

City of Knox

Downtown Revitalization Plan



Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Downtowns across the US are seeing a resurgence as millennials and empty-nesters seek walkable, compact neighborhoods in which to live. Downtowns are the heart of cities and their health reflects on the entire city (see Figure 1). Since these are also the historical sites on which cities developed, they reflect the history and cultural significance of municipalities in the U.S. Civic leaders see the redevelopment of downtowns as a catalyst for the economic revival of cities and their historic neighborhoods.

Rationale and Scope of Work

The purpose of this study is to prepare a downtown revitalization and façade improvement plan for the City of Knox, IN with a goal to re-establish downtown as a vibrant mixed-use environment with a variety of recreational, residential and family-friendly uses. The plan was developed in a manner and scope that will also enable the city to meet the minimum technical requirements established by the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for cities that wish to apply for Main Street designation.



Figure 1: Images of downtown Knox.

Residents' Vision for the Downtown

The word cloud in Figure 2 was generated from the survey responses of residents and depicts their aspirations for the downtown's development. It shows that the keywords that are often used to describe residents' vision for the downtown are "historical" "businesses", "attractive", and "people", among others. In sum, residents' vision of the downtown is of a place that is vibrant, aesthetically pleasing, and pedestrian-friendly, with a small-town feel that is enriched with the city's unique architecture and proud history.



Figure 2: Residents’ vision and priorities of downtown redevelopment

Methodology

The study utilized several approaches to assess the current conditions in the downtown and to identify the key issues that need to be addressed. These included a precedence study, a field assessment, a public forum, a resident survey, and ESRI analysis. Details of these approaches are discussed in the next sections.

Precedence Documents Review

We began our assessment of the current conditions of downtown Knoxville by reviewing existing historical documents and plans about the city and its downtown. These documents included the City of Knoxville comprehensive plan, and the 2015 and 2019 Constellation of Starke OCRA grant document. Though we reviewed the entirety of the documents, we paid special attention to those sections that directly related to downtown. The findings from these documents provided us with a baseline understanding of conditions in the city and of the priorities of residents as they relate to the downtown's development.

Field Assessment

After thoroughly reviewing the documents, we visited Knoxville to get first-hand information of conditions in the downtown. We walked the entirety of downtown to establish its boundaries. This informed our demarcation of the downtown for our analysis. We also conducted a survey of the east and west building facades along the Main street business corridor and recorded our observations. This survey included taking pictures of every building on both sides of main street, documenting the condition of each building, its use, and whether or not the building was vacant. The visual survey and recording were done with Survey123 to geotag the pictures taken to geographic link them with the data that we gathered.

Public Forum

To gain input from residents in the preparation of the downtown plan, we also held a public forum in the city. The forum had an impressive number of participants, with about 30 members of residents in attendance. At the public forum we held several small focus group discussions to obtain the public's answers to three questions: What do you most like about the downtown and would like to retain? What do you most dislike about downtown and would like to improve?

And finally, what are your aspirations for the downtown? At the end of the public forum, a person at each of the tables presented the findings from their table, which we then collated and analyzed as part of our study.

Survey

After the field trip, we used our newfound understanding of the city to formulate a survey that we administered to residents. We designed the survey using Qualtrics, an online survey tool. Residents of the survey were given a web link to access and fill out the survey questions. The survey was also advertised to residents through the local radio station and social media such as Facebook. At the close of the survey 364 residents responded to the survey. We then used the built-in data analysis function in Qualtrics to analyze the data to derive our findings. This survey gave us a more in-depth look into what the citizens of Knox liked about the downtown, what they wanted to change about downtown, and much more.

ESRI Analysis

The final step in our assessment of the downtown was the utilization of ESRI to analyze socioeconomic data about downtown Knox. This yielded information on the economics, demographics, housing, expenditure and business patterns of the city and its downtown. The ESRI data allowed us to get objective data that reflects downtown Knox and allows us to separate any asymmetry that could exist between the perception of the citizens of Knox and what is reflected in the data.

A History and Economy of Knox and Its People

The area that is now the city of Knox was established more than 12,000 years ago when the last ice glacier receded from the land. The melting of snow and ice left what is now Starke County and Kankakee Valley, a flat, slowly drained marsh and swamp with sandy, wooded knolls, and highlands in and around the sides of the valley (County history, n.d). The incredible bounty and diversity of wildlife that once inhabited the area led it to be called “Chicago’s food pantry” (Everglades of the North, 2012). It is believed that the first settler, an Englishman named Edward Smith, lived on the land in what is known as Oregon Township in 1835. The city was founded in 1851 and named after General Henry Knox. Knox was also the home of Indiana Governor Henry F. Schricker. The city of Knox was incorporated in 1871, twenty years after it was surveyed and laid out. In 1898 the city annexed parts of section 22 and 23 and thus extended the city limits to 2 square miles, one mile north and south, and two east and west (A short history of Knox, 1916). In the 2010 Census, the city’s population was 3,704. It is estimated that the 2019 population is 3,668. The population is projected to decrease to 3,630 by 2024 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Population Trends

Year	Population	Change
2000	3,754	
2010	3,704	-0.13
2019	3,668	-0.01
2024	3,630	-0.01

The median age in the city increased slightly from 36.3 in 2000 to 37.5 in 2019 and is expected to inch up a bit to 37.9 in 2024. The daytime population in the city is 5,687, comprising of 2,331 residents and 3,356 workers. There are currently 1,425 households in the city with an average household size of 2.56 persons per household. Median household income in the city is expected to rise from \$32,255 in 2019 to \$34,149 in 2024 as will per capita income from \$17,509 to \$19,514.

Of the 1,637 housing units in the city, 55.0% are owner-occupied, 29.9% are renter-occupied, and 15.1% are vacant. This vacancy rate is quite high considering that the conventional housing vacancy rate is typically expected to be between 5% and 7%. The median home price is expected to increase slightly from \$80,080 in 2019 to \$81,592 in 2024. In education, only 17% of the residents have an associate degree or higher. The unemployment rate in 2019 is 8.1%, which is higher than the state and national average. The civilian labor force that is older than 16 years is 1,348. Of this number, 35.9% are employed in the service sector, and 31.7 are employed in manufacturing (see Table 2).

Table 2: Employment by Sector

Industry	Percent
Agriculture/Mining	0.1
Construction	7.9
Manufacturing	31.7
Wholesale Trade	3.4
Retail Trade	12.4
Transportation/Utilities	2.4
Information	2.2
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	1.9
Services	35.9
Public Administration	2.2

The ESRI marketplace profile in Table 3 shows that the city had a retail potential of \$30,027,496 but that a total of \$55,434,630 in retail sales took place in the area. This means that the additional sales of \$25,407,134 were from residents who lived outside the city. The implication is that the city is benefiting from people who shop in Knox but don't live in the city.

Table 3: ESRI Market Profile



Retail MarketPlace Profile

Knox City, IN
 Knox City, IN (1840374)
 Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri

Summary Demographics						
2019 Population						3,668
2019 Households						1,425
2019 Median Disposable Income						\$27,334
2019 Per Capita Income						\$17,509
2017 Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$30,027,496	\$55,434,630	-\$25,407,134	-29.7	47
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$27,386,068	\$48,240,164	-\$20,854,096	-27.6	31
Total Food & Drink	722	\$2,641,428	\$7,194,466	-\$4,553,038	-46.3	16
2017 Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$6,276,229	\$10,729,226	-\$4,452,997	-26.2	6
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$4,925,949	\$7,684,964	-\$2,759,015	-21.9	2
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$769,765	\$0	\$769,765	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$580,515	\$3,044,262	-\$2,463,747	-68.0	4
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$723,759	\$0	\$723,759	100.0	0
Furniture Stores	4421	\$473,370	\$0	\$473,370	100.0	0
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$250,389	\$0	\$250,389	100.0	0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$745,648	\$3,155,841	-\$2,410,193	-61.8	3
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$1,995,225	\$1,209,674	\$785,551	24.5	2
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$1,839,057	\$1,209,674	\$629,383	20.6	2
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$156,168	\$0	\$156,168	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$4,711,240	\$13,135,262	-\$8,424,022	-47.2	5
Grocery Stores	4451	\$4,141,758	\$12,332,031	-\$8,190,273	-49.7	4
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$218,653	\$0	\$218,653	100.0	0
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$350,829	\$803,231	-\$452,402	-39.2	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$1,780,064	\$9,043,247	-\$7,263,183	-67.1	4
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$3,270,877	\$6,787,667	-\$3,516,790	-35.0	2
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$968,207	\$0	\$968,207	100.0	0
Clothing Stores	4481	\$594,714	\$0	\$594,714	100.0	0
Shoe Stores	4482	\$196,048	\$0	\$196,048	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$177,445	\$0	\$177,445	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$570,882	\$0	\$570,882	100.0	0
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$469,080	\$0	\$469,080	100.0	0
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$101,802	\$0	\$101,802	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$4,465,184	\$2,367,428	\$2,097,756	30.7	2
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$3,311,801	\$0	\$3,311,801	100.0	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$1,153,383	\$2,367,428	-\$1,214,045	-34.5	2
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$1,289,527	\$1,623,884	-\$334,357	-11.5	6
Florists	4531	\$56,563	\$269,163	-\$212,600	-65.3	2
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$208,845	\$0	\$208,845	100.0	0
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$153,729	\$148,072	\$5,657	1.9	1
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$870,390	\$1,206,649	-\$336,259	-16.2	3
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$589,226	\$187,935	\$401,291	51.6	1
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$434,243	\$0	\$434,243	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$30,127	\$187,935	-\$157,808	-72.4	1
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$124,856	\$0	\$124,856	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$2,641,428	\$7,194,466	-\$4,553,038	-46.3	16
Special Food Services	7223	\$71,979	\$0	\$71,979	100.0	0
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$90,667	\$133,981	-\$43,314	-19.3	1
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$2,478,782	\$7,060,485	-\$4,581,703	-48.0	15

Expenditure Patterns

Consumer spending shows the amount spent on a variety of goods and services by households that reside in the area. Expenditures are shown by broad budget categories that are not mutually exclusive and consumer spending does not necessarily equal business revenue. The Spending Potential Index (SPI) represents the amount spent in the area relative to a national average of 100 (see Table 4).

Table 4: Consumer Expenditures

2019 Consumer Spending	
Apparel & Services: Total \$	\$1,544,328
Average Spent	\$1,083.74
Spending Potential Index	51
Education: Total \$	\$1,066,065
Average Spent	\$748.12
Spending Potential Index	47
Entertainment/Recreation: Total \$	\$2,569,823
Average Spent	\$1,803.38
Spending Potential Index	55
Food at Home: Total \$	\$4,088,007
Average Spent	\$2,868.78
Spending Potential Index	55
Food Away from Home: Total \$	\$2,714,702
Average Spent	\$1,905.05
Spending Potential Index	52
Health Care: Total \$	\$5,053,101
Average Spent	\$3,546.04
Spending Potential Index	60
HH Furnishings & Equipment: Total \$	\$1,589,799
Average Spent	\$1,115.65
Spending Potential Index	52
Personal Care Products & Services: Total \$	\$646,476
Average Spent	\$453.67
Spending Potential Index	51
Shelter: Total \$	\$13,054,757
Average Spent	\$9,161.23
Spending Potential Index	50
Support Payments/Cash Contributions/Gifts in Kind: Total \$	\$1,850,635
Average Spent	\$1,298.69
Spending Potential Index	52
Travel: Total \$	\$1,540,265
Average Spent	\$1,080.89
Spending Potential Index	48
Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs: Total \$	\$906,245
Average Spent	\$635.96
Spending Potential Index	56

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. ESRI forecasts for 2019 and 2024 ESRI converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

Figure 3 summarizes key facts about the City of Knoxville. It shows the city has a median age of 37.5 years, an average household size of 2.6, and a median household income of \$32,255. It also shows there are 285 businesses in the city, employing 3,549 people, 38% of whom are white-collar workers, 37% are blue-collar workers, and 25% are in services.

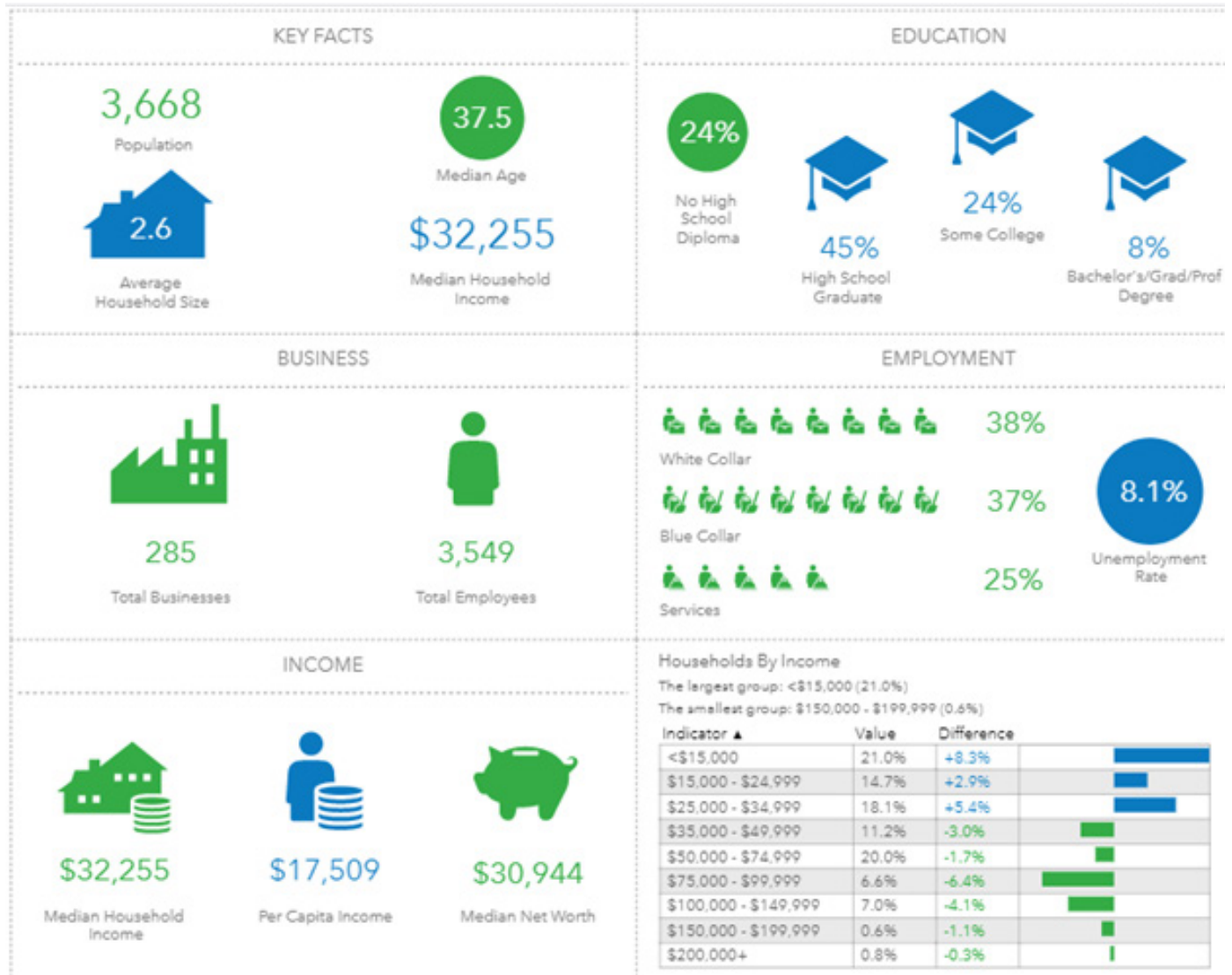


Figure 3: Key socioeconomic characteristics of the city of Knoxville

Characteristics of Downtown Knox, Indiana

For purposes of this study, the downtown boundaries comprise of Bender Street to the south, along the train tracks. The major western border consists of Shield street. Shield street runs north until Washington, which extends further west as a downtown border. Wrapping around the post office, the northern border is then defined by Mound Street, eventually meeting with Main Street to Water Street. The border continues south along Pearl Street until Mound Street. Moving east along Mound Street, the border runs south through the alley between Pearl Street and US 35 / Heaton Street. This border runs south through the alley until the Marathon gas station, where the border extends east to US 35, eventually connecting to the southern border, Bender Street (see Figure 4). This border was made to ensure all commercial properties in close proximity to the downtown core along Main Street were included, and to exclude the adjacent residential properties west of Shield Street and east of US 35.



