

# DOWNTOWN LANCASTER

Spring 2013



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## Introduction

The plan is intended to be used as a guide by both public and private entities in their efforts to physically and economically improve Downtown Lancaster. The plan establishes guidelines, built on community aspirations to be considered in future policy decisions and development scenarios. A coordinated community-driven approach amongst citizens, government, and business should be considered when referencing this plan. The plan recognizes three underlying principles that direct the goals and recommendations presented in this document.

**Economic Development:** Attract new businesses and potential homebuyers to the Downtown area;

**Promotion:** Raise awareness of Downtown's physical, governmental, and cultural assets; and

**Opportunities:** Explore policies and programs that increase Downtown growth.

This plan envisions Downtown Lancaster becoming a vibrant, mixed-use, destination location in Central Ohio. Making Downtown Lancaster attractive to its residents will foster increased visitation as a secondary benefit. Goals were created to build upon Downtown's existing conditions and the revitalization expectations of the community. The following chapters of the plan elaborate upon these goals, their objectives, and the necessary actions needed to achieve them.

## Goals

### POLICY

Strengthen public - private development partnerships to help manage vacancies.

### LANCASTER GATEWAY

Develop a quality space that serves as a gateway to Lancaster and becomes a catalyst for Downtown revitalization.

### ENTERTAINMENT

Promote entertainment by encouraging dining and interactive public spaces.

### TRANSPORTATION

Upgrade the transportation network to reflect the physical landscape of Downtown.

### PARKING

Improve the visitor experience by centralizing public parking and adding a uniform sign network.

### ARTS, PARKS, AND RECREATION

Add desired landscape adjacent to Downtown that promotes the natural features of the region and offers new recreational opportunities.

### HOUSING

Explore potential housing opportunities that encourage Downtown living.

### BRANDING

Establish a community brand that encompasses Lancaster's heritage and future Downtown aspirations.

## Process

The plan was developed from January 2013 through May 2013 by The Ohio State University City and Regional Planning undergraduate studio class. The class met twice a week for three hour sessions of discussion, team planning, and research. The first half of the class focused on intense research and data collection that culminated at the February 20th, studio midterm peer-review. Following the peer review, the class moved forward with formal proposals on group assigned research topics.

Throughout the process the class was actively involved with the Lancaster community. We met with our primary contact, Mayor Smith, on multiple occasions to receive feedback on our progress. The class traveled to Lancaster frequently to attend public meetings, take inventories, and engage with community leaders.

## Project Area

The plan focuses on the Downtown area; the area starts at the intersection of Main Street and Memorial Drive and extends East towards Maple Street. The area sits between the North and South boundaries of Mulbery and Walnut Street. Primary intersecting streets include: Columbus, Broad, and High. This plan recognizes Main Street as the main economic artery for downtown development. This area comprises most of Lancaster's traditional small businesses and historic building stock.

## Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 38,780 people, 16,048 households, and 9,937 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,955.9 people per square mile (755.0/km<sup>2</sup>). In the City, the population was spread out with 24% under the age of 18, and 15.7% who were 65 years of age or older. (Source: City Data)

## Community Assets

**History:** Sherman House, Georgian Museum, 19th-Century Architecture.

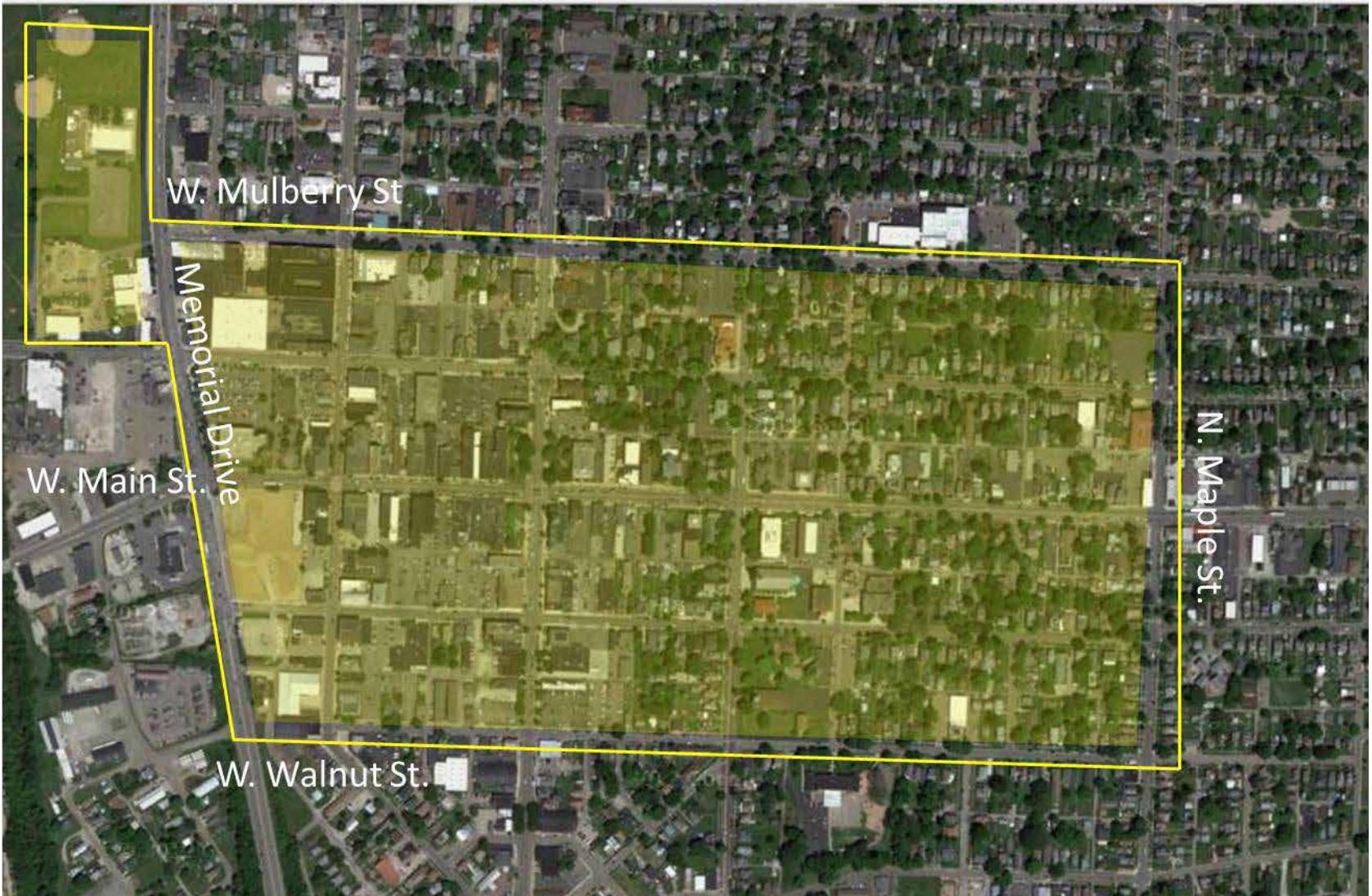
**Civic:** Fairfield County Seat.

**Culture:** Decorative Arts Center, Lancaster Festival, Museums.

**Natural:** Mount Pleasant, Hocking River, topography.

**Infrastructure:** Wide sidewalks with planters.

**Geography:** Close to Columbus and Hocking Hills.



## Project Area

The plan focuses on the Downtown area; the area starts at the intersection of Main Street and Memorial Drive and extends East towards Maple Street. The area sits between the North and South boundaries of Mulberry and Walnut Street. Primary intersecting streets include: Columbus, Broad, and High. Parts of this plan extend into the Miller Park area. This plan recognizes Main Street as the main economic artery for downtown development. This area comprises most of Lancaster's traditional small businesses and historic building stock.

## Survey

After compiling a list of businesses we sent out a survey electronically on February 20th. We received 19 responses from business owners representing a diverse group of companies across Lancaster. From the survey we were able to gather a general sense of the Lancaster business identity through statistics. More importantly, we received dozens of comments regarding business owner's hopes for Downtown development and gained perspective on the business - government relationship. Many of the comments, concerns, and opinions are echoed in the various chapters of this plan. Below is a brief statistical summary of the survey.

### How long have you been in this location?

31% of respondents have been in their current business location for 6-8 years. 1-2 years and 8-10 years each had 5 responses respectively. Only one business has been in their current location for over 20 years.

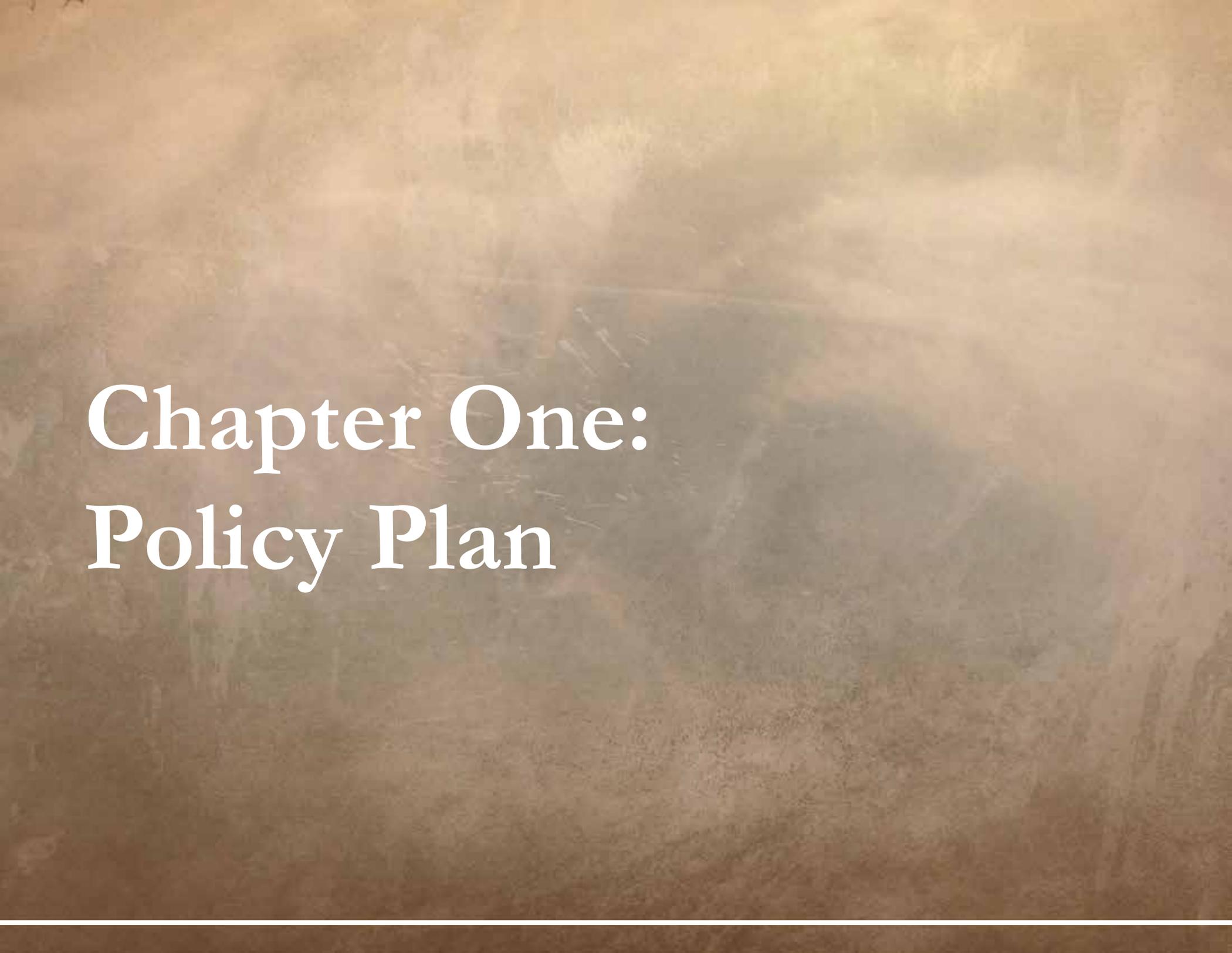
### How many employees do you have including yourself?

Half of the respondents have between 4 and 10 employees. Three respondents have 30+ employees.

### Do you own or lease your space?

58% of the respondents lease their space while 42% own their space.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
My current parking situation is adequate.	21.05% 4	47.37% 9	0% 0	21.05% 4	10.53% 2	19
Most of my customer base is located in Lancaster.	16.67% 3	22.22% 4	11.11% 2	16.67% 3	33.33% 6	18
I would recommend Lancaster to another business owner for relocation.	10.53% 2	5.26% 1	36.84% 7	26.32% 5	21.05% 4	19
I am pleased with my current business location.	0% 0	5.26% 1	5.26% 1	26.32% 5	63.16% 12	19
Children and the elderly are represented in my customer base.	5.26% 1	10.53% 2	15.79% 3	21.05% 4	47.37% 9	19



# Chapter One: Policy Plan

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Picture1-1: Eastbound view on Main Street

“ What would happen to a company that only uses 30% of its assets?”

## Policy

Comprehensive land use policies are the best way a city government can influence strategic uses for properties that play a vital role in the community. In the case of Downtown Lancaster, the historic buildings along Main Street represent the character and culture of the area. In order to maximize the full potential of Downtown, these buildings must be held to a high standard of land use policies and city code in order for activity and economic development to be brought into Downtown.

## Vacant Property Database

### Existing Conditions

One of the critical issues facing Downtown Lancaster is the treatment and management of vacant and for sale properties. Throughout the district, many historical buildings sit vacant or partially rented, causing eyesores that negatively affect the perception of the Downtown community. This is extremely problematic in the sense that the stakeholders with vested interest in the success of Downtown are being hurt by property owners who are satisfied with profits made from buildings at only partial occupancy.

Deferred maintenance on the upper floors causes those spaces to become unusable and does not allow the building to reach its full economic potential. Problems in unused upper floors will eventually reach the lower floors rendering the building unfit for use. Demolition will then be the preferred method of dealing with these properties for owners who do not have a personal interest in the development of Downtown Lancaster. The negative impact of the loss of these buildings would be tremendous and should not go unresolved because of their great importance to the economic development of Downtown Lancaster.

### Recommendations

The first step in combating vacant properties Downtown is to develop an “early warning” database that will help Lancaster identify at-risk properties and will allow organizations and local officials to take action before a building becomes vacant. The database should be set up so that it can be useful for the Lancaster SID, and multiple City departments.

A basic construction of one of these models has been provided in the appendix. It should include key indicators of vacancy such as tax delinquency, utility shutoffs, or for-sale filings, and issues with code enforcement. A more comprehensive database could also include property values, amenities, best uses for the property, and the date it was last occupied. Data from other municipal departments should also be collected and included in the database and Lancaster should ensure that data is easily accessible to all the users that the database was designed for. The database will be most effective if the information is kept up to date, in which case a person should be appointed to handle and update the data on a timely basis.

### Quick Facts:

#### Vacant Property Database

- I. Consists of all downtown properties.
- II. Intended to identify at risk properties and prioritize them for action
- III. Useful for Code Enforcement, SID, Fire and other Municipalities Departments

## Mobile GIS Technology

Using iPads with ESRI ArcMap GIS, we were able to create a vacant property database for the City. To do this, we took pictures with the iPad of the inside and outside of each building. Attached to the iPad is a GPS receiver which gives the coordinates of the building. This allows for the iPad to record the exact location and then marks it on a coordinate system. The end result is a map that shows parcels that have either partial or total vacancy.

### Results

Through multiple days of mapping, we recorded a total of 22 vacant store fronts, with a total of 11 unique parcel numbers. Using information from the Fairfield County Auditor, we were able to fill in many important data fields corresponding with each property. We ended up addressing only a few of the vacant properties in the database and we recommend that the City continue our efforts to complete the database with all the properties in downtown.

### Purpose

The purpose of this activity was to create a GIS database, linked with an Microsoft Excel database that will help the City of Lancaster manage its vacant properties. Through GIS, the City can perform geo-spatial analysis which will be useful for many municipal departments as well prospective developers. The geocoded data includes current building condition, building owner, zoning, property values and other fields.



Picture1-2: Inside view of Hammonds



Picture1-3: Inside view of a vacant property on Main Street

Parcel Number	Address	Value	Existing Condition	Building SQ FT	Land Use	Year Built	Location on Block	Property Owner
0535044500	149 W Main Street	\$109,630	Unknown	4368	(429)	1900	Mid-Block	Schwendeman William & Wedlay Carol
0535045300	121 W Main Street	\$124,500	Good	2340	(430)C	1900	Mid-Block	121 Main Street LLC
0535044200	153 W Main Street	\$58,270	Run Down	1648	(429)C	1900	Mid-Block	Producto Investment, INC
0535036100	107 S Columbus	\$657,430	Blighted	7275	(429)C	1909	Corner	Cypher Two LP
0535803940	162 W Main	\$260,100	Run Down	3642	(640)E	1900	Corner	City of Lancaster
0535803940	164 W Main	\$260,100	Run Down	3642	(640)E	1901	Corner	City of Lancaster
0535803940	168 W Main	\$260,100	Run Down	3642	(640)E	1902	Corner	City of Lancaster
0535036100	117 S Columbus	\$657,430	Blighted	7275	(429)C	1909	Corner	Cypher Two LP
0535036100	113 S Columbus	\$657,430	Good	7275	(429)C	1909	Corner	Cypher Two LP
0535036100	111 S Columbus	\$657,430	Blighted	7275	(429)C	1909	Corner	Cypher Two LP
0535037300	217 S Columbus	\$82,620	Run Down	2368	(420)C	1900	Corner	Howell Glenn P & Cheryl L Surv
0535037700	158 W Chestnut	\$100,830	Good	3150	(429)C	1930	Mid-Block	Lanmsm LLC
0535038700	110 W Chestnut	\$455,290	Good	570	(449)C	1913	Mid-Block	Wilson Properties LLC
0535038700	201 S Broad	\$455,290	Good	5130	(449)C	1913	Mid-Block	Wilson Properties LLC
0535038700	203 S Broad	\$455,290	Good	5130	(449)C	1913	Corner	Wilson Properties LLC
0535039200	211 S Broad	\$221,380	Unknown	4851	(429)C	1900	Mid-Block	Vargo John E JR & Virginia V Price Trustees
0535042400	133 S Broad	\$806,550	Good	13014	(447)C	1972	Corner	Dryden Investments LLC
0535043100	122 N Columbus	\$147,950	Good	2268	(429)C	1900	Mid-Block	Butsko Stephen A & Katherine C
0535035100	113 N Columbus	\$126,390	Run Down	2414	(429)C	1913	Mid-Block	Westerman, Steven & Vickie J Surv
0535034600	111 N Columbus	\$215,530	Good	1160	(429)C	1900	Mid-Block	Main & Lancaster Street LLC
0535045100	127 W Main Street	\$85,490	Unknown	2589	(429)C	1900	Mid-Block	Mauger Keith A & M Susan

Figure 1-1: A sample of the Downtown Vacant Property Database



Figure 1-2: Map of Vacant Properties

## Vacant Property Ordinance & Registry

### Existing Conditions

Lack of property management by owners becomes apparent when discussing unused upper floors. Many upper floors in Downtown Lancaster sit vacant because there is no law or code violation that prevents owners from leaving these spaces in a state of disrepair. By not utilizing upper floor spaces, the true potential of Downtown Lancaster's historic structures is not being unlocked. Not utilizing these buildings to their full potential drastically hurts the ability for Downtown to become a vibrant, fun, and entertaining place to be. These upper floors can be used for additional office or apartment units that bring additional revenue to the City and foot traffic Downtown.

### Case Study

Over 60 communities in Ohio currently have proposed or enacted vacant property ordinances, including Sandusky, Cleveland, Pickerington and Lakewood. Over 1,035 cities nationwide have enacted such registries each with different fees and registry requirements to fit that communities needs. Sandusky enacted its ordinance in April 2012 with 96 properties registered and 9 months later it was down to 24. For a complete list of these communities in the state, please see Appendix (1).

### Recommendations

An effective way to alleviate the problem of complacent property owners is to enact a vacant property ordinance (VPO). A vacant property ordinance becomes necessary when code enforcement is no longer an effective means of neglected property abatement. The purpose of the ordinance is to incentivize property owners to fix up their respective buildings, or face incremental fees set by the city. A vacant building registry is part of the VPO and requires owners to register their vacant buildings with the municipality. A sample registry and ordinance can be found on Appendix (2). By enacting such an ordinance, Downtown Lancaster could get rid of uninhabited buildings and uninterested owners.

“The goal of this legislation was to identify these properties, target the owners [and] promote [the] downtown.”

- Sandusky Fire Chief Ricci.

Fees should be assessed biannually for buildings sitting vacant, so as to serve as a constant reminder for the owner that their building is not performing to full economic capacity nor being preserved properly. In addition, these fees help minimize the costs of providing municipal services to these properties.

The structuring of the registration and fees should be discussed with the city attorney to ensure a solid legal standing. Incentives can be created through fines and fees for noncompliance with registration and maintenance. Property owners should also have the opportunity to be refunded if they take appropriate rehabilitation action.

Lancaster should also consider a progressive VPO. As the state statute allows, a city can determine what percentage of vacancy a building must have to be required to register. This should be incremental and should start with buildings that are just 100%, and adjusted when this goal is met. This will then target the rest of the under utilized buildings in Downtown Lancaster.

The collection of historic buildings in Downtown Lancaster is what makes the area unique. Without these grand Victorian era structures lining Main Street, Downtown Lancaster would have no identity. The buildings set the tone and character of the district and currently some buildings are not all they could be. Not having these buildings renovated and kept up to their full potential would be like a company only using 30% of their given assets.



Picture 1-4: Remodeled building on N. Columbus Street

### Vacant Property Ordinance:

- I. A VPO can have a positive effect on the high vacancy rate Downtown
- II. Fees from a VPO will put pressure on property owners who have vacant space
- III. A VPO allows historic buildings Downtown to operate at their full economic potential

## Community Development Block Grants

### Existing Conditions

Every year the Department of Housing and Urban Development issues millions of dollars to State and Local governments to help meet national objectives, which include: activities benefiting low and moderate-income persons; prevention or elimination of slums or blight; or to meet an urgent community development need. Communities can use these funds to help jump-start the revitalization of downtown and the local economy. In 2012, Lancaster received an approximate total of \$437,000 in funds for the Community Block Development Grant (CBDG) program. Most of these funds are used to pay back the Downtown Revitalization Section 108 Loan (1997), which has a current balance of \$400,000.

### Case Study

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development completed a case study on the city of Gallion, Ohio that stated: “Galion, Ohio has used State CDBG money to leverage 10 million dollars of funding from public and private sources to revitalize their “historic uptown” area, which had fallen into decline due to plant closures. Projects included façade work, rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvements. Additionally, the main square was restored and an historic walking tour was developed to promote Galion as a tourist destination. Businesses have returned to the district helping to generate more revenue for the city and providing needed services to residents and tourists.”



Picture 1-5: Main Street at night

### Quick Facts:

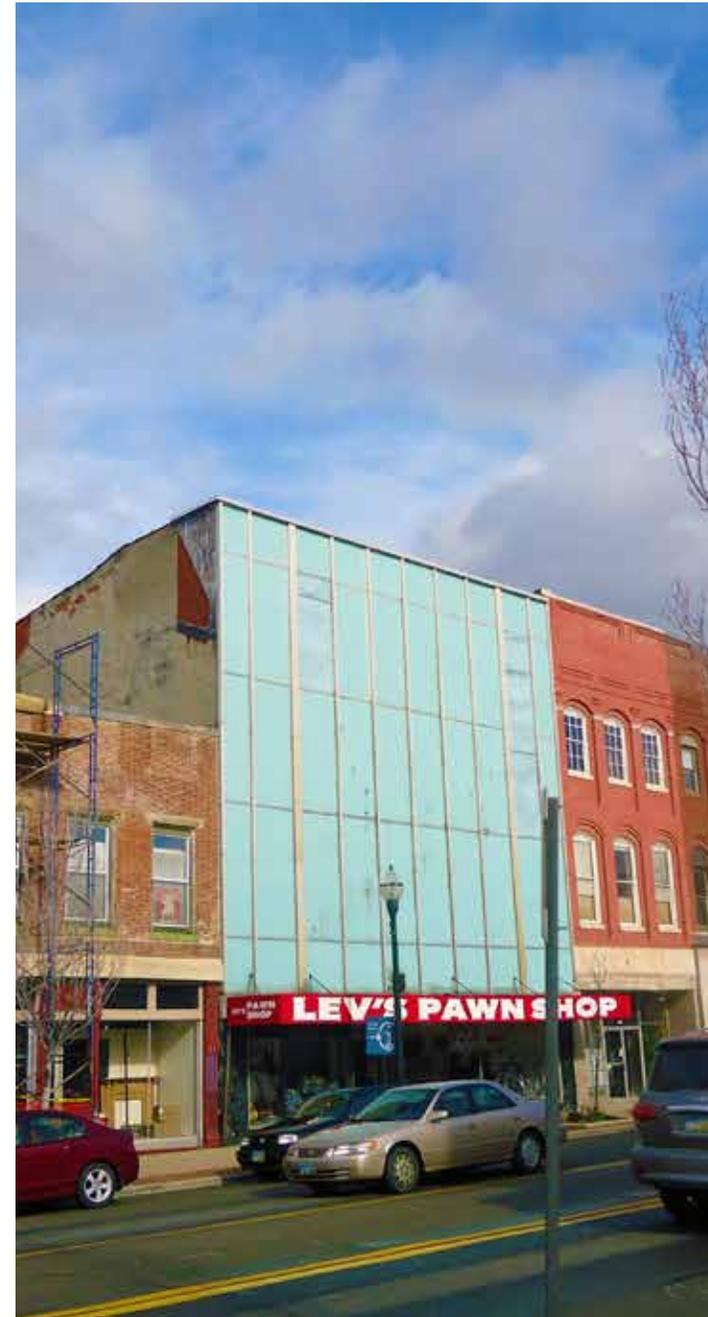
- I. Lancaster received \$437,000 of Community Block Grant Funding
- II. Currently repaying Downtown Revitalization Section 108 Repayment

## Recommendations

Although the City currently diverts most of its CDBG money to the Downtown Revitalization Section 108 Loan Repayment, it is essential that Lancaster direct more of these funds to Downtown. These funds will be critical in helping to revitalize historic buildings and funding other improvement projects on Main Street. The completion of these projects will turn Downtown Lancaster into a more business friendly environment.

The best way for Lancaster to utilize these CDGB funds would be to use them for Downtown revitalization projects. Historic preservation that includes rehabilitation, is a specific eligible activity under 24 CFR Part 570.202(d) that would help improve the aesthetics of downtown building façades. CBDG money may also be used for activities by a community-based developmental organizations (24 CFR 570.204(c) and HCDA Section 105(a)(15)). These funds may be granted or loaned to the Special Improvement District and would greatly improve the capacity of the organization.

