



Mt. Sterling, Illinois, Uptown Long-Range Strategic Plan

A Redevelopment Blueprint

PRESENTED TO THE
Citizens of Mt. Sterling

KIKU OBATA & COMPANY | NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Mt. Sterling, Illinois, Uptown Long-Range Strategic Plan

A Redevelopment Blueprint

City of Mt. Sterling, Illinois
Matt Bradbury, Acting Mayor

Tracy Family Foundation
Jean Buckley, President

Downtown Mt. Sterling
Steering Committee

Prepared by
Kiku Obata & Company
6161 Delmar Blvd.
Suite 200
St. Louis, MO 63112

November 1, 2011

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The Downtown Mt. Sterling Steering Committee donated considerable time, energy and creativity to provide direction to all aspects of planning for Mt. Sterling's Uptown revitalization, including preparation of this strategic plan and blueprint. Members and affiliations are listed.

Steering Committee

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Jean Buckley | Tracy Family Foundation |
| Pat Tracy | Dot Foods |
| Karla Metz | Tracy Family Foundation |
| Steve Gragg | Brown County Action Team / Dot Foods |
| Debbie Willis | Willis Insurance |
| Bob Willis | Willis Insurance |
| Philip Krupps | Brown County Development Corp. / TIF Committee |
| Andy Holler | Mt. Sterling City Council |
| Sandy Truwesych | Two Rivers Regional Council |
| David Slocum | Brown County Historical Society, Tracy Family Foundation |
| Marianne Slocum | Brown County Historical Society |
| Jeremy Flynn | Mt. Sterling Library President / Farmers State Bank |
| John Oliver | Dot Foods |
| Suzy Kassing | Dot Foods |
| Eric Bricker | U of I Extension / United Way of Adams Co. |
| Brad Kassing | Ray Insurance |

Consultant Team

Kiku Obata & Company

St. Louis, Missouri

Kevin Flynn, FAIA, Dennis Hyland, AIA, Igor Karash, Kiku Obata, Paul Scherfling, Carlos Zamora



INTRODUCTION | BACKGROUND



INTRODUCTION

Kiku Obata & Company considers it a distinct privilege to partner with the citizens of Mt. Sterling, Illinois to help shape important aspects of the future of Mt. Sterling through the creation of this Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint. This document articulates a vision and frames an action plan to guide revitalization of the Uptown District and adjacent zones in Mt. Sterling, Illinois.

The future success of the uptown area of Mt. Sterling will require cooperation of the private and public sectors in the community in order to ensure that underlying community values are respected, that a sense of community is maintained, that residents' concerns are heard, and that quality of life issues are factored in all decisions.

Thereafter, a strong District business and economic development organization can build upon a shared vision and the community's sense of their responsibility for a common destiny, and be empowered to implement the blueprint.

The Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint has five major components:

The Introduction / Background section of the report contains a brief overview of the community, a historical overview, views of the community, market analysis, an outline of community strengths and

opportunities, a character study that highlights significant attributes of the area, and the project goals and objectives, along with the citizens' vision for their future.

Part Three is the actual blueprint which outlines a development strategy for the District and the different development zones. It contains a desired lease plan strategy for the core blocks in the Uptown District along with the potential development opportunities for the blocks in that zone. Finally, this section highlights several public realm projects that will create the canvas for private development.

Part Four contains a proposed set of development and design guidelines designed to foster development of the Uptown District of Mt. Sterling in an efficient and vibrant way. They are designed to create a spirit of cooperation between all parties, providing creative ways in which changes can occur while maintaining respect for the history of the District. Using this resource, building owners and developers can create positive growth in an easier, focused manner, maintain a neighborhood sensibility in the area, and develop a vital economic district that is a retail destination for local residents, residents of Brown County, guests, tourists, and workers.

Part Five presents an overview of the Mt. Sterling brand, a marketing and publication strategy outline, a suggested series of seasonal festivities and proposes the adoption of a Mt. Sterling tree and flower program.

Part Six is the implementation strategy section which outlines potential organizational structures for overseeing future developments to ensure they are in compliance with the long-range strategic plan. It provides conceptual costs for key development parcels, presents a proposed phasing and priority list for the projects, and outlines a recruitment and retention program for supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses.

OVERVIEW

Phase I of the Mt. Sterling Uptown Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint involved several activities, all of which lay the groundwork for future work and the development of the blueprint. Tasks included both group and individual interviews with members of the community, review of past studies and reports, site reconnaissance to understand the unique qualities of the area, exterior visual assessment of the buildings, a preliminary market analysis, a project kick-off meeting with the Mt. Sterling Downtown Steering Committee, an existing conditions inventory analysis, and a synthesis of the above materials to identify opportunities and challenges, and from those, create a preliminary set of goals and objectives for the blueprint.

The City of Mt. Sterling, Illinois is the county seat for Brown County, which is located in West Central Illinois within the Illinois River watershed. The town spans approximately 1.8 square miles. The population of Brown County is home to nearly 5,000 residents of which almost 2,000 live in Mt. Sterling. During the weekdays, the population almost doubles as commuters arrive for work at the major employers in Brown County. Brown County is primarily an agricultural community, but is also known across the U.S. for the hunting of white-tailed deer and turkey.

There is one school district for the County, and those schools are located in Mt. Sterling. A lot of effort has gone into improving the school district, and those efforts are starting to show in improved student performance. Brown County's public schools spend \$3,784.00 / student.

The school for some is the center of the community, especially for Friday night football and basketball games.

Mt. Sterling is fortunate to have two major employers: Dot Foods, which employs over 1,800 people; and the medium-security State of Illinois Western Illinois Correctional Facility, which employs more than 400. In addition, two other major employers in the area are the Brown County school system and Timewell Tile. The current unemployment rate is 4.5%, which is well below the U.S. average. In addition, the cost of living in Mt. Sterling is almost 23% lower than the U.S. average.

The median home cost in Mt. Sterling is \$64,050. Home appreciation over the last year has been 1.13 percent. It has been identified that there is a shortage of rental apartments and homes in the \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00 range, which is a deterrent for some seeking to relocate to Mt. Sterling.

Total retail sales generated in Mt. Sterling in calendar year 2009 were \$29.3 million. The City receives \$1 in municipal sales tax for every \$100 of retail sales, which represents a significant source of revenue for the City. Based on review of past reports, revenue is shrinking by a significant amount, with retail dollars going outside of the community because of the lack of stores that carry basic necessities, services, and dining and entertainment opportunities. Residents travel to Quincy and Springfield for these, and also to the Walmart in Beardstown.

OVERVIEW CONTINUED

When looking at a map of Mt. Sterling's location in Illinois, it might appear that it is in the middle of nowhere. In actuality, it is in relatively close proximity (2.5 hours or less) to four major urban areas and only five hours or less from four more cities.

These cities are:

Jacksonville, Illinois – 1 hour (38 miles)

Quincy, Illinois – 1 hour (40 miles)

Springfield, Illinois – 1.5 hours (78 miles)

St. Louis, Missouri – 2.5 hours (120 miles)

Davenport, Iowa – 2.5 hours (121 miles)

Chicago, Illinois – 4.5 hours (249 miles)

Des Moines, Iowa – 4.5 hours (257 miles)

Kansas City, Missouri – 4.5 hours (263 miles)

Indianapolis, Indiana – 5 hours (284 miles)

This dynamic can be viewed as both a positive and a negative. From the negative, for consumers, these are not great distances to drive, so getting in the car to go to one of these other communities is not an inconvenience. People in urban areas often drive 20 minutes to an hour for destination shopping trips. It also is viewed as a way to get away and have new experiences. On the positive side, the same holds true. For those living in larger urban areas and for all those living in between, Mt. Sterling has the opportunity to provide unique shopping, dining, entertainment, and recreational experiences that don't exist in their communities.

In addition to this relationship, there are seven colleges and universities with over 31,000 students within a 33-84 mile area. This represents another unique pool of shoppers that could be tapped if Mt. Sterling had unique experiences for them.

Why revitalize the Uptown District? The Uptown area of Mt. Sterling served as the main street for this community since its founding. Uptown is where the community gathered to see films, dance, work, visit their bankers, shop, make a day of it on Saturday, attend churches, and carry out most of their economic and social life. Uptown provided a central identity for all those who came to Mt. Sterling. It was the heart of the community.

Without action, Uptown will be lost forever, and its unique qualities, characteristics, and memories will also be gone. The loss of this heritage will make it much harder to attract new business opportunities and residents. After all, it is the Uptown District that creates the ambience and essence of that small town atmosphere, and all the positive connotations that people associate with those words.

Though economically weakened, the traditional main street building stock is in place and the street's promise is intact. A concentrated and sustained effort will be needed, but it is achievable and possible, especially with some of the developing trends around the increasing desire to live in communities like this.

The following sections present the case for rebuilding and defining Mt. Sterling's Uptown identity around the residents' vision for their town and future.

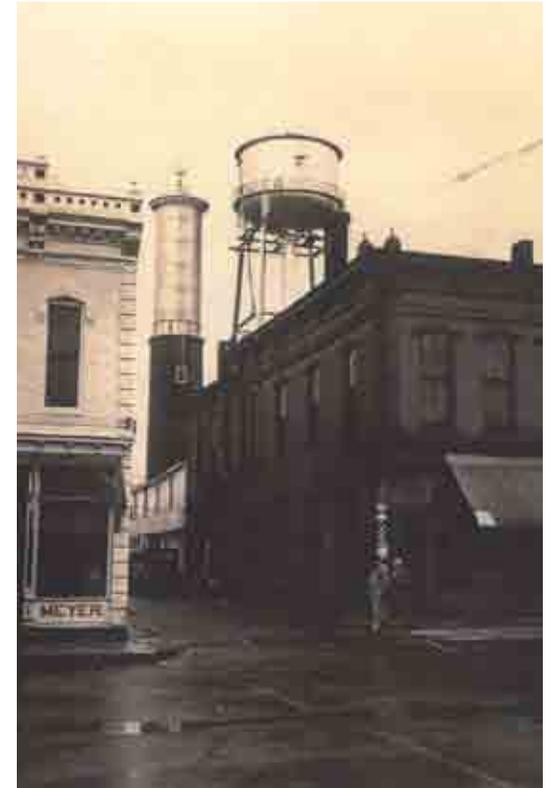
HISTORY

“Brown County was part of the military bounty tract set aside by the United States Congress in May 1812, as land to be granted to soldiers in payment for military service. Every soldier who served nine months was to receive 160 acres of land. The soldiers of the War of 1812 were the most numerous recipients, although some volunteers in the Black Hawk War received payment in land.” From *History of Brown County 1880-1970*.

The town was named Mt. Sterling by Alexander Curry. The name was taken from the Indian mound and the surrounding highest ground in the county, and because of the connotation of value in the word

“sterling.” In 1833, Curry laid out a town of eight 60 x 120 foot lots bounded by North and South East Cross and West Cross Streets with Main Street in the middle. In 1845, the town was incorporated under a board of five trustees.

On June 15, 1839, Mt. Sterling was selected to be the county seat of Brown County. On July 6, 1841, the county commissioners directed that the new courthouse would be constructed on the public square of Mt. Sterling.



HISTORY CONTINUED

Highlight from *History of Brown County 1880-1970*;

Brown County State Fair:

"One of the big attractions for the women was the Floral Hall. It gave them a chance to show off their finest sewing, bakery goods, jams and jellies, fruits, vegetables, or any other hobbies they had."

Harness racing has also been a big attraction of the State Fair along with the current-day tractor pulls.

Mt. Sterling City Library

"The Citizens of Mt. Sterling and the surrounding community are proud of the Mt. Sterling City Library, now about 85 years old, as a lending library and 56 years as a Public Library and Reading Room." (The Library will celebrate its centennial on November 15, 2015 and the Reading Room on October 1, 2016).

The present library owed its existence to the former Twentieth Century Club of the city. The Twentieth Century Club had as its motto "No nation is greater than its women," and its object in the beginning was "self-culture through study."

Historical Names & Places:

Milltown, The Railroad Neighborhood, The Stock Yards, Southeast Mt. Sterling

The Old Bottle House

Places of Entertainment: Golconda Hall – First general gathering place above Tom Brockman's Blacksmith Shop; Fry Opera House; Curry Hall; Brower Hall and Murphy House; Plez-U Theatre (later the Brown Theatre); Picture Shows; the Knights of Columbus Hall; The Harry C. LaTier (Hello Bunch) Show; Uncle Josh (Cal Stewart); The Humbug Circus – The Fall Festival was advertised as "The Biggest Of All Big Times," Free as the Air You Breathe"; "Mammoth World's Greatest Show" – one day only. "You will be cured of the blues for seven years."

The Givens Brothers' grocery float used a huge coffee pot advertising "Ask Your Neighbor Coffee." It was remembered long afterward because the coffee pot was put on top of the store for a time and then on top of a silo on their farm north of town. The farm is still called the "Coffee Pot Farm."

Historical Store Names:

Grocery Stores: Givens' Grocery Store; The C.B. Craven Store; Meyer Grocery Store; Ingels-Flynn Grocery Store; Hoffman Store; During Store; Ambrose Putman, Keifer-Brooks Store; East End Grocery Store

Hardware Stores: Breidenbend Store; Hagel Store; Sears Store

Hotels: Tinnen House; Parker-Curry House; City Hotel

Jewelery Stores: Bailey Store; Gross Jewelry Store

Rickey Drug Store

Restaurants: The Condee Restaurant; Nick Fritsch Restaurant; Ryan Restaurant; Dairy Bar; Candy Kitchen

Shoe Stores: Barry-Hisle-Shank; Webber and Byrne Shoe Store; Thornton Shoe Store; E.F. & F.D. Crane Co.; Model Tailoring Company; H.&S. Shoe Store; Baxter's Drug Store

The Big Chicago Store



VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

In 2011, Kiku Obata & Company team visited Mt. Sterling on April 4, 5, 7, and 8 to conduct a series of focus groups and individual interviews with stakeholders – hunters, Brown County Action Team, city government officials, business and property owners, building occupants, senior citizens, downtown lunch crowd, commuters to Mt. Sterling, young professionals, newcomers to Mt. Sterling, and parents and youths. Even with the diversity of these groups, there was a consensus that developed around the core concerns and visions for the future.

There was also consistency between the various groups and individuals interviewed and the input collected as part of previous reports. The following summarizes those items and others that are most relevant to the scope of this work. (A full summary of all comments from the interviews can be found in Appendix A).

Attributes:

Common words and phrases that people used to describe Mt. Sterling: “It is about trust and pride, family, small town values”; “if you need anything, it’s all there”; “all family”; “charming historic town”; “feeling tired”; “empty storefronts”; “so many buildings need repair”; “desolate”; “a farm community”; and “Brown, Pike and Adams Counties are known across the U.S. for the hunting of white-tailed deer.”

The community wants Mt. Sterling to be “how it used to be when we grew up”; “inviting”; “people should want to stop and look.”

People refer to the downtown with many different names: downtown; uptown; cross-town; in town; to town. Uptown seems to be the most common since, geographically, the intersection of Main and Capitol is the highest elevation.

There is an identity issue between Brown County and Mt. Sterling. When people are asked where they are from, they say Brown County.

When asked what’s the “Heart of Mt. Sterling,” we received multiple answers: “YMCA”; “schools” (function as a community hub); “courthouse”; “golf course”; “ballpark in the summer”; “parks”; “football / basketball games”; and “the four-way stop sign at Main Street and Capitol.”

There is nostalgia around having a Fall Festival again.

There is a strong volunteer spirit amongst the Brown County residents and business owners we interviewed. It was noted that people serve on multiple volunteer committees. This spirit will be helpful in moving this plan forward.

VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY CONTINUED

Concerns:

People expressed concern regarding the appearance of the Uptown District and the need to reinforce maintenance within the residential neighborhoods. These are important in terms of creating a welcoming environment for visitors and establishing a sense of community pride—“this is our town, and we are proud of it.”

The teens need a place to hang out and be part of the community.

A large amount of truck traffic travels Main Street every day. How can you make this a positive so that truck drivers feel welcome and consequently drive respectfully as they pass through town?

A large number of people noted that their taxes were too high.

The issue of insufficient parking in the uptown area was brought up multiple times. When further pressed on this, it seems that this may be more of a perception issue and revolves around the type of available parking: parallel versus head-in, and parking lots.

Mt. Sterling needs more rental units in the uptown area, and there was a consensus that more homes in the \$60,000 - \$80,000 range were needed.

We detected a slight sense of insecurity with some expressing the sentiment “you can do better if you go somewhere else.”

There is a need for senior housing.

People get accustomed to driving and going to Quincy, Springfield, or Rushville. It’s tough to stay in business long enough to change current behavior.

Desired Retail / Entertainment Experiences:

Roller rink, bowling alley, movie theatre, clothing shops, kids stores, footwear retailers, bookstore, gift shop, nice restaurant, coffee shop, sandwich shop.

Surrounding Communities:

There was a strong sense among the groups that Rushville had more to offer than Mt. Sterling: a movie theatre; a Mexican restaurant; a great kitchen store; and a town square. There was a sense that Rushville has more of an artistic community and expresses more pride in maintaining their historic buildings. One person described it as “Rushville Envy.” Rushville has two jewelry stores, a hardware store, a kitchen store, an opera house, etc.

VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY CONTINUED

Support Systems:

The community needs marketing programs and an aggressive public relations program to spread the word about the positives of Mt. Sterling.

Mt. Sterling needs mechanisms to help people get started in business and be successful. Some people are afraid to ask for assistance and are afraid to fail.

Recent Trends:

There appears to be a trend over the last five years where people in their 30s, 40s, and 50s are returning to Mt. Sterling.

Change is scary, but the community and its officials seem more open to embracing it in the past few years.

Strengths:

Banks are involved in the community.

It was noted several times that the community was fortunate to have Dot Foods and the Prison.

Mt. Sterling has the lowest unemployment rate in Illinois.

Most people interviewed believe the school system is improving and that the focus should be to keep improving it. There are currently 800 students in the Brown County school system, from Pre-K through 12th grade.

Some expressed concern that if we can not attract young families to move to Brown County, and Mt. Sterling in particular, there will be a decline in school enrollment which could lead to a merger with another school system.

Assets:

It was noted that the Dot General Store drew people from a wide area because of its great deals. Is there a way to capture shoppers with other “great deal” stores?

There is a potentially strong group of artists and entrepreneurs who could be viewed as potential tenants.

MARKET ANALYSIS

A. Existing Conditions

Based on information in the IMAP Report, The Feasibility Study of Mt. Sterling / Brown County Retail Development report, and the TIF II report, it initially appears that in order for retail to succeed in Mt. Sterling, unique experiences that will attract shoppers from a regional area need to be created.

There is significant competition within the market area for the number of residents and for the income available to spend. Creating more of the same types of stores will most likely not have long-term sustainability.

It is also evident, based on current population numbers, that innovative financing and rent structures will need to be considered to help smaller businesses survive and grow while efforts are made to increase the resident population, create attractions to increase visitors' visits and expenditures, and to attract shoppers from surrounding communities.

Given the current status of the historical building stock and current rent structures, alternative development strategies need to be formulated that decouple the renovation of the building and the opening of a business.

Given current population counts and disposable dollars, and even with an increased residential base in the future and a larger regional draw, for retail to

succeed, shared-use situations or facilities that could serve multiple uses during the various day parts should be considered. For example, rather than a nice restaurant relying on just a lunch and dinner business, this could be combined with a need for catering services at Dot Foods and others. Rather than thinking of a new movie theatre, is there need for a large meeting space / movie theatre / performance space that is then part of new civic facility such as a library?

Creative uses, innovative financial models, strong marketing, and a focus on entrepreneurship are what will be needed to drive the revitalization of the Uptown District of Mt. Sterling and to ensure its success.

MARKET ANALYSIS CONTINUED

B. Best Practices – Finance, Marketing, Ownership

The economic model for rebuilding the Uptown District will need to include funding from grant sources, and public and private sources. This effort will need to be a private / public partnership with new financing structures.

Our initial thought is that to renovate the Uptown District buildings and to have them turn-key ready for stores will not make economic sense based on rent rates and capacity in the initial years.

A new model that takes a long-term look and brings in investors who do not expect a typical return on investment and can appreciate the development of long-term value will most likely be required. Use of the TIF, historic tax credits, and other incentive programs will be critical in making these projects work.

The optimum strategy in terms of ownership and building renovation would be to have one entity or not-for-profit development corporations purchase all

the key properties between North, South, West Cross, and East Cross as soon as possible. This strategy would allow for critical renovation and maintenance items to be accomplished on the buildings before more long-term damage is done. Second, it will send a signal to the community, potential tenants, and other potential developers that the community is serious about its long-range plan for the Uptown District. Third, it will allow tenants to believe it is possible to open a business without having to think that they also have to renovate the building. Fourth, it allows immediate leasing of the second floors for apartments, which starts a cash flow for the property and creates an increased residential base. Fifth, it will allow a faster start-to-finish for getting a critical mass of stores open which will facilitate their long-term sustainability. Finally, by doing the renovation of the buildings as a group, there could potentially be some construction cost savings, especially in the current market where favorable pricing is available for products and labor.

Besides the physical aspects of the project, we will need to put together a strong common marketing and public relations effort to promote the assets of Mt. Sterling, not only within the region, but also to other cities that are within a five-hour drive, and to visitors coming into Brown County. This will need to be an on-going effort to keep Mt. Sterling top-of-mind as a great, small community in which to live, do business, or simply visit.

There will also be a need for some type of management team that oversees the marketing effort, helps the entrepreneur with business-related issues, and helps to make sure the area is well maintained. This group could also be responsible for helping to plan special events that would promote Mt. Sterling and drive increased traffic at certain times of the year.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES (NEEDS / OPPORTUNITIES)

Based on the information obtained during the interviews, our site visit, and our review of past work, we have identified the following strengths that will serve as assets in the redevelopment strategy, and needs / opportunities that can be achieved with a coordinated redevelopment strategy.

Strengths:

- Most current housing stock is close to the Uptown District
- Areas for new housing are available within close proximity to Uptown
- Moderately priced housing; increasing housing values
- Natural resources
- Hunting
- Dot Foods
- Prison
- Strong community values
- Strong historical core of buildings
- Identifiable group of craftspeople who might be potential tenants for retail spaces
- Improving school systems
- Low unemployment rate
- Strong desire to make Uptown better
- Trend of younger generations moving back
- Numbers indicate a reversal in population loss
- Strong banking community
- Brown County Fair
- Volunteer spirit among community members

Weaknesses (Needs / Opportunities):

- Need more moderate housing for first-time buyers (\$ 60,000.00 - \$ 80,000 range)
- Need rental apartments
- Vacant houses / absentee landlords / owners not keeping up properties
- Lack of basic-needs retail
- Lack of a nice sit-down restaurant
- Need destination, unique specialty retail
- Need more diversity of both large and small employers
- Streetscape / pedestrian environment needs improvement
- Transportation access, parking
- High amount of truck traffic on US24
- Insufficient pedestrian infrastructure
- Lack of street-level activity in existing buildings
- Natural assets not well-promoted
- Lack of traffic-calming efforts
- Lack of identity and market presence

CHARACTER STUDY

Introduction

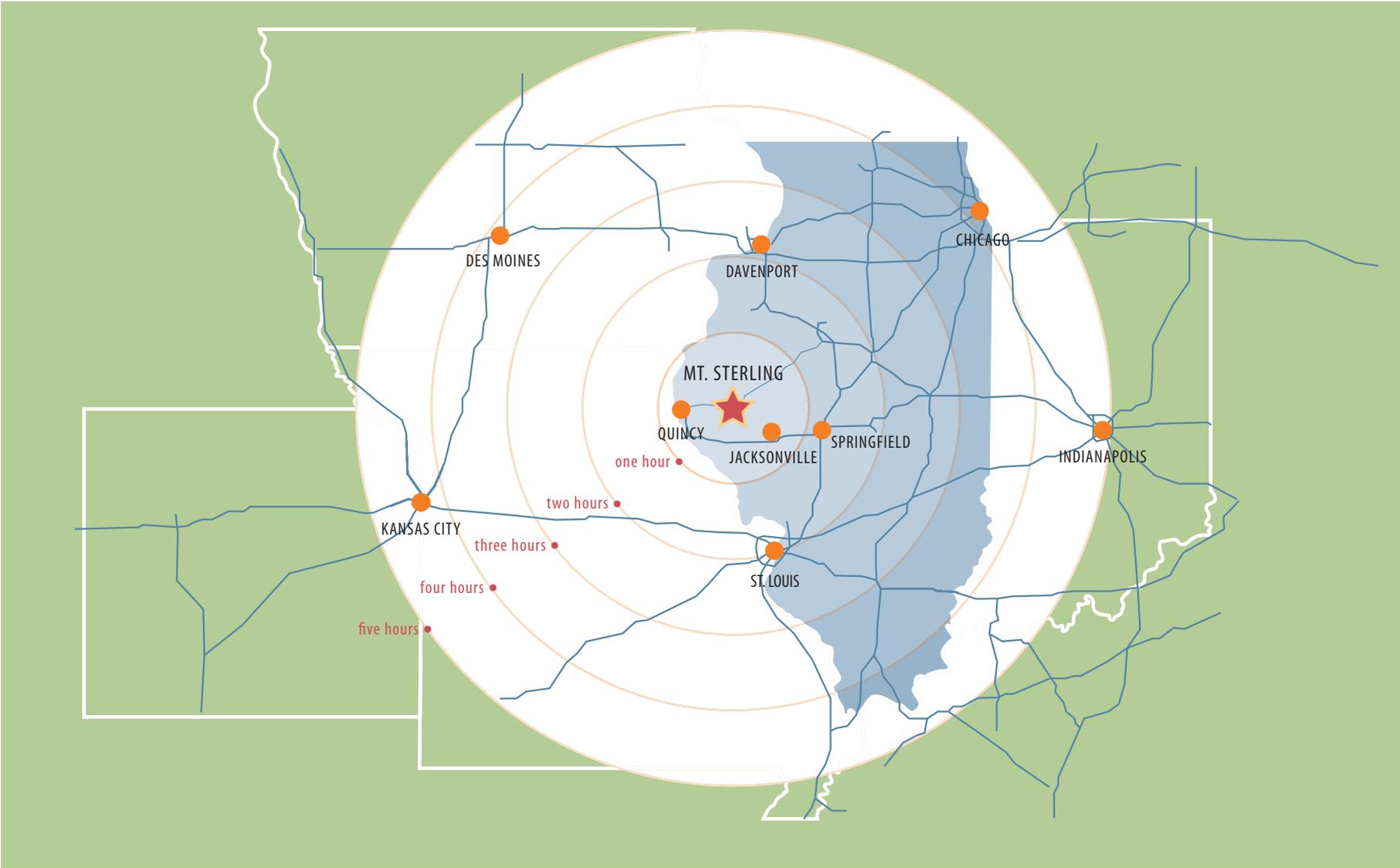
Community character is the sum of all the attributes and assets that make a community unique and establish a sense of place for residents. While some traits, such as “good work ethic” are intangibles, others, such as “attractive central business district” are very visible.

