



# **Downtown O'Fallon Area Action Plan**

**October 19, 2015**

## Thank you to our current and former elected officials for their support during this planning process

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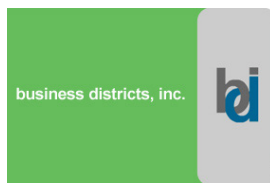
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Gary Peck (McDonalds)	Ray Holden (Ward 6)	Cheryl Hill (American Legion)
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## Thank You to the Businesses That Contributed Food and Gift Cards for the Public Meeting

Gia's Pizza	Sweet Katie Bee's	Peel Pizza
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# INTRODUCTION

The Downtown O'Fallon Area Action Plan seeks to be a practical analysis of the current state of Downtown O'Fallon and a road map for reaching its full potential in the future. The goals set forth are market-based, realistic aspirations created from the stated preferences and spending habits of the community and the unique strengths of a downtown environment.

The Action Plan is a culmination of many steps that have occurred over the past year including:

- Market Analysis
- Online Community Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Parking Utilization Study
- Public Workshop
- Supplemental Online Parking Survey
- Organizational Interviews

Information on topics such as management, parking, and streetscape design are found within this plan. Existing businesses can use the survey and market information to add desired products/services or to market them more effectively. Additionally, new businesses that will thrive in O'Fallon can be recruited to fill vacant tenant spaces. The final chapter of this document (Action Steps) is in an easy to follow table format and lists specific tasks to be completed along with responsible parties, timelines and budgets (when available). The hope is that this Action Plan will be used regularly by City staff, elected officials, and other downtown supporters to ensure steady progress on the steps needed to improve Downtown O'Fallon and achieve the vision of the community:

Downtown O'Fallon will be a memorable and cherished place providing an active, walkable, mixed use district with unique community activities and commerce and offering O'Fallon residents and visitors a superior place to live, shop, dine, work, and interact.

# 1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR SURVEY

The consumer behavior survey was a tool used to understand residents' current shopping behaviors and opinions about the downtown O'Fallon area. The survey solicited specific data and feedback on community use and satisfaction with the existing character and presented an opportunity to learn which businesses, investments, and policies would attract a larger share of residents' time and dollars to the downtown O'Fallon area.

## Survey Design

From October 21, 2014 through November 27, 2014, the web-based survey was accessible through respondents' computers and mobile devices. The City of O'Fallon promoted the survey via e-blasts, its website, water billings, and business cards provided to the Chamber of Commerce and downtown businesses.

The survey was composed of 21 questions and took approximately 10 minutes to answer. Seventeen of the questions were multiple-choice. The remaining questions were short answer questions asking respondents to list restaurants and stores they had visited and thought would be good additions to Downtown O'Fallon. A summary question asked respondents to give any additional comments. The final question asked respondents to provide their name and e-mail address so they could learn the results of the survey and assist in efforts to improve the downtown O'Fallon area.

A total of 1,104 surveys were completed. In addition, an initiative inviting O'Fallon Township High School to answer survey questions generated another 203 responses. Around the same time the survey was closing, a new business, Peel Pizza, opened in Downtown O'Fallon and appeared to change the parking dynamic. To investigate that impression, survey respondents who provided e-mail addresses, City e-blast participants, website visitors, and attendees at the Visioning Workshop were given the chance to answer a follow-up parking survey. That survey was open from December 11, 2014 through January 9, 2015; 343 responses were received. Detailed information on the results of the parking survey is provided in Chapter 6.

In calculating percentages of respondents' satisfaction or inclination to spend, "I don't know" answers were removed from the totals before rankings were created. This adjustment eliminated any potential misinterpretation that might arise when an unusually high number of "I don't know" answers reduced the other response percentages.

The analysis that follows highlights survey results that inform the planning process. The survey also provides a basis for future program analysis and can support additional research (primarily involving focus groups). Focus groups composed of individuals who provided specific answers can be created by using the respondent's e-mail addresses given as a reply to Question 21. After implementation progress, the City can repeat survey questions to learn whether respondents saw improvement. Appendix A provides the complete survey results.

# Survey Response Findings

## Current Perceptions

In examining perceptions of quality, it is important to understand that for certain characteristics, such as traffic flow and parking, the goal is simply to be average. As long as the area is generally equal to competing shopping options in these aspects, visitors will not be deterred from visiting Downtown O'Fallon. Costly investments completed with the goal of moving scores for parking and traffic flow to above average will not increase vitality. As Table 1 highlights, the traffic flow is currently not deterring three quarters of the respondents from visiting. Scores received for parking convenience are also considered good. However, due to the amount of concern expressed by business owners in the area, parking was investigated further with an additional survey and parking study. Please see Chapter 6 for more information on parking.

Certain characteristics, such as cleanliness, building attractiveness, and bicycle access need to score very high in order to attract customers to the district. Investments to improve these ratings can have a significant impact on the success of Downtown O'Fallon. As shown in Table 2, the building attractiveness, bicycle and pedestrian access, and sidewalk and lighting attractiveness had such low ratings that one can conclude they must impact the competitiveness of Downtown O'Fallon businesses. Improving the perception of those characteristics will increase the number of visits. It is important to note that general safety was highly rated. This result is important because correcting low perception of safety is very expensive and difficult.

Many of the poorly rated items are in the public realm and the City will need to ensure improvements are completed. However, issues with building attractiveness are the responsibility of the property owners. Even so, the City can facilitate improvements in this regard with the newly created Central City TIF District and/or a facade improvement grant program.

**Table 1\***

Rate your overall satisfaction with these factors as they apply to Downtown O'Fallon	
Answered "average" or better	
Traffic Flow	74.7%
Parking Convenience	65.2%

\* Average scores for these factors are necessary to remain competitive with other shopping options. Scoring above average *will not* increase visits to the downtown area.

**Table 2\*\***

Rate your overall satisfaction with these factors as they apply to Downtown O'Fallon	
Answered "ABOVE average" or better	
General Safety	61.5%
Cleanliness of Streets and Sidewalks	51.6%
Pedestrian Safety	38.7%
Pedestrian Access	36.8%
Sidewalks and Lighting Attractiveness	31.7%
Bicycle Access	21.7%
Building Attractiveness	15.9%

\*\* Scoring above average on these factors *will* increase visits to the downtown area.

## Current Utilization

To help determine how Downtown O'Fallon is currently being used, the survey asked about respondents' reasons for visiting (Table 3) and about recent visits to competing shopping districts (Tables 4 and 5). The answers reveal that the respondents—a group that probably is more interested in Downtown O'Fallon than is the general population given that they took the time to complete this survey—dine in Downtown O'Fallon more frequently than they shop there. Neither use attracts more frequent visits than nearby, national chain dominated shopping clusters. Because shopping frequency is driven by necessities such as groceries, the absence of that store category impacts the shopping frequency responses. The high percentage of online purchases confirms that O'Fallon consumers are following national trends. Tables 4 and 5 show that Downtown O'Fallon visitors are traveling to Edwardsville infrequently, which suggests it is a separate market. Therefore, Edwardsville-based businesses that choose to open a second location in Downtown O'Fallon would find new customers. The recent success of Peel Pizza seems to confirm that finding.

**Table 3**

<b>From the list below, select the reasons for your trips during the past year to Downtown O'Fallon.</b>	
<i>Select all that apply</i>	
Dining	76.9%
Community Festivals and Events	50.8%
Shopping	44.4%
City Hall	33.1%
Banking	25.4%
Exercise/Recreation	20.8%
Bicycling	13.8%
Work/Employment	13.4%
Church	9.3%

**Table 4**

<b>How often do you make a purchase in these commercial areas?</b>	
<i>Answered "monthly" or more</i>	
Fairview Heights	91.7%
Green Mount Road/Central Park Drive	91.2%
Online	78.4%
Downtown O'Fallon	53.3%
Missouri Side of River	46.4%
Belleville	32.4%
Edwardsville	10.3%

**Table 5**

<b>How often do you dine in these commercial areas?</b>	
<i>Answered "monthly" or more</i>	
Green Mount Road/Central Park Drive	85.9%
Fairview Heights	77.0%
Downtown O'Fallon	61.0%
Missouri Side of River	44.7%
Belleville	28.2%
Edwardsville	13.8%



The survey sought to guide this planning effort and the current property owners' recruitment focus with questions about what changes were most likely to increase bicycle and pedestrian visits to Downtown O'Fallon and what new businesses were most likely to increase the respondents' spending in Downtown O'Fallon.

The 55% of respondents who live close enough to walk into Downtown O'Fallon were asked what improvements would promote walking (Table 6). Adding plazas and more lighting were cited as most likely to increase walking. To learn how Downtown O'Fallon could attract more cyclists, the 50% of respondents who use bicycles were asked about their habits and interest in improvements (Table 7). The results indicate that, although off-street bike paths and protected lanes are the most desired improvements, marked lanes would also increase ridership.

**Table 6**

<b>How likely are you to walk to Downtown O'Fallon more often if these changes are made?</b>			
	<i>Very likely</i>	<i>Somewhat likely</i>	<i>No impact</i>
Plazas	25.9%	26.1%	48.0%
More lighting	24.0%	24.6%	51.4%
Additional landscaping	19.9%	22.7%	57.4%
Benches	16.8%	23.1%	61.8%
Additional marked crosswalks	14.9%	23.3%	61.8%
Better signs identifying the route	10.2%	18.3%	71.5%

**Table 7**

<b>How likely are you to increase how often you bicycle to Downtown O'Fallon if these changes are made?</b>			
	<i>Very likely</i>	<i>Somewhat likely</i>	<i>No impact</i>
More off-street bicycle paths	66.5%	19.1%	14.5%
More protected bicycle lanes on street through barriers or landscaping	57.6%	23.0%	19.4%
More marked bicycle routes on streets	48.2%	32.3%	19.6%
Wider sidewalks and wider setbacks of commercial buildings	41.9%	28.2%	29.8%
More bicycle parking at businesses	34.9%	35.5%	29.6%

Existing restaurants should be optimistic because the majority of respondents continue to indicate they would spend more in all types of restaurants except quick serve (Table 8). The very strong response to "Casual Dining" suggests a clear recruitment focus for the City and downtown property owners. Note also that 50% to 60% of the market is willing to spend more in the White Tablecloth, Pub, and Counter Service restaurants suggests opportunities for those concepts as well.

There was also interest in adding stores, particularly those which sell home accessories, fine wine & spirits, and apparel (Table 9). Existing businesses can best apply this survey information and improve sales by adopting desired formats and either stocking merchandise similar to what is carried by the requested stores or, if already in stock, advertising the item's availability. This response should allay fears of existing businesses that competition would cannibalize current sales levels.

Although "books" is a top category request, few bookstores are successfully fighting the challenges presented by e-books and online sellers; however, hybrid beverage/used book stores are doing very well when they sponsor book

clubs and children’s reading circles. A Downtown O’Fallon business could examine creative ways to satisfy the bookstore desire, despite the tough market, by encouraging specialty focus and hybrid businesses for the bookstore category.

When respondents were asked whether they would attend events downtown, there was strong support for events of all types (Table 10). Food oriented events had exceptionally strong appeal. Offering more types of community activities downtown would likely bring more visitors. When people attend these events, they become more aware of the existing businesses and their offerings.

**Table 8**

<b>How would the addition of these restaurants affect the amount of money you spend at businesses in Downtown O’Fallon?</b>	
<i>Answered “I would spend a lot or a little more”</i>	
Casual dining (Family oriented menu with full service)	84.4%
White tablecloth restaurant (Leisurely dining, gourmet food, prices matching full service level)	60.4%
Pub (Limited food options with a focus on entertainment of sports)	51.2%
Counter service restaurant (Order at counter and employee delivers food)	50.5%
Quick service restaurant (Order and receive food at counter, drive thru service)	32.2%

**Table 10**

<b>How likely is it that you would attend these Downtown O’Fallon events?</b>	
<i>Answered “Very likely or somewhat likely”</i>	
Food Festival	92.0%
Farmers Market	91.2%
Downtown Restaurant Tastings	88.8%
Art Festival or Gallery Walks	72.3%
Christmas Window Display Contest	71.0%
Parades	70.4%

**Table 9**

<b>How would the addition of these stores affect the amount of money you spend at businesses in Downtown O’Fallon?</b>	
<i>Answered “I would spend a lot or a little more”</i>	
Home Accessories	60.4%
Fine Wine & Spirits	58.2%
Apparel	57.6%
Gifts & Collectibles	49.5%
Books	48.3%
Bakery	43.1%
Pet supplies	40.4%
Hardware	39.4%
Gardening Supplies	36.5%
Art/Craft/Knitting/Sewing Supplies	29.5%
Fine Art	17.9%
Bikes	17.4%
Antiques	16.4%

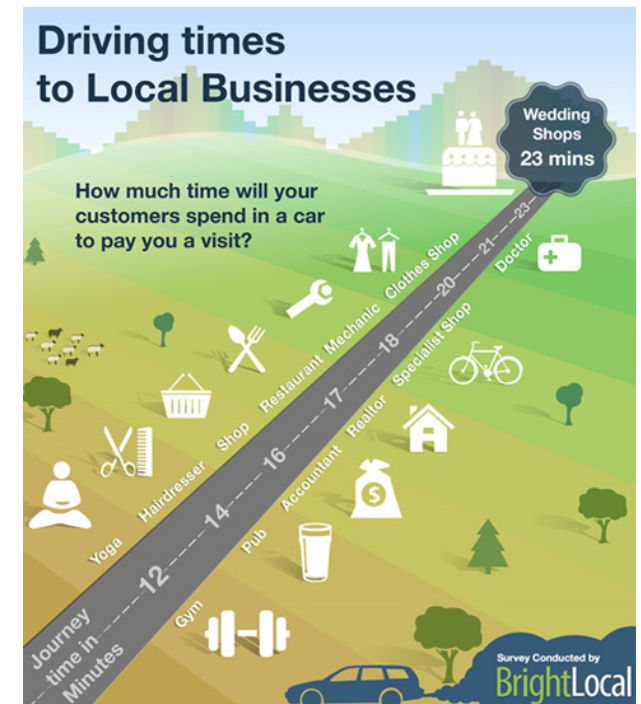
There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.

