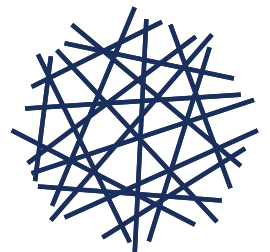




Columbia City

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

photo: Columbia City Connect





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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What would you like to see downtown?

What would you like to see downtown?

What would you like to see downtown?





CHAPTER 01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this planning effort has two main goals. First, it will provide a strong vision to guide downtown planning, decision making, and development for the next five to ten years. Second, it will ensure downtown Columbia City is prepared for future funding opportunities as they arise.

Columbia City cannot be written off as a sleepy Indiana town. The downtown has active festivals throughout the year that draws thousands of participants and a number of lively shops and eateries. Local special interest groups have devoted their time, and in many cases, manual labor towards beautification of the streetscape and renewing older buildings and encouraging entrepreneurs to inhabit them. This combined vested interest in the success of downtown from both the city leadership and the community is visible and vibrant.

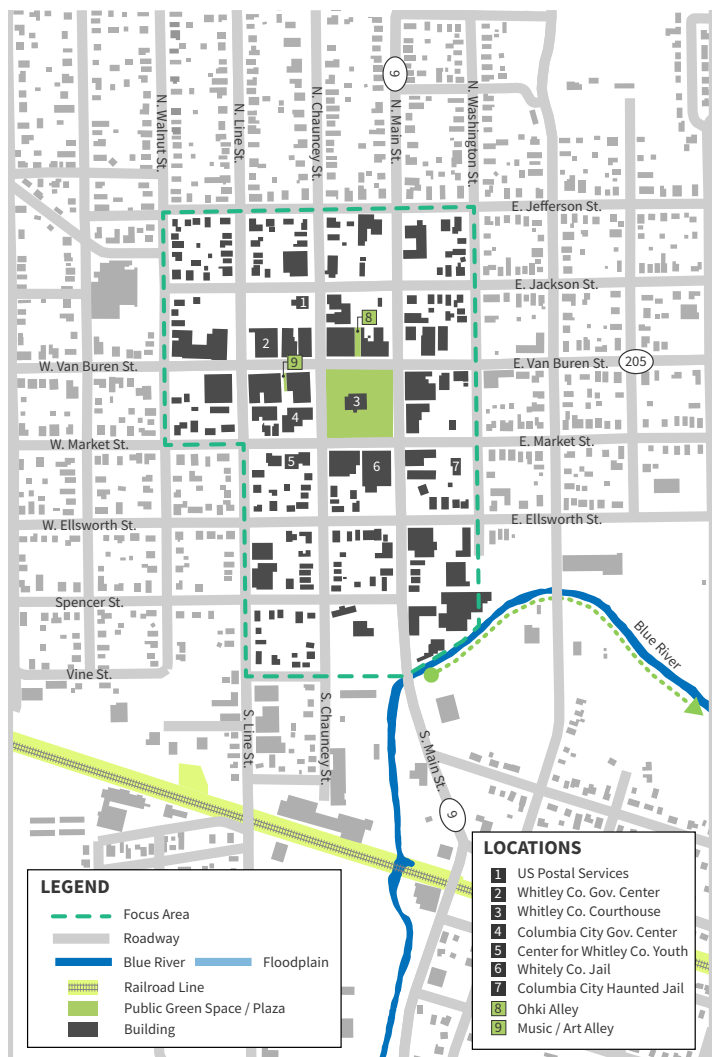
Alongside Columbia City Connect, the City of Columbia City can use the implementation plan at the end of this document to guide next steps and initiatives. Potential state and federal revenue streams and programs may present themselves in the coming years—the intent is for Columbia City to be ready to capture those opportunities.

STUDY AREA

The plan focuses on city blocks surrounding the Whitley County courthouse square. The area is bound by Jefferson Street to the north, Vine Street to the south, Walnut Street to the west and Washington Street to the east. At the southeast corner, the study area touches the Blue River.



The Steering Committee led a walking tour during the planning process--here reviewing one of the many vibrant local businesses within the blocks surrounding the square.



PLANNING PROCESS

The five types of public engagement included in the planning process are outlined below—a more detailed account of the input received is included in the Public Input chapter within the plan:

- **Steering Committee Meetings:** A committee made up of downtown business owners, city leadership, life-long residents, and several professionals who have relocated to Columbia City from larger cities met regularly throughout the planning process.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Teenage residents from the Mayor’s Youth Council, active downtown advocates, and downtown business owners were the three groups of stakeholders who were interviewed separately as a part of the project.
- **Online Public Survey:** An 18-question survey was made available to the public via social media from early-June to mid-August. 425 people responded to the survey within that time. Questions were focused to first gain a better understanding of the demographic responding and secondly to help determine priorities of the participants regarding present conditions as well as the outlook for downtown Columbia City.
- **Downtown Public Outreach Event:** A public input booth was set up at the First Friday event on August 4th, 2023. As residents of Columbia City, as well as neighboring communities, enjoyed food vendors, booths, and live music, they were invited to participate in public input exercises.
- **Public Presentation:** The plan was presented at both the Redevelopment Commission meeting and the Columbia City Council meeting on November 14th, 2023.



Participants review imagery preference boards at the First Friday public input booth held in August.

KEY FINDINGS

Key takeaways from public engagement:

- Residents go downtown most often for community events and dining.
- Visitors want more dining and shopping options but not more events.
- Cars get them there, but other options would be desirable.
- Visitors want to enjoy outdoor spaces.
- Dining, shopping, and entertainment are in the greatest demand.
- Downtown is the heart of the community

Common themes that rose to the top in discussions with downtown advocates and entrepreneurs:

- Remove angled parking from busy streets surrounding the courthouse square
- Make parking more convenient/accessible for new businesses, restaurants, and residents.
- Recruit upscale dining options
- Improve streetscape by providing consistent lighting, better maintained trees and grates, and providing matching signage
- Require property owner accountability for building conditions and upkeep

Top six desired downtown amenities:

- Indoor Play Space
- Downtown Trails
- Play Sculpture
- Interactive Lighting
- Interactive Fountain
- Food Truck Court

GOALS & STRATEGIES

Because so many of the “little things” have already been accomplished here—successful facade programs, activated alleys, well-attended events and programming, the establishment of an arts council and the implementation of several public art installations—plan recommendations push the community towards a next “big” thing.

After reviewing past planning efforts and recent accomplishments, analyzing public input, and inventorying existing conditions, recommendations were developed in four main categories—CONNECT, ATTRACT, PROTECT, and INFORM.

USING THE PLAN

This plan is intended to be used as a guide for key decision makers over the next five to ten years to shape the future success of the downtown. Strategies and immediate next steps are outlined with assigned responsible parties within the implementation table in the Recommendations chapter. Intended to provide high level guidance, implementation in many cases will lead to more detailed studies and further development of recommended construction projects, policies, and programming.

connect

Connect downtown to Eagle Park.

Connect downtown to Blue River Trail/School Campus.

Connect downtown to the 4-H Grounds.

Connect teens to the square.

attract

Attract families with children downtown.

Attract residents/visitors in the evening hours.

Attract residents/visitors in the winter.

protect

Protect building integrity (structures).

Protect building character (facades).

Protect (and enhance) walkability downtown.

inform

Inform community identity.

Inform downtown district(s).

Inform downtown development.

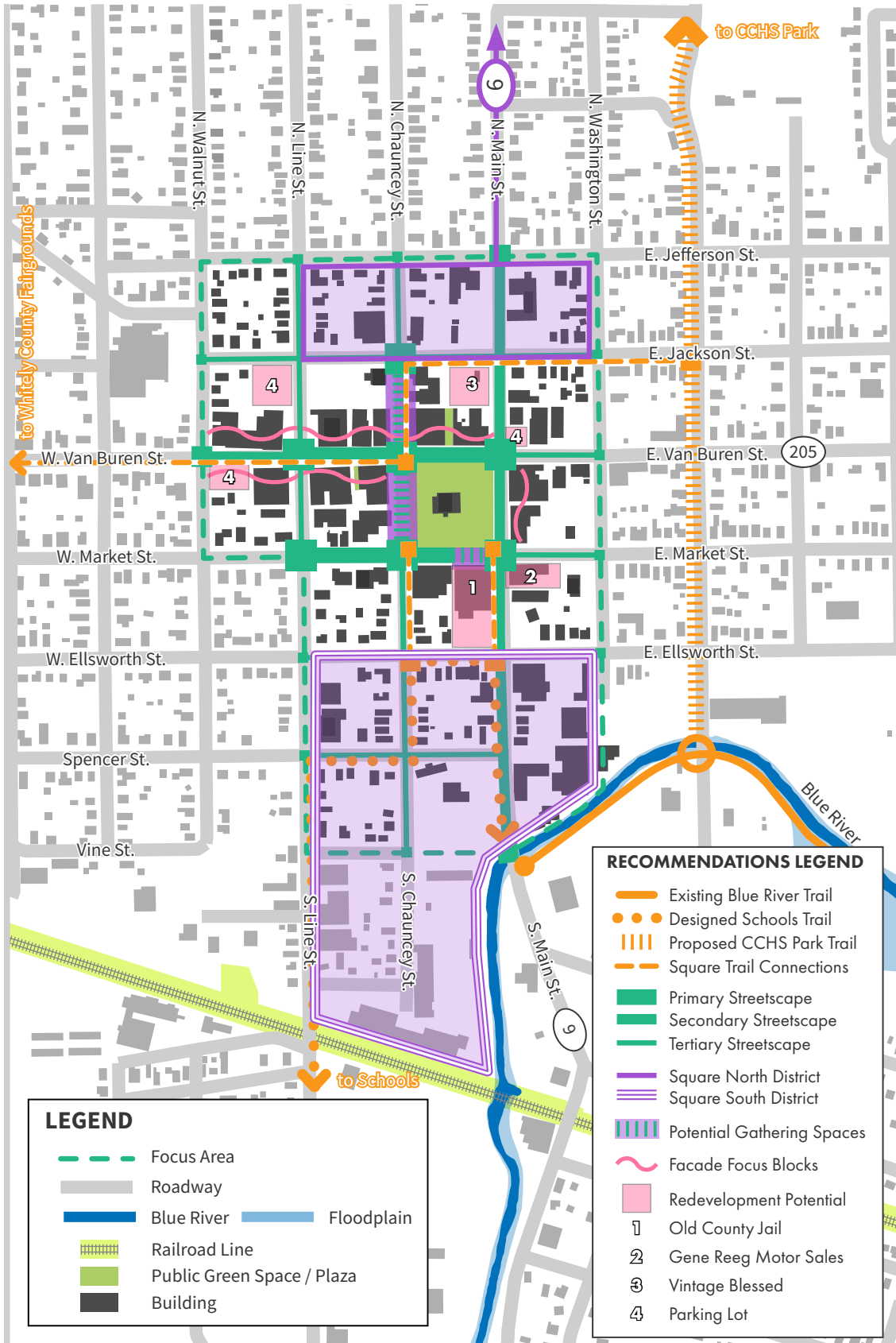


FIGURE 1.1: PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS





CHAPTER 02

EXISTING CONDITIONS

PAST PLANS

Past planning documents provide valuable insight into where the community was and how it has evolved. The following documents range from parking studies to a past city-wide comprehensive plan. Examined in chronological order, these studies inform the current Revitalization Plan with what goals were set, if they were met, and how to adjust future goals to continue the community in a forward motion towards progress.

DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY (1992)

In response to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a downtown parking study was commissioned to analyze the parking conditions at the time, access accessibility, and provide solutions to improve accessible parking. The study encompassed the downtown area bounded by Jackson Street, Washington Street, Spencer Street and Walnut Street. The city has since improved parking configurations, quantity of accessible spaces and placement of accessible spaces to accessible routes to meet ADA requirements. The purpose of this study was strictly to address ADA requirements, and therefore no conclusions were drawn as to the analysis and solutions to parking zones, time limits or available parking to downtown business and residents identified as concerns in the Comprehensive Plan. A study of this nature could be beneficial in the city's endeavor to revitalize downtown.

REVITALIZATION STUDY (1993)

This study was the culmination of a collaborative effort between city agencies and downtown businesses to revitalize the City's downtown by identifying specific concerns, issues, goals, and

objectives to make recommendations for façade and streetscape designs. The Study identified the need for a financial incentive program and visualized conceptual façade, streetscape, and clustering designs.

Culminated in the recommendation of a Five-Year Action Plan the following goals are addressed: maintaining downtown business stability, encourage business expansion, improve diversity and new development; improve aesthetics and pedestrian safety; improve existing residential properties and develop new ones; provide leadership for downtown revitalization efforts; improve street signage; and increase downtown activities and programs to attract visitor and residents.

Twenty-two years later, many of these issues have been addressed with façade improvements and redevelopment but the continued identification of these same issues in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan indicates these goals have not all fully been met.

FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM (2005)

The purpose of this program is to provide funds to improve the street appearance of the commercial and business facades to help stimulate the business environment of the downtown as identified in the 1993 Revitalization Study. The program provides grant assistance to businesses for façade improvements, awnings, signage, and lighting. Building facades play an important part in a city's streetscape and maintenance of historic facades further enhances a city's historic and cultural heritage.

CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY
**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**
PEOPLE. PLACES. THINGS.
LEVEL UP. ↻

ADOPTED AUGUST 25, 2015



Columbia City Comprehensive Plan (2015)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2015)

The most current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015. A moderately sized, rural community in northeast Indiana, Columbia City has experienced moderate growth and economic stability without denying its small-town identity. To meet the city's need to compete with changing social and economic trends, the Comprehensive Plan proposed improvements and "leveling up" its existing community assets.

Revitalization of an underutilized downtown square was a primary focus of the Plan. In 2015, the downtown was described as a blank

slate with buildings vacant, underutilized or in disrepair. Recommendations included rezoning to Mixed Use from the existing Central Business District to allow multi-family housing opportunities, development of a downtown satellite campus for higher education, and increased opportunities for restaurant and retail businesses and business incubators. Although the downtown remains zoned as Central Business, the downtown area could no longer be considered a "blank slate". Murals and street art can be found in activated alleys and spilling out into the sidewalks, buildings have high occupancy offering a range of restaurants, shops, and small businesses, and programming around the square brings people to the square throughout the year.

Several recommendations from this plan are still applicable today including pursuing mixed use housing opportunities downtown, create a city-wide public art master plan, create a gateway and wayfinding signage master plan, create a downtown streetscape master plan, create a downtown link for the Blue River Trail, and establishing a visual standard downtown by reviewing existing policies and guidelines.

REDEVELOPMENT STUDY (2016)

This study narrowly focused on the redevelopment of a vacant property bordered by W. Van Buren Street and N. Line Street as a three-story, mixed-use workforce housing apartment building. The recommended solution for a three-story mixed-use low-income housing apartment building with first-floor retail space, a community room and garden space has since been constructed and is open for leasing. Projects of this type were identified in the Columbia City Redevelopment Initiative and Comprehensive Plan for revitalizing downtown and provide a blueprint for future such developments.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

PROJECT STUDY AREA

This plan focuses on city blocks surrounding the Whitley County courthouse square. The area is bound by Jefferson Street to the north, Vine Street to the south, Walnut Street to the west and Washington Street to the east.

THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY

The northern boundary, two blocks north of the square to the Whitley County Historical Museum, encompasses three large, downtown churches. One of these churches was uniquely restored and is now home to an established retail store, The Shops @ the Sanctuary (pictured bottom right).

THE EASTERN BOUNDARY

The eastern boundary extends one block east of the square, capturing the one- and two-story buildings along Main Street, and includes a fair amount of residential areas.

THE WESTERN BOUNDARY

The western boundary, two blocks west of the square to the Marshall Community Center, includes three-story commercial buildings and the new mixed-use development along Van Buren Street. South of the square, this western edge extends one block west, capturing residential parcels as well as two downtown churches- one retrofitted currently as The Center for Whitley County Youth.

THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY

The southern boundary extends three blocks south to the Blue River, connecting to the Blue River Trail and establishing an anchor for a southern gateway into downtown. This zone south of the courthouse square also includes an industrial site prime for redevelopment.

BUILDING DENSITY

Building density in the study area varies block to block with some blocks having a few larger buildings and others having many large, medium and small buildings. The residential areas are in close proximity to the downtown square, in some cases only one block removed.

Larger, three-story historic buildings are focused along Van Buren Street mostly with retail and commercial on the main level. Some have successfully established living quarters or vacation rentals on the second and third floors, but many sit vacant due to development codes making conversion costly.

One- and two-story buildings are focused along Main and Market Street largely comprised of retail/commercial business with some buildings being historic in nature. The two exceptions being the three-story automotive building located southeast of the Market-Main intersection and the one-story Whitley County Jail located southwest of the same intersection. City Hall, with three stories, creates a presence at the northwest corner of the Market-Chauncey intersection.



Shops @ the Sanctuary

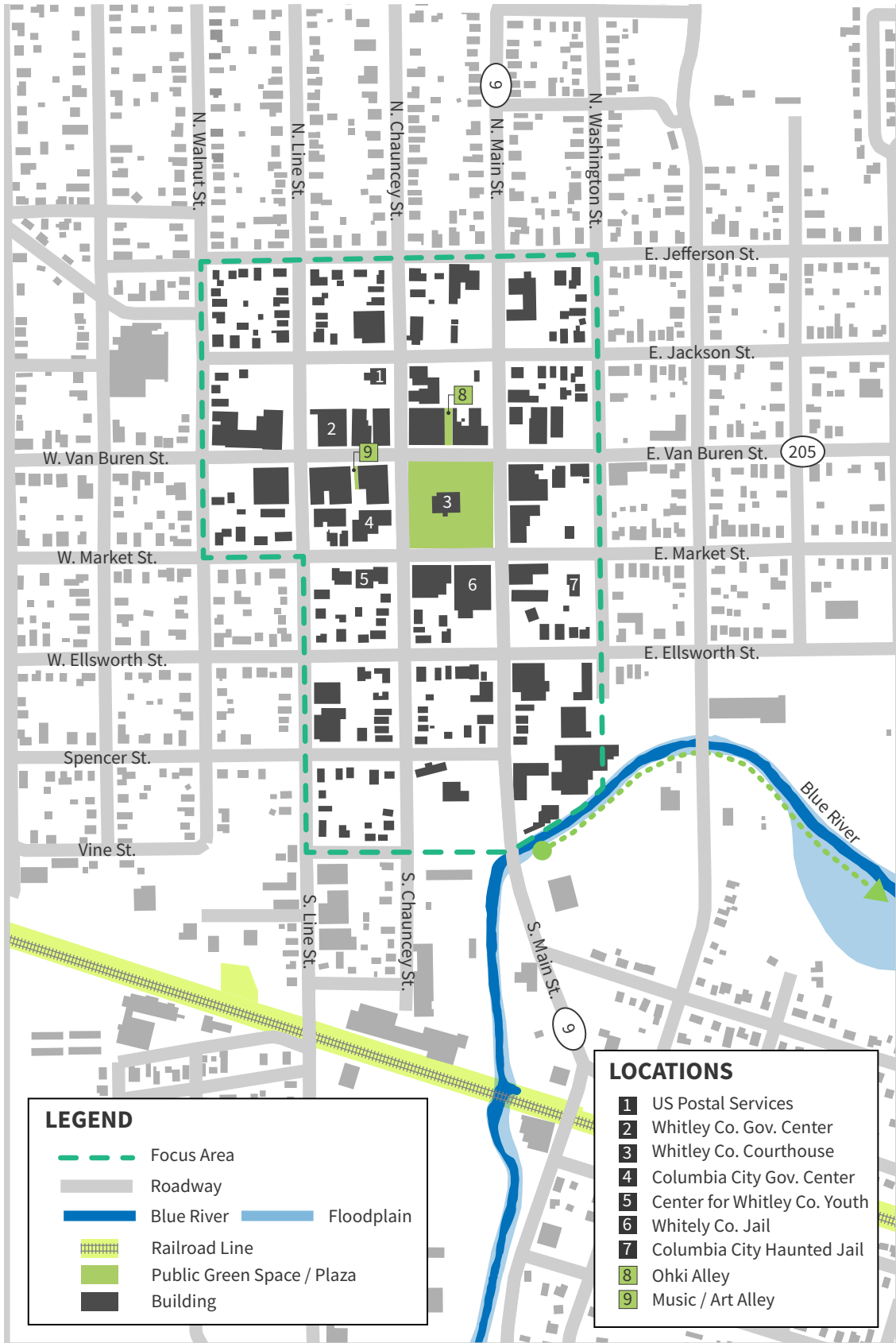


FIGURE 2.1: PROJECT STUDY AREA

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

PUBLIC GREEN SPACE + PLAZAS

The project area does not include any defined parks; however, there is a parklet located south of Van Buren Street between Line and Chauncey Streets along the alley known as Thomas Marshall Plaza.

The alley north of this site is activated as a pedestrian thoroughfare – including paver walks, a mural, and security bollards – in conjunction with the Whitley County Government Center. This location hosts “Art in the Alley” events.

Another activated alley, Ohki Alley, exists directly north of the square off Van Buren between Chauncey and Main Streets. This alley is a true pedestrian plaza with murals, outdoor seating, planters, and overhead lighting.

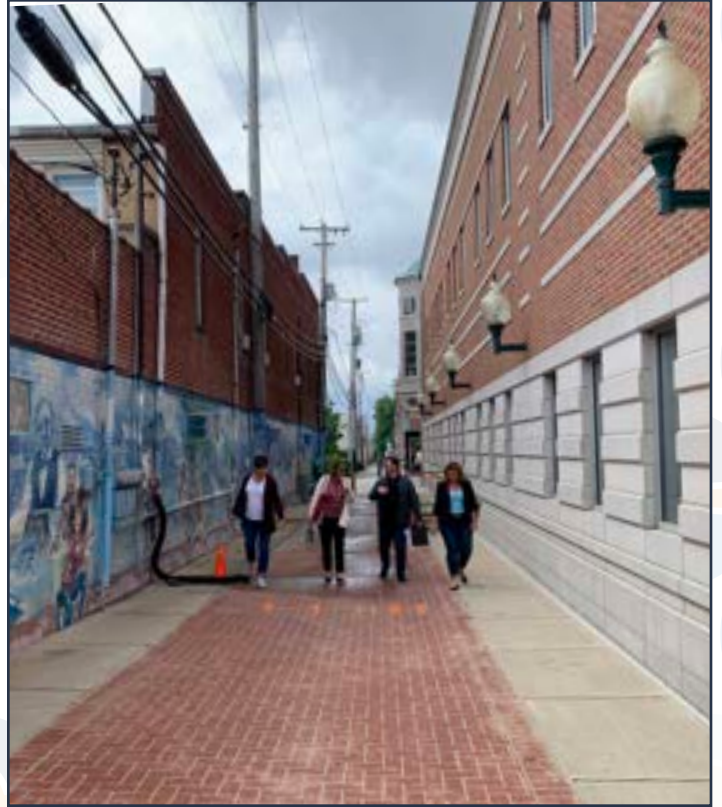
The main green space in downtown exists on government property with the largest being the courthouse square lawn. City Hall has a nice lawn and plantings outside the main entry that encompasses the southeast corner of the block.

PROPOSED PARK

In 2020, the old Columbia City High School property was turned over to the Columbia City Parks and Recreation department for the development of a new, 56-acre park adjacent to the Russel and Evelyn Fahl Aquatics Center. The City worked with the design team of Jones Petrie Rafinski and Moake Park Group to create a masterplan for this community park. Upon completion, the park will include amenities like a recreation facility, outdoor amphitheaters, several playgrounds, various athletic fields and trails to name a few.



Final Master Plan for the proposed, 56- acre park to begin first phase of construction before the end of 2023.



Okhi Alley (top left), Whitley County Gov. Center Alley (top right) Thomas Marshall Plaza (bottom),

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

LAND-USE

Planning and Zoning for Columbia City is provided jointly alongside Whitley County and includes the communities of Columbia City, Churubusco, South Whitley and Larwill. The Whitley County online zoning map, powered by Beacon, identifies the downtown area as CB, Central Business District. The district is defined by Walnut Street, Jackson Street, Whitley Street, and Spencer Street. Established zoning districts are defined in Columbia City's Zoning Ordinance.

The majority of the study area is located within the CB district, with properties between Jackson Street and Jefferson Street zoned LB, Local Business, and R-3, Multiple-Family Residential. This is depicted in figure 2.2 at the parcel level.

One of the greatest uses in downtown has to do with "Tax-Exempt" services indicated as dark orange parcels in the map to the right. These services include governmental buildings - at both the county and city levels as well as religious institutions.

One of these uses, the current Whitley County Jail located on the eastern half of the block south of the Courthouse Square, could see a change in use as a new jail is currently being developed outside of downtown Columbia City. This parcel could be an opportunity for acquisition by the City to expand public uses through collaborative efforts with appropriate parties for development that benefits the vision for downtown.



Van Buren Flats



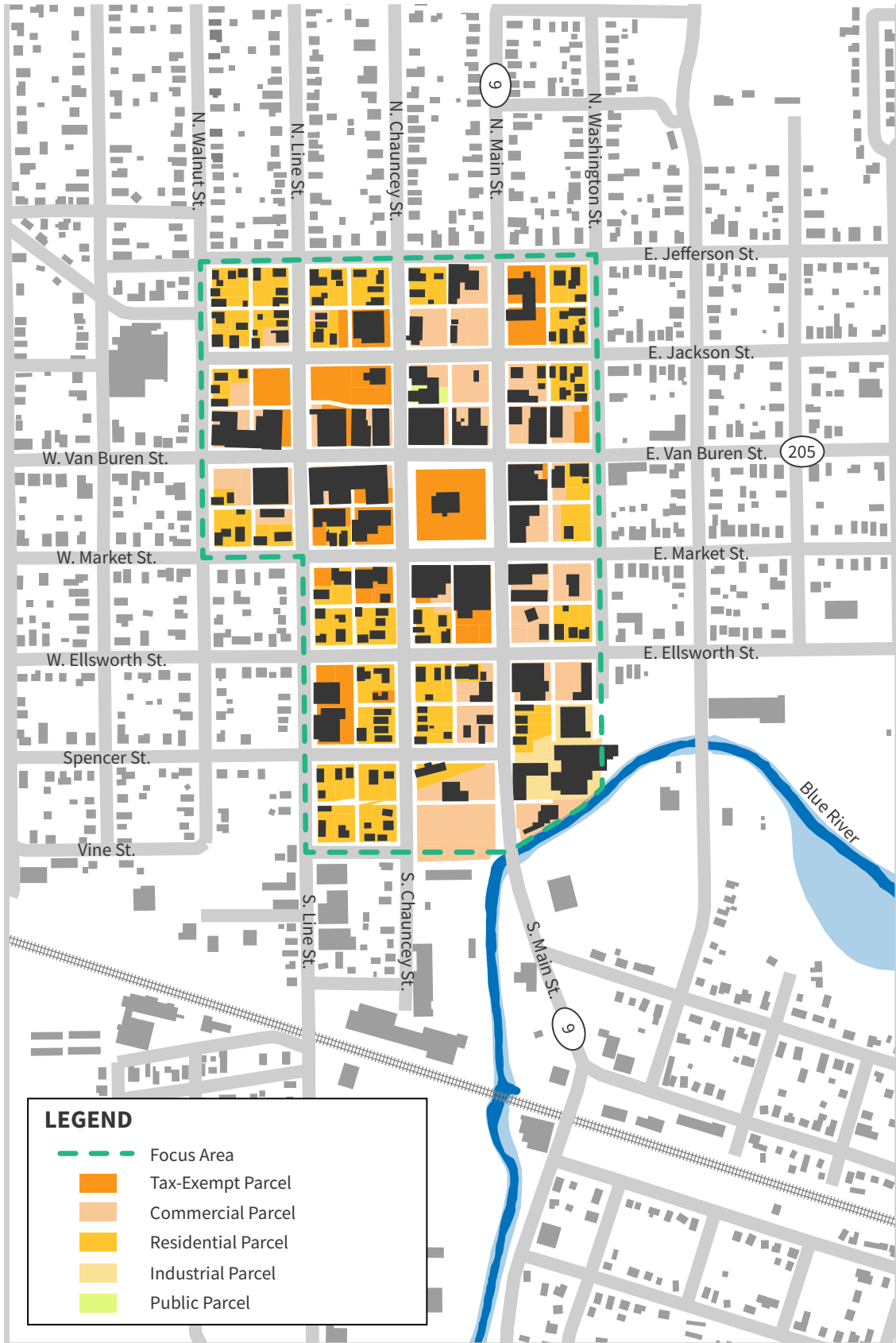
Downtown Businesses



Whitley County Courthouse Square



Whitley County Jail



LEGEND

- - - Focus Area
- Tax-Exempt Parcel
- Commercial Parcel
- Residential Parcel
- Industrial Parcel
- Public Parcel

FIGURE 2.2: LAND USE

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

GATEWAYS

A welcoming entrance sequence into downtown is not well defined from any of the four cardinal directions today; however, with strong residential areas surrounding the district, the potential is great.

As travelers approach downtown Columbia City from the south, the top of the courthouse rotunda can be seen above the tree tops. Shortly thereafter, the impressive educational campus—a recently built showcase for the community—comes into view. Once past the railroad tracks, the views begin to quickly degrade to treeless roads, utility lines and lighting, and ample parking lots. The vehicular bridge over the Blue River has potential to become a primary south gateway for downtown. Lighting, landscaping, identity signage, and strong trail connections would greatly improve this arrival sequence.

From the north, travelers access the downtown from U.S. Route 30, a main thoroughfare between Columbia City and Fort Wayne. Commercial development continues to grow in this location. A stronger connection between this commercial area and downtown would benefit the adjacent neighborhood and should be encouraged here.

East and West Van Buren Street (State Road 205) offer tree-lined streets and consistent sidewalks leading up to the downtown. Traditional ornamental lighting begins at Washington Street (from the east) and Walnut Street (from the west) but is the only mechanism by which to define the transition between the residential area and downtown. An identity marker, art installation, or monument sign with landscaping and lighting are lacking here.



North Main Street approach



South Main Street approach - bridge at the Blue River Trail



East Van Buren Street approach



West Van Buren Street approach

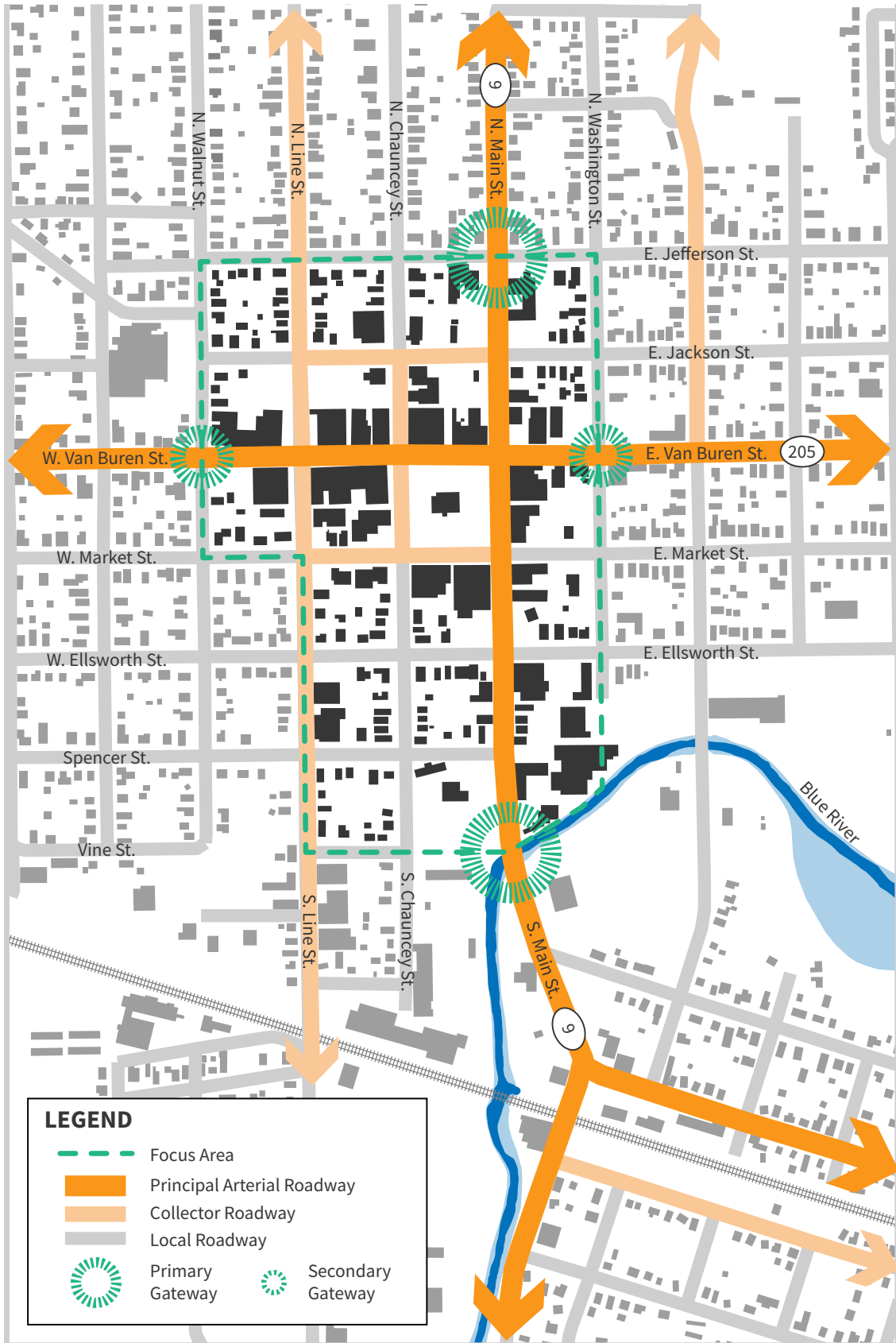


FIGURE 2.3: GATEWAYS & VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

PARKING

ON-STREET PARKING

All streets within the project area maintain on-street parking—most on both sides of the street. Angled parking is prominent around the square and one block west of the square on Van Buren Street. Parallel parking is consistent on Main Street and on most blocks as they transition into neighborhoods. On-street angled parking on the south side of the courthouse is currently reserved for county employees. Once the jail relocates, on-street angled parking currently reserved for police cars on the south side of W. Market Street will free up for public use.

OFF-STREET PARKING

Parking lots are prevalent downtown—some public, some private, and some shared-use. As more second stories are developed into housing and vacation rentals, resident and overnight guest parking options will need to be explored. Access to parking lots for pedestrians is easily navigable from the square via clean, decorated alleys north of Van Buren Street.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

SIDEWALKS

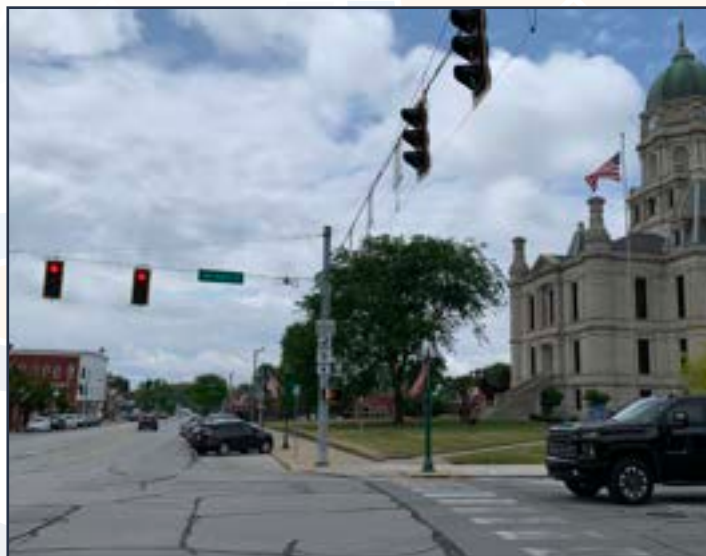
Although sidewalks are in good condition and sidewalk concrete has been repaired and replaced over time, many pedestrian ramps do not meet current standards for accessibility with steeper than allowed slopes and the lack of truncated domes. On busy roads such as Van Buren Street and Main Street, crosswalks are long and not particularly well marked. Replacing the signalized intersection at Chauncey and Van Buren could reduce vehicular speeding on this busy corridor.

TRAILS

The Blue River Trail enters the study area along the Blue River at S. Main Street. An existing trailhead sits just southeast of the study area providing parking, restrooms, and trail access to residents and visitors. Additional phases of the trail are underway to make connections south to the educational campus and residences.



On-Street parking along Chauncey Street



Crosswalk intersection at Van Buren and Main Streets

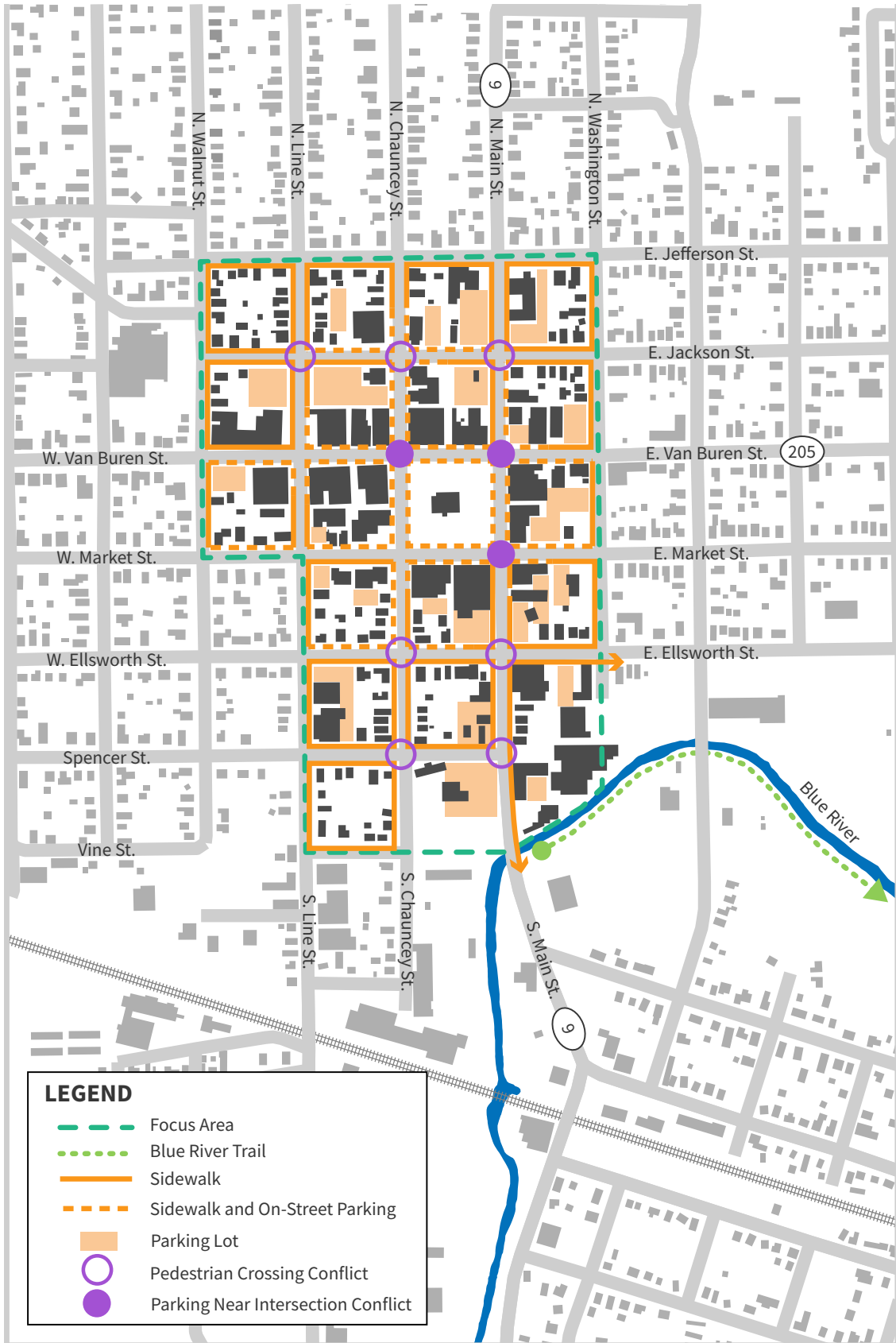


FIGURE 2.4: PARKING & PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Main Street acts as a collector roadway for downtown, but also a principal arterial roadway for the broader region existing as State Road 9. This state-run roadway makes streetscape redesign downtown challenging as state roads will not allow curb extensions or bumpouts. Van Buren Street acts as a collector roadway for Columbia City, and also a principal arterial roadway for the broader region existing as State Road 205. Unlike Main Street, this state-run designated roadway stops at the intersection of Main and Van Buren Streets, allowing more opportunities for creativity in streetscape design.

Alleys within the study area are serving as access and connection points for vehicles predominantly. Improvements to the alleys to encourage pedestrian use for easier access to destinations and parking should be considered, similar to Ohki and the Government Center Alley.

UTILITIES + INFRASTRUCTURE

DRAINAGE

STREET AND SEWER

Mechanisms to heat the concrete were installed within a recent sidewalk improvement project near city hall that has helped prevent ice and snow buildup and decreased the need for upkeep by shopkeepers. Heated sidewalks throughout downtown would improve safety and reduce maintenance for business located there.

Street closures for festivals and events occur regularly downtown. It was suggested a more permanent system for street closures would eliminate the need for hauling barricades back and forth from storage. Retractable bollards

within the pavement and swing gates should be considered. Fire access would need to be maintained if these options are considered.