To determine those attributes that contribute most to a community’s character, it is important to listen to the residents and members of the community, and hear what is most important to them. During our interviews, we asked questions and gathered the responses in terms of attributes.

The following image pages represent those attributes we heard about most and that make up the perceived character of Mt. Sterling, Illinois:

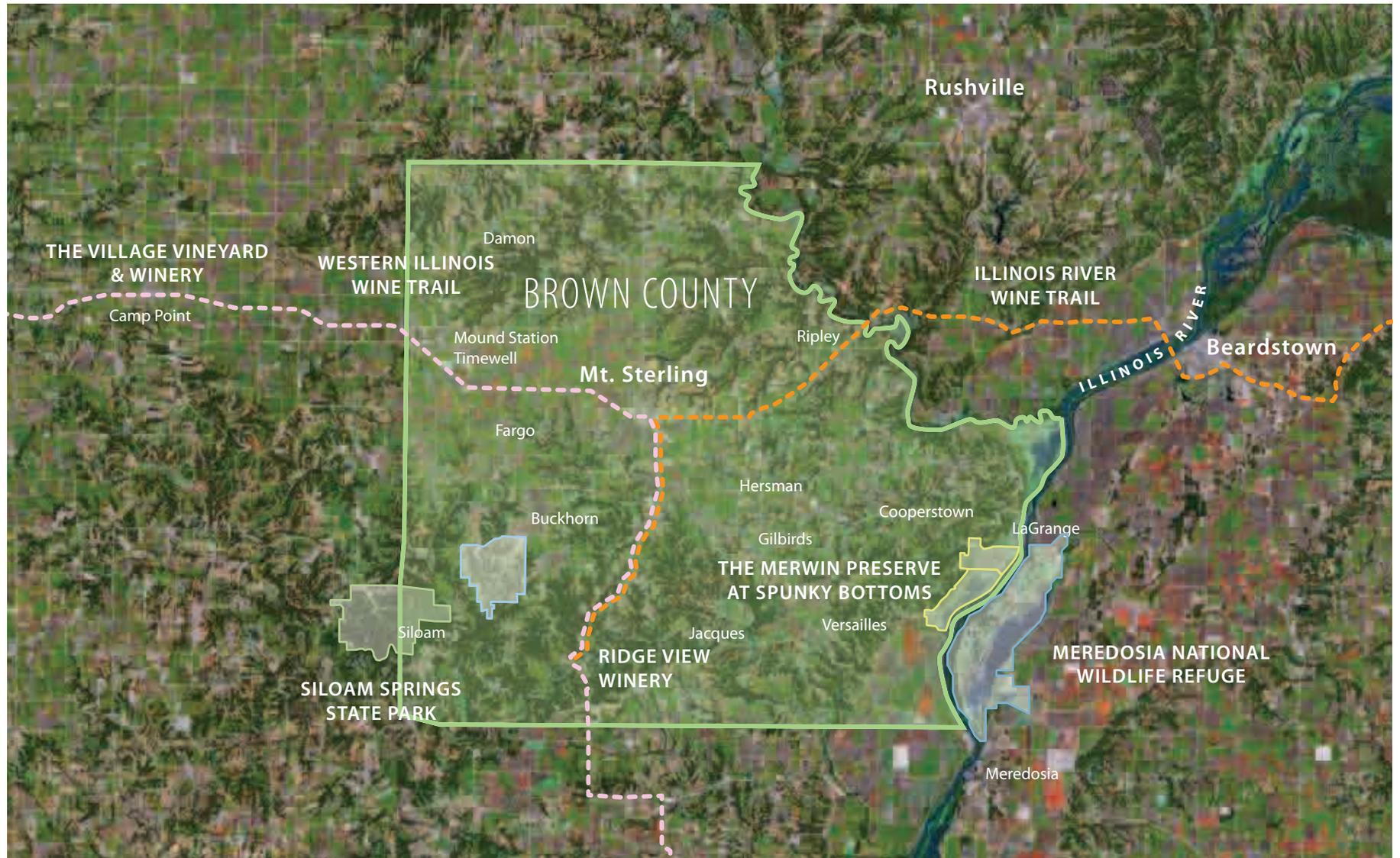
- I. Importance of being the county seat and a central location. The map shows cities within a five-hour drive where we would want to concentrate marketing efforts in order to attract visitors to Mt. Sterling.
- II. Map which reflects that Mt. Sterling is the “heart” of Brown County and the many natural resources that exist within the region. Map also shows that two of the Illinois wine trails intersect in Mt. Sterling.
- III. Agricultural community and major food distribution hub
- IV. Historical attributes of the Uptown buildings
- V. A family friendly community with a “small town atmosphere where people care about one another
- VI. Nationally recognized hunting region
- VII. Local and regional recreation assets
- VIII. Unique local businesses and crafts persons

CHARACTER STUDY



I. REGIONAL PROXIMITY MAP—Urban areas within a five-hour drive of Mt. Sterling

CHARACTER STUDY



II. THE CENTER OF BROWN COUNTY

CHARACTER STUDY

Brown County

The map on the adjacent page highlights the many recreational opportunities in Brown County and reflects that Mt. Sterling, Illinois truly is the “heart” of Brown County.

The Merwin Preserves at Spunky Bottoms

Since The Nature Conservancy began work at Spunky Bottoms, the landscape has been transformed. Once drained and used for farmland, this land is now a thriving wetland landscape that becomes richer in plant and animal life every year.

Spunky Bottoms has one of the most abundant populations of northern cricket frogs in Illinois. In the spring, more than 16,000 waterfowl migrate through the area. The wetlands echo with the raucous cries of mallards and pintails, widgeons and Canada geese. The restoration has also attracted several uncommon species rarely seen in the local area, including king rail and American and least bitterns.

Merodosia National Wildlife Refuge

Merodosia National Wildlife Refuge is located along the east side of the Illinois River in Cass and Morgan counties, about 50 miles west of Springfield, IL. It is positioned in the upper end of the Alton navigation pool in an area that was historically known for its ability to sustain fish and wildlife.

Land management programs improve migratory bird, fish, and resident wildlife habitat in the Illinois River basin, while providing increased public recreation and educational opportunities. The refuge includes a combination of backwater lake, bottomland forest, upland forest, prairie, seasonal wetland, and permanent marsh habitat. As a functioning floodplain wetland complex, the refuge plays a vital role in perpetuating biological diversity in the Illinois River basin.

Merodosia Refuge consists of 3,582 acres. The refuge is part of the Illinois River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, with headquarters at Chautauqua Refuge, in Havana, Illinois.

Winery Tours

Whether you’re looking for a romantic getaway or a let-down-your-hair road trip with the girls, a genuine Illinois Wine experience is never more than a few hours away. Over 90 wineries are located throughout the state. Many of them are conveniently clustered near one of six wine trails, allowing you to discover a variety of wines in just one trip. Two of these trails, the Northern Illinois River Wine Trail and the Western Illinois Wine Trail intersect in Mt. Sterling, Illinois.

Siloam State Park

Originally part of the “military tract” of western Illinois (land set aside to be given to combat veterans), the area was acquired in 1852 by George Meyers for his service in the Black Hawk and Mexican wars. He died in 1882 at the age of 102. Legend has it that spring water in the area had a medicinal effect, thus the name Siloam Springs from a Biblical reference, so-called by the Rev. Reuben K. McCoy, who had discovered the springs following the Civil War.

In 1935, the Siloam Springs Recreation Club purchased the site in an effort to restore it and provide a place of recreation for the local population. Citizens of Adams and Brown counties raised money to match state funds and by 1940 an agreement was reached to make it a state recreation area. Eventually, the old hotel and bath houses were torn down, the swimming pool abandoned and the springs no longer were used. The No. 2 spring house was rebuilt in 1995 and contains the most popular spring.

In 1954 and 1955, an earthen dam was constructed across a deep ravine and the 58-acre lake was created. In 1956 Siloam Springs was dedicated as a state park, and efforts began to develop its recreational facilities.

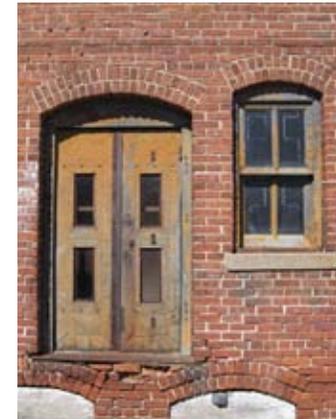
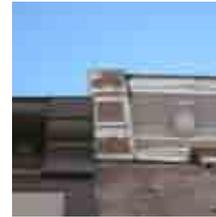
CHARACTER STUDY



Images not for reproduction.

III. AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY AND MAJOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION HUB

CHARACTER STUDY



Images not for reproduction.

IV. ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

CHARACTER STUDY



Images not for reproduction.

V. COMMUNITY VALUES

CHARACTER STUDY



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VI. HUNTING

CHARACTER STUDY



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VII. RECREATION / ENVIRONMENT

CHARACTER STUDY



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VIII. CRAFT / LOCAL ARTISANS

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Uptown Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint is to translate the community's hopes and dreams and the existing reality into a doable vision, and structured implementation plan which the residents of Mt. Sterling can follow for the next twelve years.

We have titled this: "A Renewed Vision for 'Uptown': Mt. Sterling, A 21st Century Main Street, the Heart of Brown County." The Uptown District will again play a key role in Mt. Sterling's life, but in a manner that enhances the quality of life of a community in the 21st century. Uptown will be the new common ground addressing the aspirations and needs of Mt. Sterling residents, workers, visitors, and tourists.

The following is a preliminary set of goals that the design team will use in developing the blueprint concepts and that the community will use to review those concepts.

Uptown Mt. Sterling should...

- Be the community's front door
- Be a place of celebration and community
- Be a commercial center of mixed uses
- Celebrate and enhance its unique and desirable characteristics
- Have a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Make it a priority to preserve and rehabilitate its existing buildings
- Promote new, high-quality developments that fit within and enhance the existing context
- Create connections
- Empower the voice and vision of Mt. Sterling's citizens
- Create mechanisms to carry out the plan
- Support entrepreneurs to start and sustain them through innovative programs
- Be inviting and welcoming
- Be sustainable in all aspects

The following are some preliminary ideas regarding potential marketing concepts for a campaign that would draw visitors and tourists to Mt. Sterling:

- A revitalized Fall Festival & Foliage Tour
- A Hunting & Fishing Trail
- Highlight the Conservation Districts
- Highlight / Build upon the Illinois Wine Trails
- A Farm Trail
- Christmas on Main Street
- A Food Fair

The following are some emerging themes that could be used to help inform visual imagery, potential tenant categories, and a marketing focus.

- Outdoors—Hunting, Fishing, Conservation
- Food—Farms to Distribution
- Trucks—Historically a major economic route for movement of goods to the west
- Value and Great Deals
- "Made in Mt. Sterling" or "Made in Brown County"
- A sustainable community...agriculture... environmental stewardship...business...energy

VISION STATEMENT

A RENEWED VISION FOR ‘UPTOWN’: MT. STERLING, A 21ST CENTURY MAIN STREET IN THE HEART OF BROWN COUNTY.

The Uptown District will again play a key role in Mt. Sterling’s life, but in a manner that enhances the quality of life for a community in the 21st century.

Uptown will be the new common ground addressing the aspirations and needs of Mt. Sterling residents, workers, visitors, and tourists.



THE BLUEPRINT

INTRODUCTION

The three strategic sectors which make up the blueprint are the public realm improvements, the private investment opportunities, and the civic or community involvement.

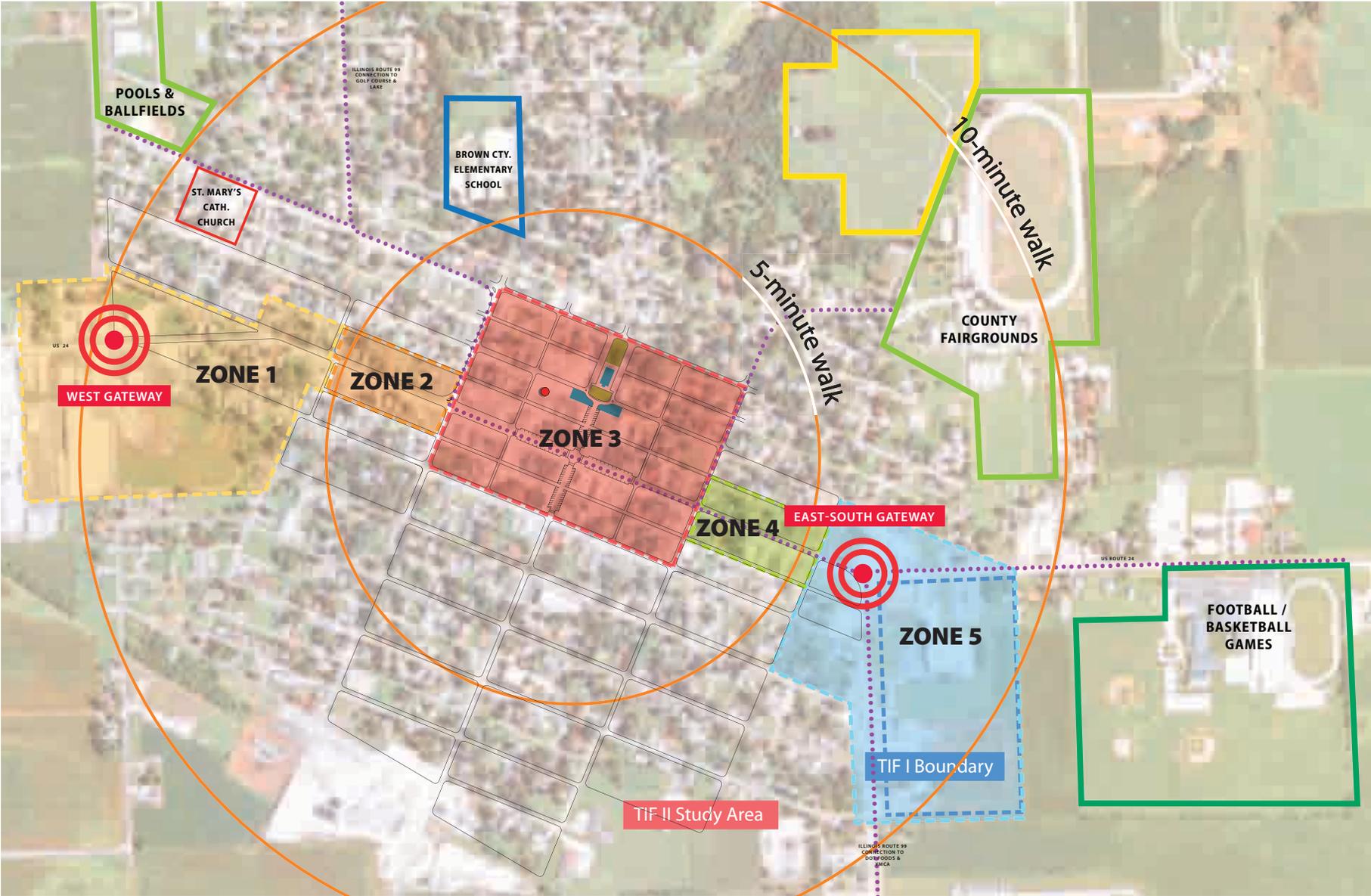
The development strategies outlined in this section combined with the proposed implementation strategies in Section III of the report will be the basis for how the community moves forward over the next 12 years to achieve the long-term strategic plan and vision.

With all three sectors of the community working together, following the blueprint, Mt. Sterling will once again be a thriving community. Simply put, it will be a great place again! It will have a defined community and cultural identity. It will build on its rich history and community values to reinvigorate the Uptown District and promote purposeful exchanges.

Once again Uptown Mt. Sterling will be viewed as a vibrant, beautiful, authentic, and comfortable commercial district and neighborhood. A new generation will begin to develop a very special set of memories, just like those shared by grandparents and parents during our conversations with the community.

A successful implementation of the blueprint will support the Tracy Family Foundation's Vision for Brown County. The Tracy Family Foundation will play an integral role in Brown County being recognized as a magnet community. The community's strong school system, its nurturance of youth and families, and its environment of generosity and inclusiveness will create a desire in people of all ages to live, work, raise a family, and grow older in Brown County.

DEVELOPMENT ZONE MAP



DEVELOPMENT ZONES

The map at the end of this section indicates a series of development zones along the Main Street / US 24 corridor in Mt. Sterling, Illinois. The plan identifies five zones. These zones reflect differences in building type and use, visual character, economic vitality, and redevelopment potential.

Each zone description that follows summarizes the general urban character and suggests general goals for making improvements within the zone. Goals may not apply to all projects, but every project should try to achieve applicable goals to the fullest extent possible. In addition to the goals, a set of specific standards are listed to ensure an appropriate framework for redevelopment and consistency in development standards.

The zones are delineated on the accompanying map. In addition, the map highlights key landmarks within the community, TIF I and II boundaries, and approximate walking distances from the intersection of Main Street and Capitol.

Zone 1: West Gateway Zone

Character:

Ensemble of one-story commercial buildings and older residential buildings and undeveloped parcels.

Goals:

As the west entry point into Mt. Sterling on US 24, efforts should be made to create a signature development(s) at the intersection of Damon Road / Buckhorn, US 24, and west South Street. As part of the development, a gateway identity element for Mt. Sterling should be created at this location.

Streetscape improvements including new sidewalks, should be extended to this area from the Uptown District in order to provide visual continuity.

Preserve residential character and encourage residential uses on streets that are currently mainly residential and compatible reuse for homes along the Main Street area. Small commercial buildings in this area could be renovated into retail uses if practical and will add to the character of the zone.

Remove inappropriate and negative character-giving elements.

Redevelopment Standards:

Setbacks: Follow established residential setbacks on the mainly residential streets. Along West Main Street, establish new setback guidelines to create a streetwall. Setback should allow for pedestrian / bike circulation, rain gardens, and planting areas for "city trees". All parking in this zone along West Main Street should be at the rear of development. Parking along West Main Street should not be allowed. Access to parking should be planned so that a minimum number of curb cuts are required.



DEVELOPMENT ZONES

Zone 4: East Residential

Character:

Intact ensemble of existing older residential units, mostly one-story and one-story small commercial buildings.

Goals:

Streetscape improvements, including new sidewalks, should be extended to this area from the Uptown District in order to provide visual continuity.

Preserve residential character and encourage residential uses and compatible reuse for homes along East Main Street.

Remove inappropriate and negative elements.

Redevelopment Standards:

Height 1 – 2 Stories

Setbacks: Along East Main Street, establish new setback guidelines to create a streetwall. Setback should allow for pedestrian / bike circulation, rain gardens, and planting areas for “city trees.” All parking in this zone along East Main Street should be at the rear of the development. Parking along East Main Street should not be allowed. Access to parking should be planned so that a minimum number of curb cuts are required.

Zone 5: East Gateway Zone

Character:

Most of this zone is comprised of either empty parcels or suburban type development – that is one-story, single-use buildings separated from the street by large parking areas. No streetwall exists. There are few one-story residential units in this area. The zone has good redevelopment opportunities.

Goals:

Establish a street edge and enhance the streetscape with right-of-way improvements.

Redevelop with new buildings along East Main Street that re-establish a pedestrian-friendly environment in order to make connections to the Uptown District. Parking should be required to be in the rear of all new developments.

As part of the new development, create a signature element to welcome people to Mt. Sterling.

Work with current building owners to improve properties and increase curb appeal in this gateway zone.

Redevelopment Standards:

Height: 1 – 3 Stories

Setbacks; Zero feet along East Main Street and at intersection of US 24 and US 99. Follow the established setback in other areas.



ZONE 3: UPTOWN DISTRICT – LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

The following plan highlights the focused development area that was studied as part of the blueprint. The boundaries for the study were North Street, South Street, West Cross Street, and East Cross Street.

The plan shows a preferred streetscape concept for both East and West Main Street and Capitol Avenue. In addition, potential development opportunities are shown for the key blocks within this zone.

A series of development opportunities have been identified within the Uptown District. The most significant are the potential for two developments on Capitol at North Avenue that would flank the

new civic plaza. The first development on the SE corner would be a new two-story building that could potentially house a new Brown County Library on the first floor and classroom space on the second floor for John Wood Community College. The second civic building would be on the SW corner.

Following the plan are enlarged plans of the eight key development blocks showing the potential plan for development, approximate size of spaces available, preferred uses, and the estimated cost for redevelopment of the parcel.

LAND USE PLAN—PROPOSED PHASING



PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Introduction

The following pages highlight proposed improvements in the public realm. These improvements will be key in conveying the special character of the Uptown District, and creating an appropriate setting that will spur investment by the private sector in upgrading current businesses, renovating of existing buildings, and introducing new developments.

Project I:

Lighting of the front facade of the courthouse and constructing new cupola to match the historical cupola that existed before the courthouse burned. The courthouse will once again be the center of civic life in the community and a point of pride for the citizens.

Project II:

Renovate the old water tower to act as a focal point for the revitalized Uptown District. Positioned at the highest elevation in Brown County, the old water tower offers excellent visibility from all directions. In addition to the renovation of the tower, a new pocket park could be created at its base. The tower should be lighted so that it is visible in the evenings and serves as a beacon to draw in visitors to Mt. Sterling.

Project III:

Create a symbolic "heart" or center for both Brown County and Mt. Sterling by constructing a new signature civic plaza in front of the courthouse. This plaza will be the gathering place for the community.

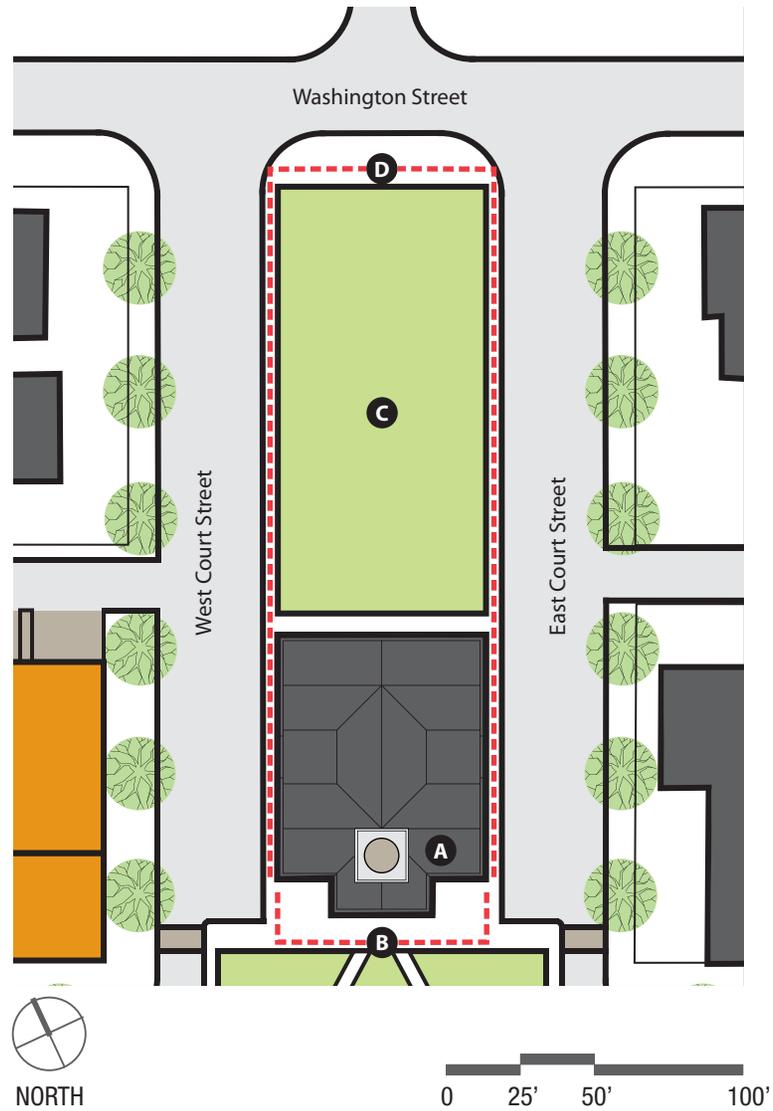
Project IV:

New streetscape development along West and East Main Street from West Cross to East Cross and on Capitol Avenue from North Street to South Street. Work will include new sidewalks, street trees, landscaping / flower beds, new light poles, banners, and areas for sidewalk cafés.