Figure 4: Downtown boundaries

Land Uses in Downtown Knox

The majority of downtown Knox is in commercial and mixed land use, particularly retail and office space (see Figure 5). The highest concentration of mixed-use buildings occurs along Main Street between Bender and Washington streets. Table 5 shows that there are 32 buildings in this block, 8 of which are vacant. The table also shows a mix of uses including retail, office, residential and mixed uses. Two of the buildings were assessed to be in great condition, 13 are in fairly good condition, 12 are in a decent condition, and five buildings were determined to be in poor condition.

Table 5: Characteristics of Buildings on Main Street

Building Characteristics	Number
Number of buildings	32
Number of buildings being used	24
Number of vacant buildings	8
Building Use	
Buildings being used	24
Office	8
Retail-Service	10
Residential	1
Mixed-used	5
Building Conditions	
Poor condition	5
Decent condition	12
Fairly good condition	13
Great condition	2

The mixed-use buildings have retail space at the ground level with residential apartment units above. Below is a list of some of the major commercial businesses in downtown Knoxville.

- Dollar General
- Downtown Depot
- Rabbit Coffee Roasting Co
- Key Bank
- O's Tap
- MBS Fitness
- Jack and Diane's USA Café and Sports Bar
- Fingerhut Bakery
- Mikey's Pizza Pit Stop

Downtown Knoxville has a concentration of the city's civic and cultural amenities. These include:

- Starke County Courthouse
- Historic commercial buildings along Main Street.
- Community Center
- Historic Depot
- Proximity to Wythogan Park
- Serenity Gardens pocket park

Other notable features within the downtown include the street art along Main and Lake Streets and the mural on a downtown building along Lake Street. These are great art pieces that tie in well with the nearby Serenity Gardens pocket park. The downtown area has two significant spaces for potential infill: the empty lot on the southeast corner of Main Street and Lake Street, and the lot near Main Street and Washington Street that is currently home to the vacant Moose Lodge. The downtown is quite small and compact, making it easy for pedestrians to walk from one end to the other. Figure 6 shows two highlighted service areas indicating a 5- and a 10-minute walk from the origin point near Main Street and Lake Street

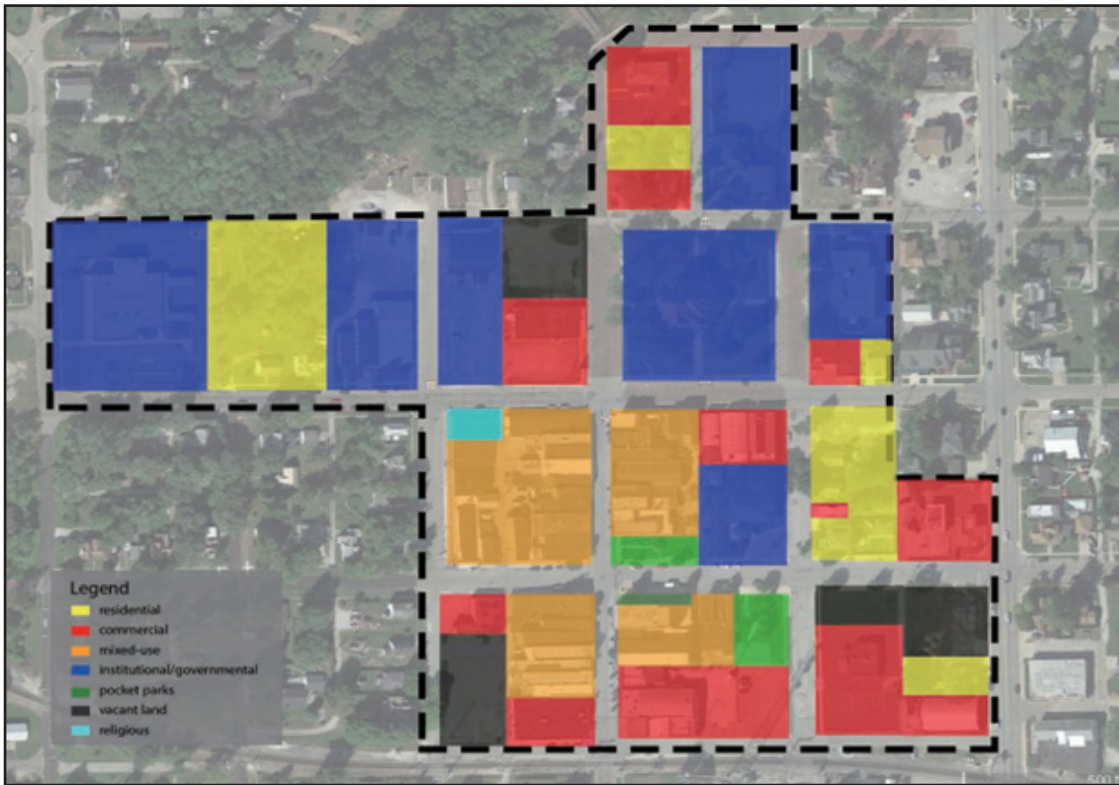


Figure 5: Land uses in downtown Knox by type.

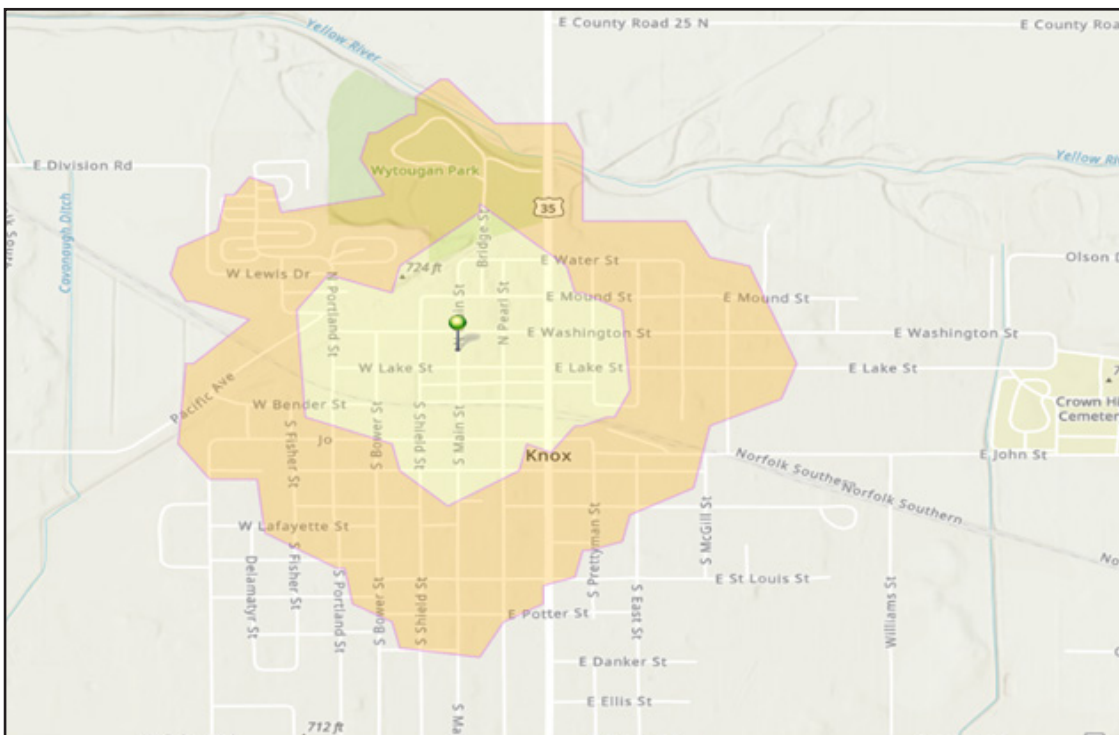


























Figure 6: Areas in the lighter yellow region are a 5-minute walk from the origin. Areas in light orange are a 10-minute walk from the origin.

Vision Perceptions Assessment

A visual audit of the downtown provides further insights into the physical characteristics of the downtown and is summarized in Table 6. The downtown scored well in the number of destination points, in the street wall provided by the historic buildings, in the mix of downtown uses, and the predominance of civic and cultural activities. However, the downtown lacks a well defined boundary and gateways, and complete streets that accommodate different modes of transportation as conveyed in Table 6.

Table 6: Visual audit of downtown Knox

Feature	Presence	Quality	Comment
Well define boundaries			There are no clear north/east boundaries of the downtown, but the southern boundary is clear
Gateways and gateway signs			No gateway to the downtown present
Wayfinding signs			There were signs with the street names only
Destination points		Pretty good	There were several destination points in the downtown like the post office, courthouse, city hall, etc.
Street Wall		Pretty good	There are no noticeable gaps, the only gaps are at the corners
Public square			No public squares, but there are plans to build one
Activities to do		Good	There are varied activities to go in the downtown, however, it's still lacking in some areas (retail, entertainment, etc)
Diversity of economic activities		Good	There are different type of economic activities to do (law firms, real estate offices, restaurants, coffee shop, bakery, gas station, clinic
Mixed-use buildings		Good	There are mixed-use buildings present in the street wall, however many of the residential units are vacant
Sidewalks and pedestrian furniture		Somewhat good	Sidewalks are in good condition however there aren't enough pedestrian furniture
Bike lanes			There aren't many people who bike to downtown therefore many residents expressed no need to have bike lanes
Short Blocks			
Small and large gathering places		Somewhat good	There is a pocket garden on the corner in main street, however, it isn't enough and there aren't large gathering places
Places for people to sit		Somewhat good	There is a pocket garden on the corner in main street, however, it isn't enough for pople to sit

Civic and cultural amenities		Pretty good	There are plenty of civic and cultural amenities downtown
Diversity of architectural styles			There are different architectural styles in the downtown that disconnect the buildings from one another
Historic preservation		Poor	There have been several changes to the exterior of the historic buildings in the downtown. Only the courthouse remains well maintained
Trees and landscaping		Somewhat good	There is landscaping present, however, it is not enough
Public Art		Pretty good	The crosswalk art and murals are great
One-way streets			
Uniformity and types of business signs		Poor	There was no uniformity to the business signs
People		Somewhat good	It was a cold day, however, not ideal for observation
Historic neighborhoods		Pretty good	
Landmarks		Pretty good	
On-street parking		Pretty good	Most wasn't used

Notable Socioeconomic Characteristics of Downtown Knox

As a major hub for city businesses, downtown Knox has 87 different businesses. This comprises 28% of all businesses in the city. These businesses employ 486 people and brought in \$29 million in total sales in 2019. ESRI analysis also shows that there is more money going into downtown Knox than there is leaving downtown Knox. For example, in 2017 the total demand for “retail trade and food and drink” in the city’s downtown was \$292,864 but the total supply of goods in the downtown area was \$3,353,526. Thus there was a retail gap of \$3,060,662 in the area. Residents identified the strengths of the downtown and the areas that need improvement. As indicated in the word cloud in Figure 7, the most frequent responses regarding downtown assets included the historic architecture, including the Starke County Courthouse, the small-town feel, the unique shops, including the popcorn and coffee shops, the downtown mural and pocket parks, and access to Wythogan Park.

Table 7: How often residents visit the downtown

Daily	35%
Weekly	38%
Bi-weekly	12%
Monthly	13%
Never	2%

What do you do when you go to the downtown

Table 8: What residents do when they visit downtown

Shopping	187	23%
Restaurants	234	29%
Work	41	5%
Government Services	195	24%
Community Activities	90	11%
Other	70	9%

Figure 9 illustrates the “other” activities that people most often engage in when they go downtown. Most people go downtown to do banking service, to use the gym, to walk and shop at downtown businesses.



Figure 9: Other activities residents engage in when they go downtown

About the same proportion of residents visit the downtown now as they did five years ago. This implies that the downtown has not lost its customer base now than it did in the past (see Table 9). Respondents gave suggestions of the amenities that need improvement in the downtown (Table 10). These include landscaping, street lighting and seating improvements, as well as signage and sidewalk improvements. The businesses that need to be attracted to the downtown from a residents' perspective are clothing stores, restaurants and coffee shops (see Figure 10).

Table 9: Comparison of frequency of visits to the downtown now and in the last five years

Most frequently	49.56% (169)
Less frequently	50.44% (172)

Table 10: Amenities needing the most improvements downtown

Landscaping	185	23%
Sidewalks	95	12%
Seating	128	16%
Streeting Lighting	136	17%
Signage	106	13%
Other	166	20%



Figure 10: Types of businesses that need to be attracted to the downtown

While the high concentration of businesses is good news for downtown Knoxville, vacancy is still an issue. Some 42.1% of downtown buildings are vacant. Also, only 2.3% of the city’s housing units are located downtown and 1.3% of the population lives in the downtown. The downtown has experienced depopulation over the years. Between 2000 and 2019 the population living downtown decreased by 8.2%. Reusing vacant land and repurposing vacant buildings remains a priority to ensure that the downtown realizes its full potential.

Summary of Major Assets and Liabilities of Downtown Knoxville

Through the community engagement process, the review of documents, fieldwork, and the socio-economic data analysis, we identified the assets of the downtown and the priority issues that need to be tackled to improve conditions in the downtown. These are summarized in Table 11 under three broad categories; design, policy, and regulation.

Table 11: Summary of key findings

	Observation	Planning implications
Design	Expanding landscaping	More landscaping is needed especially near parking lots
	Exterior building improvements	Facade improvements with matching grants. Defensible space theory may be useful. We must explore other funding sources at the state or federal level. Motivate property owners to improve buildings. Speed up permitting process for developers that want to build downtown.
	Reusing moose lodge building	Dog park, plaza, restaurant
	No public seating	Provide seating at courthouse and pocket park
	Improve lighting	Period lighting
	Lack of cohesiveness of facades	We will do improvements

	Reusing moose lodge building	Dog park, plaza, restaurant
	No public seating	Provide seating at courthouse and pocket park
	Improve lighting	Period lighting
	Lack of cohesiveness of facades	We will do improvements
	No public gathering space	Pocket park ideas
	ADA compliance	Improve ramps near street corners
	More trees	
	Connect Wythogan park to the downtown	
	Expanding crosswalk painting	
	Lack of gateways and entrance to downtown	Must need an entrance. More wayfinding
	The perceived shortage of parking	
Policy	High vacancy rate	Must increase the attractiveness of downtown businesses. Establish BID
	High crime rate	Ring cameras? Downtown ambassadors/volunteers to walk downtown. Develop ambassador program
	Competition from non-downtown businesses	Find a way to attract drivers on US-35 to go downtown. Direction signs in Knox along 35 that point out local businesses and attractions
	No downtown Merchant association	Develop merchant association. There must be regular events downtown at least every two weeks.
	Establish historic preservation policy	Ordinance, form-based code

	1.3% population is living downtown	
	42.1% vacancy in the downtown	
	Not enough events in the downtown	
	ADA compliance	
	More trees	
	Connecting downtown to US-35	
	Lack of clothing stores	
	Brick street deteriorating	
	Water systems need updating	
Regulation	Historic preservation	Need historic preservation ordinance
	Poor signage	Signage that is regulated but some uniformity
	ADA compliance	
	Synchronized business signs	
	Apathy of property owners	Increased building code enforcement

Priority Action Areas

Six strategies are advanced for the redevelopment of downtown Knoxville based on the findings from the study and the input from stakeholders. Three factors influenced the selection of the strategic actions proposed: cost, political support, and impact. We identified projects that can be readily implemented within a short time period of between two to five years and that can be funded from the general revenue fund or that would not incur significant debt for the city. We also considered whether the projects will receive widespread support from civic leaders and city residents. Third, we identified projects that will have an impact not only on the downtown but ripple effects on the rest of the city. Based on these considerations, the following proposals were identified for implementation by the city:

- Historic building façade improvements.