It was noted light poles along the streetscape have been hit in several locations downtown due to turning movement of semi-truck traffic. Modifying the parking type—parallel versus angled—to provide more adequate turning movement space and improve visibility was discussed as a potential solution to this on-going issue.

STORMWATER AND WATER

One long term goal is to separate sanitary and stormwater utilities downtown. There are current plans for a new line along Chauncey from Spencer to Market. As streetscape improvements are proposed in the project area, the separation of these utilities should be included in those projects. Additionally, many water mains and service lines within the study area need to be replaced due to the presence of lead. Although there isn't a current plan for replacement, this work should be included in any streetscape work that may be planned in the future.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Free, public WIFI is currently available downtown—this was implemented in 2022. The addition of security cameras along W. Van Buren St. is desired to provide better surveillance for safety during inactive hours as well as during festivals and events.

FIRE

The poor structural condition of many of the downtown buildings is of grave concern to the local fire department. Some downtown structures are in such disrepair, the department would not feel comfortable sending firefighters inside if a fire were to occur.

STREETSCAPE

LIGHTING

Green ornamental poles with acorn luminaries are present throughout the study area; however, the fixture type and pole vary due to manufacturing availability issues. Hanging baskets with annuals and flags adorn some poles. The key to the successful presence of this type of feature in a downtown is consistency.



Lamppost with attached planters.

HARDSCAPE

The majority of the pedestrian hardscape areas are standard concrete. Bumpouts, or sidewalk area extending into the restricted parking areas at intersections, exist at N. Line Street and N. Chauncey, which narrow the crosswalk and provide better visibility of pedestrians for vehicles and vice-versa. A narrow paver strip exists along many blocks downtown. The pavers appear worn and faded with settling issues here and there.



Crosswalk

STREET TREES

In some locations, where a tree species appropriate for an urban context was selected, trees have matured without growing into buildings, and are providing shade and seasonal interest for downtown patrons. In other locations, trees have died, not been replaced, or been removed to provide better visibility to buildings. Empty tree grates remain leaving long, shadeless stretches of sidewalk.



Street trees at the s.w. corner of Van Buren and Chauncey

SITE FURNISHINGS

Outside of the occasional bike rack and litter receptacles, most site furnishings such as benches, outdoor dining tables, and free-standing planters, are left up to the store-owners creating an eclectic feel along some streets and a lifelessness along others where the sidewalks are more bare.



Dining outside Pickles Cafe

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

DOWNTOWN EVENTS

The following events occur on regular, seasonal, and annual bases in the downtown study area:

FIRST FRIDAYS

On the first Friday of every month from May through October, the downtown becomes a street festival for all ages with entertainment, music, food, and activities for kids. Hosted by Columbia City Connect, this event sees thousands of attendees. An ever-growing, popular event, the festival closes multiple city blocks to vehicles allowing pedestrians to celebrate in the streets throughout the summer evenings.

WHITLEY COUNTY FARMERS MARKET

Every Saturday during the warmer months, the Whitley County Farmers Market in downtown Columbia City offers farm fresh produce and jams, baked goods, crafts, and ready-to-eat foods along with programs for kids and live entertainment. This event is held on Chauncey and Market Streets around the Courthouse.

OLD SETTLERS DAY FESTIVAL

Every June, the city hosts an annual multi-daylong Old Settlers Days Festival with rides, food, and craft vendors on the courthouse lawn, and the American Legion Parade through downtown with similar street closures to that of First Fridays. The festival theme changes yearly.



Old Settler's Day , photo: Whitley County Facebook

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Multiple cultural institutions exist downtown—those described below are within the study area:

WHITLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The museum is in the home of Thomas Riley Marshall, the 27th governor of Indiana and the 28th Vice President of the United States. The museum celebrates Mr. Marshall's life and the history of Whitley County with exhibits, tours, and informative programs.

COLUMBIA CITY HAUNTED JAIL

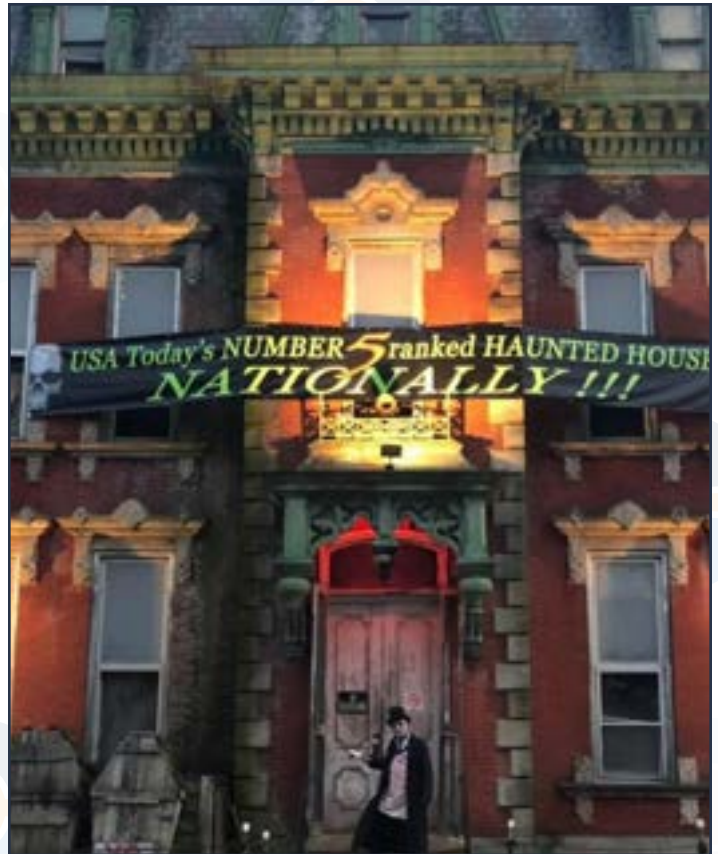
USA Today's number 5 ranked haunted house in the nation, the Columbia City Haunted Jail is located one block east of the courthouse. The building was a functioning jail built in 1875 but was re-purposed in 1991 as a haunted house. Visitors line up to be terrified by elaborate decorations and live villain actors every October.

OHKI ALLEY

Named after a local entrepreneur and community leader Shinzo Ohki, Ohki Alley is located north of the courthouse square between North Main Street and North Chauncey Street and features a rain garden, artistic bike rack, flexible seating, beer garden, murals and mobile planters for family entertainment and outdoor dining.

INDIGO STUDIO

Located inside Brew'Ha Coffee House, between East Jackson Street and East Van Buren Street, Indigo Studio is an all ages arts bar open to the public for painting, arts and crafts classes. Participants are offered a variety of projects to challenge their creative instincts in a fun, stress-free environment. The studio is also available for



Columbia City Haunted Jail, photo: WNDU 16 News Now

birthday parties and other special events. Its first studio opened in Fort Wayne in February 2023 and then the second followed in Columbia City in March 2023.

THOMAS MARSHALL PLAZA

Thomas Marshall Plaza, named after Vice President Thomas Marshall, is a pocket park on West Van Buren Street between South Line Street and South Chauncey Street. Situated in the mid-block alley, the park was created as a beautification project in 2015 in response to increased vacancies in downtown buildings and general decline. The plaza features tables, benches, a brick walking path, colorful flowering shrubs and perennials, and shade trees, welcoming patrons to the local businesses.





CHAPTER 03

MARKET CONDITIONS

POPULATION

GROWTH

As shown in the table below, Columbia City's 2020 population was 9,892, a 9% increase from 2010. Columbia City has outpaced the growth of the State of Indiana (5%) and outpaced the growth of the city's regional counterparts. Looking forward to 2028, ESRI projects that Columbia City's population will continue to grow to an estimated 10,128 people. Columbia City's daytime population is 95% of its total population, indicating more people leave Columbia City each day to go to work than stay or enter the city.

Population Growth Comparison

	Columbia City	Indiana	Whitley County	Angola	Auburn	Bluffton	Fort Wayne	Wabash
2000 Total Population (Census)	7,916	6,080,485	30,707	8,173	12,307	9,680	250,124	11,699
2010 Total Population (Census)	9,097	6,483,802	33,292	8,769	12,995	10,028	251,753	10,651
2020 Total Population (Census)	9,892	6,785,528	34,191	9,340	13,434	10,396	263,886	10,440
2023 Total Population (Esri)	10,009	6,879,052	34,567	9,424	13,779	10,573	267,670	10,231
2028 Total Population (Esri Projection)	10,128	6,934,833	34,687	9,501	14,000	10,581	271,456	10,098
2023 Total Daytime Population (Esri)	9,515	6,784,897	30,646	13,214	15,939	13,540	294,050	12,827
% Change 2000-2010	15%	7%	8%	7%	6%	4%	1%	-9%
% Change 2010 - 2020	9%	5%	3%	7%	3%	4%	5%	-2%
% Daytime Population of Total	95%	99%	89%	140%	116%	128%	110%	125%

Sources: 2000, 2010, and 2020 figures, US. Census Bureau, obtained via Esri Business Analyst. 2023 and 2028 estimates and projections, Esri

HOUSEHOLDS

As indicated in the tables below, the number of households in Columbia City increased 12.3% between 2010 and 2020, as average household size has decreased (-3.4%). Given this trend, if population continues to grow as it has, demand for housing units may outpace population growth.

Number of Households Over Time

	2000 Total Households	2010 Total Households	2020 Total Households
Columbia City, IN	3,318	3,784	4,250
Indiana	2,336,306	2,502,154	2,667,542
Whitley County, IN	11,711	13,001	13,857
Angola, IN	3,017	3,157	3,378
Auburn, IN	5,007	5,343	5,663
Bluffton, IN	4,000	4,200	4,377
Fort Wayne, IN	100,050	100,850	107,308
Wabash, IN	4,794	4,485	4,512

Household Sizes Over Time

	2000 Avg. Household Size	2010 Avg. Household Size	2020 Avg. Household Size
Columbia City, IN	2.32	2.34	2.26
Indiana	2.53	2.52	2.48
Whitley County, IN	2.58	2.53	2.44
Angola, IN	2.44	2.42	2.26
Auburn, IN	2.41	2.38	2.33
Bluffton, IN	2.34	2.32	2.33
Fort Wayne, IN	2.45	2.44	2.41
Wabash, IN	2.36	2.31	2.23

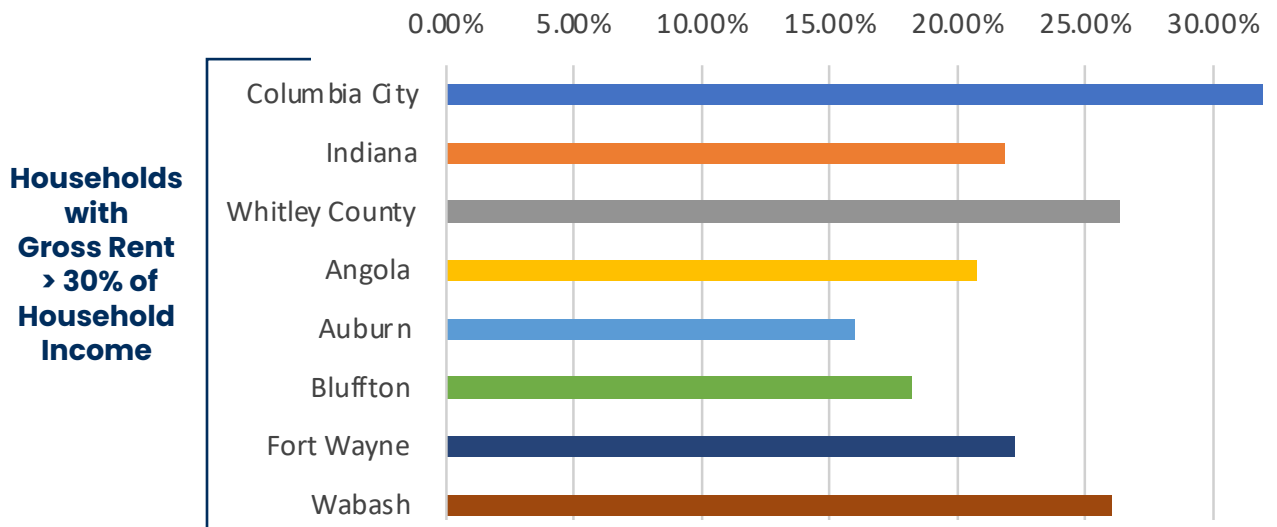
CHANGE IN HOUSING UNITS

The table below illustrates the change in total housing units over time for Columbia City, the State of Indiana, and its regional peers. According to Esri’s 2023 projection, Columbia City has an estimated 4,605 housing units. Looking at housing unit growth between 2000, 2010 and 2020, growth in housing units has slightly outpaced population growth. Between 2010 and 2020, Columbia City’s population grew by 9% and housing units grew by 10%. When accounting for the trend that household size is shrinking (-3% ‘00-’20) and population is growing (+25% ‘00-’20), housing unit demand can be expected to continue to outpace population growth.

Housing Units

	Columbia City	Indiana	Whitley County	Angola	Auburn	Bluffton	Fort Wayne	Wabash
2000 Total Housing Units (Census)	3,501	2,532,319	12,545	3,265	5,342	4,275	108,749	5,133
2010 Total Housing Units (Census)	4,057	2,795,541	14,281	3,584	5,809	4,624	112,804	5,088
2020 Total Housing Units (Census)	4,485	2,923,175	14,837	3,691	6,046	4,759	115,860	5,082
2023 Total Housing Units (Esri Est.)	4,605	2,976,793	15,077	3,728	6,236	4,828	117,728	5,054
% Change 2000-2010	16%	10%	14%	10%	9%	8%	4%	-1%
% Change 2010 - 2020	10%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	0%
% Change 2000 - 2020	28%	15%	18%	13%	13%	11%	7%	-1%

Sources: 2000/2010/2020 US. Census Bureau, obtained via Esri Business Analyst - 2023/2028 estimates/projections, Esri



OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

The table to the right illustrates the occupancy characteristics of Columbia City’s estimated 4,605 housing units in 2023. 3,349 units (73%) are owner-occupied, 1,026 (22%) are renter-occupied and 230 (5%) are vacant. Columbia City has a far higher percentage of owner-occupied units than the state average and its peers. The city also has fewer vacant units as a percentage of total units, when compared to peers. While high homeownership is a positive in many ways, rental demand greater than supply may raise rental costs, thereby potentially limiting who can afford to live in Columbia City.

COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

The table to the right illustrates the percentage of households whose gross rent is greater than 30% of their income. A cost-burdened household is considered to be a household that spends more than 30% of its income on rent. A household that is cost-burdened may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Nearly 32% of Columbia City’s renters are cost-burdened, 10% higher than the State average and higher than its regional peers.

The more income that is spent toward rent, the less income that can be spent frequenting local businesses. There is also an important link between cost-burdened renters now and homeownership in the future. A high number of cost-burdened renters may lead to a lack of future home ownership. This is because a cost-burden renter has less available monthly income to save and, therefore, is less likely to have the needed capital to purchase a home. Thus, if a community wants to increase future homeownership, the current availability of affordable rentals plays a key role.

Location	2023 Total Housing Units	2023 Owner Occupied Housing Units	2023 Renter Occupied Housing Units	2023 Vacant Housing Units
Columbia City	4,605	3,349	1,026	230
	100%	73%	22%	5%
Indiana	2,976,793	1,927,191	792,346	257,256
	100%	65%	27%	9%
Whitley County	15,077	11,893	2,241	943
	100%			
Angola	3,728	2,016	1,405	307
	100%	54%	38%	8%
Auburn	6,236	4,113	1,719	404
	100%	66%	28%	6%
Bluffton	4,828	3,024	1,442	362
	100%	63%	30%	7%
Fort Wayne	117,728	70,696	38,811	8,221
	100%	60%	33%	7%
Wabash	5,054	3,119	1,379	556
	100%	62%	27%	11%

Source: Esri estimate

Location	2021 Households w/Gross Rent > 30% of Household Income
Columbia City	31.96%
Indiana	21.85%
Whitley County	26.38%
Angola	20.75%
Auburn	15.96%
Bluffton	18.20%
Fort Wayne	22.29%
Wabash	26.07%

Source: 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Obtained via Esri Business Analyst

DEMOGRAPHICS

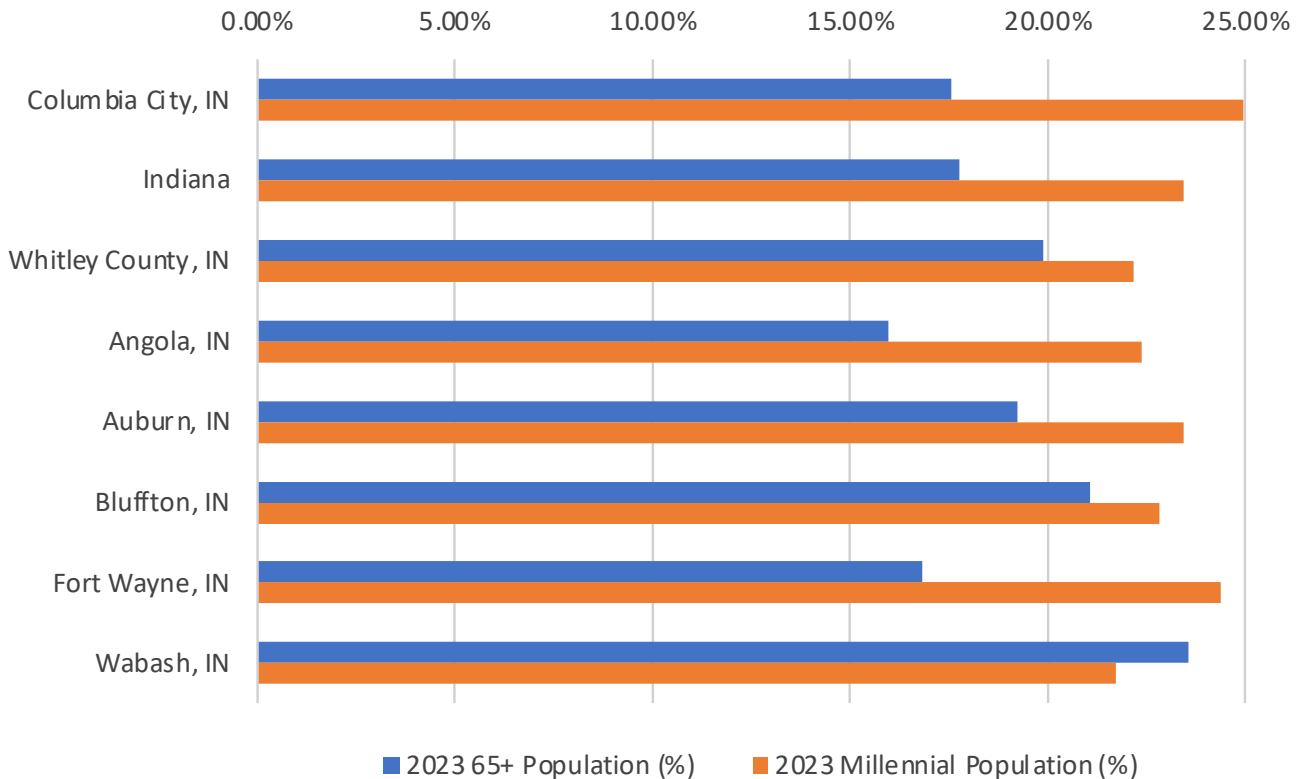
AGE

The figure below and at the right show that nearly 25% of the city’s population are Millennials, a higher proportion than regional peers. This presents an opportunity for the city to develop the amenities desired by Millennials to retain them as long-term residents. Columbia City also has a significant aging population of 18%. From a residential development perspective, Millennials are entering the prime home-buying age and are looking for products and amenities that are similar to that of Baby Boomers, such as smaller homes, requiring lower maintenance, and walkable access to amenities like parks, shopping and dining options.

	2023 65 and older Population (%)	2023 Millennial Population (%)
Columbia City, IN	17.56%	24.96%
Indiana	17.75%	23.43%
Whitley County, IN	19.87%	22.19%
Angola, IN	15.95%	22.38%
Auburn, IN	19.25%	23.42%
Bluffton, IN	21.09%	22.83%
Fort Wayne, IN	16.84%	24.39%
Wabash, IN	23.57%	21.72%

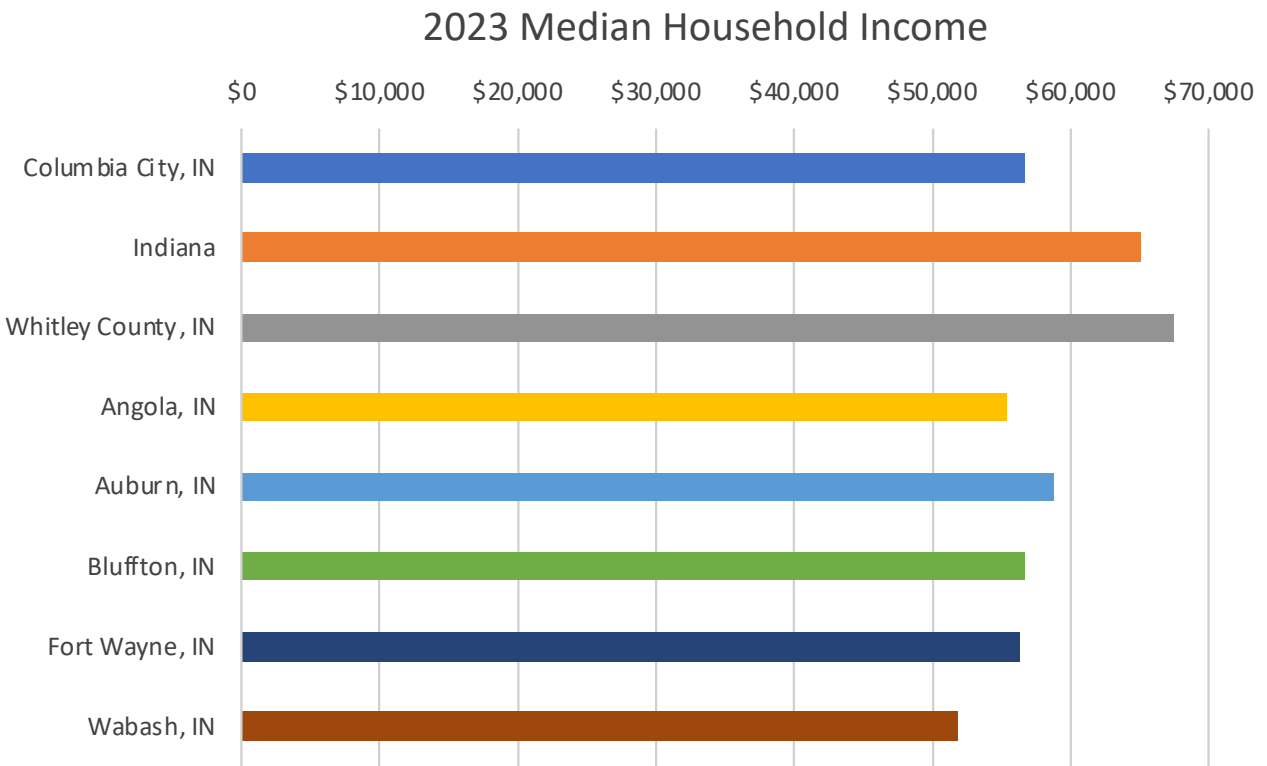
Source: Esri estimate

65+ vs Millennial Population



INCOME

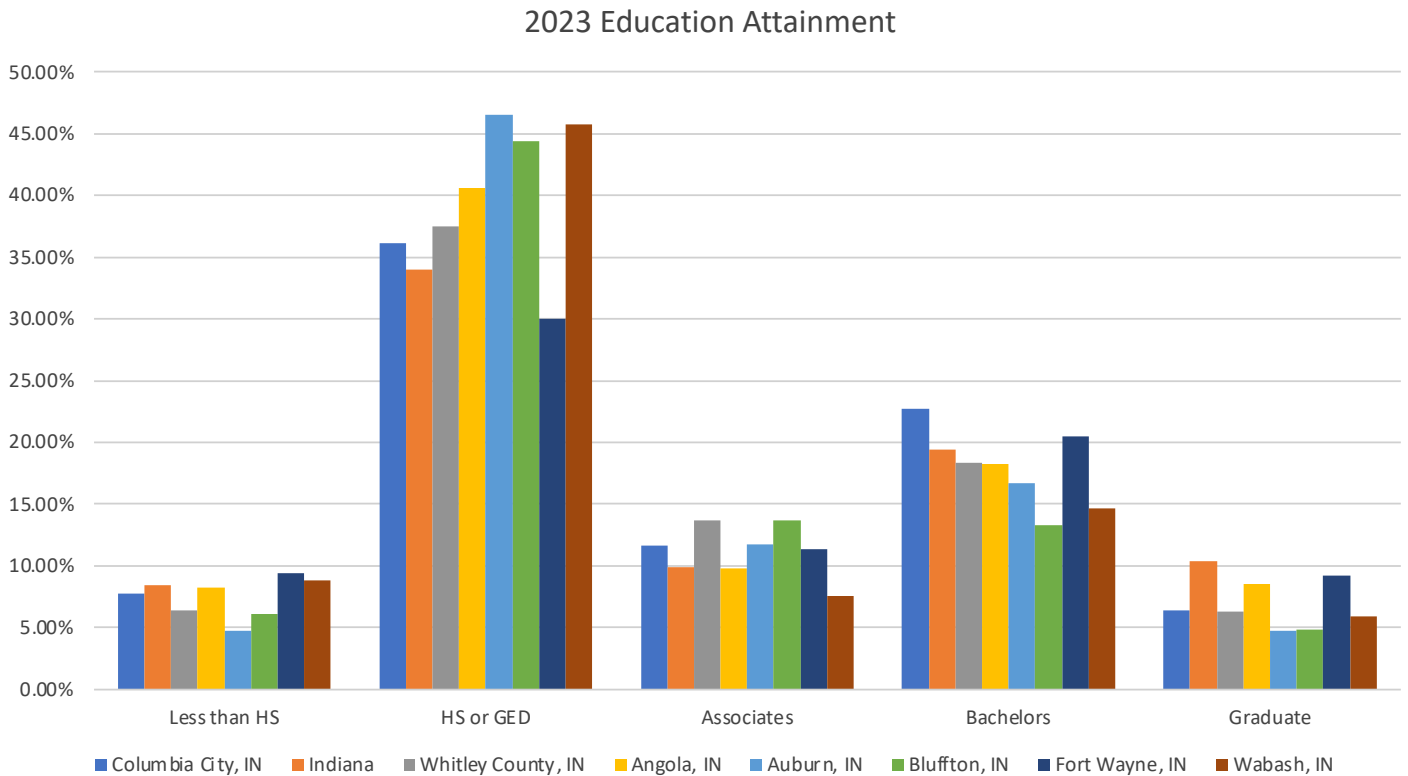
Columbia City’s 2023 median income, as shown in the figure below, is estimated by Esri to be \$56,664. This number is lower than the State of Indiana (\$65,069) and Whitley County (\$67,442). Additionally, a smaller share of Columbia City’s population has a household income above \$75,000 compared to Whitley County and the State. There may be several consequences to having lower household incomes, such as residents having less money to spend at local businesses.



Source: Esri estimate, obtained via Esri Business Analyst

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

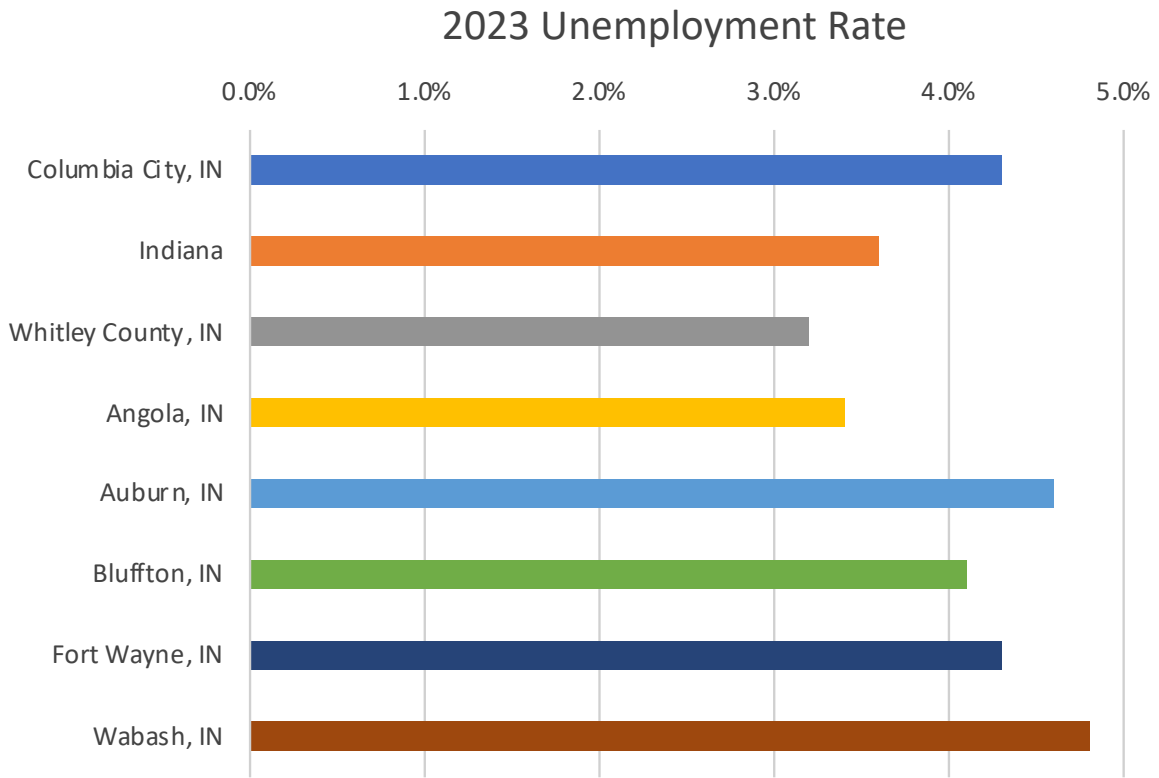
The figure below shows the distribution of educational attainment of Columbia City’s residents in comparison to the State of Indiana and its regional peers. When compared to the State and its regional peers, Columbia City has a higher level of bachelor’s degree attainment at 23%. When combined with the city’s relatively high unemployment, this provides an opportunity for Columbia City to pursue a strategy to attract high-skill, high-paying jobs.



Source: Esri estimate, obtained via Esri Business Analyst

UNEMPLOYMENT

An unemployment rate of 4.3% (shown in the figure below), nearly a percentage point higher than the State, suggests that Columbia City has an available labor force and is well positioned to attract new employers, relative to its peers.

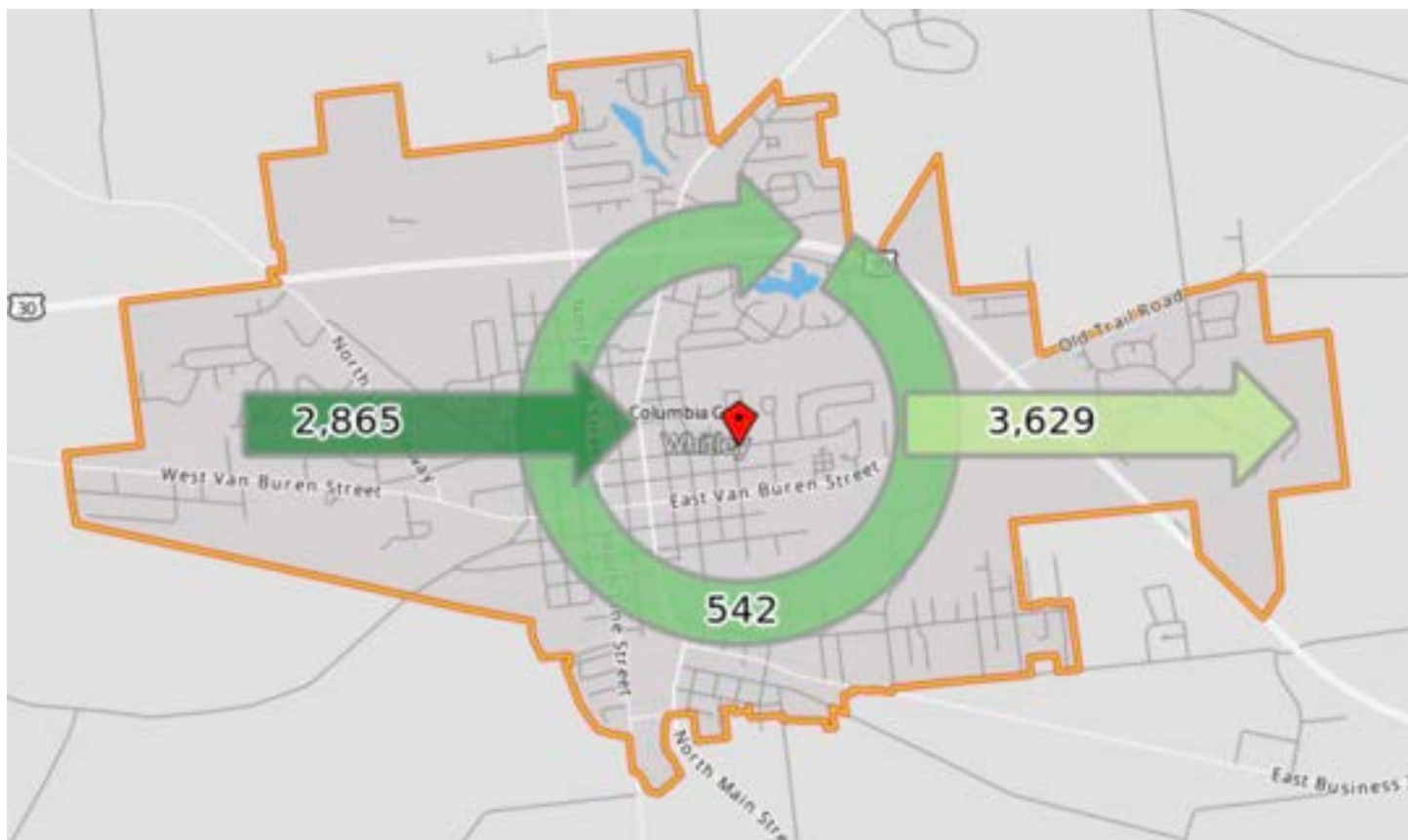


Source: Esri estimate, obtained via Esri Business Analyst

COMMUTING PATTERNS

WORKFORCE CIRCULATION

The figure below shows the inflow, outflow, and circulation of workers in Columbia City. Each day approximately 2,865 people commute into Columbia City to work, 3,629 people leave Columbia City to work, and 542 both live and work in Columbia City. As indicated earlier by Columbia City's daytime population of 95% of the total population, more people leave Columbia City each day for work than come in or circulate. This presents an opportunity to attract employers who may hire people who would be more inclined to stay closer to home for work. Additionally, if more people commuted into Columbia City, downtown businesses may benefit from the increased traffic.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap

MAJOR EMPLOYERS FOR WHITLEY COUNTY

The Whitley County Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center reports 684 total employers in the county and 255 chamber members. As is evident in the list to the right, most of the county's largest employers are located within Columbia City or in close proximity in Whitley County.

At the County level, manufacturing is by far the largest employment sector (5,960 jobs), making up almost 50% of total private employment. Federal, State, and Local Government employment is the second largest sector (1,451 jobs), followed by Retail Trade (1,224 jobs) and Health Care and Social Assistance (1,020 jobs).

Largest Employers (Whitley County)

Steel Dynamics Sales North Amr (Whitley County)
Steel Dynamics Inc (Whitley County)
Steel Dynamics Structural-Rail (Whitley County)
Undersea Sensor Systems Inc (Whitley County)
C & A Tool Engineering Inc (Churubusco)
Autoliv Inc (Whitley County)
Walmart Supercenter (Columbia City)
80/20 Inc (Whitley County)
Parkview Whitley Hospital (Columbia City)
Impact CNC (Columbia City)

Source: Data Axle via Hoosiers By The Numbers (www.hoosierdata.in.gov)

Average Employment by Sector for Whitley County

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5 Year Change	5 Year % Change
Total Employment	12,770	13,054	12,741	13,071	13,606	836	6.55%
Total Private Employment	11,289	11,584	11,315	11,643	12,155	866	7.67%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunt	95	96	94	90	92	-3	-3.16%
Mining	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Construction	525	561	576	563	538	13	2.48%
Manufacturing	5,327	5,528	5,329	5,651	5,960	633	11.88%
Wholesale Trade	466	448	436	457	485	19	4.08%
Retail Trade	1,237	1,226	1,361	1,234	1,224	-13	-1.05%
Transport. and Warehousing	238	250	215	266	288	50	21.01%
Utilities	D	D	D	79	83	83	N/A
Information	98	80	71	67	69	-29	-29.59%
Finance and Insurance	186	201	195	192	212	26	13.98%
Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	68	68	68	64	61	-7	-10.29%
Professional and Tech. Services	168	184	194	193	246	78	46.43%
Mgmt. of Companies	34	37	39	29	16	-18	-52.94%
Admin. and Waste Services	258	252	254	272	304	46	17.83%
Educational Services	15	D	22	23	24	9	60.00%
Health Care and Social Assistance	992	1,008	967	967	1,020	28	2.82%
Arts, Entertain., and Recreation	63	71	80	98	99	36	57.14%
Accommodation and Food Service	883	919	826	881	877	-6	-0.68%
Other Services	566	560	510	518	560	-6	-1.06%
Federal, State, & Local Govt.	1,481	1,470	1,426	1,428	1,451	-30	-2.03%

Note: D = non-discloseable in compliance with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and/or State of Indiana confidentiality guidelines.

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, as of August 2023.

MAIN STREET SMALL BUSINESSES

The courthouse square and larger downtown area are home to a number of local, small businesses. These businesses include diverse restaurants, a local brewing company, a bakery, a coffee house, and an ice crème shop. The downtown core is home to numerous retail stores, including those focused on antiques, furniture, clothing and shoes, comic books, jewelry, floral arrangements and more. Personal service businesses include salons and a tattoo parlor, and the many professional services include banks, law offices, real estate, insurance, and medical offices. These small businesses are supported by city and county government officials working in the downtown area, nearby residents, and those living across Whitley County and beyond.

EXISTING LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Columbia City has a Redevelopment Commission (RDC) that was created by an ordinance of the Common Council. The RDC included five voting members and an ex-officio member appointed by the Whitley County Consolidated Schools board. The RDC has created three Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to help attract and incentivize economic development in certain parts of the city. The RDC administers a façade improvement grant program to improve the appearance of commercial properties in the downtown. The RDC also purchases property on occasion to help remove blighted or neglected properties and better prepare them for redevelopment and reinvestment.

The Whitley County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) maintains a revolving loan fund and offers three specific loan programs: Microloan Fund, Community and Small Business Fund, and the Growth Venture Fund. Like the City's façade improvement grant program, the number of applicants and ultimate value of funding awards varies year to year.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Several commercial development opportunities are present within the study area, but overall, first floor occupancy is very high. Recent and ongoing infill development projects have occupied vacant sites and surface parking lots with new residential units. Several surface parking lots with development potential remain. While parking supply to the downtown area is important, infill construction on these lots has the potential to create new and modern commercial spaces and significantly increase the value of these properties. Another significant development opportunity is the current Whitley County Jail site just south of the courthouse. During the planning process, a new Sheriff’s Department and Detention Center was under construction. Once completed, the current jail will close and become a significant redevelopment opportunity. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 06.

While first floor commercial occupancy is high, many of the occupants are professional offices that don’t rely on visibility or foot traffic. Improvements to upper stories may facilitate relocation of first floor offices up off the ground level, thereby creating openings for new retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses.

DESIRED COMMERCIAL USES

A community survey was administered early in the planning process and completed by more than 400 participants. The top two responses to the question of “What do you wish was offered or improved upon downtown?” were “more dining options” and “more shopping and entertainment options” by a wide margin. The following table lists the types of businesses survey respondents would like to see in the downtown. More detailed survey results can be found in Chapter 04: Public Input.

What types of businesses would you like to see more of downtown? (check all that apply)

Answer Choice	Responses (%)
Casual restaurants	80.10%
Destination dining	55.64%
Gift and clothing shops	49.16%
Entertainment venues	48.68%
Boutique retail stores	47.48%
Kids stores and activities	44.36%
Bars and nightclubs	30.94%
Grocery store	24.22%
Coffee shop	23.98%
Art galleries	17.51%
Personal services (shipping, salon, bank, attorney, etc.)	11.03%
Movie theater	10.79%
Other (please specify)	6.00%
Offices	4.32%

Source: HWC Engineering





CHAPTER 04

PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Columbia City residents, downtown advocates, and leadership were enthusiastic about providing input for this plan. There is a consistent, collective desire to see downtown Columbia City continue to move forward in a positive direction. Public input for this plan was gathered through steering committee meetings, stakeholder interviews, city leadership interviews, an online public survey, at a downtown public outreach event, and a public presentation. A summary of each type of public input is included in this chapter.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Steering committee meetings were held on June 13th, July 20th, and September 12th. The committee was made up of ten members including

downtown business owners, city leadership, life-long residents, and several professionals who have relocated to Columbia City from larger cities.

Steering committee members used words like “neighborly”, “comfortable”, “safe”, and “affordable” to describe Columbia City today. Although not negative in connotation, these words don’t scream “downtown destination with unique character and vibrant quality”, which is something the committee feels downtown could be.

