

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
109 E. OLIVE ST.
MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2013, 5:35 P.M.**

1. Draft Downtown Nightlife Project Report (*60 minutes*)
2. Adjourn at 6:50pm



2013

Downtown Nightlife Project



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8/12/2013

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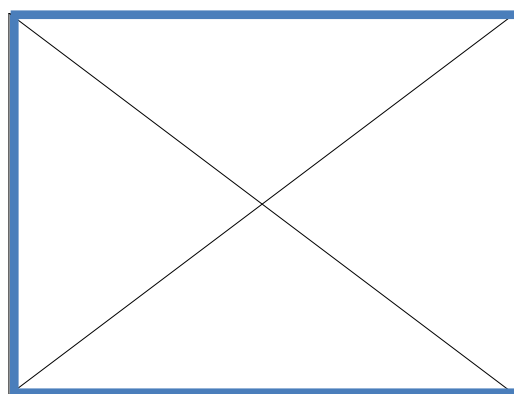
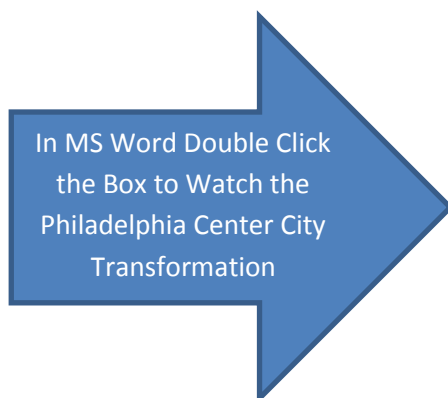
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Preface

In November 2012, the City Council issued a moratorium on new downtown liquor licenses and directed the City Manager to coordinate a comprehensive enforcement plan to address some of the growing concerns stemming from the downtown nightlife (**See Page 54**). The following report will outline the steps taken to devise such a comprehensive plan and provide an update to the actions already implemented. As staff has worked toward accomplishing this goal; much bigger questions have risen and must be analyzed before reviewing staff's progress.

Council expressed concerns over issues related to the downtown nightlife. Staff has worked diligently to come up with ways the City can alleviate issues and prevent others. This report will present Council with staff's best recommendations to address the areas of concern in the downtown. This report will not, however; provide Council with the answer as to what the future holds for Bloomington's downtown. If the current downtown environment is no longer desirable, policy leaders will need to begin to address philosophical questions such as: What is the vision for Bloomington's downtown? What does the City want its downtown to look like in 20 years? What role will the downtown serve in this community? What type of businesses will occupy downtown real estate? What type of patrons will they attract? These are all critical questions which will remain unanswered in this report, however; this report may serve as an educational component for further discussion on the best utilization of the City's downtown.

Other municipalities have been successful in transforming their downtown into a vibrant cornerstone of their community. Philadelphia underwent a transformation in the early 1990's with a simple mantra of "clean and safe". Twenty years ago, Center City Philadelphia streets were so dirty that wind would kick up "trash storms" pelting sidewalk pedestrians with wrappers and bags. The city was drowning in debt and faced a multitude of socioeconomic issues. The city faced problems so large that city leaders decided to think small. They would work to keep the city "clean and safe". To accomplish this they created a Center City District which collected money from area property owners to pay workers to clean the streets and help tourists track down locally famous cheesesteaks or find a quick route to the Liberty Bell. The district's workers also reported problems to the police and other city officials. The district started in March 1991 and just over 20 years later it has become a worldwide model for reviving weary downtowns.



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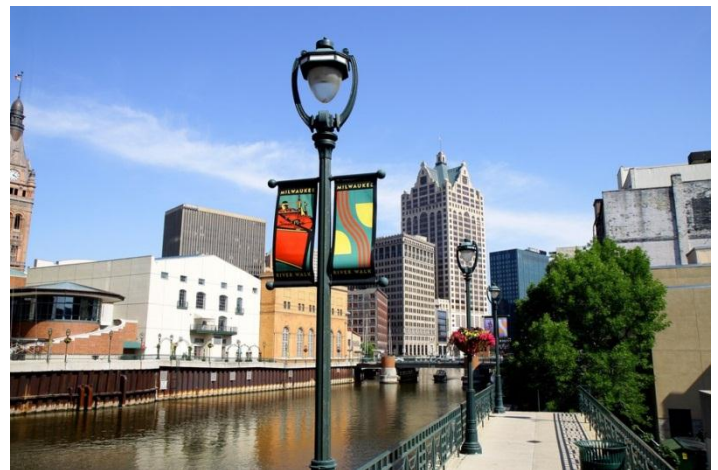
In March 2013, Forbes Magazine ran an article highlighting 15 Cities with emerging downtowns¹. Denver, Colorado was highlighted for their efforts in working on their Lower Downtown starting in 1989 with the issuance of \$240 million in bonds. Today “LoDo” is a trendy destination with over 100 restored Victorian warehouses and buildings filled with art galleries, boutiques, local eateries and nightclubs. The Downtown Denver Partnership says the area has welcomed \$3.6 billion worth of non-residential public and private investment in the last decade, with over \$1 billion in public and private development slated to come online this year and in 2014.



Louisville, Kentucky has attracted \$1.8 billion in reinvestment since 1992. Over the past decade it converted much of its subsidized housing downtown to market-rate real estate, and expanded retail offerings. In 2011, the mayor unveiled a public-private initiative to restore downtown Louisville’s Whiskey Row. The buildings are expected to house bourbon-themed restaurants and nightlife spots, adding to the success of nearby projects like the mixed-use Whiskey Row Lofts. Bourbon distilleries have begun moving their operations back to the area as well, including Mitcher’s Distillery, Heaven Hill and whiskey giant Jim Beam. The area’s residential population, though still small, grew about 10% from 2000 to 2010.



The City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin first turned its sights to downtown in 1988 with the RiverWalk initiative. In the decades since, the city passed zoning changes to encourage developers to erect more housing in the area. In 2002, with the help of \$45 million in government funding, the city dismantled the mile-long elevated Park East freeway and replaced it with a landscaped boulevard. According to the Congress for New Urbanism, per-acre land values within the freeway footprint had surged 180% by 2006 from 2001. Since 2000, the downtown population has increased by nearly 26% compared to the greater city of Milwaukee, which has experienced an overall decline. Jobs in the area increased by nearly 4% from 2000 to 2010, and the median income



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¹ See: <http://www.forbes.com/pictures/mhj45eddgl/introduction-42/>

of downtown households has climbed by 38% since 2000, compared to 2% for the city overall, according to Milwaukee Downtown organization.

Since 2007, downtown Atlanta, Georgia has welcomed \$2.9 billion in investment plus an additional \$182 million in public funding for infrastructure. In January, the city council voted to create a task force to oversee the revitalization efforts in downtown Atlanta. Home to five major college campuses, the area is growing at faster rates in terms of population, housing and median income than the overall city of Atlanta or the state of Georgia as a whole, according to Central Atlanta Progress, with much of the demand coming from young adults and young professionals. The city is finishing up a \$70 million streetcar project that will bring 2.6 miles of transit online in late 2013 and ground was broken in 2012 on the new Center for Civil and Human Rights project.



Each city on the Forbes list was credited with implementing change through a vision. In the case of Philadelphia, the vision started very simple, “clean and safe”. In the report to follow, City staff will outline a comprehensive plan for the enforcement of policies governing the downtown nightlife. While reviewing staff’s recommendations for addressing the issues at hand, one must also begin to look toward the future of the downtown and begin to find answers to questions such as: What is the vision for Bloomington’s downtown? What does the City want its downtown to look like in 20 years? What role will the downtown serve in this community? What type of businesses will occupy downtown real estate? What type of patrons will they attract? A majority of these questions have been recently explored by the Downtown Business Association in their Downtown Bloomington Strategy report which may also serve as guiding resource toward the development of a vision for the downtown (See Page 55).



Timeline of Events

November 13, 2012 – Staff held a meeting to discuss Council’s concerns following the City Council Retreat about the downtown nightlife. In attendance: Mark Huber, George Boyle, Jim Karch, Todd Greenburg, Bob Wall, Clay Wheeler, Mike Kimmerling, Patti-Lynn Silva, Barb Adkins, and David Hales.

Assignments

Police: Chief Randy McKinley, Assistant Chief Robert Wall, Assistant Chief Clay Wheeler

- Randy McKinley needs to designate one person to own this project in the Police Department
- Help start giving some elements of an action plan
- Put together some measurable/statistics they are tracking **(See Page 13)**
- 3 month focus group?
- Take the weather into account in report (school holidays)
- Answer questions like:
 - “Why do we put up with this?”
 - “Why do we have taverns for college students instead of Normal?”
- Honest/frank/bold statements from Police Admin
- What ideas in general does Police Staff have
- Sanctions – are they strong enough? Higher fines? Increase penalties?

PACE & Fire Department: Mark Huber & Mike Kimmerling

- What is the current occupancy? **(See Page 24)**
 - Is it justifiably set?
 - What is the methodology of setting occupancy?
 - Are there public safety issues with the current occupancy?
 - How do we enforce current and future occupancy numbers?
 - When was the last time the City measured occupancy, plumbing code for toilet fixtures to avoid public urination, fire sprinkler systems, what are other communities doing, locked doors for fire emergency, need more staffing for regular/frequent fire inspections

Finance: Patti-Lynn Silva

- Audit businesses to make sure they are not exceeding the 50% alcohol sold of all tangible items. **(See Page 28)**
 - What are the rules and regulations?
 - What could we do to audit the businesses?
 - How would we go about it? Start with restaurants, then taverns? No percentage requirement for food versus liquor for tavern licenses.
 - Estimate staffs time to do a project of this nature before beginning.

Public Works & Planning & Code Enforcement: Jim Karch & Mark Huber

- Enforce cleanliness
 - Enforce cleanliness for the front and adjacent property for each business.
- Reference Downtown Entertainment Task Force report
 - Is there even anymore that could be included?

Legal: George Boyle

- Legal issues with enforcing cleanliness in an ordinance
- Consider the option of closing at 1:00am instead of 2:00am
- Moratorium to Council

Deputy City Manager: Barbara Adkins

- Review issues with vehicles-for-hire **(See Page 29)**
 - Used to pack the downtown area when the bars are already crowded
 - Issues with drinking on party busses and the dropping off intoxicated people to the bar to continue to drink and become too drunk
 - create something to make drinking on the party busses illegal
 - Side-effect - might increase instances of drunk driving if there are less vehicles for hire and taxis available

Information Services & Police Department: Scott Sprouls & Jack McQueen

- Provide an update on status of downtown surveillance cameras
 - Have they been helpful?
 - Do we need more?

November 14, 2012 – Staff issued a Vehicle for Hire report outlining options available to the City in the regulation of taxis and party busses. **(See Page 29)**

November 26, 2012 – City Council imposed a moratorium upon the creation of liquor licenses within the central business district with an expiration date of May 13, 2013.

December 5, 2012 – Staff held a meeting with Downtown Bar Owners Association (DBOA) to discuss issues downtown. City Attendees: David Hales, Barb Adkins, Randy McKinley, Mike Kimmerling, Bob Wall, and Edward Shumaker. 8 total bars were represented including: Daddio's (Butch Thompson), Killarney's (Tony), Six Strings (Dan Rolph), Fat Jacks (Tyler Holloway), Main Street Grill (Brian Novotny), Bistro and Lancasters (Jan Lancaster), Flingers (Pat Fruin), and Drifters (Peg Bateman).

December 7, 2012 – Staff held a meeting to discuss a Downtown Capital Improvement Plan. The intent of the meeting was to come up with a 5 year capital improvement plan for the downtown. Improvements would include all infrastructure items including streets, curbs, sidewalks, decorative street lights, trees, benches, bike racks, and garbage cans. **(See Page 36)**

January 1, 2013 – The police department assigned a Third Shift Patrol Sergeant to oversee the efforts of the Police Department in the policing of the Downtown area, specifically during the Thursday, Friday and Saturday late night hours. The sergeant is responsible to ensure proper enforcement efforts are taking place, supervise officers assigned to work the downtown hireback program and maintain communication with the Police Administration in regards to his observations. Additionally, two officers assigned to the third shift patrol division are assigned to work the downtown bar area on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights from 11:00 pm to 3:00 am when the Third Shift Patrol Division has adequate staffing. These two officers are in addition to the 2 hireback officers working on Thursday night (during the college school year) and the 4 hire back officers working on Friday and Saturday nights. Additional member of the Third Shift Patrol Division are frequently required to assist the assigned downtown area officers to assist in maintaining public safety and handling calls for service.

January 23, 2013 – Staff held a follow up meeting to discuss the status of a 5 year capital improvement plan for the downtown. **(See Page 37)**

January 31, 2013 – Staff held a follow up meeting to the original November 13, 2012 meeting to discuss the Downtown Nightlife Initiative. Topics discussed: Problem Oriented Policing (POP) conditions postings, Tangible goods 50% over/under, Occupancy limits, historical list of bars, technology (video cameras, breathalyzers), Vehicles for Hire, and Downtown cleanliness.

January 31, 2013 – Staff created a Downtown Decorative Light Plan and a Downtown Street Tree Planting and Bench Replacement Plan. **(See Page 37)**

January 31, 2013 – Deputy City Manager Barbara J. Adkins met with Tricia Stiller and 2 Downtown Bar Owners regarding hubs and discussed possible alternatives.

February 18, 2013 – Deputy City Manager Barbara J. Adkins met with the Downtown Bar Owners regarding hubs.

February 27, 2013 – City Manager and Staff met with the Downtown Bar Owners Association to discuss Downtown issues.

March 4, 2013 – PACE Department reviewed and updated the occupant loads for Liquor License holders in Downtown. In many cases it had been several years since these loads had been evaluated and recalculated. Some of the businesses experienced significant changes to their occupancy loads. Some of the changes can be attributed to changes to the floor layout of several of the establishments and new and more restrictive fire codes. Overall there was a net decrease of 138 occupants.

March 26, 2013 – PACE highlighted that the City has previously exercised its authority to allow a business to obtain higher occupancy loads as long they meet certain exit requirements. The PACE department reported that as many as 5 businesses have been given this exception. PACE posed the question: do we want to discontinue the practice of providing these exceptions and reduce the occupancy loads previously granted. **(See Page 24)**

April 2, 2013 – City Clerk reported that on March 19, 2013 forty-two (42) condition pages were mailed. Of these, sixteen (16) were for Downtown licensed establishments. The City Clerk did not think a historical list of downtown taverns would be possible with the records City Hall has available.

April 2, 2013 – City Manager held a meeting with the Downtown Business Association (DBA) to discuss concerns over the downtown nightlife. City Manager Hales presented a brief overview of staff's work and focus to date and provided the DBA the opportunity to discuss any additional concerns they may have.

April 16, 2013 – Taxi and Vehicle for Hire held its quarterly meeting to discuss continuing hubs.

April 22, 2013 – City Council passed a text amendment to Chapter 6 of the City Code requiring Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education Training (BASSET). **(See Page 48)**

May 13, 2013 – Moratorium on the creation of liquor licenses within the central downtown business district expired.

Public Safety

Staffing Downtown

On a typical week, special Hireback arrangements are made in policing Bloomington to account for activities that occur in the downtown area on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. Hireback details are a program developed to provide additional resources during specific times to the downtown without the need for additional full time hires. Hireback details are listed and assigned in two man teams. Hireback officers receive overtime pay and are selected by a continuous rolling list which starts by seniority. Officers may be required to work the detail if no one volunteers for the shift.

During the summer when the majority of college students are no longer in town, or at least not visiting downtown in as large numbers, there are no Thursday night teams dedicated to downtown hire back. On Friday and Saturday nights there are two teams of hire back (or four officers).

When the students return there are two teams assigned on Thursdays for the first couple of weeks then it will reduce to one if the activity warrants the reduction. On Friday and Saturday nights there will be three teams hired back for the first couple of weeks. It will then reduce to two teams on Friday and Saturday nights.

It should be noted that in December of 2012 Assistant Chief Wheeler tasked midnight shift command to assign two officers and a sergeant to focus on issues downtown on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights to compliment the hireback detail. Staffing at the time did not permit a completely dedicated presence by these officers but adjustments were made to allow the midnight shift additional staffing beginning in 2013. The intent of this program was in small part to shift some regular assets to the problem as opposed to it all being overtime. However, the real purpose of the assignment was to have a more consistent effort in the downtown. The sergeant would have two officers that would regularly deal with the issues and would become the face of the police department dealing with bar employees and management. The sergeant would also run the hireback detail and would be available to direct the efforts of the personnel in the right direction. Hopefully their observations and experiences will assist in formulating a plan that will attempt to get at the core issues draining police resources instead of just blindly adding more officers to the program.

This, however; does not come without cost. One might wonder why the entire detail is not funded by on duty personnel. Downtown activity levels rise to the point of needing supplemental staffing for approximately eleven hours a week. Contractually, our uniformed officers are allowed set schedules for a forty hour work week. Our staffing needs for the other hours of the week do not require this level of staffing during the midnight hours. If this level of staffing was committed to downtown from the midnight shift we would need additional officers as our current staffing is efficient with very little surplus. This would take a minimum of four additional officers. The yearly cost of four officers including benefits would be approximately \$400,000.

Occasionally, extra teams above and beyond normal will be assigned downtown. An example of this would be the Pub Crawl. The downtown sergeant is tasked with advising the Assistant Chief of any staffing needs that may develop. While permanent additional teams could have some impact on downtown it could be a waste of resources. Further, with current staffing even hiring back on

overtime will have its limitations. Officers will burn out working the detail too often and their activity will slow. With burnout will come apathy and the loss of desire to work the detail which would increase the frequency in which we need to force an officer to work the detail because no one had signed up for it. This would not be a positive for the program or the officers themselves. Permanent additional teams would not be recommended unless additional staffing of the police department itself occurs.

In the future, more ambitious scheduling may be explored if there are whole scale changes to union schedules. This could include examining ten or twelve hour shifts. A component of studying the longer shifts would be the impact on how we staff downtown. This could have a negative impact on other services and would require significant union negotiations.

Last year approximately \$98,000 was spent for the Hireback detail downtown. The same is expected for this year. However, two officers and a sergeant are working on the issue during regular duty this year. A conservative estimate of time spent for each would be one third of their time spent on downtown issues. The annual salaries without benefits of two base officers and one base sergeant would be approximately \$240,000. One third of that cost is \$80,000. This represents an investment of \$178,000 (\$98,000 + \$80,000) for the policing of downtown nightlife issues. This number does not however; include workers compensation claims which represent a significant amount at times. The revenue from ordinance violations last year of approximately \$93,000 does offset those costs to some degree but certainly does not pay for the services required in the downtown during peak bar times.

Additional staffing may increase the instances of people being caught for the criminal damage but it may not reduce it. Additional staffing does not guarantee the reduction of the impact on third shift. Much of the activity downtown is driven by the officers on the detail. Officer's observing fights will get involved trying to make arrests and stop assaults. They will ask for additional units, require transports of custodies and so forth. If no police are present sometimes these incidents work themselves out and end up not even requiring police action. On the other hand if the police are not able to respond quickly some of these incidents end in criminal damage or batteries.

The police department would encourage creative responses to the issues facing the City's downtown. Simply adding more officers to the downtown detail is certainly not a panacea to the current concerns. If the downtown's current use is to continue, more innovative holistic approaches to enforcement must be examined. The use of part-time seasonal employees, for example; to walk downtown, sweep sidewalks, enforce parking regulations, or assist citizens with directions or answer any questions they might have is one idea. Other communities whose downtown efforts have been studied (Philadelphia for example) use civilians to help create a feeling of comfort for visitors.

Staffing of officers downtown could likely be handled by on duty personnel alone if the policy of restaurants, residential and commercial was adopted. **As long as the downtown area is an entertainment district that caters to college students, additional staffing will be required for the purpose of enforcing City Ordinances and enhancing public safety.**

Criminal Damage to Property

The issue of criminal damage to property in the downtown area of Bloomington has long been a concern for property owners of all types and the City of Bloomington. For this analysis, call for service data and police report data from January 1, 2012 through May 10, 2013 was collected and analyzed.

During the five month time frame, 9,539 calls for service were dispatched to the downtown area. This includes all call types such as bar checks, traffic stops, traffic accidents, fights, etc. Of those 9,539 calls 74 were for criminal damage to property or a vehicle. This represents less than 1% of all calls for service.

A better examination of property damage comes from police reports written when there is enough information to warrant a report. Citywide, there were 1,171 reports taken for damage to property with 51 being taken in downtown. This translates to 4.4% of all property damage reports occurring downtown.

An examination of the reports reveals some interesting information regarding property crime downtown. Very few of the cases have suspect or arrestee information with only 17 persons being identified. Of those, only 5 can be identified as college students. Indeed, all 5 were Illinois State University students, as none were noted from other schools. This does not imply that students from other schools are not causing some damage; it just means there is not enough data for analysis.

Of the people suspected or arrested for property damage, 8 were 19 to 22 years old. The rest were older than 26 years of age with 3 persons in their 30's, 1 in their 40's, and 2 in their 50's. This is contrary to the commonly accepted notion that



all the property damage is caused by college aged students. Of the 51 reports taken, 15 were taken at the City owned parking garages. The typical damage at these facilities are lights being broken in

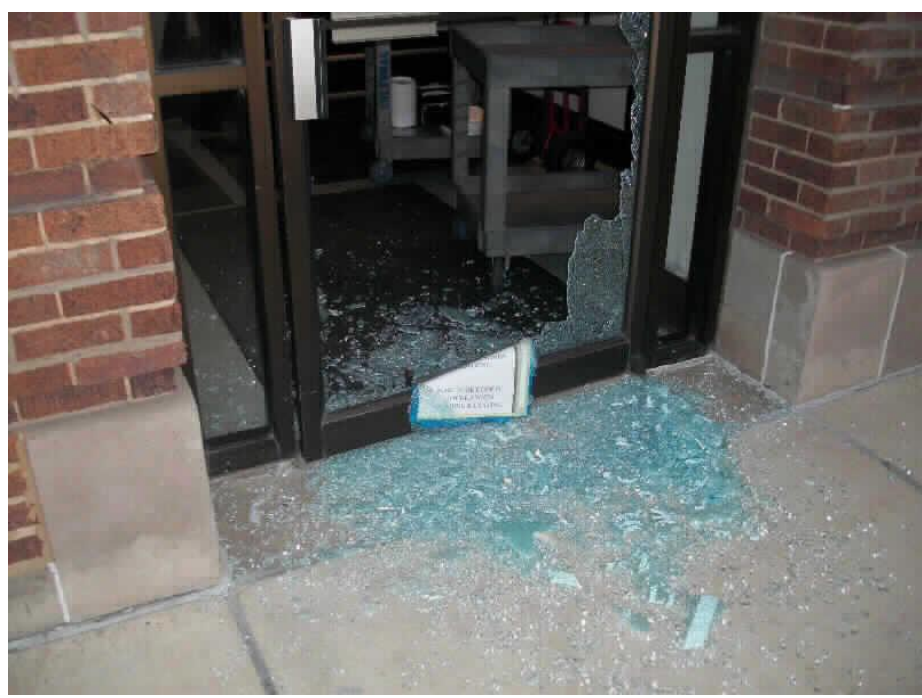
stairwells along with some car damage. This suggests that homeless persons, who are known to spend the night in the parking garages, may be breaking out the lights in order to sleep.

However, all of the persons arrested for property damage over the age of 26 in this report were not homeless. All of these persons were intoxicated when they committed the damage and often were in some type of confrontation inside a bar when the damage occurred.

Daytime businesses have felt the brunt of the property damage with 18 of the 51 reports being for them. Typical damage seen is broken windows, damaged signs, and pulled siding. The bars themselves have seen some damage as well with 9 reports taken. Usually the damage to the bars are to the bathrooms or window damage from patrons who get too intoxicated and unruly.



Typical Light Damage at a Parking Garage

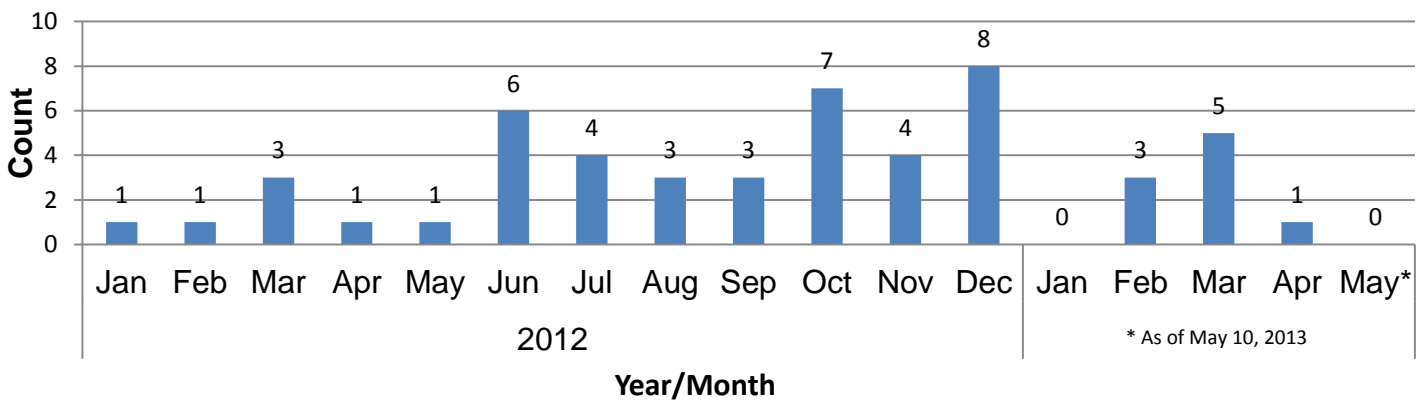


Glass broken out of a downtown business

Of the remaining places where reports were taken, 6 were to vehicles parked on the street and 3 were residences located downtown.

In terms of monthly occurrence, June through December is the time of highest activity as based on police reports. This is due to more people being outside to walk around along with the students being back in town.

Property Damage Reports Taken In Downtown Bloomington



Of the reports examined for the time frame when the damage occurred, 9 of the 51 cases had a time frame from when the property was fine to when it was damaged was too great in length to estimate a time of occurrence. From 7 AM to 3PM, 5 damages occurred while 6 happened from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. From 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. 31 property damages occurred, which amounts to 61% of the property damage occurring during that time.



Car Window Broken out on Market Street

It must be cautioned that not enough data is present to assign any kind of blame on any group of people who may be causing the property damage. The Police Department has identified that persons all the way to the age of 55 are being caught damaging downtown property. Investigators also do not know if students from schools outside of Bloomington/Normal are coming to downtown Bloomington as is the case in many other college communities. Another point of consideration is that property damage has been a problem for so long in the downtown area that unless required for insurance reasons, some victims may not be reporting the damage to the police. This may be especially true for vehicle

damage victims who feel that reporting to the police may be a waste of time.

Downtown Bloomington's bars attract a variety of people varying in age and social groups which makes it difficult to pin down the damage caused to "those drunk college kids." The high density of property damage is more likely to be due to the density of bars in the area and also other chronic problems such as homelessness, unsecure parking areas, and residential density near the bar district. Other factors such as the mixed use of downtown, exterior lighting, building materials, and other considerations need to be taken into account when developing a plan to reduce property damage in the area.

Summary of Downtown Activity

The downtown summary are notations by officers who worked Downtown Hireback included 55 incidents between the recorded months of November 2012 to May 2013 (no information is available for January 2013, and information about the weather was not included). The reports that were evaluated are summaries of some of the notable incidents rather than all-encompassing data or all reports taken during this time. However, some observations about the most notable incidents can be made to supplement the analysis of current downtown activity as it relates to the Downtown Hireback program.

The most commonly occurring incidents are summarized below:

CY2012 Total Activity Report	
Bar Checks	1,358
OV'S	512
Parking	298
UTT'S	29
Fights	198
Arrests	75
Calls	297
DUI	3
Tows*	73
OV Amount	\$82,170
OT Costs	\$93,633
Net	(\$11,463)

- **Fights (battery or aggravated battery)** were the most commonly occurring incident type which officers were involved in.
- **Illegal Consumption of Alcohol by a Minor** has the second highest rate of summarized incidents.
- **Resisting or obstructing** occurs when people either resist arrest or attempt to conceal their identity from officers.
- **Crowd control** necessity occurred 5 times.
- All other types of incidents occurred less than 5 times.

Fights (battery or aggravated battery) (18 times) - There were 3 establishments that had the highest incidents of fights at their locations. One establishment had 6 fights, another had 4 fights, and the final establishment had 2 fights. All other establishments only had 1 incident. Fighting has increased in the past few months. In March, April, and May fights occurred 14 times compared to 4 times from November through February. April and May totaled 11 times out of the recorded 18 total. As indicated in the summaries, officers believed that as the weather warms up, there will likely be an increase in potential problems with specific bars mentioned. The summaries also indicated large fights involving 50 or more people.

Illegal Consumption of Alcohol by a Minor (7 times) - The next most commonly occurring incident after fighting was illegal consumption of alcohol by a minor. Of the 7 times that this incident occurred, 5 of them can be linked to one establishment. There were only 2 other establishments where this incident occurred. A May 2013 bar check at one location resulted in 26 ordinance violations of Minors in a Tavern. The EJIS report also notes that these minors admitted to drinking in the tavern.

Restricting / Obstructing (5 times) - The occurrences of resisting and obstructing appear to be at random. Each of the five reported incidences were at separate locations.

Crowd Control (5 times) - Although there were only 5 recorded incidents, 2 of them occurred between the 500 and 600 blocks of N. Main and 2 occurred on Front Street. In the 500 and 600 blocks of N. Main, there are many establishments in a limited area. Fighting also occurred most often

at these two locations. As previously noted, Front Street experienced 6 incidents of fighting the 500 block of N. Main had the second highest rate of 4 incidents of fights.

Summary of Incidents Fewer than 5 times - Drug related (4 times), criminal damage to property (3 times), and minor in a tavern (3 times) were the next most common types of incidents. All other incidents occurred two or less times within the recorded months from November 2012 to May 2013.

Workload Data

Starting in January of 2013 the BPD began to tow cars from the downtown during peak nighttime hours on Thursday through Saturday nights. This was enacted to allow the shuttles to operate with more room. At the same time officers from Third Shift were added to the downtown detail to add more manpower to the area. However, stats for Third Shift officers are not kept with the Downtown Hireback Officers statistics. As such, it is difficult to determine what, if any, effect the addition of these officers had.

Officers are required to collect data at the end of shift for the following: Bar Checks, Ordinance Violation Counts (OV'S), Parking Tickets Issued, Uniform Traffic Tickets Issued (UTT'S), Fights, Arrests, Calls For Service, Ordinance Violation Amounts, Driving Under the Influence Arrests (DUI), and the number of Tows.

Bar Checks	341
OV'S	90
Parking	152
UTT'S	5
Fights	58
Arrests	12
Calls	78
DUI	1
Tows*	112
OV Amount	\$14,300
OT Cost	\$24,762
Net	(\$10,462)

To control for the weather and holidays, which can affect the number of patrons downtown, a comparison was made from January through May 2013 to the same time period in 2012. The average number of officers working downtown hireback per month was added for further comparison.

The average number of officers for 2012 is exaggerated by the high number of officers who worked in

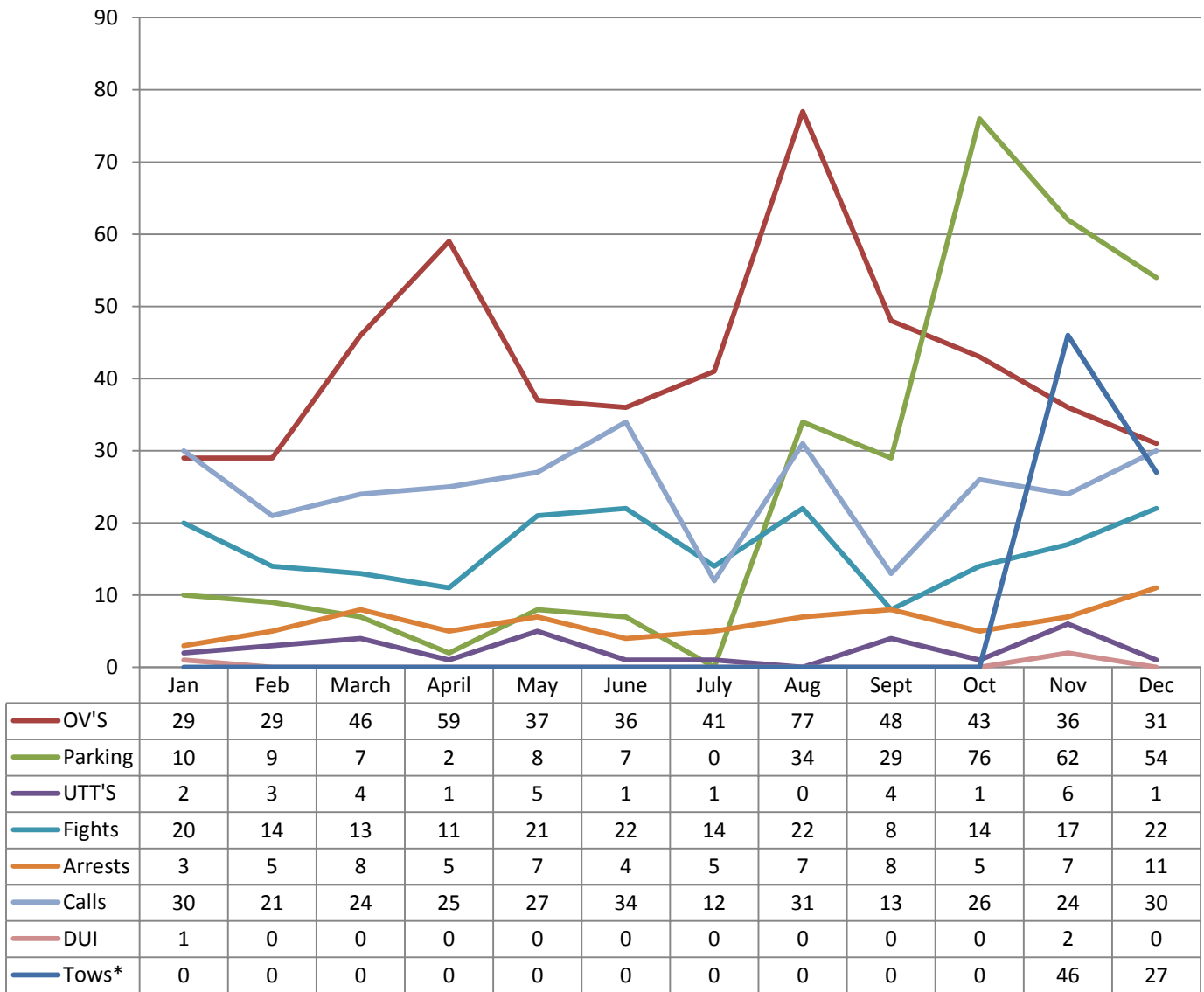
	Bar Checks	OV'S	Parking	UTT'S	Fights	Arrests	Calls	OV Amount	DUI	Tows	Avg. # of Officers *
Jan to May 2013	484	139	197	6	78	13	113	\$23,150	1	138	42.8
Jan to May 2012	476	241	68	8	64	28	107	\$45,710	1	0	34.4

* Refers to the average number of officers assigned per month to the Downtown Hireback.

August to deal with the influx of college students when school came back into session. In almost every category, the numbers dropped from 2012 to 2013. Based on this dataset, the time it takes to deal with towing vehicles from the downtown area may be taking time away from officers being able to address the crowd related issues in the Downtown area.

Broken down monthly for 2012 in the graph below, one can see the fluctuations of the various types of ordinance violations.

2012 Total Activity Report



Officers' & Supervisors' Comments and Recommendations

The Impact of Downtown on 3rd Shift:

Third Shift Officer: "Due to the fact that most of the problems from the Downtown Area is concentrated during our work hours, this area has a significant effect on 3rds. I love being assigned down there and doing what I can to help make a change. With that being said, it still does take 2 officers off of the shift and require them to concentrate their efforts to that area only. Usually ending with some sort of significant report every night, which takes them off the street for follow up and report writing. I can't remember the last time 3rd shift has not been called to assist the other downtown officers. Whether it be for a call for service, assist BFD, pedestrian contacts, or the large crowds during closing. At least 4-6 officers are needed to assist the Downtown Officers every weekend for the large crowds in front of certain establishments. 3rd shift is ALWAYS affected by the downtown area!!!!"

Third Shift Supervisor: "I believe the impact of downtown has impacted 3rd shift in many different ways. First, it has taken two (2) officers who we would have on the streets and put them downtown on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Also, we have had many situations regarding some bars where we have had to have multiple 3rd shift officers respond. Most of these situations have involved the specific bars."

Third Shift Supervisor: "I believe downtown has affected 3rd shift in many ways. Even with hiring back four officers and having two 3rd shift officers in the downtown area is not enough on most nights. On many occasions, 3rd shift officers are being called downtown to assist with large crowds, pedestrians contacts, assist with DUI's, traffic stops and large fights. If a downtown unit gets a DUI or an arrest, it takes that unit off the street and 3rd shift has to fill in the gap. Even if 3rd shift volunteers to take the arrest or DUI it still shortens the shift. This happens almost every weekend. Downtown does not only affect the officers on the streets, but it also affects the supervisors on all shifts. With the towing of vehicles in the 100 block of W. Washington and the 500 block of N. Main, the supervisors have to return to post to release vehicles on a regular basis. This keeps the supervisor away from the downtown area or assisting with calls."

Third Shift Supervisor: The specific assignment of two officers from the shift on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays has not caused any significant manpower issues for the shift. Going into the year knowing about this new assignment or detail for 3rd shift, I was up front with my shift and told them we would go by the contract regarding time off. I was not going to allow additional officers time off and short the shift; thus potentially creating officer safety concerns. Since I communicated that clearly at the beginning of the year, the shift understood what to expect. There were not going to be any surprises. However, do not think or assume the implementation of the two assigned officers to the area has decreased the use of the rest of the shift. It is very common for other 3rd shift officers to assist with the handling of calls especially on the busy nights. In addition, with Officer Carlton taking the lead on this assignment or detail, it has provided the bar owners with a consistent or familiar face to meet with.

Recommendations to Improve the Situation

Third Shift Supervisor: "I think we should continue to sporadically do bar/ID checks with 15 or so officers to keep the bouncers/bars on their toes."

