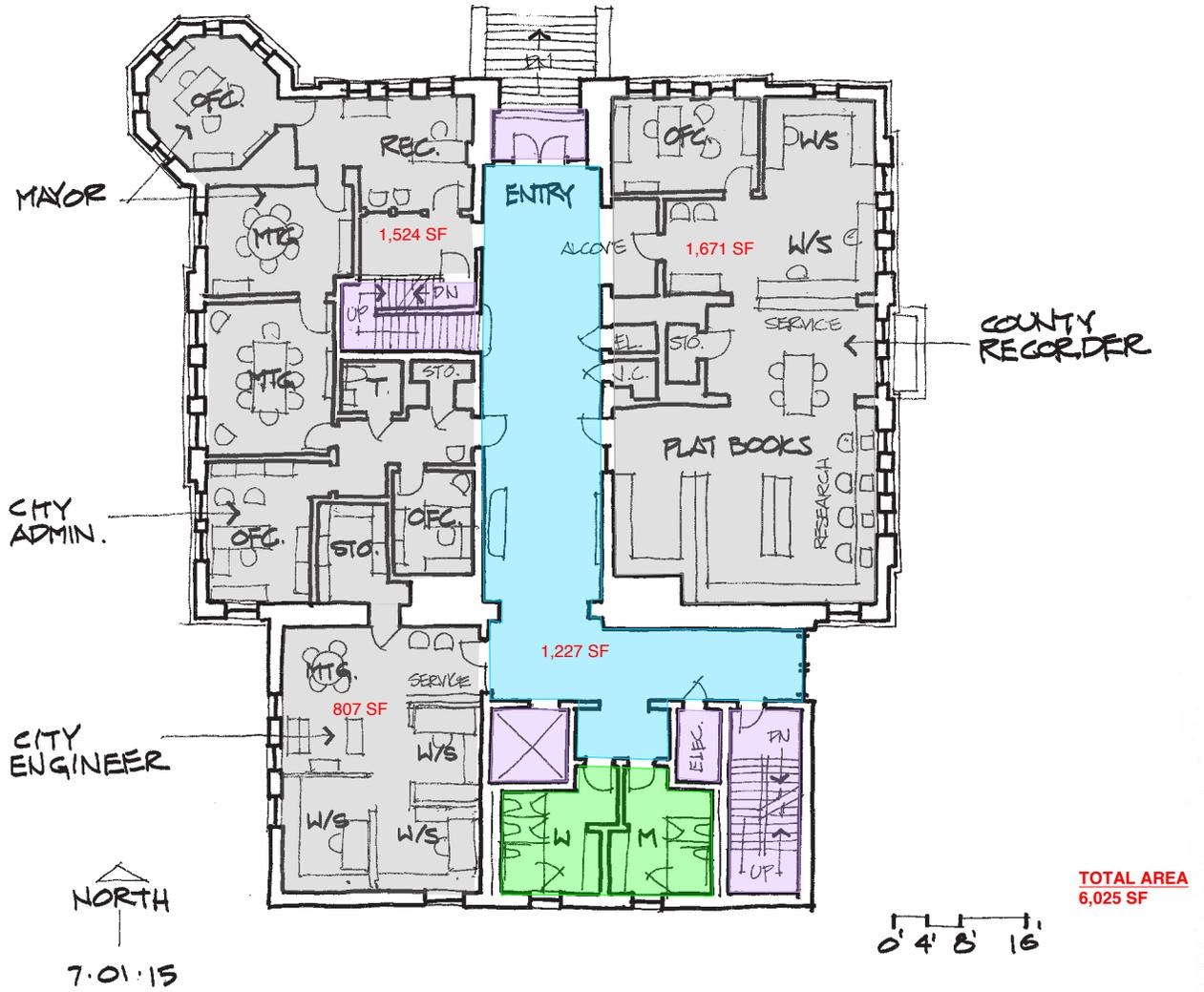
Note: Costs are estimates only. No guarantee of actual costs is offered or implied. Actual costs can only be obtained through a competitive bid process based on complete construction documents.

