

Downtown Development

Iowa Downtown Resource Center



Downtown is a symbol of economic health of the community....and even a key element in industrial, commercial and professional development.



Iowa Downtown Resource Center

- Downtown Assessment Visits
- Downtown Walk Arouns
- Downtown Exchange
- Iowa Downtown Conference
- Downtown Forums
- Downtown Revitalization Grants (CDBG)
- Online Resources
- Main Street Iowa
- Community Catalyst Building Remediation Grants
- Shop Iowa



Jim's Top Ten List: Things You Just Gotta Do!



MAIN STREET
I O W A



1) Structure: Develop an organized group of people to make things happen



2) Clean & Neat: Maintenance, weeds, old building signs.....



3) Develop an event schedule: Promote!



4) Downtown Buildings: One By One Approach





Central City



State
Center



5) Investigate upper floor housing opportunities



6) Identify your downtown



7) Enhance walking experience with interesting streetscape



8) Be unique. Create something special



9) Be proactive with business development



10) Get in the loop; Get connected!

- Attend statewide conferences
- Get events listed with Division of Tourism
- Seek grant opportunities
- Visit your neighbors. Tour success stories
- Utilize Iowa Downtown Resource Center services



One more....Downtown signage: Work on it!

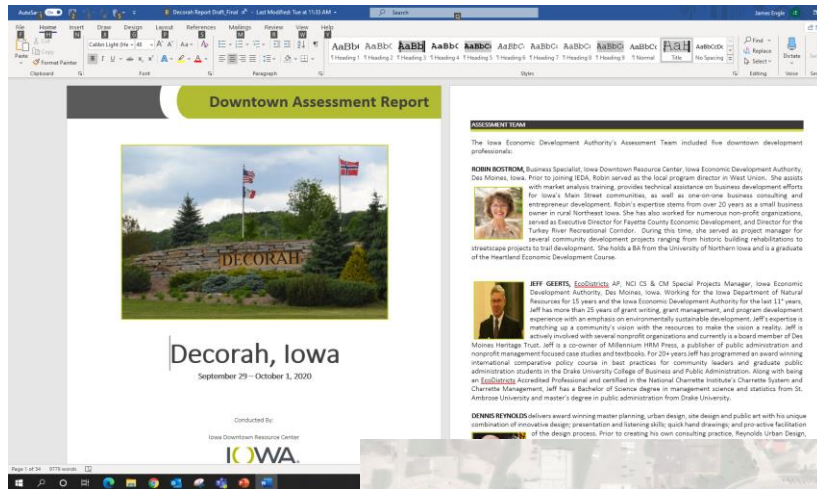


Downtown Assessment Visit

- 3 day assessment of your downtown's opportunities and challenges
- Recommendations/report from professional downtown staff
- 4-5 member team
- \$2500 for two day visit



Downtown Assessment



Downtown Walk Around

- 2 hour downtown tour with community leaders
- 2 IDRC staff members
- 1 hour meeting to discuss impressions
- \$300



Downtown Walk Around

Downtown Walk Around Summary Hopkinton, Iowa

JIM ENGLE – DIRECTOR
IOWA DOWNTOWN RESOURCE CENTER

TIM RENDERS – DESIGN SPECIALIST
MAIN STREET IOWA

This report is a summary of the observations and recommendations resulting from an Iowa Downtown Resource Center Walk Around conducted in Hopkinton, IA on November 18, 2019.

HOPKINTON is a community of 628 residents in Delaware County. Hopkinton is the home of the former Lenox College. The beautiful, historic buildings now house the Delaware County Historical Museum Complex. Hopkinton residents enjoy a pool, parks and a community center. City government is eager to make improvements and has taken on the bold and important role of cleaning up personal property in the city. Downtown has a mix of businesses that includes a bank, clinic, feed store, library, newspaper and two restaurant/bars (with a great mural on one of them). Retail is not a strength of the downtown; however, the Tiny House Mission store is an excellent traffic builder and provides financial assistance for community projects and people that need help. Downtown Hopkinton has interesting architecture that presents an opportunity. Local organizations sponsor popular downtown events such as the Car Show, the street dance and Monsters on Main. We hope Hopkinton benefits from the following recommendations that address downtown needs.

APPROACHING DOWNTOWN

Downtown Hopkinton's most challenging issue is the entry to the district. Currently, signs direct drivers down Locust which means one of the first things they see is the large, vacant industrial building and associated tanks, equipment, etc. Unless the building is made functional again the action steps to mitigate this negative first impression could center on traffic flow and clean up.