It is unrealistic to commit all of the CDBG funds into downtown revitalization, but for the best results the City must be willing to invest more money into downtown. Providing more funds for low income housing downtown, economic development activities, code enforcement, and improvements to infrastructure and public facilities will benefit all the residents of Lancaster and of Downtown. A complete list of HUD approved uses CDBG funds for main street purposes can be found in Appendix (3).



Picture 1-6: A building that could benefit from Block Grants



Picture 1-7: Aerial view from Mt. Pleasant

“When there is no enemy  
within, the enemies outside  
cannot hurt you”  
- Winston Churchill

### Government Relations

One of the core objectives of city government is to maintain a high quality of life for its citizens. Supporting a high quality of life includes upholding laws, providing services, and sustaining growth. Communication between citizens and government should be a priority to make sure government is continuing to strive for these goals. In order for effective lines of communication to occur, several steps must be taken to make the City of Lancaster government the most efficient in the region. Analysis of the City and County government will help realize what areas need more priority to revitalize the Downtown.

### Website Update

For potential residents and many developers, a city's

website is the first impression used to create a perception of that community. The influence of the internet and city websites will only continue to grow as more people gain access to technology.

## Existing Conditions

The City of Lancaster's website is outdated for the effectiveness of both residents, visitors, and businesses. Visual appeal is one aspect of the website that currently that does not exist. Implementing a design that represents the values of the City would strengthen the website.

## Recommendations

The update of the City's website would greatly improve the way the public and City officials communicate. The City of Upper Arlington has a model the City could implement with 'Quick Links' on the main page with links to the City code, request for a service, forms and applications, and contact information (www.uaoh.net). The webmaster or an unpaid/paid intern would likely make a new design that goes along with Lancaster's new brand including the color palet. Utilizing interactive features to keep interest in the page is key to providing an efficient web site. The current web page could be larger across the screen to make the text easier to be read.

Developers and investors utilize the City website before they even visit the town because they want to see if the City knows who they are and if they have a vision for the future. This plan should be utilized on the website in a downloadable feature.



Figure 1-3: Screenshot of the City of Upper Arlington Web Site

Interactive features are abundant on the site above. Residents can easily click on the upcoming events to see what is happening over the weekend or developers can look at the city code to see if their intended structure meets the code.

## Website:

I. Design should match branding

II. Interactive features are needed to enhance visitor experience

III. Incorporate the vision/plans for the future Lancaster

### City-County Collaboration

#### Existing Conditions

The City and County currently do not communicate well on issues pertinent to the health of the area. There are many different organizations that work on economic development each with their own set of goals. Economic development job creators like to see one unified vision.

#### Recommendations

There are specific departments of the City and County that are critical to establish collaboration within. The departments include Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, the Auditor's Office, and the Engineer. A set of standards should be set up to determine how each department will share information and how often. Monthly meetings should be attended by officials on all levels of government to update each other on critical City news and information.

"Shared Services" equals consolidation of resources, staff, or projects which in turn makes everything more efficient. While the subject of "shared services" is still a hot topic in the State of Ohio, it would be beneficial to look into feasibility of consolidating resources. The City and County park departments for example could share maintenance equipment in order to save on both of their budgets.



Picture 1-8: Site of Firehouse Park on E. Chestnut

#### Recommendations:

- I. Collaborate among appropriate departments
- II. Shared Services (decrease budget)

### Mobilization of Public

#### Existing Conditions

Lancaster has a population of roughly 40,000 people; but how many of those people really are invested in the health of their community?

#### Recommendations

Dr. Dave Ivan, Interim Director of Michigan State's Land Policy Institute, promoted that a city cannot create a comeback without stakeholder and community champions.

The City needs to communicate with their citizens at a higher level. This would be done with assistance from the SID or an intern with public relations experience. Providing open lines of communication to residents includes: using phones, e-mail, online forms, newspaper articles, and social media. An online form would be beneficial to help manage which department the concern is going to. The Mayor should input a rule for a 24-48 hour response to each concern for all members of his staff. The City of Upper Arlington has a 24-hour response rule in place and it makes them communicate better with residents knowing they expect a response in a specific time frame.

A city magazine, if not already part of the City's monthly agenda, would be beneficial to get out news and columns written by the directors of each department. An example is Pickerington Magazine.

The Lancaster Public School District needs to get kids involved in aspects of planning and politics especially in the higher levels of education.



Picture 1-9: Citizens gathering on Main Street

#### Mobilization:

- I. Open communication with public
- II. Online Forms/Comment
- II. City Magazine with online version
- IV. Education Programming

## City Planner Capacity

### Existing Conditions

The Certified Building and Zoning Department handles all of the zoning issues within the Lancaster government. Presently, there is no professional planner on staff in the City of Lancaster. Planners are an essential part of city government, as they provide a different type of skills than an engineer or architect. Planners are able to not only look at development from a technical and design perspective but are able to see the economic and social impacts as well.

### Recommendations

In Central Ohio, most of the cities greater than 50,000 in population have a full-time planner position on the staff. The City of Newark, City of Pataskala, and the City of Canal Winchester are all surrounding rural cities that hire city planning positions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook states that the median annual wage of urban and regional planners was \$63,040 in May 2010. Most urban planners are coming out of school with a master's degree often with a bachelor's in majors such as engineering, architecture, and environmental studies.

The planner would be able to spend time simplifying the City zoning code which is outdated and hard for residents to understand. Developers and business owners like to be able to request simple changes to code. Simplifying the code would make Lancaster more approachable for economic development.



Picture 1-10: Fairfield County Municipal Court

- Recommendations:
- I. City Planner
  - II. Simplify zoning code

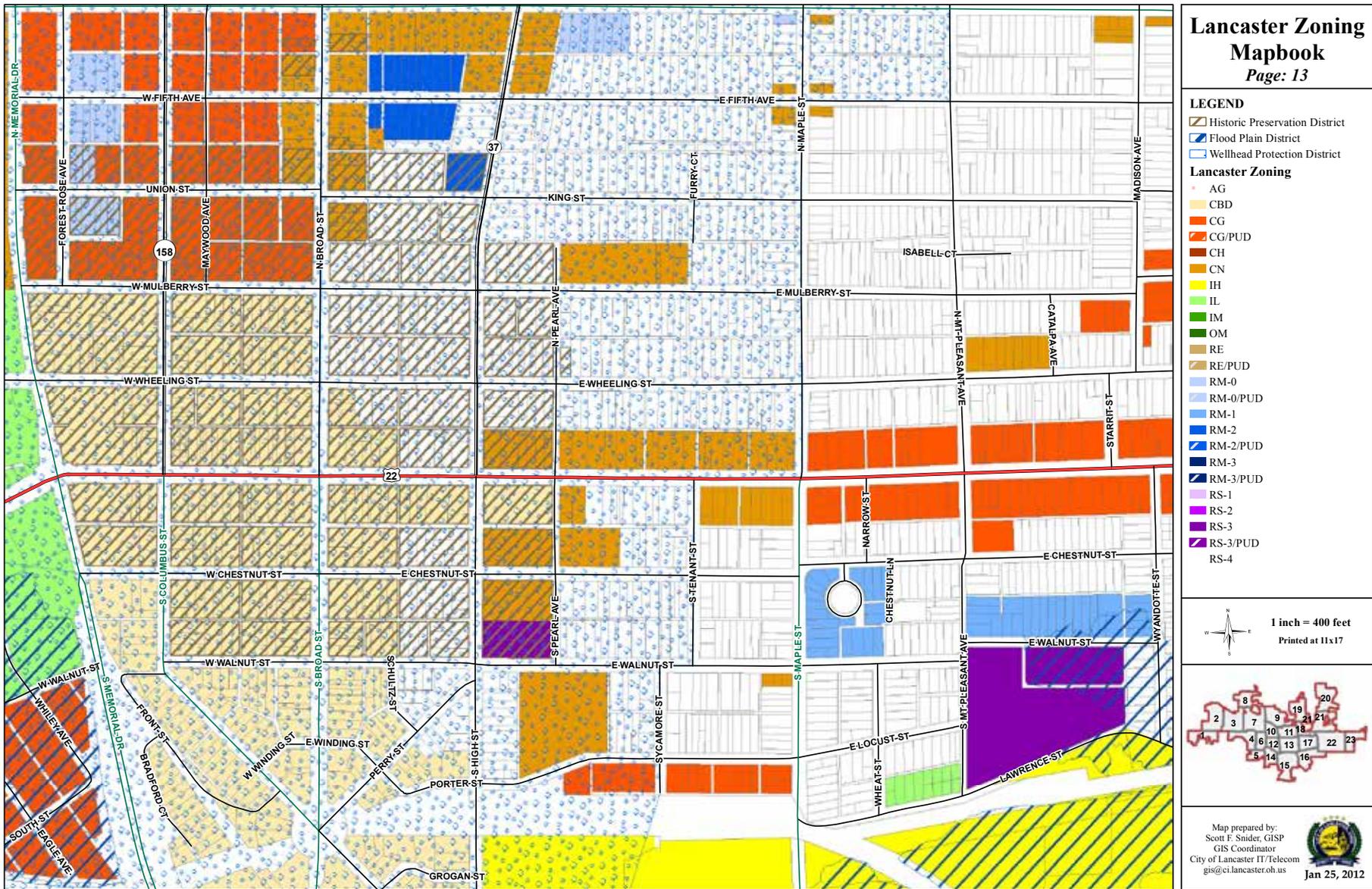


Figure 1-4: Current Downtown Zoning Code

### Financial Investment

#### Existing Conditions

Fairfield National Bank (a branch of Park National), Chase Bank, PNC, and Fairfield Federal all have Downtown locations.

#### Recommendations

The City and the banks should create a Public-Private Partnership in order to combat the vacant property problems. Banks such as Huntington, Chase, and Fifth-Third all contribute money to the demolition and rehabilitation of vacant properties in order to increase property values around blighted areas.

An example of a successful 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is relevant to a Public-private partnership is the CORE Fund in Hamilton, Ohio.

“The CORE Fund provides financial resources for qualified residential and commercial real estate projects within Hamilton’s urban core” ([www.corehamilton.org](http://www.corehamilton.org))

Banks have a stake in the downtown area because they give out loans to businesses. When the businesses are all occupied there is more demand to be in the downtown atmosphere creating an economic boom; thus leading to less riskier loans.



Picture 1-11: Fairfield National Bank on Main Street

#### Recommendations:

- I. Public-Private Partnership
- II. CORE Fund (Hamilton, Ohio)

### Metropolitan Planning Organization

#### Existing Conditions

Transportation projects are submitted to Ohio Department of Transportation which receives state money to fund all projects. Lancaster currently does not fall into any Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

#### Recommendations

A Metropolitan Planning Organization is a federally mandated transportation policy-making organization in regions greater than 50,000 people. The City of Lancaster is within 10,000 residents of being able to create its own MPO. The benefit of having a MPO is that the federal government distributes money to be utilized within the MPO region on transportation projects. MORPC is Central Ohio's MPO; however Lancaster falls outside of the boundaries and does not receive any money for improvements or additions. The Federal Highway Act of 1962 requires the formation of an MPO for an urbanized area greater than 50,000 in population.

The City of Lancaster would not have an MPO on its own however; it would include a larger regional area (most likely Fairfield County). Having federal dollars to spend to improve the region would be beneficial especially to projects currently on the waiting list to be funded by ODOT.

Refer to local MPOs: Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Licking County Area Transportation Study, or Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission for examples.



Picture 1-12: Truck brake sign on Main Street

#### Recommendations:

- I. Transit Opportunities
- II. Increased Funding
- III. Regionally Placed Projects



Picture 1-13: View of part of the SID District on Main Street

“ The day of the big downtown department stores is gone until we get more people living downtown.”  
-Bernard Datz

## Special Improvement District

A Special Improvement District (SID) forms when a group of property owners in close proximity to one another decide to create and develop extra fees to fund improvement projects in that particular area. The improvements can be in the form of infrastructure, streetscape, public art or general street maintenance projects that in turn help their businesses. Property owners themselves are responsible for the management and development of SID initiatives.

## Existing Conditions

The Downtown Lancaster Special Improvement District was created to ensure that its recent infrastructure and beautification project would be maintained. The SID was also created to focus on the economic development in Downtown Lancaster. The SID is a private-sector organization that is funded by over 100 property owners in a nine block area, and requires the support of 60% of property owners in the district to be renewed every five years.

Currently, the SID is in its fourth year of its five year cycle and has received 53% of the 60% needed to pass. A recent survey conducted found some business owners to be unhappy with the SID because of the lack of proactive economic development. We also received several comments about the need to fill the empty spaces in downtown as well as the beautification of building facades.

## Recommendations

There are many proactive ways to help in the renewal of the SID. For owners who express apathy about voting, it is best to recruit other property owners to go peer to peer to get them to vote. In addition to other property owners, it would be beneficial if the director, Kate Ervin, communicated with these property owners directly to address any concerns they may have. A new services plan should be drawn up every year, this will guarantee that the goals and strategies of all business owners are being met.

Additional steps to renew the SID involve organizing a steering committee of property owners that are proactive in the SID. These owners would create a new business plan describing the additional services the SID would complete as well as a new description of the SID, governance, boundaries, levies, budget and services. This process would help get some buy-in from the owners. Again, throughout this process it is crucial to engage in peer to peer interaction.



Picture 1-14: Part of the SID District on N. Columbus Street

# Chapter Two: Gateway Development Strategy

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## Preface

Lancaster, Ohio has the opportunity to emphasize several unique features about its natural environment, talents, resources and history, in a more clearly identifiable way which reflects what the overall spirit of Lancaster. Things that set apart and make it unique; its defining features). Instead, the Downtown district, with the exception of a few key businesses, has stagnated. The area is marked by vacant, dilapidated, properties that damage the overall value and spirit of the place. Vacancy rates for first floor, business appropriate, spaces within the Downtown are an estimated 32%. Furthermore, dwelling space in the upper floors, even in the case where the first floor is occupied, is seriously underutilized. However, given these, Lancaster has a tremendous opportunity to redevelop and re-imagine a great Downtown.

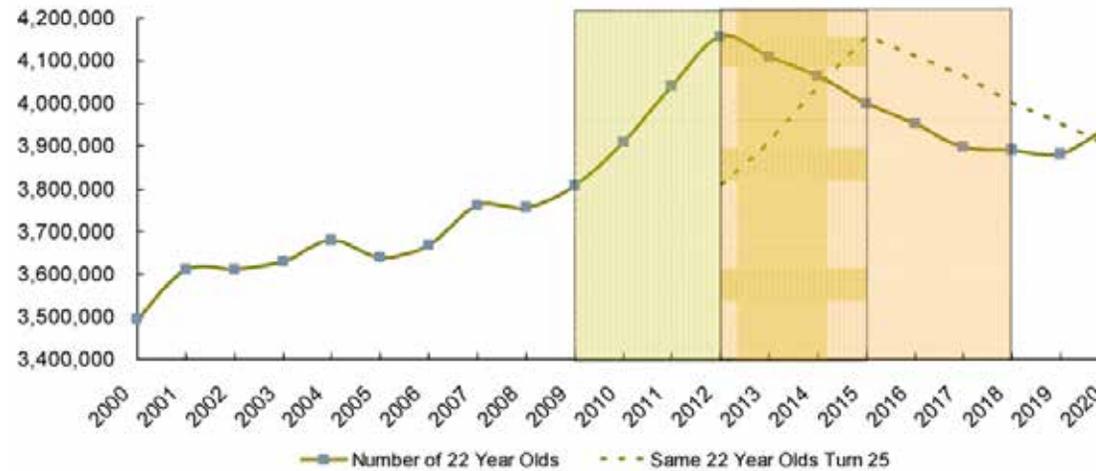
## Regrowing cities

The question is how can Lancaster do that? Well, the good news is that research has shown that “the American Dream is poised to make its next great shift — this time from the suburbs to the urban core of our cities (1).” Simplified, more people than before want to live in cities. The thought is, Lancaster can capture some of this demographic by positioning it self as the quintessential American small downtown that has a bit of something for everyone.

This resurgence of the American city is due to a shift in lifestyle preference in generation Y (hereafter gen-Y), the largest current generation after the baby boomers.



(Picture 2-1) The Downtown is marked by vacant properties, yet lancaster has serious redevelopment oppurtunity



NOTE: Number of 22-year olds is based upon birth rate and does not factor in death rates and migration.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

“77% of gen-y members plan to live in an urban core.” (figure 2-1)

reproduced from placemakers.com blog quoting RCLCO

According to Robert Charles Lesser & Co. (RCLCO), “77% of generation Y members plan to live in an urban core” (1). Undoubtedly, the next successful places will be the ones that can attract the now growing tax base (to feed the city income tax dollars) of gen-Y while baby boomers shift into retirement.

The change in choice of living location also comes with a change in the types of careers held by gen-Y. And the link is correlative. *The Economics of Place* discusses the link between Michigan’s faltering economy, which dropped from 18th most prosperous state to 37th in nine years, and Michigan’s lack of investment in not only new types of business but also how these topics influence and is influenced by the built environment.

What goes into that? They cite globalization and its effect on job markets. “The American economy is going

through profound structural transformation from [an] industrial-based to [a] knowledge-based” (2 – p. 15). It’s a well-known fact Detroit, Michigan’s flagship city, invested heavily in, vehicle specifically, manufacturing. Well, according to Lou Glazer, of the 8 million jobs lost in 2008, 7.6 of those were manufacturing (2 – p. 16). Jobs that require low levels of education are suffering. It’s also well-known that Detroit is suffering.

## What is placemaking?

Placemaking is primarily concerned with developing quality, lasting, space – it can also be classified as an economic development strategy. Now, the U.S. is seeing a shift in the types of cities that are successful.

Placemaking is:

“A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces.”

“Both a process and a philosophy.”

- Adaptable
- Inclusive
- Flexible
- Context-sensitive
- Collaborative
- Sociable

(3)



(Picture 2-2) Placemaking creates sociable places

The key to developing a strong economy and, in a circular sense, place is “attracting educated people...” and you do that those people prefer “quality places with a high quality of life matter more.” You do that through building a place with “physical and cultural amenities... (2 – p. 47).” Thusly, the built environment is an economic driver. In short, placemaking strategies focus on creating a unique, cultural and location sensitive, place that residents can take ownership

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) deems that, “Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Put simply, it involves looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, to discover their needs and aspirations. This information is then used to create a common vision for that place. The vision can evolve quickly into an implementation strategy, beginning with small-scale, do-able improvements that can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them” (3).

Keep in mind that this particular groups working definition of placemaking is based on the fact they are primarily focused on public spaces. Placemaking techniques can still be applied across places not traditionally deemed public - as in whole neighborhoods or districts that can unite under common goals.

## Why use placemaking?

in. It's analogous to a quality long term investment. If placemaking attempts are successful – the affect should really just be deemed as normal.

Regressing, the unfortunate fact is that placemaking techniques are often not used and the result has been catastrophic to municipalities. In *Divided We Sprawl*, the authors (Bradley and Katz) discuss how sprawling suburbs cannibalize space, and budgets, by abandoning the slightly older to rot while overburdening the brand new. The authors rightly criticize this circular habit of draining a space within a schools context. They mention how expensive it is to build new schools as mobile people pour into an area because it has existing good schools. “Not just schools but also sewer and water lines, libraries, fire stations, and roads (4).” That it is impossible to keep and maintain standards with an influx. And then people move on in search of the next best thing. This process is “familiar to almost anyone who has driven from one edge of a metropolitan area to another. It is endlessly repeatable (4).” Highlighting the financial drain that sprawl yields, Tim Beatley estimates “When tax revenue and public costs, especially road maintenance and public safety costs were taken into account, big box commercial was found to be a net loser – costing \$586 per 1,000 square feet (5 - p. 15).”

If every place looks and feels the same, what is to keep people from moving about to capitalize on the next fresh market suburb? The idea behind placemaking is to anchor people to a unique place so that the initial investment is a lasting one.

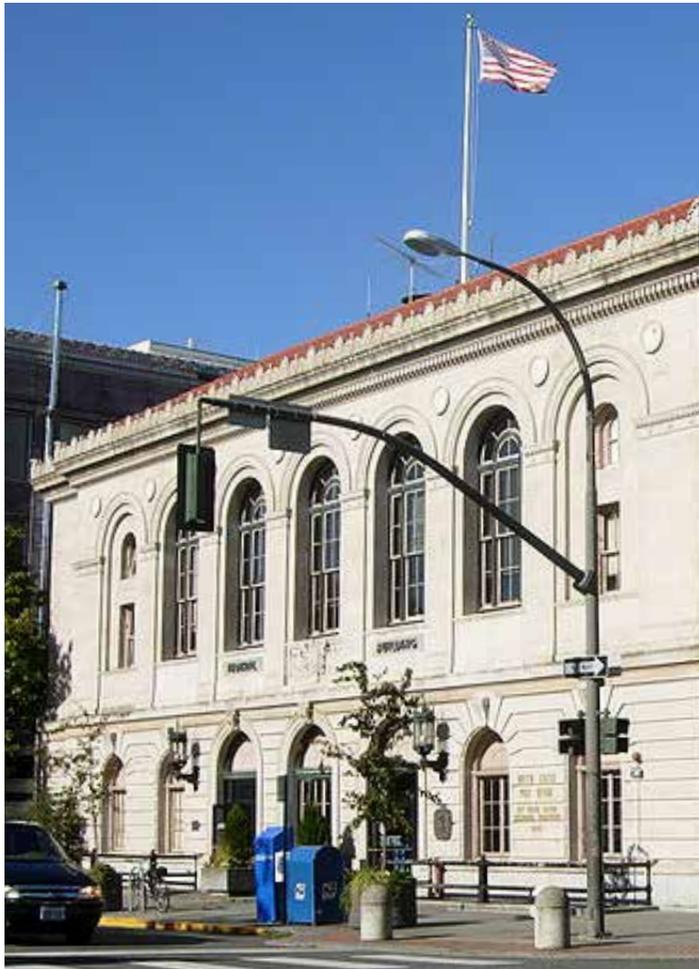
The good news is that despite the challenges Lancaster faces in redeveloping its Downtown, there is already so much existing that the city can use to develop a truly fantastic space. It just has to be harnessed and nourished. Economist Joe Cortright says that “Every city has nice suburbs, but not every city has a vibrant central city and strong, close-in neighborhoods. That’s a key difference among cities (6).” The location, geography, history, and talent are all present in Lancaster. And, with time and careful planning, it can become a Place that people will remember.

## How does placemaking work?

While placemaking methods, at the academic level, are largely varied in terms of labels – the key, practical, applications usually are similar. While these terms originated in architecture, Douglas Kelbaugh author of *Repairing the American Metropolis* (7), has adopted five characteristics to consider when striving to develop an authentic place. The methods are “a reaction to... standardization and universality...” These techniques can be applied to varying scales of place from a single building, to a neighborhood, to a district.

## Sense of Place

Sense of place is the overall 'feeling' of a space. "It honors local climate, topography, vegetation, building materials, and building practices (7)." A sense of place influences a person on what is deemed appropriate in the space, what kinds of things to expect from the place, and what kinds of things they will find in the space.

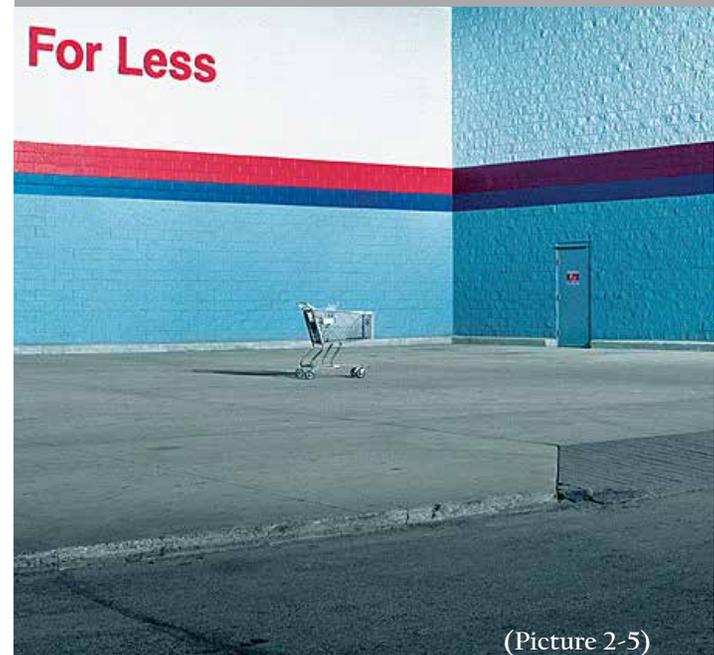


(Picture 2-3) The types of things offered in this place are expected to be related to government - given the style



(Picture 2-4)

What is the feeling of the space?



(Picture 2-5)



(Picture 2-6)

### Sense of Nature

A sense of nature assists in locating a person within the larger global context (forest vs. desert region). It tells you where you're at in the world. It also informs what types of buildings "fit in." Having a sense of the local ecology can also connect residents to the larger biosystem their residence is in. Nature is also a quality of life enhancer.

“Human subtlety will never devise an invention more beautiful, more simple, or more direct than does nature.”  
– Leonardo Da Vinci.



History can help establish place (picture 2-7)



(Picture 2-8) German Village Columbus is still named so based on the country of origin of the village founders

### Sense of History

History is a direct contributor to the pervading sense of place. It tells a person what the space was, what it is now, and where it's going.



(Picture 2-9)

### **Sense of Craft (above)**

A sense of craft is primarily concerned with quality. A space with a good sense of craft would appear as if to stand the test of time. Having buildings with a strong sense of craft promotes care in that investment.

A sense of craft “need not be expressed in traditional ways, so long as it respects materials and their joinery,” although it can be expressed traditionally as well.

### **Sense of Limits**

Limit is the most esoteric sense of the five. It’s mainly a way to describe “the need for human scale in the built environment.” Human scale generally refers to a development that is easy to navigate as a pedestrian.



(Picture 2-10) Similar to Lancaster's Downtown - The Short North is very walkable.

## Objectives & Recommendations

The question is how can Lancaster apply placemaking techniques to capture both internal (existing residents) and external (new residents) investment into its Downtown? Almost serendipitously, Wagenbrenner Development has remediated a 2.6 acre site at Main (22 – Main St.) and Main (S. Memorial Dr.). Due to conclude cleanup efforts at the end of the year – this site as serious potential to herald a new interest in Lancaster’s historic Downtown. First, as previously mentioned, the sites location at the intersection of two major roadways gives the space excellent visibility. Secondly, the site is adjacent to the Downtown core. The successful redevelopment of this Lancaster Gateway Site can serve to do two things. One, it can introduce Lancaster’s Downtown district to both people passing by and people actively seeking out Downtown. Two, if done right, the space can be the catalyst for Downtown reinvestment. So how can that actually happen?

Expanding, the practical application of developing an impactful space can be boiled down to a few objectives. These may serve to guide development yet are not set in stone ideas – merely ponderings, based on research, on what could be part of a powerful gateway.

