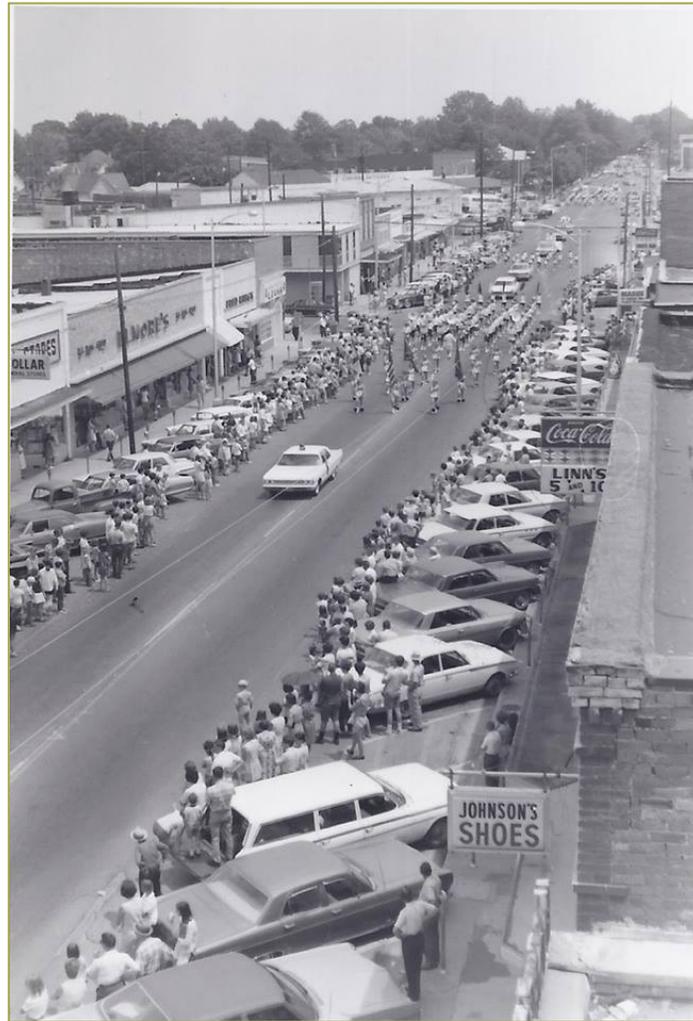




Albertville Downtown Master Plan 2015

Adopted: March 02, 2015

Cover Photo – Main Street Music Festival - Downtown Albertville, 2014
Photo courtesy of the City of Albertville



The Broiler Festival parade - Downtown Albertville, ca. 1969

Photo courtesy of John Allen

Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

Albertville Downtown Master Plan

2015

Adopted March 02, 2015

Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

Albertville Downtown Master Plan 2015

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This document constitutes the "Albertville Downtown Master Plan"
for the City of Albertville, Alabama

Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG)

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This plan was prepared by the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments



About TARCOG

Established by a local initiative in 1968, the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) aims to identify and address common regional issues, opportunities, and challenges of Northeast Alabama’s municipalities and counties. TARCOG serves as Substate Planning District Twelve and the Area Agency on Aging. The governments of five northeast Alabama counties, DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, and Marshall, and the municipalities located in these counties make up TARCOG. TARCOG helps local governments by obtaining funding for local government assistance, coordinating local governments’ responses to regional issues, and providing a wide range of services to the region’s governments and residents. This document was prepared and designed by the TARCOG Department of Planning and Economic Development.

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The *Albertville Downtown Master Plan* was prepared by the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) for the City of Albertville, Alabama with the assistance of the Albertville Downtown Steering Committee. This plan was made possible by funding through the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) – Grant Agreement Number LR-PF-PL-13-004.

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“Every increment of construction must be made in such a way as to heal the city.”

- Christopher Alexander, A New Theory of Urban Design

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

- Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities

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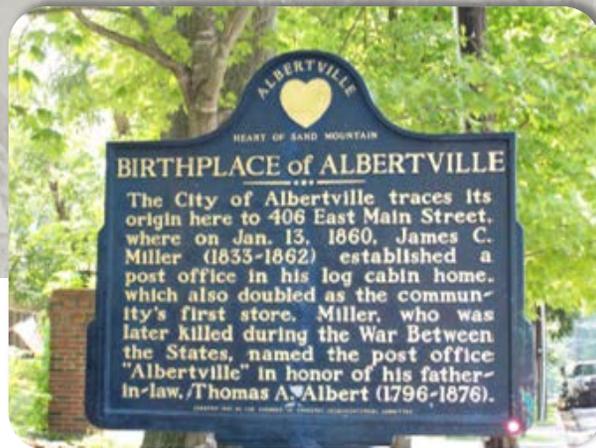
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Sincerest thanks and appreciation go to the Albertville Steering Committee for their dedication and hard work on this project, Mayor Honea and his Administration, and the people of Albertville. This plan is dedicated to the citizens of Albertville, Alabama.

