

Oakland, MD: Riding the Rails to Revitalization



Oakland, MD SDAT Report

AIA Communities by Design 
ENVISION. CREATE. SUSTAIN.



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THE DAT PROGRAM

For more than 50 years the American Institute of Architects has provided design assistance as part of its public service work to assist communities across the country. AIA's Center for Communities by Design provides Design Assistance Programs to help communities and civic society address design and sustainability challenges. Through these public service programs, over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines have provided millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, engaging thousands of participants in community driven planning processes. Its projects have helped spark some of the most recognizable places in America, such as San Francisco's Embarcadero, Portland's Pearl District, and the Santa Fe Railyard Park.

Created in 1967, the AIA's Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT) pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations. In 49 years, the R/UDAT program has worked with over 150 communities.

In 2005, as a response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT), a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long-term sustainability plans. In 12 years, SDAT program has worked with over 75 communities and regions.

Through collaborations, conferences, workshops, pilot efforts, and other dissemination efforts, AIA's Center for Communities by Design has also supported and catalyzed other new design assistance efforts. These range from trans-Atlantic conversations on remaking cities to resiliency-focused efforts in New England to urban-design efforts in Brazil, Ireland and beyond.

The Center's Design Assistance Teams operate with three guiding principles:

- 1. Enhanced objectivity.** The design assistance team programs provide communities with a framework for action. Each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that transcends and transforms the normal politics or public dialogue. Team members are selected from geographic regions outside of the host community and come from a wide variety of professional and community settings. Team members to serve pro bono and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.
- 2. Public participation.** The AIA has a five decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.
- 3. Multi-disciplinary expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance which incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes an interdisciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. Teams are multi-disciplinary, combining combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.





What We Heard

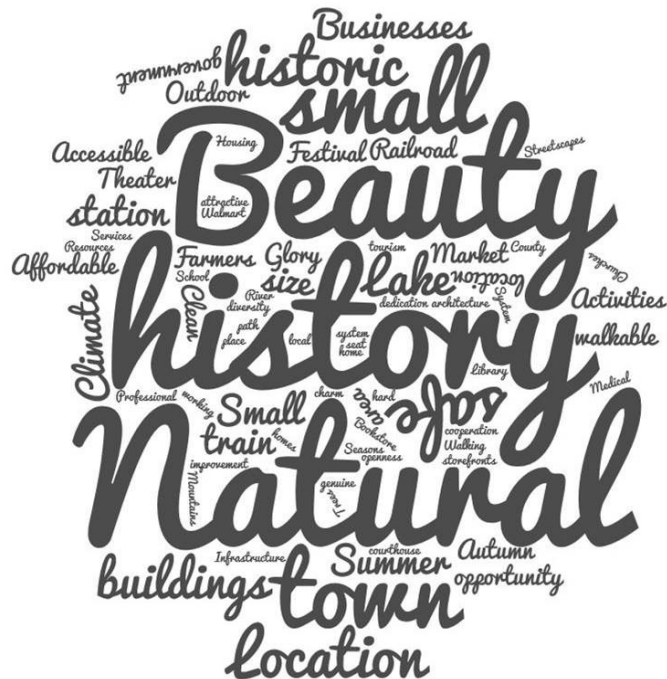
WHAT WE HEARD AND SAW

We met with stakeholders and the community at large during our walking and driving tour of downtown and the region. We then met that evening for the town hall meeting to further the conversation and learn of Oakland's past, the Oakland of today, and the hopes for the Oakland of tomorrow. The team has analyzed all the information we have obtained and have compiled our findings based on our observations, research, and community input.

Community Assets

We will begin with our discoveries regarding the community assets of Oakland. Oakland has much to offer. Oakland has a rich history including the railroad and as a vacation destination. Much of this history can be relived in the various museums downtown. Good portions of the historic buildings still remain to this day to maintain the historic fabric of downtown Oakland. Oakland is a walkable city. Oakland is nestled amongst a wide area of natural features including Deep Creek Lake, the Youghiogheny River, the Appalachian Mountains, and numerous national parks.

Oakland is a safe place filled with great and friendly people. Oakland has core events like the Farmer's Market, the Summer Music Festival, Autumn Glory, and a Great Smalltown Christmas. The arts both visual and performing intermingle with all these events and look to grow within Oakland. As it has been stated, Oakland is "A Great Small Town."



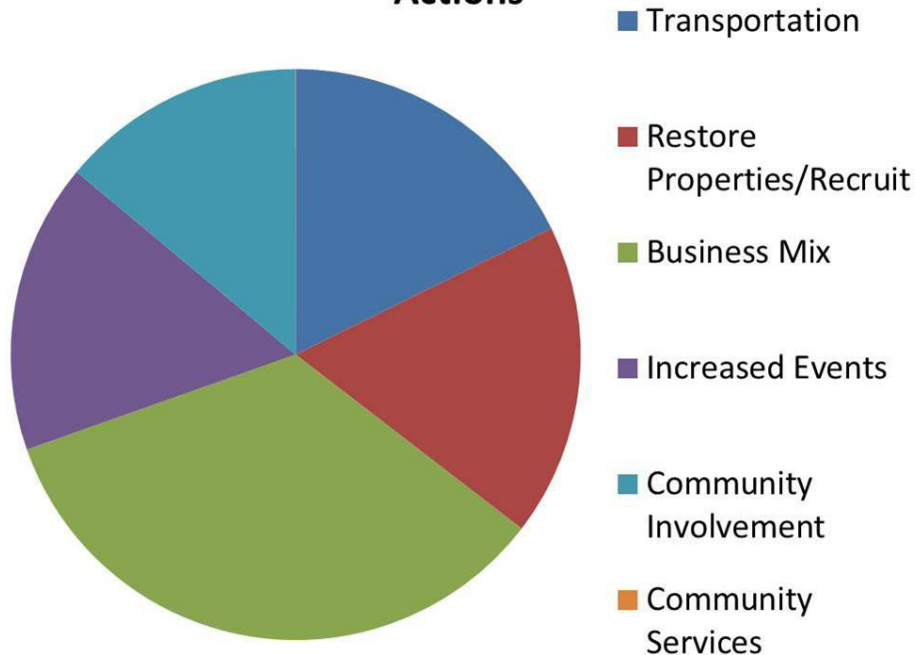
Community Challenges

Even with its greatness, Oakland has its challenges. With a major state route running thru its downtown, transportation and accessibility can be a challenge. Wayfinding can be difficult and the sidewalks roll up at the end of the workday leaving no after work vibrancy in downtown. The population is aging and the younger generation is often leaving for other cities. They leave partly due to a declining workforce need in the area. There is some resistance to change, to lose the essences of Oakland. While Oakland has many identifying assets, what is Oakland's identity? While Oakland has some greatness today, what will sustain and make Oakland even greater in the future? Not easy questions to answer, but this report will offer strong suggestions and implementations to achieve just that.

Community Impact

Some of the most impactful areas for action revolve around transportation and wayfinding. Others center on the business mix, and the ability to draw new business to fill vacant buildings downtown. While Oakland has some large events, a calendar including more events to activate downtown on a steady basis was seen as an impactful action item. Increased community involvement can be the glue to hold all these actions together.

Actions



the population. As the resident experience is enhanced, so will the tourist experience which is a large economic opportunity for Oakland.

Community Implementation

Identifying items to act on is great, but the key is to act on these discoveries. We asked you where the heart of Oakland was. That's where you start, at the heart. Complete the heart of downtown. Freshen it up, connect the vital pieces together, and energize it. Grow new and existing businesses in Oakland. Improve the processes for sustainable and continuing business development to create new destinations.

Next, connect the heart to the rest of the town. Once the heart is strengthened, do the same to connect the heart to the existing and new destinations. Improve the pedestrian experience in Oakland. Connect the destinations with safe, recognizable, and inviting paths.

Create an identity for Oakland. Make Oakland's history, railroad, nature, and arts, fun all the time! In addition to seasonal events like Autumn Glory develop additional programming to activate the destinations year round. Market the rejuvenated Oakland experience. Establish Oakland as a destination again. The tourist industry put Oakland on the map with the railroads and the lake. By establishing the destinations and experiences for residents, not just seasonally, or monthly, but daily, year round, it will also be a destination for tourists. Get the word out about this "Great Small Town" to develop more business, encourage more growth and investment, and retain and grow

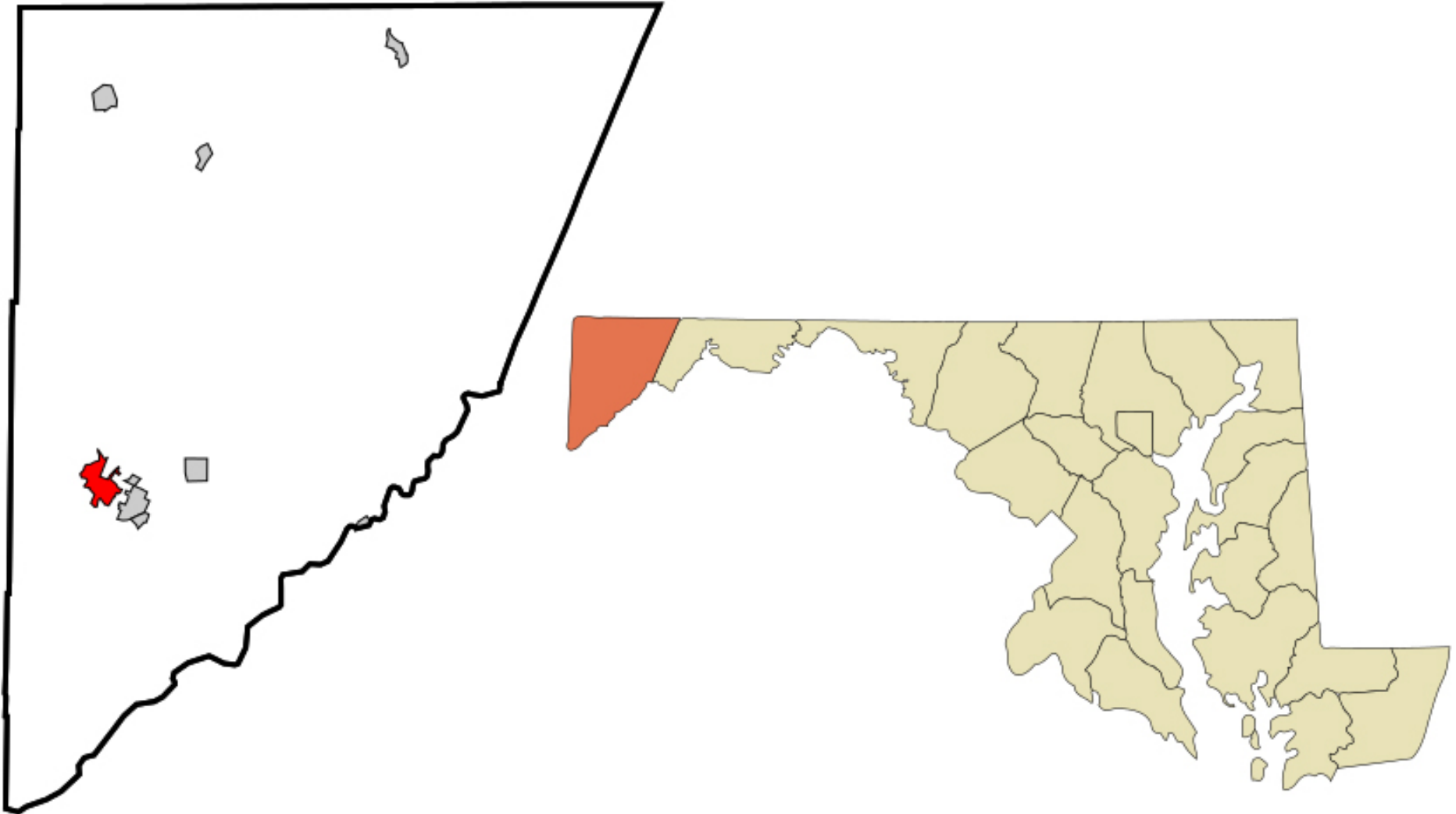


Oakland Today

LOCATION

Oakland is located in Western Maryland, and is the county seat of Garrett County, Maryland. Oakland is situated to serve as a major hub for visitors to the region. Oakland is located near major tourist attractions including WISP Resort, Deep Creek Lake, and several state parks. In addition, the Autumn Glory Festival attracts large numbers of tourists every October. Its position as both the county seat and easy access to multiple regional attractions make it a strategic location that can leverage both tourists and the regional economy.

The Town of Oakland has a population of 1,892, with a median household income \$30,986. Currently, there is an existing annual supply of \$100.4 million of retail goods and services and an existing annual demand of \$24.2 million. The excess supply of retail goods and services indicates that the Town of Oakland attracts a large portion of demand from outside of town.



KEY LOCAL DRIVERS

Oakland has the opportunity to capitalize on four potential major drivers to support retail and restaurants in Downtown Oakland including workforce, visitors, students, and the residential population.

Oakland attracts people from as far as Baltimore, Washington, and Pittsburgh. Deep Creek Lake provides significant opportunities to attract tourists throughout the region. In addition, the nearby state parks, scenic drives, and potential for agro-tourism may attract additional tourists in search of outdoors activities and natural amenities.

The town lies 11.5 miles north of West Virginia-Maryland along US Route 219. The town is strategically located to capture regional and commuter traffic along this major highway. There are over 300 businesses that employ more than 4,200 workers in the Town of Maryland. The vast majority of the existing workforce commutes into Oakland each day from nearby communities. The local workforce has a significant impact on both local retailers and housing demand.

Garrett County is located nearby and has a Southern Outreach Center located in Oakland offering non-credit classes. An attractive mix of retail, green space, and activities may leverage student discretionary spending that will provide additional support for local retailers, restaurants, and entertainment venues.



Local Workforce



Residents



Visitors



College Students

Garrett County is an attractive location for businesses due to its workforce, location, and affordable community. Major regional employers include Garrett County Memorial Hospital, Beitzel, Wal-Mart, and Wisp Resort. Oakland is a net importer of employees from the region. According to the US Census, over 4,000 workers commute into Oakland for work each day.

There are 305 businesses employing over 4,200 workers in the Town of Oakland. Of the existing workforce population 252 workers both work and live in Oakland. The remaining 4,016 workers commute in each day from outside of town. Nearly 50% of this workforce commutes more than 10 miles each day, and 20% of this workforce commutes more than 25 miles each day.

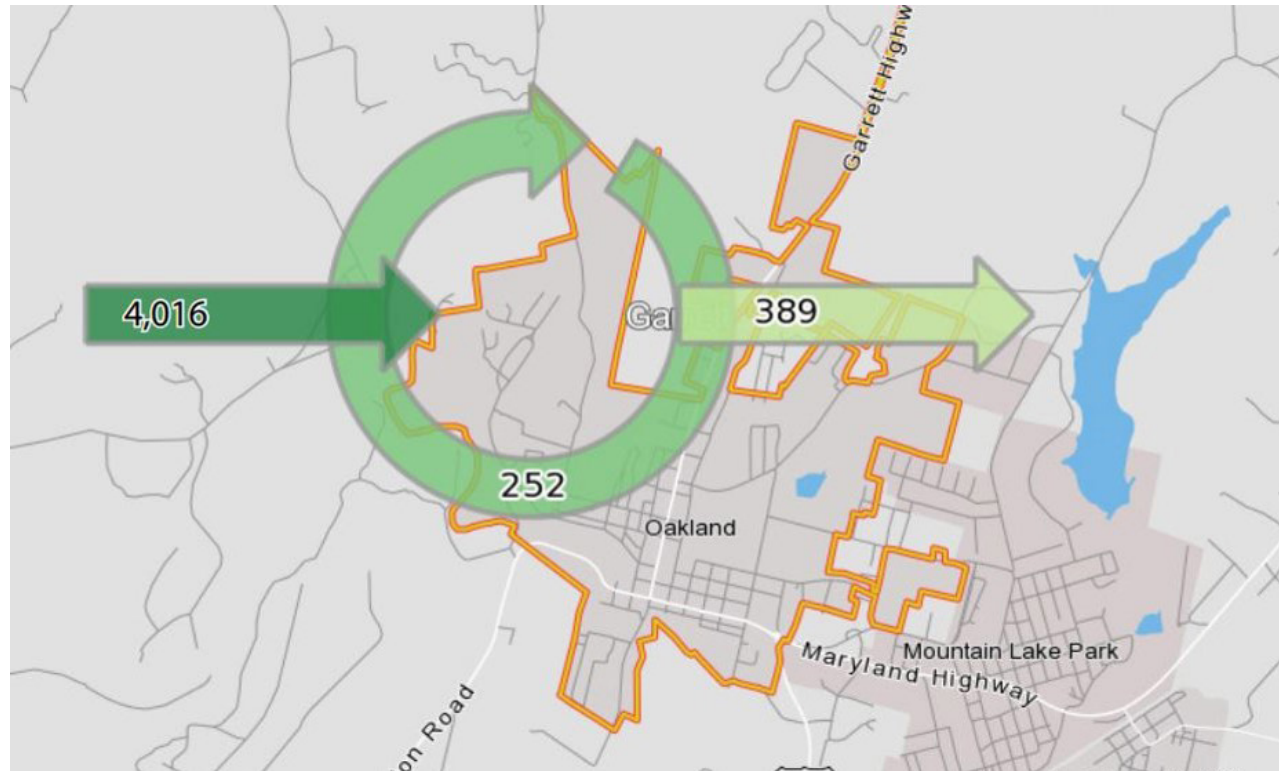
The existing workforce population may be leveraged to support existing and new retailers located in and near Oakland. The county courthouse provides a natural flow of both workforce and local visitors into downtown. A pedestrian friendly downtown with signage will more easily route the existing workers to nearby business establishments.

