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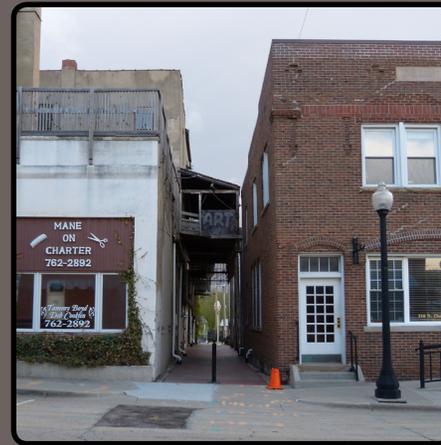
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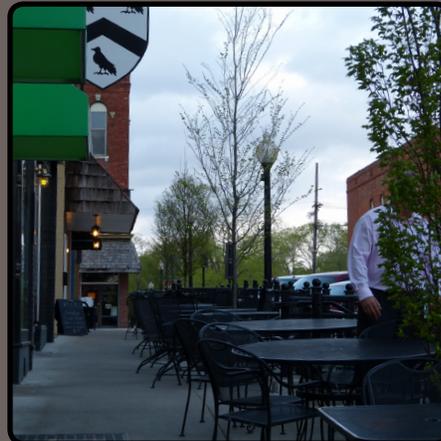
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Historic Courthouse Square Downtown Monticello, Illinois



Historic Courthouse Square Downtown Monticello, Illinois A Downtown Enhancement Plan

Prepared by
MSA Professional Services, Inc.



with assistance from
The City of Monticello, Illinois



Adopted by City Council:

November 24, 2014

INTRODUCTION

INTENT OF THE PLAN

The Monticello Downtown Enhancement Plan is intended to address current issues and improve and protect the appearance, value, and function of properties in the downtown area, especially including those commercial and civic uses. This comprehensive approach to revitalization planning considers the physical, economic, social and political dimensions of a downtown. In all the plan strives to identify issues and opportunities, to frame the community character, analyze existing conditions, and give action and implementation steps to address any negative conditions of the downtown.

This planning document is intended to be a “living guide” for the future overall development of Historic Courthouse Square and surrounding downtown area. It serves to meet the following objectives:

Objective 1: Identify and analyze existing conditions around the square and surrounding Downtown area.

Objective 2: Identify and analyze the issues and opportunities specific to downtown Monticello.

Objective 3: Identify policies and programs which will work to enhance the characteristics and qualities that make downtown Monticello unique and that are important to the downtown’s heritage and quality of life.

Objective 4: Develop a concept for downtown Monticello which outlines a guide for enhancements which are in line with the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 5: Create an implementation plan which addresses the policies and programs in a way that allows downtown Monticello to achieve the goals of the plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

Urban communities are complex; made up of many interrelated spaces. The spaces within which we live our lives are formed and changed over time by the interplay of economic, environmental and social forces. Decisions are made each day that impact the quality and function of these spaces, sometimes improving our lives and sometimes making it more difficult to meet our needs. In a sustainable community economic prosperity finds balance with environmental protection and quality of life considerations, and this balance is maintained over time. In a sustainable community, businesses thrive and people are out in public throughout the day and throughout the year, working, socializing and recreating. It’s with these principles in mind, this Plan is created.

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

While there has been no formal plan specifically for Downtown Monticello, previous Master and Strategic Plans did establish goals which would impact the Downtown within their documents.

Monticello Strategic Plan - 2005

A Five-Year Plan which focused on the specific goals, strategies, and action steps for all aspects of the community.

Monticello Master Plan - 1998

Established a goal of “An enhanced downtown that is a main focal point for the community.” As well as a city which is “pedestrian-friendly” and “aesthetically-pleasing”.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To help create and carry out this plan a Steering Committee of informed and involved residents and business owners was created. This group helped to guide and shape this plan through a tour and a series of working meetings (see sidebar).

The following people who served on the Steering Committee were instrumental to the success of this plan:

Derrick Bruhn
 Ruthanne Burgard
 Matt Foster
 Brian Fulton
 Jim Gortner
 Laura Hiller
 Heather Lawhead
 Haresh Patel
 Derek Peterson
 Kerry Redshaw
 Carol Stoddard
 Kelly Vetter
 Suzanne Wells
 Vic Zimmerman

Project Milestones

April 2014

Steering Committee Meeting #1; Kickoff Meeting - Assets and Liabilities

May 2014

Steering Committee Meeting #2; Downtown Walkabout

July 2014

Steering Committee Meeting #3; Community / Downtown Character and Goal Setting

August 2014

Steering Committee Meeting #4; Implementation and Action Plan

September - October 2014

Public Review of Draft Plan

November 2014

Council Adoption of Plan

EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

PLANNING AREA



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A key purpose of this plan is to provide guidance for property owners, developers, and City officials. Such guidelines should be grounded in an understanding of the downtown as it exists in 2014. This section offers an assessment of the current character of the downtown area, including the identification of assets to protect and shortcomings to overcome.

ASSETS & LIABILITIES

At the initial meeting for the Downtown Steering Committee, a list of assets and liabilities pertaining to the downtown was created. The following is a bulleted summary of the discussion.

Assets

- *Collaboration among businesses*
- *Recent streetscape improvements*
- *The Square*
- *Specialized businesses*
- *High first floor occupancy rate (95% in 2012)*
- *Community Events*
- *Street Festivals*
- *Opportunity to coordinate events*
- *Marketing of “Court House Square” and surrounding area*
- *Illinois Main Street*
- *Historic Aspects and Architectural character*
- *Maps of downtown available in businesses*
- *Collaboration and communication between City, Chamber, etc.*
- *Tourism Board*
- *Facade improvement grants*
- *TIF District*
- *“Unique” Monticello*
- *Small town feel*
- *Room for retail business growth*
- *Have upper floor residential, but room for more*
- *Progressive, small town*

- *Mixed use*
- *Good schools*
- *Safe city*

Liabilities

- *Not enough parking for patrons*
- *Need signage for free parking lots*
- *Need to grow volunteer base for quality events*
- *Volunteer group is aging (especially for the Trains)*
- *Need wayfinding signage*
- *Some buildings need renovated/updated, both inside and out*
- *Life safety issues*
- *Not enough collaboration among tourism groups (Trains, Main Street, etc.)*
- *Overlapping events*
- *No on-street map signage*
- *Printed maps need updated*
- *No public restrooms*
- *Currently no business incentive package*
- *Tourism Board only meets once a year*
- *Develop Monticello as a day destination*
- *Need to cultivate a small business incubator*
- *Need to expand upper floor residential*
- *Need incentives to create cohesive downtown design*
- *Need design guidelines*
- *Do not need to over regulate*
- *Route 105 is a barrier to downtown as well as downtown’s expansion*
- *Improve crosswalks over 105*
- *Fire codes are voluntary*
- *Need incentive for historic rehab*
- *Take down shingle awnings*
- *Methodist Church is moving out of downtown*
- *Need a B&B*
- *Fill 2nd floor vacant spaces*

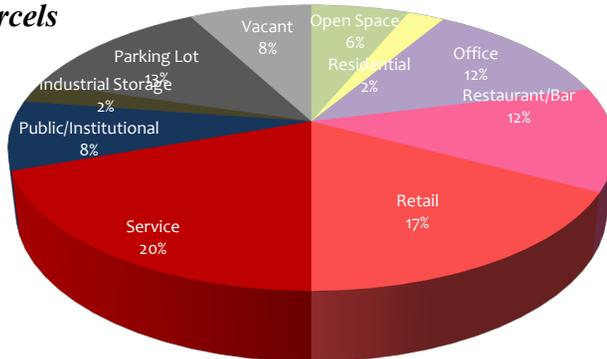
EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

EXISTING LAND USE WALKABOUT

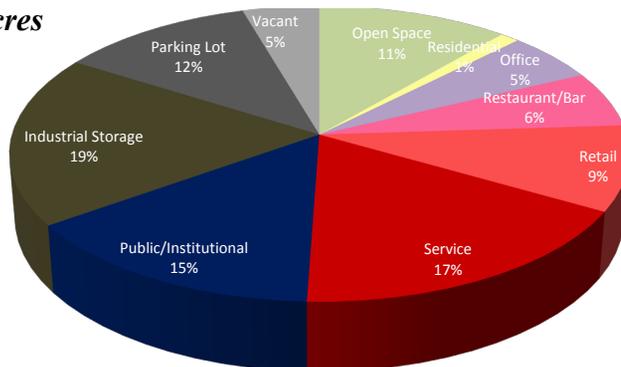
In preparation for this study, MSA Staff, City Staff, and the Downtown Steering Committee conducted a Downtown Walkabout on April 28, 2014. Despite the threat of severe weather, the group of eight (8) Committee Members traversed the Downtown recording their observations and creating a photo inventory. The inventory included the buildings, sidewalks, streets, street furniture, and the function of spaces. Thorough discussions were held and extensive notes were taken. The walkabout is summarized in the following pages.

