

F. Downtown

This chapter details the Vision Statement, goal, and strategies developed by the Downtown Citizen Topic Group. They looked at three specific subtopics:

- Subtopic: Investments
- Subtopic: Housing
- Subtopic: Mobility

The Downtown Vision Statement is as follows:

“Downtown Columbia is a hip and vibrant district with a diversity of easily accessible businesses, residences, attractions, and institutions; it is an exciting gathering place for all types of people.”

Investments

Goal:
 Significant investments in the physical, community, and business environment, as well as the tools to leverage economic strength, will bring vibrancy and diversity of culture, professions, and businesses, and lead to major attractions and exciting destinations.

Strategies and Action Plans

Strategy 1: Create a new management organization through public-private partnerships whose core purpose is to make downtown a compelling city center in which to live, work, play, shop, study, and invest.

Action Plan ***Note: For further information, please see Appendix C for a highly detailed report and Action Plan regarding Downtown Investments.*

Who should take the lead: Public and private sector leaders; the proposed Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC); City Government; the proposed Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP)	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
The broader mid-MO communities, County and State Government, Chamber, REDI, area business community (including financial institutions, etc.), Non-profit organizations, institutions (MU, SC, CC, etc.) and the community at large	Development of creative policies and actions to prompt significant Downtown (DT) revival to attract sufficient new business, public and private investment, and the young talent necessary to sustain itself and grow in the years ahead (The Knowledge Economy / the Creative Economy implications)
A Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC) A Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP) A Downtown Columbia Development Authority (DCDA)	Creation of a DT Development Concept Plan, DT Revitalization Strategic Business Plan, Design Guidelines for building and developers, Market Analysis, and DT Existing Conditions Assessment, etc. Creation of an identity/brand for DT Columbia as the civic and cultural heart of the region, which will help citizens from throughout the region regain civic pride, support DT initiatives and promote the Mid-MO Region as a thriving area
Various consultants	
Citizens of mid-Missouri	Will help guide what and how our “DT Living Room” should look, feel, and inspire how each of us will experience it, whether it is to shop, live, work, play, be entertained, or study and grow
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
Retain Sasaki again to analyze the remaining 322 acres and develop a development concept plan for the entire downtown area The proposed DT Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC) and the proposed Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP) should facilitate community consensus around a shared concept vision for the future of Downtown Columbia Initiate the process of developing a Downtown Economic Development and Revitalization Strategic Plan to direct future public and private investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design the future of Downtown Columbia as a Regional Center • Form a DT Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC): an advisory group (comprised of our city mayor, city manager, planning director, county executive, county legislature, Chamber, REDI, District President, and others) to guide the development of a DT Strategic Business Plan • Develop a set of DT Physical Development Goals, Objectives and Strategies Develop the Public Policy Framework that will support our guiding principles and provide the basis for our planning concept that will support our goals • Formalize the DT Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP) to create a concept-level development plan and guide development of the Economic Development and Revitalization Strategic Plan and make recommendations to the City Council • Pursue a holistic community development strategy with many integrated strategies; need to identify comprehensive, interrelated strategies and principles for making Downtown Columbia the best it can be in the coming years • Develop a Strategic Framework for Downtown Revitalization by describing the strategic framework of primary land uses or themes and supporting strategies

toward the goal of creating a vital, thriving and self-sustaining DT	
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Strategy 2: Create an enhanced economic development strategy that acknowledges the link between economic prosperity and the central city, promoting Columbia as a “cultural, business, entertainment, and educational center” for the region while attracting jobs, people, and opportunities.

