

City of

SOUTH



MILWAUKEE

Downtown Revitalization Plan



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historically, South Milwaukee's downtown served as the primary market place for the exchange of goods and services, as well being the main focal point for social interaction. The neglect and overall deterioration of the central business district over time has resulted in an outward flux of people, business, and industry. This cycle of disinvestment has led to low-value uses replacing what were once vibrant businesses. These problems have negatively impacted City finances, downtown businesses, and area residents, as potential businesses and customers look to locate elsewhere. This report provides an analysis of the current economic and social conditions impacting the vitality of downtown South Milwaukee and provides recommendations to improve the downtown area.

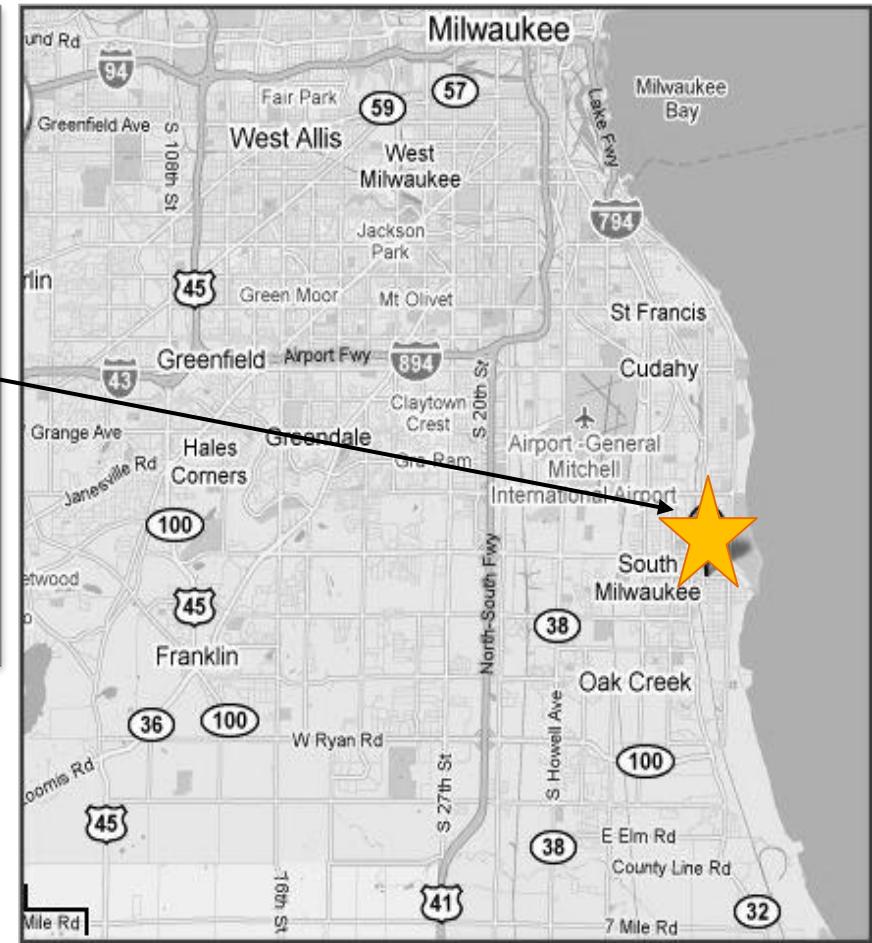
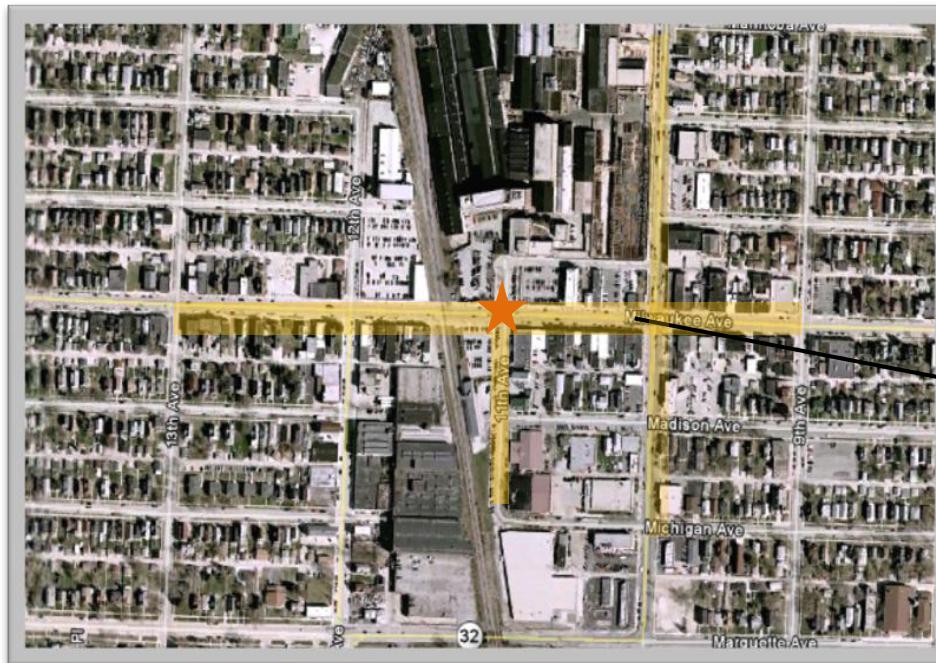
Based on extensive research, site visits, interviews and public participation, the planning team is able to provide recommendations and a strategy to enliven downtown South Milwaukee. The strategy is based on achieving three objectives:

- Improving the image of downtown;
- Creating an identity for downtown;
- Creating a multifunctional downtown.

This report is divided into two sections. Section one focuses on five recommendations that address: streetscape, façade, building vacancy, community and sign code. Some recommendations offer an incremental approach, others offer immediate implementation. The second section of the report focuses on a three-step strategy to implementing the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations consist of: organizing, consenting and implementing a Main Street Program. Successfully following the recommended process to implement the recommendations will result in: administrative ease, political will and financial feasibility.

It is important to note, deterioration and neglect in the central downtown area did not occur overnight. As such, "quick fixes" may demonstrate immediate reinvestment, but do not address or rectify the underlying forces which led to the deterioration. The recommendations and strategies offered in this report are starting points for further visioning and analysis of overarching issues impeding the City of South Milwaukee's growth as an emerging city. Thus, taking heed to careful planning will yield a solid foundation upon which a revitalization strategy may be developed.

THE CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE IN CONTEXT



The City of South Milwaukee, located in Milwaukee County, is a city rich in history and heritage. Downtown buildings and storefronts are reflective of the prosperity and the prominence the community experienced many years ago. Residents are proud of their community, which is evident in their civic engagement to protect the unique environment created from years past. People are friendly and willing to work hard to revitalize and restore the City's prominence as a traditionally unique city that boasts big city amenities.

The City of South Milwaukee's downtown revitalization area is the intersection of Milwaukee Avenue at 10th Avenue and 11th Street between Manitoba and Marquette Avenues. The map above (Figure 1) clearly illustrates South Milwaukee's ideal location on the southeastern border of Milwaukee County. Surrounding communities include the rapidly expanding Cudahy to the north, Franklin to the east and Oak Creek to the south. The City is fifteen minutes south of a major metropolitan area, City of Milwaukee, General Mitchell International Airport, and is minutes from major highway route I-41 and I-794.

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE



In 1838, under the Pre-emption Act, the government opened land in the Northwest Territory for sale at \$1.25 per acre. South Milwaukee was marketed as a rich, fertile, forested prairie-like territory with good water supply. The pioneers who chose to settle claimed great areas of land along the creek and along the lakeshore and built homes, cleared land to farm and began foundations of a settlement. At the time, Milwaukee County was the governing unit made up of townships. This area was part of the Lake Township, which was too large for the board members to travel to meetings and do town business in one day. In 1841, the area was divided. As the area was around a deep beautiful stream with an abundance of white oak trees, they decided to name the settlement Oak Creek.

By 1870, many more homes and some farms were built along Hawthorne, North Chicago and Rawson Avenues. The population by 1891 surpassed 500. The village government was incorporated and the name changed to South Milwaukee in late 1891. The matter of incorporation was projected as of August 8, 1892 with a population of 518 and finalized and granted December 3, 1892. By 1891, the capitalistic ventures of South Milwaukee Company emerged to re-plan and extend the rural settlement into an industrial suburb. A downtown plan was platted and laid out in lots, streets were named and industrial spaces were allocated for sale. With a strong industrial base along the shore of Lake Michigan, spacious streets and grand homes South Milwaukee rivaled Milwaukee.

The City of South Milwaukee still holds fast to the ambition of a more promising future. Today, the City is well developed with a wealth of natural amenities, low crime and the ownership of independent water and utilities. The City of South Milwaukee has seen steady growth over the past three decades from 20,958 in 1990; to 21,256 in 2000 and a small dip in 2010 with a current pupil count of 21,171. It's a working class bedroom community with the City's largest employer being Bucyrus with 1,100 employees. The City's median household income according to the 2010 Census is \$52,616, which is higher than the City of Milwaukee (\$32,216) and Milwaukee County (\$45,902). Although the City of South Milwaukee has a stable economy, compared to other cities, it suffers from a decentralized downtown and capital leakage.

The City of South Milwaukee began participating in the State of Wisconsin's TIF Program in 2000 to aid in eliminating blight, rehabilitate declining property values, promote industry, and encourage mixed-use development. Prior to mobilizing the TIF

program, the City tried to incentivise new development and to keep big business like Bucyrus in South Milwaukee, but the lack of incentives and financial resources made TIF a more attractive and viable option. Since then, the City has developed four Tax Increment Districts (TIDs). Figure 1 illustrates the four TIDs developed, their value, and the projects that have developed as a result of the TID.

Table 1 – City of South Milwaukee TIF Districts

	TID 1	TID 2	TID 3	TID 4
*TID created	July 5, 2000 (effective date January 1, 2000)	July 5, 2000 (effective date January 1, 2000)	Effective date January 1, 2005	Effective date January 1, 2006
Base Value:	\$8,397,700.00	\$6,394,400.00	\$16,460,500.00	\$634,800
Current Value:	\$27,179,900.00	\$20,835,500.00	\$36,857,000.00	N/A
Increment Value:	\$18,782,200.00	\$14,441,100.00	\$20,396,500.00	\$38,930,625.00
Completed Projects:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marquette Square (mixed use) Commercial and 920 Lofts. - Metalcut Products office and manufacturing building - Speedway gas station - Marquette Manor, a 74 unit senior housing development - The Klamrowski Office Building and Condos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Carrington Place Condominium, includes six condo units. - Wescott Place, includes six condo units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage Reserve, 32-unit condominium development. - Grant Park Plaza, allowed for the construction of a Roundy's Pick N Save retail center on a former Kohl's site. 	Through a two year phased improvement program, Bucyrus International will expand its operations in South Milwaukee, including new buildings and production equipment. The increased manufacturing capability and capacity will provide 190 additional jobs, including skilled labor, engineering, and professional, cementing BI's status as South Milwaukee's top employer.

**According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, when a TIF district is created the aggregate equalized value of taxable and certain municipal owned property is established by the Department of Revenue (DOR). This is called the Tax Incremental Base. The municipality then installs public improvements and property values grow. Taxes paid on the increased value are used to pay for projects undertaken by the municipality. This is the Tax Increment. It is based on the increased values in the TID and levies of all the taxing jurisdictions that share the tax base.*

PROBLEM

Historically, the City of South Milwaukee's downtown served as the primary market place for the exchange of goods and services, as well being the main focal point for social interaction. The deterioration of the central business district has resulted in an outward flux of people, business, and industry. These problems have negatively impacted City finances, downtown businesses, and area residents, as potential businesses and customers look to locate elsewhere. This cycle of disinvestment has led to low-value uses replacing what were once vibrant businesses.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

TWO PART APPROACH

This report is divided into two sections. Part One provides recommendations for the vision of a revitalized downtown. Part Two provides recommendations in the form of a three-step strategy for reaching this vision.

PART ONE: THE VISION FOR SOUTH MILWAUKEE

The following objectives were addressed in order to create recommendations for the vision:

Objective One: Improve the image of downtown

Most successful downtown revitalization efforts recognize the value of developing a positive image for the area through the improvement of aesthetic characteristics and the development of pedestrian friendly environments. Improvements such as these create a “sense of place” where community members and visitors look forward to engaging in social, recreational, and economic activities.

Enhancing the visual appeal of downtown creates an environment that encourages people to look, linger, and engage in what the area has to offer. The downtown commercial district can distinguish itself from nearby retail outlets that lack a strong sense of place, while providing the community with a signature South Milwaukee experience.

Objective Two: Create an identity for downtown

A successful downtown must have a strong presence within the rest of the community. In general, people must be able to identify the location of downtown and have no problem identifying when they are within downtown. In order to create an identity, the City should be involved in branding, programming events, and connecting people to the area.

Objective Three: Create a multi-functional downtown

Traditionally, downtowns housed a wide variety of functions. In recent years, cities are revisiting this unique characteristic of downtown by encouraging a healthy mix of retail and service options, as well as developing spaces where people can come together to celebrate, work, and relax. The downtown should attract business people, shoppers, the young and old, passers-through and the entire community.

Our recommendations meet the following criteria:

- The recommendations must be consistent with the 2020 Comprehensive Plan
- The recommendations must utilize input from successful strategies in other downtowns
- The recommendations must increase pedestrian activity downtown
- The recommendations must utilize the market assessment to measure demand for additional economic activities

PART TWO: THREE-STEP STRATEGY

South Milwaukee's downtown revitalization will require strong collaboration between the public and private sector, as well as a sustained effort to improve the area. The client expressed that a lack of financial resources for downtown improvements exist, and further feedback from City officials reinforce this reality. Efforts currently exist within government, downtown businesses, and other groups to make specific improvements to the area, but successful downtown revitalization will entail a comprehensive strategy reflective of a shared community vision.

While South Milwaukee is unique in its history and character, the downtown area tells a story similar to those in many other small cities that share similarities in both the external forces causing downtown's decline and strategies for successfully rebuilding the area anew. Much credence has been given to applying a gradual, incremental approach that builds on existing strengths. For this reason, along with those previously mentioned, this plan calls for downtown organizational efforts to occur incrementally. We propose a three step strategy.

Our steps meet the following criteria:

Administrative ease

- The steps must build involvement from within the community to organize committees devoted to specific areas of revitalization

Political feasibility

- The steps must be implementable without necessitating an increase in the tax levy

Financial feasibility

- The steps must build a pool of revolving funds necessary to implement revitalization techniques

PROCESS SUMMARY

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviews with South Milwaukee residents, downtown business owners, organizations, and government officials were conducted over the course of four weeks. Fourteen interviews were conducted and over twenty hours of conversation was recorded. The objective was to obtain a variety of local perspectives about downtown and understand stakeholders' preferred direction for revitalization efforts. Our final recommendations blend the technical expertise, local knowledge, and unique perspectives of those interviewed. Interview questions and responses have been synthesized. For complete interview responses, please refer to **appendix A**.

COMMUNITY CHARRETTE

In addition to conducting stakeholder interviews, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Planning Team conducted a charrette at the South Milwaukee public library on Saturday, April 16th from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. The charrette was marketed via word of mouth, flyers, social media and the internet up to three weeks prior to the event. A downtown business, Wildflower Bakery, donated refreshments for the event.