The average expenditures by workforce employees are \$195 per week. A capture of 25% of existing retail expenditures, excluding transportation and online spending, may generate \$7.2 million in retail expenditures for Downtown Oakland, which will support nearly 24,000 square feet of retail establishments.

Workforce retail expenditures may support approximately 24,000 SF of retail demand

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Company	Employees	Type
Garrett County Memorial Hospital	365	Healthcare
Beitzel	306	Construction
Wal-Mart	270	Retail Trade
Wisp Resort	230	Arts
Garrett College	205	Educational Services
Garrett County Community Action Committee	189	Other
Goodwill Retirement Community	188	Healthcare
ClosetMaid	181	Manufacturing
First United	180	Finance and Insurance
Uno Chicago Grill	156	Accommodation and Food Service
West Coast Shoe Factory	38	Scappoose



Workforce Inflow/Outflow

VISITOR ECONOMY

Recent research estimates that tourism in Maryland generated \$9.6B in 2013, a 4.1% increase. Tourism is a powerful economic driver for the State of Maryland, and the tourist industry is on the rise. Tourism is the 10th largest private sector in the state, and these jobs generate over \$5.4 billion in income. Statewide there was a 6% increase in visitor spending in 2014.

Tourism is a major component of the Garrett County Economy. According to the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, the County attracts over 1.2 million annual visitors. The average vacation expenditures are \$1,145 per person. The largest portion of tourist expenditures are on food related services and lodging. Approximately 10% of the total expenditures are for retail purchases. The existing tourist economy creates \$1.2 billion in annual retail expenditures throughout the region.

Oakland's close proximity to numerous regional attractions and abundant natural resources allow the town to capture a significant amount of visitors to the region. These visitors and expenditures create capacity to support additional retail, arts, and cultural events.

Oakland is well positioned to capture a larger portion of the growing visitor expenditures on restaurants and retail due to its easy access to natural beauty and scenic drives. A well programmed downtown with a variety of entertainment and eating venues may easily capture 2% of existing regional tourist expenditures, which would support an additional 19,214 square feet of retail and restaurants.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF TOURISM RELATED SPENDING FOR OAKLAND

Category	Potential Annual Expenditures	Demand (SF)
Grocery Stores	\$2,077,738	4,374
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$2,077,738	5,194
Full-Service Restaurants	\$2,077,738	4,889
Clothing Stores	\$682,435	2,482
Shoe Stores	\$0	-
Jewelry, Luggage, & Leather Goods	\$0	-
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$682,435	2,275
Entertainment	\$2,776,164	
Lodging	\$4,902,390	
Transportation	\$10,167,600	
Total	\$25,444,239	19,214

1.2 million annual visitors

Tourist related activities may generate \$15M in expenditures and support 19,214 SF of retail expenditures

STUDENT ECONOMY

The Garrett County College is located in McHenry, 14 miles from downtown Oakland, and has a Southern Outreach Center located in Oakland. There are approximately 712 student enrolled in Garrett County College as of 2015-2016 academic year. The average student discretionary spending is \$5,559 annually. The existing student population and spending patterns create a potential for \$2.8 million in off-campus expenditures.

Existing studies of the traditional college age student show an increased preference for walkable communities with access to green spaces, arts and music, and restaurants. A survey by the American Planning Association found that 56% of Millennials and 46% of active baby boomers prefer to live in a walkable community, whether urban, suburban, or a small town location. Research on demand preferences of both seniors and Millennials identify convenient access to retail and a diversified housing stock as a major determinant in shopping and living preferences.

Based on these trends, a vibrant pedestrian friendly downtown may capture 50% of existing student retail demand. The \$1.2 million in retail expenditures would support an additional 3,367 square feet of retail. The majority of this spending is for groceries, restaurants, and drinking places.

Student expenditures will support an additional 3,367 square feet of retail

COLLEGE STUDENT DISCRETIONARY SPENDING PATTERNS

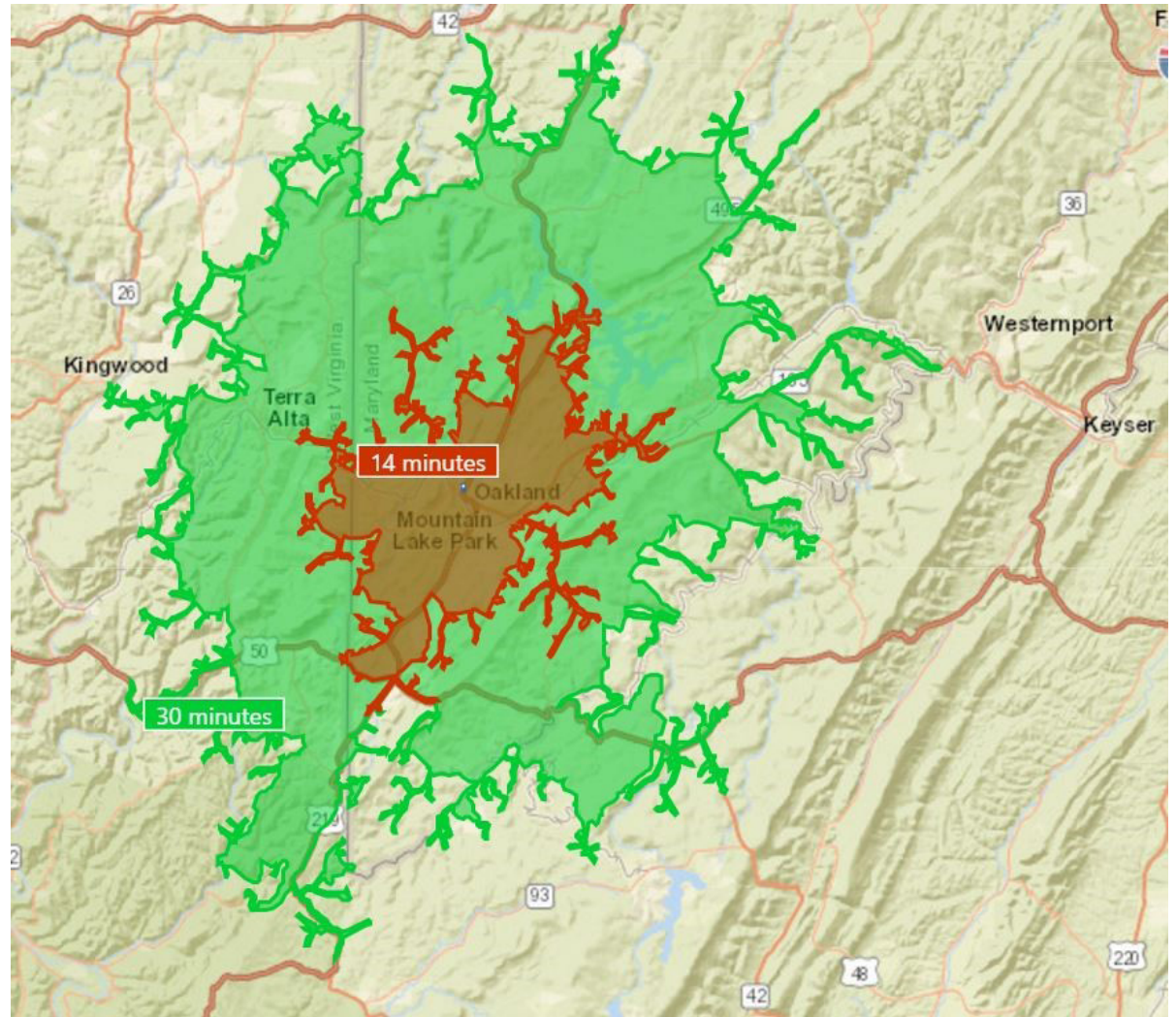
Average Annually Discretionary Spending	\$5,559	
Category	Potential Annual Expenditures	Demand (SF)
Grocery Stores	\$328,346	691
Alcohol	\$117,590	392
Full-Service Restaurants	\$183,912	433
Auto Parts, Accessories, & Tire Stores	\$281,205	562
Clothing Stores	\$53,918	196
Shoe Stores	\$53,918	359
Jewelry, Luggage, & Leather Goods	\$53,918	171
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$31,123	104
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$137,431	458
Entertainment	\$12,052	-
Total	\$1,241,360	3,367

RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

In 2011, Buxton identified the primary and secondary trade area for Oakland. The Oakland primary trade area was determined to be a 14-minute drive time, and the secondary trade area is a 30-minute drive time. The Primary Trade Area is the geographic area where 55% to 70% of customers originate, while the secondary trade area represents an additional 15% to 20%. These geographies show that the Oakland PTA includes portions of Deer Park, Loch Lynn Heights, and portions of West Virginia.

The Oakland Primary Trade Area contains nearly 4,000 households, with a population of 9,800. The 2016 median household income in the Oakland Primary Trade Area is \$31,846. The secondary trade area contains an additional 14,995 people with aggregate expenditures of \$362 million. Currently, there exists an unmet residential demand of \$80 million within the primary and secondary trade areas.

The average distance traveled for each retail category was examined in order to identify the potential capture of unmet retail demand across each of these categories. Within a 0 to 14 minute drive there is potential to support an additional 9,448 square feet of unmet residential demand. Within a 14 to 20 minute drive there is potential to support an additional 11,378 square feet of unmet residential demand. Combined the current residential population within the primary and secondary trade area may support an additional 20,800 square feet of retail and restaurants.



Range	Demand (SF)
0 - 14 Minute Drive Time	9,448
14 - 30 Minute Drive Time	11,378
Total Demand (SF)	20,826

AGGREGATED DEMAND

Retail demand for Downtown Oakland will be impacted by each of the demand drivers discussed, which includes workforce, visitors, students, and the residential population. The table shows the current potential of each of these demand drivers and the cumulative supportable square footage by each retail category. Based on current demand, the study area has the potential to support 61,799 square feet of retail. Nearly 40% of the unmet retail demand is for food and drink related services, and 20% is for clothing stores.

Potential Supportable Retail Square Footage By Retail Category (Note: Residential-generated retail demand only takes into account the <i>unmet</i> retail demand by retail category)						
Category	NAICS	Student	Workforce	Visitor	Residential	Total
Automobile Dealers	4411	-	-	-	-	-
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	-	-	-	-	-
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	562	-	-	-	562
Furniture Stores	4421	-	-	-	-	-
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	-	-	-	-	-
Electronics & Appliance Stores	4431	104	1,006	-	-	1,109
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	-	-	-	-	-
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	-	-	-	-	-
Grocery Stores	4451	691	2,103	4,374	-	7,168
Specialty Food Stores	4452	-	-	-	-	-
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	-	-	-	-	-
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	458	4,057	2,275	-	6,790
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	-	-	-	-	-
Clothing Stores	4481	196	757	2,482	8,137	11,571
Shoe Stores	4482	359	1,040	-	833	2,233
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	171	793	-	3,782	4,746
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	-	451	-	-	451
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	-	-	-	698	698
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	-	1,352	-	-	1,352
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	-	6,242	-	-	6,242
Florists	4531	-	-	-	184	184
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	-	1,526	-	-	1,526
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	-	-	-	-	-
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	-	-	-	3,135	3,135
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	433	1,983	4,889	-	7,304
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	-	2,670	-	1,303	3,973
Special Food Services	7223	-	-	-	861	861
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	-	-	-	1,892	1,892
Total Demand (SF)		2,975	23,979	14,019	20,826	61,799

RETAIL RECRUITMENT AND INCENTIVES

Incentives are a common tool used in economic development and can play a valuable role in retail recruitment to the local community. There are a wide variety of incentives available for a local municipality to use. Tax exemptions, waiver fees, sales tax rebates, tax credits, grants and loan guarantees are the most common incentives. The Town of Oakland, the Greater Oakland Business Association, and the Garrett County's Office of Economic Development offer incentives to existing and potential new businesses on a case by case basis. However, the existing incentives program may be amended to provide better transparency and enhanced effectiveness at targeting specific business types to Downtown Oak

1. **Goals and Measurable Objectives-** Measurable objectives will increase effectiveness of economic development incentives. Common objectives may include identifying specific business recruitment and/or retention and a geographic focus.

2. **Define Types of Incentives-** An economic development policy should specifically define the types of incentives offered and the extent to which these will be used.

3. **Define Evaluation Process-** Clearly define the evaluation process for consistency and transparency. This process may include:

- How a proposal measures up to the established economic development criteria.
- A cost/benefit analysis
- Fiscal impact on the tax base or an economic impact on the local community.
- Analysis of the impact on existing businesses

4. **Establish Performance Standards** - The policy should establish specific performance standards for any business receiving incentives. The performance standards will assist in measuring the effectiveness of the incentive program and recovering benefits if any commitments are not fulfilled.

5. **Monitoring-** A process should be established for regular monitoring of granted incentives and performance of each project. The monitoring process should examine the performance standards related to the incentive agreement and determine if the goals for each project are accomplished.



Revitalizing Oakland

THE PLACE TO START

THE COMMERCIAL CORE — THE HEART OF OAKLAND...

Where is the “heart of Oakland?” We asked this question of Oakland residents and business owners and they overwhelmingly responded “the commercial core or downtown.” This is the area that most people think of as the Oakland’s “historic downtown”, comprised of a two block area along with a variety of commercial buildings around its perimeter. The commercial core is centered between the government center, the town square/museums, and the farmers market pavilion with the majority of its commercial storefronts located on 2nd Street (historically known as Main Street) and Alder Street. Although this area is only a part of the greater Oakland downtown area, the entire historic downtown is included in the state and federal Downtown Historic District.

REJUVENATING THE COMMERCIAL CORE

The proposed rejuvenation of the commercial core centers on a “T” shaped area created by the intersection of 2nd Street and Alder Street. The “T” is the place where primary circulation patterns overlap, connecting major nodes in the greater downtown area with the heart of Oakland. Focusing on this part of downtown allows new resources and redevelopment strategies to be applied where they will have the greatest impact on the existing historic downtown fabric.



Oakland's “commercial core” with existing buildings highlighted.



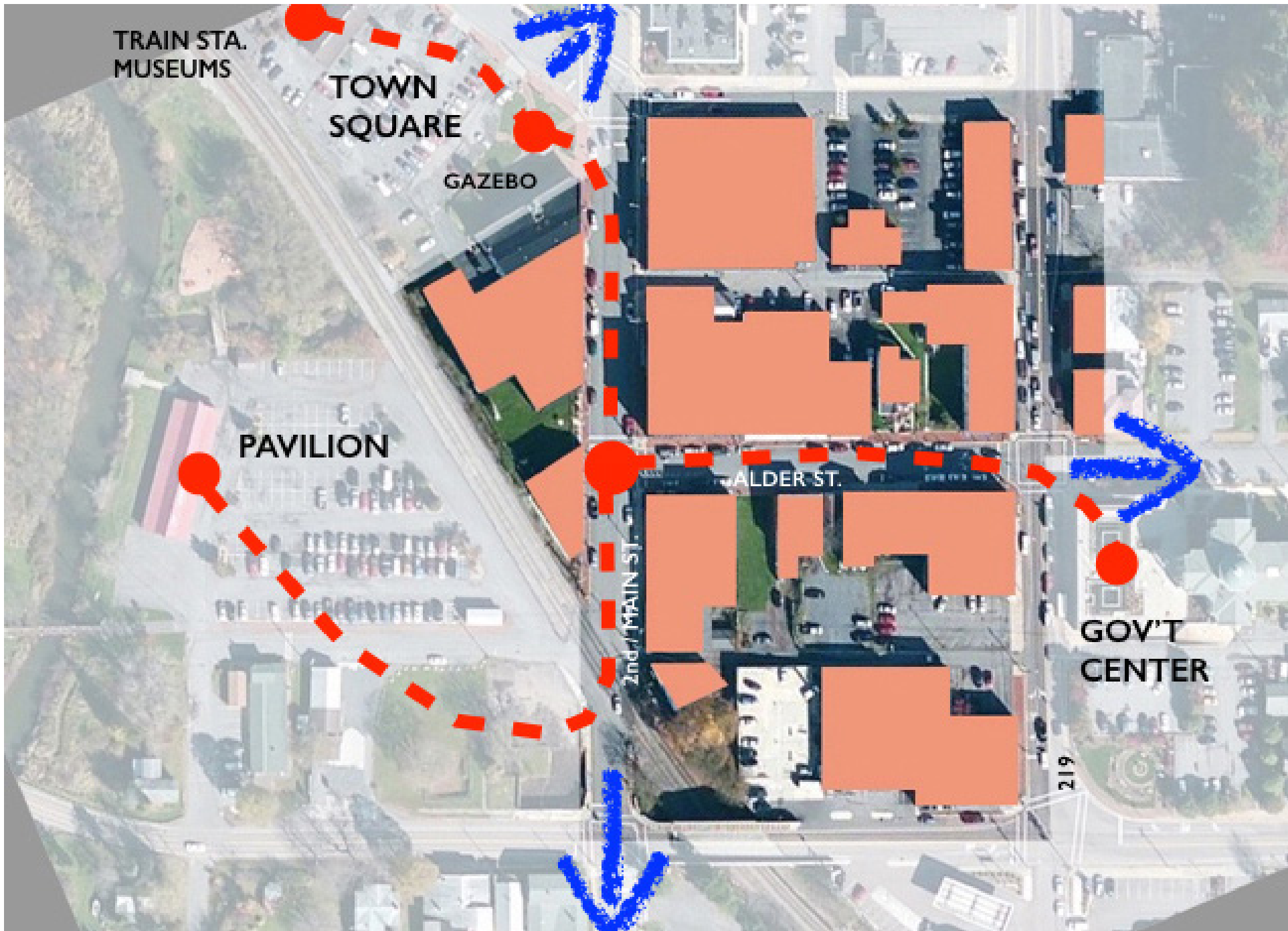
View down 2nd Street, historically known as Main Street.