EAST TOWER: MARKET & JEFFERSON STREETS



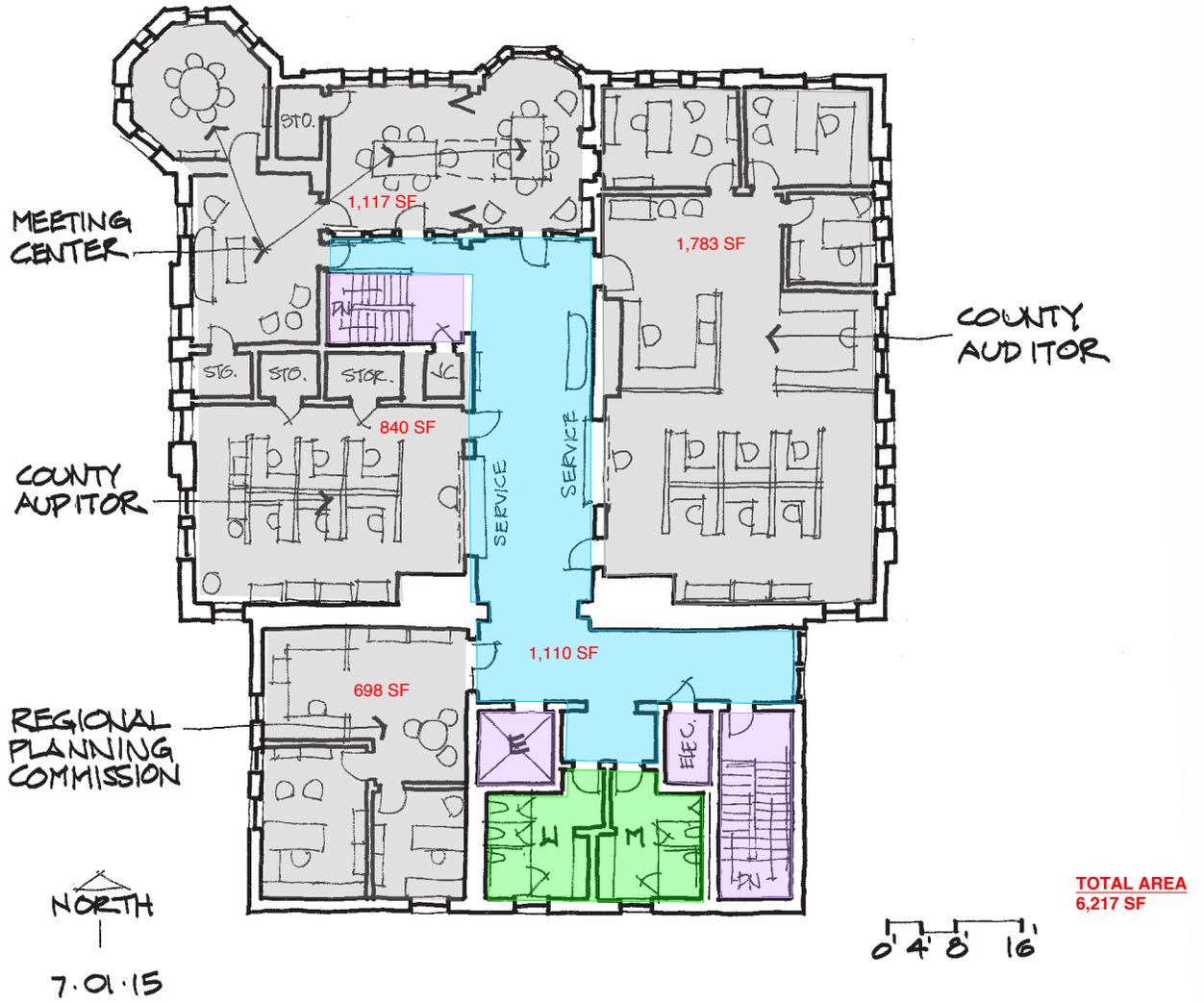
GROUND FLOOR

EAST TOWER: MARKET & JEFFERSON STREETS



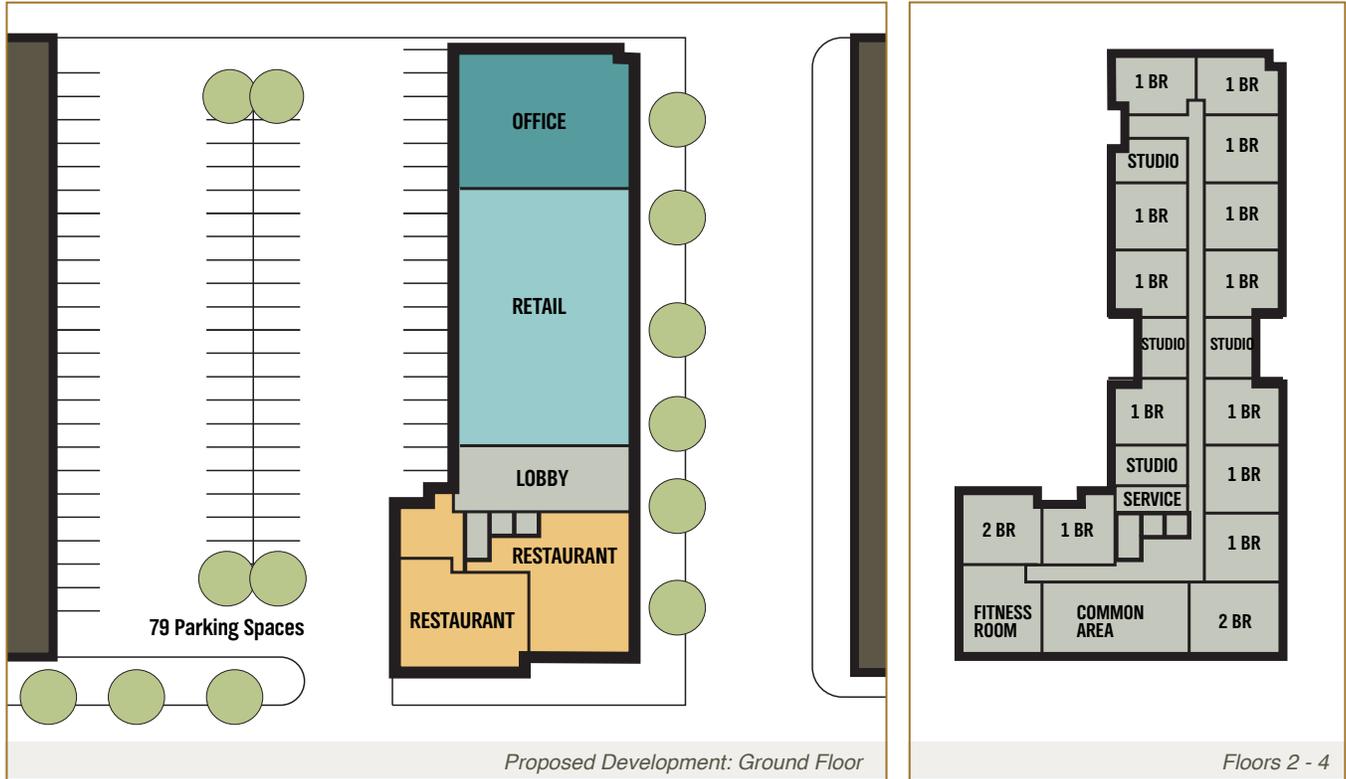
FIRST FLOOR

EAST TOWER: MARKET & JEFFERSON STREETS



SECOND FLOOR

PRIVATE INVESTMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT 3



Development Program

1st Floor

- Restaurants -5930 sf
- Retail – 6550 sf
- Office – 3770 sf
- Lobby – 1900 sf

2nd Floor

- Apts 18 – 850 sf avg
- Commons - 3000 sf
- Fitness Area

3rd & 4th Floors

- Apts – 21 per flr

TIFFIN FLATS

The Opportunity: With heightened interest in downtown and demand for higher quality housing, an opportunity exists to consider new infill housing. This opportunity should increase as the market continues to grow. The most likely development model would include apartment flats over ground floor commercial use. The sketches above represent the type of site layout & floor plans we think would be appropriate for this kind of project.

The Challenge: The accompanying proforma spells out the economic challenge currently in place for new construction in downtown Tiffin. With retail rents hovering around \$8-\$11 psf and new construction space demanding \$15 psf plus CAM, it is challenging to make the numbers work. Public acquisition of land & contribution to a development entity would help, which might be a complete contribution or a below market value sale with a patient return on investment. The key for the city is to understand that tax-free property can be redeveloped into tax-producing property. This private mixed-use development model generates immediate economic impact through property tax, resident income tax & customer sales tax.