The Planning Team presented four stations for public comment, based on consolidated research and preliminary recommendations for downtown improvements: target parcel revitalization and vacancy use; streetscape enhancements and façade revitalization; community building; and community testimonies, which recorded attendees' testimonials about the present state and future of the downtown area. Thirty-four residents, downtown business owners and government officials attended and gave input at each of the four stations. Their input was considered in our final recommendations. The synthesized charrette findings are detailed in **appendix B**.

CASE STUDY REVIEW AND RESEARCH

Small City Revitalization

Small city downtowns throughout America have experienced decades of decline, and many have made efforts to revitalize their downtowns. Common strategies and wisdom exist, and those who have adapted the successful strategies of others often experience similar benefits.

Case study review and research was conducted on successful strategies for downtown revitalization over the course of three months. Many sources were referenced in order to contextualize South Milwaukee's downtown and develop appropriate strategies for improvement.

Among the most successful strategies for downtown revitalization are:

- 1- Emphasize a multifunctional downtown
- 2- Enhance downtown's sense of place
- 3- Develop a community vision for downtown
- 4- Use public/private partnerships
- 5- Apply the Main Street Approach
- 6- Promote Downtown Activities

Case studies of cities that share multiple characteristics with South Milwaukee (including population, industrial history, and external threats, such as neighboring malls) that have successfully employed these strategies include: New Albany, IN; Jeffersonville, IN; and Two Rivers, WI.

Additional case study research is located in **appendix C**.

Wisconsin Business Improvement Districts

Additional case study research is located in **appendix D**.

Business Improvement District Case Studies Summary

Our research focused on three Business Improvement Districts that we believe should be emulated by the new South Milwaukee Business Improvement District. The Downtown Beloit Association, Downtown West Allis Business Improvement District and Main Street Marshfield are all successful BID's in small cities similar in nature to South Milwaukee. Each offer innovative grant programs aimed at improving the image of their district.

With a city population of 37,710 and a BID levy rate of \$3.25 / \$1000, the Downtown Beloit Association is perhaps the best example of what the Downtown South Milwaukee BID could eventually become. The Beloit BID offers a wide variety of business assistance programs including a façade grant program, sign grant program, and upper floor housing grant program. The upper floor housing program is a unique attempt to revitalize their downtown with a focus on creating a “live, work, play” environment in downtown Beloit. Once the Downtown South Milwaukee Business Improvement District has a funding structure in place, we recommend implementing business assistance programs like the upper floor housing grant program.

Wisconsin Main Street Program Communities

The Wisconsin Main Street Program is a vital asset for a community that is serious about revitalizing its struggling downtown. The Program provides technical support and training to Wisconsin communities that have expressed a grassroots commitment to revitalizing their traditional business districts. There is an application and review process to be involved.

The Main Street case studies are provided from the 2009-2010 Annual Report. Each study provides an example of how a community was improved through access to the Main Street Program. Special attention is given to communities which improved façade and streetscaping or created vacant building reuse and promotion events.

The case studies are provided in **appendix E**.

MARKET ASSESSMENT

The following are the Economic Goals listed in the City of South Milwaukee Comprehensive Plan 2020:

- Retail and Service opportunities deemed feasible and desirable include appliance and housewares sales and service, restaurants and specialty retail.
- Attractive industries include: electrical equipment, electronics and metal product manufacturing; electronic and precision equipment maintenance; electrical goods wholesale; residential construction and remodeling; business and office support services; health care.
- The City seeks renewed emphasis on its central business district.

Table 2 shows shipment, sales and receipts for businesses located within South Milwaukee in 1997 and 2007.

Shipment, Sales and Receipts in South Milwaukee					
Year	1997*		2007		
Business and Industry	Value (\$000)	%	Value (\$000)	%	
Manufacturing	429,931	74.8%	852,645	85.2%	
Wholesale Trade	19,944	3.5%	6,675	0.7%	
Retail Trade	53,990	9.4%	64,703	6.5%	
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	3,556	0.6%	5,314	0.5%	
Professional, scientific, and technical services	2,121	0.4%	3,556	0.4%	
Admin., Support, Waste Mngt and Remediation	5,410	0.9%	6,562	0.7%	
Health Care and Social Assistance	17,224	3.0%	47,599	4.8%	
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1,924	0.3%	2,136	0.2%	
Accommodation and food services	9,838	1.7%	11,807	1.2%	
Other Services	30,486	5.3%	Withheld	Not Quantifiable	
Total (Other Services Not Included in 2007)	574,424		1,000,997	100.00%	

*The 1997 dollars values are not adjusted for inflation to match 2007 values.

Table 2

Renewed emphasis on the Central Business District will support the commerce and long-term value of the entire City. The City should concentrate on the types of businesses that are lacking in the area or industries with potential growth.

Retail trade lags further behind Manufacturing in 2007 than it did in 1997. In 2007, Retail generated about only 6.5% of the total economy. Manufacturing far outpaces the other industries accounting for 75% of the total economy in 1997 and 85% in 2007. Retail should benefit from the growth of the City's economic base. In order to reverse the decline of Retail the City could promote its

Central Business District as an area able to support commercial businesses.

The Comprehensive Plan states that the City should consider ways to reduce the “leakage” of locally available dollars from the community. The Plan acknowledged that an important aspect of reducing the “leakage” is to consider Consumer Demand and Retail or Service development.

The Plan provides its list of community-wide retail and service needs based on consumer spending patterns and source imbalances.

Table 3

Consumer Spending Patterns and Source Imbalances (Claritas, 2001, and South Milwaukee)	
Purchasing Pattern	Retail and Services
Residents may spend more locally if these businesses are expanded or established in South Milwaukee...	Home Improvements Hardware Stores Restaurants
	New Car Dealers Computers and Data Processing Services Advertising and Services Video Games and Movie Video Rentals Book Stores Fitness Facilities Sporting Goods
Non-residents visiting South Milwaukee spend more than expected on...	Recreation-related

Table 3 highlights businesses that the community may wish to attract or expand locally; the bottom list includes a business-type that the community may wish to see expanded in order to consolidate South Milwaukee as a destination for these products or services. Based on community preferences, other retail and service opportunities may exist in apparel, groceries and retail specialty stores.

Table 4**Possible Stores South Milwaukee Can Support, By Category**

Category	Demand*	Supply**	Shortfall or Surplus (D-S)	Sales per Stores (Thousands)	Possible Stores (Shortfall/Sales Per Store)
Grocery	\$37,734,291	\$80,020,919	\$42,286,628	\$16,004,184	3
Restaurant	\$24,073,289	\$12,350,019	\$11,723,270	\$363,236	32
Medical services	\$7,993,685	\$4,620,125	\$3,373,560	\$2,310,062	1
Vehicle maintenance and repairs	\$7,235,309	\$7,045,694	\$189,616	\$3,522,847	0
Apparel and services	\$14,972,786	\$3,787,674	\$11,185,112	\$1,262,558	9
Personal care products and services	\$5,513,593	\$49,788,139	\$44,274,546	\$1,508,731	29
Major appliances	\$1,936,931	\$11,855,863	\$9,918,932	\$790,391	13
Medical supplies	\$1,424,516	\$5,623,691	\$4,199,176	\$401,692	10

Table? -?

*Based on data from the BLS Expenditure Survey. Midwest region totals.

**Based on data from the 2007 U.S. Economic Census

Table 4 provides data about the number of possible retail stores that can be supported within the City.

Based on this data, South Milwaukee can support 32 restaurants, one medical service, and nine apparel and services. There is a high surplus of existing personal care, products, and service. The other items in red have a surplus in the City.

The numbers *do not* imply that categories Grocery, Personal care products and services, Major appliances, and Medical supplies will fail; they indicate that current supply of the categories exceeds demand.

VACANCY REPORT

A major problem expressed during public input was the high proportion of vacant buildings on Milwaukee Avenue. A high proportion of vacant buildings in a central business district indicate the lack of identity as a shopping district. Visibly vacant storefronts reduce the appeal for downtown visitors. In general, filling the downtown with viable, long-term businesses is a strong desire of the community.

The city does not keep official documentation of the vacant buildings downtown. High business turnover makes this a difficult document to maintain.

Vacant Buildings on Milwaukee Avenue
Collected During Survey of Area April 14, 2011



describes as suspected to be vacant with no clear visual sign (in most cases, the blinds were closed during normal business hours).

A walk-through, visual survey was completed on April 14, 2011 to collect all vacant properties on Milwaukee Avenue and between 8th and 14th Avenues. This area represents the high-density, commercial "main street" portion of downtown.

The results of this survey are represented on the following map:

The survey collected 18 vacant parcels with buildings and six questionable vacant parcels. The 18 vacant parcels (red outline) are described as those with for sale signs, for rent signs, or else visibly empty inside. The six questionable vacant parcels (blue outline) are

In the survey area, there are 126 total parcels zoned as Central Business District (C3). With 24 vacant or questionable vacant parcels, there is a commercial vacancy rate of 19% on Milwaukee Avenue between 8th and 14th Avenues. **Appendix F** provides the owner information for all 24 vacant properties.

PRIOR PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

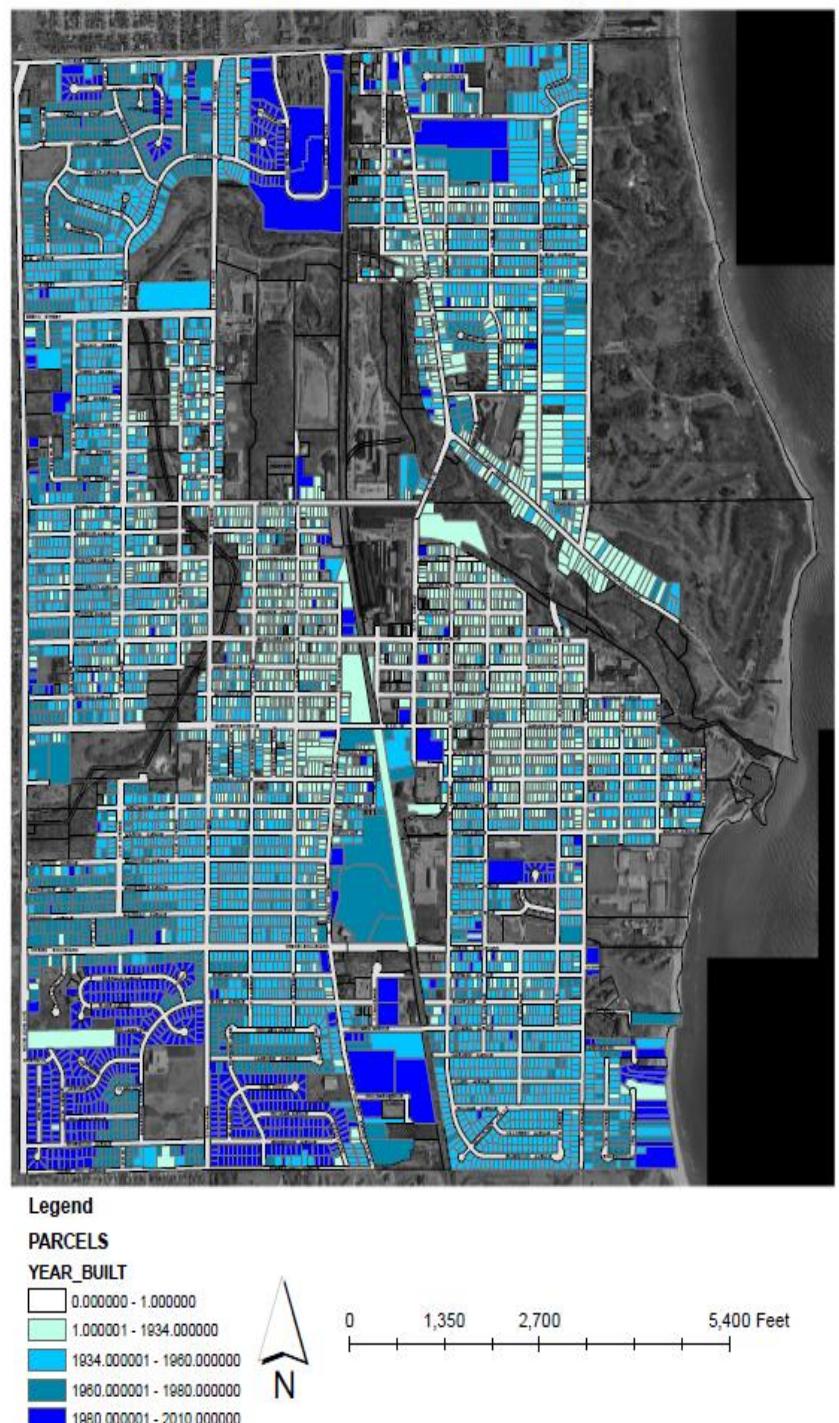
Though the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail project has been put on hold, we believe it is important for the City of South Milwaukee to plan for future transit oriented development (TOD) located in the downtown area.

Borrowing from the KRM Alternatives Analysis conducted by Earth Tech, Inc and HNTB in 2006, we recommend increasing residential density and encouraging mixed-use development within a quarter mile area of the proposed train station, concentrated primarily along Milwaukee and 10th Avenues. This transit-friendly development would include retail and service uses on the ground floor and residential uses, including affordable housing, above the ground floor. Additionally, we recommend attracting businesses to the downtown area that would provide jobs and entertainment for the additional residents of downtown South Milwaukee.

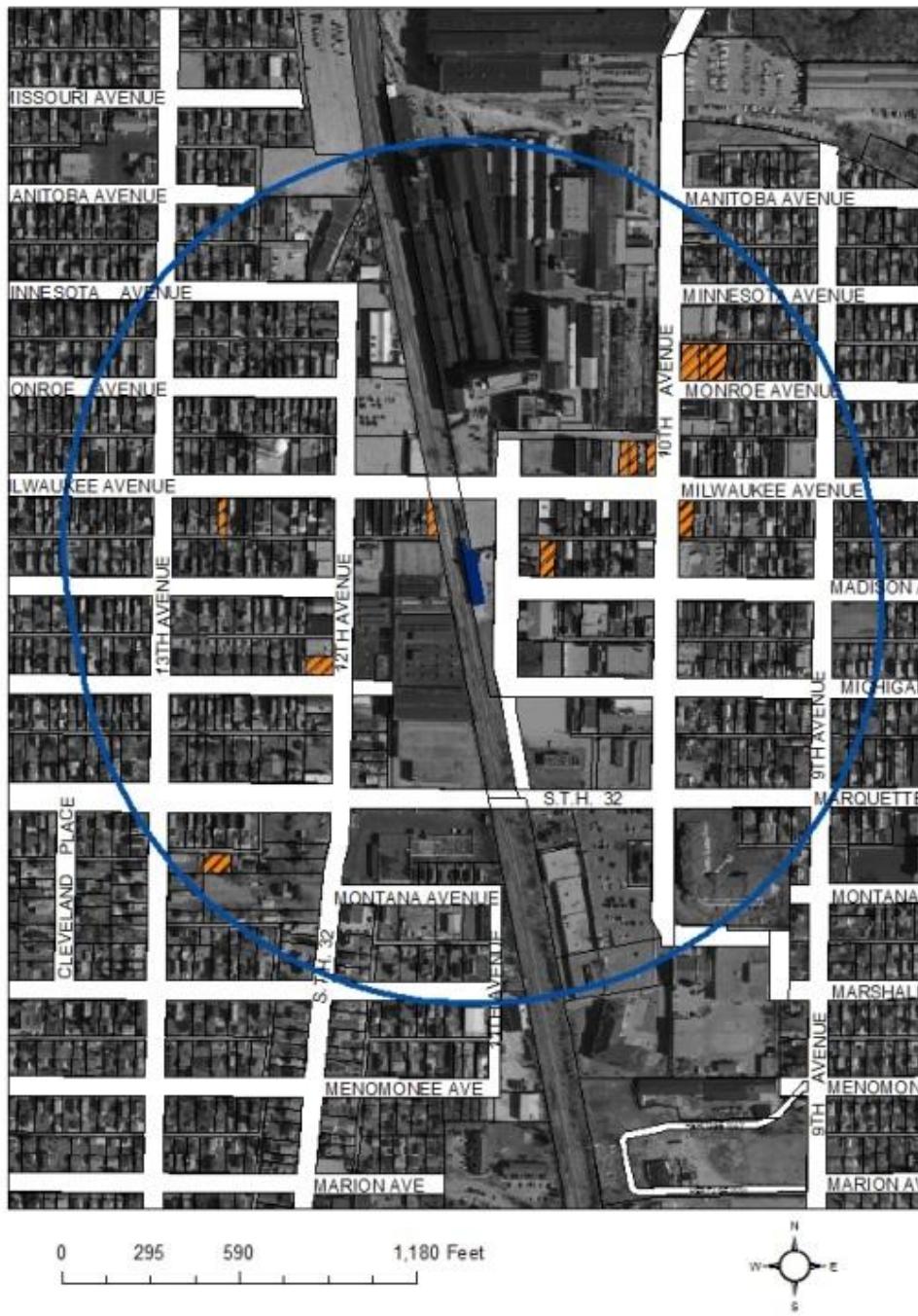
This “live, work, play” environment will attract residents of all ages and income levels to the downtown to take advantage of the increased accessibility provided by the commuter rail stop.