View of Alder Street from its intersection with 2nd Street.



The "T" shown in blue.



The "T" connects Oakland's public spaces and institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations reflect the communities desire to strengthen the commercial core's character and vitality by building on its historic architecture, its charming and inviting retail streetscapes, and its function as the downtown crossroad, connecting Oaklands downtown public spaces and institutions.

Currently, Route 219 is the main artery through town, taking the majority of the traffic along the edge of the commercial core but not through it. The visitor knows that they have entered part of Oakland's commercial area but they experience it more as a suburban retail strip rather than as a downtown. Existing signage along route 219 encourages people to speed on through town bypassing Oakland's downtown historic district, waterfront, town square, and museums. A large part of Oakland's image problem comes from people just driving by and missing it.

Visitors coming to, or passing through, Oakland should be encouraged to drive through the historic downtown core, the heart of the city, where they can glimpse Oakland's unique character or be enticed to stop for a cup of coffee, a bite to eat or a visit to one of the town's museums or galleries.

We propose a new 2nd Street loop taking you off of route 219 and through the historic downtown with new directional and wayfinding signage, along route 219, as you approach from both the North and the South, designed to direct visitors to two new downtown gateway locations: 1) the train bridge overpass, and 2) the intersection of 219 and Center street. New signage at these locations should be designed and coordinated with a branding system that ties all visitor directional and wayfinding signage into a consistent graphic system for navigation and information throughout Oakland.

Train Bridge Gateway

The train bridge gateway should be enhanced by the cleaning and restoration of the historic bridge, the addition of compatible lighting and signage welcoming the visitor to historic downtown Oakland. Key buildings adjacent to the gateway areas should be a primary focus of revitalization efforts. The buildings and sidewalk along the street leading to the bridge should complement the gateway and should be cleaned up, vacant spaces filled, new signage installed and landscaping upgraded.



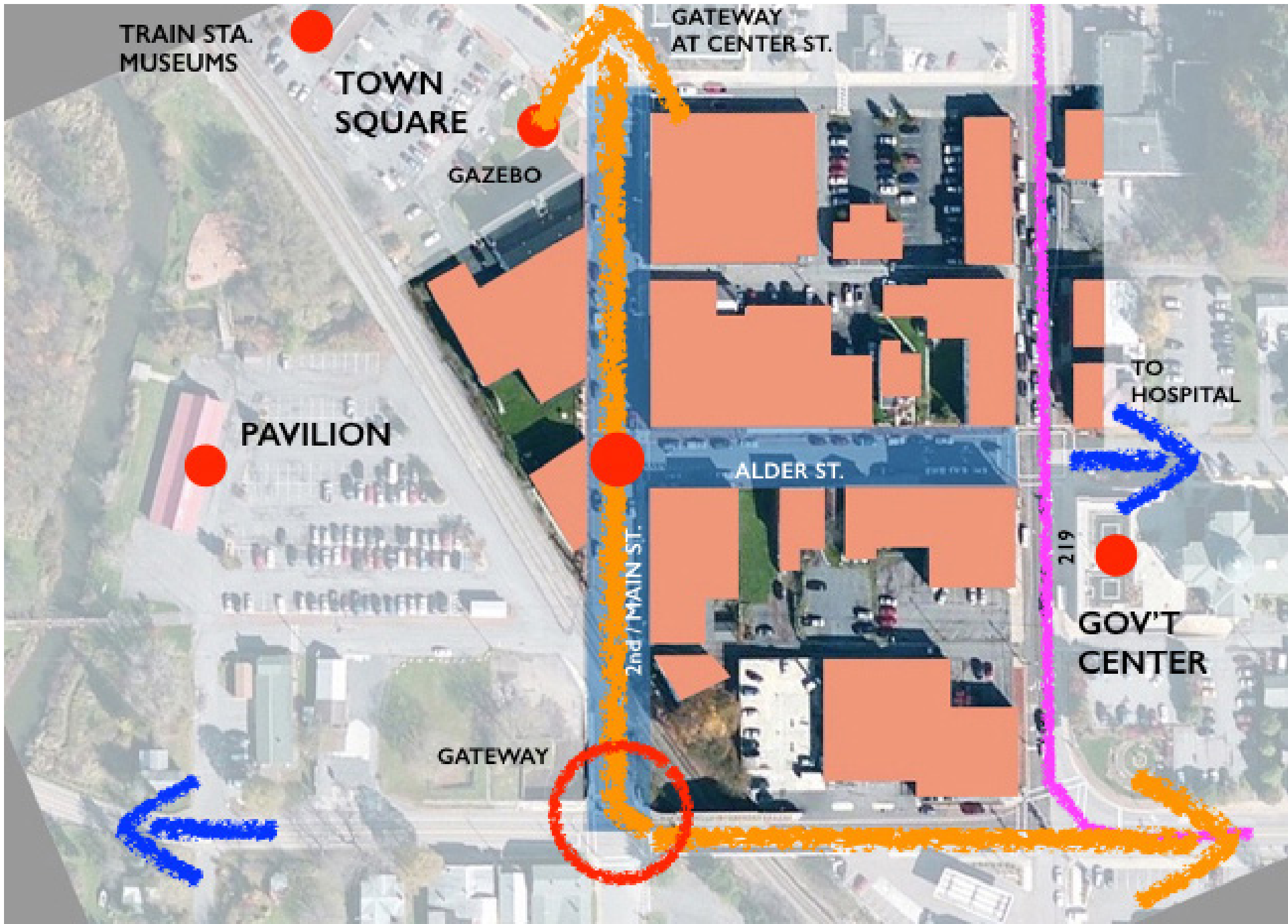
The "T" connects Oakland's public spaces and institutions.

Center Street Gateway

The gateway at Center street is not only a gateway to the historic downtown but is also a gateway to Oakland's 2nd Street residential historic district. Signage should be installed directing visitors through this area and towards downtown along 2nd street. This route will give the visitor a sense of the character of both Oakland's residential and commercial historic districts while giving downtown businesses and museums increased visibility.

Grow Existing and New Businesses

Oakland's commercial core currently contains a wide variety of vacant buildings and spaces from empty historic commercial buildings to upper story office space for lease. The scale of the commercial core and its gracious sidewalks give this area a comfortable feel for pedestrians wanting to walk the downtown but the presence of empty storefronts and vacant buildings breaking up each block make the downtown feel fragmented and semi-abandoned. The town's economic development strategy should be focused on filling these empty spaces with new businesses and should work with existing businesses directly to help facilitate their growth to prevent business turnover in the commercial core. Regulatory processes should be simplified and incentives should be developed for businesses wanting to locate or stay in Oakland. These incentives should be tied to a marketing and public relations campaign promoting Oakland as a business friendly and fun loving downtown.



New route through downtown (orange) showing railroad bridge gateway.

Oakland can also be a destination for a small live/work culture. Bringing more downtown housing to the commercial core and its surroundings will create a more vibrant and visible street culture, support new restaurants and shops, and provide a rich mix of professional, service and retail workers who spend their days and their money in Oakland.

New office and retail should be developed in upper stories or at locations along the edges of the commercial core where larger building footprints may be better suited for flexible or changeable working environments. Tenants in these areas can range from professional offices, insurance, health care, or organizational offices. The spaces (shown dark purple below) located along route 219 provide for larger footprints and direct access to route 219 for both marketing (signage) and access.



Vacant spaces at the time of this study shown in blue. Note how the spacing of vacant buildings breaks up the streetscape of every block.



NEW RETAIL/ OFFICE SPACE

New Office / Retail space shown in dark purple.

Create an Anchor Development

The development of an anchor project in the commercial core would be one of the fastest ways to see this part of downtown begin a turn-around. An anchor project of significant scope and scale has the ability to lead the way and set an example for subsequent development in the district. As the largest and most substantial historic structure in the core area, the restoration of the bank building at 2nd and Alder would have a significant impact on the redevelopment of the commercial core and would:

Be a catalyst for redevelopment: A project of the scale of the bank building would act as a model and a sales tool promoting the idea of rehabbing historic buildings and working with the historic tax credits while encouraging complementary development in the commercial core.

Change how people value downtown: A newly completed project of this size and significance would increase peoples perception of the value of downtown and its importance to Oakland and Garrett County.

Increase value of downtown property: A completed project of this scale would change the value of adjacent and nearby properties and would help the real estate market to normalize, thereby encouraging development and property sales.

Be a symbol of progress an optimism: A completed of this scale would be impressive and would symbolize Oaklands new trajectory as positive and growth oriented.

Demonstrate that Oakland is good place to invest: If this development is successful, then other developments can be successful also. A successful project of this scale will bring Oakland to the attention of other experienced developers who might be interested in investing in downtown or in tackling some of the more difficult projects in the area.

Be an example of how to utilize Historic Tax Credits and other financial incentives: A project of this scale will typically utilize all of the incentives that are available. The experience and knowledge gained by going through the historic tax credit process on a project such as this can be shared in the community to help smaller owners/developers understand how to utilize the credits and apply them properly to their development projects.



The historic bank building at the corner of 2nd Street and Alder



The inset shows the bank building as it exists today; the larger picture shows proposed renovations.

Redevelop Key Historic Buildings

As the remaining section of Oakland's historic downtown, the historic character of the commercial core should be preserved, managed, and enhanced by any proposed redevelopment. Since the entire commercial core area lies within the state and federal Downtown Historic District qualified rehabilitations of historic structures are eligible for a 20% Maryland state historic tax credit as well as a 20% federal historic tax credit if the project is income producing and meets a minimum percentage of residential/commercial space. The building's rehabilitation must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Structures to qualify for the tax credits.

Almost all of the vacant buildings in the commercial core are contributing structures to the historic district so any significant renovations to these structures could qualify for one or both credits. If the owner/developer can use the tax credits themselves to offset their personal tax liability then they can use 100% of the credits they earned. Some developers choose to "syndicate" the credits, or sell them to a corporate or individual buyer who will give them (currently) \$.85 - \$.90 on the dollar for the credits.

As an example: A developer that spends two-million dollars on a qualified historic rehabilitation could get a 20% state credit and a 20% federal credit, equaling \$800,000.00 in tax credits. If they sold them for \$.90/dollar they would save \$720,000.00, making the two-million dollar project cost only \$1,280,000.00.

To successfully navigate this process, and insure that an administrative, design, or legal issue does not jeopardize the credits, it is important that the owner/developer be working with a professional team, including their architect, accountant, and attorney, that has experience in the historic tax credit process.

Buildings within the district that are not contributing structures to the historic district and are over fifty-years old may still qualify for a 10% federal rehabilitation tax credit. Owners of historic buildings in the commercial core should be encouraged to save and restore historic building fabric when possible even if they are not seeking the state or federal historic tax credits. Maintaining a building's historical authenticity



Vacant buildings well suited to historic rehabilitation.



contributes to the value of the district and the downtown as a whole and should be encouraged at all times.

Make Places to Gather, Eat, Drink, and Share

When asked what they wanted to see most in a revitalized Oakland downtown the answer was overwhelmingly "places to gather, eat, drink, and share." Residents want more choice and flexibility to be able to come downtown in the evening and grab dinner or have a drink and relax a bit catching up with friends. Currently there are three existing restaurants in the commercial core with limited hours and limited food choices. With so few choices and inconsistent hours of operation neither residents nor visitors choose Oakland's downtown as a destination for food, drink, or entertainment.



Locations of existing restaurants shown in yellow.

Several currently vacant or empty buildings in the core area would make good development targets for a restaurant or food service use. By adding three new restaurants to the core area and working with businesses to extend hours and promote downtown Oakland as a "place to eat," the commercial core can become a food destination for local residents as well as tourists and visitors in the Garrett County area. People will come downtown to eat even if they haven't decided where they want to go yet. The range of restaurant types might include deli's and prepared food markets, ethnic foods, traditional down-home cooking, or a locally sourced cafe. To support a restaurant/food scene vacant spaces could be occupied by specialty food shops like a bakery or a coffee shop. Although there is often a seasonal market to consider with specialty products, as more people live in or near downtown, demand for local products and services will grow and downtown Oakland will become the most desirable place to locate a new business.

The possible new restaurant locations show below are all located in buildings that already have the potential for outdoor seating making them more visible and more desirable as a place to gather during nice weather.

Bring Art and Music into Downtown

In addition to restaurants, residents want to see art and music play a role in the downtown through the creation of galleries or artist live/work spaces or through the development of an entertainment venue that can host local and regional music. Across the country, the venue for gathering and hearing local or regional music is no longer the bar or the club. Today the brewery / taproom has taken over as the music venue of choice. The industrial feel and casual atmosphere of the small brewery is well suited as a music and arts venue and in many small communities the local brewery is fast becoming the favorite social gathering place — the community's living room.

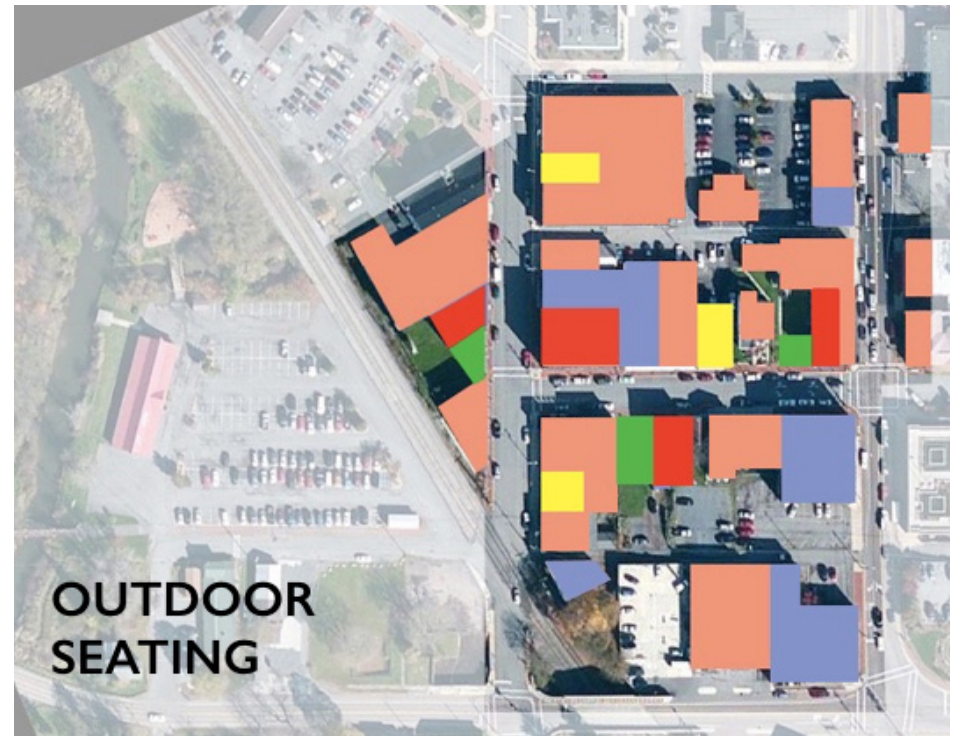
Several buildings around town have the potential for development as a small micro-brewery but the industrial building located next to the proposed railroad bridge gateway is particularly well suited for this use. This building has overhead door loading on the alley side, on-site parking, an area that could support an outside deck overlooking the town, and large open interior spaces for the brewhouse and tanks,



A possible new restaurant location that would be able to have outdoor seating.



Locations of possible new restaurants shown in red.



Green space / outdoor seating shown green next to proposed restaurant locations.

the tasting room/restaurant, and live entertainment. For Oakland, this could be seen as a brewery/arts and culture center serving not only the town of Oakland but as a regional arts and cultural center for Garrett County and surrounding areas.