Project V:

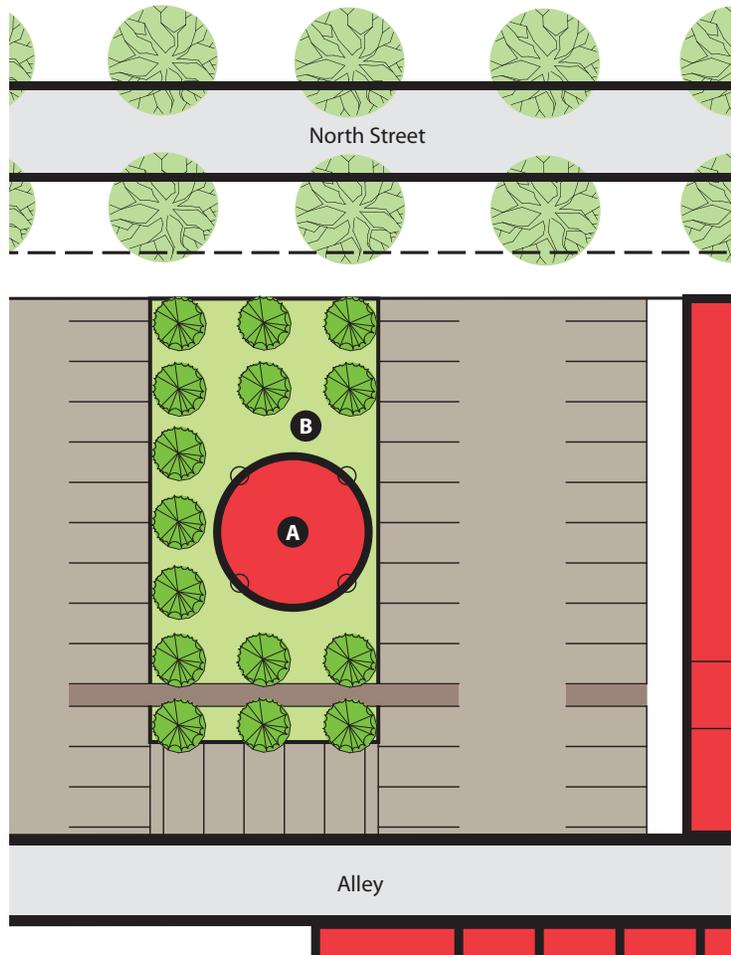
The community should always be looking to create a series of pedestrian walking paths and bike paths to connect the various elements in the community and to further the idea of a well-connected and healthy community.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE



- A** New Cupola on Courthouse roof to match original.
- B** New Facade Lighting of Courthouse
- C** General Landscape Refurbishing
- D** New Perimeter Street Lighting

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – WATER TOWER RESTORATION & WATER TOWER PARK



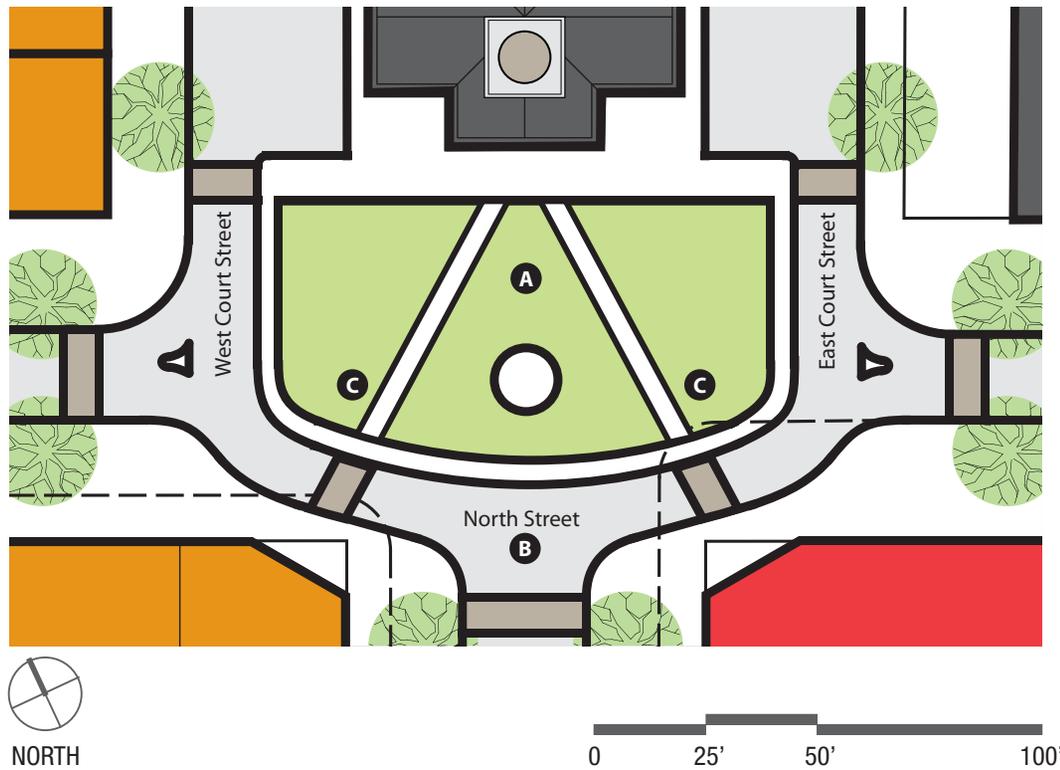
- A** Restore and paint the old Water Tower to serve as a landmark and town beacon. Paint new Mt. Sterling logo on east and west faces of Water Tower.
- B** Develop a new City Park at the base of the old Water Tower. Feature the official Mt. Sterling tree and flower in the new park—offer the opportunity to sponsor the planting, care and maintenance of individual trees and flower beds.



NORTH



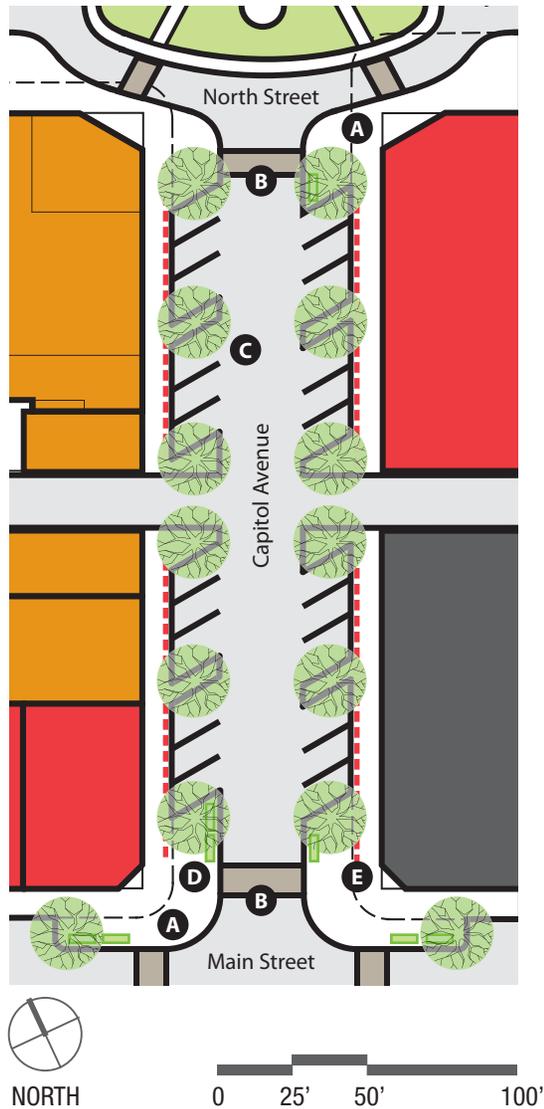
PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – BROWN COUNTY CIVIC PLAZA



- A** New 120' x 70' Civic Plaza restores a Sense of Place to Uptown Mt. Sterling. Plaza to consist of walking paths, plaza areas and landscape; new pedestrian lighting; infrastructure for events; public art and amenities.
- B** Reconfigure North Street to one-way, with vehicles circulating counter-clockwise around the new Civic Plaza.
- C** Provide strong connections to new buildings on Capitol, flanking the view to the County Courthouse.

Develop a public forum for determining the design and programming for the new Civic Plaza.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – CAPITOL AVENUE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS



- A** New sidewalks between South Street and the new Civic Plaza with bump-outs at intersections to create safer, more pedestrian-friendly street crossings.
- B** New textured paving in contrasting color at pedestrian crossings to alert vehicles about the presence of pedestrians.
- C** New street trees as part of the official Mt. Sterling tree and flower program.
- D** New planting beds with low wrought iron fence at intersections and cafe seating areas.
- E** New street and pedestrian lighting.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – MAIN STREET STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS



NORTH



- A** New sidewalks between West Cross Street and the alley east of Capitol Avenue with bump-outs at intersections to create safer, more pedestrian-friendly street crossings.
- B** New textured paving in contrasting color at pedestrian crossings to alert vehicles about the presence of pedestrians.
- C** New textured paving in contrasting color at pedestrian 'safe-zones' adjacent to parallel parking.
- D** Expanded sidewalks for outdoor cafe seating.
- E** New street trees as part of the official Mt. Sterling tree and flower program.
- F** New planting beds with low wrought iron fence at intersections and cafe seating areas.
- G** New street and pedestrian lighting.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS – BIKE & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

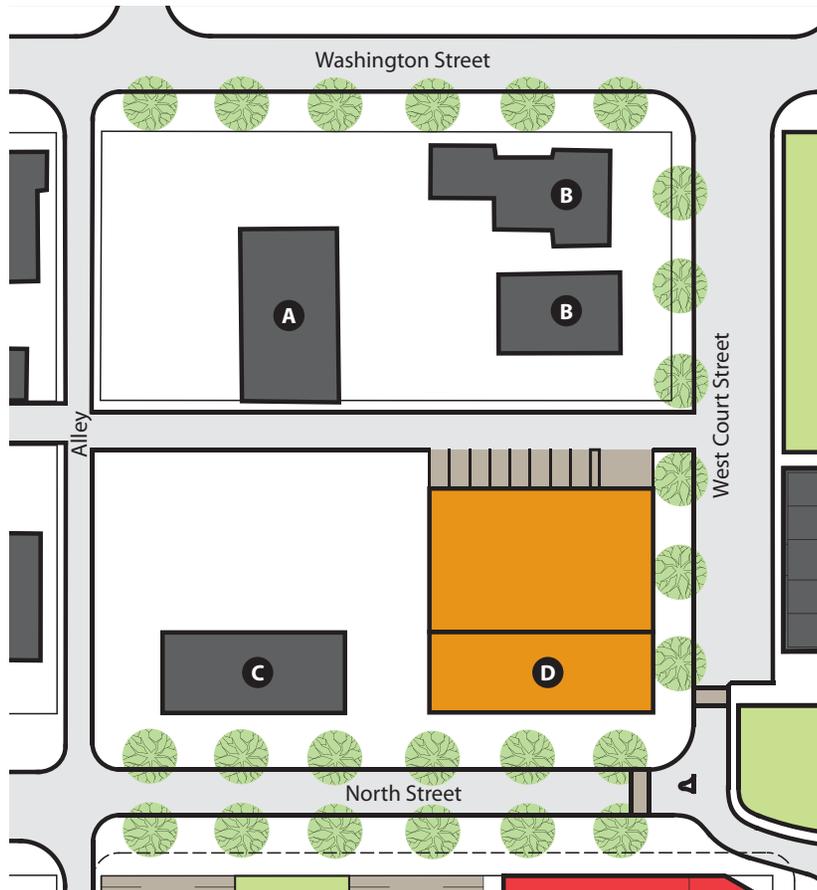
The following pages highlight eight key blocks in the Uptown District that offer a variety of redevelopment opportunities. These blocks contain all of the buildings on the National Historic Register, which serve as the primary character-building elements for the community.

In addition to the existing buildings, there are several open parcels of land that could be developed to fill in gaps in the streetwall.

For each block, we have suggested future potential uses for the buildings, renovation needs, and a conceptual development cost for that block.

The purpose of these block plans is to give the community an initial blueprint for the development of the Uptown District and to be used when discussing potential projects with business owners and / or developers. This will allow all involved in the process to understand the community's desires for this part of Mt. Sterling. It should be realized that this is a "living document" that will evolve over time as projects are completed, new projects are started, new business types are identified, and market forces influence the developments.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 1



Current Zoning: B-1 Business

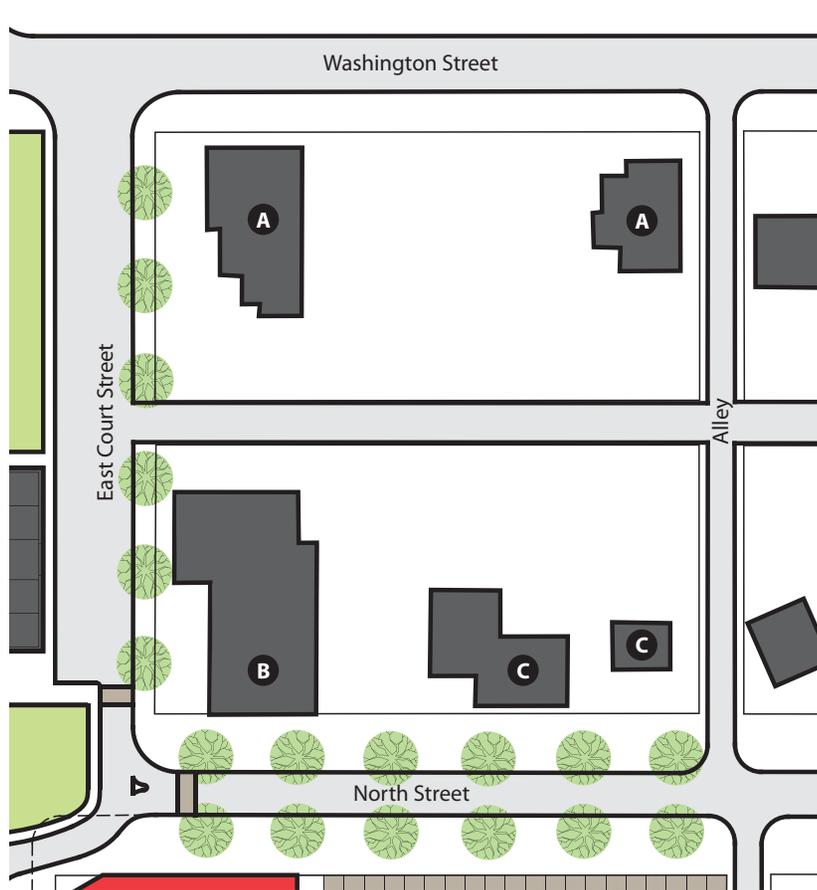
| Current Use | Proposed |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| A Kassing Lumber Storage Building | Rezone to R-2 Residential |
| B Single-Family Residential | Rezone to R-2 Residential |
| C Farm Bureau Offices | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| D Vacant Lot | New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building |
| | First Floor 10,000 S.F. |
| | Second Floor 6,400 S.F. |
| | Third Floor 6,400 S.F. |
| | Total 22,800 S.F. |



NORTH



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 2



| Current Use | Proposed |
|--|---------------------------|
| A Single-Family Residential | Rezone to R-2 Residential |
| B Presbyterian Church of Christ | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| C Single-Family Residential | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |

Current Zoning: R-1 Residential



NORTH



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 3



| Current Use | Proposed |
|--|--|
| A Single-Family Residential | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| B Dixon Auto Body | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| C Mt. Sterling City Hall / Police Station | New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building |
| | First Floor 6,900 S.F. |
| | Second Floor 6,900 S.F. |
| | Total 13,800 S.F. |
| D Brown County Public Library | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use Renovate Existing Library Building for Retail Use |

Current Zoning: B-1 Business



NORTH



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 4



Current Zoning: B-1 Business



| Current Use | Proposed |
|--|--|
| A American Legion | New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building Renovate and expand the existing American Legion building to include a second story along Capitol for Mt. Sterling City Hall, new entrances from Capitol Street and the rear parking lot and a new outside garden and terrace. Entrance to City Hall is located on the first floor facing the new Civic Plaza. 1st Floor - American Legion 11,200 S.F. 2nd Floor - Mt. Sterling City Hall 4,780 S.F. Total 15,980 S.F. |
| B The Golden Comb Salon | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Stabilize building immediately; Renovate for first floor retail and second floor residential use. |
| C Farmers State Bank Bank & Trust | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Replace second floor windows with original size. |
| D Brown County Democrat Message | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate for first floor retail and second floor business use. |
| E Uptowne City Limits Bar & Grill | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate for second floor residential use. Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. Coordinate renovation with adjacent storefronts and second floor windows. Add new Live/Work unit along alley. |
| F Vacant | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Preference for single owner for all parcels. Demolish back portion of east parcel to maintain consistent building depth. Renovate entire building for first floor retail and second floor residential use. Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. Coordinate renovation with adjacent storefronts and second floor windows. Add new Live/Work units along alley. |
| G Vacant | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Demolish back portion of building to 60' depth. |
| H Vacant | Renovate entire building for first floor retail and second floor residential use. Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. Add new Live/Work unit along alley. |
| I Willis Insurance Agency | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove existing storefront canopy and replace with awnings. Renovate storefronts. Paint wall mural on brick facade facing Capitol. |
| J Peggy's Hair Salon | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate entire building for first floor retail and second floor residential use. Replace windows facing Capitol with historically correct shape and size. |
| K Bar & Grill | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate for second floor residential use. Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. |

PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 5



| Current Use | Proposed |
|---|--|
| A State's Attorney Office | New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building New two-story building for Brown County Public Library and John Wood Community College. |
| | 1st Floor - Library 12,800 S.F. |
| | 2nd Floor - John Wood C.C. 10,000 S.F. |
| | 2nd Floor - Expansion 2,800 S.F. |
| | Total 25,600 S.F. |
| B Vacant Lot | New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building New two-story building for Dot Foods Country Store and 200-seat Theatre. |
| | 1st Floor - Dot Country Store 12,400 S.F. |
| | 2nd Floor - Theatre 12,400 S.F. |
| | Total 24,800 S.F. |
| C Arms Unlimited | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Stabilize east wall of building immediately; Renovate for first floor retail and second floor community meeting space and offices. Renovate rear space facing alley as Youth venue. |
| D Bank Parking & Drive-Through Banking | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Build new infill two-story building with first floor retail and second floor residential. Add new Live/Work units off of alley. New infill development is a long-term goal and is dependent on long-term needs of bank for parking and drive-up facility. |
| E Brown County State Bank | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove existing storefront canopy and replace with awnings. Renovate storefronts to reference original. |

Current Zoning: B-1 Business



NORTH



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 6



- Current Use**
- A** Ayerco Gas Station & Convenience Store
 - B** United States Post Office
 - C** Vacant Lot
 - D** St. John's Lutheran Church

Proposed

New B-2 Zoning - Mixed-Use Building
New two-story mixed-use building for first floor retail and second floor residential use. New building should address the corner of West Cross and Main Streets and act as a gateway into the Uptown area.

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1st Floor - Retail | 11,760 S.F. |
| 2nd Floor - Residential | 11,760 S.F. |
| Total | 23,520 S.F. |

Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use.

Rezone to B-2 Residential; Build new two-story townhomes facing West Cross and South Streets.

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| (12) Units at 1,440 S.F. | 17,280 S.F. |
|--------------------------|-------------|

Rezone to B-2 Residential

Current Zoning: B-1 Business and R-1 Residential



NORTH



PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 7



Current Zoning: B-1 Business and R-1 and R-2 Residential



NORTH



| Current Use | Proposed |
|---|---|
| A Farm Mutual Insurance / Apartments | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove existing storefront canopy and replace with awnings. Renovate storefronts. Replace windows facing Main Street and west Alley with historically correct shape and size. |
| B The Guest House | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Replace windows and door facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. |
| C Main Street Barber Shop & Inez Beauty Shop | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate storefronts. Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. |
| D Jasper Oil | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| E Booters | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove inappropriate wood panel exterior siding and renovate storefronts to appropriate scale and proportion. |
| F Vacant | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate facade and storefront. Retail use on street level with apartments or offices on second floor. |
| G Vacant | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Preference for single owner for all parcels. Demolish east parcel (H), but stabilize and maintain Main Street facade in place. Renovate (F) and (G) for Bakery/Restaurant/Catering concept. Develop exterior courtyard behind restored facade of (H) to serve restaurant and adjacent parcel (I). Renovate storefronts and tin facade of (G). Replace windows facing Main Street with historically correct shape and size. |
| H Kidds Stuff | |
| I Under Renovation as mixed-Use | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Property is currently under renovation as Coffee Shop/Cafe. Replace windows facing Main and Capitol Streets with historically correct shape and size. |
| J Jesse R. Gilsdorf, Attorney | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate facade facing Capitol. |
| K Apartments | Retain R-2 Zoning |
| L Single Family Residential | Rezone to R-2 Residential |
| M Deer Ridge Auto Parts | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| N Two Rivers Regional Council Thrift Store | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate storefronts and tin facade. Replace windows facing Capitol with historically correct shape and size. |

PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BLOCK 8



| Current Use | Proposed |
|--|--|
| A New Images Salon / Scrapaholic | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Refurbish storefronts, windows and facade facing Capitol. |
| B Dance Studio | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove inappropriate aluminum panel exterior siding and renovate facade including second story windows to appropriate scale and proportion. |
| C Dr. Cowan, Chiropractic Physician | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Remove inappropriate aluminum exterior siding and renovate storefront. |
| D Leon Urven Insurance / Nancy's Private Practice | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Preference for single owner for both parcels. Remove inappropriate aluminum siding and canopy. Renovate facade facing Main Street. |
| E Jennings Brothers / Carolyn Wright Agency | |
| F April's Creative Floral Design | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Renovate storefront. |
| G Brown County Health Department | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| H Two Rivers Farms, Inc. | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use; Preference for single owner for both parcels. Recreate retail storefronts. Replace windows facing Capitol with historically correct shape and size. |
| I Edward B. Tucker, Attorney | |
| J First United Methodist Church | Rezone to B-2 Mixed-Use |
| K Single Family Residential | Rezone to R-2 Residential |

Current Zoning: B-1 Business and R-1 Residential



NORTH



CIVIC LEADERSHIP / CIVIC PRIDE / CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The third key that will make the plans outlined in this section is going to require a community consensus and a dedicated, long-term effort.

That effort is more than a goal. It is a process which requires ongoing development of leadership into the future and a regeneration of community pride and civic engagement.

The vision...Mt. Sterling will become a community that public and private leadership—and the population as a whole—will cherish and work tirelessly to sustain through multiple initiatives:

- Growing local leadership's capacity to affect change in Brown County
- Developing a "Youth Engagement and Empowerment Initiative"
- Initiating a community-branding campaign focused on raising levels of community pride and engagement
- Improving local coordination, collaboration, and consensus across constituencies and communities in Brown County

The community should embrace the creation of a Mt. Sterling Civic Pride – "Made in Mt. Sterling" Steering Group that will work with the community to achieve the above vision and objectives. It will strive to instill in all residents the need to promote and maintain community pride by continuing to raise the bar and by growing strong neighborhoods in the community.

