Dear Steve,

Through our *Downtown Strategic Visioning Workshop* process, we assessed the five pillars of your downtown’s mix: *Market Analysis, Policy & Administration, Design, Tourism & Promotion, and Economic Vitality* to provide a true roadmap to revitalization.

For Downtown Poplar Bluff, we identified and created a tailored strategy to enhance, revitalize, and mobilize your community’s efforts. When properly fueled, your Downtown can be a powerful economic, tourism, and quality of life engine and our team of professionals was honored to help you define your potential and empower you to achieve it.

Downtown Strategies’ Strategic Visioning Workshop operates on three key tenets: utilizing asset-based methodology based on the community’s existing strengths and potentials, holistically evaluating the community’s Downtown, and conducting the Workshop with community and stakeholder input.

The holistic approach utilized in the Workshop included varying degrees of emphasis on the five pillars:

- **Market Analysis** to uncover and define the economic potential in your Downtown area
- **Policy & Administration** to ensure the recommendations of the plan include a road map to turn them into reality by creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort
- **Design** to support a community’s transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart,
- **Tourism & Promotion** to position your downtown as the center of the community and hub of economic activity,
- **Economic Vitality** to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

Finally, it is the participatory nature of the Workshop that makes it maximally effective. Since the plans were created considering input from the communities’ citizens and stakeholders, the Workshop ensured a level of community-wide buy-in and enthusiasm that will lead to an unprecedented level of successful implementation.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with you and your staff, and we look forward to continuing a strong and productive relationship as you embark on your revitalization journey.

*Jenn Gregory, President*

*Downtown Strategies*

*Retail Strategies*
Poplar Bluff is situated in Butler County in Southeast Missouri, United States. It is the county seat of Butler County and is known as "The Gateway to the Ozarks" among other names. The population was 17,023 at the 2010 census.

The French were the first Europeans to assert any territorial rights over the Poplar Bluff area. The French held the area until 1770 when it was ceded by treaty to Spain. Spain held the area until 1802 when it was returned to France. During this time, the area of Poplar Bluff, as well as all of Butler County, held almost no European settlements until 1819, when the first white settler family moved into the Poplar Bluff area. It was reported that about 300 Native Americans resided in the area at that time.

The earliest permanent settlements in what is now Butler County occurred in the early 19th century along the Natchitoches Trail, an old Native American Trail west of what is now Poplar Bluff on Ten Mile Creek and Cane Creek. Butler County was organized in 1849 and Poplar Bluff was chosen as the county seat. In 1855 the first courthouse was built, and the town grew.

In 1927 a tornado leveled most of the city, especially the original business district along Main and Broadway streets. The tornado killed 98 people, tying it as the seventeenth deadliest tornado in U.S. history.

The Poplar Bluff train station was built in 1910 by the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railway.

When the line and railroad was bought by the Missouri Pacific Railroad in 1917, the station was renamed the Missouri Pacific Depot, and when the line was bought by the Union Pacific Railroad in 1982, the station was renamed the Union Pacific Depot in 1983, despite the fact that it was already used by Amtrak. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

In 2003, Union Pacific donated the building to the Committee to Save and Restore the Historic Train Depot, a citizens-led non-profit that has since reorganized as the Poplar Bluff Historic Depot Restoration Corporation. The group has worked to raise money to restore the depot to include the exterior and interior.

Downtown Poplar Bluff still displays infrastructure from its original heyday, such as brick lined streets and original historical assets like the Rodgers Theater. More contemporary assets such as the Black River Coliseum, Ray Clinton Park, Dog Park, Skate Park, Public Library, and Train Museum provide visitors and residents with many amenities to enjoy while visiting Poplar Bluff.

Events like the Farmers Market and promotions such as the Downtown Poplar Bluff mural project enhance livability and attract new visitors. With proper preservation and a focus on modernizing the vacant structures with new retail tenants and vibrant restaurants, Downtown Poplar Bluff has the opportunity to become a true destination.
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- Walkability Assessment

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- Vacant Storefront Tax
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Executive Summary

1. Promote the benefits of state and federal tax credits to property owners in Downtown Poplar Bluff and support rehabilitation and redevelopment of historic properties in the Downtown area. Consider placing the Downtown Poplar Bluff district on the National Register.

2. Work with property owners and community leaders to develop a plan to begin backfilling vacant properties, starting with short term leasing and pop-ups during regularly scheduled events.

3. Create phased plan for wayfinding signage system, including parking signage in first phase.

4. Assemble a prospect list for recruiting local and regional based retail according to categories identified in report.

5. Create task force that includes representation from the City of Poplar Bluff, Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Poplar Bluff, Inc., Downtown merchants, and Downtown property owners to begin establishing and codifying the Customized Toolkit of Incentives, which include: CID, Vacant Storefront Tax, Lease Assistance Incentive for New Businesses, Local TIF, and State Supplemental TIF programs.
1. Create a separate Community Improvement District Task Force to develop Downtown support and a timeline for a campaign to create a CID in the Downtown area.

2. Establish Façade Improvement Incentive Program and publicize to existing and prospective property owners.

3. Install wayfinding signage system in phases.

4. Incorporate a Farm to Fork Dinner on Vine Street to re-invite the community back Downtown for a safe, evening experience. Close off Vine Street to vehicular traffic for this event.

5. Create a series of regularly scheduled events on Vine Street, pedestrian only, to begin to make the case for a pedestrian boulevard in this area. Be sure to include a pop-up element for retailers in tenantable vacant spaces.

6. Hold merchant meetings to communicate plans for events and redevelopment and to gain feedback.

6. Work with the City of Poplar Bluff to create an Entertainment Overlay Zoning District for Vine Street to allow for special long-range plan provisions like pedestrian only experiences and open-container policies.

6. Cultivate multi-community support for state and local provisions for “To-Go Cup” ordinance in entertainment district, to allow for open-container experiences on Vine Street.
Executive Summary

In the next 12 months, our team can grade your community’s progress, re-evaluate your needs, and identify which future opportunities should be tackled next. We are here to be your guide.
MARKET ANALYSIS

We begin by assessing your consumers from multiple geographies. Using our advanced analytics and proprietary tools, we uncover and define the economic potential in your Downtown area based on a custom trade area derived from mobile data tracking.
MARKET ANALYSIS
Diving into the Data

For your Downtown, assessing your consumers from multiple geographies is key. Using our advanced analytics, and proprietary tools, we help you uncover and define the economic potential in your Downtown area.

Downtown Study Area

Poplar Bluff has a prominent and easily identifiable Downtown that is primely located on the edge of the Black River. Through proper implementation of our recommended strategies, and a focus on placemaking and business development, this defined area has the great potential to become a premier destination and gathering place.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

Memberships, Subscriptions & Customized Reports

Downtown Strategies is proud to be a member of Main Street America and the International Downtown Association.

Research Partners & Geographic Information Systems
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

Where does all this information come from?
Here are a few of the demographic data sources used:
MARKET ANALYSIS

Summary & Conclusions

The purpose of the Market Analysis is to identify the true retail trade area for the market and to better understand the habits of the consumers. This knowledge will equip the community with the ability to make evidence-based decisions to renovate, revitalize, and reinvigorate its Downtown.

Customized Trade Area(s)

Utilizing mobile data tracking (cell phone activity,) we identified where consumers are actually coming from to shop in your market. This geographic area of consumers is called the Customized Trade Area and represents a much more accurate snapshot of your community’s retail reach. Understanding the true trade area allows us to more accurately predict business success and identify which categories of retail are missing from your market.

Mobile data suggests that Poplar Bluff is receiving a number of visitors from a radius that includes Williamsville, Fisk, Neelyville, and Grandin. With successful implementation of branding and messaging and a honed-in focus on product development and diversification of retail, this trade area can represent actual Downtown shoppers over time.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Summary & Conclusions

GAP Analysis

A GAP or retail leakage analysis compares consumer expenditures sorted by codes in a trade area (demand) with the corresponding retail sales of trade area stores (supply.) A leakage exists when demand exceeds supply. The demand that is not met locally is seen as leaking out to shops beyond the trade area’s borders. These leakages are usually interpreted as identifying local untapped retail demand that, if recaptured, can not only support growth, but do so without taking market share away from existing retailers.

In Poplar Bluff, there is leakage/market opportunity within the primary trade area in the following categories:

- grocery
- electronics & appliance
- sporting goods & hobby
- apparel
- restaurant

Annual Spending Patterns

Based on the Customized Trade Area, we analyzed consumer expenditures annually in 5 retail categories: Apparel & Services, Household Equipment, Entertainment, Food & Beverages, and Others. Within those categories, we’ve displayed the subcategory expenditures for the trade area.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Summary & Conclusions

Commute Profile

As communities move to a more walkable environment, it’s important to understand how residents utilize transportation and commute to work at present. Poplar Bluff’s CTA displays a higher than average walk to work population with 5% of the trade area walking to work. We believe that with increased connectivity such as bike lanes and greenways, and a more robust economy Downtown, multi-modal transportation will increase. Additionally, within the Customized Trade Area, an average of 4% of residents work from home, which is above the national average for rural communities. We believe that office space or co-working space would be a worthwhile investment in Downtown Poplar Bluff.

Tapestry Segmentation

Tapestry Segmentation classifies areas into unique segments based not only on demographics but also socioeconomic characteristics. It describes areas in easy-to-visualize terms. Tapestry gives you insights to help you identify your best customers, optimal sites, and underserved markets by understanding customers' lifestyle choices, what they buy, and how they spend their free time. Your Tapestry Segmentation profile was run from a 3-mile radius of Downtown Poplar Bluff. The following segments were derived for the area:

- Hardscrabble Road – 30.6%
- Small Town Simplicity – 28.6%
- Midlife Constants – 13.5%
- Heartland Communities – 8.6%
- Social Security Set – 7.0%

Walkable Demographics

The demographics of page 37 of this document reflect those residents within a 20-minute walk-time of Downtown Poplar Bluff. With increased connectivity to neighborhoods surrounding Downtown Poplar Bluff, and more dedicated pathways such as bike lanes, sidewalks, and/or greenways, a more well-developed live-work-play environment will be realized, and the vitality of the Downtown will increase.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Mobile Data Tracking

Mobile data tracking uses data collected from mobile phone users who have agreed within their apps and phone settings to enable location information. This technology includes mobile phone data with latitude and longitude points that are accurate to approximately 20 feet. Data inputs are updated as quickly as every 24-hours.