South Milwaukee should also encourage, through parking requirements in the zoning code, the use of shared parking in the downtown area. Businesses drawing customers at

Age of South Milwaukee Building Stock



Vacant Parcels In TOD Zone



different times of the day should explore the use of shared parking as a way to decrease parking costs and encourage alternative forms of transportation. If shared parking is implemented, existing surface parking lots could be redeveloped into high-density, mixed-use transit oriented developments, adding to the tax rolls and improving the financial health of the City.

Finally, continuing to improve the pedestrian experience in the downtown district is vitally important for successful transit oriented development. We recommend hiring a consultant to develop a streetscape improvement plan which will include street lighting, street furniture, street trees and landscaping improvements to be made in the downtown area. A community plaza or green space near the transit station would also draw more residents from other areas of the downtown.

PART ONE: RECOMMENDAITONS

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT REVLOVING LOAN FUND

A quick scan of South Milwaukee's downtown belies its proud past, engaged community, and promising future. Predominately neutral facades set against an expansive skyline wash out downtown's image and fail communicate South Milwaukee's unique history or convey the story of people who live and work there.

A clear need for façade improvements exists in the downtown area, but Façade Improvement Program funds are nearly depleted. A Façade Improvement Revolving Loan Program is recommended because it allows businesses to engage in façade improvements without requiring City funds.

The City has indicated that many local business owners are disinterested in the program, and some local business owners have indicated a lack of awareness about the program. Additionally, some businesses have solicited funds for non-qualifying improvements. To improve the look and feel of the downtown area, business owners need to be knowledgeable participants in the façade improvement revolving loan program by advertising the program through the web, Chamber of Commerce and other local outlets, and word of mouth.

A number of methods exist to encourage business owners to learn about the program and solicit funds for qualifying improvements without incurring unnecessary municipal expense, including

- Low interest rates: Set interest rates below prime.
- Employ application fee: Some programs employ a nominal application fee in order to cover administrative costs and discourage the application of funds for non-qualifying programs.
- Marketing: Market the program through existing outlets, such as the City of South Milwaukee website, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Lions Club. Marketing of the program allows South Milwaukee to underscore their commitment to downtown improvements. Additionally, business owners will not participate in the program and may request disqualifying improvements if guidance (in the form of program details and application forms), is not readily available.

Based on community input and a careful analysis of the downtown area, qualifying improvements should include:

- Paint
- Historic restoration initiatives (Restoration reflects buildings' proud past, and transitions their image from "tired" to "historic.")

- Outdoor lighting
- Commercial signage (only for signage that complies with code)
- Window expansion
- Repair or replacement of existing awnings or non-compliant signage
- Pedestrian or ADA enhancements

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The strategies we considered include (these are for all: target parcels, short-term creative techniques to enhance vacancies, streetscape enhancements, and façade revitalization):

- Encouraging pedestrian activity by adding and enhancing street crossings;
- Adding pedestrian amenities such as planters, trees, brick pavers, and benches
- Revitalizing building facades through lighting, windows, color, texture, or other methods
- Enhancing existing open space
- Provision of clear downtown linkages to existing amenities within the community

Two Phases for Streetscape Improvements

Downtown South Milwaukee's infrastructure is clean and in good repair but the general streetscape, to quote residents and downtown business owners, is "tired, worn out, and struggling". Streetscape improvements will enhance the image and aesthetic qualities of downtown's central business district while encouraging pedestrian and civic activity. Due to limited funding, streetscape improvements should occur in two phases:

Phase 1: Low-cost, immediate, and impactful improvements reflective of community vision

Examples include: mosaic planters filled with sedge grasses or other low-maintenance perennials, benches, way finding signage for downtown, vacant space improvements



Figure 1: Community members create a mosaic planter.



Figure 1: Benches such as this evoke the sense that the area is in motion and depending on materials and design, may symbolize connections to the area, such as water.



Figure 3: Volunteers clear vacant land for a community garden.

Phase 2: Higher end, strategic improvements reflective of community vision

Examples include: bike lanes, planter benches, storm water and community gardens, enhanced street crossings.

Streetscape improvements should be applied in conjunction with other revitalization strategies and are not meant to compensate for a lack of commercial concentration or vitality, which is essential for enlivening downtown.¹ Various streetscape improvements were analyzed based on functionality, South Milwaukee's unique geographic and cultural characteristics, and input from public participation events. The streetscape improvements to the streetscape described here, will improve the look, image, and feel of downtown for its users. In selecting specific amenities, the city's vision, and downtown's specifically, should be reflected in the visual landscape and feel of the street. Bucyrus' history, the Yellowstone Trail, and the Underground Railroad are examples of defining features of that could be highlighted.

(¹ Urban Land, January 1997.)

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community Building is recommended to create an identity, connect community and clearly identify the City of South Milwaukee's Central Business District (CBD). This recommendation is divided into three sections: branding, programming and connectivity.

Branding Recommendations

During the community charrette, participants completed a branding survey which identified the need for an identity that boasted South Milwaukee's proud tradition, natural amenities, and sense of community. An honest, relevant, clearly and cleverly articulated brand can move your community from good to great. The synthesized survey results are included in **Appendix B**.

It is recommended the City defines its identity through a branding campaign. This identity comes from the history, the culture, the geography and the society of South Milwaukee. South Milwaukee's brand is not created; it is discovered using qualitative and quantitative research tools that achieve a focused snapshot of the community's values, assets and priorities, which can then be articulated as its "brand." The City of South Milwaukee's brand will be a mixture of attributes – tangible and intangible – that creates value and influence. It will help consumers (residents, businesses and tourists) distinguish them from other cities in the market place. Brands uncovered in this manner are endorsed and absorbed by their communities due to their fundamental truth. Because of this, they are exceedingly useful to community leaders in furthering the economic, political and social goals of the community.

Destination Marketing and Tourism Branding Case Studies

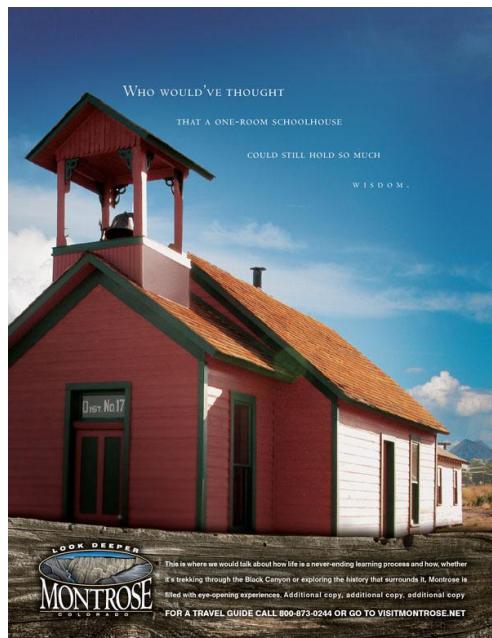
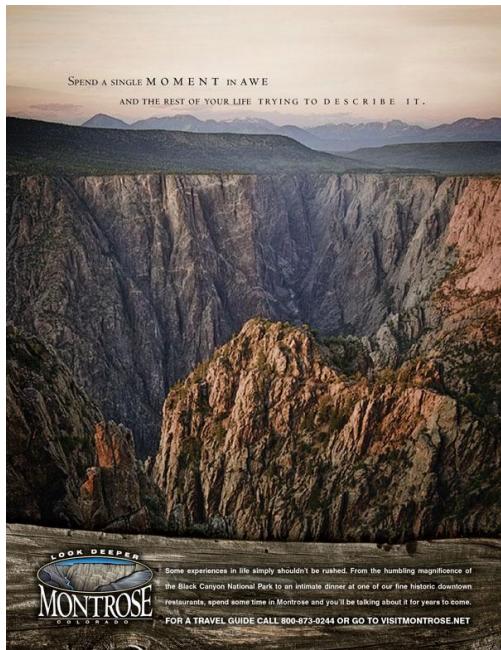
In some cities tourism is the fuel that drives the fiscal engine and tourism marketing receives the majority of public funding. Such cities are typically known as "destinations." In these communities the entire destination, or tourism, brand is often developed for and by its public sector tourism organization (i.e. Travel Wisconsin). Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Dells are good examples of excellent tourism, or destination branding. The City of South Milwaukee can do the same. Below are four case studies, conducted by North Star Branding, that identifies how these small cities were able to brand themselves as destinations.



Key Challenge: Montrose, Colorado is perched on the rim of the awe-inspiring Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park – but has done little to leverage that relationship. Montrose assumed people made the connection between them and the canyon; however, visitors were actually connecting the canyon to better-known but much-more-distant Gunnison, Colorado. Exacerbating the situation was the relative obscurity of the Black Canyon – a direct result of being the newest addition to the national park family and the notorious under marketing of most national parks in general.

Brand Strategy: Montrose positioned itself as a historical town in the heart of southwest Colorado on the edge of the awe-inspiring Black Canyon, where it serves as base camp for deep adventure and unexpected wonder. Montrose offers visitors three times the fun for their travel dollar: portal to the Canyon, base camp for recreation and home to a western history almost as old, deep and rugged as the Black Canyon itself.

The creative concept “Look Deeper” is about taking the time to give this unique and complex place the attention it deserves, and the rewards that come from doing so. It invites visitors to take their time exploring the spiritual and life-changing experience that is the Black Canyon. At the same time it encourages people to “look deeper” into a town that’s more than just a tourist attraction or a mark on the map.



This campaign included:

- Brand Merchandise
- Postcards
- Stationary and Packaging
- Visitors Guide
- Print Ads



“creative class” citizens and a corresponding creative culture.

Brand Strategy: To express this strategy creatively, North Star developed a campaign taking advantage and ownership of a symbol universally known to represent the region – a mitt or hand. The initial roll-out focused on residents and showed citizens and well-known locals including politicians, business owners, etc. involved in various activities while pointing to the center of their hand.



Key Challenge: Lansing, Michigan was suffering from a lack of identity. Lost manufacturing jobs and a struggling economy had residents critical of their community. To be successful, Lansing’s brand had to ring true to residents, even before it was rolled out to tourists. If the people who live in a place don’t believe in their city, no one else will either.

North Star research found that Lansing is actually the literal and figurative heart of Michigan. Centrally located, Lansing is both the state capital and home of Michigan State University. It is also home to a surprising number of

This campaign included:

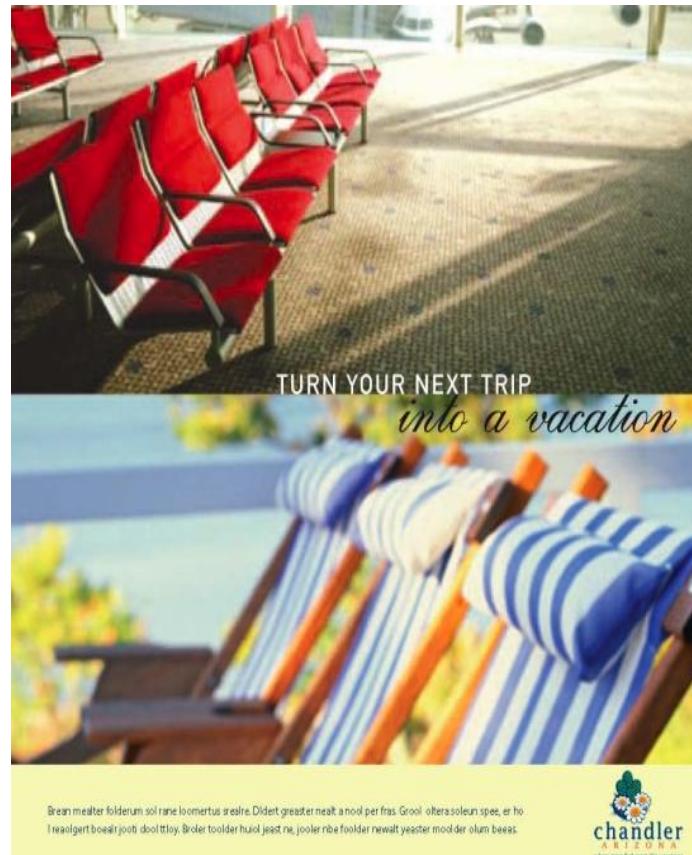
- Community Involvement
- T-Shirt
- Website
- Visitors Guide
- Print Ads
- Public Service Campaign



where trips feel more like vacations.

Key Challenge: Chandler, Arizona is in second place to tourist destination Phoenix. This growing bedroom community with limited resources and no dominant attraction struggles to compete. However, one thing Chandler does have is exceptional customer service. Visitors enjoy all that Phoenix has to offer while making their dollars stretch further by staying in Chandler.

Brand Strategy: Chandler was branded as a destination where smart travelers extend their stay and reward themselves and their families.



This campaign included:

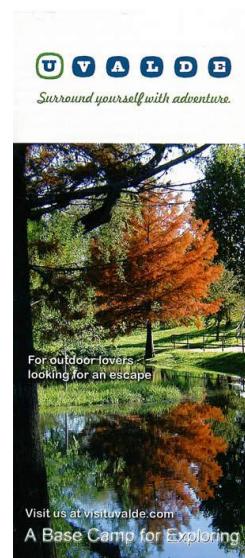
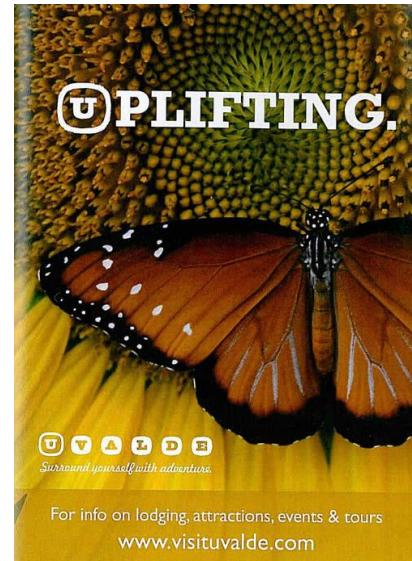
- Java wraps with the Chandler logo
- Brand advertising at local movie theatres, ball parks, gyms and arenas
- Banners and Unique Signage
- Print Ads



Surround yourself with adventure.

