

4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Section 4: Implementation Plan contains recommendations on how to revitalize and/or develop the existing conditions as assessed in *Section 2: Physical Plan* and *Section 3: Economic Plan*. This section includes strategies to encourage good downtown design; updates to comprehensive planning and zoning policies; and a market analysis to determine what kinds of retailing and other uses the downtown target area could support and suggestions for incentives.

4.1 Physical Recommendations

As per the Downtown Property Inventory and Smart Growth Policy Checklist (Municipal Scorecard) assessment in *Section 2: Physical Plan*, the physical implementation of this report will consist of design improvements and historic preservation practices in addition to areas of opportunity for the comprehensive plan and land use regulations.

Maintaining an active downtown inventory assists in renting and selling downtown property; efficient site selection between the community, realtors, developers and new businesses; evaluating the current supply of products and services; and determining business expansion and recruitment opportunities. The inventory also provides information about public and private spaces, buildings, and infrastructure in the downtown target area. Two categories of work most popular in downtown revitalization are design improvements and historic preservation practices. This is due largely to the physical elements of downtown design being most tangible.

Based on survey findings of the Downtown Property Inventory, MPA could work to promote design awareness and the value of historic preservation in the downtown target area by doing the following:

- A historic resource survey should be conducted to identify significant buildings, districts, objects, sites, and structures located throughout the village so that policies, procedures, and strategies for maintaining and enhancing them can be established. For more information, refer to the National Park Service's National Register Bulletin No. 24: *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*.
- Conducting a comprehensive photo inventory of the downtown target area to compliment the property owner survey is a simple design education and awareness project. A current photo inventory documents the current condition of the entire district. The photos will be valuable for "before and after" photo displays, for providing design assistance, and to include in business recruitment information.
- Public programs could be offered that inform property owners about the proper care of historic building materials found in exterior walls, such as bricks and wood clapboard, in addition to common materials used in the foundations of the downtown buildings such as poured concrete, concrete block, and stone. These programs could also build awareness on the use of artificial siding on historic buildings so that if these substitute materials must be used, it can be installed without irreversibly damaging or obscuring the architectural features and trim of the building. For more information, refer to the National Park Service's Preservation Brief No. 8: *Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on*

Historic Buildings (The Appropriateness of Substitute Materials for Resurfacing Historic Wood Frame Buildings) and No. 16: *The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*.

- To activate vacant storefronts, a window display program could be developed. Window displays can be used to achieve multiple goals, such as promoting other businesses and attractions in the Village of Macedon.

To achieve revitalization goals for the downtown target area, the downtown's relationship to the Village's master plan must also be considered. Many comprehensive plans include a section or component for the community's downtown. These sections usually have one focus, such as land use, transportation, or historic preservation. The advantage of having part of the comprehensive plan focused on the downtown is that it's in accordance with planning policies and principles of the overall comprehensive plan. Therefore, areas of opportunity for updates to the Village of Macedon's Master Plan as it pertains to the downtown target area are as follows:

- A pedestrian component, which includes policy framework on trees and other vegetation to act as a buffer between pedestrians and automobiles, and resources to properly maintain the pedestrian environment.
- Addressing access to sidewalks, streets, parks, and other private and public services for people with disabilities.
- Addressing transportation systems and networks, such as linking pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and public transit trips.
- Clarifying the function and value of open space to the downtown, such as undeveloped land, mature trees, and corridors.
- The protection of historic resources and the role of a historic preservation commission.
- The creation of a Business Improvement District (BID). The proceeds from this levy are used to supplement existing public services and foster improvements for businesses within the district.
- Tools and incentives that encourage mixed-use developments, such as retrofitting single-use commercial developments, declining shopping malls, and strip retail centers.
- Establishing clear design guidelines so that streets, buildings, and public spaces work together to create a sense of place.
- Strengthen local brownfield efforts to coordinate with state brownfield programs and improve remediation efforts.
- Explore the use of code enforcement, incentives, and partnerships to minimize and abate vacant properties.
- Adopting a "fix-it-first" policy that prioritizes the maintenance and upgrades to existing facilities and structures.
- Incorporating principles of sustainability, such as supporting green building strategies and green technologies.