-Jane Jacobs

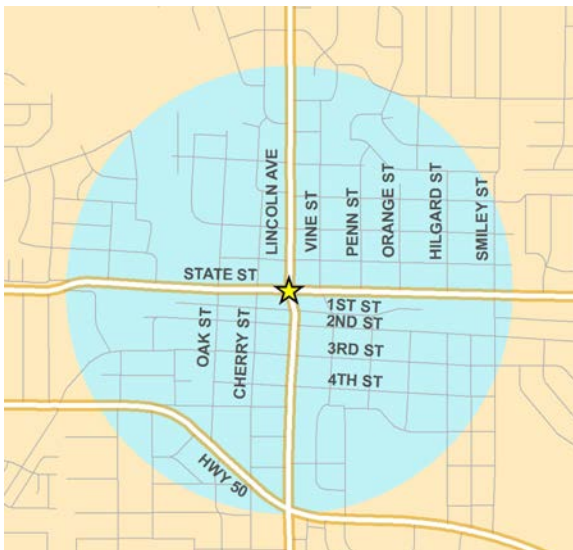
## 2. MARKET INFORMATION

Downtown O'Fallon is not an economic island, rather, it belongs to a large and complex region with competitive commercial environments. The characteristics that drive the regional economy (transportation accessibility, skilled workers, Scott Air Force Base, and agglomeration of industries) create jobs and in turn create a demand for workers and homes for those workers. These developments filter down to O'Fallon as it competes against neighboring communities. Because Downtown O'Fallon's commercial experience mixes residential units, financial services, recreation, stores, and restaurants, it appeals to a variety of markets. Although each business in Downtown O'Fallon develops its own market, there are four markets that the combination of businesses must capture. These markets are:

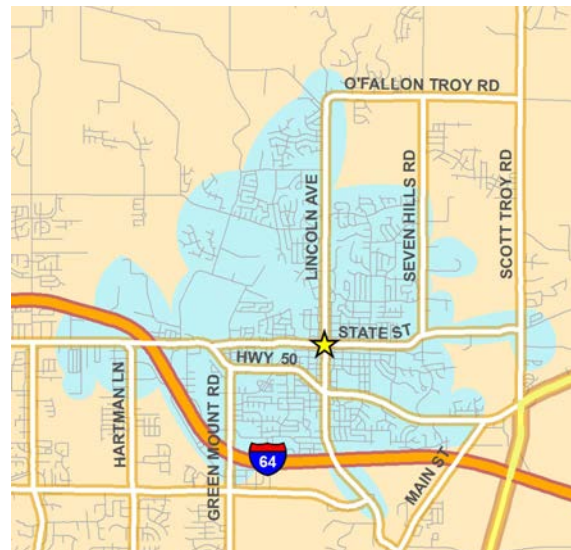
- **Community Affiliated Market:** Downtown O'Fallon is an element of the community's character. With pride, residents bring guests to dine in independent restaurants and seek special items at unique stores. It is a setting for community events that draw residents and the location of City Hall where resident business is conducted. This relationship creates an affiliation that makes community residents an important market for the Downtown O'Fallon enterprises.
- **Pedestrian Market (Fig. 2):** Residents living within one-half mile of Downtown O'Fallon should be particularly intense users. The frequent trips and presence of these nearby residents adds vitality even when businesses are not open and therefore this market is more important to Downtown's success than its spending power suggests. The size and condition of homes in this market influences the image of downtown. Neighborhood infrastructure enhancement, new development, and new businesses attracted to this area have the power to transform Downtown O'Fallon.
- **Convenience Market (Fig. 3):** If one can drive to obtain needed items within five-minutes, that location can be the routine choice to meet every day needs. Traditionally, these convenience shoppers were the primary market for both downtowns and neighborhood retail clusters such as Southview Plaza. Although much of that purchasing power has shifted to power center clusters near the Interstate, this convenience market still must provide 50% to 85% of the spending captured by Downtown O'Fallon businesses. That high sales percentage reflects downtown businesses' role as an amenity where residents develop relationships with business proprietors and quickly obtain a range of necessities such as haircuts, exercise classes, auto service, and take-out meals. Downtown O'Fallon's five-minute drive time market also identifies the homes of bicyclists who can pedal to stores and restaurants in ten-minutes or less. Increasingly, that activity adds recreational users to the convenience mix.
- **Destination Market (Fig. 4):** This geography encompasses all of the markets served by businesses in Downtown O'Fallon. The businesses unable to sustain their operation from sales to the closer markets must create a destination draw, as their unique offering attracts



**Figure 1: Drive Times by Business Category**



**Figure 2: Pedestrian Market**



**Figure 3: Convenience Market**



**Figure 4: Destination Market**

visitors from a larger geography. Interviews with local businesses and input from O'Fallon Community development staff led to the creation of the custom market depicted in Figure 3. This custom market expands the more typical 20-minute drive time destination market to include customers from rural areas to the east of Downtown O'Fallon where unique shopping and dining options are limited. This destination market both supplies customers to Downtown O'Fallon's destination businesses and adds sales to adjacent convenience businesses. Destination businesses such as Peel Pizza, Fezziwig's, and Luckenbooth Consignment Gallery, attract this market and also give the commercial cluster a unique character that differentiates it from other shopping alternatives. It is important to note that, although the sales volume from destination customers is a smaller percent of the downtown's total volume than sales from the convenience market, these marginal sales add significantly to the profits of all businesses and without destination customers, even convenience businesses probably cannot meet their sales goals.

The optimal business mix in Downtown O'Fallon will balance the appeal to all four markets. To understand this mix, it is useful to consider national research that queried a balanced sample of 500 customers to understand the maximum time they would spend in a car to obtain different categories of goods (Fig. 1). This research is important because it verifies that a shopping district like Downtown O'Fallon must connect to the local and destination markets. Through operation excellence and the under-served rural population to the east, it is expected that Downtown O'Fallon's unique stores and restaurants may attract shoppers from an even greater distance than this national standard.



## Demographics and Market Economics

As businesses in Downtown O'Fallon seek customers from the available markets, it is important to understand the potential sales that are available from those markets. Table 11 documents the populations in Downtown O'Fallon's key markets and their spending power. Appendix B provides more detailed demographic information and Appendix C gives information on spending power by business category.

**Table 11: Downtown O'Fallon Spending Power**

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian Market (Fig. 2)	Convenience Market (Fig. 3)	Destination Market (Fig. 4)
Total Population	29,149	2,810	19,682	298,438
Employees	11,034	1,268	7,245	N/A
Jobs per Household	0.8	1.0	0.9	N/A
Median Age	37.9	38.3	38.1	37.7
New Millennials	18.4%	20.8%	18.8%	20.0%
Average Household Income	\$89,934	\$84,552	\$87,819	\$68,969
Median Household income	\$70,235	\$65,441	\$69,229	\$54,437
Renter Occupied Housing	31.3%	33.9%	32.4%	32.5%
Annual Restaurant Demand	\$34,814,874	\$3,738,837	\$24,605,988	\$314,223,901

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As Downtown O'Fallon property owners seek new tenants, this information confirms the market strength and the approach that tenants must take to be successful. Based on the data "Annual Restaurant Demand," a new restaurant that seeks \$1 million in annual sales, would need to attract much less than 1% of the spending within Downtown O'Fallon's destination market (\$1 million/ \$314 Million = 0.32%). However, to attract that market, the new restaurant will need to advertise to the destination customers' geography. If that marketing is not done, the business will likely only reach the local market and need a 4% market capture (\$1 million/ \$25 Million = 4%).

## Market Summary

It is not municipal boundaries, but rather accessibility that determines the size of the Downtown O'Fallon market. With more than \$3 billion in retail spending power within its destination market, Downtown O'Fallon is centered on a substantial but very competitive market. Under these conditions, success is driven by the quality of the shopping experience. What businesses offer can and should change over time, but the high quality of the experience that they deliver must be constant. It is the intention of this project to identify the current Downtown O'Fallon experiences and elements that must change to improve the downtown O'Fallon area.

### 3. TENANTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Downtown O'Fallon's opportunities extend to potential ground floor tenant categories that will have an important impact on altering downtown's overall business mix and in changing the downtown experience over time. The following tenant categories were identified in this Plan's downtown market data and consumer survey.

- Restaurants and Dining: The consumer survey results indicated a strong preference (in spending more) for casual dining. Survey respondents were also interested in other dining formats: white tablecloth, pub, and counter service. Downtown O'Fallon has an existing cluster of successful restaurants. This cluster represents an opportunity to attract more restaurants and meet the demand of the O'Fallon market.
- Home Accessories
- Fine Wine and Spirits
- Apparel
- Gifts and Collectibles
- Bookstore: This retail category remains challenged nationally. Successful independent bookstores either specialize, such as selling mysteries and crime books, or operate as 'hybrid' businesses, sharing ground floor space with a coffee shop or similar compatible business.

As an interim step, Downtown O'Fallon retailers in the above categories could extend current product lines to include additional items from these categories. Downtown retailers can then promote these new items. If retailers already carry these products, additional promotion should reinforce that these goods are available in Downtown O'Fallon. Both will begin to educate local consumers about downtown retail and what is available. Another interim measure to expand shopping options in Downtown O'Fallon is temporary retail, such as pop-ups. These temporary events serve as incubators for new business concepts, and often, showcase vacant downtown lease space. Micromixing is a related shared space option for complementary businesses. Small retail entrepreneurs share a larger ground floor space, overhead, and often, marketing costs. This more permanent space, provided by micromixing, educates entrepreneurs about store operations and cross-promotion among their fellow businesses.

Much of the City's work in the short-term is to prepare for greater investment by Downtown's current business and property owners. Property enhancements and strong businesses will enhance the City's good downtown investment climate. It will also permit the City and its partners to change the downtown experience and begin to attract residents and visitors from the region to Downtown O'Fallon.

# 4. DOWNTOWN O'FALLON SWOT

## SWOT Summary

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis sets strategy by identifying the key internal and external factors seen as important to achieving a business goal. Beginning the downtown O'Fallon area planning with a SWOT analysis ensures that the recommended business development approach is soundly conceived and matches the specific opportunity that the Downtown presents. This process examines internal factors (the strengths and weaknesses internal to the organization) and external factors (the opportunities and threats presented by the environment external) to the organization.

The analysis that follows began as a consultant's list presented at the Community Visioning Workshop. Workshop participants modified the initial analysis to present an accurate account of the community evaluation of the opportunities offered by the downtown O'Fallon area.

The SWOT analysis revealed strong local support for the downtown O'Fallon area, but it recognized that the physical environment must be improved. The outside forces are positive for Downtown growth but suggest that short-term opportunities such as festivals will be central to development.

## Strengths—positive market characteristics under local control

### Quality existing businesses

- Strong restaurant cluster
- Antiques and vintage cluster
- Office cluster
- Independent business that are locally owned
- New business (entrepreneurial)
- Long-standing businesses

### Cooperating Property owners

- Current private investment
- City-owned property
- Local property ownership

### Good “Bones”

- Compact, walkable size
- City-owned parking
- Top quality schools
- Strong Interstate 64 exit businesses
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Hall
- Stable employment at Scott Air Force base



## Weaknesses–detrimental local market characteristics

### Substandard Infrastructure

- Railroad tracks divide
- Substandard roads
- Unpaved parking lots
- Inadequate lighting
- Poor signage and wayfinding

### Challenging Business Conditions

- Deteriorating Southview Plaza
- Absentee property ownership
- Some deteriorating buildings and lots
- Lack of identity
- Imbalance of alcohol emphasizing vs. family restaurants

## Opportunities–outside market characteristics that could improve business

### National Trends

- Declining strength of mall-based specialty stores
- Growth of shared workspace
- Technology allowing people to do business anywhere
- Web advertising
- Possible reuse of recently decommissioned railroad line

### Regional Initiatives

- Potential for significant new employment in O'Fallon
- Close proximity to St. Louis
- Top choice for companies expanding to Metro East

## Threats–outside market characteristics that could hurt business

### Rapidly Changing Retail Business Models

- Internet retailing
- Short leases & pop-up businesses
- Smaller stores
- Services with product sales
- Uncertain economy
- Better financial tools in competing locations

# 5. OPERATIONS, MARKETING & PROGRAMMING

## Organizational Structure

In communities like O'Fallon, the most successful downtowns have a formal management structure. These communities recognize that attractive downtowns with unique and profitable small businesses serve as a source of community identity and pride. In the past, O'Fallon applied the Main Street model for its downtown work, using the National Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach™ from 1995 through 2003. Since then, the not-for-profit Downtown O'Fallon organization was formed and has conducted various downtown marketing activities.