- Install attractive signs that direct drivers a different way into the district – perhaps a better choice would be down Walnut (at least from the south) by the fire station and the large, attractive homes on the periphery of the downtown. From the north, consider East Street. Once the dilapidated building on the corner is dealt with, this entry becomes much more visually interesting.
- Consider adapting the county scenic drive logo and revise it into a new (yet similar) design for your local wayfinding sign design. This creates a distinctive local look and helps tie Hopkinton into the larger network for travelers and tourists.
- Work with owners and volunteers to clean up junk and paint tanks and other industrial eyesores. Some of the "Placemaking" strategies discussed on the next page can be used to help enhance these industrial structures. Visual screens – like bushes or fences – are another strategy that can help disguise these items and improve the overall appearance of downtown.

BUILDINGS



The condition and character of downtown buildings say a lot about the overall character of a community. Even though Downtown Hopkinton has several very interesting, historic buildings – almost all of them have undergone some type of inappropriate renovation. Others simply have not been maintained. Some underutilized buildings hold the potential for growth but need rehabilitation requiring significant investment before new businesses can use them. There are several financial assistance programs available for building rehabilitation – including grants, but they all require a significant local investment by the City and/or property owner.

Some of the most successful communities (big and small) have gone out of the way to not only emphasize cleanliness in the downtown but to also develop interesting features that make people want to go there. Hopkinton could benefit from streetscape amenities that add to the experience of being there.

- Take a walk with a group of residents. Look for red flags. Identify potential paint projects to spruce up the downtown. Hopkinton has used the [Keep Iowa Beautiful Diamond Vogel Paint Program](#) before. Look for additional opportunities to use this program.
- Hopkinton has local artists. Talk to these artists about the possibility of doing something creative with industrial amenities such as tanks, valves as well as trash cans, grates fences and other downtown art opportunities.
- Use strategic landscaping and/or fencing to cover problem areas that cannot be enhanced with paint or art.



COMMUNITY COOPERATION/SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Regional promotion and cooperation can often bolster the impact of promotions and develop more cross-use of downtowns in a county, essentially expanding local markets for businesses. Maquoketa Valley School District provides a natural cooperation opportunity for partnerships, friendships and joint projects that can benefit each community. Students and parents are far more apt to know each other in Hopkinton, Earlville and Delhi.

- Work with the school on community engagement. Delhi is the home of the high school. Look for opportunities to give greater visibility, cooperative efforts and even entertainment in all the communities. For example, hold a pep rally the night before the big Homecoming Game in downtown Hopkinton!
- Get 20 interested residents from each community (Hopkinton, Delhi, and Earlville) and show your support for businesses in those three cities. Do a Cash Mob. 60 people agree to spend \$20 each in a specified business in one of those towns. Pick a business (perhaps out of hat) and flood them between 4-6 pm on a designated evening. Do this every month or every quarter. Have fun with it. Have dinner afterwards and talk about the success of the event.
- The communities in the area have had to make some tough decisions to eliminate nuisances on properties. It has to be done. But, also create some "carrots". Pick one Yard of the Month or House of the Month or Window Display of the Month in the three communities and promote that person or business widely.



EVENTS

Residents will only know downtown as the "place to go" if local organizations create reasons for crowds to come. Downtown should be a community's social hub. Likewise, small towns need local events as an entertainment option. Hopkinton has a good thing going with food related get togethers. Several organizations host themed breakfasts and dinners throughout the year. This is a great thing! This kind of event builds community. We also believe the community could program the downtown with more outdoor events on a small scale throughout the year. These could also be promoted regionally with your neighboring towns. Hopkinton's biggest event is the Car Show. This is a great event that everyone knows about.

- Develop 1-3 new events in the downtown to bring crowds. These can be small. Feature local talent. Recruit an organization to serve food. Have an interesting contest like the best decorated truck, ugly dog contest, trivia, etc. Target specific demographic groups with individual events. Promote the events individually but also develop a calendar with all of Hopkinton's existing events (including the dinners) and its three new promotions. Use this calendar for regional (at least county wide) marketing to attract nearby residents to your events.
- If the site of the LeClere Building becomes a pocket park, this could be an excellent location for small downtown events. When designing the layout of the park, keep event coordination in mind. The Kiwanis pavilion/shelter is also a great place for small events/activities. The new pocket park should be designed to complement this existing facility.

GETTING THE WORK DONE

Perhaps nothing is more important for a small town's success than the development of leadership, groups and volunteers that can develop ideas, raise funds and get work done. Sometimes, small towns lack this kind of organization. In addition to the City, Hopkinton has two organizations that do positive work. HOPE plans events and has done planting projects. HAPPE has been involved with playgrounds and environments. We saw

953 words

Focus



Downtown Exchange

- Swap visits with a similar community
- 6-10 people per visit
- Fill out survey
- Report back by IDRC staff
- Free



Iowa Downtown Conference

Annual Downtown
Development
Conference

Gain knowledge
and network!