The data shown includes shoppers who visited the defined location during a 1-year time period. This tool allows us to identify where consumers are actually coming from to shop in your market (Custom Trade Area) using actual data. This information is used to optimize your trade area, analyze business locations, compare frequency of visitors, and more accurately predict business success.

This data is intended to support the trade area but does not solely define the trade area.

The location tracked was: Walmert

for the time period of: March 2019 – March 2020
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

State of Missouri
Population – 6.2 Million

Poplar Bluff, MO (CTA)
Population – 64,076

*The following demographics (pages 17-28) reflect the Custom Trade Area (CTA) and not geographic community boundaries.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

64,076
2019 estimated population

63,889
projected 2024 population

40
male avg. age

43
female avg. age

-0.3%
projected growth rate 2019-2024
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

Race

- Asian
- Black
- Latino
- Latino
- Other

92%
2%
4%
2%
0%
2%
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

Number of Households: 30,364

Median Household Income: $39,258

- 1-person household: 28%
- 2-person household: 36%
- 3-person household: 16%
- 4-person household: 12%
- 5-person household: 5%
- 6-person household: 2%
- 7 or more person household: 1%
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

$133,030
Avg. Housing Unit Value

Vacant Housing Units
Occupied Housing Units
Owner-Occupied
Renter-Occupied
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

- Nonfamily Households: 6%
- No own children under 18 years: 7%
- With own children under 18 years: 6%
- Female Householder: no husband present: 14%
- Male Householder: no wife present: 4%
- No own children under 18 years: 2%
- With own children under 18 years: 2%
- Married-couple family: 48%
- Family Households: 66%
- 1 Person Households: 28%

Avg. People Per Household: 2.40
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

DAYTIME POPULATION

- Children at home: 4%
- Retired/Disable persons: 19%
- Homemakers: 18%
- Work at Home: 1%
- Employed: 31%
- Unemployed: 4%
- Student Populations: 22%
MARKET ANALYSIS

Our Research

- White Collar: 37%
- Blue Collar: 62%
- Military: 0%
- Unclassified: 1%

Average employee salary: $40,916
# MARKET ANALYSIS

## Our Research

### Current Year Estimated Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional School Degree</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>1,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>4,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>3,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, no degree</td>
<td>9,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate (or GED)</td>
<td>16,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School, no diploma</td>
<td>5,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 9th grade</td>
<td>2,635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARKET ANALYSIS
Our Research

CONSUMER DEMAND AND SUPPLY (OPPORTUNITY GAP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods &amp; Hobby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies, Stationery &amp; Gift Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited-Service Eating Places</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Service Restaurants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics &amp; Appliance Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer, Wine &amp; Liquor Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars/Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Parts, Accessories, &amp; Tire Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Food Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Food Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn &amp; Garden Equipment &amp; Supplies Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Personal Care Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline Stations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Material &amp; Supplies Dealers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- $140,000,000 - $100,000,000 - $60,000,000 - $20,000,000 - $20,000,000 - $60,000,000
MARKET ANALYSIS

Annual Consumer Spending Patterns

By utilizing mobile data collection, data and analytics, and real estate acumen, our team identified shopping patterns within your Custom Trade Area that will answer key questions for your revitalization efforts. Based on the CTA, we analyzed consumer expenditures annually in 5 retail categories: Apparel & Services, Household Equipment, Entertainment, Food & Beverages, and Others.

### Apparel and Services: $72.7 MM

- Men and boys: 79, $39,046,318
- Women and Girls: 81, $9,010,606
- Children under 21: 82, $15,319,023
- Footwear: 81, $1,137,785
- Other Apparel: 81, $6,292,672

### Entertainment: $52.5 MM

- Fees and admissions: 72, $13,890,550
- TV & sound equip.: 62, $17,560,411
- Pets, toys & playground: 81, $16,614,461
- Other entertainment: 73, $4,388,393

### Food and Beverages: $209.1 MM

- Food at home: 84, $117,067,827
- Food away from home: 80, $79,426,088
- Alcoholic beverages: 73, $12,561,783

### Household Equipment: $41.6 MM

- Household textiles: 85, $2,470,657
- Furniture: 79, $11,279,873
- Floor coverings: 66, $588,126
- Major appliances: 79, $5,464,020
- Small appliances: 81, $2,532,761
- Misc household equip: 79, $16,417,697

### Other Categories: $55.3 MM

- Miscellaneous: 86, $11,947,854
- Personal care: 82, $15,307,079
- Personal insurance: 80, $10,322,103
- Reading: 87, $1,713,018
- Smoking Supplies: 95, $10,000,273

*Index numbers represent your spending patterns in comparison to the standard community in the U.S. The standard index is always 100. Your index is either below, on par or higher than the standard spending patterns per each category.*
MARKET ANALYSIS

Commute Profile

Workers

- 7,235
  2013-2017 ACS Workers Age 16+
- 4%
  2013-2017 ACS Workers Age 16+ Worked at Home (%)
- 78%
  Estimated % Workers 16+ Drove Alone to Work

Transportation to Work

- 1%
  Took Public Transportation
- 10%
  Carpooleled
- 5%
  Walked to Work
- 0%
  Biked to Work

Travel Time to Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time to Work</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 5 Minutes</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 To 9 Minutes</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 To 14 Minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 To 19 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 To 24 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 To 29 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 To 34 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 To 39 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 To 44 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 To 59 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 To 89 Minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 Or More Minutes</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARKET ANALYSIS

Tapestry Segmentation Profile

Tapestry Segmentation classifies neighborhoods into 67 unique segments based not only on demographics but also socioeconomic characteristics. It describes US neighborhoods in easy-to-visualize terms, ranging from Soccer Moms to Heartland Communities.

Tapestry gives you insights to help you identify your best customers, optimal sites, and underserved markets by understanding customers' lifestyle choices, what they buy, and how they spend their free time.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Tapestry Segmentation Profile

LifeMode Group: Middle Ground
Hardscrabble Road

Households: 1,507,700
Average Household Size: 2.66
Median Age: 32.4
Median Household Income: $28,200

WHO ARE WE?
Hardscrabble Road neighborhoods are in urbanized areas within central cities, with older housing, located chiefly in the Midwest and South. This slightly smaller market is primarily a family market, married couples (with and without children) and single parents. Younger, highly diverse (with higher proportions of black, multiracial, and Hispanic populations), and less educated, they work mainly in service, manufacturing, and retail trade industries. Unemployment is high (almost twice the US rate), and median household income is half the US median. Almost 1 in 3 households have income below the poverty level. 60% of householders are renters, living primarily in single-family homes, with a higher proportion of dwellings in 2-4 unit buildings. This market is struggling to get by.

INCOME AND NET WORTH
Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by Exis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$28,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>$56,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$83,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$137,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$164,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$192,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$248,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$276,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Net Worth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$93,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$147,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$174,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$201,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$228,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$255,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$282,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$309,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little extra money to invest in retirement savings plans, stocks, or bonds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For those with young children at home, watching Disney Channel, Cartoon Network, and Nickelodeon on TV is popular; diapers, baby food, and children's clothing are priority expenditures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favor shopping at their local discount store, search for bargains on the Internet, or purchasing from in-home sales representatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read parenting and health magazines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch programs on BET, VH1, and Game Show Network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to listen to gospel, R&amp;B, rap, and hip-hop music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to listen to sports on the radio and watch on TV. Favorite sports include NASCAR racing, professional wrestling, and basketball.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
- Renters: About three-fifths of households.
- Primarily family households, married couples with or without children, single parents (Index 203), and multigenerational households (Index 137).
- Primarily single-family homes (61%), with a higher proportion of dwellings in 2-4 unit buildings (Index 225).
- Older housing, built before 1960 (59%), with a higher proportion built in the 1940s (Index 215) or earlier (Index 257).
- Almost four-fifths of owned homes valued under $100,000 (more than 3.5 times the US).
- Higher percentage of vacant housing units at 18% (Index 155).
- Most households with 1 or 2 vehicles (71%), but 19% have no vehicle (Index 204).

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS
- Education completed: 38% with a high school diploma only (Index 137); 28% with some college or an associate's degree (Index 97).
- Unemployment rate is higher at 11.2%, almost twice the US rate.
- Labor force participation rate is lower at 57.1%.
- Wages and salaries are the primary source of income for 70% of households, with contributions from Supplemental Security Income for 12% (Index 232) and public assistance for 7% (Index 254).
- These cost-conscious consumers purchase sale items in bulk and buy generic over name brands.
- They tend to save money for a specific purpose.
Tapestry Segmentation Profile

Small Town Simplicity

Households: 2,305,700
Average Household Size: 2.26
Median Age: 40.8
Median Household Income: $31,500

WHO ARE WE?
Small Town Simplicity includes young families and senior householders that are bound by community ties. The lifestyle is down-to-earth and semirural, with television for entertainment and news, and emphasis on convenience for both young parents and senior citizens. Residents embark on pursuits including online computer games, renting movies, indoor gardening, and rural activities like hunting and fishing. Since 1 in 4 households is below poverty level, residents also keep their finances simple—paying bills in person and avoiding debt.

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
- They reside in small towns or semirural neighborhoods, mostly outside metropolitan areas.
- Homes are a mix of older single-family homes (61%), apartments, and mobile homes.
- Half of all homes are owner-occupied (Index 79).
- Median home value of $92,300 is about half the US median.
- Average rent is $639 (Index 62).
- This is an older market, with half of the householders aged 55 years or older, and predominantly single-person households (Index 139).

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS
- Education: 67% with high school diploma or some college.
- Unemployment higher at 7.7% (Index 141).
- Labor force participation lower at 52% (Index 83), which could result from lack of jobs or retirement.
- Income from wages and salaries (Index 83), Social Security (Index 133) or retirement (Index 106), increased by Supplemental Security Income (Index 183).
- Price-conscious consumers that shop accordingly, with coupons at discount centers.
- Connected, but not to the latest or greatest gadgets; keep their landlines.
- Community-orientated residents; more conservative than middle-of-the-road.
- Rely on television or newspapers to stay informed.