A development such as this would provide Oakland with another downtown "destination" that would support downtown's growing restaurant and food culture and bringing new life back into the city.



View of possible brewery development, with railroad bridge to the left.



Possible location for outside deck seating.



Loading/service area for brewery deliveries.



Connecting Oakland

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES: THE PUBLIC REALM

Overview and Existing Conditions

Much of Downtown Oakland and its surrounding residential neighborhoods were designated as a National Historic District in 1984 (see the following page for a description). The majority of contributing buildings are residential, but there is a concentration of contributing commercial buildings in the heart of Downtown. This commercial Historic Core of Downtown is shown on the adjacent map.

Significant public improvements have been made to reinforce the historic character of the commercial Historic Core and encourage walking, including brick sidewalks, pedestrian street lights, the Farm Fresh Pavilion and adjacent parking lot, the historic B&O Train Station, Garrett County Historic and Transportation Museum and replica of the Deer Park Hotel facade that harkens back to the era when Downtown was home to many large wooden hotels that served visitors arriving in Oakland by rail.

Of course, Downtown extends beyond this two block area. The general consensus is that it extends north along Second Street to Center Street and along Third Street to about Memorial Drive. On Third Street (Highway 219), the primary highway connecting Oakland to Deep Creek, McHenry and other destinations to the north, commercial development north of the Historic Core is typically set back from the street with parking in front.




Challenges and Opportunities

The commercial Historic Core is tucked away. This is both good and bad. On the positive side, there is much less vehicular traffic on Downtown streets other than Third Street, so they are more intimate and walkable. On the other hand, visitors may drive right by without realizing that they could stop and shop or dine.

“Oakland is walkable but people don’t walk.” There are too many gaps along the street to maintain interest, there are not a lot of people living in walking distance, and public facilities and spaces are disconnected from one another. Economic development strategies described previously, including renovation of historic buildings, leasing of ground floor space to catalytic uses, and the addition of more residential units in upper floors and in new buildings in close proximity to the commercial Historic Core, will begin to fill in the gaps along Downtown streets. There are also opportunities to better connect public facilities and spaces to one another and to the commercial Historic Core.

Third Street has a unique set of challenges. Because it is part of the regional highway system, connecting Oakland to destinations to the north, it carries through traffic as well as local traffic and has to balance its role as a regional highway and Downtown-serving street.



-  Downtown - approximate boundary of commercial/institutional area
-  Historic Core of Downtown - commercial area
-  Downtown gateway marker - general location

Maryland's National Register Properties

Oakland Historic District

Inventory No.: G-VI-A-040

Date Listed: 1/26/1984

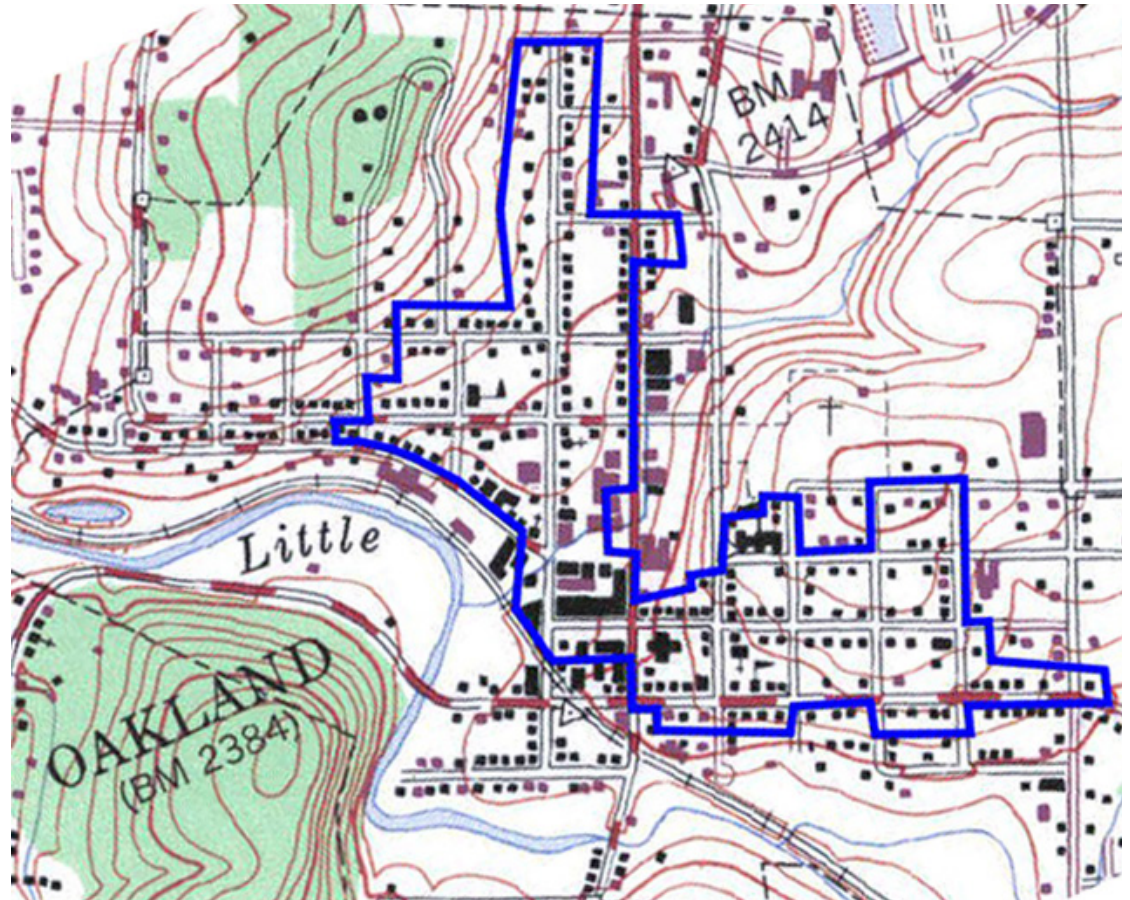
Location: Oakland, Garrett County

Category: District

Period/Date of Construction: mid 19th century - 1930s

Description: The Oakland Historic District is an L-shaped area in the central and older section of Oakland which contains 206 buildings of various types, periods, materials, designs, and uses that reflect the evolution of this rural county seat from the mid 19th to the mid 20th centuries. The district is located on a hill that rises to the north and east of the Little Youghiogheny River with the Garrett County Courthouse, a 1907-1908 Renaissance Revival brick structure, situated overlooking the central portion. The buildings are primarily residential and positioned with deep setbacks from the street and surrounded by large lawns. The most prestigious houses stand along Second Street above Center Street. The commercial area, where the buildings abut the property lines, stretches along Second Street south of Green Street and along Alder Street between Second and Third Streets. Several churches and schools and a library are scattered in the district. The earliest houses and the more modest residential structures are of frame construction, the public buildings and churches of brick or stone, and the commercial buildings of brick, frame, or stone.

Significance: The Oakland Historic District is significant historically for its role as the seat of Garrett County, the westernmost county in Maryland and as the center of a mountain resort area which was popular from the 1870s to the early decades of the 1900s through promotion by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. As the seat of Garrett County since the county was formed in 1872, Oakland was the administrative, economic, commercial, educational, and cultural center of this county well into the mid 20th century. These historic roles are represented by a wealth of commercial, residential, public, and religious buildings in a variety of period styles and types which give the district architectural significance. Although the large wooden hotels that once dominated Oakland are gone and many new structures stand in the commercial area, the district has a high sense of historical integrity and continuity.



Benefits and Protections: Listing in the National Register honors the property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or to the Nation, and confers a measure of protection from harm by Federal or State activities. [Link to Section 106 process] It does not, however, place any restrictions on the actions of private property owners.

Listing in the National Register is the effective threshold for eligibility for a variety of programs designed to assist in the preservation of significant properties, including Federal and State tax credits for certain types of rehabilitation work. Other financial incentives for preservation include grants and loans.

Donations of preservation easements on Register-listed properties may qualify for charitable tax deductions.



Source: State of Maryland Department of Planning Maryland Historic Trust

Recommendations

Recommendations for enhancing walkability and connectivity on the following ages are divided into four categories:

1. Make it easier to find Downtown and the Historic Core
2. Strengthen and connect Downtown public spaces
3. Make it easier/more fun to walk everywhere Downtown
4. Connect to places beyond Downtown



1. Make It Easier to Find Downtown and the Historic Core

Downtown Gateway Markers. Reinforce the entry to Downtown Oakland with Gateway markers at the southern entries to on Oak St. east and west of Downtown, as well as at the northern entry in the vicinity of Memorial Drive as shown in the diagram on the first page of this section.

Wayfinding to the Historic Core and Other Downtown Destinations. In addition to gateway markers, which signal the entry to Downtown Oakland, wayfinding (or directional) signs are needed to inform people in advance of approaching destinations, including public parking. Signs on Oak Street should direct motorists to the new



Examples of the wide range of gateway markers used by other communities.



In addition to gateway markers, the historic Oak St. bridge creates a gateway to the Historic Core of Downtown.



Directional sign to Historic Core and parking - general location



Primary routes to Historic Core and parking

entry to the Farm Fresh Pavilion parking lot and to the Historic Core via Second Street. Similarly, a sign on the southbound side of Third Street just north of Center Street should direct motorists to the Historic Core via Center Street, as shown in the diagram on the previous page.

The Oak Street bridge is also a gateway to Downtown Oakland, particularly now that the entrance to the Farm Fresh parking lot is from Oak Street west of the bridge. The bridge could be spruced up and enhanced to create a more dramatic entry point.

Once in the Historic Core, directional signs can direct motorists to other locations, including the historic Railroad Station, Railroad Museum and adjacent public space, as well as to other parking lots, the Post Office, Court House and other public or institutional facilities.

Within Downtown, wayfinding signs for pedestrians and bicyclists can provide additional, more detailed information, including a directory and map of location businesses that can be easily updated.

Wayfinding signs should be designed at different scales appropriate to the intended audience:

Directions to the Historic Core and primary parking lots are directed primarily toward motorists. Signs directed toward motorists are large and simple enough to read at typical vehicular speeds, for example, 25 to 30 mph on Oak Street and Third Street

Signs intended for people who are walking or bicycling are smaller and can contain additional information, including information about the destination or about the cultural or natural history of the destination.

A graphic designer can create a family of permanent signs of all appropriate types at all appropriate scales like those in the top two rows at right.

In the interim, simple temporary wayfinding signs can be created and installed in a matter of days or weeks like the ones in the bottom row. There is a web page that can help with these at <https://walkyourcity.org>.



Examples of wayfinding signs for motorists.



Wayfinding signs for people who are walking, bicycling or driving slowly.

Maps and directories need to be easy to update.



Temporary walking distance signs from walkyourcity.org and others.



Informational signs are especially helpful to describe historic places.

2. Strengthen and Connect Downtown Public Spaces

The Farm Fresh Pavilion north of Oak Street adjacent to the river and the outdoor space around the historic B&O Train Station, Garret County Historical Museum and Museum of Transportation appear to be successful public spaces. The Farmers Market and other events are programmed at the Pavilion and the adjacent parking lot provides convenient parking. Events are also programmed in the public space around the Train Station and community members identified the gazebo adjacent to the Historical Museum as a place they bring visitors to experience the “heart of Oakland.”

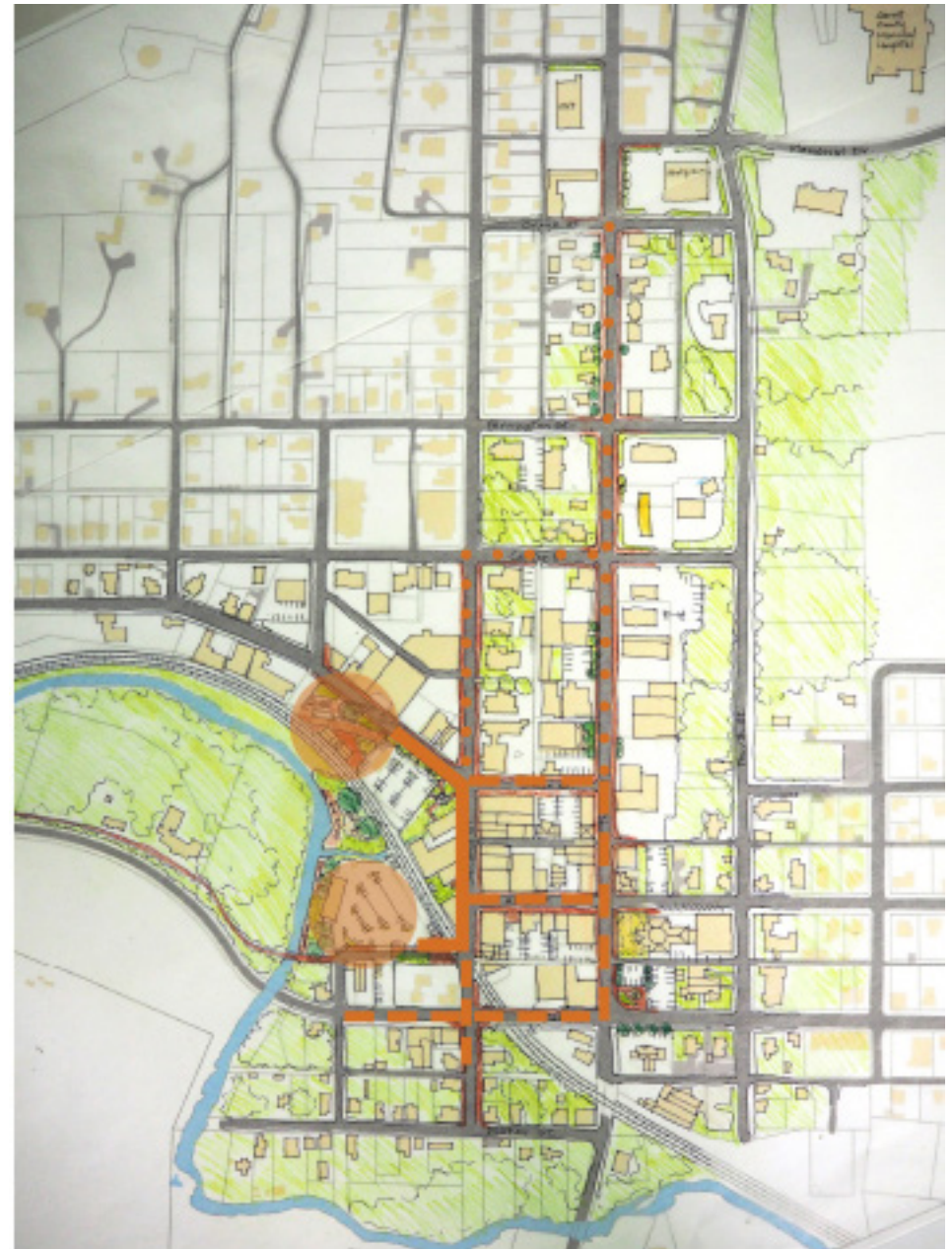
In addition, both these public spaces have parking lots that provide a “park once” opportunity for visitors and residents, that is, large lots where both visitors and local residents can park and walk throughout the rest of Downtown, particularly the Historic Core, without getting back in their cars.




However, these public spaces and parking lots are isolated from the commercial downtown and from one another. The Pavilion and Train Station are only 400 feet apart as the crow flies (across the river and railroad tracks), but are 1,200 feet apart as the person walks. While 1,200 feet is not really far - just a five to 10 minute walk - some of the walk is through or along parking lots and it may not be clear to visitors just how close they are.

Both public spaces could be enhanced to strengthen their connection to Second Street and, at the same time, make them more functional, enjoyable and flexible spaces.

Similarly, a few additional enhancements could make Second Street even more walkable, providing a seamless link between the two public spaces.

Once those three key elements have been linked, improvements to other Historic Core streets and then to other Downtown streets could follow.



-  Farm Fresh Pavilion to Train Station connection
-  Historic Core Streets
-  Other Downtown Streets

Farm Fresh Pavilion. The Town is in the process of making improvements to the Farm Fresh Pavilion parking lot that will provide a better pedestrian connection to Second Street, including the recently relocated vehicular entry from Oak Street, which allows access from Second Street to be pedestrian only with a new walkway, grassy gathering place and gateway element near the railroad tracks and Second Street that will let pedestrians on both sides of the railroad tracks know that there is something to see on the other side.

Another potential improvement would be to expand the playground at the Mountain Fresh Pavilion into a riverfront park that would take advantage of the Pavilion's location next to the Little Youghiogheny (Little Yough) River.

Both of these improvement would strengthen the connection to the walking trail that extends west from Town Park Lane across the river and bring the public space all the way to Second Street.



Looking across the railroad tracks from Second Street to the Farm Fresh Pavilion: existing (left); with simple improvements including a walkway, gateway arch and grassy gathering space (right).



Existing road from Second Street to the Farm Fresh Pavilion, which will become a pedestrian walkway.



River front next to the Farm Fresh Pavilion (left); example of a river front park with views and seating, connected to the walking trail.