July 26-28
Iowa City



Downtown Forums

- Networking with other communities
- Once a year
- Regional
- Downtown revitalization topics



Community Development Block Grant

Downtown Revitalization Fund:



Downtown Revitalization Fund

- Funded through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
- Meets the national objective of slum and blight elimination
 - Requires the city to formally declare that area blighted
 - Requires a survey to be filled out for every property in the project area
- Vast majority of projects have been façade master plan projects
 - Entails having private property owners sign an easement with the City that gives them ownership of their facades for 7 years
- Average project size approximately \$1 million with 10-15 buildings; \$500 grant for communities over 1,000. \$300,000 for communities less than 1,000.
- Federal regulations apply – environmental review, section 106, procurement, Davis Bacon rates, etc.
- Application process takes approximately two months. Next application round:
Application Workshop: Fall of 2018



Belle Plaine



- **Population:** 2,534
- **Project Scope:** Rehabilitation of 36 façades while implementing a building-to-building streetscape project integrating storm water management best practices.
- **Total Project Cost:** \$4.1 million
- **CDBG Grant Amounts:** Downtown Revitalization \$500,000; Sustainable Demonstration \$300,000
- **Total Properties Affected:** 36 of 49 Main Street properties



Belle Plaine



Belle Plaine



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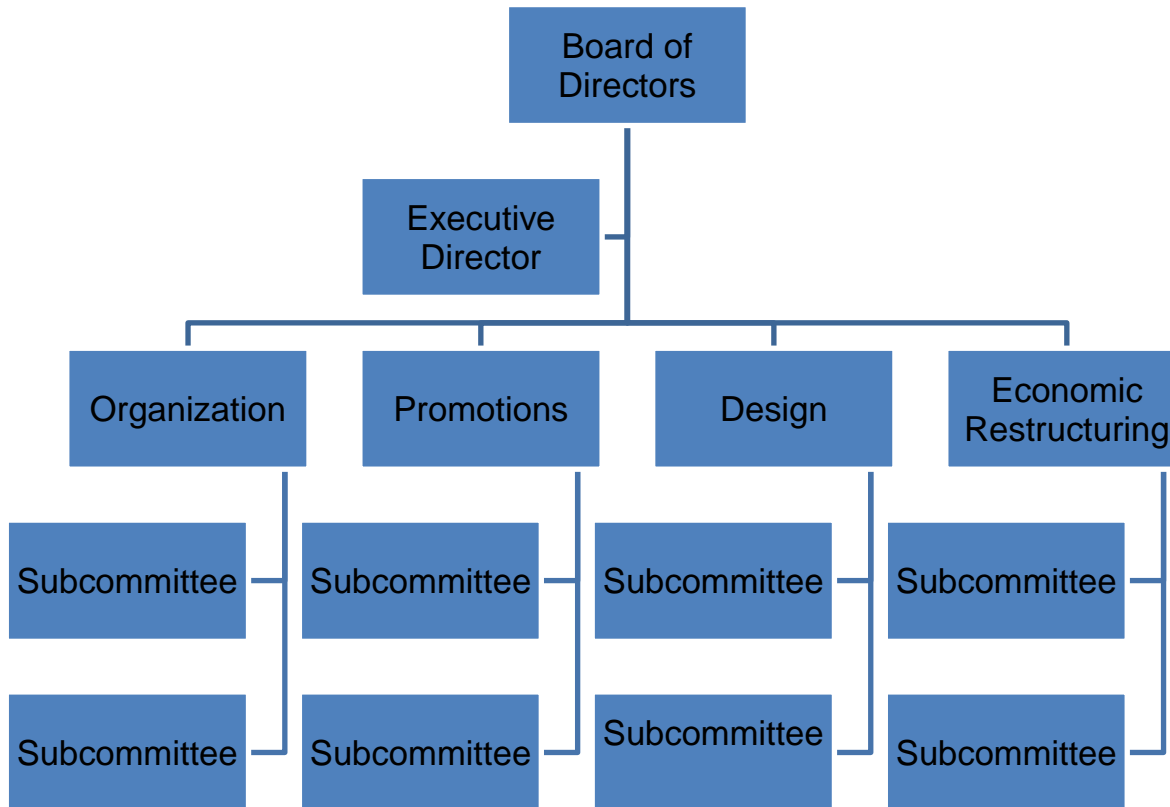


Mission:

To improve the social and economic well-being of Iowa's communities by assisting selected communities to capitalize on the unique identity, assets and character of their historic commercial district.

*Main Street is **economic development** within the context of **historic preservation**.*

Local Main Street Organization Chart



Main Street Executive Director

- The difference maker
- This person is hired to manage the program...not single handedly run the program.

