

Downtown

# Shelbyville

## Small Area Plan



**EATC**  
107 South Pennsylvania Street  
Suite 100, Schrader Building  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-3684  
Phone: 317 633 4040  
Fax: 317 633 4153

# Downtown Shelbyville Small Area Plan



# Foreword

---

Throughout the nation there are countless examples of communities that have recognized the importance of their downtowns and have developed innovative ways to breath new life into them. The success of an entire community is directly related to the vitality and health of its downtown. Downtowns have historically represented the symbolic heart of the community.

Throughout the comprehensive planning process residents, business owners, and City officials recognized the importance of a vital and economically healthy downtown. To achieve this success those involved in the planning process listed four primary issues that needed to be addressed and ultimately resolved. They included:

- 1 resolution to current and future parking issues,
- 2 increased economic activity and continued business development in the downtown,
- 3 increased vehicular and pedestrian safety on the public square, and
- 4 aesthetic improvements to the corridors and entries into downtown.

The purpose of this Plan is to critically evaluate these concerns and develop appropriate solutions. Of the four items listed above, the current state of the public square and parking were consistently mentioned by those in the public forums as the two major problems facing the downtown. Although this document evaluates all four matters, these two items are analyzed in greater detail based on the public's opinion and initial analyses. It is also important to maintain a broad perspective concerning how each of these items are integrally related to one another and understand that the resolution to one cannot come at the expense of another.

The time frame for this document addresses steps that can be undertaken or initiated over the next five years. In an effort to focus on specific issues, this Plan concentrates on the Harrison Street corridor encompassing approximately one block on either side from Colescott Street to the Blue River. Such a focused plan allows City officials, community organizations, and business leaders to concentrate their efforts on generating immediate successes, ultimately leading to long-term solutions to downtown Shelbyville's revitalization.

The Downtown Small Area Plan is a part of the City of Shelbyville's initiative to update the Comprehensive Plan. Both documents seek a proactive approach to planning and guiding appropriate development throughout the community. The ultimate goal of this Downtown Plan is to build on the success of projects already undertaken by community leaders and to build upon efforts to enhance the downtown's vitality. Improving and preserving the unique character of the downtown and the buildings that comprise it should be key guiding principles to this process over the coming years.

This Plan is part of an evolving process to strengthen the heart of the community. Due to the nature of this document, not all the issues can be thoroughly evaluated to the degree necessary. The issues discussed in Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six will need to be examined further to determine their feasibility, impacts on the larger community, and additional implementation strategies. The purpose of the catalyst projects listed is to address the primary issues currently facing the downtown, propose alternatives for future improvements, and generate a long-term vision for the future of downtown Shelbyville and the community as a whole.

*Downtown Shelbyville circa 1982*



# Table of Contents

---

## **Preface**

Foreword .....	iii
Table of Contents .....	iv
Acknowledgments .....	v

## **Chapter 1 - Downtown Analysis**

Downtown Analysis - Introduction .....	4
Small Area Plan Study Area Map .....	5
Historical Perspective .....	6
Existing Land Uses .....	8
Land Use Map - Street Level.....	9
Land Use Map - Second Level.....	10
Land Use Map - Third Level.....	11
Existing Circulation and Parking-General.....	12
Existing Circulation and Parking Map.....	13
Existing Circulation & Parking-Public Square .....	14
Existing Economic Issues .....	16

## **Chapter 2 - General Plan**

Introduction - General Plan .....	20
Recommended Streetscape Phasing Map.....	21
General Implementation Measures .....	22
General Implementation Measures-Urban Design ..	23

## **Chapter 3 - The Public Square**

Introduction - Public Square Configuration .....	26
Square Options “A”, “B”, and “C” .....	27
Square Option “D” and Summary Matrix .....	28
Proposed Public Square Reconfiguration .....	29

## **Chapter 4 - Circulation and Parking**

Introduction - Circulation and Parking .....	32
Circulation and Parking Alternatives Map.....	33
Additional Public Parking Alternatives .....	34

## **Chapter 5 - Downtown Gateways**

Introduction - Downtown Gateways .....	38
Gateway Locations Map .....	39
Northern Gateway.....	40

## **Chapter 6 - Economic Development**

Introduction - Economic Development .....	42
Additional Economic Opportunities .....	43
Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings .....	44

## **Chapter 7 - Conclusion**

Conclusion .....	46
------------------	----

# Acknowledgments

---

The Shelbyville Downtown Small Area Plan is the result of hard work and contributions from many people. A plan that does not involve those it hopes to serve will not be as successful. For this reason, those interested in the success of the downtown put forth much effort, thoughts, ideas, goals, and vision. It is appropriate and necessary to give special recognition and appreciation to those who were an integral part of this process.

Special thanks to the people of Shelbyville, particularly those who provided their valuable insight into this planning process by participating in the public workshops, key group interviews and the public presentation “open house” held in May (2001). Special thanks also to the following people who made this effort possible.

Mayor of Shelbyville:  
Frank Zerr

City Council:  
Cheryl Atwood  
Orville Branson  
Scott Furgeson  
Jeff Martin  
W. Anthony Sipes  
Jim Sleeth  
Roland Stine

City of Shelbyville Plan Commission:  
David Finkel, President      Larry Lux  
Dennis Baker                      James Macklin  
DiAnne Forville                  Amy Moore  
Scott Furgeson                      Jeff Sponsel  
Terry James

Planning Staff:  
Thomas DeBaun, Director  
Amy Butcher, Deputy Director

Steering Committee Members:  
Cheryl Atwood                      James Garrett, Jr.  
Orville Branson                      Cheryl Miller  
Mike Dellinger                      Amy Moore  
David Finkel                          Terry Smith  
DiAnne Forville                      Jeff Sponsel

Special thanks to Jeff Sponsel for providing the historical photographs found on pages 6 and 7.





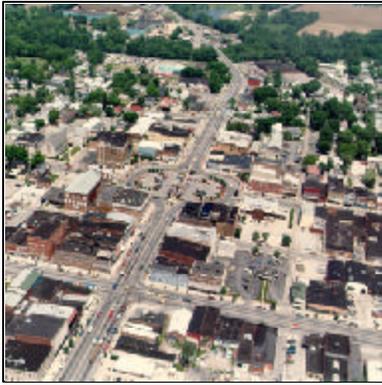
ARCHITECTS

107 South Pennsylvania Street  
Suite 100, Schrader Building  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-3684  
Phone: 317 633 4040  
Fax: 317 633 4153

# Part One

# Existing Conditions





# Chapter 1

## **Downtown Analysis**

---

# Downtown Analysis - Introduction

---

Shelbyville's original downtown represented the character of a small community during an earlier time. The compact urban form provided a conducive environment for residents to walk to and shop at many of the local businesses which comprised the downtown. The original public square represented the center of City and County governments and served as a public gathering place.

The layout of Shelbyville's original town square was typical of most communities in Indiana. The primary roads into town traversed directly through the downtown and were a convenient means of access to activities in the center of Shelbyville. As the amount of traffic and the frequency of large trucks increased, safety became more of an issue, and this asset became more of a detriment to the downtown's image and economic vitality.

Access to Shelbyville and the downtown is primarily along State Road 9 (Harrison Street) and State Road 44 (Broadway Street). Although both routes funnel a significant amount of traffic into the downtown area, a large number of heavy trucks travel through the downtown square causing numerous conflicts.

Over the years, public policy and changing economic patterns shifted economic activity away from the town center. Development patterns shifted from a concentrated (small) area to a more dispersed pattern scattered throughout the community. Like many other communities, as people moved to the edge of the community businesses and services followed creating a void in the heart of the community. A primary influence of this trend was the automobile and the mobility it provided. Due to these changes and other influences, many small towns suffered over the years, and Shelbyville was no exception.

Fortunately, recent trends indicate a reversal in this movement away from town centers, and many downtowns have new life. Reasons for this shift include a return of residences to the downtown, proximity to employment, and a desire to maintain the economic, cultural and historical aspects that make the community unique.

Downtown Shelbyville contains many of the aspects listed above. There are a large number of residents in the downtown area and several major employers within easy (walkable) access. Although the number

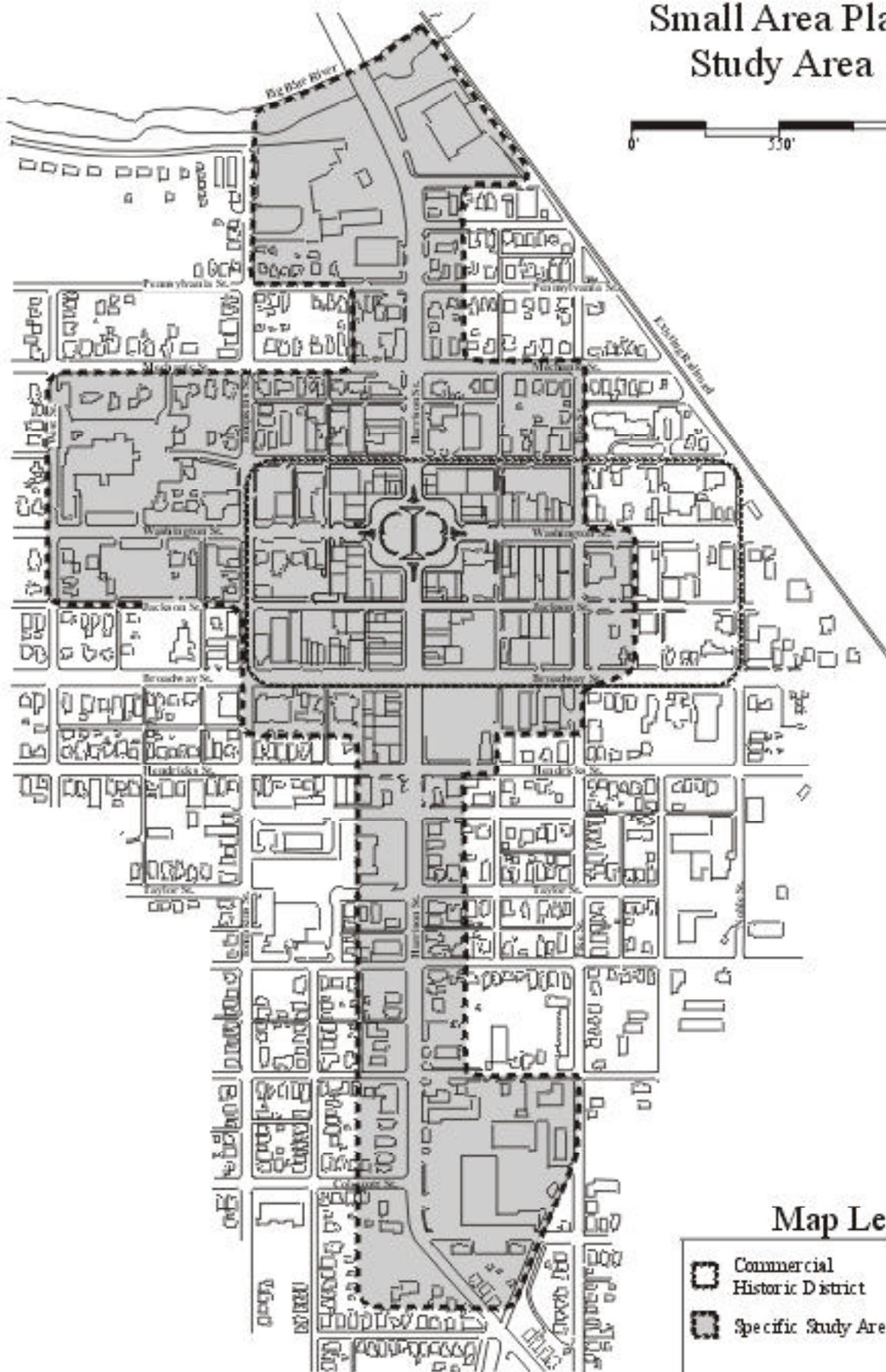
and variety of businesses is not what it could be, it represents a solid core from which to build.

As the largest single employer downtown, Major Hospital represents an influential component of the downtown's vitality. The hospital employees' current and future use of infrastructure such as streets, parking, and other City services can directly impact development in the downtown area. The City of Shelbyville and interested downtown stakeholders should maintain ongoing dialogue with the hospital to anticipate and plan for change as conditions warrant in the future.

The map on the following page indicates the geographic scope of the study area. The area indicated begins to allude to either the areas of primary concern or the major influences on the downtown. In addition to the immediate public square area, other areas of concern include the parcels of land just south of the Blue River and the southern entry point into downtown comprised primarily of Mickey's Plaza.

The remainder of this chapter explores the numerous other factors impacting downtown Shelbyville. In addition to a brief historical overview of the downtown, existing land uses, vehicular circulation and parking are also analyzed. A brief description of economic conditions is also included in this chapter.

# Small Area Plan Study Area



## Map Legend

- Commercial Historic District
- Specific Study Area

# Historical Perspective

---

The original 1823 plat of Shelbyville was comprised primarily of what the downtown is today. Proceeds from early land sales were applied to land acquisition and the construction of the County's first courthouse. This courthouse was located in the center of the public square until it burned in 1850. The courthouse was rebuilt at its current location along South Harrison Street, and the square became an open public plaza.