INCOME AND NET WORTH
Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by ERI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>$31,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Net Worth</th>
<th>$15,300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MARKET PROFILE (Consumer preferences are estimated from data by OK MRI)
- Small Town Simplicity features a semirural lifestyle, complete with trucks and SUVs (domestic, of course), ATVs, and vegetable gardens.
- Residents enjoy outdoor activities like hunting and fishing as well as watching NASCAR and college football and basketball on TV.
- A large senior population visit doctors and health practitioners regularly.
- However, a largely single population favors convenience over cooking—frozen meals and fast food.
- Home improvement is not a priority, but vehicle maintenance is.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Tapestry Segmentation Profile

LifeMode Group: GenXurban
Midlife Constants

Households: 3,068,400
Average Household Size: 2.31
Median Age: 47.0
Median Household Income: $53,200

WHO ARE WE?

Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement, with below average labor force participation and above average net worth. Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country than urban. They are generous, but not spendthrifts.

INCOME AND NET WORTH

Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by Esri.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$53,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>$54,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60K  $70K  $80K  $90K</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Net Worth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$136,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$193,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100K  $200K  $300K  $400K  $500K  $600K+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- Older homes (most built before 1980) found in the suburban periphery of smaller metropolitan markets.
- Primarily married couples, with a growing share of singles.
- Settled neighborhoods with slow rates of change and residents that have lived in the same house for years.
- Single-family homes, less than half still mortgaged, with a median home value of $154,100 (Index 74).

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

- Education: 63% have a high school diploma or some college.
- Unemployment is lower in this market at 4.7% (Index 86), but so is the labor force participation rate (Index 91).
- Almost 42% of households are receiving Social Security (Index 141); 27% also receive retirement income (Index 149).
- Traditional, not trendy; opt for convenience and comfort, not cutting-edge. Technology has its uses, but the bells and whistles are a bother.
- Attentive to price, but not at the expense of quality, they prefer to buy American and natural products.
- Radio and newspapers are the media of choice (after television).

MARKET PROFILE

- Prefer practical vehicles like SUVs and trucks (domestic, of course).
- Sociable, church-going residents belonging to fraternal orders, veterans' clubs and charitable organizations and do volunteer work and fund-raising.
- Contribute to arts/cultural, educational, health, and social services organizations.
- DIY homebody that spend on home improvement and gardening.
- Media preferences: country or movie channels.
- Leisure activities include movies at home, reading, fishing, and golf.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Tapestry Segmentation Profile

LifeMode Group: Cozy Country Living
Heartland Communities

Households: 2,850,600
Average Household Size: 2.39
Median Age: 42.3
Median Household Income: $42,400

WHO ARE WE?

Well settled and close-knit, Heartland Communities are semirural and semi-rural. These older households are primarily homeowners, and many have paid off their mortgages. Their children have moved away, but they have no plans to leave their homes. Their hearts are with the country; they embrace the slower pace of life here but actively participate in outdoor activities and community events. Traditional and patriotic, these residents support their local businesses, always buy American, and favor domestic driving vacations over foreign plane trips.

INCOME AND NET WORTH

Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by Esri.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$45,400</td>
<td>$56,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$100K</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Net Worth</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$100K</td>
<td>$93,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$100K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- Rural communities or small towns are concentrated in the Midwest, from older Rustbelt cities to the Great Plains.
- Distribution of household types is comparable to the US, primarily (but not the majority) married couples, more with no children, and a slightly higher proportion of singles (Index 112) that reflects the aging of the population.
- Residents own modest, single-family homes built before 1970.
- They own one or two vehicles; commutes are short (Index 82).

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

- Retirees in this market depress the average labor force participation rate to less than 60% (Index 94), but the unemployment rate is comparable to the US.
- More workers are white collar than blue collar; more skilled than unskilled.
- The rural economy of this market provides employment in the manufacturing, construction, utilities, healthcare, and agriculture industries.
- They are budget savvy consumers; they stick to brands they grew up with and know the price of goods they purchase. Buying American is important.
- Daily life is busy, but routine. Working on the weekends is not uncommon.
- Residents trust TV and newspapers more than any other media.
- Skeptical about their financial future, they stick to community banks and low-risk investments.

MARKET PROFILE

- Traditional in their ways, residents of Heartland Communities choose to bank and pay their bills in person and purchase insurance from an agent.
- Most have high-speed Internet access at home or on their cell phone but aren’t ready to go paperless.
- Many residents have paid off their home mortgages but still hold auto loans and student loans. Interest checking accounts are common.
- To support their local community, residents participate in public activities.
- Home remodeling is not a priority, but homeowners do tackle necessary maintenance work on their cherished homes. They have invested in riding lawn mowers to maintain their larger yards.
- They enjoy country music and watch CMT.
- Motorcycling, hunting, and fishing are popular; walking is the main form of exercise.
- To get around these semirural communities, residents prefer domestic trucks or SUVs.
MARKET ANALYSIS
Tapestry Segmentation Profile

WHO ARE WE?
Social Security Set is an older market located in metropolitan cities across the country. One-fourth of householders here are aged 65 or older and dependent on low, fixed incomes, primarily Social Security. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, early retirement is now a dream for many approaching the retirement age; wages and salary income in this market are still earned. Residents live alone in low-rent, high-rise buildings, located in or close to business districts that attract heavy daytime traffic. But they enjoy the hustle and bustle of life in the heart of the city, with the added benefit of access to hospitals, community centers, and public transportation.

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
- Most residents live alone in this older market; 13% of householders are aged 75 and older; another 13% are 65 to 74 years old.
- Multiunit rental properties with affordable rents are predominant (index 63).
- Located in higher-density, high-traffic areas of metropolitan cities with good access to public transportation, vehicle ownership is low.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS
- These aging consumers rely mostly on Social Security income but also depend on Supplemental Security Income and public assistance.
- Wages and salary income are still earned by almost half of all householders.
- With fixed incomes, consumers remain price sensitive.
- A trusted source of information, TV is an important part of their lives.
- An aging population that is often limited by medical conditions, they are willing to try advanced medication but rely on their physicians for recommendations.
- Rather than eat out, Social Security Set residents prefer to have their meals at home, whether they order takeout or warm up a frozen dinner. To save money, many frequently cook their own meals.

INCOME AND NET WORTH
Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by Esri.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>$17,900</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$56,100</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Net Worth</th>
<th>$10,200</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$93,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MARKET PROFILE
(Consumer preferences are estimated from data by ESRI MMR.)
- With limited resources, spending on entertainment is restricted. To pass the time, residents have basic cable television. Daytime news, documentaries, and sport shows are popular. Activities outside the house are also limited, but bingo at the local community center is a favorite. When the TV is off, the radio is on; residents aren’t picky about the radio station, but do enjoy the companionship.
- Risk-averse consumers in Social Security Set prefer to pay their bills in person, usually with cash. Some residents don’t have a checking account, although one in three maintain a savings account for their small savings.
- Technology is a bear for these consumers. They steer away from cell phones, computers, and digital cameras.
- Many residents are dependent on Medicare and Medicaid for health care expenses.
- They don’t eat out often, but KFC and McDonald’s are their restaurants of choice.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Walkability Assessment

What’s your Community’s Walk Score?

A community’s walk score is determined by analyzing 3 factors: walkable distance between boundaries, presence of a comprehensive network of pathways designed for pedestrians and cyclists, and variety of restaurants, retailers, and service providers necessary for regular life.

This assessment shows your Downtown with boundaries notating a 5, 10, and 20-minute walk. A walk time from one Downtown boundary to the next that exceeds 20 minutes is not considered walkable.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Walkability Assessment

A community’s walk score is determined by analyzing 3 factors: walkable distance between boundaries, presence of a comprehensive network of pathways designed for pedestrians and cyclists, and variety of restaurants, retailers, and service providers necessary for regular life.

1. **Walkable Distance Between Boundaries**
   Poplar Bluff’s Downtown boundaries fall within a 0.5 mile radius or a 10 minute walk time from end to end of the District. This is considered extremely walkable from a distance perspective, as a 20-minute walk time from end to end is considered walkable.

2. **Presence of a Comprehensive Network of Pathways**
   Poplar Bluff has a very well-developed system of pathways throughout the Downtown area. The brick-lined streets are a gem and should be maintained and preserved as best as possible. From an infrastructure standpoint, Downtown Poplar Bluff scores exceptionally well.

3. **Variety of Restaurants, Retailers & Service Providers Present**
   The majority of opportunity for Downtown Poplar Bluff in terms of walkability is to increase the inventory of retailers, restaurants, and service providers. Foxtrot coffee shop, Haffy’s Sports Bar and Grill, Myrtles and Bronze Owl are exceptional and provide an excellent atmosphere. More of this, plus quality retailers will eventually create the destination attributes desired.
The following demographics represent the population of residents within a 20 minute walk time of the Downtown Study Area. Keep these figures in mind when imagining the possible economic impacts of developing your Downtown into a walkable destination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY FACTS</th>
<th>INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4,944</td>
<td>$20,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>$15,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>$11,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size</td>
<td>Median Net Worth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESSES</th>
<th>EMPLOYMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>279</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Businesses</td>
<td>White Collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,904</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Employees</td>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>HOUSING STATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>$86,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No High School Diploma</td>
<td>Median Home Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>$3,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>Average Spent on Mortgage &amp; Basics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>$449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>Median Contract Rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s/Grad/ Prof Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy & Administration involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.
Consider implementing the following list of incentives to publicly re-invest in the Downtown area and to foster and support private investment in vacant or deteriorating structures.

The following districts, incentives, ordinances, and programs have been selected as successful tools for revitalizing Downtown Poplar Bluff. Further information and details regarding each incentive and program follow within the plan:

**Local Districts**
- Community Improvement District

**Local Ordinances**
- Vacancy Tax

**Local Incentives**
- Façade Grant Improvement Program
- Historic Tax Credits (National Register of Historic Places)
- Lease Assistance Incentive for New Businesses
- Local Tax Increment Financing

**State Incentives**
- State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing
Community Improvement Districts are designed to help improve the community by bettering conditions for existing businesses and attracting new growth. Community safety, beautification, business retention, economic growth, and capital improvements are all domains in which CIDs can help improve business-minded communities.

What is a Community Improvement District (CID?)

The purpose of a CID is to fund, promote, plan, design, construct, improve, maintain, and operate one or more projects or to assist in such activity. A CID is a special taxing district and separate political subdivision of the state.

How is a CID Financed?

A CID is to be financed by the district through the issuance of notes or bonds, which are in turn retired by the CID’s levy of various taxes within the geographic boundaries of the district, including sales tax, property tax and special assessment. The typical lifespan of a CID is 20-25 years from the date of establishment.