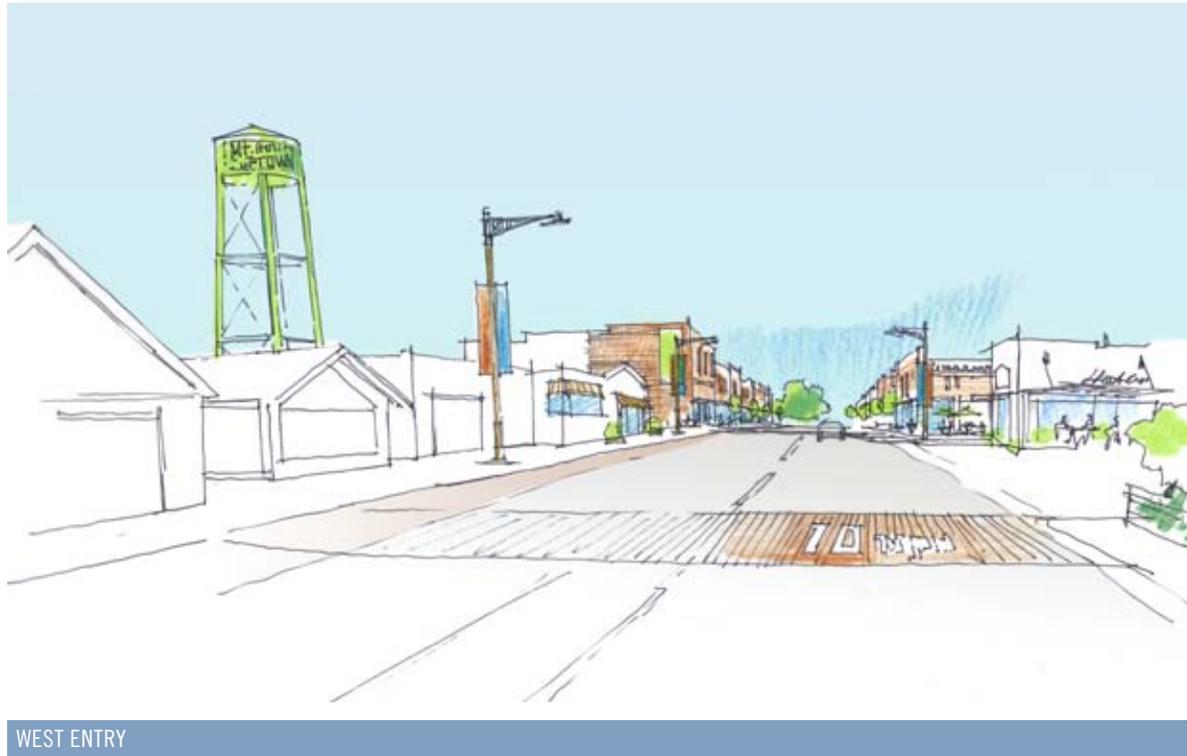
Potential activities this group could consider implementing include the following:

- Conduct a campaign to educate residents about their local environments
- Coordinate fall and spring community clean-up and beautification projects
- Set a policy with the city council to address vacant or dilapidated buildings in the community. Create a community clean-up program with four components—enforcement, housing grants, loan programs, and volunteer efforts.
- Create a "best local yard / garden" contest as part of a spring festival

- Create a "best decorated house" contest as part of a winter festival
- Report to the community as part of the fall festival
- Track and publish community volunteer hours
- Develop a Mt. Sterling Neighborhood Assistance Program

The future success of Mt. Sterling will be based on "partnerships." Relationships between individuals or groups will be characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility, and efforts will be directed toward the achievement of a specified goal.

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



This sketch depicts US 24 approaching Mt. Sterling from the west just past West Cross Street looking east. To the left is the renovated water tower serving as a landmark for the rehabilitated Uptown District. Looking down the street, is the new streetscape and lighting, and crossing the street is a rumble strip indicating to truck drivers that they are entering a pedestrian zone and that the community would appreciate their cooperation in reducing their speed as they pass through Mt. Sterling.

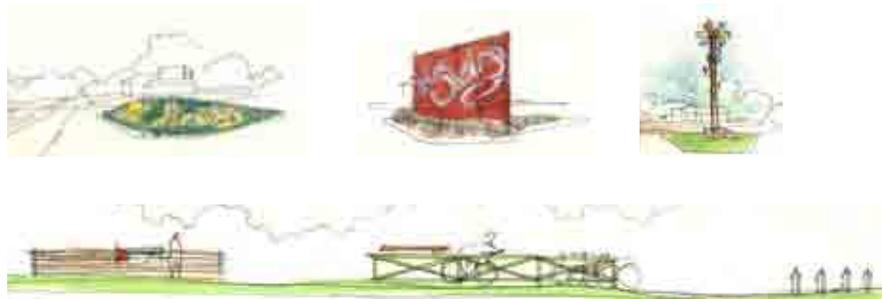
WEST ENTRY

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



CITY ENTRY AT US 24 & IL 99

This sketch shows an aerial view of the intersection at US 24 and IL 99. It reveals how development in this area should be approached in order to reinstate the streetwall, put parking behind the buildings, and create an enhanced streetscape program that connects this area with the Uptown District. In addition to private development, a “welcome element” should be included in this area to warmly greet visitors to the community.



EAST ENTRY

This view follows along East Main Street approaching the Uptown District from the east. It shows new rain gardens along the streets with the new city flower as the focus.

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



VIEW FROM CAPITOL & MAIN LOOKING NORTH

This aerial view looks north on Capitol Avenue from the intersection of Capitol Avenue and Main Street. It shows new streetscape development, a new civic plaza in front of the courthouse, new and / or renovated buildings on either side of the civic square, a renovated water tower, and renovated existing buildings highlighting the city's historical architecture.



CIVIC PLAZA

This sketch offers a view of Brown County Courthouse with the new civic plaza in front, a new two-story building development on the left with a potentially new Brown County Library on the lower level and a branch of John Wood Community College on the upper level. On the opposite side of the street is the American Legion Post shown with a new two-story addition along Capitol Avenue that could potentially house the offices of the Mt. Sterling city government on the second floor.

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



CAPITOL & MAIN INTERSECTION LOOKING EAST

This view of the Capitol Avenue and Main Street intersection looks east showing, the new streetscape—planter beds, light fixtures, banners and bump-outs at intersections with demarcated crosswalks in the pavement.



CAPITOL & MAIN INTERSECTION LOOKING WEST

This view from the intersection at Capitol Avenue and Main Street looks west at buildings along the south side of West Main Street. Buildings are shown restored to reflect their original historical character with new first-floor storefronts and renovated facades. First-floor uses would include a mixture of retail and restaurants, while second floors would contain offices or apartments.

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING

The potential exist to add a new two story addition to the first thirty five feet of the American Legion building. The new addition would allow for second floor office space, an additional income source for the Legion and a new prominent entrance and sign for the Legion along North Capitol. In addition the potential exists to add some additional meeting room space and an outdoor patio space.



MAIN STREET INFILL BUILDING

This rendering shows the potential impact of a new two story building to the east of the Hagel Brothers building. The building would have space for retail on the first floor and meeting/office space on the second floor.

DISTRICT CHARACTER IMAGES



YOUTH CENTER

Located in the rear of the Hagel Brothers building off the alley will be the entrance to the new Mt. Sterling youth center. This will be a place where the youth of Mt. Sterling can call their own and potentially offer opportunities for the youth to learn entrepreneurial skills in a relaxed and fun atmosphere.



DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN GUIDELINES – OVERVIEW

Introduction

These guidelines are intended to foster development of Mt. Sterling and in particular the Uptown District in an efficient and vibrant way. They are designed to create a spirit of cooperation between all parties providing creative ways in which change can occur, while maintaining respect for the history of the community.

By following these guidelines, living streets will be created that respect history, and celebrate vitality and new technology. These guidelines are designed to be easy to use, specific in their goals, and broad in their application. Adhering to these guidelines will streamline and facilitate the review of projects within the designated development zones.

Established development and design guidelines have proven to be a critical economic development tool in the revitalization of mainstreet projects as well as in the promotion and preservation of historic neighborhood commercial areas. They have encouraged reinvestment by ensuring that individual improvements collectively reinforce and enhance the street's character and pedestrian nature.

When uniformly applied, guidelines can spur investment by providing a measure of assurance that one's investment will not be devalued by an inappropriate, low-quality development nearby. Guidelines also ensure that new development

appropriately contributes to the overall character and economic vitality of the street.

When accompanied by a review process, guidelines provide the review body with a framework for the objective evaluation of development proposals. By following guidelines, property owners and developers can design projects in accordance with the community's expected level of quality and visions for future development.

Organization

The Guidelines are organized into three sections: Planning and Urban Design; Architecture and Built Environment; and Signage and Environmental Graphics. Each section is further subdivided into major categories or features falling within the major heading. Photographs and illustrations of appropriate (and inappropriate) examples accompany each section to reinforce the narrative descriptions.

Importance of Historic Preservation

An historic district is a group of resources (buildings, structures, objects or sites) possessing historical and architectural significance. The majority of Mt. Sterling's Uptown District is a federally designated National Register Historic District. The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the

National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

There are 80,000 listings on the National Register. These listings are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits
- Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Uptown District Character

The Uptown District has an intact street facade line that has retained the scale of Mt. Sterling's historic commercial character. Mt. Sterling retains a sense of community place, of town center rather than commercial strip. However, individual properties and storefronts have been neglected, and the retail area is unattractive and uninviting. Updating or maintaining properties in a manner consistent with the prosperity of the area is necessary so that Mt. Sterling can fulfill its potential.

Uptown Mt. Sterling can once again be a community-oriented, energetic and walkable town center. Restored and well-maintained historic buildings, along with sensitive new development that enhances the historic scale and varied architecture of the Uptown District will create an eclectic, charming and vibrant retail experience.

This list of terms describes the desired character for the District:

- Revitalized
- Intimate
- Walkable
- Eclectic
- Charming
- Energetic
- Current
- Vibrant
- Community-oriented
- Personal
- Pride
- Beautiful



DO: Interesting storefront displays, good signage and street connections such as sidewalk cafés or restaurants help create pedestrian-focused shopping streets.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Historical Context

Building owners, store owners, and developers should become familiar with the history, historical context, and the existing structures adjacent to their properties. It is one of the goals of these guidelines to create an identifiable character throughout the District; projects should respect the context of the existing area and maintain the historic nature of Mt. Sterling. Enhancing the historical nature of the built environment will help to create a unique atmosphere for retail to thrive.

Materials and Color

The historical materials of the District are brick, stone, wood, tin, cast iron and glass. There is a variety of natural color provided by these materials, and a rich palette of historical paint colors to draw from which complements the range of material.

Existing materials should be matched to the fullest extent possible in renovations. New construction projects should utilize materials, proportions and scale appropriate to the historical nature of the District and adjoining properties.

Colors used in renovations and new construction in the District should be appropriate to the historical and existing palette of materials and colors. Historical colors should be reproduced where evidence of the original color exists. Where there is no information, colors should be complementary to the building materials.



DO: *Appropriate colors complement the materials of the building.*



PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Commercial Streetwalls & Setbacks

The character and integrity of Mt. Sterling's Uptown District is directly related to the relationship of the buildings to the street and to each other. The core of the Uptown District is comprised of buildings which were built at the property line, adjacent to and abutting the sidewalk. Buildings were also constructed the full width of their lot, adjacent to and abutting each other, creating a continuous streetwall that lines both sides of Main and Capitol, establishing a unique pedestrian scale and feel to the streetscape.

The streetwall is vitally important to maintain, reinforce, and preserve since it establishes a safe, intuitive, and comfortable pedestrian walking experience. The continuity and rich variety of building storefronts, side-by-side, provides a visually interesting and stimulating environment that is conducive to strolling and shopping.

Alternative development patterns such as those which set buildings back from the sidewalk with parking lots facing the street, common in suburban settings, compromise the integrity of the streetwall and interrupt the shopping experience while also creating an unsafe and unnecessary intrusion of vehicles crossing over the pedestrian sidewalk.

All buildings fronting on Main and Capitol Streets should be constructed on the property line, abutting the sidewalk and should span the full width of the lot.



The Northwest corner of Main & Capitol is a good example of a well-preserved streetwall that should be maintained and preserved.



The continuous streetwall with storefronts side-by-side is apparent in this successful example of a retail streetscape.



The gap in the streetwall is apparent on the east side of Capitol approaching the County Courthouse.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Building Heights

The Mt. Sterling Uptown District was constructed predominately of two-story buildings with varying cornice heights, creating a streetwall with variety and interest. It is the consistent scale established by the relative building heights, along with the buildings relationship to the sidewalk, that defines a cohesive urban pattern lending the Uptown District a unique sense of place.

It is important to protect and maintain the integrity of Uptown by establishing minimum and maximum building heights that are in harmony with the existing scale and character of the street.

All new building construction on Main and Capitol Streets should be two stories in height and within a height range determined by averaging the heights of adjacent buildings within the same block.

Entrances

The traditional location of building entrances facing the street encourages a vibrant street life by focusing the pedestrian shopping experience along Main and Capitol Streets.

All primary retail entrances should be located facing Main or Capitol, preserving the continuous street retail experience. Supplemental entrances and building exits may be located on the alley.



The relative consistency of building height contributes to a cohesive streetscape and retail district.



All primary retail entrances should face Main or Capitol Streets, creating an inviting and continuous retail experience.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Landscaping & Screening

The Uptown District is fortunate to have a fairly intact streetwall that is conducive to a continuous shopping experience. However, within any shopping district there may be undesirable views that detract from the overall experience, such as parking lots that abut the sidewalk, trash collection and service areas or ground- or roof-mounted equipment. It is important to soften or mitigate those views as much as possible to emphasize and focus the experience on the character-giving elements of the District.

A few locations exist along Main and Capitol Streets where parking lots have been introduced adjacent to the sidewalk. These lots interrupt the streetwall, compromise the pedestrian experience, and detract from the overall character of the District. The ideal solution would be to introduce new infill retail development in their place, though landscaping and screening of parking and service areas adjacent to the street will help to soften their impact on the shopping environment and re-establish the streetwall.

All parking lots fronting on Main and Capitol Streets should incorporate a landscape buffer along the sidewalk with a minimum depth of six (6) feet to soften the edge of the parking area.

Wrought iron fences or low brick screen walls are encouraged along the back side of the landscaped area to further enhance the streetscape.



Example of screen element at parking area that also maintains building street edge.



Example of an artist-inspired decorative screen that could be used for shielding parking lots.



Example of a screen element with planting that could be used at parking area between buildings.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Sidewalk Café & Outdoor Merchandising Zones

Sidewalk cafés and outdoor merchandising are two of the most important ingredients for a healthy retail district. By bringing shopping and dining onto the street, the street itself becomes a destination.

The city should establish a permit policy for sidewalk cafés and outdoor merchandising.

Define cafés through planters. Table umbrellas shall be no larger than six feet in diameter and may not interfere with street trees. Lighting, such as Tivoli lights or tiki torches, and outdoor heaters may be used as long as there is no danger of contact with umbrellas, trees or other flammables. If the merchandising zone is used, simple folding tables draped in fabric shall be used to facilitate outdoor merchandising, and may be constructed of metal or wood. Limit depth of merchandising zone to two feet.



Example of a well-executed outdoor café.



Example of innovative outdoor merchandising at storefront windows.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

Surface Parking Lots

While the desire is to create a shopping environment that is focused on pedestrians, clearly the success of the Uptown District depends on accommodating those who arrive by car. This means that it is very important to provide safe and convenient parking in close proximity to the District. Main and Capitol Streets both have on-street parking which will serve local residents well during most of the week; however, at peak times there is a need for additional parking to accommodate those arriving from the surrounding area.

Supplemental off-street, surface parking lots are necessary to accommodate increased retail activity on weekends, evenings and holidays and should be strategically located to offer convenience while not compromising the overall character of the District.

Two parking lots are proposed as part of the redevelopment blueprint, both located along North Street, one midway between West Cross St. and Capitol, and the other midway between East Cross St. and Capitol. These lots should be sufficient, along with other available on- and off-street parking, to meet the needs of the District.

Parking lots are not to be located adjacent to the sidewalks along Main and Capitol Streets.

Parking should be free to shoppers within the District.



Example of planting to screen surface parking lot.



Example of using low brick wall and plantings to screen a surface parking lot.

STREET FURNITURE

Metal Benches & Trash Receptacles

The public spaces in Uptown Mt. Sterling are as important to the success of the District as the retail stores. Street furniture such as trash receptacles, benches, bike racks, and planters offer a level of amenity and convenience that can enhance the overall shopping experience.

A consistent vocabulary of street furniture lends a sense of place to the District while sending the message that the shopper's needs have been accommodated. All street furniture in the public realm should be selected from the adjacent examples.



STREET FURNITURE

Specialty Benches



STREET FURNITURE

Planters



STREET FURNITURE

Bike Racks & Sidewalk Fence



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Building & Facade Design

There are several vacant lots in the northeast quadrant of the District, as well as surface parking areas that may precipitate the proposal of new building construction.

New buildings with contemporary uses may require larger floor plates with different floor-to-floor heights than the existing buildings; however, all new construction should reinforce and enhance the unique qualities of the Uptown District that are defined by the original historic buildings.

The siting, orientation, scale, proportion, and details of new buildings should respect the existing historic context — the streetwall, the engaging storefronts, and the use of authentic materials and expression — while clearly establishing themselves as contemporary structures of their own time.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

New Building Construction

Storefronts

Storefronts in new buildings and construction should respect the scale and context of the existing buildings in the Mt. Sterling Uptown District. New building storefronts should reflect the scale and facade proportions of adjacent buildings on either side of the development property. Storefront retail and public commercial use, such as restaurants, should be maintained throughout the street level of new buildings.

Typology

First-floor retail in new buildings should use the materials, scale, and proportion of existing storefront types as a guide; commercial uses with large, clear glass display windows are the historical standard in the District. It is acceptable for new stores to be wider than typical historic retail bays in the District (generally 35') but storefronts should be broken up by vertical building elements (such as piers, columns, etc.) at the typical retail bay dimension where appropriate, and in no case should the breaks occur less frequently than twice the typical bay width.

Retail Identity

New developments that incorporate multiple stores should create varied storefronts for each store; a single, consistent storefront system is inappropriate for large building developments. Retail tenants should create an individual storefront that addresses the identity and specific merchandising and display needs of the store. Developers creating new retail space without specific tenant agreements should install temporary partitions or board-ups that provide a graphic identity for the project, rather than building standard storefront systems without tenant input.



DO: Larger building facades are broken up to reinforce the historic scale of the neighborhood.



DO: New construction uses materials, scale, and proportion of existing buildings.



DO: Appropriately scaled storefront bays maintain the rhythm of the historic street.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Materials & Design

Do not attempt to invent or recreate a historic building or storefront. Modern buildings and storefronts using the scale, proportions, and materials of the District are appropriate. Use masonry, steel, glass, terra-cotta, stone, cast stone, and tile for new storefront facades. Use brick and stone masonry of a shape, color, and texture as found within the District. White or tan brick, painted brick, T-111 or similar plywood siding, and E.I.F.S. are not appropriate materials in the District. Oversized brick or concrete block are not appropriate materials in the District.

Color

The appropriate use of material and paint colors can assist in unifying a building facade and focusing attention on the retail storefront. Inappropriate color schemes detract from the overall quality of the streetscape.

A simple strategy is best, generally with the use of no more than three (3) colors; one color for the base of the building (in many cases, the brick), one for major trim and storefronts, and one for minor trim.

Neighborhood

Develop buildings with storefronts that interact with the street. Recommended features include operable windows, planted window boxes, retail and restaurants that open onto the street, and storefront windows that offer maximum transparency.



The simplicity of the paint scheme on this cast iron storefront allows the retail windows to feature merchandise while still showcasing the historic detail of the columns and cornice.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T use a single, continuous storefront system across the entire facade of a new building.

DON'T use inappropriate materials such as EIFS, plywood siding, or painted brick.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Additions & Infill Construction

Due to the density of the Uptown District, new construction may be proposed in the form of additions to existing buildings or as infill construction between existing buildings.

It is important to the integrity of the Uptown District that any additions or infill construction are sensitive to the existing historic context, including materials, scale, proportion, and details. Successful additions and infill construction preserve and enhance the sense of place.

Additions and Infill construction should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, including the following:

"New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment."

New construction should strive to be contemporary in expression while respecting the scale, proportions, and detail of the surrounding historic context.

No historic features, materials, or details should be obscured, altered, or destroyed by additions or infill construction.



This contemporary development is a good example of contextual, yet modern design that blends with its historic context.



This contemporary infill building on the left respects its historic surroundings without copying them.



This contemporary infill building respects the line, the scale, and the proportion of its historic neighbors while clearly making a modern statement.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Existing Buildings

In order to enhance the historic character of the District, existing original or historic buildings and / or features should be preserved and repaired whenever possible.

- When designing a storefront, maintain the architectural integrity of the existing facade.
- Piers, cornices, or columns that have been re clad or covered with inappropriate material should be returned to their original material where possible.
- Preserve existing decorative ornament and cornices. Repair damaged areas to match existing adjacent surfaces. Remove any cladding obstructing existing cornices.
- Limit storefront design to the bays between building columns and other solid features.
- Transom heights and transom bars should be located at the same height at each bay of the building.
- Storefront materials, dimensions, and attachments (e.g., awnings) should be consistent for multiple bays of one building.
- Returning a storefront to its original character is the standard; existing original storefronts should be retained whenever possible. Preserving a previous storefront renovation which has gained architectural significance in its own right provides continuity of the building's history.



DO: Renovated storefront shows appropriate sill, full-height display windows, decorative sign band, and lighting.



DO: Intact historic buildings show typical building and storefront elements.



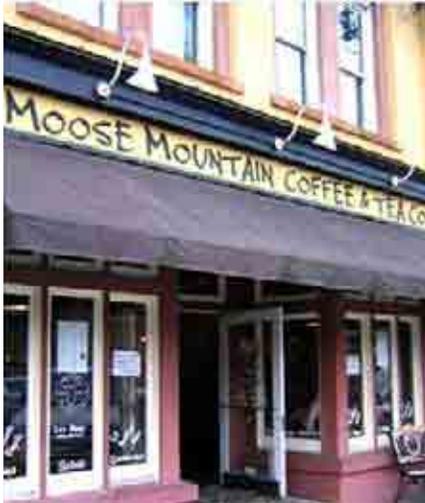
DO: Restored storefront maintains transom windows and large storefront glass area.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Evaluating Existing Renovations

Renovations should respect the history of Mt. Sterling, while recognizing the need for retail design to be current and appropriate to the time. Renovations can build on the existing historic building fabric of the District by being sensitive to the level of craftsmanship, the scale of historic features, and the context provided by adjacent buildings. Existing quality renovations that are historically significant on their own and that reference different eras in the life

of the building should be maintained as contributing to the history of the District. Renovations of poor quality, using inappropriate materials that conceal or otherwise obscure historic building elements, or that are not sympathetic to the scale and proportion of the original building, should be removed or reworked in order to regain the historic character of the building.



DO: *Appropriate sign location, lighting and awning location.*



DO: *Signage is appropriately located at sign band (although each store should only have one main sign), storefronts create large areas of glass, and transoms have been restored to fill storefront bays.*



DO: *Storefronts and transom windows are restored consistently across bays; appropriate blade sign locations.*

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Inappropriate Modifications

Remove items obstructing architectural features such as added piers, cornices, and spandrels. Remove associated adhesives and mechanical fasteners. Remove inappropriate materials from the transom and sill areas of storefronts. False brick and stone, corrugated metal, stucco infill, wood or vinyl siding, plywood and similar materials should be removed.

Remove wrought iron security gates where not integral with the storefront design. Where possible remove stucco when it has been installed over existing decorative piers, cornices, or ornament. If not possible, paint to match adjacent materials. Treat each storefront bay in a similar manner, so transom bars and sill levels align from bay to bay.

DON'T infill storefront bays with solid materials such as paneling, siding, or masonry

DON'T use residential-type materials (doors, windows, decking, lighting) when repairing, replacing or developing new buildings; only commercial-grade materials are allowed.

DON'T obstruct architectural ornament or building features with signage or non-original materials.

DON'T remove architectural features such as piers, cornices or mouldings from the building facade.



DON'T: *Improper removal of historic elements and replacement infill of storefronts result in loss of historic character.*



DON'T: *Inappropriate sign bands covering historic elements; Box signage covering transom windows; Improperly placed awning at second-story windows.*



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Historic Renovation & Tax Credits

Federal tax credits may be available for historic renovation. Contact the National Park Service (www.cr.nps.gov/buildings.htm) for further information. Do not proceed with any work before obtaining the approval of the appropriate tax credit review authority, where federal historic tax credits are sought. These guidelines may conflict with the requirements for historic tax credits.

- DO** Research original building designs to determine original design intent.
- DO** Remove inappropriate materials and replace with original materials to recapture the integrity of historic buildings which have been inappropriately modified over time.



BEFORE: Existing transoms are covered with paneling; Left storefront bay is infilled with siding; Awning does not fill bay; Storefront glass is divided inappropriately with mullions; Historic roofing material was removed and replaced with asphalt shingles.



AFTER: Paneling has been removed; Awnings span entire storefront bay; Storefront glazing fills bays in large panels; Historic roofing has been restored.



BEFORE: Existing transoms and projecting windows are covered with siding; Storefronts are inappropriate aluminum; Storm windows and door are inappropriate; Historic detail has been removed.



AFTER: Siding has been removed; Transoms are restored to original glazing pattern; Storefronts are appropriate wood construction; Trim and panel details have been restored at facade.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Storefront Design

Goals

The unique character of the Uptown District is largely due to the care and attention to detail in the design of the original historic buildings lining Main and Capitol streets. It is essential to the success of the District to maintain and protect the existing historic buildings while allowing new development to expand and enhance the District.

Successful storefronts are particularly important in creating a positive and memorable shopping experience.

The goal of the storefront guidelines is to create well-designed, dynamic, and upscale storefronts throughout the Uptown District, to enhance the historic character of the District, and define the area as an attractive destination for shopping, entertainment and socializing.

Rationale

- Dynamic and inviting storefronts attract clientele and establish the unique identity of the space.
- Creating transparency at the storefront in conjunction with well-designed and maintained merchandising make the quality and offerings of the retail establishment apparent to shoppers and pedestrians.
- Quality signage and detailing of storefront construction contribute to the perception of high quality retail goods and services.
- Consistent lighting will make the District comfortable for all age groups. Keeping display windows and buildings lighted after regular hours allows pedestrians to window shop and explore the District in comfort and safety.
- Appropriate storefront design should enliven restaurant and café storefronts with activity at the window. Visible activities, dining, conversation and visual connection of spaces with the sidewalk will promote and enhance the shopping experience along the street.