As the series of photos indicate, the central square accommodated vehicles and pedestrians alike throughout the early 1900's. The former courthouse site was reduced to a small, centrally-located fountain with traffic flowing directly through the square. The open plaza served as a central gathering space for the downtown and larger community for numerous social and political events. The original interurban which connected various parts of Shelbyville also passed through the public square.

In 1956, the square was redesigned to accommodate the increased influence and popularity of the automobile. A large parking lot was placed in the center of the square, creating somewhat of a round-about with traffic circulating around the centralized parking area. This configuration is what can be found here today.

Downtown Shelbyville is comprised of a designated historic district as well. The Shelbyville Commercial Historic District, shown on the map on Page 5, contains a majority of the historic buildings found within the city. Some of the notable buildings include:

- City Hall
- Old City High School (Town Hall)
- Blessing-Deprez Building
- Knights of Pythias Building

In 1978 an effort was undertaken to improve the physical appearance of the public square. With a generous donation from Knauf Fiberglass, streetscape improvements such as landscaping, street lights, and decorative sidewalk pavers were incorporated to enhance the downtown setting. Although these enhancements addressed downtown needs at the time, changing economic trends, increased traffic, and the general effects of time have combined to create a setting that is once again in need of rejuvenation.

Up until the early 1980's downtown Shelbyville served as the primary business district for the City and



*Downtown Square Looking Northeast, Circa 1900*



*Downtown Square Looking South, Circa 1920*



*Downtown Shelbyville Looking North, Circa 1949*

County. Nearly all the prominent businesses serving the community surrounded the central plaza. As the popularity of the automobile gathered strength and businesses moved nearer to residents on the outskirts of town, the downtown struggled to retain its role as the community focal point. Today, several buildings are underutilized or vacant. Most of the businesses in the downtown are service-oriented or professional offices.

In recent years, there has generally been a high turnover rate among businesses in the downtown. Vehicular parking has also become a major issue for would-be patrons and employees of the downtown businesses. Improving pedestrian-related aesthetics and safety have taken on added importance. The number and frequency of large trucks passing through the square have generated problems for business owners and pedestrians alike.

In 1997, *Mainstreet Shelbyville* was organized to address some of the issues discussed previously. Since that time, the organization has been successful in assisting local businesses and promoting the downtown. The organization has sponsored numerous events and has actively promoted downtown as a place to visit, shop, and dine.

The downtown has had a diverse history, and this trend of diversity continues today and will continue into the future. Continued cooperation and coordination between the City and other stakeholders will ensure the downtown remains a vibrant and economically vital part of the community. Like many other communities throughout the country that have revitalized their downtowns, Shelbyville has the necessary resources and spirit to follow this trend.



*Downtown Square, Circa 1982*

# Existing Land Uses

---

## Introduction

This section evaluates existing land uses in the downtown study area. Due to the historic nature of the area, a majority of the buildings are multi-story brick buildings fronting the streets. Because few buildings have been demolished and replaced with parking lots or new construction, the continuity of the urban fabric has remained relatively intact. Most parking is located behind existing buildings, generating less of a visual impact on the aesthetics of the downtown streetscape.

## Method of Analysis

An analysis of existing land uses is the primary method of determining the issues and problems of the area. Building inventories and conditions illustrate business types, vacancies, and nodes of activity. Due to the dynamic nature of the business environment, this survey represents a snapshot of existing land uses as of May, 2001.

## General Conditions

Many of the buildings in the study area are two and three story commercial brick buildings built between the mid 1800's and early 1900's. Unfortunately, most of these same buildings have been vacant and/or underutilized on the upper floors for many years. Buildings that are fully occupied generally have residential rental units on the second and third floors. Unfortunately, many of these units are in poor condition and are in need of significant improvements. Many residents who took part in the public workshops for the Comprehensive Plan said the amount of vacant space and the perception it creates is one of several factors affecting the downtown's inability to attract reinvestment.

The preservation of historic buildings in the downtown is vital to maintaining the unique character of the area. Numerous, complex issues must be addressed in order to make a building viable for reuse. The structural integrity of the building must first be examined. In addition to that, ADA and fire code compliance must also be addressed to make a building viable for public use. Although making some buildings code-compliant would be cost prohibitive, there are many buildings that could be rehabilitated at reasonable costs.

In addition to having major employment centers in the downtown, it is equally important to have supporting retail and service businesses catering to the needs of

those living and working downtown as well. Listed below are some of the primary land uses in the downtown.

- 1 Major Hospital
- 2 City Hall
- 3 Shelby County Courthouse and Annex
- 4 Mickey's (retail) Plaza

Major Hospital has been a steady employer and corporate citizen in the community over the last eighty years; however, its continued growth and expansion has created a situation where the hospital will soon be exploring options for future expansion. Due to the "land-locked" status of the hospital's current site, it is assumed the hospital will be searching for locations to expand outside its current location. The City should work closely with Major Hospital and any other interested parties to explore options for the future use of the existing building and site.

As mentioned previously, the number of vacant buildings downtown has been an ongoing problem over the years. But this problem also represents an opportunity to create catalysts for improvement. Listed below are some of the key buildings that represent this potential for redevelopment.

- 5 Safeway Supermarket site
- 6 Porter Pool building
- 7 some of the Methodist Building's floors
- 8 Knights of Pythias building

## Community Events

Community events and festivals are integral to the identity and spirit of the community. There are several events held annually in Shelbyville that have a long tradition. The largest one is the *Bears of Blue River Festival* which is held annually during August. Other special events or activities that take place downtown, or have taken place in the past, include:

- Spring clean-up activities,
- car shows, farmers' markets, pancake breakfasts,
- the Cinco de Mayo Festival (*May*),
- pumpkin painting contest (*October*),
- Late Night events, and
- Oktoberfest (*planned for September 2001*).

# Land Use Map- Street Level Plan

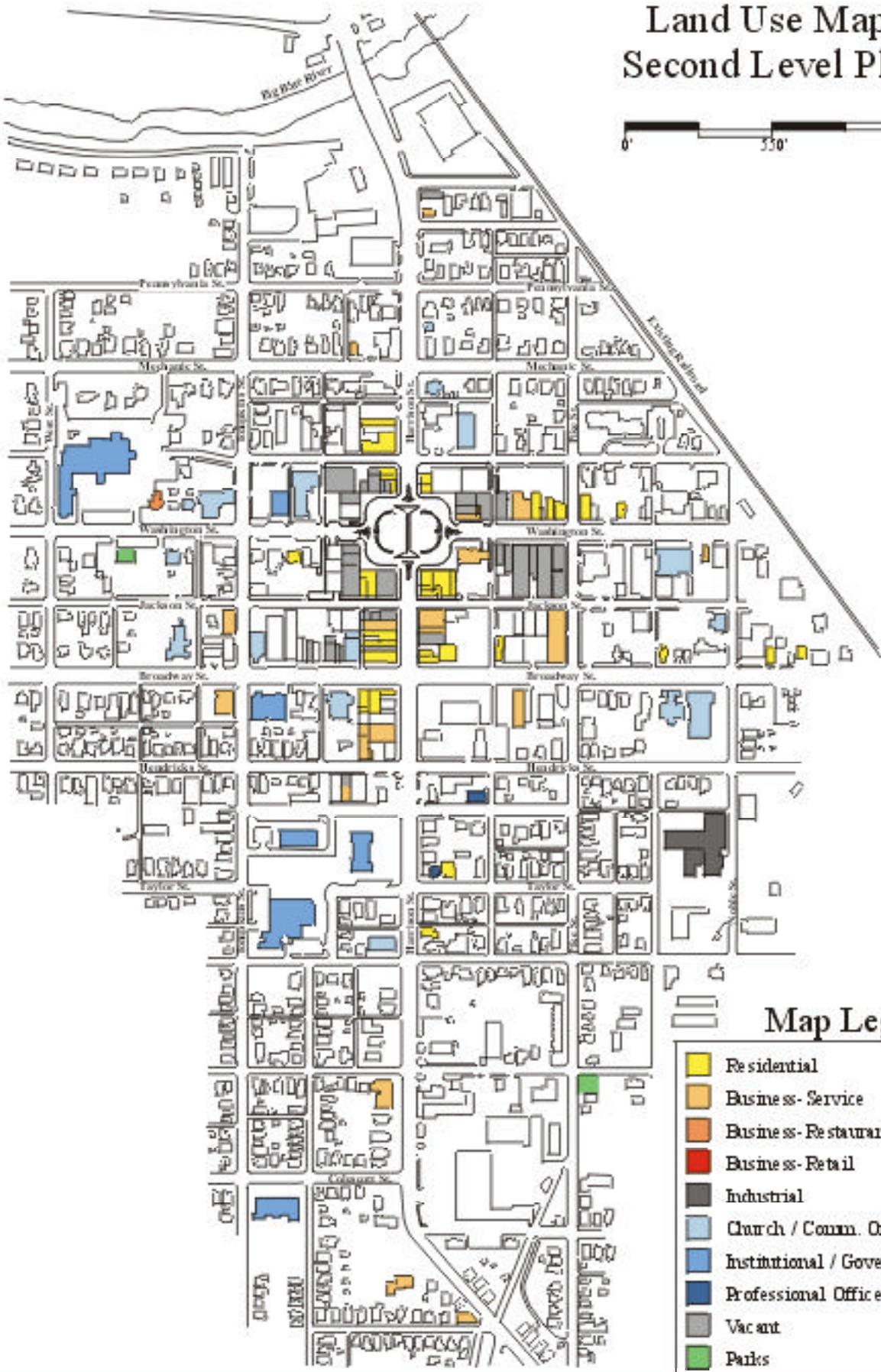


### Map Legend

	Residential
	Business-Service
	Business-Restaurant
	Business-Retail
	Industrial
	Church / Comm. Org.
	Institutional / Government
	Professional Office
	Vacant
	Parks

# Land Use Map- Second Level Plan

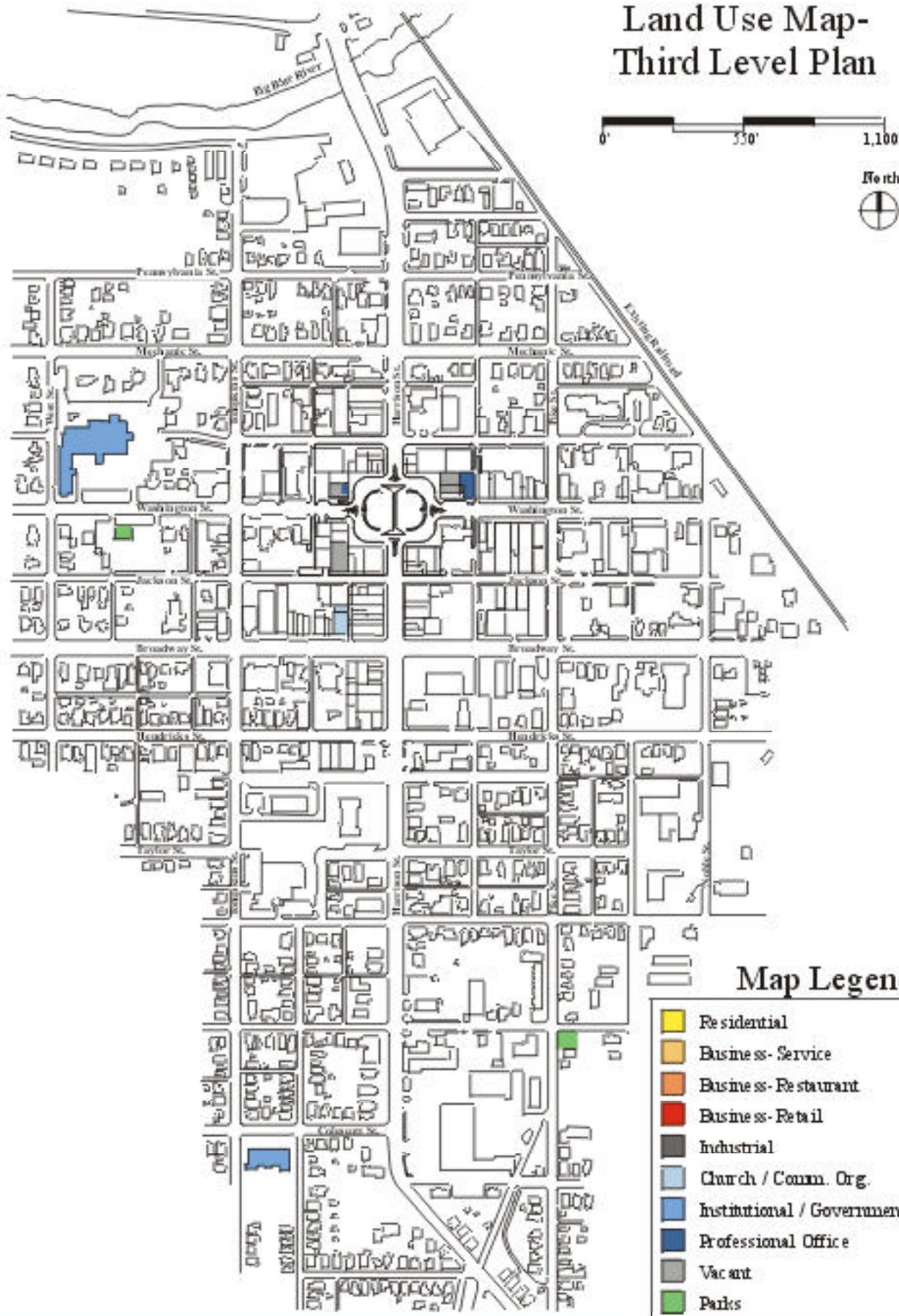
0 550' 1,100'



## Map Legend

- Residential
- Business-Service
- Business-Restaurant
- Business-Retail
- Industrial
- Church / Comm. Org.
- Institutional / Government
- Professional Office
- Vacant
- Parks

# Land Use Map- Third Level Plan



## Map Legend

<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow;"></span>	Residential
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange;"></span>	Business-Service
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightcoral;"></span>	Business-Restaurant
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red;"></span>	Business-Retail
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:grey;"></span>	Industrial
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue;"></span>	Church / Comm. Org.
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue;"></span>	Institutional / Government
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkblue;"></span>	Professional Office
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgrey;"></span>	Vacant
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:green;"></span>	Parks

# Existing Circulation and Parking - General

---

## **Introduction**

This section examines existing traffic patterns in and around the public square including vehicular and pedestrian circulation. This section also evaluates the amount and availability of parking throughout the study area and various infrastructure issues (streets, sidewalks, underground utilities, etc...) that may need to be addressed. Finally, an examination of gateways or entrances into the downtown is also explored.