Tiffin Flats Project

Budget			
Hard Costs	TOTAL COST	COST PER SF	% OF TOTAL COST
Demolition	-	0.00	0.00%
Sitework Allowance	75,000	0.38	0.96%
	-		
Commercial GR	2,141,700	118.00	27.45%
Residential 2	2,043,300	98.00	26.19%
Residential 3	2,043,300	98.00	26.19%
Residential 4	2,043,300	98.00	26.19%
Parking Spaces	395	5.00	0.01%
Constr. Contingency 10%	834,700	10.34	10.70%
Land	200,000	2.48	2.56%
General Requirments OC	-	-	0.00%
Total Hard Cost	9,381,695	116.25	120.24%
Soft Costs			
Soft Cost	1,875,401	9.38	24.04%
<i>Architect, Engineers, Attorney, Leasing</i>			
Total Soft Cost	1,875,401	23.24	24.04%
Total Cost	11,257,095	139.49	144.28%
Less Equity	2,254,756	27.94	*
Lease up Income	-	0.00	0.00%
TIF Funding	1,200,000		15.38%
Sales and Reimbursement	-	0.00	0.00%
Total Project Costs	7,802,339	96.68	100.00%

Proforma Economics			
Tenants	\$/sf	S.F.	\$
Commercial GR	17.50	16,250	284,375
Residential 2	1.10	17,850	19,635
Residential 3	1.10	17,850	19,635
Residential 4	1.10	17,850	19,635
Vacancy 4%	0.00	-	-
		69,800	343,280
Expenses			
Real Estate Tax	1.00	69,800	69,800
Insurance	0.00	-	-
CAM	0.75	69,800	52,350
Miscellaneous	0.00	-	-
Replacement Reserve	0.00	-	-
Management Fee	0.00	-	-
Total Non Rec Exp	1.75		122,150
Cash Flow Before Debt Service			343,280
Debt Service	1.1	Coverage	312,073
Cash Flow After Debt Service			31,207
Financing	0.04	Loan Constant	7,801,818
Surplus/(Gap)			(521)
Return on Cost			3.05%
Financing:			
Permanent Loan Constant			5
Coverage Ratio			1.20
Construction Interest Rate			4%
Debt Service			390,091
Equity			2,254,756
Return on Investment			15.22%