Public Spaces at the Train Station. There are several visitor and local resident serving institutions and outdoor spaces around the Train Station:

- The historical and transportation museums
- The gazebo adjacent to the Historical Museum
- The outdoor stage and seating area adjacent to the Train Station.

In the middle of these spaces there are three parking lots - two serving the adjacent facilities and one private. If they could be integrated with the public spaces, the area could have the feel of a town square rather than a sequence of separate places. A first step might be add a parklike edge between the parking and sidewalk with seating, wayfinding, art and/or other elements. This edge would help to unify the public spaces. A more substantial change would be to consolidate the parking lots into a sign lot and redesign them to serve as both parking and an event space or “town square” with enhanced paving, shade trees and lighting around which the public spaces are organized. It would provide parking most of the time and an event space or town square when needed.



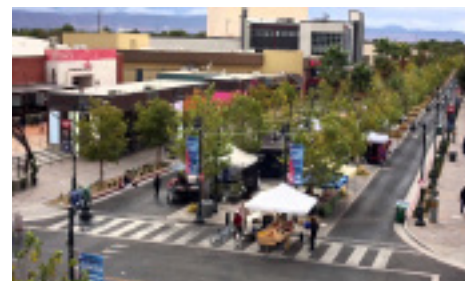
Historic Train Station and adjacent parking lot (left); Museum of Transportation (right).



The Historical Museum and gazebo (left) and stage and seating area (right).



As a first step, the edge of the parking lots could be transformed into a “linear park” with seating to connect the public spaces.

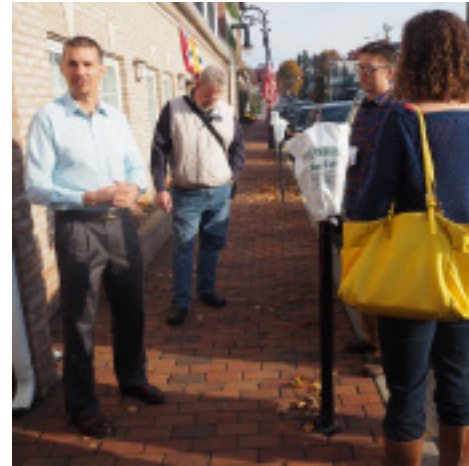


A next step could be to consolidate the parking lots into a single shared parking/event space. Examples of combined parking/event spaces.

Second Street. Second Street between Green Street and Town Park Lane links the two public spaces described above. It also connects them to the rest of Downtown. The key improvements to Second Street is infilling vacant storefronts with active, pedestrian-oriented uses and adding residential units above and nearby as discussed in Section _ to eliminate “dead zones” and create a more continuously activated street.

Improvements along the street can support the adjacent businesses, make the street more walkable, and reinforce the connection to the public spaces on either side of the railroad track. The Town has already installed brick sidewalk and historic street lights. Other potential improvements include the following:

- Remove parking meters to make more room for pedestrians and elements that support walking. In the future, if charging for parking makes sense, a single pay station can replace the meters.
- Consider festive night lighting, typically strung between street lights, to illuminate this key pedestrian route and activate the street.
- Underground utilities if the opportunity arises.



Parking meters are currently not in use (left) and could be replaced by a pay station (right).



Festive lights can cross over the street (left) or along the sidewalk(right).



Undergrounding utility lines would make the Historic Core of Downtown more attractive and would make more room on the sidewalks.

- Do not convert Second Street into a one-way street just to gain a few parking spaces. Access to the Historic Core of Downtown and to individual businesses along the street from both directions is important.
- Use the downtown pocket parks, vacant lots and space between buildings for outdoor dining, as well as more events, like movie night at the First United Bank pocket park.
- If a restaurant that needs more dining area, consider a curbside parklet. A parklet typically occupies one parking space and can be temporary or more permanent. They typically include a platform at sidewalk level and a barrier separating them from the travel lane.



Pocket parks, vacant lots and spaces next to buildings provide opportunities to expand dining, as well as for outdoor events like movie night.



Permanent outdoor dining can occupy the edge of a park (left) or temporary furniture can fill a vacant space.



Curbside parklets can be permanent or temporary; fancy or simple.

3. Make It Easier/More Fun to Walk Everywhere Downtown

All Commercial Historic Core Streets. Other streets in the commercial Historic Core, including Alder Street, Green Street, Oak Street, and Third Street between Oak Street and Green Street, would benefit from many of the improvements suggested for Second Street, including:

- Add brick sidewalks, historic pedestrian lights and street trees, where they have not already been installed.
- Remove parking meters and optionally replace with pay stations.
- Consider festive night lighting, typically strung between street lights.
- Underground utilities.
- Avoid one-way streets. Alder and Green Streets were converted to one-way because vehicles slide down Alder Street when the street is icy. So, this one-way couplet may be unavoidable. It also allows for curbside parking on Third Street south of Alder Streets since a left-turn lane is not required.
- Use the downtown pocket parks, vacant lots and space between buildings for outdoor dining, bicycle parking and similar elements that support businesses and their customers.

Although Oak Street is not part of the Oakland Historic District, because it now provides access to the Farm Fresh parking lot and is a key gateway to the commercial Historic Core, it should be treated similarly.

Parking in the Commercial Historic Core. Managing parking can help make Downtown more walkable. As discussed previously, providing better connections to the parking lots will allow visitors and local residents to park once and walk Downtown. Most businesses on Third Street north of Center Street have on-site parking, so the initial focus should be on the Historic Core.

Other parking improvements that can help with access and walkability include:

- Consolidate adjacent parking lots across property lines, graded to create a single larger, more efficient lot.
- Lay out spaces as efficiently as possible to maximize the number of spaces.
- Set up a shared parking program, so that people can park in one lot and walk throughout Downtown.
- As businesses are added and parking demand increases, explore opportunities for locating employee parking where it will not compete with customer parking.



Brick sidewalks, pedestrian lights and street trees on all streets in the commercial and institutional areas will help unify the Downtown.



Examples of individual, unimproved parking lots that could be consolidated across property lines and graded to create a single, more efficient parking lot that can be shared.

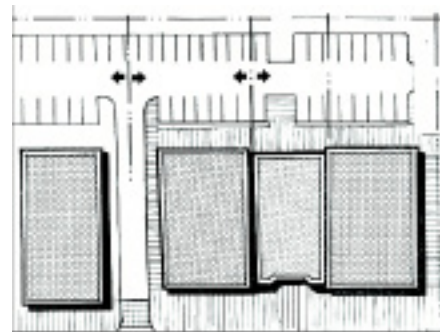


Diagram of a consolidated parking lot that can be shared.



Vacant lot that could be used for outdoor dining in front and parking in back.

Second Street South of Town Park Lane. Second Street south of Town Park Lane is a key gateway into the Historic Core. The large vacant parcel on the west side of Second Street between Town Park Lane and Oak Street should be developed in a manner that reinforces that gateway and contributes to the character and success of Downtown. It could be acquired by the City to add open space and/or additional parking or it could be developed with, for example, market-rate housing, possibly with ground-floor commercial uses. Similarly, completing the building on the east side of Second Street with quality siding and finishes would contribute to the gateway experience.

It has been suggested that Second Street south to Water Street could become an artists' community. The character of the area suggests that it could evolve in this direction and would complement adjacent Downtown commercial activity.

Second Street North of Green Street and Center Street. Second Street north of the commercial Historic Core is part of the Oakland Historic District and is occupied largely by institutional, rather than commercial, uses, including the Post Office, Board of Education, County Library, Community Action Commission (CAC) building, Our Town Theater, and churches. The streets in this area should flow seamlessly into the commercial Historic Core so that institutional employees, clients and visitors can walk to restaurants, shops and services. In addition to the improvements listed for the commercial Historic Core, the institutional area lacks sidewalks in some locations.

Third Street. Third Street serves two roles:

- A gateway to Downtown and a Downtown-serving street
- Highway 219, which is part of the regional highway system, carrying considerably more traffic than other Downtown streets, much of which is through rather local traffic.

As long as it is part of the highway system, it needs to balance those two roles. It needs to move vehicles through Downtown safely. Toward that end, the northeast corner's radius has been increased significantly from the typical 10 or 15-foot radius to a 70-foot radius to allow trucks to turn easily and safely. In addition, signal time should be refined to smooth the flow of traffic to the extent possible, while reducing it to a speed that is appropriate to a small town downtown. A slower, consistent speed can move traffic more efficiently than higher speeds combined with stops.



Looking north on Second Street from Oak Street at the vacant parcel on the west and unfinished building on the east (left) and looking at the vacant lot from Town Park Lane.



Looking south on Second Street from Oak Street (left) and at the character of the area (right), which has been suggested as an artists' community.



Institutional uses on Second Street and Center Street north of the commercial Historic Core include the CAC building and Our Town Theatre.

To improve safety for both pedestrians and motorists, pedestrian walk signals, ideally with count-down timers, should be added to all signalized intersections and highly visible crosswalk striping should be added, for example “Continental” striping.

In addition to adding brick sidewalks, pedestrian lights, missing sidewalks and, where they can be accommodated, street trees, and undergrounding utilities between Oak Street and Center Street, other improvements that could help integrate Third Street back into Downtown include:

- Enhance the gateway experience at Oak and Third Streets. The building on the northwest corner is nondescript with no relationship to the Historic District. It could benefit from a facade renovation that is more welcoming.
- Should the opportunity arise, relocate the detention facility to reveal the historic Courthouse building and restore its landscape. For example, in the future if state or federal standards require that the detention facility be upgraded or if it needs to be expanded, it should be relocated to a more appropriate location.
- If possible, avoid eliminating curbside parking on Third Street. Eliminating parking will typically result in increased traffic speed, which is not appropriate to a small town downtown, as well as reducing parking.

North of Green Street, where commercial development is set back from the sidewalk with parking in front, basic safety improvements, including pedestrian walk signs, highly visible crosswalks, and continuous sidewalks should be provided. In addition, the striped buffer between traffic lanes and curbs should be converted to bike lanes. While not the safest way to cycle (bike lanes separated from the traffic lane would be much safer), designated bike lanes would alert motorists that bicyclists are sharing the street.

Sidewalks north of Green Street should include a parkway with street trees since buildings are set back behind parking.

New development in this part of Downtown should be consistent with the character of older buildings, like Gregg’s Pharmacy and Naylor Hardware.



The building on the northwest corner of Oak and Third Streets (left) could be modified to be a more complementary gateway to the Veteran’s Park on the northeast corner (right).



When possible, the detention facility should be relocated, so the County Courthouse’s historic setting can be restored.



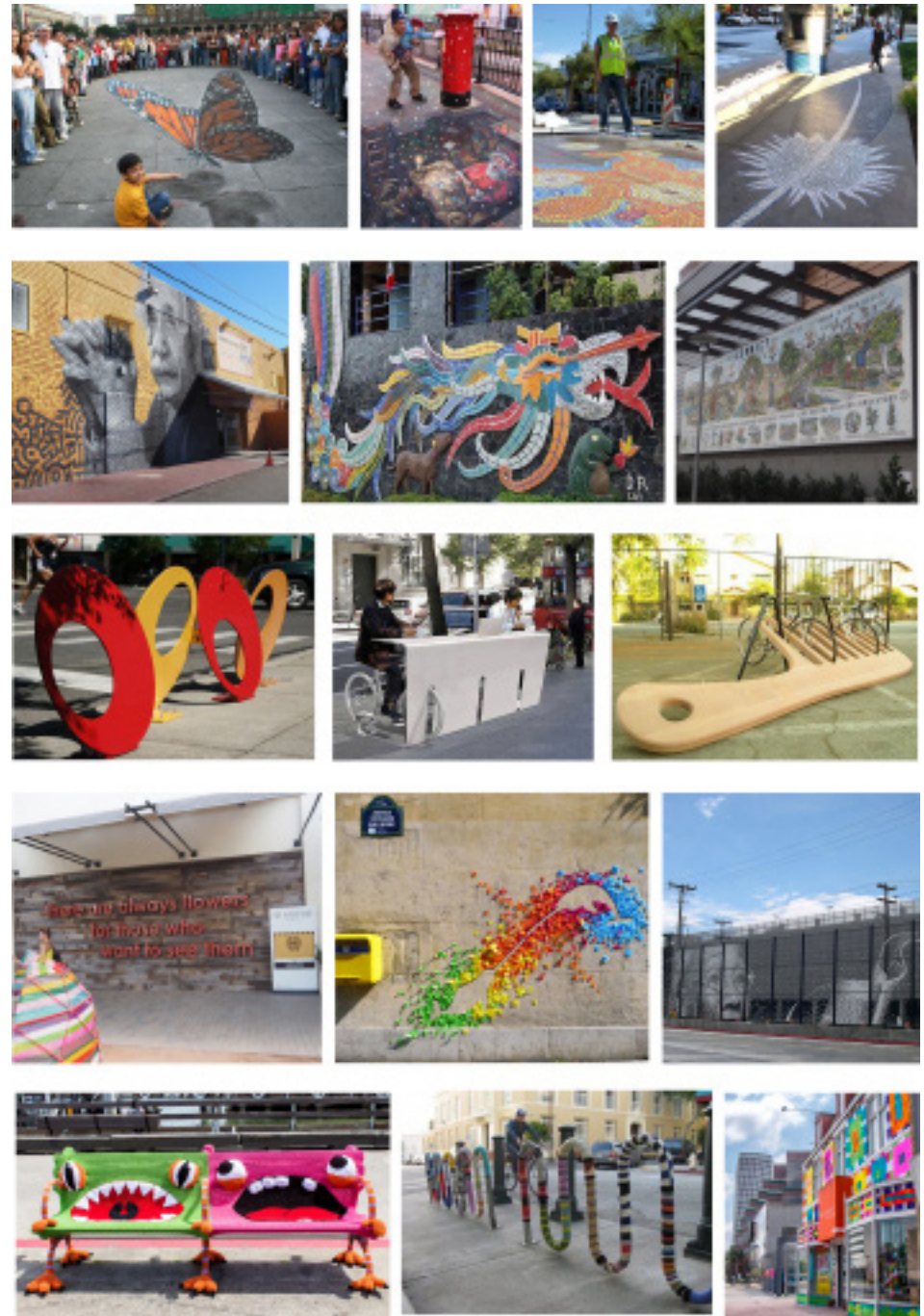
Parking should be retained and highly visible crosswalks should be added (left) in addition to sidewalk improvements.

Public Art and Other Interventions. There are a variety of relatively quick and easy interventions that local artists and community members can create to enliven Downtown. The parking meter decorations are an example. Other possibilities show on the right include:

- Temporary sidewalk art, such as chalk drawings and 3D drawings (top row)
- Murals that explore the history and culture of the community or reinforce uses, such as schools (second row)
- Fun bike racks (third row)
- Word or other 3D wall art (fourth row)
- Knit art (bottom row)



Oakland murals and parking meter decorations.



Other examples of public art interventions on Downtown streets.

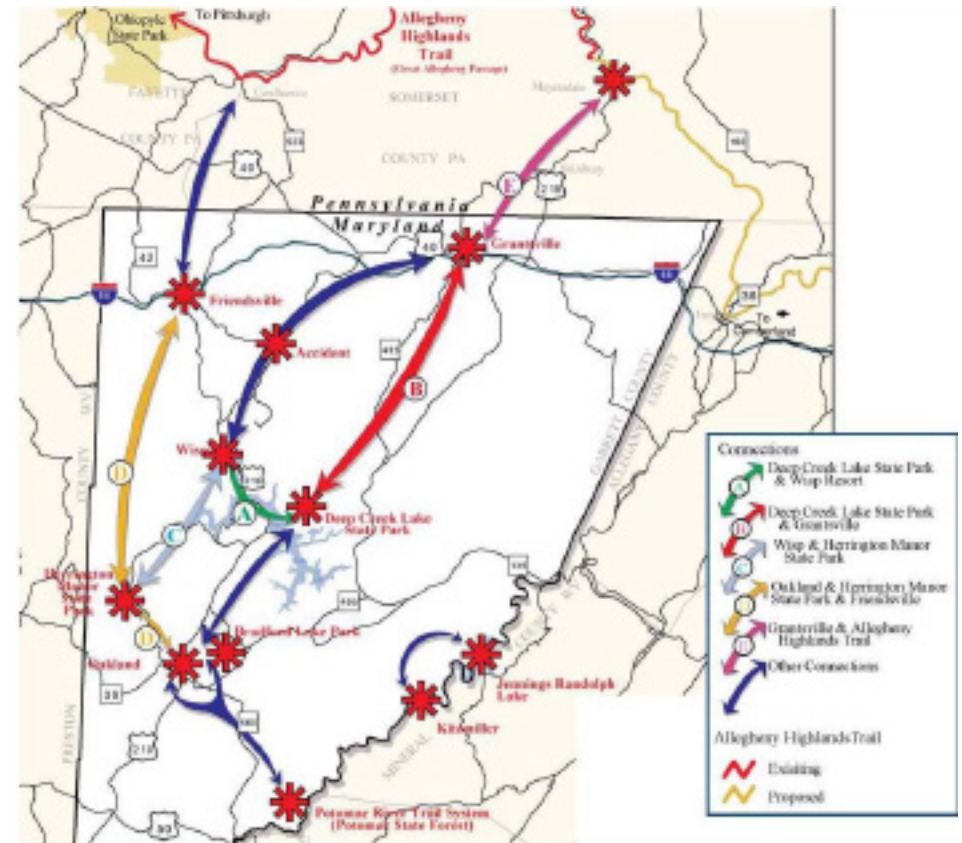
4. Connect Without a Car to Places Beyond Downtown

Restoring rail access to Oakland on a limited basis has been proposed and would be support tourism. If it is achieved, it will need to be complemented by other means of local access, such as ride sharing services, including Uber and Lyft, and bicycling. In addition to providing access for visitors who are carless, bicycling is a growing part of the recreational economy and a growing means of commuting.