## **Method of Analysis**

Several site visits were conducted to evaluate existing traffic related issues on the downtown square and surrounding street network. In regards to parking, a survey was conducted to tally the approximate number of spaces within the study area.

## **General Conditions**

Primary access to the Shelbyville public square is served by State Road 9 which runs directly through the downtown square. State Road 44, one block south of the square, is the designated truck route through the City and follows Broadway to Harrison Street and south to Colescott Street. These two routes generate the largest volume of traffic, including large truck traffic, through the downtown. During the public workshops, residents repeatedly discussed their concerns about vehicular and pedestrian safety due to the size and number of trucks traveling through the square.

In regards to pedestrian circulation in the downtown, the dashed circle on the map on the following page represents a 1/4 mile radius from the center of the public square. A distance of 1/4 mile is generally considered to be a comfortable 5 to 10 minute walk for the average individual. The purpose of the graphic is to provide a sense of scale to the downtown area and to illustrate potential alternatives to access various parts or destinations in the downtown.

Parking on the downtown square is dominated by the parking lot located in the center which contains approximately sixty-six spaces. Other major parking areas include employee and visitor parking for Major Hospital (approximately 225 spaces) and for Mickey's Plaza (approximately 200 spaces). As the map on the following page indicates, the remaining parking is scattered in smaller pockets throughout the downtown. From the survey taken, there are approximately 1,525 spaces within the downtown study area. This figure

includes most of the on-street parking but does not distinguish between public parking and private, or business patron parking.

Providing adequate access that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is another issue. Currently there is an inadequate amount of handicap-accessible parking spaces on or around the public square. Proper curbs and sidewalks for those with physical limitations needs to be evaluated and addressed as a priority.

There is a lack of directional and informational signage in the downtown. Motorists and pedestrians alike must be able to easily recognize their surroundings and know where they are going. Signage directing visitors and residents alike to downtown attractions or simply to available parking areas are the first steps in making the downtown a more user-friendly destination.

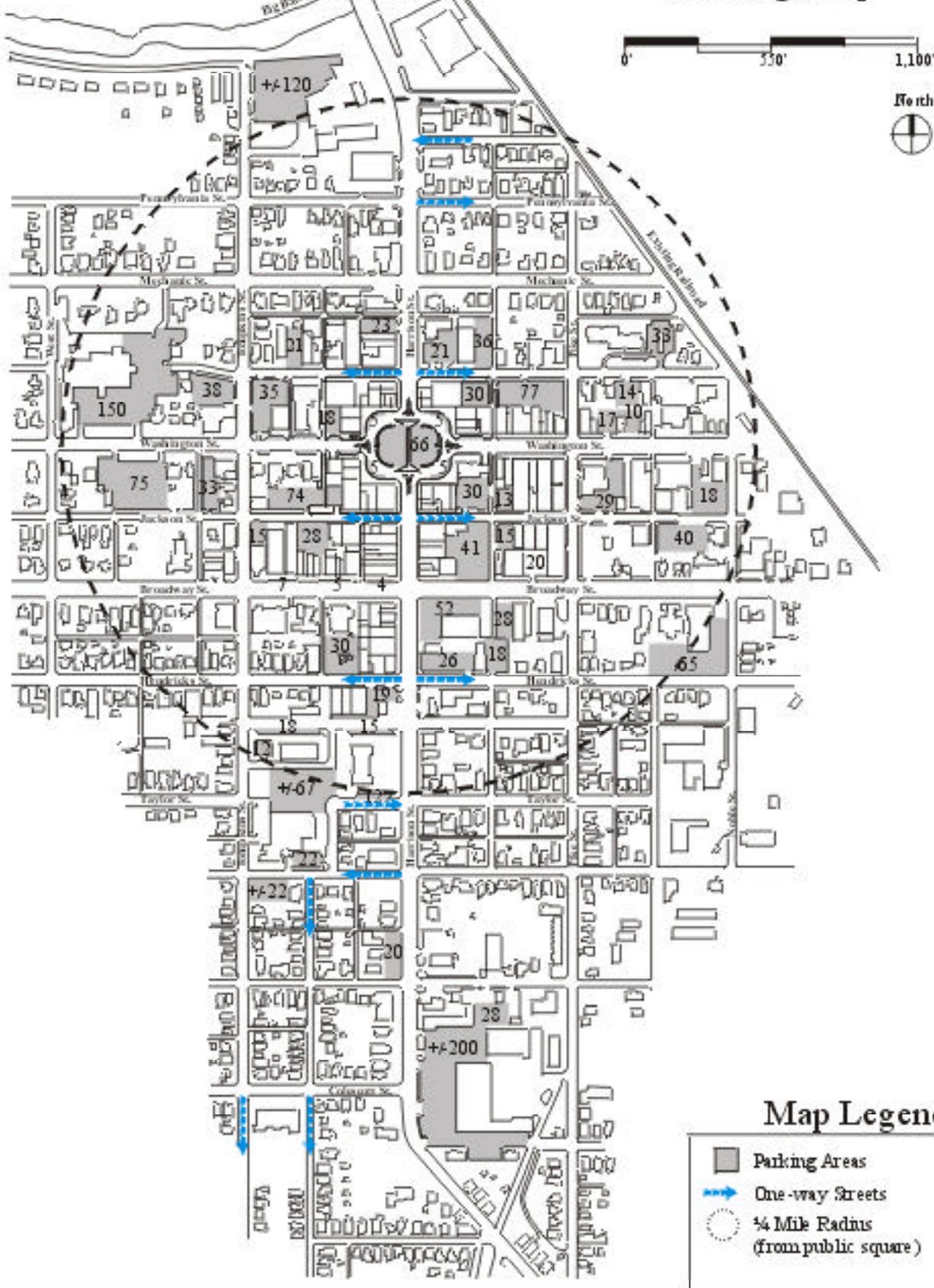
## **Infrastructure Conditions**

The condition of sidewalks, curbs (curb-cuts), handicap ramps, street lights, and local streets is not only a maintenance concern but an aesthetic one as well. Prioritizing where to concentrate maintenance, funding, and other resources to improve the aesthetics and functionality of these components in the downtown are essential to improving the business climate of the area. In order to ensure investments are made by existing and potential business owners in the downtown, the City must show a commitment as well by investing in the area.

## **Gateways to the Downtown**

The importance of community gateways has been highlighted in the Comprehensive Plan, Implementation Workbook, and again in this Small Area Plan. Although all three documents explore this issue and many of the issues are similar, differences lie in the scale of each project. The importance of creating a pleasant pedestrian experience is vital to the success of the downtown. Additionally, State Roads 9 and 44 are the primary vehicular routes into and through downtown. Encouraging redevelopment and incorporating urban design enhancements along such gateways can spur revitalization efforts throughout the downtown.

# Circulation and Parking Map



## Map Legend

- Parking Areas
- One-way Streets
- 1/4 Mile Radius (from public square)

# Existing Circulation and Parking - Public Square

## Introduction

In order to determine appropriate solutions to the numerous circulation issues on the public square, a thorough analysis of existing problems in the area must be conducted. This page and the photograph on the following page highlight some of the primary vehicular and pedestrian issues on the square.

## General Liabilities

- Lack of safe, ADA accessible parking spaces.
- Excessive (semi)truck traffic generating numerous issues including:
  - noise pollution (throttling up and down)
  - vibration
  - air pollution (causing building degradation)
  - trucks taking up both travel lanes when making turns around the circle, and
  - truck trailers rolling over curbs and sidewalks and destroying landscaping.
- Parking spaces in central lot utilized by business employees rather than patrons.

## Urban Design Issues

- Lack of cohesive outdoor space for community events.
- Vending machines located in front of businesses.
- Inconsistent maintenance of landscaping.
- Island medians too small/narrow to provide pedestrians with a sense of safety from traffic.
- Parking lot full of cars detracts from the water fountain located in the center.

## Infrastructure Issues

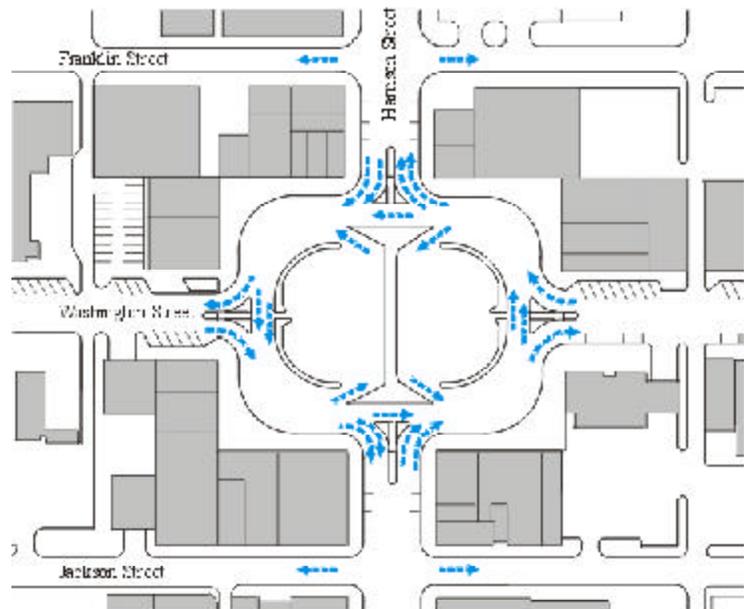
This analysis examines “above-grade” infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, curbs, and street lights. Determining underground infrastructure conditions is a much more difficult task that can only be accurately evaluated through additional engineering studies that expose existing conditions. Listed below are some of the “above-grade” issues that have been examined.

- Lack of ADA-accessible curb-cuts and ramps.
- Lack of storm sewers under the public square.
- Deteriorated sidewalks in some locations.