Additionally, the use of each building/site was noted. A quick visual inventory of the 115 existing land uses yielded the following mix:

Parcels



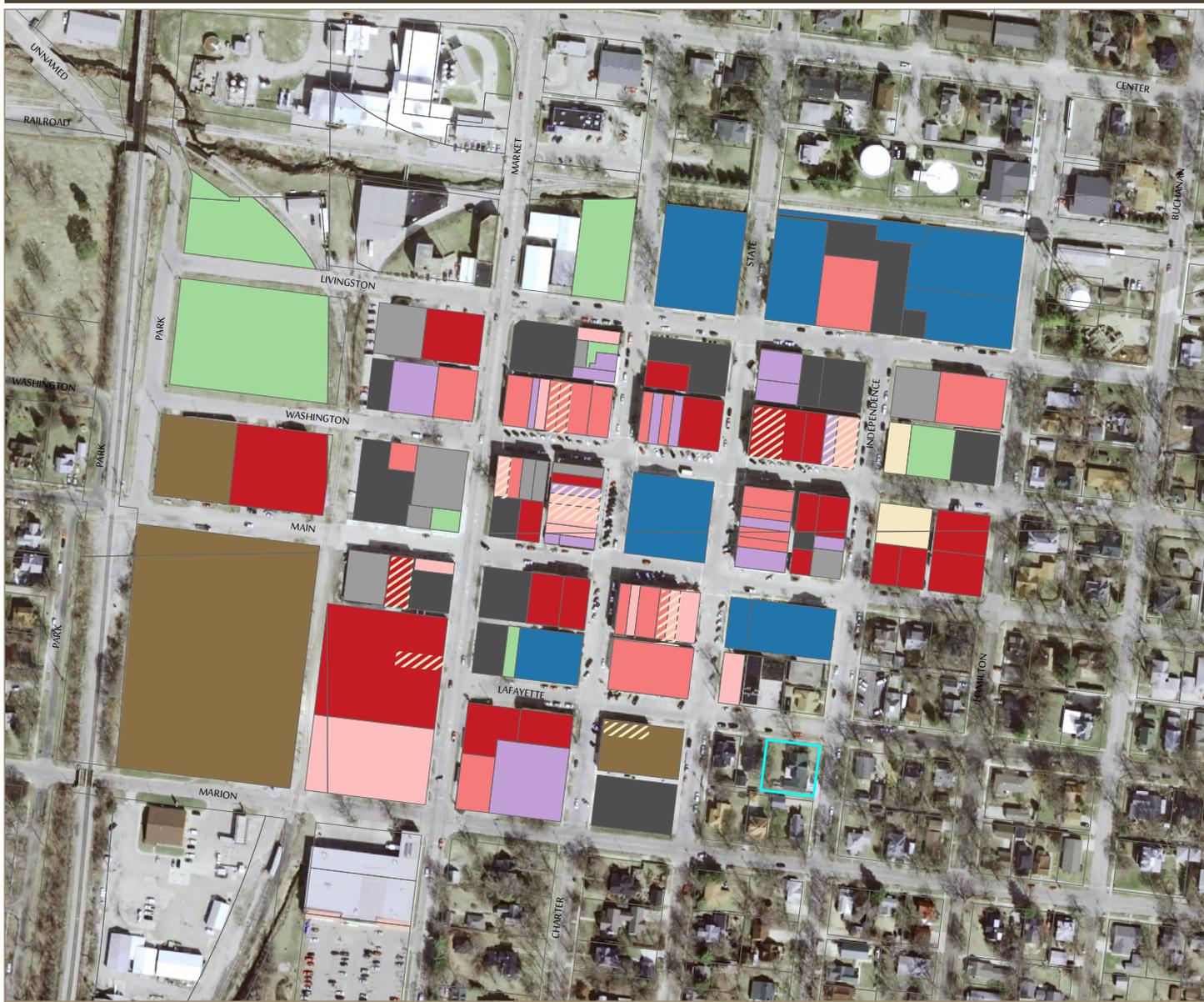
Acres



Monticello has a quaint downtown which is most closely described as a Square. And of those uses on and around the Square, nearly 50% of the parcels are dedicated to customer service (retail, office, and service). These sectors bring residents and visitors to the downtown on a regular basis, especially during regular business hours (8am-5pm). Another 12% of the parcels are currently be used by restaurants and bars. These uses, along with residential (2%), bring people downtown after regular business hours creating more of a 24-hour downtown which makes the area safer as there are always eyes on the street. Additional parcel uses include office (12%), open space (6%), public/institutional (8%), industrial/storage (2%), and parking lots (13%).

While most of the current uses contribute positively to the vibrancy of the downtown, there are a few sites that impede this vibrant nature, such as the vacant buildings (8%; shown in light gray on the following page).

Overall, the downtown has a good mix of uses and has seen several updates in the last decade. However, some buildings and sites do show signs of neglect, age and are in need of updates and renovations. The text and maps on the following pages highlight the observations and findings of the group.

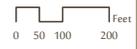


EXISTING LAND USE

- OPEN SPACE
- RESIDENTIAL
- 2ND STORY RESIDENTIAL
- OFFICE
- RESTAURANT/BAR
- RETAIL
- SERVICE
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL
- INDUSTRIAL/STORAGE
- PARKING LOT
- VACANT

DATA SOURCES: CITY OF MONTICELLO,
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.
AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.

CITY OF MONTICELLO
PIATT COUNTY, ILLINOIS



EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

PROPERTIES

Individual parcels/buildings can have a lasting impression on a person's perception of an area, either positively or negatively. For instance, a building could be so well-designed, unique, or historically significant that it is the first thing someone thinks of at the mention of Monticello. Contrarily, a poorly designed or dead public space, a rundown/falling apart building, or a large vacant parcel can leave a negative impression.

The map on the next page illustrates the building conditions within the downtown. These evaluations were assessed on the walkabout in April of 2014, and are based on the exterior appearance of each building as viewed from the street (see sidebar) and not a reflection of the structural integrity of the building. In general, the majority of the properties were in good to fair condition (examples of buildings in "good" condition are shown below). There are a few properties with buildings in need of minor to major repairs and/or maintenance. These properties can detract from the character of the downtown, and should be improved for the betterment of the overall character of the downtown.

Building Conditions' Definitions

Good

Very few to no improvements can be made

Good to Fair

Minor repairs and/or updates could be done

Fair

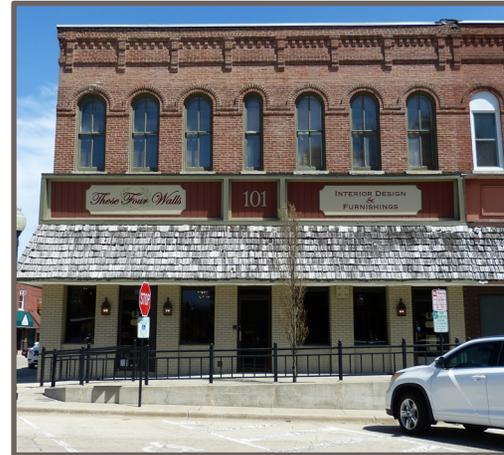
Visible neglect (peeling paint, deteriorating brick/grout, worn siding/awning, etc.)

Fair to Poor

Visible signs of major neglect (broken/missing windows, crumbling exterior)

Poor

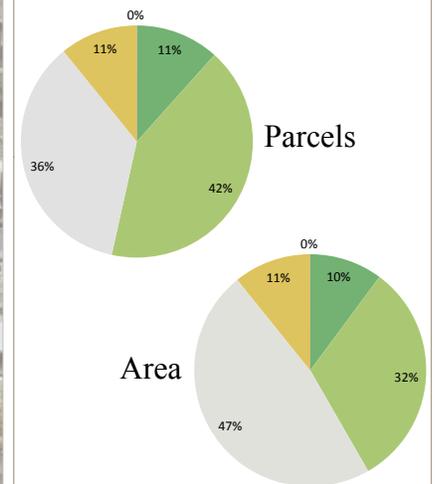
Building appears to be dilapidated or condemnable





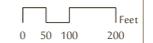
EXISTING CONDITIONS

- GOOD
- GOOD TO FAIR
- FAIR
- FAIR TO POOR
- POOR



DATA SOURCES: CITY OF MONTICELLO,
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.
AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.

CITY OF MONTICELLO
PIATT COUNTY, ILLINOIS



EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

BUILDING / SITE SIGNIFICANCE

The following text and map (opposite page) illustrate the strengths and weaknesses in and around the downtown.

- **Historic Buildings** provide a sense of history and can have a positive influence on the downtown overall character/image (if the buildings are maintained properly and keep their historic elements visible to the public eye). There are a significant number of properties with historic character around the Square. They have good bones, but some need significant facade improvements.
- **Public/Civic Uses** bring residents and activity to the downtown. They also can be catalysts for redevelopment (if built and maintained with quality materials and design).
- **Destination “Businesses”** bring residents and visitors to the downtown.
- **Parking Lots** are necessary in order to accommodate customers in the area; however, they can be detrimental to the look of a downtown if not properly buffered from the street.
- **Eye sores** are buildings/sites that stand out because they are in disrepair, vacant, or are incompatible with Downtown Monticello.