The economic, health, environmental and transportation benefits of bicycling and bicycle tourism have been documented. The Adventure Cycling Association (www.adventurecycling.org) summarizes the economic benefits of bicycle recreation to 1.) the United States as a whole and 2.) Maryland and Pennsylvania as follows:

1. "The Outdoor Industry Foundation released a study in 2006, "The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy A \$730 Billion Annual Contribution to the U.S. Economy," that valued the total outdoor recreation economy at \$730 billion in the U.S., with bicycling contributing \$133 billion. The study shows that the national bicycle recreation economy also supports nearly 1.1 million jobs across the U.S., generates \$17.7 billion in annual federal and state tax revenue, produces \$53.1 billion annually in retail sales and services, and provides sustainable growth in rural communities."
2. "The Allegheny Trail Alliance has contracted trail user and business surveys to better understand the economic impacts that the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) brings to the region. The 2015 survey reports almost one million trail users and found that 62% of trail users had an overnight stay with an overnight spending average of \$124.58. Businesses experienced an increase in trail user traffic from 34% in 2013 to 41% in 2014. Forty percent of the businesses planned to expand and of those reported to expand 67% attributed their expansion to the impact from the trail."

Oakland and all of Garrett County can take advantage of the growing bicycle economy by providing opportunities to bicycle safely, preferably separated from the roadway. Garrett County's 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) proposes an "Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail" that connects to the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail, which runs from Pittsburgh to Washington D.C., in Confluence and Meyersdale. Connecting south to the Allegheny Highland Trail of West Virginia is another possibility. Connecting Oakland to Deep Creek and Wisp, a shown in the LPPRP should be a priority as it will provide resort visitors with easy access to Oakland.



source: Garrett County Recreational Trails Plan Update 2003

The County's LPPRP identifies a bicycle network that provides local access and connects to the regional Great Allegheny Passage (or Allegheny Highlands Trail).



Bicyclists are safer when separated from traffic.



Bicycle tourism is a growing economy that benefits small towns.



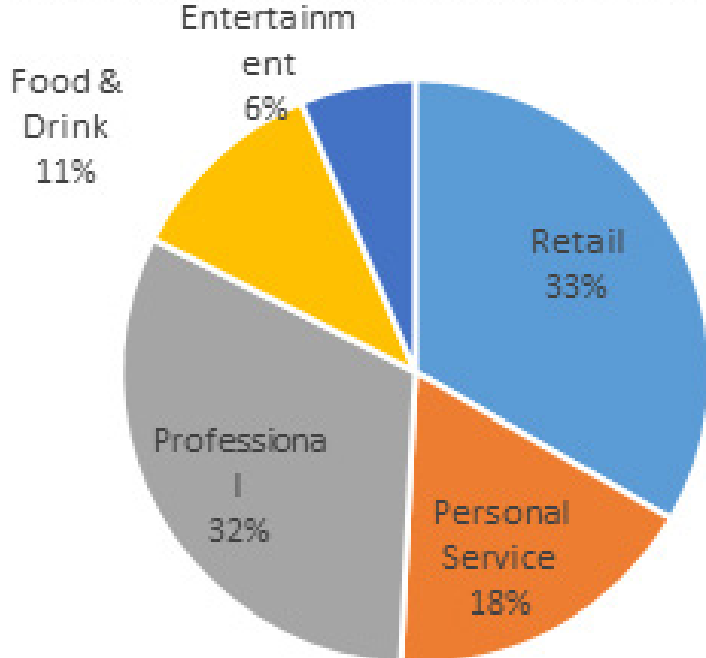
Marketing Oakland

BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION & RECRUITMENT

Although there are several vacant storefronts downtown, Oakland does have a fairly diverse business mix including restaurants, services and shops. Many of these businesses are long-standing anchors within the community and provide a destination for locals, while others cater to new demographic groups, expanding the appeal of downtown. Supporting the growth of these businesses provides a platform for future business expansion. New businesses will be more likely to locate in an area where other successful businesses share similar clientele, and will often talk with existing businesses before choosing a location. Oakland has numerous organizations offering various programs designed to support businesses, whether through marketing initiatives, networking or other targeted activities. However, many of these programs are more broadly focused, and there are limited platforms for downtown business owners specifically to coordinate and market the downtown as a singular walkable destination. Some specific strategies which would be effective as

Once a supportive business environment has been created, the process of recruiting additional complementary businesses will be simpler. Some activities which can be carried out by existing entities to specifically foster a supportive small business environment downtown include:

Downtown Storefront Utilization



Provide assistance to individual businesses to increase marketing presence in the marketplace.

- Identify an intern to work individually with businesses to boost online presence, including claiming google or other business listings, creating or enhancing social media sites, scheduling social media posts, etc.
 - Due to reduced mobile data coverage for many visitors, introducing a free downtown-wide wifi hot spot (including parks) could be an excellent way to attract visitors to the area, encourage social media posts, and facilitate additional business visits.
- Explore strategies to pair local artists with merchants to create eye catching rotating window displays or exterior merchandising to enhance storefront/downtown aesthetics and encourage visitors to stop and explore.

Establish direct joint marketing for downtown businesses.

- Install an informational map and directory at key locations (Market Pavilion, Museum Lot).
- Establish cross-marketing coupons between downtown businesses with complementary customer demographics. Examples might include messages printed on receipts or coupons included with a purchase that offer a same-day discount at other downtown businesses. For instance, a purchase at the book store might result in \$0.50 off a regular coffee, which then creates a coupon for \$1.00 off an accessory with the purchase of a shirt at the clothing store.

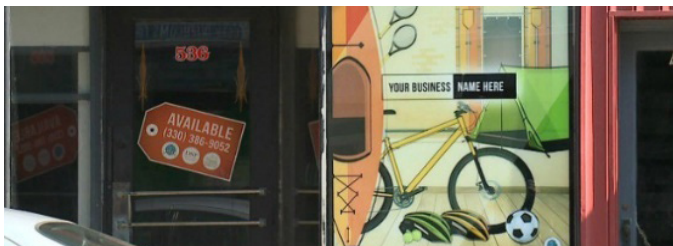
- Similarly, since the farmers market is already a draw for the community, GOBA could offer wooden tokens to farmers' market visitors redeemable at any Oakland business. As an example of this type of program, Viroqua, Wisconsin, provided wooden \$2 tokens to market visitors which were redeemable at member businesses, identified with window clings, shown in the photo at right. Businesses could turn their tokens in at the Chamber offices to recoup \$1 of the value. Over the season when the program was in place, 85% of the tokens were redeemed at a wide variety of businesses including shopping and dining destinations throughout town. They also surveyed market visitors at several points during the season, and visitors reporting spending as much at nearby businesses as they did at the market itself (average of \$25 per individual).



Encourage downtown business collaboration.

- Host marketing meetup groups monthly or quarterly for downtown businesses to allow them to share events and updates and generate marketing ideas (for instance, each business could identify a problem and other participants spend 5 minutes brainstorming potential solutions). Other meetings could focus on scheduling social media posts or planning coordinated retail events.

Once a basic level of business support and collaboration has been established, creating a platform to support existing and new businesses, Oakland can move forward with recruiting key businesses to fill gaps in the market. Based on local feedback, market study results and an assessment of the current business mix, businesses offering any combination of food and/or entertainment would be a good fit for the community as a first priority. Although town staff currently receive numerous inquiries regarding space availability, national studies have found that more than 2/3 of prospective businesses will begin their search for space online. Currently there are zero properties in downtown Oakland (or really anywhere in the town) marketed as available for sale or lease online. Many of the properties which were identified locally as available do not even have a for lease sign in the window. As a result, many potential tenants interested in opening a business would not even think to consider Oakland as a possibility. Additionally, many community stakeholders identified perceptions of landlord quality and lack of information about appropriate rental rates as hurdles to new business openings. For those businesses that do pursue additional information on the community, GOBA currently publishes a business startup guide (which is available online). This guide includes fairly general information on state regulations and best practices for start-up business decision-making, but provides limited information necessary for a first time business owner to create a realistic business plan. The first three steps that Oakland should take to more effectively recruit new desirable businesses include:



- Work with property owners to more effectively market available storefronts. This may include formal listing agreements with local realtors, or, at minimum, a listing on the town website that includes critical information such as square footage and price. Currently, there is significant misinformation about the cost of occupying space in downtown Oakland. By coordinating with business and property owners to collect actual rental rate information anonymously and aggregate the information to produce an effective rental rate range, it can help to create additional transparency and a fair playing field for businesses and property owners alike.
- Additionally, GOBA could work with a local print shop to produce window signage which can be placed in vacant storefronts advertising the space as available and advocating for businesses meeting identified gaps, as shown in the image at right. These signs in many cases could be re-used in new spaces as spaces are leased.
- Create a streamlined Oakland-specific business startup guide. Because many business prospects will come from surrounding states and not from Maryland, they will need specific information on the steps necessary to open a business in the community to plan for a successful startup. For a new business, a month delay or 20% cost overrun for property improvements could be the difference between success and failure. The 1-2 page guide should include critical information such as contact information for all necessary personnel (building inspection, fire, town staff, utilities, trash, etc). It should also include a general startup timeline that identifies when various entities should be contacted (before signing a lease, immediately after hiring an architect, etc.), and information on when and how frequently various bodies meet that might need to make a decision on certain aspects of the startup (conditional use, signage, etc). An example of this type of document is included in the appendix.

In addition to the steps mentioned above which will increase the experience of any prospective businesses considering locating in the town, Oakland can pursue more strategic business recruitment to obtain desired business types in the community. The first, and most crucial step in recruiting a desired business (aside from determining what one or two businesses are top priority), is to let the community know what types of businesses are desired downtown. The most effective marketers are residents and businesses that are proud of the community and can talk knowledgeably about it. By letting them know that there is desire and support for a particular business type, they can help spread the word within their networks. Beyond this first step, there are a number of strategies that Oakland can use to both reach out to prospective businesses and also increase the odds that new businesses will be successful in the district. Some of these strategies, which can be pursued separately or together, are presented below.

Create a business mentorship group comprised of local professionals. Members might include marketing, accounting, legal, HR, IT or other professional service providers. These members could be available to meet with prospective businesses (perhaps a one-hour meeting), and provide some high level thoughts on issues that the business should consider prior to opening. In addition, they might choose to offer future services to the business (to address any issues) at a discounted rate. This not only helps new businesses get off to a better start, but also helps form business to business relationships within the community, generating additional local spending.

Depending on the business recruitment targets, the town will want to consider ways to offer meaningful assistance to a qualified business. This might include financial or non-monetary incentives, as well as marketing to professionals in the targeted sector. As an example, Red Wing, Minnesota, was in need of a quality restaurant downtown. They identified the most suitable space within the downtown area, and worked



with the property owner to put together a set of incentives which would facilitate the necessary tenant improvements. This included creating a pre-approved package of resources including façade improvement dollars, tenant improvement allowance from the landlord, one month of free rent paid for by the local bank, and some kitchen fixtures at a reduced rate from a local contractor. Additionally, the prize package would include some in-kind assistance from local marketing professionals, contractors and accountants that would help get the business up and running. They then launched a business plan competition and associated advertising campaign to attract qualified chefs. The poster at right was part of this campaign. Ultimately, they narrowed applicants

down to five and held a cook-off for those five finalists, selecting one winner after a taste test competition for the community. The winner opened in the space, and a second place finisher also chose to open in a smaller space elsewhere in the community. For other types of prospective businesses, it may be necessary to coordinate housing, workforce recruitment assistance, utility expansion, etc. in order to create an optimal location which can be start-up ready in short order.

Although a combination of retention and recruitment can be successful in filling a majority of storefronts, downtown districts will have continual transition, making these efforts ongoing. This is especially true in the coming decade as more than 2/3 of all businesses will transition as baby boomers retire. To reduce the burden on the community of constantly recruiting, as well as to increase the potential pool of buyers for existing businesses with retiring owners, Oakland should also consider a more formal entrepreneurship program. There are already a number of components in place, including the incubator at Garrett College and the Qwork space, both of which provide a platform for growing and supporting local entrepreneurs. However, there are additional opportunities to raise the visibility of these efforts and of entrepreneurs in general, which will naturally result in an increase in entrepreneurial activity. Some potential strategies include:

Popup Shops. The Arts Council is already introducing a holiday popup shop for artists, which would be easily complemented by shops elsewhere in the downtown. By creating a limited-time commitment for new businesses (i.e. Thanksgiving to Christmas, or the month of July), artisans, home-based businesses, or even businesses in neighboring communities are able to test out the Oakland market as a potential future location. If several of these limited-time-only businesses can be recruited, it provides a built in marketing campaign and customer traffic, which also benefits existing businesses. Many of these programs fund the cost of the space during the popup period through a combination of landlord rent reductions and utility cost contributions from the chamber or other business organization as part of the program. They may also be underwritten by local entrepreneurial development programs which can in turn offer a space to program graduates.



Collaborative workspaces. The co-working space concept can also be applied to retail. The fact that many of the spaces currently available downtown are fairly large will limit the type of business that can feasibly occupy these spaces. The optimal space for new retail concepts is between 250 and 500 square feet. Creating opportunities for multiple small retailers to share one space, whether staffed separately or jointly, allows new retailers to fill these spaces while also creating more of a shopping destination than a single store would achieve.

Year-round Farmers Market. Similar to the collaborative retail concept, the idea of extending the farmers market season throughout the year was introduced at the community visioning sessions. The potential for

a commercial kitchen has also been discussed in the community previously, and is included in one of the development plans. Expanding the farmers' market can occur in a number of ways which vary in terms of both cost and effort. On a small scale, although the current market pavilion cannot be enclosed due to its location in the floodplain, it would be possible to utilize rollup or temporary window enclosures to create a three-season marketplace. This would reduce the risk of inclement weather and potentially create opportunities for additional food-related events to take place in the space, such as a farm to table dinner, a crab feast, or educational cooking classes or demonstrations. While there are no readily apparent appropriate sites for a commercial kitchen and indoor market combination in the downtown today, it may be possible to create a small version of a local food center which could sell a variety of locally produced goods (maple syrup, honey, preserves), serve as a CSA pick up location, and potentially offer a commercial kitchen space for the production of processed goods. This could be made available to farmers' market vendors and/or community members on an hourly basis.

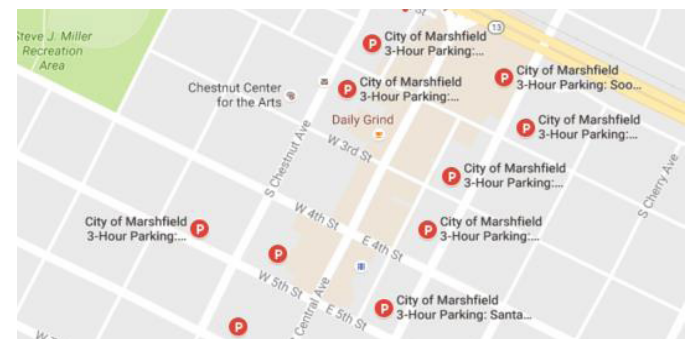
In each of the above instances, the hope is that some percentage of tenants in these spaces are ultimately successful in outgrowing the space and relocating to a full storefront in the downtown area with an existing customer base and network of business relationships.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

According to the 2016 parking study, there are numerous areas of downtown with ample parking. Additionally, areas which are experiencing slight parking shortage are often areas where employees downtown are parking and which are also marketed to tourists. While certain physical improvements have been recommended to increase the number and utilization of spaces in many areas of downtown, improved management can also start to provide both short and long-term solutions. As redevelopment occurs and events are added, it may be necessary to free up some additional spaces in these areas during the daytime. Fortunately, there are several larger sources of employees downtown, who can monitor and advocate for alternate parking arrangements as necessary. Additionally, municipally owned lots often provide necessary parking for additional residential and commercial development. On occasion, it may be

necessary to identify shared parking opportunities which would provide dedicated parking options for professional employees and/or higher end residential units to facilitate the relocation of desirable businesses and residents to the district, ultimately increasing the consumer market to support additional businesses. Putting these mechanisms in place in the near term will simplify negotiations with businesses or developers in the future, and will also be more easily accomplished in the present when there is less stress on the parking supply in most areas of downtown. Parking management tactics that can be employed include:

- Improved delineation, signage and wayfinding for public parking areas. The current wayfinding sign on 2nd is effective, but the actual lots do not have signage to indicate the location of public lots. Utilizing either standard parking signage or locally-branded wayfinding would help reassure visitors that they have reached their destination
- Currently, bags on meters indicate to many visitors that spaces are unavailable, while few lots are signed as available for public parking, discouraging visitors from spending time downtown without worrying about their vehicle.
- Create a mechanism for identifying and locating public parking areas in downtown. Since many visitors will be using digital driving directions to arrive in Oakland, providing lots with a physical address and/or name (for instance, Museum Lot at 157 E Liberty Street, or Market Lot at 102 E Oak Street) will allow them to easily navigate directly to parking lots, and helps businesses utilize this information as part of their marketing efforts.
- Remove parking meters from the street to facilitate improved snow clearance, allow for increased planters and outdoor merchandising on the street, and create a future opportunity for a multi-payment kiosk system as demand warrants.
 - In certain areas where convenience retail or services are prevalent, it may be advisable to introduce alternate time period parking limits – i.e. one fifteen-minute space per block or a dedicated senior citizen space, which will further improve parking options for audiences with specific parking needs.
- Identification of underutilized parking lots during peak demand periods, both for daytime and weekend traffic. Examples of uses which have only limited parking



demands include churches, museums, bars, some restaurants and professional employment.