### **Objective 1: Have a gateway feature**

(picture on opposite page)

The most apparent aspirations of a gateway site should be to introduce the district it’s capping and signal that there is more to see while simultaneously describing the genius loci or, “the pervading spirit of a

place (Merriam-Webster).” The interesting thing about the concept of genius loci is that part of its composition is based on the past. This can be especially true in Lancaster’s case given the town’s historic aptitude. In the practical sense, the application of these ideas usually culminates in a sort of monument, unique style, special streetscaping, or a signature building. A local example, Columbus’ Short North neighborhood has ‘wrought iron’ archways that span the street throughout the neighborhood – effectively designating it different. In Lancaster’s case, harkening back to the city’s glass making history has the potential to anchor your new gateway site and future Downtown revitalizations. In placemaking terms, activating the town’s affinity with glass would tie directly to establishing a sense of history and craft – helping create an authentic space. Given the corner lot opportunity, a vertical glass element has possibility. Further, said sculpture, in order to maximize a sense of craft in the area (anchoring your place), should be industrial in spirit.

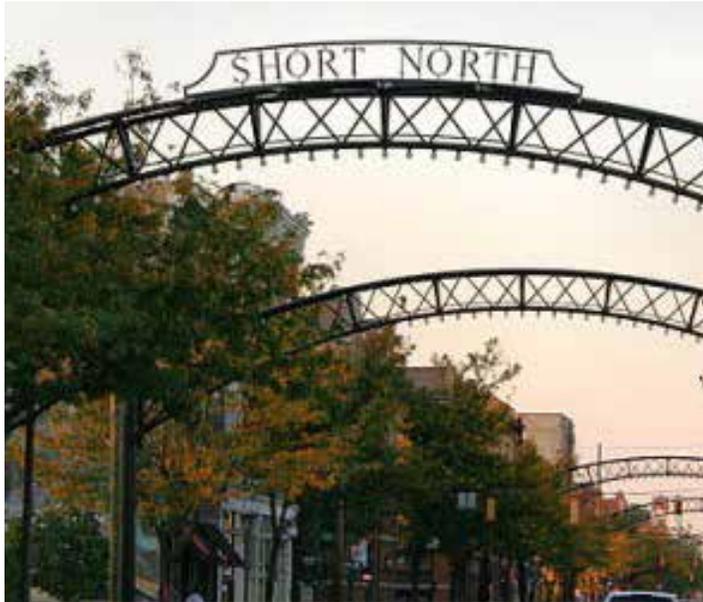
It’s key for this gateway to:

- Fit the local Downtown context
- Have public space
- Be uniquely Lancaster
- Be a place that locals will take ownership in and be proud of - so that it has lasting and growing impact



Have a gateway feature





(Picture 2-11) Columbus Ohio's Short North is a great example of a site with a gateway feature that residents recognize and remember

### **Objective 2: Design for walkable urbanism**

A site that is extremely walkable means that there are several traveling alternatives, such as, walking, biking, handicapped options, and driving, and that those options are easily located and effective. Many walking paths and sidewalks should be positioned in such a way that allows for constant pedestrian flow and provides easy wheelchair access. Bike paths should also be easily found, have a separation from pedestrians to promote safety, and connect to surrounding bike routes. Car traffic is a serious concern in downtown Lancaster, as the gateway site is off of two major streets and semi-trucks have admittance into the city.

There are possible methods of alleviating traffic and



(Picture 2-12) This woonerf found in Frankenstraat, Netherlands illustrates the features of a woonerf, with signage, vegetation, and curved roads

encouraging walkability. One technique that is known to be effective overseas is known as woonerfs. A woonerf, known as a “living street”, originated in the Netherlands and is characterized as a road that allows motorist activity, yet gives precedence to pedestrians and bikers. The concept of the woonerf began in the 1960s with the Dutch architect Niek De Boer who wanted to correct two problems in city streets: inconvenient traffic flows as well as decaying streetscapes. The common techniques utilized to obtain these conditions are elements such as shared space, lower speed limits, and traffic calming methods.

### Objective 3: Mixture of tenants and uses

The space should attract people of varying ages, interests, cultures, and backgrounds. There should also be a selection of attractions for visitors and residents to explore, spend their time, and eventually return. For a site to acquire these standards, it needs to offer several differing uses. Restaurants should be highest priority because everyone needs to eat. Shopping is another reason that draws people to a space, so local, unique shops could be a prosperous addition to the site. Finally, miscellaneous uses, such as museums, galleries, and urban markets provide entertainment and enhance the culture of the area. Lancaster has a rich history as well as a unique skill set with glass making and an agricultural background. So it would fit in with what Lancaster already contains.



(Picture 2-13) This plaza in San Clemente, California presents an assortment of uses including residential, commercial, and open space

### Objective 4: Hidden parking.

Since this is meant to be an introduction, so to speak, to Downtown Lancaster, there needs to be an attraction that catches travelers' attention. Thus, parking should be positioned behind the structures because a parking lot in the front makes it more difficult to view the attractions and discourages walkability.



(Picture 2-14) This Pittsburgh educational facility represents another clever method of hiding parking by surrounding to lot with vegetation



### **Objective 5: Shared public open space.**

In an area where people are constantly visiting, there needs to be a space for people to take a break, socialize, and relax. The gateway site recommends having a centralized green space with a water feature, such as, a fountain or pond as a meeting ground or pathway to other buildings. This encourages visitors to spend time in the space and form a connection to the site as a whole.



(Picture 2-14) Detroit, MI's Campus Martius Park was presented the first Urban Land Institute (ULI) Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award to recognize an "outstanding example of a public open space that has catalyzed the transformation of the surrounding community."

### **Objective 6: Public and private investment.**

Public amenities such as meeting space, outdoor features, and an overall inviting environment need to be combined with activities such as eating, drinking, and shopping. A site tends to be more stable in the long run if there is a relationship between public and private investors.

(Picture 2-15) The opening of retail in 2011 at The Crossing San Bruno in San Bruno, CA honors the ten years of public/private partnership between the City of San Bruno and developers Sares Regis and TMG Partners. A model of redevelopment and re-investment in their own community





Shared public open space



## Objective 7: Marketing opportunities.

This newly founded gateway can be informed by Lancaster’s cultural, unifying it, and informing Lancaster’s culture. Downtown Lancaster should have a brand that represents all it has to offer. The most important setting that the brand should be advertised is at the gateway location. This harkens back to the idea that the gateway is meant to be core representation of the rest of the city. The identity of the site needs to be clear and known; giving people an understanding of exactly what Lancaster signifies.



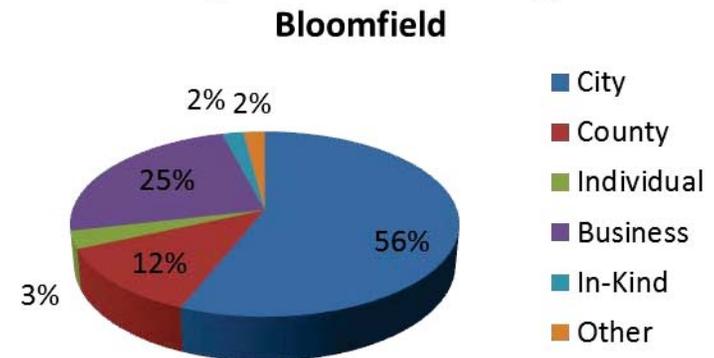
(Picture 2-16) As a way to revitalize a neighborhood in Amsterdam, urban planners created the “I Amsterdam Model” that ignited the makeover of the city’s urban management and renewal

## Realizing the gateway

“Future redevelopment of the Downtown is at stake whether or not the public is involved in the process.”

In order for redevelopment to occur in downtown Lancaster, there has to be a proper catalyst. The City may be able to assist in initiating that redevelopment, and have a voice in what is built, through a public-private partnership. City involvement in realizing a Gateway site is almost imperative if the site is to be redeveloped in such a way to be both economically viable and serve the interests of the public.

As for the question over city involvement, Lancaster stands to benefit both economically and socially if done properly. City involvement in the redevelopment of the gateway site presents the opportunity for officials to engage stakeholders and the general public in the



(figure 2-2)

<b>Population</b>	<b>2,640</b>
<b>Entered Main Street Program</b>	<b>1995</b>
<b>Since Joining Main Street</b>	
Average Net Gain in Jobs per Year	6
Average Net Gain in Businesses per Year	5
Average Building Rehabilitations per Year	15
Average Rehabilitation Investment per Building	\$20,052
Average Building Rehabilitation Investment per Year	\$300,775
Average Number of Buildings Sold per Year	4
Average Building Acquisition Investment per Year	\$142,172
Average Acquisition Investment per Building	\$36,620

(figure 2-3)

planning and design process. If done authentically, Lancaster’s locals will take ownership in the project, potentially attributing to the success of the site. On the economic side of things, Downtown Lancaster stands to increase its property values, employment, and thusly tax revenue.

Fortunately, there is a precedent for public-private development. In Iowa small towns - that have had a commitment to redevelop, the investment has netted returns. For additional details please see appendix on “Getting Results: The Economic Impact of Main Street Iowa.”

While it is unclear what the proper way to proceed would be - it is clear that that Lancaster government be involved in the the redevelopment of the site so that the community actually has a say. Future redevelopment of the Downtown is at stake whether or not the public is involved in the process.

If the City does decide to get involved in the redevelopment of the gateway site, creative support and financing may be necessary to realize the project.

## Creative Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Supporting development with TIF funds may be appropriate given that they meet certain criteria. Doing so could serve to leverage the TIF funding mechanism to bolster a developers funding. Very strict perimeters should be set for what the development will look and feel like. It is critical that the site be built in a gateway manner to promote redevelopment of Downtown. Keep in mind that giving TIF money is an outflow of cash, yet the City could serve to make large dividends if the development is able to capture well-paying jobs (income tax for Lancaster). Additionally, while under TIF no property tax gains will be captured, the bet is that by building a gateway, redevelopment will be catalyzed downtown – increasing property values and, potentially, income tax from service industries interested in locating in downtown spaces.

## Form Based Zoning

In order to more directly influence what potential projects look and feel like, Lancaster can implement a form based zoning code. Form based zoning is a way to control physical aspects of the spatial design through ordinance. In Lancaster’s case – it would be necessary to write them to reflect aspects of the existing downtown space in order for the new development to blend with the old. Additional information on the aspects of form based zoning can be found at [formbasedcodes.org](http://formbasedcodes.org), web page of the form-based codes institute.

Additionally, reaching out to the city of Newark Ohio may provide insight on the process of adopting form based codes. According to their website, as of february 2012 intial research has wrapped up and drafting has begun (8).

### Community Development Corporation

Lastly, developing a community development corporation could stream line the process of researching impact of different types of developments, conducting market research on what is viable, and to promoting and leveraging the site to both developers and post construction – potential business.

# Chapter Three: Entertainment

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Picture 3-1: Looking East on Main Street

“Entertainment venues and retail within walking distance of one another must be in place before households can be enticed to move to an urban area” (8: Leinberger)

## Entertainment

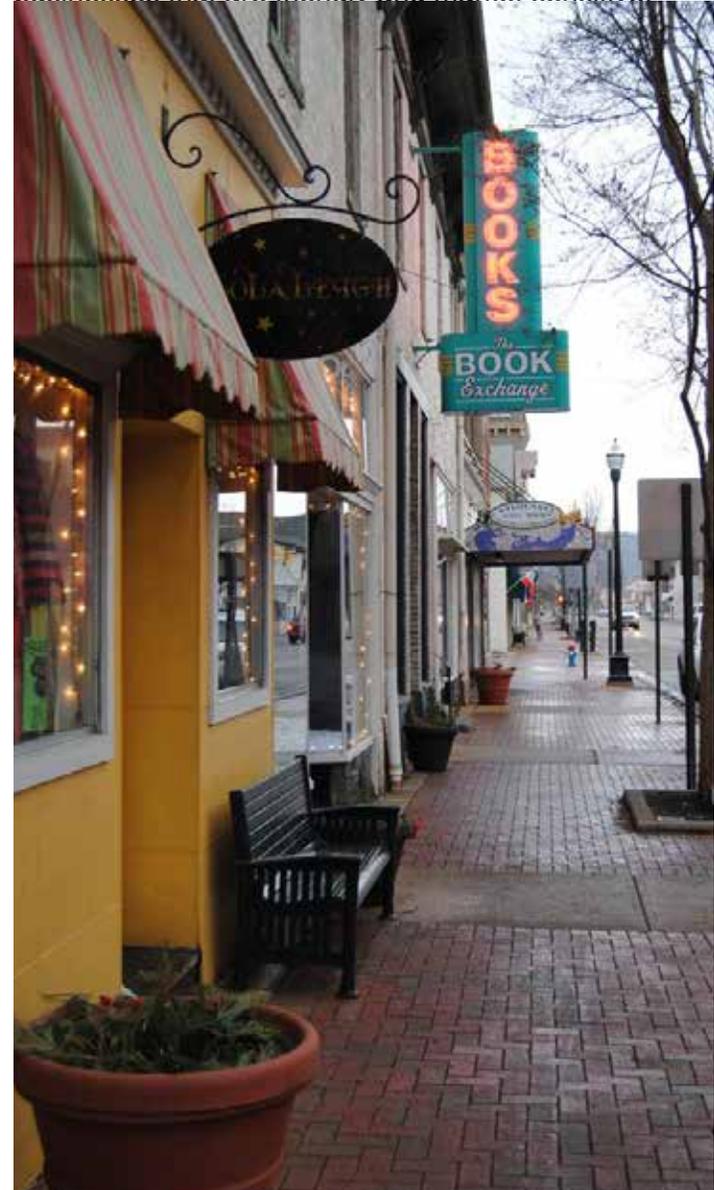
Entertainment in a downtown area the businesses, attractions, activities, and atmosphere working together to invite people to the downtown. Entertainment brings life to the downtown. It positively influences the way people feel about their community and positively affects local economics of the downtown and surrounding areas.

### Existing Conditions

Downtown Lancaster has the potential to be the entertainment destination of the area by attracting all age groups to a vital urban atmosphere. Currently, the Downtown streets are walkable and have recently undergone beautification as a result of the Special Improvement District. The buildings, though in need of some repair, have the potential to bring historic charm to the area. This is a promising potential reward for attracting people to the downtown for entertainment. Studies show that Lancaster as a whole has a surplus supply of retail and food establishments with less emphasis on full service food establishments (4: “Retail and Market Study”). Existing restaurants and bars in the Downtown do not cater to a broad age range and group of people. In a focus group from 2010 with Downtown business owners, property owners, residents, and government organizations, people desired more places to meet and socialize in the evenings at places like coffee shops, lounges, and restaurants (7: “Summary of Feedback from 2010 Downtown Focus Groups” 1-4).

Additionally, the Downtown area competes with the surrounding suburban development for potential consumers and businesses. Along Memorial Drive there are plentiful businesses, attractions, and shopping centers. A few specific entertainment destinations include the River Valley Mall, the Regal River Valley movie theater, and a solid supply of fast food establishments and sit down restaurants including Buffalo Wild Wings, Rooster’s, and Olive Garden, among other similar restaurants. This is an obstacle for the downtown. However, the downtown should not

so much compete with these outside businesses but should emphasize what they have instead: a walkable urban atmosphere with historic charm and local businesses that are friendly and market sensitive.



Picture 3-2: Paperback Book Exchange Columbus Street

## Recommendations

### Establishment of New Districts

#### Community Entertainment District (CED)

Our goal is to bring people and businesses to the downtown. A catalyst for this attraction is a Community Entertainment District. A CED is a designated contiguous area “that includes or will include a combination of entertainment, retail, educational, sporting, social, cultural, or arts establishments” (O.R.C. 4301.80). A CED allows for reduced-cost liquor licenses within a community designated area. The liquor licenses are managed by the state, however, the community shapes the form and function of the CED. Additionally the municipalities set any fees for the district including application fees.

The CED allows for additional liquor permits to be sold in the municipality at one permit per five acres up to fifteen total permits. These permits are solely for establishments that primarily sell food. It also requires the permits to stay within the geographic boundaries of the district, so they cannot be transferred outside of the district like normal permits. This is an asset to the designated district and the community. It allows the community to guide development of entertainment establishments to best suit the needs of the area. Also, the CED creates an easier and more enticing path for businesses to locate in the downtown because owners avoid potentially pricey broker fees or long waiting times.

To view the Ohio Revised Code legislation on Community Entertainment Districts and the corresponding liquor

permit see O.R.C. 4303.80 and 4301.80 permit D-5j (<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4301.80> and <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4303.181>)

#### Quick View of Requirements

- Located within a municipality of at least 20,000
- Not less than 50 million dollars will be invested in development and construction. This includes all infrastructure and building improvements in the recent past and future.
- No less than 20 contiguous acres
- Area must contain a possible combination of establishments in “entertainment, retail, educational, sporting, social, cultural, or arts establishments within close proximity to some or all of the following types of establishments within the district” (O.R.C. 4301.80) within the district” (O.R.C. 4301.80).



Picture 3-3: Shaw's on North Broad Street

### Revitalization District

Similar to a Community Entertainment District, a Revitalization District “means a bounded area that includes or will include a combination of entertainment, retail, educational, sporting, social, cultural, or arts establishments” (O.R.C. 4301.81). However, a Revitalization District has different requirements in both how to attain one and the form it takes.

Again, a Revitalization District allows for a community to designate an entertainment area through allowing additional liquor permits. The corresponding permit is a D-5I permit. Establishments seeking this permit would have to have their sales be primarily of food (seventy five percent). Also there is a limit on permits of one per five acres up to fifteen permits.

The requirements for a community to attain a Revitalization District are easier to satisfy compared to a Community Entertainment District. For Lancaster, the best requirement to meet for the district would be that the district is “located in the municipal corporation that has the largest population in a county when the county has a population between 141,000 to 225,000” (O.R.C. 4303.81). Fairfield County has a population of approximately 147,000 people. Though Lancaster does not fit inside this margin, the City may be able to pursue a variance through the state.

The Revitalization District has no minimum funding requirement while a Community Entertainment District does. A Revitalization District would be the more realistic option for Downtown Lancaster.



Picture 3-4: Vacant building with boarded windows



Picture 3-5: The Bicycle Corner on West Main Street

### Benefits and Feasibility of the Districts

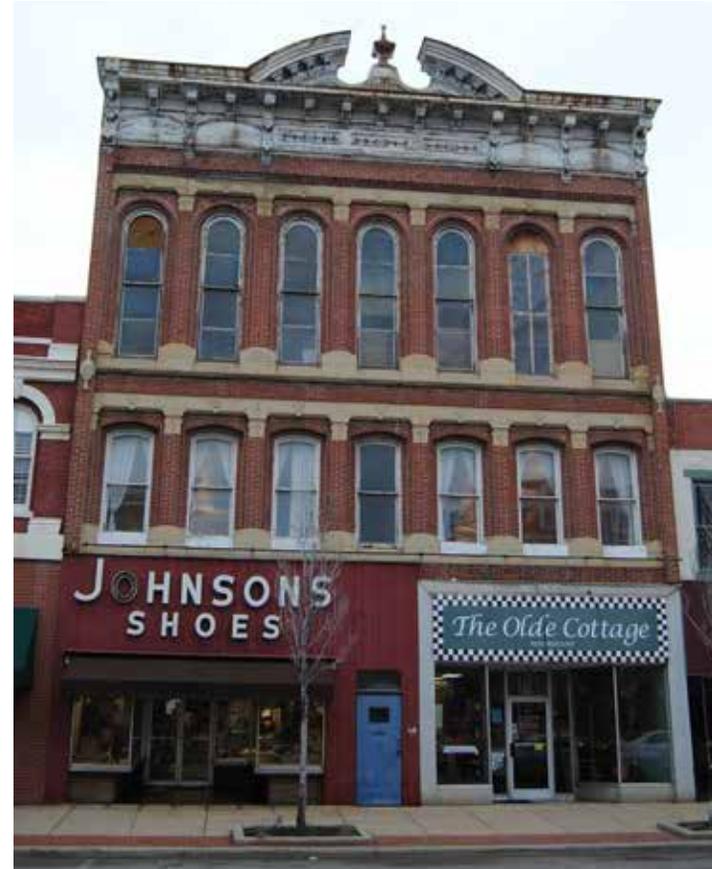
The benefits of these districts are seen not only in the designated areas themselves but the community as a whole:

- Assist communities with determining the boundaries within which to focus entertainment activities
- Serve as a marketing tool to attract new restaurants and other entertainment venues with the possibility of strengthening the neighborhood's business district
- Increase entertainment options for residents and visitors
- Create new jobs and/or retains existing ones, including those in locally-owned businesses
- Keep liquor permits in the neighborhood even if the initial restaurants close or move allowing for other entertainment options in the future
- Raise additional revenue for local government via increased income/payroll taxes and possibly property taxes
- Raise additional revenue for state government via liquor permit fees.

(3: Miller)

A Community Entertainment District or a Revitalization District are economic tools that have the potential to bring business and vitality to Downtown Lancaster. As of April 1, 2013, Lancaster has two available liquor permits at \$2,344 annually. However, there is a waiting list for eight beer permits at \$376 annually. This shows that there is an interest for businesses to incorporate alcohol into their sales. In the future, Lancaster should

show they are in support of on property alcohol selling establishments to locate in the Downtown area. As downtown Lancaster works to transition into more of an entertainment Destination Downtown and businesses in that area thrive, more businesses will follow. This could lead to an increase in the need for permits like the D-5j and D-5l.



Picture 3-6: Johnson's Shoe Store on West Main Street

### Case studies: Revitalization District

*Wooster, Ohio*

Wooster, located about 45 minutes southwest of

## Entertainment

Akron, Ohio has a population of approximately 26,000 people. Much like Lancaster, Wooster is located less than an hour from a major city and has a predominately white population of lower-middle class. Wooster saw a need for restaurants in its downtown. Alcohol permits were expensive and Wooster saw the benefit of creating a designated focus area for entertainment establishments. Once the district passed through all legislation in 2009, it saw immediate success in the downtown. Sandra Hall, Main Street director for Wooster said new permits were bought immediately following the creation of the district. She said, "It took no time at all. Now we have five new restaurants -it's been incredible," she said. "And the permits cannot be sold outside the downtown district. It's too difficult for downtowns to compete with the strip malls" (5: Shaver). Since its beginning, the Revitalization district continues to show success. As of November 2012, all five additional liquor permits were still in use.

### *Marietta, Ohio*

Marietta a community of 14,000 located in the south eastern part of Ohio looked to obtain a Revitalization district in their downtown. In late 2012, a local business purchased the last available liquor permit from the state. The business had not realized that the state had available permits and snatched up the remaining permit immediately.

After all liquor permits were purchased, the city, along with Mayor Williams looks to create a Revitalization District in there downtown after seeing its success in Wooster, Ohio (6: Shaver).

In Lancaster, similarly to Marietta, there are currently

two available liquor permits and waiting list for eight beer permits. This may be due to a lack of knowledge about permit specifications and availability.

"It took no time at all. Now we have five new restaurants- it's been incredible."  
-Sandra Hall



Picture 3-7: Well lit and easily walkable street

## Attracting Families

Lancaster should work to attract families to the downtown area. Lancaster is home to approximately 10,000 families (1: “Demographic and Income Comparison Profile”). Looking at age ranges from the U.S. Census Bureau, children ages 0-18 years make up approximately 23.7% of the population and adults ages 20-44 years make up approximately 33% of the population. These numbers are projected to stay stable into the future. This means more than half of Lancaster residents are at a “family” age, so plans or policies should be implemented to encourage families to visit downtown for their entertainment.

### School Aged Children

Downtown Lancaster should be mindful of what type of entertainment is practical and popular for the families of Lancaster. With a struggling national economy and lower than average income in greater Lancaster, entertainment options should be free or a good value. Restaurants and stores should look to attract families by offering discounts or tailoring their businesses to families during appropriate times. For instance, casual dining options should be kid-friendly during dinner hours and more adult focused during later hours.

To reach out to families, downtown businesses and events should utilize the schooling systems as a center for information disbursement and patronage encouragement. They can do this in two ways. First, Lancaster can send children home with fliers or coupons keeping parents up to date with kid-friendly options. This reminds the heads of household what the downtown has to offer and draws families into the

Downtown area through events or deals.

A common fundraising method for today’s schools is to coordinate fundraising with a restaurant or local business. During a certain time frame, a percentage of each restaurant or activity bill goes towards a group like a baseball team or chess club. This benefits the restaurants and businesses because it draws families and friends in for that particular night and if they have a good experience, encourages them to continue patronizing. The schools and youth’s extra-curricular groups should root this type of fundraising in the Downtown. This will help families realize the Downtown as a dining and entertainment option and directly push money into the downtown economy.



Picture 3-8: Kid-friendly art

### University Aged Students

In a similar way, Lancaster can reach out to its local college students from Ohio University Lancaster as well as students who live in Lancaster but commute for education. Ohio University Lancaster has over 2,200 students enrolled. This student population is of an age where they are looking for entertainment options to hangout and be social. Businesses should incentivize the downtown to these students by offering student

discounts either all the time or during certain days or hours. This promotes Downtown businesses and tells students, “We want you here.”

Students are the future of Lancaster. It is important to reach out to them and their families inviting them into the downtown area for their entertainment needs.



Picture 3-9: Bare brick wall off of Main Street

### Interactive Public Spaces

The public spaces in Downtown Lancaster have the potential to bring intellectual, artistic and social entertainment to the downtown. By incorporating more interactive public spaces, the downtown will become

a unique place of learning and community. Urban places across the world are embracing the benefits of interactive public spaces. Below are examples of interactive public spaces that Lancaster could incorporate in the downtown.

**Moveable seating** are chairs and tables in public areas that are free to move around. This seating gives people the ability to make a space work for them and their group.

**Chalkboard wall** is a large painted wall or board hung on the side of a building or in a public area. It has a prompt like, “Before I die I want to...” or a similar thought provoking blurb. Passersby are encouraged to complete the sentence using chalk. (<http://candychang.com/before-i-die-in-nola/>)

**Graffiti wall** is similar to a chalkboard wall. It is a public slate where people can create their own art in a graffiti style except this graffiti is supported and monitored by the public. This could attract a younger generation to the Downtown as well as give adults a chance to embrace their artistic side.

**Splash pads** are a unique way to bring entertainment and beauty during warmer months. Sprays of water shoot up from the ground in varying patterns. This creates a safe oasis for children of all ages and creates a playful space.

**Street instruments** like a piano sit out in daylight or a well-lit public space at night. The public is encouraged to show off their skill or snap a picture. Street pianos were successful in different neighborhoods in the Cincinnati, Ohio area.

## The Food Culture

“Preparing and sharing food bring together people of different backgrounds and cultures” (2: Hartley 4-21).

Lancaster and Fairfield county is a community rich in agricultural land. Lancaster’s location makes it marketable for farmers to locate here as well as people searching for fresh local food. Vendors from the Lancaster Farmer’s Market supply a wide array of fruits, vegetables, eggs, and baked goods. This coincides well with the recent push for more local food options across the states.

Downtown Lancaster is an ideal place to incorporate a “foodie culture,” bringing people from a more rural culture and also a progressive younger generation to one place and for one purpose: to eat. This does not mean the food should necessarily be upscale, but something truly Lancaster with a local flavor and an emphasis on creativity. Here are some options for incorporating a food culture into the Downtown.