Historic Buildings



Public / Civic Uses

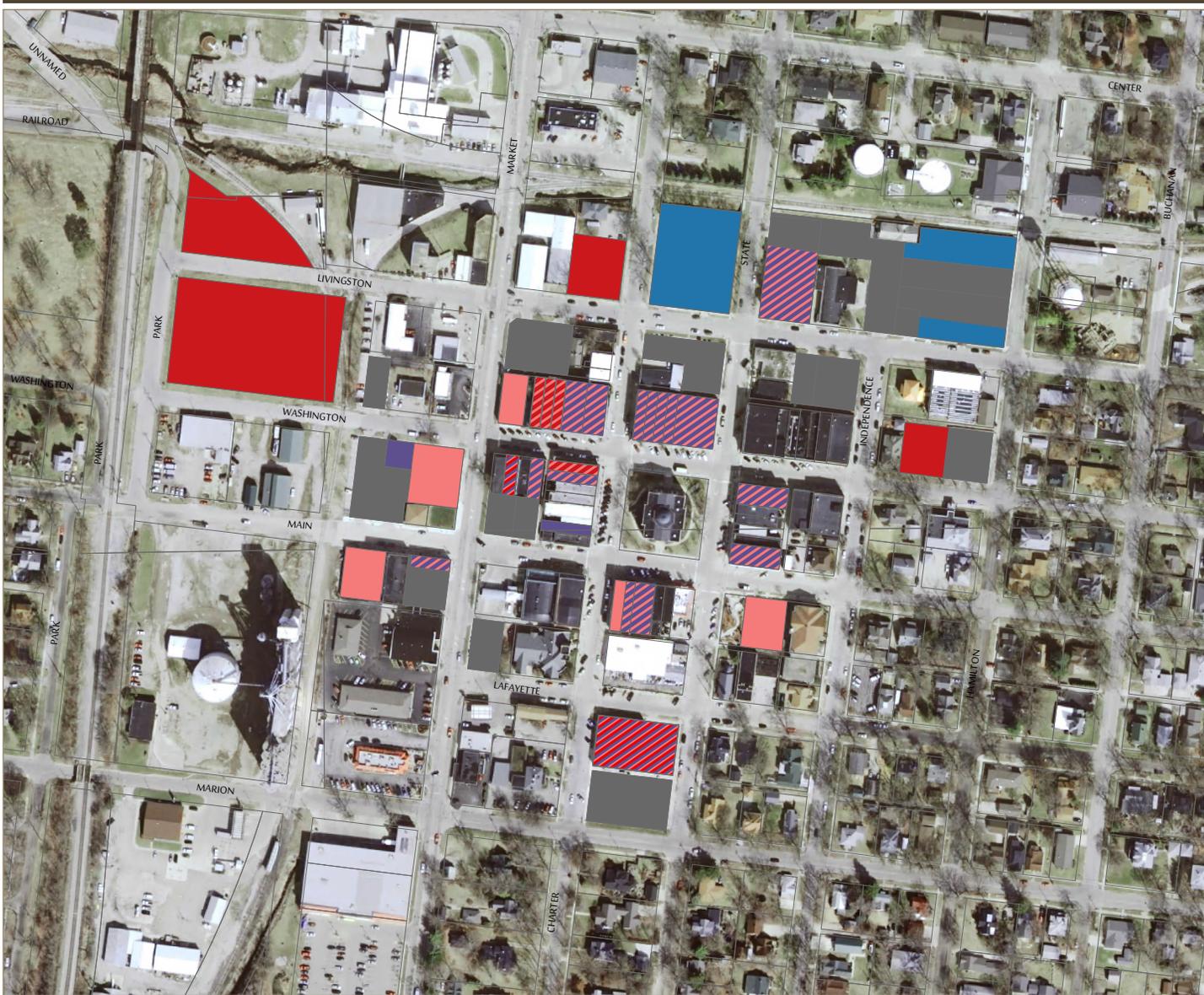


Destination “Businesses”



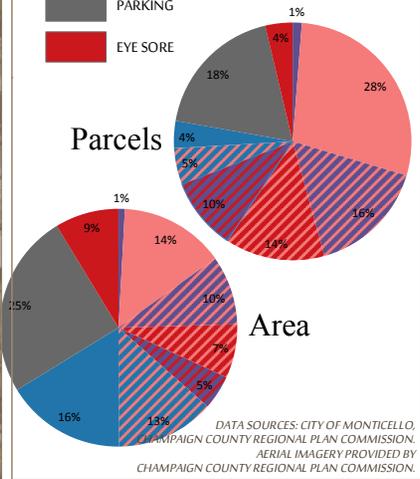
“Eye Sores”





SITE SIGNIFICANCE

- DESTINATION
- HISTORIC
- HISTORIC & DESTINATION
- HISTORIC (NEEDS WORK)
- HISTORIC & DESTINATION (NEEDS WORK)
- HISTORIC & PUBLIC
- PUBLIC/CIVIC
- PARKING
- EYE SORE



CITY OF MONTICELLO
PIATT COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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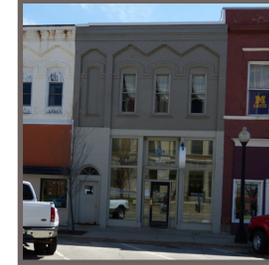
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EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

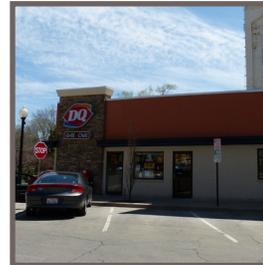
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE/TYPE

There are several distinct architectural styles and types displayed within downtown Monticello. The majority can be characterized as “historic” revival, one- and two-storied commercial (mixed use) structures. These buildings are located throughout the downtown core (Washington, Charter, State, Main, etc.); especially around the square. Mixed in with these historic buildings are many infill developments with varying styles that were built in the last fifty (50) years. Some of these infill projects somewhat fit into the historic context (the Dairy Queen), while others stand out due to poor design and/or low-quality exterior building material. As one moves away from the Square (the downtown core), suburban-style development and industrial/storage buildings become more prevalent. The suburban-style developments are primarily one-story buildings set back from the street with parking in the front yard. Most of the industrial/storage buildings are larger than the suburban-style developments in both height and overall mass, and are generally clad with metal siding or concrete block with minimal architectural detail and windows. They also have larger setbacks and feature large parking lots on both the front and sides of the buildings.

Historic Mixed-Use Buildings



Urban Infill Retail / Office Buildings



Suburban-Style Retail / Office Buildings



Metal Industrial / Storage Buildings



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CHARACTER

STREETSCAPE FEATURES

A major step in moving any downtown forward is to make public improvements that show residents and business owners that the City is taking the initiative in revitalizing the area. Monticello has done just that with the recent streetscape improvements made around the Square. These improvements--which include ADA accessible sidewalks, ornamental fencing, historic pedestrian lighting, and a hardscape terrace--have helped to create an identity for the downtown, which separates it from the surrounding neighborhoods as well as nearby Villages and Cities. A well designed streetscape incorporates crosswalks, sidewalks, light fixtures, trees, planters, trash receptacles, banners/flags, benches and green spaces within the public right of way. There is no single component that will meet the preceding goals, but a balanced mix of these components can lead to the continued successful revitalization of the downtown. Guidelines in this section are intended to assist in the design reconstruction of those streets which have not yet received improvements, and reinforce the good design standards set by the most recent changes.

Pedestrian Environment

Commercial areas that are “friendly” to both vehicles and pedestrians have proven to be highly successful. This is even more apparent in downtown districts, as foot traffic is just as important as vehicle traffic. In general, a “friendly” street has features that provide *safety*, *comfort*, and *mobility*. Examples of these features are described and illustrated on the following pages.

Safety

- ▶ Good sight distance
 - Limit obstructions at crossings (newspaper/advertising & electrical boxes, over-grown vegetation, etc.)
- ▶ Separation & buffering from other modes of travel
 - Wide sidewalks
 - Parking areas
 - Sidewalk terrace
 - Limit curb-cuts
- ▶ Pedestrian visibility
 - Minimum adequate lighting
- ▶ Adequate height clearance
 - Well maintained landscaping
 - Adequate awning heights
- ▶ Limit crossing distances
 - Provide bump outs
 - Reduce corner radii
 - Provide refuge medians at pedestrian crossings



Comfort

- ▶ At human scale
 - Establish a 1:3-1:2 street width to building height ratio
- ▶ Soften the urban hardscape
 - Add planters, street trees, landscaped spaces, etc.
- ▶ Buildings designed w/ pedestrian-friendly features
 - Awnings, large and clear windows on the ground-floor, building entrances, view of products/activities, etc.
- ▶ Limit automobile/truck traffic issues
 - Lower vehicle speed limits
 - Provide traffic calming devices
- ▶ Provide pedestrian amenities
 - Add benches, table and chairs, bike racks, etc.
- ▶ Well-maintained infrastructure
 - Well-maintained sidewalks, streets, street fixtures, and street trees



Mobility

- ▶ Clear path
 - No obstructions within areas of travel
- ▶ Accessible to all citizens
 - ADA-compliant sidewalks and building entrances
- ▶ Clear connections
 - Pedestrian pathways to building entrances



CHARACTER

STREETSCAPE: GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following section provides a series of general guidelines to address the limited streetscaping issues within the planning area. These principles are based on the best practices described in the preceding section (page 14-15). The City should consult these recommendations prior to any (re)construction of the public right-of-way or other streetscaping improvement projects. These are based on the recent improvements, a theme which should be carried throughout the rest of the planning area for continuity and place making identity.

Streets & Sidewalks

- ▶ Continue the hardscape terrace between the sidewalk and the curb / parking area. This can be accomplished with 10-12 feet wide travel lanes, which will also maintain parallel parking on both sides of the street. Or in the case around the Square, angle parking on one side of the street.



Provides additional space for light poles, outdoor seating, landscaping and street furniture.

- ▶ Provide bump-outs at street corners.



Shortens pedestrian crossing length and increases visibility around corners.

- ▶ Clearly mark (and maintain) crosswalks. At a minimum, use a solid white border, but consider enhancing high traffic crosswalks with either the ladder design stripping or with the use of a contrasting colored concrete.