Action Plan ***Note: For further information, please see Appendix C for a highly detailed report and Action Plan regarding Downtown Investments.*

Who should take the lead: The three 3 newly formed organizations the Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLCA), the Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP), and the Downtown Columbia Development Authority (DCDA); the proposed “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy” Taskforce (The Triple E Taskforce)	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
Columbia City Government, REDI, Chamber, Higher educational institutions (MU, SC, CC, etc.), Financial institutions collaborating with community leaders and businesses	Creating a DT climate and environment where entrepreneurship is recognized, celebrated and supported, an environment that nurtures and grows entrepreneurs
Mid-MO counties, State and Federal governments, Regional planning commission	Design and implement creative policies and actions that support entrepreneurship and small business development and the habitat (DT revival) young professionals require and which is necessary to attract sufficient new business
Three newly formed organizations will work together to achieve a vibrant DT: The proposed Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC) (Strategy 1) The proposed Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP) (Strategy 1) An “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy” Taskforce (Strategy 2)	For all DT planning, investments and implementation, City Council approval The DT Revitalization Strategic Business Plan operating through public-private partnerships, management committees and the promotion of a vibrant DT Columbia and region For all DT economic development business and workforce/job growth; community efforts could become the model that influences policy makers in our statehouse for small-medium metropolitan cities in MO
Community input as well as various consultants for strategic and technical assistance working with the Triple E Taskforce	Design and develop a new enhanced DT (Regional) Economic Development Strategic Plan through making the case, readiness assessment, strategy building, capacity building, and evaluation criteria process
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
The Triple E Taskforce’s organization in coordination with the new DT Leadership Council (DTLC), the new DT Development Partnership (DTDP) and our new regional commission–Develop an economic development plan for DT The purpose of this plan is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what drives the Columbia economy and what future trends may have the greatest impact of the city’s economy Develop a shared vision for DT through community surveys, community forums and focus groups Establish a 10 year vision for Columbia’s economy Develop a set of economic goals that identify specific objectives and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept and understand the implications that the rules of economic development have been transforming dramatically.. Encourage efforts that will increase the opportunities for today’s businesses, while expanding the possibilities for future workers and entrepreneurs – offering opportunities for our children/students to stay in the region and obtain competitive jobs Set-up an “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy Taskforce” (The Triple E Taskforce) for DT Columbia and our region Create a stimulating and supportive environment for entrepreneurs by making policy choices and decisions that produce a positive climate for entrepreneurship and by investing in infrastructure that supports entrepreneurs Build on the Arts: Great arts and cultural venues will be the department stores for the 21st Century Promote DT Columbia as an incubator of ideas and dreams: Coordinate and expand business attraction and retention activities: Columbia has a diverse business base, but may need to reuse several DT vacant buildings or lots and expand its retail diversity to appeal to a larger customer base The “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy” Taskforce (The Triple E Taskforce works in tandem with the Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP) to develop joint recommendations to create new live/work environments DT, new areas as

recommend the types of activity that the City and its economic partners can pursue	business parks for office, light industrial, technology-based businesses, a park system to connect to the live/work environment, promote DT as a destination for local citizens, visitors and new businesses and new investments, place pedestrians first while maintaining DT’s integrity and history by defining the DT Columbia experience through its buildings
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Strategy 3: Create a climate where catalytic projects are financially feasible using appropriate incentives and funding sources.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead: City of Columbia, based on input from other groups	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
Developers / Property Owners (invest in projects)	Work in partnership with the city to create a land use plan that meets their needs as well as the needs of business, residents, and the general public Develop truly catalytic projects Adopt a long-term investment approach to downtown projects to ensure the development remains successful over time (i.e., high quality construction, 5-year business/tenant recruitment plan, etc.)
Banks / Lending Institutions (finances projects)	Create special teams to handle new types of development projects, perhaps looking to branches in other areas for ideas Develop clear expectations for developers seeking financing (i.e., required outreach to certain groups, approval of design, comprehensive financing plan and business plan) Work cooperatively with other lenders and government organizations to pull together large funding packages Have solutions available to non-profit or state-owned institutions interested in development projects
Columbia Special Business District (provides support to ensure success of projects)	Continue to advocate on behalf of their members (developers, businesses and residents) with the various levels of government Continue to provide and distribute marketing and other data necessary to attract developers, businesses and residents Remain the marketing and public relations organization for <i>The District</i> Continue to provide key services and capital improvements Continue to monitor the “big picture” to help ensure development projects work in concert Continue business recruitment and training programs, reaching out to the SBA, the Chamber and other groups to coordinate or consolidate efforts Create a stronger, better funded organization to provide more services to the area
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
The city publicly commits to creating a cohesive development package including: incentives, design guidelines, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an incentive package, including MODESA (City) • Develop a land use plan and design / development standards (City) • Reorganize the SBD to better address future needs of downtown businesses, property owners, and residents (SBD) • Pull together a business recruitment / retention team (Conglomeration of existing business-support organizations) • Pull together a development assistance team (Conglomeration of existing development assistance organizations.)