*“I moved to Columbia City because I feel I can make a difference here.”
- Steering Committee Member*



Steering Committee Workshop No. #1 June 13, 2023

Although maybe not quite there, recent wins are encouraging:

- Arts Commission started this year
- Highly successful First Friday events going strong for 8+ years and counting
- Good mix of older businesses and newer trendy shoppes
- Robust façade grant program
- Coffee shop, brewery, ice cream, and several eateries within walking distance from the square
- Minimal vacancy in storefronts
- Recent addition of multi-family housing and second floor apartments downtown
- AirB&B's popping up in second and third apartments of downtown buildings

When discussing areas where the downtown could improve, the conversation was dominated by two subjects – “walkability” and “welcoming others”.

WALKABILITY

While walking downtown, one can't help but notice the large volume of truck traffic around two sides of the square. It was noted a better balance needs to be struck between vehicles, semi-truck traffic, large farm equipment, and pedestrians downtown. Conflicts between these entities regarding traffic, turning movements, and parking, were described by the committee members and stakeholders alike. It was stated that the agricultural aspects of the community should be celebrated, but finding a better way to co-exist downtown was strongly desired. Traffic calming, different parking configurations, and pedestrian and bike facilities were discussed.

WELCOMING OTHERS

Because Columbia City is positioned half-way between Fort Wayne and Warsaw, the committee feels there is potential to draw visitors from these communities to downtown for a daytrip or weekend getaway. They would like to see the variety of shoppes and dining increase to support this type of activity.

Additionally, steering committee members and youth council members agreed that although conservative, the community could be more inviting to people of different cultures, races, and sexual orientations. Concern was expressed that people may be avoiding downtown Columbia City due to that perception and that is not good for business or the larger community image.



Steering Committee Workshop No. #2 July 20, 2023

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Three stakeholder interviews were held during the planning process. The following individuals or groups were interviewed: five teenage residents from the Mayor’s Youth Council, two active downtown advocates, and two downtown business owners. Interviews were conducted in person at city hall on June 13th, 2023 and August 4th, 2023. Key takeaways from these interviews are included on the following pages.

YOUTH COUNCIL

Like the steering committee members, the mayor’s youth council values Columbia City for its “small town feel”. They enjoy seeing people they know on the street when they walk downtown, attend a downtown festival, or visit a downtown business. The group did not struggle to develop a long list of the things they like enjoy and appreciate about downtown—a partial list is included below:

- Outstanding public art and murals
- Teen involvement in public art
- Coffee shop for hanging out/socializing
- Downtown bowling alley
- Eateries to patron with friends
- Festivals and events with food trucks
- Street Trees and landscaping
- Holiday parades and events

EVERYDAY GATHERING SPACE

Although the group spoke very highly of downtown events—First Fridays and Old Settler’s Day—they admittedly had less motivation to come downtown on a typical day with no planned events. More shops geared towards teens was one suggestion as many of the shops downtown serve an older population with furniture and

antiques. A social space that is walkable from adjacent downtown neighborhoods—not all teenagers own or have access to vehicles—was a second suggestion. When asked what spaces they’ve been to in other downtowns that fit this bill, Promenade Park in Fort Wayne and Broadripple Village were spoken of highly.

CONNECTING THE NEXT GENERATION

Only one of the interviewees lives walkable to downtown. Others mentioned they frequently use the Blue River Trail and discussed potential further connections to downtown as well as to the middle and high school campus. Existing service activities currently connect local youth to the downtown through the Students for Life and the Key Club; however, more volunteer opportunities and activities to connect the youth to the downtown community and happenings was also discussed.



Teens from the Mayor’s Youth Council

DOWNTOWN ADVOCATES AND ENTREPRENEURS

The success of small communities typically hinges upon the motivation, participation, and dedication of a small group of individuals—downtown Columbia City is lucky to have just that. Downtown advocates and entrepreneurs have been working tirelessly for years to find grants, develop programming, and recruit new businesses to the project area. Recent wins from these efforts are listed below:

- Activated alley spaces
- Landscaped pocket parks
- Grant-based façade improvements
- Successful downtown events

Common themes that rose to the top in discussions with downtown advocates and entrepreneurs included the following:

- Remove angled parking from busy streets surrounding the courthouse square
- Make parking more convenient/accessible for new businesses, restaurants, and residents.
- Recruit upscale dining options
- Improve streetscape by providing consistent lighting, better maintained trees and grates, and providing matching signage
- Require property owner accountability for building conditions and upkeep

*“We like the parades and festivals but when events aren’t happening, there is not much to do.”
– Youth Council Member*



Teens from the Mayor’s Youth Council

ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY

An 18-question survey was made available to the public via social media from early-June to mid-August. 425 people responded to the survey within that time. Questions were focused to first gain a better understanding of the demographic responding and secondly to help determine priorities of the participants regarding present conditions as well as the outlook for downtown Columbia City. Select survey results are illustrated below—full survey results can be found in the appendix.

Key questions on the survey were: reasons for going downtown; what would you wish was offered or improved upon downtown; where does downtown most need improvement; what would you like to see more of in downtown; and what types of businesses would you like to see more of in downtown; and is revitalization important.

SIX KEY TAKEAWAYS

A review of the on-line survey found many common threads with key takeaways summarized below.

1. RESIDENTS GO DOWNTOWN MOST OFTEN FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS AND DINING.

The highest percentage of reasons residents visit downtown are for community events at 84.2%, with dining a close second at 77.12%. Shopping fell far below those percentages at 40.80%.

While special community events are excellent reasons to bring crowds downtown, the occasional event cannot sustain a thriving downtown on a daily basis. Dining downtown is a popular reason for visiting downtown but dining alone isn't sufficient to encourage restaurant patrons

to linger. As the low percentage of shopping shows, sufficient shopping opportunities may not exist to draw or keep visitors downtown.

Walking around downtown was cited as an activity in downtown but no other recreation was given as a reason. A lack of recreational opportunities, amenities such as benches, and dog-friendly venues are mentioned as needs further into the survey but may be reasons why visiting downtown for recreation was not high on visitors' lists.

2. VISITORS WANT MORE DINING AND SHOPPING OPTIONS BUT NOT MORE EVENTS.

While dining was given as the second-most reason for visiting downtown, nearly 74% of respondents stated that more dining options are their most desired improvements. Outdoor dining and dog-friendly options were most often noted as the type of dining.

Shopping options was second highest in desired improvements at over 60% stating as their most desired improvements. A variety of shopping options and longer shopping hours were noted. Shopping and dining options can draw visitors downtown and keep them there longer as one activity leads to the other.

In a distant third place was more community events as most desired improvements. While most respondents cited community events as the number one reason for visiting downtown, they would rather see more dining and shopping options. Community events draw a community together, bring in visitors from outside the community and give the community an identity. They don't, however, help sustain a viable downtown on a daily basis in the way dining, shopping, entertainment and housing opportunities can provide.

**420
Survey
Responses!**



**SURVEY RESPONDENTS
WANT MORE...**

- Retail/Shopping
- Restaurants/Dining
- Pedestrian Connectivity
- Outdoor Gathering Areas

Where do you live?



Do you live in or near downtown?



How often is downtown your final destination?



Statement: Downtown Columbia City is an active and exciting place.



Statement: It is convenient to park in downtown Columbia City.



Statement: Downtown Columbia City is safe.



3. CARS GET THEM THERE BUT OTHER OPTIONS WOULD BE DESIRABLE.

Almost 90% of the respondents get downtown by car and rate downtown parking as average or good but cite parking improvements as a need in unstructured responses. Walking was below 50% in this question that invited respondents to check all that applied. To a related question regarding where downtown needs to improve, benches and bike racks received 22.33% and sidewalks and streets received 17.10% of the responses. Offering secure storage for bikes, benches for resting, and safe, accessible and well maintained sidewalks would encourage more visitors to leave the car behind.

Improving building facades and programming events were also high on the list at 26.67% and 22.8%, respectively. An attractive downtown with activities for the entire family invites visitors to downtown and offering options without driving may bring in more visitors who opt out because of parking and traffic issues.

4. VISITORS WANT TO ENJOY OUTDOOR SPACES.

Outdoor dining spaces, community gathering spaces, parks and recreation all ranked high on the list of what respondents want to see more of. Dining options, especially outdoor dining was ranked high throughout the entire survey. While community events are popular, respondents resounding said give us outdoor spaces for hanging out when there is nothing else going on. Dog-friendly spaces and dog parks were especially noted, as were benches and bike racks.

Likewise, when rating downtown in a variety of categories, respondents rated the city as average in business variety, sidewalks and public spaces, retail environment, bicycle mobility, conditions of buildings, parks and open spaces, and restaurants and entertainment. Comments often reflected an impression of nothing exciting to do downtown. Suggestions for improvements included more dining options, filling vacant storefronts and improving existing building facades, essentially giving visitors more variety and improving the appearance of the downtown experience.

5. DINING, SHOPPING, AND ENTERTAINMENT ARE IN GREATEST DEMAND.

Casual restaurants topped the list of businesses respondents wanted to see, followed by destination dining, entertainment venues and boutique retail stores. As seen throughout the survey, more restaurants, entertainment and shopping options seen as vital components of a downtown revitalization. Many cited the necessity of leaving town for the experiences they wanted to see in their hometown. More options in downtown would keep local dollars local.

6. DOWNTOWN IS THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY.

The attitude towards and impression of the city's downtown is vital in the support of a revitalization plan. Revitalization of downtown Columbia City was rated as very important to almost 64% of the respondents. Many commented that the downtown is the heart of the community, that it represents what the community is about and it should be a place of pride for the residents.

The downtown should offer a reason to go downtown and be a beautiful place to visit. While the demand for new businesses was high, the importance of preserving the historic nature of downtown and improved aesthetics was also important. Respondents cited vacant storefronts as uninviting and negatively impacting the look and experience of being downtown. While most respondents voiced pride in their community, they felt the revitalization of downtown was an important effort for the city.

Rate the importance of each.

(Using a scale where 1 is least and 3 is most important).

Category	Avg.
More Restaurants and Entertainment	2.52
Attraction of New Retail Businesses	2.46
Infill of Vacant Sites	2.43
More Events and Activities	2.25
Restoration of Historic Buildings	2.21
Additional Parking	2.19
Improved Parks and Open Space	2.13
River Access for Recreation	1.94
Murals and Public Art	1.91
Entrance Features and Gateways	1.75
Addition of Bicycle Lanes	1.7
Better Directional Information	1.66
More Housing	1.61

Rate downtown in the following areas.

(Using a scale where 1 is "poor" and 5 is "excellent").

Category	Avg.
Business Growth over Past 5 Years	3.38
Sidewalks and Public Spaces	3.36
Overall Appearance of Downtown	3.34
Overall Perception of Downtown	3.30
Traffic Circulation	3.27
Overall Economic Health	3.13
Condition of Buildings	2.98
Directional Signage and Wayfinding	2.91
Adequacy of Parking	2.91
Business Variety	2.76
Parks and Open Space	2.7
Restaurants and Entertainment	2.67
Bicycle Mobility and Access	2.54
Retail Environment	2.46
Cultural Facilities and Attractions	2.44
Availability of Downtown Housing	2.43
Connection to Trails	2.27

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT

A public input booth was set up at the First Friday event on August 4th, 2023. As residents of Columbia City, as well as neighboring communities, enjoyed food vendors, booths, and live music, they were invited to participate in two public input exercises.

EXERCISE 1: AMENITY VOTING

The first exercise involved voting for downtown amenities in the following four categories:

- Public Spaces
- Pedestrian Comfort
- Community Identity & Real Estate
- Seasonal Programming

THE TOP SIX DESIRED DOWNTOWN AMENITIES ARE LISTED BELOW:

1. Indoor Play Space (70 votes)
2. Downtown Trails (63 votes)
3. Play Sculpture (57 votes)
4. Interactive Lighting (55 votes)
5. Interactive Fountain (54 votes)
6. Food Truck Court (48 votes)

Public outreach board results are displayed on the following pages.

EXERCISE 2:

The second exercise involved an interactive map of the downtown. First Friday-goers were invited to use cut-outs to invent a new downtown space. Additionally, participants were asked to provide additional feedback or comments via post-it notes and comment cards.





WE NEED...







"...a place downtown to host birthday parties."

"...property owner accountability for downtown blighted buildings."


"...low-income & senior housing options."

"...bike racks large enough for an entire family to lock up their bikes."

What would you like to see downtown?
PUBLIC SPACES

Interactive Fountain 	Interactive Lighting 
Outdoor Games 	Remote Work/Social Space 
Play Sculpture 	Food Truck Court 

What would you like to see downtown?
PEDESTRIAN COMFORT

Downtown Trails 	Dedicated Bike Lanes 
Bumpouts 	Safe Crosswalks 
Street Trees 	Statement Planters 



What would you like to see downtown?
COMMUNITY IDENTITY + REAL ESTATE

Inviting Gateways 	Wayfinding/History Markers
More Housing Options 	More Dining Options
Co-working Space 	Indoor Play Space

What would you like to see downtown?
SEASONAL PROGRAMMING

Summer Parklets 	Winter Dining/Gathering
Rooftop Dining 	Urban Pollinator Gardens
Pop-up Place Space 	Temporary Art Exhibits

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

On November 14th, 2023, the draft plan was presented to both the Redevelopment Commission at noon and the Columbia City Council and general public at 6:00pm. A brief overview of the planning process, public input, and draft recommendations were presented. A question and answer period followed with discussion—the following key takeaways were heard:

1. DOWNTOWN ARRIVAL SEQUENCE

Although outside of the study area, the arrival sequence into downtown from the south was brought up as a major area of concern and interest to attendees. The impressive school campus and view of the courthouse from IN-9 are a spectacular introduction to the city; however, as you move further north into downtown, parking lots are ample and various light industrial uses create a gap in the sequence that needs attention. This topic was also discussed during the planning process, and was determined it should be addressed in the recommendations section of the plan as a “bubble project”.

2. CONFLICTS AND CONGESTION ON VAN BUREN

The frequent conflicts between parked cars and vehicular traffic traveling east and westbound along Van Buren west of Chauncey was discussed as a concern. Opportunities for a modified street section using parallel parking on one side and angled on the other was discussed as a means to widen the road and reduce conflicts between cars backing out of parking spaces and those traveling in the roadway. Bumpouts



or curb extensions were discussed as a means to reduce speed—replacing the existing signal at Van Buren and Chauncey with a stop sign was also discussed as an opportunity to slow traffic on this main east-west corridor.

3. PICTURING PUBLIC SPACE

Three locations for public space downtown were reviewed and discussed. Several commented they couldn't picture how a public space would work downtown when discussed in the past, but the sketches helped them to see how it could be possible. Others mentioned they had seen roads closed in other communities to create public space and it had a positive outcome. Concerns about circulation and parking were mentioned. Many hadn't thought about how existing restricted parking on the south side of the square will become available once the jail

moves out, which allowed the idea of removing parking in other locations seem more plausible. Although individuals voiced preferences over certain locations for the public space, a single location was not preferred or disliked overall by attendees.

4. PARKING CONCERNS ARE SPECIFIC TO DAYTIME

Concerns about the lack of parking were discussed as primarily a daytime issue—if an issue at all. City and county employees are downtown during the day, most eateries, shops, stores, and offices are competing for parking during the day as well. Opportunities for shared use parking lots being made available in the evening hours was discussed. The parking lot behind the jail was also discussed as a future opportunity for more parking just a half-block from the square.


5. PARKING PERCEPTIONS

One attendee mentioned they do not patron downtown restaurants unless they can find a parking space directly in front of the building. This level of standard for available parking is not something big box retailers are held to., but is a barrier downtown business owners face. City employees have deliberately moved their reserved parking spaces away from the square to make spots available for patrons. Business owners who park in front of their stores and while complaining about available parking, should follow this example.

6. HOLD BUILDING OWNERS ACCOUNTABLE

Many downtown building owners are investing in their properties and making a positive impact downtown. In fact four facade grant payments were approved at the Redevelopment Commission meeting on the day of the public


presentation. However, attendees expressed discouragement with many building owners who live outside of Columbia City and are neglecting their properties. Several council members stated it was time these building owners be held accountable.



“...we have projects we are working on now that we thought could never happen when we first started them.”



“...we’ve discussed a public space downtown in the past, but I couldn’t picture how that might work until now.”



“...if there isn’t a parking spot directly in front of a restaurant downtown, I go somewhere else.”



TOKI
STEAK HOUSE OF JAPAN - HIRAKU

THE GROUP
REAL ESTATE

1895
G.A. WEICK



CHAPTER 05

FACADES

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Because facade funding opportunities are currently somewhat limited, the city decided not to invest in a full facade study with specific building improvements and proposed restoration renderings at this time. As new funding opportunities become available, it is recommended an architect be engaged to complete a full facade study as facade restoration is a key component of downtown revitalization. This chapter includes defined priority zones for future facade improvements as well as general recommendations for next steps related to facade improvements in downtown Columbia City.

PRIORITY ZONES

The map to the right illustrates four blocks that were identified as priority zones for future facade improvements. Many of the buildings along these blocks are in good condition, but others could use attention to bring them up to a higher standard. The following pages include elevations of these blocks with general recommendations for improvements.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PRIORITIZE FACADE PRESERVATION WHENEVER FEASIBLE--RESORT TO RECONSTRUCTION WHEN NECESSARY: In general, all historic buildings within the study area should be preserved in order to maintain the historic charm and character of the historic district. However, where the building structure is deteriorated or structural stability is a concern, reconstruction of the building behind the facade, or a complete demolition and reconstruction may be considered depending on the funding source. If federal or state money is used, more restrictions may come in to play.

2. MAINTAIN FACADE DETAILS TO MAINTAIN EXISTING CHARM AND CHARACTER DOWNTOWN:

Some components of a historic facade that contribute to the buildings character include decorative cornices, window hoods, masonry walls, evenly spaced windows, masonry piers, transoms, display windows, and bulkheads. Property owners should be encouraged to maintain these unique elements. When original elements are beyond repair, replacements should match the same size, scale, and style as previously represented under the guidance of an architect.

3. ENGAGE AN ARCHITECT WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION EXPERIENCE AND MAKE AVAILABLE TO PROPERTY OWNERS:

In order to ensure improvements are made to buildings that follow the original scale, size, and architecture style of the original building, it is recommended the contact information for an architect with historic preservation experience be made available to property owners. This architect can be consulted on a range of topics. A local match for consulting fees could incentivize property owners to engage.

4. ESTABLISH A GUIDEBOOK FOR DOWNTOWN FACADE FOR CLARITY AND CONSISTENCY:

Engage an architect with historic facade experience to develop a guidebook specific to facade restoration in downtown Columbia City. This guidebook could include topics such as window repair and replacement, masonry repair and restoration, wood maintenance, metal maintenance, decorative glass maintenance, doors, as well as community preferences for color guidelines and recommendations, awnings, signage treatments, and lighting.

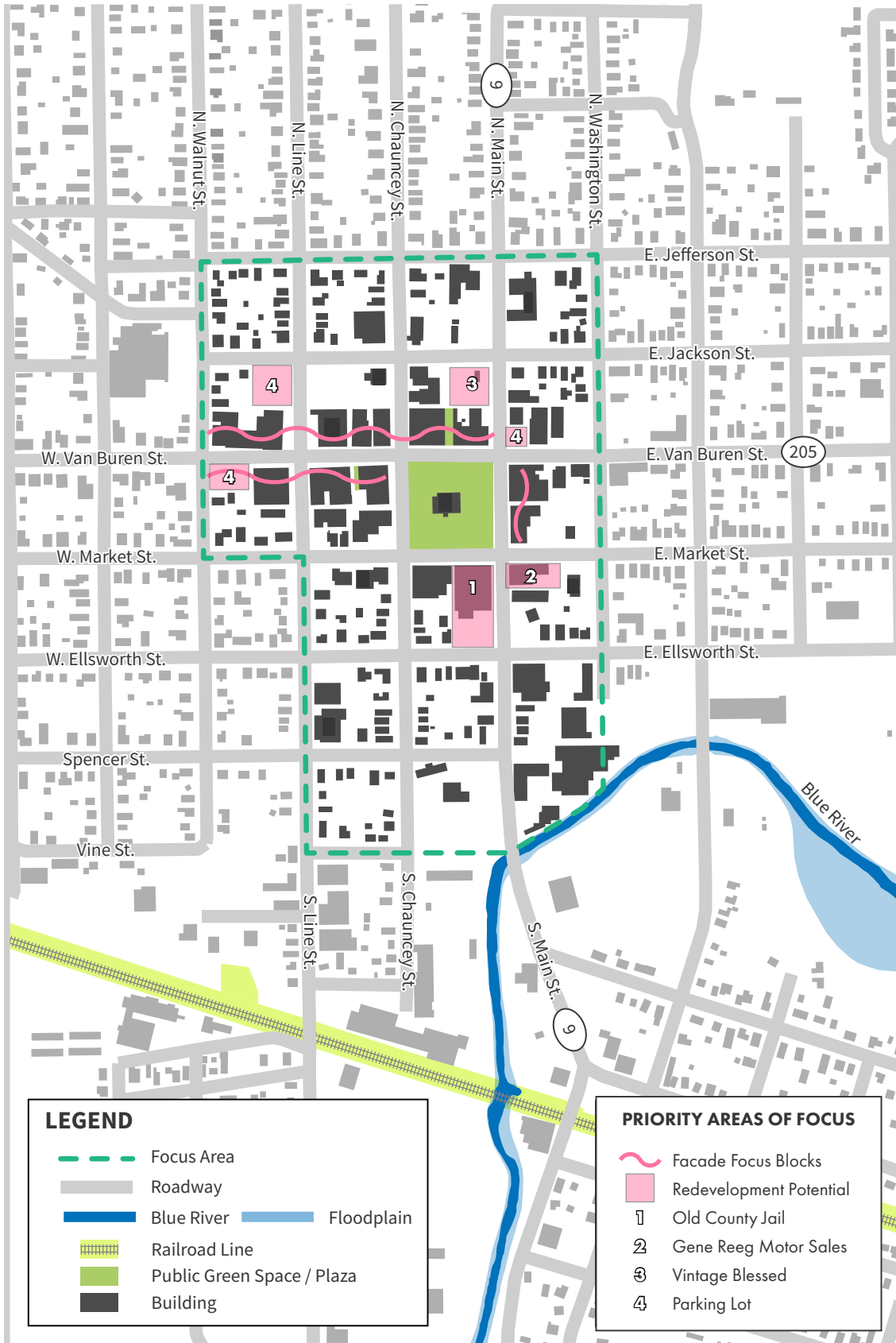
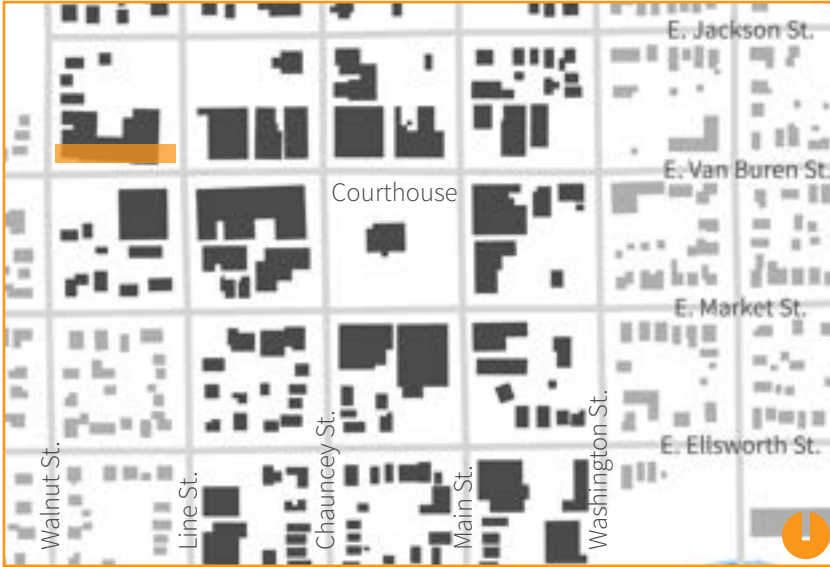


FIGURE 5.1: PRIORITY AREAS OF FOCUS

300 BLOCK NORTH FRONTAGE



328

322

318

WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<WALNUT STREET INTERSECTION

ALLEYWAY>



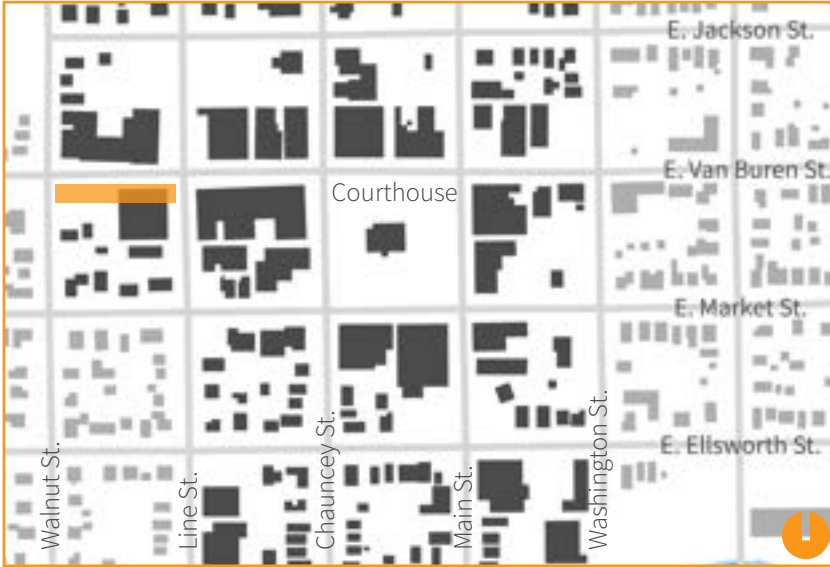
Consider building height requirements and street front use when establishing guidelines for redevelopment.



Consider establishing guidelines for new development that will contribute to the historic character of adjacent downtown buildings, such as building height, street front use and materiality.



300 BLOCK SOUTH FRONTAGE



328

322

318

WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<LINE STREET INTERSECTION

ALLEYWAY>



Consider establishing guidelines for new development that will contribute to the historic character of adjacent downtown buildings, such as building height, street front use and materiality.

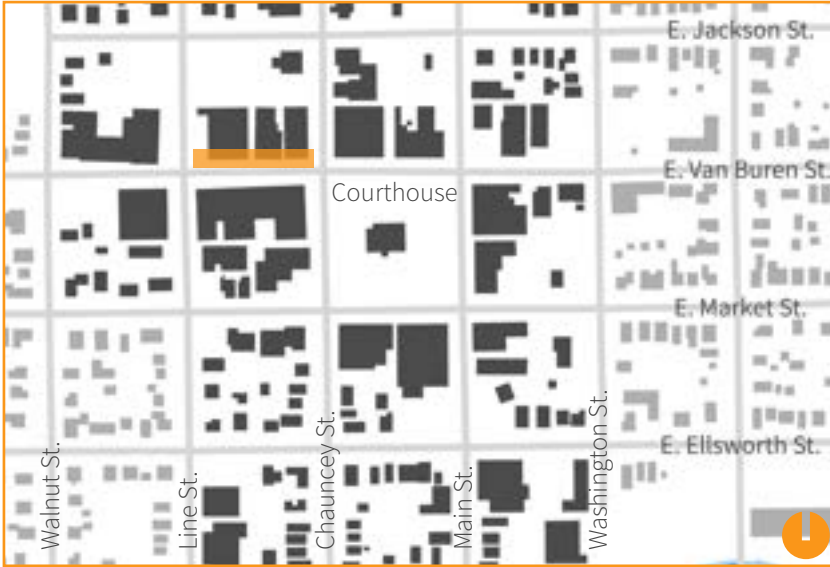


SURFACE PARKING LOT
WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<ALLEYWAY

WALNUT STREET INTERSECTION>

200 BLOCK NORTH FRONTAGE



232

220

WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<LINE STREET INTERSECTION

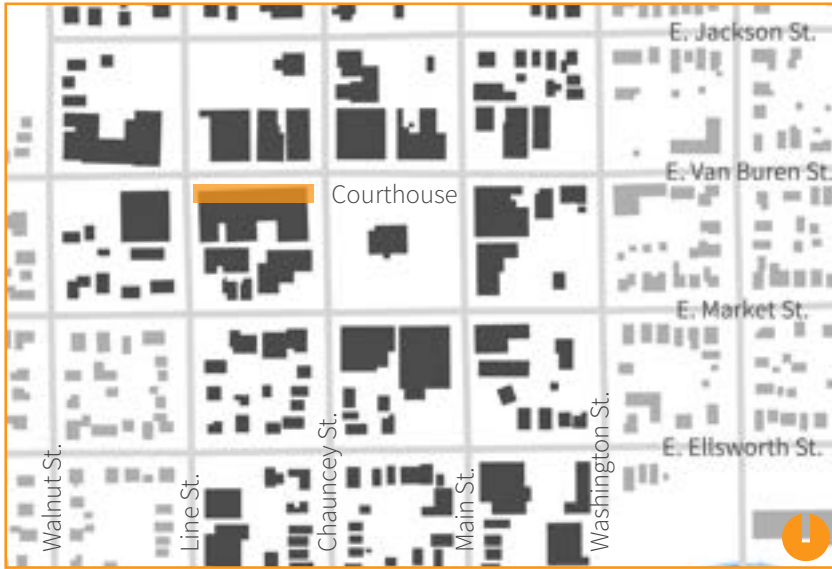
ART/MUSIC ALLEY>



Consider establishing guidelines for new development that will contribute to the historic character of adjacent downtown buildings, such as building height, street front use and materiality.



200 BLOCK SOUTH FRONTAGE



ADD CORNICE DETAIL



INSTALL DOOR AWNING



INSTALL FACADE AWNING



RESTORE ARCH WINDOWS



201

205

207

209

211

THOMAS MARSHALL PLAZA

WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<CHAUNCEY STREET INTERSECTION

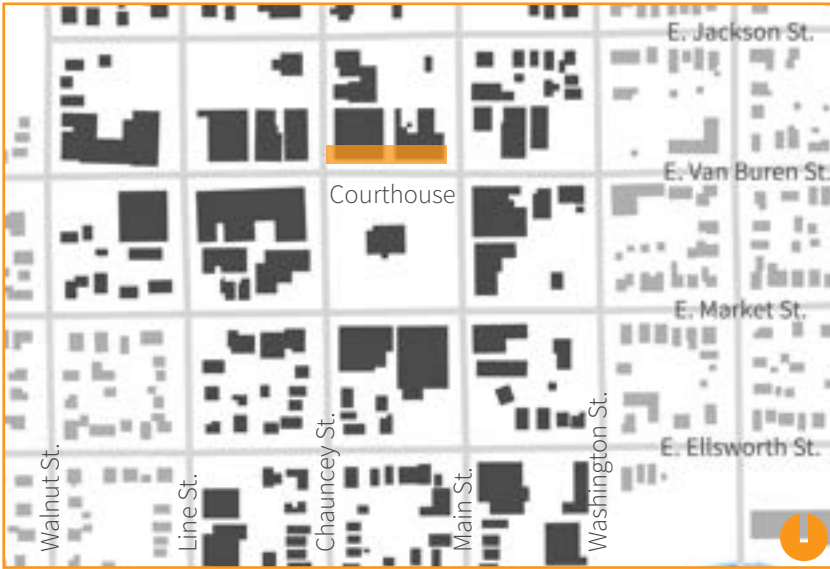
ALLEYWAY>



Consider building height requirements and color recommendations when establishing guidelines for redevelopment.



100 BLOCK NORTH FRONTAGE



ADD CORNICE DETAIL



INSTALL DOOR AWNING



RESTORE ARCH WINDOWS



INSTALL FACADE AWNING



INSTALL FACADE AWNING



130

128

126

124

122

118

WEST VAN BUREN STREET

<CHAUNCEY STREET INTERSECTION

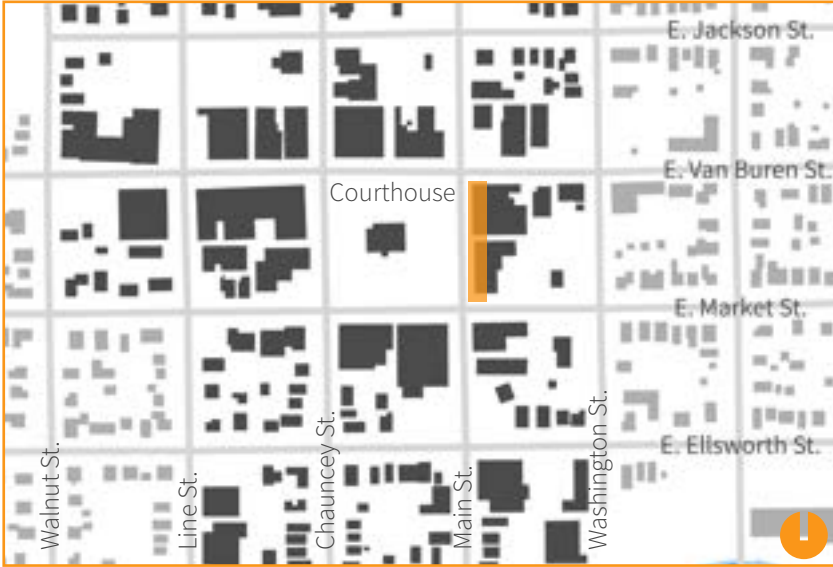
OHKI ALLEY>



Consider establishing guidelines for new development that will contribute to the historic character of adjacent downtown buildings, such as building height, street front use and materiality.



100 BLOCK EAST FRONTAGE



RESTORE ARCH WINDOWS



ENHANCE STOREFRONT CHARACTER



RESTORE ARCH WINDOWS



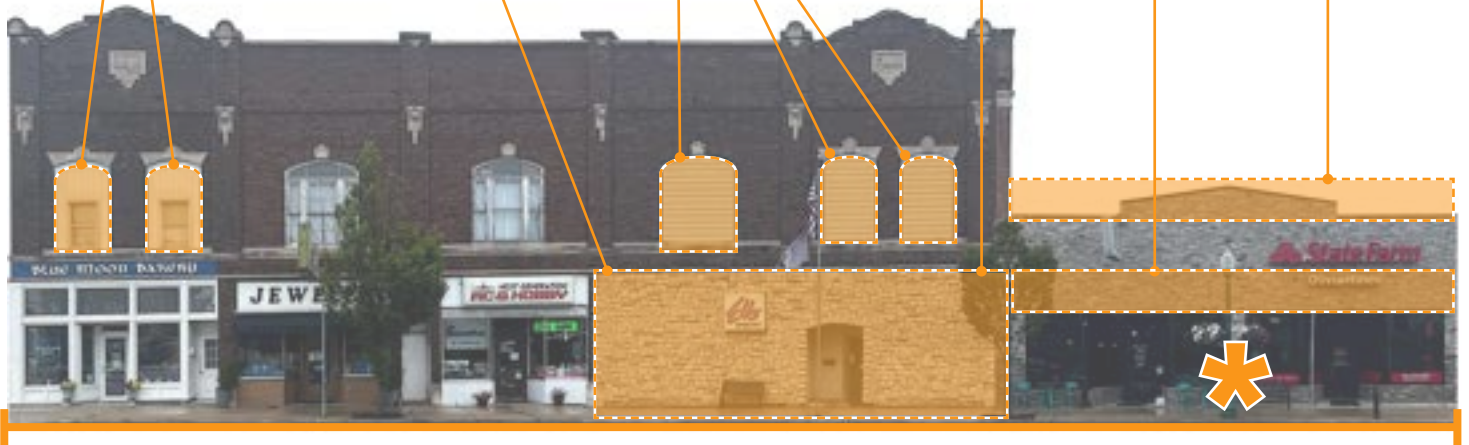
INSTALL FACADE AWNING



INSTALL FACADE AWNING



ADD CORNICE DETAIL



101

103

105

109

111

113

MAIN STREET

<VAN BUREN STREET

ALLEYWAY>

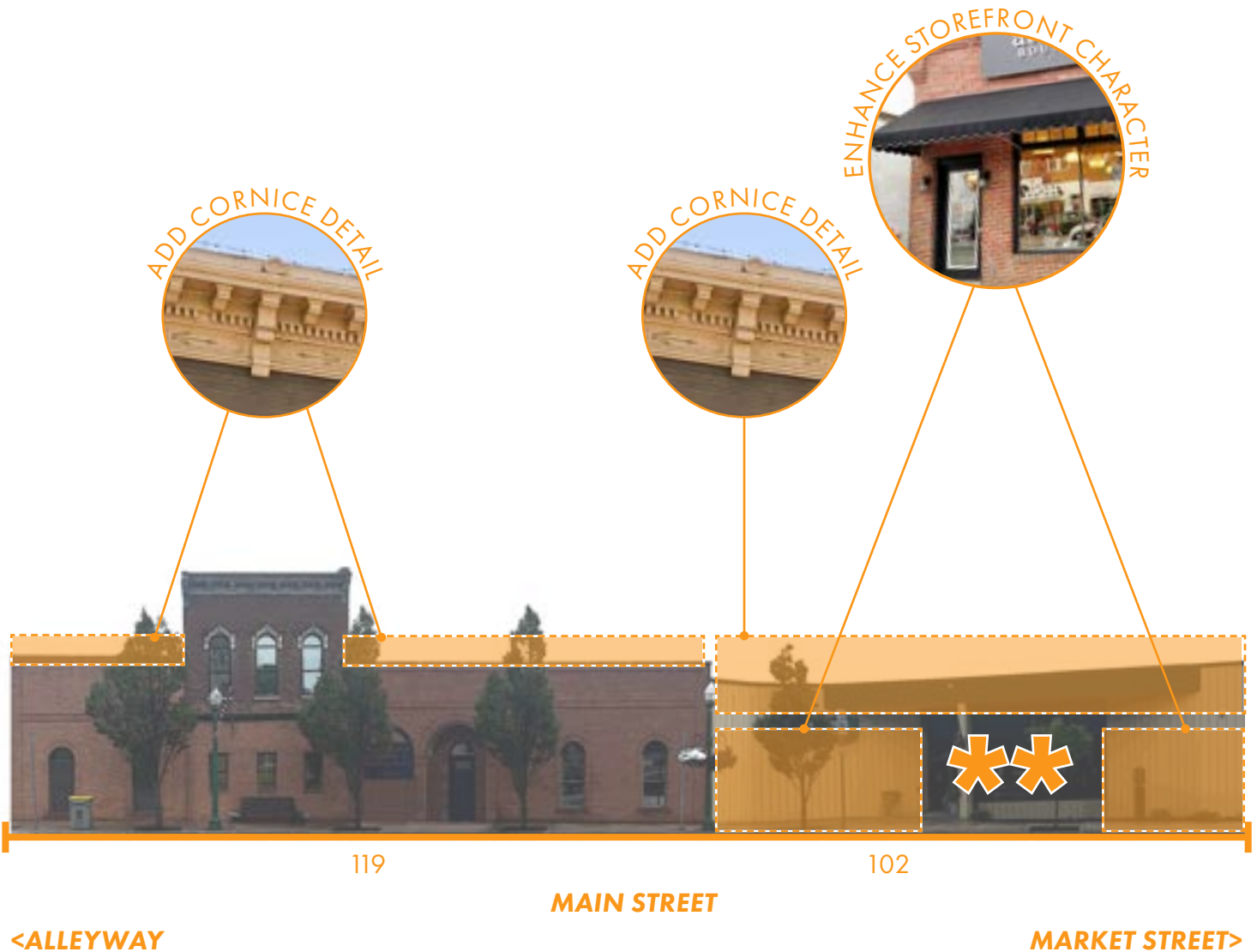




Consider material recommendations when establishing guidelines for redevelopment.



Consider establishing guidelines for new development that will contribute to the historic character of adjacent downtown buildings, such as building height, street front use and materiality.







CHAPTER 06

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPERIENCING SUCCESS

For a population of less than 10,000 people, Columbia City cannot be written off as a sleepy Indiana town. The downtown has active festivals throughout the year that draws thousands of participants. A coffee shop, bakery, brewery, several diners and restaurants, plant-based ice creme dessert shop, sushi restaurant, bowling alley, and multiple antique and gift shoppes sit within walking distance of the square.

Additionally, local special interest groups have devoted their time, and in many cases, manual labor towards smaller acts of investment like beautification of the streetscape to large investment such as renewing older buildings and encouraging entrepreneurs to inhabit them. This combined vested interest in the success of downtown from both the city leadership and the community is visible and vibrant.

Because so many of the “little things” have already been accomplished here—successful facade programs, activated alleys, well-attended events and programming, the establishment of an arts council and the implementation of several public art installations—these plan recommendations are pushing the community towards doing something “big”.

TIME FOR SOMETHING “BIG”

“Big” things are certainly happening directly adjacent to downtown. Recent planning and design efforts have resulted grant funding for Eagle Park—a newly master planned park on the site of the old high school northeast of downtown. New phases are underway to extend the Blue River trail



Patrons sit outside Moo-Over, a plant-based ice creme shop in downtown Columbia City on a weekday afternoon.

further west and south of downtown. Furthermore, discussions and procedures have been underway to clean up a brown-field site and past industrial area along the river for future development south of downtown.

With the county jail in the process of moving, a major opportunity for redevelopment will open up on the south side of the square. Although many of the facades appear to be in good condition, a number of the downtown buildings are suffering from neglect, decay, and major structural issues. With such high occupancy of first-floor retail, an overhaul of the streetscape and addition of a permanent public space could take the walkability and opportunities for outdoor dining and events to a whole new level. It’s time for something “big”.

Admittedly, these are not small tasks—daunting in fact. But placed in the wrong hands, these big opportunities could be easily wasted. Instead, it is recommended they be taken by the reigns and pushed forward to build on the downtown success so many have worked so hard to establish.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing past planning efforts and recent accomplishments, analyzing public input, and inventorying existing conditions, recommendations were developed in four main categories—CONNECT, ATTRACT, PROTECT, and INFORM.