At this point, it is clear a more focused effort is needed. Rethinking how to best manage, fund, and activate a downtown organization will ensure that the City and downtown business and property owners achieve long-term positive economic results. The kind of sustained effort needed is not a 'project'. It starts with small steps and builds its capacity for new efforts and programs over time. It will require a long-term commitment, including funding, participation, and other resources. In determining the best way to proceed, several successful downtowns were studied and interviews were conducted with many downtown stakeholders and staff members. Moving forward, it is important that the City take the lead and provide staff assistance while regularly getting input from and utilizing the expertise of a variety of downtown stakeholders. Some key features of the proposed downtown organization include:

- The City Administrator will appoint a number of downtown stakeholders to an informal "Downtown Steering Group". The members of this advisory group will not be involved in the day to day "hands on" management of the downtown, but will meet regularly with a dedicated City staff member (described below) to get updates, provide guidance, and relay issues or concerns.
- The City should designate an employee to serve as an external and internal liaison to the "Downtown Steering Group", to the downtown business community, to partners throughout the community, and to City departments. This employee will likely start out allotting a portion of their time specifically to the downtown area. As the downtown progresses and more funds become available in the future, it may eventually become possible to have a full-time dedicated staff person for the downtown.
- One of the focuses of the "Downtown Steering Group", or a subgroup thereof, should be marketing. This group will be responsible for events and business promotions. Including representatives from the Chamber of Commerce as well as current organizations holding major events downtown will be important to the success of this effort.

## Programs and Activities

Successful downtown organizational structures exhibit a willingness to experiment with programs and activities and to change or eliminate them if they are not working. Initiating small improvements, ensuring downtown's regulations support investment, and building upon successful events represents a start to this process. Some suggested initial program categories for O'Fallon include:

- Develop a marketing plan that includes a balance of marketing programs—special events, business promotions, and downtown image

enhancement—and a communication plan to promote the programs, the district, and downtown’s successes using social and traditional media. The results of the community survey (Chapter 1) can be used to help identify the most highly desired types of events to focus on initially. Food related events, such as farmers markets, food festivals, and downtown restaurant tastings, rated exceptionally high.

- Direct outreach to downtown businesses, property owners, and potential partners located throughout the community. This should include the regional commercial real estate community.
- Work with the downtown businesses and property owners to facilitate City processes for approvals and recommend changes as needed in collaboration with City staff.
- Serve as the primary contact for new businesses seeking downtown locations. Identifying services to help existing businesses increase sales, and facilitating the expansion of downtown’s successful businesses is another aspect of this role.
- Based upon outreach and partnership efforts, consider what types of targeted incentives could spur reinvestment and business attraction in Downtown O’Fallon, their optimal structure, and how to fund them.



## Funding

O’Fallon needs to identify funding sources for operations, marketing, and programming as well as development incentives and infrastructure improvements. As noted in the case studies that follow, incentives and substantial physical improvements are generally not considered part of the annual operating budget for the downtown management structure. Often times, multiple funding sources are needed to cover these various expenses. Several of the options are described below.

The City recently created the Central City TIF district, which encompasses the core downtown area and Southview Plaza. This district will operate as a ‘pay as you go’ TIF. In this type of TIF, those who undertake redevelopment projects will pay costs upfront, but can be gradually reimbursed for eligible expenses as the assessed value of their property increases. A small portion of this increased value is set aside for the City to use for costs authorized by state statute. These City TIF funds are often used for marketing, infrastructure improvements, and/or grants (such as façade improvement, handicap accessibility, and other life/safety issues). However, the necessary improvements and services will be costly and it will take years for any considerable sum of money to accumulate to pay for these efforts. Therefore, it is likely a supplemental source of funding will be needed to ensure the success of downtown. More information on the City’s TIF districts can be found at <http://www.ofallon.org/economic-development-division>.

If desired by the Downtown business community, there are several options to generate additional funds that can be used in conjunction with the existing TIF District. Direct City funding, a Special Service Area (SSA) property tax, a Business District (BD) sales tax, or a combination of these support downtown initiatives in other communities. As sustainable funding mechanisms, SSAs and BDs have individual advantages and disadvantages. SSAs are a self-tax on real estate within a defined geography and are created by local governments, based upon Illinois' enabling legislation. SSAs require advance outreach to property owners and business tenants (paying real estate taxes via their lease terms) within the defined geography in advance of the approval process. Once approved and established as a funding mechanism for downtown work, SSAs generate reliable revenues. BDs allows local governments to impose a sales tax of up to 1% (in .25% increments) on certain goods sold within the BD's defined area for 23 years. Business Districts are usually easier to implement, however, the primary disadvantage in this case may be revenue generation. Even at the full 1%, the BD area may not generate the necessary sales tax revenues to support all downtown programming due to the small amount of retailers in the area. Businesses with customers affected by the sales tax may also object, concerned that any additional sales tax will affect their ability to compete locally. An added difficulty is that only businesses that sell retail products and generate sales tax will be paying into the fund, while all businesses (including offices and professional services) would be receiving the benefit.

### Downtown Interview Summary

To identify which local elements should be considered for the future management, operations, and programming of Downtown O'Fallon, seven interviews with downtown stakeholders, including the existing non-profit Downtown O'Fallon organization leadership, were conducted. The common themes derived from all interviews are noted below:

- Downtown stakeholders are optimistic about downtown's future based upon recent new business openings and the potential to appeal to O'Fallon and nearby residents.
- Sustained City engagement in improving Downtown and in encouraging downtown investment will be needed. Currently, the City is not perceived as vested in supporting a healthy downtown or downtown business growth.
- Infrastructure improvements and improved appearance will be important to downtown and its ability to compete in attracting and retaining strong downtown businesses. Streetscape and electric boxes in the sidewalk were two examples of infrastructure needing attention. Banners and more plantings were suggested as ways to improve downtown's appearance.

• Engaging all downtown businesses and property owners in any future organizational structure will be important to downtown's long-term success. This includes those involved with the current Downtown O'Fallon organization.

- In the past, a SSA was considered as a potential funding mechanism for O'Fallon's Main Street organization, but was never utilized. Most interviewees were open to the possibility of funding the future management, structure, and programming of the downtown O'Fallon area with



(cc) Steve Bustin

a SSA levy. O'Fallon will need to reach out to property and business owners to determine what types of services are desired from the City and if they want to pursue a SSA to fund these services.

- City employees are bound to enforce the locally adopted zoning codes and building codes, as well as state mandated codes such as the Illinois Accessibility Code, Illinois Plumbing Code, and the Illinois Energy Conservation Code. However, the enforcement of these regulations is perceived as inconsistent and overly bureaucratic. Various examples were cited by several sources. Interviewees feel that very different local standards apply, even in similar situations. O'Fallon will have to evaluate the situation further to determine how much of this perception is due to unhappiness with the regulations themselves, true inconsistencies in enforcement, or poor communication with property owners.
- Related to enforcement, many downtown buildings need some level of reinvestment by current owners. Without reinvestment, these buildings cannot attract optimal tenants that can then attract more customers to Downtown O'Fallon businesses.
- Downtown's business and property owners consistently suggested two opportunities for downtown: 1) upper story housing, assuming enforcement is clarified and 2) outdoor dining for downtown's restaurants. The City's processes specific to both opportunities can both protect the public interest and support increased downtown activity.



(cc) Church Coker

## Case Studies

After the stakeholder interviews and conversations with O'Fallon City staff, the downtown organizations in seven Midwest communities were considered as potential examples for the City of O'Fallon. From among these communities, three were identified as representative case studies. Each of the following case study communities is a suburban Illinois community with a similar population to O'Fallon's. These communities have a focused, existing downtown management structure engaged in successful public-private partnerships to improve their downtown districts. Specific components of each program fit with O'Fallon's need to pursue a downtown effort that reflects both downtown's character and the scale of its growth and development opportunities.

### Collinsville

In nearby Collinsville, one of the City's economic development staff members is fully dedicated to working on downtown issues. This effort, known as Uptown Collinsville, succeeded two earlier district management structures. The Uptown planning area has similar, but not contiguous, boundaries to the existing area TIF district. The Uptown area's sales tax portion of the existing TIF is set to expire. No SSA or Business District (BD) is planned for Uptown. TIF and City economic development funding support Uptown's programs, and the most recent annual budget is about \$125,000. Overall, staff believes that the full-time position provides for a balanced approach to Uptown's ongoing management and improvement.



The Uptown Development Commission serves as the advisory board for Uptown's activities and for overall economic development in the Uptown area. This board is comprised of twelve members; eight are Mayoral appointees (with connections to Uptown) and four are representatives from the City's Planning, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation Commissions and from the Chamber of Commerce. This advisory board meets six times annually. They review certain TIF awards and provide input into new Uptown programming, based upon their knowledge about area issues.

The Uptown Collinsville efforts to improve their traditional commercial core encompass the following:

- **Liaison and Community Engagement:** The Uptown director actively works with multiple local partners, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Collinsville Main Street Community Association, to develop partnerships and promote the Uptown area. This work ranges from serving on the Boards of community organizations, to working with local groups interested in organizing a downtown event, to helping businesses understand City regulations and processes.
- **Business Attraction:** A significant portion of Uptown's business attraction work is direct and ongoing outreach to Uptown's business and property owners. This includes: understanding and marketing Uptown's available lease space; meeting regularly with property owners and prospective tenants; responding to inquiries from potential new businesses; and helping new and expanding businesses as they negotiate City approval processes. These relationships have also proved helpful in marketing Uptown. Staff organizes certain marketing programs as part of their broader attraction activities for Uptown.
- **Local TIF Incentives:** The Uptown staff member manages all TIF requests, including two important grant programs. The 40% program offers reimbursement grants for permanent improvements to businesses and buildings for accessibility and architectural compliance. The 90% program provides direct assistance for life safety improvements and any associated costs, such as sprinkler systems in restaurants. For example, if a water line tap is also needed for a sprinkler system, the tap expense can be included in the incentive request.

## Batavia

Located in the Fox Valley west of Chicago, Batavia was a manufacturing center for decades. Batavia's population is an estimated 26,400 (2014). The City's median income (about \$85,000) is similar to neighboring Fox Valley communities, Geneva and St. Charles. Batavia is also home to Fermilab and to the U. S. headquarters of Aldi. In addition to its downtown district, Batavia shares three major auto-oriented retail corridors with neighboring communities, most notably along Randall Road. Downtown Batavia is included in two active Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, with a possible third TIF under discussion.

Batavia's downtown work is accomplished through an ongoing partnership between the City of Batavia and Batavia MainStreet (BMS). BMS is an independent 501(c)(3) organization and obtains one-third of its annual funding from a SSA (which was recently renewed for another 5 years). According to their formal SSA implementation agreement, the City matches the annual dollar amount generated by the BMS SSA. The remaining one-third of BMS funding is the result of fundraising from business and individual donations, special event income, in-kind, and grant

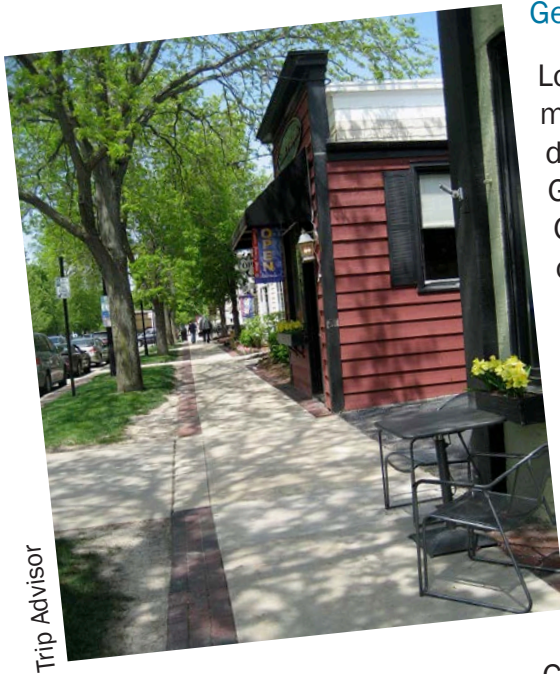
administration. Their annual budget is about \$130,000.