CID Quick Facts

- A CID is a geographically defined district in which commercial property owners choose (by a vote) to impose a self-tax.
- CIDs are considered a powerful public-private partnership. They have been used successfully throughout the country to revitalize cities.
- CIDs can directly enhance property values by allowing property owners to decide how funds are spent in their area.
- CID funds can add to existing services, such as public safety, and they can be used to leverage additional public and private funds.
- CIDs can make improvements to a variety of areas in a community, including water, public transportation, street and road construction and maintenance, parks and recreational areas and facilities, storm water and sewage, parking areas and more.
How is a CID Created?

A district board manages a CID. Depending on the petition, the board may be appointed or elected by voters in the district. Community improvement districts become independent political subdivisions.

To establish a CID, a valid petition must be submitted to the appropriate governing body. A valid petition must specify the size, area and duration of the district, as well as the maximum rate of taxes which can be imposed and the method and maximum rate of assessment.

The petition must also be signed by more than 50 percent of property owners (by assessed value) within the boundaries of the proposed district. A public hearing is held to approve or deny the CID.

The petition must also outline several other factors, such as maximum rates for real property taxes that can be submitted to voters for approval. Before taxes can be levied, an election must be held through a mail-in ballot, and a majority vote is required.

The tax levy can’t exceed the rate stated on the petition without a vote from property owners, and taxes are collected and redistributed in the same way as real property taxes.
The Missouri Community Improvement District Act, Sections 67.1401 through 67.1571 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, as amended (the “CID Act”) provides for the formation of a community improvement district (“CID”). Pursuant to this act, the CID board of directors possess and exercise all the District’s legislative and executive powers.

A CID is authorized to undertake certain public improvement projects such as:

- constructing infrastructure improvements
- providing security
- making capital improvements
- installing pedestrian and streetscape enhancements
- marketing of the area

Recommendation

Develop property owner support, create a CID plan (consultants such as Retail Strategies can assist with this,) and begin the process of establishing a CID for Downtown Poplar Bluff.
Vacant Storefront Tax

Site-specific Causes for Vacancies

**Knowledge gap**

Smaller, independent property owners may lack an understanding of appropriate asking rents for a commercial tenant, the best way to market their space to prospective tenants, or how to assist tenants with occupying the space effectively. This is further exacerbated when property owners employ non-local real estate agents that may not be adept and are not privy to the unique character of each sub district and their respective customer bases. Still other property owners may not be able to afford traditional brokerage services and will attempt to go it alone instead.

**Tax write-off**

Institutional investors with large real estate portfolios may benefit from keeping certain commercial properties vacant as part of a larger strategy to claim tax write-offs on passive income. This scenario not only creates a disincentive to the owner to find a long-term tenant, but also temporary users like pop-ups.

**Tenant attraction strategy**

Property owners may have a deliberate plan to attract a specific tenant to complement the larger retail mix. In several instances, it was found that property owners had turned down offers from credit-worthy formula retail tenants offering more competitive rents and elected instead to wait for a particular operator perceived to better complement neighboring uses.
Downtown Strategic Vision for Poplar Bluff

POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

Vacant Storefront Tax

Site-specific Causes for Vacancies

Development/lease negotiation

Some vacancies are the result of owners seeking to develop or rehabilitate properties. During this period, the space may or may not have a committed tenant, though lease negotiation can also contribute to prolonged vacancy.

High asking rents

Property reappraisals may increase real estate tax obligations to property owners, wherein they pass the additional expense on to their tenants through higher rents, thereby contributing to turnover/vacancies.

Speculative rents

Property owners located in central locations of high-demand may feel justified holding out for high rents, believing the long-term benefit outweighs short term losses.

Disinterested owner

Property owners in peripheral commercial areas may be less beholden to the community or feel less compelled to activate their space than those located in areas like Harvard Square and Central Square.

Community opposition

In instances where a property owner procures a tenant, but the community opposes the use/operator, it can delay occupancy.
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

Vacant Storefront Tax

Recommendation

Work with the City of Poplar Bluff to implement a Vacant Storefront Tax to incentivize property owners to rehabilitate, lease, or sell their buildings within the Downtown Poplar Bluff area.

Vacant Storefront Tax Ordinances, implemented in numerous cities and towns across the country, requires that owners of vacant commercial properties submit information to a registry and pay an annual fee for each year that the property remains vacant.

In so doing, the municipality is able to track and monitor vacant properties, establish a dialogue with property owners to understand the nature of the vacancy, and develop strategies to help the owner either tenant the space, temporarily activate it, or else adhere to minimum standards for the appearance and maintenance of the property while vacant.

How is a vacancy typically defined?

Any property that is not legally occupied, is abandoned, or is not used for a period of at least 90 consecutive days or longer by occupants having custody or legal right of entry to such property; or is intermittently occupied by persons with legal right of entry, but exhibits in the opinion of the Building Inspector dilapidated walls, root or doors which fail to prevent the entry of a trespasser for a period of more than 7 days.

How is the registration fee determined/structured?

Initial and renewal registration fees are $400 per storefront annually (based on estimated cost to the city of $100 for quarterly inspections).
At what point must a vacancy be registered?

Within 90 days of last legal occupancy. Fees are due at time of registration. Registration requires a statement by the owner reflecting their efforts to regain occupancy.

Under what conditions can an owner seek a waiver/exemption?

Demonstration of financial hardship, or by agreeing in writing to display public art for a period of up to one year and subject to the availability of public art. Demonstration of financial hardship is subject to a 30-day review period and is reevaluated on a quarterly basis until property is leased or sold.

How must the owner/property manager maintain a registered vacancy?

Vacant buildings must be maintained in accordance with all applicable local and state Sanitary Codes, Building Codes and Fire Codes; must promptly repair all broken windows, doors, other openings; boarding up is only permitted as temporary measure unless the Building Inspector determines otherwise, in which case boards or coverings must be colored to blend with the existing building color scheme. The building shall be maintained so as to appear not to be vacant. Advertising materials must be approved by the Planning Director or comparable position.

What is the fine structure for failure to register and/or additional violations?

Failure to register or other infractions are fined at $100 per day in total. Failure to pay registration or fines will result in a lien against the property.
Lease Assistance Incentive for New Businesses

Incentive programs are typically developed to target needs in specific areas. In Downtown Poplar Bluff, there is a need to help property owners improve the exterior and interior of these historic buildings, coupled with the need to support and incentivize new retailers, restaurants, and cultural asset providers to locate in the Downtown area. A Lease Assistance Incentive program, provided by the CID or City, provides this direct support in a targeted and strategic way.

**Purpose of Lease Assistance Incentive**

The Rent/Lease Assistance Incentive Program for New Businesses is an incentive designed to provide financial assistance in the form of a rent reimbursement to targeted businesses that are wishing to locate within a targeted area of the Downtown area, specifically within the Community Improvement District boundaries. This incentive is provided to help reduce the initial monthly lease rates that the business would pay and assist them through the first few months of operation. These early months are generally the months that businesses incur the greatest costs with the least amount of income in their new location.

**Creating a Niche Marketplace**

Recruiting and growing a density of like businesses can also create a niche destination marketplace. For example, if a Downtown continues to draw restaurants and unique boutiques and cultural uses, it will begin to emerge as a lifestyle destination. This also contribution to promotion and recruitment efforts to encourage continued small business growth and development.

**Recommendation**

Determine funding capabilities for a Lease Assistance Incentive program for New Businesses in the Downtown Poplar Bluff area (and ultimately the CID boundaries.)
Local Tax Increment Financing (Local TIF) permits the use of a portion of local property and sales taxes to assist funding the redevelopment of certain designated areas within your community. Areas eligible for Local TIF must contain property classified as a "Blighted", "Conservation" or an "Economic Development" area, or any combination thereof, as defined by Missouri Statutes.

**Purpose**

Local Tax Increment Financing (Local TIF) permits the use of a portion of local property and sales taxes to assist funding the redevelopment of certain designated areas within your community. Areas eligible for Local TIF must contain property classified as a "Blighted", "Conservation" or an "Economic Development" area, or any combination thereof, as defined by Missouri Statutes.

**Typical Budget Items**

TIF may be used to pay certain costs incurred with a redevelopment project. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Professional services such as studies, surveys, plans, financial management, legal counsel;
- Land acquisition and demolition of structures;
- Rehabilitating, repairing existing buildings on site;
- Building necessary new infrastructure in the project area such as streets, sewers, parking, lighting; and
- Relocation of resident and business occupants located in the project area.

**Supported by Local TIF Revenues**

The idea behind Local TIF is the assumption that property and/or local sales taxes (depending upon the type of redevelopment project) will increase in the designated area after redevelopment, and a portion of the increase of these taxes collected in the future (up to 23 years) may be allocated by your municipality to help pay the certain project costs, partially listed above.
Local Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Local Responsibilities

Missouri’s TIF Act defines a "Municipality" as an incorporated city, town, village or county.

The governing body of your municipality is required to establish a TIF Commission, composed of certain members including representatives of other local taxing authorities within the redevelopment project area as defined by state statute.

The municipality is also responsible for the approval of ordinances (or resolutions if a county) that establish a comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, and for approval of the specific TIF Redevelopment Project.

Responsibilities of the TIF Commission are many, and may include working with the local government in creating the Redevelopment Plan and TIF Redevelopment Project parameters, holding required public hearings, preparing economic impact reports and revenue projections, blight studies and other documents to justify the need for TIF and as required by state statutes governing Local TIF projects.

The use of TIF is helping dozens of Missouri communities thrive by creating new and better jobs while increasing tax revenue streams from formerly non-productive, unattractive and substandard areas.

TIF benefits redevelopment in the urban core areas of our largest metropolitan cities, as well as in smaller Missouri communities, wherever the need exists.
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (State TIF) is meant to facilitate the redevelopment of blighted areas by providing essential public infrastructure.

Purpose
Facilitate the redevelopment of blighted areas by providing essential public infrastructure.

Authorization
Section 99.800, 99.845.4 - .14, RSMo

Eligible Areas
To be eligible for State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (State TIF), the redevelopment project must meet each of the following:

• The redevelopment project area must be blighted.
• The redevelopment project area must be located in:
  -- a state enterprise zone;
  -- a federal empowerment zone;
  -- an urban core area; or
  -- a central business district
• The zone or blighted area must contain at least one building that is 50 years of age or older.
• The redevelopment project area, over the past 20 years, must have experienced a generally declining population or generally declining property taxes.
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Eligible Applicants

Municipalities

Program Benefits/Eligible Uses

When local tax increment financing leaves a gap for a redevelopment project, a municipality can apply for a portion of the new state tax revenues created by the project to be disbursed to cover the financing gap for eligible redevelopment costs on the project.