Areas		
TOTAL SF:	80,700	TOTAL ACREAGE: 200,000
Commercial GR	18,150	
Residential 2	20,850	
Residential 3	20,850	
Residential 4	20,850	
Parking Spaces	79	

SUMMARY OF POLICIES AND FUNDING STRATEGIES

POLICIES

Special Improvement District (SID)

SID is where property owners within a targeted area agree to assess themselves to pay for services, improvements and programs that DIRECTLY BENEFIT the targeted area.

SID: funding from the assessment is governed by the members of the district. Board membership must include at least five individuals, one of which must be the chief executive of the local Municipality (in most cases the Mayor). The board has full authority to implement improvements and to contract for services.

SID: will identify strategic initiatives and opportunities for continued revitalization opportunities. It is important to have an organization of property owners in a leadership role downtown.

SID: will work to educate, communicate and build cooperative initiatives among members of the downtown community.

Parking

SID: in partnership with the city, county government and other advocates for efficient parking will develop enhancements that are necessary to the further downtown growth.

Potential Action Items:

- Review the current inventory of existing parking area / facilities in downtown.
- Identify improvements to existing parking lot layouts that would help increase the number of quality parking spaces and make the parking area more user friendly.
- Develop plans for additional parking areas and facilities in downtown with construction estimates
- Identify the potential end user of the parking and frequency of their use.

Marketing and Development

SID: will strive to be the central resource to support all marketing and ensure SID presents a consistent image and message.

Potential Action Items:

- Consider a three tier audience
- Current Seneca residents
- Residents of neighboring counties
- Residents within 1 hour of Seneca County

SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



Clean and Safe

SID: will deliver high quality, cost-effective clean and safe services to maintain the downtown area.

SID: will assure the downtown maintains a reputation for being, a visually attractive destination and enhance its perception as a clean and safe downtown community asset that attracts people and investment.

Potential Action Items:

- Negotiate a level of understanding with the city and county government regarding basic levels of services for Downtown.
- Establish quarterly meetings with city, county, and police, fire and building, and business owners to better address safety issues.
- Work with strategic partners to develop and implement a recycling program.

Next Steps

- Identify the individual/organization responsible for implementing the SID formation process
- Determine the SID boundaries
- Determine the uses of SID funds
- Create material that describes the uses of funds and boundaries (brochure, estimated budget and district map)
- Meet with the 10 largest property owners to establish support for the program. (review with them the uses of fund and their cost per year for the program)
- Hire legal counsel to prepare the documents needed. Legal cost will range from \$10,000 to \$30,000
- Meet with each property owner one on one, from largest smallest. Must gather support from at least 75% of the total sq./ft. in the SID district
- Present to City Council and ask for a resolution of support.
- Summit all the necessary documents to city government before the first Monday in September.

Limited Liability Corporations

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 it and invigorate. As such, it is recommended that a for-profit LLC 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 to future buying.

- 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 redevelopment.
- 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.

INCENTIVES & FUNDING PROGRAMS

Introduction

Below are several programs* worth considering while exploring funding programs for future development. Some are for pure private development, while others are public conduits requiring public/private collaboration. This section is not meant to be exhaustive, comprehensive, or definitive but to highlight some key programs that are often used for development projects.

Preliminary assessments regarding the potential applicability for these projects comes from the team experience, exploratory discussions with program contacts, and working together with local economic and downtown development officials (e.g. SIEDC.) It is also important to note that in addition to the programs listed below, communities have been able to leverage state and federal capital funds to complete the financing of important public projects.

**Program specific information collected from <https://development.ohio.gov/>*

Local Property Tax Exemptions & Abatements

A. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Overview

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. They allow local government to redirect a portion of the new property taxes generated off of real property improvements to finance public infrastructure directly related to the project.

For Whom

TIFs are implemented at the local level and may be created by a township, municipality or county.

Benefits

Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement to real property beyond that amount are directed towards a separate fund to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation.

How to Apply

Local jurisdictions seeking to establish a TIF project must enact legislation that (a) designates the parcel(s) to be exempted from taxation, (b) declares improvements to private property within the

State Contact Information:

Business Services Specialist
Office of Strategic Business
Investments
(614) 728-6778

Local Contact Information:

David Zak
President & CEO
Seneca Industrial and Economic
Development Corporation
(419) 447-3831
zak@senecacounty.org

specified area as serving a public purpose, (c) delineates the public infrastructure improvements to be made that will directly benefit the parcel and (d) specifies the equivalent funds to be created for those redirected monies. Only those public infrastructure improvements directly serving the increased demand arising from the real property improvements to the parcel(s) or an Incentive District are eligible for TIF financing.

B. Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)

Overview

The Ohio Community Reinvestment Area program is an economic development tool administered by municipal and county government in Ohio that provides real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. Community Reinvestment Areas are areas of land in which property owners can receive tax incentives for investing in real property improvements. The program is delineated into two distinct categories, those created prior to July 1994 (“pre-1994”) and those created after the law changes went into effect after July 1994.

For Whom

The Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program is a direct incentive tax exemption program benefiting property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. This program permits municipalities or counties to designate areas where investment has been discouraged as a CRA to encourage revitalization of the existing housing stock and the development of new structures. Benefits Local municipalities or counties can determine the type of development to be supported by the CRA Program by specifying the eligibility of residential, commercial and/or industrial projects. CRA

Benefits

Community Reinvestment Area exemptions can provide local property tax exemptions for commercial property of up to 100 percent for up to 12 years on any eligible real property improvements.

How to Apply

Property owners in Tiffin apply through the Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation, who in turn coordinates and works with the Auditor’s Office and the City of Tiffin to obtain approval.

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Historic Tax Credits

A. Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit

Overview

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. The 10% rehabilitation investment tax credit equals 10% of qualified expenditures for rehabilitation of a non-historic building built before 1936. For both credits, the building must be depreciable and the rehabilitation must be substantial.

For Whom

Owners and long-term lessees of historically designated buildings and buildings built before 1936 who undertake a rehabilitation project may apply for the federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit. A building is historical designated if it is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, contributes to a National Register Historic District, National Park Service Certified Historic District, or Certified Local Government historic district, or is listed as a local landmark by a Certified Local Government. Properties that will be used as a single-family residence are not eligible.

How to Apply

The 10% Rehabilitation Tax Credit does not have a formal application or review process. The tax credit is claimed on IRS form 3468 for the tax year in which the rehabilitated building is placed in service.

The 20% Rehabilitation Tax Credit has a three-part application and review process. Part 1 (“Evaluation of Significance”) certifies the property as historically significant. Part 2 (“Description of Rehabilitation”) ensures the project conforms with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Part 3 (“Request for Certification of Completed Work”) ensures that the work described in Part 2 was done and done according to the federal guidelines. Owners submits each part of the application to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), who then submits it and a recommendation to the National Park Service.

Benefits

The Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program provides a federal tax credit of 10 or 20 percent (but not both, the two credits are mutually exclusive) of qualified rehabilitation expenditures incurred during rehabilitation projects. The tax credit can be applied to applicable financial institutions, foreign and domestic insurance premiums or individual income taxes.

Contact Information

Tax Credit Application Coordinator
Ohio State Historic Preservation Office
(614) 298-2000

B. Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

Overview

The Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program provides a tax credit in order to leverage the private redevelopment of historic buildings. The program is highly competitive and receives applications bi-annually in March and September.

Over the fifteen completed funding rounds, tax credits have been approved for 284 projects to rehabilitate 398 historic buildings in 52 different Ohio communities. The program is projected to leverage nearly \$4.4 billion in private redevelopment funding and federal tax credits directly through the rehabilitation projects.

For Whom

Owners and long-term lessees of historically designated buildings who undertake a rehabilitation project may apply for the Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit. A building is eligible if it is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, contributes to a National Register Historic District, National Park Service Certified Historic District, or Certified Local Government historic district, or is listed as a local landmark by a Certified Local Government. Properties that will be used as a single-family residence are not eligible.

Benefits

The Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program provides a state tax credit up to 25 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures incurred during rehabilitation projects. Applicants are eligible for no more than \$5 million in tax credits unless approved as a catalytic project. The tax credit can be applied to applicable financial institutions, foreign and domestic insurance premiums or individual income taxes.

How to Apply

Applications are received bi-annually in March and September for the Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit. Applicants file a competitive application with the Ohio Development Services Agency and applicable historic rehabilitation documentation with the State Historic Preservation Office. All applicants are required to schedule a pre-application meeting with the State Historic Preservation Office prior to submitting an application.

Contact Information

Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit
Program Manager
Office of Strategic Business
Investments
(614) 728-0995

APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY RESULTS

Survey

Now that you have seen recommendations from the Tiffin Downtown Plan we would like your opinions. Please complete the following survey by prioritizing the objectives listed.

Rank the projects on the scale with the highest priority as 1 and lowest priority as 10.

Public Investment

Low / Moderate Cost

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Alley updates	<input type="radio"/>							
Zoning updates	<input type="radio"/>							
Washington streetscape	<input type="radio"/>							
Bike facilities	<input type="radio"/>							
Parking coordination	<input type="radio"/>							
Riverfront design	<input type="radio"/>							
Pocket park at Civil War Museum	<input type="radio"/>							
[describe other below]	<input type="radio"/>							

What other projects do you believe the public should invest in?