DO: Proper display and transparent storefront, signage lighting, seasonal decorations and lights.



DO: Consistent sign band and large display windows are preferred.



DO: French doors make a connection with the street; pots and plants provide interest and a buffer for pedestrians.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Composition

Transom – The transom consists of transom windows and a transom bar. This area may contain signage, infill panel(s), or be covered by awnings.

Display Window – The display window should provide maximum transparency; tinted or mirrored glass is not allowed.

Sill – The sill inside can be configured as a shelf or cabinet for merchandise display. A shelf is not necessary at restaurant locations. The sill should be a maximum of two (2) feet tall.

Sign Band – the sign band can be a panel with decorative moulding above the transom, a panel constructed with the same material as the storefront, or a decorative inset in the building facade above the storefront. Lighting for signage is usually installed directly above the sign band and below any second-story window; sometimes the lighting is mounted on the sign band below the sign.



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Storefront Types

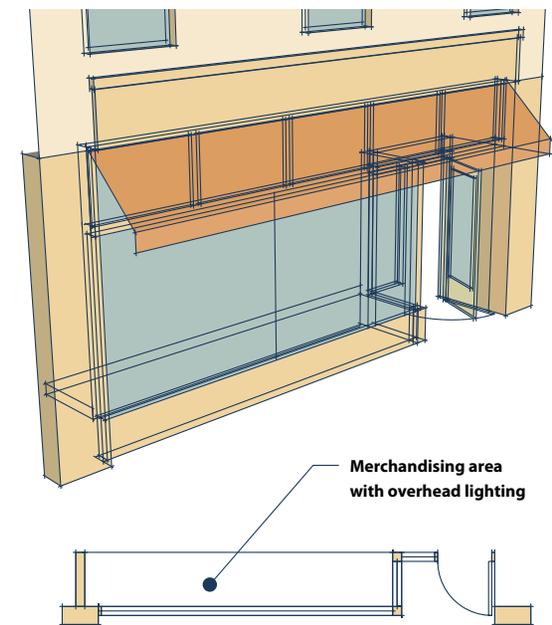
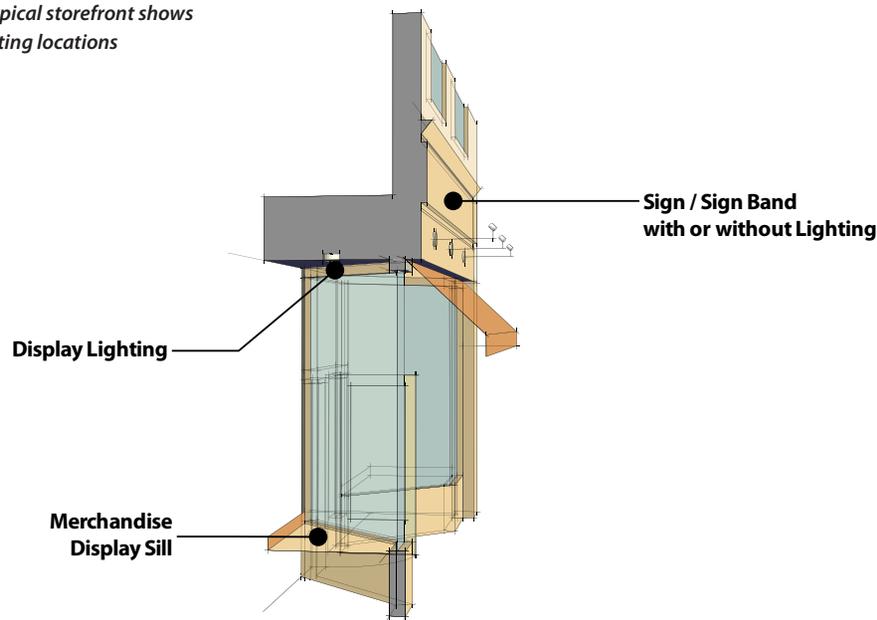
These storefront descriptions represent the storefront configurations that are appropriate to the existing buildings and the character of the Mt. Sterling Uptown Historic District. Original historic storefronts should be retained and restored. Many of the original glass transom areas of the storefronts in the District have been covered with inappropriate materials such as vertical siding, plywood, or other panels. These coverings should be removed; the transom should be glazed and can be a location for appropriate signage.

Awnings should be located at the transom as indicated in each Storefront Type. The sill height is roughly at the knees, and should be no higher than 24 inches from the sidewalk. Glass lites in the storefront should be as large as possible; added mullions and small windows are not appropriate. Doors should be recessed from the face of the storefront at least 30", but not more than 4'. The first 4-5' of the store interior from the storefront window should be considered the merchandising area. This area should have a display sill and adjustable lighting.

Storefront Type A

This storefront presents a large display window with the entry door to one side, recessed from the face of the building. The glazed transom is divided into smaller, regularly spaced windows and runs across the storefront bay.

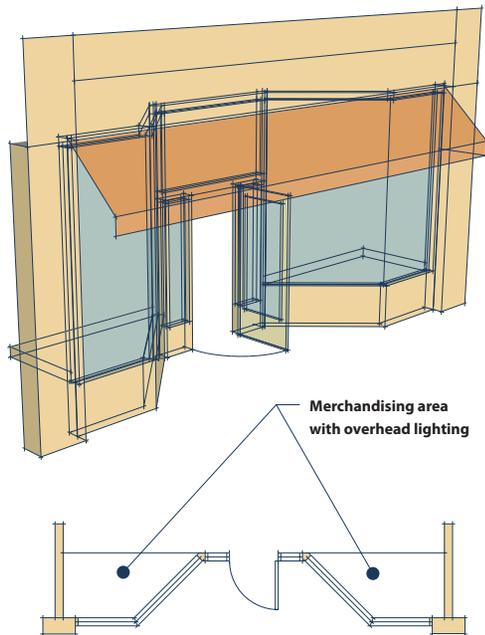
A section through a typical storefront shows merchandise and lighting locations



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

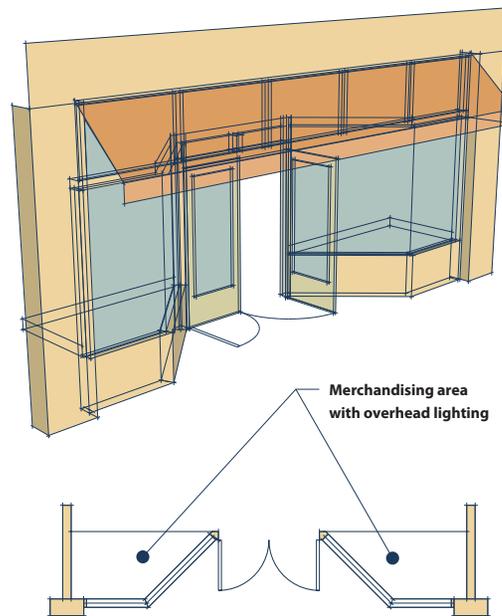
Storefront Type B

The center entry provides two merchandising sills at the angled display windows to each side of the recessed entry door(s). A sign band sits above the storefront at the face of the building. Signage should be located at the sign band above the storefront.



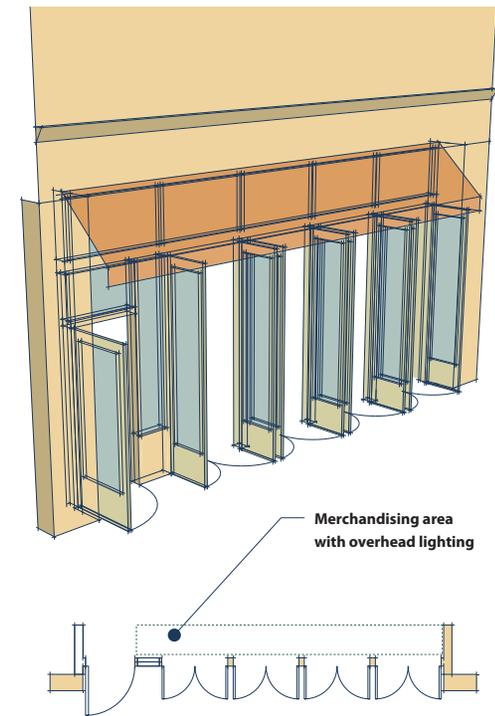
Storefront Type C

Another center entry storefront with two smaller display windows flanking the recessed doorway. The transom windows run across the face of the building to unify the storefront bay. Transom windows are often decorative glass divided into smaller window units. Signage should be located at the transom bar, or on the display window glass, to avoid obscuring decorative details.



Storefront Type D

This storefront is composed entirely of French doors. A narrow band of transom windows serves as a unifying element between the French doors and the main entrance. Doors and frames should be wood or metal. Operable windows and doors are perfect for restaurants or cafés and bring activity to the street. An awning provides shade, and should be used for signage.



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Display & Storefront Windows

Inviting and energetic storefronts help to establish the character of the neighborhood, and attract the interest of shoppers.

- The merchandising area should be distinct and lighted specifically to highlight retail goods in the display window.
- Storefront display windows should be clear glass and as large as possible for the expanse of window.
- Display windows should extend the entire width of the storefront bay wherever possible (with the exception of the entry door).
- Sills or support walls at the bottom of display windows should be approximately 8-18" high, and generally no higher than 24".
- Solid materials (brick, stone, siding or paneling) and unit windows that partially infill storefront bays should be removed, and full-width glass storefronts installed.
- If storefront display windows are to have mullions, the mullion spacing should match the proportions and spacing of existing building elements as appropriate.
- Window treatments (e.g., shades, blinds or curtains) are not allowed in storefront windows, unless these are primarily decorative and do not obscure interior views.
- The sill or display shelf of a storefront should be constructed of high-quality durable materials. The surface should be wood, tile, or similar hard surface. Carpet is not appropriate in the storefront.
- Merchandise, objects, and displays in the storefront display window should be wares or objects available in the store, or related to the use of the storefront.



DO: Large panes of transparent glass allow views into the store.



DO: The storefront sill allows interesting merchandising displays (left and above).



DO: Lighting and people at the storefront window make cafés or restaurants more inviting.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Display & Storefront Windows (cont.)

- Window displays and merchandise should be changed or updated frequently.
- Business uses in storefronts should create displays that relate to services rendered. It is inappropriate for the backs of desks or equipment to face the display window.
- See Merchandising section for additional information.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T use solid materials such as brick, cladding, paneling and siding, or window units in a storefront.

DON'T use window treatments in the storefront window.

DON'T install intermediate mullions in storefront windows.

DON'T cover transom windows or block portions of the storefront windows with signage, paneling or other infill materials.

DON'T install air-conditioning units in any part of the storefront bay.



DON'T: Blinds, signage covering the transom, and a transom-mounted air conditioner are all inappropriate.



DON'T: Inappropriate covering of transom; Temporary signage used at top of display window.



DON'T: Covering of transom, temporary banner used as signage, and multiple signs in the display window create a cluttered and poorly designed storefront.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Merchandising Zone

Merchandising and storefront display materials should reflect the energy of the District, and should be designed with an emphasis on transparency and display of merchandise. The first 4-5' of the store from the storefront window should be considered the merchandising area. This area should have a display sill and adjustable lighting.

- The ceiling of the merchandise area should maintain the original height at the transom and be made of plaster or drywall; dropped ceilings should not be used in this area. Transitions to a lower ceiling height should be unobtrusive.

- Storefront displays should be clean, current, colorful, and attract the pedestrian's attention. Displays should be updated or changed frequently. Displays should incorporate merchandise in a creative manner.
- Seasonal and Holiday decorations accentuate a storefront. Use fresh decorations such as real pine swags or plantings that are seasonally themed with color.
- Solid walls or built structures behind the storefront that create enclosed display windows are not allowed.
- Storefront displays should be constructed of high-quality, durable, and interesting materials.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T use solid materials or walls behind the storefront window; views into the store should not be obscured.

DON'T use carpet, plastic shelving, slatwall or other solid fixtures in the merchandizing zone.

DON'T obstruct views into the store.

DON'T use dropped or acoustic tile ceilings in the merchandise zone.



DO: Simple graphics and clean, appropriately scaled displays keep windows transparent.



DO: Well-lighted and fresh merchandise invites customers. Cluttered signs and posters should be removed from glass.



DO: Large scale displays are eye-catching; Preserve views into store.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Awnings & Canopies

Awnings and canopies offer shelter from the elements, serve as a colorful complement to the building, help to identify locations of storefronts and public and private entries, and provide locations for signage and graphics.

Awnings are fixed or retractable projections from the storefront bay that protect from sunlight and weather. When awnings are not necessary for these protections (e.g., when a storefront faces north and does not receive direct sunlight), they are discouraged.

Canopies are permanent architectural features of a building that are only located at building entries.

Awnings

- Locate awnings in each retail bay and use consistent design (profile, color, dimensions) for all awnings at a single building. Awnings should fit the opening of each single bay fully, and the base of the awning should align with the bottom of the transom bar and provide a minimum clearance of 8'-0". Awnings should project a minimum of 3' and a maximum of 5' from the building face.
- Awnings should not obscure architectural ornament.
- Awnings should have open sides (no side panels)
- Awnings constructed of canvas should have a diagonal shape (unless the openings are other than rectangular). Canvas awnings can be fixed or retractable.
- Awnings constructed of metal should be flat panels and have a diagonal shape and similar section to canvas awnings. Standing seam, corrugated or other roofing products, or enclosed structures with soffits are not allowed. Metal awnings are fixed.
- Striped awnings should have a minimum stripe width of six inches, and have only two colors.



DO: *Appropriate signage at awning, sign band used for main store sign, signage and display in windows maintains transparency.*



DO: *Appropriate use of signage on awnings. Awnings fit within the storefront bay.*



DO: *Appropriate signage at awning, signage and display in windows maintains transparency.*

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Canopies

- Canopies are permanent constructions made of materials appropriate to the building construction, such as stone, metal, wood, or glass.
- Canopies identify and occur at the major entrance to a building. The entrance canopy should fit the opening of the entrance, be appropriate to the scale of the building, and should not obscure architectural ornament or have any support located on the sidewalk. Incorporate careful, simply designed details on canopies.
- See Signage section for location of signage, graphics, emblems, and store names on awnings or canopies.



DO: Canopies emphasize the building entry and reinforce the architectural style of the building.

Inappropriate Actions

- DON'T** use curved or internally illuminated awnings or canopies.
- DON'T** cover up architectural ornament or building features.
- DON'T** project awnings more than 3' from the face of the building.
- DON'T** use awnings at building entries; they should only appear across the storefront bay.
- DON'T** use awnings above the street level.
- DON'T** install canopies at retail or commercial bays.
- DON'T** install canopies where none existed before.
- DON'T** use plastic or vinyl for canopies.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Maintenance

Clean, well-maintained storefronts are critical to the shopper's perception of value, safety, and comfort.

- Canvas awnings should be thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis to prevent buildup of dirt and other contaminants.
- Replace canvas awnings when they become faded or torn. Paint metal and wood canopies as required.
- Signage for existing retail and restaurant venues must be maintained. All lights on an illuminated sign must be in working order.
- Fix faded or broken items on non-illuminated signs or building-mounted lighting.
- Storefront glass and glazing should be cleaned, inside and out, on a regular basis.
- Wood trim and detailing at the storefront should be

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T allow trash or dirt to build up at the sidewalk or storefront windows or sill.

DON'T keep faded or ripped awnings or banners up.

DON'T allow paint or other finishes on the storefront to degrade or fail.

DON'T allow broken signs, light bulbs, fixtures or other decorations to remain without repair.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Architectural Details

Existing decorative ornament and cornices should be preserved throughout the District.

- Remove any added cladding, siding or panels obstructing existing cornices or decorative brick or stone work. Repair damaged areas to match existing adjacent surfaces.
- The scale of details (for example cornices, banding, or parapets) and features (for example windows, storefront bays, or entry doors) should be similar to adjacent properties in order to create a consistent character.
- New building materials should be appropriate to existing context. Brick, stone, decorative wood trim, and mouldings are appropriate.
- New buildings should not attempt to copy historic details, or make a new building look historic. The scale and alignment of details such as cornices, windows, and bays should be consistent with the scale of existing adjacent buildings.



DO: New storefront with appropriate transom proportions.



DO: New construction using traditional proportions, materials and features.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T copy historic details or ornament when developing new buildings.

DON'T use EIFS, siding, vinyl or other inappropriate materials when renovating existing buildings, or when developing new buildings.

DON'T cover up existing details, transom windows, storefronts, doors or other features.



ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Doors

The entry to a store should be special, inviting, and clearly marked. Entry doors to second floor spaces should be distinguished from the display windows and store entries.

- Doors may be wood or metal frame as appropriate for the building and storefront materials, but entry doors should be mostly glass to allow views into the store and to create comfortable, safe entry and exit for customers.

- Doors should not have window treatments such as shades or curtains, unless these are primarily decorative and do not obscure interior views.
- Doors should not be cluttered with signage. Store name, address, and regular hours of operation should appear on the glass of the door. Individual letters are most appropriate and maintain visibility through the glass.
- Products and advertisements should not be posted in the glazing of doors. See the Signage section for more information.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T clutter the glass at doors with signage, permanent or temporary.

DON'T use window-treatments in doors unless they are primarily decorative and do not block views into the glass.

DON'T install security shutters or gates at doors or storefront windows.



DO: Pairs of French doors are used to connect the store with the street and support display of merchandise.



DO: Historic doors enhance the storefront and can become a focal point.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Windows

Windows in the upper stories of the original historic buildings on Main and Capitol, together with storefronts, establish a balance of openness to building mass that creates an overall sense of harmony.

Upper-story windows also provide a sense of rhythm and scale that contributes to the overall success of the streetwall. It is important to maintain the scale and proportion of the original historic windows in order to preserve a cohesive streetscape.

Original upper story windows should be preserved, reconstructed, and / or restored where possible.

Replacement windows should meet U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for historic buildings.

Upper-story window openings should never be infilled with new materials or smaller windows.

New buildings should include upper-story windows of a scale, proportion, and rhythm consistent with existing adjacent buildings.



DO: Good example of historical restoration of second floor windows.



DO: Good example of proper restoration of second floor windows.



DON'T: Example of improper replacement of second floor windows. Do not infill opening. Do not change size of window.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Planters

Planters set around the entry door or at points along the storefront can accentuate the entry and add colorful interest to the storefront and the streetscape.

- Plants included in storefront displays inside or outside the store should be healthy and well-trimmed at all times.
- Dead plants should be removed from display promptly.
- Planter or flower boxes at second-floor windows shall respect the design of the building and not obscure any ornament or conflict with signage.
- Pots add seasonal color and draw the eye of the shopper.



DO: Planters and flower displays provide colorful interest.



DO: Landscape pots and plants reinforce the rhythm of the structure and enhance the facade.



Inappropriate Actions

DON'T allow plants to obscure views into the store.

DON'T keep dead or dying plants on display.

DON'T use artificial plants.

DON'T display wares or items not related to the function of the store.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Lighting

Lighting is an important design element in creating a successful nighttime shopping experience. Appropriate levels of lighting can be used to enhance the District's shopping experience by highlighting specific areas of interest while also providing a sense of safety and security.

Great retail district lighting can also extend the street life of the District beyond normal business hours. Exterior lighting should be used to illuminate signage. At retail stores, storefronts should be illuminated with interior spots to highlight merchandise in the display window. Create a "merchandise zone" that is well lit and draws the eye with great visual merchandising. In restaurants or cafés, pendant or

can lights behind the storefront create atmosphere. Storefronts should be illuminated well after the store is closed to create interest along the street and provide a comfortable and safe streetscape at night.

- The lighting effect, not the source, should be visible.
- Shielded light sources should be used to avoid direct glare from both the pedestrian viewpoint and from those who occupy spaces inside the building.
- Recommended light sources are color-corrected metal halide or fluorescent lamps with a color temperature of 3000 degrees Kelvin and a minimum color rendering index (CRI) of 70.
- Surface-mounted flood or spotlights on buildings should be located in a manner that is as unobtrusive as possible. Lamp-holder type fixtures without shields are not allowed.
- Lighting for signage should be placed evenly at the face of the storefront and along the sign. Lighting should be located either above the sign, or below it.
- If the retail use occupies the second story of the building, lighting for signage is allowed (see Signage section for allowable signage above the street level). Signage or other retail lighting is not allowed above the street level with residential use.



DO: *Appropriate placement of signage and lighting enhances the rhythm of the building structure.*



DO: *Well-lit, transparent storefronts create an inviting street.*



DO: *Well-lit storefronts emphasize the retail zone; Building accent lighting (at second story retail) provides a hierarchy of visual interest.*

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Lighting (cont.)

- Gooseneck or stemmed flood or spotlight fixtures are appropriate for lighting signage. The style of these fixtures (modern or traditional) should be compatible with the building style; however, it is acceptable to use small, simple, modern fixtures in most cases.
- Fixtures of a decorative nature should be coordinated with the facade and mounted as appropriate to the design of the building, at piers or over the storefront bay as illumination for signage. Small fixtures are encouraged.
- Building lighting should be consistent in placement and design. Develop a lighting strategy that enhances the building and the storefronts.
- Storefront merchandise and display windows should be lighted from the inside, with lighting directed on the display. Windows and storefronts should be lighted until 11pm to maintain pedestrian interest.
- General building lighting should be avoided, though highlighting specific architectural details, such as cornices, can enhance the overall streetscape.
- Lighting should also be provided on the backs and sides of buildings along the alleys to provide safe access from parking lots to the street.
- Particular attention should be given to alley entrances to buildings as well as recesses or offsets



DO: Directed light sources illuminate signs and building face.



DO: Appropriately placed and directed lighting works with the features of the storefront.



DO: Small, simple light fixtures are unobtrusive.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T use bare-bulb type fixtures, or install exposed conduit or other wiring at the building facade.

DON'T use fixtures that are not appropriate to the style of the building.

DON'T use residential-type fixtures; only commercial-grade fixtures are allowed.

DON'T use lighting where the light source is visible from the street / sidewalk; only the lighting effect should be visible.



DON'T: Broken lights or missing lamps should be replaced immediately; conduit should not be visible at building face.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Backs of Buildings

The backs and sides of buildings along Main and Capitol are second only in importance to their primary street facades.

The introduction of Live / Work studios along the alleys, combined with the proposed new parking lots along North Street will significantly increase pedestrian traffic in the alleys. This creates a unique opportunity for the backs and sides of buildings to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide valuable exposure for retail businesses.

The backs and sides of buildings facing an alley can provide 'secondary' entrances into retail businesses, or additional display windows as well as signage, awnings, and landscape elements such as planters or trellises.

Buildings with backs and sides facing alleys should attempt to engage the pedestrian experience by providing one or more of the following enhancements:

A secondary entrance, awnings, signage, additional display windows, supplemental lighting, landscape elements.

Residential and business entries off the alley should be clearly marked and highly visible. The use of awnings and supplemental lighting to further identify these entries is encouraged.

Every attempt should be made to screen service areas in the backs of buildings.



The character of backs of buildings, including Live / Work studios, can create an inviting pedestrian experience between parking lots and Main and Capitol Streets.



Well-designed backs and sides of buildings along alleys can invite a sense of exploration.

SIGNAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

Historical Precedent

When Uptown Mt. Sterling was a flourishing retail district, signage and environmental graphics played a large role in defining the character of the place. Retail signs and painted wall advertisements were used at a variety of scales to engage pedestrian and vehicular (and buggy) traffic, creating a lively mix of scale, material, and color that clearly established the area as a retail district.

Retail signage and environmental graphics can be used once again within the Uptown District to reinforce the sense of place and further define the character of the shopping experience.



Example of historical signage along Main Street, Mt. Sterling



Example of historical storefront signage



Example of painted wall advertisement

SIGNAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

Signage

Retail signage should be designed to convey the identity of the tenant, enhance the historic features of the building facade, and bring delight to the street. Signs should be professionally designed and fabricated to ensure quality. Design signage so that it is not too heavy in appearance. Signs with individual letterforms and graphic elements, or signs hung away from the face of the building create a less heavy appearance than do cabinet signs mounted to the face of the building.

- Signs should be made from durable materials; wood, metal, glass, painted acrylic etc.
- Internally illuminated cabinet signs are prohibited.
- Exposed neon is an appropriate method if used in a limited and tasteful manner.
- Dimensional letterforms (min. 1/2" deep) are preferred to flat, vinyl, or painted acrylic.
- Internally illuminated, plastic-faced signs are not allowed. Instead, use open-face neon channel letters or halo-illuminated letters.
- Temporary paper, vinyl, or fabric signs or banners are only allowed to be displayed for a period of time not to exceed 20 days in any 365-day period. A sign permit is required for the erection or attachment of any temporary sign.
- Paper, fabric, or adhesive signs in windows are considered temporary. Temporary signs should be removed within 20 days of application.



DO: Dimensional letters with indirect lighting can create a dramatic effect.



DO: Even subtle graphics make a strong impact at pedestrian level.



DO: Decorative light fixtures enhance the textural quality of the facade.

SIGNAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

Signage (continued)

- Permanent signage in storefront windows should be limited to store or business name, hours of operation, and limited secondary signage related to the use of the storefront (e.g., 'café', 'fine furnishings').
- Banners or fabric signs attached between buildings, or to items or features in the public way, are not allowed.
- Signage for non-retail uses should adhere to the same guidelines as retail signage.
- See Merchandising section for additional guidelines within the storefront.

Inappropriate Actions

DON'T obscure architectural ornament, details or storefront windows with signage.

DON'T use internally illuminated plastic-faced signs.

DON'T use temporary paper, fabric or adhesive signs in windows where permanent signage is more appropriate.

DON'T allow temporary signs or banners to stay on display for longer than 20 days.



DO: Hanging blade signs under canopies can make a strong impact at pedestrian level.



DO: Banners or fabric signs identify retail use at upper floors.



DO: Subtle graphics at pedestrian level are a good way to reinforce the store identity.

SIGNAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

Freestanding Sign

Freestanding signs may be used to identify retail information that changes on a daily basis, such as menu boards or special events. Freestanding signs should be placed on the sidewalk adjacent to retail and restaurant entrances but should not interfere with pedestrian traffic. Freestanding signs should be scaled for pedestrians and not vehicular traffic.

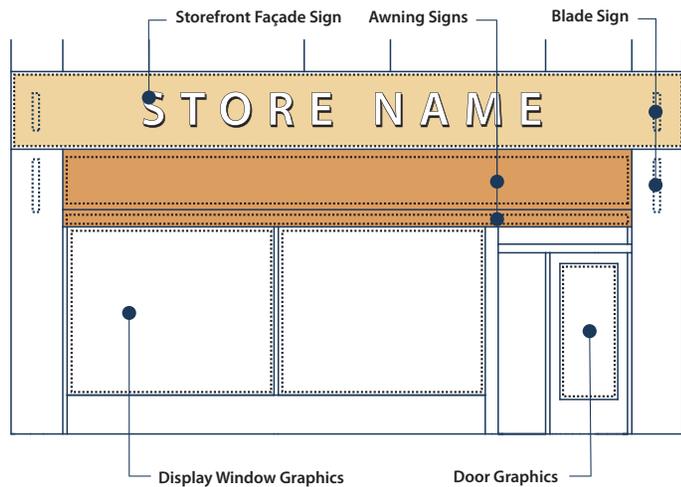
Storefront Facade Sign

A Storefront Facade Sign identifies the tenant by utilizing letterforms, logo, and / or graphic elements and is located within the sign zone. If the building has architectural detailing in this area, individual letterforms should be used so that detail is not obscured. Scale signs to fit within the boundaries of the storefront sign zone so that they do not crowd architectural elements or adjacent signs. Secondary messages promoting goods and services should not appear on the storefront facade sign. Instead, locate on transoms and storefront windows.

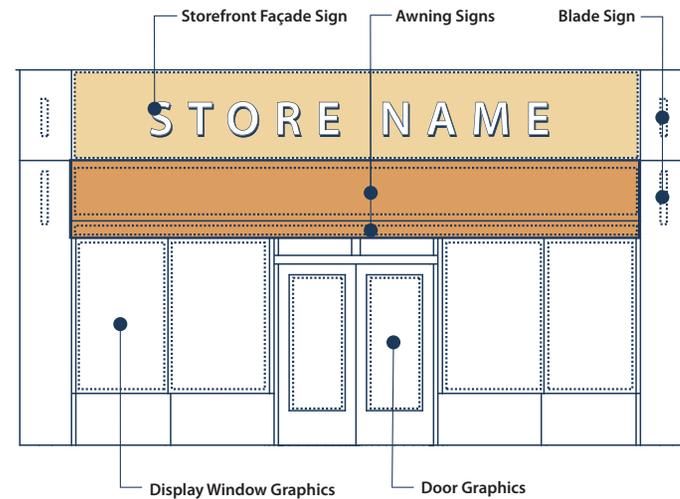
Transom Sign

A tenant identification sign that uses letterforms, logo, and / or graphic elements is appropriate within the Transom Sign Zone as shown in the building elevations below. Transom signs may occupy no more than 50% of the glass area and may not be solid panels. Individual graphic elements or typography should be used.

Storefront A - Sign Zones



Storefront B - Sign Zones



SIGNAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

Awning Sign / Canopy Sign

Awning and canopy signs occur on the faces or edges of overhead protective elements as shown in the building elevations below. On awnings, graphics should be painted, embroidered, or silkscreened. Limit signs on awnings to either on the vertical drop (6" copy, max.) or on the sloped top (30% of surface, max.), not both. Canopy signs may be pin-mounted to a canopy surface, or stood upright along a canopy edge.

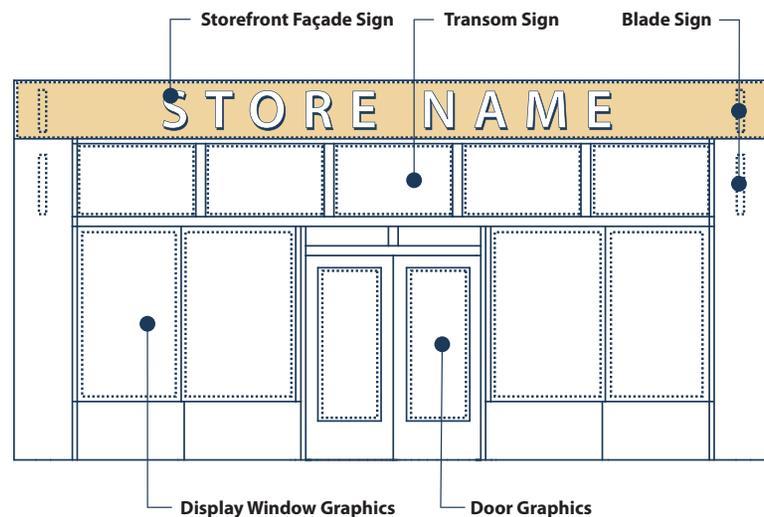
Projecting Sign

Projecting (or blade) signs are used to identify storefronts at the pedestrian level as shown in the building elevations below. They should be sized to their mounting area and should be centered on the building pier. Blade signs should not obstruct or obscure other tenant storefronts or signs, or significant Landlord building features. Minimum mounting height is 8'-0" above grade. One blade sign is allowed per storefront.

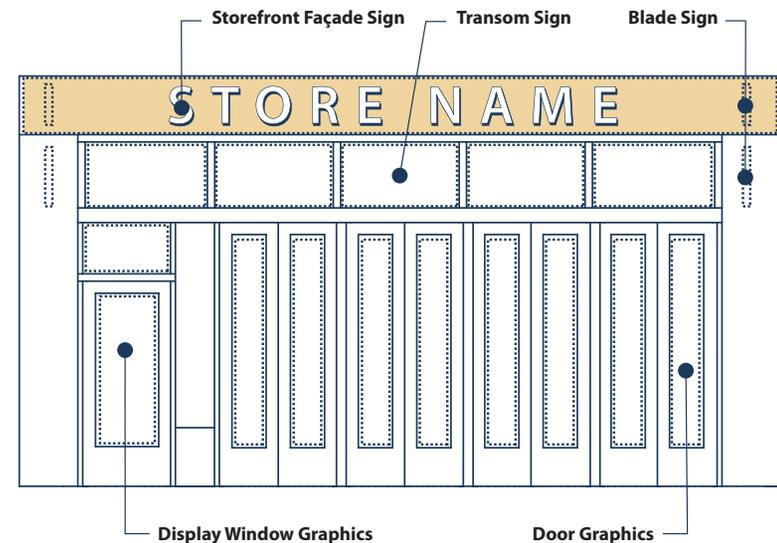
Display Window Graphics & Door Graphics

Display window graphics feature tenant identification on the storefront glass as shown in the building elevations below. These graphics should be applied vinyl and should not occupy more than 10% of the storefront glass and not impair the visibility of the storefront merchandise area. Door graphics display tenant hours of operation on the glass surface as shown in the building elevations below and should not occupy more than 10% of the storefront glass.

Storefront C - Sign Zones



Storefront D - Sign Zones





MT. STERLING'S BRAND

BRAND STRATEGY

Introduction

The brand embodies the DNA of a place, what it is made of, and what it passes from generation to generation. It is authentic and indicates what makes a place different from others. This is a strategic process for developing a long-term vision for a place that is relevant and compelling to key audiences.

A strategic and well-executed brand shapes positive perceptions of a place.

When a brand is clear, compelling and unique, it becomes the foundation that helps make a place desirable as a home, a business location, and a visitor destination.

A great brand...

- Shifts the perception of a place among internal and external constituents
- Creates a common vision for the future of a community and its potential
- Provides a consistent representation
- Enhances its local, regional and global awareness

The following two pages show the logos that will represent the brand aspirations of not only the plan but also the desires we heard from the community.

The first logo is the primary identifier for the community of Mt. Sterling. The second logo represents the ability to build on the energy of local entrepreneurs and to create a program around the concept of “Made in Mt. Sterling” – The Place for Great Value.

BROWN COUNTY | MT. STERLING, IL LOGO

Main Identifier

The concept behind this mark is that when people are travelling, they tend to say they are from Brown County rather than Mt. Sterling. Since Mt. Sterling is the county seat and is in the center of the county, it made a great deal of sense to build on this with a logo that would place the emphasis on Brown County and then highlight the various communities that make up the county. The concept offers built-in flexibility so that, each community could use the same layout, but would employ their own unique color and mark. Much like a patchwork quilt, the logos, when put together, would represent all of the citizens of Brown County.

Historically, Mt. Sterling is both an agricultural center, and a center of food distribution. This creates a compelling story. The mark within the logo represents the centrality of a place. At the core, community is represented by the flower pattern. The logo also references farming—the patterns of the fields, the tools and equipment required to produce the crops, the crops themselves, and ultimately the plate on which food is served. The overall effect of the logo is to pay homage to the values of the community, connect to its historical past, and present a 21st century vision for the future Mt. Sterling.



MADE IN MT. STERLING LOGO

Made in Mt. Sterling Community Logo

The “Made in Mt. Sterling” logo harkens back to historical graphic language that speaks to sense of uniqueness, quality, and hand craft. The intent of this logo is to celebrate the heritage of handmade items in the community.



MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Since the long-range strategic plan is a long-term effort, it will be critical to have an effective marketing and public relations effort to keep the community informed about progress being made and events in the community, and to promote activities in the community to local residents, and regional and national audiences.

A Facebook site has already been created to help promote the Mt. Sterling Long-Range Strategic Plan, in addition to this, a City Web site should be created as soon as funds are available for its design and implementation, and communications with the local residents should be implemented.

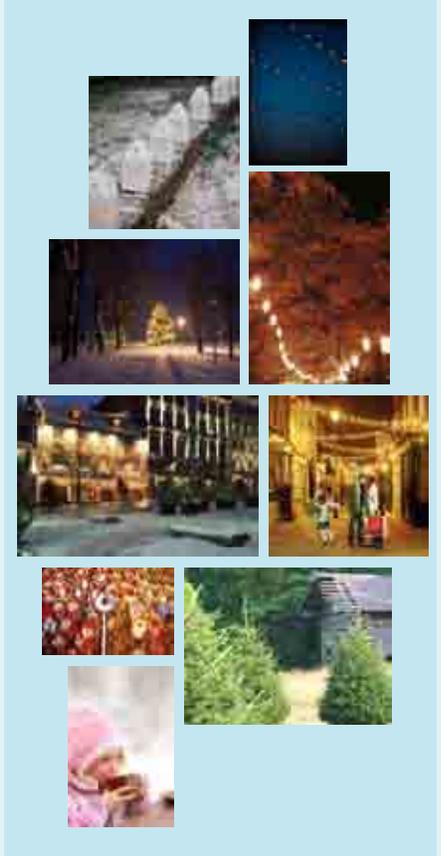
Also in the near future, a regional and national marketing campaign should be developed to promote Brown County, and in particular Mt. Sterling, as a great place to do business, a great place to live, and a great place to visit.

In addition, the next pages outlines four seasonal festivals that could occur in the community. The actual Festival is a draw both for residents and visitors and economic generators, but more importantly it is a way to bring members of the community together in a collaborative effort that will help build relationships for future endeavors. The festival is the physical manifestation of a renewed community pride.

So as not to over-burden the community, every effort should be made to spread the workload out for these events. It is best to start small and let the festivals grow organically by adding one or two new things each year. We recommend that the community start out with one festival and branch out from there perhaps adding one new festival every two years.

Just like the blueprint, the marketing and public relations plan will also be a living document, adjusting with the other developments in the community, the region, and nationally.

SEASONAL FESTIVALS

| WINTER | SPRING | SUMMER | FALL |
|--|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |  |
| <p>An Old Fashioned Country Holiday Celebration; the entire Uptown area decorated for the holidays with lights—everyone drives to town to enjoy hot cider, roasted chestnuts, homemade soups and chilis, and to see the lighting of the Christmas tree on the Square; a Holiday concert or play; a great tree farm and Craft Fair.</p> | <p>A Spring Festival around the Easter holiday centered on the idea of flowers in bloom, herbs and great plants; a Craft Market to showcase all the items created over the long Winter break; gifts for Mother’s Day; a celebration of regional plants, flowers and trees including the Illinois state flower—the violet!</p> | <p>A series of Summer events to enhance the Brown County Fair experience and extend the celebration throughout Mt. Sterling—an antique car show; vintage tractors; a local celebrity softball game; an Uptown parade of children on bicycles; Thursday evening Farmers Market; Friday Music on the Square; Saturday evening outdoor movies.</p> | <p>A Fall Farm Festival—a celebration of local Farms, Food and Arts; pumpkins, Indian corn and hay bales; a corn maze; an outdoor BBQ on the Square followed by S’mores made over a bonfire; a celebration of agricultural heritage; a foliage tour with stops along the Wine Trail; farm tours and education; 4H Club demonstrations.</p> |

MT. STERLING TREE PROGRAM

DECIDUOUS
SPRING | FALL



THORNLESS HONEY LOCUST



AUTUMN BLAZE MAPLE



MAGYAR GINKGO (MALE)



MARMO MAPLE



LONDON PLANE TREE

FLOWERING
SPRING | FALL



EASTERN REDBUD



PAGODA DOGWOOD



AUTUMN BRILLIANCE SERVICEBERRY



PRAIRIE FIRE CRABAPPLE



CHANTICLEER PEAR

EVERGREEN
SPRING | FALL



AUSTRIAN PINE



NORWAY SPRUCE

The purpose of this program is to identify multiple tree types that will appear as signature elements in the community and be part of the overall city brand. They will act as the centerpiece of the spring festival, create a sense of pride, and will help to beautify the city. As the trees mature and burst into color in spring, not only will residents be filled with a sense of pride, but visitors will be drawn to Mt. Sterling to this spectacular display of community spirit.

Secondary to this effort, a long-term goal should be to get the city recognized as a "Tree City USA."

Finally, in order to get all the citizens involved, the community should consider setting up a Mt. Sterling Living Tree Memorial Program. For a donation, someone could give a living, growing, lasting testament to someone special in their lives. Donors would be recognized on a Living Memorial Tree nameplate placed on a plaque at the Mt. Sterling City Hall.

MT. STERLING FLOWER PROGRAM



The purpose of this program is to promote the sustainable use and conservation of native Illinois prairie wildflowers.

The wildflower program in combination with the Mt. Sterling tree program will create a signature look to the Mt. Sterling landscape.

In the spring and summer, as the flowers emerge, all those visiting Mt. Sterling will be reminded of the great vitality and community spirit in this community.

The images on this page represent just a few of the spectacular Illinois prairie wildflowers. Top row, left to right: Prairie Sundrop, Shooting Star, Maximillian's Sunflower. Center row, Slender Dayflower, Sky Blue Aster. Bottom row: Carolina Anemome, White Prairie Clover and Aromatic Aster.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

BUSINESS, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The success of this plan will not occur unless both the public and private sectors are heavily involved and committed together. A strong public-private partnership will be key in turning the vision outlined in this report into reality.

An organizational structure should be created to have oversight responsibility for coordinating funding for most of the projects outlined in this report. Funding sources will be varied and broad; however, the appropriate source must be identified for each project, and in particular, the requests and projects must be coordinated as a cohesive implementation of the vision outlined in the preceding pages.

It will be necessary for the citizens of Brown County and Mt. Sterling and their leaders to be actively engaged in the implementation of the plan over the next twelve years. The powerful actions of these two groups working together and the momentum that will build from those actions will be what propels Brown County and Mt. Sterling towards a new and promising future.

In this section, we will look at the potential organizational structures that might be formed to oversee the plan as it moves forward. Next we will establish the starting timeline / phasing plan for the public, private, and civic sectors that will set out a realistic appraisal of opportunities moving forward. This phasing plan is a “living document” that will need to be constantly updated as projects are completed and as some projects shift into different phases. The next section looks at some of the potential funding resources for projects outlined in the report. Finally, we outline the need for creating a recruitment and retention program for the retail business community.

Potential Organizational Structures

The following are a few ideas on potential models for setting up an organizational structure(s) to oversee the plan. One of the immediate action items in 2011 should be to further explore these options and look at pros and cons of each and determine what structure makes the most sense to the citizens and leaders in the community.

The Uptown District Alliance / Brown County Development Corporation

A non-profit community development corporation providing leadership, programs and services to preserve and strengthen the economic vitality of Mt. Sterling, Illinois.

Brown County Community Foundation

A nonprofit 501(c) (3) corporation to help concerned individuals mobilize charitable giving to support the betterment of Brown County communities.

Community Land Trust

Residential land trusts have existed for a long time. Communities have recently begun to explore this option for their commercial centers. Having the ownership of the property under consistent trust ownership may have long-term sustainable benefits.

Main Street Program

The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street program is a proven strategy for revitalization, provides a network of linked communities, and a national support program. “The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a unique preservation-based economic development tool that enables communities to revitalize downtown and neighborhood business districts by leveraging local assets - from historic, cultural, and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride. It is a comprehensive strategy that addresses the variety of issues and problems that challenge traditional commercial districts.”

PHASING AND PRIORITIES

| | 2011 Pre-Phasing | 2012-2016 Phase I | 2016-2020 Phase II | 2020-2023 Phase III |
|----------------|--|---|--|---|
| PUBLIC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of 2011 Comprehensive Plan Adoption of Blueprint Submit grant for lighting front of courthouse Post office painting Organizational Structure 2012 Planning Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Plan Zoning Code changes Courthouse lighting implemented Courthouse cupola design Civic plaza Main Street Streetscape Water Tower Web site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Hall Relocation Police Station Relocation Water Tower Park Facade grant Program Capitol Avenue Streetscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown County Park lighting and general maintenance Main Street Streetscape from Alley west to West Cross Street Planning for 2023 – 2033 & Bicentennial |
| PRIVATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courthouse lighting project Purchase of some of the key character buildings Organizational Structure Temporary Storefront Program Continue discussions with Brown County Library Board, John Wood Community College and potential developer regarding potential for a new building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown County Library / John Wood Community College Project Courthouse cupola Hagel Project Water Tower North & South Side of West Main Street Parking lots Alley Lounge-Teen Center Willis Insurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Hall relocation Police Station Relocation American Legion project South & North Capitol projects Facade improvements projects South Street and West Cross Street Residential project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alley live / work units Facade renovation project continue Project development on south side of West Main Street from post office to West Cross Street Project development on north side of West Main Street from post office to West Cross Street Conversion of old Brown County Library space to retail / restaurant Planning for 2023 – 2033 & Bicentennial |
| CIVIC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Festival Plant first of new city trees and flowers Planning for 2012 programs Organizational Structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Festival Spring Festival – 2013 Winter Festival – 2014 Summer Festival – 2015 Annual Community Meeting Clean-Up Mt. Sterling Tree & Flower Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Festival Spring Festival Winter Festival Summer Festival Annual Community Meeting Clean-Up Mt. Sterling Tree & Flower Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Festival Spring Festival Winter Festival Summer Festival Annual Community Meeting Clean-Up Mt. Sterling Tree & Flower Program Planning for 2023 – 2033 & Bicentennial |

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

This section starts to identify some of the potential partners for the projects outlined in the report and the programs that they offer that could be sources for potential funding.

IDOT

The Illinois Enhancement Transportation Program (IETP) is a very competitive and requires an 80 / 20 match. It is easier to get one of these grants if project size is \$1M or less.

USDA

Rural Development's Business Rural Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG)

The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses, help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities.

Direct and Guaranteed Community Facility Programs

USDA Rural Development has authority to guarantee or make direct loans to public bodies and not for profit corporations in rural areas to construct, enlarge or otherwise improve essential community facility projects which serve the public. There is a separate portion of funds under this program dedicated to rural libraries.

Rural Energy for America Program

Program that offers grant funding for energy efficiency upgrades and use of alternative energy sources.

Foundations

Besides the Tracy Family Foundation, other foundation sources that have rural towns as part of their mission should be identified, types of programs they fund identified and then matched to projects within the blueprint to have the best opportunity to get funding.

Private Investors

Once the plan is completed, one of the first tasks should be to create a marketing kit that could be used to send to potential investors to outline the potential projects and benefits for investing in Mt. Sterling.

Grant Organizations

Need to identify the top ten grant organizations that exist in terms of supporting development in rural areas and set up meetings with them to explain the vision for Mt. Sterling and explore the types of projects that they might fund.

Federal, State, Local

We will need to research and explore other opportunities within the federal, state, and local public structures to look for potential funding sources for some of the public realm projects.

TIF Financing

Now that the TIF 1 and 2 districts have been established, projects should be identified which best fit into that program.

River Valley CDC

River Valley CDC is a Community Development Corp. funded by local banks that offer financing specifically bridge and non-typical financing that supports economic growth, specifically related to job creation.

Enterprise Zone

The Enterprise Zone was established in Mt Sterling as an extension of the existing zone in Adams County. It provided sales exemption for specific projects located within the zone.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM

Purpose of this program is to focus on creating an Uptown District retail core, then expand it outwards into a larger contiguous district along Main Street. The retention and recruitment program is a four step process.

First step is to assist current merchants with strengthening both the appearance and performance of their business.

Second step is to address the vacant storefronts. Vacant storefronts should be cleaned, painted, and activated as soon as possible. The appearance of the current retail frontages is critical in importance for attracting developers and new tenants to the Uptown District. It will send a message that the community will support quality development.

The third step will be to create a retail incubator program. The retail incubator program will be both a facility that houses several businesses that share common costs and equipment, and a organization of services combined together to help nurture early stage businesses.

The fourth step is to develop and fund a targeted marketing campaign for the purpose of attracting new retail business and to develop an expanded range of special events that will attract visits to the community from the regional area.



CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION



“This is our vision for our civic center, the “heart” of Brown County and Mt. Sterling. In 2011, the community (citizens and leaders) agreed to step up, to get involved, and to invest in the future of our community for the benefit of our children and grandchildren.”

A Brown County | Mt. Sterling resident

The redevelopment of the Uptown District of Mt. Sterling is a critical first step in the revitalization and preservation of this community. The shared vision of the community represented in this report will be to the “go to” document over the next 12 years as progress is made in achieving its aspirations. It will give validation to the community when things are going well and provide guidance during challenging times. Patience and perseverance will be critical virtues for everyone in the community to have as the vision is being accomplished.

As part of the acceptance of this report by the current community leaders and the citizens, there also needs to be some level of long-term commitment offered, not only by the current government officials, but by the community as a whole, that efforts will continue over time.

The community must recognize that this will not be a quick fix, but one worth working hard to achieve because it means leaving a sustainable future for the future generations of those who decide to live in Mt. Sterling.

MT. STERLING, ILLINOIS TIMELINE

| DATE | SIGNIFICANT EVENTS | POPULATION | TIME PERIOD |
|------------------|--|------------|-------------|
| 1833 | Alexander Curry laid out a town of 80- 60' x 120' lots bounded by North, South, East and West Streets with Main in the middle | | |
| 1880 | | 1,445 | |
| 1876-1915 | Period when most current Uptown buildings were built | | |
| 1931 | Centennial of 1st settlement Pageant held in front of courthouse | 1,724 | 45 YEARS |
| 1961 | Highest population | 2,252 | |
| 2000 | Alexander Curry laid out a town of 80- 60' x 120' lots bounded by North, South, East and West Streets with Main in the middle | 2,070 | 47 YEARS |
| 2007 | Lowest population | 1,887 | |
| 2009 | Estimated population | 1,912 | 26 YEARS |
| 2010 | Baseline year | 2,025 | |
| 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueprint development • Adoption of 2011 Comprehensive Plan • Kick-off celebration • Quick wins | | |
| 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Grants / Financing • Building stabilization • Quick wins | | 12 YEARS |
| 2013 | PROJECT GROUP 1 | | |
| 2018 | PROJECT GROUP 2 | | |
| 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 12-year implementation • Begin planning for next 10-year cycle | 2,252 | |
| 2033 | BICENTENNIAL YEAR 2011 Brown County HS class will turn 40 | | |

2011 ACTION ITEMS

Immediate Action Items

The following are a series of quick-win projects that the community can accomplish in the next four months to send a signal that is serious about accomplishing the goals, objectives, projects, and vision set out in the blueprint.