To be eligible for State TIF, the underlying local TIF must dedicate at least 50% of the amount of the new local sales tax (and earnings tax in St. Louis and Kansas City) revenue and 100% of the amount of the new real property tax revenue created by the project each year for which state TIF is sought.

An applicant may be approved to receive up to 50% of the net new state sales tax revenue (general revenue portion only; excluding dedicated taxes) generated in the project area OR up to 50% of the increase in state income tax revenue from net new jobs in the project area. An applicant cannot receive both.

State TIF may be awarded for a period of up to 15 years (a longer period may be requested, but not to exceed 23 years).

The TIF project funds may be derived from a bond issue (retired with the local and state incremental revenues), or a reimbursement to the developer for eligible costs.
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Eligible Redevelopment Project Costs

- studies, surveys, plans and specifications.
- land acquisition, land preparation.
- rehabilitation, reconstruction or repair or remodeling of existing buildings and fixtures.
- construction of public works or public improvements.
- professional services such as architectural, engineering, legal, financial and planning.
- financing costs such as expenses of issuance of bonds.

*Any expenditures made prior to approval for State TIF cannot be reimbursed with state funds.

Funding Limits

- A redevelopment project will not receive funds until it generates increment.
- A redevelopment project cannot receive more than half of the increased amount of state sales tax or income tax it generates.
- The program is limited in any year to the amount appropriated by the General Assembly. The law does not allow an annual appropriation to exceed $32,000,000.

Recommendation

Collaborate with the City of Poplar Bluff to develop first a local TIF redevelopment plan, followed by identifying catalyst projects that could qualify for local and state supplemental TIF support. Make these incentives known and available to property owners and potential developers and investors.
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

State Supplemental Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

1. The Municipality and Developer must conduct the process of establishing the Local TIF concurrently with the application of the State TIF.

2. The Municipality submits a State TIF Application on behalf of the Developer.

3. The Municipality obtains authorization to receive State TIF funds from within the state budget.

4. The DED and the Office of Administration approve the State TIF application, and issue a certificate of approval.

5. The Municipality submits increment requests, at least annually, requesting distribution of increment earned by the project.
Thoughtful design supports a community’s transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.
DESIGN

History of America’s Downtowns

As we seek to redevelop and revitalize our Downtowns to their original vitality and significance, it’s important to recognize how Downtowns functioned decades away, and how we got to this shift in perspective and priority.

1950

Nearly everyone goes Downtown to shop, pick-up the mail, visit the courthouse, go to the bank, and take in a movie or other performance.

1956

Post WWII, buildings are being knocked down to make way for parking lots, and shopping centers and hotels are being developed along the highway outside of town.

1959

Federal government is funding Interstate highways and by-passes around Downtowns. Urban renewal is diverting traffic away from Downtowns. Retail sales for many Downtown merchants are plummeting.
History of America’s Downtowns

1965
Sprawl hastens the abandonment of Downtowns with their small-scale, personal, and diverse retail and commercial offerings. This lasts 30 years.

1977
Total retail market share of American Downtowns drops by 77 percent and many Downtowns lose 90% of their business.

1990
The 1990s are the peak era for constructing automobile-oriented retail in the US. In 1990, the US already had more per-capita retail space than any other nation in the world.
History of America’s Downtowns

1994
Amazon was founded and the Internet era begins. Consumer connections are greatly enhanced and more dynamic through the Internet as goods can be purchased anywhere from a computer.

1999
Declining urban crime and the New Urbanism prompts a change in market preference for living in walkable, urban places. Retailers begin to experiment with mixed-use town centers and “lifestyle centers” to recreate and/or mimic Main Streets and Downtowns.

2005
Millennials seek more “authentic” experiences in their purchasing, marking a return to the mid-20th Century concept, when nearly all US shopping was local and unique to place.
History of America’s Downtowns

2008
Nation’s economy goes into a tailspin and banks stop lending for new construction. Consumers change their shopping patterns and take pride in finding bargains and being “thrifty.”

2015
E-commerce amounts to 7% of total retail sales and is increasing. Value shopping is the new norm rather than the exception, and many national brands that overbuilt in the 21st century are closing stores.

2019
Consumers expect convenience, Millennials still seek experiential retail and authenticity and prioritize walkability and connectivity, and retiring Boomers with buying power are moving back to city cores, paving the way for Downtowns to support independent retailers and take back market share.
The key is to create and support people-oriented streets that mitigate suboptimal development patterns and the need for expensive infrastructure, increase walkability, and encourage investment and entrepreneurship, all with the goal of a harmonious, safe, and cost-effective balance of people’s and vehicular needs.

**Street Trees**
Street trees and other landscaping not only provide aesthetic enhancements to a street, but also help mitigate air pollution, provide shade and lower temperatures, and provide opportunities for better stormwater control. Proper maintenance is key to the success of planted areas. Opportunities for widening tree belts and narrowing streets should be considered whenever roads are reconstructed.

**Planters and Hanging Baskets**
Plants add color and vibrancy to a streetscape, create insect habitats, and help mitigate stormwater runoff. Consult with botanists and gardeners in your community to help identify the plants that will thrive in your climate and setting. Before planting, be sure to have a maintenance plan in place and a dedicated agency or volunteer group who will take care of the plants and flowers on schedule.

**Street Lighting**
Street lighting is a key organizing streetscape element that defines the nighttime visual environment in urban settings. Street lighting includes roadway and pedestrian lighting in the public right-of-way. Street light poles and fixtures can also create a defining visual characteristic during daylight hours.

**Recommendation**
Incorporate enhanced streetscape elements into Downtown area to improve pedestrian experience. Pitch these projects to local civic organizations as funding/partnering opportunities.
DESIGN
Key Streetscape Amenities

Banners

Banners create visual interest in the streetscape, help support the district’s image and events, and promote community pride. Banner design should be consistent with your Main Street brand and the overall design vision for the commercial district to create a consistent and cohesive visual. To create an opportunity for public engagement, you could install temporary banners that have been designed locally or voted on by community members.

Seating

Benches and other outdoor seating options not only provide resting places for people in your commercial district while they socialize or wait, but also offer a visual cue to drivers and potential pedestrians alike that a street puts people first. Bench placement is as important as design—locate them at regular intervals in places where people will feel comfortable sitting on them (e.g. not next to a trash can). Moveable seating options, on the other hand, make it easier for people to find their own perfect placement, creating impromptu gathering spaces in plazas or parks.

Public Art

Artwork in public spaces can help create a distinct sense of place and offer an excellent opportunity to engage the community and support local artists. In some cases, they can even be a traffic calming measure or “mental speed bump,” as placemaking expert David Engwicht describes them. Placement, construction, and materials are crucial—take time to think through what makes the most sense for your district.

Trash Receptacles

Well-maintained and well-placed trash receptacles are essential to a clean and attractive Main Street. If people have to walk more than half a block to throw away trash, most will not do it. Trash bags should be simple for sanitation workers to remove yet be secure and resistant to vandalism and wind.
### Key Streetscape Amenities

#### Water Features

Fountains and other water features can add interesting and engaging visual elements to a public space. They not only add a calming auditory element to your streetscape, but can actually mask or cover up unwanted noise.

#### Family Friendly Amenities

Providing family-friendly amenities, such as recreational facilities, playgrounds, and splash pads, can make your commercial district a fun and engaging place for all ages. Providing pet-friendly amenities, such as water bowls and connections to dog parks or dog runs, can also encourage people to stay and hang out.

#### Charging Stations & Public Wi-Fi

Offering free charging stations and free WiFi is a good way to get people to come and spend time in your community’s public spaces. Providing WiFi as an amenity can facilitate social interaction during some solitary activities, support communities during disasters, promote tourism throughout the town, and allow users to easily research Main Street destinations and access online services at all times.

#### Outdoor Dining

One of the easiest ways the private sector can contribute to creating a more vibrant commercial district is by providing outdoor dining options. Outdoor seating, tables, and advertising (e.g., sandwich boards) give the impression that something is going on in the district, while providing an additional safety measure by adding more eyes on the street. When outdoor seating is allowed, seating areas need to be wide enough to be comfortable, while at the same time not hindering the flow of pedestrian traffic.
Design Guidelines

Design guidelines help strengthen the character of the built environment and enhance property values by improving the quality of development and by making Downtown a more desirable place to live, work and play. Design guidelines help preserve a cohesive character and also help clarify the community’s expectations for new development.

In many communities, Design Guidelines are codified and meant to manage alterations and new construction in a Downtown area. For Poplar Bluff, MO, we recommend developing basic style guidelines first that provide direction and visual evidence of successful installation of appropriate signage and awnings, provide a paint palette for unified and cohesive color schemes for façade improvements, and suggest appropriate use of potted plants and other storefront enhancements.

The following color scheme was derived from Downtown Poplar Bluff’s existing historical inventory and natural resources and features historically appropriate colors and tones.

Recommendation

Engage a consultant to create a “Design Guidelines” booklet to showcase preferred and recommended styles of façade improvements and design alterations within the Downtown district.
Design Guidelines: Color Inspiration
Design Guidelines: Exterior Paint Palette

- Bunglehouse Blue SW 0048
- Black Magic SW 6991
- Lanyard SW 7680
- Dover White SW 6385
- Cajun Red SW 0008
- Urbane Bronze SW 7048
- Dutch Tile Blue SW 0031
- Gallery Green SW 0015
- Cut the Mustard SW 6384
- Light French Gray SW 0055
- Salty Dog SW 9177
- Alabaster SW 7008
Façade Improvements

Recommendation

Develop a Façade Grant Incentive Program to encourage property owners to improve the exterior of their buildings.

The revitalization of a neglected commercial district or residential neighborhood often begins with improvements to a single building or storefront.

Even simple changes such as the removal of non-historic materials, repairs, or a new paint job that calls attention to the building’s original architectural details signal positive change and often stimulate similar improvements in neighboring buildings.

While this process sometimes begins spontaneously through the work of individual property or business owners, it can be accelerated when a community creates a façade improvement program. As a result, such programs are frequently among the implementing actions of comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization strategies, and historic preservation plans.

Façade improvement programs are incentive programs created to encourage property owners and businesses to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings and storefronts. They focus on either commercial or residential properties in historic or non-historic areas and provide financial incentives such as a matching grant or loan, a tax incentive, and design assistance.