- Where possible, negotiate public and/or private arrangements to share parking between alternate parking demand users. For instance, the town/Courthouse may choose to offer lease options for spaces in some lots, while negotiating with churches to lease (lower cost) spaces in church lots during workday hours when limited church parking is needed.
- Identify and create strategies for allocating parking (formally or informally) to support renovation of key vacant properties. This may include the shifting of government employee parking to alternate areas east of 3rd Street, rethinking of alley access points and parking areas, or negotiated shared maintenance agreements between adjacent property owners for common lots.

MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

Although Oakland as a destination is not marketed as part of most regional tourism campaigns (although individual businesses or destinations are), many visitors find their way to the community, whether as a result of event-driven traffic (movies, farmers market), or simply as part of a regional day trip to visit local attractions such as farms or parks. As a result, two Oakland destinations appear in the top five regional photo sites (according to mobile uploads). These are the Train Station and Courthouse (#3 and 4 respectively). The top two sites are Swallow Falls and Deep Creek Lake itself. Rounding out the top five is Cranesville Swamp. Indeed, although visitors may not be directed toward individual sites in the community, the Instagram feed of popular Oakdale images indicates that they are experiencing a fairly representative experience once they arrive.

However, while this experience may be representative, it does not encourage visitors to linger or to ensure that they are able to discover the various local destinations that would appeal to them and enable them to extend their visit in the community beyond one or two stops. Achieving this requires a more dedicated effort to communicate with visitors before, during and after their visit. Some potential strategies that may be effective for Oakland's tourism audience are listed adjacent.



Capitalize on Social Media

- Visitors are already finding Oakland. However, they may not be discovering the places that the town would like to showcase, nor is the town maximizing the free marketing exposure from these visitors. Adding elements such as selfie spots and scenic photo spots (complete with hashtags) can ensure that the most iconic images of Oakland are captured and shared with the world.
- Once all businesses are on social media, it will also be possible to coordinate social media campaigns – programs like the 12 days of Christmas on Pinterest which profiles one local business every day with 'buy it now' options, Facebook contests to capture favorite visitor memories of the community (which can then be used in other marketing) in exchange for prizes like restaurant gift certificates. This can be especially impactful if seasonal visitors can purchase a memento from the community as a holiday gift or part of a holiday celebration (favorite ice cream brands, Mountain Fresh Market shirts, etc.).

Event Marketing

- Oakland has excelled at producing special events which draw visitors into the community for large celebrations such as Autumn Glory. They also have a positive following for recurring events such as the farmers' market, movie nights, etc. These types of events are effective at increasing awareness and improving the perception of the community as a destination. However, there has been limited effort to create retail focused events which help existing merchants within the district. Some of the strategies introduced previously can help to weave the retail experience more closely into the average visitor trip, but a more focused strategy on retail-oriented events is also warranted. Examples include:
 - Highlight local partners by having businesses host partners within their establishments for a period of time, usually a weeknight evening. For instance, businesses could take part in an Art Walk by having businesses host artists within their storefronts during a specific period of time. Artists can give demonstrations of their craft, and even sell some of their products as part of the event. Other themes might include non-profit partners, writers, student clubs, etc. If, as in the case of the downtown trick or treat event, a percentage of businesses elect not to participate, business stops can be supplemented with vacant storefronts, public facilities and even on-street booths.
 - Ideally, over time, these retail events can either be combined with or complement other downtown events (i.e. a progressive dinner downtown or business cookie contest in advance of a movie or box lunches available from restaurants in advance of the movie), or Tuesday Night Late event that highlights retail specials, complementing the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evening programming.
- Another thing that Oakland excels at is the development of seasonal event calendars (such as for the movies) which are introduced at the beginning of the

season. This allows potential visitors to anticipate events and even to plan visits around certain events. However, these calendars tend to be event-specific, and there are no easily located event calendars for local attractions. Two strategies can be employed to help address this. First, an annual event calendar should be developed which includes all community-wide events for the year. This calendar can be distributed not only regionally to the tourism network (hotels, etc), but also mailed to the 5,000 seasonal homeowners in the County. These individuals can then plan their visits around these events. In the instance that they primarily rent their home, printing the calendar in magnet form will allow them to display it prominently in the unit. Second, an improved online calendar can be developed which includes community-wide events as well as coordinated business events (i.e. not an individual business sale, but a multi-business event) and non-profit events. This can be populated directly by nonprofit partners, and can also be connected on a Oakland Facebook page which can create and aggregate events from all partners in a single location.

Leverage Regional Assets

The previously described activities include elements which are specifically Oakland-focused and are completely within the town's control to produce and market. However, as part of the Deep Creek Experience, and as part of the Heritage Trail implementation, Oakland has the potential to be part of trip itineraries being planned for day trips. Although at present there may not be sufficient destinations for an entire afternoon stop in Oakland, it certainly has a role as part of a regional day trip marketed to a specific interest group. The example below highlights how this type of itinerary can incorporate a mix of local businesses and destinations as part of a broader regional thematic trip. Some potential examples for Oakland are listed below, but others might include family outings, girls weekends, history and architecture, arts and culture, etc.. Where insufficient activities exist for a target group, an opportunity exists to recruit businesses and/or start events which can help create a mini-cluster of activities designed to appeal to demographics that are readily available in the area.

- **Agritourism Outing:** Stop at the Cornish Cafe for coffee and donuts from the Amish-run Sugar & Spice bakery before hitting the Mountain Fresh farmers' market at the Pavilion. Head south of town to Pleasant Valley to visit one of ten local farms offering the chance to experience everything from wine tasting to petting zoos. Make sure to stop at Lakeside Creamery on the way back home for a sweet treat.
- **Silent Sports Outing:** Rent a bike at High Mountain Sports. Drive to Oakland and park in the Pavilion lot before getting breakfast at Dottie's Old Soda Fountain – a vintage restaurant at the back of Englander's department store downtown where biscuits and gravy are a popular favorite. Walk off breakfast on the 2-mile riverfront trail before heading out on the scenic 8-mile route to Swallow Falls Natural Area to cool off in front of the 53-foot falls. Once you're refreshed, head back (downhill this time), just in time to grab dinner at either Tomanetti's pizza or the Cornish Manor before attending one of the regular evening events on the riverfront – Wednesday

music or Friday movies, beginning at 6 pm.

Visitors are increasingly searching for this type of pre-planned itinerary, and just having them listed on your website will drive additional traffic. Including outlying destinations in customized itineraries also increases the odds that these destinations will return the favor by marketing other local venues, and may even create opportunities to establish expanded partnerships such as local produce displays in downtown businesses, downtown petting zoos, etc.



SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP WEEKEND

- Wild About Music - East 6th Street
- Brooks Brothers - Congress Avenue
- Ect. Ect. Ect. - 2nd Street District
- Csilla Wear - Congress Avenue
- Patagonia - Congress Avenue
- Mercury Design Studio - 2nd Street District
- Prize - 2nd Street District
- BookPeople - West End
- Hatbox - East 6th Street



OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

- Hike & Bike Trails, Lady Bird Lake – Take a jog, stroll or ride
- Mellow Johnny's – Rent or buy a bike and hit the trail or road
- Texas Rowing Center – Rent a kayak, canoe or paddle board; learn to row
- Rowing Dock – Rent a kayak or paddle board; learn to row
- Austin Rowing Club – Learn to row; join a novice or competitive club
- St. Bernard Sports – Get the right gear for your day
- Patagonia – Stock up on sustainable activewear



YOUNG AT HEART

- Downtown offers fun for folks young and old. Be sure to check out latest Events for more family outing opportunities.
- Texas State History Museum – Treat the family to exhibits and IM
- Congress Avenue Bridge – Watch 1.5 million bats fly at dusk
- Austin Farmers' Market – Find fresh-off-the-farm eats each Saturday
- Republic Square
- Wooldridge Square – Play knee-high chess every Saturday afternoon
- Wee – Shop for your little one's clothing and gear

Create the Unexpected

Last, but certainly not least, the community can act now to begin to make Oakland fun. By thinking outside the box about what makes Oakland unique and how this can be reflected in new and unexpected ways within the community. This type of placemaking activity can take a variety of forms, ranging from public art to interactive displays or exhibits, outdoor play space, scavenger hunts, etc. Some of these installations may be permanent, some temporary, some marketed and others just left to be discovered. They are designed to appeal to locals as well as visitors, and in fact can resonate more with locals who can have a role in creating the installations and will recognize in them the aspects of the community which they appreciate.

The images below represent just a fraction of the range of options available to the community to create a one of a kind and ever-changing visitor experience in Oakland. In order to facilitate this type of civic engagement, it may be necessary or advantageous for the town to create some guidelines under which this type of activity does not require additional permitting or approvals, or may want to provide a blanket approval for projects which are carried out under the leadership from the Arts Council, GOBA, or another entity that can take responsibility for vetting the idea and installation. Some potential guidelines might include that installations not interfere with ADA accessibility, that they not be permanent, etc. Alternatively, these groups can work with private property owners to create installations which would not require approvals.



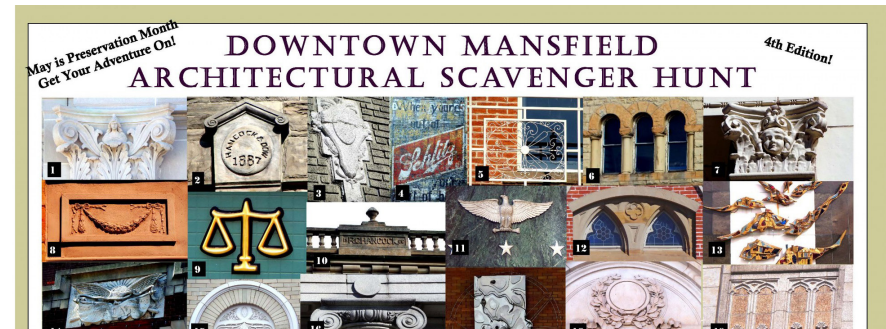
Permanent or temporary activities and games encouraging interaction in public spaces.

Hidden art installations which can be discovered by being in the right place and being observant.

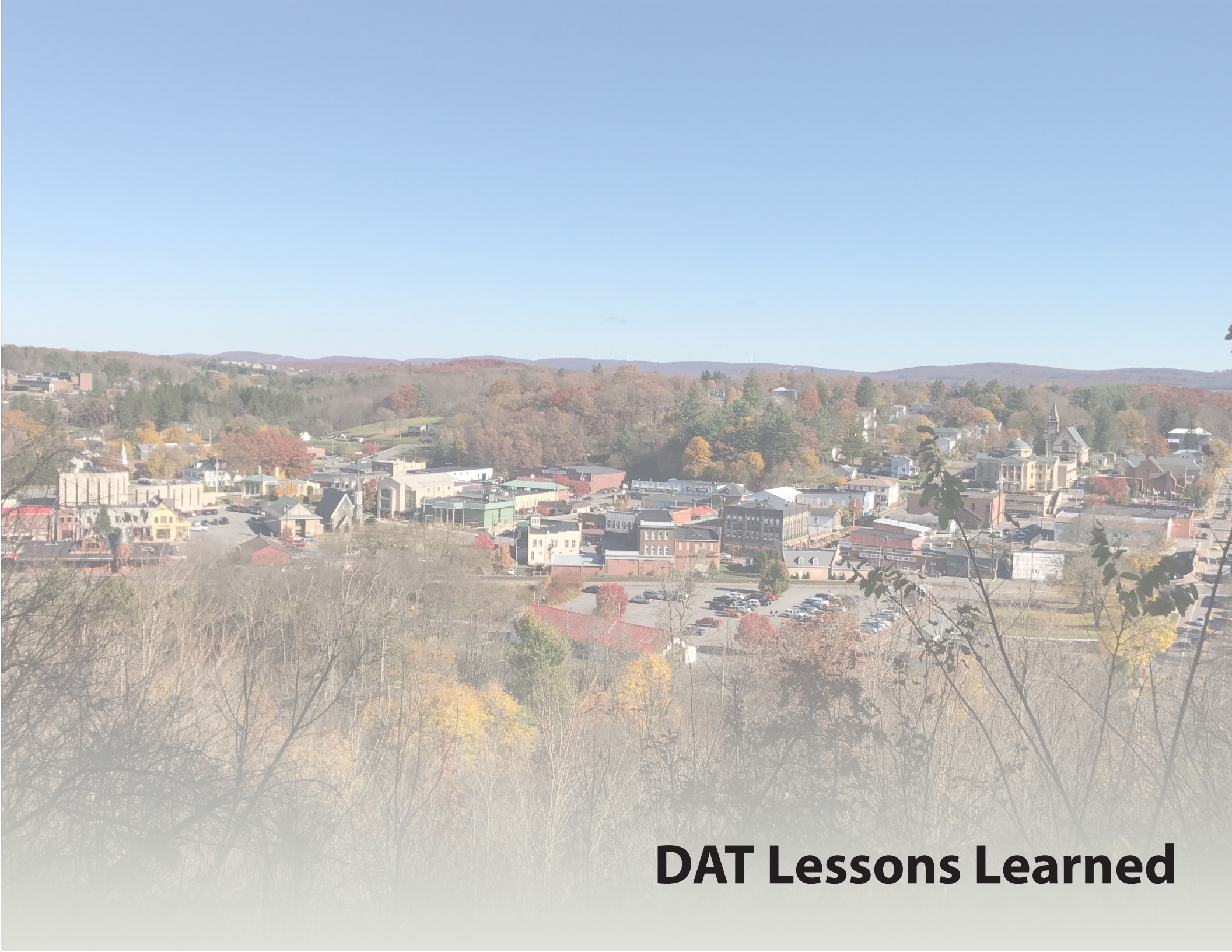


Interactive and engaging public infrastructure. Artistic parking lots, dance steps or poetry in the sidewalk.

Introduce ways to play into the downtown.



Create scavenger hunts incorporating something local – fairy doors, musical instrument sculptures, architectural features, etc.



DAT Lessons Learned

What Has Been Achieved by Other Communities Through This Process

Over the 50 year history of the design assistance program, a clear pattern has emerged with how communities achieve implementation success. There are some common elements present in the success stories we see in community processes:

- Place-based approach
- Public Shared Vision
- Civic Leadership & Shared Governance
- Innovative Partnerships and Financing
- Grassroots Activism
- Supportive Regulatory Framework
- Integrative Approach
- Importance Placed on the Public Realm

The “snowball effect” is the way one community described the process dynamic that successful momentum creates for transformative change over time. San Angelo, Texas, on the 20th anniversary of its design assistance process, wrote an open letter to the team that had assisted their community. As they noted, “When I tell my younger friends about the part you played in revitalizing our city, they think it’s an urban fairy tale: “Once upon a time, a group of architects, planners and urban design experts from around the nation volunteered to travel to San Angelo and work day and night to find ways to change the future of the city...Many San Angeloans worked many years to transform the Historic City Center. But you affirmed our ideas, planted seeds and sketched a possible map for our future. And you gave us hope. Back in 1992, your ideas seemed like dreams. Now we are living those dreams.” Lee Pfluger, who served as the chair of the local steering committee for the process, described the conditions then: “Back in 1991 you could have shot a cannon in downtown San Angelo on a Saturday night and not hit a soul — it was that dead — not a car in sight. The effort started with Celebration Bridge (with funds raised from the community) and the revitalization of the Paseo de Santa Angela as public space, and each success stimulated new interest in downtown. [...] All the vacant buildings that were underutilized in 1991 have all enhanced their utilization to a higher use.”