Housing

Goal:

Downtown Columbia will have a variety of safe housing options, including new and revitalized units, for all age groups and income levels with easy access to desirable amenities. Development and design guidelines will be instituted.

Strategies and Action Plans

Strategy 1: Follow up on the implementation strategies of the Sasaki Opportunity Study, including creation of the implementation entity Missouri Downtown Economic Stimulus Act, in order to facilitate the development of new housing downtown.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead: City of Columbia	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
University of Missouri	Provide needed funding, staff support and representation on board
Stephens College	Provide needed funding, staff support and representation on board
Columbia Special Business District	Continue to advocate on behalf of its members
Central City Neighborhoods	Facilitate two-way communication and cooperation in planning forums
Columbia College and Columbia Housing Authority	Participate in discussions and provide representation for committees
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
Generate more public information about ongoing meetings of the three initial partners; frequent updates on progress of project; press releases and public vision casts from City Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City, University and Stephens College formalize partnership • Create governing “board” • Begin preparation of MODESA application

Strategy 2: Contact realtors, retailers, developers, and financial sources to access the barriers and opportunities to downtown housing development.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead: Public, private, and civic leaders	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
City Managers office	To give an overview of what can and can’t be accomplished
Developers who have the skills to carry project to completion	Must have knowledge and avenue of resources
Planners and consultants- both City and individuals with foresight and vision	Skilled visionaries
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
Provide incentives such as tax incentives, credits, grants, rebates, and identifying land/buildings to be targeted as goals; Analyze zoning, rules and regulation, ordinances to modify the implementation of goals and strategies; Design parking garages differently for both City and University owned property. Improve streetscape by having	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what land/ buildings can be purchased or redeveloped • Inventory Particularly City and County owned land and buildings • What parking lots and property can City, County, Churches relinquish or acquire from private ownership • Sell the land/buildings to developers, not investors

storefronts with parking behind and overhead; Consider underground parking	
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Mobility

Goal:
 People and vehicles will have easy access to downtown businesses and services and enhanced movement within and through the downtown area.

Strategies and Action Plans

Strategy 1: Establish a baseline of existing traffic information including the mobility of vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, buses, delivery trucks, and the use of existing parking assets. Develop recommendations based upon findings.

Strategy 2: Research similar cities with respect to efficient use of assets (alleyways, walkways, bike paths, parking spaces, etc.) for considerations for plans for Columbia.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead: City	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
City Parking	
SBD	
Pednet	
University/Colleges – Columbia, Stephens	
Disabilities Commission	
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data on vehicular, pedestrian and bike traffic downtown • Use the newly collected data to determine the extent of the problem • Explore how other similar cities have addressed these issues (ie, field trips, etc.). • Establish a committee of above interests designed to address the entire issue rather than a piece of it • Issues to look at: Broadway congestion (alternate route East to West), Study “left turns” on Broadway, would “back in” park work better, restructure parking fees – more expensive to park on Broadway/less in garage, E3 park cards, improve Walnut corridor (i.e lights, sidewalks, etc), consider improving walk to town from all campuses (i.e. safety considerations), an improved plan for delivery in the downtown area.

* This action plan covers both strategies.