## Specific Problem Areas

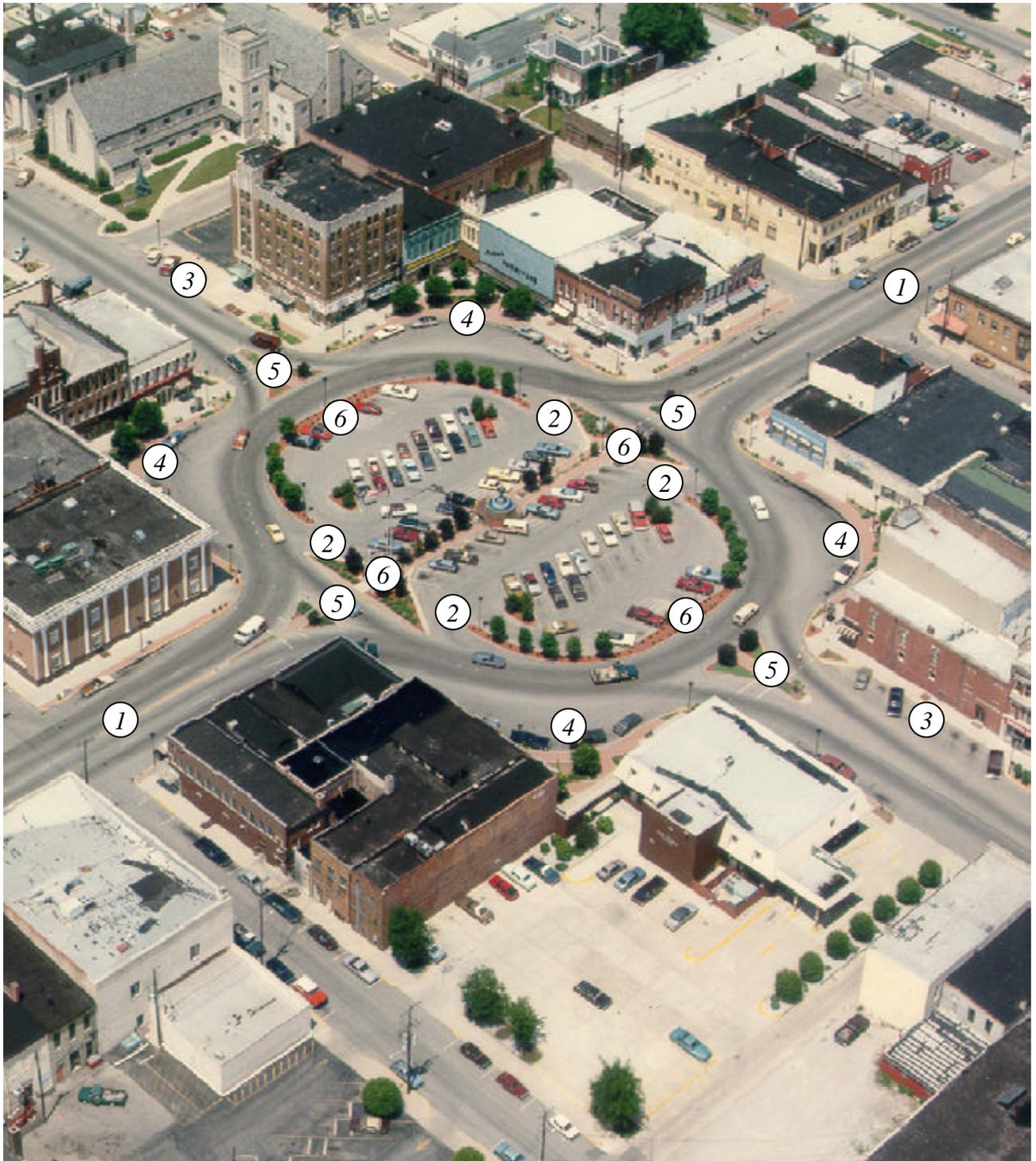
There are several problematic areas associated with circulation around the circle. The following analysis refers to the photograph on the following page and accompanying graphic below.

- 1 Speed of vehicles along Harrison Street too fast when approaching the square.
- 2 Numerous conflict points where vehicles enter and exit the central parking area.
- 3 Vehicles backing out of parking spaces into the flow of traffic.
- 4 Vehicles pulling out of parking spaces into the flow of traffic.
- 5 Confusion concerning who has right-of-way:
  - motorists vs. pedestrians
  - motorist vs. motorist
- 6 Lack of direct, safe routes for pedestrians trying to cross from the central parking lot to surrounding businesses.



*Vehicular Circulation on the Square*

# Existing Circulation and Parking - Public Square



*Vehicular and Pedestrian Conflicts on the Square*

*Photo Circa 1980*

# Existing Economic Issues

---

## **Introduction**

Any effort to revitalize or enhance the aesthetics of the downtown will fail if approached as an isolated issue. Maintaining a healthy business climate is vital to the ultimate success of downtown and that of greater Shelbyville.

## **Method of Analysis**

Due to the importance of this issue, a separate document was developed that focused on the downtown's economic issues. The document contains information on the various types of businesses which comprise the downtown area, a market analysis of past and future trends, and recommendations for future development based on those trends. For additional economic information and projections, refer to the *Economic Development Opportunities and Required Actions* report completed in January, 2001.

## **General Conditions**

Downtown Shelbyville currently is comprised of a variety of business and land uses. According to the economic study referenced above there are approximately 1,000 employees in the downtown area. Of this total, approximately 600-700 are located within the Small Area Plan study area.

A majority of the employers in the downtown are small business owners with less than twenty employees. To contrast the large number of small businesses, there is also the impact of a select number of large employers within or near the study area. These large employers influencing the development of downtown include:

- Major Hospital
- Knauf Fiberglass
- City and County government agencies

As with most downtowns, there is also a large percentage of service sector employers. For a breakdown of the types of land uses, refer to the land use maps located earlier in this chapter.

Even though there is a large amount of vacant space in the downtown, many long time businesses exist in the area. These businesses include financial institutions, restaurants, some warehouse/distribution businesses, service-oriented operations, furniture and appliance stores, and specialty/"niche" shops. Although financially stable now, many of these small

businesses would benefit greatly from a downtown economic revitalization effort.

Downtown and greater Shelbyville are uniquely positioned to utilize the fiberoptic line recently installed. The City negotiated free access to the line for the next thirty years. Currently, only the Methodist Building on the public square is linked to this high-tech infrastructure.



ARCHITECTS  
107 South Pennsylvania Street  
Suite 100, Schrader Building  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-3684  
Phone: 317 633 4040  
Fax: 317 633 4153

# Part Two Implementation Measures





# Chapter 2

## **General Plan**

---

# Introduction - General Plan

---

This Small Area Plan focuses on projects that can be initiated or undertaken over the next five years. The map on the following page indicates the areas of highest priority to focus funds and efforts. The following implementation measures center on improvements to the public square, increasing public parking, and creating a gateway feature along the Blue River. The map also indicates a long term phasing plan which addresses urban design and streetscape issues throughout downtown.

The various phases of downtown (re)development should be viewed as a series of interrelated steps ensuring the long-term health and vitality of the downtown and greater Shelbyville. Although this Plan investigates opportunities over a five-year time frame, many of these ideas may not become reality for another ten to twenty years. Listed below is a brief summary of each of the phases relating to urban design issues and the primary focus for each.

## **Phase One**

This initial phase represents the primary focus of the Small Area Plan. Throughout the comprehensive planning process, residents and City officials alike reiterated their concern for the public square and their desire to see its revitalization. Improving pedestrian and vehicular circulation, addressing parking issues, and improving the overall pedestrian experience and safety on the square are central issues addressed in this phase. This phase is directly influenced and affected by the Parkway Arterial proposed in the Comprehensive Plan which will reduce truck traffic on the public square.

## **Phase Two**

Creating a lasting image and entry into the downtown is another key to the future viability of the downtown. The development of a strong gateway experience along north State Road 9 for the motorist and pedestrian alike is the focus of this phase. Redevelopment opportunities for the Porter Pool building and vacant Safeway Supermarket site could raise the quality of development for the downtown and overall community.

## **Phase Three**

The final phase of this five year plan involves linking the new gateway feature(s) along the Blue River with the downtown square. This effort could include a coordinated effort with the Parks and Recreation

Department to create a pedestrian path from the River south along Harrison Street to the public square. Streetscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian experience and safety is key to this phase.

## **Long-term Phases**

The remaining phases indicate a long-term commitment to downtown Shelbyville and ultimately the businesses comprising it. The two primary components of this vision include streetscape improvements and the redevelopment of Mickey's Plaza into a southern gateway for the downtown. Streetscape improvements along the three remaining streets radiating from the square, including Harrison Street to the southern gateway, comprise one part of this phase. Streetscape improvements along east Broadway Street could be incorporated as part of the Indiana Department of Transportation's plans to improve East State Road 44 within the next ten years.

Redevelopment opportunities at the intersection of Colescott and Harrison Streets could further invigorate the downtown business climate. The creation of a significant gateway feature anchoring the southern part of downtown would serve as the opposite "bookend" to the northern entry at the Blue River. Such a scenario could generate a well-designed urban experience for those passing through or visiting the downtown.

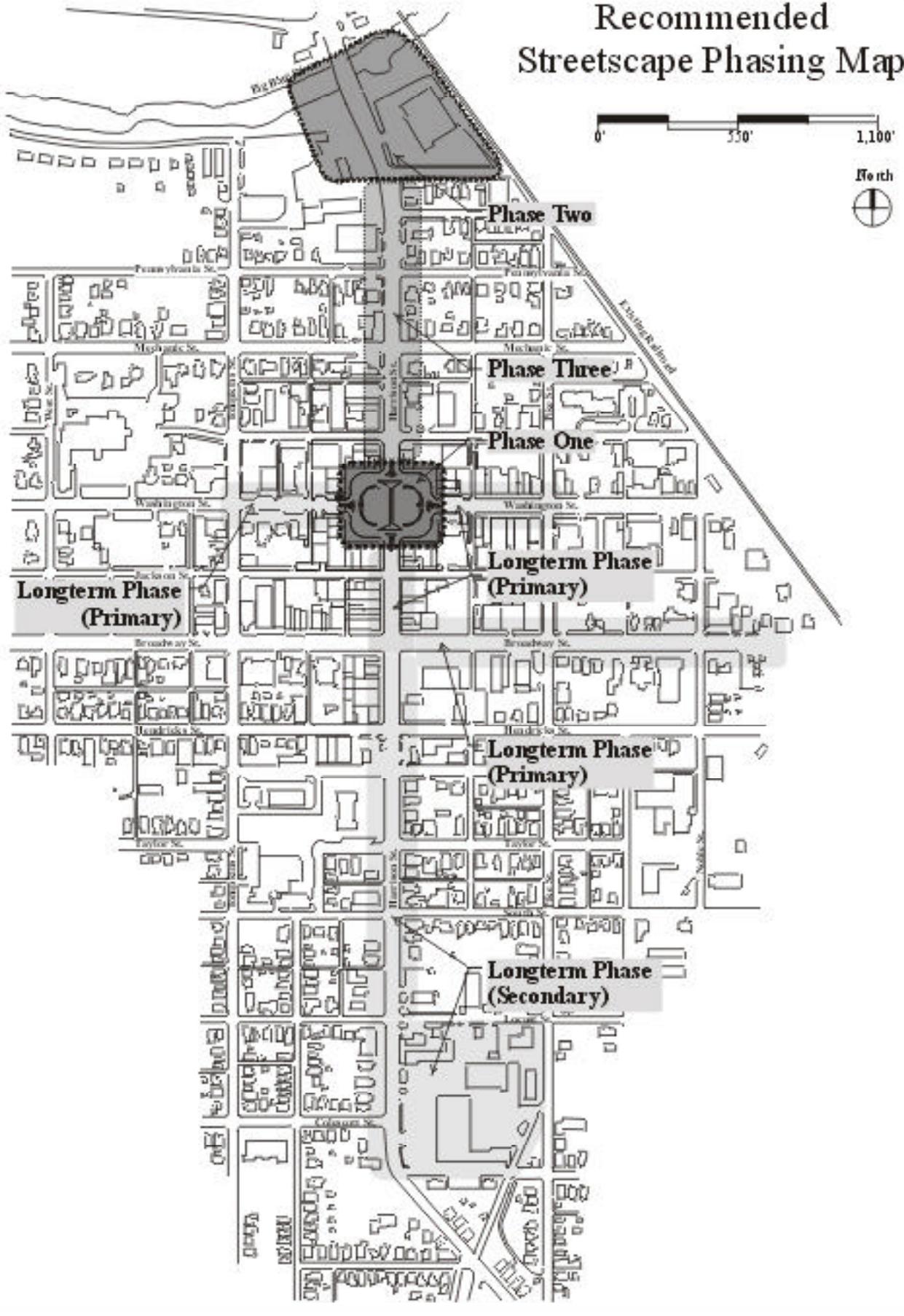
## **Public Parking Issues**

Integral to the success of all phases described previously is an adequate supply of public parking. Establishing a program or system that addresses current parking issues and also sets up potential solutions for future parking needs is key to developing a proactive approach to resolving parking issues. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

## **Economic Issues**

In addition to the urban design issues listed above, it is equally important to encourage a vibrant collection of businesses that will spur downtown redevelopment and investment. Chapter 6 explores the economic potential of the area. New and exciting business opportunities utilizing the existing yet untapped fiberoptic line running through the downtown is one resource to enhance the community's future economic health. Another tool centers on providing an opportunity for continuing education in the community in the form of a life-long learning center.

# Recommended Streetscape Phasing Map



# General Implementation Measures

---

In addition to the specific catalyst projects outlined in the chapters that follow, there are also some general implementation measures that can be applied throughout the downtown. They are meant to supplement and strengthen the general goals for improving the area. These suggestions relate to urban design, infrastructure, circulation and economic development. These improvement efforts must also preserve the existing historic resources to maintain the integrity of the downtown. Additional implementation measures are listed below.

## Land Use Strategies

- Generating a strategy to reuse vacant buildings and/or vacant (upper-level) floors.
- Protecting existing homes from inappropriate conversion to home offices, businesses, and multifamily units.
- Addressing and encouraging improvements to existing residential units and promoting new rental and owner-occupied residences throughout the downtown.

## Government Policy Strategies

- Creating a “mini-capital improvement plan” to highlight areas or issues to be addressed by the City over the next five years regarding infrastructure improvements.
- Developing a Traditional Neighborhood zoning classification to protect residential areas and their historic character.
- Developing a Downtown Zoning District classification to maintain and protect existing, significant buildings that comprise downtown.
- Developing design guidelines for appropriate new development and building renovation.

## Marketing Strategies

- Developing a general marketing and promotional strategy for downtown business and events.
- Creating a tour to show/educate residents how upper floors of historic buildings can be renovated for business or residential use. This could be modeled after a similar tour sponsored by Noblesville, Indiana’s Mainstreet organization.
- Continuing the walking tour of downtown highlighting some of the historic buildings or places and the stories behind them. This could be supplemented by educational placards with pictures and accompanying information about the history of the public square.