Zoning, therefore, could serve as a tool to implement land use decisions in the comprehensive plan. As per the Smart Growth Policy Checklist, the following suggestions apply to the Village of Macedon's zoning/land use regulations for the downtown target area:

- Exploring the use of overlay zones and Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) with complimentary design guidelines. Overlay zones permit a special application of land use and building design standards in a targeted area. PUDs provide flexibility in zoning requirements when evaluating the nature and location of uses and buildings for an entire site. In order to ensure the preservation of community character and that new development reflects an appropriate and complimentary style, a design review board should also be created to oversee this zoning district.
- To make commercial areas more walkable, adopt design standards for sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle enhancements to local zoning and site planning requirements. For more information, refer to the Genesee Transportation Council's *Bicycle and Pedestrian Supportive Code Language* project.
- Exploring the use of form based zoning requirements, which limits regulation to building type and allows building owners to determine uses.
- Utilizing pictures in zoning regulations to better illustrate their intent to the general public, such as accompanying design guidelines in *Article XII: Sign Regulations*.
- Evaluating enforcement policies and strategies and parking regulations.

4.2 Economic Recommendations

The survey results discussed in *Section 3: Economic Plan* form the foundation for the economic development recommendations outlined here. Three general themes to emerge from the Downtown Business Owner Survey are: the request for grant and loan assistance to assist in building maintenance, an improvement with regards to the permitting process, and the desire for more retail businesses. The main themes emerging from the Consumer Intercept Survey are an improvement in the selection of retail/services; better upkeep of buildings; and maintaining the community character through streetscape improvements.

The data collected from the two surveys was considered in the formulation of the following economic development recommendations. These recommendations are broken down into three sections: Smart Growth, Business Attraction/Retention, and Marketing Coordination. Altogether, the three sections form the basis for an economic development strategic plan that can be fully developed with individual tasks and responsible parties.

Smart Growth

The implementation and support of smart growth principles within the downtown target area will not only benefit the general public, but they will help the business community as well. Smart growth practices take advantage of the existing downtown for development opportunities, in order to help prevent sprawl, deteriorating infrastructure, overcrowded schools, tax increases, and

traffic congestion. It also helps encourage building renovation and rehabilitation.⁸ Successful implementation of smart growth principles helps develop a sense of place within the downtown target area so that it can compete with the growing discount centers and regional malls; important when you consider that 68% of the consumer intercept survey respondents identified that they shop at the discount super center.

Professor Kent Robertson of St. Cloud State University, Minnesota discussed the components of developing a downtown “sense of place” for a *Main Street News* article entitled, “Enhancing Downtown’s Sense of Place.”⁹ The components discussed are: downtown is multifunctional, downtown is pedestrian friendly, downtown encourages people to linger, and downtown engenders a high level of community ownership.¹⁰

Having a multifunctional downtown encourages visitors for a variety of reasons, such as the handling of government business, shopping, and the Erie Canal. A pedestrian friendly downtown encourages these visitors to walk around and visit multiple stores without the need to move their car. A safe and walkable community also encourages people to stay in the downtown for an extended period of time and promotes the spending of additional money. One of the important benefits of a strong sense of place that Robertson points out is the community pride that exists.¹¹ This sense of pride is built over many years and ties into the history that the community has with the downtown developed through many visits to the retail shops and the relationships that exist amongst businesses owners and customers.

Businesses can play a critical role in the development and support of smart growth policies because of their impact on the community. One important recommendation for those business owners that are also property owners is to support downtown revitalization through building maintenance and appearance. Property owners can encourage their neighbors to do the same. Additionally, the business community can foster business-to-business education on the importance of smart growth and the sense of place.¹² Hearing this message from another voice besides government can be quite beneficial and provide business owners with an understanding that the support of these policies helps improve the bottom line for everyone.

Encouraging outside business to invest in the established downtown is also a critical component of smart growth.¹³ This investment allows new business to take advantage of the pedestrian traffic that already exists in the downtown and also benefits the community by preserving the downtown’s distinct character by bringing back to life many underutilized lots.

⁸ National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals and Smart Growth Leadership Institute, *Smart Growth is Smart Business: Boosting the Bottom Line and Community Prosperity* (2004), 1.

⁹ Kent Robertson, “Enhancing Downtown’s Sense of Place,” *Main Street News*, no. 157 (September 1999): 1-4 and 12-13.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals, *Profiles of Business Leadership on Smart Growth: New Partnerships Demonstrate the Economic Benefits of Reducing Sprawl* (1999), 87.

¹³ National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals and Smart Growth Leadership Institute, 13.