This chapter provides goals and strategies within each category as well as examples of where these types of strategies have been successful in other communities as a starting point. Concepts were developed for several strategies to provide a better visualization of how they could be applied specifically to downtown Columbia City.

The chapter concludes with an implementation table, which specifically identifies next steps, budget ranges, responsible parties, and priority.

PLAN UPDATES

To ensure downtown revitalization progress it is recommended the plan be revisited and updated every 5 years. These continual tweaks will make certain the plan remains relevant, current leadership is involved and invested, and goals are clear and focused. Additionally, annual reviews with the committee and City leadership are encouraged to monitor implementation efforts and support momentum.

PLAN ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS CHAPTER

IDNR: Indiana Department of Natural Resources
IDOH: Indiana Department of Health
INDOT: Indiana Department of Transportation
OCRA: Office of Community and Rural Affairs
READI 2.0: Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (second round)

connect

Connect downtown to Eagle Park.

Connect downtown to Blue River Trail/School Campus.

Connect downtown to the 4-H Grounds.

Connect teens to the square.

attract

Attract families with children downtown.

Attract residents/visitors in the evening hours.

Attract residents/visitors in the winter.

protect

Protect building integrity (structures).

Protect building character (facades).

Protect (and enhance) walkability downtown.

inform

Inform community identity.

Inform downtown district(s).

Inform downtown development.

connect STRATEGIES

Connect downtown to Eagle Park. (north)

Connect downtown to Blue River Trail/School Campus. (south)

Connect downtown to the 4-H Grounds. (west)

Develop community-wide trails master plan.

Implement phasing as funding allows.

Connect teens to the square.

Establish teen ambassadors.

Create volunteer opportunities/projects for local students.

Establish connectivity programming.

CONNECTING DOWNTOWN AND THE SCHOOL CAMPUS

Throughout the planning process, discussions were had regarding how to connect the active educational campus south of downtown with the square. Physical connections, such as trails, and non-literal connections, such as involving the student population in the care and success of the downtown district through volunteer opportunities and special projects were discussed.

Many communities have a “Tree Tenders” program, which assigns volunteers to the care and maintenance of newly planted trees. This program could also involve creating an inventory of the urban tree canopy and monitoring health and longevity of trees downtown. A “Teens for Trails” program could involve students organizing temporary art or educational exhibits along the trail or even a 5K or bike ride from the campus

to downtown. Teens from the Mayor’s Youth Council mentioned they need a place to go after school before a football game on Friday nights throughout the fall season. “Teen Ambassadors” could organize a pep rally on the square or a game night at a local coffee shop. Activation of downtown is a multi-generational effort.



Tree Tenders in Philadelphia pose for a photo after a planting. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful also has an active program.

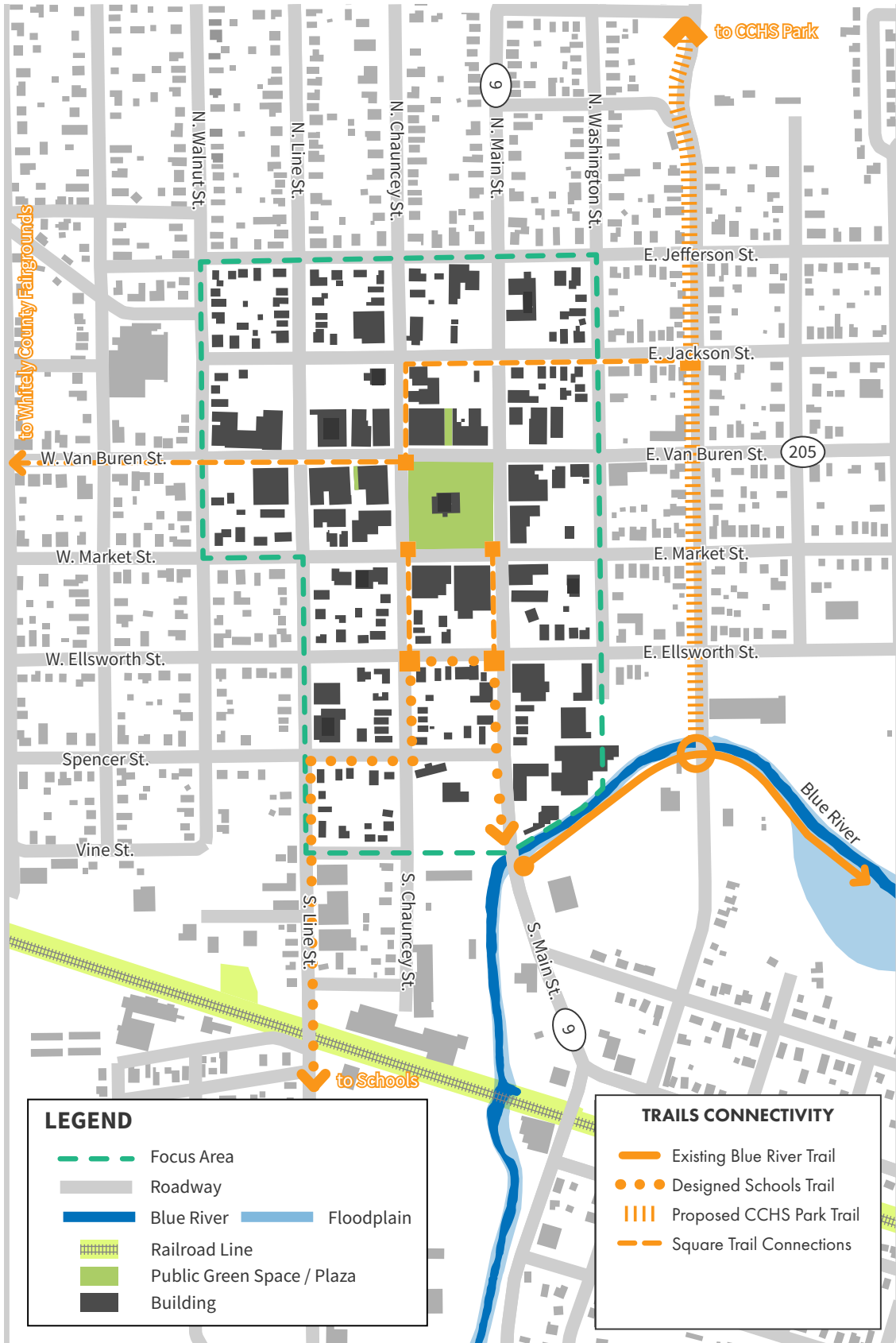


FIGURE 6.1: TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

attract STRATEGIES

Attract residents/visitors in the evening hours.

Generate opportunities for fine dining.

Expand evening programming.

Attract residents/visitors in the winter.

Encourage seasonal outdoor dining.

Develop winter programming.

Attract families with children downtown.

Develop indoor attractions.

Provide casual outdoor dining/socializing space.

Establish a permanent public space.

GENERATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FINE DINING DOWNTOWN

Although downtown has many eateries, there was an overwhelming ask from the public and the committee for a fine dining option. Strategies to move towards this goal are outlined below:

- Incentivize established county restaurateurs to develop a downtown satellite location:
- Ensure new builds can accommodate restaurants and not just commercial, office, or retail uses: Restaurants require specific fittings including sprinkler systems and grease traps. These accommodations would be costly for a new entrepreneur to retrofit themselves and could be a deterrent.
- Re-imagine existing buildings as restaurants. The PREWITT in Plainfield, Indiana is an example of a re-purposed theater turned restaurant and lounge with rooftop dining and a small music venue.



photo: The Prewitt Restaurant + Lounge

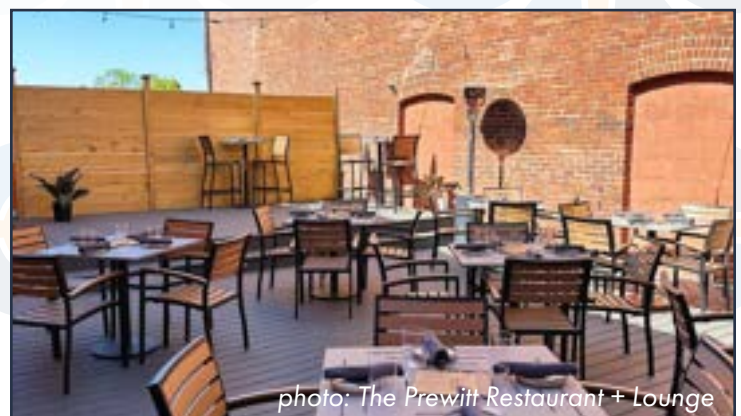


photo: The Prewitt Restaurant + Lounge

The PREWITT in Plainfield, IN is an example of an existing downtown theatre re-imagined as a restaurant and lounge.



EXPAND EVENING PROGRAMMING

Outside of First Fridays, most evenings the sidewalks downtown are free of people. This could be due to existing store hours and the busy evening activities many families are consumed with such as youth sports. Suggestions heard at the public input sessions were to develop street dances or free concerts to attract people downtown for dinner and entertainment. An open mic night could attract performers and their families to patron downtown more often.



ENCOURAGE SEASONAL OUTDOOR DINING

Many communities with chilly weather have still found ways to provide an interesting dining experience in the winter months. Freestanding, portable heaters are typically just enough to stretch the fall season for outdoor dining. Temporary, plastic igloos can take “outdoor” dining into the winter months by providing a toasty private setting for dinner under the stars with a view of the courthouse architecture.



DEVELOP WINTER PROGRAMMING TO ACTIVATE THE SQUARE

Fair Oaks Farm sets up an ice rink and “Arctic Blast” slide each winter to attract families for winter fun. Combined with holiday shopping and some pop-up outdoor eateries could be enough motivation to bring people out into the cold during the holiday season. With the sun setting before five o’clock on many winter nights, interactive lighting could attract people to explore the downtown sidewalks prior to grabbing dinner at a downtown eatery. Interactive lighting provides a unique experience each time you visit with motion sensors setting off only when people are present.





photo: Wonderlab



photo: City of Wanneroo Library and Innovation Hub



photo: Explore Northwest Arkansas



photo: Rebar Studio

INDOOR ATTRACTIONS

Families with children are typically looking for things to do that are close by. The Wonderlab in Bloomington is an example of a small children's museum that has become a place people from outside the community now travel to. This type of facility would be a great place for local teens to work or seniors to volunteer bringing people of all ages downtown. An indoor climbing or play space would also satisfy the desire for a place to host birthday parties downtown.

The Peabody Public Library is an outstanding amenity for residents located just east of downtown. If a satellite branch were established in a small storefront downtown, it could host children's programming and after school study sessions, tying that amenity to the center of the community.

CASUAL OUTDOOR DINING & SOCIAL SPACES

Lafayette has implemented a seasonal outdoor dining program that involves creating a temporary, removable deck at the same height as the sidewalk curb in specific parking spaces downtown. These spaces increase dining space for local restaurants during the summer and fall months and are removed the rest of the year. This concept could also be used for seasonal, temporary public art space or casual outdoor social spaces or mini-plazas to encourage people to come downtown and stay awhile during the warmer months.

Establishing a more permanent food truck court was something rated highly in the public input process as something downtown Columbia City should consider. When combined with movable seating, a social gathering space is created.

PERMANENT PUBLIC SPACE

Most major festivals and events held downtown today require a street closure. Much of the feedback received during the planning process pointed towards the desire to have a permanent public space downtown that could be a central gathering space standing on it's own even if no planned events are taking place.

Critical components of this type of public social gathering space might include the following:

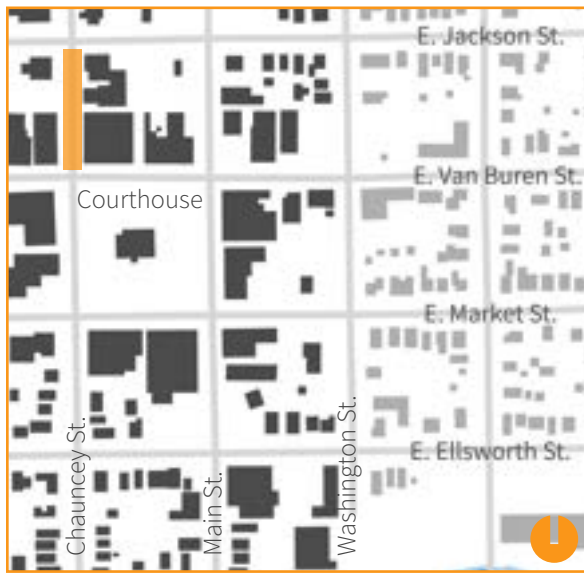
- Flexible programming space.
- A fountain or splash pad.
- A play structure or play space.
- Outdoor game tables such as ping pong.
- Social seating and shade.
- Flexible, programmable plaza space.
- Event lawn, trees, and landscaping.

Three locations for a permanent public space downtown were explored during the study. Each location would include a combination of these similar components. Concept plans of each location can be viewed on the following pages:

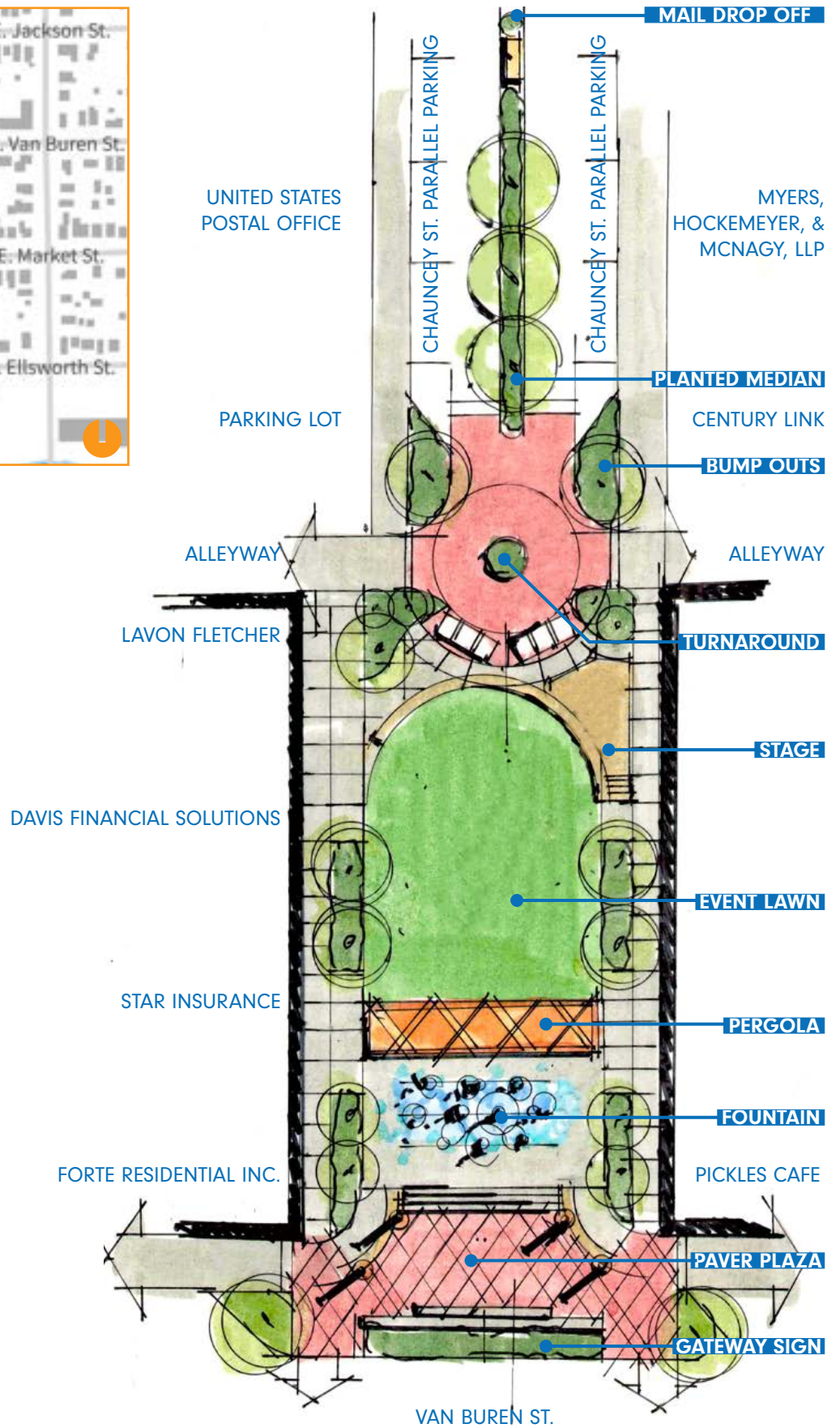
- Location 1: Chauncey Street (north)
- Location 2: Chauncey Street (south)
- Location 3: Jail Redevelopment



LOCATION 1



Location Map



EXISTING

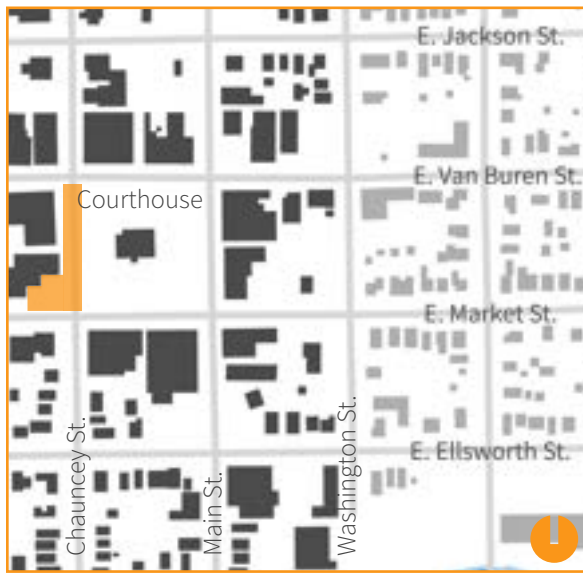


Chauncey Street and Van Buren Street Intersection looking north towards the post office.

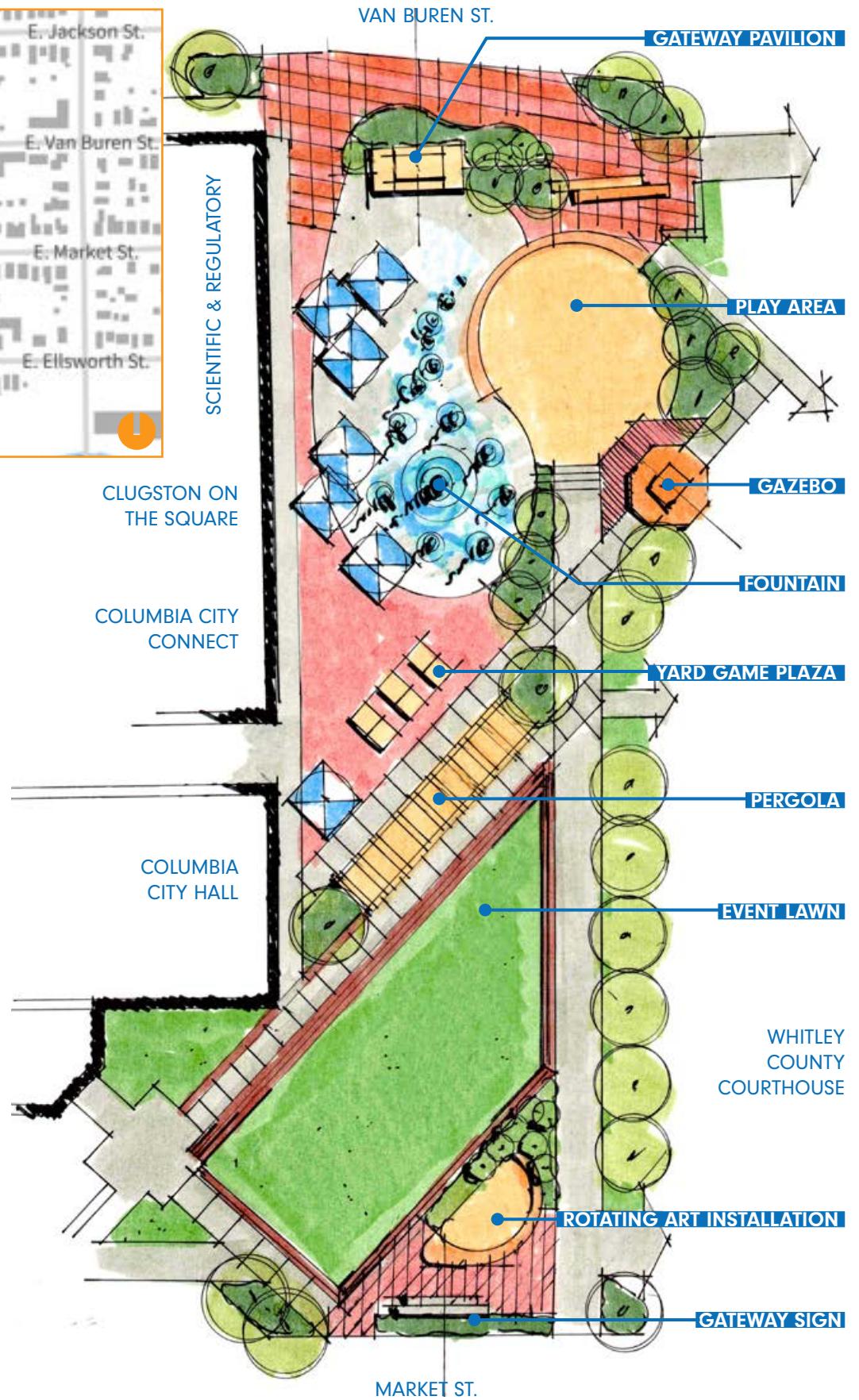
PROPOSED



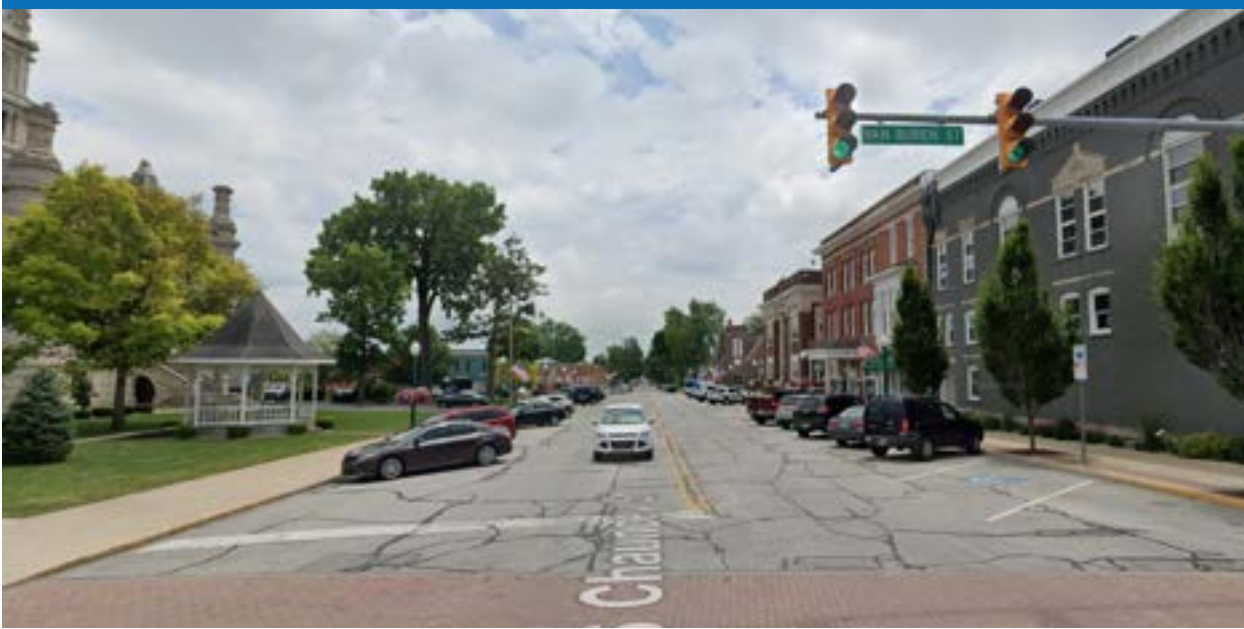
LOCATION 2



Location Map



EXISTING

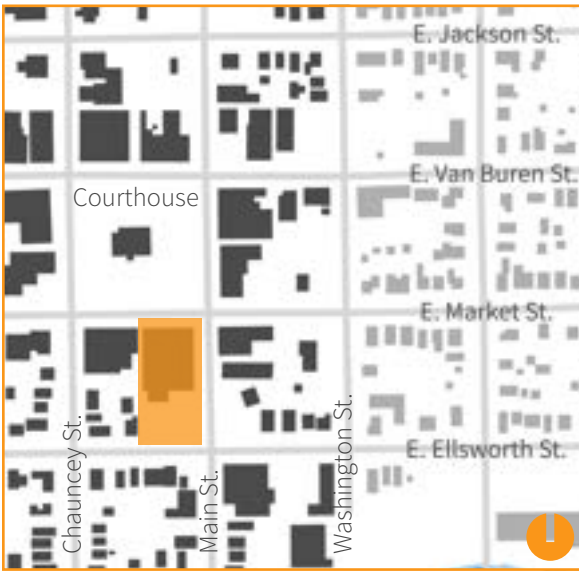


Chauncey Street and Van Buren Street Intersection looking south towards City Hall.

PROPOSED



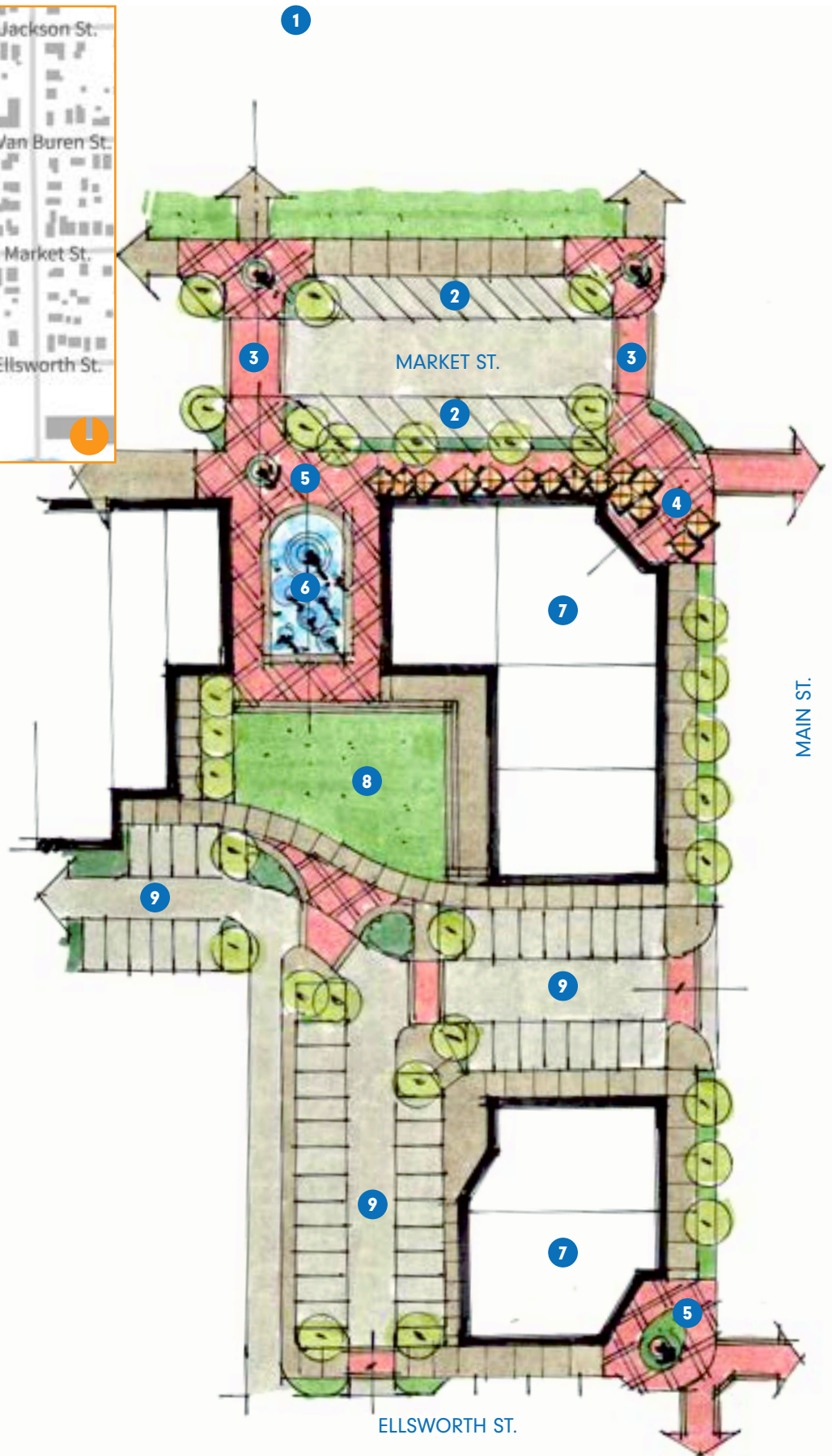
LOCATION 3

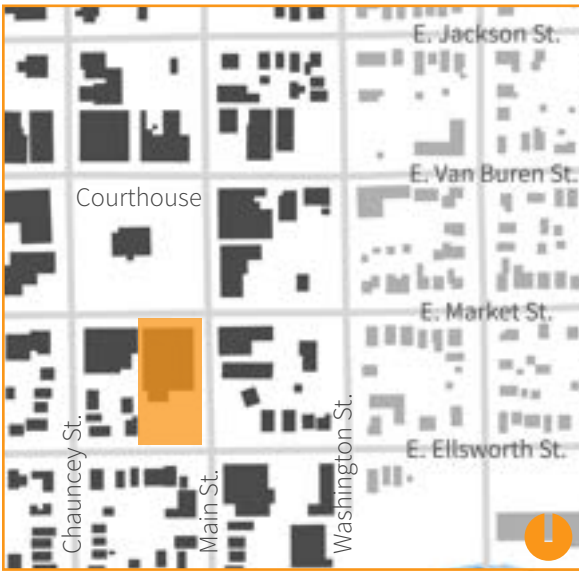


Location Map

DESIGN OPTION 1

- 1 COURTHOUSE
- 2 ANGLED, ON-STREET PARKING
- 3 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- 4 OUTDOOR DINING
- 5 PEDESTRIAN PLAZA
- 6 FOUNTAIN
- 7 MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT
- 8 COMMON GREEN SPACE
- 9 PARKING

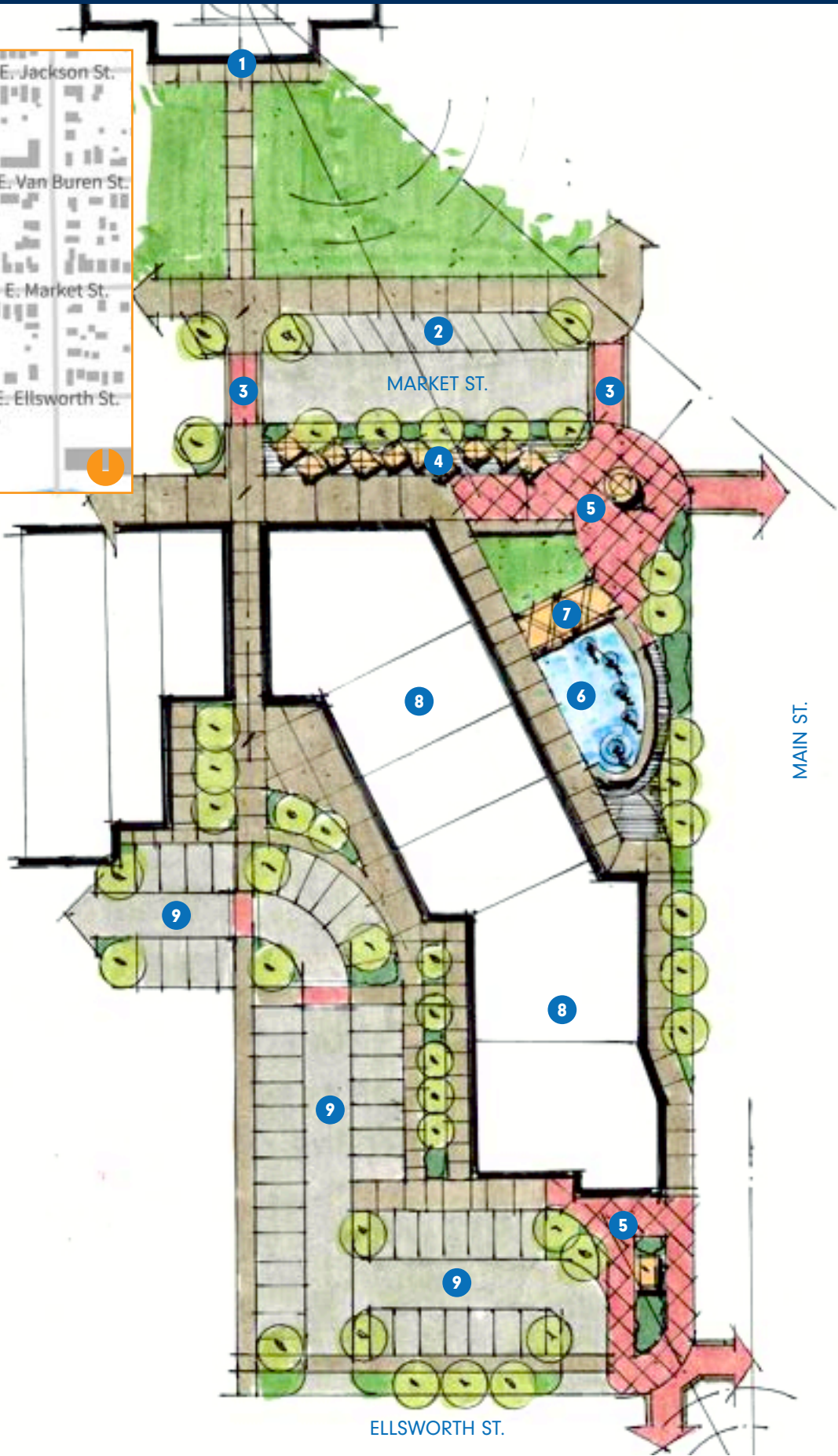




Location Map

DESIGN OPTION 2

- 1 COURTHOUSE
- 2 ANGLED, ON-STREET PARKING
- 3 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- 4 OUTDOOR DINING
- 5 PEDESTRIAN PLAZA
- 6 FOUNTAIN
- 7 PERGOLA
- 8 MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT
- 9 PARKING



GATEWAYS TO DOWNTOWN

GATEWAYS

During the planning process, the importance of a strong entrance sequence from the city limits to the downtown district was brought to light. The existing school campus and views of the courthouse are strong, but other areas leave something to be desired. The next two pages explore potential improvements for the arrival sequences from the south, west, and east. Although outside of the study area, this discussion had value and has been identified in the plan as something of high priority to explore as decisions regarding development and improvements in these areas are decided in the future.



A - Overhead Primary Gateway (Carmel, IN) including downtown district signage, lighting, and pedestrian pathways



D - Bridge Treatment (Wabash, IN) including railings, lighting, pedestrian pathways and overhead signage



Streetscape and Wayfinding Amenities (Spindale, NC)



B and C - Upright Secondary Gateway (Montpelier, VT)



Plantings and Sidewalks (Kingsport, TN)



E - Upright Primary Gateway (Littleton, CO)

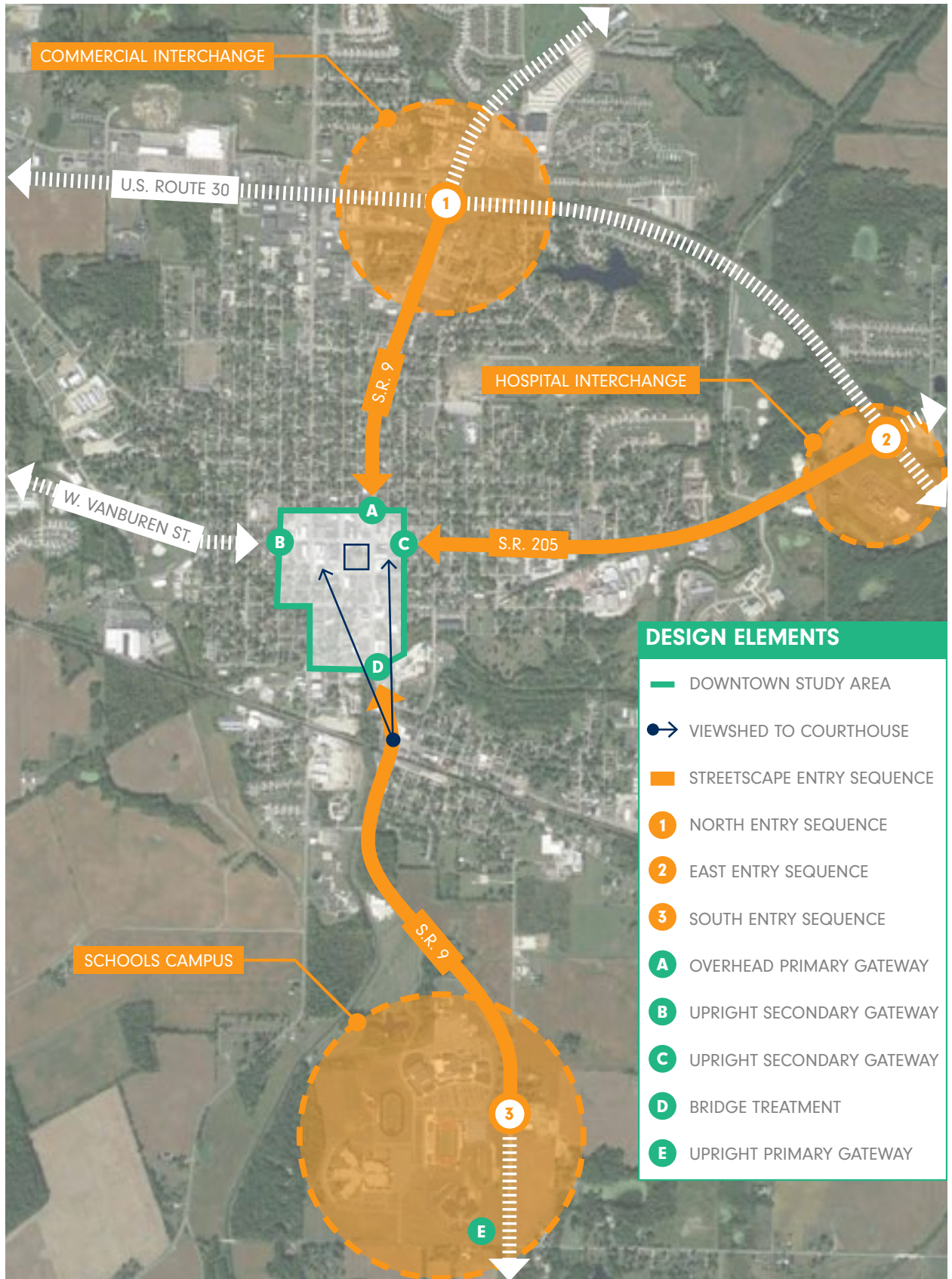


FIGURE 6.2: GATEWAYS

0 mi 0.25 mi 0.5 mi 1 mi



protect STRATEGIES

Protect building integrity (structures).

Ensure codes exist and enforce them.

Lead structural study of existing buildings.

Protect building character (facades).

Increase the max. dollar amount per building in local façade program.

Seek out funding specific to structural improvements.

Engage an architect to develop a facade restoration guidebook.

Protect (and enhance) walkability downtown.

Develop a phased streetscape master plan.

Implement blocks (aesthetic/infrastructure) as funding allows.

PROTECT STRATEGIES

The streetscape hierarchy and facade priority zones are illustrated in the map graphic to the right. Further explanation and imagery can be found on pg. 98.