- Formation of a Downtown Business Owners Association (DBOA).

- Cultural/Yellow Brick Trail.

- Gateways, wayfinding, and signage.

- Landscaping, seating, and lighting of public spaces.

- Parking and outdoor/sidewalk cafés.

Façade Improvements

Cities that seek to revitalize their downtowns usually begin the process with a building façade improvement program. This is because façade improvements provide a visible attestation to residents and visitors of the downtown's revitalization. We, therefore, recommend that the city of Knoxville begin the downtown redevelopment process with façade improvements of the historic buildings on Main Street. The city's history is embodied in its historic buildings, most of which are located in downtown. These structures were built at the time of settlement of the city, dating back to the 1800s. Many are now showing wear and tear and need to be restored to extend their useful lives. Façade improvements will also help to improve the appearance of the historic buildings as many have been boarded up with modern materials that do not conform with the original building materials that were used in their construction. Studies of façade improvements of historic buildings in other cities show that building upgrades help to activate Main Street by opening up the ground floors of these buildings for retail, and increase downtown housing through the remodeling of the upper floors of these buildings. Façade improvements to the historic buildings also enhanced the unique and

historic architectural features. Façade improvements can also have benefits beyond the buildings themselves. For example, façade improvements:

- i) Inspire property owners to take greater pride in their buildings and to make additional improvements beyond the building facades such as interior modifications to the buildings;
- ii) Increase the number of first-time customers to businesses located in the buildings;
- iii) Make the buildings more appealing to investors and thus increase their sales value;
- iv) Improve the assessed value of the buildings and thus the revenue that cities can generate from them; and
- v) Make the adjacent neighborhoods a more attractive residential choice for residents in the city.

Best Practices in Façade Improvement Programming

In implementing the façade improvement program, city leaders should be cognizant of the factors that make such a program successful and avoid the pitfalls that can contribute to the program's failure. Façade programs usually unfold in three phases: pre-planning, implementation, and post-implementation. It is important for the city to establish in a clear language the roles and expectations of the public sector and the building owners at each phase of the process. In particular, it is important for the city to provide a context for the façade improvements so residents and property owners know that the façade program is part of an overall redevelopment plan for the city and not a stand-alone program. In this case, the façade improvement program will be the first of several programs to revitalize downtown Knoxville that will also include infrastructure improvements to the downtown. The following considerations are important in achieving a successful façade improvement program.

Stakeholder buy-in: It is important to first get buy-in from private property owners who own the historic buildings in the downtown. The city must, therefore, provide a convincing reason why the building owners should participate in the façade improvements beyond the benefits it provides to the public. Here data from other façade improvement programs that demonstrate sales volume improvement, increase in property values, and pride of ownership in buildings can be used to make the case to building owners. City leaders should hold several one-on-one meetings with each

property owner to discuss and seek their input in the façade improvement program.

Stakeholder Forum: Once the individual meetings have taken place between the city and property owners, the next step is to hold a stakeholder forum with all property owners to discuss the program and explain the process. At this meeting, the city should provide the before and after images of each building that will undergo the façade improvements. Sketches of the buildings that show the types of modifications that will take place and the outcome of these changes can help excite building owners about the project. The stakeholder forum should also be used to discuss the role of the architects as well as the contractors and sub-contractors in the program.

Online tutorial: In addition to the meetings, the city should provide an online tutorial to help property owners and city residents understand the facade improvements program. The tutorial can cover such issues as to why it is necessary to have a façade improvement to the historic buildings, how the program is going to unfold over time, potential disruptions to traffic on Main Street and how it will be handled to minimize the impact on customers of downtown businesses, and the timeline for implementation, among other considerations. Such a tutorial can assist property owners, and city residents to better understand the program and even help convince reluctant property owners to enroll in the program.

Contract: Once property owners agree to participate in the façade improvement program a contract should be signed between the city and each of the building owners, establishing the terms of the projects. This way, each side knows what is expected of them as the contract spells out the responsibilities of the public sector and the property owners.

Matching grants: Restoring historic buildings to their original state is expensive and comes with high risks. To decrease the cost to building owners, cities must provide sufficient matching grants to decrease the rehabilitation cost to the building owners. Typically, the matching grants range from a low of 50% to a high of 90% from the public sector, with the property owners making up the difference in cost. Each property owner has to commit to contributing their share of the project cost for their building.

Bid for contractors: The city must take on the responsibility of seeking, vetting and enlisting construction firms that are well versed in historic property rehabilitation. This can be done by putting out a bid to solicit the interest of contractors for the work. Once the vetting is completed, the city can then maintain a register of the selected contractors that property owners can select from to

work on their projects. If some of the funds for the project is from the federal government such as CDBG, then HUD requirements must be met. This usually includes a requirement that contractors should not be on the debarred list that prevents them from working on federal projects, and that contractors must also pay construction workers Davis-Bacon prevailing wages.

Cost assessment: Once a property owner selects a contractor from the list maintained by the city, they will need to work with them to provide a cost estimate for their building. This is the estimate that will be used to determine the city's match for each building. In some cases, it may be necessary to have an estimate from more than one contractor so the best option is chosen. Ideally, the contractors that the city vets and enlists in the program should be local to the community, meaning they should be easily accessible to the property owners so that they be easily reached to resolve problems when they arise.

Contingency funds: Property owners need to know that older buildings such as the ones the façade program is funding often have structural problems that may be difficult to fully assess by visual inspection alone. More often than not these structural problems are discovered when remodeling and after the walls have been taken down. Thus, the initial estimated cost may be far less than what it will take to complete the project. Property owners should, therefore, make provision for cost overruns that may occur during construction.

Some cities approach this by creating a contingency fund. Building owners are then required to pay an additional 2% to 5% of the construction cost into this fund to meet potential cost overruns. The money is refunded to them if no cost overruns occur at the end of the project. If this is not possible, then the city would have to create the contingency fund and pay for these unexpected costs from public funds.

Creative financing: Although the city may be providing matching grants for the façade improvements, it is possible that some property owners will not have the funds to meet their share of the cost. The city should, therefore, work with local banks to see if they can provide low and no-interest loans to property owners to meet their matching requirements. Such a creative financing program will decrease the burden to property owners and increase the likelihood of their participation in the program.

Project timeframe: As part of the contract and project implementation process, the city and building owners have to commit to implementing the building improvements within a given timeframe, usually no longer than one year from start to finish. This helps to control costs and ensure that all projects are completed within the same timeframe.

Building easements: As part of the contract, building owners must also agree to not modify their building facades after the completion of the projects for a given period of time. Building owners should, therefore be required to sign an easement agreement with the city on their building facades. The easements serve two purposes: i) easements are necessary to make the façade work eligible for CDBG funding if it is used, otherwise the city will not be able to invest CDBG funds to improve what is otherwise a privately held façade, and ii) the easements help to protect the city's investment in the property. This ensures that the facades stay the same and contribute to the cohesive look and aesthetics of the downtown.

Flexibility in program requirements: While historic building materials should be used in restoring the historic buildings, sometimes there may be a need for flexibility in using alternative materials that are durable, have low maintenance, and yet do not compromise the historic character of a building. The city should, therefore, provide such flexibility where needed.

Communication: In all cases, effective communication between the city and property owners is crucial to having a successful façade improvement program implemented. Most façade projects run into serious problems where there is a breakdown in communication and property owners do not know the expectations of the city or do not have a clear sense of the requirements. To avoid this problem there should be regular meetings between city staff and property owners to ensure a smooth flow of information and communication between the two bodies with a clear channel established for resolving problems that may arise. All downtown property owners that are in the façade program should also be required to participate in regular meetings during the construction-phase to share ideas and experiences. This ensures mutual learning as the projects proceed.

Storefront Façade Improvements

Ten buildings on Main Street have been identified for the first phase of the façade improvement program in downtown Knoxville. The buildings and the design proposals for their improvement are provided in Figures 11 to 20.

10 N. Main Street

Analysis

- Upstairs windows need a unified design
- The upstairs brick façade looks good but may require tuckpointing to prolong the life of the brick
- Design details on cornice need to be exposed and polished
- Painting on the ground floor façade does not fit well with the brick façade style
- Improve stairway entrance

Design Modifications

- Restored all upstairs windows with double-hung windows
- Provided wide glass windows on the ground floor to improve visibility and daylighting
- Added awnings to the storefront for shade and to improve aesthetics
- Added door to the stairway entrance and window above the front door

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 11: Before and after images of the storefront at 10 N. Main Street

11 N. Main Street

Analysis

- Cornice detail needs to be exposed and rebuilt
- Brick material needs tuckpointing
- Upper floor windows are boarded up
- Remove siding from façade
- Improve storefront entrance
- The building needs fresh paint

Design Modifications

- Accentuated cornice detail
- Restored all windows to their original material and form
- Siding is replaced with large glass windows to let in sunlight
- Awnings are added to storefront display windows for weather control and sun
- Doors restored with historic material style
- Awnings provided for shade

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 12: Before and after images of the storefront at 11 N. Main Street

7 N. Main Street

Analysis

- Faded brick material
- Historic building materials on the first floor have been replaced with cheaper materials
- Windows on the second floor are covered up, hiding their design
- No business sign on the building

Design Modifications

- Removed coverings from upper floor windows
- Restored upper floor bay windows that were in the original building
- Added permanent awnings
- Opened up first-floor windows with wide glass windows

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 13: Before and after images of the storefront at 7 N. Main street

5 S. Main Street

Analysis

- The building has a sheet metal false front above display windows
- Upstairs Windows boarded up with sheet metal
- Front door not parallel to the street
- Attractive brickwork, with interesting details, including cornice above upstairs windows
- Brick façade may need tuckpointing

Design Modifications

- Replaced sheet metal false front from façade and upstairs windows
- Placed in double-hung windows
- Added an awning to replace the lower half of the false front
- Added prism glass to replace the upper half of the false front

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 14: Before and after images of the storefront at 5 S. Main Street

4 S. Main Street

Analysis

- The first floor is covered with false façade material
- First-floor windows are covered up and two small windows are added instead
- The door is not on the level with the sidewalk
- Second-floor façade appears well maintained

Design Modifications

- Removed false coverings from the first floor
- Restored a more era-appropriate design to the first floor
- Added permanent awnings
- Repainted the columns with a more neutral beige color

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 15: Before and after images of the storefront at 4 S. Main Street

6 N Main Street

Analysis

- The upper floor has different window styles and designs
- There is a unique detailed entrance to the upstairs
- Pillars and the door entrances are attractive, hence need to be preserved
- An awning on the first floor doesn't match building material style and quality
- Awning covers a larger portion of the façade than is required

Design Modifications

- Installed new awnings for the two shops
- Installed double-hung glass windows on the upper floor
- Provided wide glass windows on the ground floor to bring in light to the indoor activities
- Installed wood panels (bulkheads) with attractive woodwork below the display windows

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 16: Before and after images of the storefront at 6 N. Main Street

5 N. Main Street

Analysis

- The building appears newly renovated and in good shape
- Façade is well maintained and needs little work
- First-floor design needs minimal modification

Design Modifications

- Restored a more era-appropriate design to the first floor
- Added permeant awnings to the first floor
- Repainted the columns with a more neutral beige color

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 17: Before and after images of the storefront at 5 N. Main Street

3 S. Main Street

Analysis

- Comprised primarily of a metal overhang, large glass windows, and a stone façade
- The building has a large sign and little detail around the windows
- There are two entrances, the north entrance is the main storefront entrance, the south entrance leads to the upstairs
- The top of the façade forms a broad triangle that meets above the historic “Metzger” building name

Design Modifications

- Provided an awning over the front of the building
- Removed the tan metal and replaced it with glass transom windows to allow sunlight into the building
- The current stone above the transom window is removed to expose the original historic brick façade (as seen from Lake Street)
- Details added to the windows to help them stand out
- Removed large signage
- A smaller painted sign on the window can be used or a smaller hanging sign that faces the sidewalk can be installed

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design

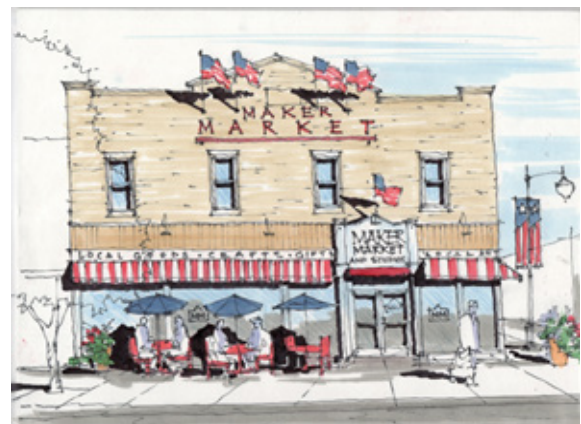


Figure 18: Before and after images of the storefront at 3 S. Main Street

13 N. Main Street

Analysis

- Underneath the wood façade is brick
- AC unit above door
- Windows appear to be in good shape
- The top floor of the building is stone and also appears to be in great shape
- Lower layers of building are sheet metal

Design Modifications

- Returned building back to a bricklayer
- Removed the sheet metal layer from the building facade
- Replaced sheet-metal layers with wood and added border underneath storefront windows
- Removed AC unit from atop the entrance door
- Added awning to the storefront window
- Restored and provided wide glass windows on the first floor

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 19: Before and after images of the storefront at 13 N. Main Street

11 S. Main Street

Analysis

- The design of the first floor is covered with false facades
- The design of the second-floor façade is well maintained

Design Modifications

- Removed false coverings from the first floor
- Restored a more era-appropriate design to the first floor
- Provided large glass windows on the first floor
- Restored cornices
- Added fixed awnings

Existing Storefront



Improved Façade Design



Figure 20: Before and after images of the storefront at 11 S. Main Street

Form a Downtown Business Owner's Association (DBOA)

The city of Knoxville does not currently have an organization that takes on the responsibility for championing the interests of the downtown, leaving the responsibility to the city government. A Downtown Business Owner's Association (DBOA) will take on this responsibility. The purpose of a DBOA will be among other things, to organize and coordinate events in the downtown for the mutual benefit of the city and downtown business owners. The organization will also give the downtown an identifiable stakeholder and a voice in decisions affecting the downtown. It will provide business owners the opportunity to discuss the redevelopment of downtown and how to make continual, achievable improvements to their businesses for the mutual benefit of all. Additionally, the DBOA will take on the task of organizing downtown events that will bring people to the area and provide the customer base for downtown businesses. Some of the events that can be organized by the DBOA could be:

- Discount/Deal Days – identify certain days in the month in which all members of the Downtown Business Owners' Association offer discounts or deals to draw more consumers to downtown.
- Art Walks – these events let local artists display their work either in downtown buildings or in front of main street businesses. Again, the aim is to bring more foot traffic to the main street corridor and also allows the community to draw meaningful connections with local artists and downtown businesses.
- Charitable Events – the Downtown Business Owners' Association can organize charity events where a certain percentage of sales made during the scheduled day would be donated to a locally focused charitable cause.

Structure of Downtown Business Owner's Association

The Downtown Business Owner's Association (DBOA) would be a non-profit organization that is separate from the Chamber of Commerce and its membership will include only owners of the businesses that operate in downtown. The elements that are needed to form a non-profit are articles of incorporation and by-laws. The DBOA will have a board of directors that oversees the mission and vision of the organization and an executive director that oversees the daily operations of the organization.

There are many structures available to use for establishing a non-profit organization, and it's important to choose the structure that is best suited for the type of non-profit you would be establishing. Establishing a non-profit in Indiana can be a complicated process, and we suggest that an expert in the field be consulted to assist in this endeavor. As an example, we provide below a DBOA that was formed in Gaylord, MI that can inspire Knox.

Case Study: Gaylord, Michigan

Gaylord is a town of 3,687 people located in north-central Michigan. Like Knox, Gaylord is located next to a highway and has multiple lake communities surrounding it. A key difference between Gaylord and Knox, however, is that the city is located close to a ski resort, Treetops Resort. Another key difference between Knox and Gaylord is the existence of a downtown merchant's association, which in this plan is referred to as a downtown business owner's association.