Although it may seem to be a minor aspect of an improvement program, design assistance enables and helps ensure that building modifications comply with any historic district guidelines or other design guidelines developed specifically to enhance buildings in the target area.

A sample Façade Grant application and program outline have been provided on your flash drive.
Façade Improvement Program

A façade improvement program is a financial incentive to inspire private property owners to upgrade the visible, corridor-facing components of their properties. Property owners can upgrade properties without having to relocate, making a façade improvement program a business retention strategy. Typically, assistance is given as grants, rebates, or as low- or no interest loans.

1. **Establish Design Parameters**
   To coordinate redevelopment and reap the greatest reward from the investment, start by determining what expenses are eligible (prioritizing those most visible to consumers,) and outlining the visual design requirements such as paint colors, sign and awning specifications, and preservation techniques.

2. **Develop & Manage Application Process**
   Determine how the program will be financed and who will administer the loans and/or grants. Use this investment as a jumpstart to implementation of new overlay districts or refreshed policies and ordinances.

3. **Evaluate & Monitor Program Success**
   Establishing benchmarks at the time of launching the program is useful in determining if a program is providing a return on resource investment for the administering organization. Planning to evaluate success at the one- and two-year marks is logical for pilot programs.
What can the program cover?

It is the administering organization’s decision what to list as “eligible” and “ineligible.” Some communities choose to separate a façade improvement program from other assistance programs—namely, an on-site improvement program. However, we organizations to streamline and combine incentive programs as much as possible. Standard lists of eligible and ineligible improvements are the following:

Typically **Eligible** Expenses

- Actual construction costs
- Application fees
- Architectural or engineering services
- Removal of inappropriate features
- Restoration of missing or altered features
- Replacement of private sidewalks when it improves pedestrian circulation
- Landscape improvements/restoration
- Parking lot improvements, especially where improvements lead to better compliance with local codes and improve safety and access
- Screening of service areas such as utilities and trash containers
- Installation/restoration of architectural features
- Installation of traditional awnings
- Masonry restoration or repair
- Painting, in conjunction with other restoration or rehabilitation
- Maintenance and preservation of historic signs
- Construction of accessibility improvements to the exterior

Typically **Ineligible** Expenses

- Building permit fees (exception: Can be eligible, wholly or in part, if using the rebate structure)
- Extermination of insects, rodents, etc.
- Title reports and legal fees
- Repair or installation of elevators
- Interior floor or ceiling
- Plumbing and electrical equipment
- Sprinkler systems
- Working capital
- Mechanical equipment
- Flat roofs or other work not visible from public space
- Painting masonry that was not previously painted
- Refinancing existing debt
- Sweat equity
- Acquisition of land and/or buildings
Façade Improvement Program

Develop & Manage Application Process

Where does the funding come from for a Façade Improvement Program?

It is possible for funding to come from multiple sources or one. The source may already exist (for example, a tax increment financing district) or can be created for the purpose of funding the program.

Below is an example of a funding structure that features a maximum award based on property owner investment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low $2,000.00 up to $3,499.00</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,500.00 up to $4,999.00</td>
<td>$1,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000.00 up to $7,499.00</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,500.00 up to $9,999.00</td>
<td>$3,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000.00 up to $12,499.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12,500.00 up to $14,999.00</td>
<td>$6,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000.00 up to $17,499.00</td>
<td>$7,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$17,500.00 up to $19,999.00</td>
<td>$8,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000.00 up to $22,499.00</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000.00 up to $27,499.00</td>
<td>$12,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$27,500.00 up to $29,999.00</td>
<td>$13,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000.00 up to +</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typically, assistance is given as direct or matching grants, rebates, waivers of permit fees, and/or as low- or no-interest loans. Sometimes the administering organization is actually passing through funding from a larger entity. For example, a local government may use its allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
Façade Improvement Program

Storefront façade improvement enhances the image and overall economic viability of neighborhood business districts by improving the function and appearance of individual building facades; and by spurring new private investment in commercial properties in the same location and in adjacent commercial districts. Successful storefront improvement projects manifest readily observable outcomes that positively affect the community.

Establishing benchmarks at the time of launching the program is useful in determining if a program is providing a return on resource investment for the administering organization. Planning to evaluate success at the one- and two-year marks is logical for pilot programs. For ongoing, mature programs, a yearly memo that summarizes program’s activity is recommended.

Participation is measured in two key ways:

1. Of the properties that could apply for assistance, what percent applies?
2. Of those that apply, what percent actually invest and install improvements to properties?

In addition, some communities and organizations track a “multiplier” to gauge if a façade improvement award inspires investment beyond what is covered in the program. Program administrators encourage recipients to track all of their property improvements that happen at the same time as eligible façade improvements, with cost amounts. A common instance is a business will make, for example, $50,000 in overall investment, but receive only $10,000 as part of the façade improvement award. The total investment figure divided by the amount of awards given out would be the multiplier and make either a strong or weak case for continuing the program.

A more qualitative approach is to record before-and-after project photographs for each award recipient property. These photographs can be compared with design guidelines.
The National Register of Historic Places is the United States federal government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects deemed worthy of preservation for their historical significance.

National Register Properties & Districts

There are 21 properties or districts located in the Downtown Poplar Bluff area currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are plotted on this map.
Recommendation

Promote the benefits of state and federal tax credits to property owners in Downtown Poplar Bluff and support rehabilitation and redevelopment of historic properties in the Downtown area. Consider expanding this list to include all of Downtown Poplar Bluff.

Benefits of being listed in the National Register include:

- Potentially stopping the damage or destruction of registered places by requiring state or federally permitted/funded/licensed projects to examine alternatives
- Offering a federal income tax incentive for rehabilitating income-producing places.
- Offering a property tax assessment freeze incentive for rehabilitating single-family, owner-occupied residences
- Increasing awareness and appreciation of registered places

Being listed in the National Register DOES NOT:

- Require private property owners to obtain prior approval to change their property when using private, city or county funds
- Require private property owners to preserve or restore their registered place
- Block state or federally funded/permitted/licensed projects when these are desired by the owner and shown to be in the public interest

Rehabilitation Tax Credits are dollar-for-dollar reductions in income tax liability for taxpayers who rehabilitate historic buildings. Credits are available from both the federal government and the State of Missouri. The amount of the credit is based on total rehabilitation costs. The federal credit is 20% of eligible rehabilitation expenses. The state credit is 25% of eligible rehabilitation expenses. In some cases, taxpayers can qualify under both programs, allowing them to claim credits of 45% of their eligible rehabilitation expenses.
Smart promotion initiatives position your Downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community’s unique characteristics.
Wayfinding in Downtown landscapes proves to be critical beyond basic navigation. Identification and information represented in elements such as monuments, directional systems, directories, interpretive and even regulatory signs enrich our experiences with Downtown environments.

In order to create a successful wayfinding system, even in an age of smartphones and GPS, physical wayfinding elements and systems strengthen brands by improving the legibility, navigation, understanding, and accessibility of the environment.

**Wayfinding Signage Systems**

- Reinforce an area’s defining history, architecture, and landmarks
- Give less prominent districts and destinations a much-needed boost
- Help the public find parking, improve traffic flow and ease the transition between car, pedestrian and transit use
- Reduce visual clutter with clear, consolidated and on-brand information and identity

The following is a set of signage featuring a sample set of new branding marks designed for Poplar Bluff:

**Recommendation**

In Poplar Bluff, wayfinding signage should be strategically implemented to provide directional navigation to and from historic resources like the theater and train depot,
TOURISM & PROMOTION

Wayfinding Signage

Library
Park
Courthouse

POPLAR BLUFF
Historic Downtown
TOURISM & PROMOTION
Special Event Growth Opportunity

**Recommendation**
Enhance the success of Downtown Poplar Bluff’s Farmer’s Market by hosting a Farm to Table dinner on Vine Street. Close the street to vehicular traffic during the event and recruit pop-up vendors to activate sidewalk space or vacant storefronts that are tenantable.

A Farm to Fork Event is an all-local meal event designed to facilitate relationships and inspire community conversation in a delicious, fun, and healthy way by pairing locally grown produce and meat with local chefs who prepare the ingredients for attendees. These events are intended to benefit your local community as well as contribute to the larger local food system conversation.
TOURISM & PROMOTION

Entertainment Overlay Zoning District

Overlay zoning is a regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zone(s), which identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base zone. The overlay district can share common boundaries with the base zone or cut across base zone boundaries. Regulations or incentives are attached to the overlay district to protect a specific resource or guide development within a special area.

Steps to Create an Entertainment Overlay District

• **Define the purpose of the district.** The district should have a clearly defined purpose e.g. to protect drinking water, preserve historical character, minimize erosion from storm water run-off, provide a zone that fosters economic vitality, etc.

• **Identify the areas that make up the district.** Mapping district boundaries will depend on the natural or cultural resources and the geographic areas that relate to achieving the purpose of the district.

• **Develop specific rules that apply to the identified district.** This is where specific provisions like open container, design guidelines, specific zoning techniques, etc. will be applied. Zoning requirements must be applied equally over all properties within the district and must comply with any state and federal regulations and be consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the municipality’s comprehensive plan.

Recommendation

Poplar Bluff should first establish an entertainment overlay zoning district on Vine Street, followed by pedestrian only regularly scheduled events on the street, with the ultimate goal of creating a permanent pedestrian only thoroughfare when patron demand and retail/restaurant offerings reach a peak.
“To Go-Cup” Ordinance

Recommendation

Build relationships with other key communities in the region or state to form a coalition to lobby State and local officials for the passage of a “To-Go Cup” ordinance to allow for open containers within a specified Downtown district or CID.

What’s a To Go-Cup Ordinance?

A “To-Go Cup” Ordinance, typically provided for in state statute, allows downtown participating businesses, in a city with a local authorizing ordinance, to offer a to-go cup for patrons wishing to finish their beverage outside of restaurants or bars within the designated district, typically a Downtown or entertainment district.

How Does it Work?

Most ordinances feature a framework that includes provisions such as:

- Patrons are required to go inside of a restaurant or bar to purchase a beverage. Leaving the site with a drink in hand is allowed, if it is done within the boundaries of the entertainment district.
- To-go cups are issued at the discretion of the individual establishments. The owner, manager, or bartender has the right to refuse a to-go cup to any individual they believe may be in danger of being over-served.
- Only one (plastic, 16 oz. or less) container will be issued per guest over the age of 21. You may not enter licensed premises with an alcoholic beverage.
- Unless otherwise permitted by the property owner, citizens electing to take their beverage “to go” must stay within the public sidewalks and not private property.