Third Shift Supervisor: "This first recommendation starts with me. I will have a meeting with the downtown units before they hit the streets on every Thurs, Fri and Sat. I will address that officer presence is a key factor of keeping the peace in the downtown area. My presence downtown is needed more to keep the hire back officers in check. I will attempt to get downtown when time allows, it is difficult when other responsibilities pull the supervisor's away. I truly believe the supervisor in charge of the downtown detail needs to work 3rd shift. The officers working the overtime detail need to be supervised by the person in charge of the detail. It is very hard for a supervisor to do this on a different shift that does not see it firsthand.

We need to come up with more surprise bar checks (one or two a month during busy time). On these nights instead of just having two teams maybe hire back four or five teams. This will take the pressure off 3rd shift on supplying additional officers. Get rid of the tow away zones. This will free up the downtown units and the supervisors from having to release the vehicles".

Third Shift Supervisor: "As I have stated time and time again, the problems downtown are not much different than they always have been (in my 26 years). The fights will always be there. There will always be drunken fools. As the city attempts to balance the existence of bars/entertainment and residential life, the relationship between the business owners and the citizens who live in downtown will continue to be strained. However, I will continue to organize sweeps or checks as we did in May, which was very successful. The word got out among the bar owners and patrons that we were cracking down hard on the under-age drinking. Relating to this, I also believe the city or department needs to provide training for the bar owners and their bouncers. BPD or city used to require this training for them".

Comments on the Vehicles for Hire

Surveys were given to Third Shift Officers and the Third Shift Supervisor to solicit feedback on issues they are experiencing to solicit potential recommendations and insight as to what seems to be working and what does not. The responses are as follows:

Third Shift Officer: "I think the idea of having an area where buses can load/off load is a great idea, but still needs work on the implementation of the routes. Having buses parked for hours in front of a bar is not good for the safety of all. Officers can't see pedestrians as they are on the sidewalk areas. Pedestrians can't see around the buses and have to enter the roadway to see, causing conflict between cars and people. I believe having a staging area for the buses, just off the square is appropriate. Then when needed they can come in, load up, and leave. This can be a very systematic and possibly more money for these companies. Closing the 500 and 600 block of North Main Street would be the most beneficial aspect. Pedestrians would be free to roam, with no safety concerns of vehicle traffic. PLUS we don't have 2 officers ineffective for 1- 1.5 hours towing cars all night! Moving the bus hub to Mulberry/ Center area would work great."

Third Shift Supervisor: "I believe having buses in the downtown area is a must. From working downtown from 14 years ago to today is a big difference. The downtown area gets cleared out quickly. It also cuts down on the DUI's leaving the downtown area. It also cuts down on criminal damage reports from drunken students walking home on Main Street. The tow away zones and the buses parking in front of the bars are not working the best. It is very difficult seeing the front of each bar when a bus is parked in the way. There have been fights between the buses and the bars that are

not seen from the streets. It is also very dangerous when subjects run out from in-between the buses into the roadway. Most of our problems with the buses are not having enough of them on occasions and drunken patrons are fighting to get on the bus. The best way I can think of keeping the buses working in a safe manner is closing off the one hundred and the five hundred blocks of north Main. This will keep patrons out of the streets where moving vehicles are at. This also makes our officers get out of their vehicles and walk the beat when the street is closed. The buses can park in the middle of the street that opens the view in front of the bars for crowd control".

Any New Ideas on Enforcement

Third Shift Officer: "Obviously, the downtown issues now are not going away in supersonic speed. But I do believe the 3rd shift Team does hold their own, when working in this area. Based on the number of arrests, OV's, and reports; I believe anyone could see the more pro-active approach IS WORKING!

Third Shift Supervisor: "I believe that putting extra officers in the downtown area the first several weeks after the students return would help get the message out to them. I also believe that having at least one of the 3rd shift officers who works the detail go to the liquor commission meetings and downtown bar association meetings on occasion to explain to them what problems we are seeing and having in the area would be beneficial."

Third Shift Supervisor: "I think changing it up on some nights during the busy times. Instead of having two teams maybe have three or four to have more officer presence. Do more sweeps that involve more hireback along with 3rd shift. When a problem has been identified, maybe hire back more officers to cover the problem until the problem is solved".

Third Shift Supervisor: I think we need to keep the downtown assignment as it is. I would suggest beefing up the numbers at the beginning of the school year (put 2 teams on Thurs, 3 on Fri & Sat) until October. In addition, hopefully, with continued communication and training (involving Officer Carlton & Sgt. Shumaker), the bar owners will know what to expect. This whole approach and/or relationship with the bar owners and their patrons will take some time to show any real impact. The shift will continue to do the sweeps on a more regular basis (to keep them honest). Require the bar owners and employees to attend the training I explained above. Overall, if compliance is not gained from the bar owners, city legal and/or the liquor commission needs to take a stricter zero tolerance approach towards the violators. Set guidelines. For example, if XXX OV's are issued for minors in a tavern during a XXX month time frame, then they lose their liquor license for a weekend of the city's choice (NOT on holidays when the students are gone). Hit them hard. Hit them when they have the most to lose. I realize this is wishful thinking, but we must send a message to them that we are serious. If we do, then they will either comply or eventually they will close their doors and go out of business.

Working with the Universities

City staff is currently working with Illinois Wesleyan University and Illinois State University on an Intergovernmental Agreement the sharing of police information. Both universities have Student Codes of Conduct for their students. The codes regulate not only conduct occurring on campus, but also conduct which occurs off campus and affects the universities' community. Staff believes it is in the best interests of the safety and welfare of the universities' students, university staff members, as well as the City of Bloomington's general public that the universities enforce their code. These agreements will keep the universities better informed as to the incidents occurring downtown in respect to their respective student bodies.

Police Recommendation: Alcohol Compliance Unit

University community alcohol programs require a comprehensive approach that utilizes collective public and private efforts to reduce high-risk drinking and the negative behavioral consequences. College students are not the sole focus of these programs, but components within the program will target both the alcohol business environment and student behavior. Students and community benefit from the broader, community-wide aspects of the program designed to reduce such behaviors as high risk drinking, sales to minors and alcohol related business practices.

It is recommended that the City of Bloomington create an Alcohol Compliance Unit that is responsible for the coordination and enforcement of city alcohol-related ordinances and state statutes, as well as coordinate with the Liquor Commission, Police and Fire, Legal, PACE and City Clerk to create a comprehensive plan and uniform effort to address the policies set by the City Council. This unit would also work with the retail alcohol businesses to create safe environments for their employees, patrons as well as define and assist in understanding the City's responsibility to regulate these businesses. The Alcohol Compliance Unit would be staffed by a Sergeant tasked with conducting liquor inspections at Bloomington licensed entities throughout the City. This Sergeant would ensure standardized reporting and consistent application of enforcement, the Sergeant would coordinate officers, on duty or hired back, with the inspection of liquor establishments on a regular basis and respond to complaints received from the general public regarding violations. The Unit would also coordinate periodic compliance sweeps in conjunction with other state and local enforcement agencies. During these sweeps, the combined forces check for violations above and beyond City and Illinois liquor laws.

In addition, the Unit would supervise underage purchasers during random ID checks. These checks, which would be performed throughout the City, test retail sales personnel on their duty to perform proper ID checks in the sale of alcohol and tobacco.

Finally, the Unit would work with the City of Bloomington Liquor Commission to provide reports, details, and develop educational programs to assist business, the community and students in the area of alcohol related issues.

If the current use of the City's downtown is to remain unchanged and no policies are established to deter the volume of taverns catering to the consumption of alcohol on weekends and evening hours; it is recommended that a new position of Sergeant be created to staff the Alcohol Compliance Unit and a new full time employee be hired to fill this position.

Summary of Relevant Research

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) addresses that successful programs included five reinforcement components. **(See Appendix Page 33: Alcohol Compliance Unit: Summary of Relevant Research)**

- 1. Community mobilization addressed support for public policy interventions by increasing general awareness, knowledge, and concern about alcohol-related trauma. Program initiatives were jointly planned by project organizers and local residents and implemented by the residents.*
- 2. The responsible beverage service (RBS) component sought to reduce sales to intoxicated patrons and increase enforcement of local alcohol laws by working with restaurants, bar and*

hotel associations, beverage wholesalers, the Alcohol Beverage Control Commission, and local law enforcement.

- 3. A component to decrease DWI offenses sought to increase the number of DWI arrests by a combination of special officer training, deployment of passive alcohol sensors, and the use of driving under the influence (DUI) checkpoints. News coverage publicized these activities.*
- 4. A component directed toward underage drinking sought to reduce alcohol sales to minors by enforcement of underage sales laws; training of sales clerks, owners, and managers to prevent sales of alcohol to minors; and advocacy to bring media attention to the issue of underage drinking.*
- 5. Local zoning and other municipal powers that determine alcohol outlet density were used to reduce availability of alcohol.*

These components; community awareness/mobilization, responsible beverage service, increased enforcement, training, and zoning for density, could be addressed by a comprehensive alcohol program developed by the City of Bloomington and should be included in a comprehensive enforcement plan addressing issues related to the downtown nightlife.

License Classifications & Fees, Fines, and Code Enforcement

License Classifications & Fees

Chapter 6 Section 7A of the Bloomington City Code outlines 22 license classifications governing the sale of alcoholic beverages; only a few of which apply to the existing establishments downtown (**See Page 42**). The 4 major licenses in the downtown area are Club, Packaged, Restaurant, and Tavern. The City generates a little over \$60,000 annually in license fees from downtown establishments with the most recent existing establishments listed in the table below.

Number in Downtown	License Type	License Code (Description)	Fee	Revenue to City
1	Club	CA (all types of alcohol) or CB (beer and wine only)	\$1,760	\$1,760
1	Packaged	PAS (all types of alcohol, Sunday sales)	\$1,410	\$1,410
11	Restaurant	RAS (all types of alcohol, Sunday sales)	\$2,210	\$24,310
1	Restaurant	RA (all types of alcohol)	\$1,760	\$1,760
15	Tavern	TAS (all types of alcohol, Sunday sales)	\$2,210	\$33,150
1	Tavern	TA (all types of alcohol)	\$1,760	\$1,760
Total Revenue to City				\$64,150

With the previously estimated investment of \$178,000 (not including workers compensation claims) in staff costs for the policing of downtown nightlife issues alone; it is clear that current fees do not cover the costs generated by the downtown establishments. The question then is; should the City's license fees in the downtown area cover the costs for services generated by the establishments that occupy them? Is the intent of the assessed fees to cover the demands for services or is the purpose to simply offset some costs associated with the operations of the businesses? These are questions for Council to consider. Some options Council could consider include: the establishment of a full cost recovery fee structure; a revenue generating fee structure; or continuing the practice of offsetting some of the costs with the fees assessed. It is also important to note that the City receives 2% sales tax on all liquor sales and collected approximately \$93,000 last Fiscal Year in ordinance violations generated from downtown activities. While more research and analysis would have to be performed before deciding upon the most equitable fee assessment, other revenue sources could be considered in a cost recovery fee structure approach.

The Town of Normal has 11 Liquor License Classifications. A copy of the Town of Normal's Liquor License Classifications may be found in the **Appendix on page 46**. It is important to note that **Normal's liquor code does not contain the word tavern**. Normal's liquor code defines Restaurant as "Any public place which is kept, used, maintained, advertised, and held out to the public as a place where meals are sold and served, and where meals are actually and regularly served to the public. The sale of liquor at a restaurant shall be considered incidental to the principal purpose of the sale of food. A restaurant shall have seating available for patrons as well as adequate and sanitary kitchen and dining room equipment. A restaurant must have employed therein a sufficient number and kinds

of employees to prepare, cook, and serve full meals for its guests. A restaurant must keep its kitchen open and be serving meals from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and any day the restaurant is open for business and at all time between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. when alcohol is served. Restaurants must keep a record of all food items sold such that a determination that the restaurant is serving meals can regularly be made.”

Stated more simply, the Town of Normal does not have and does not allow for Tavern establishments. Normal has taken a clear stance on alcohol focused establishments and does not face the same issues that currently challenge the City due to the downtown nightlife environment. Many recommendations within this report are prefaced with the disclaimer “if the current volume of taverns is to continue, staff would recommend (insert additional resource here).” One of the first questions that should be addressed and approached philosophically and logically is; **should the City mirror the Town of Normal’s approach to Tavern establishments?** Staff does not have a recommendation for the answer to this question. The intent of this report is to inform Council of the options available and the resources necessary for the options chosen.

Fines and Penalties

Bloomington penalties and sanctions that may be imposed for liquor license violations are set forth in Chapter 6, Section 37 of the Bloomington City Code. These may include reprimand, fines, suspension, revocation, or the placing of conditions on the license. Bloomington ordinance allows for fines in the range of from \$250 to \$3,500 for each violation. Suspension may be for a maximum of thirty days.

Both Bloomington and Normal tend to utilize a three year look-back period when making a decision as to what kinds of settlements may be offered to violators who admit to the facts of a violation and waive the right to a hearing in exchange for an agreed upon fine. Offenses occurring within this three year period are viewed as subsequent offenses for purposes of imposition of sanctions.

1. First offense: \$600
2. Second offense: \$1,200
3. Third offense: fine of from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and a suspension of 1-5 days, depending on the circumstances.

Sanctions that Normal's Liquor Commission may impose against Licensees who violate provisions of their liquor licenses are detailed in Chapter 4, Section 4.18 of the Town of Normal Code. As in Bloomington, they may include reprimand, fines, suspension or revocation of the license. Fines may be up to \$10,000 for each violation. Suspension may be for a maximum period of 150 days.

The Town of Normal has a three year look-back period it considers when making offers for settlement. The violations tend to settle along the following lines:

1. First offense: \$250
2. Second offenses: \$1,000 or \$500 fine plus a two day suspension. Generally, the choice is left up to the Licensee. The days of the suspension must be the same day of the week as date of the infraction: i.e. weekend infractions must include a weekend day.
3. A third infraction may result in a \$1,000 to \$2,000 fine and a two to five day suspension, depending upon the circumstances.

Occupant Loads

City staff determines occupant loads by utilizing the standards established in the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Life Safety Code. In February 2013, the PACE Department staff visited downtown establishments to review and update the occupant loads for the liquor license holders in Downtown. In many cases it had been several years since these loads had been evaluated and recalculated. As seen in the chart on the following page, staff's review of the establishments and application of current occupant load regulations would result in some significant changes to these loads. This can be contributed to changes to the floor layout of several of the establishments and new more restrictive fire codes. In one example, staff found the establishment's occupant loads had been previously calculated incorrectly and were in need of adjustment. Overall there would be a net decrease of 138 occupants if the occupant loads are agreed upon by City Officials.

Currently, the number of occupants established for a specific business can be based on a ratio of people per square feet of space, dependent on space usage (i.e. standing room, loose tables and chairs, or fixed seating); based on gross verses net square feet; actual and/or intended use of a space; and other limiting factors (i.e. capacity of the exits). Review of all these factors by the fire inspector determines the final occupant load. General rules include: Standing space – 1 person/5 square feet, net; loose tables and chairs – 1 person/15 net square feet; and kitchens – 1 person/200 gross square feet.

At this time, action has not been taken on any changes to current occupant loads. **The question of what should also be considered when establishing occupant loads remains to be answered.** Currently, staff utilizes the NFPA's Life Safety Code which takes into consideration floor space and patron's ability to safely navigate to an exit door in case of an emergency. The City may wish to include other criteria when determining occupant loads to address safety issues as well as promote the long term viability of the downtown. Ordinance violation history may be a factor for consideration when establishing an occupant load for an establishment. Businesses which have previously displayed an inability to safely and responsibly control a certain volume of customers could possibly be criteria for consideration even if the establishment has the floor capacity to accommodate larger numbers. **Liquor establishments are required to monitor their customers' alcohol consumption and are not to serve patrons that are intoxicated².** This can be challenging in establishments reaching current load capacity where a majority of the patrons are standing up and conversing.



On April 22, 2013, the City Council passed a text amendment to Chapter 6 of the City Code requiring Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education Training (BASSET). The ordinance sets a standard for the number of BASSET trained servers which are required to be on duty during hours of operation. The ratio of the number of trained servers is based on the number of employees on duty. The inference is that levels of staffing are reflective of anticipated patron volume. This requirement also

² See (235 ILCS 5/6-16) (from Ch. 43, par. 131) Sec. 6-16. Prohibited sales and possession.

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs4.asp?ActID=1404&ChapterID=26&SeqStart=7700000&SeqEnd=12100000>

alleviates the difficulty of tasking enforcement ratios of *patron:server*, as patron volume could be difficult to audit throughout a particular evening. The ordinance states that at times when 8 or fewer employees are working at an establishment, a minimum of 1 employee must have BASSET training or another alcohol education program approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission. At times when more than 8 but fewer than 16 employees are working, the ordinance requires a minimum of 2 employees to have received the alcohol training. Between 16 and 24 on duty employees require a minimum of 3 BASSET trained staff and more than 24 employees on duty require a minimum of 4 trained staff. This ordinance amendment establishes a precedent amongst liquor establishments for responsible serving practices. Additional considerations for how the City establishes occupant loads would also help promote responsible serving practices. **It is recommended that ordinance violation history be a consideration when awarding occupant loads for establishments.**

Occupant Loads (as of February, 2013)				
NAME	ADDRESS	CURRENT³	NEW⁴	CHANGE
Illinois Brewing	102 N Center	201	210	+9
CII East	102 S East	59	59	
Elroy's	102 W Washington	362	202	-160
Rosie's	105 E Front		119	
Eleven 2nd Fl	105 W Front		94	
Eleven 1st Fl	105 W Front		85	
Mug Shots	107 W Front		95	
Chasers	110 W Washington	500	440	-60
Lucca Grill	116 E Market	49	49	0
Maguire's	218 N Center	260	262	+2
Diggers Again	230 E Front	93	67	-26
The Bistro	316 N Main	186	136	-50
Reality Bites	414 N Main		152	
Fat Jacks	511 N Main	397	413	+16
Main St Bar	519 N Main	149	221	+72
Kilarney's	523 N Main	94	86	-8
Six Strings	525 N Center	300	256	-44
Daddio's	525 N Main	536	567	+31
Mulligans	531 N Main	128	128	0
Blueline	602 N Main	272	272	
Drifters	612 N Main	201	281	+80
Totals		3,787	4,194	-138

³ "Current" is what the current occupant load is today. "New" are staff's findings from the February 2013 visits into the establishments where new floor arrangements and updated and more restrictive fire code regulations were factored into consideration. The "New" occupant loads have not been implemented or shared with the businesses downtown as the implementation is dependent upon Council policy direction.

⁴ New occupant loads were calculated per the *International Fire Protection Code, 2009*.

Conditions Reporting

The City currently has over 180 liquor licenses. Of those 180+ licenses, 42 have special conditions placed on them. There are a total of 31 establishments in the downtown which have liquor licenses. A requirement of retaining a liquor license is the establishment must post the conditions of their respective license in the building so that it is visible for enforcement officers to reference. On March 19, 2013; the City Clerk's Office mailed 42 condition pages to all liquor license holders. Of these, 14 were for Downtown licensed establishments.

Listing of Downtown Liquor Licenses:

Clubs – 1

1. Fraternal Order of Eagles, 311 – 313 S. Main St.

Packaged – 1

1. CVS, 210 N. Center St. (has conditions)

Restaurant – 12

1. Renee, 306 N. Center St., Suite 102 (has conditions for sidewalk sales)
2. Reality Bites, 414 N. Main St. (has conditions)
3. BMI Concessions, LLC, 101 S Madison St., (US Cellular Coliseum) (has conditions)
4. Castle Theater, 209 E. Washington St. (has conditions)
5. Lancaster's, 513 N. Main St.
6. Lucca Grill, 116 E. Market St.
7. Main St. Grill, 517 N. Main St. (has conditions)
8. Rosie's Pub, 106 E. Front St. (has conditions)
9. Station 220, 220 E. Front St.
10. Michael's Family Restaurant, 110 W. Washington St. (has conditions for sidewalk sales)
11. Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, 600 N. East St.
12. Laugh Comedy Club, 108 E. Market St. (has conditions)

Taverns – 16

1. CII East Lounge, 102 S. East St.
2. Fat Jack's, 511 N. Main St. (has conditions)
3. Illinois Brewing Company, 102 N. Center St., Suite 111
4. Maguire's, 220 N. Center St.
5. Blue Line Night Club, 602 N. Main St. (has conditions)
6. Killarney's, 523 N. Main St.
7. Chasers, 110 W. Washington St.
8. Drifters, 612 N. Main St. (has conditions)
9. Mulligan's, 531 N. Main St.
10. Daddio's, 525 – 529 N. Main St.
11. Six Strings, 525 N. Center St. (has conditions)
12. Mugshots, 107 W. Front St.
13. Diggers Again!, 230 E. Front St. (has conditions)
14. Eleven, 105 W. Front St.
15. The Bistro, 316 N. Main St.
16. Elroy's, 102 W. Washington St.

Conditions

A total of 14 establishments have conditions downtown with 2 of the 14 having conditions for sidewalk sales.

Staff did not have sufficient records to provide opening dates for these establishments. For a number of these establishments, there were other liquor license holders at these addresses prior to the current license holder. While staff could provide dates for the current license holder. This would not provide an accurate picture of licensed establishments in the Downtown over time.

On May 13, 2013; the Police Department verified that all of the liquor license establishments in the downtown have their conditions posted. It was found that 3 of the establishments did not have occupancy load signs posted. The Police will work with PACE and the Fire Department to get this accomplished.

Downtown Restaurants and Percentage of Alcohol Sales

One issue of concern which has been more prevalent in recent conversations about the downtown nightlife is the restaurant licenses. Some believe the majority of the restaurants in the downtown moonlight as taverns in the late evening hours and on weekends. A requirement to attain a “R”, Restaurant liquor license, is more than half of total sales must come from tangible items. There are currently twelve Restaurant liquor licenses in the Downtown. In November 2012, the City Clerk’s Office mailed the City’s REV – 1 Liquor Commission Information Return for Revenue Ratio Reporting form (or REV – 1) to all twelve restaurant liquor license holders.

As of May 2013, two establishments have not provided REV – 1. Of the remaining ten licenses, three of them have ticket sales as a major revenue source: Bloomington Center for Performing Arts, US Cellular Coliseum, and the Castle Theatre. In December of 2012, the City’s legal department issued a memo identifying tickets sales as tangible goods under restaurant classifications **(See Page 51)**. These three establishments were granted “R”, Restaurant liquor licenses as the City only has two classifications for sale by the glass. The other classification being “T”, Tavern.

The percentage of liquor sales range from a low of less than one percent to the high of sixty-three percent. Provided is a listing of each establishment reviewed:

Establishment 1	.004%
Establishment 2	8%
Establishment 3	17%
Establishment 4	22%
Establishment 5	25%
Establishment 6	30%
Establishment 7	38%
Establishment 8	39%
Establishment 9	60%
Establishment 10	63%

Based upon the Code which states that more than half of total sales must come from tangible items, it appears that only two establishments have exceeded the percentage. While this data does not support the claim that a majority of the restaurants in the downtown are operating as taverns in the evenings and on weekends it also does not state that issues do not arise when restaurants downtown stay open later in the evening to sell alcohol to patrons. Bloomington Police Officers have cited issues with restaurants staying open later, however; our data indicates that under current liquor license requirements, a majority of downtown restaurants are operating according to the policies in place.

It is recommended that an annual audit be established to ensure license holders satisfy the appropriate requirements for alcohol sales to tangible goods.

Transportation

Vehicles for Hire

In 2006, it was brought to staff's attention from the Taxi Cab owners that "party buses" were charging students to ride from Normal to Downtown Bloomington on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

In 2006, the City Council approved amending the Taxi Cab Ordinance to include regulations for "Vehicle for Hire" (VFH) or as known on the street as "party buses". Staff's logic at the time was to regulate vehicles that would provide rides to these students and at the same time decreasing the number of students that were drinking and driving.

Since then, Staff has spent an enormous amount of time investigating complaints, licensing, etc. and find that there are now "Renegade" vehicles running illegally to and from the Town of Normal to Downtown Bloomington.

Based on staff's research and experience in enforcing the VFH, the following possible recommendations are presented (please note that some of these alternatives are mutually exclusive):

1. Rescind Ordinance that allow VFH's to operate in the City
 - a. This may cut down on the number of students in the Downtown, but it would increase the number of "Renegade" vehicles and students drinking and driving
2. Amend Ordinance that would only allow Vehicle for Hire to start at 10:00 pm, instead of 7:00 pm
3. Amend ordinance to prohibit all alcoholic beverages on the buses and require signage notifying passengers of the prohibition.
4. Set up "check points" for all vehicles (not just VFH) to be pulled over and Officer check for City Licenses, alcohol, etc.
5. Set up "stings" in VFH
6. Issue parking tickets, arrest if needed in the Downtown for VFH not adhering to City Code and/or State Statue
7. In order for the City to get control of the Downtown, VFH owners/drivers must be held accountable for not following the law
8. "Renegade" vehicles must be sanctioned to the fullest extent of the law
 - a. They will always be buses on the streets that are not registered with the City, but enforcement has been an issue
 - b. Police Department should patrol streets in the downtown outside of the "buckle" for these Renegade vehicles. The drivers are told to not go into the Hub areas, so they drop off and pick up on side streets
 - c. Sanction Pizza Owners and Illinois State University (dial a ride-they charge students a fee for a ride to and from the downtown-they are running as an illegal VFH) and their Drivers that are using their delivery cars as "illegal VFH"
9. Per City Ordinance and Intergovernmental Agreement, the City of Bloomington regulates Taxi's and Vehicle for Hires, but the Town of Normal **should** be required by Intergovernmental Agreement to assist the City in enforcing the laws as they pertain to VFH
10. Amend City Ordinance to allow for a Moratorium on VFH

11. Enforce the Auditing of VFH log sheets
12. Increase the amount of the VFH license fees
 - a. Current fees do not take into account staff time, paperwork, etc.
13. Any of these recommendations that are adopted or move forward with, please note that it is standard for the VFH Owners be made aware of at their Quarterly Meetings, prior to the adoption
14. **Assess and recommend VFH fees which are equitable and reflective of City staff time and resources dedicated to enforcement.**

Staff also conducted a small survey to see how other municipalities approach VFH issues:

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Max Number of Vehicles for Hire Registered: The City of Sioux Falls does not regulate the number of vehicles for hire that are licensed to operate within the City.

Method Used to Measure the Number of Vehicles for Hire Needed: N/A.

Designated Pick Up and drop off locations: The City of Sioux Falls does not regulate pick up and drop off locations.

Other Information: The City is currently in the process of updating the ordinance for Vehicles for Hire. The task has been referred to a subcommittee and it will be several months before it is ready to go back before the Council for their approval.

Naples, Florida

Max Number of Vehicles for Hire Registered: The City used to regulate the number of taxicabs and limousines. Years ago, the Council made the decision to deregulate this aspect of vehicles for hire. Today, there are 120 taxi companies that are registered with the City. These companies can have an unlimited number of cabs or as few as one. Regardless of the number of taxis, each company/driver must complete the application process and be approved to operate a vehicle for hire in the city. "Since deregulation, the private market has done a good job of keeping the number of vehicles for hire in check and the city is not seen as manipulating the market."

Method Used to Measure the Number of Vehicles for Hire Needed: Before deregulation, the number of vehicles for hire allowed to operate in Naples was based on the number of residents living in the city.

Designated Pick Up and drop off locations: There is no drop off requirement for taxis and limousines. Some buses are required to drop off in specific areas but this is determined on a case by case basis.

Other Issues Related to Vehicles for Hire: A vehicle for hire board exists if drivers/companies want to appeal a suspension or rejection of license. Since this situation rarely occurs, the City is considering dissolving the board and giving responsibility to review suspensions/rejections to the Code Enforcement Department to reduce the unnecessary meeting time required by the board.

Decatur, Illinois

Max Number of Vehicles for Hire Registered: There is not maximum at this time

Method Used to Measure the Number of Vehicles for Hire Needed: N/A

Iowa City, Iowa

Max Number of Vehicles for Hire Registered: At this point, there is no maximum number of taxicabs allowed to operate. Iowa City has found that the private market regulates the number of cabs in the downtown area. However, several years ago, the City updated the code to require all companies operating taxicabs to have a fleet of at least 4 taxicabs operating year round. This action was taken in response to “fly by night” operators that offered taxi services during football games. Creating a minimum required number of cars successfully ensured that the taxicab companies were professional and following the rate structure and inspection procedures.

Method Used to Measure the Number of Vehicles for Hire Needed: Four was the number agreed upon for the minimum. No formula was used. The council determined that this would be the necessary number to eliminate the problem discussed above.

Designated Pick up and drop off locations: At this point, there are no set pick up and drop off locations. However, the City is currently considering designating certain areas in downtown for taxicab stands where they can line up. For example, beginning at 10:00 PM Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, parking will be strategically removed on specific streets for the cabs to sit and wait. This measure is still under consideration and will likely be taken to council before summer.

Information Technology

Surveillance Cameras

In July of 2008, the Police Department submitted a grant to the State Farm Foundation for a variety of technology-based projects. In October of 2008, the grant was awarded to the Police Department in the amount of \$168,652 with \$81,000 of this amount dedicated to the design, testing and implementation of a downtown corridor wireless public safety camera network. Beta testing of the first two wireless cameras began in September of 2011 with system expansion occurring over the next twelve months with five camera location installations.

The current camera system is used to passively monitor high crime locations, outdoor events, traffic issues and pedestrian public safety in the 300, 400, 500 and 600 blocks of N. Main. The camera system allows the department to; identify, apprehend and prosecute offenders, assist in gathering evidence of crimes, monitor pedestrian and vehicle traffic activity and improve the general environment in the downtown corridor.

The camera system has been very effective in aiding post-incident investigations. Arrests have been made in multiple cases where we lacked eye witness evidence. These cases include; Assaults, Batteries, Robbery, Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol, and Theft. The camera system has also been utilized in the production of evidence in vehicular incidents including Accidents, Hit and Run (fatal and property damage), Vehicle Burglary and Vandalism. The cameras have also proven to be very effective in the identification of subjects involved in street level altercations when video footage is show to the victim(s) and witness(es) in crimes. Overall, the use of the downtown corridor public safety camera system has increased investigation efficiencies by identifying additional suspects and in some instances, detecting crimes that were not previously reported to the department.

Staff's long term goal is to expand public safety camera coverage in the downtown corridor as both infrastructure and funding allow. Over the next two years, permanent camera coverage is planned for an area that extends from the public areas around the U.S. Cellular Coliseum in a path heading East down Front St. to Main, then North from Main to Market. This coverage area will address some of our more critical response areas and intersections. The exact location and order of future camera installations will be contingent on the density of police calls for service around each proposed site. The Police Department is also currently experimenting with the temporary placement of marked wireless public safety cameras that can be deployed quickly and moved from site to site as needed to provide a deterrent effect in crime hotspots. One of these cameras has already been utilized in a temporary fashion downtown with positive results.

As we continue to expand the camera network we need to remain cognizant of the changes to the downtown lighting and the effect they have on camera placement and functionality. Site specific illumination has proved a critical element to the effective use of these cameras.



Appendix

Alcohol Compliance Unit: Summary of Relevant Research

How To Reduce High-Risk College Drinking: Use Proven Strategies, Fill Research Gaps

Comprehensive College-Community Interventions

Comprehensive college-community interventions are multicomponent programs that colleges and communities conduct collaboratively in an effort to reduce high-risk drinking and its consequences. College students are not usually the sole focus of these programs, but components within the program target them specifically. Students also benefit from the broader, community-wide aspects of the program designed to reduce such behaviors as drinking and driving and sales to minors.

Summary of Relevant Research

A number of factors support the development of comprehensive college-community interventions to address college drinking problems. First, this approach reframes the issue as a community problem, not simply a college problem. It brings together the range of players needed to address the problem and sets the stage for cooperative action. Second, such efforts appear to offer a high-yield, low-cost approach for institutions. Some joint activities require few university resources but result in policy and enforcement reforms that alter the drinking environment. Third, such alliances can improve town-gown relationships overall, improving, for example, networking between student affairs offices and local police or other agencies related to student concerns and enhancing opportunities for faculty researchers to conduct needed studies.

Comprehensive community interventions to reduce health problems typically involve several governmental agencies as well as private citizens and organizations. Most use multiple program strategies such as education programs, media advocacy, community organization and mobilization, and environmental policy changes or heightened enforcement of existing policies (Hingson and Howland, 2002).

Although there is no research evidence to support collaborations among colleges and universities and community groups aimed at college drinking (Hingson and Howland, 2002), community coalitions have had positive effects on reducing alcohol problems in the general population. In fact, efforts to date have had the greatest impact on youth, reinforcing the potential of campus-community coalitions to reduce college-age drinking problems. In addition, the National Academy of Sciences has recommended this approach for reducing alcohol-related health problems (IOM, 1989) based on its success in addressing other health issues.

A number of comprehensive community efforts have been designed to reduce alcohol and other substance use among underaged youth, including college students, and adults (Chou et al., 1998; Hingson et al., 1996; Holder, 1997a,b; Holder and Treno, 1997; Pentz et al., 1989; Perry et al., 1996; Saltz and Stangletta, 1997; Wagenaar et al., 2000a,b). These interventions have resulted in reductions in underage alcohol use and alcohol-related problems, including drunk driving and alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities.

Community Trials Program

The Community Trials Program (Grube, 1997; Holder et al., 1997a,b; 2000; Holder and Reynolds, 1997; Holder and Treno, 1997; Reynolds et al., 1997; Saltz and Stangletta, 1997; Treno and Holder, 1997; Voas et al., 1997) was a 5-year initiative designed to reduce alcohol-involved injuries and death in three communities. The theoretical basis of this program was to alter individual behavior by changing the environmental, social, and structural contexts of alcohol use.

Program Components

The Community Trials Program had five mutually reinforcing components:

1. Community mobilization addressed support for public policy interventions by increasing general awareness, knowledge, and concern about alcohol-related trauma. Program initiatives were jointly planned by project organizers and local residents and implemented by the residents.
2. The responsible beverage service (RBS) component sought to reduce sales to intoxicated patrons and increase enforcement of local alcohol laws by working with restaurants, bar and hotel associations, beverage wholesalers, the Alcohol Beverage Control Commission, and local law enforcement.
3. A component to decrease DWI offenses sought to increase the number of DWI arrests by a combination of special officer training, deployment of passive alcohol sensors, and the use of driving under the influence (DUI) checkpoints. News coverage publicized these activities.
4. A component directed toward underage drinking sought to reduce alcohol sales to minors by enforcement of underage sales laws; training of sales clerks, owners, and managers to prevent sales of alcohol to minors; and advocacy to bring media attention to the issue of underage drinking.
5. Local zoning and other municipal powers that determine alcohol outlet density were used to reduce availability of alcohol.

Program Outcomes

This multicomponent approach was tested in a quasi-experimental design in three matched pairs of communities and resulted in a 43 percent decline in alcohol-related assault admissions. Although not all measures indicated effects in the predicted direction, there was strong support for the efficacy of a coordinated, comprehensive community-based intervention to reduce high-risk alcohol consumption and alcohol-related trauma.

Intermediate outcomes also indicated success, including decreases in alcohol outlet sales to underage-appearing pseudopatrons without identification. Local regulations of alcohol outlets and public sites for drinking were changed in all three experimental communities. Changes in the Northern California intervention city were typical. The city council implemented a proposal to eliminate special land use conditions for alcohol outlets, adopted restrictions on the availability of alcohol in city parks, denied a new alcohol license, revoked a retailer's conditional use permit because of liquor sales violations, and instituted a citywide ordinance requiring new owners of off- and onsite alcohol outlets to complete a responsible server course. In addition, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce voted to make its annual festival alcohol free.

The DWI reduction component resulted in an increase in news coverage of DWI, additional police officer enforcement, greater use of Breathalyzer equipment, and increased public perceptions of risk of arrest for DWI. Alcohol-related crash involvement as measured by single vehicle night crashes declined 10 to 11 percent more among program than comparison communities.

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (CMCA) was a 6-year project designed to test creative approaches to reduction of drinking by young people. The project was implemented in seven small to midsized communities in Minnesota and Wisconsin in 1993. Eight additional communities in the region served as a control group. CMCA emphasized environmental factors that affect the supply of alcohol to youth and used a community organization approach to achieve policy changes among local institutions.

Adults and young people in each community identified and promoted a variety of issues designed to change the local environment in ways that made alcohol more difficult to obtain and made underage drinking less acceptable within the local culture (Wagenaar et al., 1999, 2000a,b).

Program Objectives

Specific objectives were to change community policies and procedures to reduce:

- Access to alcohol by underage youth whether through retail sales to youth or purchase/provision by parents, other adults, or older youth;
- Number and proportion of alcohol outlets selling to underage individuals;
- Youth and adult support for or tolerance of underage purchase and consumption of alcohol;
- Prevalence, quantity, and frequency of alcohol consumption among youths 15 to 20 years of age; and
- Incidence of alcohol-related health and social problems among youths 15 to 20 years of age (Wagenaar and Perry, 1995).

Program Outcomes

Retailers in intervention communities increased age-identification checking and reduced sales to minors, especially in on-sale establishments. Young people—ages 18 to 20—reduced their propensity to provide alcohol to other teens and were less likely to try to buy alcohol, drink in a bar, or consume alcohol. However, there were no effects on drinking by high school seniors (Wagenaar et al., 1999, 2000a).

From the perspective of this report, it is encouraging that the intervention had its greatest effects on college-age youth. Additional analyses of arrest and traffic crash data indicated that DUI violations declined in the intervention communities. Again, this effect was most marked for college-age youth and only approached significance for youth ages 15 to 17. There were no differences in arrests for disorderly conduct or traffic crashes for either age group. Collectively, findings from the CMCA project indicate that a community-organization approach to limiting youth access to alcohol can be effective for college-age youth, 18 to 20 years old (Wagenaar et al., 1999, 2000a,b).

Massachusetts Saving Lives Program

The Massachusetts Saving Lives Program (Hingson et al., 1996) also illustrates combinations of approaches that communities have used successfully to combat risky drinking and enhance public safety.

Program Components

To reduce drunk driving and speeding, communities introduced media campaigns, drunk driving checkpoints, business information programs, speeding and drunk driving awareness days, speed watch telephone hotlines, police training, high school peer-led education, Students Against Drunk Driving chapters, college prevention programs, alcohol-free prom nights, beer keg registration, and increased liquor outlet surveillance by police to reduce underage alcohol purchase. To increase pedestrian safety and safety belt use, program communities conducted media campaigns and police checkpoints, posted crosswalk signs warning motorists of fines for failure to yield to pedestrians, added crosswalk guards, and offered preschool education programs and training for hospital and prenatal staff. Coordinators engaged in numerous media advocacy activities designed to help local news outlets move beyond reporting only the specifics of motor vehicle crash injuries and deaths to explaining trends in local traffic safety problems and strategies communities were implementing to reduce traffic injury and death (Hingson et al., 1996).