Gaylord's Downtown Merchant Association's main function, outside of organizing downtown businesses, is to hold events. Many of the events they hold are similar to the ones already outlined above. One event that draws a crowd to the downtown is the downtown Easter Egg hunt. In this event businesses downtown all chip in and hide Easter Eggs downtown for the community's children. Families bring their children for this fun event and it also provides an opportunity to build generational bridges and positive memories associated with downtown. The family-friendly event drums up foot traffic in downtown and supports the downtown business.

The formation of a Downtown Business Owners' Association is also a prerequisite by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for receiving the Main Street designation. As a Main Street Community, the city of Knox can benefit from several programs and funding from the state government. As Figure 21 shows, in Indiana, there are only 11 counties that do not have a designated main street community. Starke County is one of those counties, and, with work, Knox could be the community that earns that designation for Starke County.

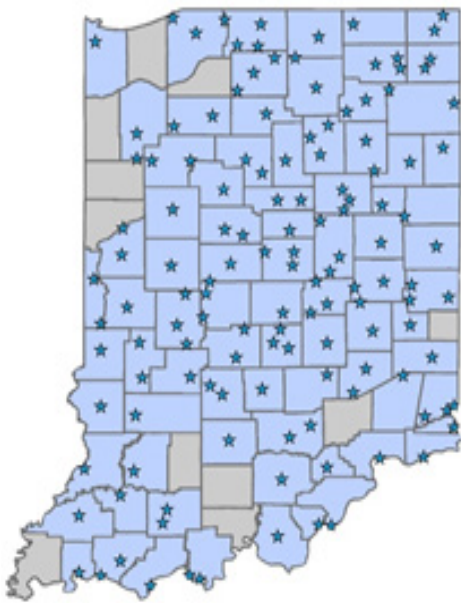


Figure 21: Indiana Main Street Communities by County, 2018
www.in.gov/ocra/mainstreet.htm

The Indiana Main Street Program is a state-run program, overseen by the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, that aids local communities to develop plans and programs to achieve incremental, long-term, and sustainable revitalization of their communities. The Indiana Main Street has assisted in the revitalization of downtowns in the state. For example, it is reported that every dollar that was invested in the downtown leveraged \$56 investment from the private sector.

There are other benefits to earning the designation of the main street community. Your city will have access to training events, grant opportunities, technical assistance, and much more. To fully understand the scope of the Indiana Main Street program, you can visit the program's web site at the following link <https://www.in.gov/ocra/mainstreet.htm>. This website will also provide

the contact information for your community liaison and has promotional materials and infographics to help garner support from your community.

Designate Downtown as an Economic Improvement District

Once a Downtown Business Owners' Association is formed, it may be necessary to identify ways to raise revenue for the operation of the organization. One approach is to designate downtown as an economic improvement district (EID). As defined by IC-37-7-22, an EID is a special tax district that is established by the vote of the property owners within the district. The establishment of the district allows for the levy of a special tax that would provide revenue to perform a myriad of services and improvements within the district. This could include but is not limited to; planning and managing development activities, landscaping, beautification, supporting business development, recruiting new businesses, the provision of security, and much more. Figure 22 shows the boundaries of the proposed EID for Knox.

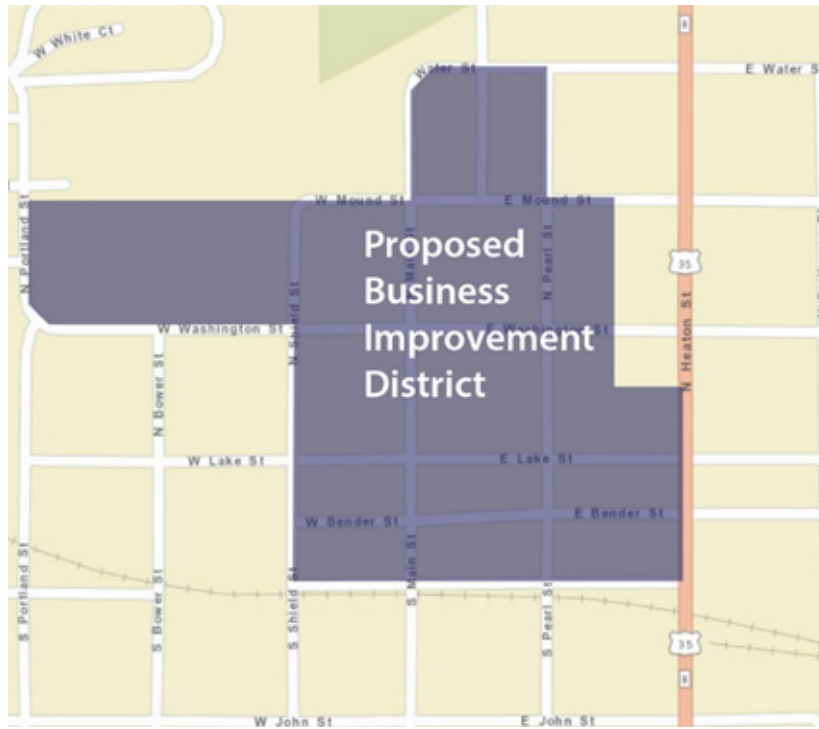


Figure 22: Boundaries of the proposed Business Improvement District

Process for establishing an Economic Improvement District

To establish an Economic Improvement District, a petition must be filed with the municipal clerk no later than one-hundred and twenty (120) days after the notice of intent to file is filed with the same municipal clerk. Items to be included in the petition are; the proposed boundaries of the district, name, and address of each parcel owner along with land use and zoning description for the parcel, a detailed description of the economic improvement projects to be carried out, a plan for the application of the revenue to the economic improvement projects within the district, a proposed formula for determining the percentage of benefit to be received by each parcel owner, and a proposed list of board members. The petition must include the signatures of at least sixty (60) percent of the property owners within the district. And the property owned by the signatories of the petition must be at least sixty (60) percent of the assessed valuation of the property within the district. The petition's sixty percent requirement will not consider properties owned by an entity or a signature representing that entity if the property would be exempt from the assessment.

After the Petition

Following the petition, an economic improvement board will be selected, and an economic improvement fund established. The annual levies collected for the economic improvement district will be collected and placed into this fund. The board is also required to submit an annual budget by November 1st of each year. The board will also be responsible for annual reporting. For a more complete look at the process of establishing an economic improvement district, please refer to Indiana Code Title 36 Article 7 Chapter 22: Economic Improvement Districts. As an example, a .50% tax on the downtown taxable property is given in Table 12. This tax would raise close to \$18,000 for the operations of the Downtown Business Owners' Association.

Table 12: Revenue from Downtown Assessed Values at 0.50% Mill Rate

Adresses	Assessed Value (2019)	Percent of Assessed Value	Tax Levy Without BID	Tax Levy With Bid	Revenue Increase
21 S Main Street	\$ 160,500.00	4.48%	\$ 4,835.00	\$ 5,637.50	\$ 802.50
15 S Main Street	\$ 62,000.00	1.73%	\$ 1,736.00	\$ 2,046.00	\$ 310.00
9 S Main Street	\$ 31,700.00	0.89%	\$ 971.00	\$ 1,129.50	\$ 158.50
11 S Main Street	\$ 40,800.00	1.14%	\$ 7,344.00	\$ 7,548.00	\$ 204.00
5 S Main Street	\$ 57,600.00	1.61%	\$ 1,748.00	\$ 2,036.00	\$ 288.00
3 S Main Street	\$ 62,800.00	1.75%	\$ 1,730.00	\$ 2,044.00	\$ 314.00
52 W Lake Street	\$ 40,600.00	1.13%	\$ 1,238.00	\$ 1,441.00	\$ 203.00
Shield Street Parking Lot	\$ 21,300.00	0.60%	\$ 639.00	\$ 745.50	\$ 106.50
Corner Shield & Bender Parking Lot	\$ 11,000.00	0.31%	\$ 330.00	\$ 385.00	\$ 55.00
18 S Main Street	\$ 47,800.00	1.34%	\$ 1,434.00	\$ 1,673.00	\$ 239.00
N of 18 S Main Street	\$ 87,700.00	2.45%	\$ 2,651.00	\$ 3,089.50	\$ 438.50
14 S Main Street	\$ 78,200.00	2.19%	\$ 3,542.21	\$ 3,933.21	\$ 391.00
12 S Main Street	\$ 37,300.00	1.04%	\$ 1,139.00	\$ 1,325.50	\$ 186.50
10 S Main Street	\$ 18,300.00	0.51%	\$ 569.00	\$ 660.50	\$ 91.50
8 S Main Street	\$ 30,300.00	0.85%	\$ 1,761.20	\$ 1,912.70	\$ 151.50
4 S Main Street	\$ 36,200.00	1.01%	\$ 1,106.00	\$ 1,287.00	\$ 181.00
52 E Lake Street	\$ 103,200.00	2.88%	\$ 3,096.00	\$ 3,612.00	\$ 516.00
Bender Street (Rear)	\$ 4,000.00	0.11%	\$ 120.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 20.00
Bender Street (Front)	\$ 10,200.00	0.29%	\$ 306.00	\$ 357.00	\$ 51.00
6 N Main Street	\$ 13,700.00	0.38%	\$ 431.00	\$ 499.50	\$ 68.50
8 N Main Street	\$ 20,900.00	0.58%	\$ 647.00	\$ 751.50	\$ 104.50
10 N Main Street	\$ 63,900.00	1.79%	\$ 1,775.00	\$ 2,094.50	\$ 319.50
12 N Main Street	\$ 42,300.00	1.18%	\$ 1,764.50	\$ 1,976.00	\$ 211.50
20 N Main Street	\$ 195,200.00	5.45%	\$ 5,876.00	\$ 6,852.00	\$ 976.00

22 N Main Street	\$ 48,900.00	1.37%	\$ 1,399.00	\$ 1,643.50	\$ 244.50
6&8 E Washington Street	\$ 12,100.00	0.34%	\$ 623.00	\$ 683.50	\$ 60.50
10 E Washington Street	\$ 18,800.00	0.53%	\$ 584.00	\$ 678.00	\$ 94.00
14 E Washington Street	\$ 21,500.00	0.60%	\$ 665.00	\$ 772.50	\$ 107.50
52 E Washington Street	\$ 39,000.00	1.09%	\$ 1,190.00	\$ 1,385.00	\$ 195.00
54 E Washington Street	\$ 99,400.00	2.78%	\$ 3,002.00	\$ 3,499.00	\$ 497.00
60 E Washington Street	\$ 82,200.00	2.30%	\$ 2,486.00	\$ 2,897.00	\$ 411.00
13 N Pearl St	\$ 54,000.00	1.51%	\$ 1,640.00	\$ 1,910.00	\$ 270.00
1&3 N Main Street	\$ 81,300.00	2.27%	\$ 2,301.00	\$ 2,707.50	\$ 406.50
5&7 N Main Street	\$ 105,500.00	2.95%	\$ 2,835.00	\$ 3,362.50	\$ 527.50
9 N Main Street	\$ 43,900.00	1.23%	\$ 2,020.02	\$ 2,239.52	\$ 219.50
11 N Main Street	\$ 40,100.00	1.12%	\$ 987.00	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 200.50
13 N Main Street	\$ 22,600.00	0.63%	\$ 698.00	\$ 811.00	\$ 113.00
15 N Main Street	\$ 49,200.00	1.37%	\$ 1,318.00	\$ 1,564.00	\$ 246.00
17 N Main Street	\$ 43,900.00	1.23%	\$ 1,207.00	\$ 1,426.50	\$ 219.50
19 N Main Street	\$ 59,100.00	1.65%	\$ 3,207.20	\$ 3,502.70	\$ 295.50
21 N Main Street	\$ 60,400.00	1.69%	\$ 3,880.20	\$ 4,182.20	\$ 302.00
41 W Lake Street	\$ 18,100.00	0.51%	\$ 281.50	\$ 372.00	\$ 90.50
45 W Lake Street	\$ 68,500.00	1.91%	\$ 1,905.96	\$ 2,248.46	\$ 342.50
51 W Lake Street	\$ 20,800.00	0.58%	\$ 644.00	\$ 748.00	\$ 104.00
53 W Lake Street	\$ 90,000.00	2.51%	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 450.00
14 N Shield Street	\$ 48,400.00	1.35%	\$ 1,472.00	\$ 1,714.00	\$ 242.00
22 N Shield Street	\$ 108,000.00	3.02%	\$ 84.00	\$ 624.00	\$ 540.00
153 W Washington Street	\$ 35,500.00	0.99%	\$ 738.00	\$ 915.50	\$ 177.50
151 W Washington Street	\$ 37,900.00	1.06%	\$ 1,259.93	\$ 1,449.43	\$ 189.50
202 N Main Street	\$ 22,100.00	0.62%	\$ 683.00	\$ 793.50	\$ 110.50
204 N Main Street	\$ 70,200.00	1.96%	\$ 650.38	\$ 1,001.38	\$ 351.00
208 N Main Street	\$ 93,800.00	2.62%	\$ 20.00	\$ 489.00	\$ 469.00
103 E Washington Street	\$ 71,000.00	1.98%	\$ 226.52	\$ 581.52	\$ 355.00
101 E Washington Street	\$ 60,200.00	1.68%	\$ 1,826.00	\$ 2,127.00	\$ 301.00
Washington & Pearl Street	\$ 21,600.00	0.60%	\$ 986.62	\$ 1,094.62	\$ 108.00

16 N Pearl Street	\$ 67,900.00	1.90%	\$ 20.00	\$ 359.50	\$ 339.50
6 N Pearl Street	\$ 12,600.00	0.35%	\$ 546.50	\$ 609.50	\$ 63.00
4 N Pearl Street	\$ 24,400.00	0.68%	\$ 752.00	\$ 874.00	\$ 122.00
2 N Pearl Street	\$ 86,700.00	2.42%	\$ 20.00	\$ 453.50	\$ 433.50
1 N Heaton	\$ 143,600.00	4.01%	\$ 4,328.00	\$ 5,046.00	\$ 718.00
152 Lake Street	\$ 13,200.00	0.37%	\$ 396.00	\$ 462.00	\$ 66.00
Heaton & Lake (Lot East)	\$ 21,100.00	0.59%	\$ 633.00	\$ 738.50	\$ 105.50
Heaton (Lot South)	\$ 28,100.00	0.79%	\$ 843.00	\$ 983.50	\$ 140.50
Lake Street (Rear)	\$ 12,400.00	0.35%	\$ 372.00	\$ 434.00	\$ 62.00
5 S Heaton St	\$ 27,200.00	0.76%	\$ 564.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 136.00
2 S Pearl St	\$ 216,200.00	6.04%	\$ 6,506.00	\$ 7,587.00	\$ 1,081.00
Totals	\$ 3,578,900.00	100.00%	\$ 105,389.74	\$ 123,284.24	\$ 17,894.50

Downtown Branding and Promotion: “The Yellow Brick

In our conversations with civic leaders and at the public forum, we were informed of the connection that the city of Knox has with the Wizard of Oz story. We think that the city can capitalize on this association to brand the downtown and use it as a theme for the downtown’s revitalization. In the 1950s, Neal Baum, son of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz author Frank L. Baum, retired to Bass Lake, Indiana where he opened and managed The Wizard of Oz Lodge. Here, the annual Oz Club conventions were held, bringing people nationwide to Knox, and establishing a historical link between the Wizard of Oz and the city to this day.