Key Challenge: The small town of Uvalde, Texas was missing out on the tourism business that resulted from millions of Texans heading to the Texas Hill Country and river region for freshwater recreational activities. Although surrounded by adventure and activity, Uvalde itself offers no recreational outlets. And many nearby communities are located at the edge of the same natural attractions, but can offer a more convenient route to the river. Visitors were getting to their recreational hot spots without traveling through Uvalde's city limits.

Brand Strategy: Position Uvalde as a welcoming oasis where guests can throw their schedules away. Uvalde offers visitors two benefits not found elsewhere. First, unlike other towns touting river retreats, Uvalde is uniquely located in the center of many great natural resources, including the river, making it the regions' hub and most convenient access to the widest variety of recreational activities. Second - and perhaps most important - life slows down in Uvalde. Some of the world's most hospitable people combine with a leisurely pace making your time in Uvalde feel like the calm from the storm of complicated living.



This campaign included:

- Community wide sponsored art project
- Outdoor Boards
- Community Cookouts
- Print Ads

Programming Recommendations

Community programming connects people and events to downtown South Milwaukee. At the community charrette, participants identified a listing of annual events residents look forward to participating in. The participants also assisted in generating ways to connect people, places and events. Below is a list of community events that could be sponsored in collaboration with local groups and the City of South Milwaukee. In connection with the recommended branding campaign, the community programs should be advertised across the city in advance thru a monthly or quarterly newsletter and should be included on one central webpage.

- Connect school, church and community groups to the Farmers Market by selling produce from the community garden.
- Redevelop one of the vacant parcels along Milwaukee Avenue into a recreation center or a creative arts center to connect the Performing Arts Center to downtown.
- Community sponsored horticultural tours in Grant Park.
- Community re-building projects that connects the community in maintaining the Seven-Bridges and Mill Pond.

Connectivity Recommendations

The City of South Milwaukee's downtown was labeled as unidentifiable during the community charrette. As such, it is recommended the City of South Milwaukee implement way finding and vehicular signage to properly identify entry points into downtown.

The vehicular signage is posted at four points surrounding the identified downtown area: Rawson and Chicago Avenue; Milwaukee Avenue and Mill Road; Marquette and Tenth Avenues; and Milwaukee and Pennsylvania Avenues. The vehicular signage details what major industry is ahead: parks, administrative buildings, parking, business, shopping, etc.

The way finding signage is for pedestrians and will be placed at the intersection of Milwaukee and Tenth Avenues. The pedestrian signage will feature a map of the city, a listing of businesses and a score of administrative buildings. The example of way finding signage used comes from Boone, North Carolina. Boone recently participated in a city-wide branding campaign and chose to tie their branded theme with their signage to make it unique to Boone's downtown.

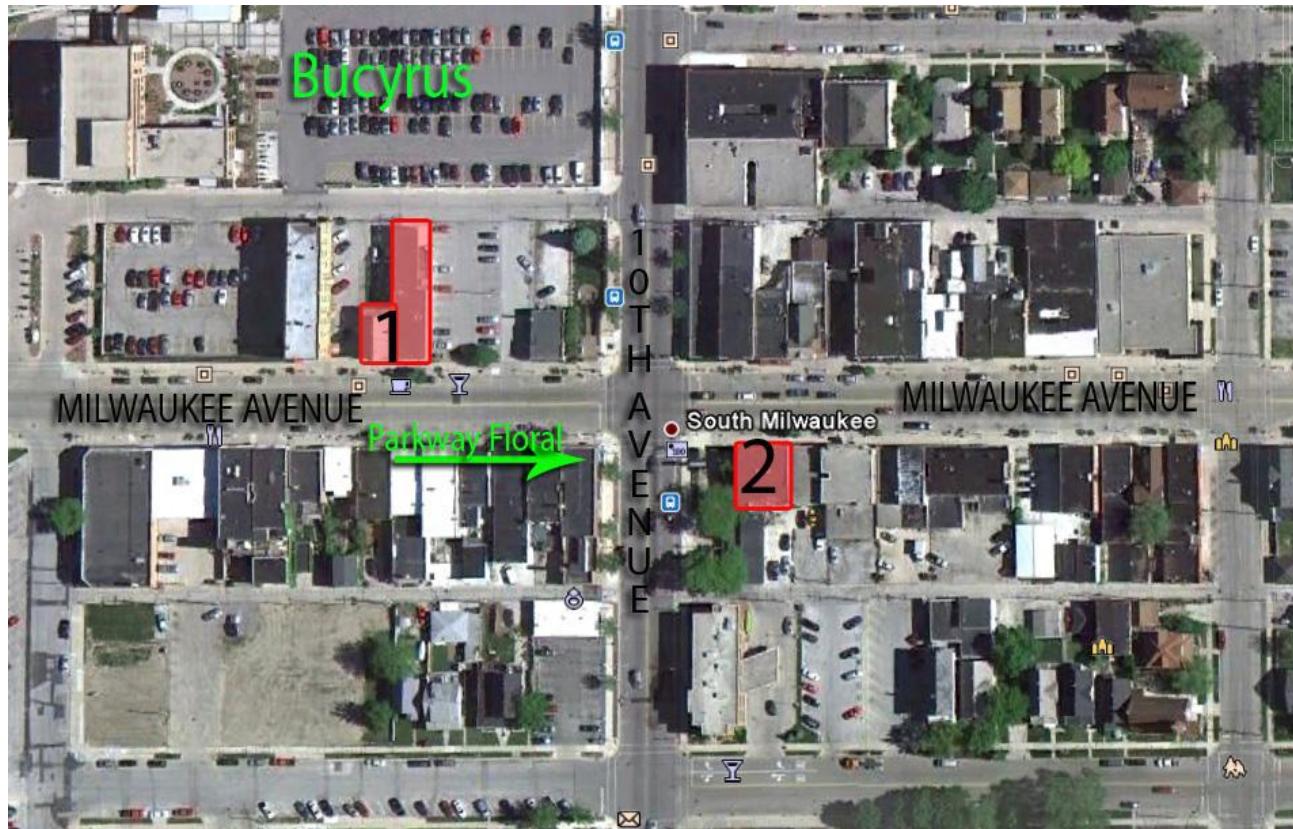


Wayfinding Pedestrian Signage

Vehicular Signage



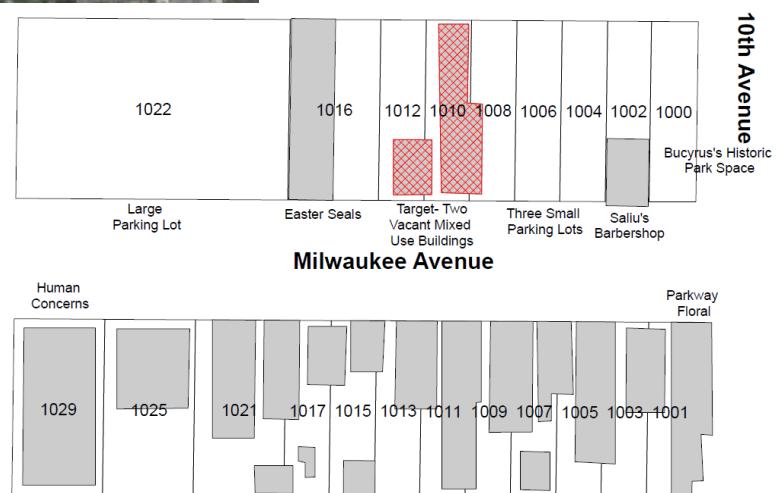
TARGET PARCEL REVITALIZATION



Two Target Areas, or parcels with vacant buildings, are selected for revitalization. They have key locations within downtown meaning their rehabilitation and turn over to a viable tenant or owner would greatly benefit the entire downtown. Further study of the buildings is recommended to discover potential for moving the buildings to an affective use. The following map displays the Target Area 1 and 2.

Target Area 1:

Target area 1 includes two vacant lower level commercial spaces at 1010 and 1012 Milwaukee Avenue. Both buildings are designated for mixed land use. The property at 1010 Milwaukee is owned by D&H Properties LLC and the property at 1012 is owned by Fadil Becirovski.



The upstairs residential space of 1012 Milwaukee Avenue may be occupied by a tenant.

The area is at a key location relative to the successful block of buildings from 1001 to 1029 Milwaukee Avenue (or Parkway Floral to Human Concerns). The two vacant buildings at 1010 and 1012 Milwaukee Avenue reduce cohesive development which a vibrant downtown should achieve on both sides of the street.



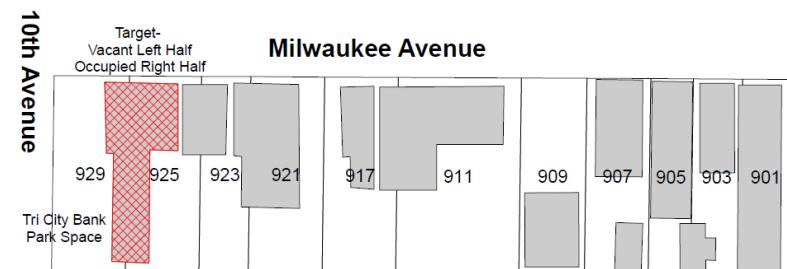
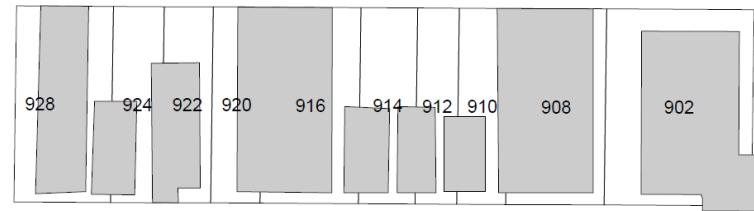
There are also three small parking lots situated between 1010 Milwaukee Avenue and the barbershop at 1002 Milwaukee Avenue. The parking lot at 1004 Milwaukee Avenue is owned by AHC Ventures I Limited Partnership and the two parking lots at 1006 and 1008 Milwaukee Avenue are owned by Kind care Incorporated.

The parking lots further reduce the density and vibrancy of downtown. The conundrum is that several businesses utilize the lots during business hours. A positive aspect of lots is that businesses typically site parking availability for customers as a key criterion for location. Therefore, initiative to revitalize either of the neighboring buildings will be beneficial in attracting a viable tenant to this key downtown location.

Target Area 2

Target area two is the tenant space at the west end of the parcel with address 925 Milwaukee Avenue. The tenant space is adjacent to the Tri City Banks park space on the corner of Milwaukee and 10th Avenue. The property's owner is listed as 925 Milwaukee LLC.

The building is located at the frequented intersection of Milwaukee and 10th Avenue, an important destination of downtown. The buildings visible from this intersection represent the image of downtown to drivers stopped at a red light. The park spaces on the northwest and southeast corner of this intersection are strong efforts by the community to accentuate the area.



The wooden panel on the facade of the building is deteriorating with severely chipped paint. Replacing the wood panel with wider windows could provide greater storefront transparency for downtown shoppers and allow greater display area for a business. The following picture provides an example of how the building could be enhanced with wider windows.

TEMPORARY VACANCY USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Local governments are often unable to incur the cost of building restoration despite a higher probability that a viable business will take ownership of the restored building. This is true in South Milwaukee where raising taxes to help pay for building restoration is not an option. The preferred method is to have owners incur the cost of building restoration and rent or sell the restored building to a tenant. A local plan will enhance the ability for a developer to achieve return on investments which validate their risk. In addition, a local government can place renewed emphasis and attention to signify the great potential for business.

Low cost solutions for vacant building reuse are actively sought by communities to signify a renewed emphasis in an area. Low cost solutions also mean methods to help alleviate a problem in the short-term. In South Milwaukee, a high proportion of vacant storefronts are cited by City officials, business owners, and citizens as providing negative attraction to downtown.

A short-term solution to the problem is temporary art displays. This solution was delivered during the charrette with positive results. Several downtown business owners provided feedback art displays provided a more positive environment for their business than visibly vacant buildings.

The following set of questions was selected as possible issues the City and client might have with creating temporary art displays. Answers to each question are provided.

Who will provide the art?

The client may choose to contact several art departments in local institutes such as Milwaukee Institute of Art, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, or the South Milwaukee High School. It is often necessary to build a repertoire with the local artist community in this way to find artists who would be willing to display their work. Artists enjoy exposure as long as their contact information is displayed with their work.

Who will display the art inside the building?

The client needs to be granted access to the building by the City, building owner, or both. The artist may be worked with to arrange the display.

Is funding from the City involved?

Not necessarily. The Racine Arts Council, a local non-profit, partners with the Economic Development Corporation to place art in Racine's vacant buildings with no exchange of funds. Artists receive no compensation, but have their contact information displayed next to their work. Building owners also receive no compensation, but benefit from the building's reuse at no extra charge.

Contact information: racinearts council.org; mfritchen@gmail.com

What happens if the art is vandalized or stolen?

The Racine Arts Council reports no problems with vandalism of art objects; however, it is always possible for vandalism to occur. For this reason, the Racine Arts Council provides a contract for the building owner and artist to sign which voids the City of any responsibility from damage.

What happens if a new tenant wants to fill the building?

The great thing about art displays is that they are easy to remove. If there is new interest in the building, the client can simply remove the art and give back to the artist or move to another location.

Are there any local grants for vacant storefront art displays which South Milwaukee may apply for?

Yes. The Wisconsin Arts Board offers several Grant Programs. The Phantom Arts Gallery Program is specifically intended for community's interested in revitalizing their downtowns. From the website, "Specifically, the program will provide grant recipients with funding and technical assistance to turn vacant downtown storefronts into temporary art galleries. In doing so, the empty downtown spaces are revitalized, and local/regional Wisconsin artists have access to non-traditional spaces in which to show their work"

Contact Information: artsboard.wisconsin.org

Other recommendations include:

- Use a sheet or board as a backdrop to mask the vacant area behind the art display. Working with local artists is beneficial to discover ways to beautify the entire storefront display.

- Provide lighting in the storefront to make the displays visible at night. Simple floodlights bought from hardware stores can usually serve this purpose. The City may need to compensate the building's owner for the electrical charges should this recommendation take place.

The following are examples of temporary art displays in vacant storefronts:



The following are depictions of temporary art in two vacant storefronts on Milwaukee Avenue. The pictures are for conceptual purposes only.

Before



1010 Milwaukee Avenue

After



COMMERCIAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ZONING AND SIGNAGE UPDATES

Signs are a vital part of a coherent central business district. They are important to store owners for reasons of advertising, identity, and image. However, store owners often try to out shout each other with oversized, flashy signs that disrupt the visual continuity of the downtown and obscure architectural features. The City of South Milwaukee should strive to enhance the walkable nature of the central business district by encouraging smaller signs oriented towards the pedestrian, not the automobile.

The City of South Milwaukee should adhere to the following principles when considering changes to the sign code in the C-3 Central Business District:

1. Keep signs subordinate to buildings
2. Signs should fit within the existing features of the facade and should not cover architectural elements such as windows, transoms, or cornices
3. Signs should reflect the quality of services and merchandise found within the business
4. Signs should have a simple and direct message
5. Window signs should not obscure the display area
6. Clear, simple lettering styles allow the sign's message to be read and absorbed quickly

In order to ensure conformity to the sign code, we recommend almost all ground and wall signage, including banners and temporary signs, require a permit and/or approval by the City of South Milwaukee prior to installation. Currently South Milwaukee requires permits only from signs in excess of the physical limits or placement restrictions specified within the sign code. Signs which should not require a permit include real estate, construction, directional, interior, political or campaign signs, temporary window signs and vehicular signs. The City of South Milwaukee should encourage sign code compliance by implementing a sign grant program which would provide matching grants of up to \$500 for the design and installation of appropriate signage.