“The Heart of Sand Mountain”

“We will strive to develop a vibrant, unique, and diverse downtown that celebrates the creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville. One Town. One Heartbeat.”

Albertville Downtown Steering Committee 2014



“The Pride is Alive”

Introduction. The City of Albertville, Alabama is located in central Marshall County along US Highway 431 and Alabama Highway 75, approximately 70 miles northeast of Birmingham, and 50 miles southeast of Huntsville. The population of the city according to Census 2013 is 21,556 persons. Of those, retail trade employs approximately 1,447 workers. Over the years, the City has experienced lost revenue and jobs due to retail leakage from the absence of a major commercial center. The conditions in Albertville's downtown central business district have become deteriorated, are in need of rehabilitation, and qualify as blighted. A detailed Blight Assessment concluded that 50.7% of Albertville's Central Business District is in deteriorated or dilapidated condition. In recent years, city leadership has determined that it is economically in the best interest of the city to prepare a long-range strategy and plan for the improvement and revitalization of the downtown to restore vital commerce to its central business district. This would include a study of economic and market conditions as well as the physical conditions which contribute to the vitality and attractiveness of the downtown area.

Over the years, the City of Albertville has made serious efforts toward housing rehab, providing potable water to all residents, upgrading and expanding its sewer treatment facilities, improving street and sidewalk conditions, airport expansion, renovating and expanding the City's Recreation Center, as well as planning for a new Senior Center facility. The City has also made aggressive efforts to attract and retain industry and retail. These activities show true commitment from the City to raise the quality of life for all residents. The City is looking to revitalize its blighted Central Business District—to boost economic opportunity and job creation, restore retail and commercial activity, and revitalize its downtown-- the site of many community activities.

Need for Plan. The general economic and environmental conditions of the city and its downtown area make the development of a plan a much-needed effort to provide guidance to city leaders for future development and improvement of the central business district. The city's leaders and business owners desire to undertake the development of a study and plan for the central business district that will include providing an overall vision for the future of the downtown area and a strategy to eliminate slum and blight. City officials recognize the importance for an overall comprehensive plan for revitalizing their downtown and restoring vital commercial activity to the heart of the city.

Urgency. The proposed project addresses several of the major program guidelines for the national objective to prevent and eliminate slum and blight. Like most American cities, commercial and retail activity has shifted away from the heart of the city to scattered strip development along major highways. Trends in housing and urban renewal policies of the past, along with the lack of comprehensive planning have also contributed to the blighted conditions in Albertville's downtown. The urgency for the development of a planning process which will serve as a guide for orderly and consistent growth to restore economic vitality, create jobs, and aid in the elimination of slum and blight, is a priority for the City.

Project Area. The geographic area covered in this study is the downtown commercial core of the city of Albertville and its surrounding central business district. The study area consists of those city blocks which make up the central portion of the downtown area, and the mixed commercial areas to the residential fringe. The downtown includes Albertville's main crossroads, Main Street/AL 205 and Broad Street/AL 75.

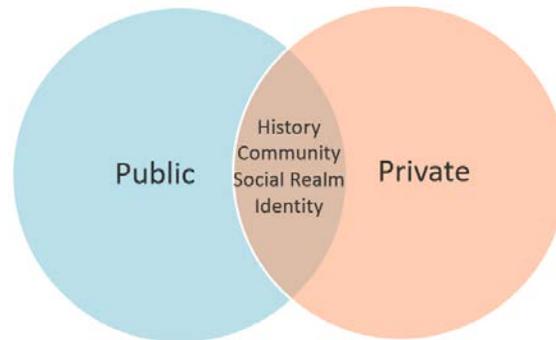
How Plan Will Guide Public Policy. The City of Albertville Downtown Master Plan includes a set of recommendations in the form of goals, objectives, and specific action items for the City to use in an ongoing program of improvement to the downtown area and its surrounding commercial district. It includes a strategy that identifies roles of various entities in the implementation of the plan as well as timeframes for the accomplishment of specific action items. This plan is to be used in conjunction with upcoming ordinances, and makes recommendations to enhance those ordinances, if the City so chooses.