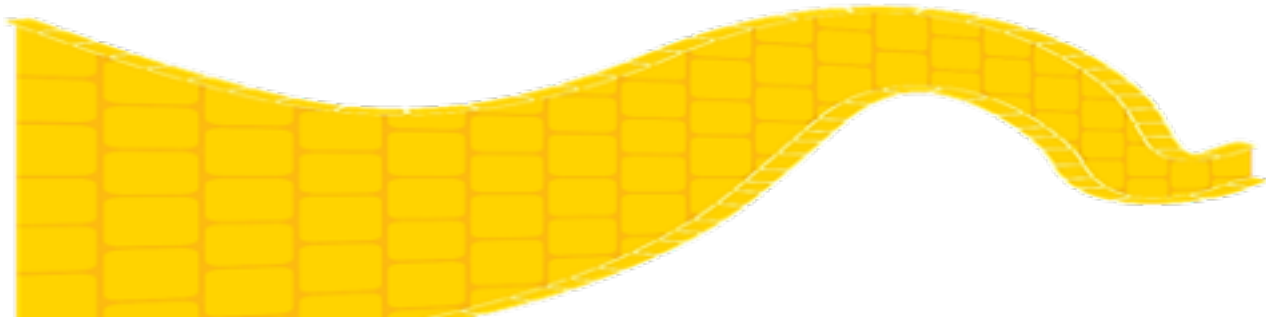


Figure 23: The Yellow Brick Road Theme

We propose using the yellow brick road as a cultural trail and a new pedestrian path to represent the cultural stamp of the city and the downtown (see Figure 23). The Yellow Brick Road will be a trail that starts at Wythogan Park, and routes through Main Street, stopping along the way at several spots to highlight the great qualities of Knox that are often overlooked. As it stands, although Wythogan Park is a popular destination for people across the region, few venture outside the park to the downtown to patronize businesses in the area. The goal is, therefore, to use the Yellow Brick Road theme to draw people out of the park and link Wythogan Park to other venues outside the park. The Yellow Brick Road will be a one-mile trail that is pedestrian and bicycle-friendly. The trail will begin in Wythogan Park with a themed Wizard of Oz experience. From there, the trail will run down N. Main Street, passing by the county government office, then wind its way through

Lake Street to a brief scenic route along the railroad, which will then connect to S. Pearl Street and back to Wythogan Park (see Figure 24). Along the trail, users will be able to interact at several stop points to learn and engage in the fun history of Knox and its significant ties to the Wizard of Oz. An example of such a stop is provided in Figure 25. It will include at a minimum a kiosk and an information booth. Other stops along the trail are provided in Figures 26 through 31.

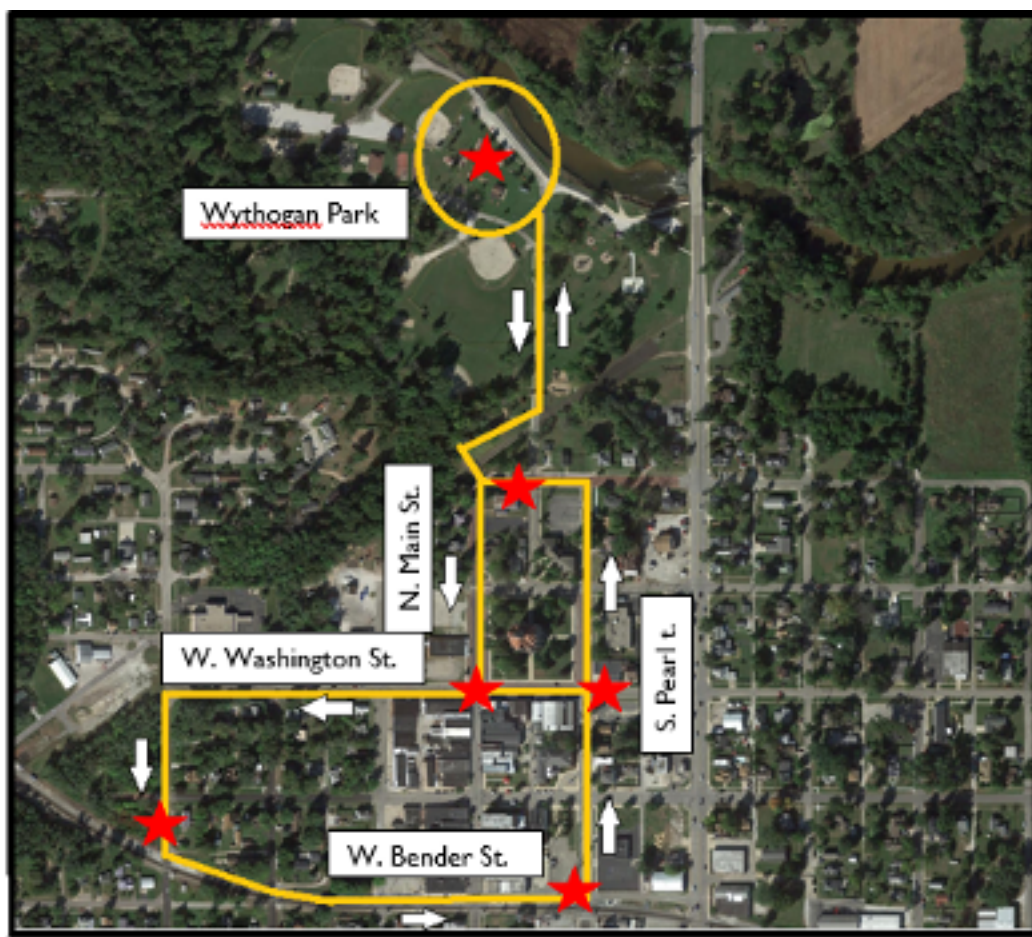


Figure 24: The Yellow Brick Road Trail

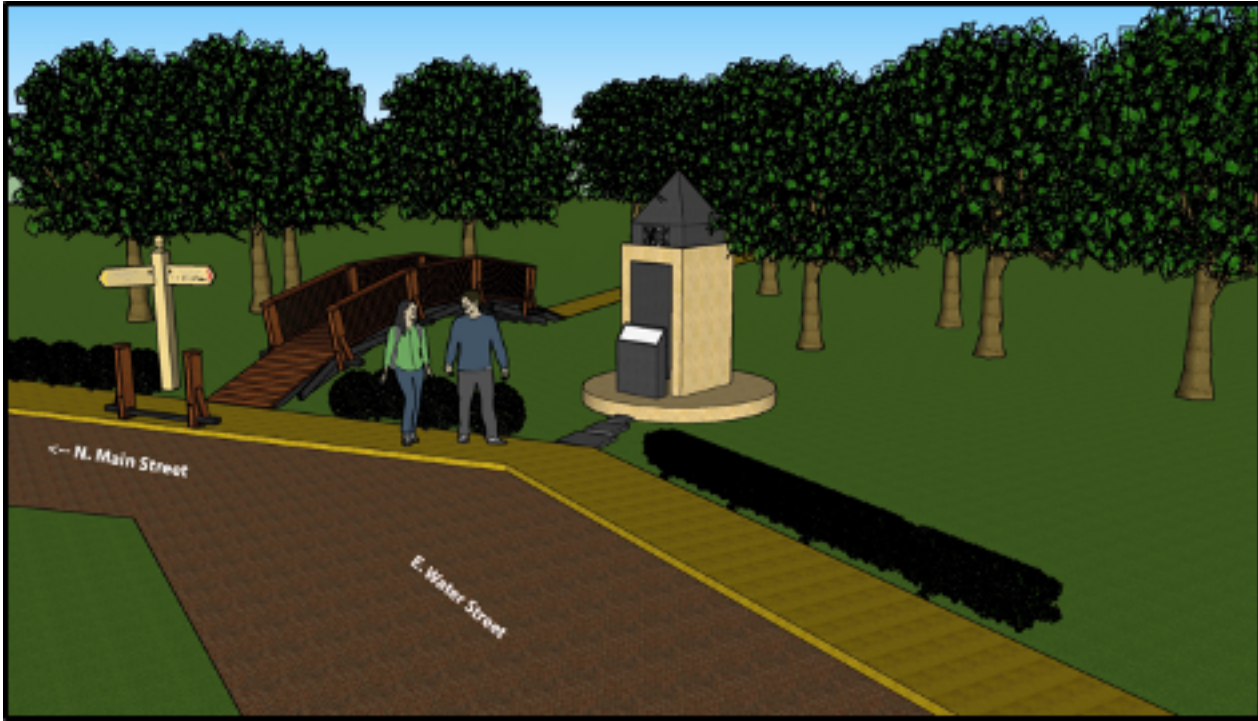


Figure 25: Example of a stop location at N. Main Street and E. Water Street.

Stops along the Yellow Brick Road

1st Stop: Wythogan Park

At Wythogan Park you will find the wonderful world of Oz! The park will have everything from Wizard of Oz themed designs, statues, seating areas, recreation, and landscaping. Here, residents will also be provided with information on the historical significance of the Wizard of Oz as it helped shape the town culturally as well.

People will also find Oz-themed signage here and at every following stop pointing them in the direction of what's next.



Figure 26: The themed Wizard of Oz experience at Wythogan park.

2nd Stop: N Main St. and E Water Street

Here, residents and visitors will find information on the history of Knox as it pertains to interesting facts about the town. For instance, the PBS Kids television series Postcards from Buster filmed the first episode in Knox.



Figure 27: Second stop at N. Main and E. Water Street

3rd Stop: E Main Street and Washington Street

At this point, the Yellow Brick Road will highlight the Starke County and its historic Courthouse. The building is the third county courthouse and is significant for being the seat of the county government for nearly 90 years.



Figure 28: Third stop at E. Main Street and Washington Street

Gateway on Washington Street

The entrance to the downtown will have a gateway that welcomes residents, visitors, and investors to downtown Knoxville while also providing information about the city's history and legacy!



Figure 31: Stop along Washington Street

The Yellow Brick Road will accomplish the following major objectives:

- It will set Knoxville apart from other cities in the region and provide a theme for branding and promoting the downtown.
- It will provide a cohesive theme for the development of downtown.
- It will draw people to the downtown for fun activities who will then patronize downtown businesses.
- It will encourage businesses to locate near the trail because of the potential customers that the trail will draw to the vicinity.
- It will attract people from across the region to experience the unique amenities that the city of Knoxville provides in its downtown.

Gateways, Wayfinding, and Signage Improvements

Gateways help define the downtown borders and are one way that the city can promote downtown to visitors and investors. Therefore, it is important that they are located along the major traffic corridors leading into downtown. The design of gateways should also reflect the image of the downtown and provide information about its history and legacy. To this end, we are proposing two gateways located at the southern exit to Wythogan Park at Bridge Street, and a second to be located at the eastern entrance to the downtown from Washington Street, as shown in Figure 32.



Figure 32: Proposed sites for the location of gateways to the downtown at Bridge Street, and Washington Street.

Design of Gateways

Two options are provided in the design of the gateways. The first option takes inspiration from the courthouse design, considering it is one of the most recognized landmarks in the city. The

gateway's base is made of brick, the traditional material used in the downtown buildings, and it provides a space to display information about the downtown (see Figure 33).

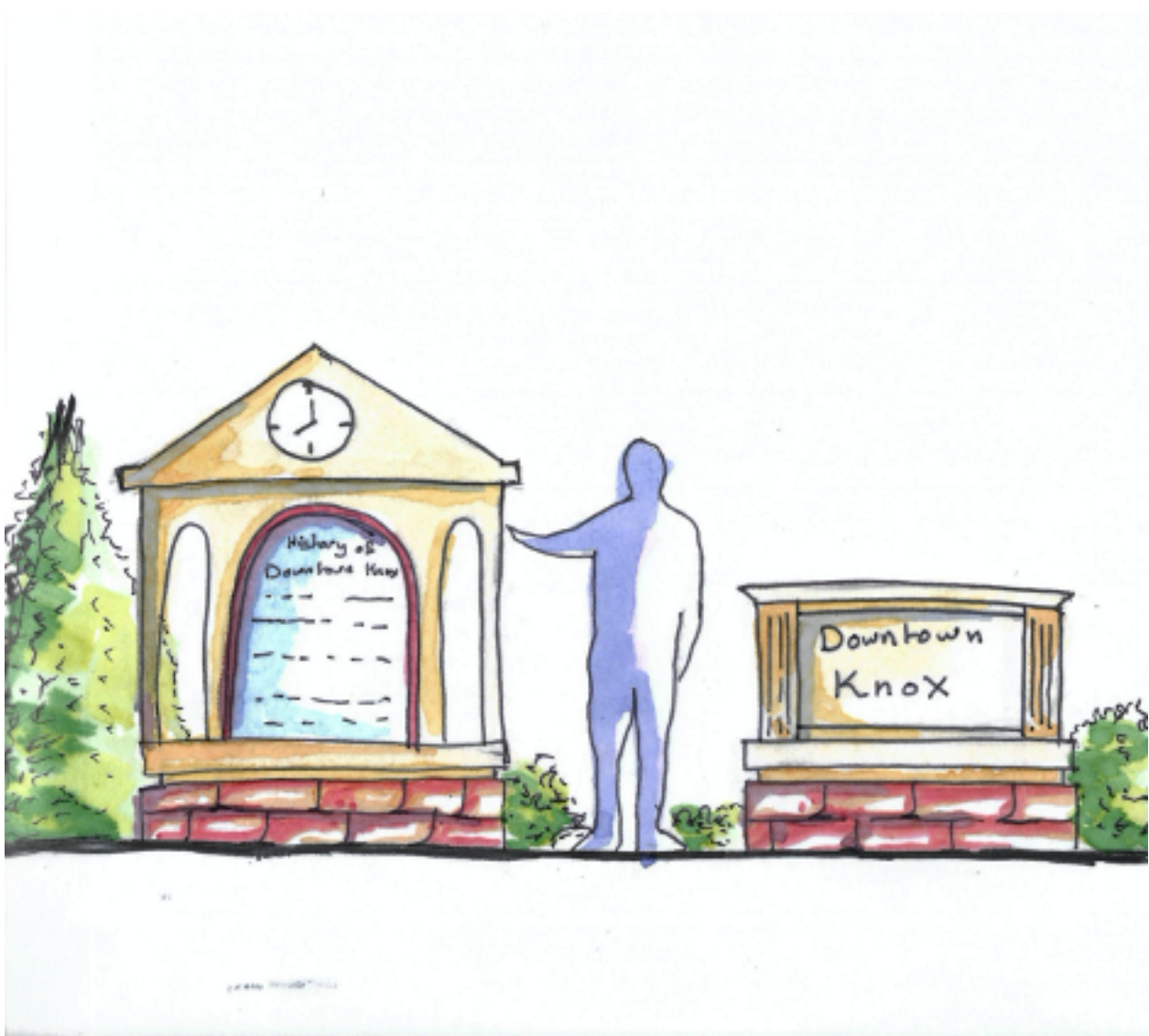


Figure 33: Option 1 Gateway Design

The second option is similar in approach to the first but displays the information vertically rather than horizontally as shown in Figure 34. The design is more contemporary and also takes inspiration from the Courthouse building, with the clock situated in the middle. Its base provides space for display of information and facts about the downtown.