Additionally, many Wisconsin Main Streets prohibit internally lit signs and awnings. If the City of South Milwaukee wishes to prohibit internally lit signs, a provision similar to the following should be added to the C-3 Central Business District sign code.

- (a) No new backlit signs or awnings shall be permitted. If sign lighting is needed, the preferred lighting is either ground lighting or mounted arm lighting. Existing legal nonconforming backlit signs and backlit awnings shall be considered grandfathered.

Other Recommendations

Sidewalk Cafes: Allowing for sidewalk cafes within the right of way will tend to increase activity on the sidewalk, invite consumer activity, and make it feel more pedestrian friendly. Tables should have shade covering to protect consumers from the sun and other elements.

Buffer Existing Parking Lots (phase 2) : Installation of landscape buffers or a low decorative wall is recommended to separate parking from pedestrian activity. Appropriate signage should invite autos into parking lots.

Gateway features: Gateway features, including signage and other amenities, are recommended to help define the boundaries of downtown. Features should reflect South Milwaukee's unique character.

Parking: After careful consideration, no additional parking is recommended for downtown at this time. Rather, promoting full utilization of existing parking through signage is recommended.

PART TWO: THREE-STEP STRATEGY

Successful downtowns have a higher level of organization from a diverse and invested group of interested participants. During public participation activities, our team discovered a high level of interest from people who would like to be involved in downtown revitalization.

This first step of the three step strategy will help build engagement and begin the revitalization process while forming the foundation necessary to pursue Step 2 and 3.

STEP 1: FORMATION OF A DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION

The City of South Milwaukee, like many small cities during this recession, has limited financial resources to dedicate to downtown revitalization efforts at this time; however, it is not short on community interest and energy surrounding the revitalization of the downtown area, as witnessed in extensive public participation during this project. While the prospect of revitalizing downtown is complex, a strong and integrated downtown organization that represents both the public and private sectors can greatly enhance prospects for success. At the same time, downtown businesses, property owners, and government work in collaboration towards their mutual benefit.² Because of this reciprocated dependence, individuals that represent both the private and public sector and who are capable executing activities once the implementation stage is reached should be included in this organization.

Action Steps:

1- Organize a Steering Committee

Composition: Include diverse representation from several organizations individuals unaffiliated with organizations, all of whom are unequivocally committed to mobilizing the effort, but prepared to encounter challenges and setbacks. Be sure to bring under- and unrepresented stakeholder markets, such as Bucyrus and its employees, into the fold. Encourage new members as well as old, and enforce limited terms of service. (Sometimes established leaders are the

² Popular research on small city downtown revitalization supports this claim, including sources cited in the Appendix of this report.

very figures that impede revitalization efforts; for this reason and others, diversity within the group, as well as limited terms of service, are important.)

Responsibilities include: Promotion of effort throughout the community, establishing and coordinating sub-initiative groups, engaging the public (to inform and solicit support), recruitment of community participation in the effort, examination and possible pursuit of non-profit status for the purposes of tax benefits and increased funding potential.

Committee member responsibilities include: Commitment to a limited term of service, preparation for and attendance at meetings, continual expansion of knowledge base related to downtown revitalization, conveyance of positivity to the public regarding downtown and revitalization efforts.

Note: Anticipate and plan for opposition. Develop strategies to handle it positively. It is common in downtown revitalization efforts to be confronted with mistrust or apathy from some business owners, property owners, or others.

2- Plan Efforts

Self-evaluation: Use the comprehensive plan, this report, and other resources to conduct a careful self-evaluation of downtown's current economic and social status, placed within the context of the greater community.

Articulate a vision: Use the many resources available, including this document, to aid in developing a comprehensive and current vision for the downtown area. Part of the articulated statement may include South Milwaukee's slogan of "Proud Past, Promising Future."

3- Establish an Action Plan

Identify potential projects: Bridge the gap between the "where we are now" self analysis with the "where we want to be" vision by generating ideas for projects.

Evaluate: Determine whether potential projects move toward realization of the vision, and whether ample finances, community, and political support exist to see the project through to completion. Identify necessary resources needed to execute and, if necessary, maintain the project. Establish a plan for acquiring needed support. Quantify project goals and timeframe.

4- Mobilize Resources

Fundraise: Mobilize steering committee individuals or others within the community who can help with both large and small scale fundraising activities and in-kind contributions. For South Milwaukee, streetscape amenities, including benches or planters, may be donated by individuals within the community. In this case, donor recognition could add to the use of the downtown area as well as encourage the donation of additional resources. Loans, grants, membership donations, and hosting festivals are other ways to raise needed money.

5- Evaluate

Performance measurements: Determine whether the activity achieved the desired results and critically analyze why or why not. Many projects do not initially meet their desired outcomes. Those that do have often underwent a careful evaluation and reapplication of efforts prior to succeeding.

The following section describes the opportunities that a business improvement district may offer by levying special downtown property assessments in order to provide additional funds to projects identified by the downtown organization. It should be noted that in communities where either the city or the private sector is apathetic, downtown improvement efforts generally face a difficult road. Step 1 may be used to solidify organizational efforts, rally participation, and pursue appropriate timing for the implementation of a Business Improvement District.

STEP TWO: IMPLEMENT A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The challenges described earlier -- vacant storefronts, deteriorating building facades and lack of downtown advertising -- require additional funding if they are going to be addressed. However, especially during these difficult economic times, the City of South Milwaukee finds itself unable to contribute the additional tax dollars needed for our recommended downtown improvements. For this reason, we strongly recommend the City of South Milwaukee explore the feasibility of a *Downtown South Milwaukee Business Improvement District (BID)*. This BID will provide the organization and funds necessary to turn downtown South Milwaukee into a vibrant, mixed-use commercial district that will serve the needs of all South Milwaukee residents.

Essentially, a business improvement district is a public/private partnership in which property and business owners elect to make a collective contribution through their taxes to the maintenance, development and promotion of their commercial district. BID's have a long history of helping revitalize main streets in Wisconsin. In fact, since the law allowing BID's was passed in 1984, the number of BID's has grown to over 80 such districts, located in all corners of the State.



According to the City of Milwaukee BID fact sheet, the main benefits of establishing a business improvement district include:

- Promoting a positive image of a commercial district
- Creating a unified voice to advocate for the commercial district
- Establishing private sector control and accountability
- Developing a BID structure that can serve as an economic development tool for business associations, merchant groups and community development corporations

In addition to the benefits above, a BID helps a commercial area overcome the “free rider” problem by ensuring that all beneficiaries of district programs participate in the funding of the programs.

Some examples of programs funded by business improvement districts in Wisconsin include:

- facade grant program
- sign grant program
- marketing/advertising assistance grant program
- upper floor housing grant program
- relocation assistance grant program
- reinvestment loan program
- business mentoring
- revolving loan fund
- market analysis
- landscaping/hanging basket program
- litter control
- snow removal
- event funding

How BID funds are spent is determined directly by BID members, not the City of South Milwaukee. This gives businesses the flexibility to react to conditions on the ground and direct funds to where they will be most effective. In addition, unlike general tax dollars, BID funds are reinvested directly to the downtown area. Together, these characteristics lead to greater private-sector accountability and market-driven solutions to the problems ailing downtown South Milwaukee.

Specific examples of programs funded by the Beloit, West Allis and Marshfield BID's are included in detail in the **appendix D**.

Establishing a Downtown South Milwaukee Business Improvement District

Forming a Downtown South Milwaukee Business Improvement District should be a high priority for the City of South Milwaukee. Communication with businesses and property owners in the downtown area is a vital part of making a BID a reality. The typical 9-12 month process of forming a business improvement district consists of the following steps (UW-Extension, Local Government Center):

- **Form BID Planning Committee**
 - insure adequate representation of downtown business owners
 - survey/poll downtown South Milwaukee business owners
- **BID Planning Committee Drafts Initial Operating Plan**
 - identifies BID goals and objectives and its relationship to South Milwaukee comprehensive plan
 - identifies district boundaries and whether manufacturing properties will be assessed
 - identifies assessment methodology and actual rates
 - identifies procedures for collection and the kind, number and location of all proposed expenditures
- **BID Planning Committee Petitions City of South Milwaukee for Permission to Create BID**
- **City of South Milwaukee Plan Commission Makes Notice of Proposed BID and the Date and Times of Scheduled Public Hearing**
 - posted and published as a Class 2 Notice under Chapter 985.07(2)
 - certified letters mailed to all affected property owners (including a map of district boundaries and a copy of the initial operating plan)
- **Plan Commission Holds Public Hearing**
 - designates proposed BID and adopts Initial Operating Plan

30 DAY WAITING PERIOD

Proposed BID Can Be Rejected If:

- a) petition is signed by owners of properties representing more than 40% of the value of property to be assessed using the same method of valuation specified in the initial operating plan
- b) petition is signed by owners representing more than 40% of the value of property to be assessed in the proposed BID

- **Common Council Votes to Adopt Operating Plan and Establishes or Rejects Proposed BID**

- **Mayor Appoints BID Board Members**

- must have a minimum of 5 members with a majority being district property owners
- members generally recommended by BID planning or ad hoc committee

<http://lgc.uwex.edu/cpd/bidpage/creation.pdf>

An important step in the BID creation process is determining the boundaries of the district. While many factors need to be considered when determining a BID boundary, we conducted a preliminary analysis of two possible districts for the Downtown BID in order to give South Milwaukee decision-makers a better understanding of the process. The first BID boundary overlays the boundary of the central business district. It stretches along Milwaukee Avenue from the Oak Leaf trail to 7th Avenue and along 10th from Marquette to Manitoba Avenue (see BID 1). Only assessable commercial property was considered in the analysis. The second business improvement district scenario is smaller in size. It stretches from 9th to 12th Avenue and from Marquette to Minnesota (see BID 2). Based on interviews conducted with residents and City officials, a more compact central business district is desired and we wanted to reflect this in our analysis.

Using a geographic information system (GIS), we first obtained the assessed value of all real commercial property within each BID boundary (see appendix for detailed data) and found the total commercial value for each district. BID scenario #1 was valued at \$24.1 million while the smaller BID scenario #2 had a total commercial value of \$14.6 million (see below).

Next we chose a BID assessment (levy) rate of \$3 per \$1000 of assessed value and applied it to each of our geographic scenarios. According to our calculations, BID #1 would generate approximately \$72,437 annually under this levy rate while BID #2, due to its smaller size, would generate \$43,855. If a minimum levy of \$100 and a maximum of \$1000 for each business within the district were applied, each BID scenario would generate less each year, however the contribution burden would be equalized among businesses. Finally, if a \$400 flat contribution were implemented, BID #1 would generate \$48,800

while BID #2 would generate \$26,800 annually (see below). It is important to note that the actual BID boundary and assessment rate would be chosen by the BID Board and could differ greatly from our scenarios.

	Total Assessed Value	\$3 per \$1,000	\$3 per \$1,000 Min= \$100 Max= \$1,000	\$400 Flat Contribution
BID #1	\$24,145,800	\$72,437	\$61,186	\$48,800
BID #2	\$14,618,400	\$43,855	\$34,535	\$26,800

Appendix G provides owner and special assessment information for all properties included in Bid #1 and Bid #2.

Business Improvement District Boundary #1



Business Improvement District Boundary #2



STEP THREE: PURSUE THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Step One recommends that South Milwaukee organize individuals from the public and private sector into steering committees capable of implementing the initial strategy. Step Two recommends that South Milwaukee create a downtown Business Improvement District capable of leveraging additional funds for improvements. Step Three builds on the grassroots organization and a business improvement district as catalysts for joining the Wisconsin Main Street program.

Our team is confident in the ability of a business improvement district and the Main Street program to enhance long-term revitalization efforts. At the same time, we are conscience of the necessity to build local consensus for either of these recommendations to happen.

The 2009-2010 Wisconsin Main Street Annual Report and Wisconsin Department of Commerce we used to compile the following information.

Overview

The Wisconsin Main Street Program is a vital asset for a community that is serious about revitalizing its struggling downtown. The Program provides technical support and training to Wisconsin communities that have expressed a grassroots commitment to revitalizing their traditional business districts. During the past two decades it has helped achieve the following among all its communities:

- Attracted more than \$1.1 billion in public and private reinvestment
- Created more than 17,800 new jobs
- Generated more than 4,000 new businesses

The benefit to South Milwaukee will be long-term support from a state resource with a proven track record of enhancing revitalization in similar sized downtowns. The Program has four elements that combine to create its redevelopment strategy:

1. Organization

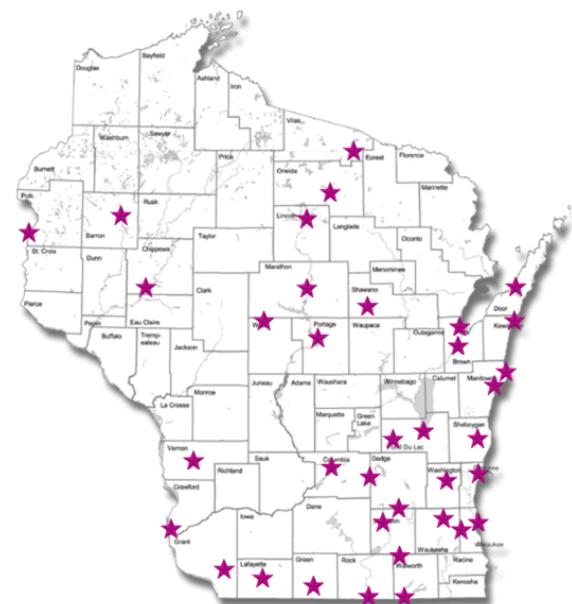
Build a Main Street framework that is well represented by civic groups, merchants, bankers, citizens, public officials and chambers of commerce. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

2. Promotion

Market an enticing image to shoppers, investors and visitors. Street festivals, parades, retail events and image development campaigns are some of the ways Main Street encourages consumer traffic in the downtown.

3. Design

Enhance the physical vitality of the business district and the potential to attract and keep customers, tenants and investors. Rehabilitating buildings and properly designed signage all help to create an environment where people want to shop and visit.



Wisconsin Main Street Communities

4. Economic Restructuring

Analyze current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Improving the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants, creatively converting vacant spaces to new uses, and recruiting new complementary businesses are examples of economic restructuring activities.

The Selection Process

South Milwaukee must fill an application to join the Main Street Program and participation is described as "a rigorous review process." Steps One and Two of this plan are intended to build the case that South Milwaukee is organized and committed to revitalizing downtown.

Implementing a Business Improvement District is not a requirement for participating in the Main Street Program. Though it helps build financial

capacity, it is possible to join the Program without a BID in place.

The following items are considered within the application and during the review process:

1. Need

The need for the Main Street program in the community and its expected impact on the community.

2. Organizational Capability

The capability of the applicant to successfully implement the Main Street program.

3. Public Sector Commitment

The level of public sector interest in, and commitment to, a local Main Street program.

4. Private Sector Commitment

The level of private sector interest in, and commitment to, a local Main Street program.

5. Historical Identity

The historic significance of the proposed Main Street program area and the interest in and commitment to historic preservation.