Heightens awareness of pedestrian crossing.

- ▶ Maintain a minimum clear path of six feet. Refrain from placing fire hydrants, light and electrical poles, traffic lights, signs, benches, etc. in the clear path zone.



Promotes walkability and street activity.

- ▶ Maintain alleys for safe and easy access. Explore ways to enhance these small public spaces with art.



Promotes walkability, comfort, and provides additional pedestrian space.

Landscaping

- ▶ Continue to add and maintain trees in the recommended hardscape terrace. There should be no pavement in a 12-foot circumference around tree trunks to allow for growth, and include a 7-foot height clearance when maintained within the 6-ft clear path zone. Prune trees that impede this zone.



Trees break up downtown hardscapes by providing visual interest and shade.

- ▶ Continue seasonal planting program that prescribes procedures for locating, installing, and maintaining seasonal color plantings in at-grade planting beds, raised planters, and hanging baskets.

Provides visual interest and softens the urban district.

Street Furniture

- ▶ Maintain benches on at least every other block and trash / recycling receptacles at high-volume pedestrian crosswalks. Bolt the benches to pavement to prevent vandalism.



Benches provide opportunities for leisure and trash receptacles help maintain a clean downtown.

- ▶ Provide bike racks at major destinations. Consider attractive bike racks that allow the bike frame to be locked to the rack.



Promotes biking and reduces chances of bikes being locked to trees, poles, etc. Racks can also provide an opportunity for public art.

Infrastructure

- ▶ Maintain and expand the number of decorative light fixtures. Consider the use of LED light bulbs.

Decorative lights enhance the streetscape, while a full-cut off LED fixture reduces glare and improves efficiency.



- ▶ Work with electrical company to bury overhead wires when feasible and appropriate.

Reduces vertical clutter.

Signs/Poles

- ▶ Add wayfinding signage and make it consistent throughout downtown and Monticello (see page 35 for more information).

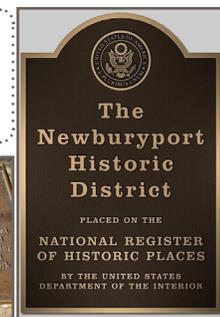


Adds to the downtown identity and helps direct drivers/pedestrians to community destinations.

- ▶ At historic destinations provide a plaque or informational sign to denote its historical significance and history.



Documents and promotes historic places within Monticello.



CHARACTER

DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS

Development provides the City with economic stability and provides goods, services and jobs for its residents. However, too often buildings are (re)designed without significant consideration to neighboring parcels and their overall effect on the area. To ensure *high-quality* and *long-lasting* projects which enhance the Courthouse Square and surrounding Downtown, the following guidelines have been created to provide assistance in guiding future (re)development in and around the downtown, including major facade improvements:

Land Use Strategies

1. Older buildings with architectural character and historical interest are important to the image and character of the entire community. The City encourages and supports adaptive reuse projects that retain and restore the historic character of significant structures (See Page 11-Site Significance Map).

Design Context / Architectural Elements

Development should reinforce the existing downtown character, maintaining a consistent street wall that provides visual interest at a human scale.

Consider the following techniques:

1. The surrounding context, especially adjacent buildings, should always be documented and considered before design begins. City reviewers should require photos of this context during the review process. The City should also require developer/building owner to submit accurately-measured elevations of all exposed facades; that includes any adjacent buildings(s).

2. It is not necessary to replicate historic architectural styles with new buildings, but there should be some consistency of the scale and rhythm of design features, such as windows and floor heights, that help fit a new building within a block of older buildings.



An example of several properties following similar window proportions, floor heights, and rhythm of design features.

3. Building materials should be consistent with other nearby buildings. Brick and stone are strongly encouraged in most parts of downtown, but other quality, long-lasting materials may be appropriate in some places.
4. Buildings should incorporate architectural elements that provide visual interest and human scale, such as differentiation of the ground floor level, awnings or canopies over entrances, etc.
 - Buildings should establish vertical proportions for the street facade (e.g. windows, doors, structural expressions, etc). Any building with a total width equal to or greater than its height should utilize one or more of the following techniques: expression of structural bays, variations in material, and/or variation in the building plane.

- Buildings should incorporate horizontal expression lines from existing buildings within the same block, whenever practical.
- A positive visual termination at the top of the building should be established. A flat roof with a defined cornice is acceptable; however, a parapet with cornice is the preferred treatment.
- Unique and decorative cornice designs are encouraged to generate character and building identity.

An example of how horizontal architectural elements between three buildings can correspond to each other.



Examples of unique, decorative cornices throughout Downtown Monticello.

Building Height

Buildings should reinforce the general characteristics of the downtown district.

Consider the following techniques:

1. A full, two-story building is strongly encouraged, wherever feasible.
2. If the building is to be less than two stories, consider

expanding the overall height to at least eighteen (18) feet, either by raising the ceiling or by adding a parapet and cornice.

Relationship to the Street

Buildings and sites should be designed to establish visual and physical connections between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the building.

Consider the following techniques:

1. In most cases there should be no setback from the sidewalk, though occasional partial setbacks to create usable space, as for an outdoor seating area, are acceptable (generally setback less than 10 feet). This setback space should then be used for pedestrian oriented activities such as a plaza or outdoor seating. Bringing the buildings closer to the street completes the physical appearance of the Historic Courthouse Square and/or continues it in the surrounding area.
2. The primary entrance/door should face the Square or primary street.
3. There should be clear vision windows on the street facade. Retail and service spaces should have large, clear (low/no tint) windows that provide a good visual connection between the building interior and the sidewalk.
4. Street-facing garages doors should be avoided whenever possible. If unavoidable, consider setting back the garage a minimum of four feet from the primary building facade.



Example of a setback area providing outdoor seating.

CHARACTER

Projections (e.g. awnings and canopies)

Projecting features should reinforce the existing building character within the downtown area but not hinder public safety.

Consider the following techniques:

1. The use of ground floor awnings is encouraged. Fabric or soft vinyl awnings are preferred.
2. Awning colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade (see pages 24-25 for more info).

Parking

Parking lots should be designed to be safe for drivers and pedestrians, while mitigating visual and environmental impacts.

Consider the following techniques:

1. Whenever possible, parking areas should be placed in the side and rear yards. Front yard parking is strongly discouraged.
2. Parking should be separated from the sidewalk by a low fence or landscape buffer to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety.
3. Parking lots should be designed to mitigate stormwater. (See *Stormwater* of this section-page 22)
4. Access drive lanes should have adequate throat depths to allow for proper vehicle stacking.



Example of landscaping providing a physical and visual separation between vehicle parking and the public sidewalk.

Landscaping

Generous landscaping should be provided with an emphasis on native plant species.

Consider the following techniques:

1. In places where the building is not placed on the front property line, hardscape improvements (such as retaining walls, ornamental fencing, planters, etc.) and/or native plants should be used to provide visual interest and a comfortable pedestrian environment.
2. Indigenous plants with low water and pesticide needs are strongly encouraged (work with local nurseries in developing a landscaping list/plan).
3. Landscaping should be placed along street frontages, between incompatible land uses, along parking areas, and in the islands of larger parking lots.
4. Parking lot islands should be planted and maintained with perennials, shrubs, and/or shade trees. Landscaping should be designed to allow for vehicle overhangs, unless wheel stops are used.



Examples of plants native to Illinois. From top: Black Eyed Susans, Bee Balm, Arrowhead, & Aromatic Aster.

Signs

Signs should reflect the character and nature of the business, as well as the character of Downtown Monticello.

Consider the following techniques:

1. Signs should be pedestrian-scaled. Desired sign types include projecting, building-mounted, window, awning and monument.
2. Signs should not be excessive in height or square footage.
3. Signs should be integrated with the overall building design in color and style.
4. Creative, detailed, artistic, and unique signage is encouraged.
5. Pole signs are strongly discouraged.



Preferred pedestrian-scaled sign types which fit it with the context of their respective downtowns.

Wayfinding Signs

Wayfinding Signs should reflect the historic character and nature of the Downtown and have a consistent design concept throughout the area (see page 35 for more information).

Consider the following techniques:

1. Wayfinding signage should direct people to key locations in and around Downtown Monticello (e.g. City Hall, the public

library, restaurants, shops, parks, markets, etc.) as well as places within the region (Allerton, Railway Museum, etc.)

2. Signage should be attractive and coordinated.
3. The design should be easy to read and easy to update as changes occur.

Lighting

Use effective and attractive exterior lighting that is efficient and does not produce glare or light pollution.

Consider the following techniques:

1. Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare and light pollution, and especially to avoid light trespass to neighboring residential uses.
2. Limited up-lighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).
3. Pick fixtures that compliment the character of the building as well as the overall character of the downtown.
4. Illuminate parking lots and pedestrian walkways uniformly and to the minimum level necessary to ensure safety.
5. Lighting should be energy efficient and should render colors as accurately as possible. Preferred light types include: LED, fluorescent, and metal halide.



Examples of full cutoff fixtures that minimize glare and light pollution.

CHARACTER

Service Areas

Service areas should be screened from view, as much as possible, to improve the overall appearance of the downtown.

Consider the following techniques:

1. Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, outdoor storage, and loading docks should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street.
2. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.
3. Placement of service boxes with the right-of-way should be located away from the pedestrian zone.



Good examples of how to hide/screen service areas.