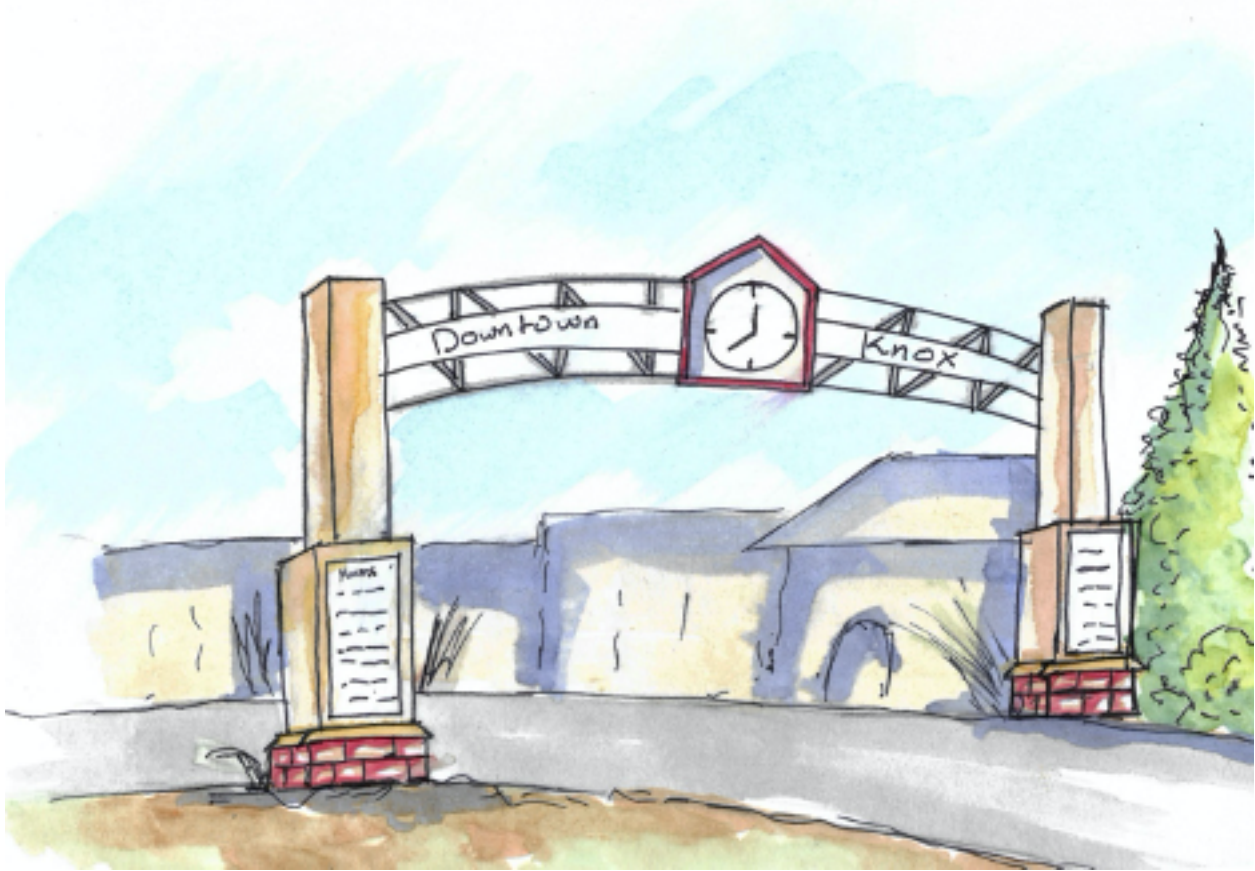


Figure 34: Option 2 Gateway Design.

Wayfinding Signs along US 35

We recommend that several wayfinding signs be erected along US-35 to help direct visitors and motorist traffic to the downtown. According to the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), a community wayfinding sign is defined thus: “WFS is a type of destination guide sign for conventional state highways with a common color or identification enhancement marker for key civic, cultural, visitor, and recreational attractions within a city or a local urbanized or downtown area.” Guidelines for the installation of such signs are provided by INDOT and can be accessed at [https://www.in.gov/indot/files/Indiana%20Guide%20Sign%20\(GS\)%20Program%20Policy.pdf](https://www.in.gov/indot/files/Indiana%20Guide%20Sign%20(GS)%20Program%20Policy.pdf)

Downtown Wayfinding signs

Wayfinding signs are also needed to help users and visitors navigate downtown and direct them to the businesses that are located in downtown. Freestanding identification signs are an appropriate design choice that will include multiple businesses at the same time and provide directional arrows to them.

Business Signs

There are different types of business signs. They include fabric storefront signs, plywood storefront signs, painted glass storefront signs, punched metal signs, metal logo and lettering storefront signs, and awning storefront signs, among others. In order for the downtown to have a cohesive aesthetic look, it is recommended that the city enact an ordinance that provides guidelines to business owners on acceptable sign designs for the downtown. This will eliminate clutter and disparities between them, and also provide a unified image for the downtown.

Reuse of Moose Lodge Site

The Moose Lodge is a vacant building located at 115N. Main Street and was purchased by the city in 2019. The site is strategically located in the downtown and can play an integral role in the revitalization of the downtown with the appropriate use. In considering the use of the site, it is important that whatever development takes place on it complements the neighboring existing uses, and that it helps to activate the space and brings people to the downtown. Based on these criteria, the following uses are proposed for consideration by the city: i) a dog park, ii) a restaurant, iii) a thrift store, or iv) a food co-op.

A Dog Park

A dog park is one that will complement the recreational uses at Wythogan Park, just north of the city. The nearest dog parks to the city are Perry Ferrini Dog Park in Crown Point and Centennial Park in Munster. Data shows that there are more than 500 dogs in Knox, and that about 42.7% of residents in the city are dog owners, so there is a potential demand for a dog park in the city. The location of the city along US 35 could also provide relief for dog owners traveling along the highway.

The dog park would cover roughly ½ acre and would include 34 new parking spaces within walking distance of the park. With no dog park within a 40-minute drive of downtown Knox, the park would attract nearby town residents as well as passing traffic on US 35. Often, pet owners seek green space and dog parks for pets on long car trips, making Knox a perfect stop between Indianapolis and Chicago or Lafayette and South Bend.

Dog parks can vary in cost. If the lot space were maximized, roughly 600 feet of fencing will be needed. Apart from the fence, the other key components are potable water, trees for shade, and benches. BarkPark, a dog park construction company, estimates that a community dog park can cost as little as \$15,000, but as much as \$750,000. With 1/3 of American residents owning at least one dog, dog parks are very popular. Across the US, the number of dog parks has increased by 20% over the last five years. A major study done in the Leisure Sciences Journal concluded that a dog park has many benefits to a community. Their key findings include:

- i) At dog parks, pets serve as avatars, allowing owners to meet people and navigate space through their pets.
- ii) The demographics of park visitors do not seem to matter in forming relationships. Human interactions appear to be based on how each owner's dog behaves toward other dogs and people.
- iii) Dog parks provide a place for owners to get information about local veterinarians, groomers and pet stores as well as referrals related to housing and employment. Through the use of dog parks, owners share resources through informal conversations such as offering to carpool or tutor a child.
- iv) Some relationships extend beyond the park. For example, regulars of one park created a Facebook page to communicate and share photos. Some regulars refer to the park as their "community."
- v) Dog owners sometimes are asked by the local government to serve on committees to help address issues such as park maintenance and pet overpopulation. Dog parks help create valuable social interactions between community members. A downtown Knox park would be a valuable community resource.

Figures 35 through 41 show conceptual designs of the Knox dog park and the amenities that can be provided in the park. The dog park would be located at the northwest corner of Main and Washington as shown in Figure 35. Parking for the park would be located on all sides. Park users could park along Main Street in any of the 28 diagonal parking spots, or at the west or north side of the park where 17 spots are reserved for park users. Of course, one could park anywhere in the downtown.



Figure 35: Aerial view of the Knox dog park.



Figure 36: The dog park looking south on Main street



Figure 37: The dog park looking northeast on Main Street



Figure 38: The Knox dog park showing the entrance on Main and Washington street.

As seen in Figure 38, the gate for the park would face southeast at the corner of Main and Washington. Ideally, the gate would be visible to those turning left from US35 / Heaton.



Figure 39: The Knox dog park view from the north showing the area for smaller dogs.

The northern part of the dog park as shown in Figure 39 would have a smaller section. This section would be for smaller dogs. While any size dog can use the larger area, it is best to have a separated fenced-in section in case owners are not comfortable with their dog playing with larger dogs.

The park would have several waste containers as well as doggie bags as shown in Figure 40 in order to keep the park clean. Several trees around the park will provide users with much-needed shade in the hot summer months.



Figure 40: The Knox dog park showing the amenities provided within it.

Repurposing Moose Lodge: Restaurant

The resident survey showed that restaurants were the most identified reason for visiting downtown. The Moose Lodge was also identified as an area of concern in the public forum. Although downtown Knox currently has several restaurants, only two are open for the evening hours. The ESRI analysis showed that the city has a surplus of \$509,202, which means that Knox is currently drawing in people from outside to spend money in the city. A restaurant at the Moose Lodge would provide more restaurant options during the evening hours, and help attract more customers to downtown businesses.

Repurposing Moose Lodge: Thrift Store

A frequent comment made by residents in our survey was that there are currently limited retail options in the city, particularly for groceries and clothing. The ESRI analysis of the city's retail market profile also showed this to be reflected in the data. There were complete leakages in the categories of clothing, shoes, jewelry, and used merchandise stores, meaning residents are leaving the city to make purchases of these goods outside the city. Repurposing the Moose Lodge into a thrift store would address this gap in the downtown. A conceptual sketch of the building is displayed in Figure 41.



Figure 41: Conceptual rendering of Thrift Store on Main Street

Repurposing Moose Lodge: Food Cooperative

Another option for the Moose Lodge site is that of a food cooperative. A food co-op is an “association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.” Food co-ops are good opportunities for cities and towns to coordinate and cooperate by pulling resources and investment together to sell and distribute goods back to the community.

Some of the benefits include:

- Helping support local agriculture and local farmers by selling fresh produce to people,
- Being more environmentally and financially aware of the community and town, and
- More investment in local businesses from community residents.

Starting a food co-op takes commitment and determination on the part of residents. Though it may appear daunting, food co-ops help cities and towns that may be experiencing a decline in investment. In Indiana, there are three places that have successful food co-ops, Bloomington, Fort Wayne, and Indianapolis. In smaller towns around the US, some rural towns have also noted success with food co-ops. Towns like Moran, Kansas, with a population of 558, opened their food co-op after superstores like Walmart pulled out. Another case was in the town of Winchester, Illinois with a population of 1,500, which started a food co-op. Having only a dollar store, and driving a half-hour to the nearest grocery store, community leaders held a public meeting to start a food co-op. With the help of grants, donations, and volunteer labor, community residents were able to sell nutritional products and other goods for community residents. The city of Knox can reuse the Moose lodge site into something that offers fresh produce, support local businesses, and strengthen the downtown with new sustainable investment. A rendering of the building is shown in Figure 42. The location of the building is shown in its context in Figures 43 through 45.



Figure 42: Proposed food coop building on the former Moose Lodge site.



Figure 43: Aerial view of the proposed food coop building.



Figure 44: Location of food coop store on Main Street



Figure 45: Food coop building looking east from city Hall.

Activating Main Street through increased Parking, Outdoor and Sidewalk Cafés

One of the concerns expressed by residents of the downtown is that of inadequate parking. Such concerns are not unique to Knoxville as many studies have shown that customers at downtown businesses usually prefer to park next to the businesses that they are visiting but are willing to walk long distances to a big box store with large parking lots in the suburban locations. The goal of the downtown revitalization plan is to make the downtown pedestrian-friendly, improve safety, and activate the sidewalks, and storefronts.

Parking

An inventory of parking spaces indicates that there are 224 marked on-street parking spaces in downtown Knoxville and 301 spaces in surface parking lots. This is a total of 525 marked parking spaces in the downtown district, with additional unmarked parking spaces available.

A number of survey responders indicated an interest in additional parking availability downtown. A possible location for additional spaces would be the east side of Main Street between Mound and Washington Streets. The total street width on that block is 68'. The angled parking on the west side of the street is 14'. Placing 14' angled street parking on the east side of the street would still allow more than enough room for through traffic and would provide 20 additional parking spaces. Other possible areas to add marked parallel on-street parking are along Bender Street, and the east side of Pearl Street between Lake and Bender.

Sidewalk Cafes

One way to activate the downtown and street life is to also provide outdoor restaurant seating along some sections of the sidewalk, also called sidewalk cafes. These open-air seating areas provide an option for customers of downtown restaurants to eat and drink. Three areas along Main street may be ideal for providing sidewalk cafes in downtown Knoxville. These are Jack and Diane's

USA Café and Sports Bar at 60 E. Washington Street., Momma’s Pizzeria at 10 N. Main Street., and the Rabbit Coffee Shop at 10 S. Main Street.

A challenge for the sidewalk cafés at these locations is the limited sidewalk space. We are therefore suggesting that portions of the street parking spaces be reclaimed to create outdoor seating. The sidewalk café space would need to be raised in order to be level with the curb as shown in Figures 46 through 48. The sidewalk cafés are designed to be removable to maximize parking availability during the winter.



Figure 46: Sidewalk café at Jack and Diane’s USA Café and Sports Bar, 60 E. Washington Street.



Figure 47: Sidewalk café at the Rabbit Coffee Shop, 10 S. Main Street.



Figure 48: Sidewalk café at Momma's Pizzeria, 10 N. Main Street

In the long run and as the city's finances warrant, an improved street design plan for downtown would include same-grade sidewalk and street levels, with storm sewer drainage in the center of the street (see Figure 49). This would allow an easier transition from sidewalk café in the spring, summer, and fall to parking in the winter. The drainage in the center minimizes rainfall effects on the sidewalk café, pedestrians, and bicyclists.



Figure 49: Example of at-grade sidewalk café in downtown Muncie, Indiana.

Streetlights

Streetlights are important for several reasons: They discourage crime and vandalism, they decrease accidents from poorly lit environments, they make urban environments more habitable at night by ensuring safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, and they help protect buildings and property. Inadequate lighting in downtown Knoxville was a concern expressed by residents. As a consequence, we analyzed the available streetlights in the downtown and made suggestions for improving lighting in the downtown.

Streetlight Analysis

There is no uniformity to the streetlights that are provided in downtown Knoxville. We identified three different types that are provided: streetlights on utility poles, arm streetlights, and period or historic style streetlights (see Figure 50).




		
<p>Streetlight on a utility pole</p>	<p>An arm streetlight pole</p>	<p>c. Historic style streetlight</p>
<p>Lack of aesthetics. Mainly located in northwest downtown Knoxville.</p>	<p>Lack of aesthetics. Mainly located in north part of downtown Knoxville and some crossings.</p>	<p>Mainly located in central area of downtown Knoxville.</p>

Figure 50: Types of streetlights in downtown Knoxville.

As Figure 51 shows, most streetlights are located in the central area of downtown Knoxville. Some streets only have streetlights on one side. For example, the south side of Washington St and west side of S. Shield St. almost have no streetlights.

There are 12 streetlights that are on utility poles within the downtown boundaries. There are 16 streetlights that are mounted on arm poles, and 21 that are of the historic style. The light poles do not seem to have any order, and some are closer to each other than others. This suggests there may be illumination problems for some areas of the downtown, particularly along Washington Street and S. Pearl Street.



Figure 51: Location of existing streetlights in downtown Knoxville.

Proposed streetlight plan

We are proposing 17 additional streetlights at the locations provided in Figure 52 for better illumination of the downtown. We suggest the streetlights be of a period style to reflect the history of the downtown. An example is provided in Figure 53.



Figure 52: Proposed streetlights in downtown Knox.



Figure 53: Proposed street-light style for the downtown

Street Trees

Street trees contribute to the ambiance of downtown. Trees provide shade, help define street boundaries, and provide a sense of safety for pedestrians on sidewalks. Additional benefits to street trees include: they provide shade, help decrease the urban heat island effect, and decrease stormwater runoff by absorbing rainfall. Some of the most successful and vibrant downtowns are known for their tree-lined streets and foliage.

Figure 54 shows the location of street trees in downtown Knoxville. Several streets are without trees, especially in the northern and western parts of the downtown.