- 1.5 – Washington Streetscape
- 2.75 – Riverfront Design
- 3.25 – Alley Updates
- 3.5 – Pocket Park
- 5.25 – Zoning Updates
- 5.5 – Parking Coordination

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the successful implementation of any plan. So, a survey was given after the October 13th stakeholder meeting in which a draft plan was presented. The survey provided a snapshot review of the plan and an opportunity for stakeholders to prioritize implementation ideas. Unfortunately, only four people responded to the survey, but those results are provided here.

Private Investment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Student housing	<input type="radio"/>									
Downtown upper floor housing	<input type="radio"/>									
Facade improvements	<input type="radio"/>									
Infill development	<input type="radio"/>									
Student center/business Downtown	<input type="radio"/>									
More restaurant options	<input type="radio"/>									
More retail options	<input type="radio"/>									
Events	<input type="radio"/>									
Parking lot improvements	<input type="radio"/>									
[describe other below]	<input type="radio"/>									

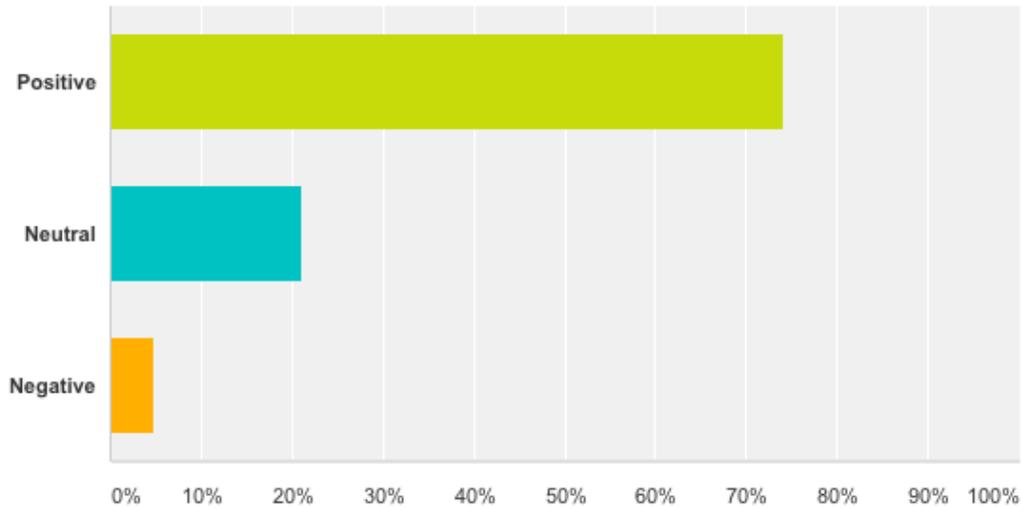
What other projects do you believe the City should encourage and incentivize?

- 1.75 – More Restaurant Options
- 2.75 – More Retail Options
- 3.25 – Upper Floor Housing
- 3.5 – Façade Improvements
- 5 – Downtown Events
- 6 – Infill Development
- 6.75 – Parking Lot Improvements
- 8 – Downtown Student Center / Business
- 8 – Student Housing

DOWNTOWN SURVEY RESULTS

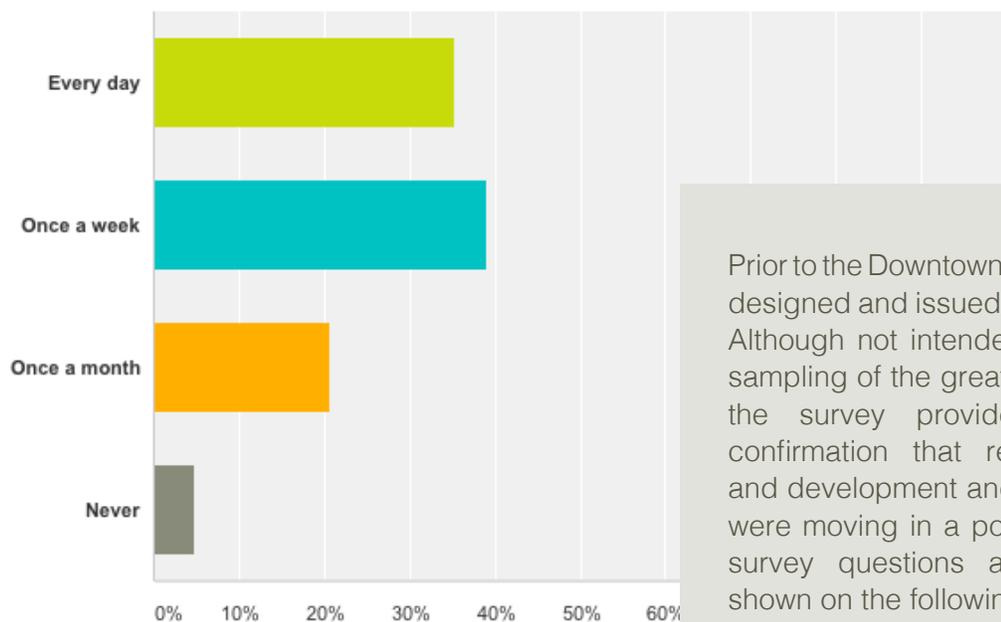
What direction do you think downtown Tiffin is heading?