The **Farmer’s Market** in downtown Lancaster is the perfect opportunity to push for food in downtown. To improve the market, local chefs should be invited to give cooking demonstrations using local food. Placing the market temporarily on the gateway site along Memorial Drive shows that this is a main focus of Downtown as well as invites visitors into Downtown.

A **Community Garden** located on a vacant lot and tended by neighborhood volunteers, creates a space that would bring fresh food and beauty to the Downtown. Community gardens increase the access to healthy, organic foods while giving people the opportunity to learn to grow their own food.

**Cooking classes** that are offered by partnering with The Ohio University Lancaster and Downtown would teach people a skill that they can use in the workforce or at home to make healthy, home cooked meals.

The popularity of **local brewing**, seen in the success of the local business, Rockmill Brewery, should be embraced in the Downtown. By bringing local brews into restaurants or incorporating tastings into activities, beer and spirits will add to the feeling of Lancaster culture Downtown.



Picture 3-10: Community garden in Pittsburgh neighborhood

Additionally, Downtown restaurants must accept that a good run business in any part of town is more likely to succeed than a worse competitor. It is important for the success of restaurants Downtown that businesses have a high quality of food, beer, and service and events, whether private or public, are regular. Also, the Downtown should be a place of creativity in the food that they serve and the buildings or places they serve in.

## Entertainment Map

The map on the next page is a printable locator map for downtown shops and dining according to Destination Downtown’s list of businesses. Currently, Downtown Lancaster does have a map kiosk of destinations of Downtown and it is located on Main Street. However, Downtown Lancaster does not have a printable map for visitors to carry with them for reference or view on the internet.

It is important for downtown to give visitors the correct tools to navigate throughout the businesses. This helps people decide where to park and how to walk to their destination. This map also serves as a marketing tool because it lists all businesses of which some visitors may not be familiar with.

*Please note, this map is only for reference.*



Figure 3-1: Entertainment District map of Downtown Lancaster

# Chapter Four: Parking and Wayfinding

# Parking

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Picture 4-1 : Example of surface parking in Lancaster

## Parking

The parking situation in downtown Lancaster is perceived to be one of the largest barriers to development and redevelopment in the City. There is much concern as to whether the current parking stock is enough to satisfy the demand for downtown parking. However, in actuality there is an overabundance of parking in downtown Lancaster.

## Existing Parking Conditions in Downtown Lancaster

Based on a parking study conducted in downtown by Walker Parking Consultants in 2008, the overall weekday parking occupancy was recorded at 57%, much lower than an occupancy that exceeds 85%, or when parking is considered to be a serious “problem.” Because of this statistic, even at the busiest times of the week in downtown, 43% of the parking stock is going unused, contributing to much wasted space within the area. But how can there be a perceived problem when there is so much available parking? Based on the Walker study, Lancaster has a total of 2,118 parking spaces in downtown: 406 spaces on-street and 1,712 off-street. However, out of these off-street spots, only 56 are listed as “public” parking spaces, leaving 1,656 as private. This disproportionality leads to the common

## Parking and Wayfinding

Required Off-Street Parking Spaces (Commercial Districts), Section 1151.08	
Use	Number of Required Spaces
Professional, administrative, business	One for each 400 SF of gross floor area
Food, department, general merchandise, hardware, drugs, or other retail sales	One for each 200 SF of gross floor area
Eating or drinking establishments without drive through facilities	One for each 100 SF of gross floor area
Eating or drinking establishments with drive through facilities	One for each 75 SF of gross floor area plus additional spaces in the drive through lanes equal to 25% of the required number of parking spaces
Personal services, including banks, savings and loans, and repair services without drive through facilities	One for each 200 SF of gross floor area
Personal services, including banks, savings and loans, and similar services with drive through facilities	One for each 200 SF of gross floor area, plus an additional space in drive through lanes equal to 80% of the required number of parking spaces
Barber and beauty shops	Two for each work station
Gasoline and service stations, automobile	Two for each service bay plus one for each service pump, plus one for each employee during the main shift

Parking in the Central Business District, Section 1151.07
a) For non-residential uses located within the CBD district, only 25% of the required number of parking spaces as specified in section 1151.08 (above) shall be required, provided that, in all cases, sufficient off-street spaces shall be provided for all employees of the establishment
b) Required parking spaces may be located within 300 feet of the principal use which they are intended to serve
c) Two or more uses within the CBD district may meet the parking requirements by the joint provision of parking facilities, provided the number of spaces and location otherwise meet the requirements of this chapter. In such case, the applicant shall provide a written agreement between the parties, stating the terms under which such joint parking is provided and maintained.

Figure 4-1 : Minimum Parking Requirements as displayed in City Code Source: Lancaster City Codified Ordinances (1)

misconception that parking is an issue in downtown. According to the City's codified ordinances, businesses, even in the central business district, are required to provide a certain number of parking spaces based on the location's square footage (seen in Figure 4-1 on the previous page). This creates many small parking lots scattered around downtown which are only available to employees and/or customers using the business. In addition, employees can sometimes reserve a parking space for a fee. Even when this space is unoccupied by the employee, it is still seen as an unavailable space.

### Problems with Existing Parking Conditions

The perceived problem with parking in Lancaster deals with the idea that there are not enough parking spaces in downtown, while in actuality there are too many parking spaces. Currently in downtown Lancaster, the overabundance of small, scattered private parking lots creates a hectic environment for visitors. Individual business' parking restrictions limit the visitor's parking options in the CBD, and only allow them to frequent one business while parked in each location. Because on-street parking contains the most public parking spaces, this would most likely be the visitor's first choice. However, there might not be any on-street spot close to the desired location. This creates a need to drive from business to business, even if the two are only a block apart. A downtown is supposed to be the most walkable portion of a town, but with heavily restricted private lots, this cannot be the case.

Another negative aspect of the proliferation of small private lots is the degradation of an aesthetically

pleasing environment. Large tracts of empty pavement can be seen in several sections of downtown, especially south of Main St. These open tracts create an uninviting atmosphere with ugly sight lines and a desolate feeling. In addition, there is virtually no screening of parking lots which adds to the negative aesthetics (see Picture 4-20 below).



Figure 4-2 : Downtown Surface Parking- North



Figure 4-3 : Downtown Surface Parking- South



Picture 4-2 : Poor sight lines create negative aesthetics

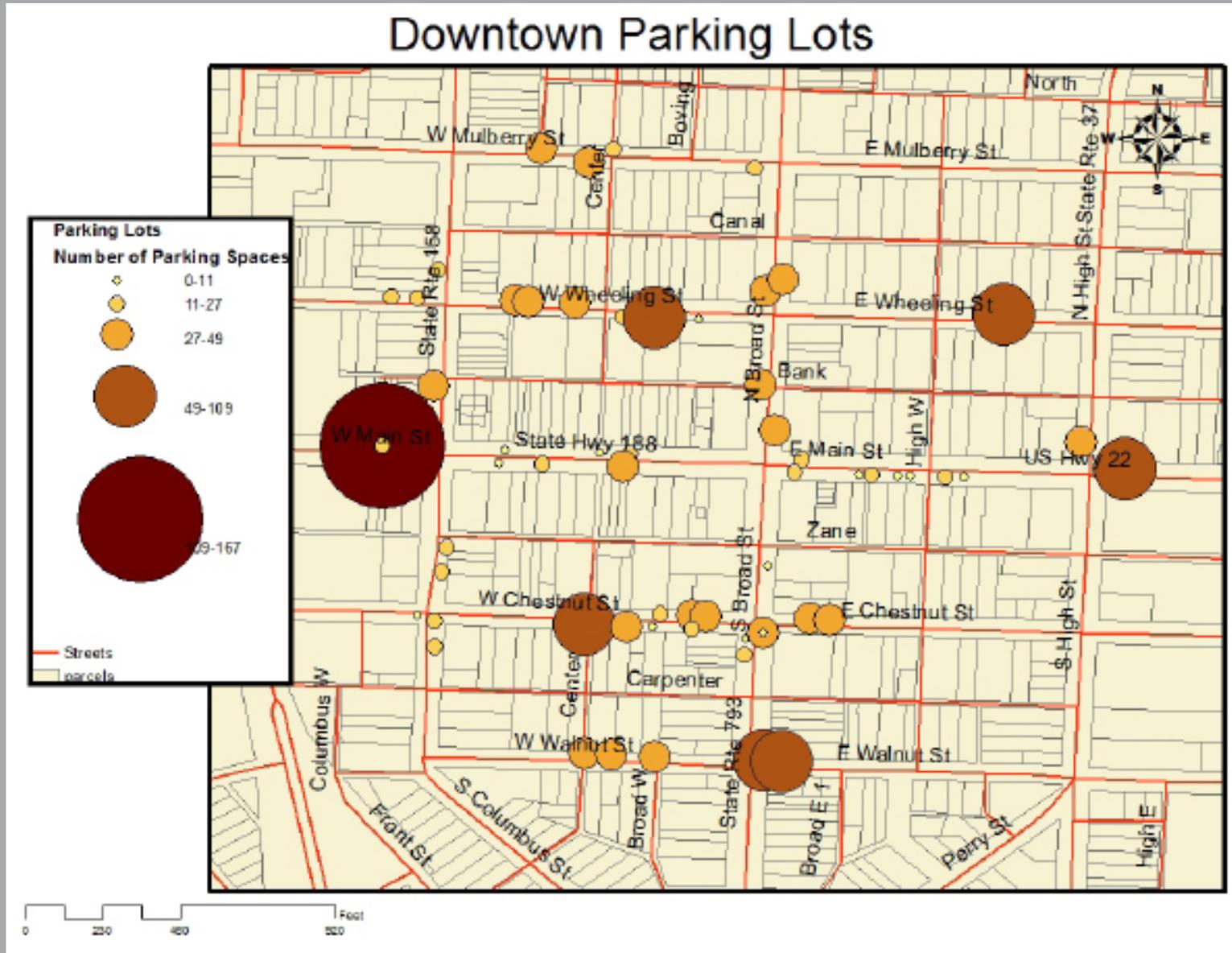


Figure 4-4: Map displaying parking lot locations with number of spaces  
(Also refer to Parking Appendix Figures 4-7 through 4-12)



Figure 4-5: Recommended public lot location

### Parking Recommendations

Currently, as stated above, there are only 56 off-street parking spaces in all of Downtown Lancaster. This lack of a centralized public parking area where visitors can park and then walk to whichever business they so desire is the real parking problem for the City. The Walker parking study states: “Our observations indicate that overall parking occupancy is not at a critical level; however, public parking is an area that is lacking in many of the blocks, and where it is available, it is full.” A large, centralized parking lot that is specifically designated as public would create a more inviting atmosphere for visitors, as they would not waste time in the search for viable parking. It would

also encourage these potential customers to frequent the other businesses that are located on the way to their desired destination; benefitting more than just one location. Presently, customers may rely on on-street parking as their only option when shopping in downtown, and if none is available, move on to the more auto-friendly shopping centers along Memorial Drive. However, as long as there is no centralized public parking area, Downtown Lancaster will suffer from a perceived lack of access, and will greatly deter many potential customers.

The City’s first step in the creation of a large public lot will be the acquisition of a large, currently private lot located in a central location. This lot will need to have easy access to the main streets in downtown Lancaster (Main Street, Columbus Street, and Broad Street), and signs will need to be built which properly lead visitors into the parking lot. These signs can better emphasize the walkable aspect of Downtown Lancaster through employing a “Park and Walk” slogan. Downtown visitors will then have an easily accessible place to park their vehicle and walk to whichever businesses they so desire without the need to drive to each location. Possibly the best location for this centralized public parking area would be the large lot currently owned by Fairfield County, just south of Main St. and the Zane Alleyway (shown in Figure 4-5 to the left). This lot contains roughly 75 parking spaces.

In order to properly solve Lancaster’s parking problem, changes to the City’s codified ordinances will need to be made. As of now, the code focuses on creating parking minimums which force businesses to supply a certain number of spaces according to type of

use. These maximums create the small, private lots mentioned above. After a centralized public parking lot is established, many of the small, private lots will no longer be needed. The City code can then focus on parking maximums, instead of minimums. These parking maximums would allow for a reduction in the amount of space needed for parking whenever new businesses are added, since visitors can simply park in the large public lot. Parking maximums also benefit new business owners who want to locate in downtown. With the current parking minimums, businesses must acquire land in order to provide the necessary amount of parking. This may deter potential owners who cannot afford the purchase of land needed for parking. If current parking minimums were relaxed (or nonexistent) in the CBD, the potential business owner could focus more resources on the establishment of the actual business, instead of worrying about the providing the “necessary” amount of parking.

Shared parking between businesses and uses should also be implemented. Multiple businesses should be encouraged to cooperatively share parking lots around downtown. For example, businesses that primarily have hours between 9am and 5pm could use a lot during those hours, while another use could occupy the same lot primarily at night. In addition, if businesses only occupy lots on weekdays, the lots should be open to other uses which accrue business primarily on weekends.

In order to improve the aesthetics of downtown Lancaster’s parking areas, screening should be applied to commercial districts. As of now, Lancaster’s codified ordinances state: **“Unenclosed off-street parking**

**areas which are principal uses shall be screened by the erection of a screening wall or fence on the lot line or lines in common with an R District. Unenclosed off-street parking areas, containing 6 or more spaces, which are accessory to uses not required to provide screening shall be screened by the erection of a screening wall or fence on the lot line or lines in common with an RE or RS District, provided that if the parking area is located more than 50 feet from the RE or RS lot line or lines, the screening requirement shall not apply.” (Section 1151.03)**

The code could further include a similar section pertaining to the screening of parking lots in commercial areas in addition to lots that abut residential districts.

### Parking Case Study: Westerville, Ohio



Westerville, Ohio is a suburb of Columbus with approximately 40,000 residents. Westerville’s “Main Street,” State Street, is the central focal point of the city’s Uptown District. This district remains the historic and cultural core of the city, much like downtown Lancaster. In addition, due to State Street’s designation as Ohio

State Route 3, Uptown Westerville receives much traffic, comparable with that of Main Street in Lancaster. However, unlike Lancaster, Westerville's city code relaxes parking requirements for businesses in its historic district. The code reads, "The Planning Commission shall determine the nature and extent to which compliance with the provisions of Chapter 1171 [parking code] is necessary." Instead of creating an all-encompassing rule for the entire district as in Lancaster's case, Westerville instead reviews the parking needs for each individual use on a case by case basis, ensuring maximization of efficiency and a reduction of unnecessary parking. Westerville also emphasizes pedestrian connection to and from parking lots in its code: "The development of pedestrian facilities shall be encouraged. Such facilities include the development of pedestrian accessways to rear parking areas..." In addition, Westerville encourages the "Park and Walk" slogan as mentioned above, through the creation of several well-demarcated public parking lots. A reduction in private lots, an increase of centralized public parking, an addition of pedestrian connections, and a reduced need to drive from business to business foster a more pedestrian friendly environment.



Picture 4-4: Wayfinding signage clearly indicates direction of parking

“Instead of creating an all-encompassing rule for the entire district as in Lancaster’s case, Westerville instead reviews the parking needs for each individual use on a case by case basis, ensuring maximization of efficiency and a reduction of unnecessary parking.”



Picture 4-5: Westerville's "Park & Walk" Slogan

### Key “Take Away” Points:

- The perceived parking problem in Lancaster is completely false, however the real problem is that downtown contains too much private parking
- Parking restrictions limit visitors’ ability to find adequate parking, leading to the perceived problem
- An overabundance of scattered, private lots leads to an uninviting, non-walkable atmosphere that is not aesthetically pleasing
- The creation of a large, centralized, easy-to-access public parking lot is imperative in downtown Lancaster
- Emphasize a “Park and Walk” atmosphere which caters to pedestrians
- Apply parking lot screening to enhance aesthetics



Picture 4-6: Pedestrian kiosk in downtown Lancaster

## Wayfinding

Wayfinding refers to the process of finding one's way from point to point. Good wayfinding systems direct traffic flows across all transportation modes to key areas or destinations. Great wayfinding systems not only accomplish these goals, they also promote a city's brand or identity. This brand or identity helps establish a sense of place by communicating a certain message to residents and visitors alike. Great wayfinding systems use consistent designs to further promote a positive image of a city.

## Existing Wayfinding in Lancaster

Lancaster currently has some wayfinding signage, but it is not enough to be considered adequate. The vast majority of signage is focused on directing automobile traffic, while there is signage geared towards pedestrians and cyclists as well. There are currently two pedestrian kiosks in downtown which contain maps of the surrounding area as well as business listings. Pedestrian kiosks are great assets for any downtown to have, in that visitors can quickly find their way around. These kiosks also foster the exploration of cities and create an inviting atmosphere.

Trailblazer signs direct automobile traffic to the main destinations of a city including districts, parks, schools or hospitals, as well as other cities located further down the highway. Much of the trailblazer signage that currently exists in Lancaster focuses on the latter. This signage created by ODOT is not unique to Lancaster and is exclusively functional. While this type of signage is necessary, it does not promote the

## Parking and Wayfinding

City in any way and can actually augment Lancaster's status as a pass-through town. Other trailblazer signs throughout town focus on the city's attractions such as the Fairfield County Fairgrounds and the Sherman House. Trailblazer signs are usually larger than other types of signage due to their need to direct traffic while at-speed. Large trailblazer signs are located along primary access routes, while smaller trailblazers are placed along secondary access routes.

Gateway signs announce the entrance into a city or neighborhood, and are very important in that they act as a first impression for visitors. In most cases gateway signs are in monument form, much like the signage welcoming visitors to Lancaster's "Heritage District" on Main Street. It is imperative that gateway signs reflect a city's brand or message. There are also signs located in downtown Lancaster which direct patrons to the Fairfield Heritage Trail. Wayfinding signage which focuses on all potential modes of transportation is another great aspect.

### Wayfinding Recommendations

It is recommended that the City add more pedestrian kiosks around downtown, especially near public parking areas to further create an inviting atmosphere for visitors. If one of the main goals of revitalizing downtown is to create a more walkable environment, more pedestrian signage is required. It is recommended that one pedestrian kiosk be placed along East Main Street and one along South Broad Street (refer to Wayfinding Appendix Figure 4-15).

As of now, Lancaster's trailblazer signs do not contain



Picture 4-7: Information banner directing pedestrians to kiosk



Picture 4-8: Bike trail signage and Fairgrounds arrow sign (background)

## Parking and Wayfinding

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consistent designs and are insufficient in number. There are currently no highly visible signs which direct traffic from Memorial Drive, the City's main thoroughfare, into downtown. Currently as a motorist travels along Memorial Drive, even at the intersection with Main Street, there is no way to discern that they are in downtown. Above all else, there need to be large, highly visible trailblazer signs which explicitly direct visitors to downtown. Once again, these signs will follow the unique design of the other signage types. Trailblazer signs which can also display special City events are recommended. Refer to Wayfinding Appendix Figures 4-13 and 4-14.

Lancaster is lacking signage which indicates the entrance to its historic downtown. As stated above, the only gateway signage is located along Main Street at the intersection with Memorial Drive. However, this signage is not very noticeable to motorists along Memorial Drive. For this reason, gateway signage should be placed along Memorial Drive, along both north and south directions. Gateway signage should also be placed on Main Street east of downtown as well smaller signage along secondary access routes. It is best to have a clearly demarcated downtown area. Refer to Wayfinding Appendix Figures 4-13 and 4-14.

Signage indicating the Fairfield Heritage Trail is also insufficient. Trail signage should not only be placed in downtown, but also in all major centers of recreation such as Miller Park and Rising Park. In addition, this signage must be more visible to cyclists.

As stated in the parking section of this document, if a large public parking lot is created, there must be

adequate signage directing motorists to and from the lot. This public lot, combined with wayfinding that directs traffic into the lot from all major access routes will help diminish Lancaster's perceived parking problem.



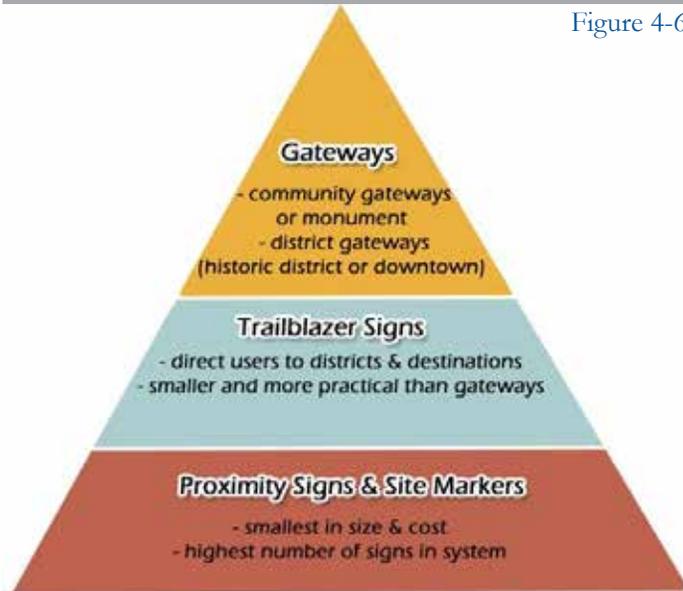
Picture 4-9: Example trailblazer sign with space to display city events



Picture 4-10: Example New Haven, MO wayfinding system (see case study on following page)

### Wayfinding Case Study: New Haven, MO

Figure 4-6



New Haven, Missouri, a small city located along the Missouri River, faces a similar problem as Lancaster: that of a downtown that has been bypassed by a major highway. In order to achieve better recognition from visitors and travelers along the bypass, New Haven established a wayfinding system which would alert passer-bys to the city's downtown and other attractions; a system that would greatly benefit Lancaster. The wayfinding system promotes four main goals: "1.) Alert Highway 100 travelers to Downtown New Haven, 2) Help these travelers find Downtown New Haven and its points of interest, 3) Establish a positive first-impression, and 4) Alert travelers to other destinations in New Haven." Together, these goals help drive downtown visitation, and in turn spur economic development.

In addition to the goals explicitly stated above, the New Haven wayfinding system plan fulfills another city need: that of establishing an identity and conveying a message. As shown in the picture on the previous page, New Haven employs the use of riverboat design themes to display New Haven's river town prominence. All signage in the wayfinding system plan incorporates this imagery to some extent, which creates a cohesive network of signs. The town's name is also proudly displayed on all signs, something Lancaster is greatly lacking.

New Haven, Missouri employs a phased approach in the implementation of their wayfinding plan. The plan calls for the cooperation of several area committees, such as the chamber of commerce and Downtown New Haven, Inc, in order to fully realize the goals. The wayfinding plan also recognizes the need to contact the Missouri Department of Transportation in order to place signage along state highways. Lancaster must follow this lead if a wayfinding system is implemented as many primary and secondary access routes in downtown are either US or state highways (2). A table displaying proposed costs for the wayfinding in New Haven is displayed in Wayfinding Appendix Figure 4-16.

"In order to achieve better recognition from visitors and travelers along the bypass, New Haven established a wayfinding system which would alert passer-bys to the city's downtown and other attractions; a system that would greatly benefit Lancaster."

### Key “Take Away” Points:

- Lancaster’s current wayfinding signage is insufficient and does not convey any city identity
- Signage clearly directing motorists from primary access routes (Memorial Drive and Main Street) into downtown is imperative
- Multimodal signage which caters to pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists is needed to create a walkable atmosphere
- It is important to include signage which adequately demarcates public parking opportunities





# Chapter Five: Transportation

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## Transportation

Mobility plays a huge role in how a person experiences a place. The flow, accessibility, and comfort of an area define its success. Lancaster already benefits greatly from its location, through access to main highways such as 22 and 33, and proximity to the state's capital. However, in order to keep improving and moving towards the future we have established some recommendations to keep Lancaster functional and safe. Our research and ideas have been split up into four sections: walkability, biking, automobiles, and transit.

### Walkability

The core of Lancaster's Downtown is already set up very nicely for the pedestrian. The sidewalks are very wide and well-maintained; people can walk in groups comfortably. This also means there is plenty of room for benches, trash cans, and lighting. All of these things promote safety and cleanliness, and it is clear that they work fairly well. The scale of Downtown is very appropriate for a pedestrian setting, and if more businesses can be brought back to the main streets, Lancaster has a great existing structure for a lively outdoor atmosphere. During our visits, there were lots of kids riding bikes and a frequent sheriff presence, making the downtown feel safe and family-friendly. Downtown is clearly teeming with potential and has great framework for future economic activity.

Once a pedestrian is within Downtown Lancaster, everything is accessible by foot. However, getting there is not as trouble-free. The surrounding residential



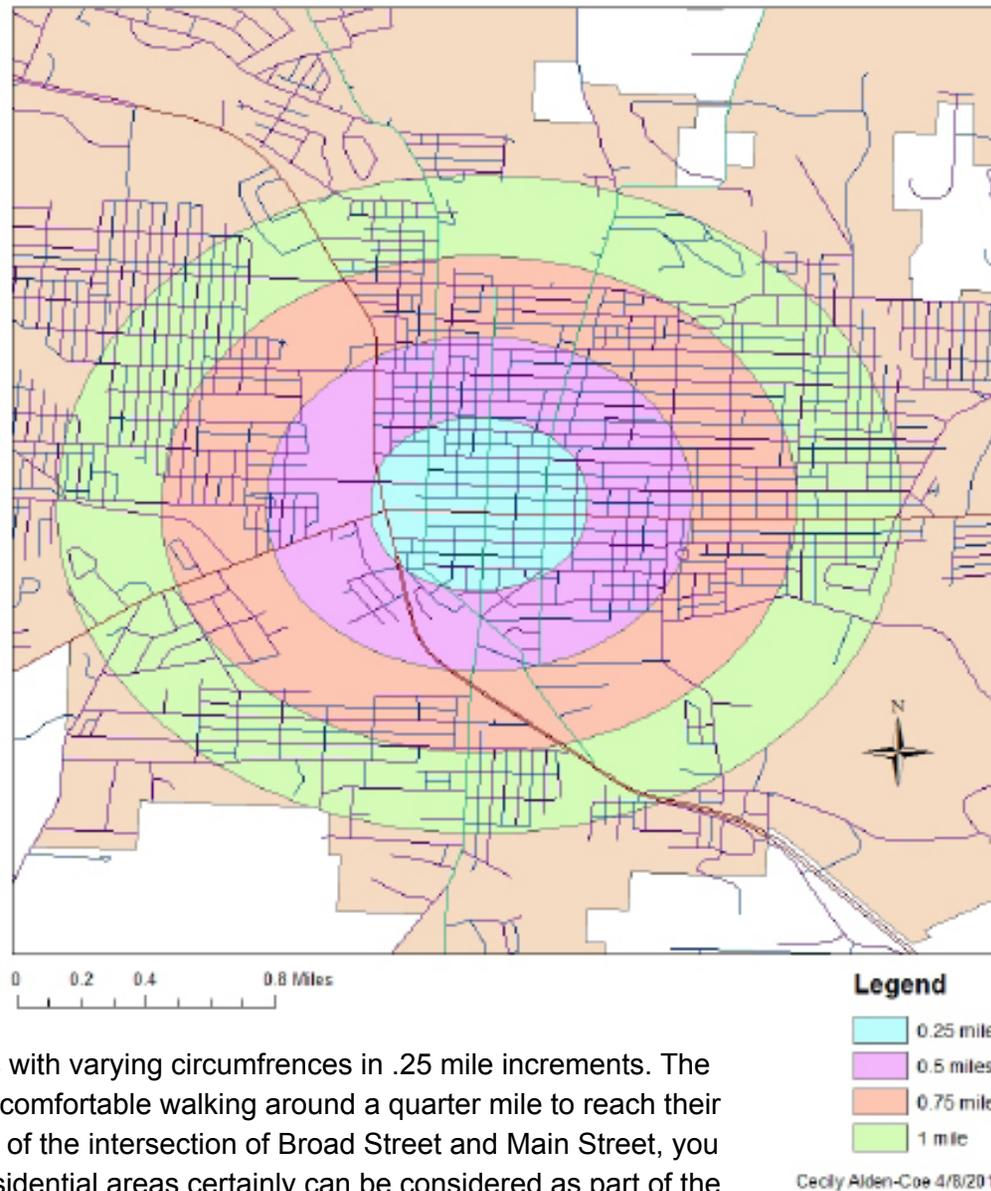
Picture 5-1: This crosswalk is located on Main Street in the center of the block



Picture 5-2: Main Street southside sidewalk is very well maintained

Figure 5-1

Walking Distances from Downtown



This map shows rings with varying circumferences in .25 mile increments. The average person feels comfortable walking around a quarter mile to reach their destination. Based off of the intersection of Broad Street and Main Street, you can see that some residential areas certainly can be considered as part of the pedestrian consumer base

area includes lots of homes, meaning lots of potential customers. In order to attract these consumers to the downtown as opposed to Lancaster’s periphery for dining and recreation, it needs to be more accessible. Figure A on the following page details walking times from Broad Street and Main Street. Currently, the sidewalks along the residential areas are in contrast to the nicer downtown ones. Frequently cracked, or overgrown, adjusting these to the same standard as downtown could encourage more people to choose to take a nice walk to Downtown. It would offer a healthy choice as well as improve aesthetics and safety. According to the Ohio Revised Code, Section 729.01 lot owners are required to fund repairs for their own sidewalks, which could be a deterrent to some.