Therefore, economic development recommendations based on smart growth principles for the target area are as follows:

- Cultivate relationships with local schools and colleges to provide assistance to local businesses.¹⁴
- Designate a vacant properties coordinator to address any properties that are abandoned or underutilized.¹⁵
- Conduct an “infill checkup” to evaluate potential development sites for businesses before they show interest in locating to the community.¹⁶
- Expand economic incentives for businesses and homeowners to locate in areas with existing infrastructure¹⁷ (i.e. tax increment financing, zoning waivers, expedited permitting, favorable lending terms, etc.).

Business Attraction/Retention

Attracting new business to the downtown and retaining those businesses that are currently operating helps to address issues such as vacant buildings and storefronts, improves the streetscape and encourage pedestrians to visit and walk around the target area. New business provides consumers with more choices and additional reasons to use the downtown. These new downtown visitors help existing businesses expand their customer base. Bringing new business to vacant storefronts also helps create an improved downtown image and helps maintain the character of the community. It is also important to not forget the existing businesses within any economic development strategy (see Figures 4-1 and 4-2, next page), as they typically account for the largest portion of any job growth within a community.¹⁸ Listening to the concerns and thoughts of these existing businesses also helps to improve strategies for targeting new business development. The many business assistance/incentive programs that are currently available can also be utilized to both retain and attract businesses in the downtown target area.

Recommendations for business attraction/retention are as follows:

- Establish a business retention team and hold periodic meetings with the business community to discuss any problems and potential solutions.
- Develop a vision of the types of businesses desired in the downtown target area and coordinate marketing accordingly.
- Continue to provide businesses with access to low interest loans through revolving loan fund to assist business expansion efforts.
- Develop a small business counseling program to work individually with businesses to assist them as needed and identify opportunities for expansion.

¹⁴ Smart Growth Network and International City/County Management Association, *Getting to Smart Growth: 100 Policies for Implementation* (2002), 83.

¹⁵ Smart Growth Network and International City/County Management Association, *Getting to Smart Growth II: 100 More Policies for Implementation* (2002), 69.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 56.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 58.

¹⁸ Rhonda Phillips and Robert Pittman, *Introduction to Community Development* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 210.

- Link businesses with workforce training courses that are being provided to increase production and efficiency and the sustainability of each business.
- Establish a database of available assistance programs and market to both existing businesses and new businesses looking to expand into the downtown target area.
- Provide businesses with grant resources to assist them in façade development and improvements.
- Proactively work with businesses that seem to be struggling to help keep them in business.



Figures 4-1 & 4-2: An economic strategy should address strengthening existing businesses, such as this downtown floral/gift store (left) and home furnishings store (right). Business assistance may include how to better reach customers, improve business skills, and general assistance to reposition or expand.

Marketing Coordination

A large portion of the economic development strategy revolves around the marketing of the downtown target area and the assets available to businesses. Having the right programs and resources in place is important, but linking these assets to the appropriate organizations is even more critical.

Once an economic development vision is in place for the downtown target area, the marketing process can begin. This vision will define the types of businesses the downtown is looking to attract and identify a contact person for target area development. A brochure and other marketing materials can be developed and targeted to relevant businesses, the existing network of current businesses, and local entrepreneurial classes. Marketing efforts can also be expanded to help attract more residents and visitors to the downtown target area for events. Additionally, a website can be developed to promote the downtown, business resources available, and any space available for sale or rent. The following suggestions can assist in the marketing coordination of the downtown target area:

- Develop marketing brochures/material for business attraction. Material can include information such as demographic data, local market trends, the current mix of retail in the

- downtown, traffic and pedestrian counts, information on special events, available space, business assistance/incentives that can be provided, and contact information.¹⁹
- Designate one person as the contact for target area development. This can speed up the assistance process and help develop relationships within the business community.
 - Utilize the networks of existing businesses and local entrepreneur and business courses to target new business owners.
 - Coordinate with local organizations, such as: Wayne County Industrial Development Agency (WCIDA), Macedon-Palmyra Chamber of Commerce, Wayne County Business Council, American Legion, Macedon Gardening Club, and Macedon Partners Association, Inc. Each of these organizations participates in some aspect of marketing the target area and aligning all promotions will strengthen the message.
 - Develop and maintain a website or utilize existing social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to promote the downtown target area to current and future businesses and to promote events to residents and visitors.

¹⁹ The Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities, *The Pennsylvania Downtown Economic Development Toolkit* (2007), 65.