Top Ten Mt. Sterling Quick – Win Action Projects

1. Planting of first Community Trees
2. Revive the Fall Festival
3. Clean up and activate building storefronts
4. Apply for grant funds to allow the lighting of the front of the courthouse
5. Set goals and projects for 2012
6. Get a letter of agreement to build a new facility for Brown County Library and John Woods Community College
7. Achieve adoption of Comprehensive Plan by Mt. Sterling City Council
8. Achieve adoption of the Mt. Sterling, Illinois, Uptown Downtown Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint by Mt. Sterling City Council
9. Establish citizens' working group responsible for implementation of the Long-Range Strategic Plan & Redevelopment Blueprint
10. Announce one other major project in the Uptown District
11. Establish the guidelines for proper usage of new brand and the "Made in Mt. Sterling" logo so they are implemented in a cohesive and positive manner

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: REVIEW OF RECENT PLANNING REPORTS & ZONING CODE

Reviewed the final draft of ***The Mt. Sterling, Illinois Comprehensive Plan 2011 being developed by the Two Rivers Regional Council.***

The Mt. Sterling, Illinois Comprehensive Plan was reviewed as this plan was being done. Input to the Plan was given to make sure that there was alignment between the Comprehensive Plan these guidelines.

The City Council adopted the plan at its September 2011 meeting. The Comprehensive Plan along with the guidelines will provide guidance for future development in Mt. Sterling.

Reviewed the ***Illinois Municipal Assistance Program (IMAP) Report prepared by the Center for Governmental Studies for Mt. Sterling in January 2011.***

Some highlights noted from that report are relevant to the current study. First impressions are important. If a community does not present or show well, it will be difficult to sell it. Physical appearance, easily obtained information, a welcoming attitude on part of the municipal officials, a willingness to assist, quick follow-up, and a focused commitment to economic development all help to make a good first impression.

The Issues and Themes identified in Section II of the report are very similar to those which came up during our discussion with the community.

Agree that the recommendation to create a comprehensive plan and an accurate boundary map are important issues.

Agree with recommendations regarding Web site and promotional materials outlined in this report.

Reviewed the ***2005 Brown County Action Plan and the current reports of the Brown County Action Teams: Community Betterment; Education; Health and Social Services; Housing and Economic Development; and Youth Involvement.***

Issues discussed in this report are similar to what we have seen and heard during our recent visits. There has been good progress made on many of the action items outlined in the report and the development of the Downtown Long Range Strategic Plan will be another part of this progress.

APPENDIX A: REVIEW OF RECENT PLANNING REPORTS & ZONING CODE

CONTINUED

Reviewed the ***Mt. Sterling Zoning Code – Adopted January 1, 1996***

After our review, the following sections of the code are the ones that may need to be modified based on recommendations that may come out of this study.

Article VII – “B-1” Business Commercial District Regulations should be reviewed and recommendations for changes should be made as part of the next stage of this project in terms of residential use, parking regulations, height requirements, and permitted uses.

Article XVI – Parking Regulations should be reviewed in terms of construction of lots, locations, allowable curb cuts, and allowable location of lots.

In addition, the zoning code currently does not have a section on signage guidelines or a review and guidelines for projects within the Federal Historic District Boundaries.

Reviewed ***The Retail Trade Analysis for Mt. Sterling Report prepared by The Rural Economic Technical Assistance Center in 1995.***

This report examined an estimate of the number of customers drawn to Mt. Sterling to purchase a product or service. The report looked at sales figures in different product categories over the period 1984-1993. Although out of date, it does give a good overview of what was happening with sales in that period. In general, the report showed a gradual decline over the period with an especially sharp decline in the apparel sector and home furnishings.

Total retail sales in 1984 were \$15,469,910 compared to \$14,051,031 in 1993.

Based on data from Info USA and Environmental Systems Research Institute, total retail sales in 2005 were estimated to be \$17,269,570.00.

Reviewed the ***Feasibility Study of Mt. Sterling / Brown County Retail Development prepared by the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs – 1996***

Looked at economic prospects for Brown County, especially in terms of a hotel and restaurant. Looked at declining socio-economic trends of Brown County population from 11,557 in 1900 to 6,247 in 1995. Noted a population of 65 years and older as the fastest growing demographic. The median household income is an issue. Survey respondents indicated shopping as moderate to poor – 88.7%. There was significant leakage. The main stores wanted by consumers at this time are restaurant, clothing, groceries, and shoes. The regional market is not large enough to support businesses. Attract businesses serving larger and more specialized markets: hunting / recreational services. Focus on services not readily available elsewhere and for which customers would likely travel long distances. Issues include financing for expansion; incubator business structure; low interest in new business opportunities; the need for aggressive marketing campaigns; the creation of a regional marketing strategy with an organized theme; and an organized set of events. In general, issues outlined in the report, the concerns voiced by the community, and their desires for the future are similar to what we heard during our interviews.

APPENDIX B: SITE RECONNAISSANCE

We walked the city to observe existing conditions in the public realm, to develop an understanding of the area's physical characteristics through its buildings, and to gain a first-hand understanding of the City's character.

In terms of the public realm, most of the sidewalks conditions vary from good to need replacement. Amenities that would make the environment more attractive and comfortable for shoppers, such as planters, banners, pedestrian scale lighting, and trees, are scarce. Intersections lack clear pedestrian crossing identification. The amount of truck traffic on Main Street constitutes an issue in creating an environment where shoppers feel comfortable.

Most of the existing buildings are two-story, red brick commercial structures with wood framing. All of the nineteenth-century buildings are Italianate in style, with cast iron pilasters and wood storefronts. Many of the buildings have either stamped metal cornices or ornamental brick cornices. There are a few buildings within the study area that have full stamped-metal facades.

In general, there is a good density of historical buildings left, and from initial observations, all of these buildings can be renovated.

Most of the exterior walls have deferred maintenance. Some repair and tuckpointing will be required. Parapets were not reviewed due to lack of roof access, but based on historical knowledge will likely have suffered from deferred maintenance and will require rebuilding. Based on observations and from reports during interviews, there is most likely some dry rot and water damage to decks and joists in most of these buildings.

After repairs, structures will be suitable for planned renovation of retail on the ground floor and either office or residential on the second floor. Next steps would be for Kiku Obata & Company to perform a visual inspection of the interiors of the buildings during our next visit to determine interior structural issues and to review suitability of floor plans for potential future uses. It is common in brick buildings of this period that the walls are unreinforced masonry that is not tied back to the structure. For long-term stability as the buildings are renovated, these walls should be pinned back to the floor and roof joists.

There are some major needs on these buildings which should be addressed as soon as possible to prevent further deterioration. Broken windows, rooftops, and exposed brick walls should be repaired and tuckpointed.

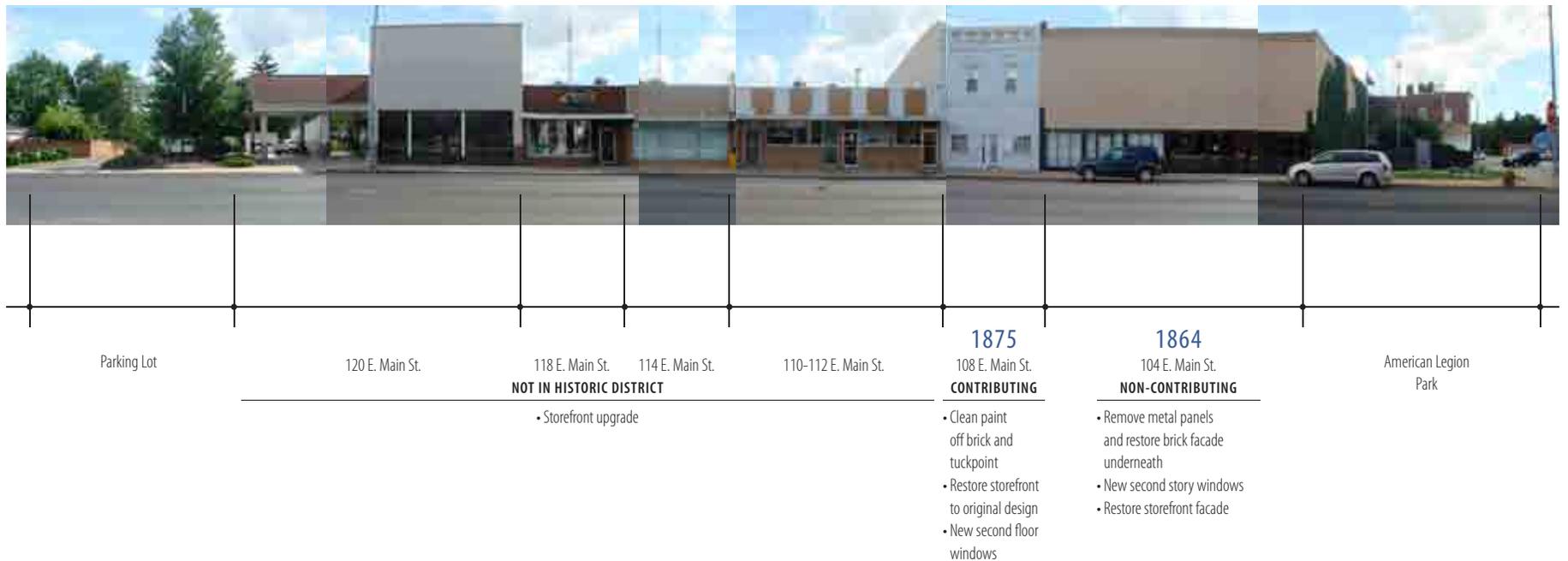
Many of the storefronts are in good condition and could easily be preserved. For those buildings without original storefronts or ones that have storefronts that are beyond repair, efforts should be made to rebuild new storefronts that are in keeping with the historical ones in terms of proportion, scale, and materials.

We recommend that once our study is complete and potential desired uses of the buildings have been determined, we engage a structural engineer with experience in historical buildings and historical renovation to do a more detailed review of the buildings to further determine their conditions and suitability for renovation for proposed uses.

It is critical, not only for keeping the listing on the National Register of Historic Places, but also for maintaining the historical character of the Uptown District, that all remaining buildings be saved in their entirety. If that is not possible, the facades should be saved and all renovation work on the buildings should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Our initial thoughts are that the old water tower should be saved, rehabilitated, and become an icon for Uptown Mt. Sterling.

EAST MAIN – SOUTH SIDE



Definitions:

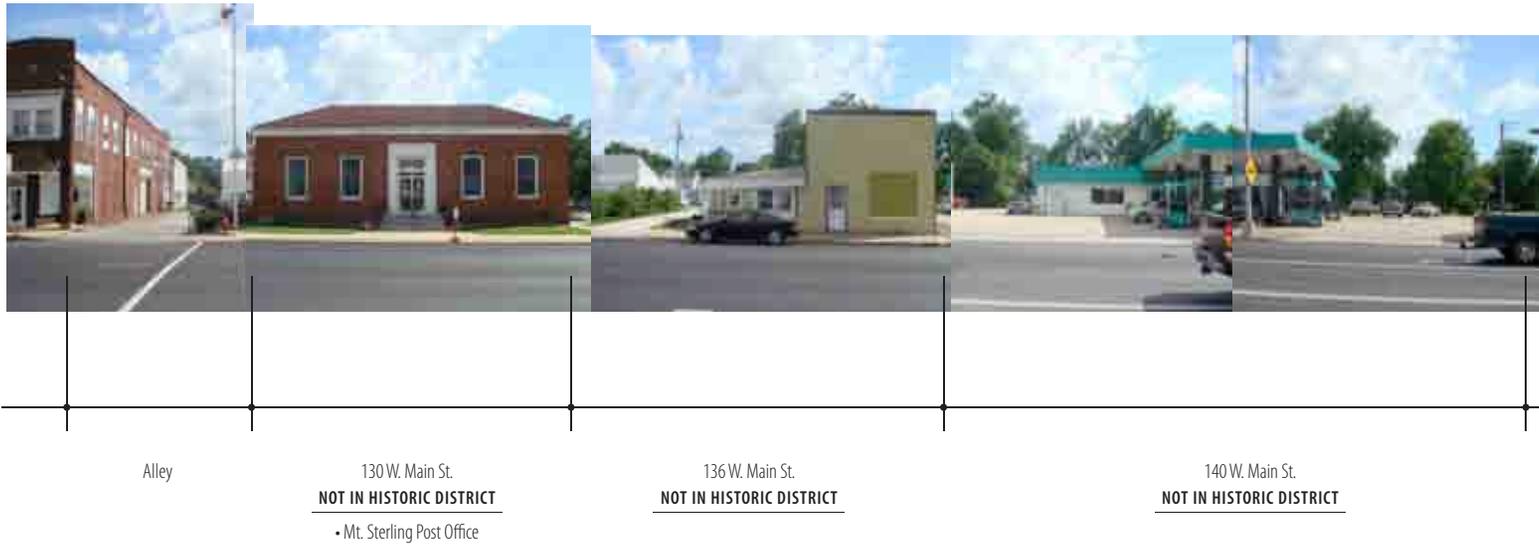
- ❶ **Contributing:** A property or structure or object which adds to the historical integrity or architectural qualities that make a historic district, listed locally or federally, significant.
- ❷ **Non-Contributing:** A property or structure or object which is not integral to the historic context and character of the district.

WEST MAIN – SOUTH SIDE



| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| South Capitol Ave. | <p>1915 100 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New windows • Restore entry • Clean and tuckpoint brick | <p>1890 104-106 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of overall building needs to be done • Overall restoration of storefront required | <p>1890 108 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore facade and paint • New second floor windows • New storefront | <p>1885 110 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean paint from brick, tuckpoint • New storefront • Cornice repair and painted • New second floor windows | <p>1980 112 W. Main St. NON-CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New facade | <p>1872 118 W. Main St. NON-CONTRIBUTING</p> | <p>1895 120-122 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General maintenance • Storefront restoration | <p>1920 124 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at historical photos. Restore to match | <p>1915 126-128 W. Main St. CONTRIBUTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore storefront • Restore second floor windows to original layout • Clean, tuckpoint brick as required |
|--------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|

WEST MAIN – SOUTH SIDE



WEST MAIN – NORTH SIDE



WEST MAIN – NORTH SIDE



| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|---|---------------------|--|-------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1889 | 1889 | 1889 | 1892 | 1892 | 1892 | 1872 | 1900 | 1892 | | Capitol Ave |
| 125 W. Main St. | 123 W. Main St. | 119-121 W. Main St. | 117 W. Main St. | 113-115 W. Main St. | 111 W. Main St. | 109 W. Main St. | 105-107 W. Main St. | 101 W. Main St. | | |
| CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | CONTRIBUTING | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore storefronts to original • New 2nd floor windows • Repair cornice • Paint • Clean and tuckpoint brick as required | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore storefronts to original • New 2nd floor windows • Repair cornice • Paint • Clean and tuckpoint brick as required | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and tuckpoint brick as required • New 2nd floor windows • Remove awning • Restore storefront as required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore storefront • New 2nd floor windows • Paint • Clean and tuckpoint brick as required | | | |

EAST MAIN – NORTH SIDE



Capitol Ave.

1893
 101 E. Main St.
CONTRIBUTING
 • Work with bank on storefront
 • New canopy

Bank Drive-Thru

Bank Parking

1885
 113 E. Main St.
CONTRIBUTING
 • Clean and tuckpoint brick
 • Remove and paint cornice
 • Restore storefront
 • Remove awning

Empty Parcel

Alley

Residential

SOUTH CAPITOL – WEST SIDE



NORTH CAPITOL – WEST SIDE



1892

101 W. Main St.

CONTRIBUTING

- Clean, tuckpoint brick
- New windows
- Potential for mural on wall

1892

107 N. Capitol Ave.

CONTRIBUTING

- Clean, tuckpoint brick
- New windows

1892

111 N. Capitol Ave.

CONTRIBUTING

- Clean, tuckpoint brick
- New windows

Alley

1876

115 N. Capitol Ave.

CONTRIBUTING

- Tuckpoint brick
- Paint

Empty
Parcel

1984

121 N. Capitol Ave.

NON-CONTRIBUTING

- At minimal, when possible, renovate existing storefront building facade

North St.

NORTH CAPITOL – EAST SIDE



SOUTH CAPITOL – EAST SIDE



1890

108-110 S. Capitol Ave.
CONTRIBUTING

- Paint & clean up storefront

Alley

1890

116-118 S. Capitol Ave.
CONTRIBUTING

- Install missing cornice
- Replace second floor windows
- Remove brick on first floor and restore storefront

NOT IN HISTORIC DISTRICT

APPENDIX C: MAPS

This section contains a series of maps which graphically indicate the following:

Map 1: Existing Zoning, TIF II, and National Historic District, boundaries within the study area

Map 2: Zoning and Districts—Proposed

Map 3: Current Building Occupancy

Map 4: Current Property Ownership

Map 5: Contributing Building Character

Map 6: Existing Parking

Map 7: Future Parking

MAP 1: ZONING AND DISTRICTS—EXISTING



MAP 2: ZONING AND DISTRICTS—PROPOSED



MAP 3: CURRENT BUILDING OCCUPANCY



MAP 4: CURRENT PROPERTY OWNERSHIP



- 1 Farmers State Bank & Trust
- 2 Coulson Publications
- 3 Tinkey Schlosser
- 4 Ed Teefey
- 5 Jennings Brothers
- 6 Eric & Tammy Wilson
- 7 James Heaton
- 8 Clifford Long, et al
- 9 Robert & Deborah Willis
- 10 Clifford Long Trust
- 11 Peggy Huston
- 12 John & Sharon Parker
- 13 City of Mt. Sterling
- 14 American Legion
- 15 Mark Vincent
- 16 Brown County State Bank
- 17 Arms Unlimited
- 18 Brown County Development Corp.
- 19 Brown County Library
- 20 Brown County Public Health Board
- 21 April Cline
- 22 Mary L. Jennings
- 23 Lowell Brown
- 24 Mary Cowan
- 25 Daniel J. Griffin
- 26 American Legion Post #374
- 27 Ranea Kunkel
- 28 T & K Development Company, Inc.
- 29 First United Methodist Church
- 30 Lowell Woodward
- 31 John Neussen & Michael Yingling
- 32 Jesse Gilsdorf
- 33 Cassandra Tilly
- 34 Jim Craig
- 35 Jim Craig
- 36 Roger Zimmerman
- 37 Booters, Inc.
- 38 Jasper Oil
- 39 Gilbert & Inez McNeff
- 40 Roger Zimmerman
- 41 Janet & Larry Franklin

MAP 5: CONTRIBUTING BUILDING CHARACTER



- Primary**
 Buildings, or significant portions thereof, that exhibit overall character and details consistent with the majority of the vernacular architecture of the study area.
- Secondary**
 Buildings, or significant portions thereof, that exhibit characteristics similar to the above, except they have been altered in a manner that does not maintain the historical detailing of the building.
- Marginal**
 Buildings, or significant portions thereof, that may exhibit some desirable characteristics but that are otherwise inappropriate in character. These buildings would require significant rehabilitation, renovation, or redevelopment to bring them up to the character desired for the historic core of the Uptown District.
- Negative**
 Buildings, or properties that are underdeveloped, not developed, vacant lots, or otherwise not consistent with the goals for the downtown area. These buildings and properties would be ideal candidates for development of new projects consistent with the historical area of Uptown District.

MAP: 6 EXISTING PARKING

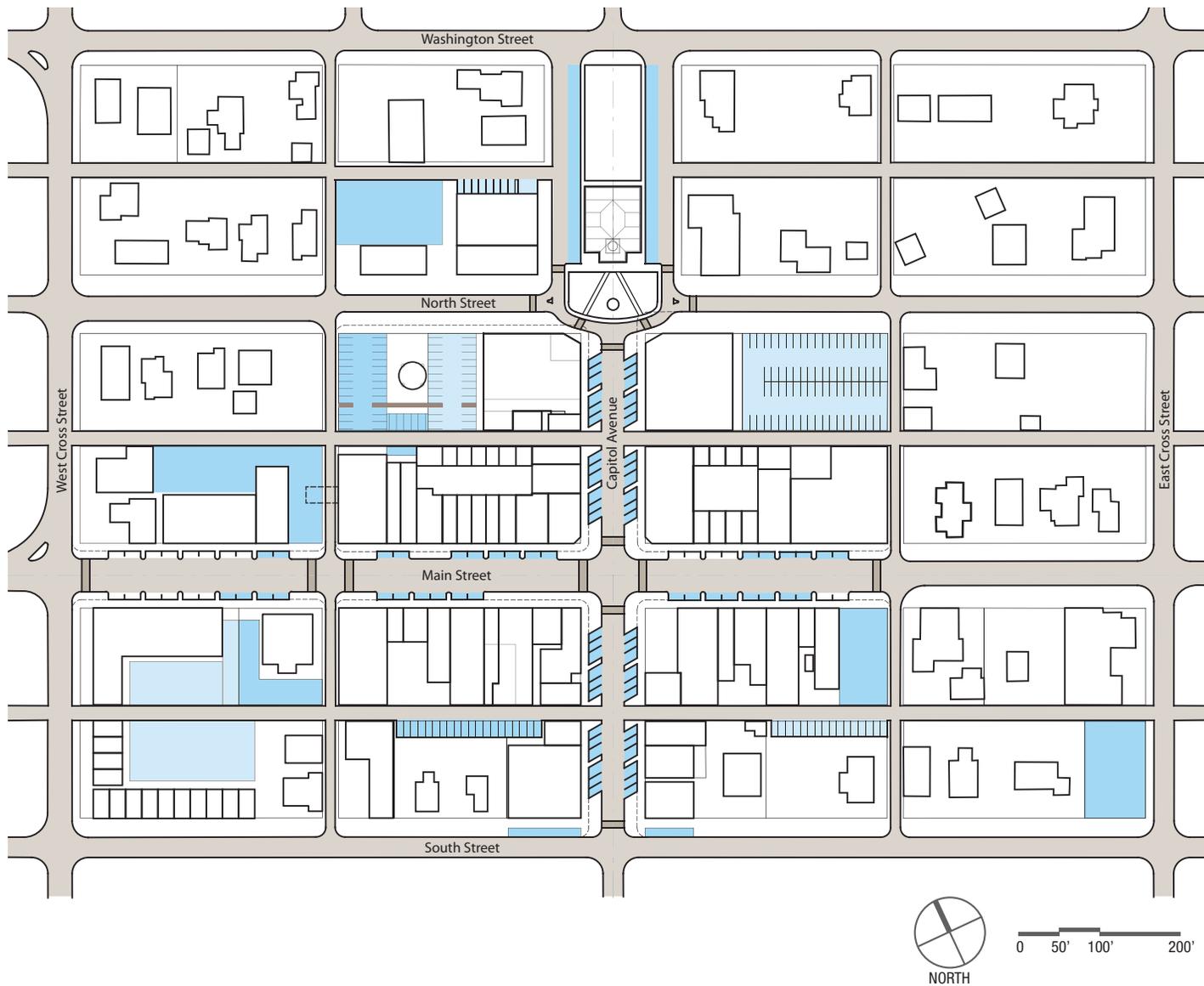


■ Existing Parking

Parking Counts:

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| On-Street Parking | |
| Main Street | 43 |
| Capitol Avenue | 104 |
| Public Parking Lots | 0 |
| Private Parking Lots | 210 |
| Total Parking | 357 |

MAP: 7 FUTURE PARKING



- Existing Parking
- Future Parking

Parking Counts:

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| On-Street Parking | |
| Main Street | 54 |
| Capitol Avenue | 84 |
| Public Parking Lots | 103 |
| Private Parking Lots | 246 |
| Total Parking | 487 |

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

City Government Officials, Business / Property Owners and Building Occupants: Group 1A

- Group described Downtown as being deserted. It needs help compared to other small towns.
- Mt. Sterling is best known for: Dot Foods; Hunting; Prison; Dot Foods Country Store; Public Schools, and Catholic Elementary School.
- By comparison, Rushville is known as a thriving downtown area, which surrounds a town square and has two (2) pharmacies, Ace Hardware, Insurance and Real Estate offices, two to three (2)-(3) restaurants, several boutique stores, South Side Emporium and Phoenix Opera House. A bowling alley and theatre are just off the square.
- The pharmacy and Dollar General moved out of Downtown recently. Jim Heaton owns the pharmacy and said it was the best move he ever made due to the amount of foot traffic he gets being located in the IGA. Parking was also an issue downtown according to Jim.
- A boutique which recently closed (Dunlop Place) sold crafts, books, home décor, and furniture.
- There could be a place like The Peddlers on South Main in Jacksonville, which rents booths for local craftspeople.
- Mt. Sterling could be known as the place to come for “deals,” as there is already an established customer base for Dot Foods Country Store.
- One opportunity to consider is retail and attractions for the wives of the many hunters who come to Brown County.
- Local events include the Car Show (June), County Fair (August), Sportsman's Club Testicle Festival (June), Homecoming Parade (Fall), Brown County Deer Classic (November); there used to be many more social events...beginning to see more with Brown County Action Teams.
- The Library – existing Library on Main Street is actively looking at building a new facility. The Library would like to draw more teens / young adults / adults. The new facility is seen as a place for ideas – movies / lectures / meeting space / traveling exhibits / displays. “The YMCA is a hub for physical activity; the Library should be a hub for ideas and thinking.”
- The group described the heart of Mt. Sterling as the following: public school; Capitol & Main; Buckley area.
- The new public golf course will be fully open this year.
- The group noted the following as the historical / cultural attributes of Mt. Sterling: agriculture; hunting; good values; hard workers; good people; friendly people; Brown County football team.
- Housing – there is a need for housing in the \$60K-\$80K range. There are plenty of homes in the \$30K-\$40K range and \$100K+ range. There is a demand for rental property.
- There is a current plan for a new senior living facility.
- Need parking in Downtown.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