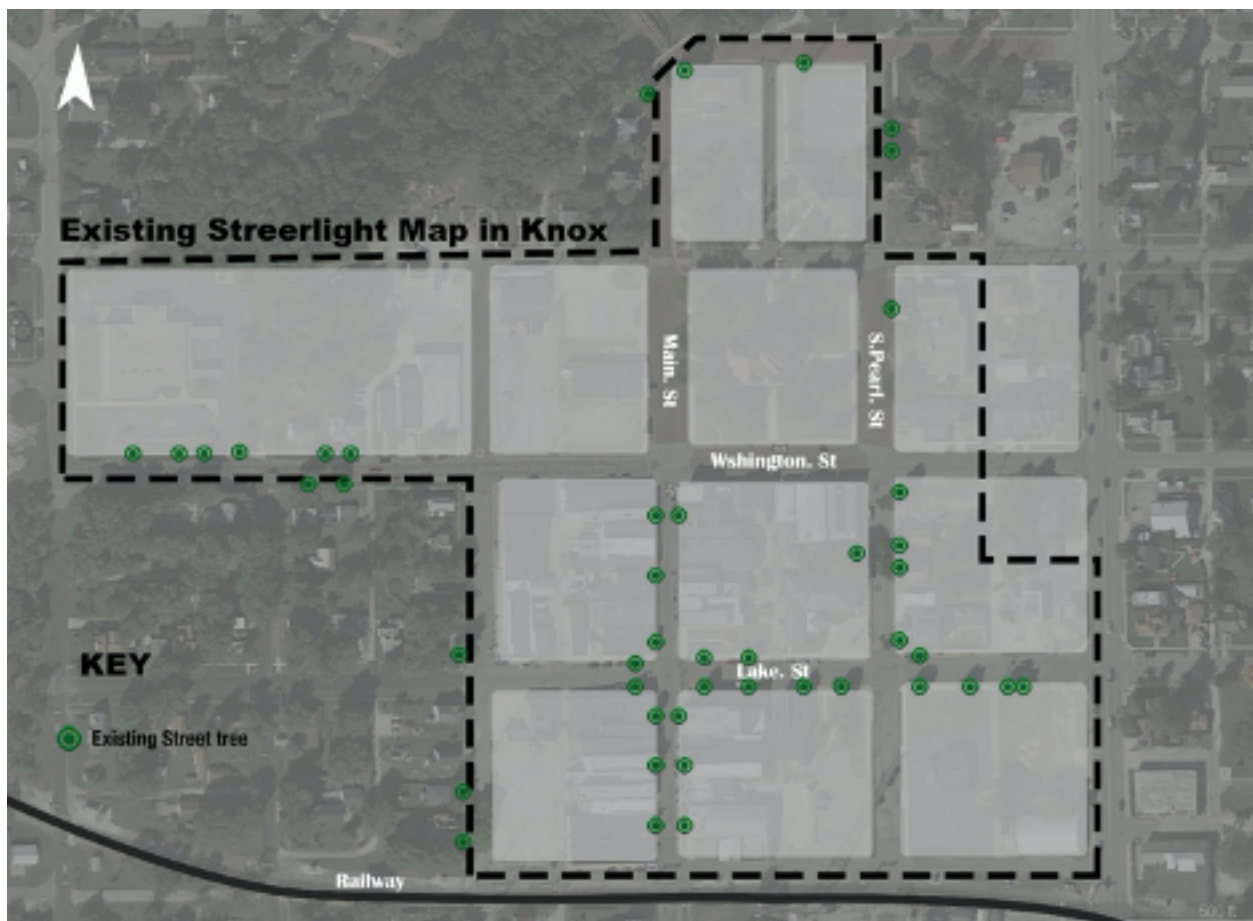


Figure 54: Location of existing street trees in downtown Knoxville.

We are proposing additional trees to be planted at the locations shown in Figure 55. It is best to plant a variety of street trees in the downtown to guard against potential infestations that could potentially wipe out an entire species.

Street trees should also be selected that are appropriate for the region so native trees are a better choice. The types and species of trees that are selected should be relatively low maintenance to decrease the cost to the city. Care should be taken not to plant trees too close to buildings as their roots can interfere with the foundations of buildings.

Indiana’s City Foresters and Indiana DNR, Community & Urban Forestry, provide guidance on tree selection in the state based on the hardiness of the tree and the climatic conditions. This information can be accessed at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/fo-IndianaCommunityTree-SelectionGuide.pdf>.

The agency recommends several trees that it categorizes into small, medium, and large types. The large trees include the maple tree, horse chestnut, Ohio buckeye, the hickory tree, and honey locust. The medium size trees are the serviceberry, hornbeam, and yellow wood. The small size trees are the redbud, dogwood, and cherry trees. Table 13 displays examples of these trees and their growth characteristics.

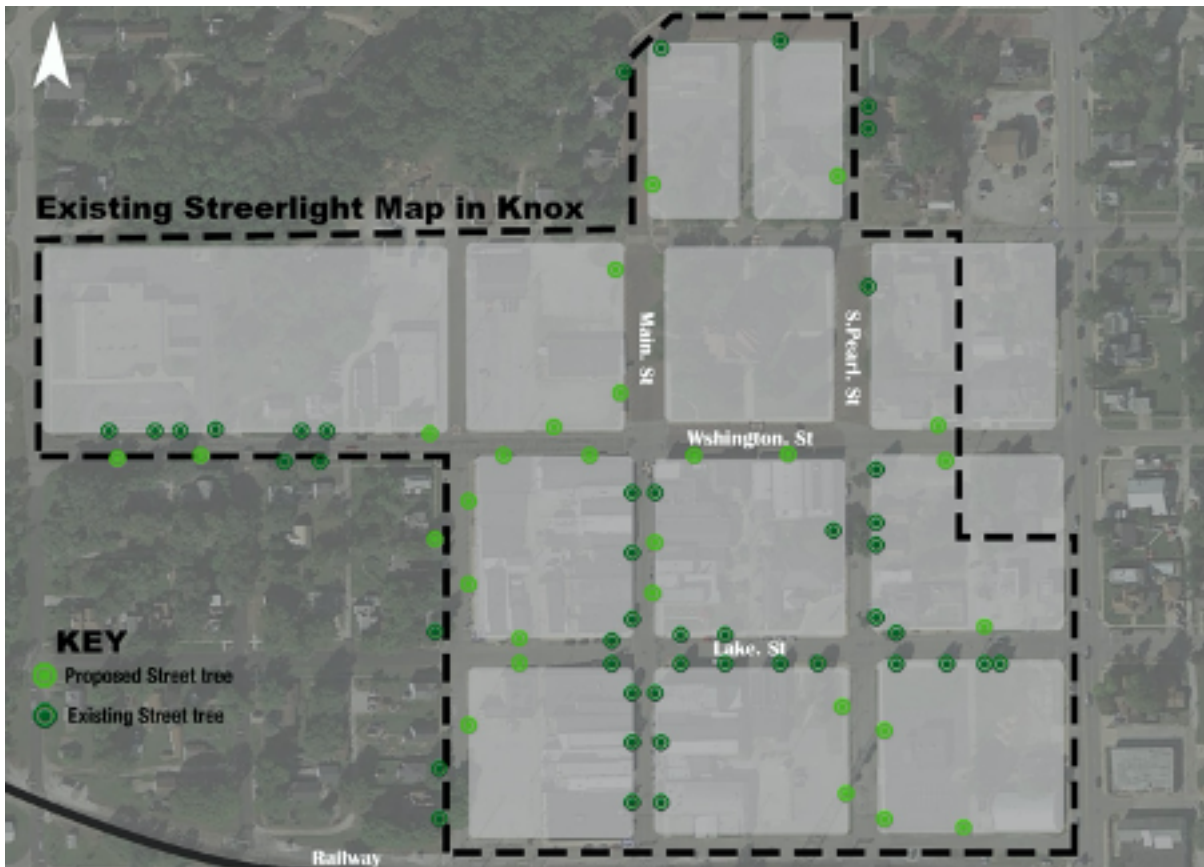




Figure 55: Location of proposed street trees in downtown Knox.

Table 13: Tree recommendations by size for the city of Knox.

Tree	Image	Characteristic
Honey Locust (large tree)		<p>The honey locust has an open branch structure and tiny compound leaves which create very light shade. They are good to plant over grassy areas where some sun is desired. Honey locusts are among the toughest street trees around. They can grow to 70 feet tall.</p>
Red Maple (large tree)		<p>Red maple is a medium-sized, deciduous tree that is native to Eastern North America. It typically grows 40-60' tall with a rounded to oval crown. It is easily grown in average, medium to wet, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade and is easy to transplant. It is tolerant of a wide range of soils, but prefers moist, slightly acid conditions.</p>

Red Oak



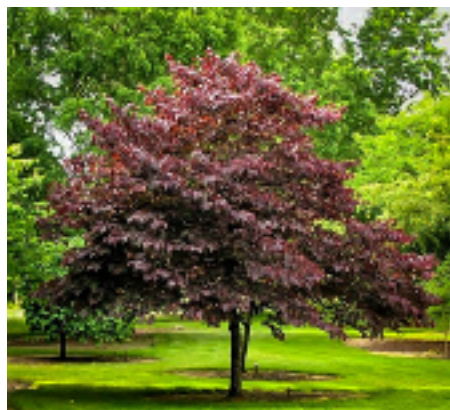
This tree displays a rich red color in the fall. It is an excellent street tree that can tolerate difficult urban conditions. It grows to 80 feet tall.

American hornbeam tree (medium size)



It is a deciduous tree that seasonally loses its leaves. Grows to 25-45 feet at maturity. It requires six hours of full sunlight daily. Grows best in moist, well-drained soil.

Redbud



This tree grows best in full sun to light shade areas. Full height ranges from 20 feet to 30 feet with a spread of between 25 and 35 feet. Tolerates acidic or alkaline soils as well as heavy clays.

Landscaping in Pocket Parks

There are three pocket parks in downtown Knoxville: Serenity park, the pocket park at the corner of Main Street and E. Lake Street, and a pocket park at the corner of E. Lake Street and S. Pearl Street. The Courthouse Square also has a green lawn. However, many of the pocket parks are not well landscaped and the Courthouse Square does not have any seating furniture. The following proposals are made to improve the quality of these spaces and the pedestrian experience downtown.

Serenity Park

Existing situation: Figure 56 shows the park is composed of grass, some seating, street trees, and a pavilion, with a single species of plants. In the proposal, the existing pavilion is maintained, and additional plants are added, as well as flowers and shrubs as shown in Figure 57.



Figure 56: Existing conditions at Serenity Park.



Figure 57: Proposed improvements to Serenity Park

Pocket Park at the corner of Main Street and E. Lake Street

Existing situation: Figure 58 shows that the park only has grass with no trees or seating furniture. The proposed design in Figure 59 adds some seats and trees in the pocket park to improve its usefulness to residents.



Figure 58: Existing conditions of the pocket park.



Figure 59: Proposed additions to a pocket park.

Pocket Park at Corner of E. Lake Street and S. Pearl Street

Existing situation: The pocket park at the corner of E. Lake Street and S. Pearl Street (see Figure 60) has a few plants but not enough, so the proposal adds more landscaping with more variety of trees, as well as flowers and shrubs (see Figure 61).



Figure 60: Existing landscaping at pocket park.



Figure 61: Proposed improvements to a pocket park.

Conclusion

The city of Knox is blessed with numerous assets that can be capitalized on for the city's development. It has a trusted leadership and enthusiastic residents who are willing to volunteer their time and resources to redevelop the city's downtown. There is a street wall on Main Street, provided by the historic buildings, a feature that many other cities have lost due to urban renewal. A historic Courthouse is located downtown as are most of the city's civic and cultural amenities that draw people to the downtown daily. While other cities have lost their downtown clientele the survey showed downtown Knox hasn't lost residents to the suburban businesses. Moreover, Knox records a net gain from the expenditure of people who live outside the city. These attributes of the city bode well for its development. Implementing the proposals in this plan will assist the city to transform the downtown into the vibrant historically significant neighborhood that residents and civic leaders desire.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A QUALTRICS SURVEY ANALYSIS

We created a survey of twenty questions to determine the perceptions of Knox residents about the strengths of downtown and items they felt needed to be improved. A total of 364 responses were recorded from January 21-February 4, 2020. This represents a response rate of 10.3% of the 3,535 residents of Knox.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic characteristics of those completing the survey are as follows:

Male	25%
Female	74%
Other	1%

Under 18	0%
18-24	6%
25-44	46%
45-64	37%
65 and over	11%

Some High School	1%
High School	20%
Some College	29%
Associate's Degree	17%
Bachelor's Degree	21%
Advanced Degree	11%

Lived in Knox 0-5 years	9%
Lived in Knox 6-10 years	6%
Lived in Knox more than 10 years	1%

What is your most frequent mode of transportation to downtown?

Driving	323 (93%)
Walking	15 (5%)
Biking	1 (0.3%)
Other	6 (2%)
Both walk and drive	2
Golf Cart	2
Skateboard	1

How often do you visit downtown?

Over 73% of respondents visit downtown at least once a week.

Daily	35%
Weekly	38%
Bi-weekly	12%
Monthly	13%
Never	2%

Do you most visit downtown on weekdays or weekends?

Weekends	32%
Weekdays	68%

Do you feel safe in downtown?

Yes	86%
No	14%

The word cloud below demonstrates the most common words in the answers to why people felt safe downtown. Interestingly, most of these words were used in conjunction with an explanation of why they did not experience.

Q7_1_TEXT - Yes



The word cloud below demonstrates the most common words in the answers to why people did not feel safe downtown.

Q7_2_TEXT - No



What do you do when you go downtown?

Shopping	187	23%
Restaurants	234	29%
Work	41	5%
Government Services	195	24%
Community Activities	90	11%
Other	70	9%

The word cloud below illustrates what “other” activities people most often included in their responses:

Q9_6_TEXT - Other (please specify)



Do you visit downtown more or less frequently than you did 5 years ago?

More frequently	49.56% (169)
Less frequently	50.44% (172)

Which amenities need the most improvement in downtown?

A significant amount (20%) of respondents indicated other items they would like to see improved downtown, as is indicated in the word cloud below. Most of the responses indicated some need for façade improvement and lowering the rate of vacant buildings.

Landscaping	185	23%
Sidewalks	95	12%
Seating	128	16%
Street Lighting	136	17%
Signage	109	13%
Other	166	20%

Q11_7_TEXT - Other



What kinds of businesses are missing that need to be attracted to downtown?

The word cloud below indicates the common responses for what kinds of business respondents would like to see downtown.



Would you consider living downtown?

Yes	18%
No	82%

Many of the people responding “yes” indicated that they would like the convenience, or that they already lived downtown. Some responded yes if some of the ideas for improving downtown were implemented.

Most of the people responding “no” indicated they were already happy living where they currently live. Several responders indicated they didn’t like people or neighbors. The most common answers were:

Like country living	45
Like a big lot	17
Live at Bass Lake	11

In your view, is the city’s leadership doing enough to improve downtown?

Yes	69%
No	31%

Many responders think highly of the mayor and the improvements he has made and think there have been positive improvements. The word cloud below indicates the most common responses to “Yes, the city leadership is doing enough.”

Q14_1_TEXT - Yes, Please Explain



Many positive responses indicate they are happy with the current mayor’s work on the downtown. Several replies simply said, “they’re trying.” There is an acknowledgment that work has been done, but that more could be done.

The “no” responses focus on the issue that the improvements have mainly been cosmetic and that more serious work is needed to improve the economy and fill the vacant spaces.

In what ways would you be willing to contribute to downtown?

Monetarily	14%
Volunteering	63%
Expertise	9%
Other	14%

Is the downtown important to the identity of Knox?

Yes	92%
No	8%

The word cloud below indicates the most common responses regarding why downtown is important to the identity of Knox.

Q16_1_TEXT - Yes



Would you support allocating more of Knox’s city budget to improving downtown?

Yes	89%
No	11%

APPENDIX B

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION SURVEY

The Department of Urban Planning at Ball State University is assisting the city of Knox with its façade improvement and downtown plan. As part of the process, we are seeking the views of residents on how to improve conditions in the city's downtown through a survey. Please fill out the questions to help us with the project. It should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. All responses will be kept confidential and your identity will never be revealed in the analysis of the data. If you have any questions regarding the survey, you can call Mayor Estok at 574-772-4553 or professor Burayidi at 765-285-5699. Thank you for your participation.

Q1 How many years have you lived in Knox?

- 0-5 years (1)
- 6-10 years (2)
- More than 10 years (4)

Q2 What do you most like about downtown?

Q3 What do you most dislike about downtown?

Q4 How far do you live from downtown?

- 0-5 minutes (1)
- 6-10 minutes (2)
- 10-15 minutes (3)

Q5 What is your most frequent mode of transportation to downtown?

- Walking (1)
- Driving (2)
- Biking (3)
- Other (4) _____

Q6 How often do you visit downtown?

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- Bi-Weekly (3)
- Monthly (4)
- Never (5)

Q8 Do you most visit downtown on weekdays or weekends?

- Weekends (1)
- Weekdays (2)

Q7 Do you feel safe in downtown? Please Explain

- Yes (1) _____
- No (2) _____

Q9 What do you do when you go to downtown? (Please check all that applies).