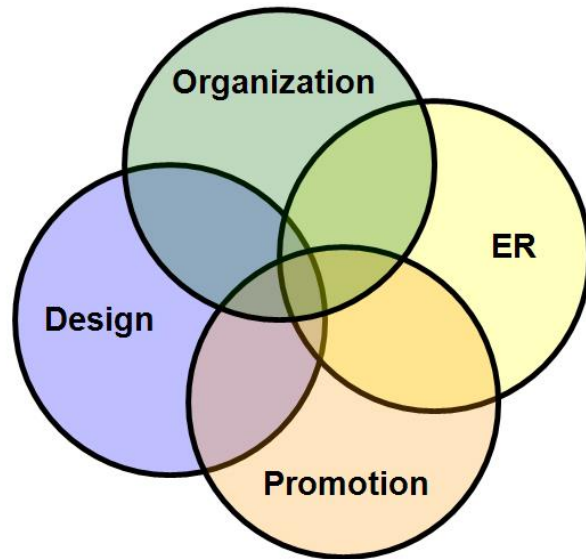


The Main Street Approach

The Main Street Program is a comprehensive downtown economic revitalization program that uses historic preservation as one of its most important tools.



Main Street Four Point Approach®



Organization

- Volunteer & Leadership Development
 - Funding & Investor Development
 - Communication

Building strong, broad-based public and private support for the commercial district and revitalization initiative.



Promotion

- Retail/Business Selling Events
 - Special Events & Festivals
 - Image Campaigns

Attracting people to the district by marketing its unique assets and improving its image.



Design

- Building Improvements
 - Historic Preservation
 - Public Improvements
 - Window Displays
 - Management and Education

Improving the appearance of the commercial district through historic preservation based sustainable strategies.



Traditional Buildings



Façade “Remuddling”



MAIN STREET
I O W A



Façade “Remuddling”





Economic Restructuring

- Market Analysis
- Business Retention & Expansion
 - Business Recruitment
 - Real Estate Development
 - Measuring Progress

Repositioning the district's economy through market-driven retention and development strategies.



Services to Main Street Communities

- Orientation
- Annual Visit
- Quarterly Workshops
- Design Assistance
- Business Assistance
- Recorded Trainings
- On-Site Visits
- Board and Committee Training
- Planning Retreat Facilitation
- Recognition at MSI Awards Ceremony
- Issue Specific Assistance
- Scholarships to National Main Streets Conference
- Reduced Registration to IA Downtown Conference
- Participation in State and National movement
- Networking Opportunities



Services to Main Street Communities

- Main Street Iowa Website
- Statewide Marketing
- Mentoring
- MSI Inquiry (list serve)
- Eligibility for HUD Challenge Grant
- Scholarships to Certification Institute



Community Catalyst Building Remediation Grant

- Up to \$100,000 per building rehab
- Competitive application process
- Goal of more downtown projects
- Applicant must be city
- Underutilized building (s)
- Reimbursement program
- 40% of funds to communities less than 1,500



Catalyst Grant

- All pre-applications and applications submitted through Iowa Grants @ iowagrants.gov
 - Pre-applications may be submitted and approved starting September 30, 2020
 - Pre-applications must be submitted by January 29, 2021, to be considered eligible for this fiscal year's funding cycle
 - Applications are by invitation ONLY
 - Application Deadline: April 16, 2021
 - Announcement: June 2021 Award Letters
- Project Completion: 24 months after award



What worked

Dyersville (4,058)

- 1903 building/Vacant
- Most recently a sewing factory
- Connection to Heritage trail extension to riverfront
- Gateway to planned development project
- Rehab/Conversion to brewery



What worked

Cascade (2,281)

- Old Bank Building
- Roof Failure
- First floor rehab into restaurant or retail
- Two 2nd floor apartments
- Masonry work, windows, restoration



What worked

Zearing (pop. 554)

- Vacant “Old Bank Building”
- Structurally sound, but complete rehab needed
- First floor commercial/retail
- Second floor Two Apartments



Shop Iowa



Small Town Survey

Describe your downtown:

- Small business mix
- No downtown
- Small in size
- No businesses
- Buildings in disrepair



Small Town Survey

Greatest downtown need:

- More businesses
- Clean up/rehab properties
- Street maintenance
- Building demolition
- Replace sidewalks



Small town survey

What business types could succeed:

- Restaurant
- Coffee shop
- Gas stations
- Beauty shop
- Grocery
- Clothing
- Insurance office



Small town survey

Best feature of downtown:

- Park/playground
- Clean
- Friendly
- Specific business
- Small town feel



Small town survey

Average number of businesses: 6.7

Average number of retailers: 1.37

Is downtown worth saving?

Yes: 85%

No: 15%



Questions?