## Recommendations

Repair and maintain sidewalks throughout the residential areas. The homes that are closer to Downtown (the blue ring in Figure A) are crucial since they are more likely to travel on foot. This could be done by enforcing the ORC Section 729.01.

## Biking

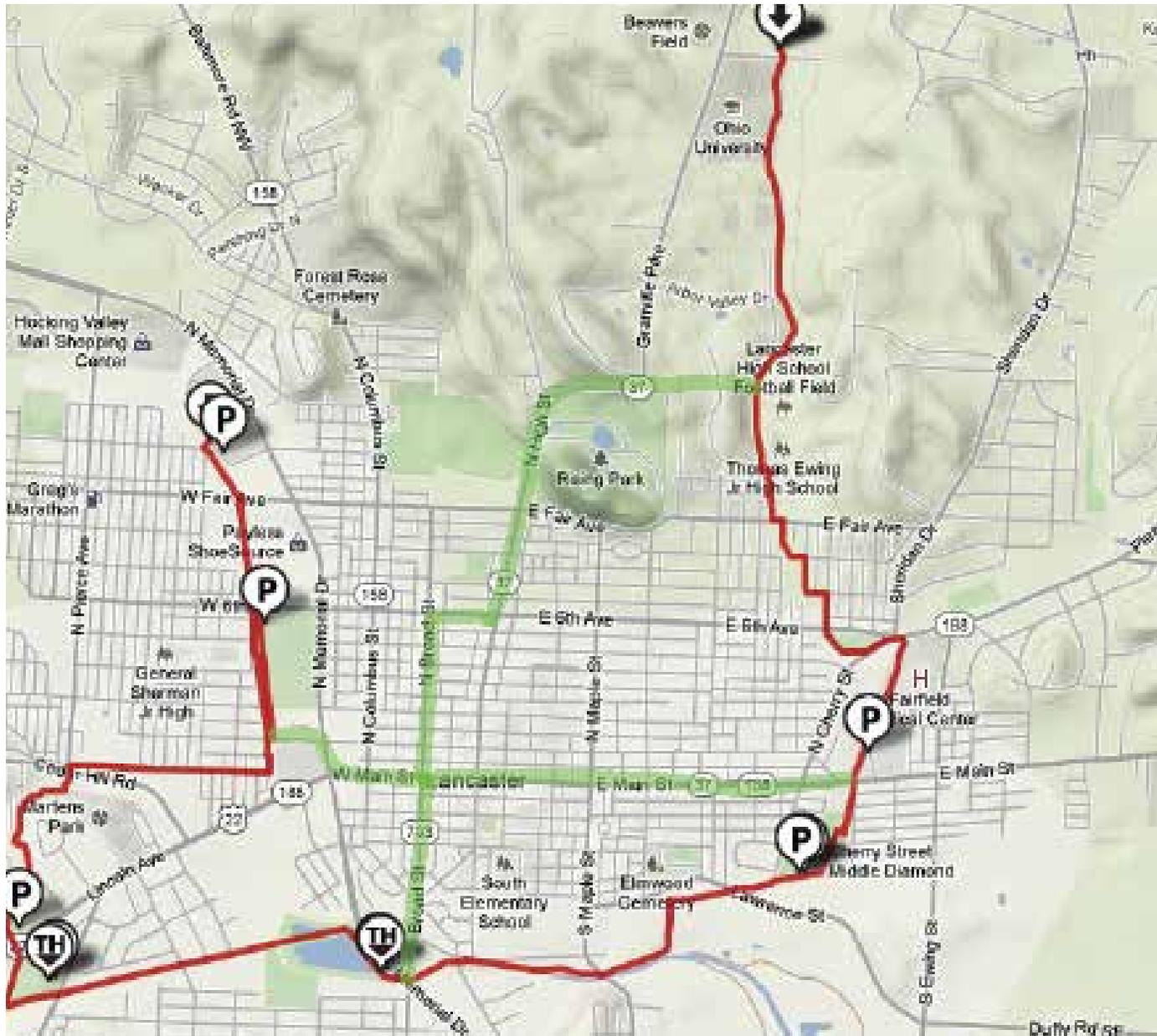
One of Lancaster’s most beneficial features is the Fairfield Heritage Trail. This trail surrounds the downtown in a ‘U-shape’ on the Eastern, Southern, and Western sides. It crosses over the southern end of downtown at South Memorial Drive, but otherwise does not travel through the downtown. Currently, this is a great asset for accessing the periphery of Lancaster, including the shops and the surrounding schools. Incorporating this trail more throughout Downtown would serve to greatly



Picture 5-3: The main signage indicating the Fairfield Heritage Trail on Main Street and Broad Street.

Figure 5-2

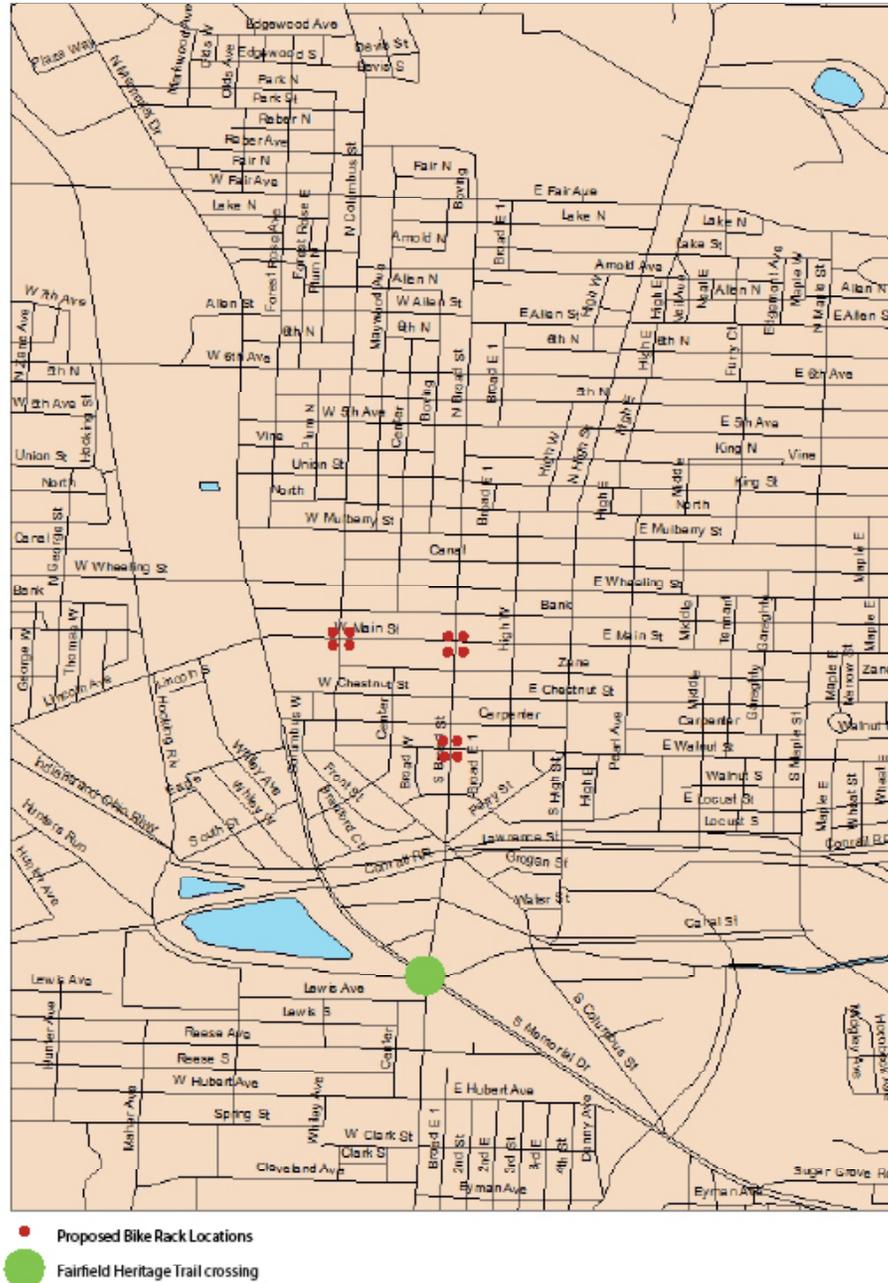
Proposed Streets for Bike Trail Connections



Source: Trail Link

Figure 5-3

### Proposed Bike Rack Locations



increase downtown's accessibility. Figure B details the existing trail in red as well as the streets that could be included to create greater connectivity. The Fairfield Heritage Trail Association has a 'Proposed Bike Path' map that details the phases of future growth of the trail (See Appendix). They have included a portion that highlights the downtown and historic buildings. It is designed to be a walking tour, however making downtown more bike-friendly would make it possible to have a biking tour. This would bring more bike traffic downtown and therefore more potential consumers. To further the effect, it would be beneficial to incorporate more bike racks throughout Downtown. This invites all of the trail users to visit and stop in Downtown. While there is the occasional small bike rack to use, such as by the pocket park on the southwest corner of Main and Broad Street, having more spaces to park creates more opportunities. Figure C shows potential locations in high volume areas of Downtown. These areas are near key locations and they would encourage traffic to enter from the Fairfield Heritage Trail.

Another way to really promote use of the Trail and bike traffic Downtown would be to incorporate bike lanes along main streets. They would allow bike traffic from the Heritage Trail to seamlessly explore downtown and allow residents to have a new mode of transportation to take advantage of. An alternative, cost-effective approach could also be the use of 'Sharrows.' A 'Sharrow' is a symbol in a driving lane that indicates the lane may also be utilized by bicycles. This promotes slower, more safe traffic and invites bicycles downtown without undergoing construction.



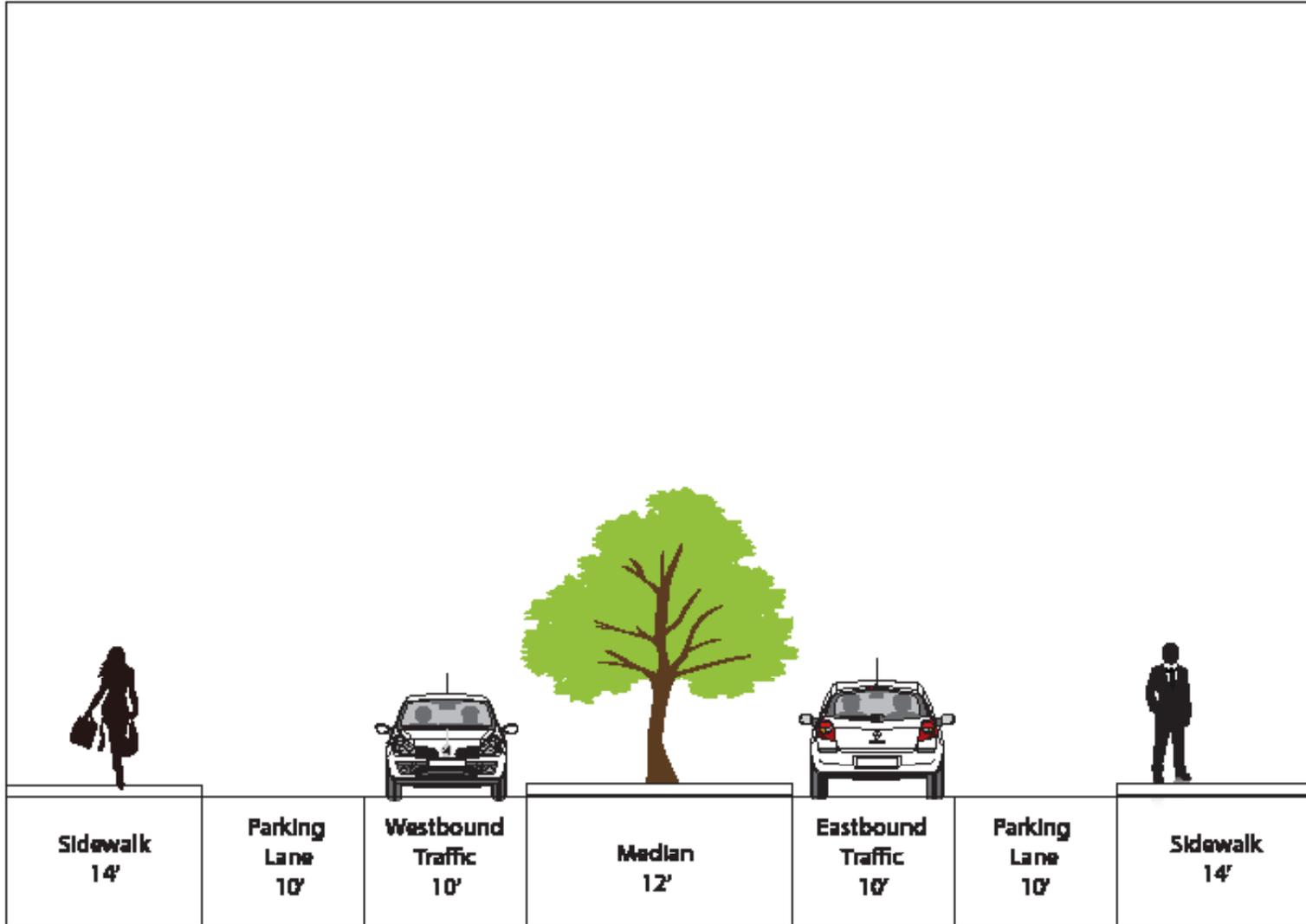
Picture 5-4: Semi-truck travelling down Main Street.



Picture 5-5: Another example of semi-truck traffic along Main Street.

Figure 5-4

# Main Street Vision Streetscape



Source: Cecily Alden-Coe

“This results in noisy streets, parking dilemmas, and lessened social contact.”



Picture 5-6: Cars travelling through Downtown Lancaster.

## Recommendations

- Implementation of bike racks at key locations throughout Downtown
- Integration of the Fairfield Heritage Trail
  - Bike lanes
  - Sharrows

## Automobiles

Currently, Lancaster is very auto-dependent. Especially due to its location, most people choose to travel by car for ease of access and comfort. This results in noisy streets, parking dilemmas, and lessened social contact. While cars are an important part of a functioning downtown, our recommendations are intended to maximize efficiency and function.

Lancaster’s access to main highways is great in many ways. It allows outsiders to visit easily, and residents to travel for work. The downside is traffic and noise. One of the biggest grievances to come to our attention during this study is how noisy Route 22 (or Main Street) is. Since it is a truck route, semi-trucks are constantly passing by, and the noise is enough to be bothersome. Many of Lancaster’s prominent buildings are along this street, as well as lots of buildings with future potential, making it important to make downtown as safe and pleasant as possible. As a truck route, it poses a safety concern for bicyclists. It’s also a source of noise pollution making walking, and spending time in the pocket parks less attractive. One way to reduce

the amount of truck traffic on this road is to make it less appealing for higher speeds. One way to do this would be to implement a median that includes aesthetic elements. This would make Main Street feel more like a boulevard. It would be visually pleasing, but also make the Downtown feel more intimate. Figure D is a street section highlighting the dimensions for a potential built-up median. There is already an existing 12 foot median that would just need to be built up slightly and landscaped. Putting in imposing factors such as a median, or bump outs in the road serve to instinctively slow traffic down. This would be a cost-effective measure to make this street less appealing to trucks and more friendly for pedestrians.

Decreasing the truck traffic could also occur through officially rerouting 22 around downtown. Rerouting this would allow Main Street to be more idyllic and a charming asset. About a mile long stretch would need to be rerouted along the southern end of Lancaster. This would be a more expensive option, but since it is a state route, there is potential for alternative sources of funding. Figure E details a potential reroute option courtesy of Larry Childrey. It would reroute the trucks slightly through the downtown.

## Recommendations

- Decrease traffic on Main Street by making it less attractive to trucks
- Consider officially rerouting 22 and 188 away from Main Street

## Transit

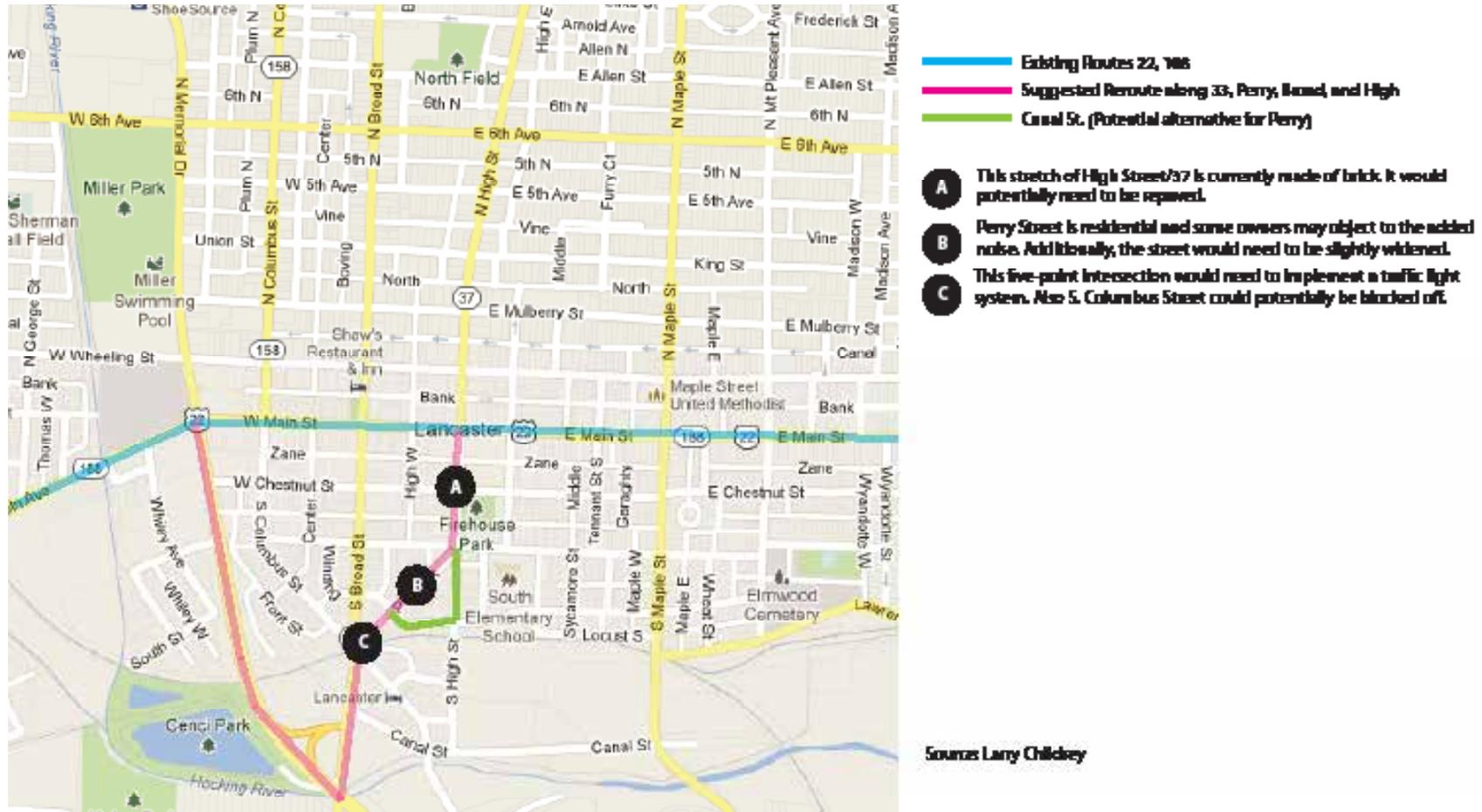
Currently Fairfield County offers an 'on-demand' transit service that services Lancaster. This system is ideal for senior citizens without driver's licenses. A ride made be scheduled in advance, and for a small fee the rider may be taken all over the county. For the moment this is an adequate amount of public transit for Lancaster. Perhaps in the future a more comprehensive system will be needed such as a timed bus service or more local on-demand service, however presently the countywide system works well.

## Recommendations

- Pay attention to increased travel to downtown and provide appropriate public transit as volume increases.

“It would be visually pleasing, but it would also make the downtown feel more intimate.”

Figure 5-5





# Chapter Six: Parks

Parks

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Nature Reserve

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Biking

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## Parks

A city that supports and encourages the use of park space is a city that supports healthy lifestyles. Green space offers a place of respite, recreation and community gathering. Introducing nature can soften the hardscape and mitigate the effects of pollution as a result of our built environment. Parks can increase adjacent property values. There are several advantages to having a great park system, but perhaps the most important effect is the contribution to the quality of place of a community.

A healthy park system is an essential tool to promote healthy lifestyles.

### Existing Conditions

Lancaster features various size parks with various uses. Rising Park, considered by many local residents as the “crown jewel” of the local park system, is unique in its character and offers unmatched vistas of the city. This park is heavily utilized year round, particularly in the warmer months, due to its variety of features including a baseball diamond, tennis courts, botche courts, a playground, pond, gazebo, picnic/event shelter and walking trails. This park is the exception to what many consider to be an underutilized citywide park system.

Miller Park is the second largest park in Lancaster and features several ball fields, a swimming pool and a skate park. However, the park suffers from a lack of maintenance and, even with its various features, a lack of patronage. This space represents a

## Parks

unique opportunity to compliment any economic development effort within the adjacent downtown district.

There may be concerns by residents regarding the absence of the sports fields if replaced by a nature reserve. However, an inventory conducted of the existing park system and sports facilities shows that there are an adequate number of alternate facilities available in several nearby park locations. Currently, Miller Park features four baseball diamonds. Additionally, there are a total of 24 baseball diamonds of varying degrees of upkeep located within 10 parks, Lancaster High School and the Ohio University Lancaster branch.



Rising Park



Existing Parks:

- Rising Park
- Miller Park
- Cenci Lake Park
- Martens Park
- Olivedale Park
- Cedarlen Park
- Maher Park
- Firehouse Park
- Glassco Park
- Wacker Park
- Keller-Kirn Park
- Lanreco park
- Deffenbaugh Park
- Huffer Durdin Park
- Mary Burnham Park
- Utica Park
- Hocking Park
- North Field Park
- Fairground Park



Figure 10.1

Recommendation

**1. Encourage increased usage of existing parks.**

To increase the utilization of the Lancaster park system by residents, upgrades should be made accordingly and maintenance should be better coordinated. A greater diversity of activities will encourage more visits and healthier lifestyles.



Rockford, Minnesota

## Introduction

Wetlands are a valuable natural resource than can provide important benefits to the built environment and natural environment. It's important to note that a wetlands is not a mud pit but a natural lowland. Functions of wetlands include water quality enhancement, reduction of flood impacts, reduction of pollution, increased biodiversity, education and recreation. The following recommendations provide a road map for the transformation of an underutilized park space into a new type of gathering space, one which could be unique to the City of Lancaster. Transforming this space into a wetland can serve as a new amenity, which has the potential to increase surrounding property values, as well as the community's overall appeal.

The City of Lancaster is fortunate to have a dynamic landscape characterized by rolling hills and valleys. It is a "gateway" to the Hocking Hills recreational area. Having a wetland conservation area within the heart of urban Lancaster will be a unique feature not only to the city, but to the state as well. Because of its natural features, the city is in a strategic position to be an advocate for environmentalism and sustainability.

## Public Input

Residents and city officials have expressed an interest in the creation of a wetland within city limits. A previous survey taken by the residents demonstrates some degree of pride in the current city park system and interest for expanding park space. Some expressed concern over the lack of a

## Parks

connection of Miller Park to the downtown area. This represents an opportunity to create that connection. There are currently no plans to convert Miller Park, or any park space in the City of Lancaster for that matter, into a wetland.

## Existing Conditions



Figure 10.2

Miller Park (Figure 10.2) currently exists as an underutilized and poorly maintained public park space adjacent to the downtown core of Lancaster. At approximately 23 +/- acres, features include several sports fields, a swimming facility, a skate park and a biking/walking path.

The park suffers from poor drainage. Standing water is common after episodes of rain or melted snow cover. The north, south, east and west edges of the park are all sloped upward creating a bowl effect. The Hocking River borders the park to the west but is largely held back by a large mound



constructed by city engineers in order to reduce the likelihood of flooding into the park. This mound also currently facilitates a leg of the city bike trail.

Access to the park is adequate. However interaction along the eastern edge of the park with Memorial Drive is poor. Sidewalks exist on three sides. Vehicular access is located to the north and south with surface parking lots. There is very little landscaping softening the transition between hardscape and the landscape.

**Goal: Encourage the transition of Miller Park from a sports park facility to a wetlands conservation area.**

**The following objectives should be incorporated into the implementation of the proposal:**

- Gauge community interest to determine what

elements to include.