## Additional Strategies

- Offering evening classes in downtown space(s) for hobbyists using local talent as educators--woodworking, painting, etc...
- Developing a plan or program to coordinate street furniture, trees, and other amenities throughout the downtown. This could include unified directional and business signage as well as general streetscape enhancements.
- Developing physical and visual connections to the Blue River.

This brief list begins to allude to some of the many issues and opportunities in the downtown. Stakeholders in the downtown must work together in a renewed spirit of cooperation to improve the downtown, avoid the duplication of efforts, and remain ever-mindful of the long-term vision for the downtown. The following chapters detail how some of these measures and ideas can become reality.

# General Implementation Measures - Urban Design



**Existing Streetscape at S. Harrison and Hendricks Streets**

- Lack of visual and physical separation between pedestrian and parking area.
- Amount of paved area doesn't provide a pedestrian-friendly setting and increases ambient temperature.
- Lack of continuous sidewalk in parking lot signifies incomplete sidewalk network for would-be users.
- No defined edges between pedestrian and vehicular traffic or parking area particularly south of Hendricks Street.
- Severe tree pruning is unsightly and blocks views to retail establishments more than limbed-up trees.



**Proposed Streetscape Enhancements**

- Increased landscaping provides greater sense of enclosure and safety for pedestrians.
- Tree canopy over sidewalk provides shade for pedestrians and reduces ambient temperature.
- Properly pruned trees still allow motorists to see adjacent businesses and signage.
- Extension of sidewalk to the south maintains continuity of sidewalk system.
- Hedge provides visual separation between pedestrian and adjacent parking areas, thus decreasing the amount of pavement in the viewshed.



**Existing Streetscape at W. Broadway St. (looking West)**

- Lack of visual and physical separation between pedestrian and street parking.
- Continuous paving doesn't provide a defined edge between pedestrian and vehicular spaces.
- Lack of unified (size, proportion, etc...) business signage detracts from the streetscape's image.
- Building materials along storefront not consistent with historic nature of surrounding buildings.
- Small planting beds will significantly limit the lifespan and growth potential of trees.



**Proposed Streetscape Enhancements**

- Increased landscaping provides a more pedestrian-friendly setting and opportunity for plant growth.
- Canopy over sidewalk provides shade for pedestrians and can unify various building facades.
- Properly pruned trees still allow motorists to see adjacent businesses and signage.
- Building/storefront rehabilitation can improve the aesthetic quality of the streetscape.
- Consistent/unified signage can improve the visual appeal of existing storefronts.
- Potted plants add visual appeal and human scale.

# General Implementation Measures - Urban Design



**Existing Streetscape at N. Harrison and Pennsylvania Streets (looking North)**

- Lack of visual and physical separation between pedestrian and parking area.
- Number of curb-cuts increases safety issues for vehicular traffic and creates potential conflicts between motorist and pedestrians.
- Amount of paved area doesn't provide a pedestrian-friendly setting.
- Existing signage not scaled to the pedestrian or the speed of vehicular traffic.
- Lack of sidewalk in parking lot signifies incomplete sidewalk network for would-be users.
- No defined edges between pedestrian and vehicular traffic or parking area.



**Proposed Streetscape Enhancements**

- Increased landscaping provides greater sense of safety for pedestrians.
- Decreased number of curb-cuts increases pedestrian and motorist safety while maintaining adequate access for businesses.
- Properly pruned trees still allow motorists to see adjacent businesses and signage.
- Extension of sidewalk maintains continuity of sidewalk system.
- Hedge provides visual separation between pedestrian and adjacent parking areas, thus decreasing the amount of pavement in the viewshed.
- Business signage appropriately scaled to the streetscape setting.
- Proposed firestation headquarters in the distance serves as a gateway feature or entrance for the downtown.



# Chapter 3

## **The Public Square**

---

# Introduction - Public Square Configuration

---

## **Introduction**

Pedestrian and vehicular circulation on the public square is of primary concern to both citizens and City officials. Of specific concern is the volume and speed of large trucks traveling along State Road 9. This section explores the positive and negative aspects of various alternatives for improving circulation on the square. Although there is no “magic bullet” for solving all the complexities, a recommendation is put forth as the best opportunity for addressing a number of the current problems existing on the public square.

## **Issues**

One key to improving the aesthetics and function on the square requires improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Although the proposed Parkway Arterial referenced in the Comprehensive Plan seeks to reduce the amount of truck traffic in the downtown, such a solution will not occur for several years. As a result, this Small Area Plan proposes an alternative that will at least reduce the impact of current traffic patterns.

The parking area in the center of the square not only detracts from the aesthetic value of the area but also creates safety concerns. Traffic entering and exiting the parking lot is a safety issue for motorists and pedestrians alike. For additional information on existing circulation issues refer to the *Existing Circulation and Parking* section of Chapter 1.

## **Method of Analysis**

The method of analysis to evaluate options for improving circulation and safety issues on the square began by examining (and ultimately eliminating) previous proposals. Numerous site visits were conducted to gather information, and a walking tour with downtown representatives and other local business leaders was also conducted to gain further insight. The culmination of this information formed the basis for the analyses described earlier in Chapter One. The matrix on page 28 summarizes and compares the numerous factors that were used to judge the potential for each proposed option.

## **Implementation Measures**

The recommended alternative seeks to return the public square to a common public plaza reminiscent of the one that was there prior to the mid-1950's. In conjunction with this improvement, maintaining and/or expanding parking around the square is a primary

concern as well. All of the options shown seek to create a greater balance between the requirements of automobiles and the need for a more pedestrian-friendly environment. To be successful this reconfiguration must coincide with alternative parking strategies discussed in Chapter 4.

## **Vision**

The goal is to once again return the public square to the social prominence it once held and increase public safety. This includes creating a balance between the needs of the pedestrian and the physical requirements of accommodating the automobile. Like many communities, Shelbyville must strive to create a healthy and vibrant downtown that symbolizes the values and aspirations of the community. The recommendation proposed for the public square reconfiguration is only conceptual in nature and will require further study to determine its feasibility. Based on such future studies, the proposed reconfiguration may or may not be implemented in its current form. Such a challenge may not be completed in five or even ten years, but community leaders must have the forethought and vision to set the process in motion to ultimately achieve the goal to enhance Shelbyville's public square, whatever shape it ultimately takes.

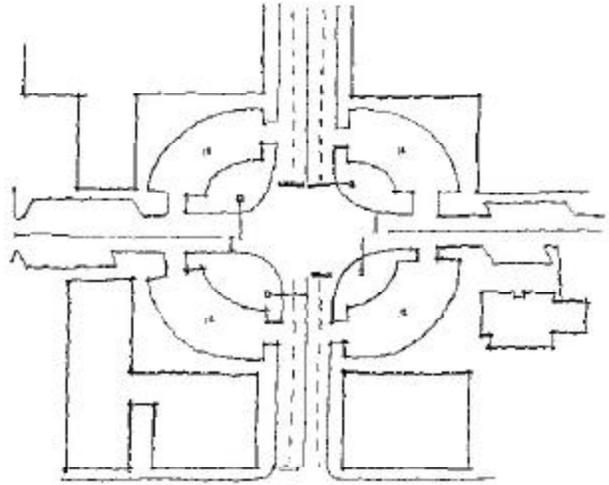
## Option “A”

### *Pro’s*

- Good amount of parking.
- Clear circulation patterns.
- Direct travel path for large trucks means less noise, vibration, and pollution.

### *Con’s*

- Design focuses on needs of the car, not the pedestrian.
- Nothing has been done to reduce the speed of traffic along Harrison St.
- The intersection cuts the heart out of the community.
- Doesn’t lend itself to the Bears of Blue River Festival.
- No sense of place.



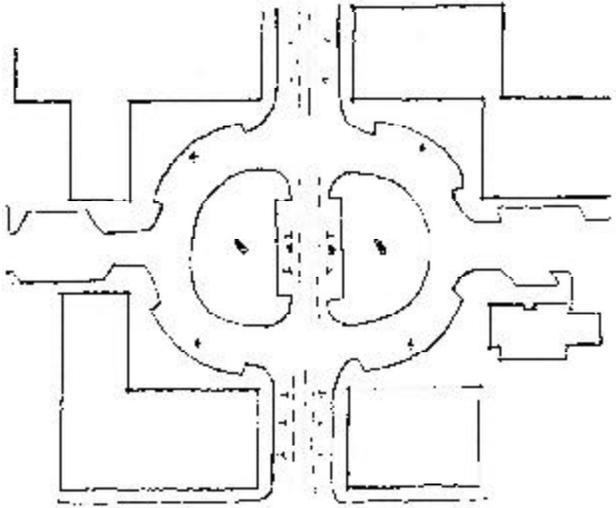
## Option “B”

### *Pro’s*

- Direct travel path for large trucks means less noise, vibration, and pollution.
- More greenspace.
- Could work well with the Bears of Blue River Festival.
- Could eventually connect the islands when (if) the Parkway Arterial becomes reality.

### *Con’s*

- Insufficient amount of parking.
- Problem of parked vehicles pulling out into traffic still remains.
- Sense of place still lacking.
- Doesn’t reduce the number of pedestrian/vehicular conflict points.



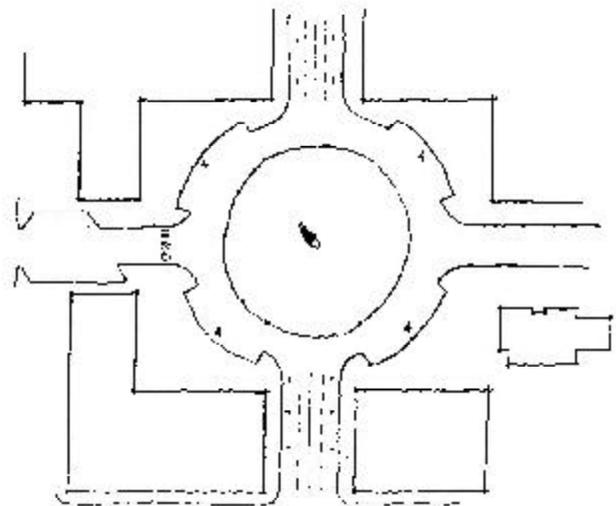
## Option “C”

### *Pro’s*

- Could work well with the Bears of Blue River Festival.
- Creates a sense of place.
- Adequate greenspace.
- Creates a focal point opportunity.
- Separates pedestrian/vehicular traffic patterns.

### *Con’s*

- Insufficient amount of parking.
- Problem of parked vehicles pulling out into traffic still remains.
- Circuitous travel path of large trucks means continued noise/vibration/pollution.



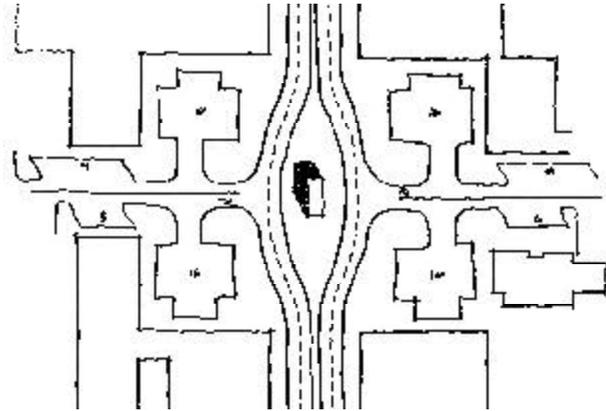
# Option "D"

## Pro's

- Equals the existing amount of parking.
- Clearly defines pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- Generous amount of greenspace.
- Reintroduces the heart of the community.
- Allows North/South traffic to continue through the square, but reduces the speed.
- Places parking at the front door of stores and businesses.

## Con's

- Inability to directly travel East/West on Washington St.
- Redesign could increase vehicular traffic on nearby streets.