Program Outcomes

During the 5 years of the program, the proportion of drivers under age 20 who reported driving after drinking in random-digit dial telephone surveys declined from 19 percent during the final year of the program to 9 percent in subsequent years. The proportion of vehicles observed speeding through use of radar from unmarked cars was cut in half, and safety belt use increased from 22 percent to 29 percent of motor vehicle occupants. Differences between intervention and comparison communities were statistically significant. Alcohol-related traffic deaths declined 42 percent more in Saving Lives cities relative to the rest of the State during the 5 years of the program as compared to the previous 5 years. This decline was also seen among 16- to 25-year-olds, many of whom may have been college students (Hingson et al., 1996).

Other Comprehensive Community Interventions

In addition to reducing underage alcohol consumption, drunk driving, and their consequences, comprehensive community interventions have also reduced smoking and risky sexual behaviors among adolescent and college-age populations (CDC, 1999; COMMIT Research Group, 1995; Forster et al., 1998; Kegeles et al., 1998; Vincent, 1987). Research shows that combining environmental and institutional change with health education theory-based programs designed to change behavior and promote community ownership of programs enhances success (Hingson and Howland, 2002). Reviews of comprehensive programs (Wagenaar et al., 1999) have also identified important components of coalition development. They include:

- Assessing community interests,
- Building a core base of support in the community,
- Expanding the base,
- Developing a plan of action,
- Implementing the plan,
- Maintaining the effort and institutionalizing it, and
- Evaluating and disseminating results.

Panel Recommendations: What Colleges and Universities Can Do Now

The Panel recommends that colleges and universities:

- Create and/or participate in joint college-community interventions to reduce student drinking problems. Community coalitions have been effective in addressing alcohol and other health issues, although there has been no research on campus-community activities to reduce high-risk drinking and related problems.
- Create a task force or coalition representing relevant constituencies on campus (including students) and in the community (including local businesses) to develop and monitor college drinking initiatives.
- Plan coalition activities strategically, including setting measurable objectives, establishing target timelines, clearly defining member responsibilities, and collecting and evaluating data on both the process of working together and the results of the interaction.

Panel Recommendations: What Researchers Can Do To Fill Gaps in Knowledge

The Panel recommends that researchers address the following questions to fill key gaps in knowledge:

- Are comprehensive college-community interventions to reduce high-risk college drinking effective? What is the most effective mix of policy and program elements? What are the assets and liabilities for colleges and communities?
- Is it more effective to focus such efforts on drinking practices or on the health and social problems high-risk drinkers cause for themselves and others?
- Where should decision-making responsibility be focused: in city government, the college and university, another group or institution, or a combination of players?
- What are the best strategies for mobilizing and optimizing the effectiveness of campus-community coalitions?
- Do effects of college-focused programs extend to others in the community?
- What is the best way to enforce community alcohol-related ordinances?
- How can the results of alcohol research be effectively disseminated to community audiences such as chiefs of police, parents, and legislators?
- How effective are State-level coalitions that support individual campus-community collaborations?

Infrastructure

Downtown Decorative Light Plan



A Decorate Light Example

As of January 2013, there are 91 existing decorative lights (37 single, 1 two-globe, 5 three-globe, 1 four-globe, and 47 five-globe lights) in the downtown district. The map (on the next page) shows possible future locations for decorative lights. The future for decorative lights in the downtown district includes 331 proposed (185 single-globe, 8-three globe, and 128 five-globe lights).

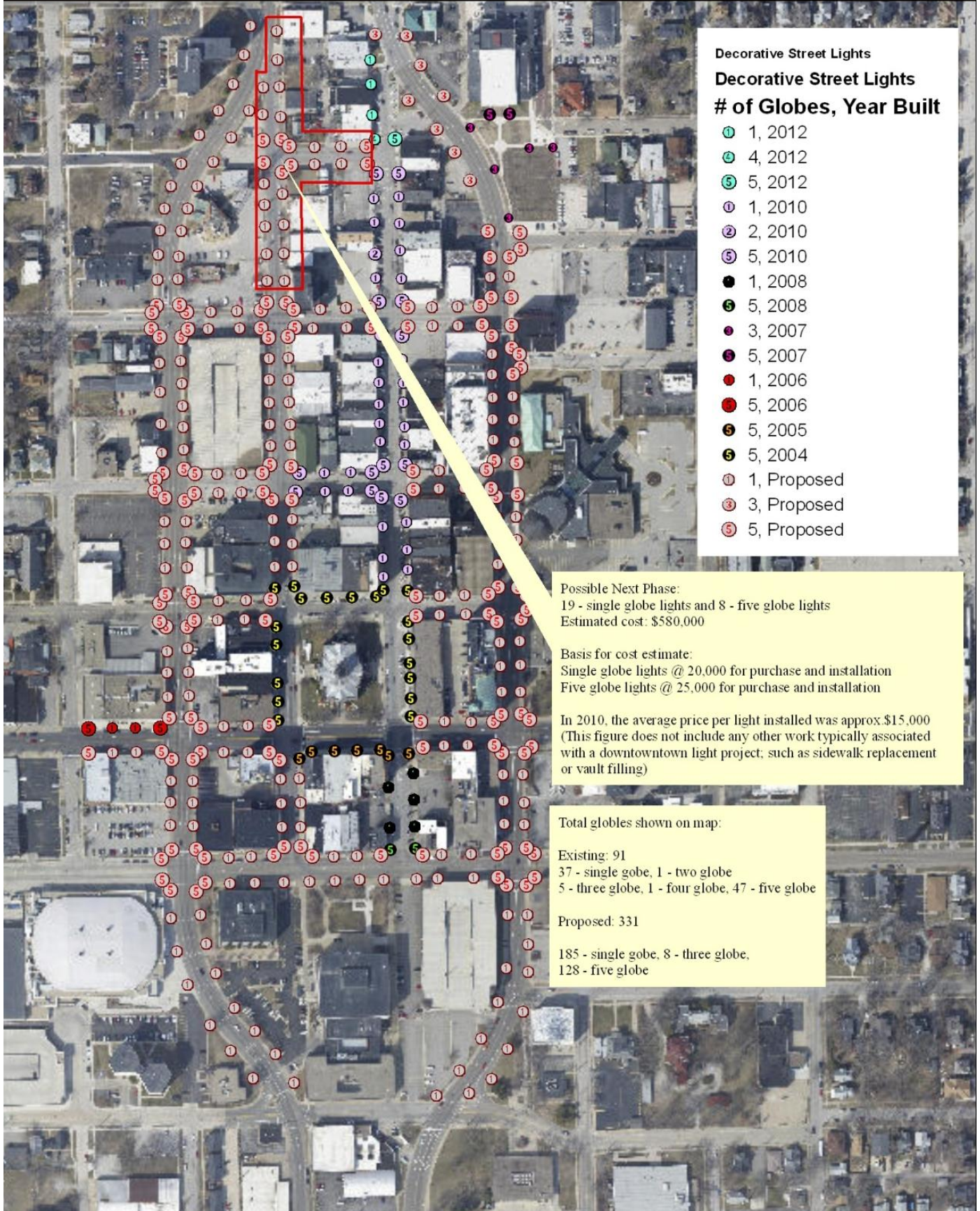
For purchasing and installing the decorative lights, the Public Works Department has estimated it would cost around \$20,000 per single globe light and \$25,000 for a five globe light. Preliminary discussion suggests that a possible next phase for the decorative lights could have an estimated cost of \$580,000. This phase would include 19 single globe lights and 8 five globe lights.

The City Council approved \$75,000 for the design phase of the downtown decorative lighting plan in the current (FY 2014) budget cycle. In addition, \$100,000 has been allocated in each of the next four budget cycles for the construction of downtown streetscape improvements, which includes the purchase and installation of decorative lights.

One of the biggest disadvantages for the installation of decorative lights are the private underground sidewalk vaults because trenching is involved for the foundation of the light poles. Sidewalk vaults are extended basement space that are owned by the property owners, but encroach upon City rights-of-way located under city sidewalks. While private sidewalk vaults are underneath City's sidewalks in the public right-of-way, they are the responsibility of the property owners to maintain because they are part of the owner's property. Currently, the city has incomplete records, which makes it difficult to properly plan for the decorative lights.

Proper planning for installing decorative lights is necessary because they operate off electrical circuits. This requires some questions to be analyzed, such as how many lights can be fed off of one circuit and the best way to construct a lighting plan.

Decorative Light Plan



Decorative Street Lights

Decorative Street Lights

of Globes, Year Built

- ① 1, 2012
- ② 4, 2012
- ③ 5, 2012
- ④ 1, 2010
- ⑤ 2, 2010
- ⑥ 5, 2010
- ⑦ 1, 2008
- ⑧ 5, 2008
- ⑨ 3, 2007
- ⑩ 5, 2007
- ⑪ 1, 2006
- ⑫ 5, 2006
- ⑬ 5, 2005
- ⑭ 5, 2004
- ⑮ 1, Proposed
- ⑯ 3, Proposed
- ⑰ 5, Proposed

Possible Next Phase:
19 - single globe lights and 8 - five globe lights
Estimated cost: \$580,000

Basis for cost estimate:
Single globe lights @ 20,000 for purchase and installation
Five globe lights @ 25,000 for purchase and installation

In 2010, the average price per light installed was approx. \$15,000
(This figure does not include any other work typically associated with a downtown light project, such as sidewalk replacement or vault filling)

Total globes shown on map:

Existing: 91
37 - single globe, 1 - two globe
5 - three globe, 1 - four globe, 47 - five globe

Proposed: 331
185 - single globe, 8 - three globe,
128 - five globe

Downtown Sidewalk Plan

The Public Works Department has identified the condition of the downtown sidewalks. The map (on the next page) outlines the sidewalks that are in need of replacement. In 2012, the Public Works Department estimated that it would cost approximately \$30,000 to replace all the bad sidewalks in the downtown district. While some of the bad sidewalks have already been replaced, the City still has some failing sidewalks in the downtown district. According to the current (FY 2013-14) sidewalk contract, the pricing for sidewalk removal and replacement is \$6.75 per square foot, which is .25 cents higher per square foot than last year's contract.

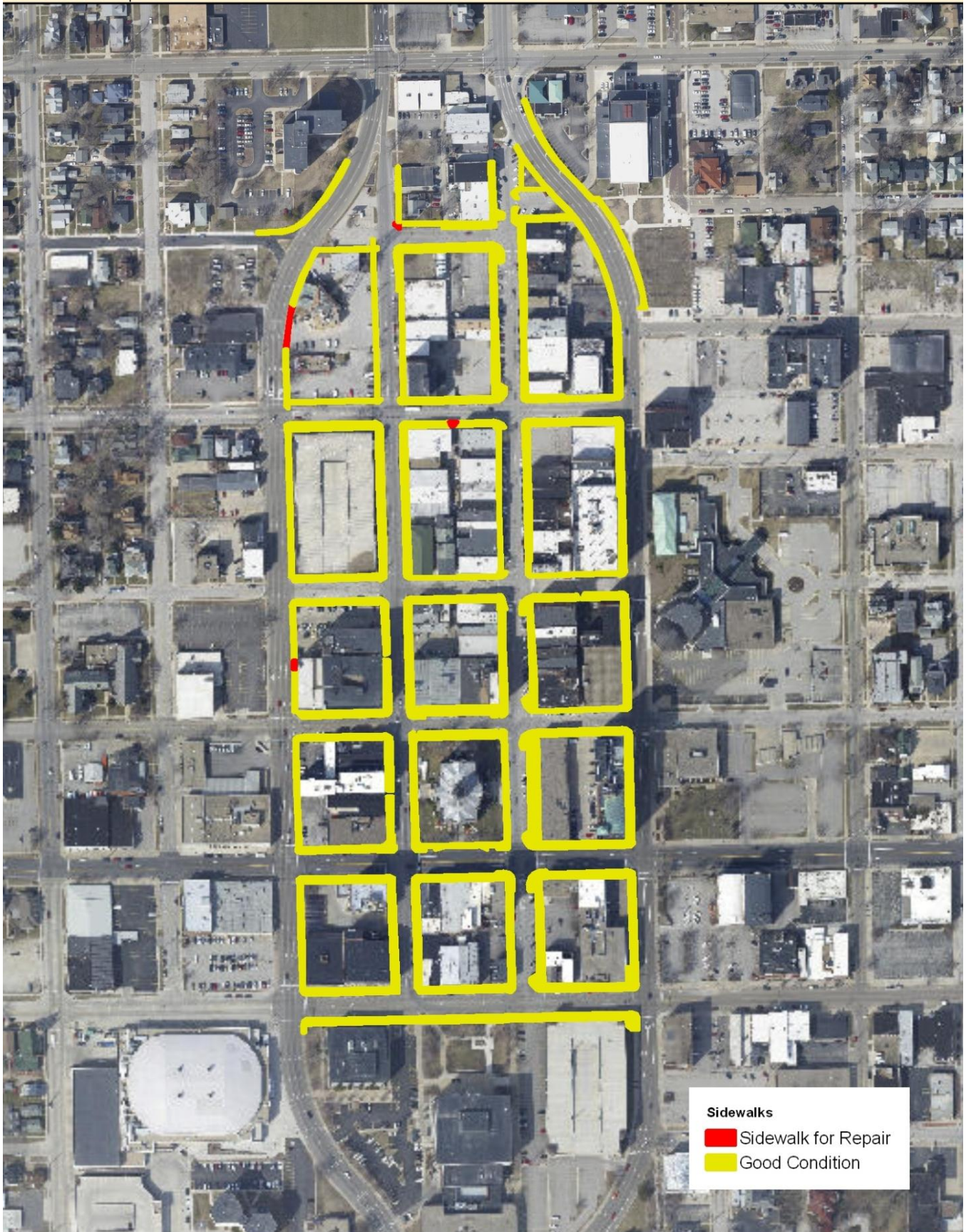
Since the passing of the American with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, the City of Bloomington has been required to follow guidelines when installing sidewalk ramps. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has updated their standards for sidewalk ramps in 2012; therefore, many of the ramps in downtown Bloomington are non-ADA compliant according to the new IDOT standards. The Public Works Department has estimated that it would cost approximately \$1,200 to replace one ramp. The City will replace any sidewalk ramps associated with any resurfacing road project.

The staff believes it would be poor planning to replace any sidewalks without a decorative light plan because installation of lights would require the sidewalks to be torn out and replaced. With incomplete records, the staff feels uncertain of some of the sidewalk vault locations. This uncertainty has made it difficult for good estimates or planning for sidewalk replacement in the downtown area due to unforeseeable costs.

Downtown Sidewalks

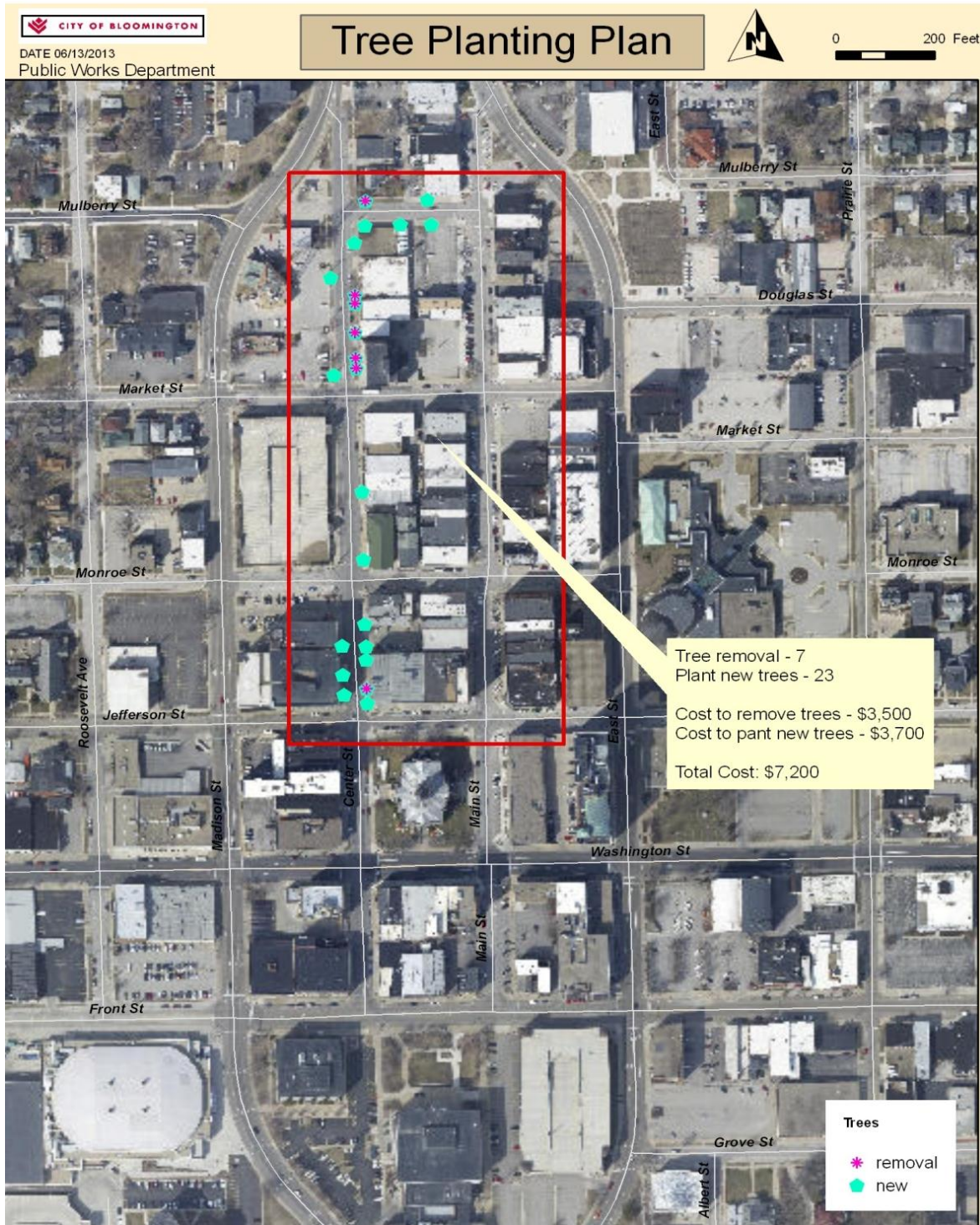


0 100 200 Feet



Downtown Tree Planting

The Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department created a tree planting plan for the downtown area. Below is a map of the current tree planting plan. The overall plan consists of removing 7 trees at \$3,500 and planting 23 new trees at \$3,700. The total cost is approximately \$7,200. The long term maintenance cost for the trees would include watering the tree in the first year of its life span and may require trimming within 5 years resulting in additional manual labor time.



City of Bloomington's Liquor License Classifications

(1) Class "CA" (Clubs - All Types of Alcoholic Liquor) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises of all types of alcoholic liquor for consumption only on the premises of Clubs as the same are herein defined.(Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(2) Class "CB" (Clubs - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises only of beer and wine for consumption only on the premises. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(3) Class "F" primary licenses authorize the activities enumerated in Section 1L(2) through (7) of this Chapter. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(4) "GPA" (Convenience Store - All Types of Alcohol) primary licenses authorize the retail sale of all types of alcoholic liquor only in the original package for consumption off of the premises at retail grocery convenience stores, as those premises are defined in Section 1(g) of this Code, at which motor vehicle fuels are sold. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(5) "GPB" (Convenience Store - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale of beer and wine only in the original package for consumption off of the premises at retail grocery convenience stores, as those premises are defined in Section 1(j) of this Code, at which motor vehicle fuels are sold. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(6) "LA" (Limited - All Types of Alcoholic Liquor) primary licenses authorize the retail sale of all types of alcoholic liquor by civic, charitable, fraternal, educational, patriotic, festival and/or religious organizations on premises in nonresidential locations for a maximum period of sixty (60) days with the following conditions. Only civic, charitable, fraternal, educational, patriotic and/or religious organizations which have been in active and continuous existence for a period of one (1) year prior to the date of making the application or those which are incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois will be eligible to receive an "LA" license. No organization shall be issued more than three (3) LA licenses in any twelve (12) month period. The license shall only apply to catered functions and special events sponsored by the organization. (Ordinance No. 2008-34)

(7) "LB" (Limited - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale of beer and wine of alcoholic liquor by civic, charitable, fraternal, educational, patriotic, festival and/or religious organizations on premises in nonresidential locations for a maximum period of sixty (60) days with the following conditions. Only civic, charitable, fraternal, educational, patriotic and/or religious organizations which have been in active and continuous existence for a period of one (1) year prior to the date of making the application or those which are incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois will be eligible to receive an "LB" license. No organization shall be issued more than three (3) "LB" licenses in any twelve month period. (Ordinance No. 2008-34)

(8) Class "MA" (Motel/Hotel Rooms - All Types) primary licenses authorize the retail sale of alcoholic beverages of all types from locked containers in rented motel and hotel rooms for consumption on the premises. The license holder may provide key(s) to registered guests for the locked container(s) in rooms rented by them provided they are over 21 years of age and no one under that age who is not the spouse or child (natural, adopted or foster) of a registered guest will be staying in the room, during the rental period. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(9) Class "MB" (Motel/Hotel Rooms - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale only of beer and wine from locked containers in rented motel and hotel rooms for consumption on the

premises. The license holder may provide key(s) to registered guests for the locked container(s) in rooms rented by them provided they are over 21 years of age and no one under that age who is not the spouse or child (natural, adopted or foster) of a registered guest will be staying in the room during the rental period. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(10) Class "O" (Outdoor) - authorizes the retail sale of alcoholic liquor by any person holding a Class R license upon a sidewalk designated in a sidewalk cafe permit adjacent to the licensed premises during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 o'clock midnight, Monday through Saturday, and 12:00 noon to 12:00 o'clock midnight on Sunday, provided that a valid sidewalk cafe permit has been issued, pursuant to Article IX of Chapter 38. During the times when alcoholic liquor may be served under the Class O license, the licensee shall: (1) Not allow or permit any customer, employee or other person to remove alcoholic liquor from the area designated in the sidewalk cafe permit or the service premises of the licensee. (2) Not serve, allow or permit any person to be served, be in possession of, or consume alcoholic liquor in the area designated in the sidewalk cafe permit unless that person is utilizing the seating which has been provided in accordance with the site plan approved with the sidewalk cafe permit. (3) Comply with all requirements set forth in Article IX of Chapter 38. (4) Provide table service, which shall include food service, in the sidewalk cafe area during the hours when alcoholic liquor is permitted to be served. The sidewalk cafe area shall be subject to all provisions of this chapter as though the sidewalk cafe area was part of the licensee's service premises during the times permitted by this section for alcoholic liquor sales. Prior to the issuance of a Class O license the licensee shall provide proof of dram shop insurance. The policy shall name the City of Bloomington as an additional insured, and will indemnify and hold it harmless from any action, proceeding or claim of liability asserted against it as a result of the operation of a sidewalk cafe. Failure by the licensee to maintain the insurance required by this section shall result in the revocation of the license. (Ordinance No. 2011-31)

(11) Class "PA" (Package Sales - All Types of Alcoholic Liquor) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises of all types of alcoholic liquor only in original packages for consumption only off of the premises and for consumption of beer and wine on the premises in conjunction with a beer and wine tasting as defined in Section 1. (Ordinance No. 2006-89)

(12) Class "PB" (Package Sales - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises only of beer and wine in the original packages for consumption only off of the premises and for consumption on the premises in conjunction with a beer and wine tasting as defined in Section 1. (Ordinance No. 2006-89)

(13) Class "RA" (Restaurant - All Types of Alcoholic Liquor) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises of all types of alcoholic liquor for consumption only on the premises. "RA" licenses shall be issued and renewed only if the Liquor Control Commissioner believes the licensee will have and maintain gross sales on the premises of all types of alcoholic liquor in an amount less than the gross sales of all types of tangible items, excluding services and rentals. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(14) Class "RB" (Restaurant - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises only of beer and wine for consumption only on the premises. "RB" licenses shall be issued and renewed only if the Liquor Commissioner believes that the licensee will have and maintained sales on the premises of beer and wine in an amount less than the gross sales of all types of tangible items, excluding services and rentals. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(15) Class "S" (Sunday) secondary licenses issued to the holder of any primary license described herein (except Class "W" which is valid on Sunday) extend the authority of primary licenses to Sunday hours as specified in Section 20 of this Chapter. (Ordinance No. 1992-102)

(16) "SA" (Secondary Premises - All Types of Alcohol) authorizes the retail sale of all types of alcoholic liquor by the current holder of a TA, TB, RA, RB, PA or PB license at nonresidential public premises other than the premises covered by the existing license at locations and on days approved by the Liquor Commissioner. All of the terms and conditions of the license holder's primary license shall extend to and apply to the license issued. The license holder must submit proof of adequate Dram Shop Insurance covering the premises licensed under the "SA" license prior to being issued such license. Any violation of the terms of the "SA" license shall be considered a violation of the license holder's primary license and shall subject the license holder to penalties and/or sanctions directed at the primary license. (Ordinance No. 2007-19)

(17) "SB" (Secondary Premises - Beer and Wine Only) authorizes the retail sale of beer and wine by the current holder of a TA, TB, RA, RB, PA or PB license at nonresidential public premises other than the premises covered by the existing license at locations and days approved by the Liquor Commissioner. All of the terms and conditions of the license holder's primary license shall extend to and apply to the license issued. The license holder must submit proof of adequate Dram Shop Insurance covering the premises licensed under the "SB" license prior to being issued such license. Any violation of the terms of the "SB" license shall be considered a violation of the license holder's primary license and shall subject the license holder to penalties and/or sanctions directed at the primary license. (Ordinance No. 2007-19)

(18) Class "SPA" (Seasonal Performance – All Types of Alcohol)

(a) Authorizes by secondary license the retail sale of all types of alcoholic liquor at a performance venue designated by the Liquor Commissioner for a specified season by the holder of a current TA, TB, RA, RB, PA or PB license. This license may be issued at the discretion of the Liquor Commissioner. All of the terms and conditions of the license holder's primary license shall extend to the issued seasonal performance license. The license holder must submit proof of adequate Dram Shop insurance covering the premises licensed under the SPA license prior to being issued such license. Any violation of the terms of the SPA license shall be considered a violation of the license holder's primary license and shall subject the license holder to penalties and/or sanctions directed at the primary license.

(b) As used in this and in the succeeding subsection, the term "season" shall mean a defined span of time, not less than 30 days and no more than 1 year, during which a given venue hosts 4 or more performances per month. The length of the performance season for a given venue shall be as defined herein, or as otherwise designated by the Liquor Commissioner.

(c) The term "season" as applied to the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts shall mean the period of time from August 1 through May 31 of the succeeding year.

(d) The term "season" as applied to the Illinois Shakespeare Festival performed at Ewing Manor shall be the period from June 1 through August 31. (Ordinance No. 2009-71)

(19) Class "SPB" (Seasonal Performance – Beer and Wine Only) authorizes by secondary license the retail sale of beer and wine at a performance venue designated by the Liquor Commissioner for a specified season by the holder of a current TA, TB, RA, RB, PA or PB license. This license may be issued at the discretion of the Liquor Commissioner. All of the terms and conditions of the license

holder's primary license shall extend to the issued seasonal performance license. The license holder must submit proof of adequate Dram Shop insurance covering the premises licensed under the SPB license prior to being issued such license. Any violation of the terms of the SPB license shall be considered a violation of the license holder's primary license and shall subject the license holder to penalties and/or sanctions directed at the primary license. (Ordinance No. 2009-71)

(20) Class "TA" (Tavern - All Types of Alcoholic Liquor) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises of all types of alcoholic liquor for consumption only on the premises. (Ordinance No. 2009-71)

(21) Class "TB" (Tavern - Beer and Wine Only) primary licenses authorize the retail sale on the specified premises only of beer and wine for consumption only on the premises. (Ordinance No. 2009-71)

(22) Class "W" (Catering) primary licenses authorize the holder thereof to provide catering services to private parties pursuant to Section 8 of this Chapter provided, however, that a Class "W" license does not authorize the sale of alcoholic beverages. An additional Sunday license shall not be required. (Ordinance No. 2009-71)

Memorandum

To: Alex McElroy, Asst. to the City Manager
From: Tracey Covert, City Clerk
Date: 7/30/2013
Re: Town of Normal – Liquor License Classifications

The following is a listing of the Town of Normal's Classifications & Fees:

Class A – Off premise consumption: 1,000 sq. ft. interior space; Annual fee - \$3,000; Sale hours: Sunday – Thursday 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., Friday – Saturday 7:00 a.m. until 1:45 a.m.

Class B – On premise consumption, beer only: Restaurants (R) and Clubs (C); Annual fee – R with occupancy 100 or less \$750; R with occupancy over 100 \$1,000 and C \$500; Sale hours: Sunday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., Friday – Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Class C – On premise, beer & wine only: R, C and golf courses; Annual fee – R with occupancy 100 or less \$1,500, R with occupancy over 100 \$2,000, C \$500 and golf courses \$100; Sale hours: R & C Sunday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.; and golf courses Sunday – Thursday 7:00 a.m. until 1:00, Friday and Saturday 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Class D – On Premise, all types of alcohol: R & C; Annual fee – R with occupancy 100 or less \$2,500; R with occupancy over 100 \$3,000 and C \$600; Sale hours: Sunday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. until 1:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Class E - Hotels: includes in room mini bars, catering on premise, cash bars – private rentals, room service, restaurants; Annual fee \$3,000; Sale hours: Sunday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Class F – Catering: Annual fee \$100, if holds another class liquor license \$25, Permit required for each catered event – fee \$10; Sale hours: Sunday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Class G – Secondary must hold Class A, B, C, D, E or M; three days or less, nonresidential area, cash bar; Fees \$100 for the first day and \$50 for each additional day.

Class H – Outdoor gardens/sidewalk café must hold Class B, C, D, E or M, property must be immediately adjacent; Annual fee \$250.

Class I – Wine tasting must hold Class A, B, C, D, E or M; Annual fee \$50; tasting held off premise fee \$50 per day; Sale hours: 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m.

Class J – One day extend premise must hold Class B, C, D, E or M; Fee \$25 per day.

Class K – One day license for charitable, civic, benevolent or humane purposes; Fee \$100; Sale hours 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m.

In reviewing Normal's liquor code, there was no class M.

Please note that the Normal liquor code does not contain the word tavern. Normal's liquor code defines Restaurant as "Any public place which is kept, used, maintained, advertised, and held out to the public as a place where meals are sold and served, and where meals are actually and regularly served to the public. The sale of liquor at a restaurant shall be considered incidental to the principal purpose of the sale of food. A restaurant shall have seating available for patrons as well as adequate and sanitary kitchen and dining room equipment. A restaurant must have employed therein a sufficient number and kinds of employees to prepare, cook, and serve full meals for its guests. A restaurant must keep its kitchen open and be serving meals from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on any day the restaurant is open for business and at all time between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. when alcohol is served. Restaurants must keep a record of all food items sold such that a determination that the restaurant is serving meals regularly can be made."

Chapter 6 Section 29 Text Amendment: Alcohol Education Training Requirements

ORDINANCE NO. 2013 - 22

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING BLOOMINGTON CITY CODE CHAPTER 6

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Bloomington, Illinois:

SECTION 1. That Bloomington City Code Chapter 6 is hereby amended by adding Section 29 to read as follows:

SEC. 29 ALCOHOL EDUCATION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) It shall be unlawful to sell, offer for sale or serve alcoholic liquor unless a minimum of 1 person employed by the licensee is present on the premises who has successfully completed a Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education Training (BASSET) course approved by the State of Illinois or another alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission. Copies of certificates showing successful completion of said training shall be kept on the premises at all times and shall be made immediately available upon request to any law enforcement officer or Liquor Commissioner. For secondary and catering licenses, the premises shall be construed as the area where alcohol is being sold, poured or served.

(b) All holders of any class of liquor license within the City of Bloomington shall require the general manager of the business to successfully complete a BASSET or other alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission. A copy of the certificate showing successful completion of said course shall be filed with the City Clerk's office and another copy shall be kept on the licensed premises at all times and made immediately available upon request to any law enforcement officer or Liquor Commissioner. All new general managers shall be allowed 60 days from the first date of commencement of work performed, or such other time as set by the Liquor Commission, to complete the required alcohol education and training course.

(c) Any class T license holder having an establishment with a fire occupancy load of over 100 persons shall be subject to the following requirements:

- (1) At times when 8 or fewer employees are working at the establishment, there shall be a minimum of 1 employee on the premises who has completed BASSET or another alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission;
- (2) At times when more than 8 but fewer than 16 employees are working at the establishment, there shall be a minimum of 2 employees on the premises who have completed BASSET or another alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission.

- (3) At times when more than 16 but fewer than 24 employees are working at the establishment, there shall be a minimum of 3 employees on the premises who have completed BASSET or another alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission.
- 4) At times when 24 or more employees are working at the establishment, there shall be a minimum of 4 employees on the premises who have completed a BASSET or another alcohol education and training course approved by the Bloomington Liquor Commission.

(d) Failure to comply with the requirements of this Section shall subject the licensee to fines, suspension or revocation of license as provided in Section 37 of this Chapter.

(e) The provisions of this Section shall become effective July 1, 2013.

SECTION 2. Except as provided herein, the Bloomington City Code, as amended, shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3. The City Clerk shall be, and she is hereby directed and authorized to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form as provided by law.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance is enacted pursuant to the authority granted to the City as a home rule unit by Article VII, Section 6 of the 1970 Illinois Constitution.

SECTION 5. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon passage and approval.

PASSED this 22nd day of April, 2013.

APPROVED this 23rd day of April, 2013.

APPROVED:

Stephen F. Stockton
Mayor

ATTEST:

Tracey Covert
City Clerk

Mayor Stockton introduced this item. This text amendment addressed BASSET training. The Commission considered this item for some time. The Town of Normal considered a BASSET training ordinance and voted it down. It would have required BASSET training for all employees. He did not believe that this approach was practical.

A Public Hearing was held on the proposed ordinance on March 26, 2013. Attendance at same was limited. The biggest concern addressed a time line for completing the training. The City would begin with the establishments' managers. One (1) person, who had completed BASSET training, must be present in the establishment during business hours. The City had the ability to expand its requirement in the future if needed. It had been stated that BASSET certified staff can have a positive impact upon an establishment's insurance rates. He believed that this approach was reasonable. The largest establishments, which generally were taverns, would be required to have a number of employees present who were BASSET certified. He added that the Council, the Downtown Entertainment Task Force, (DETF), and the BNCCC, (Bloomington Normal Community Campus Committee), had all requested a requirement for BASSET training.

Alderman Fazzini cited a letter from Thornton's. This business held a packaged liquor license. The letter claimed that their company's training program was more stringent than BASSET training. He noted that City staff had responded to this letter. He questioned a liquor license holder's ability to avoid BASSET training.

Mayor Stockton read from the draft ordinance. The Liquor Commission had the authority to approve training other than BASSET. At this time, he questioned the Commission's ability to evaluate other training programs. This issue was raised by the DETF. The Commission generalized the text amendment and applied it city wide. He noted the recent Public Hearing and Commission meeting. Smaller establishments faced challenges such as staffing and limited hours. The draft ordinance provided sixty (60) days to complete the training.

Alderman Fazzini appreciated the difficulty. He readdressed Thornton's letter and a packaged liquor license holder. It appeared that exceptions would be minimal.

Mayor Stockton noted that the draft ordinance did not contain any language which addressed internal training programs. He added that there had been a number of violations at packaged establishments during police audits. He restated that the ordinance was amendable.

Motion by Alderman Schmidt, seconded by Alderman Fazzini that the Ordinance be passed.

The Mayor directed the clerk to call the roll which resulted in the following:

Ayes: Aldermen Stearns, Mwilambwe, Schmidt, McDade, Mathy, Fazzini, Sage, Fruin and Purcell.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

Restaurant Classification – Tangible Goods

The following was presented:

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Manager, Liquor Commission, and City Council

FROM: George Boyle, Assistant Corporation Counsel

RE: Restaurant Class Licenses/Tangible Items

Date: December 11, 2012

Issue: Whether tickets to sports and entertainment events are counted as “tangible items” within the meaning of the Restaurant License classifications in the Bloomington Liquor Code.

Background: Chapter 6, Section 7A of the Bloomington City Code provides that restaurant licenses “shall be issued and renewed only if the Liquor Control Commissioner believes the licensee will have and maintain gross sales on the premises of all types of alcoholic liquor in an amount less than the gross sales of all types of tangible items, excluding services and rentals.” In recent meetings of the Liquor Commission, the issue has arisen as to whether tickets to sports and other entertainment events are “tangible items” as that phrase is used pertaining to Restaurant Class liquor licenses. This memo considers the meaning of the word “tangible” and past practice in the City of Bloomington and determines that they are.

Analysis: The context of the word “tangible” as it appears in Section 7A of the Bloomington Liquor Code requires that the legal meaning of the term be applied in construing the ordinance. In the legal sense, “tangible” means “that (which) can be valued monetarily; tangible property.” American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition, Copyright 2000.

Tickets to sports and entertainment events are tangible property within the meaning of the ordinance not merely because they can be touched, but because they can be monetarily valued.

Examination of past practice in Bloomington shows that tickets to sports and entertainment events have been treated as tangible items for valuing gross sales. Restaurant licenses have been created for such venues as the U.S. Cellular Coliseum, Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts and Castle Theater. Each of these venues focuses primarily on providing entertainment rather than food and alcohol. Each venue’s ticket sales are the primary source of its gross sales. In each venue, alcohol sales are ancillary to the venue’s primary focus on entertainment.

Although tickets to sports and entertainment events may be counted as gross sales for purposes of establishing the proportion of sales needed for the creation or maintenance of a Restaurant Class license, it does not necessarily follow that every applicant for a liquor license who claims that their business will sell tickets to sports and entertainment events in an amount greater than its gross sales of alcohol is entitled to such a license. As stated above, Section 7A provides that restaurant licenses will be issued and renewed “only if the Liquor Control Commissioner

believes the licensee will have and maintain” gross sales of alcohol in an amount less than the gross sales of tangible items. This requires that a restaurant license applicant or holder may be required to provide enough evidence to the Liquor Commissioner to indicate that their required proportion of revenues necessary for a restaurant license will be met. Moreover, Chapter 6 of the Bloomington City Code (hereinafter, “the Code”) provides standards for creation, factual criteria and the ability to place conditions on liquor licenses that allow the Commission and, ultimately, the City Council, to decide not only whether a license is created, but also the kind of license created and the manner under which it will operate.