The City and BMS's most important collaborations include:

- **Business Growth:** Joint efforts emphasize tenant retention and recruitment. City staff, including their economic development contractor, BMS, and downtown's property owners work together to fill vacancies. Recent successes include the arts collaborative, a monthly pop-up initiative showcasing regional artists within existing downtown businesses or available lease space. Other successes include a small co-working space started in 2011–12 and recently expanded, and the recruitment of ten net new businesses over the last two years. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the City and BMS organize developer and broker tours throughout Batavia to promote downtown and other available spaces, build relationships with the area's commercial brokers, and provide information about incentives.
- **Education:** The City and BMS work in tandem to educate the community and local officials, including the City's elected officials, about downtown issues, downtown's importance as an amenity, and how downtown fits within the City's broader economic development objectives. At the request of City staff, BMS goes beyond the requirements of its SSA implementation agreement to provide information and data about emerging downtown and small business issues.
- **Incentives:** The City offers five financial incentives to downtown businesses and property owners: Downtown Improvement Grant (interior and exterior); Downtown Façade Grant; Micro Loan (small loans for specific business operations); Revolving Loans (larger dollar amounts to spur private investment with minor job creation goals), and a new, unannounced Signage Grant. In addition, funds from downtown's two active TIFs support City grants for life safety improvements, such as sprinkler systems. BMS is actively involved in the grant and loan making processes. In addition, BMS offers two incentives: a Business Promotion Grant and Business Assistance Grant. The promotion grant supports three or more businesses working together on a cooperative promotion to attract customers to their businesses. The assistance grant provides technical services to assist individual business owners with growth issues. BMS typically engages a consultant to provide these services on behalf of the owner.
- **Community Garden:** BMS initially worked with local gardeners to develop a community garden on one of downtown's vacant parcels. Food grown in the garden is donated to the local food pantry. Supplementing the community garden, gardeners and local clubs now assist the City and BMS with coordinated plantings in certain areas of the downtown. The City provides routine watering services to both areas, and the volunteers maintain the gardens and plantings.



Chicago Tribune



## Geneva

Located just north of Batavia, Geneva is slightly smaller in population (21,700) than O'Fallon. The median household income is just under \$88,000. Geneva's early history was as a manufacturing and dairy center, but the City began to evolve into a bedroom community early in the twentieth century. Geneva's downtown is a both a National Register and local landmark district. During the 2000s, Geneva's downtown footprint expanded through new commercial in-fill and residential development. The downtown businesses, in addition to serving area residents, also attract day visitors from throughout metropolitan Chicago. Like Batavia, Geneva includes multiple auto-oriented corridors. The Geneva segment of Randall Road includes upscale retail development and a lifestyle shopping center.

Geneva's downtown effort combines elements of the Batavia and Collinsville organization structures described above. A City economic development staff member manages the downtown district. Key partners in this effort include the downtown merchants organization and Geneva's Chamber of Commerce. Downtown Geneva's improvement efforts are funded primarily from the City's general funds. A SSA, encompassing most of the downtown, funds downtown parking lot acquisition and maintenance, appearance-related maintenance, and snow plowing. The City is currently considering a BD for the downtown area that would generate additional revenues to support downtown programs. Geneva's current budget for downtown work and activities is about \$130,000.

The City's programming for downtown Geneva emphasizes economic development by focusing primarily on small business growth. Downtown's four major festivals and cooperative advertising programs are organized by Geneva's Chamber, in collaboration with City staff and regional tourism groups. The City also provides resources for tour groups and meeting planners in partnership with the local and regional Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

- **Ongoing Communication:** The partnership between the City and the downtown merchants organization is noted above. City staff and the merchants' organization meet monthly, and City staff regularly visits business and property owners. Through the merchants' Business Improvement and Retention Committee, the City and local merchants also communicate directly via downtown Block Captains. The City and merchants operate closed Facebook and Pinterest pages for downtown merchant communication. (A public Instagram page is provided for downtown photos.) Quarterly merchant meetings are held and are generally well attended.
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** The City provides regular business training sessions open to all downtown businesses through their Frontline program. While topics vary, one training segment is always included. The 'Ask Me about Geneva' segment provides downtown history, customer service tips and reminders, and stresses cross sales among downtown's merchants. The Block Captains also have a role in delivering technical assistance. They inform staff about any business issues on their blocks, and confidential technical assistance is then made available to individual businesses. In addition, the City facilitates access to regional business resources, such as regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) or SCORE.



- **Marketing:** City staff provide marketing and communication support for smaller events organized by downtown business clusters and for the entire downtown district. The City publishes the downtown directory and its online version. The City also organizes three smaller events to supplement the Chamber's larger festivals: (1) Live Windows, an event following the downtown holiday tree lighting in early December. Local students pose in storefront windows along State Street, based upon a theme identified by the store owner. The students receive community service credit, families attend to support their children, and all visit downtown stores; (2) Geneva Bride, a retail promotion organized with regional tourism groups, attracting future brides and wedding planners; and (3) Gardenology, a spring gardening event for both homeowners and professionals that features temporary retail and promotes related downtown businesses.

Imagine having a city  
full of things that no  
other city had.

-Bill Bryson

## 6. PARKING

Most downtowns provide a relatively small amount of on-street parallel parking in front of businesses; a majority of visitors and employees are accommodated in larger public parking lots in the rear. O'Fallon is arranged a bit differently. It offers substantially more parking in front of businesses than is typical in a downtown area because the configuration of First Street allows for two to three rows of angled parking. Therefore, those visiting Downtown O'Fallon have become very accustomed to parking almost directly in front of their destination. Until somewhat recently, a large majority of visitors and employees could be accommodated in the front without much of a problem. However, the addition of a very popular restaurant to the downtown has shown that this arrangement is not going to work in the long-term, particularly as the downtown continues to become a more desirable location to visit.

Creating additional parking spaces is a costly endeavor, but is an idea that should certainly be kept in consideration. However, a lack of parking is often mostly a problem of perception and poor utilization, a situation that is supported by the parking counts and online surveys conducted by City staff. For example, the existing spots are being poorly utilized because employees and other long-term visitors are taking up prime parking spaces in the front instead of leaving them for customers. Additionally, overflow/rear public parking lots are being sparsely used in some cases. O'Fallon will need to make improvements to correct these issues to improve the downtown parking situation.

### Parking Counts

While anecdotal information about parking from business owners and customers is helpful, collecting real world data makes it possible to make a true assessment of the situation. With advice from CBB Traffic Transportation Engineers, City staff divided the core downtown area into four major zones and several sub-zones. Staff conducted parking counts in these zones in October 2014 and January 2015. During these counting times, staff collected data 4-6 times per day on a Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. A summary of the data collected in public parking areas is shown on Maps 1 and 2.

#### October 2014

As shown in Map 1, in October 2014 (before the opening of Peel Pizza), parking counts confirmed what staff had been hearing anecdotally from business owners in the area for quite some time. Zone 2B, the 100 block of East First Street (near Shooter's & Hemingway's Bistro) was under considerable stress. The on-street parking in front of the shops was in heavy use from lunch time through the evening. Even so, other alternative parking in the immediate vicinity (such as the City Hall Annex lot in Zone 2A and the overflow parking area near the Santa Hut in Zone 2C) was hardly used.

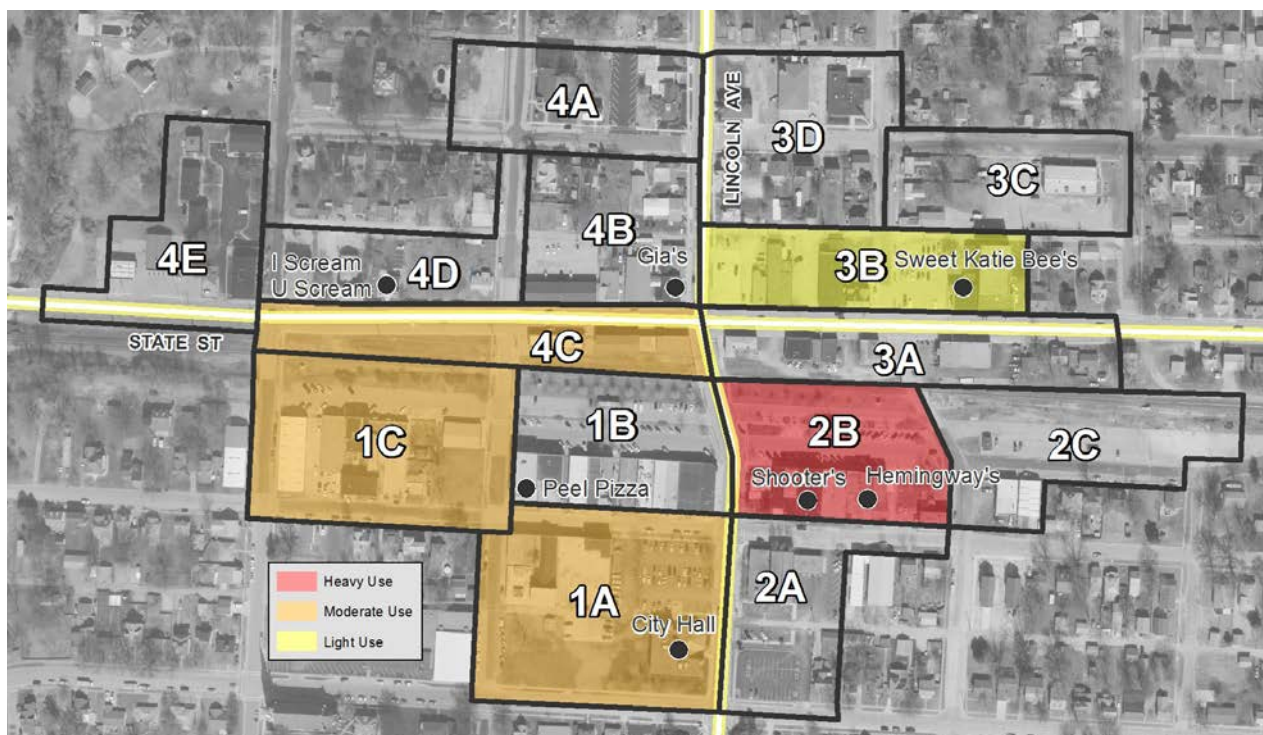
Even though the approximately eight on-street parking spaces on 2nd street in zone 1A experienced moderate use, the City Hall lot itself was not under stress. Zone 1C only experienced moderate use when the VFW hosted large events in the evening. In zone 4C, on-street parking was primarily used in the 100 west block (near Gia's) and not the 200 west block (near I Scream U Scream).

### January 2015

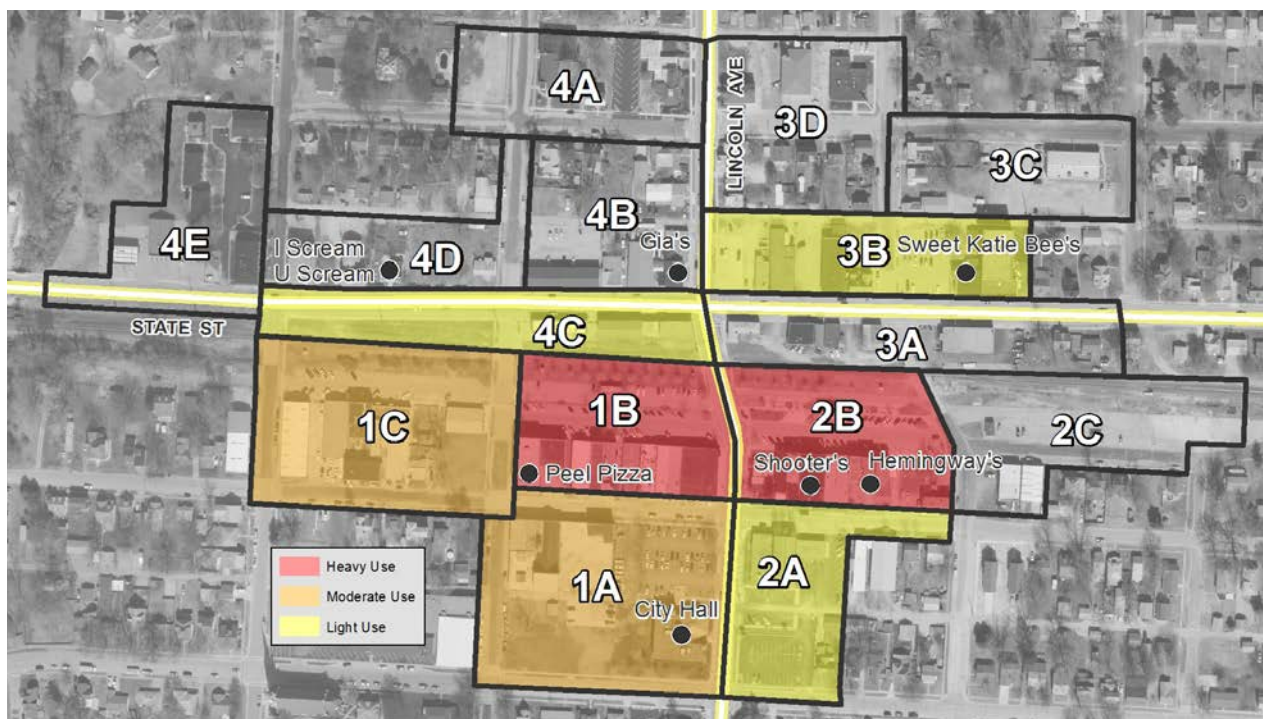
As shown in Map 2, in January 2015 (after the opening of Peel Pizza), parking counts indicated that in addition to Zone 2B, Zone 1B (near Peel Pizza and Wood Bakery) was now also being heavily used from lunch time through the evening. Several other nearby parking areas (such as the City Hall lot in Zone 1A and on-street parking in front of the VFW area in Zone 1C) were also seeing increased usage in the afternoons and evenings. The overflow lot in Zone 2C (near the Santa Hut) was being used slightly more than before and the parking lot in Zone 2A was being used more regularly, primarily by Peel Pizza staff.