6. Financial Capacity

The financial capability to employ a full-time executive director, fund a local Main Street program, and support area business projects. A variety of funding sources should be utilized. A minimum budget of \$70,000 annually (including in-kind donations) is expected for communities hiring a full-time director.

Services Available to Designated Communities

After admittance to the program, South Milwaukee will receive free technical assistance aimed at enabling the community to professionally manage the downtown to better compete with competition. The services are in the first five years include:

1. Director orientation and training sessions

Includes a two-orientation and training session for new Main Street directors.

2. Materials such as manuals and PowerPoint programs

Includes excellent resource materials on downtown revitalization topics so that communities can start their own Main Street libraries.

- 3. On-site volunteer training programs**
Includes intense on-site training to committees and individuals in new Main Street communities.
- 4. On-site planning visits**
Includes staff help to develop a work plan to prioritize and develop projects for the year.
- 5. Design assistance**
Includes free service from design specialists to address design issues. Requests are handled on a building-by-building basis due to individuality of each project which allows assistance to be tailored to the specific needs of each property owner.
- 6. Business counseling**
Includes free service from a small business specialist in areas such as marketing, business planning, advertising, financial analysis and inventory control.
- 7. Downtown market analysis**
Includes work with the University of Wisconsin-Extension Center for Community Economic Development to complete a downtown market analysis that will help with business development efforts.
- 8. Advanced technical visits on specific downtown issues**
Includes on-site assistance in the form of one or two-day technical assistance visits from outside consultants on specific needs of the community. Past visits include development feasibility for a white elephant building.
- 9. Progress visits**
Includes new and mature programs to assess progress and address specific issues.

ECONOMIC RETURNS FROM MAIN STREET INVESTMENT

The following tables tell the success of the Wisconsin Main Street Program at attracting attention and generating investment in struggling downtowns.

Wisconsin Main Street Reinvestment Statistics 1988-2010

Promotional Events	3,465 New Jobs	17,865
Total Attendance	7,103,735 New Buildings	263
	Private Investment in	
Public Improvements	1,530 New Buildings	\$285,762,069
Public Investment	\$286,347,891 Buildings Sold	1,539
	Private Investment in	
Building Rehabilitations	5,656 Buildings Sold	\$238,021,507
Private Reinvestment in Building Rehabilitation	New Downtown Housing Units	
	\$325,536,361	249
	Total Private	
New Businesses	4,030 Investment	\$849,319,938
	Total Public and	
Business Relocations and Expansions	1,396 Private Investment	\$1,135,667,828

Return on Investment (ROI)	
Estimated real estate taxes generated by building rehabilitations and new buildings	\$104,595,920
Estimated state sales taxes generated by new businesses	\$293,640,000
Estimated state income taxes generated by new jobs	\$134,463,139
Return for every state dollar invested through Wisconsin Main Street Program	\$49.34
Return for every local dollar invested through local Main Street organization	\$12.61
Return for every state and local dollar combined invested through Main Street	\$10.04

Assumptions

For Rehab Investment and New Building ROI, assume all improvements add to the property tax base at the full value tax rate. For New Business ROI, assume each new business generates \$200 K/year in revenues and pays five percent in state sales tax. For New Jobs ROI, assume each new job is 2,080 hours/year, paid at least \$7.50/hr. and generates six percent state income tax.

Reinvestment serves as a catalyst for additional economic development which is all beneficial to the long-term vitality of South Milwaukee. This includes:

- Higher property values which in turn leads to an increase in the property taxes generated by the district.

- Increased number of businesses which leads to an increase in the volume of sales from these businesses.
- Increased sales which lead to increase sales taxes returned to the City through the state shared-revenue program.
- Increased number of employees working downtown.
- Increased occupancy and decreased vacancy downtown.
- Increased rent per square foot which increases the profitability for investment in downtown.
- Increased traffic by both residents and visitors who translate into shoppers.
- A greater multiplier effect of money: Changes in the level of one activity bring further changes in the level of other activities throughout the economy. An example is new or expanding businesses adding employees to the downtown workforce who spend their paycheck within the community.

The City competes with other communities to attract private investment. Without a long-term strategy to stay competitive, South Milwaukee will fall behind its neighbors and experience more vacant buildings and less pedestrian activity downtown. The Main Street program is designed to help communities who are committed to making their historic downtowns and mains street districts competitive again.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Downtown revitalization involves restoration of social and economic vitality to the central core of a community. It is a complex process which has a dramatic affect on the social, economic, and physical well-being of a community over time. In order for downtown revitalization to be successful, three important factors must be considered. First, it must be understood that change, especially physical change, occur over the long term on an incremental level. Second, a successful revitalization strategy should encourage the involvement of both public and private sectors. Third it must be understood that downtown revitalization encourages a return to community self-reliance. Community self-reliance focuses on realistic revitalization activities that are envisioned, accomplished, and celebrated by the local community through a plan that will guide future development.

This report provided a framework for a downtown plan to be implemented. An analysis of the current economic and social conditions impacting the vitality of downtown was identified and recommendations were proposed to: improve the image of downtown; create an identity for downtown; and produce a multi-functional downtown. This report also served the purpose of delivering two options: one, a list of recommendations to enliven the City of South Milwaukee's downtown; two, offer step-by-step instruction to organize and implement the proposed recommendations.

We hope the findings shared and the recommendations offered will spur interest and momentum among City of South Milwaukee residents, business owners, elected officials and stakeholders.



APPENDIX

Appendix A: Complete Interview Responses

1. What is your perception of the DT commercial area?

- Not much there, but there's a lot of potential
- Clean
- Old, but not old and welcoming
- Obsolete
- Not a welcoming feel
- Worn out
- Empty stores
- Tired
- Businesses "don't want to get involved"/ "don't seem to want to do anything"
- Old, small buildings
- Struggling
- People would rather go to strip malls
- Too big (2)
- Dead

2. What have you heard about others' perceptions of DT?

- New entrepreneurs try to open businesses, but they fail b/c people won't pay the prices, or they don't have business sense
- With the exception of a few core businesses, it doesn't offer anything
- In order to purchase consumable goods, you need to go to Oak Creek

3. (For business owners) How long have you owned and operated a business in the DT area?

Responses ranged from 1893 to 15.

4. Would you say business in the DT area is declining, improving, or staying the same?

- Stagnant
- Declining – more vacancies

5. Strengths of the downtown area:

- Bars, some restaurants, Bucyrus.
- Summer: community groups plant flowers and some businesses purchase banners
- Lots of storefront space that could be utilized
- “Huge strength”: pedestrian friendly (2)
- Parks are close by
- Festivals: Heritage, Farmers Market (5), Parade in Summer (not much residual business effect), DT Evening on the Ave (events that get people DT are positive - 3)
- Parkway Floral
- Martial Arts place
- Nice planters
- Low Crime
- Senior center
- Lighting is good
- Streets are in good shape
- None
- Relatively accessible from the highway/ Hwy. 32 heavily traveled
- Bucyrus improvements a plus
- Buildings in fairly good shape
- DT is very clean
- Just resurfaced 10th Ave
- The fact that it exists is a plus
- Azteca
- Resiliency in businesses who know how to weather tough econ times
- Easy to find parking
- Strong and active community/community groups want to support local initiatives

6. Weaknesses:

- Antiquated, like a ghost town
- No sit down restaurants; no “dinner and a theater...”
- Poor dining and shopping selections
- Nothing to complement existing assets, dinner before PAC would be cheap/cause heartburn
- Short hours (lots of 9-5)
- Storefronts behind the sidewalks are vacant and run-down

- No Target/one-stop shop
- Traffic count is low
- People in the community won't support local businesses
- Lack of spillover from successful businesses
- Not a magnet for activity
- Doesn't have a unique identity – easy to drive right past
- Wildflower isn't open on Sundays (have to go to Oak Creek Panera for good coffee)
- Demographics don't support some uses, like boutiques.
- Need places that are unique
- No nice steakhouse
- Small size (4mi x 4 mi?) and formula stores like to have a 5 mile market radius
- Main problem: lack of interest by business community to do anything DT
- DT businesses are closed by the time people get off of work
- Poor service by business owners
- The zoning in place right now doesn't promote redevelopment (times are different from when the code was first established)
- Lack of visionary leadership
- The "community night or whatever they call it" (the event in the summer) brings out the underbelly
- Huge start up cost to bring a business into the DT (\$100K estimate). Some people can't support this.
- Poor quality food
- Empty businesses
- Restaurants aren't that good
- Business owners don't work together
- Lack of shops
- Foreclosures
- Vacancies
- Absence of foot traffic

7. Opportunities for improvement:

- Food delivery options,
- higher quality restaurants
- Fish fries like at Grant Park, but market them! (not marketed well at Grant Park)
- DT NEEDS to do a better job marketing itself

- stores that would offer some conveniences
- Ordinance to control the size and uses
- maybe some retail,
- something to capitalize on Bucyrus' wellness program (like fitness activities)
- something to capitalize on Bucyrus' 1400 employees' purchasing power,
- Huge potential. It's quaint and could have a unique culture to it w/o letting brands in but it has to meet the demands
- Plenty of parking
- Shoe store (but competing with Kohl's, Target, one-stop shops)
- Merchandise Outlet in another city is popular
- More collaboration b/w PAC and DT business owners
- Market/capitalize on "community movement" happening in S. Mil
- Fill vacant storefronts with Art; create an arts culture
- More events: be trendy and improve the area
- Something artsy – kids doing are on weekends, etc.
- ID additional retail opportunities

8. What kinds of businesses or uses will not improve this area as a neighborhood center for business or shopping?

- Bars (7), anything not family-friendly
- Chinese restaurants (already have 3)
- Dry cleaners
- Trophy shops
- They had a massage parlor that... "had some problems"
- Resale shops, antique stores "generally when you see those you are at the bottom of the barrel"
- Commercial space used for storage – no good!
- Non-profits shouldn't take up too much space on the Ave-don't generate a lot of business activity
- Tattoo parlor (2) "Who has these types of places on Main St?"
- Vacancies

9. What kinds of actions by the City, residents, or other business owners do you think would improve the downtown CBD?

- Beautification (but not by the City, by the business owners)
- If the businesses tried to cater more to the needs of the people

- “A place to sit down and read the paper on Sunday would be a start.”
- Shrink it (tear some stuff down and bring it in)
- Need a mayor with vision
- “Leave improvement to the business owners”
- Chamber is focusing on marketing the DT and that’s basically it (for the Chamber of Commerce)
- Encouragement mechanism by the City to “put a brighter face” on storefronts
- Market the façade grant program – businesses don’t know about it
- Plowing for business owners DT
- Zoning code that promotes (re)development of structures that don’t fit the standard mold
- Rule that storefronts need to be used as storefronts
- Businesses should keep window displays fresh, same with websites
- The outside of businesses need to be fixed up, but no one has the money to do that
- Historic restoration/promote historic past/highlight underground railroad
- Connections with city assets: PAC, Grant Park, Yacht Club, senior center
- Residents need to support businesses that do come with retention
- “All out of ideas”
- More partnerships with private firms to get projects done
- Stricter codes
- Major façade improvements
 - Problem: up to owner to make upgrade
 - Business and property owner have disparate interests
 - Faced with major pushback when enforcing codes/businesses threaten to leave
- Landlock necessitates redevelopment of existing parcels

10. What, if any, other efforts would you like to see directed at revitalizing downtown South Milwaukee?

- collaborative effort
- Weekly or regular events
- More involvement by the business owners. “unless they are interested in putting time into it, it won’t improve”
- Removing snow in the wintertime from the sidewalk
- Offer low-rent/ fee schedule to get businesses in
- More events and better promotion (3)! Hardly know what’s going on.
- More community involvement/Bucyrus involvement
- Beautify and have community groups maintain them as a sense of ownership

11. How often do you use services in the DT?

- 1x/wk: store or restaurant... not a lot of use there
- 1x/wk: meetings, flower shop, banking, dry cleaner
- Not often – poor quality
- Every once in a while for something specific, like the barber
- Wal-Mart should bring some kind of business to the community
- 1x/mo: bank, food for lunch
- Never – goes to Milwaukee
- 2x/mo for hair and nails

12. What efforts have been made to improve economic activities downtown?

- Bucyrus made improvements to façade
- City put millions of dollars into the infrastructure for Bucyrus
- Done redevelopment to add residential; increase pedestrians (not much residual effect)
- Comp plan goals, but haven't yet decreased size of central business district
- Chamber of Commerce map with business locations
- Enforced removal of out of business signs (although now it's all empty)
- City has spent a fair amount of \$ -- fake brick, repaving, landscaping
- Streets aping Committee (by ex-mayors) funded by Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, DT merchants
- 25 yrs ago City hired consultant to help DT businesses
- Sign ordinance – hasn't really worked (even those with good signs are in violation and taking signs down makes the area look empty)
- Business fair at Bucyrus
- Façade grant program,
- Signage ordinances – business owners would complain about one violation, when they, too, were in violation. Controversial
- They always seem to be working on the streets, but “you can't tell”
- “heard it all; every time the city moves to support constituents they don't use goods/services and the businesses go under”
- City offers case-by-case assistance to private developers: financing, tenants
- They've done market analysis and feasibility studies to determine what the community would be able to sustain. Starbucks/other chains said they couldn't sustain a market in S. Mil

13. Threats

- From a traffic standpoint you have 32 going n/s but central business district goes east/west
- Challenging economy
- 325 teachers but 75% live elsewhere, taking purchasing power
- People go to 27th St. or Oak Creek/S. Howell to spend money
- Oak Creek has modern facilities/high traffic count
- Other communities are more attractive to live (i.e.: few two car garages, etc), so people with money live/spend it elsewhere
- Aging population
- Southridge

14. What kinds of businesses or uses do you think will improve the DT CBD as a neighborhood center for business or shopping?

- Shopping opportunities but the reality of it is that it needs to be a niche business to attract people
- Mid-range or upper end restaurants – have to go out of town to get a decent meal
- Coffee shop (4)
- Unique gathering space/Starbucks/mid-grade eatery
- Food
- Clothing
- Good quality sandwich shop (had one in the past that did well)
- “Tried nearly everything but people are frugal”

15. In terms of the city's economic growth, how important is downtown?

- Have Kmart, Targets... DT is not viable or important in people's lives
- Nothing DT that people want or need
- Business owners care much more about DT than residents do
- Not high on City's list of funding priorities

Anything Else?

- BID: Folks are not interested. The money, change, and maintenance turn people off.
 1. Brett – Not enough management interest
 2. Tami - 10-15 years ago they considered a BID, however, the cost was prohibitive

- TIF: not enough increment – Brett and Tami
- Main St. Program: Considered the State Main Street Program but didn't enroll because of the lack of funding sources. She seemed like if the money was there, they would enroll in the program but with decreased revenue they are struggling to deliver the same level of services. NO MONEY FOR MAIN ST PROGRAM! Tami)
- Check out TMJ4 website for S. Milwaukee's "shop local"
- Niche of bridal didn't work in the past: they had flowers, jeweler, wedding dresses, etc.
- PAC is a community resource but not synergizing w/ DT (coupon nights, etc.)
- DT being run-down is a sign of the times.
- Look at DT traffic count and whether Wal-Mart will raise the count through DT
- Check into Streets aping Committee and its funders
- Connect DT with the beach. At the beach, no vendors, all there is to do is swim. If vendors came to the beach, it would be more active and create loyalty.
- Incentivize restaurants to set up in Yacht Club and market to neighboring communities
- Offer DT space at a reduced rate based on use and service to the community
- "Whatever your team suggests, make sure your ideas are attached to a funding source"
- City's major funding priorities: infrastructure

Appendix B: Charrette Responses for Streetscape Improvements, Façade Revitalization, and Downtown Bounds Station

Streetscape Improvements:

- Patio seating under awnings (for bad weather or when it's too sunny). "This would be a cheap way to get a lot of mileage from a dollar."
- Need a coffee shop
- Need to fill vacancies
- Stop ripping down historic buildings! The city is tearing down the wrong stuff! Renovate!
- Alderman's place looks messy. "I'm afraid to go in there/ touch anything."
- Some businesses are "disgusting," "have crooked signage," "could make an effort"

Façade Improvements:

- Add color/life/fresh paint to facades
- Color on trim, murals on side of building (but waiting to see where this study leads)

- Big windows, like at Café LuLu
- “Dead after dark.” Leave some tiny/soft lights on (like LED) to beautify store
- From a business owner: “City should start a façade improvement program”

What additional amenities would enliven the streetscape?