Section 4B(a) of the code provides that the City Council shall not create a new license unless it finds that “creation of such license is necessary for the public convenience of residents of Bloomington and is in the best interest of the City of Bloomington.” Section 4B(b) of the code lists factual criteria that the City Council shall consider in making its determination. (A copy of Section 4B is attached hereto in its entirety.) The 23 factors listed generally require an examination of the nature of the business, its location, potential effect on the neighborhood, compliance with applicable law and the recommendation of the Liquor Commission. Some of the factors specifically pertinent to an analysis of entertainment-related licenses are the following:

- (2) Whether most of the establishment’s anticipated gross revenue will be from sale of alcohol or other resources;
- (3) The character and nature of the proposed establishment;
- (4) The general design, layout and contents of the proposed establishment;
- (5) The location of the proposed establishment and the probable impact of a liquor establishment at that location upon the surrounding neighborhood or the City as a whole giving particular consideration to:
 - (a) the type of license(s) requested in the application;
 - (b) the nature of the proposed establishment;
 - (c) the location of the building of the proposed establishment in relation to any dwelling, church, school, hospital, home for the aged, indigent or veteran’s and their wives, or any military or naval station with particular emphasis on its entrances/exits, windows and parking facilities;
 - (d) the hours of operation of the proposed establishment;
 - (e) the effect of live entertainment and/or amplified music in the proposed establishment upon persons in the surrounding area, particularly with respect to any dwelling, church, school, hospital, home for the aged, indigent or veteran’s and their wives, or any military or naval station;

(9) Whether the applicant intends to furnish live entertainment in the establishment, and if so, the nature of such entertainment;

(11) Whether the proposed establishment poses any problem to the Bloomington Police Department or Liquor Commissioner in the enforcement of City Ordinance or State and Federal Law;

(12) Whether a current City of Bloomington liquor license has been issued for the premises sought to be licensed in the application;

(13) Whether the premises complies with all pertinent health and safety codes applicable within the City of Bloomington;

Factors such as those enumerated above give the Commission and Council the authority to consider such things as whether the venue focuses primarily on providing entertainment rather than food and alcohol (Factors 2, 3, 4, and 9), whether the business's ticket sales are the primary source of its gross sales and whether the sale of alcohol is ancillary to the venue's focus on entertainment (Factors 2, 3, and 4), as well as the effect having entertainment at the venue will have on the surrounding neighborhood (Factor 5).

Similarly, Section 4C provides that, upon the creation of a license, the Council may impose conditions on how a license is operated involving such things as restricting the hours of sale, requiring sound barriers and the hours entertainment is offered.

In the future, it may be beneficial to revise and clarify liquor license classifications. However, at present, the statutory scheme is in place to provide for control of the creation, maintenance and renewal of restaurant licenses, whether the sales from said licensees are based primarily on sales of food, tickets to entertainment events or other tangible items.

PRESS RELEASE

Contacts: David A. Hales, City Manager
City of Bloomington
dhales@cityblm.org
(309) 434-2210

November 9, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bloomington City Council Strategic Planning Session, Downtown Nightlife

The Bloomington City Council has identified as a high priority the immediate need for actions to set a new tone for the late night environment in downtown. In its work session today, the Council directed City Manager David Hales to lead coordinated efforts to enhance the health and safety of our downtown environment. This action reflects the input and direction from multiple stakeholders regarding needed changes in the downtown.

The Council expects shared responsibility and collaboration among public and private stakeholders. To this end, the Council will direct policy and provide coordination among the Council, the Liquor Commission and City staff.

The City Manager will engage downtown stakeholders as he takes the actions necessary to insure a vibrant downtown. In the coming weeks, Council will consider an ordinance that caps liquor licenses in downtown for a period of six months.

####

Downtown Bloomington Association: Downtown Bloomington Strategy

City of Bloomington, Illinois

Prepared for:

Downtown Bloomington Association

Draft February 24, 2010



Coordinating Organization:

Downtown Bloomington Association

Sponsoring Organizations:

Downtown Bloomington Association
City of Bloomington

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Market Analysis & Implementation

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Clark-Dietz Engineers
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Parking Framework

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Technical Advisory Committee

Doug Grovesteen, Director of Engineering, City of Bloomington
David Hales, City Manager, City of Bloomington
Mark Huber, Director of Planning and Code Enforcement, City of Bloomington
Greg Koos, McLean County Museum of History
Chuck Stuckey, Bloomington Planning Commission
Bill Wasson, Director of Parks and Recreation, McLean County

Steering Committee

Josh Mast, State Farm Insurance (chair)
John Dirks, District 87 School Board
Russel Francois, Francois Associates
Cheryl Gaines, Town of Normal Councilmember
John Hanson, City of Bloomington Alderman
Ben Hart, Heritage Enterprises
Dennis Mohrman, YMCA
Karen Schmidt, City of Bloomington Alderman
Stephen Snyder, Prudential Real Estate
Carl Teichman, Illinois Wesleyan University
Vicki Tilton, Fox & Hounds Salon & Day Spa
Fred Wollrab, Downtown property owner & developer

This report should be reevaluated and revised after 5 years as implementation progresses.

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I. Project Overview

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Goals and Objectives

Tour of Downtown

Historic Amenities

I. Project Overview

Executive Summary

This report concludes that Downtown Bloomington, McLean County's greatest asset, is threatened by a failure of consensus on how to maintain, regulate, redevelop and generally manage this valuable and unique community asset. The work of this study builds on core insights and wisdom gained from Bloomington leaders, business folks, and residents, and also draws from successful communities and best practices nationally to propose a comprehensive approach to address these concerns.

Many recommendations made in this plan, such as those regarding streetscape improvements and parking management, can be undertaken immediately or in the short-term future, providing early benefits to Downtown merchants and residents. Other recommendations, such as zoning revisions, will set the stage for future development when the real estate market regains strength. Significantly, the recommended remedies of the most chronic concerns, principally the high speed streets that isolate Downtown from the surrounding neighborhoods, its natural market for goods and services, are estimated to take as long as 15 years and require changes (or at least exceptions) to Illinois, and potentially national, policies and practices on street design.

No plan is without critics, but one does not have to agree with everything in this report to recognize its core strategies and insights. We believe that this plan has achieved a critical mass binding leadership to a specific and thoughtful plan for ongoing Downtown maintenance, improvement, and investment. Sustained leadership and guidance, over a long period of time, is required to implement the goals of this plan; however, in taking these necessary steps to improve Downtown, Bloomington will gain incredible social, economic, and aesthetic benefits.

Community Vision

Downtown Bloomington is one of the greatest assets in the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area and has the potential to enhance its regional draw. Its abundant historic features and character, location on Illinois Route 51, a major commercial thoroughfare, and centralized position within the community give Downtown an advantage over other regional centers (see Figure I-1). However, in order to capitalize on this advantage, the City of Bloomington and its residents must recognize the importance of Downtown as a critical asset as well as the fundamental shift taking place across the country, particularly among young adults and the elderly, towards living in more urban settings. This shift will increase the demand for the lifestyle provided by Downtown Bloomington, and the benefits of this demand can be captured most effectively through implementing the policies contained in this document.

While conditions within Downtown are stable, the area is not reaching its potential due to several errant planning issues. To originally identify these issues, at the outset of this planning process, participants at a community meeting were asked to describe their hope and vision for Downtown in one word. Typical responses included that residents envisioned Downtown as sustainable, walkable, cultural, energetic, accessible, and clean (see Section II: Downtown Vision for more information).

Participants were also asked what they felt the greatest threats and weaknesses were for Downtown. One of the greatest threats voiced was the infringement of Veteran's Parkway and other suburban sprawl into the retail market that could be locating within Downtown. The auto-oriented style of retail development prevalent along Veteran's Parkway is not conducive to a Downtown setting, particularly Downtown Bloomington, which has such an intact historic retail core. It was decided through the public process and market study that Downtown should seek to emphasize its urban character to provide a different experience to visitors than that offered by typical suburban commercial development.

These responses from the community indicate that Downtown can use improvement in several key realms, such as urban design, parking, transportation, and overall place making, that it was the goal of this plan to remedy. To do so, this master plan assesses and makes recommendations on key areas that will greatly influence the future of Downtown. In order for

Downtown to fulfill the community's vision for an energetic, vibrant destination that is regionally competitive in the long term, certain steps, outlined in this plan at length, must be taken to improve these areas of concern. The following provides a brief overview of the different components of the report and their major findings.

Master Plan Components – Built Environment

Market Assessment

The market assessment section of this report was undertaken to ground the master plan in economic realities. Demand for housing, retail, office, and hotel space must be known to produce a master plan that has reasonable parameters and expectations and, in addition, this information will greatly aid developers who are looking to invest within Downtown.

Many critical findings came out of the market assessment. For example, the market study found that Downtown has current unmet demand for 38,000 square feet of retail, with another 36,000 square feet of demand possible by 2030. The Downtown market was also found to have current unmet demand for 500 housing units, with the potential to add 500 to 600 more units by 2030, if Downtown continues to grow and evolve. The retail and housing markets appear promising, but are dependent upon the improvements and recommendations outlined within the master plan. The market study's findings served to inform the majority of other recommendations in the plan, including the retail plan.

Retail Plan

The retail plan seeks to embody the findings of the market study. The market study found that up to 74,000 square feet of retail by 2030, which is an encouraging number; however, it also indicates that the market for retail in Downtown is limited. Currently, almost the entire study area is zoned for commercial development, which enables retail to occur anywhere. In order to fill in empty storefronts and vacant parcels in key retail nodes within Downtown, consolidation of retail is required. The retail plan created in this master plan identifies three major retail nodes within which to focus retail: Main Street between Jefferson and Locust; the parcels around the McLean County Museum of History; and the small cluster of mixed-use buildings on east Front Street. Focusing retail in these specific areas will help to fill in vacant parcels and create vibrant Downtown shopping districts.

Land Use & Zoning Recommendations

Based upon the findings of the market study and exemplary urban design principles, land use and zoning recommendations were made for the Downtown study area. These recommendations should guide the future of development for the next several years and will result in an appropriate mixture of uses and development styles. In general, most residential, office, service, civic, and industrial uses were kept in place as they exist currently. One major change is that, as discussed above, retail is shown as being consolidated into three main nodes. Another recommendation is to provide flexibility in the uses of certain areas on the east side of Downtown, where the market may need a chance to mature to determine what type of development is most appropriate. These areas are adjacent to residential neighborhoods to the east of Downtown, and should step down in intensity from the core of Downtown in order to provide a transitional area.

Lastly, the zoning recommendations section's major recommendation is the creation of a zoning overlay for the Downtown study area. Such an overlay is necessary to implement the recommendations of this report, as well as to protect the historic buildings within Downtown. A proposed zoning overlay framework map is provided as a guide to developing the zoning overlay.

Site Plan

The overall site plan for Downtown gives one depiction of how the recommendations of the other built environment sections of the report could play out in a physical sense. Redevelopment scenarios are given for each opportunity site identified in order to provide a starting point for developers, City officials, and stakeholders in pursuing development. These scenarios are meant to illustrate one potential option for a site, not necessarily what must occur.

Parking Policy Framework

One of the most common complaints during the public involvement process at the outset of this project was that parking was a major problem for Downtown. It is critical to resolve this issue in order to encourage visitors to Downtown and improve quality of life for those living and working there. Luckily, the initial parking analysis found promising news – that there is an adequate supply of parking, but the way it is being managed is the issue. This is an easier problem to fix than having to increase parking supplies.

Several recommendations for managing both public and private parking are outlined in the Parking Policy Framework section. One of the key recommendations includes the installation of parking meters in specified locations Downtown. Currently on-street parking is free in all of Downtown, leading to congestion in several areas. Pricing on-street parking according to the demand will help greatly in managing those spaces and also provide a revenue source. Also, currently several surface parking lots exist within Downtown, including some within the prime area between the Madison-East couplet. It is recommended that those lots in the core of Downtown redevelop with context-sensitive mixed-use buildings, and the parking housed on those lots be transferred as needed to public parking decks. This will improve the built environment and provide more visual interest in the heart of Downtown without sacrificing parking needs.

Connectedness and Mobility

Bloomington developed as a traditional American downtown with a grid system of streets. This pattern is very functional, providing a high level of pedestrian and vehicular access into and out of the downtown. This traditional pattern was altered by IDOT in the 1970's with the introduction of high volume, high-speed one-way pairs on Madison and East. This has been a chronic problem, as it was previously recommended in the 1998 Downtown Bloomington Vision and Strategic Plan that Main and Center Streets be returned to two-way traffic to encourage traffic to flow into Downtown and increase access. That plan reported that Madison and East Streets are a “no man's land” which create an uninviting entrance to Downtown, discouraging passers-by to stop and spend time in the Downtown. The current design of Madison and East remains the single greatest physical barrier to a long-term resurgence of Downtown Bloomington.

While these streets have been identified as a major Downtown concern for years, any effort to undo the high-speed one-way arterials up to this point would have failed. For more than a generation, traffic engineers at IDOT (and around the country) have rigidly adhered to what is called the “functional classification system” that all but requires DOT to build only pedestrian-hostile streets. For the first time ever, the traffic engineering profession is showing signs of reform that now make this problem viable to take on. With full awareness of the effort required to reverse ingrained approaches and policies, this report recommends that Bloomington begin the sustained multiyear campaign to reclaim Madison and East for pedestrians by repositioning them as part of a grid of two-way streets. With quick action it may be possible to designate this DOT project as a qualified project under the soon-to-be-passed Livable Communities Act.

Conclusion

The ideas and recommendations expressed in this master plan are substantial tasks that will take a great deal of time, money and fund-raising, political will, and commitment to realize. The Implementation Matrix contained with this report identifies the parties responsible for each major recommendation made in the plan and also lists potential funding sources for these tasks. However, the goals of this plan will not come to life without the perseverance and work of those dedicated to improving Downtown, which will be an enormous asset if managed properly.

Study Area

The Downtown Bloomington Master Plan study area includes the area locally referred to as Downtown Bloomington (see Figure I-2), which is roughly bounded by Locust Street to the north, Prairie Street to the east down to Douglas Street, Gridley Street to the east from Douglas to Jackson Street, Jackson and Water Streets to the south, and Lee Street to the west. Section III, Warehouse District, focuses on the area depicted in orange in Figure I-2; this section of the report is the only section where the warehouse district to the south of Downtown is included.

Community Involvement

The community input phase of this master plan project included several components. At the outset of the project, a public kick-off meeting was held to gather information from the community on what type of development they felt was most appropriate and needed in the Downtown. Next, a two-day charrette was held to create redevelopment scenarios for specific sites within the Downtown. At the end of the charrette, a public meeting was held to present drafts of the different scenarios. Near the end of the planning process, a public open house was held to present the master plan draft. The following describes the community input process in greater detail.

Kick-Off Meeting

The public kick-off meeting for the project was held on November 6, 2008 at the State Farm Insurance building in Downtown Bloomington. Roughly two hundred people attended the meeting, which consisted of a brief presentation covering an overview of the project and past planning initiatives, as well as an in-depth brainstorming session to gain feedback from the public on the existing conditions and potential future direction of Downtown. The following subsections describe the discussion at the kick-off meeting. There were several general themes and concerns for Downtown, including:

Great desire for a vibrant, welcoming, beautiful, safe, clean, and fun Downtown

Vision of Downtown as a tourist destination; Emphasis on preserving and enhancing the historic assets of Downtown

Concern over economic competition with auto-oriented commercial areas in the region and need for economic development and improved assistance for small or start-up businesses

Concerns with safety, vagrancy, and cleanliness

Demand for Downtown to embrace pedestrian-orientation and alternative modes of transportation, especially cycling, and an overall aspiration for sustainability

Frustration with parking availability

Recognition of the issues associated with the Madison-East couplet, which acts as a physical barrier isolating Downtown from surrounding neighborhoods

Worry over a lack of leadership, management, and funding to carry out the goals of the plan

Participants were asked a series of questions to refine goals, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to Downtown; responses included the following.

In a word, describe your hope for Downtown.

Responses included: sustainability; beautification; color; vibrant; community; collaboration; walkable; convenience; diversity; destination; lifestyle; commitment; cultural; hip; multipurpose; safe; preservation; cleanliness; center; 24/7; fun; green; energy; creative; hub; art; historic; vitality; neighborhood; genuine; personality; unique; welcoming; unintimidating; home; multifaceted; tourism; romantic; spatially convivial; hotel; accessible; occupied.

What are the Strengths of Downtown?

Responses included: Lincoln heritage; architecture; artistic community; venues; arts center; farmers' market; friendliness; Performing Arts Center; history museum; numerous colleges; professional community; law and justice center; county seat; surrounding neighborhoods; largest county in Illinois; highway access; residential; Coliseum; local retail base; Amtrak; decent public transportation; jobs; taverns; State Farm; churches; Route 66; Central Illinois Regional Airport; parks; library; Constitution Trail; independent restaurants; west side community garden; historic neighborhoods; strong neighborhood association; home of Dan Brady; Downtown Bloomington Association; good radio stations; technology; tourism potential; strong social services; Downtown Bar Association; people care.

What are the Weaknesses of Downtown?

Responses included: perception of failure; lack of wayfinding signage; 4-lane bypass; proximity of residents to entertainment; one-way streets; dirty; poorly lit; homeless people; perception of the poor; retail closes too early; surrounding neighborhoods; increased crime; too much rental; on-street parking regulations; not knowing or understanding past; lack of respect and economic opportunity for poor people; vandalism; need more gyms; navigation and visibility; failure to embrace college students; alcohol abuse; insufficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities; parking

structures; garbage, recycling, and management; no water element; unhelpful city when a new business; lack of Downtown manager; lack of focus on environmental; ghost town on Sunday; sewer maintenance; missing services; bad public transit; inconsistent retail; streetscape lack; aesthetics.

What are Opportunities for Downtown?

Responses included: colleges and Downtown coexist; better promotion; more density and retail to be had; opportunity sites; larger range of housing prices; add night security presence; early morning cleanup; unify residents; bike link to Constitution Trail; cable car around the Courthouse; Lincoln history and tourism; Route 66; trolley/shuttle between Downtown and uptown Normal; move Visitors' Bureau to Downtown; green roofs; more bike racks and events; restructure the couplet; pedestrian-friendly features; "61704s" - shift retail from Veterans' Parkway; stoplights yellow after 10 pm; Wi-Fi; entertainment venues self-supporting; breakfast restaurant; kid-friendly destination; lack of holiday decor; movie or arts theater; hotel; resident services and retail; conventions; sell to business people; signs from highway pointing to Downtown; signage and murals by local artists; public art; outdoor concerts; reverse Jefferson.

What are the Threats to Downtown?

Responses included: sprawl and retail shift; lack of cooperation and support in government; community apathy; regulations (i.e. grease traps); current economic crisis; youngsters with nothing to do; funding for implementation; strip malls; perception of crime; plan for whole area - not just one part; Illinois Department of Transportation; opposition by uninformed citizens; lack of accountability for police; not welcoming of change; banks not supporting local development; free parking; city management doesn't understand Downtown; Uptown Normal; racism and lack of diversity; Normal willing to spend money; exploitation of poor; lack of retail competition; City doesn't help new businesses; corporations.

Pick Your Model Place: What Should Downtown Look/Feel Like?

Responses included: Omaha, NE; Fort Collins, CO; Saugatuck, MI; Madison, WI; Iowa City, IA; Burlington, VT; Decatur, IL; Dallas, TX; Santa Cruz, CA; Utica, IL; Galena, IL; Great Barrington, MA; Urbana, IL; Columbia, MO; Portland, ME; Ithaca, NY.

What does Downtown want to be?

Responses included: better; alive; vibrant; creative, artistic; hub of everything; connection; Downtown in motion; capitalize on travelers to metropolitan areas; diversified magnet

Downtown Redevelopment Charrette

A charrette is a public design workshop in which the consultant team, community stakeholders, developers, City officials, and residents collaborate to achieve a shared vision or set of goals for a project. The Downtown Redevelopment Charrette brought the consultant team together to brainstorm redevelopment ideas. Feedback and input was sought from the Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, and the finalized ideas were presented to the public, where they were well supported. The redevelopment scenarios are summarized below; for more information, see Section II: Downtown Vision.

Redevelopment Scenario #1

Scenario 1 involved the redevelopment of several parcels along north Main Street, between Market and Mulberry, which are currently being utilized as parking lots. The consultant team sought to illustrate how new development could blend in successfully with existing historic buildings that surround the parking lots by integrating similar design features as the existing structures.

Redevelopment Scenario #2

The second redevelopment scenario, at Washington and Prairie Streets on the southeast side of the study area, was chosen by the Steering and Technical Advisory Committees for its position as a transitional area between Downtown and the residential neighborhoods to the east. The consultant team illustrated how new development could either take the shape of townhouses, to blend in with residential neighborhoods, or small-scale mixed-use or office development, to relate to the core of Downtown.

Redevelopment Scenario #3

The final redevelopment scenario focused on the Market Street Garage parcel, which is slated for redevelopment by the City of Bloomington in the near future. Brainstorming with the working committees at the beginning of the charrette brought up the idea of relocating the YMCA (which is currently located further south on Main, outside of the study area) to

the site. Discussions with the YMCA leadership and board revealed that they would be interested in pursuing the idea. Redevelopment scenarios shown illustrate the YMCA as one potential option, or a mixed-use office or civic center with a parking garage underneath as another option.

Public Open Houses

Two public open houses were held, both at State Farm Insurance in Downtown, to solicit comments, responses, and questions from the public on the draft master plan. The first open house, held on September 30, 2009, consisted of a PowerPoint presentation to present the draft with a limited period of discussion at the end of the meeting. The public was invited back to continue the discussion two weeks later, at a Question and Answer session, to give enough time to review the document.

The Question and Answer session was held on October 13, 2009. Major topics of conversation included the integration of parking meters, need for public bathroom facilities, assistance for entrepreneurs and small business start-ups, and integration of the Downtown plan with the West Bloomington Neighborhood Plan. The consultant team addressed these and other community concerns in revising the master plan in preparation for public hearing.

Working Group Meetings

In addition to public meetings, the master plan was also informed by the participation and feedback of two working groups, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Steering Committee (SC). The TAC members consisted of city staff as well as professionals with technical expertise, while the SC members consisted of community leaders, stakeholders, and business owners. Both committees were asked to give their input and feedback on the master plan throughout its development.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives below were created, with input from the public as well as the Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, to provide a vision and direction for Downtown Bloomington.

Leadership

Goal: Engage strong leadership and achieve consensus on how to maintain, regulate, manage, and redevelop Downtown.

Objectives:

1. Create transparency in the decision-making process to garner community support and to ensure that decisions made are in accordance with the recommendations set forth in this plan.
2. Hold local government and other organizations accountable for the responsibilities assigned to them to implement this plan.

Historic Preservation

Goal: Protect, preserve, and restore the historic resources in Downtown.

Objectives:

1. Preserve existing historic Downtown buildings and infill non-historic parcels with buildings of similar character and scale.
2. Promote the restoration of historic buildings through incentive programs.

Economic Development

Goal: Build a healthy Downtown economy that offers diverse employment, retail, cultural, and entertainment opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Provide a pedestrian-friendly shopping experience as an alternative to the auto-oriented experience offered by Veteran's Parkway and other regional shopping centers.
2. Develop the Downtown as a destination that will attract regular shoppers and investment.
3. Cultivate start-up businesses and entrepreneurs in the Downtown to keep an emphasis on local businesses and maintain a strong retail core.
4. Promote office and employment uses within Downtown to provide a strong economic base.

5. Build upon the presence of the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts and the U.S. Cellular Coliseum, as well as various artist galleries, to further enhance the arts and cultural amenities within Downtown.
6. Create attractions within Downtown that will serve as a regional draw for tourism and further enhance interest and investment in the area.
7. Recognize the interdependence of Downtown with its surrounding neighborhoods and work towards the revitalization of those neighborhoods as well.

Land Use and Development

Goal: Create a successful mix of land uses, including residential, retail, office, service, and institutional, in the appropriate locations in the Downtown area.

Objectives:

1. Focus retail uses around existing nodes in the core of Downtown, defined as the area contained within Madison and East.
2. Utilize a mixed-use building type for the majority of the commercial core of Downtown, with retail or office space on the ground floor and office or residential space on the upper floors.
3. Preserve existing residential uses and promote new urban housing types.
4. Preserve existing industrial uses and buildings on the south end of Downtown and foster the development of new “craftsman” industrial uses in the area.

Urban Design and Aesthetics

Goal: Create a unified aesthetic vision for the Downtown that will encourage investment from developers and business owners and patronage from residents.

Objectives:

1. Implement streetscape and pedestrian and auto wayfinding signage improvements in the Downtown.
2. Create a zoning code overlay for Downtown to preserve and replicate desired physical characteristics.

Walkability

Goal: Develop an integrated transportation system that favors pedestrians and cyclists while also providing for the safe movement of people and goods via motor vehicle traffic and alternative transportation.

Objectives:

1. Reconfigure the couplets and other one-way streets to restore connectivity and ease of use.
2. Utilize the existing public transportation system and actively invest in improvements that will make the system more successful.
3. Incorporate crosswalks and dedicated bicycle facilities where possible to create a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Parking

Goal: Provide and manage an appropriate amount of parking to realistically meet the needs of residents and businesses without negatively impacting land use, streetscape, and use of transit.

Objectives:

1. Focus parking in strategically placed on-street spaces and parking decks to reduce the negative economic and aesthetic impacts of surface parking lots.
2. With an eye toward future transportation trends, re-evaluate the amount of parking that is needed to accommodate residents and businesses.

Sustainability

Goal: Maintain and improve our natural and built environment to ensure its viability for future generations.

Objectives:

1. Encourage some level of energy efficiency for all new buildings.
2. Shift the built environment from auto-orientation to a focus on pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit.
3. Encourage the rehabilitation of historic and high quality existing buildings to conserve building materials and preserve such amenities.

Clean and Safe

Goal: Maintain a clean, attractive, orderly, and safe Downtown.

Objectives:

1. Manage noise, debris, and other negative externalities associated with Downtown businesses.
2. Create an inviting environment that is welcoming and safe.

Tour of Downtown

Downtown Bloomington boasts many community resources, historic buildings, and other assets. This section contains an overview of many, although not all, of these places. Some areas, with proper cultivation, may in the future become irreplaceable assets as well - for example, the Warehouse District at the south end of the study area or the single family areas on the periphery of Downtown. The following key areas were considered throughout the planning process; refer to Figure I-3 for locations.

Phoenix & Lincoln Towers

Phoenix Towers is located on the northwest side of Madison Street and Lincoln Towers is located on the southwest side of Madison. These two 9-story senior housing buildings are some of the tallest buildings in the area and are prominent as part of the view people see while in or around Downtown.

Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts

Originally built in 1921 as Bloomington's Scottish Rite Temple, the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts was recently renovated and reopened in 2006 as an anchor to Downtown Bloomington's cultural district, offering performing, visual arts, and arts education facilities.

East Douglas Apartments

This 19th-century industrial loft building was recently converted into 52 affordable dwelling units with an addition to the west. The existing building section of the development is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mixed Use Core

The northern end of Main Street and buildings surrounding the McLean County Museum of History (see #9), are considered the retail mixed-use core of Downtown. These areas consist primarily of beautiful historic mixed use buildings with shops, restaurants, or bars on the ground floor.

Market Street Parking Garage

The Market Street parking garage is a major public parking facility in Downtown Bloomington. The facility will either need substantive repairs or to be torn down in the near future. The site also houses a branch of the United States Postal Service.

Second Presbyterian Church

Founded in 1855, Second Presbyterian Church is a staple in the community, providing opportunities for worship and service. Its recently constructed facilities take up a block on the east side of Downtown.

National City Bank Facilities

National City Bank, now PNC Bank, has a large facility, drive-through, and several parking lots in Downtown. There is also a small park on this site.

State Farm Fire Company Building

The State Farm Fire Company building was built in 1929 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. The building originally housed State Farm's corporate headquarters, which has since moved to east Bloomington. There is also a heavily used parking garage on-site, which is primarily used by State Farm employees.

McLean County Museum of History

The McLean County Museum of History, built in 1903, is on the National Register Historic Places. The building was

designed by William Reeves and John Baillie and housed the McLean County Circuit Court from 1900-1976; The courts are now located in facilities a few blocks to the south.

Pantagraph

The Pantagraph is a daily newspaper that serves eight counties and over 60 communities in Central Illinois. Founded in 1847, it is the oldest business in McLean County. Its facilities occupy several parcels.

Government Center

The Government Center houses various county and city offices.

Lincoln Garage

With 906 spaces, the Lincoln Garage is by far the largest public parking facility in Downtown Bloomington. Heading north into Downtown on East Street, Lincoln Garage is one of the first things a visitor will see.

Law & Justice Center

The McLean County Law and Justice Center, built in 1976, is regarded as the “county seat,” and includes County courts, the McLean County Jail and County Coroner and Morgue, as well as other County offices.

McLean County Health Department

The McLean County Health Department is located on the first three floors of this building, while other floors are occupied by various state, City, County, not-for-profit, and law offices.

U.S. Cellular Coliseum

The U.S. Cellular Coliseum is an 8,000 seat entertainment venue that opened in April of 2006. Since its inception, the Coliseum has drawn tens of thousands of people to Downtown annually.

City Hall, Police Department, & Library Complex

These parcels house several buildings related to local government, including City Hall, the Police Department, and the public library.

Historic Amenities

Brief History of Downtown

Downtown Bloomington has a long and rich history that includes events and personalities ranging from American presidents to the famous Route 66 highway. Today, Downtown Bloomington retains much of its 19th Century historic architectural character. Filled with historic commercial buildings that showcase brick facades, large windows, decorative cornices, and terra cotta designs, the buildings make up a vibrant historic district at a classic pedestrian scale. Several buildings are significant enough on their own to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see Figure I-4).

In the mid-19th Century, Abraham Lincoln practiced law from the historic Miller-Davis Law Buildings. Downtown Bloomington recovered from a disastrous fire that swept through in 1900 that destroyed great portions of the Downtown, with the city rebuilding with even more impressive buildings in their places. Also, in the early 20th Century, several street car lines transected Downtown including lines on Main Street and Washington Street. Later, during the rise of the automobile age, the famous Route 66 traveled right through Downtown Bloomington, making the Downtown both a regional and tourist destination. The well-known insurance agency State Farm began in Downtown Bloomington, and later built the State Farm Fire Building (which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places) there to house their operations. Today, Bloomington embraces its rich heritage and proudly showcases its historic Downtown resources.

Bloomington Historic Commission

The City of Bloomington established the Bloomington Historic Commission in 1983 to oversee the city’s preservation ordinance. The local ordinance establishes a special zoning category, S-4: Historic District, for historically significant

property. This special district requires a Historic Commission review of exterior changes to the structure. The Historic Commission is a volunteer citizen board appointed by the mayor that oversees the protection of the architectural and historical heritage of the community.

Owners of historic property in Bloomington can seek S-4 District designation by nominating their property, and final decisions about the zoning are made by the city council. Although not currently funded, there have been special incentives for structures zoned S-4 made available to property owners. Special grants can also help offset the cost of maintenance or rehabilitation of the historic buildings.

The local designation of buildings protects Bloomington historic buildings by requiring an exterior design review for any proposed changes to the facade. This is in addition to the protection offered to the properties honored on the National Register of Historic Places.

The requirements for local S-4 designation cover a range of criteria that include a number of features of significance. Properties that have important heritage and cultural value may be considered, as well as property associated with a famous or historic person or a historic event. Architectural criteria include the building possessing distinguishing characteristics of a particular architectural style or method of construction. A property may also be considered if it is the work of a famous architect.

Bloomington Central Business Historic District

Roughly bordered by Locust Street to the north, Front Street to the south, Center Street to the west, and East Street to the east (see Figure I-4 for exact boundaries and Figures I-6, I-7, and I-8 for images), the Bloomington Central Business Historic District is the heart of Downtown Bloomington. With significant buildings ranging in construction date from 1842-1942, the district contains a wide range of historic architectural styles and numerous buildings important to the heritage of the City of Bloomington. The district was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

Covering approximately fifteen city blocks, the district includes numerous historic commercial buildings that shape the character of the streets. While the majority of buildings in the district are contributing significant structures, there are a few buildings that are exceptional enough to be listed on the National Register individually.

For example, the civic and architectural anchor of the district is the McLean County Museum of History (see Figure I-5). Completed in 1903, the grand structure replaced the previous courthouse that the Downtown fire of 1900 destroyed. It is a graceful, but monumental, building that was constructed mostly of stone because of fears of additional fires.

On the corner of Main Street and Front Street is the Miller-Davis Law Building (see Figure I-9). This building is historic in its own right, dating to 1843, but gained even more significance because in his early years, Abraham Lincoln practiced law there.

More characteristic of the commercial buildings in the district, the White Building (see Figure I-10) on Douglas Street is a superior example of late 19th Century commercial architecture. The building was recently rehabilitated and now houses apartment buildings, with a historically-sensitive addition to the west.

Illinois Main Street Program

Bloomington joined the Illinois Main Street Program in 2005. The Main Street Program, which is sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is a volunteer-driven, preservation-based Downtown revitalization program. It offers information, guidance, and access to the national preservation community to its member cities. Focusing on community organization and promotion, Bloomington and its Main Street Program are proactively promoting the historic identity of the City.

Downtown Bloomington is a historic community with a wealth of physical historic heritage. The City's continued support for Downtown business and property owners illustrates the pride that the entire community has for these irreplaceable historic amenities.

II. Illustrative Master Plan

Downtown Vision

Market Assessment

Key Redevelopment Opportunities

Retail Plan

Overall Site Plan

Open Space

II. Illustrative Master Plan

Downtown Vision

During the charrette conducted at the outset of this master planning project, the consultant team, directed by the Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, developed several redevelopment ideas to guide the remainder of the project. The ideas were then presented to the community at a public meeting, where the response was overwhelmingly positive. The redevelopment ideas center upon creating a more walkable and vibrant Downtown that focuses on a mix of land uses and preservation of existing historic features. A brief overview of each redevelopment scenario follows.

Scenario 1: North Main Street

The intersection at Market and Main Streets in the core Downtown retail area was chosen because of its critical location and impact on the surrounding built environment. The following features were noted for the existing and proposed developments.

Existing Development

Expansive parking lots currently occupy several parcels on the block of North Main between Market and Mulberry Streets.

Existing historic mixed-use buildings are in good condition, but are located in a vacuum, with parking lots on either side.

Erratic street trees are located along the street.

Existing streetscape elements, such as planters, benches, and garbage cans, are located sporadically in this area (see Section V: Streetscape Recommendations).

Proposed Redevelopment

Private parking lots in the core of Downtown are replaced by consolidated public parking supplies (see Section IV: Parking Policy Framework) and are infilled with new development. The scale and character of this new development matches that of the existing historic structures in the area. Storefronts are utilized to create an interesting pedestrian environment, buildings are located adjacent to the sidewalk, and a height of 2-3 stories is maintained in keeping with the local context.

Historic mixed-use buildings are preserved.

Street trees are spaced regularly along the street to provide a shaded and green environment to those passing by.

Existing streetscape elements, such as planters, benches, and garbage cans, are preserved and enhanced with new additions when possible (see Section V: Streetscape Recommendations).

Scenario 2: East Washington Street

Washington Street was chosen as a redevelopment area due to its existing historic buildings and importance as a connection between Downtown and the neighborhoods to the east. Emphasis was placed on the importance of integrating new structures with the existing historic buildings on the south side of Washington (and State Farm further to the west). The following features were noted for the existing and proposed developments.

Existing Development

Expansive parking lots currently occupy almost the entire north side of the block. According to the parking analysis done as part of this report, this surface parking is currently underutilized.

Existing historic mixed-use buildings include the Castle Theater and Paxton's on the south side of Washington, as well as the State Farm Downtown Building further west. In addition, there are several historic buildings on Front Street directly to the south.

Street trees are located sparsely along the street.

Proposed Redevelopment

Consolidated public parking supplies make it possible in the future for surface parking lots to be replaced by new development. Depending on market forces, this area could redevelop as townhomes (shown in option 1) or as non-retail mixed-use buildings (with office or service uses on the ground floor and office or residential uses above, shown in option 2).

Historic mixed-use buildings are preserved.

Street trees are spaced regularly along the street to provide a shaded and green environment to those passing by.

Distinctive pedestrian crosswalk treatments are added to enhance safety and alert motorists that pedestrians may be present.

Scenario 3: Market Street Garage

The Market Street Garage is a public parking garage which is nearing the end of its functional life. The City of Bloomington owns the site and has indicated they are pursuing the possibility that the site may be redeveloped as something other than a parking garage, or as a development with a parking garage component. The following features were noted for the existing and proposed developments.

Existing Development

The current site contains a monolithic parking structure that lacks a relationship with the street.

There is a significant grade change running from north to south along the site, which must be taken into consideration when redevelopment occurs.

Existing street trees should be preserved when possible.

Proposed Redevelopment

Option 1 shows the redevelopment of the Market Street Garage site into a new YMCA facility. This idea was brainstormed during the charrette and presented to the YMCA board by the consultant team. The YMCA board subsequently wrote a letter of support for the concept to the Bloomington City Council. Such a facility would bring a steady flow of visitors, encourage Downtown workers to stay past working hours, provide much needed services to the population in and around Downtown, and provide a family-friendly destination.

Option 2 shows the redevelopment of the parking garage into a mixed use facility. Such a building could hold office, service, or civic uses on the ground floor and offices, apartments, or condominiums on the upper floors.

Parking is located underneath the facility to avoid a break in the street wall created by the building. Additional parking spaces may be replaced in other public decks (see Section IV: Parking Policy Framework).

Street trees are filled in along the street to provide a shaded and green environment to those passing by.

The following is a summary of the full market study completed for Downtown Bloomington. The unedited version of the market study may be found in Section VII: Appendix.

Market Assessment Summary

Summary of Market Assessment

Summary of Demographics and Economic Trends

Bloomington, Normal, and the surrounding region are steady growth markets without a recent history of dramatic swings in demographic indicators or construction patterns. Bloomington is in a strong regional position, with a relatively high growth rate, well-educated population, high per capita income, professional workforce, and stable industries dominated by large employers. Net migration to the region is generally positive, despite net losses to other states and the Chicagoland area; in-migrating households come from a wide variety of places. On the whole, the study area population is less educated and has lower incomes than that of the region.