- Perform a site inventory prior to developing a plan.
- Be aware of and use caution with the existing biodiversity.
- Practice sustainable construction methods to reduce and divert waste.
- Remove west edge mound to allow existing water supply from the Hocking River to contribute to the new wetland habitats.
- Maintain existing connections with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Provide additional connections to adjacent and nearby neighborhoods to enhance recreational activities.
- Utilize sustainable storm water methods.

Miller Park currently exists as an underutilized and poorly maintained public park space adjacent to the downtown core of Lancaster.

- Use native plantings but introduce new species that are complimentary.

### Recommendations

#### 1. Strengthen the connection with the adjacent downtown core.

To complement the overall plan, the proposed wetland should be designed to better connect with the adjacent downtown district. New signage and wider sidewalks should be installed. Furthermore, to further protect the pedestrian, traffic slowing mechanisms should be implemented at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Main Street to accommodate for a safer traverse for pedestrians.

#### 2. Focus on good design elements throughout the wetland.

Include design elements into the wetland space to encourage frequent patronage. This can include bird watching stations, boardwalks, an observation tower, walking trails, seating areas and picnic areas. Each of these components, if included, should be inspiring designs and complimentary to the natural surroundings.

#### 3. Incorporate environmental and sustainable practices.

To reinforce the inherent natural functions of the wetland, environmentally friendly and sustainable components should be utilized throughout. This can include windmills and solar panels, which can power most, if not all, of the minimal power demands of the park space. Rain collection barrels are widely utilized for facilities requiring minimal water usage and can supplement city water usage for drinking fountains and restrooms.

#### 4. Enhance biodiversity.

Introduce new plant species alongside native plant species to expand biodiversity, which in return, will likely diversify the number of animal species. This expansion of biodiversity will not only have an impact on the wetland space itself but within surrounding properties as well.

#### 5. Relocate current Miller Park activities to other park facilities.

Many of the current activities taking place at Miller Park can be relocated to other nearby underutilized park spaces. Studies should be conducted in order to determine the most feasible locations for relocation of the skate park and swimming pool, both of which are needed in order to preserve a variety of activities for residents. Existing sports fields located within various parks throughout the city should be upgraded and better maintained in order to encourage increased activity.

#### 6. Advocate for education and recreation.

To encourage education on environmental awareness, sustainable practices and nature's role in both, a nature center should be erected. City officials should educate on the benefits of wetlands to the overall ecology of



Miller Park (Before)

Figure 10.3



Miller Park (After)



Miller Park (Before)

Figure 10.4



Miller Park (After)

the city. This can be accomplished through town meetings and charettes utilizing case studies from comparable municipalities in Ohio. If residents see that an urban wetland has been implemented, backing for the project is likely to gain support more easily.

**7. Utilize state and federal funding sources.** There are numerous funding sources available through state and federal resources, the latter of which the city has utilized before. (Figure 10.7). Funds are available through ongoing yearly appropriations by the state and federal government.

## Case Studies

### Grange Insurance Audubon Center, Columbus, Ohio



Figure 10.5

The City of Columbus converted a former industrial park and city impound lot into a new metro park featuring wetlands. This once underutilized space now

provides a vital connection to the city park system and various new activities including bike trails, climbing walls, sports fields, a dog park and a LEED Gold Certified Audubon center for research and educational purposes. The new park space and wetlands have since won several awards including the Sustainability Honor Award and Merit Design Award from the Columbus Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

### The Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park, Columbus, Ohio



Figure 10.6

The Wilma H. Scheirmeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park is a 52 acre aquatic research facility located just north of the Ohio State University Columbus campus. Features include two primary wetland basins, boardwalks and a research and educational facility. One side of the wetland was planted with native plants. The other side was left unplanted as an uncontrolled experiment to see what would result with no human

intervention. It flourished under nature's rule and showed that wetlands have the ability to require only minimal human maintenance. This can be a cost saving measure for the City of Lancaster if funding becomes scarce.

### Deeds Wetlands Restoration



Figure 10.7

This case study, although not as ambitious as the Miller Park conversion, is located within the City of Lancaster and resulted in the restoration of 50 +/- acres of riparian wetland areas along the Hocking River- the same river running along the eastern edge of the proposed Miller Park wetland. Engineers simply breached the existing levee to reconnect the stream to the floodplain. Native trees and shrubs were planted on more than

15 acres. Several educational and outreach activities were conducted to support the project. At a minimum, this could be the method utilized in the Miller Park conversion proposal.

Funding was provided by the Ohio EPA, which created the Surface Water Improvement Fund (SWIF) in 2009 in order to help aid in the restoration of streams and wetlands. Lancaster was awarded \$150,000, which covered the total cost of the restoration. The SWIF fund has been renewed for 2013 and could be a potential funding source.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.state.oh.us](http://www.epa.state.oh.us)  
 Surface Water  
 Improvement  
 Fund (SWIF)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)  
 Section 404 of the  
 Clean Water Act

## Biking

Bicycling has been a primary mode of transportation since the late 1800's. However, its popularity and necessity for many began to wane in the 1950's as the car culture took hold of our daily lives. Not until recently has biking as a form of recreation and commute been desired for so many Americans. This is a trend that appears to be gaining momentum. Future trending shows an increased demand for biking facilities, which can be attributed to rising gasoline prices, health and environmental concerns and the inability of an increasing number of Americans able to afford the expenses associated with car ownership. Furthermore, trends show a changing demographic perception – one that prefers the health benefits and convenience of biking over the inherent costs of relying on a personal motor vehicle.

### Benefits of Biking

- Promotes physical health
- Environmentally friendly form of transportation  
- no emissions
- Reduces fuel dependence.
- Reduces the number of cars contributing to traffic
- Affordable mode of transportation
- Provides local businesses with more foot access by allowing greater access

## Parks

### Existing Conditions

The City of Lancaster has an existing, but limited, bike trail system. Since 2006, the city has initiated a four phase implementation of new bike trails that would be comprised of a semi-loop network around the downtown core (Figure 10.8). As of today, Phase 3 is still in the construction phase in various locations with Phase 4 planning well underway.

This certainly has added recreational opportunities for the residents of Lancaster, however there is room for future expansion. As previously mentioned, Lancaster is located within close proximity of the Hocking Hills recreational area, as well as Clear Creek Metro Park. It would be to the city's advantage to plan for and find any feasible methods for making a connection of the city bike trail system to these heavily visited park sites. To do so would have a major impact on the quality of life for residents by offering them an additional way of accessing one of Ohio's great natural amenities.



Bike trail access point at S. Broad Street



Miller Park bike trail

## Recommendations

### 1. Connect the Lancaster Park system with bike paths.

Future plans should focus on additional connections to Lancaster's park spaces, most notably Rising Park and the recommended Miller Park wetland conversion. This will allow for greater access to more residents and will encourage the healthier option of biking to a park rather than driving there.

### 2. Connect the existing Lancaster bike path with the greater Ohio bike trail system.

The Ohio Bikeways trail system is a statewide, state funded recreational trail system that connects many of Ohio's towns and cities through an integrated network of bike trails. A majority of these trails are paved and well maintained. The State of Ohio currently has conducted studies suggesting future routes that connect many of the state's large and small municipalities. (Figure 10.10)

The Hocking Adena Bikeway is located in nearby Nelsonville to the southeast and runs through

Wayne National Forest to the city of Athens. This trail provides a connection for the residents of Nelsonville and Athens to one another, as well as the nearby Hocking Hills recreational area. The Three Creeks Metro Park in nearby Columbus to the northwest provides a bikeway connecting thousands of residents to natural amenities within a densely populated urban area. Both of these trail systems can and should be accessed via a future bikeway connection through the City of Lancaster connecting Columbus and Athens in one continuous route.

### 3. Connect the existing Lancaster bike path with the Hocking Hills region and Clear Creek metro park.

As previously mentioned, the close proximity of the Hocking Hills recreational area and Clear Creek Metro Park should lend a vital role in the quality of life aspects of the residents of Lancaster. Any planned future bikeway connections to the southeast should take into consideration a direct connection to these two parks. Both are within a close enough distance that even the casual bicyclist can access them.

This connection will be challenging considering the multiple landowners along any proposed route. However, it has been done on numerous occasions throughout the state. This is a long term plan and will need the collaboration of local, county, state and federal officials.

### 4. Utilize funding resources through the state of Ohio and federal government.

There are currently several state and federal funding resources available to aid in anything from the environmental impact assessments to the actual design and construction of bike trails. These should be researched and utilized.

### LANCASTER BIKE TRAIL

Construction is beginning on a 2.5 mile western addition to the city's bike trail, extending the trail to nearly 10 miles. The city first opened the bike trail in 2006.



Source: City of Lancaster

MICHAEL LEHRKUNLE/EAGLE-GAZETTE

Figure 10.8

5. Provide shared roadways to encourage more bicycling. (See Transportation Chapter)

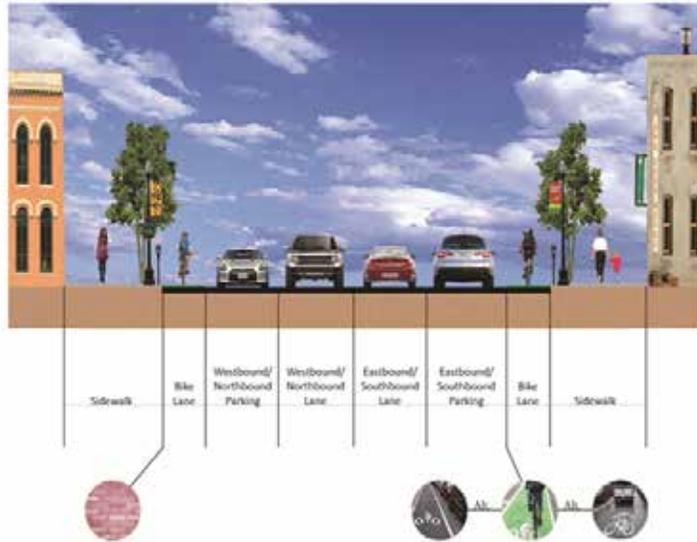


Figure 10.9

## DEPARTMENTS & ORGANIZATIONS

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.state.oh.us>

United State Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov>

Fairfield Soil & Water Conservation District

The mission of the Fairfield SWCD is to be progressive natural resource advocates by assisting the public with conservation choices.

<http://www.fairfieldswcd.org>

Lancaster Parks & Recreation

<http://www.lancasterparks.com>

Lancaster Department of Engineering

<http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/dept/engineering>

Lancaster Division of Stormwater

<http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/dept/stormwater>

Lancaster Division of Water Pollution Control

<http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/dept/waterpollution>

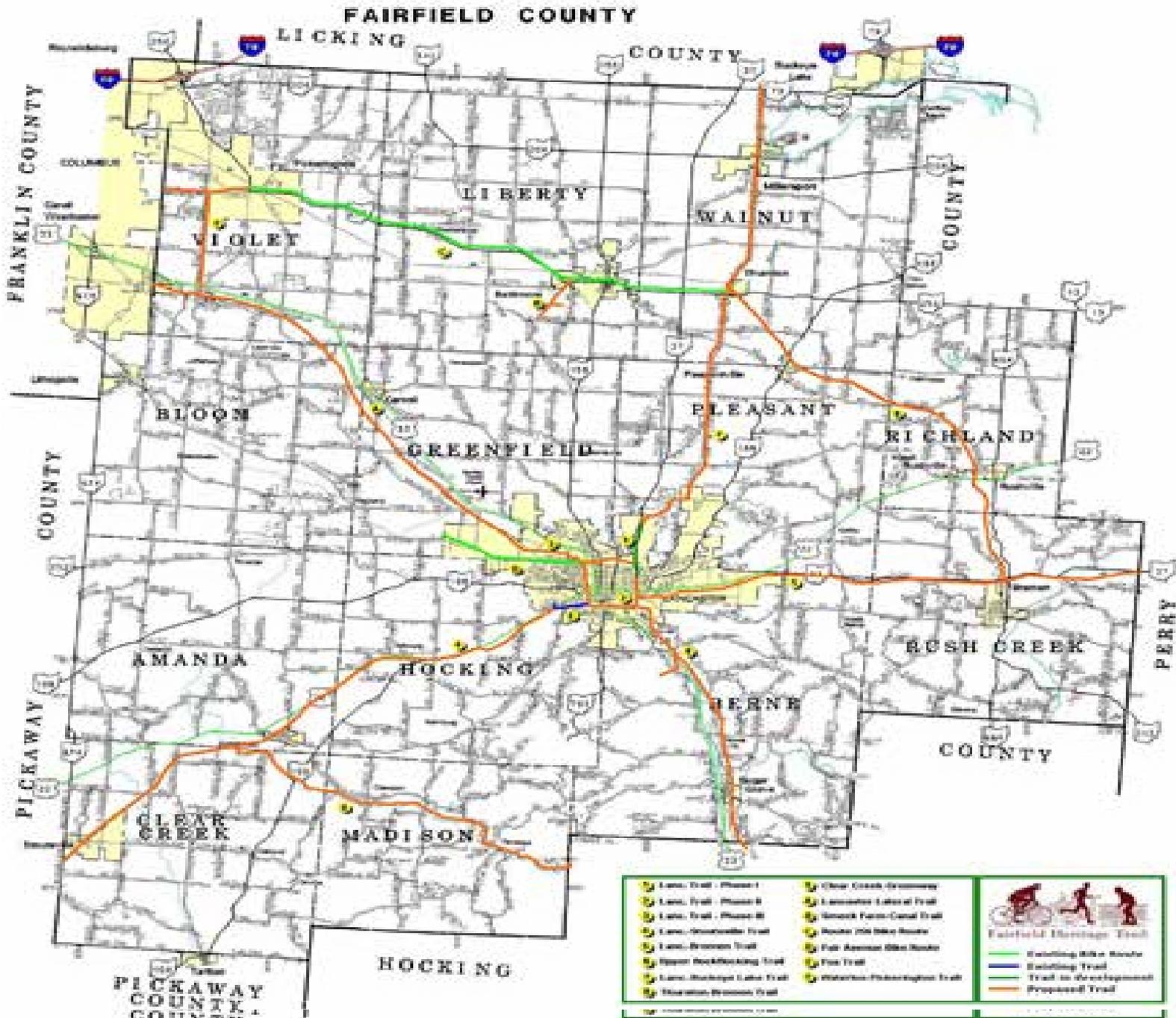


Figure 10.10

## Arts

## Who are the “creative class”?

The creative class typically includes workers in the arts, design, media, information technology, science, engineering, education, research, and other knowledge-based professions. Creative class workers tend to be younger (typically 25 to 34 year olds) and are typically characterized as hip, urban, diverse and politically progressive.

A myriad of recent sources and studies have concluded that cities benefit economically and socially by providing resources for a thriving arts scene. The promotion of programs for the arts can be utilized as an economic development tool to attract new residents, businesses and the “creative class”, the latter of which has been shown to comprise of a significant amount of new job creation in technology, design and the arts. Cities competing with one another for the coveted education workforce are at a strategic advantage if they are investing in and promoting the city as a home for the creative class to thrive. Not only is funding for the arts an issue of economic development, but it is an issue of enhanced quality of life as well. Advantage if they are investing in and promoting the city as a home for the creative class to thrive. Not only is funding

for the arts an issue of economic development, but it is an issue of enhanced quality of life as well.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Lancaster currently features a well funded public arts program within the downtown core. Numerous exhibits of public art ranging from sculptures to murals dot the landscape. Several museums, those most notably dedicated to the local culture and history of glass sculpture, along with several well attended festivals provide cultural activities for residents and regional visitors. These efforts have been spearheaded by Destination Downtown Lancaster, a non-profit organization that focuses on downtown revitalization. Their stated goals include fostering a sense of community, attracting and retaining businesses, and planning for the future. Facilitating the arts has been one way the organization has succeeded in helping to achieve these goals.

One strength of the Downtown arts program is the generous private donations collected to fully fund the purchase and placement of sculptures and murals. In comparison, Downtown Lancaster features more of these pieces than most other Ohio cities of similar size. This alone should evoke a point of pride for the local arts culture.

**GOAL: Coordinate new events to bring people downtown throughout the year.**

Foster a stronger sense of community by planning events, primarily, but not limited to the weekends with a year long schedule. Events should target not only local residents, but regional visitors as well.

**GOAL: Provide additional funding for public arts installation and programs.**

Private donations for public art installations shows a point of pride within the Lancaster community. However, these funding sources, which often times can be limited, cannot be relied upon to fund expanded programs or future installations. New sources of funding should be researched and utilized.

**GOAL: Provide affordable space for creative class workers.**

Numerous examples can point to the economic and social benefits of attracting and retaining the creative class. However, for many in the profession, incomes still remain low. In order to bring this economic segment into Lancaster in greater numbers, affordable space must be provided.

**GOAL: Incorporate a signature art piece within the “gateway” site.**

The vacant parcel located at the corner of Main Street and Memorial Drive represents a rare opportunity for the city to showcase and attract residents into the downtown core. Its visibility is unmatched.



### Festivals

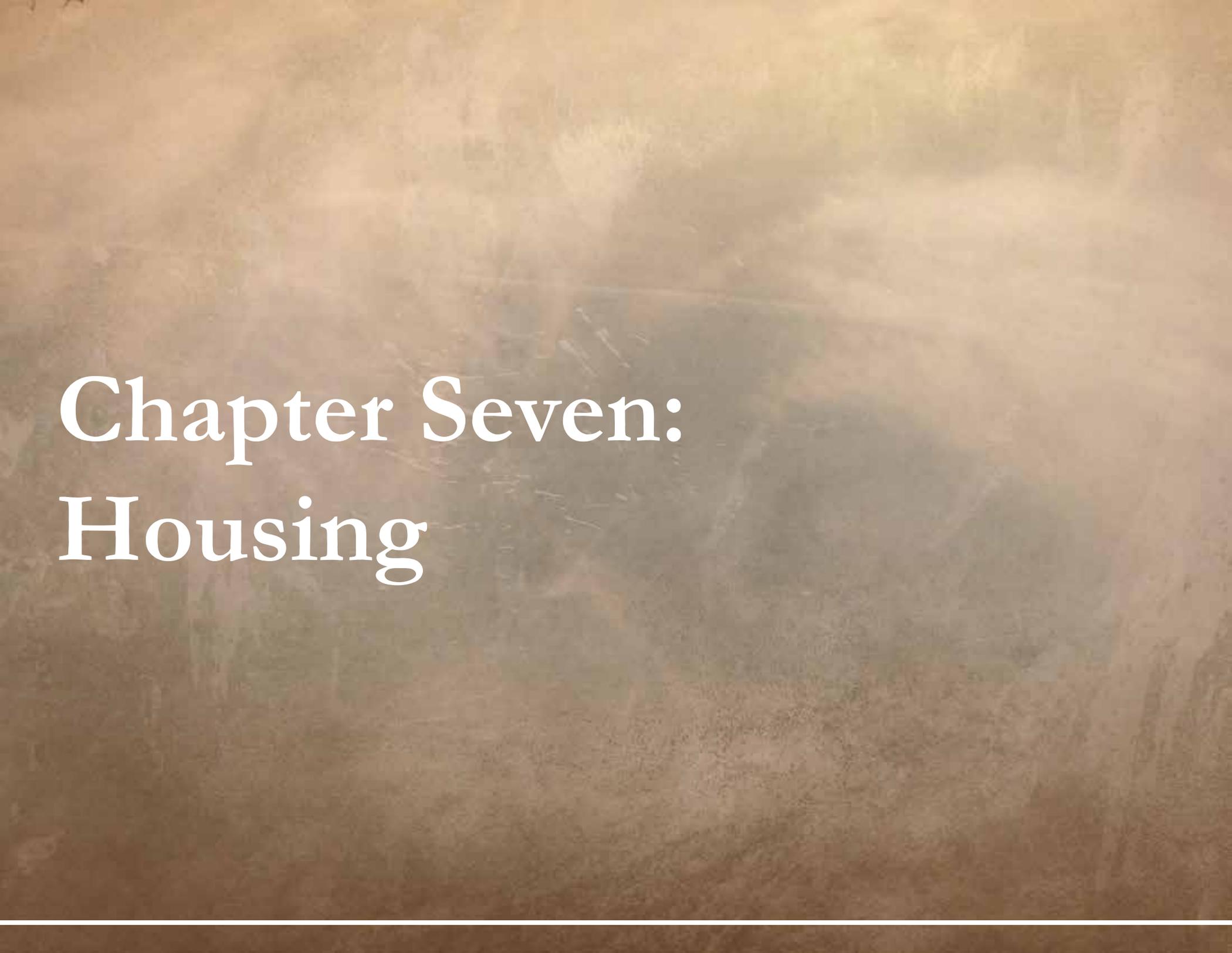
- Lancaster Festival
- Experience Downtown Lancaster
- Art Walk
- Chocolate Walk
- Saturday Cinema
- Lancaster’s Amazing Race
- Rally in the Alley
- All Hallow’s Eve Tour
- Small Business Saturday
- Downtown Tree Lighting Ceremony
- Winter Carnival

### Museums

- The Georgian Museum
- Decorative Arts Center of Ohio
- Ohio Glass Museum
- Sherman House Museum
- Fairfield Heritage Association
- AHA: A Hands-on Adventure







# Chapter Seven: Housing

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Picture 7-1: Lancaster homes looking south on North High Street

## Housing

Housing is an integral part of a city's fabric and influences the types of residents that call it home and the different people that would be considering moving there. Lancaster has a sizable amount of single-family homes located throughout the City, but is lacking in mixed-use residential in the downtown area. This type of housing creates density and stimulates economic activity in an area that would otherwise close up after 5 p.m.

## Housing Stock

### Existing Conditions

According to the 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Lancaster, Ohio has 17,594 residential within the City. Between 2011 and 2000, Lancaster has seen a 10.7% increase in residential units (15,891 in 2000). The dominant type of residential structure is single-family detached with 12,076 units or 68.6% of the total. The next most common type of structure is three or four-units with 1,444 units or 8.2%. Additionally, there are 702 single-family attached units which makes the total single-family unit account for 72.6% Lancaster's housing stock. Of the remaining 4,816 multiple-unit residential structures, 49.5% are four-units or smaller and 75.5% are nine-units or

smaller. Assisted living homes are well-represented in Lancaster predominantly along North Memorial Dr., West Fair Ave., and the Town and County Plaza Shopping Center. There is only one assisted living home located in downtown Lancaster and the next closest is located greater than two miles from Lancaster's downtown area. Apartment style communities are located on the perimeter of Lancaster and are between one and three stories in height in town home, ranch-style, and small development size.

The housing stock in Lancaster is very old with a small number of homes being built post-2000. The majority was built pre-1970 and there are a significant number of homes clustered around the downtown area that were built pre-1939. The age of the homes centered on downtown Lancaster poses a problem when renovations are undertaken due to: outdated wiring, asbestos, galvanized steel used in water pipes and structural issues that include the roof and foundation. If the pre-1970 homes have been maintained and updated the housing stock in Lancaster greatly benefits, but if they have been neglected then there will be considerable obstacles during renovations. It is becoming increasingly popular to renovate older homes and Lancaster offers historical homes for below average prices.

### Recommendations

The most pressing need for Lancaster to address is the lack of downtown housing options for potential residents. Downtown contains historical buildings rich in character with little to no occupancy in the upper levels. Many of these buildings have commercial activities in the ground floor and one or two floors

above that remain vacant. Upper-floor housing would bring downtown Lancaster:

- A diversified consumer base
- Higher density which brings increased vibrancy
- Increased tax revenue for the city
- Increased revenue for property owners
- Historic preservation opportunities



Picture 7-2: Lancaster home on North High Street

“ ... Lancaster offers historical homes for below average prices.”



Picture 7-3: Apartment complex on East Walnut Street

There is an increased movement across the country whereby people in very different demographics are choosing to live in downtown urban areas. Senior citizens (aged 65+) in particular are choosing to locate in urban settings because it allows them to walk to a variety of places, experience nightlife, and have an ease of life that is not typical of an assisted living center. On the other hand, millennials (aged 17-43) are also choosing to locate downtown primarily due to a shift in their work/life situation; instead of choosing a job and finding a home, they are doing the opposite. It is important for millennials to live in a place that they have chosen and not their company. Millennials want walkable communities, common areas for gathering that have technological amenities such as Wi-Fi, and green space to relax at. Millennials, in particular, are choosing to rent where they work as opposed to buying which allows for more disposable income to be put back into the community as well as more housing opportunities for Lancaster. Targeting these two groups in particular will allow Lancaster to build a base in downtown which could cause downtown to be the residential and cultural hub of the city.

Revitalizing Lancaster's downtown is not without challenges chiefly the costs of rehabilitating the buildings and converting them into residential use. Navigating the obstacles associated with a downtown revitalization may seem daunting, but with the assistance of an organization such as Heritage Ohio (the official Ohio Main Street program administrator) the process becomes much less daunting.



Picture 7-4: Alleyway on East Wheeling Street

Lancaster as a municipality is also able to streamline the process to revitalize downtown by:

- Selling City-owned properties to interested developers at a discounted price
- Utilizing a land bank program in order to return under-utilized or vacant properties into community assets
- Creating Tax increment financing (TIF) districts
- Expediting the permitting and review process
- Offering low-interest or no-interest loans to developers

Establishing a public-private partnership is key so that developers and the municipality can work in a productive manner and realize a cohesive vision. Offering developers incentives to want to work in Lancaster is key when thinking about developing downtown into a mixed use area. There are also a variety of incentives available to developers such as:

- HUD HOPE VI grants
- Community Development Block Grants
- HOME Investment Partnership Program
- New Market Tax Credits
- Certified Local Government funds which allow for a community to join the National Preservation Program

An issue that will arise when converting the upper-floors of buildings to residential use while maintaining the lower-floor as commercial use is building codes. Utilization of the International Builders Code (IBC) is paramount when converting uses of a building (different Occupancy Classifications require different fire protection standards, accessibility standards, and egress requirements)



Picture 7-5: Lancaster commercial structure undergoing repairs

## Occupancy Classifications from IBC:

Assembly Use (A): intended for the gathering together of persons for: civic, social or religious functions, recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation.

- A-1: generally movie theaters with fixed seating
- A-2: food and drink consumption
- A-3: worship, recreation or amusement
- A-4: viewing of indoor sporting events
- A-5: participation in or viewing outdoor activities

Business Group (B): assembly occupancies less than 50 persons and/or uses intended for office, professional or service-type transactions, including storage of records and accounts.

Mercantile Group (M): uses intended for the display and sale of merchandise, and involve stocks of goods, wares or merchandise incidental to such purposes and accessible to the public.

Residential Group (R): uses intended for sleeping purposes.

- R-1: occupants are transient in nature
- R-2: containing sleeping units or more than 2 dwelling units where the occupants are more permanent in nature
- R-3: one and two family dwelling, or adult and child care facilities that provide accommodation for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hrs
- R-5: occupancy as residential care/assisted living facilities including more than five but not more than sixteen occupants, excluding staff

When converting a building to mixed-use, it is important to be aware of the code requirements that ensure the building is safe and accessible. There are strategies that a developer may use to streamline the process of converting a building to mixed-use.