### Future Counts

It is recommended that these parking counts are repeated regularly to monitor the situation in Downtown O'Fallon.



**Map 1: October 2014 Parking Utilization**



**Map 2: January 2015 Parking Utilization**

## Parking Survey

In the online downtown survey conducted as part of this plan, parking convenience was ranked as average or better by over 65% of survey participants (Fig. 5). This is generally considered a good score as far as parking is concerned. In addition to these results, a short follow up online survey specifically about parking was conducted. This survey took place from December 11, 2014 through January 15, 2015 (after the opening of Peel Pizza); 343 responses were received. While parking is definitely in higher demand than it was before Peel Pizza opened, the survey results seem to indicate the parking is still within acceptable limits. Over 70% of respondents are finding parking one block or closer to their destination (Fig. 6) and their search takes less than five minutes (Fig. 7). Additionally, the safety, time restrictions, appearance, proximity, and availability of parking was ranked as average or better by 60-80% of respondents.

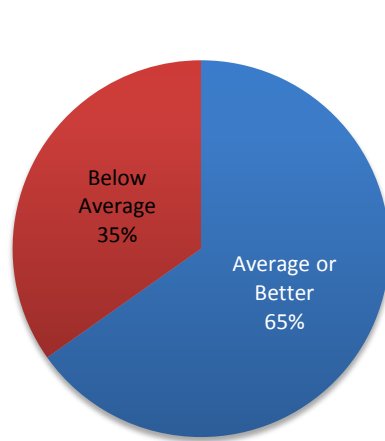


Figure 5: Parking Convenience

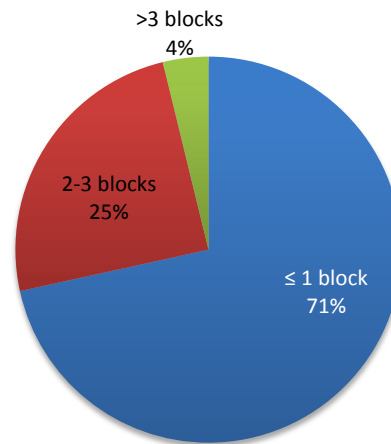


Figure 6: Distance to Parking

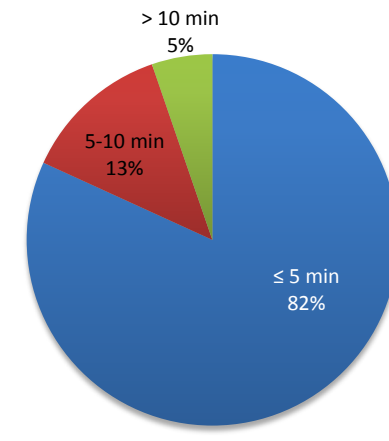


Figure 7: Time to Find Parking

## Recommended Improvements

Enhancements to parking must be kept in perspective with all the other improvements and programs needed to make a downtown successful. Lower cost options that maximize the use of existing parking should be prioritized over large capital improvement projects. Generally speaking, as long as parking is adequate, customers will not be deterred from visiting the downtown district. Spending the large sum of money required to make parking scores move from “average” (as indicated in the survey) to “excellent” will eliminate the pedestrian environment desired in a downtown by creating seas of parking that will rarely be used. Downtown O’Fallon would see very little return for such an investment.

### Signs

Downtown O’Fallon currently lacks even basic signage indicating that a parking lot is for public use. Creating a system of signs that directs people to public parking areas (and other important features) will make it easier for visitors to be aware of nearby parking opportunities and



rear/overflow lots will likely be used more often. With thoughtful design, these signs can also improve the appearance of the downtown and be used as an opportunity to unify the district with a distinctive logo or other type of branding scheme developed specifically for Downtown O'Fallon.

### Pavement Markings

Additional parking can often be added in a very cost efficient way by reconfiguring and restriping existing parking areas. The O'Fallon Public Works Department has examined several options that are estimated to cost \$200-570 per space that can be completed relatively easily. For example, the 100 block of East First Street (in front of Shooter's & Hemingway's) can be returned to two-way traffic by replacing angled parking with perpendicular spaces, thereby adding 10 spots in a prime location. These types of projects should be completed as soon as possible.

Additional pavement markings on north-south streets such as State, Cherry, Oak, and Vine would clarify the existence of on-street parallel parking opportunities on side streets. Currently, small signs showing the time limitations are the only indication of a parking spot. These marking would have the added benefit of traffic calming, as delineating parallel parking areas makes the travel lanes appear narrower, which tends to slow down vehicles. This effect is very beneficial to a pedestrian area such as the downtown.

### Restrictions & Enforcement

Enforcing parking restrictions in the downtown area is a complex process which merits a thorough evaluation to determine the best way to ensure businesses have sufficient parking for their patrons and employees. First, there must be discussions between downtown business owners and the City to determine if there is a demand for parking regulations, and if so, what type of parking regulations are appropriate and how should they be enforced. Once a common vision is established, the details of this new system will need to be worked out: who will enforce and when, how will it be paid for, how will any potential tickets be processed, etc. Once established, parking enforcement could prove to be an essential piece of the system to make downtown parking work more effectively.

To manage downtown parking, premium parking in front of businesses should be reserved for customers only and have time restrictions during peak hours; employees should park in less desirable spots in the rear or other locations. The existing signage downtown does not consistently promote this parking strategy and is somewhat confusing and inconsistent. Further complicating matters, almost all of the parking signs have been placed through an informal process and have no supporting ordinance.

The City should make an effort to meet with downtown business owners and representatives from the Police Department to discuss the parking strategy recommended above and determine what accommodations need to be made to ensure its success. Any parking regulations involving tickets or fines need to be passed by ordinance and codified. The cost to enforce these regulations should not be cost-prohibitive as community service officers can possibly complete the work. Also, the parking areas needn't be monitored constantly; periodic enforcement through warnings or tickets is enough to remind people of the rules and improve compliance.



Boston Public Library

In most locations in Downtown O'Fallon, it will be impossible to add more premium parking spaces in front of businesses simply because there is no room to do so. Better utilizing existing spots is a much more cost effective strategy. Even so, it may be wise for the City to plan for additional overflow public parking lots to accommodate the expected growth of the downtown, particularly considering the response to the downtown survey indicated a strong desire for more restaurants, a use which can have relatively intense parking requirements. These additional spaces will make it easier for downtown employees to comply with the parking restrictions mentioned above and will ease congestion at the City Hall parking lot. These new lots will also make it more practical to have community festivals in Downtown O'Fallon as they provide alternative parking locations if a portion of a street needs to be closed for an event.

Unfortunately, creating additional parking is the most costly option available. Local land values and the type of facility provided greatly influence the construction cost. As shown in Table 12, parking spaces in a surface lot usually cost approximately \$1,000–\$4,000 per space to build and spaces in a multi-story parking garage are at least \$10,000 each. Generally speaking, structured parking does not become cost effective until land prices exceed \$1 million per acre.<sup>1</sup>

Given the costs mentioned above, City staff have investigated several possibilities to add surface parking lots downtown. The most promising options are larger tracts of land which the City already owns. The vacant lot west of City Hall is the easiest option to add a significant amount of parking. Between 45-80 spaces could be created at a cost of approximately \$3,600-\$4,100 per space. Another possibility is making significant improvements to the land at the northeast corner of 1st and Vine (near the Santa hut). This area already serves as unofficial overflow parking for the downtown. However, it is used sparingly, likely due to the poor condition of the property. The asphalt pavement is crumbling, the lighting is poor, the railroad uses the adjacent area as storage, and the Santa hut blocks visibility. Revamping this area to bring it up to city code and make it official parking is expected to be very expensive, but would certainly provide ample overflow parking and would eliminate an eyesore in Downtown O'Fallon. Until funds for this project are available, the City should consider striping parking spaces as well as making minor improvements to pavement and lighting if it is not cost prohibitive. The City should also work with the railroad to get them to clean up their property and store their materials elsewhere.

**Table 12**

<b>Estimated Parking Construction Cost per Space</b>	
Does NOT include value of the land	
Subsurface or 3+ Story Parking Garage	\$15,000–\$30,000
2-Story Parking Garage	\$10,000–\$15,000
Surface Lot	\$1,000–\$4,000
Restriping w/Minimal Alterations	\$200–\$600

Source: CBB Transportation

<sup>1</sup> Victoria Transport Policy Institute- Transportation Cost and Benefit Analysis II: Parking Costs [www.vtpi.org](http://www.vtpi.org)

When Solomon said there was a time and a place for everything, he had not encountered the problem of parking his automobile.

-Bob Edwards

# 7. INFRASTRUCTURE & STREETScape DESIGN

While quality businesses have the greatest capacity to draw customers to Downtown O’Fallon, improvements to the streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces can also increase the number of visits by making the area more pleasant overall and safer for walking and biking. These public improvements can also spur additional private redevelopment as they give property owners confidence that investing in their buildings will make economic sense.

The online survey for Downtown O’Fallon revealed poor scores for some of the key areas which are most critical to improving the image of and visits to the area (Table 13). A large percentage of survey takers indicated they would visit more often if the City added more plazas, lighting, landscaping, benches, and marked crosswalks. Using this information, design firm SWT created two conceptual images for improvements to Downtown O’Fallon that make the area aesthetically appealing and safer (Figs. 9 & 10). These conceptual designs will need to be vetted and refined based on feedback from downtown stakeholders, City staff, and the community at large. Some of the key features include:

## Landscaping

- Additional street trees provide shade and beauty
- Planting areas at intersections provide more green space and potential stormwater runoff collection

## Street Lights

- Additional lighting increases safety by making pedestrians and cyclists more visible

## Intersections

- Pedestrian safety is increased by having prominently marked crosswalks with textured pavement
- Bump outs at intersections make it easier for cars to spot pedestrians and increases safety by shortening the crossing distance
- Bump out areas also provide locations for outdoor seating and landscaping

## Bicycling

- Marked lanes along Lincoln Avenue provide a clear path to get visitors to the downtown O’Fallon area

## Parking

- Adding pavers (or a stamped pattern) to parking areas breaks up large expanse of asphalt and provides visual interest

**Table 13**

Rate your overall satisfaction with these factors as they apply to Downtown O’Fallon	
Answered “above average” or better	
Pedestrian Safety	38.7%
Pedestrian Access	36.8%
Sidewalks and Lighting Attractiveness	31.7%
Bicycle Access	21.7%
Building Attractiveness	15.9%



These potential improvements were presented to the public at a meeting on December 11, 2014 and were very well received. However, these designs will likely need to be adjusted after in depth discussions with City staff and downtown stakeholders take place. Funds for final design, engineering, and construction should be incorporated into the City's Capital Improvement Plans.



**Figure 8: Potential Improvements–3rd & Lincoln**



**Figure 9: Potential Improvements–State & Lincoln**

# 8. ACTION STEPS

## Organization

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Identify a dedicated City staff member to serve as downtown's champion.	City	2015	\$0	This staff member will serve as an external and internal liaison to the steering group and marketing committee (described below and in the Plan Recommendations), to the downtown business community, to partners throughout the community, and to City departments. This staff position will be part of the City's reporting structure. The position will start as a part-time position.
Identify and appoint a Downtown Steering Group.	City Administrator	2015	\$0	This advisory board will be appointed by the City Administrator. Appointees should include downtown business and property owners, commercial real estate representatives, and representation from City staff, the Chamber, relevant City boards or commissions, and downtown institutions.
Define the Downtown Steering Group operating structure.	City and Downtown Steering Group members	2015-2016	\$0	The Downtown Steering Group should formulate by-laws governing their advisory role and determine their name (other than Downtown Steering Group). By-laws can describe their role, number of annual meetings, and representation. By-laws should permit the formation of permanent and ad hoc standing committees, including the marketing committee, to enable current or future work. This board will provide advice on programming and downtown issues. Their role will not include day-to-day downtown management.
Organize a marketing committee as a standing committee of the Downtown Steering Group.	City and Downtown Steering Group members	2016	\$0	This committee should include downtown business owners, Downtown O'Fallon representatives, Chamber representation, regional tourism staff (if appropriate), and representatives from other O'Fallon organizations holding major events downtown. This group will be responsible for events and business promotions.

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Develop partnerships with a wide range of O'Fallon and regional organizations to further the interests and success of downtown O'Fallon.	Dedicated City staff member	2015 and Ongoing		Potential partners should be considered broadly. Any organization or group may be a resource for some type of downtown work by providing people, expertise, or funding.
Review and assess current programming, and formulate a draft annual program schedule.	Dedicated City staff member and Downtown Steering Group	2016 and Ongoing		
Organize liaison efforts and processes between City staff and departments and the downtown business community.	Dedicated City staff member	2015-2016		Visible outreach to individual owners will be necessary to start.
Review potential funding mechanisms, after City staff review.	Dedicated City staff member	2016-2017		

Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible.