Psychographic data categorizes households into 67 market segment categories based on shared demographic traits, lifestyle preferences, values, and consumer behaviors. These shared traits are useful for generating a nuanced understanding of a local population, including housing and retail preferences. The psychographic profile for the Downtown core adds another dimension of information with which to interpret demographic data, and demonstrates that nearly half of all households in this area are likely to have primarily chosen Downtown to take advantage of its unique lifestyle amenities. Meanwhile, the psychographic profile of nearby eastern neighborhoods demonstrates the inclusion of households similar to those found Downtown, plus additional households that are likely to generate current demand for unique Downtown offerings and provide potential future demand for Downtown housing.

In-depth demographic and economic analysis found strong positive trends that can benefit Downtown Bloomington, but their potential has not yet been realized. Downtown offers a unique niche for housing, retail, and office uses; this niche limits the depth of potential demand, yet also provides Downtown with a distinct and strong competitive position. The following sections summarize the potential for housing, office, retail, and hotel uses in Downtown within the framework of leveraging Downtown's unique assets to maximize its ability to capture the share of market demand compatible with the area.

Housing Market Findings

Downtown competes against other locations in the Bloomington-Normal region based on its unique setting and unique housing offerings.

No other location in the Bloomington-Normal region offers the combination of amenities and walkable urbanity of Downtown Bloomington, nor does any other location offer a concentration of unique loft spaces. Uptown Normal is the next closest competitor in both regards, but is relatively small and lacks Downtown Bloomington's historic character, concentration of lofts, and cultural amenities.

The rental market in Downtown has consistently performed well.

The rental market has consistently performed well over the past ten years, with rapid absorption and lower vacancy rates than the Bloomington-Normal region.

Rehabilitated loft rental units are generally larger than apartments elsewhere in the region, but less expensive on a per square foot basis. Downtown lofts are differentiated by their large size relative to apartments elsewhere in the region. The size of the lofts results in high gross rents, but the price per square foot is lower than units elsewhere in the region.

Condominiums have generally not performed well in Downtown, but small units have a better sales record than larger high-end units. Absorption of large loft-style condominium units has been stymied by poor market timing, high total prices, and other extraordinary issues. However, some smaller units – similar to traditional apartments – have sold since 2000.

Historic neighborhood households are a strong source of future demand for living in Downtown.

The psychographic profile of households in Historic Neighborhoods near Downtown suggests that their preferences are compatible with Downtown living. This demand will grow further as homeowners in these neighborhoods age and become more likely to downsize to condominiums.

There is current demand for an additional 500 households in Downtown and an additional 500 to 600 by 2030, but conditions must be correct to capture this demand.

Psychographic profiles and current regional housing preferences suggest that there is significant demand for Downtown living, but much of this demand is being captured by other locations. Growth will require that Downtown capture additional demand by offering sufficient additional housing units while further improving as a walkable, vibrant, amenity-rich urban environment.

Retail Market Findings

Downtown Bloomington contains a concentration of unique, independent retailers that draw customers from throughout the region.

Successful retailers in Downtown Bloomington are able to offer a special experience or product that can draw customers from throughout the region.

Downtown retail is clustered in three agglomerations, or “nodes.”

Three retail nodes create synergies between their tightly-clustered businesses by generating foot traffic, visibility, and varying opportunities to easily shop, dine, and imbibe. These nodes are located around Main Street between Jefferson and Locust, the blocks south of the Museum of History and Square, and Front Street between East and Prairie.

Downtown retail business is boosted by events and non-retail “anchors” that draw visitors from throughout the region and beyond.

Currently, the role of a regional retail anchor is fulfilled by event programming and the presence of cultural and performing arts anchors in Downtown, including the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, McLean County Arts Center, McLean County Museum of History, U.S. Cellular Coliseum, and Pepsi Ice Center. These assets attract visitors to Downtown and help to increase business for some of the small retailers. However, the draw is not as consistent or strong as an actual retail anchor.

There is current unmet demand for nearly 38,000 square feet of retail in Downtown, with an additional 36,000 square feet by 2030.

Downtown Bloomington retail opportunities are limited by traffic volumes, store sizes, store configurations, and the scale of Downtown.

Downtown Bloomington will not be able to compete with suburban locations in terms of parking access and large store formats. Instead, Downtown Bloomington must continue to offer a unique historic urban environment, the “café culture” that accompanies such a place, and a collection of one-of-a-kind specialized stores and restaurants that will continue to draw people from throughout the region. These independent retailers are also more able and willing to adapt to the unusual or antiquated configurations found in Downtown retail storefronts. It is not likely that a large national chain will be attracted to Downtown in the foreseeable future due to high income, access, and population requirements.

Retail growth in Downtown Bloomington requires an emphasis on a well-connected, amenity-rich, and safe environment.

The focus on specialty retail and unique drinking and eating establishments in Downtown Bloomington shifts the emphasis from meeting unmet demand to creating an environment that encourages additional agglomerations/clusters of businesses able to draw customers from throughout the region. This strategic direction is supported by the low likelihood that large comparison goods stores will locate Downtown, and by business owner statements that local workers and residents comprise only a small share of their business.

Office Market Findings

Downtown Bloomington is the sole major submarket outside of Veterans Parkway, although the vast majority of office space in the region lies within one mile of the parkway.

The Class A and B office space surrounding the Museum of History and Square is considered the strongest subarea of Downtown given its proximity to county and local government offices and inclusion of the State Farm Insurance Building. Rents in Downtown Bloomington are generally lower than the region, but vary widely depending on building condition and proximity to government offices.

The Downtown office market is dominated by State Farm Insurance, City and County government offices, and small professional firms that largely service the government offices.

Low rents have encouraged startup businesses in Downtown.

Although some office rents in Downtown match those of new Class A space in the region, rents vary widely and are lower than the region overall. This has made Downtown an attractive location for smaller startup businesses and firms that prefer to remain small.

The small office spaces in Downtown buildings reduce the ability of businesses to grow in place.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that growing businesses are likely to eventually move out of Downtown since there are few large spaces available. Future development can help overcome this problem, but such development must respect the historic scale and character of Downtown.

Downtown Bloomington is likely to remain a specialized office market centered on large existing employers and smaller firms that enjoy a specific location or cost advantage in a Downtown site.

The specialized office market in Downtown reduces the breadth of demand it may capture in the foreseeable future, but also ensures its competitive advantage as a uniquely-positioned niche market. The domination by large employers will result in fairly slow growth in demand for office space (barring an unforeseen expansion decision), but some additional demand will come from will come from growing startup and small companies.

Hotel Market Findings

Three major entities are likely to drive demand for a hotel in Downtown Bloomington: U.S. Cellular Coliseum, Illinois Wesleyan University, and State Farm Insurance.

Additional demand is generated by the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, other businesses, and more distant institutions such as BroMenn Regional Medical Center and Illinois State University.

Preliminary evaluation of the Bloomington-Normal hotel market suggests that there is pent-up demand for a hotel in Downtown, but immediate demand will be absorbed by new rooms coming online during 2009.

It is difficult to discern at this time whether hotel demand is strong enough to warrant constructing a new facility within the next 3 to 5 years, especially with additional rooms being brought to market elsewhere in the region in 2009. However, given the strong synergy between a hotel and other uses in the Downtown – especially U.S. Cellular Coliseum – a high priority should be placed on attracting a hotel to Downtown.

Overview of Findings

Downtown has a number of assets, but there is little synergy between them. Improvements will depend on strategic management of these assets to generate the synergy essential to drive future investment and growth. Strategic management efforts must be focused on four main goals:

- 1) General placemaking, i.e. creating a vibrant, high-quality public realm that attracts pedestrian activity by providing attractive destinations, interactive social encounters, and well-connected, stimulating public spaces
- 2) Tying together the existing anchors and retail nodes
- 3) Drawing new anchors, such as a hotel and/or a YMCA
- 4) Maintaining the historic character and resultant small scale that generate Downtown's competitive differentiation

Recommendations by Land Use

Housing

Build connections between Downtown and the eastern historic neighborhoods.

Strategically sited housing development can connect Downtown to the historic neighborhoods to its east. This connection will physically and conceptually connect Downtown to these neighborhoods and drive retail business by growing the residential customer base and increasing the likelihood that existing nearby residents will walk to Downtown businesses.

Focus on the creation of additional rental units.

The Downtown rental market remains stronger than the condominium market. Developers should focus on this market in the immediate future, although condominium demand will increase over time.

Focus on the creation of smaller condominium units.

Less expensive apartment-style condominiums have met with more success than large, expensive, customized units. The low prices of smaller condominiums reduce barriers of entry to homeownership for purchasers interested in the Downtown lifestyle. Such smaller units will help prove the strength of the Downtown condominium market for future purchasers and also create dedicated Downtown stakeholders.

Retail

Target retail tenant types.

The full market study at the end of this report identifies targeted retail tenant types based on compatibility with small Downtown storefronts, potential to create a unique specialty business able to serve both local and regional residents and capitalize on Downtown assets, and, when applicable, capture regionally unfulfilled demand.

Build connections between nodes and anchors.

Steps to implement improved signage, traffic calming measures, an upgraded street environment, and possibly a circulator can help to connect each of the dispersed retail nodes and cultural/performance/arts anchors to each other and parking garages.

Concentrate business in existing nodes.

The three identified business nodes provide incubators for new businesses by increasing visibility and providing a linkage to the existing community of Downtown stakeholders. New retail development should be concentrated adjacent to these existing nodes to avoid spreading retail too thinly.

Preserve existing storefronts.

The Downtown rent competition between office and retail uses favors office conversion of ground floor spaces to office use. Although these conversions may have removed empty storefronts in the past, such conversions pose serious long-term challenges to development of the Downtown environment. The City and Downtown Bloomington Association, in conjunction with stakeholders, should examine the possibility of mandating preservation of storefront retail spaces, particularly in and near existing nodes.

Attract and grow new anchors for Downtown Bloomington.

It will be a number of years before a single large retail anchor exists or is viable. In the interim, other non-retail anchors can help to fill the gaps in the Downtown streetscape and also draw more foot traffic and residents to the area. Such opportunities could include a library, YMCA, or community college.

Actively manage Downtown Bloomington.

There is potential for the Downtown Bloomington Association or another organization to take on an even more proactive role that helps property owners and tenants target particular sites for particular business types. The completed Downtown Bloomington Strategy will be a useful guide for these decisions, though ongoing assistance from specialized consultants will also be valuable.

Cultivate the artist community.

The vibrant Downtown artist community has recently shown greater cohesion and capacity for action. The Downtown

Bloomington Association can further work with this community to encourage public recognition and patronage. It may also be to the benefit of both the artists and Downtown to further promote galleries with stable hours that show the works of multiple artists, thus providing a consistent draw to the area.

Office

Tailor assistance to the needs of startup businesses.

Smaller startup businesses are the most dynamic component of the Downtown office market, which is otherwise largely dominated by State Farm Insurance, government offices, and small professional firms linked to the government offices.

When feasible, pursue development of larger office spaces that can accommodate growing Downtown businesses.

There are few large office spaces in Downtown that are capable of accommodating businesses as they grow. This is not particularly damaging to Downtown given the stability of its larger employers, but it would be preferable to retain these businesses in the Study Area. Market demand may eventually reach a level sufficient to develop a building that will fill the niche for large office space.

Ensure that future development respects the historic scale and character of Downtown.

Downtown's historic scale and character differentiates it from other locations in the Bloomington-Normal region and is a key asset. Future development must respect this character and integrate into the existing urban fabric, especially if larger spaces are being provided.

Hotel

Place a high priority on the development of a hotel in Downtown.

A hotel in Downtown will have numerous spinoff benefits. Hotel development must be evaluated quickly, as the presence of a hotel will help spur numerous other improvements in the study area. An independent, boutique hotel would be most suitable for Downtown. A boutique hotel provides greater design flexibility and would fit the historic nature of Downtown; such a development could even take place within a historic building.

Phasing and Outlook

Short- and Mid-Term Development Potential and Strategy Recommendations (to ~2020)

The overall focus will remain on reuse of the existing building stock, with a few new construction projects possible toward the end of the 10 to 15 year time horizon. Emphasis is on growth of retail and housing, plus steps to encourage the development of a generally vibrant, pleasant, appealing place. The current economic environment makes it likely that little development activity will occur until at least mid-2010, but possibly later than that. Early residential development will continue to focus on upper-floor conversions of space to a mixture of rental and condominium units; the majority will be rental units. Townhomes are ideal for the open sites east of Downtown.

A limited number of additional office spaces can be accommodated in existing buildings. A small new office building, likely built on the periphery of Downtown where development is easier and less expensive, may become possible during this time period.

Significant mixed-use infill development within the Madison Street / East Street couplet is relatively unlikely during this period. Other possibilities during this time period include the construction of an additional (non-retail) anchor and construction of a hotel. The parking garage on the northwest corner of Monroe Street and Center Street presents an excellent opportunity for catalytic redevelopment with public assistance, especially since the City owns the site.

Long-Term Development Potential and Strategy Recommendations (~2020-2030)

If all goes well with developing the retail and residential markets and resolving the various concerns raised in this report, then demand and rents can rise to a level during this time period such that new construction of residential units becomes more commonplace. The City can jumpstart this process by applying tax increment financing monies to these developments, just as it has assisted many of the apartment and condominium conversion projects. Alternately, joint development is possible on City-owned lots.

Mixed-use infill retail/housing/office development within the Madison Street / East Street couplet will become increasingly common during this period, but remain the most difficult product type to deliver. New construction near existing retail nodes or on pathways between such nodes, anchors, and surrounding neighborhoods should include a ground-floor retail component to accommodate increasing demand for specialty and local-serving shopping. Population growth and increased desirability will generate demand for additional office development.

Key Redevelopment Opportunities

Figure II-1 illustrates key redevelopment opportunities within Downtown Bloomington. These sites are not being used to their fullest potential, particularly in a Downtown setting where land demand should be relatively high. A primary concern for developing such sites is that parking inventory will be reduced and further strain other existing parking facilities. The parking component of this plan addresses the redistribution of surface parking into parking decks; more information can be found in Section IV: Parking Policy Framework.

In Figure II-1, sites outlined in yellow or pink (with no hatch) either currently contain buildings or require further explanation for their classification as opportunity sites. Sites outlined in yellow or pink with a crosshatch are either currently vacant or being used for parking. More information on these sites may be found in the two sections below.

Short Term Opportunity Sites

The opportunity sites identified in this section are classified as short term opportunity sites, meaning that they have the potential to redevelop within the next five to ten years.

Electronic Billboard Site

This site is currently the first impression that visitors have of Downtown Bloomington if they are driving south. The site houses a large electronic billboard and parking lot, which gives the impression that Downtown is an auto-oriented place. The opportunity exists to transform this site into a lively gateway parcel that will draw visitors in to shop, dine, and play.

Market Street Parking Garage

The Market Street Parking Garage is in a state of disrepair and is slated for redevelopment by the City of Bloomington. This site represents one of the largest redevelopment parcels available in Downtown and is a great opportunity to kick start development in Downtown. This site was examined during the Downtown redevelopment charrette; see Section II: Downtown Vision for more details.

Roosevelt Avenue Parcels

The parcels along Roosevelt Avenue between Market and Monroe Streets contain a mixture of older residential buildings and vacant lots. The City of Bloomington recently acquired about half of the properties on this block with the hope of pursuing a redevelopment project there.

Main Street Parking Lots

There are currently several parcels on the west side of north Main Street between Market and Mulberry Streets that are being used as parking lots. These parcels' location in the heart of the retail core makes it imperative for them to redevelop as mixed-use buildings of similar scale and character to those that currently exist Downtown. See Section II: Downtown Vision for more information; these parcels were included as redevelopment sites during the Downtown redevelopment charrette.

National City Parking Lot

National City Bank currently occupies an entire block on the east side of the study area, with a large portion of the block dedicated to parking and drive-through facilities. According to our parking study, these parking areas are not heavily used. In addition, in the short term future, other parking decks proposed in the area (see Section IV: Parking Policy Framework) may make National City's parking facilities unnecessary. The area currently dedicated to parking could then be utilized for other uses. See Section II: Downtown Vision for more details; this site was included as a redevelopment site during the Downtown redevelopment charrette.

Illinois Healthcare Site

This site, which is one of the larger vacant sites within Downtown, currently contains a large vacant office building and a wide expanse of parking. The site has been for sale for a long period of time with no success.

Butler Lot & Elks Lodge Site

This block is currently being explored as a redevelopment site by the City of Bloomington. The City owns the Butler Lot, an underutilized public parking lot on the south side of the site. The Elks Lodge building on the north side of the site was recently sold to provide parking for a condo building. The combination of these parcels into one redevelopment site would present a large area with the potential to provide supportive services, such as a hotel, to attractions within Downtown.

Long Term Opportunity Sites

The opportunity sites identified below and in pink on Figure II-1 may redevelop in the longer term future, within the next ten to twenty years. Longer term opportunity sites will need to wait for the market to emerge to support the type of development that should occur on the site.

Warehouse District Parcels

The majority of parcels on the study area's southern edge are either vacant or contain older industrial buildings that are in disrepair. As a long term redevelopment strategy, it is recommended that this area play upon its industrial roots to become a more "craftsman industrial" and arts district (see Section III: Warehouse District for more details).

Auto-Oriented Buildings

While not shown as opportunity sites on Figure II-1, there are several structures within the Downtown core (within the East and Madison couplet) that are currently automobile, instead of pedestrian, oriented (see pictures numbered "2" to the right for examples). Auto-oriented buildings typically situate the building further back on the lot to make room for parking in the front and/or side of the building. This has a negative impact on the character of Downtown because such buildings do not match the historic physical features of other surrounding buildings.

While these buildings should be utilized as long as they are viable, they will likely feel development pressure as investment increases Downtown. When these parcels redevelop, it is critical that the new structures incorporate pedestrian-friendly features that match the character of the rest of the Downtown core.

Existing Retail

This section examines existing retail areas within Downtown, which are scattered around the study area and are almost exclusively comprised of independent specialty businesses. These businesses include approximately 40 stores, 16 restaurants, 15 bars, 20 service businesses, and 6 art studios. The 40 stores consist of a wide range of uses, but larger categories include approximately 7 clothing and accessory stores (mostly resale), 6 hobby and crafts stores, 4 home furnishings stores, and 3 food stores. The retail in Downtown is organized loosely into 3 nodes, which are described below.

For the purposes of this study, "retail" is defined as the small-scale (<7,500 square feet) selling of goods, wares, or merchandise directly to the ultimate consumer; Service uses, including bars and restaurants, are also included in the retail category for purposes of this discussion, as they also contribute to a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant environment.

Main Street Mixed Use

Main Street's mixed use area extends from Locust Street south almost to Jefferson Street. There are a wide range of uses in this area, including a couple of tailors, hobby and crafts stores, furniture stores, art galleries, and a coffee shop. This is the strongest base of retail businesses in Downtown, and the most likely to draw people from across the region.

Main Street Bar & Restaurant Node

The cluster of businesses along north Main Street between Market and Locust Streets represent one of two

restaurant and bar districts within Downtown. There are several bars along this stretch of street, as well as a few restaurants and two food stores, including a candy store and an organic grocer.

Museum of History & Square Mixed Use

The Museum of History and Square mixed use node consists of a pharmacy, clothing boutique, and two banks, in addition to the second cluster of bars and restaurants in the study area.

Museum of History & Square Bar & Restaurant Node

Directly to the south of the McLean County Museum of History and Square is the second restaurant and bar district within Downtown. The high number of restaurants and cafes suggest that these businesses are frequented by daytime workers in the surrounding office and governmental buildings.

Front Street Mixed Use

This area includes a small cluster of businesses along Front Street between East and Prairie Streets. Though limited in number, these businesses are housed in beautiful historic buildings that provide a strong foundation for future adjacent development. Current businesses include a restaurant, a couple bars, book store, and high end antique shop and oriental rug store.

The following recommendations relate to the proposed retail plan - how and where to locate retail uses within Downtown. This is of critical importance to the economic success of Downtown, due to the limited amount of retail that the market study found could be supported in the area. Figure II-3 illustrates the proposed retail plan, and each recommendation is explained further below.

Recommendation: Focus retail into 3 major nodes

The market study conducted as part of this plan found that a limited amount of new retail, approximately 74,000 square feet, could be accommodated within the study area. In order to make the existing retail nodes more vibrant, it is recommended that future new retail businesses be located within the three core existing retail nodes outlined in the previous section. The three retail nodes create synergies between the tightly-clustered businesses, resulting in increased foot traffic, visibility, and opportunities for visitors to shop and dine.

Figure II-3: Proposed Retail Plan shows specifically where retail development should be focused in Downtown. The pink and purple areas designate retail areas, while gray or uncolored buildings or parcels will consist of other land uses (see Section III: Proposed Land Use). These uses will be regulated through the zoning code overlay produced as part of this project.

Recommendation: Permit appropriate uses within each retail area

The retail areas in Downtown have been broken up into three different mixes of land uses to suit the context of the different areas of Downtown and to provide flexibility to respond to market changes. These three retail mixes are discussed below and examples of appropriate uses for each retail mix are shown in Table II-1: Appropriate Uses for Each Retail Mix. The lists in Table II-1 are not exhaustive and will be expounded upon further in the zoning code overlay; they are meant to provide examples of the types of retail that should be permitted in each area.

Retail Mix 1

Retail Mix 1 is shown for the majority of Main Street's mixed use area north of Jefferson Street. Only small-scale retail and service uses are recommended, since this retail mix is meant to embody the retail core of Downtown (see Table II-1). This retail area is the strongest in Downtown and is most likely to successfully integrate new retail businesses.

Retail Mix 2

Retail Mix 2 is the proposed retail category applied for the parcels surrounding the McLean County Museum of History and Square. It includes all of the uses permitted in Retail Mix 1, but provides a bit more flexibility by including additional service and office uses. Typically, in the retail core of a Downtown, office uses would not be found on the ground floors of buildings because such uses do not provide as interesting an environment for pedestrians. However, in order to concentrate retail and provide flexibility, as well as accommodate existing uses, it is recommended that this area allow limited office uses (see Table II-1).

Retail Mix 3

Retail Mix 3 is mapped along Front Street in the southeastern quadrant of the study area. This retail mix includes all of the uses permitted in Retail Mix 1 but also would permit limited larger footprint, “destination retail” users, such as a grocery store, furniture store, or appliance and electronics store, all of which are in demand in the region. These destination retail uses should be limited to a maximum of 15,000 square feet to keep in scale with the surrounding area.

There are several reasons to include larger users in this area. First, there are larger redevelopment parcels available in this area, which would be essential for businesses with a bigger footprint. Also, the trips generated by the retail mix proposed for this area are more likely to involve automobiles, particularly uses such as a grocery store, furniture store, or appliance and electronics store. Some amount of off-street parking may be necessary for these types of businesses, making larger parcels vital. Lastly, a few destination retailers, such as an antiques dealer and rug merchant, already exist in this area and could benefit from the clustering of other such businesses.

Recommendation: Liquor Commission should restrict new taverns to designated Tavern Districts

Two New Tavern Districts, outlined in orange on Figure II-3, are designated to concentrate the drinking establishments within Downtown. New nightclubs, bars, and other drinking establishments should be concentrated in these two areas to minimize potential negative impacts, such as noise, litter, and crime, on the surrounding neighborhoods. These negative impacts were frequently cited as an issue during the public input process of this project. This recommendation should not be read to suggest that additional taverns are needed or desired, or as an invitation for the expansion of such establishments.

The two New Tavern District areas were chosen due to their existing concentrations of drinking establishments and the two locations’ distance from existing residential neighborhoods. The taverns are an important asset within Downtown that attract visitors and help move Downtown toward becoming a 24-hour destination. It must be understood that, while many negative impacts from the taverns can be mitigated, some, especially noise, will likely remain to a certain extent.

It is recommended that the Bloomington Liquor Commission adopt a policy to restrict new Class “TA” and “TB” liquor licenses issued in the Downtown study area to those approximate locations indicated on Figure II-3. It is critical that this restriction apply only to *new* taverns, such that existing taverns with valid liquor licenses located outside the designated New Tavern District boundary are able to operate in perpetuity (barring a change in location). The restriction should not include liquor licenses related to the sale of liquor at restaurants, convenience stores, specialty shops, wholesalers, etc.

Proposed Retail Plan

Proposed Retail Areas: Constraints

Ideally, there would be an inexhaustible market for retail uses within Downtown that would allow for the development of retail space over the majority of the study area. While that is not the case in Downtown Bloomington, the market study conducted as a part of this report did find that Downtown has the capability to accommodate an estimated additional 74,000 square feet of retail between now and 2030.

The map to the left shows where existing retail (shown in pink), proposed retail in vacant storefronts in existing buildings (shown in light purple), and proposed new construction retail (shown in dark purple) are located in Downtown. Existing retail includes the bars, restaurants, art studios, service businesses, and stores outlined in the previous section. Proposed retail in vacant storefronts would involve filling in already existing storefronts, while proposed new construction retail would entail the creation of new mixed use buildings.

The total proposed new retail area shown in Figure II-4: Proposed New Retail is approximately 119,000 square feet, with approximately 50,000 square feet of infill retail in existing buildings and approximately 69,000 square feet of new retail in new construction mixed use buildings. This is significantly higher than the market study’s finding that the Downtown area can accommodate up to 74,000 square feet of retail in the next 20 or so years. However, since the retail mixes discussed

above are combined with service and office uses, the total amount of retail area will likely be far less than 119,000 square feet. By providing flexibility, the area will be better equipped to deal with market shifts in the future as more (or less) retail area is desired.

The consultant team, with guidance from the Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, applied the results of the existing conditions analysis and the community input process to create the following site plan for the Downtown study area. The plan shown in Figure II-5 recommends the following roadway improvements; other recommendations on specific sites are reviewed on the next several pages. See Section V: Transportation Component for more information on road improvements and Section V: Streetscape Recommendations for more information on streetscape elements.

Sidewalk Treatments

Throughout the Downtown core retail area, pedestrian crosswalk treatments are shown to slow traffic and create safe crossing areas for pedestrians. These crosswalk treatments should be a distinctive color and texture, such as brick or cobblestone, to be noticeable to drivers.

Two-Way Street Conversions

As will be discussed in Section V: Transportation Component, several streets within the Downtown study area are recommended to revert from one-way operation to two-way operation. The major streets involved in this include Madison, Center, Main, East, and Locust.

Median Safety Strip

To facilitate the use of travel lanes as shared between cyclists and drivers, median safety strips are proposed along several streets. These strips should be of a cobbled texture to make drivers aware when they are driving over it. In the context of the proposed narrower travel lanes along these streets, the safety strips serve to provide additional room to carefully pass a parking vehicle or cyclist, or for emergency vehicle access.

Street Trees

Sporadic street trees have already been incorporated in several areas of Downtown, but there is still opportunity for improvement. Street trees should be placed opportunistically, ideally every 30-40', and should be housed in at least 4' by 6' iron tree wells. Also, sidewalk widths of at least 8' are desirable for street trees to provide enough room for people walking by; therefore, those sidewalks narrower than 8' in Downtown are not shown with trees.

Madison Street Extension

Currently, the Warehouse District to the south of Downtown is bypassed by Madison as it heads south over the bridge and turns into Center Street. To improve access to the area underneath the bridge, it is recommended that Madison Street is extended through the existing parking lot to link to the Warehouse District to the south.

Mulberry Street Extension

It is recommended that Mulberry at Center Street be extended through to Madison Street to improve circulation within Downtown.

Site Plan: Northwest Quadrant

Figure II-6 illustrates proposed redevelopment for the opportunity sites located within the northwest quadrant of the study area. Specific information on each opportunity site is provided below.

Single Family Infill

Within this residential area adjacent to Downtown, there are several vacant lots, which should be filled in with single family residential development of similar size and scale to the existing neighborhood.

Office Infill

While these parcels were not called out on Figure II-1: Key Redevelopment Opportunities, they are critical gateway parcels into Downtown and must be considered as such. Currently, these parcels house auto-oriented businesses; however, the opportunity exists to create iconic development there that would set the tone for all of Downtown. Madison Street is a prime location for office and service uses, as these parcels' proximity to the core of Downtown makes them ideal for such uses. These buildings are shown as lining the street (on both sides as is the case with the through lots between Center and Madison Streets), with parking on the side and rear.

Gateway Open Space

Currently, as visitors drive down Madison heading into Downtown, they see this parcel first, which contains a large electronic billboard, parking lot, and minimal green space. Since this parcel is oddly shaped, it would be difficult, although not impossible, to design a feasible building to be built there. For this reason, it is recommended that this parcel become a small park, perhaps featuring public art by local artists.

Non-Retail Mixed Use Infill

The market study recommended that mixed use retail buildings be focused in specified sections of Downtown (see Section II: Proposed Retail Plan). However, many historic mixed use buildings exist along Center Street, which should be preserved. These buildings, instead of containing retail uses on the ground floor, should house supportive office, service, and civic uses. New buildings constructed along Center should match the character and form of those buildings that already exist along the street.

Market Street Garage Redevelopment

The Market Street Garage represents one of the largest redevelopment sites within Downtown. At the time of this report, the local YMCA was pursuing the possibility of locating a new facility in this location, moving from a location further south on Main Street outside the study area. A YMCA in this location would be a tremendous amenity for residents, business owners, and visitors.

Roosevelt Street Garage with Liner Housing

The large amount of available space on the east side of Roosevelt Street presents a unique opportunity to construct housing as well as a parking garage (potentially public) behind the units. This parking garage could help to replace spaces lost from the Market Street Garage Redevelopment. It is recommended that such a garage be developed in conjunction with liner single family attached housing along Roosevelt to maintain an active street and relate to the single family homes across the street.

Center Street Retail Mixed Use Infill

Certain portions of Center Street near the McLean County Museum of History have been identified as appropriate for

retail mixed-use development, keeping in character with several other retail businesses along Center.

Figure II-7 represents proposed redevelopment for the opportunity sites located within the northeast quadrant of the study area. Specific information on each opportunity site is provided below.

Single Family Infill

Within this residential area adjacent to Downtown, there are several vacant lots, which should be filled in with single family residential development of similar size and scale to the existing neighborhood.

New Townhouse Development

The market study conducted as part of this project indicated a strong market for single family attached development in peripheral areas of Downtown. The proximity of these parcels to the retail core of Downtown makes them ideal to provide a close supportive market for those businesses. However, as Downtown becomes a more desirable place for office and service businesses to locate, this area may also develop to accommodate those enterprises.

Transitional Townhouse Development

The areas directly to the east of the Downtown study area consist primarily of single family neighborhoods. These neighborhoods currently abut intensive commercial or industrial uses, but should be buffered by an intermediate land use intensity, such as a slightly more intensive residential use or smaller scale office or service uses. For this reason, these parcels are shown with single family attached residential development.

Office Infill

The north side of this block is flexible in terms of what development may occur there in the future. Currently, there is one mixed use building on the block, with the remaining parcels being used for parking. The adjoining office and civic uses make these parcels ideal for the same types of uses; however, this area may also be well suited to townhouse development.

East Street Office Infill

The majority of parcels along East Street are utilized for office uses; their proximity to the core of Downtown makes them ideal for such uses. These two parcels at the north end of East Street also provide opportunities for substantial amounts of office space. The parcel on the east side of East Street is currently a well-used surface parking lot; these parking spaces would need to be replaced elsewhere for development on-site to occur.

Main Street Mixed Use Infill

The retail core of Downtown along Main Street has several parcels that are currently vacant or being used for parking. These parcels should be redeveloped with mixed use buildings of similar character and scale to those that currently exist.

Jefferson Street Garage with Liner Housing

The vast quantity of parking associated with the Second Presbyterian Church, as well as the heavily used State Farm parking deck on site, makes this location a prime site for a public or quasi-public parking garage. A new parking garage here would multiply the amount of parking provided on-site substantially, and, if the parking is shared with surrounding businesses, it may reduce the need for surrounding properties to provide surface lots. It is recommended that such a garage be developed in conjunction with liner housing along the street faces. This

housing could take the form of single family attached or multifamily housing units.

Site Plan: Southwest Quadrant

Figure II-8 represents proposed redevelopment for the opportunity sites located within the southwest quadrant of the study area. Specific information on each opportunity site is provided below.

Non-Retail Mixed Use Infill

The market study conducted as part of this project stated that retail businesses should be concentrated in the core areas of Downtown (see Section II: Market Assessment). However, many historic mixed use buildings exist along Center Street, which should be preserved. These buildings, instead of containing retail uses, should house supportive office, service, and civic uses. New buildings constructed along Center should match the character and form of those buildings that already exist along the street.

Retail Mixed Use Infill

These parcels are included in the retail areas outlined in Section II: Proposed Retail Plan and will greatly add to the character of Downtown if they are infilled as mixed use retail buildings. It is important to retain the ambience of the existing Downtown core by emulating its size and scale through such infill buildings.

Office Infill

Madison Street is a prime location for office and service uses; these parcels' proximity to the core of Downtown makes them ideal for such uses. This building is shown as fronting on Madison Street with parking in the rear.

Potential Hotel

Many comments received during the course of this project indicated that this site, which is across the street from U.S. Cellular Coliseum and near to most other amenities within Downtown, would be an ideal location for a hotel. The market study also found that in the near future, Downtown would be able to accommodate a hotel. This site is large enough to accommodate a sizable hotel as well as a parking deck, whether interior to the building or toward the rear of the lot, as shown in Figure II-8. Other similarly sized sites within Downtown would also be appropriate and should be evaluated as the opportunity arises.

A hotel parking deck could be shared with surrounding businesses on off-peak hours, further easing pressure on businesses to provide surface parking lots. Regardless of where the parking deck is located, the ground floor of the structure should contain hotel uses along both Madison and Front.

Warehouse District Infill

The southern edge of the Downtown study area has historically been used for industrial purposes. Many parcels in the area are either vacant or contain older buildings that are in disrepair. The infill buildings shown on vacant parcels in this area should be sensitive to the industrial character of the area while still cultivating an interest through the arts community (see Section III: Warehouse District).

Figure II-9 represents proposed redevelopment for the opportunity sites located within the southeast quadrant of the study area. Specific information on each opportunity site is provided below.

New Townhouse Development

The market study conducted as part of this project indicated a strong market for single family attached development in peripheral areas of Downtown. The proximity of these parcels to retail and service nodes within Downtown makes them ideal to provide a close supportive market for those businesses. However, as Downtown becomes a more desirable place for office and service businesses to locate, this area may also develop to accommodate those enterprises.

Single Family Infill

Within this residential area adjacent to Downtown, there are several vacant lots, which should be filled in with single family residential development of similar size and scale to the existing neighborhood.

Transitional Townhouse Development

The areas directly to the east of the Downtown study area consist primarily of single family neighborhoods. These neighborhoods currently abut intensive commercial or industrial uses, but should be buffered by an intermediate land use intensity, such as a slightly more intensive residential use or smaller scale office or service uses. For this reason, these parcels are shown with single family attached residential development.

Non-Retail Mixed Use Infill

The south side of this block currently contains a couple of historic mixed use buildings. To limit the amount of retail occurring within Downtown, the opportunity sites shown in Figure II-9 should be developed as non-retail mixed use buildings of similar size and scale to those that currently exist, and should house office, service, or civic uses on the ground floor.

Retail Mixed Use Infill

This node of historic mixed use buildings currently contain a range of uses. The parking lots that exist on the block create a gap in the pedestrian environment and should be filled in with similar mixed use development. Some of the parking that currently exists on these sites may be replaced in the rear of the building.

Government Center

This parcel, adjacent to the Government Center, is a prime location for a civic or office building. It is currently being used as a parking lot, but development pressure may cause this parcel to be developed in the near future.

Office Infill

The proximity of these parcels to the Law and Justice Center as well as several large Downtown office buildings will make them an ideal location for new office development in the long-term future. If possible, the building at the corner of Grove and East Streets should turn the corner to provide frontage along East Street; parking may be located in the rear.

Open Space

Downtowns require open space in order to be livable, walkable, and more attractive. Figure II-10 illustrates where open space currently exists within the Downtown Bloomington study area (in green). There are several areas of open space sprinkled throughout the study area. The majority of open spaces in Downtown are greater than 1/6 acre in size, which is the recommended minimum size for usable open space.

In addition, it is a general planning rule that residences and businesses should be located within 1/6 mile of public open space, as 1/6 mile is considered the maximum distance most people will walk to get to a destination. To illustrate areas of Downtown that are not within 1/6 mile of open space, each open space in Figure II-10 is shown with a 1/6 mile radius circle (in pink) extending out from its center. This exercise illustrates that most residences and businesses in Downtown are within 1/6 mile of at least one open space area, with the exception of the southwest corner of the study area.

Recommendation: Create new open spaces within Downtown, with a focus on the southwest quadrant

Figure II-10 illustrates that most areas of Downtown are within proximate distance (1/6 mile) to open space. However, the southwest quadrant of Downtown is underserved, and should be focused on for opportunities for new open space. One

potential location for open space could include vacant industrial property at the southwestern tip of the study area.

Additionally, there is room for improvement in the quantity and quality of open spaces through the rest of Downtown. A park space within the core of Downtown (between the Madison and East couplet) would be a great asset to the area. This space could be accomplished by transforming vacant parcels or parking lots into a park; several opportunity sites exist within the core of Downtown that could be good candidates (see Section II: Key Redevelopment Opportunities).

Peripheral areas on the east and west sides of the study area are perhaps the best served in the study area in terms of open space. However, since these peripheral areas are largely residential, more open space would be appropriate. There are many opportunities to create open space with the high number of vacant parcels in the transitional areas, and such open space would help to bridge Downtown with the neighborhoods to the east and west.

Recommendation: Address safety, lighting, and maintenance issues

One of the only drawbacks to providing open space is that safety can be a concern if the spaces aren't properly lit, maintained, and policed. To avoid these issues, it is recommended that all open spaces provide adequate lighting, and that the City of Bloomington make a commitment to maintain and patrol these public amenities.

III. Zoning & Land Use Recommendations

Land Use Recommendations

Zoning Recommendations

Warehouse District

III. Zoning & Land Use Recommendations

Existing Land Use Analysis

The existing land uses within Downtown Bloomington are quite varied, as can be seen from Figure III-1: Existing Land Uses and Figure III-2: Pie Chart of Existing Land Uses in Downtown. The largest amount of area is taken up by civic and institutional uses, which comprise about a quarter of the total acreage of developable land Downtown. Office and service uses, as well as residential uses, also make up a considerable chunk at 18% and 17% of total land, respectively. Several uses comprise the rest of developable land, including commercial (9%), retail mixed use (7%), industrial (7%), non-retail mixed use (2.5%), and open space at 1.5%. Vacant parcels or buildings or parking lots make up approximately 13% of the developable area Downtown.