- Shopping (1)
- Restaurant (2)
- Work (1)
- Government Services (Post Office, Court, etc.) (4)
- Community Activity (5)
- Other (Please Specify) (6) _____

Q10 Do you visit downtown more or less frequently now than you did 5 years, ago?

- Less frequently (1)
- More frequently (2)

Q11 Which of the following amenities need the most improvement in the downtown? (Check all that apply)

- Landscaping (1)
- Sidewalks (3)
- Outdoor Seating (4)
- Street Lighting (5)
- Signage (6)
- Other (7) _____

Q12 What kinds of businesses are missing that need to be attracted to the downtown?

Q13 Would you consider living in downtown? Why or why not?

- Yes (1) _____
- No (2) _____

Q14 In your view, is the city's leadership doing enough to improve the downtown?

- Yes, Please Explain (1) _____
- No, Please Explain (2) _____

Q15 In what ways would you be willing to contribute to improving downtown?

- Monetarily (1)
- Volunteering (2)
- Expertise (4)
- Other (3) _____

Q16 Is the downtown important to the identity of Knox? Please Explain

- Yes (1) _____
- No (2) _____

Q17 Would you support allocating more of Knox's city budget to improving downtown?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q18 What is your gender identification?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (3) _____

Q19 What is your age bracket?

- Under 18 (1)
- 18 - 24 (2)
- 25-44 (3)
- 45-64 (4)
- 65 over (5)

Q20 What is your educational level

- Some High School (1)
- High School (2)
- Some College (3)
- Associate's (4)
- Bachelor's (5)
- Advanced Degree (6)

APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY FORUM

1. What do you most like about the downtown and would like to retain?
 - The historic character of the town
 - Keep existing buildings
 - Old-time style architecture
 - The brick street around the courthouse
 - War memorial ideas
 - Brick streets
 - Old Architecture
 - The Park
 - Courthouse
 - New Veteran's Memorial
 - New Street Mural
 - The courthouse
 - The park
 - The size of downtown
 - New businesses are establishing themselves there.
 - Historical architecture, retaining and enhancing
 - Small town feel (People love to see and live in small towns, good for tourism)
 - Walkable streets
 - Emerging services and city officials are centrally located (ensure the safety and security of the city, residents, and visitors)
 - New park improvements at Wythogan (New amphitheater, walking trail, splash pad)
 - Street print, murals at the lake and in the main street
 - Serenity garden and sculptures
 - Pop up store that turned in to the Rabbit Coffee Shop (would like to have more pop-up shop options)

- The roads are in good condition
- “Ma + Pa” shops / locally owned businesses versus fast food spots
- Historic structures, “nostalgic character”
- Landscaping, gazebo park, flowers in summer
- Emphasize ornate architecture

2. What do you most dislike about downtown and would like to improve?

- Parking
- Better connections to downtown from other points of the city
- Connectivity via Highway 35 / Heaton Street.
- Better downtown building maintenance.
- Improve sidewalk from downtown to park.
- Restaurants close at 2 pm.
- More wayfinding signs to downtown.
- A coffee shop.
- Do something with the old Moose Lodge.
- Missing old historic pieces of clock
- Mismatch modern architecture that does not match old feel
- Boarded up, eye-sore properties on the second floor
- Abandoned office buildings
- Broken up sidewalk
- More/Improved awnings
- No streetscaping
- The vacant buildings
- Lack of street lighting
- Better ADA accessibility
- The buildings’ design isn’t cohesive.
- The proximity of Knox mall which creates competition
- There’s no public plaza that people can gather in and hold events at.


- Not enough events in the downtown
- Poor signage and wayfinding
- Lack of consistency with street fronts / would like to restore them to original design and with more esthetic values.
- More street lights – dim and not high enough
- Parking – safety concerns with people pulling out backward on the main street
- Sidewalks are not spacious enough to hold outdoor events outside of businesses
- Empty storefronts
- The apathy of business owners who don't clean up their storefront – Need to develop a strategy to encourage business owners to participate in enhancement effects
- Overgrown and old trees – weird barriers in spring
- Unused spaces, lack of landscaping
- No flowers at Serenity Garden
- No shoes or clothing stores
- No farmers market
- People are using sheets as curtains / cracked windows
- Big empty spaces – SW corner of the lake
- Downtown seems disconnected from the rest of the city
- An issue with outsiders on utilizing 35 and not venturing the downtown
- Want more local retail businesses
- Short opening hours of the “Rabbit Coffee Shop” (Not being open enough)
- Lack of connection to US 35, “out of sight, out of mind”
- Old Moose lodge is an eyesore—tear down or repurpose


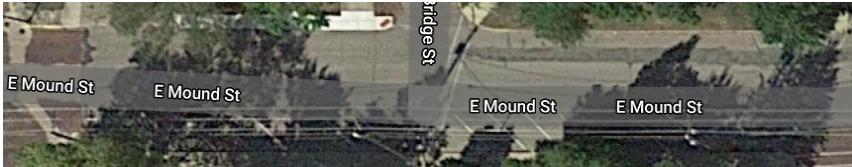
3. What are your aspirations for downtown?

- A place where businesses are flourishing.
- Make it a destination.
- Where chance encounters take place.
- An inviting, bustling place.

- Artwork ideas (wizard of oz)
- More businesses
- Some sort of gateway to downtown, using 35 to exit here
- A place that wants to stop by
- Interesting New Businesses
- More Pop-Ups/Shopping
- Attract more businesses to the downtown
- Better connections with the park
- Connecting to 35 street and attracting the traffic that drives through the city from Chicago
- Having a trail that connects the downtown to the surrounding parts of the city
- Maintaining the cozy small-town look of the downtown
- To see more people walking the downtown
- Having more pop-up stores
- ADA compliance @ dollar general and throughout Downtown
- Additional street + prints + designed crosswalks down the main street
- Want an attractive and thriving Downtown
- Historic preservation/consistency (specifically with buildings)
- Some kind of regulations about covering up historical storefronts
- New/more art (sculptures, mural, etc.)
- Downtown sign/wayfinding signs
- Decorated street signs
- Establishing a space that is off-oriented where people can work and collaborate
- Train bridge in Wythogon Park is a historical landmark
- Would like to see it restored to its original condition rather than modernized
- Opportunity for specialty shops, farmers market, unique place to visit and socialize
- Things to draw people downtown to spend time, an entertainment destination, perhaps connecting retail to the park

APPENDIX D DOWNTOWN PARKING INVENTORY




Street	Image	Parking Spaces
Bridge Street (between Water and Mound)		13



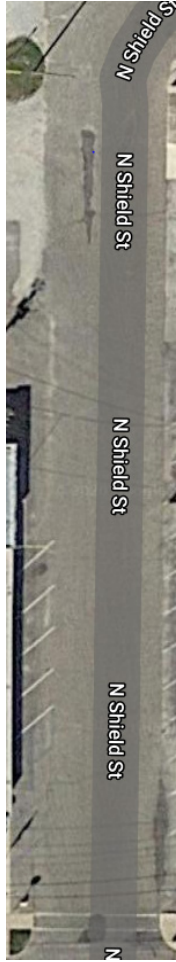
<p>Main Street (between Water and Mound)</p>		
<p>Mound Street (between Main and Pearl)</p>		<p>13</p>

Main Street (between
Mound and
Washington)



17

<p>Pearl Street (between Mound and Washington)</p>		<p>15</p>
<p>Washington Street (west of alley)</p>		
<p>Washington Street (between alley and Main)</p>		<p>9</p>

<p>Washington Street (between Main and Pearl)</p>		<p>16</p>
<p>Washington Street (between Pearl and Heaton)</p>		
<p>Shield Street (between Mound and Washington)</p>		<p>5</p>

Shield Street (between
Washington and Lake)





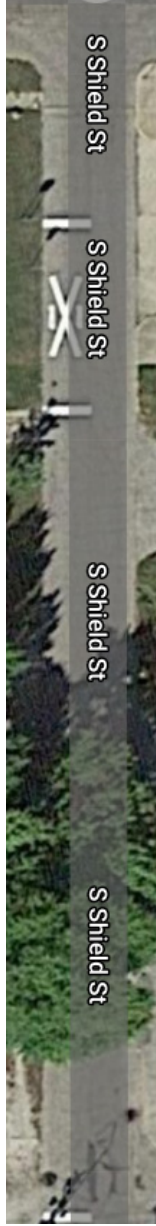
16

Main Street (between Washington and Lake)



26


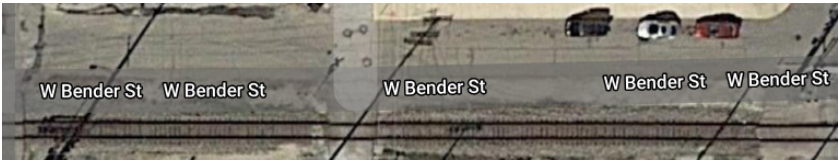
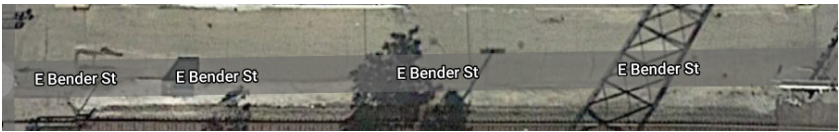
<p>Pearl Street (between Washington and Lake)</p>		<p>17</p>
<p>Lake Street (between Shield and Main)</p>		<p>14</p>
<p>Lake Street (between Main and Pearl)</p>		<p>18</p>




<p>Lake Street (between Pearl and Heaton)</p>		<p>8</p>
<p>Shield Street (between Lake and Bender)</p>		

Main Street (between
Lake and Bender)

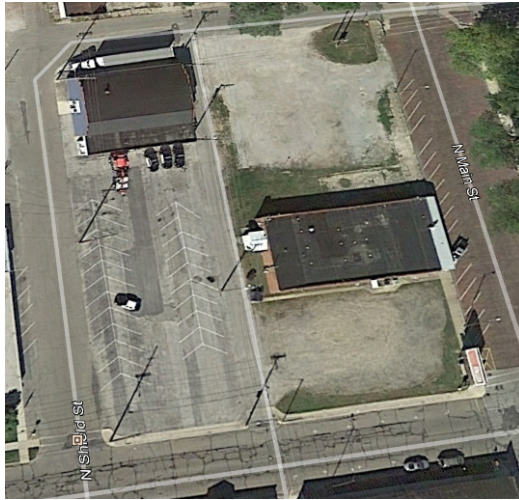


26

<p>Pearl Street (between Lake and Bender)</p>		<p>11</p>
<p>Bender Street (between Shield and Main)</p>		
<p>Bender Street (between Main and Pearl)</p>		

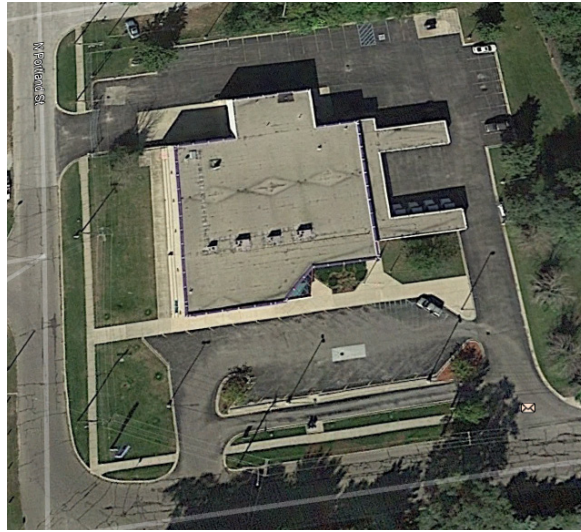
<p>Bender Street (between Pearl and Heaton)</p>		
	<p>Total Marked On-Street</p>	<p>224</p>
<p>Quality Muffler</p>		<p>22</p>
<p>Starke County Government</p>		<p>61</p>

Police Department



48

United States Postal Service



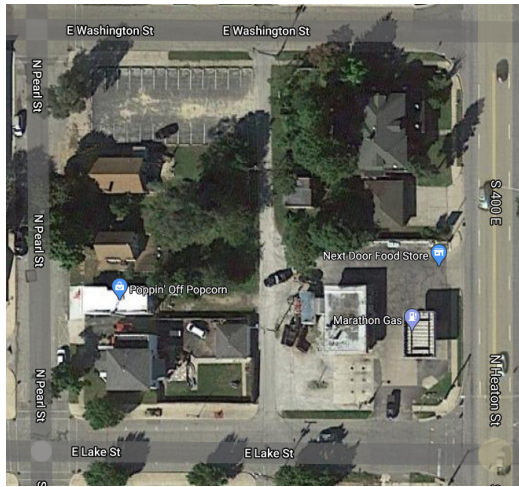
45

Starke County Health Department



6

Corner of Pearl and Washington



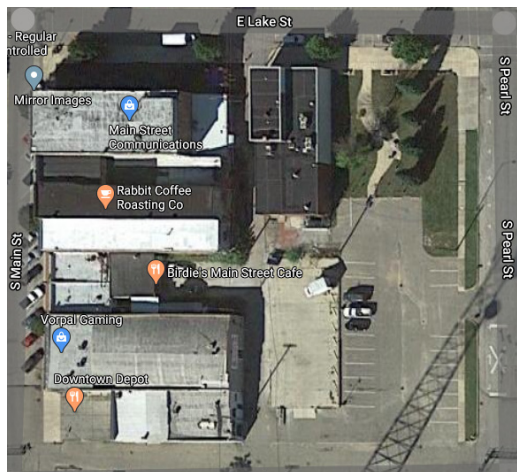
22

Corner of Shield and Bender

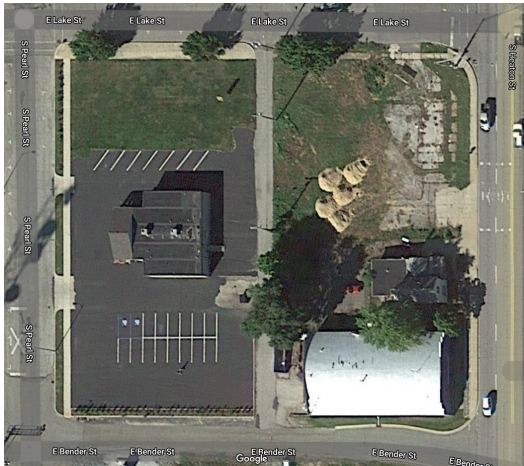


61

Corner of Pearl and Bender



23

<p>Pearl Street Clinic</p>	 <p>An aerial photograph of the Pearl Street Clinic parking lot. The lot is rectangular and bounded by Pearl Street to the west, E Lake St to the north, and E Bender St to the south. It contains several marked parking spaces, a building with a dark roof, and a large white storage tank. The surrounding area includes other streets like S Bender St and S Pearl St, and some greenery.</p>	<p>13</p>
	<p>Total Marked Surface Lots</p>	<p>301</p>

APPENDIX E

MAIN STREET BUILDING ASSESSMENT

Is the building being occupied?	What is the building being used for?	Building condition	x	y
yes	office	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office_mixed_use	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6221603	41.2978905
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
no		poor_condition_needs_immediate_decent	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office_mixed_use	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6221603	41.2978905
yes	retail_service	poor_condition_needs_immediate	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-86.623227	41.297199
no		decent_condition_needs_improvem	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service,mixed_use	fairly_good_condition	-86.623227	41.297199
no		fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
no		fairly_good_condition	-86.623227	41.297199
yes	retail_service,mixed_use	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
no		poor_condition_needs_immediate	-86.6231761	41.2974442
no		decent_condition_needs_improvem	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	residential	poor_condition_needs_immediate	-86.6231761	41.2974442
no		poor_condition_needs_immediate	-86.6233171	41.2977833
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-86.6233171	41.2977833
yes	office	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office_retail_service	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6233171	41.2977833
yes	retail_service	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office	great_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6233754	41.2978592
yes	office	decent_condition_needs_improvem,fairly_g	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	office	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6233754	41.2978592
yes	office	fairly_good_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
yes	retail_service	great_condition	-87.06516583	40.21634826
no		decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.6233754	41.2978592
yes	retail_service	decent_condition_needs_improvem	-86.623373	41.2981256