-Tony Robbins

## Redevelopment

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Foster the development of new and modern office space to increase downtown's daytime population over time.	City	Ongoing		
Encourage the development of quality residential projects in and near downtown.	City	Ongoing		
Enable targeted redevelopment at available downtown sites, including City-owned properties.	City	Ongoing		Shared parking arrangements may be needed.
Assess incentive use for redevelopment projects, given City incentive policies.	City	Ongoing		
Work with downtown property owners to facilitate upper story housing development downtown.	City and Downtown Constituencies	Begin 2016 and Ongoing	\$0	
Support the growth of downtown's ground floor businesses and downtown's overall attraction power, as described in these action plans.	City and Downtown Constituencies	Ongoing		Refer to the Business Growth and Development Action Plans.
Ensure that existing City regulations and incentives support the mix of uses.	City	Ongoing		
Market downtown's investment opportunities to the Metro East real estate community, including: 1-page flyers highlighting each downtown redevelopment opportunity; featuring one opportunity per week on the City's website; distribute press releases to regional real estate publications.	City and Downtown Management	Begin 2016 and Ongoing		This role will be assumed by the downtown management structure.
Create facade improvement program	City	Begin 2016		



Ensure stability of the housing stock near downtown and encourage infill development where possible.	City	2016 and Ongoing		
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## Promotion

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Assess downtown's current special event calendar.	City, Chamber, and Downtown Constituencies	2016		Event assessment guidelines are provided in Appendix D.
Develop three signature special events after objectively assessing downtown's current special event calendar.	City, Chamber, and Downtown Constituencies	2016	Break-even	Based upon this plan's survey results, consider food-oriented events as part of the annual event calendar. The downtown management staff would assist event organizers, once the organizational structure is in effect.
Develop a branding scheme that can be used on all downtown signage and marketing materials	City and Downtown Management	2016		
Develop promotional and advertising materials and a dedicated website to promote downtown activities and all downtown businesses and any clusters, such as restaurants.	City, Downtown Management, and Downtown Constituencies	Begin 2016 and Ongoing		This task and the two following tasks would be an ongoing effort of the downtown management structure.
Organize an ongoing public relations campaign promoting downtown O'Fallon's business and growth successes.	City's Downtown Management, and Downtown Constituencies	Begin 2016 and Ongoing		Recognizing downtown partners should be a component of this effort.
Build an online downtown community that features downtown successes, provides downtown-specific event information, and supplements the online presence of downtown's businesses.	City, Downtown Management, and Downtown Constituencies	2016		Recognizing downtown partners should be a component of this effort.

## Appearance

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Conduct an appearance 'audit' of Downtown O'Fallon, identifying 'quick fixes' to improve downtown's appearance and potential local partners to assist with these 'quick fixes.'	City	2016	\$0	This task is a first step in enhancing visitor experiences in downtown O'Fallon. Considerations include: Are there locations for additional downtown plantings or planters? Are there dead plants or trees that need removal? Are there broken sidewalks needing repair to accommodate pedestrians? What can be done to improve the appearance of downtown's surface parking lots? Are there areas that require extra attention for street cleaning or trash removal? Are there ways to work around sidewalk obstructions? What buildings require exterior improvements?
Confirm 'audit' results with downtown business owners to incorporate their customer feedback.	City	2016	\$0	
Brainstorm 'tactical urbanist' (meaning low cost, no cost) projects to address and prioritize issues identified in the 'audit' to enhance what visitors and residents see and experience downtown.	City, Chamber, and Downtown Constituents	2016		
Identify partners, such as local garden clubs, to assist with projects identified during the 'audit' and brainstorming session.	City, Chamber, and Downtown Constituents	2016	\$0	As necessary, expand the partnerships to sustain the identified projects.
Determine which partner will address each issue and time frame for completion.	City, Chamber, and Downtown Constituents	2016	\$0	When ready, the downtown organizational structure should assume coordinating responsibilities.
Identify locations at existing downtown restaurants for outdoor dining during the 'audit.'	City and Downtown Restaurant Operators	2016	\$0	Potential restaurant locations should be considered as part of this audit.

Examine regulations to enable downtown outdoor dining, focused on enhancing the downtown experience.	City and Downtown Restaurant Operators	2016	\$0	
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## Funding

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Meet with existing downtown business and property owners to identify what business or building issues should be addressed by downtown specific incentive programs.	City	2016	\$0	
Update existing City incentive policies to incorporate downtown-specific business and redevelopment incentives.	City	2016		Incentives should be structured to accommodate new businesses coming to downtown O'Fallon and the expansion of existing downtown businesses (including new business concepts but current owners).
Identify funding sources, including proposed downtown area Tax Increment Financing (TIF); City funds; local bank loan pool; local matching grant program; local public-private funding pool for small business growth.	City in partnership with Local and Regional Financial Institutions, Community Foundation, and Regional Small Business Resources	2016		Example includes the CORE fund in Hamilton, OH.
Complete downtown incentive guidelines, and develop application, review, and approval policies.	City	2016		
Identify area SBA direct lenders, and as needed, refer new or expanding businesses to these lenders.	City	2016		

## Business Growth

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Identify and provide access to regional small business resources, such as business planning through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), local mentoring among O'Fallon owners, and support through entrepreneur and maker networks.	City, Chamber, and Regional Resources	2016		The tasks in this action plan represent an ongoing effort of the downtown management structure.
Partner with the Chamber and the above resources to provide training, including internet marketing and merchandising, to downtown business owners.	City, Chamber, and Regional Resources	2016		
Identify temporary tenant programs that improve existing businesses and grow new businesses. Testing new concepts and launching resident or home-based businesses downtown are two examples.	City, Chamber, and Regional Resources	2016		This task presents the opportunity to showcase downtown vacancies in partnership with downtown property owners and commercial brokers. Regulations may need review to permit temporary uses.
Initiate a City-wide business communication program.	City and Chamber	2016		
Foster new downtown business concepts developed by existing downtown business owners.	City	Ongoing		
Build upon downtown's strong businesses and clusters, such as dining, to initially identify new business tenants. Collaborate with property owners as part of this process.	City and Downtown Constituencies	Ongoing		
Initiate formal business recruitment to downtown's vacancies, as investment increases.	City and Downtown Management Structure	After 2016 and Ongoing		Tenancing recommendations from this plan establish the basis for recruitment.



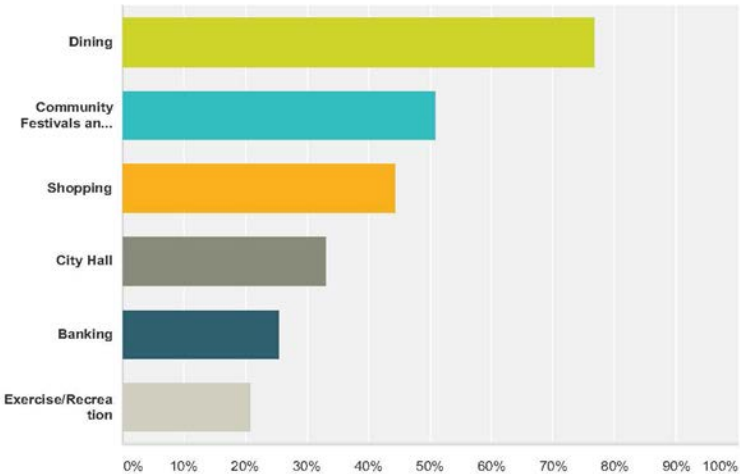
## Infrastructure

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date	Estimated Budget (if available)	Other Factors
Create a five-year capital budget for infrastructure, including for downtown infrastructure.	City	2016		City-established priority list will be needed, given downtown infrastructure needs noted in next bullet point.
Improve downtown's infrastructure including: festival/event space; curb and gutter; parking; City market; plazas; lighting; bike lanes; pedestrian access.	City	Begin 2016		
Monitor and identify available grant or matching funding sources for infrastructure improvements, including SWIDA and transportation funding.	City	Ongoing		
As infrastructure is improved, maintain improvements in partnership with downtown organization described within these action plans.	City	Ongoing		

# APPENDIX A—COMPLETE SURVEY RESULTS

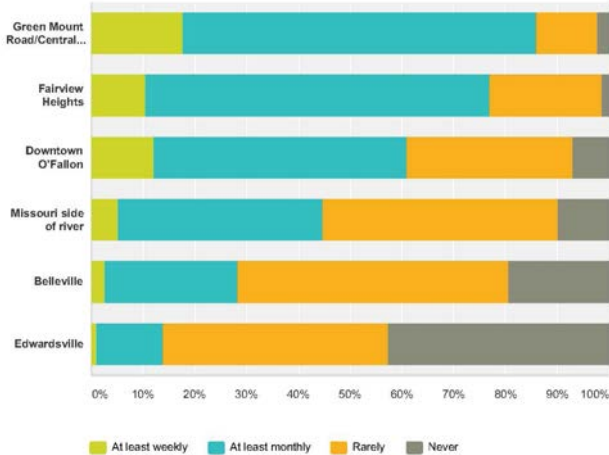
**Q1 From the list below, select the reasons for your trips during the past year to Downtown O'Fallon? (Select all that apply)**

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 32



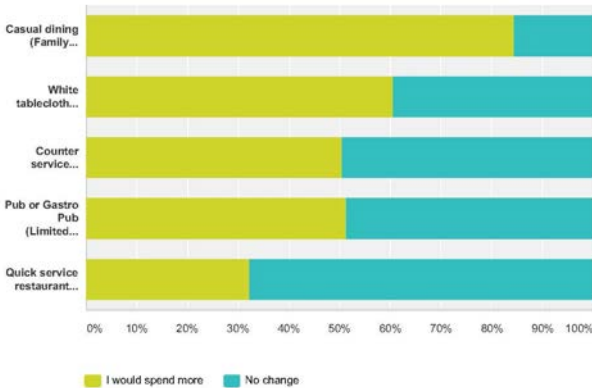
**Q2 How often do you eat out in these commercial areas?**

Answered: 1,031 Skipped: 73



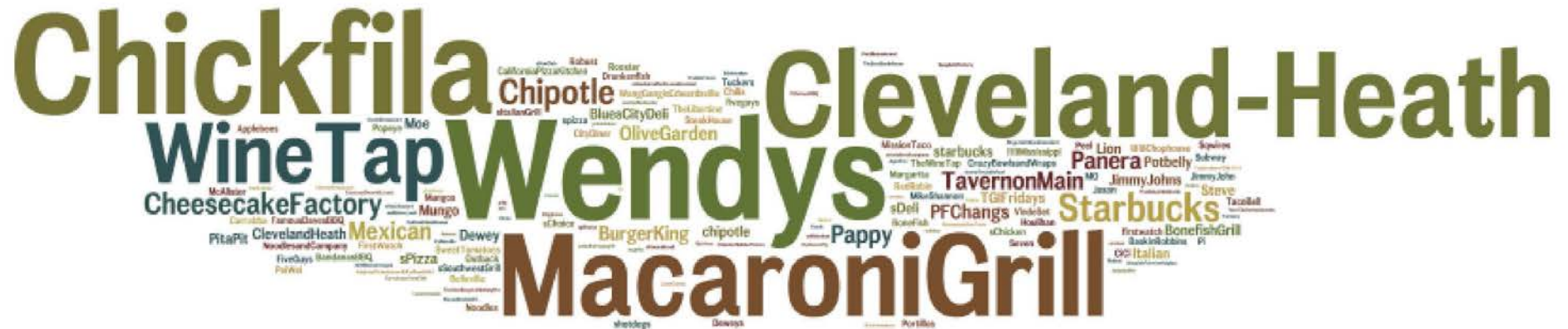
**Q3 How would the addition of these restaurants affect the amount of money you spend in Downtown O'Fallon?**

Answered: 1,029 Skipped: 75



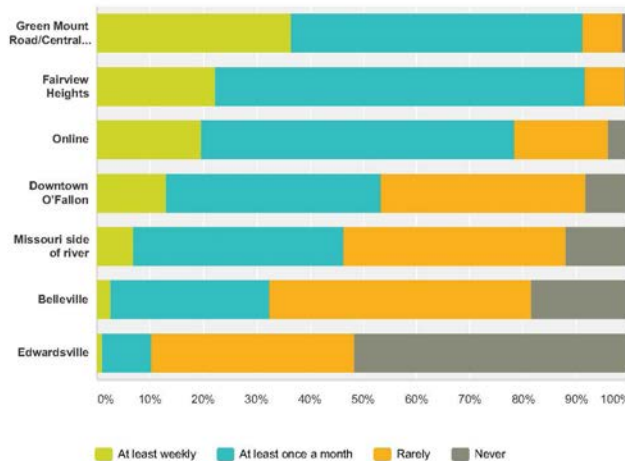
**Q4 What non-O'Fallon restaurant have you visited that you think would be a good addition to Downtown O'Fallon?**