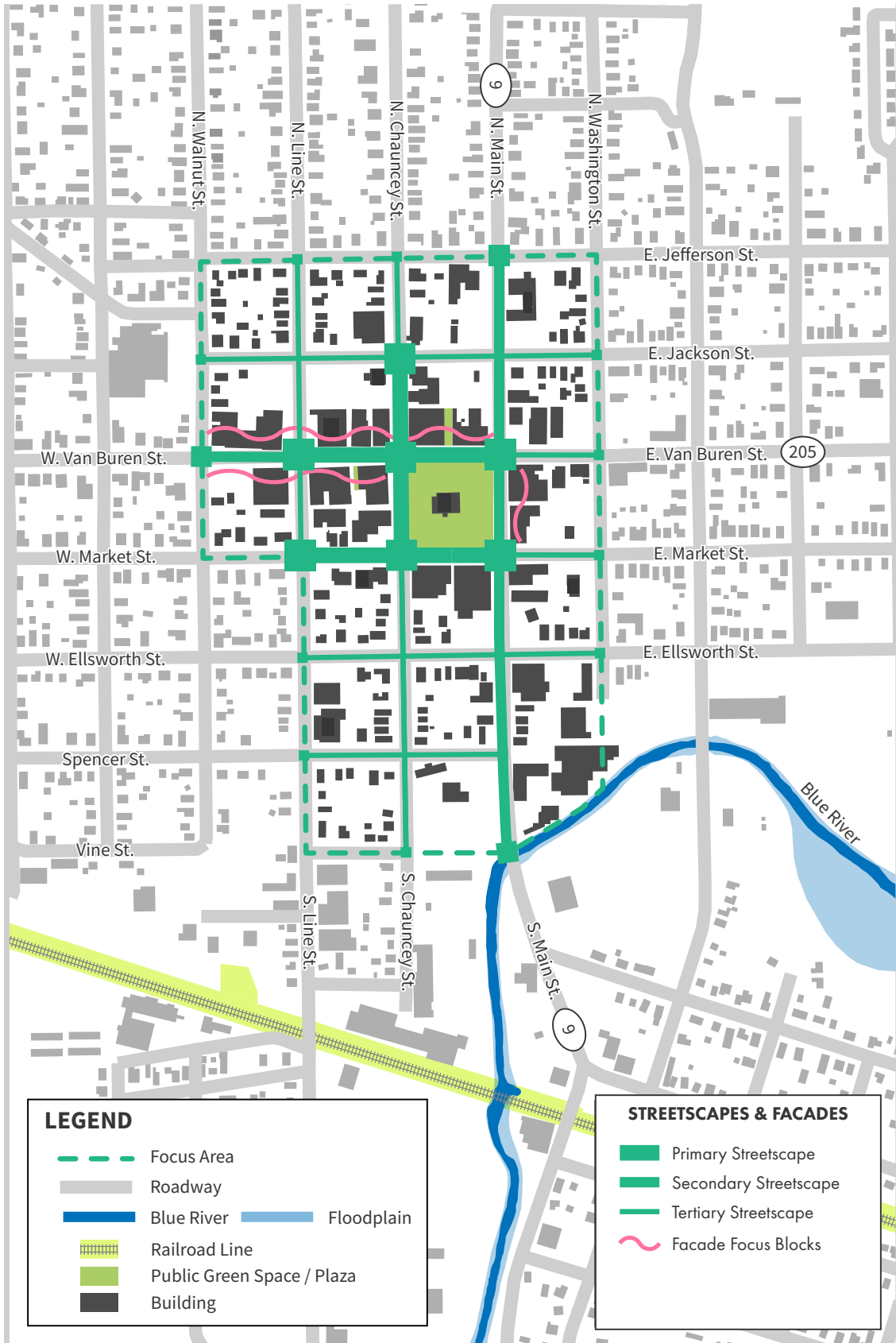


FIGURE 6.3: STREETSCAPES & FACADES

inform STRATEGIES

Inform community identity.

Encourage temporary art installations.

Marketing campaign to encourage inclusivity and welcome diversity.

Inform downtown district(s).

Develop "SQUARE SOUTH" district.

Develop "SQUARE NORTH" district.

Inform downtown development.

Purchase strategic properties for redevelopment.

Develop Requests for Proposals to attract desired development.

INFORM STRATEGIES

The proposed district definition and potential redevelopment opportunities are illustrated in the map graphic to the right. Further explanation and imagery can be found on pg. 99.

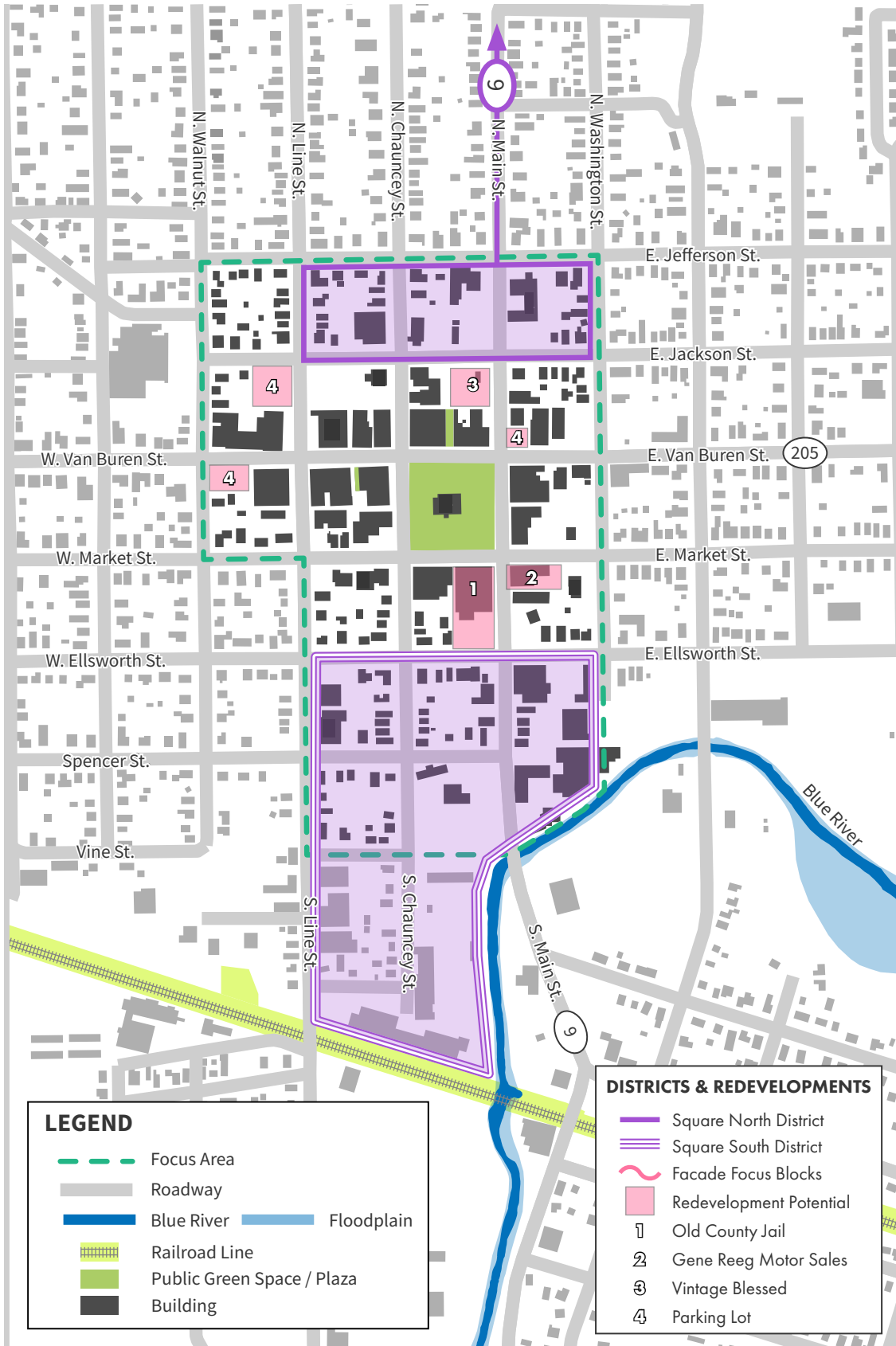


FIGURE 6.4: DISTRICTS & REDEVELOPMENTS



(Top) Digital Historic Walking Tour marker along a sidewalk in downtown Columbia City.

(Middle) Example of street trees, landscape beds, seating, and grand planters used along a streetscape to enhance a pedestrian's experience downtown.

(Bottom) A "pollinator cafe" asks "citizen scientists" to assist with counting pollinator activity within planters along a streetscape.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS & CODE ENFORCEMENT

Historic facades define a downtown's character and charm. Without them, programs like the Digital Historic Walking Tour would be less of a draw. A general concern for the structural stability of many buildings downtown is known, but in order to address the problem, the issues should be more formally recorded. It is recommended the city lead a structural assessment of buildings downtown. This would be voluntary participation by property owners, but may help identify how critical the issues are. Once inventoried and prioritized, the process for seeking out funding sources could begin. Structural issues don't qualify for most available facade funding programs, so funding may need to come from private investors with matching incentives from the city. A review of existing codes should also take place to understand if neglect of existing buildings can be enforced.

PHASED STREETScape

It is important to develop a streetscape masterplan, so phases can be implemented overtime with consistency. A streetscape masterplan would dive more deeply into design considerations for parallel versus angled parking, where to establish bumpouts or curb extensions, and would develop a preferred set of design guidelines for items such as seating, planters, lighting, bike racks, litter receptacles, signage, trees and landscaping. This plan could also take below ground infrastructure improvements into account when developing phasing. More grand and/or interactive planters were also discussed as ways to beautify the streetscape and encourage "citizen scientists" to assist with counting pollinator activity downtown.



(Top) A temporary art installation similar to the “Umbrella Sky” installation in downtown Batesville, Indiana.

(Middle) View of an existing bridge over the Blue River south of downtown Columbia City--potential for a new greenway along the river and gateway for downtown.

(Bottom) The Whitley County Jail will be relocating out of downtown leaving the south side of the square ripe for redevelopment.

TEMPORARY ART

“Umbrella Sky”, a temporary public art installation in Batesville, Indiana was so popular, vendors at the Farmer’s Market saw a 30% increase in sales during the time frame it was installed. Every two years, Greenwood sends out a call for artists to either create new artwork or temporarily lend their existing artwork to the community for installation on preset foundations along a section of their trail. Permanent public art can be difficult to agree on—temporary artwork is easier to negotiate. Non-permanent art installations will attract visitors from outside the community as well as give residents a new reason to go downtown during a set period of time.

DISTRICT DEFINITION

By defining a district north and south of the square, guidelines can be used to direct development. Steering mixed-use and multi-family to the south would allow for the district north of the square to encourage more owner-occupied housing improvements and retail within renovated homes. There are opportunities to restore natural areas along the Blue River to the south creating a greenway and gateway for downtown.

PURCHASE PROPERTIES

What happens with the Whitley County Jail property will greatly impact the next chapter for downtown Columbia City. When the opportunity arises, it is recommended the Redevelopment Commission purchase the property and work with a consultant to develop a Request for Proposal outlining the type of redevelopment that is preferred on this prominent block.

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

	STRATEGY	INITIAL TASK	
connect	Develop a city-wide trails master plan and implement phasing as funding allows.	Apply for funding through the IDOH and engage a consultant team to develop a city-wide trails master plan and/or bike and pedestrian plan with specific projects that can be implemented over time.	
	Create opportunities, special interest projects, or programs specifically geared towards getting the teenage population involved in the success of downtown.	Create a task force including members of the Mayor's Youth Council, school administration representatives, and downtown advocates to develop programs or volunteer opportunities for teens associated with the downtown.	
	Establish programming that connects downtown to the education campus south of downtown.	Programs such as Teen Ambassadors, Teen Tree Tendors, Teens for Trails, or 5K run or bike ride that promotes trail use between the campus and downtown are a few examples.	
attract	Generate opportunities for fine dining.	Create a task force to (1) develop incentives for established restaurateurs to develop a downtown satellite location, (2) inform plan review committees to be sure new builds can accommodate restaurants, (3) create a city-led marketing campaign to attract restaurants downtown.	
	Expand evening programming.	Develop an evening concert series, open mic night, or street dance.	
	Encourage seasonal outdoor dining.	Purchase heaters and igloos. Rent to local restaurants.	
	Develop winter programming.	Develop a downtown winter attraction that would bring people downtown and encourage shopping and dining while they are there.	
	Develop indoor attractions.	Purchase downtown building and issue Request for Proposal for indoor play space, climbing facility, or other indoor play space attraction.	
	Provide casual outdoor dining/socializing space.	Work with local craftsman or high school shop class to develop 'park-let' prototype for temporary outdoor dining. Implement in one location for a season to test and adapt prior to implementing district-wide.	
	Establish a permanent public space.	Choose a preferred location and engage a consultant to develop schematic design plans and a corresponding budget in order to apply for funding and/or fund-raise for the project.	
protect	Ensure codes exist and enforce them.	Review codes and engage consultant to update to allow.	
	Lead structural study of existing buildings.	Develop list of interested participants and engage structural engineer.	
	Develop a guidebook for facade restoration downtown.	Engage architect to develop a guidebook	
	Develop a phased streetscape masterplan.	Engage a landscape architect to develop a streetscape masterplan	
	Implement blocks as funding becomes available.		
inform	Encourage temporary art installations.	Develop program	
	Develop a campaign to encourage inclusivity/welcome diversity	Engage marketing consultant to develop program and implement	
	Develop a "Square South" district	Engage a planning consultant to develop district boundaries, development preferences, land use, and guidelines for building height, density, etc. for each district.	
	Develop a "Square North" district		
	Purchase strategic properties for redevelopment.	Create a task force to jump start this initiative and purchase property. Engage a consultant to develop an RFP	
	Develop an RFP to attract desired development.		

	BUDGET	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE
	\$20,000	3-5 years	Plan: Indiana Department of Health Planning Grants for Bike-Ped Improvements Build: IDNR Indiana Trails Program and/or IDNR Next Level Trails	City of Columbia City
	-	2-3 years	Teen Tree Tendors: IDNR Community and Urban Forestry Grants Teens for Trails: Indiana Greenways Foundation PPS Community Placemaking Grants	City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect Whitley County Consolidated Schools
	-	2-5 years	Local Funds	City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect Whitley County Chamber of Commerce Redevelopment Commission
	-	1-2 years		City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	\$10,000	1-2 years	IHCDA CreatINg Places Crowdfunding PPS Community Placemaking Grants	City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	TBD	1-2 years		City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	-	5-7 years		Redevelopment Commission
	\$10,000	1-2 years		City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	\$2.0M	5-7 years	READI 2.0 PPS Community Placemaking Grant Project for Public Spaces Community Placemaking Grant Grants opportunities related to playgrounds (see appendix)	City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	\$5,000	1-2 years	Local Funds	City of Columbia City Columbia City Connect
	\$40,000	1-2 years		
	\$25,000	1-2 years		
	\$30-50K	3-4 years	Plan: Local Funds Build: INDOT Federal Highway Main Street Revitalization (when available)	
	Varies		Indiana Arts Council	Columbia City Arts Council
	-	1-2 years	Local Funds	City of Columbia City Whitley County Chamber of Commerce
	\$20,000	2-5 years		City of Columbia City Redevelopment Commission
	-	2-7 years		Redevelopment Commission



CHAPTER 07

APPENDIX

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. MEETING MINUTES..... 104-111
2. PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS..... 112-67

MEETING MINUTES

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.1 - MINUTES

August 13th, 2023

HWC led the group through several exercises—the following is a summary of comment received:

- **What do you love about Columbia City:**
 - Have maintained small town feel while embracing growth
 - Open to new ideas and willing to try new things
 - Ability to get involved, have a voice that will be heard, and make a difference
 - Community that helps each other out
 - Mayor is accessible and government is working well
 - Believe that as downtown goes, so goes rest of community, that's why downtown investment is so important
 - Unique for small town because it has all the necessary amenities that many towns have lost (hospital, grocery stores, diverse shops downtown)
 - Safety
 - Agricultural community
- **Identity (what is Columbia City known for):**
 - Still trying to figure that out, this has been an on-going issue for the community
 - Halfway point between Warsaw and Fort Wayne, but much more affordable
 - Good spot for medical device firms
 - Were the largest manufacturer of bell bottom jeans (Blue Bell ? research)
 - New high school
 - Vocational program is excellent, one of best in state
- **What do you want it to be known for:**
 - For people to think of Columbia City like they think of Roanoke
 - Things to do, nice restaurants, good destination
 - Make downtown more walkable
 - Destination for families, this is the place to come for a day trip
 - More welcoming
 - When you park and get out of car...amenities...landscape, benches, etc
 - People will stop, stay, and spend money
 - Other races and cultures
 - Conservative community, which is ok, but have appeared obviously not welcoming of other races/cultures
 - Connect parks to downtown with better trail system
 - Existing system is great and widely used, but need to better direct visitors to downtown, not highway
- **What is working well:**
 - Columbia City Connect and their activities, especially first Fridays (going on 8 years)
 - May to October
 - Other communities struggle because all food trucks come here
 - Good mix of established downtown businesses and newer ones, service and retail
 - Doing better than in past when it was all service and sidewalks empty at 5 pm
 - Courthouse square and gazebo, willing to close streets for events
 - Addition of apartments and housing downtown has been good, especially in older buildings
 - Additional parking has been very helpful
 - On north-south streets it is unlimited (no time limits)
 - Van Buren Street signed as 2 hours but not enforced
 - Started Arts Commission earlier this year
- **Challenges:**

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.1 - MINUTES

August 13th, 2023

- Intersection of two state highways – Van Buren (SR 205) and Main (SR 9) is a dangerous intersection
- Large trucks downtown are a concern
 - Backing out of parking is scary
 - Multiple light posts have been hit
 - Concern with weight of some big trucks
- Have a number of buildings that need work (façade, roof, foundation)
 - Drive down alleys, that tells better story than along sidewalks
 - City has robust façade program, all the nice buildings have taken part
- Parking not issue right now, but as we work to increase housing, could become problematic
 - Some mixed opinions in group...think need clear, readily accessible parking
 - Visitors don't know can park in Post Office lot because not signed
- Don't do 'pretty' buildings because fiscally conservative
 - If we want to invest in aesthetic enhancements, need to overcome attitude that it would be frivolous spending
- **Physical conditions:**
 - Street trees, either dying or growing out of control with little in between
 - Courthouse as public space is great
 - Condition of sidewalks/curbs
 - Need more trash cans (State Farm area?...don't know where this is)
 - Who is responsible for maintenance?
 - Street dept does trash, flowers, etc
 - Share tree care w/ tree board
- **Miscellaneous:**
 - Need to determine a better way of parking downtown
 - Long trucks parked on angle, difficult to see around when backing up
 - Compact only spaces, maybe in key locations
 - Programming
 - First Fridays
 - Third Thursdays – focus on arts
 - Historic walking tour app
 - Old Settlers day
 - ? Day car show downtown
 - Saturday farmers market on courthouse square
 - Other one off festivals/events
 - Market
 - Service gaps – Clothing store(s)
 - Nice restaurant (date night, anniversary place)
 - Think there is a market for it because Tri-Lakes restaurant example...had \$35 Friday special and always sell out, but chef just went to Fort Wayne
 - Chapmans planned for more food, but can't keep cook

MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.1 - MINUTES

August 13th, 2023

Youth Council

1 pm

All born and raised in Columbia City

Love:

- Inclusion of younger artists with murals
 - High school student just did koi pond mural
- Third Thursdays and first Fridays
 - Eat at food trucks
- See growth and getting bigger but are keeping small town feel
- Know everyone
- Old Settlers - suitable for all ages

Walkable – only one student can walk downtown because close to Blue River Trail

Reasons to come downtown:

- Eating and walking around (and people watching)
 - Brew-ha
- Events

Other downtowns as good examples:

- Broad Ripple and trail system
- Promenade Park in Fort Wayne

Any use of Blue River?

- No, not very 'blue' also not big enough

Blue River Trail

- Can go from YMCA to downtown to high school

After college, why or why not come back

- Pros – affordability and location
- Con – Limited career opportunities

Needs:

- More interesting shops
- Nothing for youth to do outside of events

Parking – not an issue

Street trees – good, bc about only green downtown

What is Columbia City known for?

- Nothing...say 20 minutes west of Fort Wayne
- Not a lot that is original, yes small shops, but just like a lot of small towns

Miscellaneous:

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.1 - MINUTES

August 13th, 2023

- HS is approx. 1300, about 270 per class, only 8 students away from capacity (? Fact check)
- If choosing between Columbia City, Warsaw, and Fort Wayne, would not pick Columbia City
- Working on recreation facility where old school was
 - Pickleball, other sport courts, open space
- Sidewalks – around courthouse are good, once into residential areas are bad
- Only safe place to cross 30 is trail by Kroger
 - If could cross 30, yes, would walk downtown
- Have lots of parades – memorial day, old settlers, 4th of July, homecoming

MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.2 – MINUTES

July 20th, 2023

HWC led a discussion including a range of topics—the following remarks were made:

- **Outdoor dining during winter?**
 - Activate all year-long with igloos, heaters...maybe outdoor dining on rooftops?
- **Need for public space outside of closed street?**
 - Number of times on Friday where students go to the high school football game --- starts at 7:00 and they want something between evening school activity and start of game... get something to eat, Brew-ha, walk on trail... what else to do downtown??? Find an active space for ping-pong and other “yard game” activities for teens and others
 - There needs to be more than one reason to get to downtown... especially for families to load into the car and visit. There needs to be at least three things to convince them... ice cream, walking the shops, and yard games for example.
- **Spaces for activation???**
 - Jail land --- mayor knows there has been minor conversations on the side about the future – none of the commissioners have provided an indication. Mayor will not buy the land but will allow the county to turnover... could be an opportunity but the building is too expensive to renovate. Located on busy street – good visibility but safety concerns as public space. New jail to open 2024.
 - Bowen Center – potential police station in the future? More reusable building than the jail due to the interior layout. New Bowen center currently under construction, to open within the year.
 - South main street corridor redevelopment... especially with relocation of the school. There is a trail connection planned from high school to downtown... getting ready to go to bid with Next Level Trail grant money. The trail stays in the right of way along main as a 10’ trail that connects to the Blue River trail.
 - Triangular lot on northern edge of railroad as a mix-use development (former brownfield site currently going through remediation by the City)
- **How do we feel about street trees?**
 - Street trees first installed properly, but overtime, later installations and streetscape updates have made tree inclusion difficult.
 - Traverse City streetscape = large, raised planter beds of trees and natives with interactive pollinator component --- connection to STEM program with high school.
 - Streetscape – pedestrian environment needs that component of street trees.
 - Street trees are nice to provide shade, there needs to be a combination of trees and signage --- more strategic placement to provide vehicular signage visibility versus pedestrian signage visibility.
 - Robust, substantial planters – more dramatic
 - Loves a combination of trees and planters
- **Connectivity to the Blue River worth exploring?**
 - Bridge on state Road 9 and adjacent beautification... maybe some trees along the area with the river?
 - The Blue River needs to be seen as an amenity... allow people to access the water and a green space away from the downtown.
 - Kayak launch – Eagle Park amenity at the old school site BUT the river is an afterthought to a lot of property owners that back up to it.
 - There needs to be a river cleanup.
 - Example: Lily Center at Grace college
 - Eagle river watershed study and exploration --- where does the research stand? Columbia City at the top of the Eagle River watershed.
 - Topography is a major challenge along the river – where the railroad goes over the river ---- Radio Road and 9 has a nice prospect view of the stone railroad bridge.

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.2 - MINUTES

July 20th, 2023

- **Connectivity North of Downtown**
 - Shops at the Sanctuary and the General store are draws people north
 - So much residential to the north – so already walkable areas.
 - Imaginary line between Jefferson and north street and Main and Line as being residential corridors (turned away Casey general store at north and main for that reason) --- types of uses are more directed towards mom-and-pop stores, not chain.
 - Jackson corridor to Marshall building could be an opportunity for northern expansion of downtown amenities.
 - Vanburen Street going west has underutilized properties on the west side of downtown – harsh transitions as you travel the corridor – downtown, residential, commercial, park...
- **Downtown Housing**
 - Preserving main street opportunity through OCRA grants --- Columbia City's robust façade program has provided nice street front but need money for roofs and foundations and 2nd and 3rd story renovations --- preserving main street grant through OCRA is JUST façade and streetscape.
 - Apartments for workforce housing on upper levels?
 - OCRA will not touch upper-level living spaces because they do not have the capacity to administer HUD dollars for housing.
 - Property owners have the space but not the funds to invest in upgrades for rentable, usable space.
 - Columbia City Façade Grant – owner applies and City pays for a portion but a business owner has to pay upfront 100% and then get reimbursed which can be a challenge.

MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No.3 - MINUTES

September 12th, 2023

HWC presented proposed recommendations and the following discussion was had:

- **CONNECT**
 - Trail to the high school is at 90% design, hopefully bidding by year end
- **ATTRACT**
 - Add something about attract new businesses
 - Yes, need restaurants for dinner/entertaining clients
 - Larger offsite meeting space
 - Chauncey Street closure idea – Concept 1
 - Could that include converting traffic signal to three-way stop?
 - Public space downtown should definitely be part of plan
 - Like idea of it being connected to city hall
 - Could both sites be combined showing both ideas (north and south of Van Buren)
 - Committee does want a concept of public space on the jail site
 - Star Bank has basement with large meeting space, kitchen, bathrooms that is available for rental/events
- **PROTECT**
 - Nobody is proactively trying to acquire problem buildings
 - Lots of rear additions were never built well and are the most dangerous
 - Idea discussed to tear some of rear addition off to remove danger and create parking
 - Streetscapes are very important
 - 200 block of west Van Buren – could shift one side to parallel parking to gain additional space for larger trucks/safer backing up into traffic
 - Star Bank owns two surface parking lots, one is very underutilized
 - Bank did sign some spaces for employees only, but nearby retailer complained
 - Façade program – amount per bldg. is less now that it used to be, went several years without anyone requesting funds
 - Had issues with people making them look a little better but not any more useful/valuable
 - EDC revolving loan fund – haven't had local interest lately (currently one in South Whitley)
 - Need to use carrot and stick approach at same time
 - Once figure out what grant you're eligible for, may be too far into process
 - Need to help bldg. owners understand/educate
- **INFORM**
 - Potential redevelopment site
 - There are people who want to rent building space, but owners won't lease
 - Need to hold bldg. owners accountable
 - Code enforcement and fines
 - County planning and bldg. has not been active in pursuing/addressing structural issues
 - Pro-property rights makes it tough to hold owners accountable without clear health/safety violations
 - See Wabash as example
 - How many vacancies do we really have downtown?
 - Not much on first floors, yes on upper floors
 - Does upper floor office need to be ADA accessible?
 - Bowen center just listed for \$926k (bldg. caddy corner from city hall)
 - Would be interesting to know where people park during first Friday when street is close
 - Many use the county lot



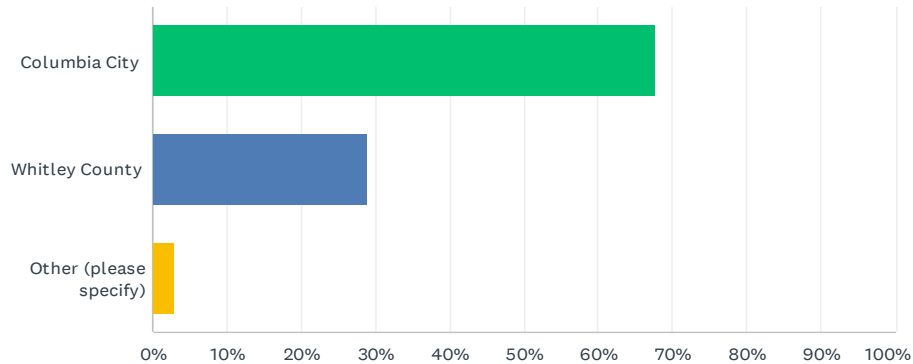
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PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY RESULTS

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q1 Where do you live?

Answered: 423 Skipped: 2

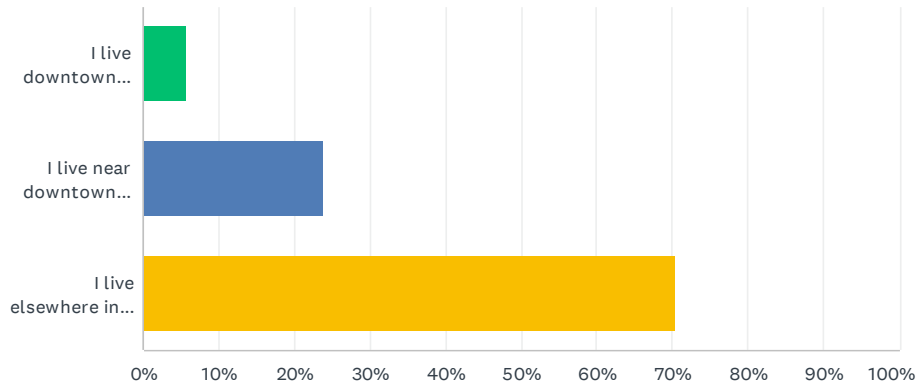


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Columbia City	67.85% 287
Whitley County	29.08% 123
Other (please specify)	3.07% 13
TOTAL	423

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Warsaw	7/14/2023 6:12 AM
2	Noble county	7/10/2023 7:30 PM
3	Work in Whitley county	7/10/2023 2:13 PM
4	Noble County	7/10/2023 2:08 PM
5	FW, Other side of county line road	7/10/2023 1:31 PM
6	Outside of the county because there's not enough affordable housing	7/10/2023 1:02 PM
7	E	6/18/2023 5:02 PM
8	Warsaw, formerly CC	6/16/2023 10:06 AM
9	Both	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
10	Loon Lake	6/15/2023 10:24 PM
11	Fort Wayne	6/15/2023 8:50 PM
12	Allen county	6/15/2023 9:41 AM
13	Big Lake	6/15/2023 9:32 AM

Q2 Do you live in or near downtown?

Answered: 422 Skipped: 3

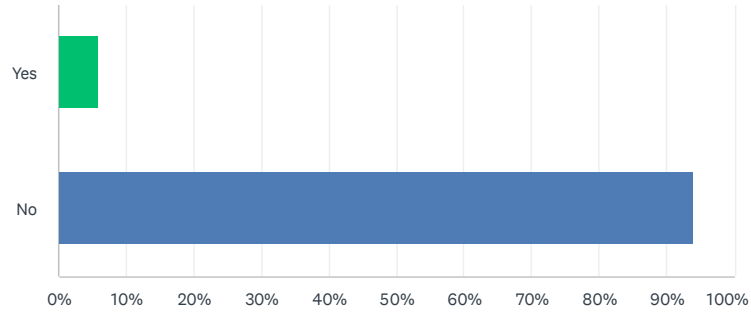


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live downtown (inside red area on map)	5.69%	24
I live near downtown (inside orange area on map)	23.93%	101
I live elsewhere in the community	70.38%	297
TOTAL		422

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q3 Are you a downtown business owner?

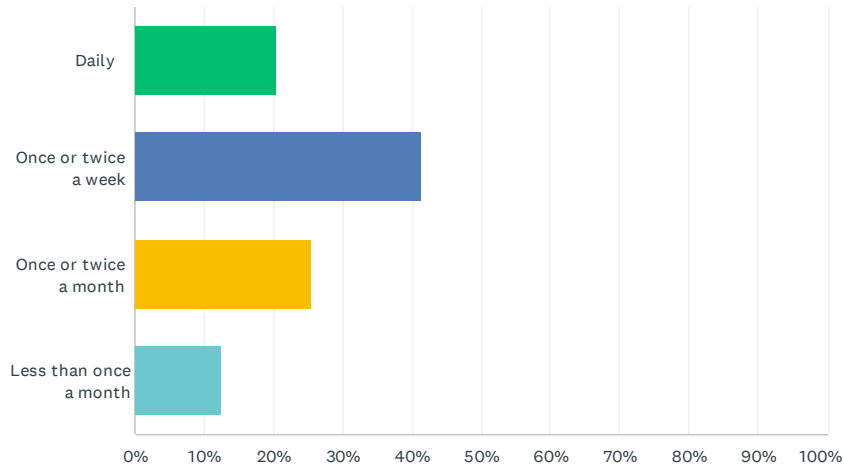
Answered: 424 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	5.90%	25
No	94.10%	399
TOTAL		424

Q4 How often is downtown your final destination?

Answered: 423 Skipped: 2

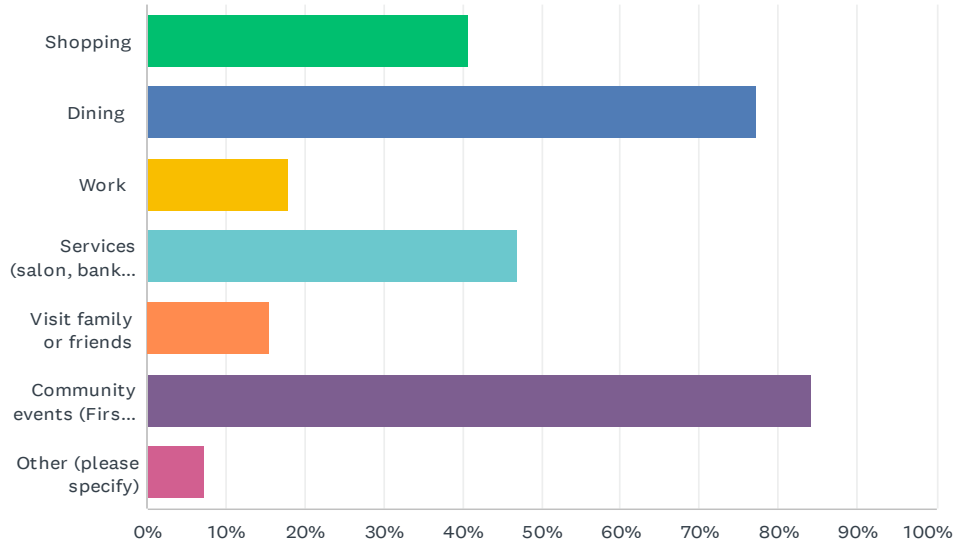


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	20.57%	87
Once or twice a week	41.37%	175
Once or twice a month	25.53%	108
Less than once a month	12.53%	53
TOTAL		423

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q5 What do you go downtown for currently? (check all that apply)

Answered: 424 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Shopping	40.80% 173
Dining	77.12% 327
Work	17.92% 76
Services (salon, bank, attorney, courthouse, etc.)	46.93% 199
Visit family or friends	15.57% 66
Community events (First Friday's, Farmer's Market, etc.)	84.20% 357
Other (please specify)	7.31% 31
Total Respondents: 424	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Occasional pop-ups	7/23/2023 7:32 AM
2	Post Office	7/22/2023 2:12 PM
3	Meetings	7/20/2023 7:28 PM
4	Dance	7/13/2023 9:52 AM
5	Walk around the courthouse or enjoy the parks; previously lived downtown near courthouse until 2021	7/12/2023 7:56 PM
6	Church	7/11/2023 8:29 PM

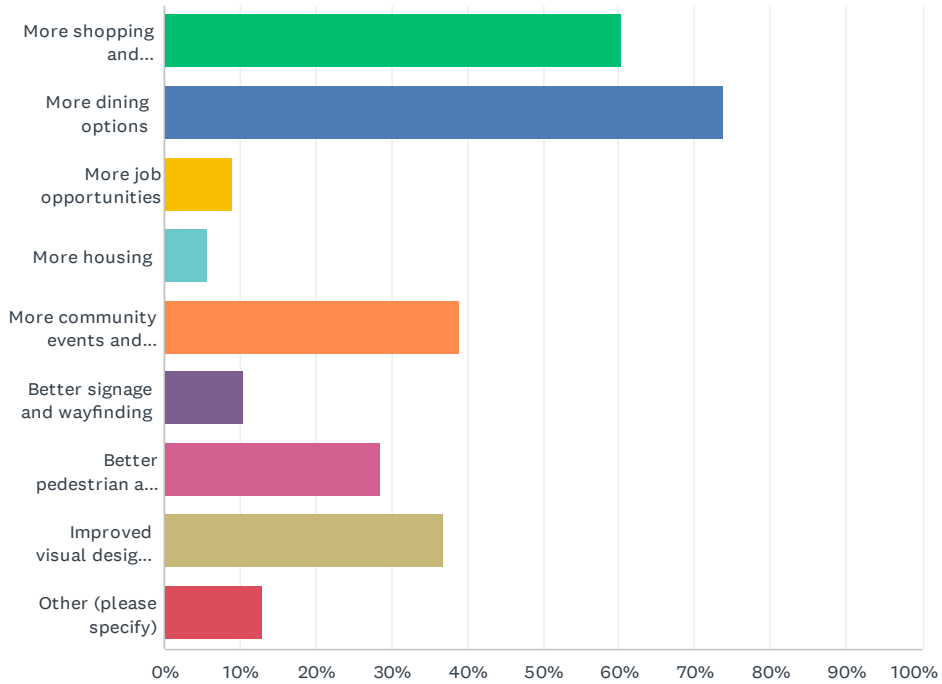
Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

7	Vegan desserts	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
8	Moo-Over	7/11/2023 12:17 PM
9	I have booths in both antique stores.	7/10/2023 5:30 PM
10	Brawha	7/10/2023 5:20 PM
11	Walking downtown, on and around the courthouse	7/10/2023 4:34 PM
12	I have my Business in several Stores there .	7/10/2023 4:07 PM
13	Next Generation Dance Studio	7/10/2023 2:55 PM
14	Church	7/10/2023 2:08 PM
15	Dance Studio	7/8/2023 9:33 PM
16	Walking	6/26/2023 9:09 PM
17	BE comics	6/24/2023 1:39 PM
18	I make deliveries to Stores that carry our product	6/19/2023 8:45 AM
19	Brewha	6/16/2023 8:16 PM
20	YMCA, library	6/15/2023 10:24 PM
21	Elks Lodge	6/15/2023 9:46 PM
22	The Center	6/15/2023 8:44 PM
23	Walking	6/15/2023 5:43 PM
24	Home	6/15/2023 4:23 PM
25	I live there	6/15/2023 2:52 PM
26	Haunted Jail	6/15/2023 2:27 PM
27	meetings	6/15/2023 1:29 PM
28	Daily walks	6/15/2023 12:36 PM
29	Post office	6/15/2023 12:07 PM
30	Moo over is my favorite	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
31	The Warehouse Church (Sunday service, CR program, Forklift, serving)	6/15/2023 9:41 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q6 What do you wish was offered or improved upon downtown? (check all that apply)

Answered: 423 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
More shopping and entertainment options	60.28% 255
More dining options	73.76% 312
More job opportunities	8.98% 38
More housing	5.67% 24
More community events and programming	39.01% 165
Better signage and wayfinding	10.40% 44
Better pedestrian and bike friendly facilities	28.61% 121
Improved visual design and aesthetic of buildings and streetscape	36.88% 156
Other (please specify)	13.00% 55
Total Respondents: 423	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
---	------------------------	------

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

1	I believe we could turn somewhere downtown into an art district where a section of homes could become small shops...an artist village of sorts. Also in need of more quality restaurants/cafes and another grocery store	7/23/2023 7:32 AM
2	Parking	7/14/2023 6:12 AM
3	Downtown may not be the best location but we LOVE the Leo-Cedarville, IN "River Garden" and FW Promenade Park that we our kids call "water rocks" -- it's a phenomenal splashpad. We'd love to see the old HS lot (near Fahl Aq) be turned into something like that. We like the splash pad but love the river rock option; or indoor playground for usage for winter.	7/12/2023 7:56 PM
4	Parking for events	7/11/2023 11:06 PM
5	Outdoor dining spaces	7/11/2023 8:29 PM
6	Vegan options-dinners	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
7	Vegan options	7/11/2023 12:24 PM
8	Vegan options	7/11/2023 12:17 PM
9	Better parking options	7/11/2023 8:45 AM
10	Dog park and more pickle ball courts	7/11/2023 8:15 AM
11	More parking	7/10/2023 11:13 PM
12	Dining with lunch and dinner hours and outdoor seating	7/10/2023 10:01 PM
13	50s diner or something similar	7/10/2023 8:26 PM
14	Affordable childcare facilities	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
15	By Visual design, I would mean keeping the historical look of downtown, keeping the buildings and artworks from when they were constructed	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
16	We need to stop promoting and having so many things with alcohol. The more we promote it, and the more children see it, the more think they can't have fun without, because it is always around. You can have fun and quality times without it. I also think that ALL streetlights and lighting should be black, to make our town look more distinguishable.	7/10/2023 5:30 PM
17	Downtown and town in general looking cleaner	7/10/2023 4:41 PM
18	Clean it up Paint , remodel Store fronts , Bring in more Small Business owners , fill all shops that Are Not Open all Week ! Open your Doors or put Shop up for Sale ! What Does Our Mayor really do .	7/10/2023 4:07 PM
19	I love how this town has grown over the years	7/10/2023 2:13 PM
20	More features for pets. (Public fountains for dogs.)	7/10/2023 1:32 PM
21	Parking, living in town is wonderful, besides parking during evenings, and events. Old Settlers, First Fridays, etc.	7/10/2023 1:30 PM
22	Shops staying open a bit later in the day.	7/10/2023 1:15 PM
23	The parking sucks	7/10/2023 12:58 PM
24	Better parking options, less congestion	6/22/2023 10:04 AM
25	A book store	6/19/2023 8:37 PM
26	Lot's of the buildings aren't taken care of	6/18/2023 8:36 PM
27	Better safety for drivers, walkers, and bikes & better parking	6/17/2023 9:58 AM
28	Community Events are getting much ether!	6/16/2023 10:46 PM
29	Dog park	6/16/2023 8:08 PM
30	Wish the business had regular hours.	6/16/2023 1:33 AM
31	Fewer government and business offices	6/15/2023 10:50 PM

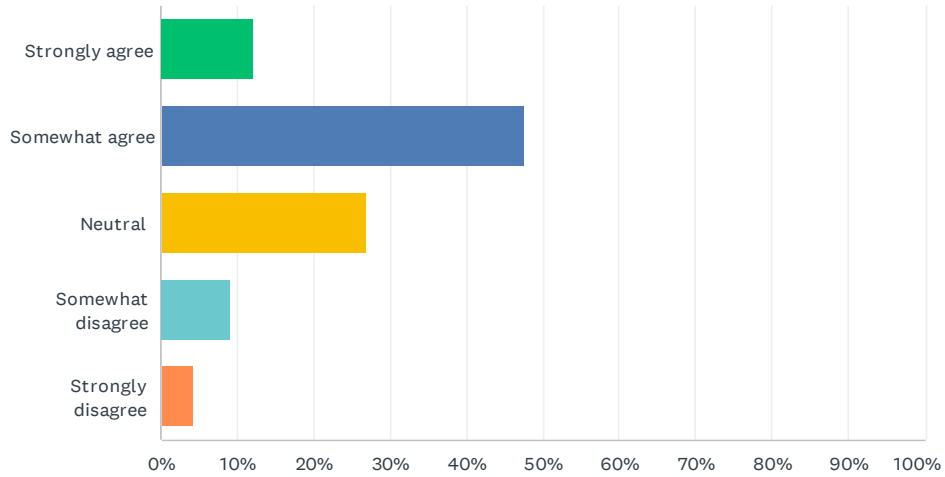
Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

32	Fewer government buildings	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
33	City wide garage sale. Expand pool to old high school property real money maker	6/15/2023 9:58 PM
34	Ban pickup and van angle parking or create a safer alternative.	6/15/2023 9:46 PM
35	I am happy with downtown, I would like more done with our parks.	6/15/2023 7:11 PM
36	parking	6/15/2023 5:57 PM
37	Better options for parking. A garage, etc.	6/15/2023 5:26 PM
38	More parking availability	6/15/2023 2:53 PM
39	Bike trails and walking	6/15/2023 2:45 PM
40	Dog friendly shops	6/15/2023 1:22 PM
41	Senior activities	6/15/2023 12:07 PM
42	Parking	6/15/2023 10:43 AM
43	Can there be signs or police giving tickets/fines for people jaywalking through traffic from The Downtown to the parking at the Courthouse. Happens daily. Someone is going to get hit at some point.	6/15/2023 10:41 AM
44	better traffic flow and parking	6/15/2023 10:25 AM
45	Parking	6/15/2023 10:22 AM
46	Outdoor dining	6/15/2023 9:54 AM
47	Please get better parking. There's hardly any room and it's hard to see pulling out of the spots there currently. I would love to see more walking friendly areas like parks and play areas for children and dogs.	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
48	Parking	6/15/2023 9:35 AM
49	Making all the buildings fresh and new looking	6/15/2023 9:20 AM
50	Parking for downtown workers	6/14/2023 12:27 PM
51	Parking, ease of access for older ppl	6/14/2023 11:24 AM
52	A nighttime area for people to hangout with rope lights, seating, maybe small turf area, etc.	6/13/2023 4:00 PM
53	Some kind of signage at Line St. and Van Buren. If someone is turning left on Line, going around them is illegal and can cause an accident.	6/13/2023 2:05 PM
54	Dog friendly	6/13/2023 1:29 PM
55	Parking, big trucks issue	6/13/2023 1:26 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q7 Downtown is an active and exciting place.