Clustering of Land Uses

As demonstrated in Figure III-1, similar land uses tend to locate near one another. Clustering of land uses is highly beneficial, particularly for businesses that may benefit from walk-by traffic and increased visibility. Such clustering is also beneficial for public health, as it promotes an environment where walking from place to place is feasible.

For example, much of the southern third of Downtown Bloomington is occupied by civic and institutional uses, such as the Law and Justice Center, City Hall, public library, Government Center, and Lincoln parking deck. However, many other civic and institutional uses are sprinkled throughout the Downtown study area, including churches, the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, and the Market Street parking deck.

Along Main and Center Streets, there is a predominance of mixed use buildings that include either retail, office, or service uses on the ground floor and office or residential on the upper stories. Mixed use buildings containing retail on the ground floor are referred to as “Retail Mixed Use” on the legend, while those buildings containing office or service uses on the ground floor and office or residential uses on the upper floors are called “Non-Retail Mixed Use.” There is also a cluster of such mixed use buildings along east Front Street as well as around the McLean County Museum of History. These areas represent the bulk of the commercial uses that are located within Downtown; however, there are a few large parcels outside the Madison-East couplet that contain single-use commercial buildings.

In addition to the office and service uses contained within mixed use buildings, single-use office and service buildings are also present within Downtown, comprising the second largest land use category. These uses do not appear as clustered due to the fact that they are also represented within the “Non-Retail Mixed Use” category. When taking this into account, it can be seen that office and service uses are represented widely across the study area.

In the northwestern quadrant of the study area, there is a large cluster of residential uses, which shows the connection of these parcels to the surrounding residential neighborhood. In fact, the majority of residential land uses within Downtown are located along the periphery of the study area boundary, next to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The majority of residential structures appear single-family in nature; however, many of these buildings have been divided to house 2 or more units. There are also a few more traditional multifamily buildings in Downtown.

Industrial land uses occur at the southwestern edge of the study area, at the northern end of the “Warehouse District” to the south of Downtown. These uses are housed in older industrial buildings, which vary greatly in their conditions. While some of these buildings may represent a challenge in terms of their physical states, this area represents an important piece of Downtown’s history that should be preserved. It also has potential to be reinvented as other such industrial areas within Downtowns have been (See Section III: Warehouse District).

Inactive Spaces

Inactive spaces, such as parking lots, vacant parcels, and vacant storefronts, make up over 13 percent of the developable area Downtown. Such spaces pose a major issue in creating a vibrant and lively Downtown because they create gaps in the street environment that are not pleasant to walk or drive by.

Proposed Land Use

Figure III-3: Proposed Land Use and Figure III-4: Pie Chart of Proposed Land Uses in Downtown illustrate the proposed land use for Downtown Bloomington. The proposed land use plan has the following goals: to concentrate retail in the core of Downtown in the 3 nodes identified by the market study (see Section II: Proposed Retail Plan and Section II: Market Assessment); to promote infill of vacant and underutilized parcels to create a vibrant Downtown; and to strengthen peripheral areas of Downtown, such as the residential and industrial areas, to fortify Downtown's diversity of uses.

Recommendation: Concentrate the retail within the study area into 3 retail nodes

Currently, commercial uses are permitted in most of the study area under the B-3: Central Business District, resulting in commercial that is spread too thin, with vacant lots and storefronts. Focusing the retail that occurs in the study area into the historic core of Downtown will help to create an aesthetically pleasing, economically viable, and pedestrian-friendly shopping experience.

In the Proposed Land Use plan, mixed use buildings containing retail on the ground floor are focused into 3 main nodes, which were identified as key areas by the market study (see Section II: Proposed Retail Plan). These three nodes build upon existing retail mixed use in Downtown. The first proposed node is on Main Street between Locust and Jefferson Streets. This area is where the bulk of Downtown's mixed use retail has historically been located. The second proposed node is around the McLean County Museum of History, where a cluster of mixed use retail already exists, but more infill is possible. The last proposed node is along Front Street and the south side of Washington Street. While there are some vacant parcels along these streets, the buildings that exist are historic mixed use buildings that provide a solid foundation for a retail node.

In terms of redevelopment, filling in existing vacant storefronts with new retail uses within the three nodes should be the first priority. Secondly, parcels within the retail mixed use areas that are vacant or currently being used as parking lots should be redeveloped as mixed use infill buildings.

Recommendation: Locate office, service, or residential uses on the ground floors of mixed use buildings adjacent to the 3 retail nodes

Traditional mixed use buildings, such as those in Figure III-3, comprise much of the building stock within the Madison-East couplet. These types of buildings are typically filled with retail uses on the ground floor and office or retail above. However, due to market constraints, retail uses are only recommended for certain specified areas of Downtown. To maintain the historic building stock of Downtown, the areas not included in the retail nodes should be mixed use buildings with office, service, or residential uses on the ground floors and office or residential on the upper floors.

Recommendation: Allow single-use buildings around Downtown's mixed-use core

Higher-intensity, mixed use buildings should be reserved for the business and retail core of Downtown (the area within the Madison and East couplet). Single-use buildings, such as those containing only office, residential, industrial, commercial, or service uses, are appropriate for areas further from Downtown's core, such as along Madison and East, and outside of the couplet.

Recommendation: Provide flexibility in uses for transitional areas

Many of the areas within the Downtown study area are currently in flux, with either vacant buildings or parcels that are not being utilized to their full potential. It is difficult to predict the shape that some of these areas will take as well as how the market will change in the future. It is therefore critical to allow some flexibility as such areas begin to redevelop.

Current uses in the flexible areas shown on Figure III-3 are very inconsistent, and include parking lots, a bank, a vacant office building, and a janitorial supply store. Based on these existing uses, office or service uses may be appropriate in the future. However, residential uses may also be suitable. Many of these parcels are located directly adjacent to the residential neighborhoods to the east. The market study showed strong potential for residential development in these areas, while the market for office was somewhat weak. Incorporating residential uses in this area will help to provide a supportive market for businesses locating within Downtown.

Recommendation: Encourage the use of transitional parcels as patios, plazas, or other public spaces

Currently, parking lots and vacant parcels within Downtown create gaps in the built environment. Utilizing these spaces as patios, plazas, small parks, or other public spaces will help to make the street a more active and lively place.

Recommendation: Maintain existing residential, civic, and institutional uses that occur within Downtown

Residential uses occur at the edges of Downtown and serve as a bridge between Downtown uses and the residential neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown. They also provide a proximate market for businesses locating in Downtown. These residential uses should be preserved and in some cases, as on the east side of Downtown, expanded.

There are many major civic and institutional uses within Downtown that provide vital services and draw visitors into the area. These uses include the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, churches, government buildings such as the Government Center, Law and Justice Center, and City Hall, and public parking decks. Such uses are critical to the functioning of Downtown and should be kept in place when possible.

Recommendation: Preserve and rehabilitate the existing Warehouse District

The industrial parcels to the south of Downtown represent a valuable market niche that should be preserved and enhanced. Many of the historic buildings located in the Warehouse District are in disrepair; the City and DBA should find opportunities to help rehabilitate and preserve these structures until the market emerges to support the resurgence of the Warehouse District (see Section III: Warehouse District).

Recommendation: Beautify surface parking lots when redevelopment of the lots is not feasible or desired

There are many surface parking lots within Downtown, many of which are not being utilized to their full potential. As Downtown's market for housing and retail improves, demand to redevelop these parking lots will increase, particularly within the Madison-East couplet. Such redevelopment should be encouraged whenever possible.

However, there are several surface parking lots outside the couplet that may continue to provide ancillary parking facilities to residents or employees that are necessary in addition to the public parking decks proposed for Downtown (see Section IV: Parking Recommendations for more information). These parking lots can become an asset rather than an eyesore by utilizing simple beautification methods. For example, landscaping the edges of the parking lot that are adjacent to streets will improve the view of the parking lot from the sidewalk. It is recommended that shade trees, shrubs, and fencing be installed around the perimeter of all parking lots. Also, within the parking lot itself, medians planted with shade trees should be installed, which will help to cool cars and pavement as well as manage the site's stormwater runoff.

Existing Zoning Analysis

The current zoning categories that are mapped within Downtown consist primarily of the B-3: Central Business District and S-2: Public Lands and Institutions District. There are a sprinkling of other zoning categories on the periphery of the study area. These zoning districts are each discussed below.

B-3: Central Business District

The B-3: Central Business District is the most commonly mapped zoning district within the Downtown study area and is meant to provide a variety of retail shops, offices, and services in the core of the City of Bloomington. The B-3 District currently allows for an extensive range of uses and has no minimum parking requirement. The B-3 District is “overmapped” within Downtown, covering almost the entire study area. Permitting core retail, office, and service uses over such a large area dilutes the capability of Downtown to foster interesting subdistricts (i.e. a retail or cultural subdistrict), as similar uses may be dispersed.

Another issue associated with the B-3 District is that it does not protect the historic resources within Downtown, or ensure that future development is complementary to existing buildings. Currently, even within the retail heart of Downtown, someone could theoretically tear down a historic building and replace it with a single-story fast food restaurant.

B-2: General Business District

The B-2 District is primarily mapped in areas adjacent to the B-3 District. The majority of activities permitted in the district include auto-oriented uses such as wholesale suppliers, retail businesses, and service establishments. The auto-dependence of the B-2 District requires that each user within the District provide its own parking area. While B-2 zoning may be appropriate for other areas within the City of Bloomington, its use within Downtown depletes the critical mass of commercial space needed within the core to create a vibrant shopping area.

S-2: Public Lands and Institutions District

The S-2 District includes public uses, publicly-regulated uses, and private uses that have an inherent relationship with the public interest, such as schools, recreation centers, and utility uses. The majority of these areas within Downtown will likely remain public or institutional in nature.

S-4: Historic Preservation District

The S-4: Historic Preservation District Overlay serves to protect, enhance, and the assets of special character or historical value in the City of Bloomington. The overlay is mapped sparsely throughout Downtown, applied only to select parcels found to have significant historic features, although many of the buildings in the core of Downtown have great historic value. The uses permitted within the S-4 District are the same as those of the underlying zoning classification, which is quite permissive in most instances within Downtown.

M-1: Restricted Manufacturing District

The M-1: Restricted Manufacturing District provides for industrial uses that do not have offensive external effects, such as light manufacturing, warehousing, and storage. These areas are developed at low densities to minimize potential negative impacts. The M-1 District is mapped only at the very southern end of the study area, toward the “Warehouse District” adjacent to Downtown (see Section III: Warehouse District).

R-3B: High Density Multiple-Family Residence District

The R-3B residential district is the highest density district in the City of Bloomington, permitting up to six stories and 70 dwelling units per acre. It is mapped in a couple locations along the fringes of B-3: Central Business District zoning. The majority of the areas zoned R-3B in Downtown do not take advantage of the high density allowed; most contain primarily single family or duplex dwellings, likely due to the lack of demand for high-density buildings on the outer edges of Downtown.

GAP Neighborhood Form-Based Code Overlay

The GAP-3 and GAP-4 Districts are mapped in the northwest corner of the Downtown study area. These districts were created as a part of the Gridley-Allin-Prickett (GAP) neighborhood form-based code, which was adopted in 2007. The two districts are similar, with both districts allowing a variety of single family building types and apartment buildings on corners. The GAP-4 District is slightly more intense, as it also permits a single-family attached building type.

Main Street Corridor Form-Based Code Overlay

A form-based code was recently drafted for the Main Street Corridor, which covers most of Madison and East Streets within Downtown. The code is currently under review, with potential adoption later this year. The permitted uses along Madison and East Streets include office, service, and civic uses, which are consistent with those uses recommended in the Proposed Land Use Plan.

Zoning Recommendations

Downtown Bloomington is an unparalleled resource within the Bloomington-Normal region. However, its current zoning regulations do not reflect its historic character or intrinsic assets. The majority of Downtown is blanketed by the B-3: Central Business District zoning category, which is not much different from any other commercial zoning classification in the City of Bloomington. Creating new zoning regulations will ensure that Downtown's zoning assists in creating the vision outlined in this plan instead of being a hindrance to it.

Figure III-7: Proposed Zoning Overlay Framework shows the areas within the Downtown study area boundary that will be covered by the zoning overlay. The zoning code covering the Gridley-Allin-Prickett (GAP) neighborhood has recently been revised and will produce the type of development recommended by this plan; for this reason, the GAP neighborhood is not included in the zoning overlay.

Recommendation: Create a zoning overlay to guide development within Downtown

A zoning overlay is recommended to further define appropriate development within Downtown and will be created as a part of this project. There are currently several problems with the underlying zoning within the study area, which a zoning overlay will correct. These issues are outlined below.

Overmapping of B-3: Central Business District

Currently, the B-3 District is mapped far too extensively for a city the size of Bloomington. B-3 permits an exhaustive list of uses, including all types of commercial and retail, that do not relate to the unique character of Downtown Bloomington. Also, as was discovered through the market study and Retail Plan (see Section II: Proposed Retail Plan), there is only a limited amount of retail area that can be supported within Downtown. To create a vibrant shopping district in the heart of Downtown, retail must be concentrated in specified areas. However, the existing zoning allows retail almost everywhere. Under Figure III-7: Proposed Zoning Overlay Framework, retail uses will be focused in those areas labeled in dark purple, "Mixed Use Buildings." These areas correspond to those outlined in the Retail Plan.

Extraneous Land Use Lists

B-3, S-2, and B-2 Districts are mapped for the majority of land Downtown. The commercial zoning districts currently used permit a wide array of uses, many of which are not appropriate in a pedestrian-friendly and vibrant Downtown. For example, auto sales and service lots are currently permitted by-right in the heart of Downtown, as are gas stations. These types of auto-oriented uses send a message to pedestrians that they are not welcome, and are typically not pleasant to walk past. In addition, these uses take the place of uses that could be accommodated that would contribute greatly to the ambience of Downtown. To prevent this from happening, it is necessary to examine the land uses permitted for each district that occurs within Downtown to ensure that they are all working together to create the desired outcome.

Lack of Context-Sensitive Design

The historic buildings within Downtown are an irreplaceable asset that add great character and charm to Downtown. However, the existing zoning for Downtown does not require historic buildings to be bolstered or complemented by new construction. The same type of construction that is allowed on Veteran's Parkway is permitted to happen Downtown. Fostering a sense of place within Downtown requires special regulations that encompass its existing assets and creates development that is in line with its historic nature. This can be done through carefully crafted bulk and land use regulations that will produce the desired outcome in different subareas of Downtown.

Few Transitional Residential Areas

One critical missing piece in the Downtown area right now is a connection between Downtown and its adjacent residential neighborhoods. The neighborhoods surrounding Downtown are cut off by the Madison-East couplet and larger-scale commercial development that does not relate to the neighborhoods. These residential areas should be buffered from Downtown by transitional residential areas of intermediate density, such as townhomes or low to mid-

rise apartment buildings. The current zoning permits high density residential development on the periphery of Downtown, when this type of housing should be located a bit closer to its retail core. The zoning should include the highest density housing toward the core of Downtown (i.e. along East and Madison, with intermediate density housing just outside the couplet to relate to the residential neighborhoods on the periphery.

Recommendation: Incorporate zoning requirements that protect the character of the historic core of Downtown

Existing historic buildings within Downtown provide a strong foundation for a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly place. These areas should be incorporated into one or more zoning districts (shown on Figure III-7 as the Historic Character District in purple) that preserves and codifies existing physical characteristics. This will ensure that future development in Downtown in key historic areas will be appropriate and in character.

All buildings within the Historic Character District should be mixed-use buildings (including either retail and/or non-retail uses according to Figure III-3: Proposed Land Use Plan) with a minimum of two stories required. These buildings should be built to the sidewalk and parking, if any, should be located in the rear. Another key aspect of creating a walkable environment Downtown will be incorporating an adequate amount of glass on the ground floor of mixed use buildings (see Figure III-8). The vast majority of existing buildings within the Historic Character District meet these parameters already; the zoning code will exist to ensure that future development also follows the same development criteria.

Recommendation: Zone for supportive uses around the core of Downtown

The Office, Service, Civic, and Apartment District shown (in blue) on Figure III-7 is meant to complement those uses occurring within the core of Downtown. Office, service, and civic uses are prevalent already within Downtown, and the market study has shown that Downtown has pent-up demand for housing, particularly rental apartment units. These uses will benefit from locations adjacent to the core of Downtown, and should fit in with the building style existing in the mixed use core.

To that end, this district will require buildings to be built to the sidewalk, with on-site parking, if any, preferred in the rear of the building. Buildings in these areas may be single-story or multiple-story, although taller buildings should be encouraged within the Madison-East couplet.

Recommendation: Provide a flexible zoning category for peripheral areas that will allow Downtown to accommodate future market shifts

The areas included in the Flexible Use District on the eastern side of Downtown are meant to respond to the market as it shifts over the next several years. Office, service, and civic uses will be permitted as well as low-rise apartments and townhouses. Residential uses are ideal for these lots, as they are adjacent to single family neighborhoods and the market study indicated that there would be a strong market for residential in this area in the near future. Bulk and land use regulations will be flexible to accommodate the breadth of options permitted in these areas.

Recommendation: Preserve existing single family areas within Downtown

Existing single family areas on the periphery of Downtown should be preserved as they currently exist. These areas provide a critical link between Downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Within the zoning code, it is likely that single family detached residences as well as duplexes and “big house” style multifamily residences will be permitted in the Residential District (shown in yellow on Figure III-7). The zoning code will take existing physical features of these areas into account to ensure that the areas continue to function as they are.

Warehouse District

The area just south of Downtown (see Figure III-9) is known as the Warehouse District and consists of several warehouse buildings from the mid-19th to early 20th century. Many of these are historic properties that presently remain in operation. This is an important commercial district within the City of Bloomington, offering a different set of uses and employment than the Downtown retail core or Veteran’s Parkway. The Warehouse District developed along with the rail line that runs through the district to the northwest. As early as 1926, busy Main Street was elevated to bypass the railroad crossing; the Center Street overpass followed shortly thereafter. The construction of these overpasses physically separated the area south of Downtown from the more traditional Downtown area.

This physical separation undoubtedly has made it possible for the warehouses and more industrial businesses in the area to remain insulated from Downtown development pressures. However, there are concerns about the condition of the area and about the deteriorating physical condition of some of the aging industrial buildings. While the idea of removing the Main and Center Street overpasses has been considered as a solution to improve the appearance and economic viability of the area, the effect on the existing businesses could be harmful by opening the area up to development pressure. The City recognizes the importance of maintaining a diverse business base and has made planning for the retention of businesses in the Warehouse District a priority.

Main and Center Street Overpasses

The most imposing physical presence in the Warehouse District are the sloping overpasses of Main and Center Streets that lead into and away from Downtown (see Figure III-10). These overpasses are likely the reason the businesses and historic buildings in the area have remained with little pressure from Downtown expansion. Any decision made about how to address this roadway infrastructure, whether it be improving it or tearing it down, is associated with broad economic and land use impacts on the surrounding area.

The removal of the overpasses could bring a great change to the area in the mid- to long-term future. The development of Downtown-centered uses like retail and residential have traditionally ignored the Warehouse District. The biggest reason for this is because these types of uses do not mix well with the intrusive, loud, and light blocking set of overpasses. The area around the overpasses does not make for a comfortable pedestrian environment the way that Downtown does. Also, the noise and traffic associated with many industrial and warehouse uses are not as comfortable for residential and retail uses to locate around.

While the area may not be appropriate for residential and retail uses, it is ideal for types of businesses and buildings currently situated there. The Warehouse District buildings developed there over the course of the last century because of the easy access to the railroad, and the presence of the overpasses does not negatively affect the warehouse and craftsman businesses. In fact, the presence of the overpasses has protected the area and made it possible to retain businesses by keeping rents low.

In communities where elevated highways have been demolished, such as New York City, Milwaukee, and San Francisco, the result has been increased development activity on the site of the former infrastructure and surrounding land. Much of the new development comes in the form of residential and commercial uses, which become more feasible as the quality of light and air increases. Often times these developments are a welcome addition because they can reconnect communities. In the case of the Warehouse District, however, residential and retail uses would most likely be a detriment to the existing community of businesses in the area, raising property taxes and potentially driving such businesses away.

The main focus for the area south of Downtown should be to retain the warehouse and craftsman industrial businesses located there. These businesses are a vital part of the economic and employment makeup of the city and should not be pushed out by development pressure. Improvements to the area and the building stock are possible from within the community without the removal of the Downtown overpasses.

There are more suitable recommendations to improve the physical appearance and condition of the area that better support the existing businesses in the Warehouse District.

Recommendation: Encourage the stabilization of Warehouse District building conditions

Happily, many of the historic building in the Warehouse District remain in active use. Many, however, suffer from maintenance issues due to their age and the cost of repairs. Bloomington has seen great success in the outcome of its preservation efforts in the Downtown and should recognize the importance of continuing these preservation and stabilization efforts in the Warehouse District.

Recommendation: Introduce and promote a targeted loan or grant program for the Warehouse District

The City and DBA should designate funding to assist building owners in stabilizing and improving the conditions of their buildings. This type of program should focus on restoring the immediate soundness and historic character of the structures. Examples of this type of work would be roof repair, structural reinforcement, and brick tuckpointing. This program would not cover complete costs, but rather offer incentives for owners to invest in their property.

Recommendation: Educate property owners regarding other funding sources or tax benefits of rehabilitation

The DBA should identify additional funding sources like grants and tax credits for property owners to assist in the rehabilitation of Warehouse District structures. By educating property owners about these types of funding opportunities, Warehouse District properties could be rehabilitated with little expense to the DBA.

Recommendation: Cultivate the artist community as well as craftsman industrial uses in the area

Downtown Bloomington has a flourishing artist community that is beginning to take advantage of the types of spaces available within the Warehouse District. In addition, “craftsman industrial” uses, which are small scale industrial uses with little to no noxious by-products, should be encouraged to locate in the Warehouse District. Craftsman industrial uses can often include a showroom or small retail outlet, and often include such businesses as commercial bakeries, wood shops, furniture and fixture manufacturing, and pottery studios. Art galleries and craftsman industrial businesses also may host special events that will help to bring people into the Warehouse District and further encourage investment.

Recommendation: Connect the Warehouse District with Madison Street

The Warehouse District is presently cut off from Downtown by the Main-Center overpass, making access to the area difficult and confusing. Reconnecting Madison Street through the existing parking lot (see Figure II-5 in Section III) would provide an easy route to access the area, improving its visibility and bringing more visitors. As the Warehouse District becomes more of an attraction to visitors, it is also recommended that wayfinding signage be installed to direct passers-by to the area.

Recommendation: Maintain the current manufacturing zoning classifications in the Warehouse District

Currently, much of the property within the Warehouse District is zoned M-1: Restricted Manufacturing District, which permits the types of structures and uses that exist in the area. This zoning designation should be maintained to further protect the businesses in this location. The City should discourage loft-style residential redevelopment in this area in order to contain development pressures as Downtown begins to redevelop.

LoDo District

Denver, Colorado

LoDo (Lower Downtown) in Denver, Colorado is an example of successful reinvestment in a commercial warehouse district. Anchored by Denver Union Station and Coors Field, the district is comprised of the highest concentration of historic commercial buildings in the city, many of which are rehabilitated warehouse and industrial buildings.

Maintaining District Character

Preservation of LoDo District buildings was a main priority in redevelopment plans. In the City of Denver Lower Downtown Neighborhood Plan, the industrial past of the area was embraced and viewed as an asset. Design guidelines encourage the retention of elements unique to warehouse building design like loading bays, fire escapes, and large painted wall signs. These elements are highly valued and give the area its distinct sense of character.

The rehabilitated warehouse buildings now support a variety of uses in downtown Denver. Residential and office uses occupy the upper stories of structures, with restaurants and shops lining the ground floors. While this mixed use district is more suitable for Main Street than south of Downtown, an important example can be drawn from the treatment of the collection of historic warehouse buildings by the community in LoDo.

IV. Parking Policy Framework

Introduction

Parking Inventory and Occupancy Analysis

Parking Recommendations

IV. Parking Policy Framework

Introduction

Parking in Downtown Bloomington was noted as a major issue by participants in the community process for this project. Parking is provided through on-street spaces (unmetered), public off-street spaces (garages and lots), and private off-street spaces (garages and lots). On-street spaces are not metered, but are managed with time limits, generally 90-minute and 2-hour limits, with no peak period restrictions. There are numerous private off-street surface lots, generally designated for various retail, residential, and business uses.

The study area was divided into seven zones, based upon the general clumping of land uses. As shown in Figure IV-1, the zones include:

- Zone 1 – central Downtown core, generally bounded by Locust, Front, East, and Madison Streets;
- Zone 2 – northwestern quadrant comprised primarily of residential uses; bounded by Locust, Monroe, Madison, and Lee Streets;
- Zone 3 – mid-western area generally comprised of industrial and warehouses; bounded by Monroe, Olive, Madison, and Lee Streets;
- Zone 4 – southwestern quadrant generally comprised of industrial uses; bounded by Olive, Water, Main, and Lee Streets;
- Zone 5 – southeastern quadrant primarily with civic uses; an “L” shaped zone generally bounded by Front and Olive on the north, Water/Jackson on the south, Gridley and East on the east, and Madison and Main on the west;
- Zone 6 – mid-eastern area primarily comprised of retail uses; bounded by Washington, Olive, Gridley, and East Streets; and,
- Zone 7 – northeastern quadrant comprised of a mix of land uses, bounded by Locust (and partially Douglas) on the north, Washington on the south, Gridley and Prairie on the east, and East St. on the west.

Parking Inventory & Occupancy Analysis

On-Street Parking

Inventory and occupancy counts of on-street parking spaces were collected at various locations within the study area by City of Bloomington staff. The data was collected by the parking attendants that patrol the Downtown area for parking violations. Counts were taken on weekdays for the following general time periods:

Thursday, October 31, 2008:	10am, 1pm, 3pm
Friday, October 31, 2008:	8am, 1pm, 4pm
Monday, November 3, 2008:	1pm, 2pm, 3pm
Wednesday, November 5, 2008:	9am, 11am, 2pm
Tuesday, November 4, 2008:	9am, 11am, 3pm

As shown in Table IV-1, 528 on-street parking spaces within the Downtown study area were inventoried. These spaces are primarily 90-minute and 2-hour parking limits. Over the five days that were counted, the highest overall occupancy occurred in the afternoon, from about 3pm to 4pm, with a high of 63 percent at 3pm. For vehicular purposes, available parking is considered to be at capacity when about 85-90 percent of the available parking spaces are occupied.

Figure IV-2 presents a summary of parking occupancy for the peak period (time of highest demand): Thursday at 3:00pm. During the peak time, there were several blocks in Zone 1 and Zone 7 that had occupancies of over 85 percent (shown in red). The area bounded by Jefferson, Front, Madison, and Main Streets had the highest occupancies. In Zone 7, occupancies greater than 85 percent were experienced along Douglas Street and East Street.

While in total it appears that there is enough parking to meet current demand, there are a few blocks that experience higher parking use of on-street spaces. Most visitors desire to park as close to their destination as possible. Very few are

willing to park more than about 500 feet from their destination. Employees, particularly in a Downtown or more urban environment, are generally willing to park a bit further, but typically no more than about a ¼ mile from their workplace. Therefore, while parking quantities could meet the “theoretical” demand, the location of the available parking could limit its use and effectiveness. Detailed inventory and occupancy information by zone are shown in the appendix. These tables show that some blocks experience occupancies of 85 percent or more during some portions of the day, particularly in Zone 1.

Off-Street Parking

Public Garages

Data was provided by the City of Bloomington for five public parking garages/lots in the Downtown study area:

- Market Street Garage, Zone 1
- US Cellular Coliseum Garage, Zone 3.
- Butler Lot, Zone 3
- Lincoln Garage, Zone 1
- Snyder Garage, Zone 1

All facilities include both monthly and hourly parking spaces, as presented in Table IV-2. Monthly permits are available to be “oversold” by about 10 percent, although only the Market Street garage is fully sold. The general users of these spaces are Downtown employees and residents. Rates at these facilities are \$40 for a monthly permit and \$0.65 per hour for the hourly public parking. Gates are down for paid parking Monday – Friday, 7:00am – 5:30pm at the Lincoln garage and 7:00am – 3:30pm for all other facilities. Parking is free on nights and weekends.

There is a total of 1,941 spaces available in these five facilities. Of the total number of spaces, almost 80% (1,538 spaces) are sold as monthly spaces, leaving only 20% available on an hourly basis. While the available monthly spaces are sold out at the Market Street garage, according to the City of Bloomington, many of the rented spaces are not being used. The hourly spaces available to the public are only about half utilized.

The Snyder Lot has nearly 90% of its spaces designated for monthly parking, while only 64% of those spaces are being used, indicating that a greater number could be used for hourly parking. The Coliseum garage has a greater number of hourly spaces available to the public, with only about a quarter utilized. Data was collected showing hourly parking data for public parking during the peak period - Thursday at 3 pm (see Section VII: Appendix for more information). During any of the weekdays counted, the highest usage of the Market Street garage was 54 percent. For the Coliseum garage, the highest usage was 26 percent. The hourly spaces are more typically used during events at the Coliseum.

Surface Parking Lots

Occupancy counts were conducted in six surface parking lots located in Zone 7 – Northeast Sector. This zone was identified as having potential redevelopment opportunities due to its large surface parking lots and adjacency to the residential neighborhoods to the east. The lots included in this analysis are listed in Table IV-3 and shown in Figure IV-3.

As shown in Table IV-3, there are a total of 376 spaces in the six lots counted. The largest lot is the State Farm structure with 144 spaces. This lot is used for State Farm employees along with free public parking. All other lots are for private use with no general public parking available.

Occupancy counts were taken in May 2009 from 8am until 6pm (see Table IV-4). The State Farm deck had the highest occupancies, generally fully used from 8am until after 3pm. Mixed use lot 1 was considered full (over 85% occupied) during the mid-morning hours and mid-afternoon hours. Mixed use lot 2 was only about half used until after 4pm when its occupancy rate increased. All other lots were generally half full or less during most of the day. This indicates that many of the underutilized lots studied have potential to redevelop in the next several years.

Turnover and Duration Analysis

In addition to inventory and occupancy studies, turnover and duration studies were also conducted. These studies tracked on-street parkers on selected blocks in the study area. Blocks identified for turnover studies were those in close proximity to the Downtown retail core and were also identified by the City as areas where parking is heavily used or had received complaints regarding parking. The purpose of this analysis was to determine how often each parking space “turns over”

(how many cars are parked in a space) during the day and the average length of time that a vehicle is parked in a space. This statistic is important to consider, as the longer a vehicle is parked in an on-street space, the fewer spaces available.

Table IV-5 presents the turnover rates and average duration for on-street parking on a typical day in May 2009. In the blocks selected for turnover studies, there were approximately 246 spaces that were occupied throughout the day by 999 different vehicles. Average turnover on the blocks studied was 4.1 and the average duration was 1.4 hours. This indicates that most of the on-street spaces in the area were being occupied by a vehicle for about 1.5 hours, with about 4 vehicles occupying a parking space per day (during the study hours).

While a duration of 1.4 hours per vehicle appears to fit in with the posted time limits per space, it was observed that a number of the same vehicles were being moved from space to space throughout the day. Further analysis of the data showed that an average of 20-30 percent of the spaces on each block were being occupied by the same vehicles being moved throughout the day. This finding was generally common across most of the blocks surveyed.

This indicates that a number of people, most likely Downtown employees, are moving their vehicles at the end of the time limit to avoid a parking ticket. The end result is that this action artificially lowers the duration length and increases the turnover rate. Should these vehicles be considered to be occupying a space for the entire day, the duration rates would actually be higher than the posted time limit.

The act of moving vehicles from parking space to parking space, while not illegal, does take up prime parking spaces during the day that could be used by Downtown visitors and shoppers. However, this may not necessarily indicate a need for more employee parking, but indicates some changes may be needed as to how parking resources are managed. While some employees may need a car to be accessible throughout the day, there appears to also be an unwillingness of some employees to walk from a parking deck or lot further away, particularly when the on-street parking is free.

Parking Analysis Summary

The parking analysis was based on data provided by the City of Bloomington, supplemented with an analysis of specific subareas. While the overall occupancy data did not include all public parking locations in the Downtown, it does give an indication of how parking is being used, the locations that may warrant changes, and implications for future development. Several issues are identified relative to the demand for parking and location of parking.

- In total, there appears to be adequate parking to meet current (and potentially future) demand. There are, however, several blocks that experience higher parking use. The area bounded by Jefferson, Front, Main, and Madison Streets had the highest on-street occupancies.
- With occupancies of over 85-90 percent, visitors will drive around in search of available parking. Searching for available parking in close proximity to a preferred destination could lead to increased congestion and increased vehicular and pedestrian conflicts, along with potentially more occurrences of double parking.
- Public parking in some of the garages is underutilized. This is a relatively common occurrence in areas where free on-street parking is provided.
- Turnover studies indicate that employees are moving vehicles throughout the day. A variety of options can be used to address the need that some employees may need their vehicle throughout the day, while “encourage” others to park in more appropriate locations. The use of a limited number of Downtown parking permits could be available to employees who need to park near their work location. Adding meters or pay stations could “encourage” employees to park in lots further away. Having a mix of time limits could also encourage employees to park in less congested blocks and eliminate the need for them to move their vehicles throughout the day.

Parking Recommendations

The primary goal of any downtown parking policy should be to create an environment where very few downtown trips generate more than one parking action — converting drivers to pedestrians while they are downtown. Such an environment both relies upon and supports local streets that are lined with dense mixtures of interesting land uses and destinations. To achieve this, Downtown needs an appealing, accessible supply of public parking spaces and an interesting and stimulating pedestrian environment that connects parking opportunities and Downtown destinations.

This three-step parking policy framework will work to move Downtown Bloomington toward providing such an environment:

1. Shift to an emphasis on public, rather than private, parking in support of a vibrant Downtown.
2. Use performance-targets to manage existing parking spaces.
3. Convert parking revenues into Downtown improvements.

Emphasize Public Parking

A conventional approach to parking development typically includes a strong emphasis on accessory on-site parking spaces reserved for individual destinations. When this approach is applied to Downtown areas, the result dilutes the walkability of Downtown attractions by spreading them further apart. On-site parking also weakens the economic potential of urban sites because sites are comprised of parking instead of more building area. Cities with more effective downtown parking have achieved more context-sensitive approaches that recognize the collective costs associated with applying conventional, suburban-oriented zoning standards in urban commercial centers. These approaches usually involve consolidating private surface parking lots into public lots or garages, as well as a variety of other strategies, outlined below.

Recommendation: Relieve pressure for surface parking lots by offering convenient spaces within public parking decks

Public parking decks are more efficient than surface parking lots for a couple reasons. First, public garages consolidate spaces into one concentrated area, typically building multiple stories to capitalize on the amount of land available. Surface parking lots by nature spread out parking spaces horizontally instead of vertically, resulting in the use of more land area. Second, public garages charge for the use of parking spaces, increasing revenue for garage structure improvements or for improvements within Downtown.

Since several public parking decks already exist in Downtown, those decks should first be utilized to their maximum potential before constructing new decks (see Recommendation: Price public garages effectively). Existing parking decks, especially those within the Madison-East couplet (Lincoln and Market Street Garages), are a significant resource for Downtown and should be maintained and utilized to their maximum ability to avoid potential pedestrian conflicts in crossing Business 51.

In the event that the construction of a new parking deck is needed, it is recommended that the City focus on the locations identified in yellow on Figure IV-4. The City should also incorporate active, sidewalk-oriented, commercial or residential land uses into new decks at sidewalk level (see Figure IV-5). The proposed parking deck locations, outlined below, were chosen for their proximity to the Downtown core and are also discussed in Section II: Illustrative Master Plan.

East & Douglas Streets

This location currently has large surface lots. According to the parking occupancy study, the parking lot along East Street is well used. The construction of a public parking deck in this location could replace all of the current parking spaces and add many more in a proximate location to the heart of Downtown.

Roosevelt Street

The City of Bloomington currently owns several parcels along this block and has indicated an interest in purchasing more in hopes of a large redevelopment project. If the Market Street Garage is torn down, many of the spaces will need to be replaced elsewhere if a mixed-use development is pursued. This Roosevelt Street location would be an ideal place to replace such spaces, since it is adjacent to the old garage site and will thus serve much of the same population. As discussed in Section II: Illustrative Master Plan, it would be ideal for this garage to incorporate a housing element along Roosevelt Street, such as condos or townhouses, that would relate to the existing single-family homes across the street.

Jefferson Street

Another potential parking garage that could include liner housing is the site along Jefferson Street. This site currently houses a small parking deck owned by State Farm that is in need of repairs, as well as a surface parking lot owned by Second Presbyterian Church. A new multistory garage in this location could serve the needs of State Farm as well as the church, and provide public parking for those visiting the businesses along Main Street and around the McLean County Museum of History.

Butler Lot/Elks Lodge

The Butler Lot location currently houses an underutilized public parking lot. The Elks Lodge, located adjacent to and north of the Butler Lot, was just sold to be used as private parking for a condo building. As was discussed in the Illustrative Master Plan, there is potential for a hotel to develop on this site due to its proximity to the U.S. Cellular Coliseum and other Downtown attractions. A new parking deck could be incorporated as part of the hotel redevelopment or as a standalone deck.

Recommendation: Encourage valet parking

Valet services can expand the effective-inventory serving Downtown destinations by making parking facilities that would be either too inconvenient (remote) or off-limits (private) to self-parking customers. Valet operators typically make arrangements with owners of under-utilized parking facilities (public or private) that would otherwise sit idle at times when parking-constrained uses typically experience peak demand. Additionally, valet operations can expand the effective-capacity of individual facilities by allowing efficient parking configurations such as tandem (bumper to bumper parking) and stacked (mechanical lifts) arrangements unavailable to self-parking operations.

Recommendation: Price public off-street parking lots & garages effectively

Effective pricing of public parking facilities can help to address constraints as well as under-utilization. Downtown's off-street garages also play a vital role in creating and supporting a park-once environment. The previous section included a summary of recent utilization data from the five current Downtown public facilities/garages.