Portland, Oregon has had a similar experience over time. As they reported, “Ever squinted your eyes and tried to imagine something that’s only in your head? That’s how it was for those of us who looked over the rail yards and abandoned warehouses of inner northwest Portland some 20 years ago. Rundown and dilapidated, it was a sight that even the best of us squinters had trouble overcoming. And yet, slowly, a largely forgotten part of Portland’s past became an urban icon of living unlike anything the country had ever seen: A unique blend of verve and vibrancy, with more than a

passing nod to Portland’s uncommon brand of originality. Today, the Pearl District has earned a worldwide reputation for urban renaissance.” The Pearl District is recognized as one of the hippest neighborhoods in America today, and its unique urban fabric and character has served as a template for similar strategies in London and other major cities around the world.

In the late 1990s, East Nashville, Tennessee struggled with perceptions about its safety. The neighborhood was located across the Cumberland River from the downtown. Many locals referred to it as “the wrong side of the river,” and most Nashville citizens never crossed the bridge into East Nashville. As one local plan described it, “For years, East Nashville was considered a rough part of town, cut off from the urban core by the river and an interstate highway.” A major event catalyzed transformation in the neighborhood. As one local report describes it, “On April 16, 1998, a tornado touched down in Nashville. It tore through downtown before hopping across the Cumberland River to East Nashville, toppling some 20,000 trees citywide and damaging hundreds of homes and businesses. East Nashville, a patchwork of quirky neighborhoods and about 25,000 people, took the brunt.” In response, the community hosted a design assistance process. The first public workshop was held in the social housing complex, and drew 350 participants – mainly local residents of the neighborhood. However, by the final presentation night, almost 1,000 people had turned out – and from all over the city. Many of them had crossed the bridge into the neighborhood for the first time, curious about the regeneration effort and eager to help support it. The strategy that the process produced was based on the connecting the assets present in the community and strengthening the urban fabric and public realm, particularly in the neighborhood’s heart – an area called “Five Points.” As a result of the process, a new organization was born, called “Rediscover East!” The non-profit organization played a critical role in the implementation effort, mobilizing hundreds of volunteers to re-plant trees and green the area, marshaling resources for redevelopment efforts, serving as an advocate for neighborhood interests, and building momentum for change. Reflecting on the neighborhood’s transformation some 15 years later, the former Mayor noted that, “For all its fury in tearing things apart, the tornado — for the first time in many decades — built a bridge across the Cumberland and brought our entire city together.” Today, East Nashville – like the Pearl District – is listed as one of the hippest neighborhoods in America, and draws artists and creative professionals from across the country to live and work in the community. It is the site of major art festivals and cultural events, home to unique retail experiences and social gathering places, and a thriving and family-friendly place.

In Santa Fe, New Mexico, the community created a special district and a unique public-private organization to implement its vision for urban regeneration. As they describe their achievement, “The Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment is a testament to the power of community involvement in the realization of great civic spaces. When the 40-acre rail yard was threatened by private development in the early 1990s, the city mobilized to purchase and protect the historic site for a local vision. With involvement from over 6,000 community members, a master plan was developed and implemented

over the next decade through a unique partnership between a non-profit community corporation and the Trust for Public Land. Today, Santa Fe enjoys a vibrant, multi-use civic space that preserves the industrial heritage of the rail line while strengthening the city's future. The historic rail depot now serves as the northern terminus of New Mexico's commuter rail, and the Railyard's cultural and commercial amenities draw new visitors every year."

Port Angeles, Washington hosted a process to catalyze urban regeneration efforts in its downtown in 2009. At the time, it faced rampant vacancy and a declining retail experience, and a long-standing and beloved department store had just closed as a result. Some of the immediate outcomes there included an implementation committee and a public workshop to prioritize the first actions the community would implement. The process generated considerable excitement, and over the first 3 months, dozens of citizen volunteers joined an effort to signal commitment to change. With donated supplies, they re-painted 43 buildings in their downtown, providing an instant sign of visual momentum. This effort led to a façade improvement program, which sparked additional private investment in new businesses. The community designed and completed construction on the first phase of a new waterfront development within just 5 years, and that effort created tremendous value in the public realm and attracted considerable private investment, sparking a transformative wave of change in the downtown. As the City's Community Development Director reported, "A primary outcome has been that the process awakened community pride and inspired a "together we can" attitude. Today the inspiration remains and the elements and recommendations of the program continue to be the driver for publicly endorsed capital projects and investments in our community. More importantly this sustainable approach has tapped into the core values and priorities of our citizens to ensure a better and more balanced future for our City."



Team Roster



RAY MACK, AIA

Ray Mack, AIA, is a project architect at Creative Housing Solutions, an architecture firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio. The firm's focus is on multi-family housing working with developers and public housing authorities nationwide on low-income and market rate housing. He previously worked with GBBN Architects in Cincinnati on a wide variety of projects ranging from the Newport on the Levee entertainment and retail development to the new Carson Elementary School.

Ray believes in the Citizen Architect, an architect that is engaged in the community whether sitting on city boards and committees, holding a political office, or as a simply volunteering within the community. Thru this engagement, the architect's unique problem solving skills can be shared and utilized to improve the communities around them. Ray served as the AIA Northern Kentucky president from 2013-2014. He currently is a director for AIA Northern Kentucky and serves on the AIA Kentucky state board. On several occasions, he has advocated for the profession with legislators at AIA Grassroots in Washington D.C. and at Legislative Day in Frankfort Kentucky. In 2013, Ray was the local AIA lead on the Randolph Park SDAT and continues to work with the City of Covington and the Eastside Neighborhood on implementing the plans and ideas conceived during the SDAT. In 2014, Ray worked with Gateway Community College on a charrette for the repurposing of an existing church in downtown Covington to serve the college and local community.

Ray is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati Architecture program with a BA in Architecture. He has been a licensed architect for over twelve years. He is a trail steward for the Licking River Greenway Trails participating in cleanup and maintenance events. He also is a member of the Wallace Woods Neighborhood Association where he lives in Covington, Kentucky.



PATRICIA SMITH, ASLA, AICP

Patricia Smith, ASLA, AICP has more than 20 years experience providing urban design and landscape architecture services to private and public sector clients. She specializes in streetscape improvements. With ZGF, she prepared the Master Plan for Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood which received a national AIA Urban Design Award in 2001, followed by the landscape design plans for the boulevard, including extensive median landscaping. Construction was completed in 2001. She designed and prepared

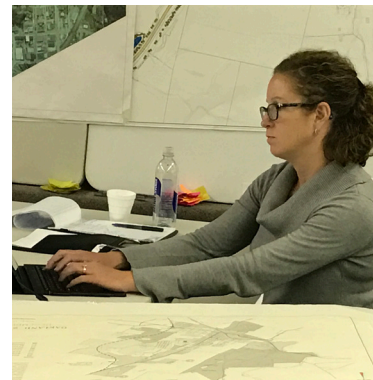
construction documents for Phase 1 streetscape and landscape improvements in the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District around Staples Center and prepared the Streetscape Master Plan for future improvements. Pat prepared the Mission Street Specific Plan for the City of South Pasadena in 1995 and more recently prepared a Downtown Streetscape Plan and construction documents for the same area. She worked with the local community in the residential South Park community of Los Angeles to design Venice Hope Park, which includes an integrated public art component. She has prepared more than 20 landscape plans for elementary, middle and high schools, with an emphasis on replacing asphalt with play fields and planting area and providing shade through strategic tree planting.



MICHAEL LATHAM, PHD

Michael Latham is a Senior Economist and Project Manager with Catalyst Commercial. He received a Master's Degree in Applied Economics and a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Political Economy from the University of Texas at Dallas. Dr. Latham is experienced in utilizing statistical analysis and Geographic Information Systems to identify beneficial insights for both commercial and residential markets. His research interests include the economic development initiatives, urban planning, and neighborhood impacts on the economy.

As an Economist with Catalyst Commercial, he has conducted numerous economic impact analysis, feasibility studies, and market analysis for both private and public. Prior to working with Catalyst, Dr. Latham worked as a Research Scientist with the University of Texas at Dallas where he worked on numerous state and federal projects including the Financial Allocation Study for the State of Texas (FAST) for the Texas State Comptroller, and a National Science Foundation Study that examined the impact of executive level leadership on Fortune 500 Companies.



ERRIN WELTY, CECD

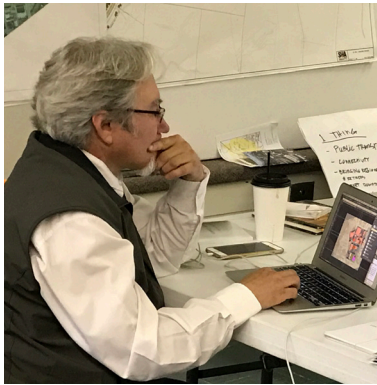
Errin Welty currently serves as a downtown development account manager for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and Wisconsin Main Street program, tasked with working with businesses, property owners, developers and community groups on downtown revitalization projects. Errin has been involved in downtown development for much of her career, starting as a marketing coordinator for the Saint Cloud Downtown Council. From there, she

spent several years working for the Downtown Denver Partnership, was a founding member of Wheat Ridge 2020, and went on to manage the marketing and research arm of a commercial brokerage firm. Upon returning to Wisconsin, she worked as an economic development consultant specializing in downtown and community development planning and real estate development planning and finance. Erin has an undergraduate degree in Community Development from St. Cloud State University and a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Colorado at Denver.

National Conference on Citizenship, and many others.

ERIN SIMMONS

Erin Simmons is the Senior Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community revitalization. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in over 250 communities across 47 states, and has been the recipient of numerous awards including "Organization of the Year" by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and the "Outstanding Program Award" from the Community Development Society. Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process, providing expertise, facilitation, and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community leaders to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Her portfolio includes work in over 100 communities across the United States. A frequent lecturer on the subject of creating livable communities and sustainability, Erin contributed to the recent publication "Assessing Sustainability: A guide for Local Governments". Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, and conducted historic resource surveys. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.



TERRY AMMONS

Terry Ammons, the Principal of StudioAmmons, is a 1987 architectural graduate of Virginia Tech and has worked for over 28 years in the architecture and museum fields working on museums throughout the U.S. and Europe. His recent interpretive designs at Sailor's Creek Battlefield and several Virginia state parks have won plaudits across the state. He also provided award winning restoration and exhibit design for the recently completed Robert Russa Moton Museum, the national center for the study of Civil Rights in

Education and has recently provided planning and design services to such nationally recognized museums as Wyoming's National Museum of Wildlife Art and the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia.

JOEL MILLS

Joel Mills is Senior Director of the American Institute of Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and democratic design for community success. Its programs have catalyzed billions of dollars in sustainable development across the country, helping to create some of the most vibrant places in America today. The Center's design assistance process has been recognized with numerous awards and has been replicated and adapted across the world. Joel's 24-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity and civic institutions around the world. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives across four continents. In the United States, Joel has worked with over 100 communities, leading participatory processes that facilitated community-generated strategies for success. His past work has been featured in over 1,000 media stories, including ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, The National Civic Review, The Washington Post, and dozens of other sources. He has served on numerous expert working groups, boards, juries, and panels focused on civic discourse and participation, sustainability, and design. He has also spoken at dozens of national and international conferences and events, including the Remaking Cities Congress, the World Eco-City Summit, the Global Democracy Conference, the



Appendix

A Guide to STARTING YOUR BUSINESS IN DOWNTOWN WATERFORD

Downtown Waterford is ready for you to call it home to your business. Over the past year, our beautiful, historic downtown has attracted new businesses and there's room for you to come and be a part of the Downtown Waterford family.

Starting a new business can present major challenges. You need to locate a space for lease or buy a building. You need access to funding and technical assistance. You need to obtain Village permits and approvals. The process can seem overwhelming.

Absolutely Waterford has created this guide in an effort to make the process of starting your business as simple as possible by outlining the recommended steps and addressing some FAQ's we've encountered.

1 LOCATING YOUR BUSINESS:

Where does it make sense for your business to be? Is it a retail or service business? Does your business rely on high visibility? Or, do you need an office setting?

2 FINDING SPACE:

For businesses wanting to locate in Downtown Waterford, Absolutely Waterford is here to help. Downtown Waterford is home to a variety of property types: storefronts, office space and residential buildings. AW maintains a database of space available for lease and buildings for sale in Downtown. Our database includes square footage, rental rates/listing prices, available parking and other important data, contact **AW** at **262-534-5911**. If you're interested in business parks or outlying areas, contact the **Racine County Economic Development Corp. (RCEDC)** at **262-898-7422** or the **Waterford Area Chamber of Commerce** at **262-534-5911**.

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PERMITS, LICENSES & APPROVALS: The particular permits, licenses and approvals needed for your business will depend on the nature of your business and the scope of needed improvements to the real estate. Absolutely Waterford will provide assistance to you in determining which Village approvals you will need to open your business. The following Village departments are the first points of contact for issuing approvals: **Building Inspection – 262-534-7911** (Building, plumbing and electrical permits and inspections), **Village Clerk – 262-534-3980** (Conditional use permits, liquor licenses, setting up water and sewer utilities). Village Hall is located at 123 N. River St.

3 FINANCING & INCENTIVES:

A number of loan programs and other economic incentives are available for prospective businesses in Downtown Waterford.

- **Low-Interest Loans: Business Lending Partners (BLP)** administers low-interest loans to finance real estate purchases, renovation, and new construction; sometimes working capital. Financed in partnership with a primary lender. Contact BLP at 262-898-7420.
- **WI Women's Business Initiative Corp. (WWBIC)** administers low-interest loans to purchase machinery, equipment, inventory, and start-up costs. Contact WWBIC at 262-925-2840.
- **Façade Grant Program: The Village of Waterford** has established a grant fund for business and property owners seeking to improve their street front facades. The program offers up to \$5,000 in matching funds for qualifying improvements. Contact the Village for an application 262-534-3980.



102 E. Main Street
Waterford, WI 53185

262-534-5911

director@absolutelywaterford.org

www.absolutelywaterford.org

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- **Minority Business Grants:** Up to \$2,500 in grants available to qualifying businesses to offset the costs of employee skills training, technology implementation projects or consulting services. Contact **UW-Parkside SBDC** at 262-595-3363.
- **Workforce Training Assistance:** Assistance recruiting and training applicants. Contact: **Workforce Development Center** at 262-638-6637.
- **Financing by Local Lenders:** Several local lenders have offered to help Absolutely Waterford by sponsoring our business recruitment efforts. These lenders are very much interested in providing financing for qualified small businesses that seek to locate in Downtown Waterford and include:
 - Associated Bank – 262-534-3151
 - Community State Bank – 262-514-2200
 - M&I, BMO Harris – 262-534-7292
 - People's Bank – 262-514-3240
 - The Equitable Bank – 262-534-5161

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**WELCOME!
YOU'RE ON YOUR
WAY TO BUILDING
A SUCCESSFUL
BUSINESS IN
DOWNTOWN
WATERFORD!**

FAQs

Q. I need a sign for my business. What do I do first?

A. Signage must comply with Village ordinances. Download the Heritage District Design Guidelines at absolutelywaterford.org. Then, bring your sign design to the Building Inspection Office to be sure it complies with local ordinances. Complete the Building Permit for review by the Heritage District Design Guidelines Review Committee. The Building Inspection Office is the final authority regarding signage and will issue approved permits.

Q. I'm opening a restaurant. How do I apply for a liquor license?

A. Complete a form provided by the Village Clerk's office. Your application will be reviewed by the Village Board.

Q. I simply need a Conditional Use Permit to open my business in Downtown. Where do I go?

A. Village Clerk's Office.

PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN: A business plan is a formal document which explains in detail your strategy for developing a financially successful business. This plan should lay out how you are going to run your business. A business plan will help you organize your thoughts, as well as your resources. Writing a business plan is critical if you plan to seek business financing.

BUSINESS PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Executive Summary
- Overview
- Description of Products & Services
- Analysis
- Marketing Strategy
- Operations Plan
- Description of the Experience
- Schedule of Activities
- Analysis of Critical Risks and Problems
- Financial Plan

BUSINESS PLAN ADVISORS:

- Accountant
- Attorney
- Banker
- Insurance Agent/Broker
- SCORE of SE WI – 414-297-3942
- SBDC @ UW-Parkside – 262-595-3363
- WWBIC – 262-925-2840
- Small Business Admin. (SBA) – 414-297-3941
- WI Econ. Development Corp. (WEDC) – 608-210-6839
- WI Main Street – 608-210-6870

WHAT WE DO AT ABSOLUTELY WATERFORD:

Mission: Develop Waterford's unique identity in keeping with its rich history and promote the revitalize of the downtown Heritage District.

- Organization Committee—Focused on volunteer recruitment, training and fundraising efforts.
- Promotion Committee—Create promotions and special events to bring people downtown.
- Design Committee—Enhance and beautify the physical appearance of the downtown.
- Economic Restructuring—Revitalize by strengthening existing businesses and recruiting new ones.

OTHER SERVICES WE OFFER IN DOWNTOWN:

The WEDC provides five years of free technical assistance to AW and to businesses in the Heritage District (a value of \$125,000) in the following methods:

- Design technical visit consultations (two per year)
- Business development technical consultations (two per year)
- Façade renderings (5 per year)

PLEASE CONSIDER A FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP:

Your sponsorship is tax deductible and will help revitalize Downtown Waterford. You can access the sponsorship brochure online at www.absolutelywaterford.org.



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