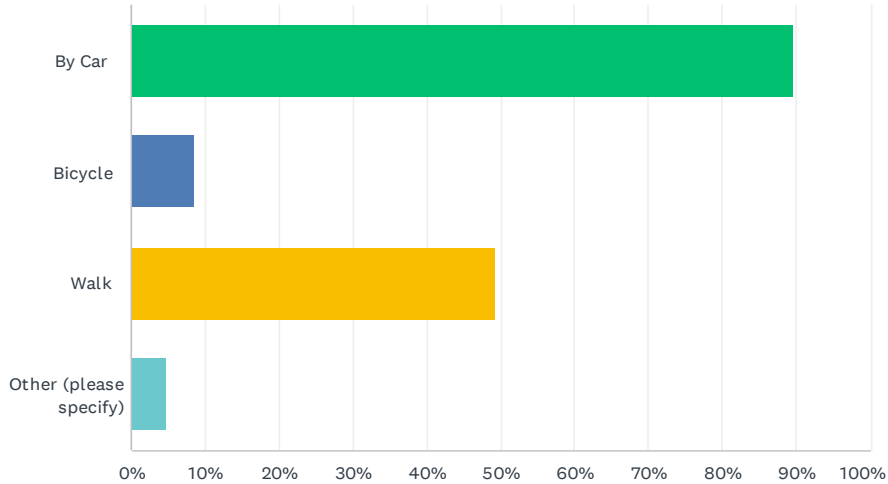
Answered: 425 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	12.24%	52
Somewhat agree	47.53%	202
Neutral	26.82%	114
Somewhat disagree	9.18%	39
Strongly disagree	4.24%	18
TOTAL		425

Q8 How do you typically get to and around downtown? (check all that apply)

Answered: 424 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
By Car	89.62% 380
Bicycle	8.49% 36
Walk	49.29% 209
Other (please specify)	4.72% 20
Total Respondents: 424	

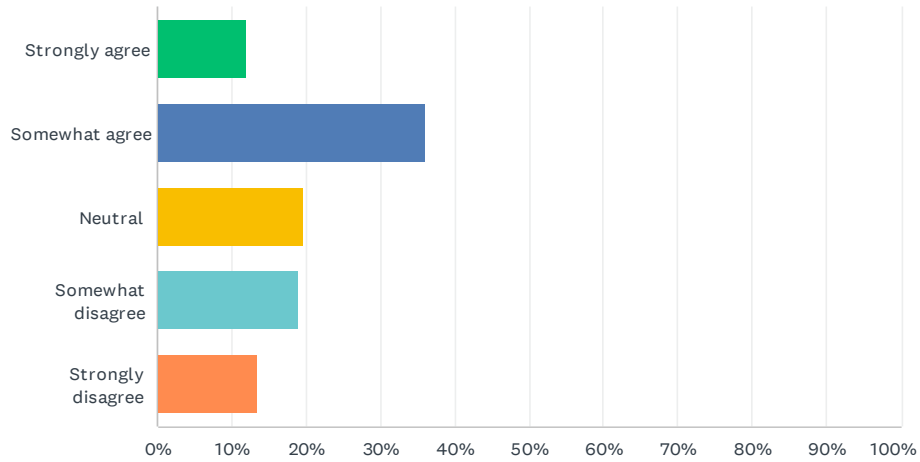
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Golf cart	7/13/2023 11:36 PM
2	Golf cart	7/10/2023 6:58 PM
3	Golf cart	7/10/2023 5:50 PM
4	Golf cart	7/10/2023 5:20 PM
5	Utv	7/10/2023 2:34 PM
6	Golf cart	7/10/2023 2:26 PM
7	All the above plus golfcart.	7/10/2023 2:14 PM
8	Golf Cart	7/10/2023 1:29 PM
9	Golf cart	7/10/2023 1:08 PM
10	Parking sucks, I have to park elsewhere and walk	6/22/2023 10:04 AM

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11	Power wheelchair or scooter	6/16/2023 5:08 PM
12	Golf cart	6/15/2023 9:01 PM
13	Side by side	6/15/2023 7:09 PM
14	golf cart	6/15/2023 5:57 PM
15	Golf cart	6/15/2023 10:50 AM
16	Golf cart	6/15/2023 9:52 AM
17	There's always cars everywhere and not much to attract walking and biking and hanging out in the downtown area	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
18	Golf cart	6/15/2023 9:39 AM
19	Golf Cart	6/15/2023 9:36 AM
20	Golf cart	6/13/2023 1:26 PM

Q9 It is usually convenient to park downtown.

Answered: 425 Skipped: 0

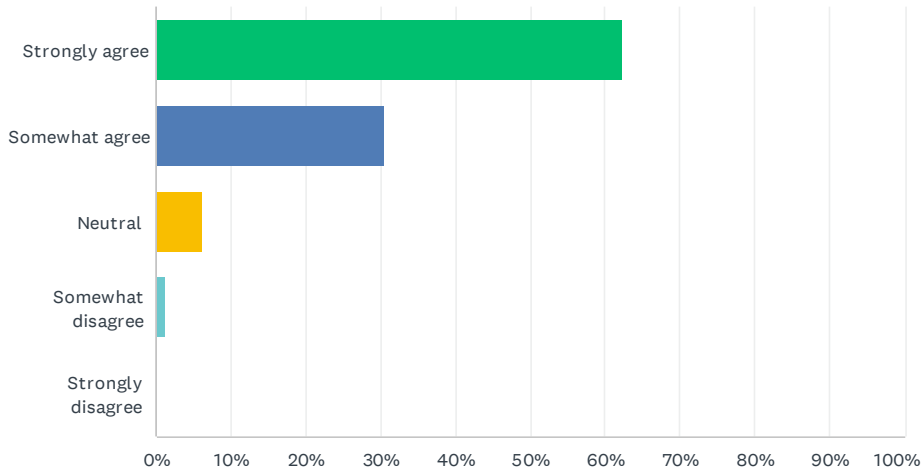


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	12.00%	51
Somewhat agree	36.00%	153
Neutral	19.53%	83
Somewhat disagree	19.06%	81
Strongly disagree	13.41%	57
TOTAL		425

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q10 Downtown is safe.

Answered: 423 Skipped: 2

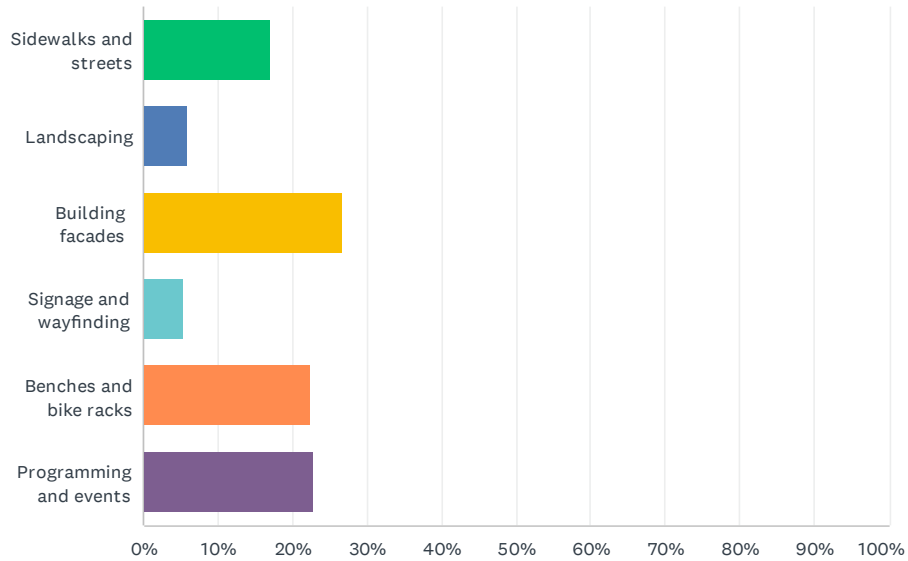


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	62.17%	263
Somewhat agree	30.50%	129
Neutral	6.15%	26
Somewhat disagree	1.18%	5
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		423

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q11 Downtown most needs to improve its:

Answered: 421 Skipped: 4

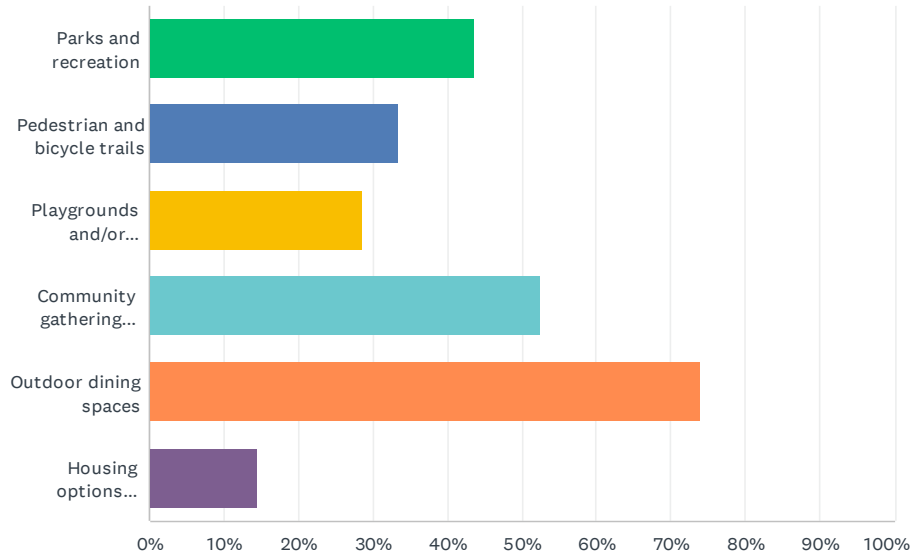


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Sidewalks and streets	17.10% 72
Landscaping	5.94% 25
Building facades	26.60% 112
Signage and wayfinding	5.23% 22
Benches and bike racks	22.33% 94
Programming and events	22.80% 96
TOTAL	421

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q12 I would like to see more of the following in downtown: (check all that apply)

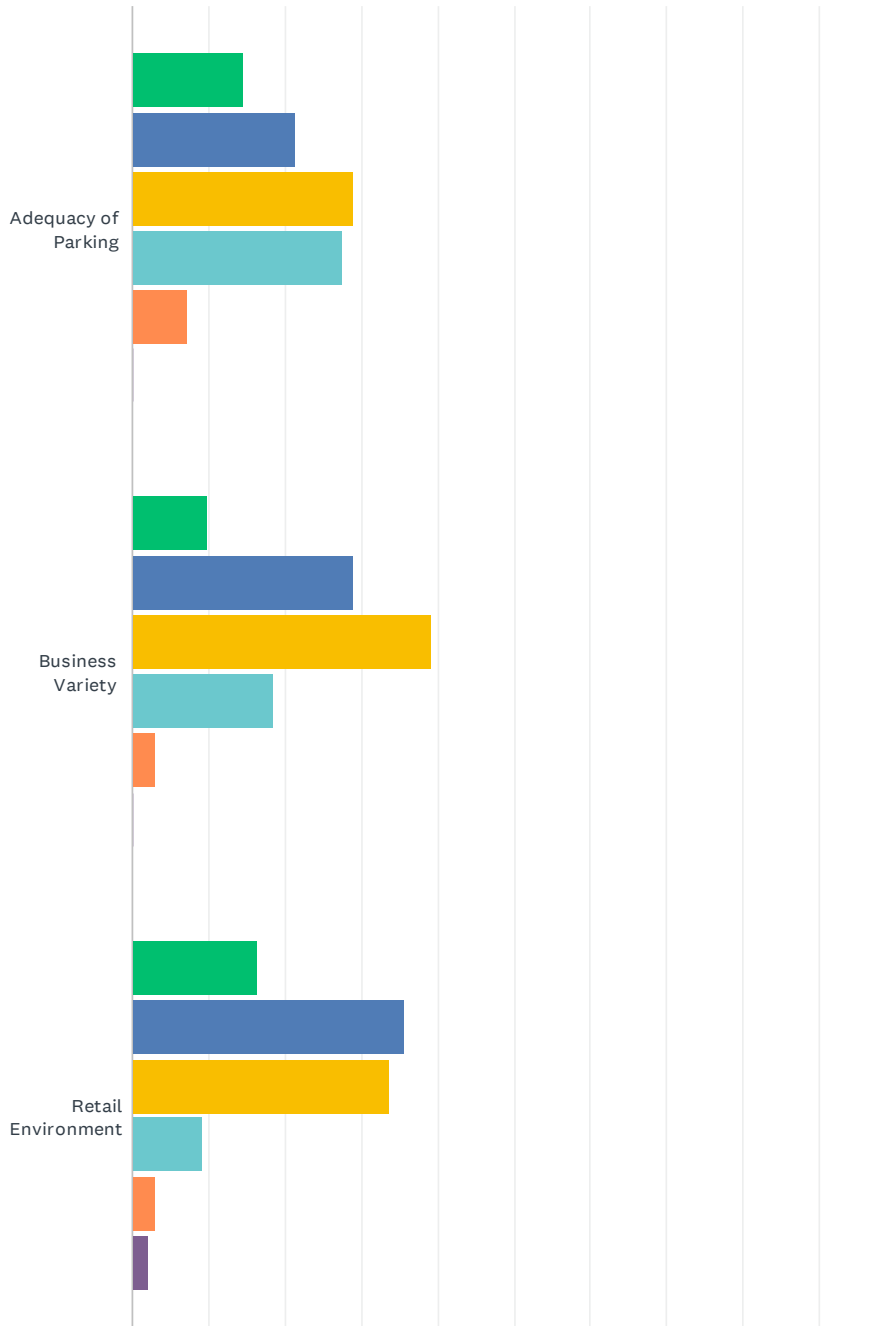
Answered: 416 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Parks and recreation	43.75%	182
Pedestrian and bicycle trails	33.41%	139
Playgrounds and/or splashpads	28.61%	119
Community gathering spaces	52.40%	218
Outdoor dining spaces	74.04%	308
Housing options including mixed use developments	14.42%	60
Total Respondents: 416		

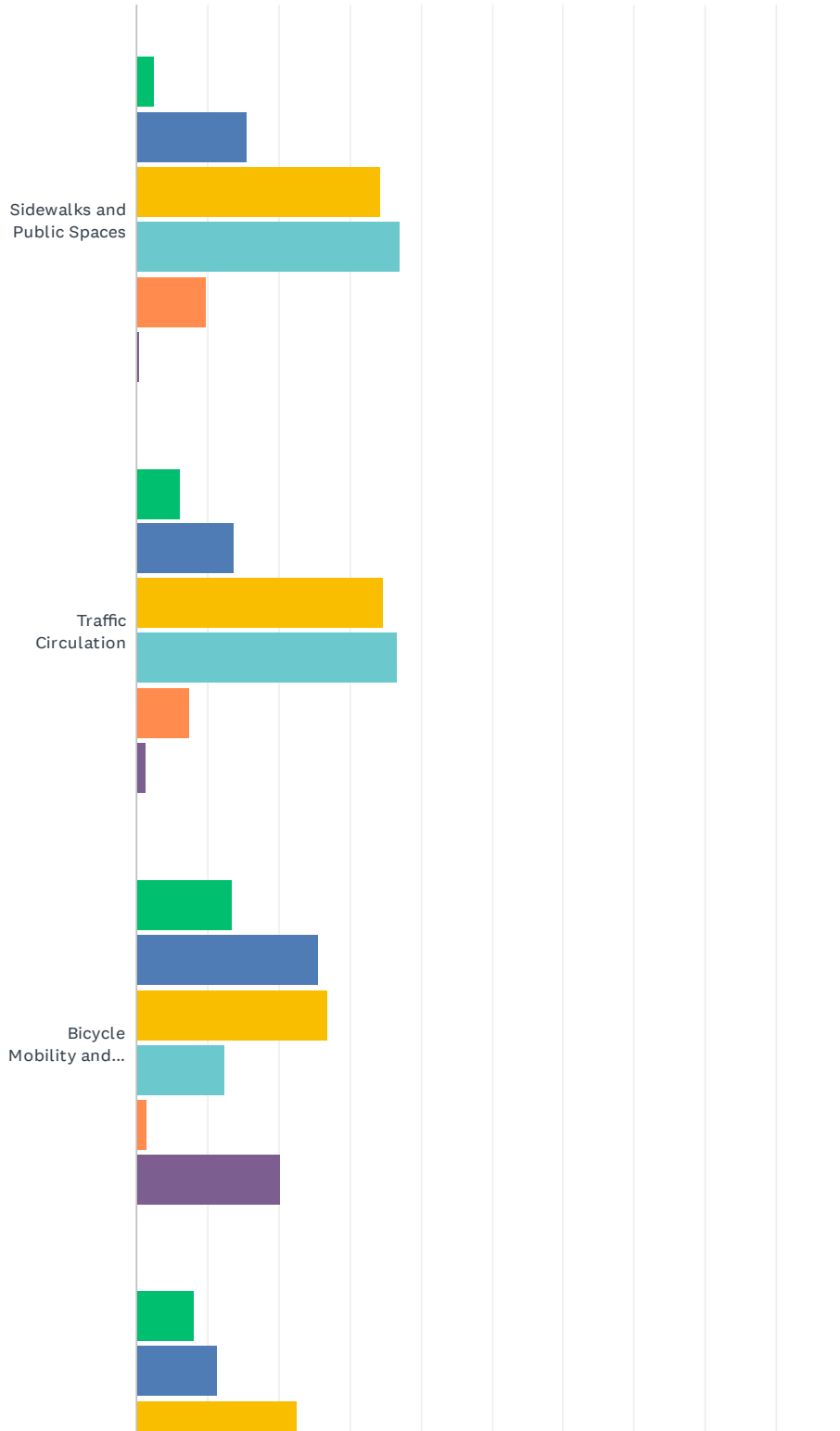
Q13 How would you rate downtown in the following areas using a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being "Poor" and 5 being "Excellent")

Answered: 425 Skipped: 0



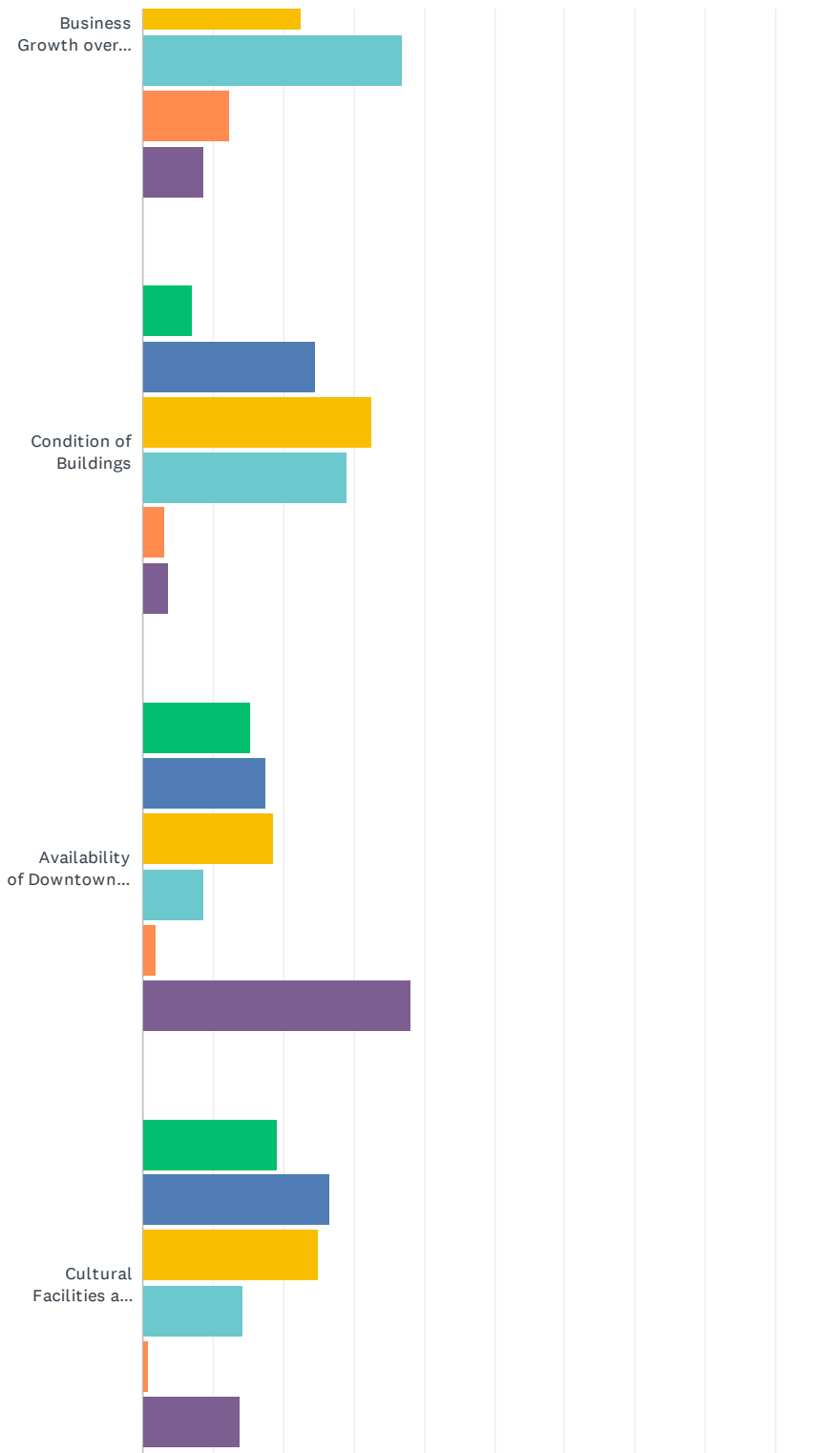
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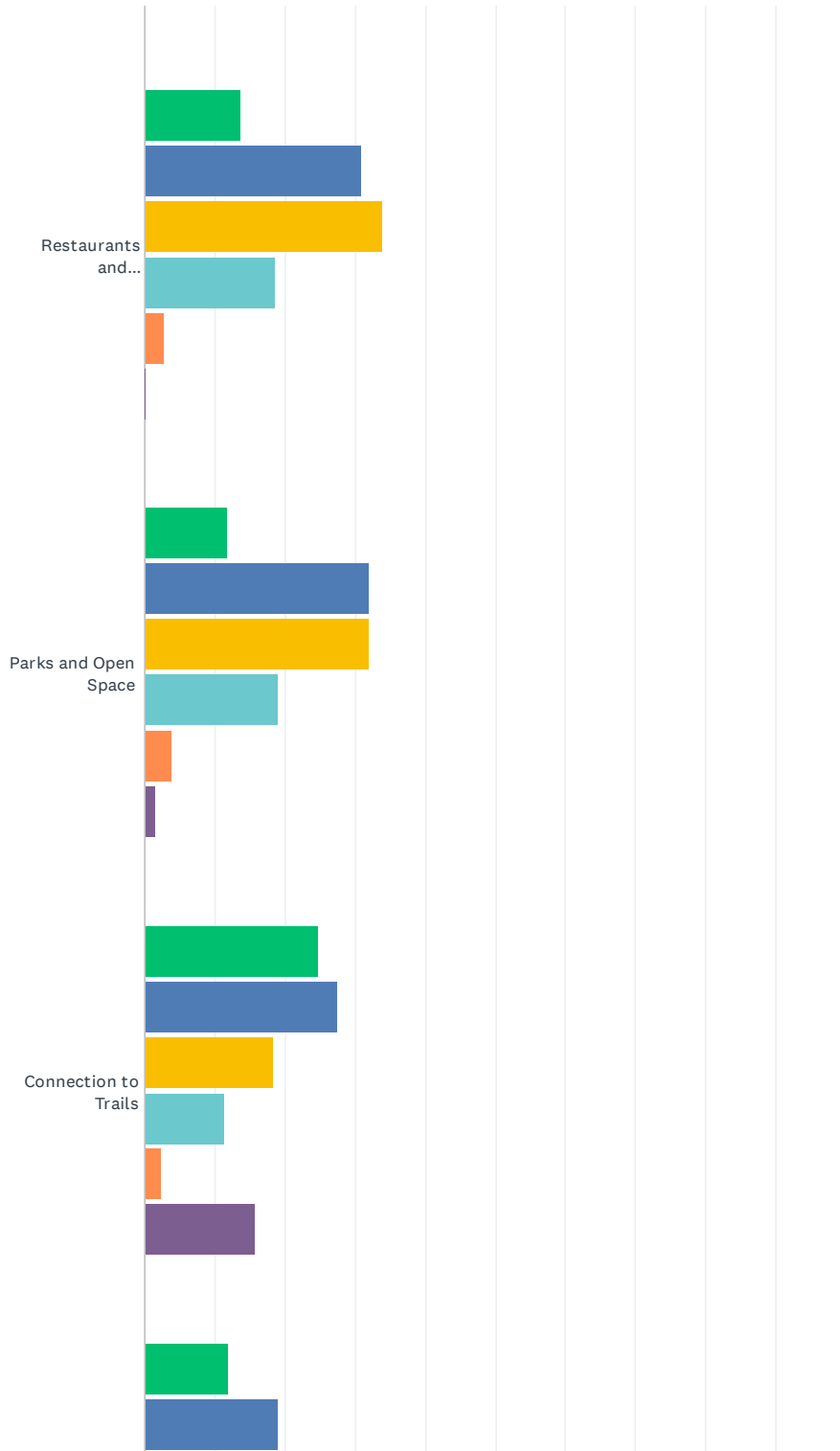


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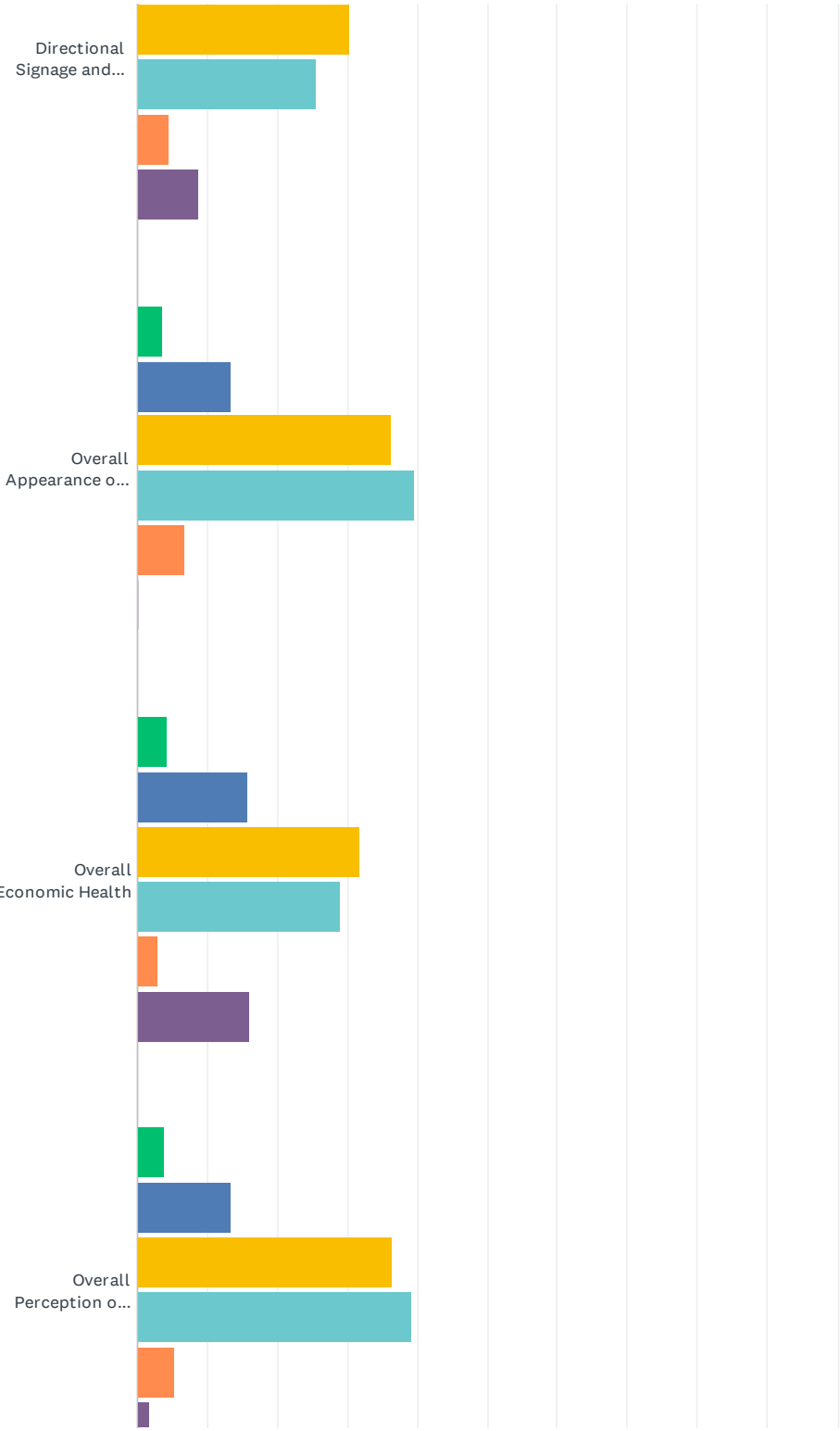
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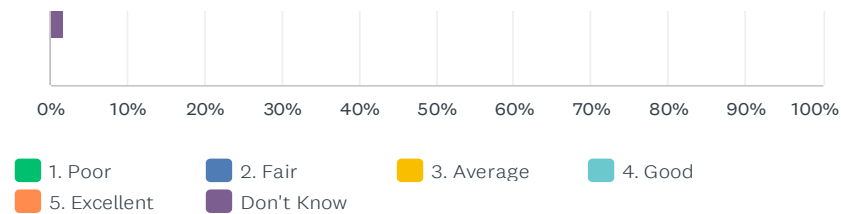
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Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey



	1. POOR	2. FAIR	3. AVERAGE	4. GOOD	5. EXCELLENT	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Adequacy of Parking	14.59% 62	21.41% 91	28.94% 123	27.53% 117	7.29% 31	0.24% 1	425	2.92
Business Variety	9.88% 42	28.94% 123	39.29% 167	18.59% 79	3.06% 13	0.24% 1	425	2.76
Retail Environment	16.47% 70	35.53% 151	33.65% 143	9.18% 39	3.06% 13	2.12% 9	425	2.46
Sidewalks and Public Spaces	2.59% 11	15.57% 66	34.43% 146	37.03% 157	9.91% 42	0.47% 2	424	3.36
Traffic Circulation	6.12% 26	13.65% 58	34.82% 148	36.71% 156	7.53% 32	1.18% 5	425	3.26
Bicycle Mobility and Access	13.41% 57	25.65% 109	26.82% 114	12.47% 53	1.41% 6	20.24% 86	425	2.53
Business Growth over past 5 years	8.00% 34	11.29% 48	22.59% 96	36.94% 157	12.47% 53	8.71% 37	425	3.38
Condition of Buildings	7.06% 30	24.47% 104	32.71% 139	28.94% 123	3.29% 14	3.53% 15	425	2.97
Availability of Downtown Housing	15.29% 65	17.41% 74	18.59% 79	8.71% 37	1.88% 8	38.12% 162	425	2.43
Cultural Facilities and Attractions	19.29% 82	26.59% 113	24.94% 106	14.35% 61	0.94% 4	13.88% 59	425	2.43
Restaurants and Entertainment	13.65% 58	30.82% 131	33.88% 144	18.59% 79	2.82% 12	0.24% 1	425	2.66
Parks and Open Space	11.64% 49	32.07% 135	32.07% 135	19.00% 80	3.80% 16	1.43% 6	421	2.71
Connection to Trails	24.70% 104	27.55% 116	18.29% 77	11.40% 48	2.38% 10	15.68% 66	421	2.28
Directional Signage and Wayfinding	11.85% 50	18.96% 80	30.33% 128	25.59% 108	4.50% 19	8.77% 37	422	2.91
Overall Appearance of Downtown	3.55% 15	13.48% 57	36.17% 153	39.72% 168	6.86% 29	0.24% 1	423	3.33
Overall Economic Health	4.25% 18	15.80% 67	31.84% 135	29.01% 123	3.07% 13	16.04% 68	424	3.13
Overall Perception of Downtown	3.77% 16	13.44% 57	36.56% 155	39.15% 166	5.42% 23	1.65% 7	424	3.29

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Houses and buildings downtown look worn and need preserved for their beauty and utility. I believe there should be some benefits to business owners to encourage them to buy buildings	7/23/2023 7:32 AM

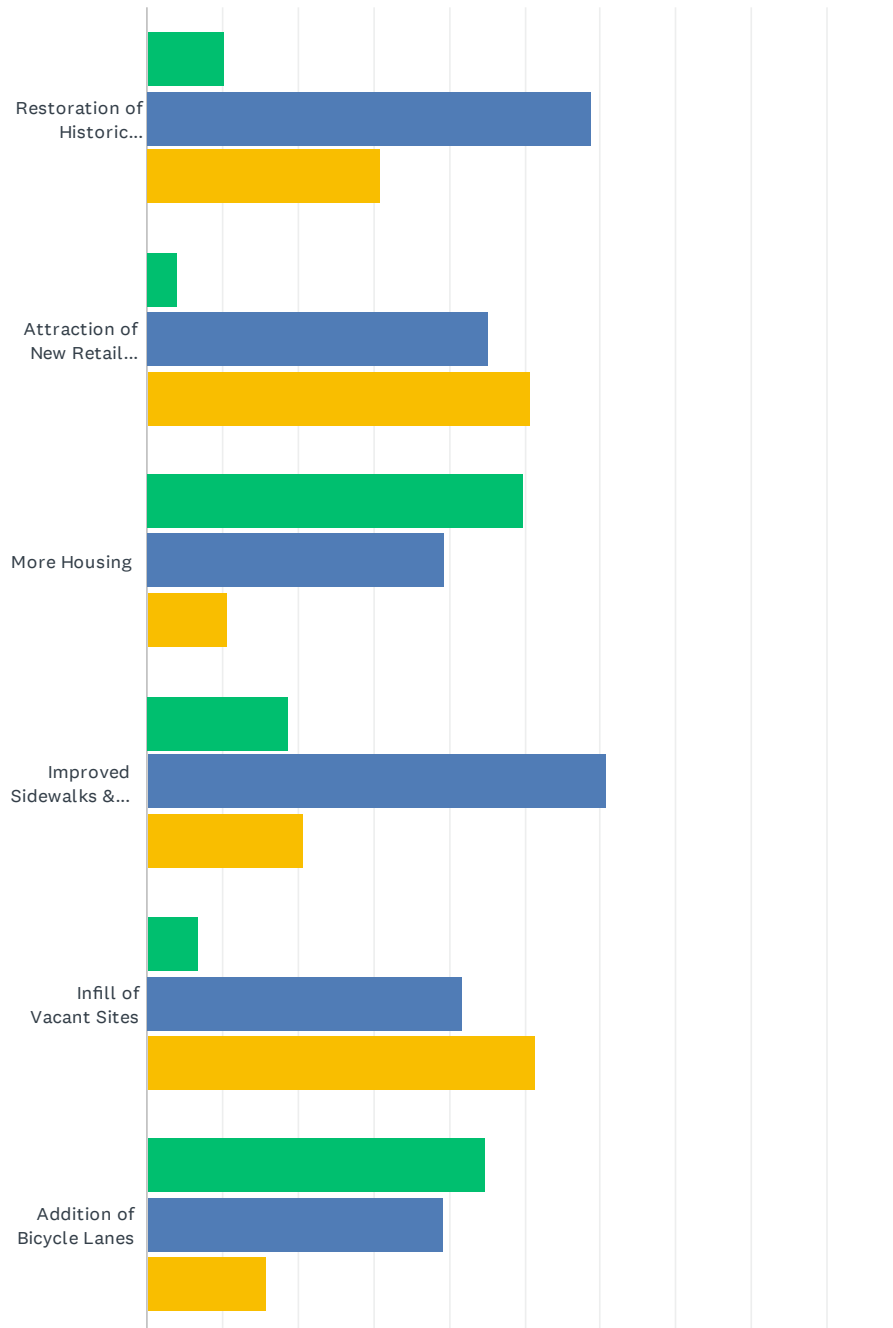
Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

or houses downtown to turn into businesses. (Think Village at Winona). The old historical house that has sat empty for years and now looking very worn down, why not encourage a business there that would keep the history intact?