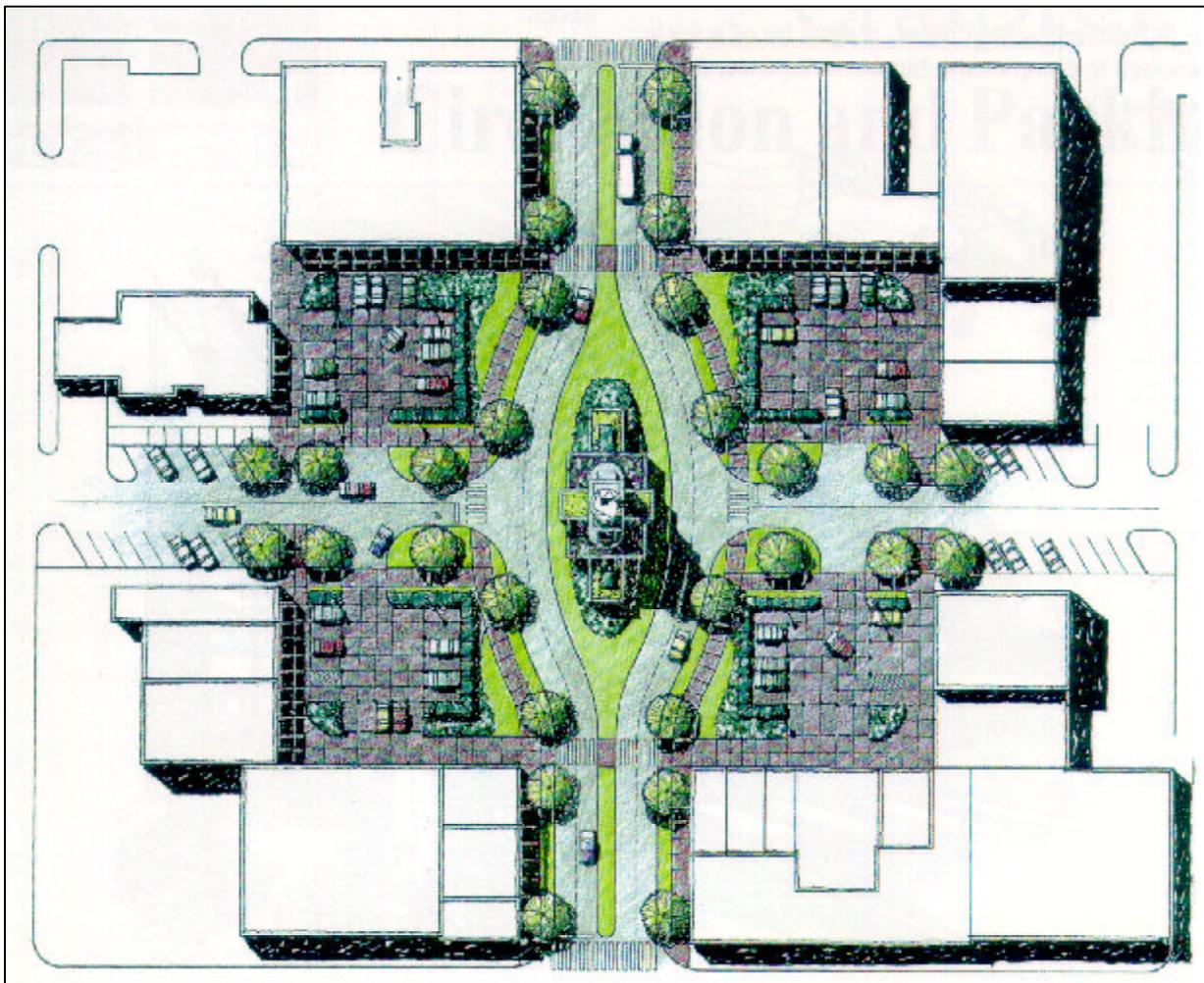


Design Criteria	Option "A"	Option "B"	Option "C"	Option "D"
<b>Tangible Criteria (weighted for importance)</b>				
Number of Parking Spaces (86 Currently)	2	2	2	2
(2-fewer, 4-same as existing, 6-more)	(60 spaces)	(22 spaces)	(16 spaces)	(64 spaces)
Pedestrian vs. Motorist Conflict Points	2	4	6	6
(2-more, 4-same as existing, 6-fewer)				
Motorist vs. Motorist Conflict Points	2	2	4	6
(2-more, 4-same as existing, 6-fewer)				
Quantity of Greenspace	3	3	3	3
(1-less, 2-same as existing, 3-more)				
Initial (up-front) Costs	1	3	2	1
(1-more, 2-same, 3-less than other options)				
Maintenance Costs	1	1	1	1
(1-more, 2-same as existing, 3-less)				
Pedestrian Safety	1	2	3	3
(1-decreased, 2-same, 3-increased)				
Traffic Flow				
(1-worse, 2-same as existing, 3-better)				
North/South Traffic Flow	2	3	2	3
East/West Traffic Flow	3	2	2	1
(Large) Truck Navigation	3	3	2	3
Reduced Speed Along Harrison Street	3	1	2	3
<b>Intangible Criteria</b>				
(1-less, 2-same as existing, 3-greater)				
Historical Accuracy	1	1	2	2
Sense of Place	1	1	3	3
Potential for Community Focal Point	1	1	3	3
Conducive to Social Events	1	1	3	3
Access to Quality Greenspace	1	2	2	2
<b>Total "Score"</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>

# Proposed Public Square Reconfiguration

The conceptual plan below details “Option D” shown on the previous page. It is understood that none of the options will solve all existing problems, but this plan represents the best alternative for resolving or minimizing a majority of them. Listed below are some of the unique design features of this reconfiguration.

- The creation of four parking courts that allows patrons to park closer to businesses and separates pedestrians from the regular flow of traffic.
- Each court provides safer ADA-accessible parking spaces.
- The parking courts are designed to reduce the number of conflict points with the regular flow of traffic. Parking is accessed from Washington Street only.
- Paving material changes at crosswalks, and parking areas visually separate pedestrians from vehicular space.
- Height of parking courts is relatively equal to that of the sidewalks but slightly higher than the street. Courts and sidewalks are separated by movable, decorative planter, bollards, etc... that can be rearranged for special events.
- Street trees provide a sense of enclosure at each court providing shade (reducing the ambient temperature), a greater sense of place, and a more pedestrian-friendly setting.
- When approaching the public square, the central greenspace serves as a visual cue for motorists to reduce their speed.
- Greenspace extends one block in either direction along Harrison Street to provide safety for pedestrians and alert motorists of the changing setting.
- Central greenspace provides the opportunity to create a focal point for the downtown and greater Shelbyville.



# Proposed Public Square Reconfiguration

---

Although reconfiguring the public square is a large piece of the downtown redevelopment puzzle, it is still only a conceptual idea in need of further study. Its success will depend largely on the other issues discussed in the remainder of this document. Because this design dramatically changes the aesthetic and functional characteristics of the public square, additional issues will need to be examined more critically.

The proposed reconfiguration of the public square represents one catalyst project relative to the Downtown Small Area Plan. As mentioned previously, the central greenspace serves as a prime opportunity to create a central focal point for the community. The illustration below is simply a conceptual idea that illustrates the potential the public square holds. What that focal element ultimately becomes should be determined by the citizens of Shelbyville. It could be a large sculptural element, water feature, or simply an elegantly landscaped space. Whatever shape it takes, it must be of a scale large enough to complement but not overpower the public space.

It is understood that the proposed reconfiguration of the public square will have a “ripple effect” on the surrounding street network. Although the Indiana Department of Transportation has preliminarily endorsed the concept of the reconfiguration, there are concerns about how it might impact surrounding traffic flow. Implementing this proposal will require additional studies to determine the feasibility of the reconfiguration and its impact on the surrounding street network and traffic patterns. The scope of such a study would need to encompass the Harrison Street corridor from Colescott Street to the Blue River as well as the numerous cross-streets intersecting Harrison Street. The amount of on-street parking would also need to reflect any forecasted changes to the volume of traffic on local side streets. An increase or decrease in on-street parking will also affect off-street parking. The following chapter explores several options to alleviate current parking issues as well as a strategy to address future parking needs.





# Chapter 4

## **Circulation and Parking**

---

# Introduction - Circulation and Parking

---

## Introduction

Discussions during the comprehensive planning process revealed a strong desire for adequate and convenient public parking in the downtown. The importance of this issue was reinforced during key group interviews and steering committee meetings. Addressing parking challenges and anticipating future concerns for safe and efficient circulation in the downtown area are the focus of this chapter.

Parking is just one of several interrelated factors that influence the downtown's vitality. An objective evaluation of existing parking conditions can determine the real impacts of parking on the downtown's economic revitalization.

Developing innovative methods to generate additional public parking is a key element to the downtown's success. This section conceptually examines various options to increase public parking throughout the downtown. Engineering and other transportation studies will be required to further develop these concepts into feasible solutions.

## Issues

There is currently an inadequate amount of convenient parking in the downtown. A large portion of designated public parking is utilized by employees working downtown. Enforcement of current parking regulations pertaining to limited on-street parking and conflicts between employee and patron parking are key components of the current parking situation.

There is also a need to provide adequate parking for those currently living in the downtown. As more and more people take up residence in downtown buildings and/or existing homes, there will be an increased demand for on- and off-street parking. This additional parking need for residents must take into consideration the unique setting of the downtown.

## Implementation Measures

This chapter examines five alternatives that address the parking situation around downtown. In addition, other strategies to help alleviate parking problems including pedestrian paths, modifications to existing streets, and traffic calming elements are also discussed. The five avenues examined to generate additional parking include:

- building a parking garage
- properly signing the numerous small pockets of

- public parking scattered throughout downtown,
- creating an innovative partnership with existing businesses to “deed” a portion of their parking spaces for public use,
- developing a city program that aggressively pursues the acquisition of properties for parking courts, and
- increasing on-street parking opportunities.

Considering the relevant factors to resolving existing parking concerns, the most economical and realistic course of action is for the City to begin actively acquiring existing surface lots for public parking. Two potential areas along Jackson Street could be strategic locations to incorporate this concept. Directional signage throughout the downtown would direct motorists to these locations and the parking areas would also be adequately signed. This concept is detailed further on the following pages.

In addition to vehicular issues, increased pedestrian access and safety to parking areas is a high priority. Pedestrian access could be coordinated with the Parks and Recreation Department's efforts to link portions of the City with people trails. One such trail could connect Sunset Park to the proposed Visitor's Center at the Porter Pool building and continue east along Mechanic and Franklin Streets to Kennedy Park. A people trail would also travel from the proposed Visitor's Center south along Harrison Street through the public square and connect to the proposed southern gateway at Mickey's plaza.

## Vision

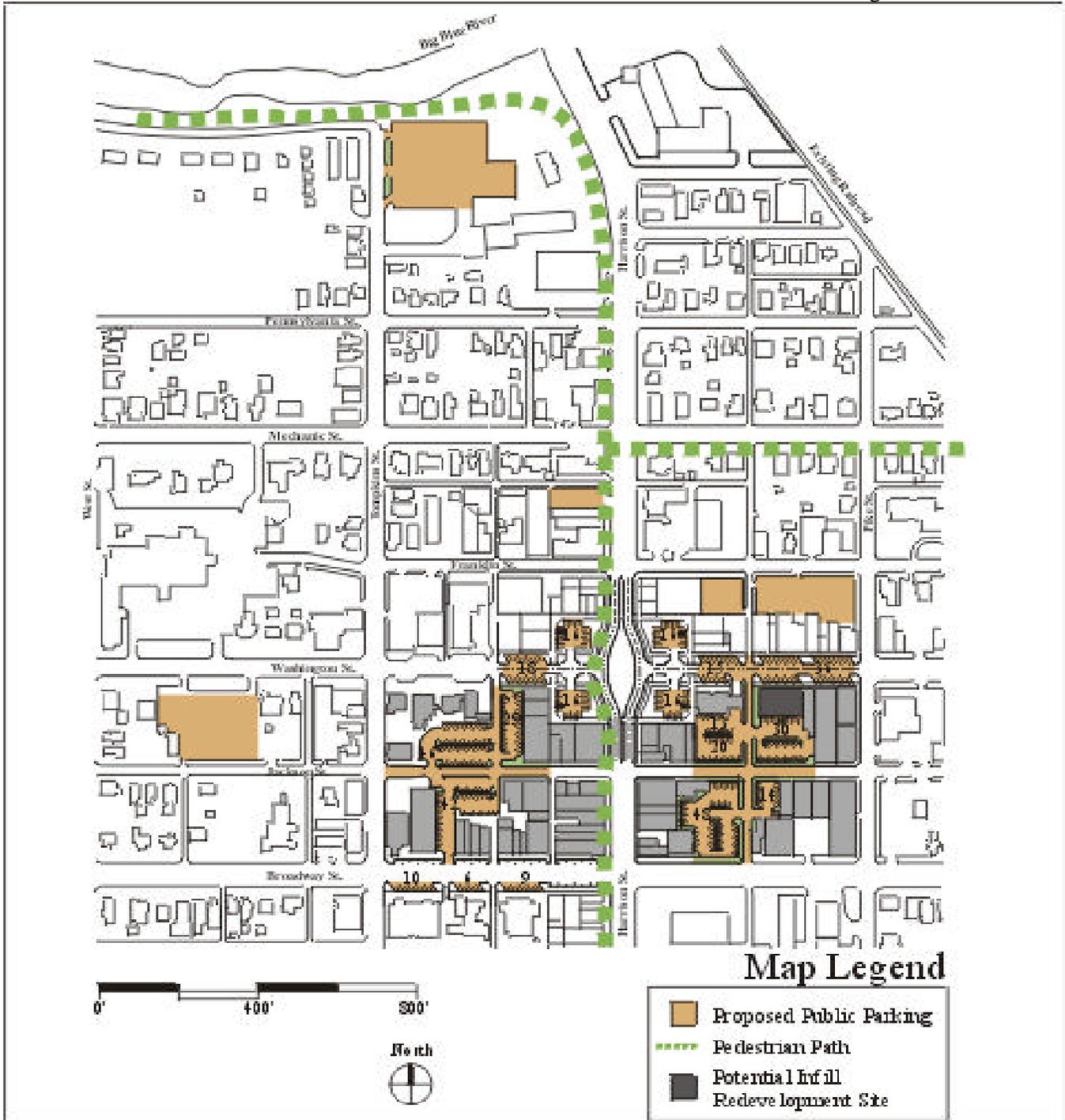
The ultimate goal in addressing this issue is to create adequate parking for both downtown business patrons and employees. Accomplishing this without creating an adverse impact on the aesthetic quality of the downtown is key to maintaining the historic nature of the area. In addition, increased vehicular access in the downtown must be balanced with the needs and safety of the pedestrian.