Stormwater

Use on-site storm water management systems to help reduce the negative ecological impacts created by parking lots and other impervious surfaces (net gain, stormwater runoff volume and contaminants).

Consider the following techniques:

1. Use rain gardens and bio-retention basins on-site (e.g. in parking islands) in order to filter pollutants and infiltrate runoff, wherever feasible.
2. Consider permeable surfaces, pervious asphalt, pervious concrete, or special paving blocks.



Examples of parking swales, rain gardens, and bio-retention areas for parking lot design.

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CHARACTER

COLORS & MATERIALS

To emphasize Historic Monticello and its modern day role, a neutral palette for the primary building color was chosen to respect the historic character, but bold accent colors like coral, turquoise, navy blue, and red will add a modern touch keeping the downtown from feeling stale or antiquated. The following materials and colors are suggested for Downtown Monticello. Considering and using these suggested materials and colors will provide a cohesive and consistent look strengthening the already unique character and reinforce the existing land uses.

The use of high-quality, long-lasting finish materials greatly enhance the look of a downtown. All exposed sides of a building should have similar or complementary materials and paint colors.

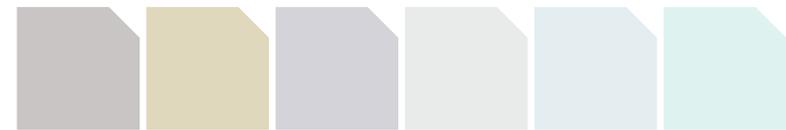
EXTERIOR COLOR PALETTE

- Muted, neutral tones are preferred for the primary facade color.
- Bright and bold colors are discouraged for the primary facade color, but are preferred as a secondary color to highlight expression lines or details. Accent colors should be chosen to reflect the chic character of the downtown. Monticello has the beginnings of a historic and bold color palette. Colors schemes when updating should also consider bold accents.
- Day-glo or fluorescent colors are discouraged.
- Buildings should choose colors that compliment and blend with neighboring buildings while creating a uniqueness.
- Sample colors palettes are provided on the next page. If not a masonry material, the primary color refers to the color of the material which is the largest percentage of the facade. Colors are then suggested for the awnings, front door, trim, and other accents such as signage, panels and other decorative features. More simplistic buildings may not use all the colors suggested, while those with more architectural detail could, although it is not necessary.

EXTERIOR PRIMARY FACADE COLORS (MUTED)

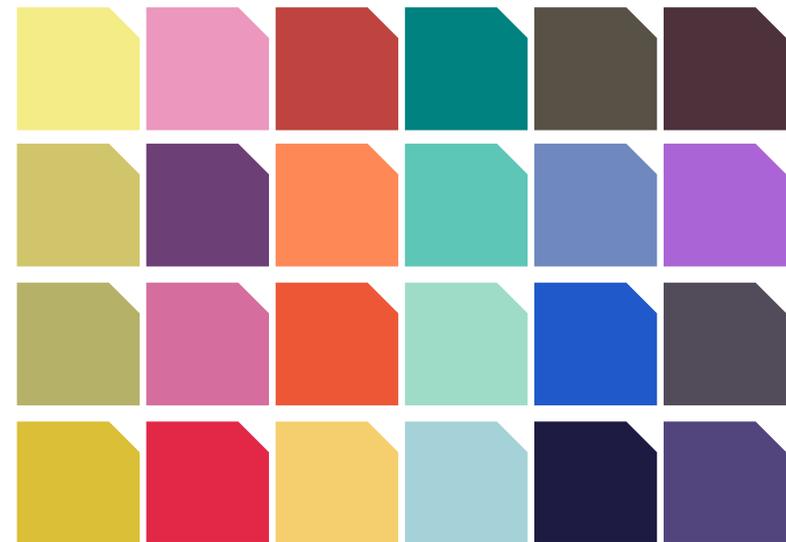


Warm Colors: Red, Orange, & Yellow Tones

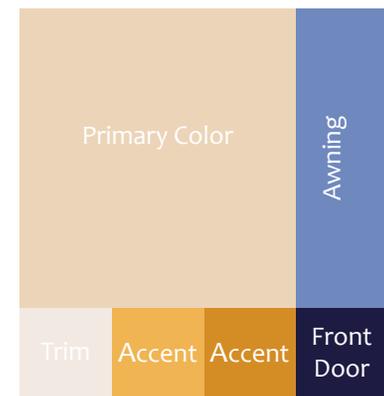


Cool Colors: Blue, Green, & Grey Tones

EXTERIOR ACCENT COLORS (BOLD)



SAMPLE COLOR PALETTE MATRIX



CHARACTER

EXTERIOR MATERIALS

- Preferred exterior finish materials (picture at left from top left to bottom right) include: kiln-fired red brick, Terra Cotta, stucco, wood siding and details, and fiber cement siding as shows at right.
- EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) is discouraged as a principle facade material, especially at ground level where susceptible to damage, but is acceptable above the ground floor and as an accent material, but should not be used to cover brick.
- Vinyl siding and residential steel lap siding are discouraged on the primary facade front.
- Discouraged building materials include gravel aggregate materials, stone or culture stone in a random ashlar pattern, rough-sawn wood siding, polished stone, and panelized products.
- The primary facade of a masonry building should not be painted, but left natural. However, if there is existing paint, and paint removal is not an option, a neutral color should be chosen (*see sidebar on page 24*).



Handmade Red Brick



Stretcher Bond Red Brick



Terra Cotta



Stucco



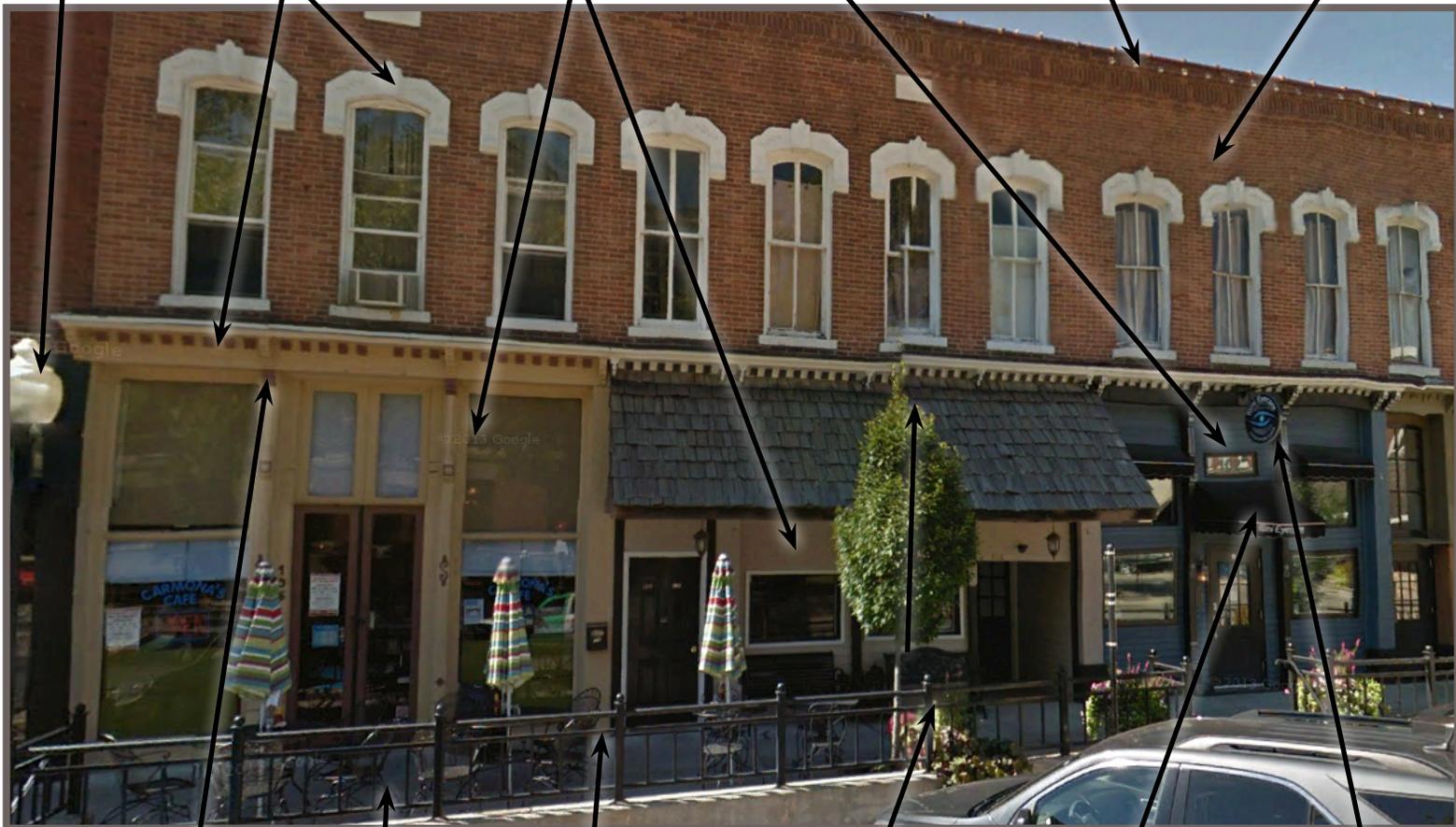
Wood Siding



Fiber Cement Siding

Existing example of good building and streetscape design.

- Ornamental pedestrian lighting.
- Contrasting trim color to highlight architectural features.
- Neutral warm tone, for ground floor facade.
- Medium cool tone, for ground floor facade.
- Decorative Cornice.
- Natural brick for primary facade.