You can find a sample state bill and a local authorizing ordinance on your flash drive.
TOURISM & PROMOTION

Optimizing your Downtown’s Facebook Page

Should you be using Facebook to promote your community to residents and tourists?

68% of U.S. adults use Facebook and 51% of them use it several times a day.

The short answer? Yes. These tips and strategies will help you get the most out of your Facebook marketing efforts.

Create a Captivating Profile

A profile picture is the first point of contact your audience interacts with on your page. Easy recognition of the picture is key to being liked and found on Facebook search. Cluttering a profile picture with slogans, contact details is not recommended. Consistency with your branding is important for the coherence of your image.

Cover photos are another element representing your brand and speak loud to your customers as the first impression. Your cover photo should be high quality, engaging and eye catching. Don’t clutter it with texts and be sure to change it often or during your campaigns.

Craft a Complete ‘About’ Page

This is the most visited section of your Facebook profile and informs your audience about your brand and values. Whenever visitors want to find out more information about your business, they head to this section. It is important to give them a clear and concise snapshot of what your brand is about. Your mission, vision, your story, company information and any other relevant details that best showcase your brand. Facebook allows you to customize sections that record your milestones, awards, etc.
TOURISM & PROMOTION

Optimizing your Downtown’s Facebook Page

Customize the ‘Call to Action’ Button on your Page

A call-to-action button is what prompts people to take a certain action. The button prompts things like ‘Sign Up’, ‘Call Now’, ‘Book Now’, ‘Watch Video’, etc. and users are offered the possibility to customize it to different URL destinations they consider pertinent. As a marketer, this gives you the opportunity to drive traffic from your Facebook page to your site easily. This can be added by simply clicking on the page and clicking on the ‘Add a Button’ box, choose which one you want to create and insert the URL you want to direct visitors to. Facebook Insights will help you measure and report the effectiveness of the CTA button.

Know your Audience

Facebook demographics are used to ensure you know your customer personas. They are continuously evolving hence the need to have tools to help you measure, report and keep track of the changes. Knowing your customers’ behaviors will help you tailor your marketing campaigns and promotions to target them. The below questions can help you better understand your ideal customers:

- What is your brand user demographic? Their age, education background, gender, income level, etc.
- Which is the goal of your Facebook campaign? This helps you target the right audience that has the highest chances of being interested in your offer.
- Which is your competitive advantage? What differentiates you from other Downtowns?

Create Engaging Content

One of the most important Facebook rules is creating content that probes your audience to take action. Developing an engaging relationship with your followers is what will determine their interaction with your brand. As content creator, you should not just stick to general statements, opinions and facts but be bold and spice up your content with some fun. Questions, photos that ask questions, and fill-in the blanks are some examples of content that entice people to act.
TOURISM & PROMOTION

Optimizing your Downtown’s Facebook Page

Don’t Forget to Engage

Respond to conversations in the right rhythm and cadence, be responsive and social. Going out of your way to make your audience feel important makes them bond with your brand. Quick feedbacks on Facebook are highly appreciated especially in the early stages of community building. This shows the brand commitment to customer service and smooth communication with its customers.

Create a Balanced Posting Strategy

How frequent you publish posts and when you post them is vital for your Facebook marketing activity. Posting too often might irritate your followers. On the other hand, not posting frequently enough might reduce your chances of credibility and authenticity. Striking a good balance between the two is the key to a strong brand presence.

Facebook insights will greatly help with this as once you have observed the performance of your previous posts you may customize the frequency, timing and strategy as required. Here are some tips to help as you start off:

1. Afternoons and evenings are the times of the day when most people visit their Facebook account so post between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.
   - However, avoid being robotic by posting at the exact time daily.

2. Posting twice a day is adequate to create awareness and gain post impressions. This ensures consistency and originality without looking spammy.

3. Always include images where possible.

There are apps and platforms that allow you to schedule posts in advance, so you’re not on the clock 24/7.
Facebook gives organizations a platform to showcase its character, promote events, and connect with its users.

But with these benefits comes the potential for mistakes that can damage your brand.

**What Not to Do**

1. Never have a personal profile to represent a brand. Create an authentic Facebook Business Page.

2. Never publish personal content on your brand page. Always assign page roles on need-to basis and post as a brand not as a private person.

3. Never spam your followers. Aim to be classy, yet perceptive.

It is of utmost importance for all brands to understand how to properly manage a Facebook business page. The Facebook business page best practices previously listed aid to tight the connection between communities and brands. You get noticed, followed and engage with your target audience creating a reliable pool for lead generation.

But as Facebook is continuously evolving, you need to be up to date and willing to adapt and try different strategies to see massive success and results for your business.
Economic Vitality focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.
ECONOMIC VITALITY

Catalyst Project: Mixed-Use Municipal Building

Recommendation

Prioritize supporting mixed-use developments to facilitate new residential unit growth in Downtown Poplar Bluff through adaptive re-use, renovation or rehabilitation. 115-125 South Broadway is an ideal property for a multi-faceted incentive project (utilizing Local TIF, State Supplemental TIF, historic tax credit, and Lease Assistance Incentives.)

Benefits of Mixed-Use Development

Economic

There are numerous economic benefits to adopting planning strategies, land use practices, and regulations that foster mixed-use development. Studies show a clear connection between walkable environments and the economic viability of a town. The resurgent interest in downtowns and in promoting mixed-use developments throughout metropolitan areas is, in part, driven by a recognition of the value of walkability. Mixed-development that promotes a walkable built environment can help revitalize a downtown, increase private investment, lead to higher property values, promote tourism, and support the development of a good business climate.

Increased Tax Revenue

A compelling argument in favor of mixed-use development is the increase in property tax revenue. As a community becomes denser, municipalities gain more tax revenue per acre than before development. The savings are huge: tax revenue can increase up to 10 times, on average, with the introduction of mixed-use development to a community. The savings are even larger when developments are built outside of an urban setting.
Benefits of Mixed Use Development (Cont.)

Operating Budget Costs Savings

While upfront infrastructure costs and increased tax revenue clearly demonstrate economic savings, municipalities continue to save after a development is completed. Mixed-use projects also reduce ongoing costs to municipalities for services like police, fire and trash. Smart Growth America estimates the average savings at almost 10 percent. While much of the savings comes from a reduced distance to travel, some communities find that fire department response times would be faster and fewer stations would be needed if the city had a better-connected street grid and closer-setbacks.

Environmental

Reducing sprawl and building communities where residents live and walk to work reduces car usage, positively impacting the environment. With the incorporation of mixed-use development and smart growth practices, sprawling development patterns could be reduced and quality of life may be enhanced. Undeveloped land, open space, and historic and natural resources could be preserved.

Health

A neglect of community-design principles, lack of walkable infrastructure, and compartmentalized built environments with single uses can lead to less active lifestyles and a greater incidence of chronic obesity and related diseases.

The Delaware State Housing Authority provides research that shows over 50 percent of Americans would walk and bike more than driving if given the opportunity. Neo-traditional neighborhood design and smart-growth strategies such as mixed-use development are being implemented to mitigate the effects of sprawl, promote a sense of community, and encourage pedestrian-friendly design. In addition to providing public health benefits, walkable communities that are attractive, convenient, and may also contribute to a sense of place that reaps economic rewards.
Supporting Entrepreneurship

Recommendation
Work with property owners to encourage development of entrepreneur ready shell space in ground floor of vacant properties. Determine opportunity for local incentives from City of Poplar Bluff to accompany this effort.

What is Shell Space?
Shell space refers to a suite or floor within a building that has floor, walls, windows and a roof, but no interior improvements. It may also have some basic HVAC, plumbing and electrical.

Shell Condition Space Typically Does Not Include:
- Demising walls
- Doors, frames and hardware
- Ceilings
- Finishes including paint and flooring
- Millwork
- Mechanical Systems
- Electrical Power and Lighting
- Plumbing for restrooms and breakroom areas

Shell condition space is typically found in new construction but can also be found in older Downtown buildings if the landlord has demoed an existing suite or is looking to attract new tenants.
ECONOMIC VITALITY

Supporting Entrepreneurship

Developing Shell Space in Vacant Ground floor Property

A typical example of what you can expect from shell space in a new development.
ECONOMIC VITALITY
Retail & Restaurant Mix

Recommendation

People love a main street, but the tired, dated look and incomplete tenant mix of many smaller downtowns—along with car-oriented streets—are a deterrent to revitalization. Small-to-midsize downtowns represent some of the best opportunities and biggest challenges for urban retail in the next decade.

Up to the 1950s, most Americans shopped, and sought services and entertainment in downtowns—large and small. Then a succession of strip malls, indoor malls, and big box stores captured most customers. Many middle-class households moved to the suburbs and suburban malls benefited from a coordinated tenant mix and management that downtowns lacked. The main streets and downtowns lost up to 90 percent of their business in the latter half of the 20th Century.

A return to urban living means that downtowns have an opportunity to regain some of their market share, if positioned properly.

The following are categories of businesses that show a propensity for success based on Market Analysis & Consumer Spending Patterns.

Poplar Bluff should take steps to recruit these types of businesses from other areas of the City or from neighboring communities for expansion:

- grocery
- electronics & appliance
- sporting goods & hobby
- apparel
- restaurant
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Recruiting Retail Downtown

Retail leads can be broken down into four general categories:

1. **Existing Businesses within or near the business district**

   Often the best leads are found near home. Leads might include existing businesses seeking more space or a better location in the business district. The district’s business owner survey as well as ongoing conversations and personal contacts of the recruitment team, chamber of commerce and other economic development professionals can help identify these leads.

2. **Emerging Entrepreneurs**

   Downtowns and business districts are often attractive to independent businesses. Accordingly, leads might include home-based or garage-based businesses seeking more fitting space and a convenient location for their customers. These leads might include managers of existing businesses wishing to go into business on their own. Commercial lenders, business schools, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counselors, Main Street program business specialists, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), chamber of commerce and other public or private small business professionals should be asked to help identify these leads.

3. **Existing Local or Regional Businesses**

   Local or regional businesses, particularly those that have branch stores and are ready to expand, are often excellent prospects. These business operators typically have a good knowledge of the market area and may already have multiple stores. They are often interested in expansion as a way to improve their penetration of the market. These leads can be identified through your team’s knowledge of the business mix in other communities in the region and information collected from your local consumer research. In addition, realtors, commercial brokers, sales representatives and supplies that work within the region can be helpful. Sometimes ads in regional business, real estate and regional lifestyle periodicals can generate leads.