- Green spaces (spaces in between structures)
 - Urban gardens
- Angle parking, maybe on one side? Says it gets crowded in evenings and people don’t want to walk a couple of blocks... suggestion for b/w dance studio/anchor fitness and Source Martial Arts
 - Need to contend with light posts, but maybe could do bumpouts.
 - Used to have angle parking, not sure why they went to parallel
- Use vacant spaces for parking and landscape around them
- “Bring S.M. into the 21st century w/ stormwater remediation, permeable paving and stormwater gardens.
- Need more planters/year round greenery/life
- Need more/better signage and wayfinding signage to invite people downtown
- Should have reverse curbs for H2O drainage
- Planter benches from 9th to 10th on south side of street

What themes or community values do you think the streetscape should reflect?

- Hometown USA
- “Greater” Place on a Great Lake
- Keep street parking

Which areas should be prioritized for the inclusion of amenities? Why?

- Entrances to shopping zone
- Improvement of poor signage on businesses that don’t care
- Better signage off of 794/College or other key locations that directs people to the business district
 - Better connectivity out of/to Grant Park and other well-traversed places
- Connect with/improve community assets (Mill Pond is silt-filled); connect with Oak Creek Parkway

Other comments:

- We need to capitalize on the assets: Golf Course, Biggest H.S. in the State (?), Lakefront, Affordable Yacht Club, Market
- Bucyrus could fund a loan program for business establishments
- Lawson Airplane Company building torn down. As part of the grant, the city needed a memorial/ descriptive plaque to honor Lawson. The art that was erected was non-descript and meaningless to the community (2 people)
- Art structures need improvement, have no meaning (like on 10th and Chicago)
- Unless we have customers, business won’t flourish

- NEED customers
- When we were younger, there were theaters, a malt shop, urban renewal destroyed this place. We could be like a Galena or Cedarburg.
- Need complimentary stores; can't compete with big box so have to try to fill niches. People won't go to Wal-Mart to get a tattoo, but going to Wal-Mart won't make people think, "I need a tattoo, either."
- Some city leaders are not making visionary decisions and are saying, "this can't happen", rather than, 'how can we make this happen?"
- City leaders deliberately don't enforce codes across the board because it gives them discretion about when/how/ for whom they choose to use the codes
- Buildings shouldn't be torn down and not replaced with eye-catchers or pedestrian/economic generators
- The city is dead after hours, except for the bars

Downtown Boundaries

Overall, very few people commented on this or seemed to have much of an opinion. Of the people who did, they said that what we had indicated was pretty much on the mark: from Manitoba to Marquette and from 8th on Milwaukee down to 12th or 13th. One person suggested that the area south of Milwaukee should be removed.

Appendix C: Small Town Revitalization Case Studies

Buenker, J., & Mesmer, T. (2003, December). A Separate Universe? An Exploratory Effort at Defining the Small City. *Indiana Magazine of History*, pp. 331-352.

The author attempts to define 'small city' and distinguishes them based on their 'types,' geographic location, and other measures. Cites mentioned include South Milwaukee, West Allis, and Cudahy, WI.

Burayidi. (2001). *Downtowns: Revitalizing the Centers of Small Urban Communities*. New York, N.Y.: Routledge.

Most of the literature on revitalizing downtowns has been based on the experiences of large urban centers. In this book, Burayidi and his colleagues seek to remedy that by providing a starting point for understanding the unique development problems of downtowns in small urban communities. The book is comprised of 15 chapters of case studies that examine various aspects of downtown revitalization, urban design and infrastructure redevelopment, waterfront and brownfields redevelopment, and retail and commercial redevelopment. Burayidi concludes the book with key experiences shown in the case studies: work within the political culture; place emphasis on local funding of downtown project; create an image and sense of place for downtown; monitor programs and progress; make downtown revitalization a community effort; develop a

long-term vision for downtown; learn from others. The book shows that downtown revitalization clearly works in small cities and that common principles apply.

Faulk, D. (2006). The Process and Practice of Downtown Revitalization. *Review of Policy Research* , 625-644.

Efforts to revitalize downtown areas have gained momentum over the past few decades. This article reviews the literature on downtown revitalization, presents a model that illustrates the process of decline and the more recent process of revitalization that has occurred in downtown areas over the past half-century, and discusses local policies that can facilitate the process. Revitalization policies and resulting projects in the cities of Jeffersonville, IN and New Albany, IN, are used to illustrate components of the model that deal with the revitalization process.

Filion, P., Hoernig, H., Bunting, T., & Sands, G. (2004). The Successful Few. *Journal of the American Planning Association* , 328-343.

Most downtowns have experienced a decline in the last half century, particularly those in small metropolitan regions. A survey of planners and other urban professionals has sought to identify small metro downtowns and the factors associated with this success. Only a small number of such North American metropolitan regions were perceived as having very successful or successful downtowns. Factors that characterize such success are described in this article. The article highlights concentration on niche markets that show little interest in homogenized suburban activities and the retention and enhancement of distinct physical characteristics that clearly distinguish downtowns from suburban environments.

Fogelson, R. (2003). *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall*. Yale University Press.

The author presents a history of the decentralization of American cities and the many efforts to stem the decline of downtown. The book examines the debates and strategies employed to maintain the dominance of downtown in light of suburban growth, the decline of public transit, the construction of urban highways and the rise of outlying shopping centers.

Fondersmith, J. (1988). 2040: Making Cities Fun. *The Futurist* , 9-17.

Fondersmith makes a case for critically evaluating secondary long-term effects of attracting corporate businesses to small towns. The costs incurred from recruiting selfish, uncaring entities will ultimately outweigh any temporary gains in employment. Successful cities will build on their own unique characteristics, as represented by their historic downtowns, to attract residents and visitors through a variety of approaches outlined in this article.

Frieden, B., & Sagalyn, L. (1991). *Downtown, Inc: How American Rebuilds Cities*. MIT Press.

Mostly a study of large city downtowns with substantial studies on four big city malls, this book has relevance to small cities, too. Downtown Inc. is a progress report on what has happened to our cities in the second half of the 20th century, documenting new directions and more productive strategies for rebuilding downtown. Frieden and Sagalyn take a close look at the retail industry and illustrate how, in cities across the country, maverick developers and enterprising mayors found creative solutions to the problems presented by conservative lenders, political controversy, and shrinking Federal subsidies.

Gratz, R., & Mintz, N. (1998). *Cities Back from the Edge: New Life for Downtown*. New York, N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Professional consultants Gratz and Mintz establish guidelines and tips for city leaders, community activists, businesspeople, and regular citizens who seek to improve the status of their communities. They examine what works, what does not work and why. The book provides case studies and descriptions about how residents with a vision have achieved visible results despite discouraging public policies.

Hicks, C. (1999). Return to Mayberry: Downtown Revitalization in Small Town, USA. *Spectrum*, 4-6.

Small communities must recognize the unique obstacles they face with economic development. Although common problems are apparent throughout the world in small areas, these obstacles must be dealt with on a local, case by case basis if success is to be achieved. Paths toward revitalization may come through many angles.

Jackson, D. (1992). It's Wake Up Time for Main Street When Wal-Mart Comes to Town. *Smithsonian*, 36-47.

In many communities, smaller, older stores have already surrendered to the big discounter, but in Viroqua, Wisconsin (population 4,335), they're fighting back. Using good old fashioned community organizing and employing the support of the Main Street program, Viroqua is seeing its historic business district come back to life.

Kemp, R. (2000). *Main Street Renewal: A Handbook*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc.

The book includes an introduction to the state of America's small cities, how communities should manage and organize, including the role of government, tools available for Main Street renewal, and provides case studies showing the successful application of these tools. Case studies describe how Main Streets should be evaluated, how to attract citizens, and how to capitalize on infill potential, among other things. A listing of resource organizations is also provided. Most of the communities examined are under 25,000 in population.

Kenyon, J. (1989). From Central Business District to Central Social District: The Revitalization of the Small Georgia City. *Small Town* , 4-17.

Kenyon analyzes the revitalization of 21 small cities, 15 of which have populations between 10,000 and 50,000. In order to measure revitalization and downtown vitality, he suggests using pedestrian counts. He suggests that the combination of historic preservation and economic redevelopment may seem incongruous, but in actuality the two reinforce each other.

Leinberger, C. (2005). Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization. *The Brookings Institution Policy Brief* . Washington, D.C.: Metropolitan Policy Program.

Though every downtown is different there are still common revitalization lessons that can be applied anywhere. While any approach must be customized based on unique physical conditions, institutional assets, consumer demand, history, and civic intent, this paper lays out the fundamentals of a downtown turnaround plan and the unique “private/public” partnership required to succeed. Beginning with visioning and strategic planning to the reemergence of an office market at the end stages, these 12 steps form a template for returning “walkable urbanity” downtown.

Lewis, P. F. (1972). Small Town in Pennsylvania. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* , 323-351.

Americans have always shown strong affinity for small towns. Some, as exemplified by Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, developed into places of very real importance in the cultural and economic life in the past, but have found it increasingly difficult to compete effectively in a world of heavy industry and quaternary economics. Changes in preferences and technology suggest that small towns might again play a meaningful role in contemporary society. Three generations of economic and demographic difficulties have caused physical and psychological damage which sharply limits Bellefonte's ability to play such a role.

Lopata, R. (1982). Small Cities Planning from a Historic Perspective: A Case Study of the Municipal Response to Tax-Exempt Landholdings. *The Public Historian* , 53-64.

The article examines the costs of operations and quality of fast growing communities and postulates that incremental development with a regard for the city's history, comprehensive plan, and adjacent uses may be most effective and sustainable.

Means, A. Downtown Revitalization in Small Cities. *Urban Land*, 26-31, 56.

Critical mass is vital in the success of any downtown – unfortunately, many municipalities jump on the “trend” wagon looking for a miracle to create it. An important first step in the revitalization process is self-evaluation while analyzing the external environment and inventorying strengths. Adaptation, rather than adoption, of strategies used by cities who have successfully revitalized is necessary.

Mitchell, J. (2001). Business Improvement Districts and the “New” Revitalization of Downtown. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 115-123.

Downtown renewal is occurring throughout the United States. Increasingly, the revitalization process is more about incremental, entrepreneurial efforts to make downtowns enjoyable and less about comprehensive projects that physically alter large swaths of property. A leader in this “new” revitalization of downtown is the business improvement district (BID). To understand how BIDs are improving downtown life, this article presents the results of a national survey of 264 independently managed BIDs operating in 43 states. It suggests that BIDs are playing an important role in downtown renewal because of their extensive involvement with the delivery of services that are elementary yet consequential.

Robertson, K. (1999). Can Small-City Downtowns Remain Viable? A National Study of Development Issues and Strategies. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 270-283.

A healthy downtown is an essential element of the prosperity in most small cities (25,000-50,000). This research surveys 57 small American cities nation-wide and explores key problems confronting them and the revitalization strategies employed to try to overcome them. Significant differences between downtown development in small and large cities are presented throughout the article. Robertson finds that: building a strong public/private partnership is critical, multifunctional downtowns are the healthiest, successful downtowns build on their assets, and the establishment of a sense of place is essential.

Robertson, K. (2001). *Downtown Development: Key Trends and Practices*. St. Cloud, MN: Public Policy Research Center.

Robertson reminds the reader why downtown is essential to the health of a community, and reviews key trends used to revitalize downtowns. They include: multifunctionality, enhancement of a sense of place, development of a community vision, use of public/private partnerships, application of Main Street Program/Approach, attention to promotion, and creation

of suburban downtowns. He concludes by stating, among other elements, that a strong commitment by local government is necessary in downtown revitalization.

Robertson, K. (1995). Downtown Redevelopment Strategies in the United States: An End-of-the-Century Assessment. *Journal of the American Planning Association* .

Downtowns all over the US are a key but troubled ingredient of the overall community fabric. They are seen as definitive of overall city identity, so cities all over are committed to successful downtown redevelopment. Yet, despite decades of efforts, most American downtowns still have serious economic problems and are perceived as inconvenient and obsolete. This article reviews contemporary revitalization policy, in particular, seven widely-used strategies of planning and design.

Robertson, K. (1993). Pedestrians and the American Downtown. *Town Planning Review* , 273-286.

Pedestrian volume and activity are necessary to the vitality and image of downtowns. However, downtowns have become increasingly hostile to pedestrians. The paper presents problems, strategies and prospects of pedestrianizing the American downtown.

Rypkema, D. (2002). The Importance of Downtown in the 21st Century. *Journal of the American Planning Association* , 9-16.

The post-September 11 world is both dramatically changed and increasingly uncertain. Two factors on the horizon are assured: globalization and diversity. Globalization has two facets: economic and cultural. Cities must learn to capitalize on economic globalization without being subsumed by cultural globalization. The downtown is a community's most effective venue to confront, learn from, and accommodate both globalization and diversity.

Shields, M., & Farrigan, T. (2001). *A Manual for Small Downtowns*. The Pennsylvania State University.

This manual is geared toward Pennsylvania downtowns, but has universal applicability. It outlines strategies and step-by-step actions for strengthening the social, physical, and economic value of a community's central business district in order to improve the liveability and quality of life in the community by expanding and attracting employment, shopping and social activities.

Sohmer, R., & Lang, R. (2001). *Downtown Rebound*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

*This survey, co-sponsored by the **Fannie Mae Foundation**, finds that the number of people living in downtowns increased during the 1990s in 18 of the 24 cities analyzed. Most of the downtown growth was fueled by the movements of white residents into these central business districts. This pattern is a counter trend to the overall loss of white residents in central cities to the suburbs.*

Walker, P. (2009). Top Ten Myths of Downtown Planning. *Planning*, 38-40.

Reviews common misinformed notions frequently voiced by citizens, and sometimes voiced by elected officials, and occasionally by professional planners or downtown experts. They are: 1-downtown needs just one “big ticket” item; 2-replacing some existing buildings with parking lots will bring more shoppers downtown; 3-the strategy for revitalization should focus on retail; 4-attractive new brick sidewalks will bring more people downtown; 5-downtown needs a large national department store to compete with suburban malls; 6-on-street parking should be converted to another driving lane; 7-existing one-way streets should be maintained for traffic flows that will benefit downtown; 8-downtown special events are a waste of money; 9-one of downtowns primary streets shoul be closed to traffic; 10-too many regulations will kill downtown’s business.

Walzer, N., & Kline, S. (2001). An Evaluation of Approaches to Downtown Economic Revitalization. In M. Burayidi, *Downtown: Revitalizing the Centers of Small Urban Communities* (pp. 249-274). New York, N.Y.: Routledge.

Authors address top issues negatively impacting downtown retail establishments in small cities, review economic development tools commonly used, and examine successful approaches to downtown economic revitalization, including the four-pointed Main Street Approach.