Upper Primary			
Ground Floor Primary			
Trim	Accent	Accent	Front Door

Upper Primary	Awning	
Ground Floor Primary		
Trim		Accent

Upper Primary	Awning	
Ground Floor Primary		
Trim		Accent

- Contrasting accent color for architectural detailing.
- Wide sidewalks for activity such as dining or display space.
- Ornamental fencing to separate street from pedestrians.
- Trees for shade and seasonal plantings for color and aesthetics.
- Bold, contrasting awning with signage.
- Sign is projecting, pedestrian scaled, and integrated with building design.

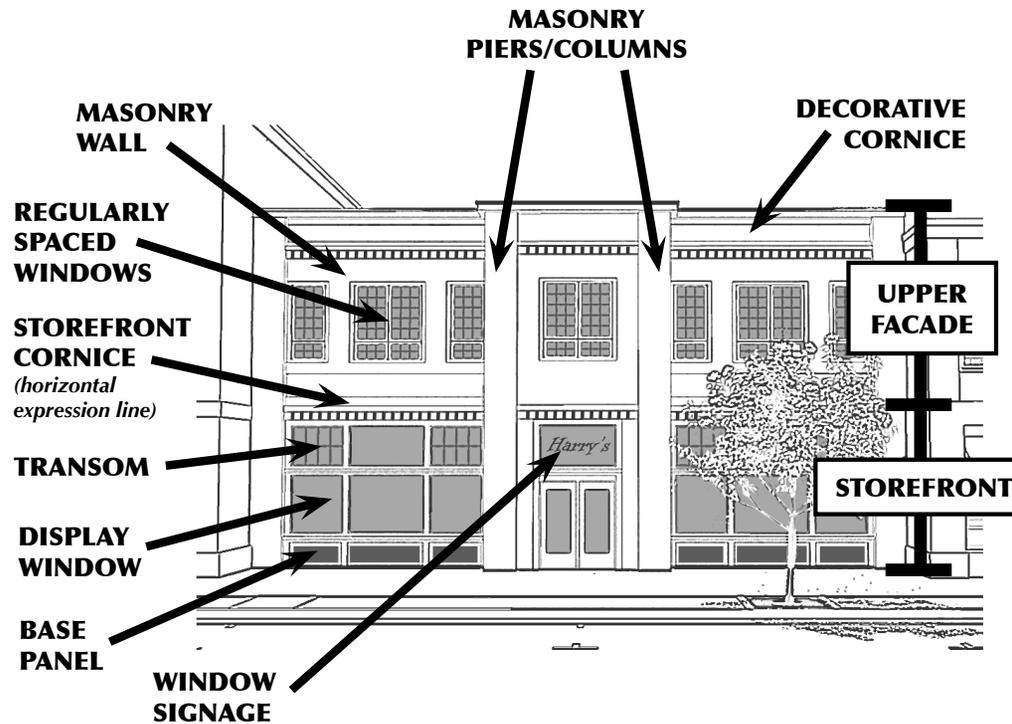
CHARACTER

“HISTORICAL” FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

Older buildings not only add to the character, charm, and feel of Monticello, they represent an earlier era of economic vibrancy. The future economic success of the downtown is dependent upon the protection and preservation of these historical structures. The City should protect their architectural heritage and help owners restore, enhance, and improve the buildings when feasible and appropriate. There should be a clear policy in place to establish a process by which alternatives to demolition can be sought for buildings that are deemed “historically significant”, especially since so many ‘street-walls’ remain intact. The subsequent page provides sample recommendations that may help guide restoration/recreation of historical facades:



Architectural Elements of a Traditional Storefront



- Building owners are strongly encouraged to *identify, retain, and preserve* historic material and features.
- Building owners are strongly encouraged to remove materials which cover the transom. If the ceiling inside has been lowered behind the transom, it is recommended that the ceiling be raised for a few feet behind the transom.
- If the original base panel is in poor condition or is missing, building owners are strongly encouraged to reconstruct it with materials consistent with the size and design of the original panels.



An example of a reconstructed architectural pediment.

- If restoration is not feasible, new elements should be designed that replicate or are at least consistent with the character, materials, and design of the original building.
- Replacement doors and windows on a historic building should maintain the historic character of the building by matching the original material, proportions, design, etc.
- Wood panels and/or other materials should be removed from upper story windows and replaced with appropriate windows.
- Infilling existing base panels with concrete block is discouraged (unless it matches the primary facade material). Brick, if used to infill the base panel, shall match the building as closely as possible in size, color, and texture.
- Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, to

existing painted brick or stone are strongly discouraged. If necessary, surface cleaning shall use the gentlest means possible.



An example of the negative effects of sandblasting brick work.

- If building owners have questions on the proper techniques for restoration and/or rehabilitation of their building, they should consult the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and reconstructing historic buildings (published in 1995).



The before and after images show a restoration project that revealed the original brick and architectural details.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

REINVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Within the downtown area there are several parcels that offer significant opportunities for reinvestment. Parcels that are strong candidates for reinvestment are either vacant or are for sale, have low improvement value (relative to land value), have buildings that are in poor condition, or have uses that are ill-suited for a downtown environment. The *Reinvestment Opportunities Map* (opposite) illustrates reinvestment opportunities within Downtown Monticello in 2014.

- **Red/Pink** Parcels are the **most viable** for reinvestment / redevelopment, as they are vacant lots (bright red) or they are currently for sale or lease (dark red hatch).
- **Orange** Parcels are viable for reinvestment / redevelopment due to low values and/or available space above the ground floor, but are not for sale and they are not completely vacant.
- **Yellow** Parcels are less viable for redevelopment due to stronger values, but are candidates for reinvestment to improve poor exterior conditions.

Currently, a majority of the first floor space within Downtown Monticello is occupied. The potential for expansion of business, office and residential then rise to the floors above. The *Reinvestment Opportunities Map* also illustrates existing upper floor uses and buildings with vacant upper floors.

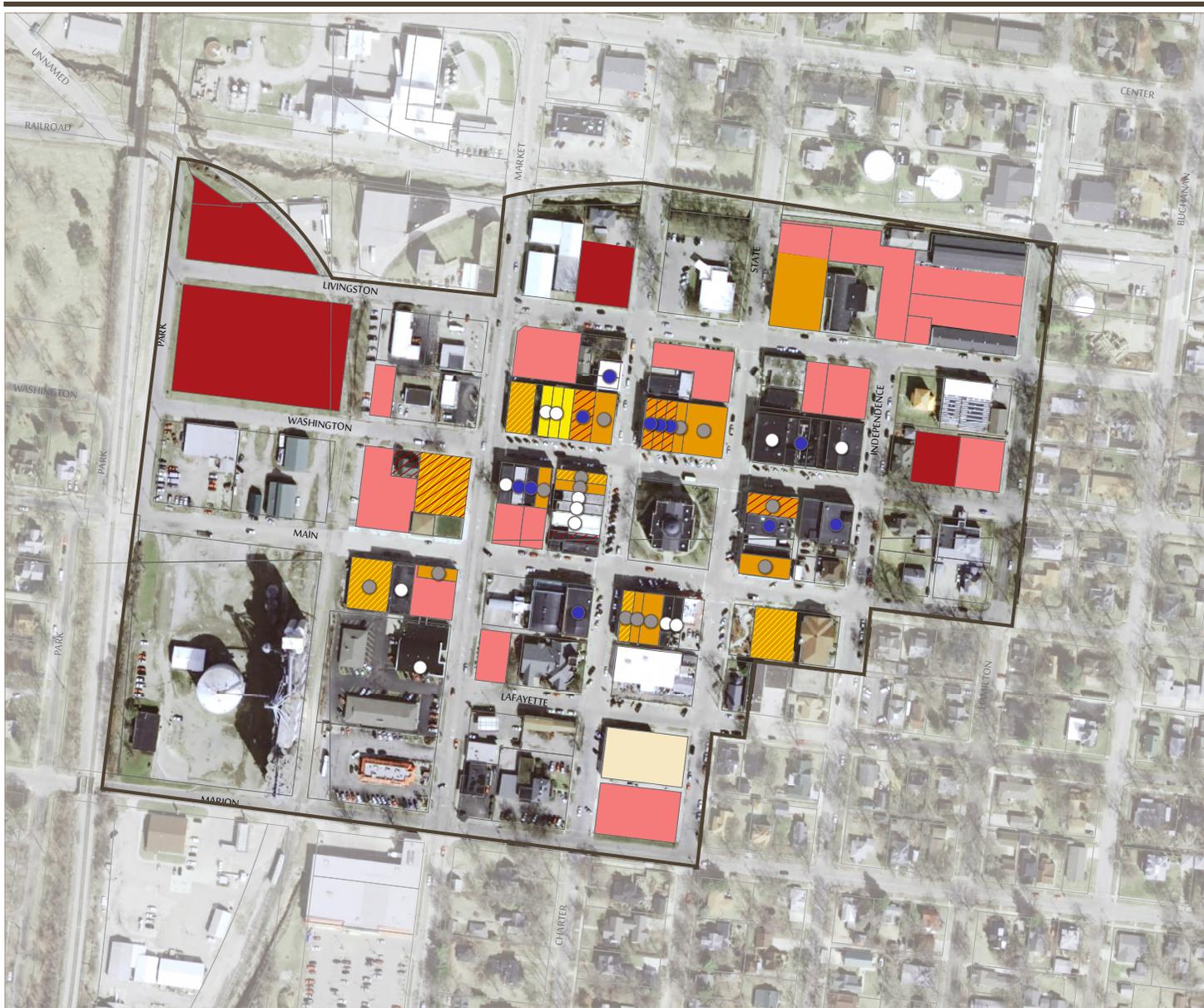
- **Grey Dots** are those buildings with vacant upper floors. Typically, there is only one floor above ground level.
- **White Dots** are those buildings which currently have residential units occupying the upper floor of the structure.