Answered: 687   Skipped: 417



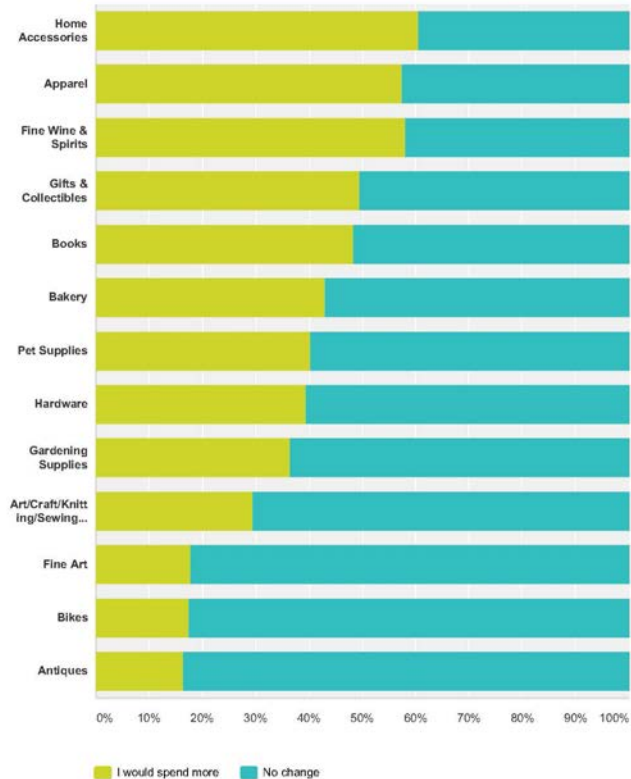
**Q5 How often do you make a purchase in these commercial areas?**

Answered: 1,017   Skipped: 87



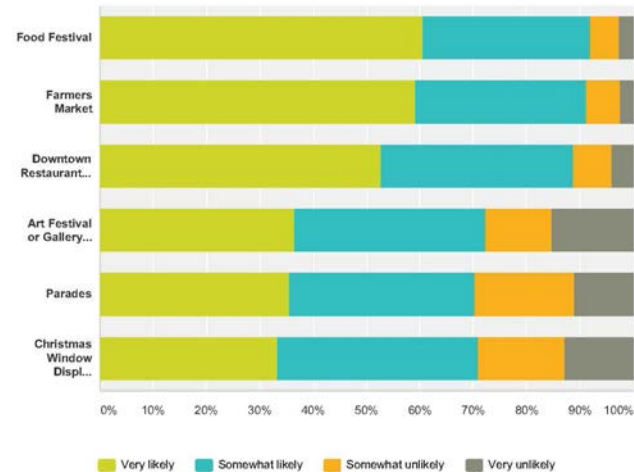
**Q6 How would the addition of stores carrying these items affect the amount of money that you spend in Downtown O'Fallon?**

Answered: 996 Skipped: 108



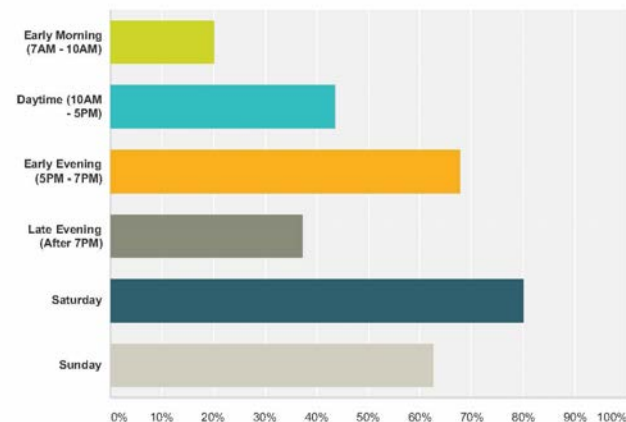
**Q8 How likely is it that you would attend these Downtown O'Fallon events?**

Answered: 988 Skipped: 116



**Q9 When is it convenient for you to shop? (Mark all that apply)**

Answered: 986 Skipped: 118



[illegible]

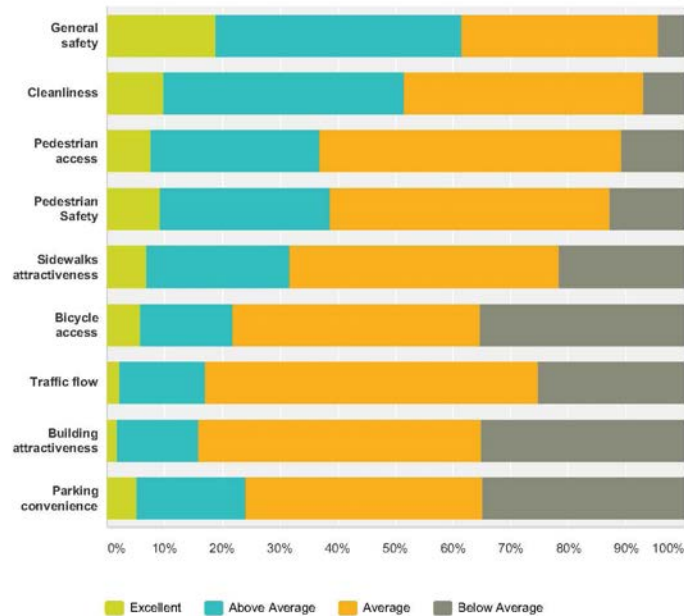
Answered: 862   Skipped: 242





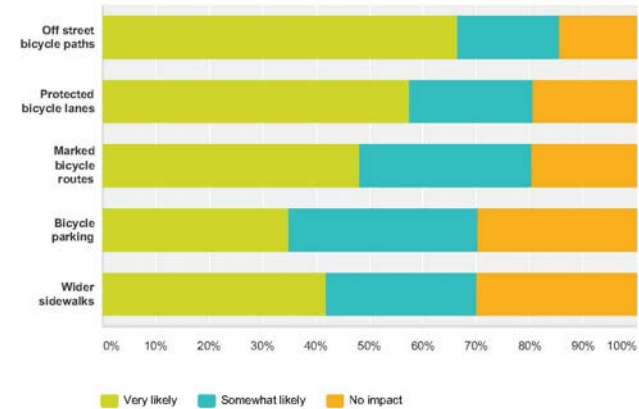
**Q10 Rate your overall satisfaction with these factors as they apply to Downtown O'Fallon:**

Answered: 988 Skipped: 116



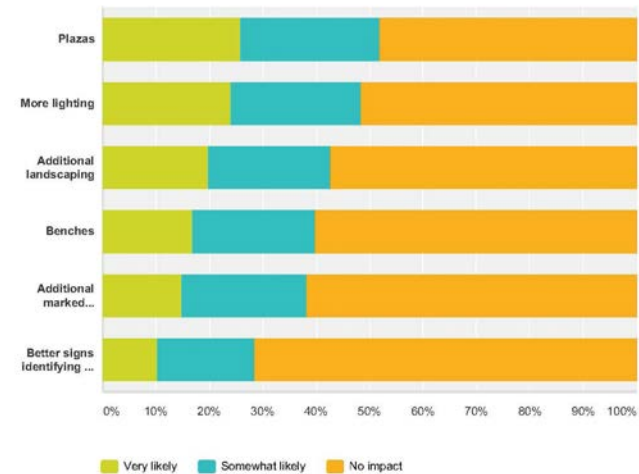
**Q13 How likely are you to increase how often you bicycle to Downtown O'Fallon if these changes are made?**

Answered: 501 Skipped: 603



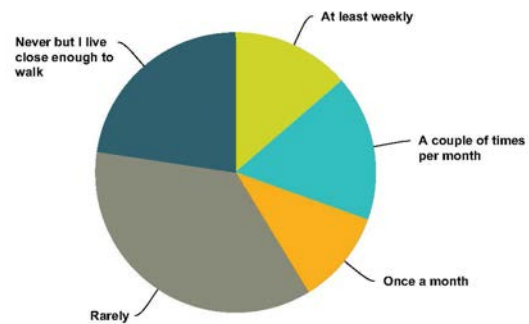
**Q15 How likely are you to walk to Downtown O'Fallon more often if these changes are made?**

Answered: 858 Skipped: 246



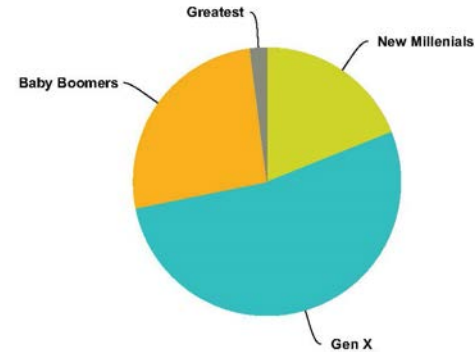
**Q14 How often do you walk to Downtown O'Fallon?**

Answered: 981 Skipped: 123



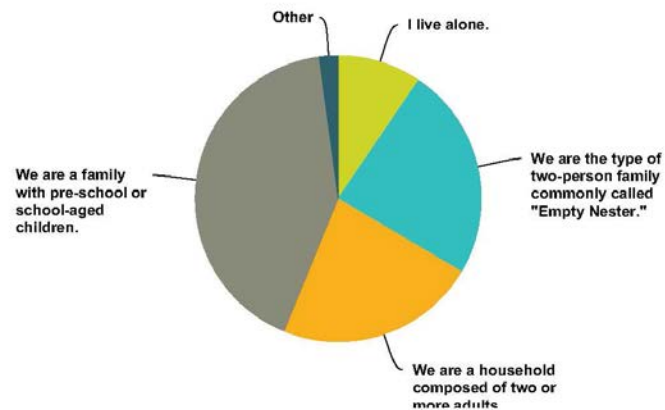
**Q17 Please choose the category that matches your age.**

Answered: 977 Skipped: 127



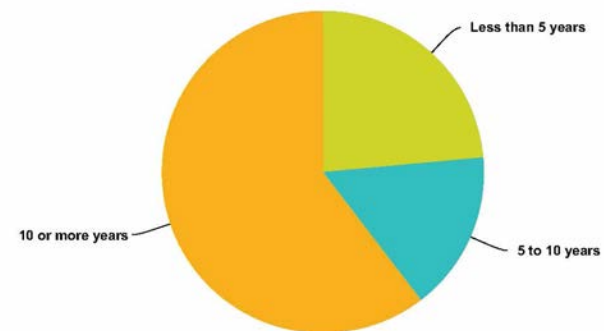
**Q16 Choose the answer that best describes your household.**

Answered: 979 Skipped: 125



**Q18 How long have you lived in O'Fallon?**

Answered: 977 Skipped: 127



# APPENDIX B—MARKET DEMOGRAPHICS

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Market
Total Population	29,149	2,810	19,682	298,438
Population Density (per Sq. Mile)	11,034	1,197	7,702	117,384
<b>Age</b>				
Age 0-4	5.7%	5.9%	5.6%	6.5%
Age 5-14	14.4%	12.1%	13.9%	13.4%
Age 15-19	7.5%	6.2%	7.5%	6.7%
Age 20-24	6.0%	6.1%	6.2%	6.6%
Age 25-34	12.4%	14.7%	12.6%	13.4%
Age 35-44	14.2%	12.9%	13.5%	12.7%
Age 45-54	16.9%	14.4%	16.8%	15.0%
Age 55-64	12.0%	12.4%	12.5%	12.3%
Age 65-74	6.2%	8.3%	6.6%	7.0%
Age 75-84	3.1%	4.8%	3.2%	4.4%
Age 85+	1.0%	1.6%	1.0%	1.9%
Median Age	37.9	38.3	38.1	37.7
<b>Housing Units by Tenure</b>				
Owner Occupied Housing Units	7,572	790	7,702	79,181
Owner Occupied Free and Clear	14.2%	17.6%	14.3%	12.2%
Owner Occupied with a Mortgage or Loan	54.3%	48.3%	53.1%	46.3%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	31.3%	33.9%	32.4%	32.5%
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>				
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	2.7%	1.9%	2.7%	1.4%
Black	15.7%	13.5%	16.5%	22.9%

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Market
White	76.9%	80.3%	76.2%	71.8%
Other	0.9%	0.6%	0.8%	1.3%
Multi-Race	3.1%	3.2%	3.1%	2.3%
Hispanic Ethnicity	3.8%	3.1%	3.5%	3.9%
Not of Hispanic Ethnicity	96.1%	96.8%	96.4%	96.1%
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Age 15+ Population	23,249	2,299	15,824	238,962
Divorced	8.9%	9.0%	8.5%	11.1%
Never Married	29.5%	31.0%	30.5%	31.7%
Now Married	56.4%	52.3%	55.7%	46.8%
Now Married- Separated	1.5%	1.4%	1.7%	4.0%
Widowed	4.9%	7.5%	5.1%	6.4%
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>				
Total Population Age 25+	19,298	1,951	13,099	199,270
Grade K-8	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%	2.7%
Grade 9-12	3.4%	3.2%	3.1%	6.5%
High School Graduate	17.5%	18.9%	17.3%	28.2%
Associate's Degree	10.9%	10.0%	10.5%	10.2%
Bachelor's Degree	27.8%	27.5%	28.5%	16.9%
Graduate Degree	18.1%	17.4%	18.2%	9.3%
Some College, no Degree	20.8%	21.4%	21.1%	25.5%
<b>Household Income</b>				
\$0-\$14,999	6.3%	7.7%	6.3%	12.0%
\$15,000-\$24,999	6.5%	7.8%	6.80%	10.7%
\$25,000-\$34,999	8.5%	9.4%	8.9%	10.8%
\$35,000-\$49,999	11.0%	11.4%	10.9%	12.8%