2	Boring!	7/13/2023 8:14 PM
3	We frequent Moo-Over and would like some vegetarian choices	7/11/2023 7:10 PM
4	There is nothing unique with Columbia City-BORING, except for Moo-Over they rock	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
5	Columbia City Connect Dies not support local businesses	7/11/2023 12:24 PM
6	The storm sewers need cleaned other than the street sweeper. Also the grass and weeds between the curb and the street needs attention.	7/11/2023 11:21 AM
7	We can't count on restaurants being open, and there's nothing to do after eating anyway because the stores close early.	7/10/2023 10:01 PM
8	We need better communication for events. I'm not sure where to look for things happening or don't see things on Facebook until it's past.	7/10/2023 1:45 PM
9	It's better than Albion	7/10/2023 1:20 PM
10	Some blocks are nice. Some buildings need a lot of help.	6/28/2023 11:57 PM
11	Need to put tables and chairs in the alley by the government building. I'm sure the employees would enjoy sitting out there on their lunch breaks and not have to walk too far. Douglas Egolf could do a mural there. His mural on the Okie alley is amazing!!!	6/22/2023 10:08 AM
12	WE DON'T NEED MORE PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN. ITS NOT BUILT FOR IT. ITS TOO CROWDED AND CONGESTED ON THE ROADS.	6/22/2023 10:04 AM
13	Needs more you can actually do downtown, like an escape room	6/17/2023 9:58 AM
14	Downtown is improving! Wish empty buildings could be filled and not just be a write off for an out of town owner!!	6/16/2023 10:46 PM
15	We think it looks poorly when a business vehicle is taking up parking in front of their own or other businesses parking spaces	6/16/2023 1:33 AM
16	Too many government buildings	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
17	The light at van buren and main needs a turning light or a turning lane. It is a nightmare to turn onto van buren when coming from uptown.	6/15/2023 7:11 PM
18	There's nothing exciting in downtown. When there's events you can't hardly get to them. I love the idea of promenade park. There's lots of seating, events, walking/biking, places for children to play, attractions/activities for adults, and it's beautiful to look at. The businesses have been growing which is great. I believe we would benefit from more eating and shopping still, but the parking is horrible and there's no reason to come. There's no where to park farther away to bike or walk and there's only 2 places to sit if you do walk and bike. I think it's greatly improved though and I would love to see it continue to do so.	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
19	need more restaurants	6/15/2023 9:34 AM
20	vacant storefronts need to be cared for or occupied.	6/15/2023 9:34 AM
21	Many of the buildings downtown look bad	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
22	Downtown has been improving the last few years but the buildings and overall aesthetic look needs to be improved	6/13/2023 8:30 PM
23	I don't want to be overly negative because I know that the downtown has grown in a lot of ways over the last few years. I just think there's a lot of opportunity to make it a really special place with continued growth and development.	6/13/2023 4:00 PM

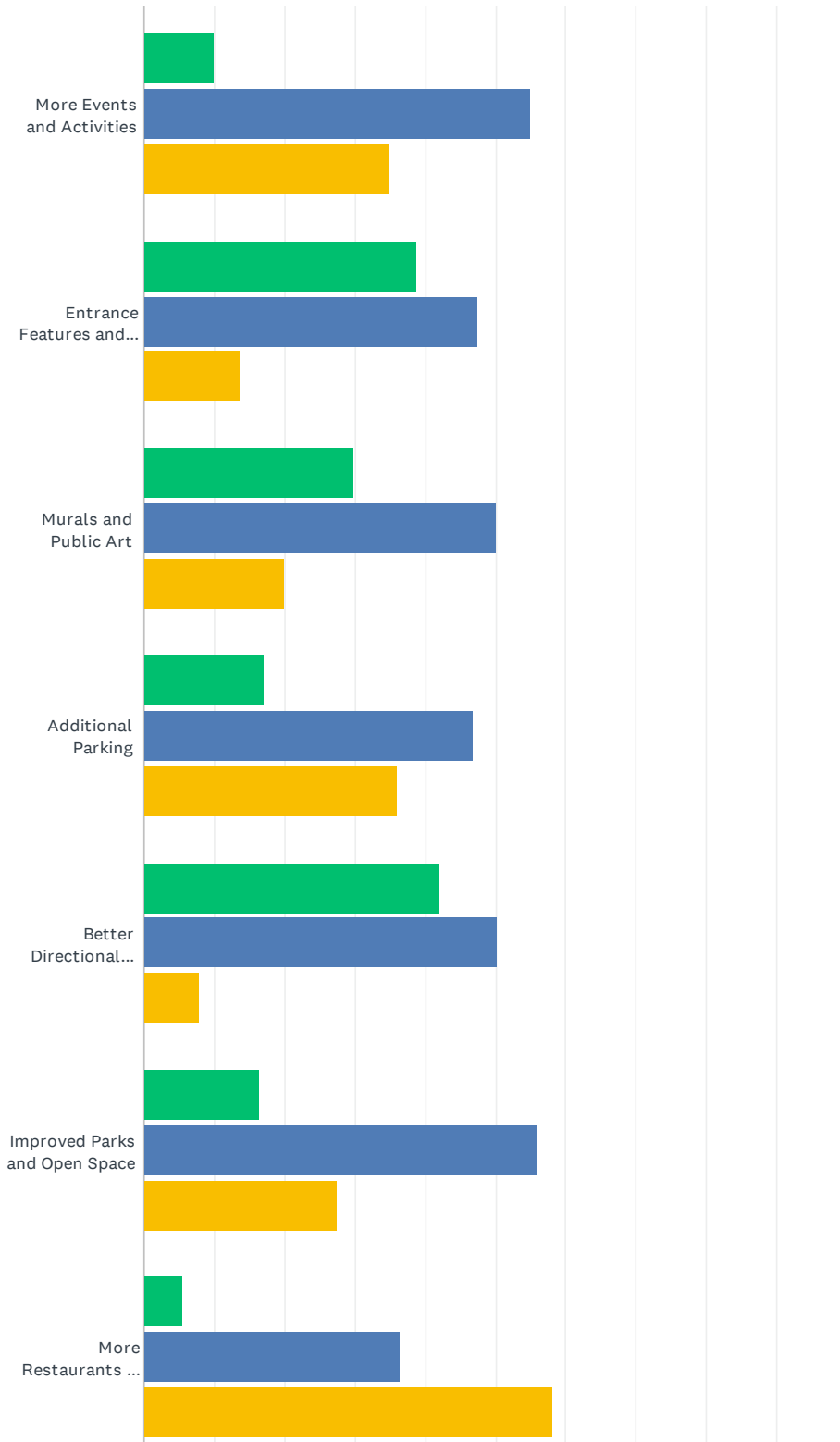
Q14 A list of ideas and actions follows. Please rate each based on how important you think each is for the future of downtown.

Answered: 424 Skipped: 1

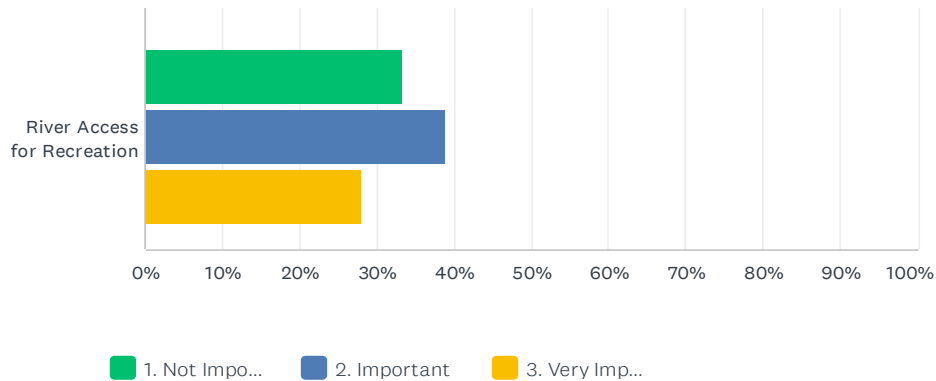


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Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey



Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey



	1. NOT IMPORTANT	2. IMPORTANT	3. VERY IMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Restoration of Historic Buildings	10.17% 43	58.87% 249	30.97% 131	423	2.21
Attraction of New Retail Businesses	4.02% 17	45.15% 191	50.83% 215	423	2.47
More Housing	49.88% 210	39.43% 166	10.69% 45	421	1.61
Improved Sidewalks & Streetscape	18.72% 79	60.66% 256	20.62% 87	422	2.02
Infill of Vacant Sites	6.87% 29	41.71% 176	51.42% 217	422	2.45
Addition of Bicycle Lanes	44.79% 189	39.34% 166	15.88% 67	422	1.71
More Events and Activities	9.95% 42	54.98% 232	35.07% 148	422	2.25
Entrance Features and Gateways	38.81% 163	47.62% 200	13.57% 57	420	1.75
Murals and Public Art	29.86% 126	50.00% 211	20.14% 85	422	1.90
Additional Parking	17.06% 72	46.92% 198	36.02% 152	422	2.19
Better Directional Information	41.90% 176	50.24% 211	7.86% 33	420	1.66
Improved Parks and Open Space	16.35% 69	56.16% 237	27.49% 116	422	2.11
More Restaurants and Entertainment	5.44% 23	36.41% 154	58.16% 246	423	2.53
River Access for Recreation	33.33% 140	38.81% 163	27.86% 117	420	1.95

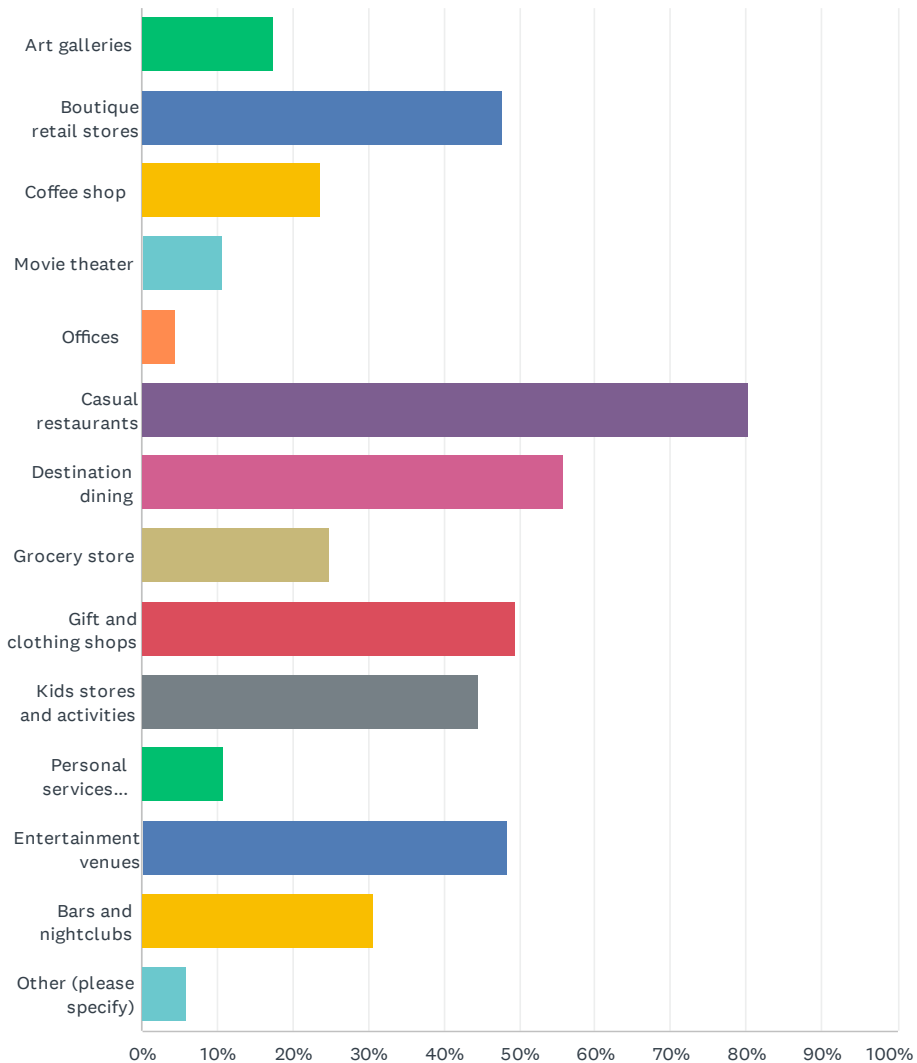
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I believe it we can attract small and large businesses to C.C., we could turn our town into a "must visit" destination small town.	7/23/2023 7:32 AM
2	This would be amazing.	7/13/2023 9:52 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

3	Need to stand out by drawing in Vegan communities.	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
4	A lot of events have poor communication and and variety of restaurants is incredibly poor.	7/10/2023 1:32 PM
5	What river?	7/10/2023 1:31 PM
6	Road or trail type access from eagle Glen side of 30 to town without Crossing30	6/22/2023 9:50 AM
7	We need a bus route going from Walmart going down line street going over to radio drive and coming backup Main Street to go to kroger's and then kroger's over to Walmart a bus So people can get around downtown to grocery stores like Walmart and krogers Because not all of us have cars Because when we do the weekly county transit we have to do 2 days in advance and some people need something from grocery stores and Walmart faster than that. And a bus that runs on weekends when people are not always at work	6/19/2023 1:17 AM
8	Fewer government buildings	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
9	See truck and van comments. Speeding and reckless motorists an issue as well as vehicles and motorcycles in violation of noise ordinances.	6/15/2023 9:46 PM
10	We need a dog park!!	6/15/2023 1:22 PM
11	Enhancement of the southern gateway to downtown	6/15/2023 11:54 AM
12	The river access would be amazing	6/15/2023 11:25 AM
13	Would like to discuss an option for vacant areas!	6/15/2023 9:48 AM
14	We need a small grocery store so the elderly can walk to it	6/15/2023 9:35 AM
15	Entertainment, not restaurants. Two very different things.	6/14/2023 11:20 AM
16	Absentee landlords need accountability	6/13/2023 1:26 PM

Q15 What types of businesses would you like to see more of downtown? (check all that apply)

Answered: 422 Skipped: 3



Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Art galleries	17.54%	74
Boutique retail stores	47.87%	202
Coffee shop	23.70%	100
Movie theater	10.66%	45
Offices	4.50%	19
Casual restaurants	80.33%	339
Destination dining	55.92%	236
Grocery store	24.88%	105
Gift and clothing shops	49.53%	209
Kids stores and activities	44.55%	188
Personal services (shipping, salon, bank, attorney, etc.)	10.90%	46
Entertainment venues	48.34%	204
Bars and nightclubs	30.81%	130
Other (please specify)	5.92%	25
Total Respondents: 422		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Health Food & Local produce, antiques, art co-op,	7/11/2023 11:06 PM
2	More Vegan Dining	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
3	Vegan option	7/11/2023 12:17 PM
4	Reserved meeting space for community and remote work	7/11/2023 8:15 AM
5	Hobby shop	7/10/2023 1:47 PM
6	Restaurants other than fast food or pizza	7/10/2023 1:31 PM
7	Dog park	7/10/2023 1:05 PM
8	Creative spaces —build guild type	6/28/2023 11:57 PM
9	Community center, skate and bike shop, skate park	6/24/2023 1:39 PM
10	Bakery open on a regular schedule	6/23/2023 8:07 AM
11	NONE, THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE OR PARKING	6/22/2023 10:04 AM
12	Community Office Spaces (like COhatch)	6/22/2023 9:49 AM
13	Shared office spaces	6/22/2023 9:44 AM
14	Anything to draw people into downtown! The more businesses the more people will come! We need to help each other in business to make us all be successful!	6/16/2023 10:46 PM
15	Book store	6/16/2023 3:41 PM
16	Bookstore	6/16/2023 1:33 AM
17	Sit down resturants	6/15/2023 9:58 PM
18	Larger meeting space for community groups that can be booked and private.	6/15/2023 9:12 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

19	Turning an open lot into a food truck hot spot!	6/15/2023 9:48 AM
20	I think entertainment and a grocery store would be great downtown. Open space and decorative gates and murals. I would love to see more shops for plants, hobby shops that may host events for games, art stores that may teach art skills, the outdoor movie theatre stuff is really cool, LGBTQ friendly spaces/businesses, clothing with more inclusive sizing, activity centered businesses	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
21	I would love to see The Warehouse Church and it's ministries (Forklift, Celebrate Recovery) remain anchored and accessable to the downtown	6/15/2023 9:41 AM
22	I feel like there is enough "destination" facilities. I wish there was a cheap/clean bar in downtown and a small corner store for essentials would be OUT OF THIS WORLD.	6/15/2023 9:28 AM
23	Live music venue at a bar or restaurant	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
24	A bar or night club would be very very nice	6/15/2023 9:20 AM
25	Dry cleaning services	6/13/2023 1:26 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q16 In your opinion, how important is downtown revitalization? Please explain why.

Answered: 363 Skipped: 62

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very important	63.64%	231
Somewhat important	28.65%	104
I am indifferent	6.34%	23
Somewhat unimportant	1.38%	5
Very unimportant	1.10%	4

#	VERY IMPORTANT	DATE
1	We as a community grow when small businesses grow.	7/23/2023 7:32 AM
2	It is the lifeblood of a community	7/22/2023 2:12 PM
3	It is the center of this community, the heart of the area	7/20/2023 7:28 PM
4	The downtown corridor is what people think of when they hear Columbia City, this should be the staple and heartbeat of the county and needs to be nurtured as our community grows and prospect of the US 30 project.	7/14/2023 6:12 AM
5	It would invite more people to downtown.	7/13/2023 11:36 PM
6	Y'all took up the sidewalks at dusk lol	7/13/2023 2:21 PM
7	I think it's very important, as can be seen by other cities in northern Indiana, and elsewhere. Columbia City is an underestimated and increasingly thriving small city. I would never have guessed I'd live in CC but the housing is affordable and the amenities are wonderful, and it feels less "busy" and spread out like Warsaw or FW. It's the perfect mix for raising my family. We LOVE CC. We also love the proximity to larger places, but tend to go to FW mostly for the parks/rec, dining, or specialty shopping (Costco or mall-type of stores). We LOVE the Promenade Park in FW and River Garden in Leo, IN. As well as the inside playground in North Webster and one in Fort Wayne. The Fahl Aquatic Ctr is one of the best things Columbia City has added in recent years. The library and Aquatic Ctr and trails are utilized often by our family. Great CC leadership and care for our community. We feel that our community is moving forward, rather than stagnant or behind the times.	7/12/2023 7:56 PM
8	It brings life to our town. Gives us some where to gather with friends/family and be proud of	7/12/2023 8:25 AM
9	Town is growing but it seems places downtown are still in the past	7/12/2023 7:11 AM
10	The health and welfare of our city needs a strong downtown for attracting new businesses. We need to work on a central parking garage for downtown.	7/11/2023 8:05 PM
11	It gives a sense of pride in my town and I want to share those feels with others, be a part of more and take better care of it	7/11/2023 7:32 PM
12	To drive business to Cc we need diversity	7/11/2023 7:10 PM
13	To be able to spend more time in CC and not FW	7/11/2023 6:18 PM
14	Comparing our downtown to surrounding cities, we are majorly lacking. We travel outside of Columbia City for fun things to do.	7/11/2023 3:31 PM
15	For Columbia City to survive and grow, they need to remove people who don't want to see the city to grow. Focusing on Vegan community will help CC grow and be a designation.	7/11/2023 2:13 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

16	It needs to stay up to date while keeping the history of the town. Updating/changing things to stay with the times while keeping the historical esthetic and memories.	7/11/2023 1:49 PM
17	To bring people to our community. We need a committee to revitalize and to offer grant to other business not just to the board.	7/11/2023 12:24 PM
18	Need to get more grants and keep Columbia connect away from the grants. They are crooked	7/11/2023 12:17 PM
19	To bring in visitors	7/11/2023 9:03 AM
20	Community, belonging, and patronage will be emboldened	7/11/2023 8:15 AM
21	The better downtown is the more people will come and spend money which helps the local economy	7/10/2023 10:27 PM
22	Columbia City can either improve downtown or watch it slowly die out with empty buildings. It would be a shame after all the work that has been done thus far.	7/10/2023 10:04 PM
23	Quality of life for nearby residents.	7/10/2023 10:01 PM
24	Family time, business	7/10/2023 9:52 PM
25	Columbia City is not that attractive to just stop in	7/10/2023 9:21 PM
26	I love our town and we should always work to improve and draw in new business.	7/10/2023 9:20 PM
27	I think it keeps the community a place where people want to stay or come to. We definitely need a more bike friendly community!	7/10/2023 8:44 PM
28	Bring people in	7/10/2023 8:33 PM
29	It makes a difference in how CC looks to the world and creates a community we can be proud of	7/10/2023 8:32 PM
30	To keep Columbia City growing	7/10/2023 8:26 PM
31	Bring more diversity	7/10/2023 7:52 PM
32	It is the life of a city	7/10/2023 7:30 PM
33	I feel like there is a mixed perception about CC. I work in FW and no one ever seems to want to come here. I've heard things like "it's a cute town" but I've also heard derogatory things about people in our county that simply is not true.	7/10/2023 7:10 PM
34	Absolutely	7/10/2023 6:32 PM
35	Because I would love to see Columbia City become a destination, bringing more cash-flow to our community.	7/10/2023 6:22 PM
36	brings in people for business and livinv	7/10/2023 5:58 PM
37	Activities to meet people in the community	7/10/2023 5:50 PM
38	Data from other localities have shown that a revitalized downtown increases tax revenue and retail revenue which in turn would help fund other improvements in the town.	7/10/2023 5:43 PM
39	Time to step up and modernize the downtown	7/10/2023 4:41 PM
40	very	7/10/2023 4:25 PM
41	Heart of the city.	7/10/2023 4:17 PM
42	We want to be known so if we revitalize downtown people will likely remember	7/10/2023 4:16 PM
43	If Not Your Town Will Die !	7/10/2023 4:07 PM
44	To attract new citizens	7/10/2023 4:04 PM
45	We need something to do without going to Fort Wayne	7/10/2023 3:59 PM
46	Columbia has sat stagnant for a while however in the last 5 or so years it has really picked up. The city is doing great things to bring the public to downtown and I'm excited to see where it goes from here.	7/10/2023 3:54 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

47	Must keep relevant to keep alive	7/10/2023 3:14 PM
48	To keep Columbia city to continue to grow	7/10/2023 3:05 PM
49	To appreciate things	7/10/2023 2:56 PM
50	It is the county seat and a very important historical landmark. We need to keep our downtown safe and well preserved.	7/10/2023 2:41 PM
51	You must keep the downtown attractive and active for current and future use	7/10/2023 2:39 PM
52	Because if the downtown looks revitalized more business will look attractive to invest on our city.	7/10/2023 2:36 PM
53	downtown is the hub of a community that brings people together	7/10/2023 2:31 PM
54	Very important, downtown is the center of everything that goes in in Whitley county. The better it looks and functions, the more money this area can bring in via businesses, trades, etc.	7/10/2023 2:28 PM
55	Keeps people wanting to be here	7/10/2023 2:27 PM
56	Keep our money here	7/10/2023 2:26 PM
57	Brings new people here	7/10/2023 2:22 PM
58	It helps the community grow and brings the community together	7/10/2023 2:17 PM
59	I would love to have all I need for food, entertainment and purchases all downtown.	7/10/2023 2:16 PM
60	I believe the heart of the city lives in the downtown area. I have loved watching my town grow and hope to see more progress in the future!	7/10/2023 2:15 PM
61	It's import for a town to thrive. If it doesn't thrive business moves out towns die and bad things start to move in and take over. Huntington is a very good example. Factories closed houses went down hill and drugs and violence moved in. I grew up there and that town is not the town I grew up in. Partially why we are trying to find a home here.	7/10/2023 2:13 PM
62	This is our community and small town life is EXTREMELY important to keep our sense of community	7/10/2023 2:08 PM
63	I feel its very important because when I visit other downtowns I love seeing and exploring their downtowns.	7/10/2023 2:08 PM
64	Pride in community	7/10/2023 2:05 PM
65	The health of a small town is located in its attraction to others. Not JUST in its downtown, but it does okay an important role. How do you attract young families? You give them space to grow and create and have fun. Places for them to take the kids during the day for activities (parks, playgrounds, splash pads, boutiques/shopping, etc) and then you give the parents things and places do experience at night. You create a culture for young people to meet by having a variety of coffee shops, wine rooms, dining areas, and open public spaces with views of the highlights of town and comfortable seating. People come because of what's offered, but stay because the quality of their neighbors and charm that you can only find in a small town.	7/10/2023 2:04 PM
66	I think it gives businesses an incentive to bring jobs to the community. Also a vibrant downtown is one that will grow and not shrink.	7/10/2023 2:03 PM
67	nobody wants to live in an ugly town	7/10/2023 2:01 PM
68	We have an amazing location between Fort Wayne and Warsaw, and downtown is dead, we avoid it a lot, and then when we do try to utilize something, it's randomly closed.	7/10/2023 1:57 PM
69	Very	7/10/2023 1:47 PM
70	Our town has nothing to offer	7/10/2023 1:25 PM
71	Keeping people in CC to eat and shop. people like a quaint pretty town.	7/10/2023 1:22 PM
72	It help out town grow more	7/10/2023 1:20 PM
73	Need to keep shopping bucks and gatherings in our community.	7/10/2023 1:15 PM
74	It will provide venues for income for locally owned businesses	7/10/2023 1:14 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

75	why build everything along a highway that allows everyone to pass us by on their way to somewhere else?	7/10/2023 1:12 PM
76	It makes people want to live here.	7/10/2023 1:10 PM
77	I feel like the town needs more space for kids with special needs my son is autistic and because the parks in town aren't fully fenced in it's not easy for me to take him an his sister to play without being worried he will run off.	7/10/2023 1:10 PM
78	A great downtown brings increase value to the whole community.	7/10/2023 1:08 PM
79	It makes downtown attractive and people want to go hang out there	7/10/2023 1:08 PM
80	It is vary important to me because it is how you keep the history alive of the town. It is important to keep the history but also grow and advance with time. Having a downtown helps create connected families.	7/10/2023 1:08 PM
81	Visual appeal and appearance is 1st step to growth. Think curb appeal when buying a home.	7/10/2023 1:07 PM
82	It would better the future for visitors coming to town	7/10/2023 1:05 PM
83	It is the heart of our city	7/10/2023 1:04 PM
84	To keep the community standards and to employ Whitley residents	7/10/2023 1:00 PM
85	It sets the stage for our community. It's the heart of this town.	7/10/2023 12:59 PM
86	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7/10/2023 12:57 PM
87	It will only improve our community	7/10/2023 12:54 PM
88	A great downtown is how you create an amazing community	7/9/2023 12:46 PM
89	I want it to be a destination	6/30/2023 11:41 AM
90	Very important	6/29/2023 6:53 PM
91	It is the heart of our city and the most convenient area to get to	6/29/2023 1:46 PM
92	It's been exciting to see events well attended.	6/28/2023 11:57 PM
93	It is important because downtown is a representation of our city— of who we are... If all the buildings look like they're falling apart, and don't look nice, and there is no venues, little shops, or entertainment, it's just not going to be a place that people want to be.	6/26/2023 9:09 PM
94	Idk	6/24/2023 8:28 PM
95	Giving residents more to be attracted to and wanting to stay	6/24/2023 2:18 PM
96	Because I like living here but it is boring. If I am making weekend plans I always plan to go to any other city besides our own for activities.	6/24/2023 1:39 PM
97	Reflects community pride and values.	6/23/2023 12:52 PM
98	Bring more people to our beautiful little town	6/23/2023 8:07 AM
99	It's the heartbeat of our town and we need to keep it strong for our community and local small businesses	6/22/2023 6:47 PM
100	Many improvements have been made downtown, but it needs to continue. Sidewalks that are wheelchair friendly are essential (trying pushing an adult in a wheelchair in our community-it's a joke). Keep focusing on the revitalization, but please don't waste money on gateways, just use good signage.	6/22/2023 5:03 PM
101	I love this small city and I enjoy it much better than downtown Fort Wayne or warsaw	6/22/2023 4:07 PM
102	Restoring downtown is very important because it attracts people into the town, simply attracting people into the town will build revenue and push the city overall.	6/22/2023 3:26 PM
103	Downtown Columbia City has been a focus in the past several years now with increasing the presence of First Fridays and The Farmer's Market for example. The courthouse square is a staple of the town and a perfect gathering place for the community to gather. But, we also need more daily activities to attract people in that area of the town more often.	6/22/2023 2:41 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

104	Bring life to the city	6/22/2023 2:17 PM
105	Image of city	6/22/2023 12:59 PM
106	I love cc been here for 17 yrs and love the community together. It would be nice to spur up and bring in other places from outside	6/22/2023 11:58 AM
107	Yes	6/22/2023 9:50 AM
108	It's the heart of the community. You have to take care of it, or it will waste away and become a point of avoidance, as opposed to an attraction for bringing the community together.	6/22/2023 9:49 AM
109	It makes the city as a whole more appealing.	6/22/2023 9:48 AM
110	Downtown is the heartbeat of the city	6/22/2023 9:44 AM
111	It provides an opportunity for the community to connect and is vital to the city's economy.	6/22/2023 9:40 AM
112	Check	6/20/2023 4:32 PM
113	It is important to bring more life to downtown. It's good as it is right now but that's exclusively around the courthouse you go further out a little and there are a ton of empty buildings just sitting and there is so much space to bring more life and energy to downtown.	6/20/2023 3:02 AM
114	This helps our community to grow and to become stronger and connected	6/19/2023 8:37 PM
115	If we don't our Town dies	6/19/2023 8:45 AM
116	More availability on transportation other than Woodley county transit they don't go on weekends and it would be nice for people to be able to pick up groceries and do things other than half an calling 4 and 5 days at a time when things come up overnight sometimes taxicab may be nice or even a bus daily and at night more after 5 o'clock	6/19/2023 1:17 AM
117	without it a town stagnates.. so many smaller towns have much more to offer their residents than CC does.. maybe hire someone willing to go other places & find what it working in their towns	6/19/2023 12:19 AM
118	It gives pride in the community	6/18/2023 8:36 PM
119	Very	6/18/2023 5:02 PM
120	An important part of attracting new residents to our community,	6/18/2023 9:46 AM
121	To bring more businesses and families	6/18/2023 7:33 AM
122	It improves the culture of the city and gains an improved sense of community among the growing Columbia City population.	6/18/2023 2:00 AM
123	I love what you've been doing! I have a 10 year old & a 13 year old & we're always looking for fun local events, with variety, and that don't cost too much.	6/17/2023 7:37 PM
124	Great for the local economy but unfortunately there isn't a reason for non locals to visit.	6/17/2023 8:56 AM
125	It will help draw businesses to the empty spaces which in turn will help all downtown businesses.	6/17/2023 8:46 AM
126	People like to shop in a nice place! We need to keep businesses going, keep buildings up, keep being successful, and keep downtown CC on the destination list of places to go, see, and shop!!	6/16/2023 10:46 PM
127	There's literally no where decent to eat in town. Chapmans is a joke.	6/16/2023 8:16 PM
128	It is the heart of the community and what keeps the residents here!	6/16/2023 8:08 PM
129	Downtown hasn't really changed in years. It would be exciting to bring more into Columbia city.	6/16/2023 4:18 PM
130	To me it represents how healthy a community is	6/16/2023 3:41 PM
131	Important to build up our community	6/16/2023 1:27 PM
132	I believe it's very important to keep up with trends and keep the attention of new people who may be passing through and/or moving into the county.	6/16/2023 12:38 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

133	I would love to see our community continue to grow and thrive. Columbia City has come a long way since I was little and want to continue to invest and bring things into our small town.	6/16/2023 10:51 AM
134	Keeps downtown busy and talked about.	6/16/2023 10:06 AM
135	X	6/16/2023 8:42 AM
136	Need to draw more people to Columbia City with more reasons to go out in downtown.	6/16/2023 7:45 AM
137	If people are going to live down town they need a place to shop both for food and other stuff and a place to eat if they can get their by walking all the better	6/16/2023 7:44 AM
138	Draws people to want to live in the area. We have jobs, but people are looking for more. There is nothing to do in the Winter here either.	6/16/2023 1:33 AM
139	Downtown is supposed to be the heart of a town. While there are good turn outs for a couple events, there's not life going on in downtown on the daily basis. We need more people and family driven businesses like restaurants and retail to bring visitors and citizens there frequently. We should be that great small town downtown that you hear everyone talk about.	6/15/2023 10:50 PM
140	Too many government facilities taking up valuable business locations.	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
141	CC is the center for Whitley	6/15/2023 10:24 PM
142	Need to preserve the city's foundation	6/15/2023 9:50 PM
143	For county seat communities it reflects the health and vibrancy of the entire county.	6/15/2023 9:46 PM
144	It would improve a sense of community	6/15/2023 9:39 PM
145	Keeps the city growing.	6/15/2023 9:32 PM
146	It's what keeps our community alive & thriving	6/15/2023 9:28 PM
147	Downtown growth is important for overall city growth and to keep business locally.	6/15/2023 9:12 PM
148	Keeps downtown thriving and the economy going for all business owners	6/15/2023 9:05 PM
149	Downtown is the heart of the community and a major driver for attracting people to Columbia City.	6/15/2023 8:50 PM
150	It is the heart of the city and community	6/15/2023 8:47 PM
151	Yes	6/15/2023 8:44 PM
152	It will draw and attract more people to downtown Whitley County.	6/15/2023 8:44 PM
153	Attracting new residents and setting a good footprint for growth once the highway plans are completed.	6/15/2023 8:21 PM
154	Historic buildings are in desperate need of rehabilitation and restoration.	6/15/2023 8:20 PM
155	Bring more people downtown	6/15/2023 7:22 PM
156	.	6/15/2023 7:06 PM
157	If the downtown begins to erode, it will spread out like a cancer.	6/15/2023 6:43 PM
158	Parking and restart 2 hour parking	6/15/2023 5:57 PM
159	Depending on what is prioritized.	6/15/2023 5:26 PM
160	We just moved here and typically opt to travel out of town for meals or cocktails. It would be better to stay near home!	6/15/2023 5:19 PM
161	In order to attract more business to our area	6/15/2023 3:29 PM
162	As the heart of the community, a healthy downtown reflects a positive image on the rest of the town	6/15/2023 3:26 PM
163	With the size of the brown being so small, we need at least some sort of central gathering place	6/15/2023 3:12 PM
164	Creating a gathering space for residents creates a sense of community and adds a visiting	6/15/2023 3:03 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

	point for our community. It can bring new opportunities for our community.	
165	I believe downtown has tremendous upside, but it is important to maintain and improve areas to allow it to reach its full potential.	6/15/2023 3:03 PM
166	The Beauty behind it all	6/15/2023 2:55 PM
167	Maintaining the character of older	6/15/2023 2:53 PM
168	These things attract people whether local or passing through	6/15/2023 2:52 PM
169	I think continuing to develop downtown (and parks department) area is the next phase of CC growth.	6/15/2023 2:24 PM
170	Attracts new business opportunities	6/15/2023 2:21 PM
171	Downtown business viability	6/15/2023 2:14 PM
172	CC is doing a great job, I hope we continue the forward momentum!	6/15/2023 2:09 PM
173	Want to feel pride in the town	6/15/2023 1:35 PM
174	It is the center of the city and something we should be proud to show off. When you look at major growing and successful cities, ie Noblesville and Carmel their downtown is thriving. A lot of it is because of nice apartments and housing with things to do and places to walk to.	6/15/2023 1:34 PM
175	Revitalization help keep the community thriving	6/15/2023 1:29 PM
176	This is my home and it would be nice to have more options for entertainment rather than commuting to Fort Wayne.	6/15/2023 1:22 PM
177	It is an important indicator of the overall economic health of a community	6/15/2023 1:21 PM
178	not revitalized, it will die	6/15/2023 12:40 PM
179	To draw more people to the city & to keep them shopping/eating/enjoying here	6/15/2023 12:19 PM
180	Growth to a city is also important for the families! Kids and adults love having a place to visit and have things to do	6/15/2023 12:00 PM
181	If more people coming to downtown is what you're aiming for then steps need to be taken to ensure visitors are welcomed (parking, attractiveness of downtown buildings). There are too many nicer downtowns nearby (such as Winona Lake, Roanoke) that have already taken steps to make their areas attractive and will pull people away from Columbia City.	6/15/2023 11:58 AM
182	Helps the city to grow and not die like other cities in Northern Indiana	6/15/2023 11:44 AM
183	Downtown is a snapshot of our community so it's a big deal.	6/15/2023 11:29 AM
184	Very important, with our new high school we have the potential to draw in lots of new residents and tourists. Our downtown needs to be a destination people are excited to experience and be a part of.	6/15/2023 11:28 AM
185	I love our town we can keep improving	6/15/2023 11:25 AM
186	It needs to be our first option instead of going to Fort Wayne.	6/15/2023 11:14 AM
187	If we stop revitalizing, it stops growing.	6/15/2023 11:12 AM
188	It helps attract and retain quality citizens	6/15/2023 10:45 AM
189	It's the heart of the City!!	6/15/2023 10:25 AM
190	Downtown needs to be attractive to consumers to keep businesses in downtown. If businesses leave downtown then we are left with empty building that soon become run down and abandoned.	6/15/2023 10:25 AM
191	Downtown is doing well, now, but planning for more people and parking and any needed businesses is ongoing so it definitely needs to stay at the forefront of management to ensure a healthy close, knit, community, and a place for businesses to thrive. Many happenings in our community are based in the downtown area so it is very important to maintain and to continue to revitalize in a economically feasible manner to accommodate growth and charm of the community...	6/15/2023 10:22 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

192	You need to bring people downtown for all of the small businesses. This is the heart of the town. You need to have a reason for families to go downtown.	6/15/2023 10:13 AM
193	In order for the community to attract and retain people, we need to have a quality downtown area	6/15/2023 10:12 AM
194	Everything has been the same for 30 years learn to grow	6/15/2023 10:09 AM
195	This is our home and we want to be proud of it and have access to it.	6/15/2023 9:54 AM
196	It sets the tone for the city on how we represent our town	6/15/2023 9:52 AM
197	It keeps the city alive, it keeps people coming downtown, my family owns a business downtown and gives me something to do with my family	6/15/2023 9:51 AM
198	Downtown is a place to gather and build networks and connect with each other	6/15/2023 9:48 AM
199	I believe there is a lot of potential in the downtown area! Especially as someone new to the community! Great things are happening!	6/15/2023 9:48 AM
200	To maintain jobs and residents there must be a vibrant downtown with various attractions	6/15/2023 9:47 AM
201	The biggest downfall to Columbia city is there's nothing to do. If I'm looking to do something fun, I go to Fort Wayne. It's so close, they have better food, activities, festivals, events, and more inclusive spaces. Columbia city has boring spaces. I love seeing pretty areas that are attractive to be in.	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
202	It's very important to modernize downtown for financial reasons as well as drawing more people and businesses to the area.	6/15/2023 9:44 AM
203	Some of the faces of the buildings don't look good at all. Look at the one attached to the new flats apartments. More events like first Friday would be awesome. Like a bbq challenge, some sort of race we could have for years, like the south Whitley bed race or something? Outside dining and drinks on the sidewalks would be nice also.	6/15/2023 9:39 AM
204	For visitors	6/15/2023 9:35 AM
205	I would love to see our downtown as a destination for shopping and dining	6/15/2023 9:34 AM
206	Needed to keep the town as a destination for residents as well as tourists.	6/15/2023 9:34 AM
207	It's what keeps our town growing	6/15/2023 9:32 AM
208	Downtown is the heart of the city and shows the state of the city. A good downtown will attract businesses and revenue to the community.	6/15/2023 9:28 AM
209	Downtown is the "hub" of the city and often is what determines if people bring their business to the city or not	6/15/2023 9:27 AM
210	Attract new citizens to our community	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
211	People want to go to a downtown that is energized. Outdoor dining at local restaurants would be	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
212	This is something that attracts people outside of our community and brings younger people to want to live in the community	6/15/2023 9:20 AM
213	Would love to see it like Roanoke.	6/15/2023 9:19 AM
214	It's always important to keep improving our town.	6/15/2023 9:19 AM
215	It already looks way different. Why stop improving now	6/15/2023 9:15 AM
216	Building are falling apart and look it. Little local ownership or investment. No natural draw to Columbia City in general yet other locations such as Roanoke invest and do quite well. There is little investment from local leaders and politicians in the downtown other than during campaign season. Doubt that many in "leadership" positions can even tell you the last time they were in many downtown locations. Many communities abandoned their downtowns and the cities took a turn for the worse. It would be best to get ahead of it and be proactive than where we close to which is having to be reactive.	6/14/2023 12:27 PM
217	Need to keep the community involved and inviting	6/14/2023 11:24 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

218	I love how our town continues to grow. I love taking visitors to the multiple restaurant options and showing how cute our town is. I Laos live all the events the different groups are doing!	6/14/2023 11:20 AM
219	Owner fix up there stores	6/14/2023 10:18 AM
220	Keeps downtown alive	6/13/2023 10:24 PM
221	Retain and attract young people	6/13/2023 9:38 PM
222	Where the downtown goes, so goes the rest of the community	6/13/2023 7:39 PM
223	There is a lot of historic building in the downtown area that gives the downtown character	6/13/2023 6:45 PM
224	It will make our city more of an attraction	6/13/2023 6:04 PM
225	I travel to a lot of places and I love seeing active downtowns. I love seeing spaces that people can utilize and enjoy while enjoying them together as groups and families. I'd love to see more evening/night activity options for families and students to be able to utilize. Not as much into the bar and club stuff as I think it can take away from some of the safety and enjoyable parts for families and students if they aren't done well. I think revitalizing downtown would be a dream come true for someone who's lived in Columbia City their whole life and really wants to see some of this happen!	6/13/2023 4:00 PM
226	Downtowns have always been the heart of towns and cities. Bypasses and major highways have bled them dry over the years.	6/13/2023 2:05 PM
227	It's how we grow as a community	6/13/2023 1:29 PM
228	It's live or die, buildings that are not taken care attract all bad things	6/13/2023 1:26 PM
229	It brings in new people to our community.	6/13/2023 1:25 PM
230	Downtown has so much potential. There is so much already there but just needs to be brought back to life. Empty buildings, decaying facades and alleyways. Better use of all spaces and more inviting exteriors. I think some better dining options would be great as well. A more casually burger place with outdoor seating. Out restaurants aren't the best for summer nights or weekend finds to hang with friends	6/13/2023 12:01 PM
231	It is the heart of our community. As goes downtown, so goes our community.	6/12/2023 1:44 PM
#	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	DATE
1	Could use a freshening	7/17/2023 3:30 PM
2	I think Walker walk needs more help, but I'm partial. :)	7/13/2023 8:14 PM
3	Yes	7/13/2023 9:52 AM
4	I realize that we are a growing city however too much would cause traffic delays and be abrupt for those of us that came to CC for the quiet close community it is.	7/13/2023 9:10 AM
5	To attract a upwardly mobile population	7/12/2023 6:59 PM
6	Given the history of our community it would be nice to reflect on that.	7/12/2023 8:43 AM
7	I would like to come downtown to shop	7/11/2023 9:29 PM
8	I was born and raised here. I'd love to walk around downtown with friends and family, but it's hard sometimes to enjoy things when so much of everything costs money.	7/11/2023 8:42 PM
9	I think it builds pride in our town to have a downtown that is aesthetically appealing.	7/11/2023 8:29 PM
10	Would love to see it the way it was in 1977	7/11/2023 11:21 AM
11	New Businesses don't seem to last too long.	7/11/2023 8:45 AM
12	Economic reasons	7/11/2023 7:18 AM
13	So our town doesn't become a ghost town	7/10/2023 11:35 PM
14	Bringing people together	7/10/2023 10:26 PM
15	I think it looks really good now, just wish there was more dining options.	7/10/2023 6:58 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