- **Blue Dots** are those buildings where a business or office space exists above the ground floor.

PRIORITY REDEVELOPMENT SITES

The City cannot market every site at one time, and therefore, should prioritize the sites based on their marketability (location, visibility, etc.), as well as their value and importance to the downtown. The selected sites (shown below) will be the City's first priorities when marketing development opportunities in the downtown. Each one of these projects can be a catalyst for new development throughout Downtown Monticello. See the following pages for specific recommendations on some of these potential catalyst projects.



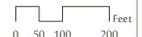


REINVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

-  FOR SALE / LEASE
-  VACANT LOT
-  VACANT BUILDING
-  PARKING - SURFACE
-  UNDERUTILIZED & POOR BUILDING CONDITIONS
-  UNDERUTILIZED
-  POOR BUILDING CONDITIONS
-  NON-CONFORMING USE
-  2ND STORY UNDERUTILIZED / VACANT
-  2ND STORY EXISTING RESIDENTIAL
-  2ND STORY EXISTING BUSINESS / OFFICE

DATA SOURCES: CITY OF MONTICELLO,
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.
AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION.

CITY OF MONTICELLO
PIATT COUNTY, ILLINOIS



DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

CONCEPT PLAN

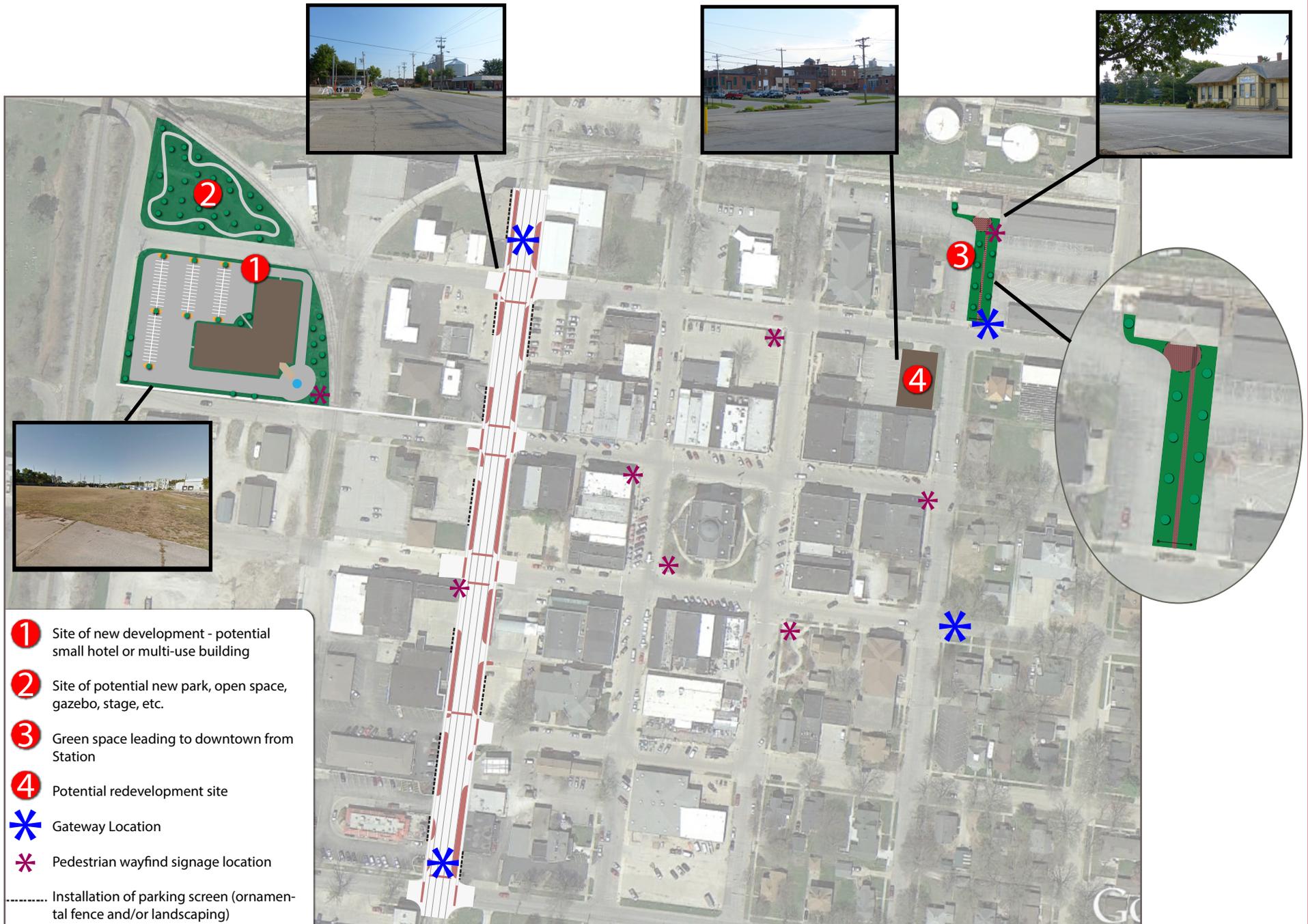
The Concept Plan (shown opposite) was created to provide general concepts for potential redevelopment sites. As illustrated on the plan, one of the major actions was to create a greenspace entrance into the Downtown from Wabash Depot. Another concept is to create a use for the vacant lot on the east side of town, known as the Pepsin site. Moreover, a streetscape identity was to create a unified corridor down Market Street through the downtown which is safe for motorist and pedestrians, in addition to providing wayfinding signage and monuments throughout.

- The vacant site, know as the Pepsin site was kept as two lots, but could be combined for a larger project.
- 1 The southern lot shows a building fronting the Railroad/Market Street with parking in the rear. Potential ideas for the use of the building were a small hotel, conference center, mixed use building or community center. The building should follow the design guidelines listed in the previous section.
- 2 The northern lot was left as a green space with trees and a walking trail. Other ideas include a gazebo, a stage, amphitheater, or other more organized green space.
- 3 Each year, there are thousands of visitors who enter/exit Wabash Depot on the edge of the downtown. There is currently nothing in place to help guide those visitors exiting the train into the downtown or to conveniently show them all that Downtown Monticello has to offer. The concept shown here turns a portion of the existing parking lot into a green space with a brick path through a gateway to lead them into the downtown. A wayfinding sign will entice and help them know what to expect once they get there. Benches are suggested.
- 4 This redevelopment would occur on an existing parking

lot. With 13% of the landuse in Downtown Monticello dedicated to surface parking, the loss of one small section for a redevelopment project would greatly enhance the overall experience. This location is also ideal as a way to draw visitors and tourists from Wabash Depot toward the Downtown.

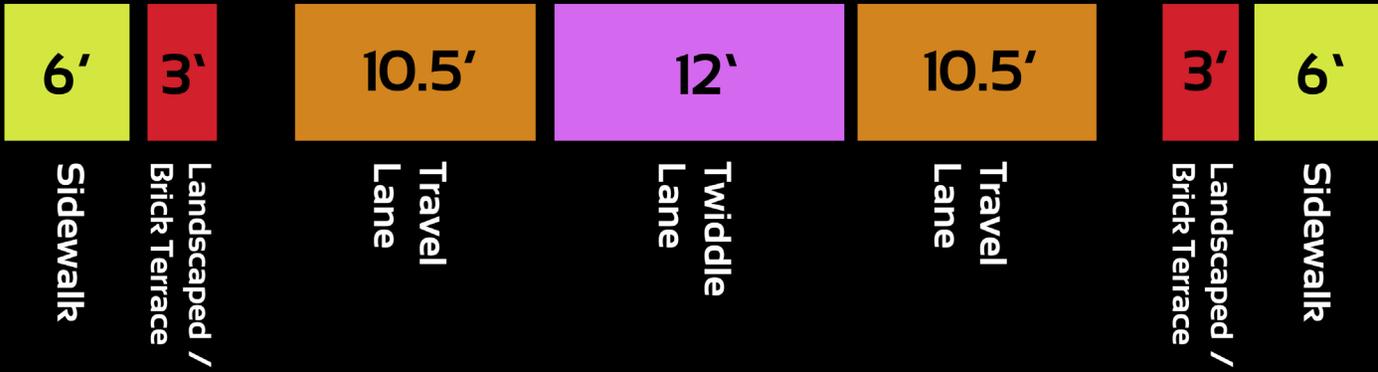
- * For the public realm, the main idea is to create a unified, complete corridor on Market Street through the Downtown using elements already existing in the downtown area.
 - Crosswalks are called out with colored concrete. In addition to traffic calming, more crosswalks will make is safer for pedestrians and help connect the west side to the downtown.
 - Ornamental fencing and/or low landscaping is suggested to screen parking lots and soften the hardscape. It will also help complete the “corridor wall” by filling in the gaps.
 - Large gateways are proposed at either end of the downtown to designate entering and leaving a special place.
 - Wayfinding signage, particularly for vehicles, is recommended along the Market Street Corridor.
- * An additional gateway was proposed on Washington Street for those entering the downtown from the east (Champaign/Urbana).
- * Throughout the downtown, potential sights for pedestrian wayfinding signage were identified to help visitors and residents alike, easily navigate via foot, bike or car.