City Government Officials, Business / Property Owners and Building Occupants: Group 1B

- The group used the following words to describe Mt. Sterling: charming, historic town; feeling tired; empty storefronts; so many buildings need repair; desolate.
- The same problems exist in all downtowns for business owners: profit and loss.
- There are not too many business owners who can spend money on the older buildings.
- The group members shared the Downtown essence and attributes they hoped others could experience: "how it used to be when I grew up on Main Street;" "charming;" "historic;" and "the center of the community."
- Need more second-floor utilization.
- There is not a parking problem, but there is a parallel parking problem.
- The group indicated a desire to have the following types of stores in Downtown: clothing stores; kid's stuff; shoes; bookstore; and a gift shop.
- Need marketing programs to encourage keeping dollars Downtown; First Fridays events with gallery openings; special events with music; crafts, appetizers, and special deals; street fairs; walking tours; fun runs; flea markets; winter fairs; farmers markets; Made in Mt. Sterling Festival and sticker (Brown County).
- Need signage that offers a tone and theme; flower baskets.
- Need to enforce codes to get rid of and improve nuisance buildings.
- Rushville envy.
- Most towns have a central square or park; need a park or pavilion.
- Honor Flight Festival.
- City owns land under water tower. Do something with that.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Brown County Businesses & County

Government: Group #2

- Downtown is bleak. There are too many vacant buildings, and it closes too early.
- Need places to go after 9 pm. There is no food or entertainment after 9 pm.
- Need a theme or idea for Downtown.
- Spunky Bottoms, Il River Bottoms nature conservancy
- There is no real appreciation of old buildings.
- Really need a place for teens.
- Hunting is a big business and is growing. There is not much fishing as lakes are too small.
- The town now seems to be growing; just not Downtown.
- Need more women's clothing retailers, more specialty stores, bakery, movies, bookstores, pottery shop, coffee shop, sandwich shop, men's clothing, shoes, and entertainment.
- Used to have "Peanut Day." Paid \$1 for a bag of peanuts and got a coupon or a plastic pig.
- Businesses have to draw from all of Brown County and beyond; need to differentiate.
- Businesses need to come together and be active, support each other, market together, and encourage new entrepreneurs.
- It is tough to stay in business long enough to change current behavior and have people shop in town, instead of just getting in the car and going to Quincy, etc.
- Need businesses uptown to "cause turn signals to come on."
- Need something like the "Smiles Day" Parade in Rushville.
- Put fabric in upper windows so it doesn't look so bad.
- Big demand for upstairs, second floor, apartments.
- Not the right housing stock; need good homes in the \$60k to \$90k range.
- Mt. Sterling has the lowest unemployment east of the Mississippi; Dot, Prison.
- Farm economy is strong; the size of farms here is good. Local farmers support the community unlike the big 30k to 40k acre farms that are self contained and don't need dealers or the town.
- Community really pulls together to help each other, no matter the cause: cancer, accidents. No one asks for money; they just pitch in and help.
- The heart of Mt. Sterling is the YMCA or Brown County Courthouse.
- Artists / Entrepreneurs: Janet Franklin, jewelry, antler jewelry, Petoskey stone jewelry (husband is carpenter Larry Franklin); Erin McKaskill, jewelry; Jeremy Taylor, coon hunting, makes something; Kathy's Kitchen, Virginia, IL, Jelly; Winery; Gary and Janet Martin, Indian Corn; Anita Rice, Pie Baker.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Hunters: Group # 3

- Hunters come to Brown County from NY, NJ, PA, FL, GA, TX (all over the U.S.) between October-January. Most come during a 3-4 week period in Oct. - Nov. every year (Oct. 15th – Nov. 15th).
- Turkey hunting is also popular – the season started Monday.
- Outfitters host hunters on their property, and provide lodging, meals, and guides for 5-8 day hunts. One local outfitter, Doug Bennefield, hosts 400 hunters on 16,000 acres.
- Mt. Sterling assets: deer, turkey, grapes, timber (hunting grounds).
- Mt. Sterling is: Dot Foods, farming, and deer.
- Farming consists of corn, soybeans, wheat, and cattle.
- One outfitter, Larry Hanhold, started growing grapes in 2000 and now has a winery with support facilities including an event facility that can cater 150 guests: Ridge View Winery (<http://www.ridgeviewwinery.com>). The Illinois Valley Wine Trail is a popular tourist attraction, with approximately 91 vintners in the state.
- It was noted that a lot of farm land in Brown County has been lost to outfitters / hunting, some of which is sold to outside or absent land owners whose only interest in Brown County is the hunting season.
- Mt. Sterling is about trust and pride.
- The cost of land is approximately \$6500-10,000 / acre for farm land and \$2600-3000 for rough land (timber).
- There is great fall foliage in Brown County, a tourist draw. In SW Brown County, there is a 200' elevation change that the Ridge View Winery overlooks.
- Brown County Deer Classic, a St. Mary's Catholic School fundraiser, is very popular.
- There is an Amish and Mennonite population in Brown County.
- It is difficult to get independent businesses to organize to promote themselves and Mt. Sterling.
- The school system is a deterrent to people living in Brown County; consequently, many Dot Foods employees commute from surrounding cities and counties.
- Some businesses have done well – Rustic Gardens, Arms Unlimited – though Brown County hunters go outside of the county to purchase their hunting gear, guns, etc.
- Renee's Place, a restaurant on Main, does well in general and very well during hunting season.
- Someone just purchased the bank building on the corner of Main and Capitol and is converting the upper floor to apartments. The ground floor will be a coffee shop.
- Money is tight from January through April 15th, although after tax day, people begin to have more disposable income.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Young Professionals: Group #4

- Close knit; everyone comes together.
- Downtown impressions: “empty;” “dying;” “vacant lots;” “eyesores;” “falling down;” “higher end missing;” “limited parking;” “have to go to Quincy to shop for clothes, see a movie, and eat out;” “only nice thing is Veteran’s Memorial;” “don’t want to have to drive 45 minutes each way to Quincy as kids get grumpy and its embarrassing;” “people are used to driving to Quincy;” “there is no dining since Woody’s left: go to the Approach.”
- Make it a destination with a coffee shop, buildings filled with tenants and dressed up, and movies.
- Taxes are too high.
- Very little to offer in jobs except Dot and prison employment at minimum wage.
- No kids are out anymore.
- Brown County was in decline before Dot. Residential has improved in the last few years.
- Can’t understand how Rushville works. It has never declined or had unemployment, and is always busy.
- No good entry-level housing.
- People all shop on line.
- People don’t seem to appreciate history.
- Local stores don’t allow buying on credit.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: YMCA or golf course.
- Social events are sporting events, games, little league games, cook outs at home, and watching kids play together.
- Not many community groups.
- Farm Bureau
- Brown County Action Teams
- The Brown County Fair is the oldest in the state. It runs an entire week during the first week of August.
- People pull together.
- Pella, IA is similar in composition, with a big company in a great small town.
- Galena, IL is an example of a town that people like.
- How to make it a destination: market the golf course.
- We want Mt. Sterling to be sustainable, busy, a destination, thriving, fun, and visually appealing.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Commuters: Group #5

- Perception of Mt. Sterling is that it is a community that has been digressing over the seven years he has been commuting.
- Would like to see more variety and ethnicity represented in Mt. Sterling.
- It was noted that the Griggsville downtown, with its recently updated streetscape, new lighting, and boutique stores, is a good example of improvements that could be made to downtown Mt. Sterling.
- Would like to see more variety in dining options at Mt. Sterling.
- Finds the Mt. Sterling community welcoming and friendly. He regularly uses the YMCA during lunch.
- Lack of overall diversity in Mt. Sterling is a negative factor in appealing to his age group (mid-late 20s).
- Regarding the restaurants and retail offerings, he feels the lack of variety and competition is a deterrent to higher expectations.
- Would like to see a more coherent Main Street with a diverse group of stores, as the current streetscape has untapped potential.
- Believes a stronger Main Street will communicate the message that Mt. Sterling cares about its community.
- It was suggested that there is a need for a place for drivers to shower, purchase diesel fuel and have their trucks washed. Roughly (50) non-Dot Food trucks pass through Mt. Sterling per day along with (300) Dot Food trucks.
- Market for women hunters, reflected in the growth of the Safari line of clothing for women.
- The schools are not a deterrent to families settling in Mt. Sterling, but they are also not a draw. Test scores are reported to be lower than communities closer to Quincy.
- There is a lack of ethnic / racial diversity in Mt. Sterling that may be a deterrent to some.
- Many meetings at Dot Foods are catered by companies in Quincy and Jacksonville rather than going out locally since the selection is limited.
- There appears to be a need for a larger meeting venue that has catering ability. The club house at the new golf course is an option; Renee's Restaurant also has a back room for private meetings.
- Dot Foods provides a benefit to their employees to encourage buying housing locally – it is valid only in Brown County, available to first-time buyers. The program offers \$3,000-\$5,000, spread over a five-year period, to help during the early years of the mortgage – the average is \$4,000.
- The kinds of activities and places that would attract out-of-town residents to Mt. Sterling include the following: Charity events, golf tournaments, Dot Country Store, folk festivals, a drive-in, fairs, Fall Foliage Festival, mystery theatre, hunting and fishing store, the winery, wild game cook-off.
- The downtown redevelopment effort in Pontiac, IL was mentioned as a possible model. In 1985, the Development Corporation sold shares at \$1000 each to purchase loans on the buildings. The effort was a success and included many new businesses in the downtown area including a music store, ice cream parlor, kitchen store, and a five-and-dime store.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Youth & Parents: Group #6

- Get rid of eyesores.
- Need one centerpiece.
- Must reverse the pattern of going out of town.
- Update Christmas décor.
- Improve landscaping in all areas.
- Mural on wall; make it a park with benches, gazebo, dogwoods or redbuds.
- Need places to eat, sit and chat; coffee shop; bakery; a good Saturday night dinner location; theatre; movies; bowling alley.
- People go to Quincy because they feel like they have to get out of town to go do something.
- Social life centers around sports and draws community together.
- Need a place for teens where they can just sit and talk, dance, play games such as Wii and ping pong, and enjoy soda and snacks.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: YMCA, ballpark in summer.
- Need big party to kick-off Downtown revitalization, with painting, youth center, chili cook off.
- Grilling cook off.
- Miss and mister contest, Friday night dance, parade.
- Art Club, Industrial Arts Class at high School would participate.
- Mt. Sterling residents who are artists or crafts people: Frank Moore, Roger Mountain, woodworking; Ann Cowick, artist; Rodney Flynn, artist; Monte Yakle, artist; Kathy Rohrer, artist; Larry Bullard, willow artist; Rick Rich, antler tables; Erin Eveland art teacher; Keith Fullerton, IA teacher.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Brown County Action Team: Group #7

- Brown County action teams gave a brief overview of what each group was working on: Youth – Special Olympics event May 7th; Housing & Economic Development – Business Incubators; Assisted Living Facility; Community Betterment – Raffle Fundraising effort for new benches in Uptown area and new ‘Welcome to Brown County’ signs at main roads leading into Brown County; Education – Launching PTO; Teacher Appreciation Week; Health & Social Services – Brown County Against Cancer event June 11th including health screenings.
- The group noted that Mt. Sterling’s Greatest Assets were: YMCA; Dot Foods; great people; family; community support; energy & volunteerism; lowest unemployment rate in Illinois; Brown County Action Team; ‘40 Miles from Anywhere’; safer than larger towns; small town values; the land / nature.
- The group noted the following as Mt. Sterling’s greatest weakness: Poor appearance of Downtown; there has been growth, but not in Downtown – decline began in the 60s and 70s.
- The group noted the following as needs in Mt. Sterling: A vibrant Downtown; coffee shop / internet café; quilt shop; roller skating rink; clothing store; local, organic food store; more activities for Youth; a destination, upscale restaurant (like ‘The Approach’ in Meredosia), something unique and different to draw diners from other cities and counties; more festivals, organized events for families; theatre; more activities for adults to keep them in Brown County instead of driving to Quincy, Jacksonville, Macomb, Meredosia; more diverse employment base; need an internet presence; a local gathering place with catering, like the winery.
- When asked what people considered to be the ‘Heart’ of the Mt. Sterling community, they responded: YMCA; the school system, which functions as a community hub with school plays, and football and basketball games.
- The following were noted as needs for the youth in the community: theatre; nice restaurant; a place to hang out with food and music – currently, young adults spend weekend evenings ‘Taking Laps’ (also known by their parents as ‘Wasting Gas’), driving around Mt. Sterling from one end of the community to the other. Look at urban areas to see what kids are doing and bring that back to Mt. Sterling.
- Dot Foods employs 1550, but approximately 650 live in Brown County – need to do something to retain those families.
- Currently 800 students in the public school system, from Pre-K through 12th grade.
- There is a strong need for middle-income housing – the upper and lower ends are well served.
- There are many craftspeople in Brown County who sell their products or services, though they do so out of their homes, and by word-of-mouth – scrapbooking, sewing, quilting, jewelry, pottery, etc. There could be a store like ‘The Blue Door’ (<http://www.bluedoorart.com>) in Springfield, which is a collection of locally crafted items. A Mt. Sterling Community Web site could provide access to locally produced merchandise.
- The dairy farm on Rte. 24 produces milk that is sold to Prairie Farms. They do not produce cheese and cannot sell raw milk for cheese production.
- Locally produced beef is sold to a local locker to be distributed.
- When asked where they’re from, people say ‘Brown County’ instead of ‘Mt. Sterling’.
- Brown County population: approx. 5000; with Prison: approx. 7000.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Senior Citizens: Group #8

- Group's perception of Mt. Sterling was that it was a family oriented community; a place that once had a thriving Downtown.
- Mt. Sterling used to have Croxton's and Penney's stores and other thriving retail, along with places to have coffee and socialize downtown, but not anymore.
- Mt. Sterling should not look like Clayton (Clayton is a small community NW of Mt. Sterling with a sparse and deserted-looking downtown area).
- "If you can't find a parking space, that is a great town!"
- Opportunities for Mt. Sterling include weekly requests for rental housing, primarily for single parents or newly married couples (rentals typically \$400-\$450 / mo. for a house); cottage industries including crafts and services, though people don't think of those skills as marketable.
- What is needed is to create a theme or atmosphere in Downtown that communicates the illusion that it is busy.
- There is a widely held perception that Downtown lacks sufficient parking.
- There are lots of people who come from outside of Mt. Sterling to the YMCA. Downtown should benefit from all of that traffic.
- Most would love to see a nice restaurant such as The Approach in Meredosia or The Red Dome in Pittsfield, and would prefer local owners. The South Side restaurant in Meredosia is known for serving the best fish.
- Mt. Sterling does a poor job of promoting itself and its offerings. There should be a local business featured in the newspaper every week, as well as an internet presence.
- There should be an effort to tidy up the community and create a 'welcome' to Brown County.
- Grafton, IL has done a good job of attracting restaurants and businesses that have made for a unique experience – The Fin Inn, The Brick House along with Grafton Antiques.
- The winery draws visitors from a large geographic area and would work well with antique and craft business to create a great visitor experience.
- Mt. Sterling has the second oldest average age in the state of Illinois according to the 2000 Census.
- There is a camp in Brown County where volunteers teach urban youth to fish.
- Visitors to Brown County typically say, "I love the area!" or "I love the people!"
- The price of land has gone up considerably in the past 10 years – land that was \$3500 / acre is now selling for up to \$10,000 / acre, leading to a loss of family owned farms. "You have to be a millionaire or inherit the land in order to be a farmer today."
- There are two (2) successful farm implement businesses in Brown County, though most believe they are not the most desirable businesses to have at the doorstep of the community.
- There is a bit of 'truck farming' (small produce farming, typically eight acres or less) going on in the County – Versailles farm – sweet corn, watermelons.
- Unique aspects of Mt. Sterling are: High employment; low crime; education; sports; natural resources; ballpark / pool; scenery.
- Mt. Sterling / Brown County is an attraction for bicyclists and motorcyclists.
- There is a large pool of part-time help for small businesses who would choose to locate in Mt. Sterling.
- Great local historical society.
- There are a variety of names for the downtown area, including Downtown, Uptown, In Town, To Town – Uptown seems to be the most common since geographically the intersection of Main and Capitol is the highest elevation.
- Create attractive entrances to Brown County and Mt. Sterling.
- Enforce local laws to clean up houses and businesses.
- Involve service clubs in assisting those without funds to paint and otherwise improve their homes and yards.
- Consider a contest for a theme for the town: Local art / crafts; holiday with retail focus; a historical theme, "The Little Town That Could."

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Senior Citizens: Group #8, *continued*

- Special discount days.
- Community yard sales on Saturday afternoons.
- Need to create a busy look on Main Street or fake it until it happens.
- Encourage entrepreneurs. Support new businesses for at least three years with low-interest loans, incubator-type assistance. Create a pool of part-time workers, subsidized to assist smaller businesses.
- Identify or create an organization to manage and promote development / retail. Create a weekly or monthly “What’s great about Mt. Sterling?” article.

Downtown Lunch Crowd: Group #9

- The feeling is that the lunch selection in town is good, but that there is a need for a good restaurant for dinner. It was noted that it would be nice to have a restaurant Downtown with a nicer atmosphere and with food that is as good as Pam’s food at The Uptown.
- Parking is a problem at lunch time in Downtown.
- People are interested in great food, good prices, and parking close by.
- Residents of Brown County regularly travel out of the County for dinner – to Meredosia, Quincy, Jacksonville, and Rushville.
- There may be an opportunity with the clubhouse at the new golf course to attract out-of-town diners to Brown County / Mt. Sterling; use the clubhouse for catered events, etc.
- A dinner theatre concept might work in Mt. Sterling. It would be something unique, and provide an experience that would draw people from many counties.
- Sports tournaments in Mt. Sterling are a great opportunity to capture a dinner audience that has traveled to Mt. Sterling from out of town.
- There is a need for family places to socialize in Mt. Sterling – a casual place that has pizza for the kids, but also serves coffee and wine for adults.
- The Fairgrounds has facilities that can accommodate many people and is currently underutilized. Perhaps the pavilions / buildings there could be put to better use as a community gathering place.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Newcomers to Mt. Sterling: Group #10

- Need curb appeal, pots with flowers, trees.
- Need restaurants, Target, and a bakery.
- Need lighting, aesthetics, and to paint the Post Office.
- Screenprinting on shirts place.
- Steak and wine place.
- Farmer's market
- Need Kohl's, and a men's big and tall shop.
- Trucks are a problem.
- It is hard to meet people.
- Mt. Sterling has a great school system, and really hard-working people.
- Need a place for teens. Now they "take laps" around town.
- No public transportation to Quincy.
- Small community, growing strong, but Downtown is not doing well. There is too much red tape involved in reinventing Downtown. Need parking.
- Amazing baker, Michelle Carmine, wants to open a bakery.
- Nichole Miller, crochet.
- Erin McKaskill, screenprinting on shirts place.
- Steak and wine place.
- The heart of Mt. Sterling would be the YMCA or the football field.
- Need a sidewalk, and a bike path from the golf course to Clark Park.
- Need apartments, and homes from \$40k to \$100k.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Comments from Nine Individual Interviews

- It was devastating to see IGA and Dollar General move to the edge of town, since they served a population that relied on walking to these stores.
- Transportation for the elderly and disabled is needed—there is a call-a-ride public transportation option.
- Senior housing is needed.
- The flower shops (particularly April's) are examples of successful retail businesses that have a mission to serve the County.
- Rushville is an example of downtown success – there is a commitment to the Arts in Rushville that has driven the planning and implementation of several events that bring lots of people from out of town to Rushville.
- There is a high Catholic population in Mt. Sterling.
- Bankers are involved in the community.
- There is a need to make the buildings attractive.
- Clayton has an example of a successful bakery / restaurant.
- Many people outside of Mt. Sterling feel the city is lucky to have the Tracy family, the YMCA, and jobs!
- There is a John Woods Community College site near the Dot Foods Country Store (Mt. Sterling Learning Center).
- Schools are improving, with really positive, generational teachers, and good people.
- Seems to be a growing trend of people in their 30s who want a small-town life and are moving back to start a family.
- Friday night football, basketball, and fundraisers are the social life.
- Arts are not as big.
- Olive McNeff has a vast knowledge of quilting.
- There is a certain ambition in town to be self-reliant.
- 30-year-olds are connected on internet, 50-year-olds are not.
- A lot of people just don't know what is here.
- 30 years ago, Downtown was booming. There were clothing stores, pizza, two hardware stores, three flower shops, and lots to do to kill an hour at lunch.
- Loves the small-town feel of the place.
- Taxes are high.
- Some people think that Mt. Sterling is cliquey.
- Everyone is a fan of the Brown County Hornets, High School. That's where everyone comes together.
- Two dance studios do really well.
- Mt. Sterling is a quiet, safe, nice little town.
- Wish it could be more accommodating: more stores, restaurants, more to walk to.
- Mt. Sterling is known for its YMCA, Catholic school, great pool, park district with tournaments, skateboarding, ice skating, tennis, and volleyball.
- The lake is city managed; fireworks draw a big crowd.
- Abe Lincoln stood at the corner of North Grade School and gave a speech.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling would have been in front of the courthouse.
- If there is a need, families here pitch in.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

- They're letting derelict buildings continue to be derelict.
- Ordinances are dated.
- IHP maintenance codes need to be enforced.
- Youths need a place to hang out.
- Mt. Sterling strengths: quaint; people are nice; would like to see it progress more.
- Would like to see Pizza Place, Walgreens or CVS, Kmart.
- Shops on line -- mostly work related.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: Main Street and Capitol.
- Now: hometown potential.
- Future: Inviting; people want to stop and look.
- Grocery stores were open until midnight every Saturday when all the farmers came into town with their families and did all their shopping for the week; common in agrarian communities until the early 70s.
- Tenant farmers lived in small houses on the big farm and would plant a tree in front of the house for shade and as a marker. Now the trees are big and the houses are gone. Farms were taxed on improvements to the property so when the tenants moved out, the houses were bulldozed to reduce taxes.
- Mt. Sterling heyday was 30s to the 50s: Three cigar stores with people rolling cigars, three butchers, Big Chicago Store that sold Hart Schaffner Marx suits.
- Germantown had its own Main Street on the edge of Downtown.
- Some don't like change.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: Dot or YMCA; also parks.
- Should build on park corridor.
- YMCA has spiked interest in health.
- People are accustomed to jumping in the car and running to Quincy, Rushville, or Springfield.
- City takes an aggressive approach to derelict housing in residential areas through City Council and with police issuing citations.
- Brown County Proud was a monthly contest for prettiest house with prize.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: it was the four-way stop until 1985 or so; now it is schools, the YMCA, the baseball diamond, and anything with kids.
- The plan needs mechanisms; here's A to Z on what you need to help you get started and be successful. Some are afraid to ask, as they don't want to appear ignorant or have to save face.
- Dr. Allen brought Lincoln to Mt. Sterling to speak, then took him to Rushville by buggy. Dr. Long's widow lives in existing house, pre-civil war. Part of old 8th Circuit, but Lincoln didn't try any cases in Mt. Sterling. Lincoln Rock was moved in the 1950s to a grove of trees, the site where he spoke, near the elementary school.
- Limestone sidewalks, 4' x 8' slabs, were replaced with concrete. First National was on alley where beauty shop is. There were two large slabs that formed the entry steps: one said "First National" and the other said "Bank." The second one was saved.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARIES CONTINUED

- Mt. Sterling is a comfortable community, close knit with all the good and bad that goes with that. If you need anything, they are there, all family.
- Not forward-thinking.
- “You could do better if you go somewhere else” for anything: doctors, lawyers, clothing, food, restaurants.
- People get accustomed to driving.
- Monday through Friday there is a lot of potential for business and office.
- Downtown needs to be more attractive; now empty and bleak.
- Golf course and YMCA draw people to Mt. Sterling.
- Rushville had Mexican restaurant, movies, kitchen store, two jewelry stores, hardware, opera house with active drama group, interesting stuff, madrigals, and a swimming pool.
- In the last five years, people in their 30s, 40s and 50s are coming back and staying.
- Friday night, for football and basketball, the gym is packed. That is a good sign.
- When something good happens, people are surprised, like the YMCA and schools.
- People, especially in retail, are afraid to fail.
- Farmers Bureau is active in community; just don’t tax my farm.
- No Mexican, no French; this is a meat and potatoes community.
- Change is scary, but officials are more open now.
- Heart of Mt. Sterling: Four-way stop sign
- Gathering place is the high school.



A RENEWED VISION FOR 'UPTOWN': MT. STERLING, A 21ST CENTURY MAIN STREET IN THE HEART OF BROWN COUNTY.

The Uptown District will again play a key role in Mt. Sterling's life, but in a manner that enhances the quality of life for a community in the 21st century.

Uptown will be the new common ground addressing the aspirations and needs of Mt. Sterling residents, workers, visitors, and tourists.