16	Need to continue growth and bring more restaurants and entertainment	7/10/2023 6:42 PM
17	Things to do	7/10/2023 6:17 PM
18	I think that the revitalization of downtown is pretty important. Although it isn't something that is absolutely necessary, it could hold the potential to help out the economy, bring more attention to small business, and help create a memorable experience for locals and travelers passing through!	7/10/2023 6:15 PM
19	Keeping downtown refreshed keeps the public engaged	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
20	By attracting more people downtown, it will allow more people to become involved in the community	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
21	Our town does not need to bring in more things, and build more things if we can't even keep the buildings filled that we already have. The look of our town has began to look trashy, with all the ugly murals on buildings that are historical. They honestly are not warm inviting. They look like scenes that are people who do grafitti. They are so busy looking and take away from a distinguished look like a Noblesville. Actually very disappointed in the changes that have been made.	7/10/2023 5:30 PM
22	It just does	7/10/2023 5:20 PM
23	Updates will make our community grow	7/10/2023 3:53 PM
24	-	7/10/2023 3:20 PM
25	We need to be in the now and grow our community so we don't have to go to other nearby towns	7/10/2023 3:08 PM
26	I think revitalization encourages residences to get outside and explore and appreciate their community, it signifies to visitors that they are welcome and we care about our community and neighborhoods, it increases accessibility for people to gather and also enjoy small businesses therefore increasing revenue. All around a downtown is the "hub" and a good hub encourages community gathering, new ideas, and and invitation to return again.	7/10/2023 2:53 PM
27	N/A	7/10/2023 2:34 PM
28	When I am trying to find thing to do for myself or with my nephews intend to look outside of my community. Also, it would possibly attract others into our community.	7/10/2023 2:29 PM
29	5	7/10/2023 2:19 PM
30	All of columbia city need revitalization not just downtown	7/10/2023 2:17 PM
31	Everything doesn't need to be new, but needs to look taken care of.	7/10/2023 2:14 PM
32	As a young mom, having businesses and entertainment close together and close to me makes life so much easier and makes it more likely for us to visit our local businesses.	7/10/2023 1:55 PM
33	We are on the right track but need more	7/10/2023 1:47 PM
34	Helps to grow the city	7/10/2023 1:31 PM
35	Yep	7/10/2023 1:30 PM
36	We have a good start, just need to continue	7/10/2023 1:29 PM
37	Columbia City is a great community. We need to keep the downtown vital.	7/10/2023 1:20 PM
38	Like to see more businesses, move in	7/10/2023 1:05 PM
39	I guess	7/10/2023 12:58 PM
40	It is important to attract businesses and people.	7/10/2023 12:58 PM
41	There's more then just downtown to attract people, but it could be a focal point.	7/10/2023 12:57 PM
42	It will bring in visitors	7/10/2023 12:56 PM
43	A historic and well cared for down this the heart of a city. Otherwise it is just a series of strip malls by a highway.	7/10/2023 8:45 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

44	I think a lot has improved over the last 5 years, but I agree it can always evolve and get better.	7/9/2023 4:26 PM
45	People go out of town because CC doesn't offer it	7/8/2023 9:33 PM
46	If Columbia City wants to become a true city then downtown needs to be a true destination and not a passage to the other cities and towns...and to realize that growth isn't always just stuffing spaces with useless lights and a bench. Get to making CC a livable downtown and the next generation will want to invest in this one horse town	6/29/2023 9:34 AM
47	People are naturally drawn to downtowns that are. Roanoke is a great local example. Franklin, TN would be another one to look at, although its demographic is much more higher end.	6/29/2023 7:12 AM
48	Builds a sense of a stronger community	6/27/2023 12:57 PM
49	Downtown is growing and I enjoy seeing so many new opportunities and businesses come to the downtown area!	6/26/2023 8:17 PM
50	Downtown should be a place for people to hang out	6/26/2023 4:02 PM
51	Brings people to Cc	6/25/2023 8:59 AM
52	Idk	6/24/2023 8:28 PM
53	Dine-in options in CC aren't very good	6/22/2023 4:28 PM
54	It's important for the city's economy	6/22/2023 10:36 AM
55	Makes us feel proud of our city.	6/22/2023 10:17 AM
56	Bring more people to cc	6/22/2023 10:08 AM
57	I think it shows pride in the community and we should always look to improve.	6/22/2023 9:44 AM
58	Keeps the community fresh and inviting	6/20/2023 11:59 AM
59	Impacts CC's economy and overall desirability	6/17/2023 10:59 PM
60	I think we have a lot of things for young kids and elderly people but middle age residents (20s-30s without kids) do not have much to do in CC	6/17/2023 9:57 PM
61	Small towns need to grow financially or they will shrink. No one wants Columbia City to fall off the map.	6/17/2023 9:38 PM
62	Needs to be balanced—keep it nice, but don't gentrify it and add overpriced apartments.	6/17/2023 9:58 AM
63	BETTER FOR COMMUNITY	6/17/2023 8:18 AM
64	Restoration of current, unique buildings	6/16/2023 11:51 PM
65	It brings people into the community	6/16/2023 9:46 PM
66	We need a thriving downtown	6/16/2023 6:18 PM
67	Despite the growth of the retail community toward us 30, the downtown core is still the heart of Columbia City. Or should be done to utilize it and welcome visitors as well as residents	6/16/2023 5:08 PM
68	To keep the appearance of CC and be inviting to people visiting from out of town. Also brings community together.	6/16/2023 1:10 PM
69	It is the hun of everything	6/16/2023 12:52 AM
70	I think we have a good downtown, a few more restaurants would be nice. Family friendly.	6/16/2023 12:20 AM
71	Having a downtown that is destination not just for CC residents, but other local areas will be a boost to the city.	6/15/2023 11:44 PM
72	I think Columbia City is a growing city and in order to continue that growth and keep younger families, a place to find community/social interaction locally can be a huge advantage over towns with less of a developed downtown.	6/15/2023 11:38 PM
73	Currently little to do in our community	6/15/2023 10:07 PM
74	We need to attract more outside incomw	6/15/2023 9:41 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

75	Attracts new residents and builds a sense of community and pride in CC	6/15/2023 9:37 PM
76	We need more dining options especially for Friday & Saturday evenings	6/15/2023 9:01 PM
77	Something to keep kids interested in downtown	6/15/2023 7:12 PM
78	I've been downtown multiple times, but often it is for a meal, a snack, or an event (farmer's market). It would be nice if there were attractions that kept me downtown though. I can go to eat, but when I am done with my meal, there aren't many options to go walk, sit, or just relax.	6/15/2023 5:09 PM
79	y	6/15/2023 4:41 PM
80	Living downtown it would be nice to see improvements	6/15/2023 4:23 PM
81	It needs more attractions	6/15/2023 3:23 PM
82	Yes	6/15/2023 3:20 PM
83	If you say you want to bring in people then things need to be done. Low income housing isn't the way to do it. Outdoor eating at restaurants . Bike trails through all of town and out to the high school	6/15/2023 2:45 PM
84	It needs to happen. It currently looks dated and unappealing. There isn't really anything to make it stand out.	6/15/2023 2:10 PM
85	It helps keep the city alive	6/15/2023 1:14 PM
86	Revitalization isn't as important as continued usage. There's lots of businesses in Col City but not all are within walking of the square. We need an area that we can park and walk to multiple places with stuff to do.	6/15/2023 1:02 PM
87	As a town changes & grows the downtown needs to change & grow as well	6/15/2023 12:36 PM
88	Keeps city alive	6/15/2023 12:07 PM
89	Downtown is the symbol of the City so it is important to be lively and recognizable. However private vs public investment is a major question.	6/15/2023 11:54 AM
90	Attract more businesses, jobs and people who want to live here for the economic stability of the community	6/15/2023 10:50 AM
91	The downtown is a reflection of the city / county	6/15/2023 10:41 AM
92	seems to be better off than other communities	6/15/2023 10:29 AM
93	A vital downtown gives a community an identity.	6/15/2023 10:24 AM
94	It is nice to be able to stay close to home with lower crime rates than going to Fort Wayne	6/15/2023 10:10 AM
95	Need to at least Maintain what we got	6/15/2023 10:06 AM
96	It's the heart of the town	6/15/2023 9:54 AM
97	Drawing more interest in our community in general.	6/15/2023 9:53 AM
98	If we want to keep the money in town, there needs to be a draw	6/15/2023 9:47 AM
99	.	6/15/2023 9:41 AM
100	new restaurant	6/15/2023 9:34 AM
101	Would rather see better parking and new businesses	6/15/2023 9:20 AM
102	Revitalization of a downtown can stimulate the local economy more so than big box stores. Money goes into local improvements and projects which creates local jobs and tourism.	6/15/2023 9:15 AM
103	People like visiting a place that has options for entertainment and good dining but it has to look nice and inviting. Our downtown Ned's to look classy in order to attract a visitor that is willing and able to spend time and money. to	6/13/2023 8:30 PM
104	Everyone wants to be proud of their city.	6/13/2023 6:37 PM
#	I AM INDIFFERENT	DATE

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

1	Would rather the park project advance	7/11/2023 11:06 PM
2	..	7/11/2023 12:37 PM
3	.	7/10/2023 3:41 PM
4	Don't really have an answer	7/10/2023 2:44 PM
5	It could go either way	7/10/2023 1:49 PM
6	It doesn't matter what they do to improve it if the shop is too specialized in one thing or geared towards 1 thing and not very good. Like Chapman's. Cool place but have had 3 awful experiences and won't be returning. Same with Tokyo.	7/10/2023 1:45 PM
7	It's a lot of talk but nothing ever really changes. Still a lot of the same crappy restaurants, poor communication of downtown events, and focus on improving things for officials and not the community.	7/10/2023 1:32 PM
8	Attraction is key!	7/10/2023 1:18 PM
9	Our town is already beautiful, start focusing on jobs, business and housing and less on making it "pretty" . Also, address community and citizens issues please.	7/10/2023 1:17 PM
10	Idk	6/24/2023 8:28 PM
11	Keep it the way it is. No more expanding.	6/22/2023 10:04 AM
12	I think it will help attract people but I also hate to see our city continue to grow because I miss the small town feel it's starting to lack!! But I do love the diversity coming in so it's a double edge sword!	6/17/2023 8:27 PM
13	.	6/15/2023 10:08 PM
14	I think it looks fine.	6/15/2023 7:11 PM
15	Not much to revitalize	6/15/2023 4:59 PM
16	I am a numbers person,so depends on the cost	6/15/2023 4:17 PM
17	It is what it is	6/15/2023 1:59 PM
18	N/a	6/15/2023 12:20 PM
19	Looks pretty good!	6/15/2023 12:08 PM
20	The only big issue I see is parking. Driving down Van Buren St. is can be dangerous.	6/15/2023 10:43 AM
21	It would be nice, but should be organic and not burden tax payers financially.	6/15/2023 9:40 AM
22	Going good	6/15/2023 9:36 AM
23	I am new to the area so I am still finding my way around.	6/15/2023 9:32 AM
#	SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT	DATE
1	I believe bringing people to our downtown has value but the amount of money wasted on simple things like another jail, heated sidewalks, and manicured lawns/parks seems like a waste of money.	7/10/2023 2:54 PM
2	I think it's very unimportant . I think our attention as a community should be focused on providing better resources for families in hardship, children in poverty, accessible therapy and counseling for families, and rehabilitating those coming out of jails/addiction. Making our town more pretty and fun doesn't seem very significant. However I do recognize that by making it more pretty and fun it will draw more residents and tax dollars. So, I think Ola small amount of time and resources should go to the shallowness of "pretty and fun" and a mich larger portion of time and resources should go to meaningfull, impacting, and life changing initiatives.	7/1/2023 8:40 AM
3	Idk	6/24/2023 8:28 PM
4	Because I don't want to Fort Wayne or warsaw our small town and have it run down in 5 yrs due to the latest trend	6/15/2023 7:09 PM
5	Revitalization is an excellent way to draw people in to the community & downtown area.	6/15/2023 2:28 PM

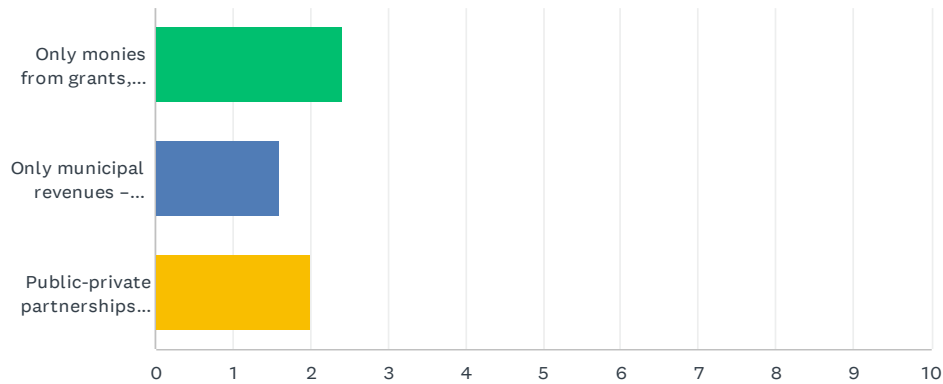
Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Downtown seems "flat." It's kind of boring. First Friday & the Farmers Market really liven up downtown!

#	VERY UNIMPORTANT	DATE
1	It's only a good thing if taxpayers aren't funding it	7/11/2023 12:14 AM
2	People need more options for housing and restaurants.	7/10/2023 1:02 PM
3	We need an update on this old town	6/30/2023 5:49 AM
4	Idk	6/24/2023 8:28 PM

Q17 Please rank your preferred method of financing downtown revitalization

Answered: 417 Skipped: 8



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Only monies from grants, donations and fundraising – no municipal revenues	58.03% 242	23.74% 99	18.23% 76	417	2.40
Only municipal revenues – everyone in the community shares in the investment	11.99% 50	35.25% 147	52.76% 220	417	1.59
Public-private partnerships – municipal revenues and funding by community businesses and residents	29.98% 125	41.01% 171	29.02% 121	417	2.01

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

Q18 Are there other things about downtown Columbia City you would like to see this plan address?

Answered: 219 Skipped: 206

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Some of the derelict houses and buildings along the main streets need ownership with care.	7/23/2023 7:32 AM
2	No	7/22/2023 2:12 PM
3	Limitations on parked vehicle sizes, especially in diagonal parking spaces	7/20/2023 7:28 PM
4	Pet friendly	7/13/2023 11:36 PM
5	Dog friendly Wheelchair friendly/access Huge window displays!!!! Especially at Christmas!!	7/13/2023 2:21 PM
6	Old linville preschool building has been making us look bad for 15 years now, helping get grants for new business owners.	7/13/2023 9:52 AM
7	More benches on the edges and rest spots for people traveling by foot or bike especially from just outside the orange area. To be close but not actually close requires a little more effort when you have children for an in town adventure.	7/13/2023 9:10 AM
8	As mentioned, the former HS property near the Fahl Aq Ctr needs development--which we realize is part of the long-term plan. I'd love to also see a great donut shop in downtown--the BlueMoon Bakery is not a traditional donut shop. Overall we love our CC downtown but would love to see continual investment in third spaces like parks and recreation, dining, and events/programming that are unique/creative, compelling, affordable, and ideally, family-friendly. We'd love to see more venues for kids/adolescents (though we are very grateful for what is already available).	7/12/2023 7:56 PM
9	No	7/12/2023 8:43 AM
10	Community connection/ purpose/ art and music festival	7/11/2023 11:06 PM
11	Taking down eye sore buildings	7/11/2023 9:29 PM
12	Whatever happens with downtown, just please do not pave N Chauncey St	7/11/2023 8:42 PM
13	Since we have all the government buildings downtown, I would like to see a parking garage, so it frees up some of the street parking for the people that would like to shop. Stop taking over building in downtown for government. Let the small businesses have a chance to grow our downtown.	7/11/2023 8:05 PM
14	Outdoor dining Kid friendly spaces (especially small children)	7/11/2023 6:18 PM
15	I am new to the area and live part time right now. I do go into Fort Wayne a lot since they have more Vegan options. I would suggest that you don't focus on art paintings or murals and focus on providing people a reason to come to CC. I would also recommend you get a committee that focuses on grants and events for the downtown area. First Fridays is awesome and your festival was nice. I am Vegan, and vegan is not a fad. The vegan community continues to grow and there is more demand for plant based eating. Columbia City needs to take advantage of this.	7/11/2023 2:13 PM
16	I really think it would be great to have more areas to dine and hang out outside. I think this would attract more people to the area.	7/11/2023 1:49 PM
17	We need a downtown committee to bring in grants for all business. We need a committee that works with all organizations. We need trust and reliability and accountability.	7/11/2023 12:24 PM
18	Remove Columbia City connect. They are a waste off tax money and don't support businesses	7/11/2023 12:17 PM
19	Please look at the storm sewers throughout the town. These need addressed, street sweeper does not get these and then we have street flooding. Also the grass and weeds growing	7/11/2023 11:21 AM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

between the curb and street needs attention.

20	Disband Columbia city connect. They don't provide any benefits to the city What do they actually do? Need an single group to focus on improving downtown.	7/11/2023 9:03 AM
21	River access for kayaking or canoeing	7/11/2023 8:45 AM
22	Police patrol on foot or bicycle. Public restrooms and water fountains, and public transportation such as trolley or vans/mini bus.	7/11/2023 8:15 AM
23	Only investing on sound business and not waste money on bs	7/11/2023 12:14 AM
24	I think having chicken would be very beneficial if they were aloud in city limits(not including roosters). Hens aren't too loud and they provide a lot of benefits such as, reduce waste reduction, natural insect control, food quality, and produces good fertilizer.	7/10/2023 11:35 PM
25	No	7/10/2023 10:26 PM
26	More benches along the streets for people who can't stand long and so that people can relax and stay longer. During well-attended events, more benches will be filled.	7/10/2023 10:01 PM
27	Parking is a huge issue, especially when the city streets are closed	7/10/2023 9:21 PM
28	No	7/10/2023 8:33 PM
29	Sidewalk and street repairs	7/10/2023 8:26 PM
30	No	7/10/2023 7:10 PM
31	Parking on Spencer Street between Line and Main.	7/10/2023 6:58 PM
32	No	7/10/2023 6:53 PM
33	Parking garage and more restaurants and entertainment	7/10/2023 6:42 PM
34	More affordable childcare facilities. People aren't working because they do not have access to SAFE affordable childcare.	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
35	Keeping the historical facade to the downtown buildings to preserve the history of our city	7/10/2023 6:08 PM
36	more business such as eatiers	7/10/2023 5:58 PM
37	More seating for events for those who can't walk or stand for long times even maybe golf cart parking for events	7/10/2023 5:50 PM
38	I would like to see more added to the blue river trail. That is the only safe place to run or ride. Columbia city as a whole is not runner or bicycle friendly.	7/10/2023 5:43 PM
39	Keep the historical look of the buildings. If housing is built. Make it match. So it doesnt look out of place like the one that is already there	7/10/2023 5:20 PM
40	Look into a new amusement company for old settlers. The last few years have been terrible. The street fair has turned into just a nuisance of the roads being shut down, not a real draw to downtown.	7/10/2023 4:41 PM
41	Possible helping homes downtown area improve their curb appeal. If i was Just driving thru and saw some of the houses I'm not sure i would save to stop. Some are rough shape.	7/10/2023 4:17 PM
42	N/a	7/10/2023 4:16 PM
43	No .	7/10/2023 4:07 PM
44	No	7/10/2023 3:53 PM
45	No	7/10/2023 3:20 PM
46	Pedestrian bridge across 30..... I know it's not for down town but sure would be nice	7/10/2023 3:05 PM
47	No	7/10/2023 2:56 PM
48	More churches and community gatherings	7/10/2023 2:55 PM
49	Turning the expensive yard in front of the courthouse into a playspace for children. Adding more benches and outdoor seating, especially for downtown events. Their is one tiny Pavilion	7/10/2023 2:54 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

to sit under to get out of the sun. Quit spending money on maintaining grass and turn the space into regularly used space.

50	Green spaces throughout downtown with bike racks and trails and access to existing park spaces (how can we connect morsches and devol and eagle park for pedestrians safely) encouraging youth and families to get outside and explore. Dining options and experiences tailored towards young adults (outdoor seating with lights and music, but not a typical bar scene either, a space for 20-30 year olds to gather during the day and at night locally and safely in downtown that can also be functionally used other times as well). How can we bring downtown Winona lake/promenade park/Landing "vibes" to this community?	7/10/2023 2:53 PM
51	No	7/10/2023 2:36 PM
52	No	7/10/2023 2:34 PM
53	community space for open-air concerts, shows, or events that does not block all of traffic in downtown	7/10/2023 2:31 PM
54	More creative and educational activities for children. Roy G Biv was great and the kids loved it, but since it has changed to Indigo Studio, the location and hours aren't as convenient anymore. I find myself taking the kids out of the community this summer.	7/10/2023 2:29 PM
55	No	7/10/2023 2:26 PM
56	Re Evaluation of "downtown district businesses" that may extend beyond "downtown", that could use funding for appearance/rehab.	7/10/2023 2:22 PM
57	Better variety of bars and restaurants	7/10/2023 2:17 PM
58	Not that I can think of maybe more walking trails and nature scenery	7/10/2023 2:17 PM
59	I would love to see a dog park and a disc golf course! We have come a far way since I was little, as far as parks and the quality of them! I just think we could utilize some open spaces within the city for more activities!	7/10/2023 2:15 PM
60	I'm very happy with how downtown Columbia City keeps improving.	7/10/2023 2:14 PM
61	Just keep this town safe. Eradicate the bad things like drugs and violence.	7/10/2023 2:13 PM
62	Attractions to bring travelers downtown.	7/10/2023 2:08 PM
63	Not at the moment	7/10/2023 2:03 PM
64	prohibit large vehicle parking on Van Buren street between Line and Chauncy street	7/10/2023 2:01 PM
65	It's not people friendly..... not enough options, nothing draws you in.	7/10/2023 1:57 PM
66	Better parking, and crosswalks with the crosswalk lights at every intersection so pedestrians can cross with the crosswalk lights.	7/10/2023 1:51 PM
67	"Talking" crosswalks for safety and to help visually impaired individuals	7/10/2023 1:49 PM
68	Nope	7/10/2023 1:47 PM
69	Can we get a different company to bring rides in for old settlers? We stopped going due to the creepy carnies from poor jacks.	7/10/2023 1:45 PM
70	No/few benches or seating. Maybe do things that are family friendly. Chalk walks etc.	7/10/2023 1:32 PM
71	Internet. That's why we moved out of CC. Unable to work from home because of poor service. Waiting for an option so can build on property we own.	7/10/2023 1:31 PM
72	To reiterate, pedestrian crossing is really dangerous. Especially at the Van Buren and Main light. Doesn't matter if I have a walk light, nobody pays attention and I'm surprised I haven't been run over yet. I don't know if additional signage would help, or if delaying the traffic signal until pedestrians start to walk, etc.	7/10/2023 1:30 PM
73	No	7/10/2023 1:29 PM
74	Less obstruction at intersections. Too many trees, too many cars parked on the street, better timing between stop lights, removal of the weeds down the curb lines, the amount of	7/10/2023 1:25 PM

Columbia City Downtown Revitalization Plan - Community Survey

abandoned looking houses, require better upkeep of houses downtown, better traffic flow for brewha drive thru.

75	None	7/10/2023 1:20 PM
76	Yes, start listening to the citizens issues. Our government needs to speak and address issues better. It's easy to address the fun stuff, start tackling the difficult issues. Listen to your concerned citizens better. Side note, you have streets cars can barely get down due to street parking. For example, Jefferson between Line and Walnut, too many of these. Thank you!	7/10/2023 1:17 PM
77	Ways to assist current businesses to grow and expand.	7/10/2023 1:15 PM
78	Reduce street widths and increase pedestrian/bike areas with sidewalks and trees that produce shade!	7/10/2023 1:12 PM
79	More safety for smaller kids and special needs children	7/10/2023 1:10 PM
80	No	7/10/2023 1:08 PM
81	Most important is east access parking for downtown businesses. City employee parking should NOT be allowed on any street around the courthouse.	7/10/2023 1:07 PM
82	N/A	7/10/2023 1:05 PM
83	A dog park	7/10/2023 1:05 PM
84	Pet area and grocery	7/10/2023 1:04 PM
85	More choices in restaurants	7/10/2023 1:02 PM
86	I would love to see another splash pad or water activity area. Both the splash pad and the Fahl Aquatic Center is always super busy and is hard to access and enjoy. We live within blocks of the Fahl Aquatic Center and are rarely ever able to go because of it always being at max capacity	7/10/2023 12:57 PM
87	More landscaping	7/10/2023 12:56 PM
88	I love this town! ❤️	7/10/2023 8:45 AM
89	More food options. Were all sick of unhealthy fast food. More stores. There is absolutely nothing to do in this town. Fort Wayne is better. We need things to do like as a community. It's so boring.	6/30/2023 5:49 AM
90	More downtown space . A fountain somewhere around court house . Use the upstairs grant building as a ball room or similar like it was back in the Day.	6/29/2023 6:53 PM
91	No	6/29/2023 1:46 PM
92	Help with signage and entrances for the buildings.	6/28/2023 11:57 PM
93	Boutiques, trendy cafes and cultural events	6/27/2023 12:57 PM
94	The clean up of older homes/abandoned homes	6/26/2023 8:17 PM
95	Sidewalks around downtown need redone	6/26/2023 4:02 PM
96	New roads	6/24/2023 8:28 PM
97	Address all the marijauna problems and young hooligans around the city make people more productive members of society	6/24/2023 2:18 PM
98	Bigger aquatic center because it's already always full of people and hardly any room to sit. Large fun park with cultural areas and LGBTQ friendly. Events at BE Comics to go to or play games would be great! Prioritizing foot and bike traffic in downtown not cars and making more space for people and activities with off location parking. I love walking around Jefferson pointe with specific shops and large shops with activities as well. Locations for food trucks to park. I want to increase our tourist activities as well so that it's a fun place to be and others would want to visit.	6/24/2023 1:39 PM
99	Government buildings and offices taking up valuable retail space	6/23/2023 12:52 PM
100	Renovated buildings, sidewalks with more artistic enhancements like the lovely alleys we	6/23/2023 8:07 AM

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	already have, perhaps artistic painted benches, sculptures and more murals.	
101	Highlight local businesses more and ease of access to them	6/22/2023 6:47 PM
102	Did I mention the sidewalks for wheelchairs - lol!	6/22/2023 5:03 PM
103	No	6/22/2023 4:28 PM
104	Possibly more venues for adult nightlife that is better updated and attracts better crowds than Duffs.	6/22/2023 4:07 PM
105	When focusing on downtown revitalization, the city should focus on uniqueness. When developing a plan, a focus should be on how we could make our city stand out; there are dozens of towns with identical-looking downtowns, so how can our city focus on pulling people off the road and into businesses? Hence why I emphasized the importance of signage in my responses. Another focus should be on giving people a bit of a "break" from the city, perhaps emphasizing the Blue River Trail a little bit more and improve it by adding signage along it with information about the flora and fauna of the river area itself, as well as history for significant buildings downtown.	6/22/2023 3:26 PM
106	Too many government buildings. Why would you take up valuable retail space with jails, offices, etc?	6/22/2023 12:59 PM
107	We love living in cc. First Fridays is a family favorite. We also took our kids to the school bash. I love all the togetherness that cc has. I moved from Utah and was worried about being in in but cc has made it feel so much like home to us!!! Great work to all the city workers	6/22/2023 11:58 AM
108	More advertising and cohesiveness with events so we know details about them	6/22/2023 10:36 AM
109	N	6/22/2023 10:08 AM
110	STOP ADDING NEW HOUSING AND BUSINESSES. Businesses already come and go too often because there's no where for people to park. The roads are a mess on the square because of big trucks in the already inadequate parking, sticking too far into the road. The lanes confuse people from out of town. The stop lights are out of sync and poorly timed. Traffic backs up multiple times a day. Tear something down, build a parking structure close to the square.	6/22/2023 10:04 AM
111	Only access from eagle Glen side of 30 to town without crossing 30	6/22/2023 9:50 AM
112	It would be great to have a little grocery type store downtown that is easily accessible to people living in the immediate area, as well as a good park that offers more than a slide and swings.	6/22/2023 9:48 AM
113	It would be awesome if we had an open an amp theater to support public performances. Plus it could be used during old settlers and other events when a band is playing. It would have dedicated seating.	6/22/2023 9:44 AM
114	Looks good!	6/22/2023 9:44 AM
115	no	6/22/2023 9:33 AM
116	I am sure many will mention lack of adequate parking in downtown CC. However, in comparison to the downtown's of other local communities, I see no issue with parking. I have never gone downtown and not been able to find a place to park.	6/20/2023 4:32 PM
117	Incentives for small business expansions	6/20/2023 11:59 AM
118	A constant Support of both Big And Small Business even Mom and Pop places . Encouraging Kids to start business here	6/19/2023 8:45 AM
119	More transportation 4 people that don't have cars. And have transportation available on weekends for people that don't have cars and then maybe having a bus going out to the hospital and to Walgreens. Van Buren up-and-downSo I think we Need busses maybe 6. Or we need taxi services toward from Five in the morning until like maybe 12 o'clock at night 7 days a week.	6/19/2023 1:17 AM
120	That the multiple groups that run the events, markets, 1st Fri, Thurs eve, etc. etc all work together instead of competing against each other. Too many clicks of groups.	6/19/2023 12:19 AM
121	Would love to see a space dedicated to a dog park	6/17/2023 9:57 PM

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122	Including everyone in the community, not just the majority. This community is diverse and should be represented.	6/17/2023 9:38 PM
123	We really miss Yo2Go. We'd love stuff like that for families...snack shops, something like Roy G Biv or Indigo, More community events (we love what all you've been doing this summer), places for say teenagers to go/things for them to do...we live very near to downtown, and my 13 year old is getting to an age where she wants to walk around/hang out downtown and nearby areas with her friends, so little areas like Okhi Alley are awesome...more of that, plus some more of a variety of places for them to go/things to do. Also, more shopping...a good variety of boutique shops, unique shops. Also more dining...a good variety of family dining and dessert/snack shops. We love going to the Shops at Winona in Winona Lake...cute little shops like that in Columbia City would be so cool!! I love the direction our little town has been heading the past several years—all the nice updates, additional activities, and all that. Keep up the good work!!	6/17/2023 7:37 PM
124	Fix traffic problems at Market & Line, add an escape room or something fun to do, need more fast food options on this end of town—they're all expensive or "sit down places" except the Nook.	6/17/2023 9:58 AM
125	Something to make Columbia City a destination. A reason for people in surrounding areas to visit.	6/17/2023 8:56 AM
126	ADDING MORE THINGS TO DO	6/17/2023 8:18 AM
127	Need to serve our community, not bring in more people. Need to keep small town.	6/16/2023 11:51 PM
128	Keep the small town feeling, yet have retail stores and shops available so people can "Shop Local" and not have to drive to Ft. Wayne or Warsaw..... or shop online!!	6/16/2023 10:46 PM
129	Handicapped accessibility to storefronts retail establishments and governmental buildings, including the post office, which is a travesty. New businesses should be required to be Ada compliant and handicapped accessible.	6/16/2023 5:08 PM
130	More plants more trees	6/16/2023 4:18 PM
131	Nothing else specifically.	6/16/2023 12:38 PM
132	No	6/16/2023 10:51 AM
133	More night life!	6/16/2023 10:06 AM
134	I'm glad this is being looked at. There is not a lot to do for people in their 20-30s without kids. Especially after 9pm or on a Sunday.	6/16/2023 7:45 AM
135	Year round events	6/16/2023 7:44 AM
136	Landscaping around the court house!	6/16/2023 1:33 AM
137	More sports bars and parking!!!	6/16/2023 12:52 AM
138	No	6/16/2023 12:20 AM
139	We need to find ways to build destination attractions in our downtown. Right now Pickles and Moo Over are the only businesses I know draw outsiders into our town. We need to build upon that. We're right in the middle of Fort Wayne and Warsaw. We should be the place that people want to meet for their business lunch or take their afternoon or Saturday outing to. I don't want to have to go out to the 30 corridor to meet my shopping needs in town. I certainly don't want to go out there to eat at a chain restaurant. I'm so excited to see what great things can happen for our downtown.	6/15/2023 10:50 PM
140	Government buildings using valuable business properties.	6/15/2023 10:47 PM
141	Outdoor performing arts stage, a bakery that is open regular hrs., restaurants open on Mon and evening hrs ,	6/15/2023 10:24 PM
142	Additional dinning, fill vacant building's	6/15/2023 10:08 PM
143	Dog park	6/15/2023 10:07 PM
144	Focus on what Columbia city already has instead of building and adding new stores, housing and fast food restaurants. Use resources to preserve its history	6/15/2023 9:50 PM

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145	The Haunted Jail is an eyesore and embarrassment 11 months of the year. Many taxpayers don't understand how this private business is allowed to continually depreciate real estate values in exchange for one month of notoriety and private revenue windfalls. It's a very poor reflection of our community and its Downtown Revitalization's reputation.	6/15/2023 9:46 PM
146	More partnership with WCCS for homecoming week. Partner with WCCS for an indoor community pool with swim lessons and diving	6/15/2023 9:37 PM
147	More things for teenagers to do. The bowling alley is great for them to hang and spend time. A pool hall or rec center open to the public would be nice.	6/15/2023 9:12 PM
148	The buildings west of line street north side of the street needs to be addressed.	6/15/2023 9:05 PM
149	No	6/15/2023 7:11 PM
150	More business!!	6/15/2023 6:43 PM
151	PARKING	6/15/2023 5:57 PM
152	Exploring the opportunity for parking spaces that have dual use and purpose. A win/win situation to bring more people on board with the idea.	6/15/2023 5:26 PM
153	NA	6/15/2023 5:09 PM
154	No	6/15/2023 4:59 PM
155	no	6/15/2023 4:41 PM
156	Na	6/15/2023 4:17 PM
157	Being a business owner outside of town I think it's important to not just bring/invest everything in downtown. Why not help all businesses in our community grow. It's very frustrating when everything goes to downtown when the majority of businesses in this community are outside downtown.	6/15/2023 3:41 PM
158	No	6/15/2023 3:29 PM
159	More dining options	6/15/2023 3:23 PM
160	No	6/15/2023 3:20 PM
161	Helping create a positive ecological impact in the way landscaping is created and recycling is promoted	6/15/2023 3:03 PM
162	No	6/15/2023 3:03 PM
163	Not letting house on Main Street look like crap or any other houses in downtown	6/15/2023 2:45 PM
164	Improved ADA	6/15/2023 2:28 PM
165	Would love to see the entire community involved with the Haunted Jail.	6/15/2023 2:27 PM
166	No	6/15/2023 1:59 PM
167	Better traffic flow to get through town with green lights	6/15/2023 1:35 PM
168	Housing and not just government subsidy housing. I'm currently looking for a nice place to rent and I make too much money to even live at most places.	6/15/2023 1:34 PM
169	There is a big need for a dog park. There isn't anywhere that I'm aware of that dogs can run off leash.	6/15/2023 1:22 PM
170	Revitalize blighted areas (old warehouses that may be brownfield sites), identify new housing opportunities where vacant or disrepaired houses currently sit.	6/15/2023 1:21 PM
171	Nope	6/15/2023 1:14 PM
172	Better quality, not just more. Expanded hours of existing businesses, cross promoting, etc.	6/15/2023 1:02 PM
173	No	6/15/2023 12:20 PM
174	Directional signage on US30 to draw travelers to the downtown	6/15/2023 12:19 PM

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175	No thx	6/15/2023 12:08 PM
176	Senior programs in city.	6/15/2023 12:07 PM
177	We need a Daniel Street.	6/15/2023 11:54 AM
178	Make the available commercial spaces affordable to attract more businesses or even help non-profit organizations have a home downtown.	6/15/2023 11:29 AM
179	Mostly new boutiques and experiences downtown, like wine and canvas or art classes, live music, etc.	6/15/2023 11:28 AM
180	I love this. We have the best small town.	6/15/2023 11:25 AM
181	...	6/15/2023 11:21 AM
182	Needs to be more seating. Benches.	6/15/2023 11:12 AM
183	Nope	6/15/2023 10:43 AM
184	Making sure people are safe in the downtown area and using the crosswalks and not walk through traffic like the Downtown restaurant and courthouse parking	6/15/2023 10:41 AM
185	affordable senior living so those without transportation can take advantage of the downtown businesses and recreation.	6/15/2023 10:25 AM
186	Flow of thru traffic needs to be top priority	6/15/2023 10:22 AM
187	Someone needs to keep an eye on the courthouse and monuments. The resent vandalism of the courthouse was unacceptable.	6/15/2023 10:13 AM
188	Bike racks that allow more than 1 bike. We have a family of 4 that would love to be able to ride to locations downtown but there is no real place to place our bikes	6/15/2023 10:12 AM
189	Actually do what they say they are going to do instead of things they don't need to	6/15/2023 10:09 AM
190	No	6/15/2023 10:06 AM
191	Family friendly all the time, not just certain days of the month.	6/15/2023 9:54 AM
192	Just more restaurant choices and better parking	6/15/2023 9:52 AM
193	A nice bar/hang out place for adults	6/15/2023 9:51 AM
194	Keep doing amazing things!	6/15/2023 9:48 AM
195	Don't make thing so clique	6/15/2023 9:47 AM
196	Dog friendly spaces. If people are walking, they'll want to take their dogs. I want downtown to be a place where people will want to hang out for hours which would have to include, grocery shopping, beautiful scenery, large open areas for people to relax and children to play, inclusive spaces for all people to feel welcome without political or religious undertones, and activities to go. You have to have places to eat at that include all people. A lot of places downtown also have weird hours so the options are still limited. I think poptique is such a cute business with a bad location, same for Roy g biv. The clothing stores are not inclusive for all sizes. The grocery stores are only on one side of town. I would like parking a ways away. So you could come from farther way to walk around and enjoy downtown. But I would not want to see more parking in downtown itself. I would love more festivals/events.	6/15/2023 9:46 AM
197	C.C. really needs the building facades updated. The entire downtown area needs a face-lift . Modernization of not only those but the entire vibe including opportunities for entertainment. Right now it's too old fashion. It's podunk.	6/15/2023 9:44 AM
198	The Warehouse Church, it's ministries and B.A.B.E. are losing there locations. These are vital programs to the community.	6/15/2023 9:41 AM
199	No	6/15/2023 9:40 AM
200	Fox the front of the building attached to the downtown flats	6/15/2023 9:39 AM
201	Expand and promote the attractions in and around the town that are not necessarily in "downtown". Museums and parks are just a short drive away.	6/15/2023 9:34 AM

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202	more dining options would be nice so there is a variety	6/15/2023 9:32 AM
203	Being a low vision individual, the walk signs can be hard to navigate and I have noticed 1-2 don't work consistently. Having a speaker system attached to the light pole telling you it's safe to walk would be great. It would also countdown to tell you when to stop.	6/15/2023 9:28 AM
204	More safety features such as Safe Havens or Emergency Phone boxes so that if needed someone can quickly request assistance if needed. Or if they feel they are being followed they can go to the safe haven more importantly at night/evenings when a lot of business are shut down. The only thing close that i know of is City Hall (Police Department).	6/15/2023 9:27 AM
205	N/A	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
206	The downtown needs to have some more outdoor dining areas in front of current restaurants. Make the downtown look more "higher end" and more higher spending consumers will visit.	6/15/2023 9:26 AM
207	It would be nice to see the downtown expanded. With Redmans gone now it could expand to the west and then to the south where the jail is currently.	6/15/2023 9:20 AM
208	Probably unrealistic, but I'll throw it out there... Is it possible to get a safe trail from the high school to downtown?	6/15/2023 9:19 AM
209	Safer parking and better patrol of downtown traffic. Drive through traffic is dangerous for cars trying to park and back out of spots. This discourages people from parking and shopping downtown.	6/15/2023 9:15 AM
210	The simple fact is the downtown is an after thought for most. Through the daily commutes to the schools and groceries, downtown suffers. Traffic congestion, poor appearance and atrocious parking conditions (try backing out onto Van Buren after school) deter people from coming downtown unless they have to. While local groups (at least 4) are attempting to spur revitalization there seem to be little desire to coordinate and work together to see it come to fruition. When you talk about spending \$50-60 MILLION on parks and there is little to no discussion on possibly assisting downtown areas it is discouraging. While parks attract people and some inevitably spend money in the community, they do not generate funds like a retail business would, yet government is hesitant to invest funds into those areas, yet all to willing to exploit it. There are things in place that could immediately address some of these issue such as ordinance enforcements, downtown cleaning of the streets, beautification through tree planting and music playing, better lighting, and upgrading/maintaining sidewalks, roads, alleys, and parking lots, but none of this is done. Why? Simple things that require little to no effort or money and yet another study done to ask what should be done when anybody can look around and tell you what needs done. It certainly creates a disconnect between local business owners and political entities who govern from Facebook and rarely, if ever, stops into downtown businesses.	6/14/2023 12:27 PM
211	More access to the history! Grow the DistricX options and add events to learn our history.	6/14/2023 11:20 AM
212	Funding for revitalizing old historic buildings	6/13/2023 9:38 PM
213	N/A	6/13/2023 6:45 PM
214	N/a	6/13/2023 6:04 PM
215	There is a park space in a small town in Illinois similar to ours right by downtown ice cream and coffee shops. It's all artificial turf with trees that have hanging lights through them. They have a light up splash pad. They have places for people to sit. Students play Spikeball and hit a volleyball around, parents/families coming to the splash pad or getting ice cream and spending time together, etc. It's just a really fun and safe environment that is well lit for people to enjoy into the night and it's extremely well kept. Thanks for all that you're doing and surveying the community!	6/13/2023 4:00 PM
216	Pets	6/13/2023 1:29 PM
217	Large vehicles pick ups with cabs park on sidewalks. Smoking and the mess on the walks streets. Enforcement of no parking or limited parking we need a beat cop! Surely we can find funds or realign using volunteer.	6/13/2023 1:26 PM
218	I would love more reasons to come downtown. Yes outdoor space are nicer but I would love to see a chance to enjoy a summer night with some good food. Something like that doesn't exist	6/13/2023 12:01 PM

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now. Or any type of rooftop space would be amazing. There is so much potential to create space to enjoys during the summer and evenings especially outdoors.

219

Everything should be focused on attraction of customers, citizens, and visitors to our downtown. We should focus on creating a unique environment that isn't a cookie cutter of every other downtown in small-city Indiana. We need to be both bold and thoughtful about our approach to the future of our downtown.

6/12/2023 1:44 PM