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Market
\$50,000-\$74,999	21.1%	19.8%	21.1%	21.1%
\$75,000-\$99,999	15.2%	15.8%	15.6%	13.6%
\$100,000-\$124,999	12.1%	10.7%	11.9%	12.9%
\$125,000-\$149,999	7.1%	6.3%	6.9%	6.3%
\$150,000+	11.6%	10.4%	11.2%	12.0%
Average Household Income	\$89,934	\$84,552	\$87,819	\$68,969
Median Household Income	\$70,235	\$65,441	\$69,229	\$54,437
Per Capita Income	\$34,059	\$36,026	\$34,368	\$27,334
<b>Vehicles Available</b>				
0	4.9%	6.4%	5.0%	7.4%
1	28.2%	31.0%	29.6%	33.9%
2+	66.8%	62.4%	65.3%	58.8%
Average Vehicles Per Household	2.1	1.95	2.01	1.92
Total Vehicles Available	22,104	2,346	15,538	225,765
<b>Employment</b>				
Employees	9,020	1,238	7,245	
Establishments*	923	161	764	
Jobs per Household	0.8	1.0	0.9	



# APPENDIX C—RETAIL SPENDING BY CATEGORY

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Area
Building Material, Garden Equipment Dealers	\$8,818,245	\$1,007,189	\$6,335,023	\$84,736,414
Building Material & Supply Dealers	\$7,163,088	\$820,060	\$5,153,499	\$69,689,185
Hardware Stores	\$453,903	\$49,491	\$322,907	\$4,423,475
Home Centers	\$3,880,935	\$438,924	\$2,782,807	\$37,167,674
Other Building Materials Dealers	\$2,509,050	\$294,528	\$1,824,008	\$25,098,677
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	\$319,201	\$37,117	\$223,777	\$2,999,359
Lawn and Garden Equipment Stores	\$1,655,156	\$187,129	\$1,181,524	\$15,047,229
Nursery and Garden Centers	\$1,430,511	\$161,350	\$1,021,106	\$13,042,419
Outdoor Power Equipment Stores	\$224,645	\$25,779	\$160,418	\$2,004,810
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$13,165,682	\$1,392,913	\$9,343,661	\$119,340,539
Clothing Stores	\$9,689,994	\$1,031,004	\$6,882,740	\$88,178,816
Children's and Infants Clothing Stores	\$467,899	\$48,624	\$325,517	\$4,354,352
Clothing Accessories Stores	\$335,197	\$35,710	\$238,076	\$2,987,404
Family Clothing Stores	\$5,172,550	\$549,029	\$3,671,989	\$47,140,776
Men's Clothing Stores	\$567,445	\$59,494	\$402,309	\$5,110,516
Other Clothing Stores	\$668,444	\$71,724	\$476,520	\$6,076,326
Women's Clothing Stores	\$2,478,459	\$266,423	\$1,768,328	\$22,509,442
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$1,196,592	\$127,491	\$842,629	\$9,667,405
Jewelry Stores	\$1,074,055	\$114,525	\$756,773	\$8,544,711
Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$122,537	\$12,966	\$85,856	\$1,122,694
Shoe Stores	\$2,279,097	\$234,418	\$1,618,293	\$21,494,318
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$4,550,718	\$472,021	\$3,182,223	\$40,707,102
Appliance, Television and Electronics Stores	\$3,702,221	\$385,288	\$2,593,727	\$33,310,616
Household Appliances Stores	\$1,119,178	\$117,821	\$791,515	\$10,237,771
Radio, Television and Electronics Stores	\$2,583,042	\$267,467	\$1,802,212	\$23,072,845
Camera & Photographic Equipment Stores	\$146,384	\$13,813	\$101,626	\$1,269,084

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Area
Computer and Software Stores	\$702,113	\$72,920	\$486,870	\$6,127,402
Food & Beverage Stores	\$40,780,038	\$4,386,813	\$29,014,866	\$402,106,812
Beer, Wine, & Liquor Stores	\$1,634,973	\$175,681	\$1,182,790	\$14,392,762
Grocery Stores	\$37,717,038	\$4,058,165	\$26,817,636	\$373,530,636
Convenience Stores	\$1,406,134	\$153,222	\$1,004,136	\$13,966,855
Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores	\$36,310,904	\$3,904,943	\$25,813,500	\$359,563,781
Specialty Food Stores	\$1,428,028	\$152,966	\$1,014,441	\$14,183,414
Foodservice & Drinking Places	\$34,814,874	\$3,738,837	\$24,605,988	\$314,223,901
Drinking Place - Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,276,810	\$140,136	\$903,076	\$11,412,973
Full-service Restaurants	\$16,622,359	\$1,786,703	\$11,748,116	\$149,927,168
Limited-service Eating Places	\$16,711,292	\$1,789,794	\$11,810,332	\$151,046,484
Special Foodservices	\$204,413	\$22,205	\$144,464	\$1,837,277
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$5,419,411	\$583,381	\$3,862,722	\$51,089,884
Furniture Stores	\$3,692,630	\$398,509	\$2,638,132	\$35,074,344
Home Furnishing Stores	\$1,726,782	\$184,872	\$1,224,590	\$16,015,540
Gasoline Stations	\$38,037,567	\$4,059,014	\$27,038,030	\$367,252,806
General Merchandise Stores	\$34,013,071	\$3,640,585	\$24,075,000	\$324,146,367
Department Stores excluding leased depts	\$11,091,368	\$1,181,910	\$7,841,760	\$102,801,022
Other General Merchandise Stores	\$22,921,703	\$2,458,675	\$16,233,240	\$221,345,345
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$8,059,339	\$889,698	\$5,719,412	\$78,109,762
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies & Perfume Stores	\$291,305	\$32,643	\$207,302	\$2,865,046
Optical Goods Stores	\$806,363	\$82,299	\$560,177	\$6,772,991
Other Health and Personal Care Stores	\$419,068	\$46,717	\$298,131	\$4,132,095
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	\$6,542,603	\$728,039	\$4,653,803	\$64,339,629
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$6,357,605	\$684,232	\$4,492,130	\$59,540,142
Florists	\$260,431	\$29,609	\$185,604	\$2,339,772
Office Supplies, Stationery, & Gift Stores	\$2,163,451	\$229,074	\$1,516,410	\$19,765,419
Gift, Novelty, and Souvenir Stores	\$918,827	\$97,556	\$645,091	\$8,445,600

	O'Fallon	Pedestrian 1/2 Mile	Convenience 5 Minute Drive	Destination Custom Area
Office Supplies and Stationery Stores	\$1,244,624	\$131,518	\$871,320	\$11,319,819
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$3,409,516	\$370,184	\$2,420,444	\$32,674,504
Used Merchandise Stores	\$524,206	\$55,365	\$369,672	\$4,760,447
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$44,663,041	\$4,985,958	\$31,790,969	\$435,622,725
Automotive Dealers	\$38,686,211	\$4,343,192	\$27,583,981	\$381,198,525
Automotive Parts, Accessories, & Tire Stores	\$2,950,136	\$315,495	\$2,089,376	\$27,666,885
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$3,026,694	\$327,272	\$2,117,613	\$26,757,315
Non-Store retailers	\$12,323,159	\$1,315,649	\$8,715,759	\$115,190,796
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores	\$3,727,941	\$385,417	\$2,615,407	\$33,560,851
Book, Periodical, & Music Stores	\$1,443,339	\$146,816	\$1,009,699	\$12,644,995
Book Stores and News Dealers	\$1,319,356	\$134,053	\$923,045	\$11,539,613
Book Stores	\$1,251,029	\$126,815	\$874,912	\$10,900,405
News Dealers and Newsstands	\$68,327	\$7,238	\$48,132	\$639,207
Compact Disc and Record Stores	\$123,983	\$12,762	\$86,654	\$1,105,382
Sporting, Hobby, & Musical Instrument Stores	\$2,284,602	\$238,602	\$1,605,709	\$20,915,857
Hobby, Toys and Games Stores	\$683,088	\$73,023	\$478,272	\$6,272,460
Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores	\$173,033	\$17,715	\$120,682	\$1,524,802
Sew/Needlework/Piece Goods Stores	\$193,662	\$20,939	\$136,009	\$1,846,513
Sporting Goods Stores	\$1,234,819	\$126,924	\$870,746	\$11,272,082
Total Aggregate Annual Retail Demand	\$254,730,691	\$27,541,708	\$180,791,191	\$3,014,238,265
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# APPENDIX D—EVENT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Special events are important catalysts for excitement and fulfillment of any downtown’s promise and in crafting a downtown’s image. They attract residents and visitors and generate positive feelings for the downtown or district. They also represent opportunities for downtown businesses to generate revenues, increase visibility, or both.

The following information includes the many criteria used by other commercial district management organizations to retain, change, or discontinue individual festivals (signature events) and special events. All districts and their management organizations struggle with this issue and how to do it, and vocal advocates for any particular event that works for them always complicate these necessary and often delayed decisions. Determining the fate of any special event or festival is fundamentally an exercise in allocating marketing resources. There are neither correct nor easy answers.

For organizations and communities like O’Fallon, the benefit of routine (meaning annual) reviews of special events, particularly signature events, are twofold: credibility for the organization with the public, the downtown businesses, the City, event participants and sponsors, and understanding existing or emerging target markets for the downtown. While each organization has an individual approach to these kinds of evaluations, the recommended criteria below are objective. City or event staff and any future Marketing Committee should identify those measurements, also provided below, that best fit within the existing event planning process.

## Overall Evaluation Measurements

- Attendance: Who and how many? This includes the understanding of the sources for the attendance numbers, for example police estimates or tickets sold.
- Vendor, Participant or Merchant Attitudes: How did they feel about the image created for the district/event? Did they feel the event generated sufficient recognition and awareness for the district? How well did the logistics of the event work? What needs to be improved?
- Specific to Vendors and/or Participants: Did the vendors or participants receive a return through sales and/or local exposure?
- Sales Volume (only if retail sales was the event objective)
- Media Value for Sponsors: Did sponsors receive sufficient coverage?
- Extenuating Circumstances: Was there an issue, such as weather, that affected the above?

Evaluations for each event should consider multi-year periods, typically the previous 3-5 years. If the event is new, generally a two-year trial period should be the basis for determining event continuation to identify those segments of the event that work.

## Attendance Measurements

- Pedestrian Counts: Counts at random locations and different times.
- Parking Volumes: Calculating number of cars and approximate number of people per car. Parking lot data for the event data and/or hourly counts in the closest lots may be used.
- Crowd Photos: Many organizations use photos to instantly document crowd levels for later counting, usually applying technology.
- Police Estimates: For larger events, local police departments often provide crowd estimates
- Exit Surveys (six or fewer questions): As attendees leave, survey them for residence or zip code, basic demographic information, how they learned of the event, reason for attending, and length of attendance.
- Coupons or Tickets: if used, coupons or tickets generally provide quite accurate attendance numbers.

## Attitude Measurements

- Surveys: Merchants and attendees can be surveyed about their opinions of the event. Like the Exit Survey, all surveys noted for these purposes should be six questions or less.
- Feedback to Event Staff: Provide evaluation forms for volunteers, entertainers, vendors, sponsors, government officials, and nearby businesses to obtain feedback on the event.
- Events Logistics: Identify problems and strengths. Discuss ways to alter the event in the future and note the anticipated positive outcomes from these changes for subsequent event evaluations.
- Social Media: Monitor comments and analytics for comments posted on downtown-related pages.
- Overall Evaluation: Did the event meet its original objectives as determined by City or event staff and any future Marketing Committee? Do the organizers want to implement the event again? For existing events with results from multiple years, can this event be improved, or expanded, to achieve greater results—sales, attendance, and/or awareness? Does the time and the event total cost, assuming positive answers to the previous questions, justify continuing the event?

## Estimated Sales Volumes

- Selected Merchant Surveys: Identify the group of businesses most affected by any event. (For example, if an event is held on one particular block. The ground floor businesses on that block should be asked for input.) Ask them to compare sales during the event with sales on a normal day. Surveys should be no more than five questions. If responses are low, staff should either call or visit to solicit input. Most important, inform them in advance of the event that the City or event staff will ask for their observations.



- Exit Surveys at parking, exit, or transportation areas: Ask people if they attended the retail events, made purchases, what and how much, and why or why not.

## **Sponsor or Participant Value Measurements**

- Vendor, Participant or Merchant Surveys: Ask food, beverage, product, or service vendors about similar sales comparisons. This category could also include restaurants with sidewalk cafes located near an event venue.
- Cost and Value: For event sponsors, ask about cost and value of their sponsorship, given attendance, how the attendees matched their target markets, and the estimated buying power of those markets, if appropriate.
- Product/Sponsor Awareness: As appropriate for that event, include survey questions on any exit surveys of attendees or participants to identify the sponsors.
- Event Reporting: Prepare an event report for any event sponsors including attendance numbers, any attendee demographic data based upon surveys, assessment of value, and photographs showing their visibility.

Using these criteria as applied to each event, City or staff and any future Marketing Committee can better quantify and formulate their recommendations for all events annually. These criteria provide a methodology and framework to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each event. Recommendations can be then completed in written form for appropriate review to determine how any event should be continued, changed, or eliminated from the annual calendar.

A city is not an  
accident, but the  
result of coherent  
visions and aims.

-Léon Krier