This Concept Plan provides a 20-year outlook for the revitalization of the downtown. It illustrates the development potential for reinvestment sites suggested in the prior section (page 31) and shows how public improvements can enhance the overall aesthetics of the downtown. The Action Plan (the next Section) will provide the framework to make these concepts a reality.



DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Market Street (IL 105) Potential Redesign



WAYFINDING CONCEPT

As discussed in the **Character Chapter**, Wayfinding Signs should reflect the historic character and nature of the Downtown and have a consistent design concept throughout the region.

The concepts below are both attractive and easy to read. They are also design to be easy to update as changes occur, either by replacing a board or changing out a map. To ensure a uniform design across signs, similar elements are used in each:

- ▶ Bold colored background.
- ▶ White font.
- ▶ Black silhouette of a train.

Pedestrian Sign - Used to direct pedestrians around the downtown

with simple commands and arrows.

Street Banner - Used on existing poles and street lights, will add color and foster community pride throughout the year.

Informational Kiosk - Gives more detailed information and maps on locations throughout the downtown and community.

Welcome Sign - To be placed at key entrances into the Downtown. Reflects architectural elements of Wabash Depot.

Vehicular Wayfinding Street Sign - Used on existing poles and street lights, will add color, foster community pride, and give direction to traveling visitors.

Parking Lot Sign - To be placed at parking lot entrances.



GOALS, ACTION & IMPLEMENTATION

The Downtown Enhancement Plan seeks to provide both short and long-term recommendations for the redevelopment of both private and public properties with the goal of creating a more vibrant and sustainable downtown. This section contains a compilation of the various goals of the community which became apparent throughout the planning process. Under each goal is a series of action steps to translate this vision to reality. Each action step is then followed by an implementation process which designates responsible parties, recommends a time-frame for completion, and identifies potential funding sources which are in addition to, or in replace of, general tax revenues. Since many of the recommendations rely on coordination with the private market it is likely that the full breadth of this Plan's vision will take many years and much coordinated collaboration to achieve.

MONTICELLO WILL BE AN "OVER NIGHT DESTINATION" BRINGING A FULL DAY OF SHOPPING, DINING, SIGHT SEEING, AND RECREATING TO VISITORS.

Action #1: Market to a developer to open a Bed & Breakfast in or near Downtown Monticello.

- Work with the State on the definition of a B&B to ensure full compliance by the City as well as ease for developers.
- Look into "unit rental" or "condo" (check out Galena)
- Potential rental coordination with Allerton

Responsible Parties: City, DCEO, Developers, Allerton (U of I)

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2016)

Action #2: Implement a Downtown Trolley/Train Program which connects key areas of the region.

- Collaborate with Allerton Park, Downtown, the Railway Museum, and similar entities to coordinate Trolley

Efforts

- Work with PiatTran on possible collaboration for maintenance and funding.
- Golf Cart/Bike Rental at Station for train goers to use.
- Work with Railway Museum on raising awareness of opportunities within the downtown for riders. Ensure patrons know what is available at the Downtown stop.

Responsible Parties: Allerton, Downtown, Railway Museum, PiatTran, Eli Field, The Trail Blazers

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Mid Term (2017-2021)

Action #3: Implement an interactive, multi-functional wayfinding system/plan at and to key destinations within the Monticello region (See Development Concepts).

- Identify key locations for signs (downtown, Allerton, Federal and State Highways, Railway Museum, Eli Field, etc)
- Identify key destinations and attractions for signage
- Coordinate design with the overall branding of Monticello.
- Chose uniform design for all wayfinding signage

Responsible Parties: City, IDOT, Tourism Board, Main Street, Chamber

Funding Sources: IDOT

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2017)

Action #4: Rebuild the Tourism Board to make it a collaborative force.

- Meet frequently throughout the year.
- Ensure all necessary parties are involved and active.
- Collaborate wayfinding signage, promotional materials,

events, website, etc.

Responsible Parties: City, Chamber, Main Street, Allerton, Railway Museum, Eli Field, The Trail Blazers

Funding Sources: State of Illinois

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2017)

Action #5: Encourage updating existing over night facilities.

- Work with hotels and motels on upgrading facilities.

Responsible Parties: Hotels, Motels, City, Developers

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Ongoing

MONTICELLO WILL HAVE A WELL DEVELOPED, HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WHICH IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL.

Action #1: Adopt and Implement Design Guidelines to preserve and enhance the historic character. (See Character)

- Ensure guidelines are shared with all building and business owners.
- Post guidelines on development website.

Responsible Parties: City, Developers, Main Street

Funding Sources: Tax Incentives

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2017)

Action #2: Adopt and Implement Standards for Right of Way enhancements. (See Character)

- Post guidelines on development website.

Responsible Parties: City, IDOT, Developers

Funding Sources: IDOT

Time-frame: Long Term (2022+)

Action #3: Educate building and business owners on guidelines and standards.

- Provide opportunities for participation in the Illinois Main Street Architectural Services program for renderings on potential historic changes and rehabilitations.
- Approach building owners who's structures do not meet the standards and present them with potential options.
- Require design guidelines when development is assisted by the City financially.

Responsible Parties: Main Street, City, Business Owners

Funding Sources: IHPA, Main Street incentives via City

Time-frame: Ongoing

Action #4: Take a field trip with business and building owners to cities with adopted and enforced guidelines.

- Learn how cities and downtowns have worked together.
- See design standards at work and the benefits to building owners.

Responsible Parties: Main Street, Business Owners, City

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2017)

Action #5: Create a recognition program for good design and maintenance within Downtown Monticello.

GOALS, ACTION & IMPLEMENTATION

- Encourage good design and maintenance of buildings.
- Create plaque or similar item for building owners to proudly display.
- Provide incentives to accomplish upgrades in design and maintenance

Responsible Parties: Main Street, City

Funding Sources: Incentives

Time-frame: Short Term (2015-2017)

Action #6: Create incentive programs to encourage appropriate (re)development within Downtown Monticello. (See Priority Development Sites)

- Incentives for New Business
- Incentives for compliance with life safety issues
- Incentives for compliance with design standards
- Tax Rebate Incentives
- Create development and incentive packet for available properties and use as a proactive tool for (re)development.

Responsible Parties: City, Main Street, Chamber

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Ongoing

Action #7: Improve streetscape along Route 105 (Market) through the downtown. (See Development Concept)

- Improve crosswalks for safety and connect businesses to the downtown.
- Enhance aesthetics of main corridor.
- Create monuments at the “entrances”.
- Create pedestrian scale.

Responsible Parties: City, IDOT

Funding Sources: IDOT, TIF

Time-frame: Mid Term (2017-2021)

Action #8: Install monuments at key entries into the downtown. (See Development Concept)

- Coordinate design with wayfinding design
- Enhance corridors
- Defines boundaries of the downtown

Responsible Parties: City, IDOT

Funding Sources: IDOT, TIF

Time-frame: Mid Term (2017-2021)

DOWNTOWN MONTICELLO WILL ATTRACT AND RETAIN BUSINESSES THAT STRENGTHEN AND DIVERSIFY THE LOCAL ECONOMY.

Action #1: Encourage the opening of a Small Business Incubator.

- Provide opportunity for new and local entrepreneurs
- Work with School District to involve/teach students on being involved in entrepreneurial enterprises.
- Track recent grads and invite back, business mentors.

Responsible Parties: City, Chamber, School District, Main Street

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Mid Term (2017-2021)

Action #2: Market a variety of businesses to ensure a good and varied mix within the Downtown area.

- Provide residents and visitors with a range of options
- Find businesses that compliment existing businesses

Responsible Parties: City, Chamber

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Ongoing

Action #3: Seek local and regional businesses that utilize the resident labor force.

- Youth retention abilities.
- Provides option for employment within City.

Responsible Parties: City, Chamber

Funding Sources:

Time-frame: Ongoing



IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Action Item	Short-Term 2015-2016	Mid-Term 2017-2021	Long-Term 2022+	Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
#1: Market to a developer to open a Bed & Breakfast in or near Downtown Monticello.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2: Implement a Downtown Trolley/Train Program which connects key areas of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#3: Implement an interactive, multi-functional wayfinding system/plan at and to key destinations within the Monticello region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#4: Rebuild the Tourism Board to make it a collaborative force.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#5: Encourage updating existing over night facilities.	***Ongoing***			<input type="checkbox"/>
#1: Adopt and Implement Design Guidelines to preserve and enhance the historic character.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2: Adopt and Implement Standards for Right of Way enhancements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#3: Educate building and business owners on guidelines and standards.	***Ongoing***			<input type="checkbox"/>
#4: Take a field trip with business and building owners to cities with adopted and enforced guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#5: Create a recognition program for good design and maintenance within Downtown Monticello.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#6: Create incentive programs to encourage appropriate (re)development within Downtown Monticello.	***Ongoing***			<input type="checkbox"/>
#7: Improve streetscape along Route 105 (Market) through the downtown.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#8: Install monuments at key entries into the downtown.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#1: Encourage the opening of a Small Business Incubator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2: Market a variety of businesses to ensure a good and varied mix within the Downtown area.	***Ongoing***			<input type="checkbox"/>
#3: Seek local and regional businesses that utilize the resident labor force.	***Ongoing***			<input type="checkbox"/>