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1



How often do you go downtown?

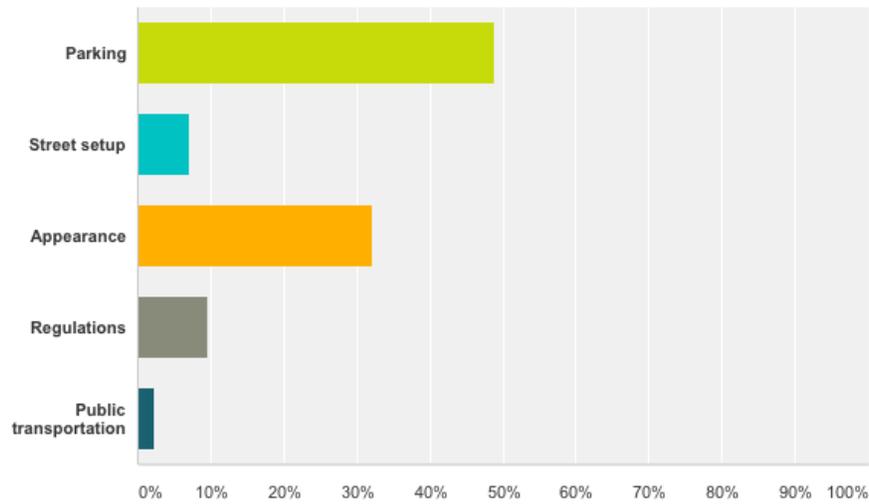
Answered: 82 Skipped: 4



Prior to the Downtown Summit, SIEDC staff designed and issued a downtown survey. Although not intended to be a scientific sampling of the greater Tiffin community, the survey provided some general confirmation that recent management and development and business activities were moving in a positive direction. The survey questions and responses are shown on the following pages.

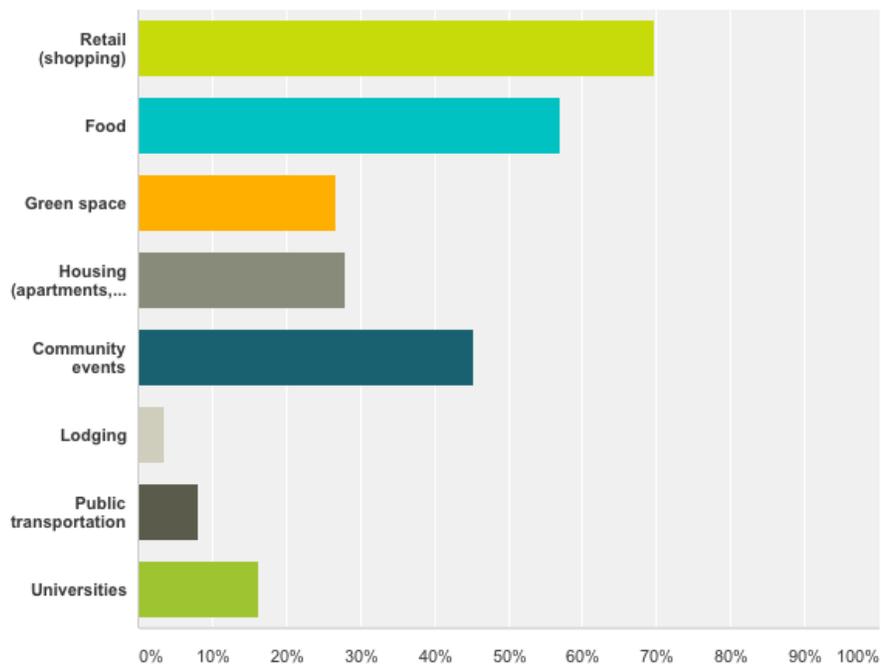
What is the biggest challenge to positive growth and development of downtown Tiffin?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 2



What are the biggest opportunities for growth and development in downtown Tiffin?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 0