**Accessory Use:** those occupancies that are ancillary to the main occupancy of the building or portion thereof.

- An Accessory Use may be designated if the use (a small gift shop for example) is less than 10% of the building area of the story in which it is located (offices). In this case the small gift shop will not need to be accounted for in sprinkler protection and other safety issues.

**Non-separated Use:** allows for multiple occupancies to occupy the same space without a physical separation between them.

- The most restrictive use of the building determines the level of fire protection that will apply to the entire building.

**Separated Use:** requires physical separation by fire-barrier walls and/or horizontal assemblies with a fire resistance rating between occupancies.

- Each occupancy is located in a separate fire area and rated according to the applicable code. Due to the large size of some buildings, the Separated Use may be more cost-efficient versus the Non-Separated Use.

When changing the use of the building, the standards of the building also change in regards to accessibility and means of egress. It is generally illegal to remove any existing exits when rehabilitating a building and so existing means of egress must be taken into account. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must also be considered when renovating historical buildings. Extensive renovations may be necessary in buildings that do not provide adequate pathways for disabled persons to use. Building codes are an integral aspect of the process when converting to a mixed-use build, but finding a developer with the knowledge of historical buildings and the applicable codes will be hugely beneficial when the process begins.

It is important for the city to realize that downtown revitalization is not something that can occur in one sweeping action but rather a piece by piece process. Building a base of successful buildings in the downtown will create a demand and occupancy that will cause more efforts and capital to be focused on other areas instead of redeveloping the entire downtown and dealing with vacancy issues.



Picture 7-6: Rehabilitated commercial space on South Broad Street

## Catalyst Project

The Democrat building in Downtown at 113 North Columbus Street would be a perfect catalyst project for the Downtown housing revitalization.



Picture 7-7: Location of The Democrat

The location of The Democrat building is just off of Main Street Downtown and a block away from the Wagenbrenner Site. If/when the Wagenbrenner Site becomes developed, The Democrat building stands as an existing structure that would provide multiple residential spaces as well as a commercial space on the ground floor. The Democrat's footprint is 34 feet wide and 71 feet deep which would allow for one sizable commercial business or two side-by-side businesses. The overall square footage of the commercial space is 2,414 square feet. The main commercial space, formerly Westerman's Tuxedo Junction, is zoned commercial and has walls that are 16 feet tall. The space on the ground floor is ideal for a mid-size store.

The space above the ground floor follows the same footprint as the building but according to the Fairfield County Auditor, it has walls that are 9 feet tall (which is a common ceiling height for residential use). The building could be done as a fully residential structure if the developer chose to pursue this avenue after analyzing the site. It is important for the rehabilitation of the building to be completely done. Half-finished projects do not instill confidence in other developers that would possibly pursue another rehabilitation.

The size of The Democrat development is small, but the full revitalization of this historical building could spark an interest Downtown. A larger, more ambitious building that is historical in nature and sits vacant is the Mithoff Hotel (corner of Main Street and South Columbus Street) which is owned by the City. Although courthouse plans were in the works, this structure could provide ample residential space on the upper floors and plenty of available commercial space on the ground floor (it previously house a restaurant, and two shops before it became vacant).



Picture 7-8: The Democrat

## Case Study

Harrison, Virginia is a city in northwest Virginia with a population of 48,914 as of the 2010 United States Census. Harrisonburg's downtown was populated by vacant buildings with crumbling facades in 2003 until the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR) got to work. At the time Harrisonburg had a downtown with around 150 residential units which were predominantly affordable housing. The perception of the downtown was of an uninviting space that was unsafe. Harrisonburg contains a lot of historical buildings that fell into disrepair after years of neglect. Harrisonburg set about qualifying for the National Register of historic places in order to qualify for federal and state tax credits. The HDR then engaged potential developers and residents in a three-part educational workshop series that:

### First-part:

- Covered trends that were seen downtown
- Successful projects around Harrisonburg
- Planned projects around Harrisonburg

### Second-part:

- People from surrounding VA cities came in to discuss their own housing and mixed use projects

### Third-part:

- Experts were brought in to discuss how successful projects came to fruition

A large component of Harrisonburg's downtown revitalization had to do with catalyst projects: the City Produce Exchange (a 50,000 square foot building built in 1911) and Sancar Flats (a 56,000 square foot building built in the 1930s). The City Produce Exchange,

now called City Exchange, became a 32-unit luxury apartment building after the \$5.1 million rehabilitation was completed. It was originally planned as a mixed-use development but the developers found it difficult to attract tenants and so they went with a residential use. The rehabilitation was a learning experience for both the developers and the City and created a working relationship so that more development could occur downtown. Sancar Flats is worth noting because they developer initially thought that the City Exchange developers were going to go belly-up but when he saw halfway through their rehabilitation that they would be successful, he bought the building across the street and began his own redevelopment. His project ended up being fully residential and houses 48 luxury apartments.

Harrisonburg shows that a downtown with negative perceptions can change as long as there is a municipality that wants to change and passionate developers willing to put forth time and money. Downtown Lancaster may have the perception of being vacant, but with public-private partnerships and a catalyst project, it can become a vibrant community. (Refer to Main Street Now January / February 2013 for additional information).



Picture 7-9: Downtown Harrisonburg

The Democrat Renderings







# Chapter Eight: Branding

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“Your brand is what they say about you when you’re not in the room” -Jeff Bezos

## Introduction

Cities have always been brands in the truest sense of the word. All of our decisions are partly rational and partly emotional. Whether it is as trivial as buying an everyday product or as important as relocating a company, a city’s image will influence the outcome. Examples of strong city brands that currently exist are: Paris is romance, Milan is style, New York is energy, Washington is power, Tokyo is modernity, Lagos is corruption, Barcelona is culture, and Rio is fun (Doig, W). These are the brands of cities. To the annoyance of many city leaders, the common view of Lancaster may be out of sync with what people see as its reality. Every community has a reputation whether it is positive or negative. A brand and identity becomes a promise

that the target audience expects the city to uphold (Dresbach, B). Would you rather have a bachelor party in Las Vegas or Salt Lake City? Would you rather have a beach vacation in Hawaii or Lake Erie? Would you rather have a wine tasting in Napa Valley or Indianapolis? Often times, a positive and distinct reputation takes years to build under a carefully crafted image (Baker, B).

Branding is the foundation that helps to make a place desirable as a business location, visitor destination or a place to call home. Development of a brand strategy for Lancaster must leverage the strongest features of the city to provide a compelling promise to a target audience. There is the common misconception that branding is simply a communications strategy, a tagline, visual identity or logo. It is much, much more. It is a strategic process for developing a long-term vision for the city that is relevant and compelling. Taglines are fragile and often fail to be an entire branding campaign. Rather, the branding strategy is a deeper, more emotional connection and a promise that must be upheld over a long sustainable period. There are many reasons why it is critical for Lancaster to have a brand strategy, but the most important is to stimulate economic growth. That’s because a strong brand can:

- Shift the perception of a city that is suffering from a poor image among external and internal audiences.
- Create a common vision for the future of the community and provide a consistent representation of Lancaster.
- Shed unfavorable stereotypes associated with a place and make it more appealing.
- Enhance its local, and regional awareness

### Lancaster Branding Breakdown

<p><b>Target Audience:</b> The local businesses and government must cater to the target audience and consider them in all decision-making activities. This will ensure that the target audience is being served to across the entire city</p>	<p>-For people seeking a “small-town” feel and a high quality life in a Midwestern community - For families who appreciate small-town atmosphere in an amenity rich city</p>
<p><b>Promise / Frame of Reference:</b> This is Lancaster’s promise to the target audience. This is what the audience can rely on and expect to be upheld. These are the first thoughts we want our target audience and members of the community to think of when imagining Lancaster. It is vital to consistently communicate this core promise if the brand is to grow</p>	<p>-Lancaster is an architecturally rich community filled with history and provides a great lifestyle for its residents and business owners. - The City of Lancaster is a rural and historic piece of Central Ohio -It is located within easy driving distance of Columbus and the hocking hills</p>
<p><b>Where Lancaster Differentiates:</b></p>	<p>More lushly landscaped compared to other Central Ohio communities. Offers unique learning and entertainment opportunities through its history</p>
<p><b>Benefit of Lancaster:</b></p>	<p>Everyday offers a wide range of activities</p>

Figure: 8-1

Not every community clearly understands what their reputation is. Some would put Lancaster Ohio, in this category. Residents recognize that a transformation of a more positive image of the community is needed, but is unsure what to do about it.

### Current Brand Image:

To the target audience, the current brand image of Lancaster is a tired, drive-through community. Although it is rich with historic amenities such as the Sherman house, the Ohio Glass Museum, and the Decorative arts Center of Ohio, and great environmental attractions like Mount Pleasant, it lacks the energy of more modern cities. Lancaster's downtown has a reputation of being only a workweek, 9am-5pm destination spot. During afterhours and weekends, the place shuts down and becomes weary.

Lancaster also suffers from a "brain drain" and has a hard time keeping its young, talented workforce. Loss of talented workforce hurts future growth through reducing innovation and attracting high quality companies. In the past century, the United States has gone from an industrial-based society, to a more leisure-oriented society, focusing on lifestyle and environment. As a result, city's working class have been in decline for many years. This has ultimately affected our economy and the way we do business and how cities operate. It is okay for Lancaster to embrace its old industrial ways, but the economy is demanding a more leisure-oriented and cultural base. Attracting new companies and retaining residents will not happen unless the current brand image and downtown conveys a single message of the City's qualities.

### Where Lancaster Differentiates:

Of the over 22,000 incorporated cities across the United States, there are other communities that are rich in history and have high quality of life. However, Lancaster Ohio is unique because they use their history as a way to entertain and foster learning. Other cities have historic cites but house commercial uses. Lancaster has more museums for learning than other central Ohio cities. There is a wide variety of museums the city offers. From the Ohio Glass Museum, dedicated to preserving the glass industry which has a 100-year history as a major part of the economy, to the Sherman House which is the birth place of William Sherman, a Civil War general, to a museum dedicated to kids, which provides a playful educational environment. Lancaster also offers public programs, art classes and workshops to better provide a high quality of life. Along with the museums and classes, the Parks Department has a nature program to continue the theme of learning and entertainment. They offer educational programs and hikes for all ages. Participants are better able to appreciate their surroundings and understand the importance of the environment. Lancaster has been able to merge education and entertainment in a way that connects back to the City's heritage and rich landscape.

Lancaster uses history as a way to entertain and foster learning

### Aspirational Brand Image:

When setting Lancaster's aspirational brand, the important question to ask is, what does the City want to be known for? Research suggests that forcing brand images of what you believe other people want to hear is a recipe for a failed brand. That means Lancaster should not try and force a new image and try and become Central Ohio's hub for Italian culture, or any other artificial idea that is not a part of their original heritage. What Lancaster does well is offer great quality of life through its historical features and lush landscape. When the City of Lancaster is mentioned in the future, images should pop in the person's head of views from Mount Pleasant, classes and workshops at the art center, and the character the museums bring to the City. It is targeted for people seeking a small town feel and a high quality life in a Midwestern community. If Lancaster can truly "own" their best features, people will start to respond.

- Great quality of life
- Unique architecture and historical features
- Lush landscape
- Amenity rich

### Immediate transition steps to help achieve aspirational brand image:

#### **City Website**

In order to help grow a brand image of high quality of life, the City has to make it easy to conduct business. Quality businesses increase quality of life. The City is often the first line of communication with residents and potential businesses. When scouting for locations, a business owner will start their search by going to the city website to gather data and information important to them. Today's generation of business owners is tech savvy and understands how to use the web. Lack of an updated website will reflect poorly on the city's appearance and bring negative images to mind. Lancaster's current City site is below average and makes the community look tired while promoting images of a city not looking to improve. Not only is the City of Lancaster's website in need of a cosmetic and technical update but it also desperately needs a business section to stay competitive.

Surprise Arizona is similar to Lancaster because it is a smaller city outside of a larger city that is approximately 25 miles away. However, they have a website that serves as a great first line of communication with residents and potential businesses. The Surprise business section allows for potential corporations or small businesses to have a "one stop" site for all their needs. We recommend not only revamping the entire website but adding a comprehensive business section that allows the process to be much smoother and efficient. Categories to include in the new business section are: workforce data, demographics, business licensing, development guide, grants and funds guide,

economic development plan, and vacant/commercial property locator.

Since a website is often the first line of communication, it is imperative the design is in sync with the brand



Picture: 8-1

image. In Lancaster's case, it is a great opportunity to show its unique topography. The banner on the home page should be a shot of Mount Pleasant. It will provide a strong first visual representation of the City.

### Parks Programs

A glass sculpture will give the City a modern feel while paying homage to the history of a vibrant glass economy. This helps continue the message of Lancaster having a unique history and ties the downtown and the parks together. A great location for the glass would be at Zane Park.



Picture: 8-2

The Parks Department has the ability to bring the community together and encourage more involvement throughout the City. The more programs and activities the Lancaster Parks and Recreation department can put together, the image of the City has a better chance to improve. The parks department also has the duty to carry out part of the brand image of learning through history. The City is in the position to offer fishing and picnic activities. The parks department should choose

a prominent time in Lancaster's past such as the 1800's and teach participants how the residents in that time period would fish and cook outdoors. The participants can choose to either build their rods and fish, or prepare and cook a meal. The fishers would build their own rods that were similar to the ones used at the time and learn the different techniques used to catch fish. The participants who would cook can learn about the different ingredients of the time period and the unique cooking techniques. Afterwards, everyone would get together and enjoy the picnic with the food



Picture: 8-3

that was prepared. Alley Park, Cenci Lake Park, and Rising Park all offer the amenities of fishing and picnic space. This allows for a day of family fun while learning about a time period important in Lancaster's past while continuing the message of the brand.

### **Business**

Vacant storefronts will hurt the image of downtown Lancaster. Not only does it hurt the City's image but it affects nearby business owners as well. To bring life into the current vacant properties in the downtown, Lancaster can host "pop-up incubators". The City can go into these empty properties and teach entrepreneurs and artists about business ownership. The programs can last for roughly two months. The City can negotiate to either pay a reduced rent or no rent at all because it brings awareness to the space and also potential renters that could come from the incubation. A recommendation is that Lancaster should go into these vacant storefronts that are having trouble leasing, and help educate inspired and motivated entrepreneurs who could use some help to get their ideas off the ground. Cincinnati Ohio has reduced vacant properties in its downtown with a similar program ([queencityproject.com](http://queencityproject.com)).

In a survey of 600 shoppers across the country, 57 percent of respondents stated a bakery/café is what drew them downtown the most (Downtown R&D Center). The Four Reasons Bakery and Deli on Main Street are the type of businesses that attract people to the area. Bakery's and café's give customers the option to grab and go, or stay and dine. It provides atmosphere and character to a city. Policies such as streamlining permits and licensing to help speed up the

bureaucratic process to add more potential café style restaurants will be beneficial.

Extended business hours across the entire downtown is a great way to create a unified event to draw people to the area. With such success of the annual Lancaster Art walk that sees 7,000 people visit, a more regular event should be looked into. To help shed the reputation of a 9am-5pm downtown, this type of event can create monthly interest. The first Friday of each month can be branded that all shops are open until midnight. To try and draw in a large crowd at the same time, from the hours between 9pm-Midnight can be “bargain hours”. Each shop can have a small section of select discounted items. This will draw lots of people during those hours into the stores and help get them to purchase other items as well. This also helps create awareness for stores to bring in customers that they normally would not go into. It will take a coordinated effort of all shop owners to make this work. The event could eventually evolve over time where bands are playing outside and street performers entertain. There is a potential to create a unique monthly atmosphere that the entire City looks forward too. It is important to have as many participants as possible. Destination Downtown Lancaster and the SID should get together with the owners to discuss the parameters of creating a monthly event similar to this one.

It is important that the SID and Destination Downtown communicate to all the local businesses the aspirational brand. Having the business owners understand who the City’s target audience will help the downtown grow and the individual businesses become stronger.



Picture: 8-4

### Signage

Signs throughout Lancaster are one of the first points of interaction with citizens. Signage can conjure up either negative or positive images in the mind. Cohesive signage shows the community and the leaders of Lancaster are conscious of image and are proactive in

bettering the community. A cohesive collection of signs that not only direct traffic (automobile, pedestrian, and other modes), but contain the same designs and logo so that visitors will know when they are in Lancaster will build up the brand. When talking with past visitors of Lancaster, a negative they expressed was wayfinding through signage. *See Chapter 4 for recommendations on unified signage.*

Signs are a way for Lancaster to make a bold statement to announce the downtown. As we recommend in this document, the empty property on the corner of West Main Street and South Memorial Drive can be a gateway site to the downtown. The entrance to a downtown is important because it provides character and lets people know a strong, vibrant downtown exist. A gateway arch as you turn off Memorial Drive on to Main Street will bring a strong character piece to the City. When people think of more historical cities, they expect special pieces of character similar to an arch. The heights of the highest 18-wheel trucks are 13 feet 6 inches. A 14 ft. arch would be sufficient for truck traffic to safely drive under. A steel arch is more economically efficient, weathers better, and easier to maintain over wood and other materials. An investment in a single arch will cost roughly \$10,000-\$50,000 depending on the design. The City can host BBQs at local parks with music entertainment with a \$10 entrance fee, having the proceeds from the event going towards building of the arch.

## A Six-Step Process for Lancaster to Find Current Image and Build New Brand on their Own

A task force for brand improvement should be created to lead the six-step initiative. It should consist of government officials, a Parks Department member, business owners, SID members, citizens, and a place brand expert. A time frame of six to twelve months of research and plan development is an approximate time frame.

### Step 1: Define Clear Objectives

- What is developing a brand for Lancaster trying to achieve
- What specific results is the City seeking from the development of a brand strategy?

These questions should be asked generally as the task force is formed because it is imperative that everyone understands the goals and objectives of the branding initiative as research continues.

### Step 2: Understand the Target Audience

- Target audiences need to be minimized in number and prioritized based on importance.
- Who does the audience consist of?
- What are their current perceptions and attitudes of Lancaster?
- Can the City provide what they need?

To best answer these questions, a series of in-depth interviews and focus groups should be formed with key influencers. The key influencers Lancaster should interview are a cross section of business leaders, residents, visitors, political leaders, media, and students.

### Step 3: Identify Current Brand Image

- What is the current personality of the Lancaster?
- What visual imagery does the City evoke?
- Has the image changed over time?

- What associations are linked to Lancaster?  
In order to find out the current associations and images, research questions should include:
  - When I say Lancaster or downtown Lancaster, what is the first thing that comes to mind? Why?
  - Describe the City's pros and cons
  - Describe the experience you have had or expect to have

The ultimate goal is to understand how the target audience perceives Lancaster today so that the gap between the current state and the desired state can be closed.

#### Step 4: Set the Aspirational Brand Identity

- What do we want Lancaster stand for?
- What associations do we want people to think of when they think of Lancaster as a place?
- What type of experience do we desire people to have here?
- What would be our ideal personality for Lancaster?

The aspirational brand identity consists of the connotations we want people in the future to make when they think of Lancaster. This is how we want the target audience to view the brand and the benefits they can come to expect. It should always influence future business and community decisions. The identity should be sustainable for a long period of time.

#### Step 5: Develop the Positioning

Brand positioning is how the City will transition from the current brand image to its aspirational identity. Essentially, the positioning is a promise or a benefit that Lancaster makes to the target audience. Positioning is different from brand identity in that it is

- Shorter and more immediate

- Focused on providing the audience a specific benefit that will lead to aspirational identity

#### Step 6: Create Value Propositions/Execution

- Once positioning is defined, it is important to make it actionable
- Discover how the target audience comes into contact with the City's brand most and begin marketing campaign (Total Destination Marketing).

### Six-Step Branding Process

1. Define Clear Objectives
2. Understand the Target Audience
3. Identify Current Brand Image
4. Set the Aspirational Brand Identity
5. Develop the Positioning
6. Create Value Propositions/Execution

## Case Study:

The City of Providence, Rhode Island was a tired city that needed an image boost. They reached out for brand assistance to help them find a comprehensive approach. It was recommended that Providence establish themselves as a prominent Northeast city where original thinking takes place and every experience is personal. In order to establish the image of this brand, the City uses the Providence “P” as a framework for an infinite number of themes designed to reflect the essence of the City. Using the colors and the creative “P” designs, North Star Branding created a comprehensive City wide brand. The brand included a new website, banner signs, economic development and recruiting packets, and tourism packets. The result of the brand effort was significant. In just ten weeks after finalizing the project, their new website received visitors from 29 countries and 44 states. REBRAND, which is a company that recognizes and awards repositioned brands, ranked Providence as one of their winning brands. The City was also awarded in Travel and Leisure Magazine as one of America’s favorite cities. Below are the images of new brand and all the creative ways they used the “P”.



Picture: 8-5

PROVIDENCE THE CREATIVE CAPITAL



PROVIDENCE THE CREATIVE CAPITAL

URBAN SPIRIT

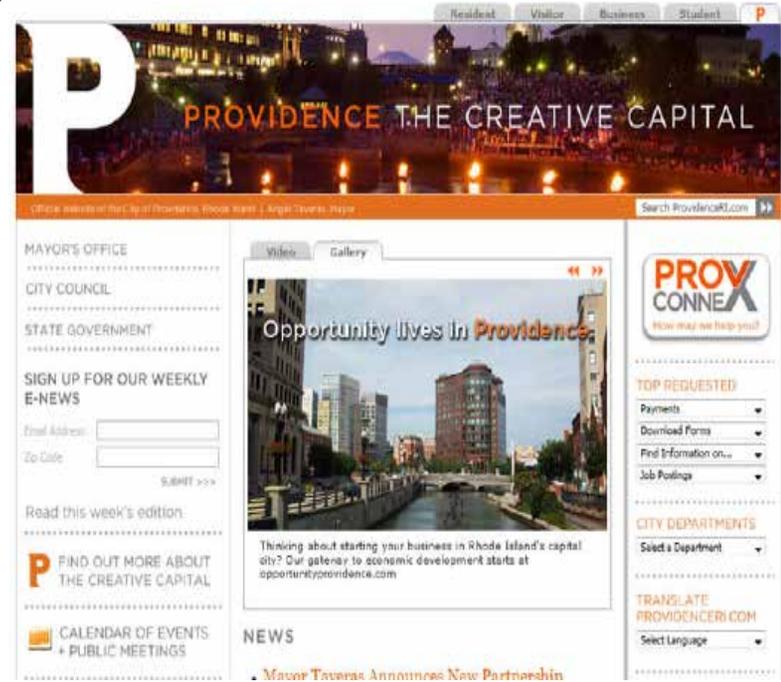
PROVIDENCE THE CREATIVE CAPITAL



A SENSE OF PLACE

PROVIDENCE THE CREATIVE CAPITAL

Picture: 8-6



## HOT PLATE

Choose from a world of flavors designed to please your palate. Discover galleries, museums and performances that provide a feast for the senses. With a rich history and an appetizing array of activities, you'll find plenty to fill your plate in Providence. Indulge your personal tastes to cook up your perfect vacation. In Providence, you are free to create.

**PROVIDENCE** THE CREATIVE CAPITAL

Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau · 1-800-233-1636 · www.GoProvidence.com · Info@GoProvidence.com



Picture: 8-7

### Conclusion:

Implementation and serious discussion of the recommendations in this document can lead to a stronger image of Lancaster. It is vital that all key stakeholders move forward with the understanding of the unified message.

Branding cities takes much more than an afternoon brainstorming session. If Lancaster is serious about boosting its image and creating a unique brand, hiring a professional branding agency is recommended. Branding is an intricate task that takes many months of research and professional expertise. One of the biggest mistakes a city can do is try a cookie cutter approach and rush its branding strategy to market. Holding logo and tagline contest is another way to ensure a failed campaign. A hurried approach will cost Lancaster the trust of the target audience and the media. A professional organization has training and experience in putting together comprehensive brands for cities in order to enhance their image. The following agencies should be considered when issuing an RFP for branding assistance:

North Star

615.232.2103 x 34

615.523.1146 fax

[info@northstarideas.com](mailto:info@northstarideas.com)

<http://www.northstarideas.com/>

42 Fish

614.223.0058

614.223.0059 fax

[42fish@42fish.com](mailto:42fish@42fish.com)

<http://www.42fish.com/>

Ologie

614.221.1107

614.221.1108 fax

[ssteele@ologie.com](mailto:ssteele@ologie.com)

<http://ologie.com/>

# Appendix



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Vacant Property Registries

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General Information

<http://www.heritageohio.org/>

## Appendix

### Gateway, Chapter 2

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2 Various authors

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## Image Credits, Chapter 2

Picture 2-1

Vacant building

Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 2-2

“Lancaster gathering”

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2-3

Picture 2-4

“American brick street”

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Picture 2-5

“Empty lot”

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Picture 2-6

“Sense of nature photo”

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Picture 2-7

“Lancaster historical house”

Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 2-8 “German village”

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“Sense of craft”

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## Image Credits, Chapter 3

Picture 3-1: Looking east on Main Street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-2: Paperback Book Exchange Columbus Street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-3: Shaw's on North Broad Street

Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-4: Vacant building with boarded windows  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-5: The Bicycle Corner on West Main Street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-6: Johnson's Shoe Store on West Main  
Street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-7: Well lit and easily walkable street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-8: Kid-friendly art  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-9: Bare brick wall off of Main Street  
Lancaster Studio original photo

Picture 3-10: Community garden in Pittsburgh neigh-  
borhood  
Alyssa Sexton original photo

### Figures, Chapter 3

Figure 3-1: Entertainment District map of Downtown

### Works Cited, Chapter 4

(1) The City of Lancaster. Codified Ordinances of Lancaster, Ohio. Walter H. Drane Co. <http://www.conwaygreene.com/Lancaster/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=-main-h.htm&2.0>

(2) City of New Haven. Wayfinding and Downtown Site Plans: New Haven, MO. PGAV Planners and DREAM Initiative. Feb. 2012. [www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfindingandSitePlans.pdf](http://www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfindingandSitePlans.pdf)

### Image Credits, Chapter 4

Picture 4-1  
Surface parking  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-2  
Poor sight line  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-3  
Westerville, Ohio  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-4  
Westerville wayfinding  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-5  
Westerville park and walk  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-6  
Pedestrian Kiosk  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-7  
Information banner  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-8  
Bike sign  
Lancaster studio original photo

Picture 4-9  
Example Trailblazer  
[www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf](http://www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf)

Picture 4-10  
New Haven Signage  
[www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf](http://www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf)

## Figures, Chapter 4

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Surface Parking South  
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Lancaster studio original map

Figure 4-5  
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Google Maps

## Appendix

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Wayfinding Hierarchy Pyramid  
[www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf](http://www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfinding-gandSitePlans.pdf)

Figure 4-7  
Downtown Parking Lot Map  
Lancaster studio original map  
Figure 4-8  
Northwest Quadrant Lot Map  
Lancaster studio original map

Figure 4-9  
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Lancaster studio original map

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Lancaster studio original map

Figure 4-11  
Southeast Quadrant Lot Map  
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Figure 4-12  
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Lancaster studio original

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Figure 4-15  
Pedestrian Kiosk Map  
Lancaster studio original map

Figure 4-16  
New Haven Cost Chart  
[www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfindingandSitePlans.pdf](http://www.newhavenmo.org/.../NewHavenDTWayfindingandSitePlans.pdf)  
Figure 4-17  
Lancaster Wayfinding Renderings  
Lancaster studio original

### Transportation, Chapter 5

Childrey, Larry. Personal Interview. 08 Apr 2013.  
Ohio General Assembly. Ohio Revised Code 729.01.  
Print. <<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/729.01>>.