# Circulation and Parking Alternatives

The map below graphically summarizes some of the issues and recommendations discussed on the following pages. In addition to the reconfiguration of the public square, other elements of note include:

- an allowance for overflow parking behind the Porter Pool building,
- proposed pedestrian paths linking the Blue River to downtown and points beyond,

- conversion of on-street parking from parallel to angled orientation in front of the library to the First Baptist Church, and along two blocks of East Washington Street,
- proposed locations for the public parking courts along East and West Jackson Street, and
- potential infill (re)development site with building next to sidewalk, and parking at the back of the building with entries at the back and along the street.



# Additional Public Parking Alternatives

---

## **Parking Garage**

This section explores the factors involved to justify building a parking structure to alleviate parking issues on the public square and throughout the downtown. Such a facility would need to be strategically located and be of significant size to make it cost-effective. Unless unique circumstances exist, the high cost of building, maintaining and operating a parking garage is difficult to justify in small communities.

The feasibility and success of the garage hinges on several factors. To defray the costs of such a facility, it must either be part of a private development or a public/private partnership. A joint partnership would need to be forged between the City and an entity (employer) that will occupy a majority of the facility on a daily basis. Commitments from employers in the downtown would be needed to ensure employees utilize the facility. As an economic and urban design issue, there would also need to be provisions made to allow the first floor to accommodate retail space.

## **Public Parking Signage**

This scenario would assume most of the existing parking locations would remain unchanged. The focus of this effort would be to provide and highlight distinct elements indicating where public parking is located. Urban design features such as pylon signage, distinct lighting, or creative paving patterns are just some of the methods to create this distinction.

In order to address the immediate need for parking, developing a program to more efficiently utilize surface parking would provide the most benefit for the downtown with the least amount of negative impact. This alternative would reduce current conflicts between patron and employee parking as well. Clearly delineating public parking from employee parking should be a coordinated effort between business owners and City officials. Such a coordination program would include a plan to make parking in the downtown as user-friendly as possible. Means of achieving this include:

- developing a standard system of directional signage so motorists can easily navigate the downtown and locate public parking areas,
- designing public parking areas that are easy to distinguish from private parking, and

- developing landscape standards specific to downtown that screen large parking lots from pedestrian view.

An additional option to gain parking is to create a large, overflow parking area behind the Porter Pool building. This could serve a dual purpose as parking for those accessing the trail system or those patronizing downtown businesses. Streetscape enhancements along this portion of Harrison Street would create a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment and reinforce the connection between the Northern Gateway and the public square.

## **Public/Private Partnership**

Creating a cooperative effort between the City and local businesses to develop additional parking for the public is the focus of this alternative. This innovative approach would involve the City and any participating downtown business with a large amount of (unused) parking forging a voluntary agreement that allows the City to “use” a portion of the parking lot for free public parking. The business would retain ownership of the property but would allow access for public use. In exchange the business could receive tax incentives or some other form of “rebate” for partnering with the City in such a manner.

## **Land Acquisition**

Creating more efficient use of existing parking areas by providing more options and locations for surface parking is the focus of this alternative. The City could set up a program to fund the acquisition, redesign, and maintenance of public parking areas. As with the other options discussed, one key to this would include proper signage to inform and direct motorists to the various pockets of parking. In order to make such a system economically and functionally efficient, the City would focus on acquiring contiguous parcels of land. This would improve circulation and safety on local streets. Creating one large parking area versus several smaller lots could potentially reduce the number of curb-cuts along the streets.

As a design consideration, the design of these parking areas could emulate the parking courts proposed for the public square reconfiguration. Such courts could cross over existing streets to create a seamless parking plaza. Although the street would still pass through the parking court, a change in elevation or material (pattern) would serve as a distinction alerting

# Additional Public Parking Alternatives

---

the motorist of the subtle change in the function of the street. The map on page 33 illustrates two examples of how and where this concept could be applied.

An additional benefit of this course of action centers on a long-term parking solution for the downtown. As increased parking demands warrant it, the opportunity to convert a surface lot into a multi-story parking garage becomes more feasible. Additionally, a parking structure strategically connected to existing buildings could potentially resolve some ADA, accessibility, or life safety (exiting) requirements. This response to the parking issue not only provides a short term solution, but also sets the stage for a long-term (potential) solution as well.

## **On Street Parking**

On street parking is one of the primary means of free public parking in the downtown. As a safety issue, on street parking forces motorists to slow down and become more aware of their surroundings. It can also allow patrons to park directly in front of a business' front door, thus providing a convenient means of accessibility.

It is accepted that there are some streets in the downtown that cannot accommodate additional parking. It may be possible, however, to gain additional parking spaces without compromising the safety of motorists or pedestrians, or the integrity of the urban fabric. Where appropriate, this can be accomplished by converting parallel parking to angled parking.

As the map on Page 33 illustrates, one potential location to increase on-street parking is along West Broadway Street from Harrison to Tompkins Street. This would provide additional parking for library, church and Grover Museum patrons. Another opportunity is along East Washington Street from the public square to Pike Street. This would provide additional parking for the numerous businesses along this downtown block.

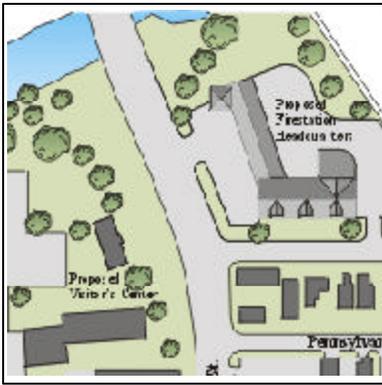
## **Implementation Measures**

Implementing a sound strategy to increase public parking in the downtown will require coordinated efforts on several fronts. A combination of the strategies detailed in this chapter could provide a cost-effective way for the City and downtown businesses to resolve one of the primary issues facing the area. The City should exhaust all options to utilize parking areas that are currently available. This document provides only a brief overview of existing parking conditions in the downtown. Detailed studies will need to be conducted further to determine the feasibility of the proposed solutions and examine any other factors that may influence the character and setting of the downtown.

The next phase in this process will be to develop an accurate assessment of how much public parking exists and where it is located. In order to mitigate immediate parking concerns, a plan must be developed to reduce conflicts between employee and patron parking. The key is to keep long-term parkers from occupying spaces meant for short-term parking. Two-hour parking limits should be enforced, and designated public parking areas should be signed as such. Employers should coordinate with the City, other business owners, and downtown churches or similar organizations to develop alternative sites or programs for employee parking.

Once clearly defined public parking areas are established a brochure could be developed that delineates where parking exists for patrons. This could be distributed by the numerous businesses in the downtown or picked up in City Hall. If an evaluation and efficient utilization of existing parking does not create enough new parking, then additional parking strategies, including a parking garage, should be reevaluated.





# Chapter 5

## **Downtown Gateways**

---

# Introduction - Downtown Gateways

---

## Introduction

This chapter explores potential gateway locations into downtown Shelbyville. This exploration will give equal value to the perspectives of both the pedestrian and motorist. Community gateways not only shape a visitor's first impression of the community but can also reflect the unique features and values of Shelbyville. Gateways not only provide a first impression to visitors but citizens as well. Determining and delineating appropriate gateway locations into Shelbyville's downtown is the first step in this process.

## Issues

Gateways can take on a variety of forms. They can vary in scale from a signature building down to unified signage, street lighting, or similar street furniture. Gateways are simply a means to designate or differentiate one area from another through distinct changes in the urban setting.

As mentioned previously, this Small Area Plan seeks to undertake catalyst projects over the next five years. To ensure efforts and funding are used efficiently, it is important to focus efforts on what is deemed to be the most important entry into downtown. The northern entry into downtown along State Road 9 provides the best opportunity to create a lasting entry point to downtown.

Two sites across the highway from one another just south of the Blue River provide the greatest opportunity to create a true entry experience. Plans are currently underway to convert the old Porter Pool building into a visitor's center for Shelbyville. The abandoned Safeway supermarket site also holds great potential for redevelopment. Creating pedestrian-scale gateways as part of the community's larger greenways plan through the Parks and Recreation Department is also another avenue to be explored.

## Implementation Measures

The City should focus its energy in creating a northern entry into the downtown. The Blue River serves as a natural point of entry into the downtown area and the redevelopment of the Porter Pool building and abandoned Safeway supermarket site could enhance this feature.

The City should continue plans and efforts to locate a new firestation headquarters on the former Safeway supermarket site. The firestation headquarters

represents an ideal opportunity to create a signature, municipal building for the City of Shelbyville. By creating a quality public building, the City would set the standard by which the private sector could emulate.

Another enhancement opportunity involves community landscaping or beautification efforts utilizing volunteers and organizations (Adopt-a-Highway/Median concept). The local Beautification Committee could be an instrumental part of this initiative. Another alternative is to involve the local art community as a source of talent, creativity, and insight to establish a public art campaign.

## Vision

The creation of a northern gateway is intended to serve as a model not only for downtown but also greater Shelbyville. Creating a northern downtown gateway through infill development represents a creative solution to enhance the character of the community fabric and strengthen its economic base. Using this as a model, it is anticipated the development of a gateway at Mickey's Plaza could be modeled after the northern gateway and serve as an anchor for the southern portion of the downtown.

As an eastern entry, the City should coordinate with the Indiana Department of Transportation when improvements, currently being planned, are made to East Broadway Street. These improvements are planned to begin just east of Noble Street and extend east along Broadway St./State Road 44 to the I-74 Interchange. The intersection of Vine and Broadway Streets could serve as an opportune location to create a gateway statement. Such street improvements would be an opportune time to improve the aesthetic appeal of this prominent corridor as one approaches downtown from the east.

# Gateway Locations Map



## Map Legend

-  Gateway Node
-  Gateway Transition

# Northern Gateway

## Introduction

As the map on the previous page shows and the illustrative plan below conceptually represents, developing a significant feature at the Blue River and Harrison Street could generate a new identity for the downtown. The illustration below is one potential alternative for this gateway. The emphasis for any redevelopment plans of the area should focus on a coordinated effort to treat the two sites as one entry experience.

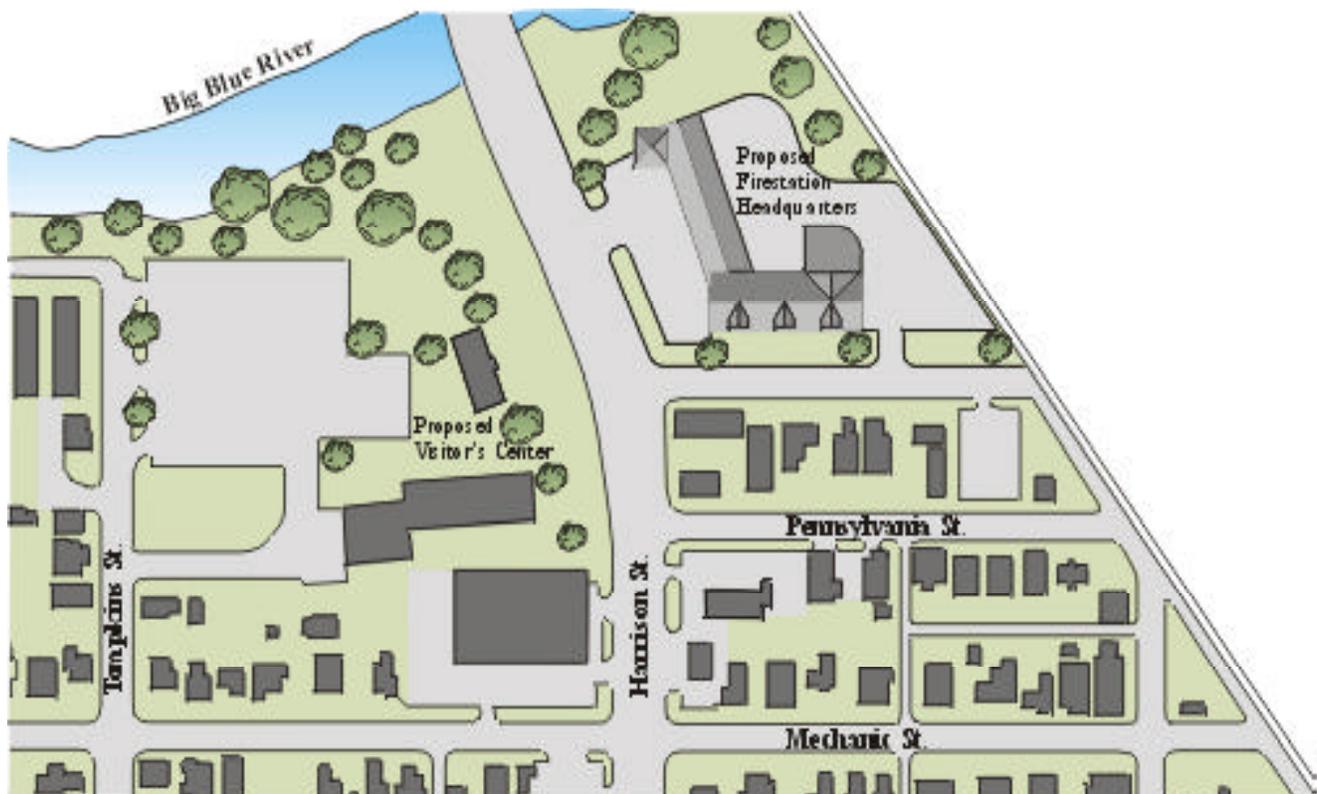
## Proposed Firestation Headquarters

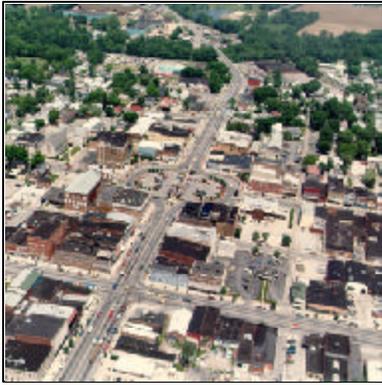
The firestation headquarters could provide a dramatic view as one approaches from the north or south along Harrison Street. Designing the firestation to serve as a multi-functional public building with space for public meetings and gathering would also add value to the community and offer an additional amenity for the public's use.