4. **National Chains**

   If local or regional businesses are not interested in expanding, larger national chains can be contacted. It is important to be realistic about the kinds of chains that might be interested in a small community as their market, store size and parking requirements may preclude them from considering your district. Leads can be identified through directories and private databases listing chain site selection criteria and contacts. In addition, leads can also come from commercial brokers, trade shows, “deal making forums,” and conferences such as those offered by the International Council of Shopping Centers.
The good news about tough economic times is that they breed ingenuity. Property owners and community leaders need to think “inside the box” — the vacant storefront, the empty warehouse, or the small office building abandoned by the busted start-up firm.

By thinking short-term instead of long-term lease, entertainment instead of shopping, farmers market instead of vacant lot, that space — particularly in well located areas — may be suited to new opportunities.

**Short-term Leases**

A pop-up or short-term lease program *activates vacant properties by introducing new, creative, and temporary retail locations with visual aesthetic*. These programs can create an environment that engages customers and authenticates downtown as a vibrant space, ready for long-term investment.

**Subdividing Ground Floor Storefronts into Smaller Parcels**

A smaller retail space means lower overhead costs and allows retailers to quickly move inventory in and out of the store. It also ensures retailers keep their displays fresh and continually try new merchandising tactics. With an initial build-out investment, *property owners can reimagine their existing storefront footprint*, and subdivide into more, lower square footage spaces, increasing the vitality of the corridor, but also lessening the burden for entrepreneurs.
Backfilling Vacancies

**Recommendation**

Work with property owners and community leaders to develop a plan to begin backfilling vacant properties, starting with short term leasing (pop-ups) and reconfiguration of existing ground floor space.

Landlords and their leasing agents must get creative and think out of the box when retail space remains vacant for too long. Not only does this empty space strain the property owner, but it creates an eyesore in the community. An easy way to remedy both problems is to lease the space out on a short-term basis.

**The Length of Leases and Other Considerations**

Pop-up shop leases usually last between six weeks and a year, with many non-seasonal retailers willing to sign month-to-month leases that could result in long-term tenancy. Rents for pop-up shops tend to be less expensive than those secured by traditional leases, sometimes by as much as 50% below lease value.

Of course, this concept works best when there is little or no space modification necessary. Generally, just adding desks and chairs or some kind of display shelving or fixtures is all that’s required. And, these simple additions/changes can be easily implemented or erected and then torn down. Modifications are usually not a stumbling block because the tenant wants an easy move-in/move-out phase, and the landlord wants little or no refit between tenants.

**The Pros and Cons for Landlords**

While a long-term lease commitment is ideal, a pop-up operation is not entirely unattractive to landlords. That’s because the prospect of bringing in some rent is better than no rent at all. The aesthetic value that a bustling pop-up operation can add to a location should also not be overlooked. It can only help consumer confidence and show off the retail space as being desirable. The short length of these leases can also be a huge benefit to landlords by providing immediate mortgage assistance while leaving prospects open for long-term leasers once the market (even a hyper-localized one) becomes more favorable.
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Pop-ups

What makes a good pop-up?

Well managed pop-ups are thoughtfully designed spaces, that allow for customers to interact with merchandise, try on options, and develop a connection with the brand. Pop-ups should be beautiful, mobile extensions of the brand. They should house remarkable experiences for customers, influencers, and employees.

Why are they effective?

They’re experiential – Experiential Retail is a strategy used in the retail landscape to increase engagement, interest, and traffic in physical retail locations. It provides an opportunity for brands to connect in one-on-one interactions with their customers. Theoretically, these interactions happen in an environment where happy and powerful memories are being made. While the experience can take many forms, experiential retail usually includes some sensory, educational, and communal experiences with emotional connotations. So, through your experience-driven retail strategy, the brand becomes associated with those powerful memories.

They’re temporary – the temporary nature of pop-up shops is baked right into the model. Temporary opportunities are often perceived as scarce and therefore develop a sense of urgency in a customer base. That’s why big sales have a time limit. Customers need to come in fast, regardless of the obstacles, to take advantage of the sale. Pop-ups drive a similar phenomenon but instead of saving money, customers save themselves from FOMO (the fear of missing out).

They’re inexpensive – When we talk about inexpensive options, we’re typically talking about the total cost of ownership. The temporary nature of a pop-up means that you aren’t paying the 10-year lease agreements common for most brick-and-mortar retailers, you aren’t required to customize the space, and you aren’t tied down to a single location. Beyond that, pop-ups are typically custom designs or DIY projects which gives an entrepreneur or brand much more flexibility to play with design, materials, and layout to value-engineer a budget.
**ECONOMIC VITALITY**

**Walk-up Window Restaurant Concepts**

**Recommendation**

Work with a local architect to create a speculative walk-up window restaurant build-out design to share with popular restaurants and property owners in the area.

Walk-up window restaurants feature no indoor dining space and facilitate a pedestrian-focused grab-and-go style experience. Locating a walk-up window restaurant adjacent to a parklet or a shared outdoor dining space is ideal for using public space in a collaborative way.

This technique also backfills vacant space on a micro-level, while preserving non-storefront space for office space or other uses.
Integrate customer offerings across channels through omnichannel retail strategies.

There is an increasing emphasis on the omnichannel experience as businesses look for new ways to connect to customers offline and online. The rise of e-commerce has been a notable trend, accounting for up to 12% of the retail market in 2020. The omnichannel strategy relies on the concept of seamless shopping experience in brick and mortar stores along with a variety of digital channels, which provides the added value of both instore assets and online access. Walmart is looked to as the prime example of an omnichannel retailer that has upgraded brick and mortar stores resulting in increased foot traffic while also increasing its online offerings.

Make use of technology to strategically grow business. Develop technological capacity where needed.

Successful retailers are adapting to increasing technology use by consumers and using technology to streamline and create new ways of doing business. Large retailers are looking to engage with technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality. A great challenge for small retailers is keeping up with the fast pace of technological change. However, they can explore options, evaluate potential returns on investment, and take strategic steps to technologically innovate. From a customer-facing perspective, retailers can embrace mobile technology and mobile payment methods, use video marketing, use social media, and offer same-day delivery options and “buy online pick-up in store” services. From an operational perspective, businesses are anticipated to increasingly use POS (point of sale) technologies, operate on the Cloud, and utilize other digital tools such as Shopify and Comment Sold.
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Trends in Successful Retail Businesses

Build a strong digital presence as a touch point for initial and recurring interaction with customers.

While not as widely noted as e-commerce as a trend, digital-first retail is arguably more influential than e-commerce. Digital-first retail is the growing tendency of consumers' shopping journeys to be influenced by digital channels, regardless of where the ultimate transaction takes place. Leading brands, from Apple to Nike to Walmart, are evolving into digital-first organizations. They’re investing to create product content that serves as the bridge between the online and offline worlds, and helping consumers shop when, where and how they want. While e-commerce now accounts for approximately 12% of all retail sales, it’s projected that web-influenced physical store sales are about five times online sales.

Invest in understanding the customer. One notable trend is customer experience.

Retailers are doing more to understand and engage the customer. One important trend is that customers are increasingly valuing experience. Customer experience has been called the next competitive battleground. The success of Apple, Lululemon, and Free People are attributed to creating a valued, personalized in-store customer experience. Technology provides an opportunity for retailers to understand and connect more directly with customers.

Strengthen brand engagement and build a base of loyal followers.

Lululemon and Free People are commonly cited examples of companies that have built strong brands based on quality and lifestyle. This branding has been attributed to not offering products at a discount, whereas other companies have trained customers to buy during regular product discount periods. However, other off-price retailers such as Ross and TJ Maxx take advantage of culture of bargain hunting and have survived their competitors. These retailers are examples of brand identities that have found a niche in consumer preference.
ECONOMIC VITALITY

Trends in Successful Retail Businesses

Leverage consumer preference for uniqueness, authenticity and local flavor. Explore submarkets and consider engaging local institutions and community.

Consumer preference for uniqueness, authenticity, and local flavor is noted to be on the rise. Brick-and-mortar retailers and those on main streets are poised to capitalize on this trend. Related to this trend, local retail stores can benefit from awareness of the resources and efforts of local institutions and building relationships with local institutions and the community. Examples from cities where local businesses and main streets are invigorated communities creating strong local business associations; working with local agencies to support walkability, streetscape improvements, and residential and commercial use; renovating historical buildings in commercial districts; and attracting restaurants, breweries, and shops that contribute to local personality.

Are strategic about innovating ways of doing business.

Across trends, successful retailers are strategic rather than reactionary in finding innovative ways of doing business. They are evaluating business nuts and bolts and opportunities unique to them, right-sizing brick-and-mortar stores, carefully constructing brands, finding niche markets, finding new ways to serve the customer, creating new partnerships and connecting with expertise and networks. New technologies for most small businesses is not an either/or proposition. They can adopt the use of new technologies and still rely on the tried-and-true ways of doing business.

Recommendation

Hold merchant training and workshops to encourage Downtown business owners to increase their level of operations, modernize their reliance on technology, and implement new and savvy ways to reach customers of all generations.
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Downtown Property Inventory

This data, included on your flash drive, can be used to better understand Downtown assets and weaknesses; identify potential locations for technical assistance; measure community achievements of recruitment and retention goals; development of a comprehensive kiosk map as part of your wayfinding signage system; and to market, retain, recruit, and track development trends within the downtown commercial area. It can also be used for:

Community Improvement Districts

A business improvement district (CID) is essentially a nonprofit organization that manages a commercial area. They can provide a variety of services, like sidewalk cleaning, capital improvements, security, parking and transportation management, and social services. But they also work to market and promote an area, recruit new businesses, and retain current businesses. CIDs are created by local governments and are given the ability to raise funding through taxes on commercial property owners. Knowing your Downtown’s tax revenue capabilities, property owners, and square footage of buildings expedites the CID creation process.

Distribution of Space

Data can be extrapolated and categorized to determine use, such as: Consumer Services, Retail, Food & Beverage, Government, Non-profit, Vacant, and Parking.

Historic Resources Survey

Historic resources surveys collect and record information about extant historic resources, usually on a county-wide, community-wide, or neighborhood-wide basis. City or county governments generally undertake surveys for their communities as a first step in documenting historic resources for planning purposes.