Spaces within Downtown's public facilities accommodate both hourly and monthly parking, with each garage setting aside a portion of spaces for each. This is a common management practice that recognizes that off-street facilities are the preferable locations for commute-oriented parking, while at the same time acknowledging their role in supporting specific short-term and medium-term parking needs.

The recent occupancy patterns at these facilities, however, as assessed through data provided by the City of Bloomington, indicate an over-supply of short-term parking at each, while monthly parking is under-supplied at the Market Street garage. Under-supplying the monthly set-aside at this facility misses an opportunity to both increase public parking revenues and remove long-term parking pressure on nearby streets. Additionally, much of the short-term parking demand that exists today at these facilities is likely created as much by high curb-occupancies as by specific demand for garage parking.

Management of each facility should follow these basic guidelines:

1. Shift as much day long parking demand away from curb spaces as possible.
2. Reserve garage spaces for short-term or long-term parking only to the extent that demand warrants. Once on-street pricing is established to maintain space availability, demand for these spaces would be expected to fall even lower.
3. Reduce rates for short-term parking at each garage to half that of the lowest hourly-rate charged for on-street parking in Downtown.
4. Use pricing to keep demand and supply in relative balance for monthly parking:
 - a. Leave the price for monthly permits for the Coliseum garage unchanged until any increased demand generated by the introduction of on-street meters can be assessed, after which adjust rates up or down in roughly 25% increments until demand reaches about 105% of the monthly space inventory.
 - b. Increase the monthly rate at the Market Street garage by 25%, and continue to adjust rates up or down to maintain demand at roughly 105% of the monthly space inventory, particularly after on-street metering is introduced.
5. Make clear that the intent of the new pricing structure is to create a rational set of cost-convenience parking options by using demand-responsive rates to ensure availability among all parking options.
6. Use all parking revenues to fund payment of existing garage construction bonds, and to fund construction of new spaces if and when the City determines it is advisable to do so.

Recommendation: Price on-street parking spaces effectively

Curbs that are too full are underpriced.

Parking meters have been around for over 70 years, and are widely disparaged especially in smaller urban centers. The situation in Bloomington represents a common reaction to this history — turnover is encouraged through time limits rather than meters. Bloomington is also in good company in its struggles to enforce meter-less time limits. In fact, the staffing commitments and technology investments that are necessary to effectively enforce existing limits not only consume scarce public resources, they also engender tremendous resentment, without any conspicuous benefits.

The abandonment of parking pricing is the direct result of the poor implementation of meters throughout most of their history. The meter was introduced specifically for the purpose of generating turnover among curb spaces for which demand would otherwise overwhelm supply. To work effectively in this manner, the price charged by the meters must be high enough to moderate parking stays while not being so high that too many spaces remain empty. However, political reluctance to set prices high enough to impact parking stays has too often reduced meters to little more than tax-collection boxes – charging a fee for which there is no immediate, beneficial impact in terms of space availability.

Despite this history of mismanagement, pricing remains the most direct and most effective means for managing demand for, and thereby maintaining access to, public parking. What many downtown businesses and planners are now realizing is that ready-access is more valued by downtown patrons than is a low meter rate and that it is in fact time limits, not specific meter rates, that create the most resentment and anxiety among downtown patrons.

Pricing that is demand-responsive and set to ensure availability even on the most popular blocks at the most popular times will provide at least two conspicuous benefits — spaces will be available for anyone willing to pay the market-price and time limits will become a thing of the past. Even more conspicuous benefits can accrue from this strategy by returning all meter revenues to fund local physical improvements.

The following are recommended steps for establishing pricing for curb spaces:

1. Establish space availability – rather than supply, price, or turnover – as the primary performance measure for public parking resources.
2. Set an availability target of 15% for on-street spaces during peak hours - one or two open spaces on each block.
3. Install parking meters within the area between Madison and East streets, from Locust Street to Olive Street (see Figure IV-4) to allow better management of turnover and availability patterns among Downtown's most in-demand parking spaces.
4. Invest in meter technology that provides flexible, convenient payment options, such as credit cards, remote payment, and cell phone payment.
5. Invest in meter technology that provides strategic price management options including variable pricing by day, time-of-day, and length of stay.
6. Set parking fees based on demonstrated demand. After setting an initial parking rate of perhaps \$0.50 per hour, increase rates (in \$0.25 increments) along blocks with under-performing availability (less than 10%) and decrease rates along blocks with over-performing availability (more than 25%) every three months, based on observed availability patterns.
7. Use all parking revenues to fund payment of existing garage construction bonds, and to invest in conspicuous streetscape and/or transportation improvements such as improved bus stops, Downtown employee transit passes, crosswalk improvements, parking shuttles, and bicycle parking (see recommendation below).

Recommendation: Use parking revenue to improve Downtown

Creating an enjoyable, attractive Downtown atmosphere is key to encouraging a walkable environment. Utilizing parking revenues to fund Downtown improvements - commonly referred to as a Parking Benefit District - is one way to achieve this. The Parking Benefit District approach has been used to combine price-based parking management with the creation of new revenue streams dedicated to improving the appearance and functionality of the areas generating parking demand. Keeping revenue in the area where parking demand is created not only helps maintain an effective Park-Once environment, it is also typically a highly effective means for gaining support for pricing strategies among local businesses. Creating a clear, conspicuous connection between money going into meters and the appearance of nearby improvements can also reduce resistance to meters among parking customers and keep people coming Downtown.

Recommendation: Require employees to park off-street in public parking decks or lots

The parking inventory and analysis found that employees working Downtown were utilizing valuable on-street parking spaces, decreasing the supply of on-street parking to those shopping or visiting. To create a favorable parking scenario for such visitors, employers should require their employees to park off-street, either in public parking decks or lots. This will greatly benefit the businesses Downtown, as customers will have easy access to parking near the businesses they wish to visit.

Manage Private Parking

Existing private parking supplies are a resource that should be managed carefully. Mismanagement results in lots that are completely independent from one another, serving only one establishment each. While this may be necessary for select businesses, most businesses can take advantage of sharing parking supplies with one another during off-peak hours. For new construction of private parking, the City should use techniques that encourage utilization of public garages before businesses construct new surface lots. Several techniques to accomplish this are outlined below.

Recommendation: Share private parking supplies

A walking customer is a shared customer.

Encouraging the sharing of private, accessory parking lots within Downtown is a means by which the effective public parking supply can be expanded without sacrificing developable land or paying high construction costs. Daytime uses such as banks, medical offices, dry cleaners, churches, and markets commonly have their own, dedicated parking facilities. These uses also frequently have well-defined peak-demand periods that neatly off-set similarly well-defined peak-use hours at evening-based Downtown uses that typically struggle to provide on-site parking sufficient to their needs — i.e., restaurants, pubs and nightclubs, theaters, and entertainment venues.

Downtown land constraints have long driven businesses to work out formal or informal arrangements to collectively meet parking needs through shared resources. The benefits of such arrangements, however, extend beyond the businesses directly involved. The use of off-site parking options generates walking traffic, adding to a sense of public vitality and exposing parking patrons to Downtown uses beyond their primary destinations. Recognizing the shared benefits of this, many downtowns have explored means by which shared-parking can be publicly encouraged and supported.

Recommendation: Use a shared-parking broker

Creating a shared-parking broker is one popular means by which this can be done. Such a broker can typically be sought within the local Chambers of Commerce, existing business associations and improvement districts, or economic development agencies. A broker can help facilitate a higher volume of such arrangements by:

- Dealing with liability, insurance, and security issues;
- Tracking off-setting peaks to identify opportunities;
- Tracking constraints and opportunities, including terms under which surplus-holders would be willing to open up their inventories; and
- Impersonally connecting opportunities to constraints, rather than leaving it to individuals to take the initiative and negotiate with (go begging among) their neighbors.

Recommendation: Discourage new surface lot development in the core of Downtown

New surface parking lots, particularly within the retail core of Downtown, should not be necessary; such parking spaces can likely be absorbed by existing public facilities or public facilities to be constructed in the future. The City has already recognized this fact, as there is currently no minimum parking requirement for the majority of the study area, which is a great first step. In addition, the City should prohibit new surface lots within the Downtown or, at a minimum, require that parking lots be located to the rear of active, sidewalk-oriented uses.

Recommendation: Set parking maximums

To avoid massive parking lots that occupy valuable land within Downtown, the City should set maximum limits on on-site, accessory parking in areas where developable land is most constrained or to protect primary pedestrian zones.

Recommendation: Institute a flexible cap on parking

Allow developers to build beyond maximum parking standards (see recommendation below) in return for in lieu fee payment or investments in alternative modes — such as the provision of bicycle parking, the reservation of prime spaces for carpool vehicles, or the provision of transit discounts, passes, or reimbursements.

Recommendation: Unbundle parking

To encourage private parking to respond more to market demand, developers should be encouraged to “unbundle” parking. Unbundling means that the use or ownership of a parking space is identified as a separate, optional cost item for all building occupants. Typically, parking is “bundled” into the cost of leasing, renting, or purchasing office space or Downtown condominiums. By requiring the separate, optional acquisition of parking access, cities can encourage more efficient private parking supplies by creating a cost-incentive for tenants to reduce their parking consumption as well as a cost-incentive for developers to only build as much parking as they can sell.

Recommendation: Encourage car-sharing

Car-sharing programs involve renting cars by the hour as needed. Cars are typically scattered around an urban area in convenient locations; users can simply make reservations online or over the phone and pick a car up at the location closest to them. These types of programs are becoming increasingly popular and there are currently two national car-share companies (Flexcar and ZipCar) and a Chicago-based company (iGo). Also, Illinois State University in Normal recently incorporated Connect by Hertz, a car-sharing company targeted toward university campuses.

Car-share programs decrease the number of total parking spaces needed - instead of one car per person, multiple people are sharing the same car, which takes up only one parking space. Surveys have shown that 50 percent of car-share users

can give up their vehicles after joining and 70 percent of members can avoid having to buy a car in the first place. It is also cheaper than maintaining a personal vehicle - typically, members are only required to pay the hourly fee associated with the rental (gas, insurance, and maintenance are handled by the car-share company).

As was recommended in the Main Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan, the City should encourage car-sharing through requirements or incentives to offer spaces to established car-sharing organizations. For example, the City could decrease the amount of parking developers are required to build by three to four spaces per car-share space that is incorporated.

V. Transportation Component

Issues Analysis and Recommendations

Bicycle Facilities

Walkable Thoroughfares

Vehicle Circulation and Mobility

Streetscape Recommendations

V. Transportation Component

Issues, Analysis and Recommendations

“Walkability” is a term used in this plan to describe the extent to which places are comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. Walkable places require a fine-grained network of connected streets that provide many options for travel, managed vehicle speeds, and human-scaled development placing amenities and services within a ¼ mile radius of one’s home.

Challenges within Downtown include restoring the high levels of walkability that existed in Bloomington prior to World War II. In the last fifty years, modern traffic engineering and development patterns have emphasized automobile transportation over walkability. The resulting street grid is harsh and uninviting to pedestrians. The following transportation assessment and recommendations attempt to soften the auto-orientation of this area and restore greater levels of walkability.

From a transportation planning context, the following issues exist for this master plan: walkable urban design, walkable thoroughfares, and vehicle circulation and mobility.

Recommendation: Implement walkable urban design

Much of America’s suburban land development pattern suffers from street and highway networks influencing its structure. Highways designated as arterials change little as they approach developed areas. Generally, speeds drop from 55 to 45 or 35 mph, but on-street parking is usually not allowed in emerging areas and is often removed from older areas. Arterial street designs, by definition, tend to exclude intersections with side streets of limited volume, leading to longer block size (600 to 1,000 feet and higher) and higher speeds of 45 miles per hour (mph) or more, both of which cause difficulty for pedestrians. As shown in Figure V-2, a pedestrian’s chance of being killed in a crash is graphed against vehicle speed. The graph indicates that in a crash with a vehicle traveling greater than 30 mph, a pedestrian’s odds of dying are better than 50%.

Finer grained street networks better serve urban peak travel demand due to multiple streets serving multiple modes – walking, cycling, transit, and the motor vehicle. Transportation plans for balanced mobility can be crafted with walkability considered first and vehicle mobility second. This is not to imply that motor vehicle mobility will be dramatically reduced, but that pedestrians are also given a high priority in addition. Achieving high levels of mobility for pedestrians is more difficult, as pedestrians are more vulnerable than are drivers, and solutions for their comfort are more complex. Often, greater walkability yields only small reductions in vehicle capacity, even though vehicle speeds are lower.

Downtown Bloomington has retained much of its historic street grid network. Over time, some streets have been widened and some intersections have been modified to permit higher-speed traffic operations than desired for a walkable area. In addition, the conversion of two-way streets to one-way operation has reduced the walkability of the area and complicated travel patterns.

The vision for Downtown Bloomington (see Section II: Downtown Vision), as described by the community and refined by the design team during the charrette, is a return to the walkable city structure of the early 1900’s, with Downtown residences, places to shop and find entertainment, and restoration of the civic centers in the area. This vision is also an important part of the transportation design criteria for Downtown Bloomington. The return to a walkable city requires managing traffic speeds to pedestrian friendly levels and ensuring connectivity of the street system. To accomplish this vision, Downtown should incorporate the use of walkable thoroughfares for specific sections of the study area, as described in this section.

Recommendation: Create walkability districts

Past conventional zoning and engineering standards, particularly those related to traffic engineering, has been focused on minimizing automobile delay, and not the creation of an environment attractive to and safe for pedestrians. These are not mutually exclusive goals, but the lack of pedestrian emphasis allows motor vehicle issues to further prevail. Street design standards, for instance, typically require large (20’ or greater) curb radii and wide (11’ or wider) travel lanes. On-street parking may be restricted in some instances. While these standards may be appropriate in auto-oriented areas, the creation of highly walkable places requires alternate standards.

For example, the thoroughfare types described in this report include narrow lane widths and on-street parking. These

walkable thoroughfare designs are not intended for use in areas with suburban patterns and features. Thoroughfares designed using narrower dimensions will only function properly within areas adhering to walkable patterns of development, such as the districts within the Downtown Bloomington study area.

New walkable thoroughfare definitions should be adopted for the Downtown study area. Transportation design engineers will have greater professional guidance when implementing the thoroughfares if the City adopts the Walkable Thoroughfare Definitions, which will be included as the recommended code modifications for Bloomington.

Recommendation: Implement Walkable Thoroughfares

Following the paradigm of Land Use First/Transportation Second, the design team identified areas where walkability improvements were needed and created specific land use designs for these areas. Walkable thoroughfares were then created or adapted from existing street sections to serve these areas with appropriate vehicle speeds. The target speed for a walkable thoroughfare is 30 mph or less. The vast majority of streets can be retrofitted within the existing curb lines. The proposed walkable thoroughfares are described below and on the following pages.

The title of each thoroughfare provides most of the information necessary to understand the thoroughfare's function and lane arrangement. An ST 66-40 8/12/12/8, for instance, is a 66' right-of-way Street with 40' of pavement, arranged in an 8' parking lane and two 12' vehicle lanes. The ST 32-20 6/14 is a 32' right-of-way Street with 20' of pavement arranged in a 6' parking lane and a 14' yield lane. The first two letters of the title indicate the thoroughfare type, such as ST – Street, AV – Avenue, CS - Commercial Street, or BV – Boulevard. A thoroughfare assignment plan is included as Figure V-1, indicating the recommended locations.

Some features, such as planting strips and sidewalks, are not indicated in the thoroughfare titles and must be determined by looking at the actual street section diagram. More information on streetscape features may be found in Section V: Streetscape Recommendations.

Proposed revised street sections for those one-way streets recommended for conversion to two-way operations are made for Madison, Center, Main, and East Streets.

Bicycle Facilities

All of the street sections to follow include the use of shared lane markings or “sharrows” and an increase in bicycle racks to facilitate greater bicycle use. Bicycle recommendations for Downtown are described in more detail below.

Recommendation: Include shared bicycle-vehicle lanes

Providing shared lane markings, such as a sharrow, will encourage greater bicycle use. A sharrow is a specific pavement marking and is used in each of the street sections to follow. Sharrows indicate preferred routing and location for bicyclists within a thoroughfare travel lane and also indicate to motorists that cyclists are sharing the thoroughfare. Greater visibility of cyclists yields increased safety, especially in the vulnerable intersection turns area. They are prevalent all over the country and are being included in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) next update.

Sharrows are the preferred facility type for bicyclists on thoroughfares with posted speeds of 20 mph and 30 mph, particularly for streets with on-street parking. The sharrow pavement marking consists of a bicyclist or bicycle symbol with two chevrons on top, indicating the direction of travel (Figure V-3). The sharrow should be located such that the center of the marking is along an imaginary line 5' away from the edge of the parking lane, if a parking lane is present, or 5' from the curb face if no parking lane is present. On multilane thoroughfares, the sharrow is located in the rightmost lane. The sharrow should be placed at the beginning and end of each block and at least once mid-block. If desired, a sign indicating “Share the Road” or “Bicyclists Sharing Road” may also be used in conjunction with the sharrow.

Recommendation: Provide bicycle parking facilities

The provision of adequate bicycle parking at either end of the bicyclist's trip is critical to encourage alternate forms of transportation. Ideally, bicycle parking should be provided in the front of a store or building, in plain sight, easily visible from inside the store or building. The simple “U” rack for bicycle parking is recommended for use in Downtown (See Figure V-4).

Within Downtown a minimum of one bicycle rack, capable of supporting two bikes, within the public frontage for every five vehicular parking spaces should be installed, oriented parallel and adjacent to the street. This will allow the parked bicycles to take up space between the tree wells, rather than block the sidewalk.

Recommendation: Improve bicycle circulation

In terms of circulation, one-way streets present greater difficulty for cyclists than almost any other user group. If bicyclists

ride legally and safely on the street, one-way routing forces more circuitous paths to a destination, just as for buses and automobiles. The difference is that a hill, for instance, is not an inconvenience to a bus or car, but can be a major inconvenience to a cyclist. In Downtown, the one-way system requires bicycling to the top of a hill, coasting back down the hill to a different street, and riding back up to the top of the same hill, but a block away, in order to reach a destination. The additional time and effort involved in this type of routing does not encourage or support bicycling as a transportation mode.

Consequently, one-way streets encourage wrong-way riding, because that may be the most direct route to a destination, and sidewalk riding, for the same reason. Wrong-way riding and sidewalk riding are common causes of bicycle crashes, however, so a safe bicycling system should discourage this type of riding. Converting one-way streets to two-way operation will, essentially, double the available routing options and cut the distance required to reach many destinations by bicycle in half.

Recommendation: Connect Downtown with Constitution Trail

During the public input process, several community members brought up the idea of extending Constitution Trail, a popular 24-mile, multi-use recreational trail, west to connect with Downtown Bloomington (see Figure V-5). This is an idea that has been echoed in recent community plans, including the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan, currently in draft form. Connecting the trail would greatly enhance cyclists' access to Downtown, thereby increasing visibility of Downtown and alternative transportation options, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and promoting public health.

The McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan shows a proposed trail along Washington Street that would link Downtown with Constitution Trail. Other potential locations include linking with the trail along Front Street, as advocated in the West Bloomington Neighborhood Plan, or directly south of Downtown just north of Mill. In the future, it may also be a good idea to also connect the Trail with Illinois Wesleyan University to the north. The recommendation to connect Constitution Trail should be prioritized and implemented as soon as possible, as it will serve a large population of residents living in and around Downtown.

Walkable Thoroughfare: Madison Street

Madison is currently 50' wide with four southbound travel lanes and no on-street parking (see Figure V-6).

This Boulevard thoroughfare type is proposed for Madison Street. As shown in Figure V-7, the section includes two 10' travel lanes in the southbound direction and one 10' travel lane in the northbound direction with 8' parallel parking lane, separated by a 12' "safety strip"/flush median. The Boulevard thoroughfare type is the widest and most traffic-intensive of the walkable thoroughfare designs. Boulevards typically have 4 or more travel lanes and traverse long distances. Managing traffic speeds on a boulevard can be difficult, so narrow lanes are usually recommended, along with short blocks and, if possible, use of traffic signals at each intersection for speed management.

The safety strip should be of a cobbled texture, making it possible, but uncomfortable, to drive over. In operation, the narrow 10' travel lanes provide speed management by keeping drivers close to the parked cars, but the safety strip provides room for carefully passing a parking vehicle or a bicyclist, or for emergency vehicle access.

The section diagram indicates that trees should be planted opportunistically, in 4'-6' tree wells. This is a more formal and urban arrangement suitable for the context of Madison Street.

Walkable Thoroughfare: Center Street

A dominant street type in Bloomington is the 50' right-of-way, curb-face to curb-face, found on Center Street. Center Street currently has two southbound travel lanes with on-street parking (see Figure V-8). Parking exists on both sides of Center except in the first block between Locust and Market Streets, where parking is on the east side only.

Center Street is a bit too wide for effective speed management, especially when operating as one-ways, and allows traffic speeds to be higher than desirable for good walkability. The proposed commercial street section (shown in Figure V-9) uses two 8' parking lanes, two 10' travel lanes (one in each direction) and a 4' "safety strip"/flush median between the travel lanes.

On-street parallel parking is introduced along these streets to benefit the adjacent businesses and residences, while helping to manage speeds.

The section diagram indicates that trees should be planted opportunistically, in 4'-6' tree wells. This is a more formal and urban arrangement suitable for the context of Center Street.

Walkable Thoroughfare: Main Street

Main Street currently operates with two one-way northbound lanes, parallel parking and angled parking in 55' of right-of-way, curb-face to curb-face (see Figure V-10). Again, this section is too wide for effective speed management, especially when operating as one-ways, and allows traffic speeds to be higher than desirable for good walkability. The proposed commercial street section (shown in Figure V-11) uses an 8' parallel parking lane with a 10' travel lane in one direction and a 12' travel lane with reverse-angle parking in the other direction (16' angled parking lane - see sidebar), separated by a 9' "safety strip"/flush median.

The section diagram indicates that trees should be planted opportunistically, in 4'-6' tree wells. This is a more formal and urban arrangement suitable for the context of Main Street.

Reverse Angle Parking

This report recommends restriping existing angled parking as reverse-angle parking. The principal benefits of this recommendation are increased parking inventory and increased safety.

Reverse-angle spaces are angled in the opposite direction, compared to head-in angle parking. The entrance maneuver is similar to parallel parking: The operator pulls past the parking space with blinker actuated to indicate intent to park, then proceeds in reverse into the 45 or 60 degree angle space.

Cities have cited numerous safety benefits and reduction in crashes with reverse-angle parking. In addition, the use of reverse-angle parking in a Downtown revitalization context showed no reduction in operating speeds and favorable reception by the public, City officials and the police.

Reverse-angle parking has a safety advantage over parallel and head-in parking spaces. A driver leaving a space commands an optimum viewing position of on-coming traffic, making it easier and safer to exit the space. They are also able to see pedestrians and cyclists more easily. Others have also cited the advantages of the "safety zone" that is created by opening car doors in reverse-angled spaces, which deter children from entering the street. The doors act as a barrier and guide children more safely to the sidewalk.

Walkable Thoroughfare: East Street

East Street currently operates with four northbound one-way lanes, in 40' of right-of-way, curb-face to curb-face (see Figure V-14). Like Madison Street, the Boulevard thoroughfare type is proposed. As shown in Figure V-15, the section includes two 10' travel lanes in the northbound direction and one 10' travel lane in the southbound direction with an 8' parallel parking lane, separated by a 2' "safety strip"/flush median.

The section diagram indicates that trees should be planted opportunistically, in 4'-6' tree wells. This is a more formal and urban arrangement suitable for the context of East Street.

Walkable Thoroughfares: Other Streets

Downtown Bloomington's remaining two-way streets are well scaled, local streets. Most have parallel parking on both sides and one travel lane in each direction. The standard right-of-way for these streets is 40', curb-face to curb-face. Forty feet may be wide enough for speeds that are slightly more excessive than desired for great walkability. The City of Bloomington should monitor these streets for speed management and where necessary, install "safety strips"/flush medians to narrow the travel lanes. This new section, therefore, would look like the CS 70-40 8/10/4/10/8, shown in

Vehicle Circulation and Mobility

Downtown Bloomington has an excellent physical network of streets. The tight grid of small blocks provides multiple routes for pedestrians and vehicle operators and should provide high levels of accessibility and traffic capacity. However, the system does not operate at full efficiency, from a walkability and redevelopment perspective, due to the extensive one-way street arrangements and left turn prohibitions. These two operation issues result in increased and unnecessary vehicle miles traveled (VMT), frustration to locally circulating traffic (pedestrian, bike, and transit as well as automobile) and increased operating speeds.

One-way Streets and VMT Reduction

One way streets typically increase overall VMT, due to the circuitous routing required to reach a given address. For example, the estimated vehicle miles of travel (VMT) needed to access locations along Main Street and East Street (between Locust Street and Front Street) from Locust Street, based on the one-way system, was 2.7 miles. For direct access to these locations, VMT required was only 1.8 miles. In this example, the one-way system required 50% more vehicle miles of travel to reach the same set of shops along the street. This figure is consistent with other estimates of additional travel required for one-way circulation, as described by Walker, Kulash, and McHugh in “Downtown Streets: Are We Strangling Ourselves on One-Way Street Networks?”

Transit Circulation

Transit buses face two dilemmas with one-way streets. First, the circuitous routing required to reach a destination means that often passengers have to be dropped off on one street and picked up on another street, which is a challenge to increasing transit ridership. Second, because buses have doors on only one side, buses are not able to access some locations, requiring unnecessary street crossings to reach a destination.

Pedestrian Circulation

There are several circulation issues associated with one-way streets and pedestrians, outlined below. For more information, consult the Appendix at the end of this document.

Sign placement and navigation

In many cases, street signs and traffic signals on one-way streets are oriented for the convenience of drivers and are not even visible to pedestrians walking toward traffic.

Choice of facing toward or away from traffic

Depending on the situation, pedestrians may find it safer to walk facing traffic, rather than away from traffic. At night, for instance, pedestrians may feel safer walking toward their destination on the side of the street facing traffic, or they may prefer to walk with traffic to avoid the glare of oncoming traffic. One-way streets limit this option.

Vehicle speed

Traffic engineering handbooks estimate that one-way streets provide a 10-20% increase in vehicle capacity. This is accomplished, in part, by allowing higher vehicle speeds. Vehicle speed through an intersection have serious consequences for pedestrian safety

Intersection safety

In low-speed street design, such as that recommended for Downtown, with narrower travel lanes and very short curb return radii, the complexity of the intersection is in itself a safety feature as it requires drivers to focus on pedestrians in the intersection.

Intersection conflicts

The assertion that one-way street systems are easier for pedestrians to understand and cross is not true. In fact, one-way street system intersections are much more complex. A pedestrian on a two-way street network has exactly two conflict sequences to consider, and they are mirror images of each other, they will be exactly the same at every two-way intersection. Under a one-way street system, however, there are 16 different conflict sequences that a pedestrian may encounter, and the sequence varies according to the direction the pedestrian approaches the street. So in practice, one-

way operation does not provide an advantage for pedestrians. Pedestrians in walkable areas do a complete scan of every intersection, even on one-way streets.

Two-Way Street Conversion Feasibility Analysis

To determine whether a conversion to two-way operations on Madison, Center, Main, and East Streets was feasible and would result in comparable levels of service for existing conditions, a series of analyses were undertaken. See the Appendix: Transportation Report for the full transportation study undertaken by Hall Planning & Engineering (HPE).

Daily Traffic Distribution

The daily traffic distribution for streets within the study area was determined based on regional traffic data from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). This data took the form of the average annual daily traffic (AADT) or total volume of vehicle traffic on each thoroughfare for a year divided by 365 days. Daily traffic volumes were manually factored into PM peak hour volumes, as the PM peak hour condition typically displays the worse case traffic scenario for an area and any remedy for the PM peak hour will take care of the overall demand needs of the area. For this reason, HPE conducts a PM peak hour analysis only, saving time and money. PM peak hour factoring was achieved by utilizing industry-accepted design hour and directional factors.

The PM peak hour traffic counts were then assigned to the existing and proposed street network, based on logical traffic loading patterns and based on the assumed peak direction in the PM peak hours (a slight preference was shown for southbound and westbound movements. This loaded PM peak hour traffic was then distributed at every intersection using industry-accepted turning movement percentages (i.e., a certain percent of all approaching traffic will turn left, travel straight, or turn right).

Synchro® Operational Analysis

To determine the operational needs for the two-way conversion, Hall Planning and Engineering utilized Synchro® (Version 7; Trafficware, Ltd.), a traffic micro-simulation computer program to analyze both existing conditions and proposed changes. Traffic counts and projections previously described were loaded into the Synchro® program with assumed turning patterns based on the new development pattern. Synchro® was instructed to optimize signal operations rather than assume existing signal timings would continue over the study period.

Level of service (LOS) categories are the measures by which traffic engineers determine the quality of service on street systems. LOS categories range from A to F; A is a completely uncongested road with all drivers having complete mobility between lanes of traffic, while F is a road in a constant traffic jam, with frequent slowing required. LOS C is considered the most efficient LOS for an urban area, where roads remain safely below but efficiently close to capacity. LOS measures were found for each traffic scenario for Downtown Bloomington: existing conditions, future conditions - phase 1 of two-way operations (conversion of local one-way streets only), and future conditions - phase 2 of two-way operations (added conversion of state maintained one-way streets to phase 1).

Results from the Synchro® analysis indicated that the existing overall LOS for most arterial roadways within the Downtown is "C", the desired LOS. Some segments or arterials between intersections, experience lower levels of service under current conditions. Intersections within Downtown currently are at an "A" or "B" LOS. Phase 1 of the proposed two-way street conversions also yields intersections at a LOS of "A" or "B"; Under this scenario, the overall LOS for arterials is mostly "C". Some segments perform slightly worse than the existing conditions model, but are still within an acceptable LOS range ("D").

Under Phase 2 of the project, with all streets within Downtown converted to two-way operations, intersection LOS will remain at "A" or "B"; The majority of main arterial streets will remain at a LOS of "C"; however, certain segments will experience lower levels of service (see the Appendix for detailed information on the Synchro® analysis).

In summary, the Synchro® analysis shows, through detailed traffic simulation analysis, that the traffic and road improvements proposed in this section of the Master Plan will work when implemented. Intersections will remain at an acceptable LOS, while major arterials will remain within suitable LOS for an urban area.

Recommendation: Convert one-way pairs to two-way operations

The City of Bloomington should convert all current one-way streets to two-way operation during the course of two phases (see Figure V-16). In Phase One, all local one-way streets should be converted. During Phase Two, the City should expand the one-way street conversion to include state maintained streets: Locust Street/State Route 9, Madison Street/US Business Route 51 and East Street/US Business Route 51.

Historically, two-way streets have slower speeds than one-way streets; therefore, within the Downtown Bloomington study area, all one-way streets (shown in Figure V-16) were reviewed to determine the feasibility of one-way operation reverting

to two-way operation. Reversion to two-way traffic will lower speeds on those streets, while still sufficiently accommodating current traffic volumes and reducing unnecessary circulation.

Recommendation: Provide adequate facilities for loading to prevent bottlenecks in traffic

One concern regarding reverting Main and Center Streets to two-way traffic is the way that delivery trucks and loading will be handled on a two-way street with one lane in each direction. There are several methods to deal with this situation that are used in scenarios all across the country. First, businesses with adequate alley access should be required to utilize the alley for deliveries. This reduces the amount of strain put on adjacent streets and parking, and is generally the best option, when available.

Also, for those businesses without adequate alley access, the City should delineate loading zones, which are designated areas in the parking lane dedicated solely to the commercial loading and unloading of deliveries to buildings. Loading zones are typically given hours of operation that are effective only during peak delivery times and may set a maximum time for a commercial vehicle to park in the zone (e.g. up to 30 minutes).

A last option is for delivery vehicles to utilize the median safety strip, as proposed in the street sections, for quick deliveries. Traffic will continue to move, albeit slowly, as vehicles maneuver around the parked delivery vehicle. This provides easier flowing traffic than what would be present without the safety strip, since the median safety strip provides room for vehicles to move around.

Case Study – Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia

The section of Grace Street from Belvidere to Lombardy Street in Richmond, VA was a one-way west-bound street prior to 1980's. In the early 1980's, this section of Grace Street was returned to two-way operation. City Traffic Engineering reported an increase in crashes along Grace Street during the initial few years, which is not unusual any time a major change is made to a traffic pattern. Today, however, Grace Street operates as safely as any other street according to the Richmond Police and to Traffic Engineering's accident reports.

Residents indicated that the transition to two-way was perceived as a good thing, and in fact ushered in a renaissance of Grace Street. Indeed, this portion of Grace Street is full of activity and street life, with people sitting on porches talking, students riding through on bicycles, and a general buzz of activity.

The Richmond Police Department, when interviewed regarding traffic safety issues, indicated that two-way street operations have an additional benefit of reducing crimes that require "cruising," such as prostitution and drug dealing. On a one-way street, a stopped car does not present an impediment to traffic. On a two-way street, however, a stopped car does stop traffic and draws immediate attention, which is undesirable to people seeking to engage in illegal activities.

Transitional Areas

Recommendation: Install roundabouts or signalized intersections to transition from one-way to two-way streets

The transition from one-way to two-way operations and vice versa can occur in the following two ways: with a pair of roundabouts or full intersection signalization.

A roundabout is a circular intersection with yield control of all entering traffic, channelized approaches and counter-clockwise circulation. Roundabouts are designed specifically to ensure that travel speeds are typically less than 30 miles per hour. They are distinctly different from traffic circles or rotaries in that the latter gave priority to entering vehicles, facilitating high-speed entries and congestion for circulating traffic.

Modern roundabouts were developed in the 1960's to rectify problems associated with traffic circles or rotaries. Large traffic circles were designed to enable high-speed merging and weaving of vehicles, with priority given to fast, entering vehicles. This led to the high crash experience and congestion often associated with these items. The modern roundabout, however, represents a substantial improvement in terms of safety and operations in that they are designed to require that all entering traffic give way, or yield, to circulating traffic. This prevents circular intersections from locking up, by not allowing vehicles to enter the intersection until there are sufficient gaps in traffic. Also, the smaller circular design and horizontal curvature achieve slower entry and circulating speeds, making them more pedestrian friendly and lowering the risk and severity of collisions ("Roundabouts: An Informational Guide." Prepared for the USDOT, Federal Highway Administration. Publication No. FHWA-RC-00-067. June 2000).

Recent studies have proven the increased safety of modern roundabouts over standard intersections. Two studies have

been conducted comparing crash statistics before and after a signalized or stop controlled intersection was converted to a modern roundabout. Both studies strongly support the claim that roundabouts are safer than signalized intersections. The first study was conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety in 2001. Its assessment of 23 intersections in the US reported that converting from traffic signals or stop signs to roundabouts reduced injury crashes by 80 percent and all crashes by 40 percent (Persaud, B.N.; Retting, R.A.; Garder, P.E.; and Lord, D. 2001. Safety effect of roundabout conversions in the United States: empirical Bayes observational before-after study. Transportation Research Record 1751:1-8. Summarized on the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety roundabouts webpage: <http://www.ihs.org/research/qanda/roundabouts.html>).

The second, similar study was prepared by Eisenman et al. Their study reported a 75 percent decrease in injury crashes and a 37 percent decrease in total crashes at 35 converted intersections (Eisenman, S.; Josselyn, J.; List, G.; Persaud, B.; Lyon, C.; Robinson, B.; Blogg, M.; Waltman, E.; and Troutbeck, R. 2004. Operational and safety performance of modern roundabouts and other intersection types. Final Report, SPR Project C-01-47. Albany, NY: New York State Department of Transportation. Summarized on the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety roundabouts webpage: <http://www.ihs.org/research/qanda/roundabouts.html>).

A pair of roundabouts can be designed at the two intersections where the transition is to occur. Coming into Downtown Bloomington from the north would require the roundabout configuration shown in Figure V-17. One potential location for this roundabout would be at Walnut Street, but would need further study. The roundabout shown in Figure V-18 should be used when entering Downtown Bloomington from the south, and could potentially be located at Mill Street (but again, would need further study).

All roundabouts proposed for this transition should consist of the following parameters:

- Urban
- Combination of single- and double-lanes (double on the first half of a one-way approach)
- 100' inscribed circle diameter
- 70' center island
- 15' travel lanes
- Raised splitter island with crosswalk cut.

As an alternative to the roundabouts, the transitions could be designed as fully signalized intersections as shown in Figures V-19 and V-20.

As opposed to the equitable distribution of traffic presented by the roundabouts, this option presents more opportunities for conflict and demands for signal timing. All movements will be competing for signal time. The signalized intersection alternative does require less right of way, but would operate less efficiently than the roundabouts.

Streetscape Recommendations

Existing Streetscape Components

This section examines the prevalence of streetscape amenities, such as street trees, planters, distinctive lighting, trash cans, and benches, within Downtown. These streetscape features greatly add to the pedestrian experience while walking through Downtown. While there are quite a few streetscape elements currently in place within Downtown, there is still much room for improvement.

For the purposes of this study, streetscape analysis was focused on the area within the East-Madison couplet. This was done to focus recommendations and future financial resources on the place where streetscape improvements will have the most impact - the core of Downtown. This area also already has a good start on streetscape amenities, giving future investments something to build upon.

Refer to Figure V-21: Existing Streetscape Components for a summary of the Downtown core's existing streetscape features noted by the consultant team as part of this project. The locations of streetscape elements are approximate.

Street Trees

Within Downtown, street tree placement is quite sporadic, with some blocks missing street trees entirely. The most regular occurrence of street trees is along Main Street.

Planters

Planters are quite prevalent around Downtown, with an average of around two planters per block. These landscape

elements add much to the ambience of sidewalk life.

Lighting

Three different types of street lighting are found within Downtown. The first is a typical cobra head streetlight with a cement base. The second type is essentially the same as the first, but includes a hanging planter basket, making it more visually appealing (see Figure V-22). The last type of lighting, the “historic context light,” is shown in Figure V-23 and is a streetlight that is more sensitive to the historic nature of the Downtown core. The second and third types of lighting are shown on Figure V-17, as they are seen to contribute greatly to the ambience of Downtown.

Garbage Cans

While garbage cans may seem run-of-the-mill, they are quite essential in keeping Downtown clean. The garbage cans that are present Downtown match the historic context streetlights and benches. Garbage cans are found pretty regularly at the end of almost every block within Downtown.

Benches

Benches are found in several places within Downtown, but are by no means prevalent. Benches are essential to promoting street life, as they encourage people to spend time on the street.