### Gateway Renderings





Appendix





# Appendix







# Parking appendix

## Downtown Parking Lots

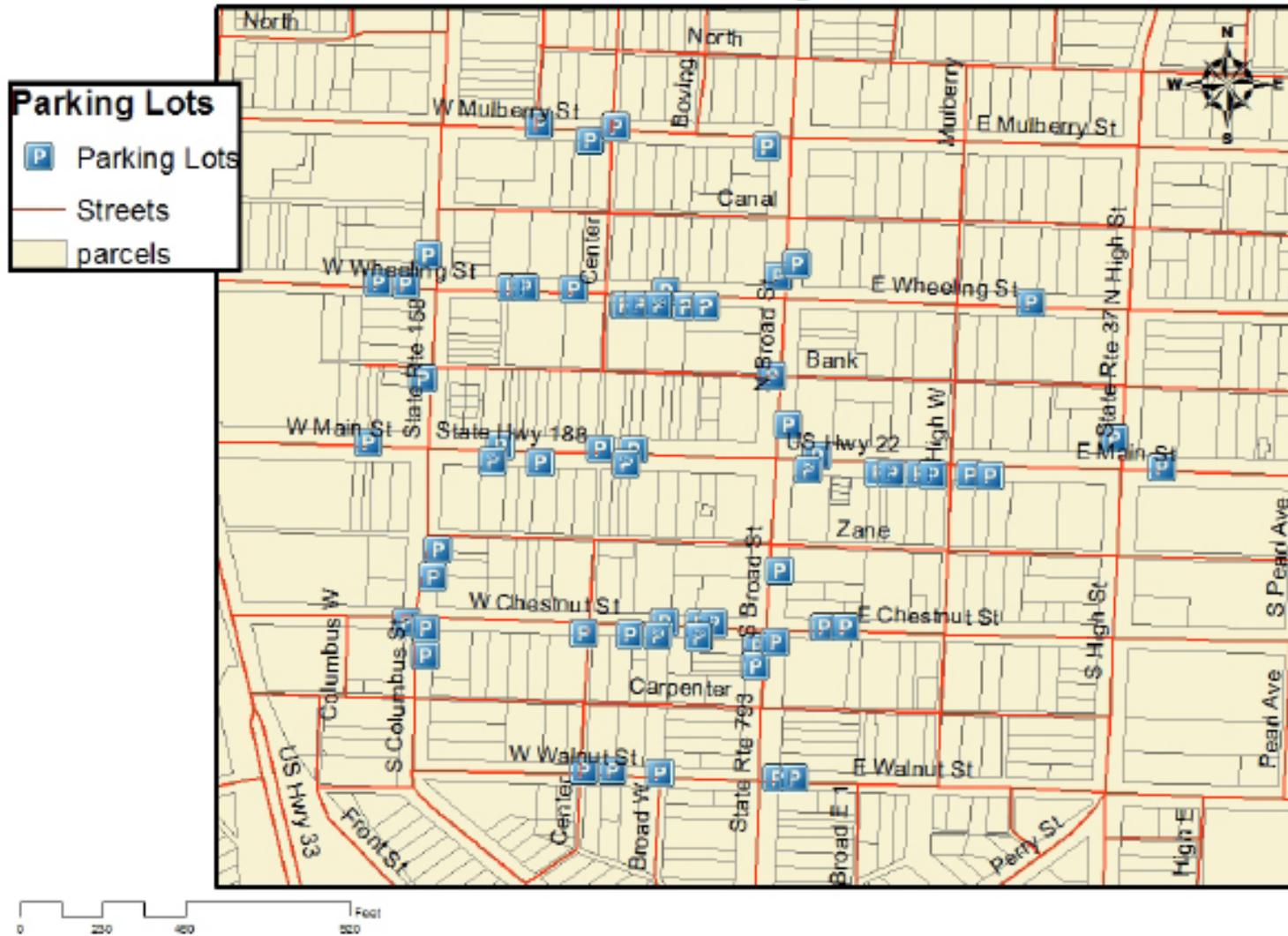


Figure 4-7 Map displaying parking lot locations

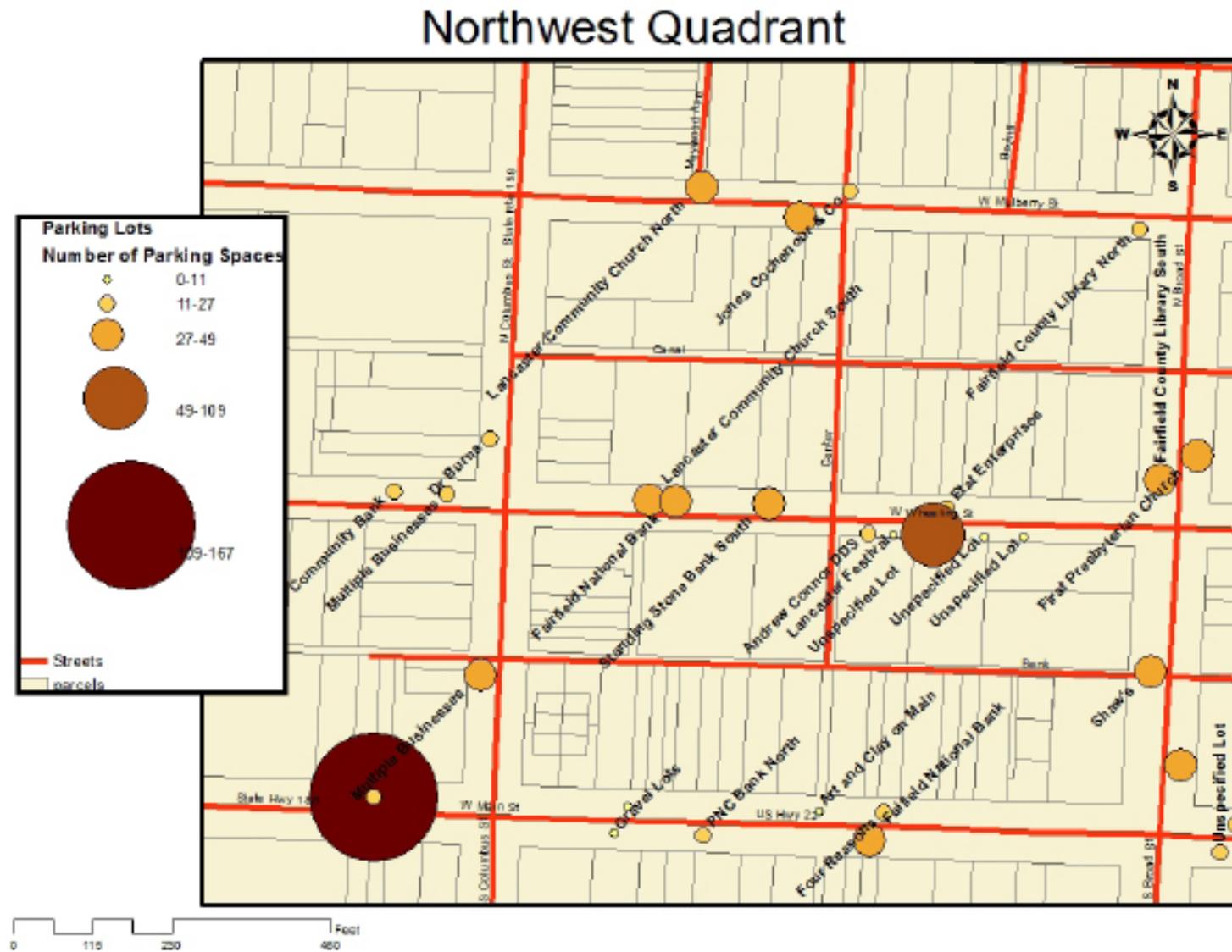


Figure 4-8 Map displaying parking lot locations with number of spaces in NW Quadrant of downtown

### Northeast Quadrant



Figure 4-9 Map displaying parking lot locations with number of spaces in NE Quadrant



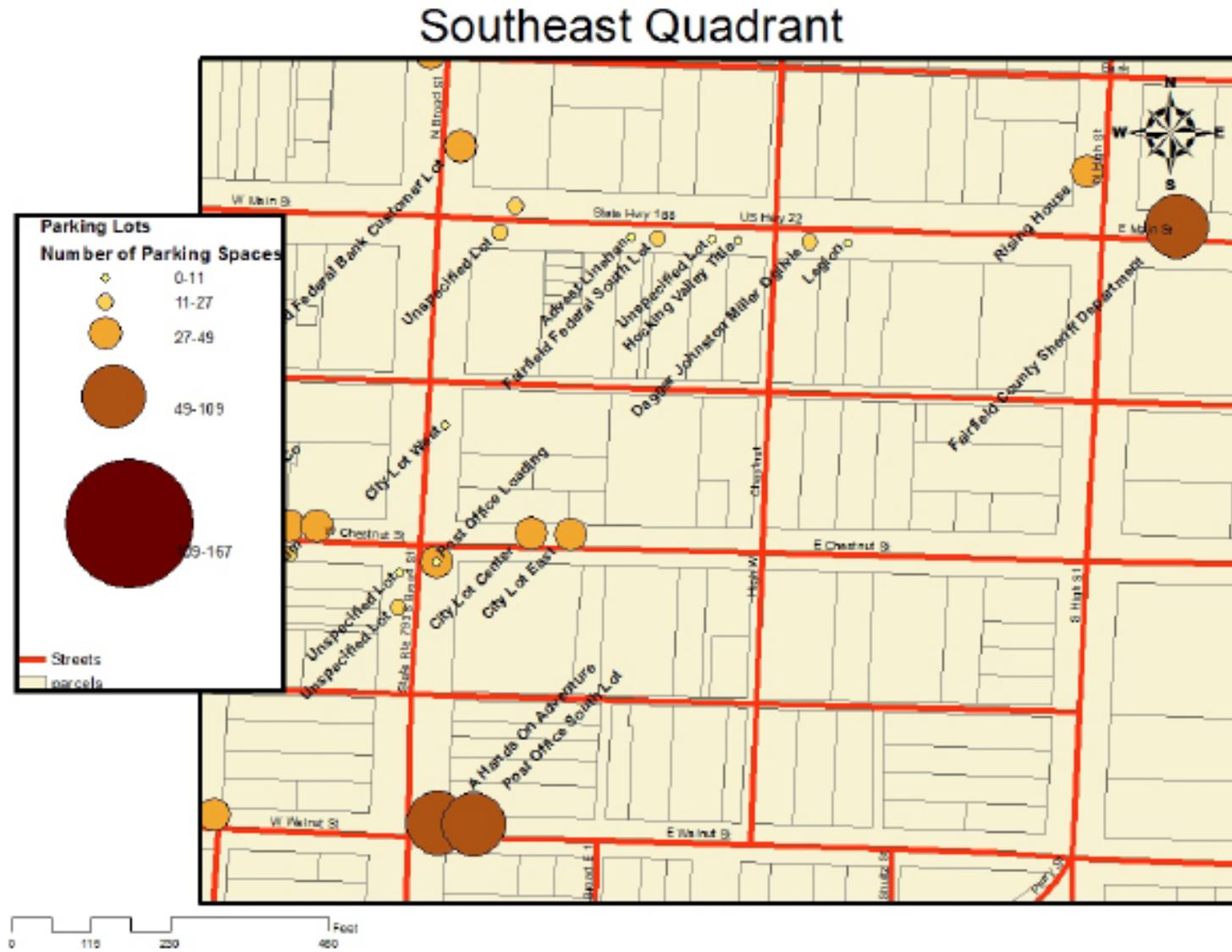


Figure 4-11 Map displaying parking lot locations with number of spaces in SE Quadrant

# Appendix

Parking Appendix:  
Figure 4-12 (Table of Downtown Parking Lots)

Lot Name	Address	Number of Spaces	Lot Name	Address	Number of Spaces
Dr Burns	223 N Columbus St	16	Lancaster City Schools	133 W Walnut St	28
Lancaster Community Church North	145 W Mulberry St	34	First Presbyterian Church	222 N Broad St	34
Lancaster Community Church South	179 W Wheeling St	41	First United Methodist Church	163 E Wheeling St	70
Standing Stone Bank North	140 W Mulberry St	30	Fairfield Federal Bank Customer Lot	122 N Broad St	29
Standing Stone Bank South	161 W Wheeling St	32	Rising House	131 N High St	43
Jones Cochenour & Co	131 W Mulberry St	26	Fairfield Federal Employee Lot	111 E Main St	19
Andrew Connor DDS	146 W Wheeling St	16	Fairfield County Sheriff Department	221 E Main St	63
Lancaster Festival	142 W Wheeling St	9	Unspecified Lot	108 E Main St	27
Etat Enterprises	135 W Wheeling St	21	Advest Linehan	128 E Main St	10
Unspecified Lot	128 W Wheeling St	9	Fairfield Federal South Lot	132 E Main St	23
Unspecified Lot	122 W Wheeling St	6	Unspecified Lot	140 E Main St	10
Fairfield County Library North	104 W Mulberry St	13	Hocking Valley Title	144 E Main St	9
Fairfield County Library South	215 N Broad St	40	Dagger Johnston Miller Ogilvie	154 E Main St	16
Human Services Employees	225 W Main St	167	Legion	160 E Main St	9
Human Services Visitors	225 W Main St	14	City Lot West	162 S Broad St	10
Human Services Public	225 W Main St	16	City Lot Center	111 E Chesnut St	40
Community Bank	219 W Wheeling St	13	City Lot East	115 E Chesnut St	32
Multiple Businesses	209 W Wheeling St	15	Post Office Customers	204 S Broad St	29
Multiple Businesses	123 N Columbus St	30	Post Office Loading	204 S Broad St	9
Unspecified Lot	181 W Main St	11	A Hands On Adventure	105 E Walnut St	65
Fairfield National Bank	175 W Wheeling St	47	Post Office South Lot	111 E Walnut St	63
Four Reasons	141 W Main St	22			
Unspecified Lot	136 W Wheeling St	109			
Shaw's	123 N Broad St	49			
Canal Place Apartments	156 S Columbus St	24			
Gravel Lots	182 W Main St	N/A			
PNC Bank North	168 W Main St	26			
PNC Bank South	172 S Columbus St	15			
Fairfield County	150 W Chesnut St	76			
Art and Clay on Main	151 W Main St	8			
Fairfield National Bank	142 W Main St	37			
Sitterley and Vandevoort	129 W Chesnut St	8			
Snyder & Co	129 W Chesnut St	20			
Chase	119 W Chesnut St	40			
Dryden Harcum	115 W Chesnut St	28			
Unspecified Lot	201 S Columbus St	N/A			
JD Henderson's Sports Lounge	204 S Columbus St	15			
Lancaster Eagle Gazette	138 W Chesnut St	45			
Unspecified Lot	130 W Chesnut St	9			
Kristen Burkett	118 W Chesnut St	13			
Unspecified Lot	209 S Broad St	N/A			
Sheridan Funeral Home	222 S Columbus St	25			
Unspecified Lot	117 W Walnut St	35			
Apartments	123 W Walnut St	36			
Unspecified Lot	221 S Broad St	15			

Total spaces= 1899

Total public= 16  
Total private= 1883

= public



Wayfinding Appendix:  
Figure 4-14

### Attractions to be Placed on Trailblazer Signs



Table of possible items to be placed on trailblazer signs

Attraction	Address	Type
Fairfield County Courthouse	104 E Main St	Civic
Lancaster Police Department	130 S Broad St	Civic
Library	219 N Broad St	Civic
General Sherman House	137 E Main St	Attraction
The Georgian	105 E Wheeling St	Attraction
A Hands on Adventure	315 S Broad St	Attraction
Decorative Arts Center of Ohio	145 E Main St	Attraction
The Ohio Glass Museum	124 W Main St	Attraction
Post Office	204 S Broad St	Civic
Human Services	239 W Main St	Civic
Rising Park	1062 State Rte 37	Recreation
Fairfield County Fairgrounds	157 E Fair Ave	Recreation
Lancaster High School	1312 Granville Pike	Education
Ohio University Lancaster	1570 Granville Pike	Education
Fairfield Medical Center	618 Pleasantville Rd	Medical
Wagenbrenner Gateway Site	231 W Main St	Attraction
Historic Downtown Lancaster	105 W Main St	Attraction

Wayfinding Appendix:  
Figure 4-15

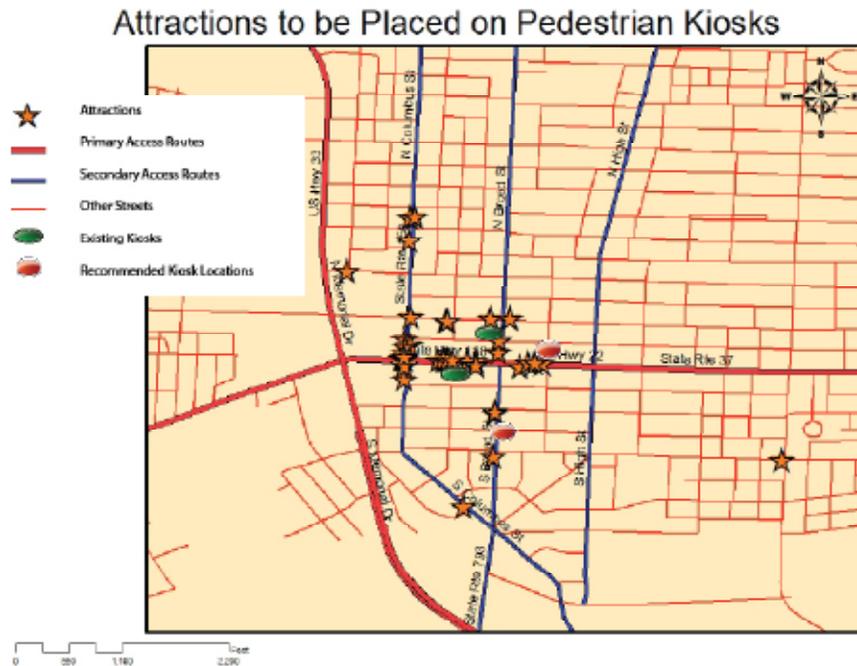


Table of possible items to be placed on pedestrian kiosks

Business Name	Type of Business	Location
ANU U Salon& Spa	Salon	125 N Columbus St
Art& Clay on Main	Art	150 W Main St
Attractions Hair Studio	Salon	139 S Columbus St
Ava Jewelers	Jewelry	111 N Broad St
Bay Food Market	Butcher	301 S Maple St
The Bicycle Corner	Bikes	201 W Main St
Christian Science Reading Room	Book store	167 W Main St
Decorative Arts Center Museum Shop	Art	145 E Main St
Good Care	Medical	209 S Broad St
Gregory Allen's Hair Design	Salon	109 S Columbus St
Hammonds	Clothing	203 S Broad St
Haven Healing Arts	Salon	160 W Wheeling St
Johnson's Shoe Store	Shoe	159 W Main St
Julia's Salon& Spa	Salon	113 W Wheeling St
Lev's Pawn Shop	Pawn shop	125 W Main St
Lolaleigh	Clothing	105 N Columbus St
Main Gallery	Art	161 W Main St
Massage Yoga Center	Salon	205 W Main St
Monarch Gallery	Art	158 W Wheeling St
Olde Shoe Factory Antique Mall	Antiques	301 Forest Rose Ave
OM on Main Hill	Art	120 E Main St
Paperback Exchange	Book store	109 N Columbus St
School Colors	Clothing	136 N Columbus St
Sherman House Museum Shop	Historical	137 E Main St
Smokers Emporium Downtown	Cigar shop	207 W Main St
Stix in Time Music	Music	131 N Columbus St
The Frame Shop	Art	339 N Columbus St
The Georgian Museum Shop	Historical	105 E Wheeling St
The Hair District	Salon	111 S Columbus St
The Ohio Glass Museum Shop	Art	124 W Main St
The Village Nerd Computers	Tech	158 W Wheeling St
Tracie Lynn's Collection	Art	117 N Columbus St
Tutu Mommies	Clothing	133 N Columbus St
Ultimate Look II	Salon	425 N Columbus St
United Hair Artist	Salon	202 N Columbus St
Annie's Main Street Bistro	Restaurant	161 W Main St
Four Reasons Deli& Bakery	Restaurant	135 W Main St
Shaw's	Restaurant	123 N Broad St
Mickey's Bar& Grill	Restaurant	431 S Columbus St
Olde Cottage	Restaurant	157 W Main St
The Lodge in Lancaster	Restaurant	129 E Main St
The Minute Bar& Restaurant	Restaurant	151 W Main St
Traders Café	Restaurant	416 N Columbus St
A Hands on Adventure	Attraction	315 S Broad St
Decorative Arts Center of Ohio	Attraction	145 E Main St
The Ohio Glass Museum	Attraction	124 W Main St
Sherman House Museum	Attraction	137 E Main St
The Georgian Museum	Attraction	105 E Wheeling St

Wayfinding Appendix:  
Figure 4-16

**New Haven Wayfinding System Signage Cost Estimate**

Sign Type	Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Subtotal
 <p><b>Monumental Gateway Sign</b></p>	Gateway Monument sign. Aluminum fabricated sign to match supplied layout. Support Columns to be constructed of stone set with mortar.	2	\$15,000	\$30,000
 <p><b>Double-Sided Vehicular Trailblazing Sign</b></p>	Trailblazing Sign Double-Sided is to be flat cut with domed accents. The sign will be constructed of aluminum composit materials with 3M HP graphic copy as per supplied layout.	3	\$4,800	\$14,400
 <p><b>Single-Sided Trailblazing Sign</b></p>	Trailblazing Sign Single-Sided is to be flat cut with domed accents. The sign will be constructed of aluminum composit materials with 3M HP graphic copy as per supplied layout.	4	\$4,200	\$16,800
 <p><b>Vehicular Proximity Sign</b></p>	Proximity is to be flat cut with domed accents. The sign will be constructed of aluminum composit materials with 3M HP graphic copy as per supplied layout.	12	\$2,000	\$24,000
			<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$85,200</b>

(Prices as of February 2012)

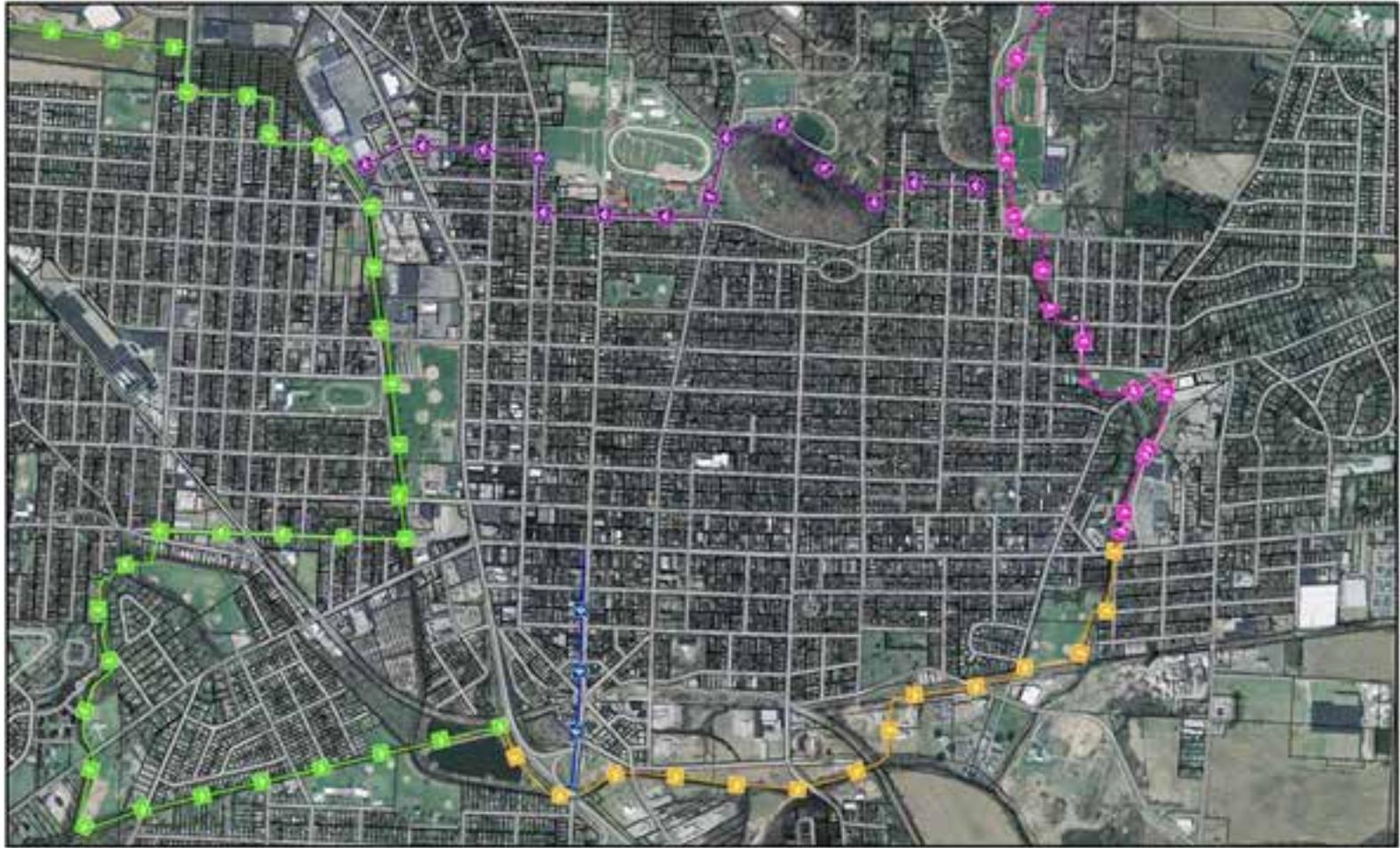
Wayfinding Art  
Figure 4-17



Example Wayfinding Renderings



# Transportation Appendix



	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Phase 1</li><li>Phase 2</li><li>Phase 3</li><li>Phase 4</li><li>Downtown Walking Tour</li></ul>	<p><b>DISCLAIMER</b></p> <p>All data provided herein is for informational purposes only. The City of Los Angeles does not warrant the accuracy, completeness, or timeliness of the information provided herein. The City of Los Angeles is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this document. The City of Los Angeles is not responsible for any damages, including consequential damages, arising from the use of this information.</p> <p>© All rights reserved. All rights reserved for the City of Los Angeles. All rights reserved.</p> <p>Revised for the City of Los Angeles, 2018</p>	<h3>Proposed Bike Path</h3> <p>Aug. 25, 2018</p>
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