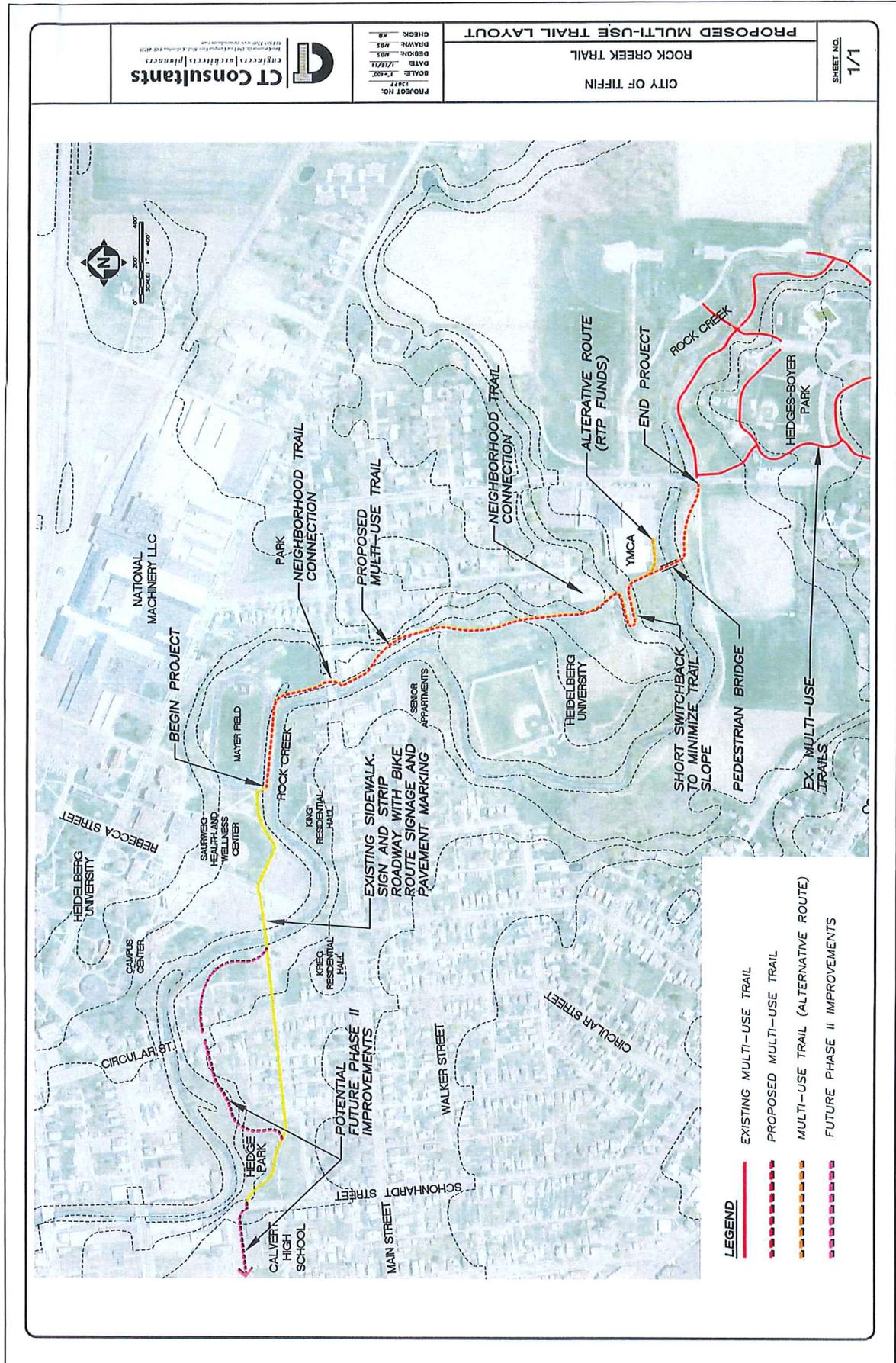
High Cost

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Riverfront promenade	<input type="radio"/>						
Bridge enhancements	<input type="radio"/>						
One-way to two-way conversion (E/W)	<input type="radio"/>						
One-way to two-way conversion (N/S)	<input type="radio"/>						
Bike Lanes	<input type="radio"/>						
East Green park	<input type="radio"/>						
[describe other below]	<input type="radio"/>						

What other major projects do you believe the public should invest in?

- 1.75 – Riverfront Promenade
- 2.25 – East Green Park
- 2.5 - Bridge Enhancements
- 5 – N/S One-way to Two-way Conversion
- 5.25 – E/W One-way to Two-way Conversion
- 5.25 – Bike Lanes

Comments: Alley updates....I am going to beat the drum on this one!
 I think distinguishing districts via archways should be a priority. Similar to how they have done in the short north in Columbus, however I think we should look at a lower cost archway. I also think we should consider looking into someone local who may be able to make these for us.



Via CT Consultants

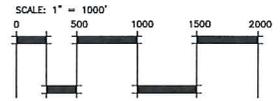
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	PHASE 2 ± 8,900 LF
	PHASE 3 ± 8,900 LF
	PHASE 4 ± 2,200 LF
	PHASE 6 ± BY OTHERS



JOB NO. 03-023
JULY, 2003