Proposed Streetscape Improvements

The following streetscape recommendations build upon streetscape elements that currently exist within Downtown. These streetscape improvements will greatly add to the ambience of Downtown and will also increase safety and visual interest for passers-by. Refer to Figure V-24: Proposed Streetscape Improvements, which illustrates where various improvements should occur within the study area.

Main Street, Center Street, and the central side streets within Downtown between Main and Center should be the top priority in terms of phasing for streetscape improvements. These areas already have significant streetscape and further improvements here will have the most immediate impact. As the retail core of Downtown becomes more successful, streetscape improvements may be extended to other side streets as well as the East-Madison Street couplet.

Install Regularly Spaced Street Trees

Street trees are indispensable to the attractiveness and safety of the Downtown core. Street trees make the street appear narrower to drivers and typically result in a decrease in traffic speed, making the environment more conducive to walking.

Currently, street trees exist irregularly within Downtown. Figure V-24 shows both existing street trees as well as approximate locations for proposed street trees. Typically, street trees should be spaced between 25 and 50 feet apart, depending on the amount of room on the sidewalk and the context of the street. New street trees should be installed to fill in the gaps between existing street trees to create a line of trees as people walk or drive down the street.

Street trees often have difficulty growing in urban environments. Typically, this is due to the fact that such trees are placed in tree wells that are too small for a mature tree, which negatively affects the health of the tree. For this reason, street trees within Downtown should be planted in 4' by 6' cast iron tree grates and, where possible, structural soil, aeration systems, and permeable pavement should be used to ensure adequate water filtration.

Install Pedestrian Crosswalk Pavers

To improve the safety of pedestrians walking around Downtown, it is recommended that special paving treatment, such as cobblestone or brick, be installed at a width of at least eight feet at key intersections as shown on Figure V-24. These treatments enhance the visibility of the crosswalk and help motorists to see that pedestrians may be crossing. Figure V-24 shows these crosswalks at all intersections within the East-Madison couplet as well as linking across East Street to the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts and Front Street commercial node and across Madison Street to the U.S. Cellular Coliseum.

Utilize Curb Bump-Outs

Installing curb bump-outs at intersections creates additional space for pedestrians and shortens the crosswalk. A bump-out does not eliminate any potential parking spaces, because it is located between the intersection and the first permitted parking spot. Bump-outs should be installed within the Downtown core at any intersection that does not include a bus stop or turn lane.

Install Distinctive Lighting

Currently, the most prevalent type of lighting within Downtown is a typical cobra head streetlight with a cement base. However, distinctive street lighting, as currently seen in limited places within Downtown, adds much to the ambience and historic character of the area. Also, historic context streetlights are located much closer to the sidewalk than typical cobra head streetlights, and therefore provide a greater amount of light and increase safety.

It is recommended that historic context streetlights, as shown in Figure V-23, replace existing lighting along Main and Center Streets and the center side streets within Downtown (refer to Figure V-24 for recommended historic context streetlight locations). All other street lights within the study area should be retrofitted with planter baskets as shown in Figure V-22. Being selective about where to locate historic context streetlights, which are more costly than typical streetlights, will help to save money and create a sense of place within Downtown.

Proposed Streetscape Improvements

Continue the Adopt-a-Pot Program

The primary reason that beautiful planters are prevalent around Downtown is the Adopt-a-Pot program, where local businesses, community groups, and families plant and maintain an assigned flowerpot. Currently, over one hundred people participate in the program, and the resulting planters add a lot of character to Downtown. This program should continue to be sponsored by the Downtown Bloomington Association, and new planters should be placed opportunistically around Downtown (see Figure V-25).

Continue to Install Benches

Benches add greatly to street life within Downtown, encouraging people to socialize and spend leisure time outdoors. Benches of the same style as those existing within Downtown should continue to be installed opportunistically as funding becomes available. Benches should first be installed at intersections and along Main Street, then along Center Street and the east-west side streets. To discourage vagrancy, benches may incorporate dividers or armrests at regular intervals.

Install Coordinated Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage is signage installed in the public right-of-way that provides directions or courtesy information intended to assist the public in navigation. Wayfinding signage should be installed to direct visitors to such Downtown amenities as: public parking garages, shopping areas, U.S. Cellular Coliseum, Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, the Law and Justice Center, City Hall, and the McLean County Museum of History. Additionally, signage identifying the area of the Bloomington Central Business Historic District (see Section I: Historic Amenities) and other key historic assets should be incorporated.

Wayfinding signage should be located at key intersections and could mimic the style shown in Figure V-26, which is ideal for pedestrians. Since this scale of signage may not be legible to motorists, it is also recommended that signage directed at automobiles should be put in place for public parking garages and larger attractions Downtown (see Figure V-27).

Create a Downtown Ambassador Program

To further assist with wayfinding, as well as help to control quality of life crimes such as aggressive panhandling and graffiti, it is recommended that a Downtown Ambassador Program be created. The farmers' market provides a de facto Downtown Ambassador Program on Saturday mornings through half of the year, but a more comprehensive program would benefit Downtown greatly. Such a program is quite common in cities across the country, including Seattle, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Madison, WI, and Dayton, OH. The program may be supported by City or BID funding, or both.

Typically, for an area the size of Downtown Bloomington, an Ambassador Program should consist of two or three full-time Ambassadors or a few volunteers only in the spring, summer, and fall. Such programs typically have three areas of focus: hospitality (answering questions, directing visitors to parking or attractions), information (providing information to visitors or even providing social resources to panhandlers or homeless people), and assistance (helping residents and visitors with minor emergencies such as theft or vandalism as well as providing an extra set of eyes for crime). An Ambassador Program would help considerably in making Downtown a navigable and welcoming place for both visitors and residents.

Encourage Sidewalk Cafes

Sidewalk cafes greatly enhance the vibrancy of street life, making the street much more enjoyable both to people utilizing the cafes and those walking by (see Figure V-28). The City of Bloomington should continue to work with property owners and streamline the permitting process to facilitate the opening of sidewalk cafes within key areas of Downtown.

Continue Facade & Roof Improvement Grants

Current tax increment financing (TIF) funds are used to rehabilitate historic facades and roofs within Downtown. As facade rehabilitations are critical to improving the physical environment Downtown, it is recommended that this program continue as TIF funds become available.

Encourage Public Art

Public art is a great way to beautify and add character to a Downtown. There have been some public art installations in Downtown Bloomington in the past, such as the "Corn-on-the-Curb" pieces, and such installations should be continued as opportunities arise in the future.

Other potential opportunities for public art were recognized by the community during the public input process. One such opportunity would be "dressing up" the radio tower, locally called the "Eiffel Tower," at Madison and Mulberry Streets, one of the gateway entrances into Downtown. Local artists could create pieces to decorate the tower, such as signage or lighting, or could even decorate it as a Christmas tree during the holidays.

Another opportunity, originally recognized in the West Bloomington Neighborhood Plan, is to beautify the U.S. Cellular Coliseum with a mural and street trees. Currently, the Coliseum structure is largely windowless, creating expansive blank walls that are not interesting to look at or walk by. Creating a public art mural will help to remedy this situation and beautify the area.

Bridge the Downtown core and its surrounding neighborhoods with physical connections

Currently, Downtown is largely separated from the surrounding neighborhoods due to disinvestment in the transitional areas and the presence of the Madison-East couplet, which acts as a barrier. Integration with these neighborhoods is critical, as the economies are interdependent and the success of Downtown is linked to the success of the surrounding areas. Streetscape improvements can help to provide a physical connection between Downtown and surrounding areas; however, due to the high expense of such improvements, they should be targeted to very specific areas.

West Bloomington Neighborhood Connection

One particular area where streetscape improvements could make a big difference, called out in the West Bloomington Neighborhood Plan, is on Washington and Market Streets between Madison and Lee. The West Bloomington Plan proposes to pick up these streetscape improvements along Washington and Market between Lee and Morris, which would make the two streets connected via visual cues to Downtown. It is recommended that the streetscaping along these streets within the Downtown study area follow the form determined by the West Bloomington Task Force or City. The West Bloomington Plan proposes adding landscaping, lighting, street furniture, parking, bus stops, and crosswalks.

BCPA and Coliseum Connections

Additionally, Downtown Bloomington should be visually connected with the U.S. Cellular Coliseum and the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. Such connections will provide synergy between the different districts and will increase the amount of foot traffic that Downtown businesses receive from visitors to the two major cultural institutions. It is recommended that lighting, street furniture, and street trees matching the style recommended for the Downtown core be incorporated near the Coliseum and BCPA, and that pedestrian crosswalk pavers be installed across Madison and East Streets to create a safer pedestrian crossing. To enliven the lawn adjacent to the BCPA, it is also recommended that street furniture is installed there and that the space is made more readily accessible to outside groups wishing to hold markets and festivals in the space.

VI. Implementation Strategy

Organizational/Procedural Goals & Actions

Implementation Matrix

Business Development Goals & Actions

Physical Environment Goals & Actions

VI. Implementation Strategy

Organizational/Procedural Goals & Actions

This section describes the targeted Goals and implementation Action Items of the Downtown Bloomington Master Plan, translating the plan's recommendations into actions. The Implementation Matrix (see Table VI-1) summarizes the implementation action items' priority levels, timeframes, funding sources, and responsible parties. Within the matrix, the following definitions apply:

- “Timing” takes into consideration both the priority and ability to fund each action item. Immediate items can and must commence immediately, Ongoing items require continuous effort to move them forward, Short-term items can occur within the next 1-2 years, Mid-term items within 2-4 years, and Long-term items will require a longer time horizon due to significant funding requirements.
- “Funding Source” identifies the primary funders of each action item, though the DBA – especially if it is funded by a BID – is a potential funding partner for most items.
- “Responsible Party” identifies the primary party to implement each action item, but the DBA will need to be an advocate for moving each item forward.

The following narrative then briefly defines each action, discusses how it moves the plan forward, and provides guidance on next steps to ensure effective execution of the action item. The memo identifies the entities primarily responsible for implementation of each action item, but the Downtown Bloomington Association must be the consistent and persistent advocate for ensuring that the actions are implemented.

The Goals and Action Items are divided into three major categories:

1. Organizational/Procedural

These items reorganize the structures of organizations and processes to better focus on plan implementation and continued, efficient funding

2. Business Development

These items improve the retail and/or office business environment in Downtown by driving additional customer traffic and providing business development services

3. Physical Environment

These items improve the physical environment of Downtown by addressing functional and aesthetic deficiencies that hinder growth of businesses, residents, and visitors by reducing overall perceptions and experiences of Downtown

Organizational/Procedural Goals & Actions

Goal 1: Strengthen Management of Downtown

Downtown Bloomington contains a number of assets – such as the cultural institutions, historic character, retailers, festivals, and artists – but strategic management will be necessary to create synergy between these assets. There are also basic cleanliness and safety concerns that must be addressed to change regional perceptions of Downtown. The Downtown Bloomington Association has begun to address some of these needs, but its limited mandate and indirect funding make it difficult for the organization to gain the financing to comprehensively organize and address shared concerns impacting economic development potential.

1.1: Form a business improvement district

The Downtown Bloomington Association (“DBA”) and City of Bloomington should place top priority on forming a Downtown business improvement district (“BID”). A BID is a common tool in which property owners and/or business owners agree to pay an additional fee – effectively a self-imposed tax – to pay for local services and improvements. BIDs typically provide “clean and safe” services such as sidewalk cleaning, snow removal, and security. Most BIDs also provide marketing and event programming, and sometimes partner with municipalities for major infrastructure investments. In short, the funding of a BID is similar to common area maintenance fees assessed in shopping centers (which often range between 10 and 20 percent of total center receipts), and its services are similar to the centralized management and promotion found in shopping malls. Use of the BID assessment revenue is controlled by members of the BID, not a government entity.

A BID in Downtown Bloomington is critically important for implementation of the Downtown Bloomington Master Plan, as it provides focused organizational support, inherent interest from the property/business owners who fund it, and a steady stream of revenue unaffected by competitors for outside funding sources such as tax increment and the City's general fund. This importance was recognized in May 2007, when the City approved a five-year funding package for the DBA in the expectation that the DBA would pursue the formation of a BID as a future funding source. It is further underscored by the high number of implementation actions in this memo that require ongoing administration or advocacy by the DBA.

The DBA and City must continue its efforts to form a BID, with an expectation that the DBA would transition into functioning as its administrator. The first step is to obtain sufficient funding to hire a BID consultant; the current economic climate may require pursuing multiple public, private, and non-profit sector sources. Illinois law allows for varying means of creating an organization with the form and function of a BID – with varying sources of funding and powers depending on whether it is a “Business District” or “Special Service Area” – and an experienced consultant will be able to navigate the various options. The consultant will also provide the expertise necessary to educate property/business owners on a BID's benefits, draw boundaries appropriately, navigate legal and organizational obstacles, and ensure passage of the BID.

Goal 2: Implement a New Tax Increment Financing District

The Tax Increment Financing (“TIF”) District in Downtown Bloomington is a powerful tool for supporting economic and physical improvements; the City and DBA must vigorously pursue the creation of a new TIF District. The current combined sales and property tax-based TIF district has existed in Downtown since 1986 and is due to expire in 2010. Proceeds from the TIF District, which directs local increases in tax revenue toward local improvements, have been used to assist rehabilitation of vacant and blighted buildings, restore historic facades, make critical repairs to roofs, and fund DBA operations. The TIF funds have incentivized some of the most significant investments in Downtown and helped to maintain its valuable historic character.

Tax increment is a key funding source for implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, providing continued financial support for physical improvements and programs beyond what a future BID could support. The TIF District ensures that value increases in the Downtown tax base are reinvested in the area, thus aligning incentives for tax dollars to be spent locally and creating a cycle of continuous improvement that ultimately accelerates growth of the overall tax base. Downtown still faces challenges in resolving blighting factors – especially in the southern industrial portions – and assisting property owners facing extraordinary renovation costs for buildings often constructed 80 to 100 years ago, as demonstrated by the City's decisions in recent years to support nearly 25 percent of rehabilitation costs for several buildings that otherwise would not have been renovated. Finally, the TIF can provide a steady revenue stream for the DBA while BID-formation is sought.

2.1: Negotiate a new tax increment financing structure with other taxing entities

The City, with DBA support, should create a new TIF District and include negotiated “pass-through agreements.” In such an agreement a portion of the tax increment income is transferred to other taxing entities that overlap the TIF district; for example, it might be negotiated that twenty percent of tax increment proceeds are ‘passed-through’ to the school district rather than used for Downtown projects. In Bloomington, the negotiated pass-throughs must allocate an agreed-upon share of tax increment toward School District 87, which provides educational services for the Downtown and surrounding areas. The school district boundaries are very limited, and the district is therefore losing a significant share of its potential revenue to the existing TIF District. Furthermore, a premise of TIF is that the tax assessment increases are ultimately returned to the pre-existing taxing entities. It is also politically unlikely that a new TIF District will be viable in Downtown unless the needs of District 87 are met.

2.2: Improve the ease of applying for funds and transparency of how funds are used

Improvements should be made to publicizing the TIF District's grant programs, clarifying the application process and contact person among City staff, and tracking and distributing information regarding the use of TIF funds. Downtown property owners have expressed frustration with the difficulty of finding information about the façade and rehabilitation grant programs and determining whom they should contact with inquiries about their applications. Strategic Economics and the DBA have encountered difficulty in obtaining comprehensive and accessible information regarding use of TIF funds and the status of the program as a whole.

The City Manager's office can alleviate these concerns through relatively simple steps, such as creating a dedicated web page on the city website, further disseminating information through the DBA and its website, designating a consistent and accessible contact person on city staff, and publishing publicly accessible revenue and use data annually.

Business Development Goals & Actions

Goal 3: Develop a Catalyst Project that Can Serve as an Additional Downtown “Anchor”

The Downtown Master Plan emphasizes the importance of attracting additional “anchors” for Downtown that will attract visitors and increase retail, restaurant, and service business. Downtown is unlikely to attract a large retail anchor, but there are other public-private partnership opportunities that can develop visitor-generating anchors to better support local businesses and create a lively, urban environment. The Downtown Master Plan specifically identifies a number of high-priority opportunity sites.

3.1: Pursue public-private development partnership and assistance opportunities

In general, the City and DBA should identify potential sites for public-private development partnerships, and actively consider development opportunities that arise or are identified by the City. The Downtown area already contains a number of underutilized sites used for parking that are appropriate future development sites. The Downtown Master Plan also specifically identifies a number of high-priority opportunity sites that are both underutilized and positioned to catalyze further development.

A well-structured public-private partnership should be explored by the City for redevelopment of the Market Street parking garage at the southwest corner of Market and Center. This is one of the most promising sites for redevelopment: the existing parking garage has exceeded its design life span and is falling into disrepair, the site is well-positioned to build on the existing strength of nearby Main Street businesses, and the city already owns the site. The City must view redevelopment of the parking garage as an opportunity to support Downtown rather than simply replace an aging structure.

The nature of the Market Street partnership will vary based on circumstance, financing, and private offers. One example of such a partnership is a ground lease, in which the land is privately-developed but publicly-owned, and the developer pays a portion of operating income to the public agency; such an arrangement allows public control over the developer, type of development, and land ownership, while also generating public revenue and fulfilling public goals. Other possibilities revolve around public ownership or development of parking to help encourage private development.

Discussions related to the formation of the Downtown Master Plan also resulted in the promising idea of locating a new YMCA facility in Downtown Bloomington. The YMCA board has already written a letter of support for this concept. The City and DBA must assist in any way possible to work with the YMCA staff and board to identify development sites, form mutually-agreeable catalytic development concepts in an appropriately urban format and, if necessary, explore a public-private joint development partnership. A YMCA facility would bring a steady flow of visitors to Downtown during a wide range of hours, provide incentive for current workers to stay in Downtown after normal office hours, increase street life since it would be easy to walk to the YMCA from Downtown and Downtown-adjacent homes and offices, and provide a family-friendly destination.

Goal 4: Strengthen Business Recruitment and Retention Activities

Downtown Bloomington competes with centrally-managed shopping centers and malls that include staff and capacity to focus on business recruitment, retention, ideal tenant mix, and management of relations with the city. Downtown will more effectively compete in the Bloomington-Normal region if it is well-managed, provides strong business assistance, and has an ombudsman with the city.

4.1: Employ or contract with an economic development specialist

The DBA should eventually employ or contract with an economic development specialist. He or she would exclusively focus on duties including recruitment and retention of businesses, consideration of tenancing mix and strategy (insofar as the DBA is able to make recommendations to property owners), site location assistance, general business development needs, and facilitation of contact between business owners and the City. The current DBA includes some capacity to carry out these duties, but staff attention is divided among competing, time-consuming duties such as event programming/coordination, general administration, and marketing. It is recognized that hiring such a specialist may incur significant additional costs, making this item a longer-term priority.

4.2: Provide assistance for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs

The DBA provides some limited assistance currently to start-up businesses, and should continue to point newcomers to resources that are available in the community that will help in interpreting regulations, permits, and bureaucracy and potentially acquiring financial assistance, business advice, and mentorship. Such resources appear to be strong in Bloomington, and include the Economic Development Council, Circles of Seven mentoring program, and Central Illinois SCORE.

Goal 5: Market and Promote the Unique Brand and Image of Downtown Bloomington

The DBA has done well in marketing Downtown and creating/promoting new events. Marketing the entire Downtown area helps to establish its unique identity within the region, encouraging people to explore the entire area rather than visit a single store. In addition, the wide reach of the DBA greatly exceeds the advertising capacity of most Downtown businesses.

5.1: Expand the Downtown Bloomington Association's marketing efforts

The centralized marketing for Downtown must continue and expand, taking into consideration the retail market study's findings that most Downtown businesses draw from throughout the region, that many restaurants and bars see increases in business from major events at the cultural/performance anchors in Downtown, that there is a cohesive artist community, and that Downtown competes based on its urban environment and unique agglomeration or clustering of independent retailers. Funding for marketing efforts can continue to come from current DBA funding sources and future BID funding.

5.2: Continue and expand the event programming activities of the Downtown Bloomington Association

The DBA must continue its largely successful efforts to coordinate events in the Downtown area. These events, such as the farmer's market, Hot August Nights, First Fridays, etc. have successfully drawn visitors to Downtown. The DBA can also heighten the sense of community among Downtown residents and business owners through special discount and event nights for residents in or near Downtown. Funding will continue to come from current DBA funding sources and future BID funding, plus relevant partners for specific events.

5.3: Continue support and coordination efforts for the Farmers Market

The DBA should continue its support for the Farmers Market as an irreplaceable asset to Downtown. The Farmers Market currently faces logistical issues and complex coordination with property owners. The DBA should provide assistance to the Farmers Market to resolve these issues and continue to support the market's efforts in the future. In addition, the City should work with DBA and the market in making infrastructure changes or recommendations, such as those related to parking, streetscape, and signage. Funding will continue to come from current DBA funding sources and future BID funding.

Physical Environment Goals & Actions

Goal 6: Protect Downtown's Historic Character and Encourage Appropriate New Development

Downtown's historic building stock and small scale combine to create a unique look and feel that is unmatched anywhere else within the region. This character is a major competitive advantage, differentiating Downtown from other locations and providing an appeal for certain demographics of shoppers, business owners, and residents. Despite this value, Downtown has suffered from a history of teardowns that has left gaps in the street environment, and new developments that fail to integrate well with the existing buildings.

6.1: Adopt a zoning overlay that captures the scale and character of historic Downtown buildings and provides appropriate parameters for new development

The City should adopt the Downtown Master Plan's recommendations for a zoning overlay ensuring that future developments are compatible with Downtown's existing historic character. The Master Plan provides a detailed breakdown of the appropriate requirements and regulations for a zoning overlay; adoption can therefore be inexpensive, provided that property owners and the City are receptive to such a change. If not, the DBA must advocate for adoption by educating stakeholders as to the benefits of the changes. Upon adoption, planning staff will need to be vigilant in consistently and fairly reviewing new development proposals subject to the new overlay.

Goal 7: Improve the Perception of Downtown as a Clean and Safe Place

Downtown Bloomington continues to suffer from a regional perception as being unsafe, and residents of Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods have frequently complained of trash-strewn streets. As with any place, basic cleanliness, infrastructure, and safety issues and perceptions must be resolved before economic development activities will have maximum impact. Beyond these concerns, an improved street environment will further encourage pedestrian activity and the overall visitor, resident, and worker experience.

7.1: Systematize cleaning and maintenance activities

The DBA should pursue a more consistent approach for trash removal, and consider contracting out for additional sidewalk and street cleaning services. Under a BID, the street and sidewalk cleaning will ensure that litter – particularly debris from revelers visiting Downtown's drinking establishments (a major complaint by business owners and residents alike) – is cleaned up quickly and that the costs are borne by the same Downtown businesses that benefit from the cleaner street environment. In addition, the BID may be able to streamline and standardize trash removal for Downtown businesses, thereby curtailing concerns raised by property owners regarding pickup days and inability to accommodate on-site dumpsters, etc. A similar approach can be taken to efficiently streamline snow removal.

7.2: Streamline communication with the City regarding infrastructure concerns such as potholes, cracked sidewalks/curbs,

lighting, etc.

The DBA and City should work to identify consistent contact persons within city staff for addressing infrastructure concerns quickly and efficiently. Addressing infrastructure concerns is particularly important in the urban environment of Downtown, since the heavier pedestrian traffic results in greater notice of sidewalk and curb conditions, greater potential for injuries due to gaps and cracks, and increased need for effective, functional lighting.

7.3: Implement streetscape recommendations per Proposed Streetscape Improvements section of the master plan

The Proposed Streetscape Improvements section of this report recommends short-term street improvements, including the installation of street trees, expansion of distinctive lighting, installation of pedestrian crosswalk treatments, and other streetscape improvements. Such improvements will increase the pedestrian orientation of Downtown and encourage walking between locations. The DBA should advocate strongly for these improvements, and a BID can provide supplementary funding for the city's implementation of these improvements.

Goal 8: Improve Parking Conditions

Although Downtown Bloomington currently has sufficient parking space to meet needs, several parking management concerns must be addressed. Specifically, the consultant team heard complaints revolving around residents, customers, and employees competing for on-street spaces, unclear parking regulations, ineffective regulations that result in reshuffling of automobiles among spaces, and unclear direction to off-street parking options. The Downtown Bloomington Master Plan recommends a "park once" strategy that encourages a single automobile trip into and out of Downtown, with internal Downtown trips accomplished on foot. Implementation of this strategy requires the following action items, but the general emphasis is again on holistic management rather than a piecemeal approach.

8.1: Enact policies to encourage and enhance public parking supplies

The City should enact the Master Plan's policy changes regarding the provision and management of public parking supplies, including ensuring that public parking is positioned for access to multiple destinations, parking maximums are put in place, and that developments can pay in-lieu fees for development of public facilities rather than on-site private parking. The City will need to create firm parking regulations for the Downtown area, and follow-through will require collaboration by the departments of the City Manager, Planning, and Public Works.

8.2: Encourage shared private parking supplies through valets and private agreements

The DBA should proactively coordinate shared private parking arrangements, including the possible implementation of a valet. A shared valet service can serve multiple restaurants, stores, and drinking establishments along the Main Street commercial area; the DBA can coordinate and manage such a valet for the multiple stakeholders along these blocks, especially if a BID is implemented. The DBA can also connect private parking owners with businesses to arrange specific agreements for sharing spaces.

8.3: Establish a parking broker

The DBA is the most logical organization to host a parking broker responsible for parking management duties in Downtown. This role could possibly be combined with the duties of the economic development specialist recommended in Action 4.1.

8.4: Install parking meters in designated locations

The Downtown Master Plan's recommendations for parking meters and availability- and price-based demand management techniques are on the forefront of modern parking planning and will alleviate concerns over availability of parking or over-use by specific groups of users. Implementation will require up-front and ongoing maintenance investments by the City, but will also generate revenue that can be used to repay initial outlays and fund future parking improvements.

Goal 9: Improve Street Circulation and Access to Downtown

The one-way streets in and near Downtown Bloomington make it difficult to navigate the area and encourage high-speed traffic that worsens the pedestrian experience and encourages traffic to completely circumvent Downtown. The Transportation Component of this report proposed several improvements.

9.1: Convert locally-maintained streets to two-way operation

Efforts should first be focused on conversion of city-maintained streets to two-way operation – i.e., Main, Center, Monroe, Jefferson, and Oakland. Main and Center are top priority streets from an economic development perspective since they are located in areas of concentrated retail. The city will need to implement these conversions as funds become available; certainly any regular street maintenance should not maintain the status quo but instead move the plan forward.

9.2: Convert state-maintained streets to two-way operation

East Street and Madison Street will be more difficult to convert since they are state-maintained streets that serve an

important role in the regional transportation network, requiring approval and funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation. In the short-term, the DBA and the City of Bloomington must build support for conversion by educating Downtown property owners and lobbying for conversion with IDOT. The City can also prove the concept and its own dedication by converting the aforementioned city streets to two-way operation.

9.3: Restripe streets per recommended street sections in the master plan's Transportation Component

As streets are converted to two-way operation, additional restriping considerations should be implemented, including angled parking, bicycle sharrows, and reverse-angle parking. The City should explore the extent to which some recommendations can be met in the short-term through relatively inexpensive restriping and signage changes, while implementing more intensive changes as funds become available.

9.4: Install wayfinding signage for parking garages and attractions

The DBA and City should collaborate to provide wayfinding signage directing pedestrians and automobiles to attractions and parking garages within Downtown. Downtown Bloomington features sufficient parking and several attractions that draw visitors from throughout the region, yet is very confusing to drivers and pedestrians trying to find these attractions. The DBA should advocate for implementation, but primary funding and implementation should come from the City, with possible funding by some of the major attractions. The attractions in Downtown Bloomington draw both city residents and visitors from a wide area, and therefore bring money into the City; it is worth investing in their success by making them accessible, encouraging exploration of other attractions, and generally improving the visitor experience.

Goal 10: Connect Downtown to the Constitution Trail

The Constitution Trail currently consists of over 24 miles of paved trails throughout the Bloomington-Normal region. It began as a joint venture between Bloomington and Normal in the mid-1980s, and recent expansions have been partly funded by grants from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The trail currently bypasses Downtown Bloomington. A more robust connection will benefit Downtown by increasing recreational opportunities and alternative transportation modes. Strategic Economics' psychographic analysis of households in Downtown and adjacent areas found a sizable share of households that seek out "urban" lifestyles; such households are typically interested in recreational opportunities and are more willing to use transportation alternatives to the private automobile.

Connecting the Constitution Trail to Downtown, whether through comfortable on-street bicycle lanes or an actual trail extension, will help satisfy recreational demand, provide an inexpensive transportation alternative for households unable to afford an automobile, and transform Downtown into a weekend destination for trail users.

10.1: Advocate for the connection of the Constitutional Trail to Downtown Bloomington

The DBA should remain focused on advocating for the connection of the Constitution Trail to Downtown, with the City ultimately responsible for implementing the connection. Funding can come from additional Illinois Department of Natural Resources grants, the City of Bloomington, and possibly the DBA and other large Downtown organizations.

Goal 11: Stabilize the Condition of the Buildings in the Warehouse District

The Warehouse District in the southern portion of the Study Area contains a number of warehouse buildings dating from the mid-19th to early-20th century, many of which have valuable historic character. Most of these buildings are still in active use, but suffer from maintenance concerns related to their age and the high cost of maintaining them relative to achievable rents. Just as historic preservation in the Downtown Core has maintained a unique and attractive stock of historic buildings that are now appealing to visitors and new residents, it is in the City's interest to preserve the historic warehouse buildings for future uses.

11.1: Introduce and promote a targeted loan or grant program for the Warehouse District

Assuming that a new TIF District is created in the future, the City should focus use of funds to stabilize the condition of buildings in the Warehouse District. Such a program should concentrate on maintaining the basic soundness and historic character of the structures, such as roof repair/replacement, structural reinforcement, and brick repointing. It is not envisioned that this program would cover all costs, but instead provide additional incentive for the property owners to reinvest in the properties. The intent and use of this program would be somewhat similar to the current Harriett Fuller Rust Grant (recommended for continuation in Action 12.1 below), and can possibly be administered under that program.

11.2: Educate property owners regarding other funding sources or tax benefits of rehabilitation that Warehouse District property-owners can use

The DBA should gather information about alternative funding sources and tax credits, and focus on educating Warehouse District property owners of these benefits. Doing so would incur little expense to the DBA, but possibly facilitate rehabilitation of these properties by allowing them to access tax credits and other grants.

Goal 12: Continue Façade and Roof Improvement Grants

12.1: Continue to use tax increment financing funds for façade and roof improvements

Assuming the creation of a new TIF District, tax increment proceeds should continue to be used for façade and roof improvement grants, as has been carried out in the past through the Harriett Fuller Rust Grant. The façade rehabilitations are critical to ensuring the removal of visual blight in the pedestrian-oriented portions of Downtown. For maximum effectiveness, it is recommended that façade rehabilitations are targeted to concentrated areas of the Downtown, such as along Main, Center, and East Front Streets, since scattered rehabilitation will have little impact on the overall appearance of any particular block.

Goal 13: Reinforce the Connections between Downtown and Adjacent Neighborhoods

A key economic development strategy requires strengthening the physical and conceptual connections between Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods, particularly those to the immediate east and west. The fates of Downtown and these neighborhoods are intertwined: each contributes to the other's historic character and overall environment, overlapping household psychographic characteristics imply potential demand for Downtown housing and retail, and there are a number of high-potential opportunity sites ripe for development that will fill in gaps and naturally encourage greater interaction between the areas.

The need to connect Downtown with its surrounding neighborhoods was of less importance in the recent past, when Downtown primarily served as a regionally-focused employment, retail, dining, and entertainment center. However, Downtown is again becoming a residential neighborhood in its own right. This process strengthens Downtown, and will be accelerated if local-serving amenities and retail exist. Such retail and amenities will be developed more quickly if strengthened neighborhood connections increase the potential customer and local visitor base, resulting in a self-reinforcing cycle of amenity growth and residential growth that ultimately creates a more vibrant Downtown.

The needed "connections" between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods are both physical and conceptual. The physical connections are straightforward, requiring attractive development that will encourage a sense of continuity between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods from both automobile and pedestrian perspectives, and a linkage between physical property improvements in both areas. The conceptual connection requires a cultural shift in the perceived context of Downtown's location, with an acknowledgment that Downtown is the integral core of a larger community of residential neighborhoods. It takes time and tremendous effort to change firmly-held perceptions of a place.

13.1: Encourage development on sites that will link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods

Similar to Action 3.1, development should be encouraged on opportunity sites that lie on the outskirts of the Study Area, especially the opportunity sites identified in the Downtown Master Plan. Many of these sites consist of large parking lots, and would therefore be relatively inexpensive and easy for willing owners to develop. Housing is the most logical use for these sites, with mixed-use construction making more sense closer to existing mixed-use buildings.

The City should encourage development by ensuring adequate, affordable public parking availability (precluding the need for parking on surface lots), entering public-private partnerships for surplus City-owned land, and staying vigilant in condemning properties that are not maintained. The DBA should help by connecting interested property owners and developers.

13.2: Form organizational alliances between the DBA and organizations active in surrounding neighborhoods

Perceived linkages between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods can be brought about through better organizational connections between the DBA and other organizations operating in those neighborhoods. Open dialog and coordinated actions between these organizations will help align the activities of the DBA with those of community development corporations and neighborhood associations operating nearby.

Strategic Economics was unable to find previous instances in which local economic development activities specifically emphasized building connections between commercial districts and surrounding residential districts. Though most economic development strategies recognize the importance of the relationship between commercial and residential districts, the existing context informs whether economic development efforts are inclusive of both. For example, in the Broad Ripple neighborhood of Indianapolis, the Broad Ripple Village Association includes the residential and commercial components of the neighborhood since they were already perceived as being inter-related despite their different functions (see the case study for more details). Conversely, organizations in big-city downtowns typically include a variety of organizations that focus on just the Downtown itself or on smaller neighborhoods of Downtown.

Downtown Bloomington is large enough that the DBA should continue to operate solely within Downtown, yet it is small enough that the DBA should work with surrounding organizations to help improve the surrounding area. This strategy

makes sense given that Downtown Bloomington is indeed a central hub of the region, yet the region and Downtown are too small to ignore the economic development opportunities of better organizational cooperation.

The DBA should establish and/or maintain close contact with organizations operating in surrounding neighborhoods and explore opportunities for joint programs, particularly those that assist property owners with rehabilitation and development. Prominent organizations include Mid Central Community Action, and the Old House Society, plus local neighborhood associations.

13.3: Pursue public-private development opportunities with major employers seeking employee housing near offices
The DBA should seek to identify major employers in and near Downtown Bloomington that desire improved and expanded housing options for their employees. These employers, such as State Farm Insurance, BroMenn Regional Medical Center, and Electrolux, may be interested in opportunities to assist with the development and rehabilitation of local housing, or perhaps participating in a mortgage assistance program for employees who choose to live within nearby neighborhoods. The latter tool is a common enticement employed by large employers wishing to contribute to the revitalization of their communities.

CASE STUDY: BROAD RIPPLE, INDIANAPOLIS

Broad Ripple Village is a neighborhood and commercial district in Indianapolis, Indiana, located about six miles north of Downtown. It is centered on Broad Ripple Avenue, a major commercial corridor. Broad Ripple Avenue has evening and nighttime entertainment venues such as restaurants, bars, and live music venues. It also has clothing and specialty stores, and is distinguished by a concentration of artists and public art. This mix of retail, entertainment, and art contributes to a lively atmosphere during both the day and night.

Broad Ripple's commercial district declined during the 1960s and 1970s as the population shifted to the suburbs. The commercial district began to improve in the following decades, with its early improvement attributed to Butler University students patronizing the district's bars. The customer base currently consists of three major users: shoppers from outside the district during the day, local and regional families/couples/groups patronizing restaurants in the evening, and bar patrons from throughout the region at night.

The residential portions of Broad Ripple always remained stable compared to the commercial district, contributing to positive perceptions of the area. Today the neighborhood around the commercial district is relatively affluent, with a median household income of approximately \$53,836 compared to a Marion County median household income of \$40,421.

The neighborhood and commercial district is served by the Broad Ripple Village Association (BRVA), a volunteer non-profit organization comprised of both residents and businesses located in the area. The organization tries to work with and serve both the interests of residents and businesses. One of their primary program areas is beautification, which includes planting trees and flowers and administering a cleaning partnership with business owners. BRVA also set up a foundation to raise money to pay for a new streetscape design and pedestrian improvements on Broad Ripple Avenue.

Another primary goal of the BRVA is to act as a liaison to the City of Indianapolis. This includes informing business owners about the City's façade improvement program and trying to get more City investment in the neighborhood. They also do marketing of the neighborhood, such as planning and advertising events such as the "Historic Home Tour," and creating an annual directory of businesses that is distributed to downtown hotels.

Conclusions

Downtown Bloomington is the central downtown for its entire region, whereas Broad Ripple is a neighborhood within a much larger city. Despite this, Broad Ripple holds valuable lessons for Downtown Bloomington, given that Downtown Bloomington is the hub of a relatively small region and in many ways functions as a smaller-scale commercial district.

Broad Ripple has succeeded in attracting a more stable and continuous customer base throughout the day and night thanks to the positive perceptions driven by the surrounding residential neighborhood; this lends support to actions aimed at improving and connecting surrounding neighborhoods to Downtown Bloomington. Like Downtown Bloomington, economic trends have forced Broad Ripple to compete as a specialty district with a unique, progressive, and artistic identity. Unlike Downtown Bloomington, the area attracts a more consistent volume of business throughout the day, evening, and night. Much of this is due to the strong neighborhood that surrounds the commercial district, resulting in positive regional perceptions of the area and a stable and family-oriented local customer base. In addition, the proximity of active homeowners ensures a base of concerned stakeholders that seek to monitor and rectify problems in the commercial district.

Given this linkage between residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, the Broad Ripple example also suggests that organizational structure is key to resolving diverse stakeholder concerns and successfully linking the economic

development of neighborhoods. The Broad Ripple Village Association includes both the commercial and residential portions of Broad Ripple since they are perceived as being inextricably linked and interdependent. As a result, the BRVA is better able to comprehensively address issues that impact homeowners and business owners while balancing the concerns of each group. Downtown Bloomington requires its own standalone organization (the current DBA, for example) given its larger size and unique, diverse mix of uses compared to surrounding neighborhoods, but the Broad Ripple example suggests the value of creating organizational bridges and shared programs with entities operating in surrounding neighborhood.