## Proposed Visitor's Center

Revitalizing the Porter Pool building could also become part of a larger effort to enhance this important section of downtown. The building could not only serve as a visitor's center but the larger grounds could provide the opportunity to create an active park. This could include serving as a trail head or a canoe livery location. The site could also accommodate large, overflow public parking for downtown visitors as well.

Revitalizing this entryway into the downtown also provides the opportunity to restore the natural vegetation and landscaping along the Blue River. Not only would this be an aesthetic improvement but would also prevent harmful, polluted runoff from entering the waterway. Restoring this natural corridor would not only improve the quality of the natural environment but also complement the Parks and Recreation Department's plans to create a network of pedestrian trails throughout Shelbyville.





# Chapter 6

## **Economic Development**

---

# Introduction - Economic Development

---

## Introduction

Exploring opportunities for business development and retention is a fundamental key to downtown Shelbyville. To promote an active setting during all hours and days of the week, two distinct yet interrelated strategies must be pursued. One should center on providing daily services within convenient walking distance (1/4 to 1/2 mile radius) for residents in the immediate downtown. Refer to the map on Page 13 which delineates the size of one such area. The second approach should be to focus on cultural, educational, and entertainment activities that will attract people from the larger community and throughout the County.

## Issues

In order to address the long-term vitality of downtown, steps must be taken to strengthen the existing economic base. It is important to retain the only supermarket downtown as a convenient and essential service for downtown residents. Similarly, the Federal Post Office and State License Branch are important components that provide a variety of services in the downtown. City officials and business leaders must recognize the needs of existing businesses while simultaneously looking for new ways to attract development.

## Implementation Measures

The first perspective should attract businesses that provide daily services (laundry, dry cleaning, groceries, videos, hardware, etc...). There is an adequate threshold of residents currently living in the downtown area that could support such businesses. Specific business development opportunities discussed during public and steering committee meetings or recommended in the economic development study include:

- hardware store--recruit a store that caters to the needs of home restoration and (business) facade improvements, and
- additional pubs or restaurants,
- Secondary Education or Community College
- Life Long Learning Center
- Visitor's Center
- "Class A" office space,
- performing arts center,
- Bed and Breakfast(s)
- Reuse of the Knights of Pythias Building

Two buildings of significance on the public square are the Methodist Building and the Knights of Pythias Building. Their imposing presence is an important part of the square's sense of place, and their historical links to Shelbyville are well documented. Both buildings are severely underutilized and special efforts must be made to find the appropriate businesses to locate in them. The Knights of Pythias Building, with approximately 26,400 square feet of floor space on its three floors, could lend itself well as a gathering space for public and private events.

Another potential implementation measure involves a body specifically organized to actively develop and oversee downtown building projects. This entity could be comprised of individuals from various non-profit agencies with an interest or specialty relevant to downtown (re)development. Its duties could include purchasing, managing, and maintaining buildings on the public square and/or downtown area. Pooling such resources could streamline decision-making processes, provide limited funding for renovation projects, apply for grants, and encourage businesses that complement one another. This scenario could also reduce the issue of building owners competing against one another for tenants.

It is important to promote activities or land uses that draw people to the downtown on a regular basis (theater, restaurants, continuing education center, etc...). The key is to create a setting that initially attracts people to the downtown and secondarily offers additional opportunities for them to stay and linger. The City should provide incentives to encourage and direct businesses downtown--as infill development-- rather than on the community's periphery or on greenfield sites.

## Vision

The economic health and viability of downtown Shelbyville is a large component of the community's quality of life. It is possible for new development to coexist within the historic fabric of the downtown. Shelbyville must look to ways of retaining the historic nature of the downtown while simultaneously looking toward the future and embracing the potential of new technologies that are readily available to the City and businesses. The opportunities discussed on the following page represent just two of the many potential avenues to improving the quality of life in Shelbyville.

# Additional Economic Opportunities

---

## **Fiber Optic Technology**

The City of Shelbyville is in the unique position of having access to a powerful economic tool in the form of a fiberoptic line running through the City. The Fiber Technology Board has been actively pursuing opportunities to utilize this technology in Shelbyville.

### **Issues**

The key issue regarding the fiberoptic line is how to fully utilize its potential. To that end, a cooperative effort between City and County officials and business leaders created the Fiber Technology Board to explore any alternatives to developing the technology. The existing Methodist Building on the square already is equipped with the fiberoptic line but is not wired up for service.

### **Implementation Measures**

The City, in conjunction with other interested parties should aggressively pursue the economic development of the fiberoptic technology specific to the downtown. Creating a high-tech business environment in the midst of a historically rich, traditional downtown setting could serve as a unique marketing tool for Shelbyville.

The technology could be used as a means to attract a continuing education campus and/or a long distance learning center to the downtown area. There are numerous other types of high-tech businesses that could be attracted to such a unique setting.

One option for some of these businesses is to locate in some of the upper floors of the existing commercial buildings. In most instances, such high-tech, information-based businesses can operate outside the conventional “nine-to-five” work day. Downtown employees during the evening hours would encourage continued pedestrian activity and ideally increased commerce. This could attract supporting businesses such as restaurants and bars to cater to the expanded clientele during a longer time period in the day.

Any strategy to attract high-tech businesses to downtown Shelbyville cannot come at the expense of existing businesses. Economic growth must be balanced with the needs of existing business owners who have an integral stake in the downtown. To ensure the long-term economic vitality of all businesses, there must be a quality mix of businesses that attract a variety of residents to the downtown.

## **Life Long Learning Center**

There have been on-going conversations and interest in developing a life long learning center to serve the Shelby County community. The concept of the life long learning center (LLLC) would focus on creating a “one-stop” center for employment, educational, and family services. It could also include numerous community organizations located under one roof. A life long learning center represents not only an economic opportunity but more importantly a valuable community resource for those in need.

### **Issues**

There has been a determined need in Shelby County to develop continuing educational opportunities for adults and nontraditional students. An educated and properly trained workforce is vital to any economic development strategies for the City and County. The LLLC could also provide rehabilitation services, literacy programs, family and parenting programs, job placement and assessment activities, or basic job skills training.

Locating such a facility in the downtown could potentially be beneficial to everyone involved. Its central location would provide relatively easy access for everyone in the County. Additionally, the facility would generate increased activity in the downtown which would encourage existing businesses to extend their hours of operation and potentially encourage new businesses to locate in or near the downtown.

Providing adequate parking for the LLLC would also be a vital factor to its success. Shared parking with an existing, primarily daytime-oriented business is one potential option. The siting of the LLLC and accompanying parking must not interfere with, or replace, existing parking for downtown business patrons. As alluded to in the parking alternatives section of Chapter 4, the LLLC could partner with other interested stakeholders to build a parking garage if future conditions warrant it.

### **Implementation Measures**

The success of such a facility would depend largely on forging partnerships within the Shelby County community. Involvement of the business and educational communities along with relevant government and non-profit agencies is another important aspect of a Shelby County life long learning center.

# Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings

---

## Introduction

This section serves as a brief “How To” manual to assist businesses and individuals on methods for renovating downtown buildings. Restoring historic buildings not only improves the image of the downtown but also increases income by allowing for higher rents, increases retail sales, and provides for tax incentives. This section includes pertinent local, State, and Federal resources regarding the necessary steps to creating a quality built environment.

## Issues

There are numerous issues to consider when deciding to reinvest in the downtown. Often, the assistance of an architectural or engineering professional may be needed. Some issues to consider at the beginning of a project are listed below.

- Verifying the proposed building is structurally sound.
- Complying with all ADA code requirements.
- Verifying the existing zoning requirements on the property allow for the planned use of the building.
- Acquiring proper building permits before construction.
- Proper facade restoration and cleaning methods.
- Installing signage that meets the City’s sign code.

## Implementation Measures

At the local level, one key to consider is investigating how similar projects have been done in the downtown. Learning from previous projects is one way to avoid unnecessary problems during a renovation process. When researching a property, city or county governments may have important records pertaining to building permit records, plat maps, and deed records. The local historical society, public library, and newspaper can also be valuable sources of information. They often possess archives of historic building photos which can provide clues to alterations that may have occurred over time.

At the State level, there are organizations that provide assistance to the owner of a historic building. Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (HLFI) is one such organization. As one of the largest non-profit preservation organizations in the country, HLFI provides preservation consultation services to communities through its regional offices throughout the State and from its headquarters in Indianapolis. HLFI can provide limited design assistance, referrals to qualified professionals and contractors, assistance with

nominations to the National or State Register of Historic Places, and some limited fundraising and grant opportunities.

Another State organization is the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA) within the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. DHPA also can provide limited design assistance, referrals to qualified professionals, assistance with nominations to the National or State Register of Historic Places. Limited fundraising and grant opportunities are also available.

The Indiana Building Code includes a provision for existing buildings entitled Rule 8 Review that utilizes a scoring system to rate life safety issues. These primarily focus on fire safety, means of egress (exiting), and general safety in a building. Although new construction must meet current codes, conditions that do not affect the life safety systems of the existing building may remain. A design professional or building code consultant can assist in determining which code issues will likely affect a project.

Several grants and low interest loans are also available to not-for-profit organizations and individuals through HLF and DHPA. These grants come from a variety of sources including Build Indiana funds, Hometown Grant funds, revolving loans and preservation grants.

At the Federal level, there are several programs that provide financial incentives for rehabilitating buildings. The Federal Government has an investment tax credit program that can provide a 20% tax credit on qualifying costs of a substantial rehabilitation to an income-producing historic structure. The structure must be on the National Register of Historic Places individually or as a contributing building within a historic district to qualify for the credit.

In conjunction with the Federal program, the State administers a similar program through the DHPA. The State provides an additional 20% credit up to \$100,000 on one’s state tax liability for qualifying expenses. Non-residential, income-producing buildings constructed before 1936 that do not qualify for the National Register individually or as part of a historic district may be eligible for a 10% credit on qualifying expenditures. Because there are several requirements to qualify for these tax credit programs interested parties are encouraged to contact the DHPA for further information.



# Chapter 7

## **Conclusion**

---

# Conclusion

---

Communities both large and small across the nation are striving for innovative methods to revitalize and strengthen their downtowns. As we enter the twenty-first century and the rate and type of change becomes more pronounced, residents are looking to their community for a sense of stability and rootedness. Downtowns have historically served as this symbolic heart and foundation for the community.

This Small Area Plan should be viewed as Shelbyville's commitment to enhance and strengthen its social, civic, and economic center. The City of Shelbyville recognizes the inherent potential of the downtown and it, along with other interested parties, hopes to continue to enhance and strengthen the downtown area. The overarching goal of this document is to generate a unified, long-term vision for downtown Shelbyville. Although numerous projects are discussed involving various groups, agencies, and individuals, all focus on improving Shelbyville's quality of life.

Developing a balanced approach to future achievements in the downtown must include respect and appreciation for the past. The reconfiguration of the square serves as an excellent example of such an approach. In order to address current parking and circulation issues, the proposed solution takes some of its cues from successes of the past and how residents once viewed and interacted with the public square.

Although this document is entitled a *Downtown Small Area Plan*, its influence encompasses more than this narrowly defined area. The ultimate success of this document and downtown Shelbyville will rely on the level of cooperation of various agencies, businesses and individuals in the community. Improving the downtown cannot be approached with an "us" vs. "them" mentality. It's not just a matter of "fixing up" the downtown for downtown's sake. In most cases, the success and appeal of a community is measured by the health of its downtown and not by how many shopping centers or commercial strips it has. The downtown is a reflection of the health and vitality of the entire community and the collective values of its residents.