Websites

Wisconsin Department of Commerce, *DHCD Index*. Retrieved Friday, May 13, 2011, from Main Street Home Page:
<http://www.commerce.state.wi.us/cd/CD-bdd-stories.html>

Page offers 37 case studies of Wisconsin cities engaged in successful revitalization of their downtown areas. The case studies are separated according to Main Street activity focus, including: Design, Marketing, Economic Restructuring and Organization.

Appendix D: Wisconsin Business Improvement District Case Studies

	Downtown Beloit Association	Downtown West Allis BID	Main Street Marshfield
Population	37,710	61,254	19,454
Median HH Income	\$36,414	\$39,394	\$37,248
BID Levy Rate	\$3.25 / \$1000	\$5.05 / \$1000	\$1.35 / \$1000
Facade Grant Program	Matching grants of at least \$500 and up to \$1000 for approved projects and provide free design guidance. Also has a TID-funded façade grant program	Grants to reimburse owners/merchants up to 50% of building façade improvements that have been approved by the Downtown West Allis, Inc.'s Board of Directors.	
Upper Floor Housing Grant	Minimum project estimate to be considered: \$25,000 Grants structured at 30% of total project cost not to exceed \$30,000		
Sign Grant Program	matching grant up to \$500 for the first 4 approved projects or until all the funds run out	Grant amount up to 50% of the final cost	
Advertising Assistance Grant Program		reimburse for up to one-half of the total advertising campaign with a cap of \$800 per year	

Relocation Assistance Grant Program		Grants up to \$1.00/sq. ft for businesses that have been targeted for recruitment by the Downtown West Allis BID. Maximum subsidy is based upon amount of square foot occupied.	
Reinvestment Loan Program			Reinvestment loans at 1% below the prime rate, with a 5% minimum. The loan will not exceed 7 years and must be > \$5,000 but < \$50,000

Beloit, WI BID

Population: 37,710

Median HH Income: \$36,414

BID Levy Rate: \$3.25 / \$1000

Timeline:

- 1987/8: Beloit BID and Downtown Association Established
- 1990: Property Maintenance Program and TID #5 Created
- 1991: Design Master Plan Created
- 1992: Sign Grant Program Created
- 1993: Façade Grant Program and Design Guidelines Created
- 1996: Hanging Basket Program Created

2008 Façade Grant Program

The DBA will provide matching grants of at least \$500 and up to \$1000 for approved projects and provide free design guidance. Matching grant program to provide assistance for the maintenance, rehabilitation, and upgrading of existing

commercial properties within the Business Improvement District. The programs intention is to encourage business growth and to make a positive statement about the Beloit business climate to the community, visitors, existing and potential business tenants. Facade grant money shall only be used for exterior repairs and renovations on commercial storefronts and facades which front on public streets, alleys or parking areas.

2009 Sign Grant Program

Purpose: to help downtown business owners to design and install appropriate signage for their business. Essentially the Downtown Beloit Association will provide a matching grant up to \$500 for the first 4 approved projects or until all the funds run out. The purpose of the sign grant program is to encourage and stimulate the introduction of quality signage into the downtown. Signage projects that receive grants will comply with the design standards established by the Downtown Beloit Association and will be approved by the DBA's Facelift Committee.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SIGN

Signs need not be large, over-illuminated, or be expensive to be effective, but should have the following characteristics:

LEGIBILITY: signs must be readable with simple lettering style.

CLARITY OF WORDING: the message should be clear and simple so the reader can easily absorb it.

PLACEMENT: the sign should be placed where it is easily seen.

ATTRACTION: some element of the sign should catch the eye and hold it long enough to get the message across.

DURABILITY: the materials and construction of a sign should weather well to present a positive, well-kept image.

ELIGIBILITY: All business and property owners who are located within the Downtown Beloit Association's Business Improvement District boundaries are eligible.

Events/Programs Sponsored by BID:

- Fridays in the Park
- Celebrate Weekend/Street Dance
- Grand Lighted Holiday Parade
- Holidazzle Event
- Holidazzle Trolley
- Holiday Light
- Corporate sponsor for streetscape support
- Flowers-Baskets & Urns

- ArtWalk

West Allis, WI BID

Population: 61,254

Median HH Income: \$39,394

BID Levy Rate: \$5.05 / \$1000

Advertising Assistance Grant Program

Requirements: The AAGP will reimburse for up to one-half of the total advertising campaign with a cap of \$800 per year. Applications will be issued in a “first come, first served” manner and may only be accepted once every quarter. AAGP will **not** provide reimbursement for in-store promotional advertising or Downtown West Allis, Inc. (DWA) sponsored events and promotions.

Advertising Scope and Restrictions:

- 20% of each advertising campaign presented must contain or mention the DWA, its location and website address. This information will be provided to you by the DWA office.
- Multiple businesses who reside in the same address location will be considered one ad/application.
- If a business decides to pursue multiple forms of advertising they must submit multiple applications.
- Only one (1) business in a multi-business campaign can apply for the Advertising Assistance Grant Program for that campaign.

SIGNAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The Downtown West Allis Business Improvement District (BID) provides financial incentives to businesses/property owners within the BID. The discretionary funds in the Signage Assistance Program are established to assist business/property owners with the improvement of their exterior signage.

Assistance includes:

- Removal of existing signage
- Addition of new signage and/or awning
- Improving or altering existing signage

TARGET AREA:

The target area for this program is contiguous with the boundaries of the Downtown West Allis Business Improvement District.

TYPE OF SUBSIDY:

There are three forms of assistance:

- Front facade signage removal: up to 50% of the cost
- Front facade new signage/awnings: up to 50% of the cost.
- Alley signage improvement up to 50% of the cost
 - Signage removal
 - Signage (including awning) installation and improvement

COMMERCIAL FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Program Objectives: The Downtown West Allis, Inc.'s Commercial Facade Improvement Program provides financial incentives to building owners and merchants in the target area to encourage them to undertake improvements to the exteriors of their buildings which will:

- Enhance the historic architecture
- Complement the surrounding architecture and provide a unifying theme or visual identity for the commercial area, whether it be the front or the rear of the building.
- Eliminate exterior appurtenances which are out of scale or out of character with the building and the surrounding architecture (e.g. gaudy oversized signage which obstructs the building as well as the signage on neighboring buildings).
- Create an overall image of high quality merchandise and services.

Target Area: The target area for this program is contiguous with the boundaries of the Downtown West Allis Business Improvement District (DWA-BID) (see map below).

Type of subsidy: Grants to reimburse owners/merchants up to one-half of building façade improvements that have been approved by the Downtown West Allis, Inc.'s Board of Directors.

Owner occupants, tenant occupants and absentee owners are eligible to participate; however, tenant occupants must furnish evidence that the proposed improvements have been authorized by the building owner.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Downtown West Allis, Inc. provides financial incentives to businesses moving into previously vacant spaces within the district. The program objectives include: the retention and recruitment of growing businesses, **filling space currently vacant or where a vacancy is imminent**, creating a healthy business mid, and increasing employment opportunities. The program augments the City's Commercial Façade Improvement Program by assisting with relocation costs, whereas the Commercial Facade Program will help with facade improvements. In addition, Downtown West Allis, Inc. offers Signage Grants for removal of old signage and for new signage. Any combination of the two programs can offer a powerful incentive to a new or relocating business to choose Downtown West Allis.

TYPES OF SUBSIDY

Grants up to \$1.00 per square foot to businesses that have been targeted for recruitment by the Downtown West Allis Business Improvement District. Maximum subsidy is based upon amount of square foot occupied.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

New businesses and existing businesses are eligible.

EXISTING BUSINESSES:

The expansion of an existing downtown business is eligible for the additional space occupied. (For example: New occupied space – Current occupied space = Total square feet considered.)

NEW BUSINESSES:

The criteria for a new business include economic and employment impact brought to the downtown, the nature of the business and whether or not it complements the existing businesses of the downtown. An eligible business can receive relocation assistance by fulfilling the following requirements:

- Establishing a business within the BID boundaries
- Conducting business on a regular basis at that location for at least 40 hours per week / five days per week.
- Completing an uninterrupted period of business for 90 days
- Providing a copy of property ownership or signed lease of no less than one year.
- Providing a copy of Certificate of Business Occupancy.
- Verification of total square footage by Economic Development Committee

Any and all property alterations must conform to the *Architecture Standards, Design Standards and Signage Code developed by the BID and the City of West Allis*. The business must furnish documentation of a valid occupancy permit before the grant is disbursed.

Marshfield, WI BID

Population: 19,454

Median HH Income: \$37,248

BID Levy Rate: \$1.35 / \$1000

Reinvestment Loan Program :

Eligible applicants are property owners and tenants located in the designated Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) and meet the eligible expenditures. Up to a \$50,000 Loan.

Details: Seven financial institutions (Associated, M&I Bank ... etc.) give reinvestment loans at 1% below the prime rate, with a 5% minimum. The loan will not exceed 7 years and must be greater than \$5,000 but no more than \$50,000. Business must consult and follow Marshfield Design Guidelines.

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES:

1. Facade Renovation: Including painting, cleaning, repairing or replacing masonry, repairing or replacing cornices and other architectural detail: repairing or replacing windows, trim and storefront display areas on fronts, sides and rears of buildings facing public areas.
2. Signage: Including removing old signs, and designing, producing and installing new signs.
3. Awnings: Removing old awnings and purchasing and installing new awnings.
4. Code Enforcement: Any work specifically required to meet local, state and national building and use codes.
5. Leasehold Improvements: Purchasing and installing fixture property.
6. Roofing: Repairing an existing roof or installing a new one.
7. Structural Repair: Upgrading street level and upper floors to a usable condition, and repairing or replacing mechanical systems (plumbing, heating and cooling, electrical).
8. New Construction: Building appropriate in-fill construction, but only when existing buildings cannot be utilized.
9. Professional Design or Architectural Services: In conjunction with an approved project.

Appendix E: Main Street Program Case Studies

Testimonial from Dorothy Shueffner, Sheboygan Falls Main Street Chamber member and Main Street business owner

“Here's why I think The Main Street Program works so well.

Sheboygan Falls has been very successful as a Main Street community, and the pride we all have in our downtown is very evident. There is no doubt in my mind that without the encouragement and opportunities provided by the program, my business would not have entered our 25th year of operation and be as classy and successful as it is. I would not have reinvested in my building without the help of the variety of services provided by the program. I have met many influential, positive people throughout the state and even from the National Main Street Center. This has improved my self-image as a business person. I am very proud to be a part of this program since the late 1980's, and was extremely honored to be named to the Wisconsin Main Street Program Hall of Fame recently.”

The following case studies are from the 2009-2010 Wisconsin Main Street Annual Report. Each case offers interesting techniques for South Milwaukee to learn by example. In addition, they provide examples of the projects the Wisconsin Main Street Program might bring to the community.

Main Street Program Case Studies

Ripon

A former office products storefront was in desperate need of renovation when owner, Del Tritt, decided to make improvements. He worked with Ripon Main Street and Wisconsin Main Street on a plan to accurately restore the building to its 1920's appearance. The mansard canopy was removed and the original decorative cast iron columns were exposed. These columns had been concealed since the 1970's. In addition, the entire storefront and transom windows were rebuilt to proper proportions and the second story windows were replaced. The masonry was repointed and a new paint scheme put the finishing touches on the project. The total cost was \$15,000, and Del utilized a local façade grant. Quoting Ripon Main Street Director Craig Tebon, "the renovation turned a lump of coal into a diamond for the district."



Viroqua



VIROQUA - BUSINESS SEMINAR

In 2008, downtown Viroqua was struggling. Several anchor businesses had transitioned into retirement and some had recently closed. Viroqua Partners pulled together a comprehensive business development program in 2009. Some elements of the program included: an educational series with the technical college; a new and expanded business marketing grant of \$500 for each applicant; a façade improvement grant totaling \$45,500, which was made up of private and city funds; and continuation of a quarterly breakfast education series, now experiencing record attendance of approximately 60 people at each session. At the end of 2009, all main level retail spaces had a current lease or accepted purchase sales offer.

Platteville

When the Bayley Block was built in 1898, it was declared to be the finest structure in Southwest Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the upper floor sat vacant for 20 years. Local professionals toured the space, and local leader Cindy Tang helped form a Redevelopment Authority (RDA), which provides funding for such projects. Mark Ihm and Adam Charles created Bayley Group LLC and worked closely with Wisconsin Main Street to create a feasible financial plan and presented it to the RDA and City Council. After approval, the RDA borrowed \$320,000 from a local bank then loaned it to Bayley, along with \$600,000 from a private investor. The restoration included a new roof, the repair of 55 massive original windows, new interior storm windows, repair of the wainscoting and skylights, new utilities, laundry facilities, and painstaking recreations of the original wood doors throughout. The building now supports eight fully leased apartments and is helping to spur other Platteville rehabilitation projects.



PLATTEVILLE - BAYLEY GROUP

Sheboygan Falls



SHEBOYGAN FALLS - HOLIDAY PLANTERS

The Sheboygan Falls Chamber/Main Street Design Committee took a new approach to filling the planters throughout downtown. They made a commitment to use only natural, recycled materials in them. This required a lot of work by committee members, who faithfully cut back and dried flowering shrubs and made several trips to the landfill to retrieve what others had discarded. The materials were then assembled in a breathtaking array of "natural beauty" that adorned the downtown from November to January. The project inspired one restaurant owner to completely decorate the inside and outside of her business with recycled materials.

Eagle River

The Eagle River Revitalization Program website (www.eaglerivermainstreet.org) was originally created by a local high school student, assisted by his teacher, at no cost to the program. The website provided people with information on the Main Street program, current events and local projects. With the addition of a huge new festival, an additional website and link needed to be created. This new website provides everything and anything someone needs to know about the event, and allows people to buy tickets and register for various events. Valued at over \$1,000, this service was entirely donated to the organization. In 2009, nearly 18,000 people visited the site.



EAGLE RIVER - WEBSITE

Tomahawk



TOMAHAWK - WIN THE WINDOW

To encourage people to shop locally during the holidays, the Tomahawk Main Street Promotions Committee launched the Win the Window Campaign. Fifty-five businesses donated prizes to the window display in the Tomahawk Main Street office. People had to visit 12 participating businesses and spend a certain amount at the store to qualify for the contest. As a result of the promotion, the Main Street staff heard from some participants that they were going to do all their shopping in Tomahawk for Christmas. It was estimated that more than \$30,000 was generated in sales in the local businesses.

Lake Mills

In an effort to raise more sponsorship dollars for its events, Lake Mills Main Street invited area businesses to "Be Their Guest" at a complimentary wine, cheese, beer and bread night at a local downtown wine shop. Using a 1950s diner theme, they created a menu of opportunities that highlighted each event under food headings. For example, the winter festival went under "Cold Desserts." The wine shop was set up in the same



LAKE MILLS - SPONSORSHIP NIGHT

theme with 50's memorabilia from a local antique shop and golden oldies playing on the speakers. The Main Street program had tables featuring their events and volunteer opportunities, marketing levels and a laptop showing the new website. They also took the opportunity to include co-op advertising options the economic restructuring committee had been developing. Those who signed up that night for an advertising package got a 10 percent discount on a sponsorship. They raised more than \$7,000 in sponsorships in one night.

Appendix F: Owner Information for Vacant Properties

Spreadsheet provided on electronic copy only.

Appendix G: Owner and Special Assessment Information for Bid #1 and Bid #2

Spreadsheets provided on electronic copy only.