With this project, the City desires to begin the process of taking a comprehensive approach to city planning, starting with the downtown central business district. The next area of priority for planning purposes will be the commercial corridor that extends along US Hwy 431 from the northern to the southern boundaries of the city, in accordance with the city's Comprehensive Plan. These two efforts, along with a comprehensive review of the City's development regulations, will provide a sound framework for the City to build upon.

Purpose of the Plan. Albertville has been considered regionally as the "Heart of Sand Mountain." Over the years, however, internal and external forces have led to the decline in retail growth and the deterioration of physical conditions in the downtown central business district. Almost losing its beloved downtown completely to tornado disasters and urban renewal policies of the past, Albertville has had a history of resilience and rebuilding itself. With new leadership, and a new vision for the city, Albertville has a forward-looking desire for resurgence and long-term vitality. In addition, this plan is an important step in assisting Albertville to obtain the financial means to realize this goal of revitalization.

This Albertville Downtown Master Plan is the culmination of the current administration's planning efforts, along with private sector commitment, and a resurgence of community pride from its residents. These sectors are working together in realizing the city's vision for the future. This Plan defines that community spirit of Albertville.

Albertville Downtown Revitalization Plan



Albertville Downtown Master Plan 2015

How This Plan Was Created

Community planning is a public activity based on citizen participation among residents, business owners, community leaders and planning facilitators to guide future development. The Albertville Downtown Master Plan demonstrates this type of teamwork in downtown revitalization planning.

Background. In 2012, the City of Albertville conducted an economic and market analysis to determine retail leakage and associated revenue loss the city had been experiencing. The study found roughly 50% retail leakage across the board. Mayor Honea wanted to meet with individuals in the community in small groups to discuss how the City and the new administration could address retail development. City staff met with 10–12 different people each week from all sectors of the community – business owners, industry leaders, civic organizations, education, utilities, banking, property owners, realtors, community advocates, city boards, etc. – to discuss the strengths, weaknesses and challenges that exist in Albertville impacting retail recruitment. Those meetings, referred to as Retail Roundtables, ran over the course of three months, where the City received feedback from approximately 120 people and compiled a list of all the comments. After reviewing the comments carefully, the City determined that the issues addressed could be classified into seven categories – aesthetics, planning, downtown revitalization, property acquisition, quality of life, existing retail, and marketing. In an effort to share those results with everyone that participated, a workshop was held at Sand Mountain Toyota to review the commonalities from those discussions and the idea was presented to form seven committees to address each of those seven areas. A signup sheet was distributed and attendees were encouraged to sign up for the committee of their choice. The Downtown Revitalization Committee that was formed has been serving as the steering committee for the downtown master planning process.

In 2013, the TARCOC Planning Department met with Mayor Honea and several other city leaders to discuss priority issues affecting community development. The top three issues discussed were sewer needs, a new senior center, and downtown revitalization. It was decided that TARCOC Planning staff would write a grant for the City to embark on a comprehensive plan for downtown revitalization. After the grant was awarded, the City contracted with TARCOC to develop the plan. The planning process for the Albertville Downtown Master Plan began in April 2014, and includes seven essential steps: project orientation, evaluation of current economic conditions, evaluation of current physical conditions, development of community vision and long-range goals, concept and strategy formulation, draft plan, and final plan and adoption. The most

important step in this process is the community visioning and citizen engagement component to gain consensus and guide the direction of the plan to best represent the vision and values of the community. This included a series of intensive planning workshops, as well as obtaining local input via online and door-to-door surveys. In the first month, TARCOC Planning Department embarked on the first phase of this step and conducted a series of stakeholder workshops to identify the issues, needs, concerns, and vision of city leaders. The stakeholder groups included participants representing property owners, developers, business owners, bankers and economic development experts, utilities and public infrastructure professionals, design



How to Read This Plan

Please note that the multiple strategies recommended in this plan are to be looked at as a comprehensive approach to enhance and support economic development and quality of life, which go hand-in-hand in improving the overall conditions of the downtown, and in turn, improve the conditions of the city overall.

The Albertville Downtown Master Plan is a 10-year plan and shall be reviewed annually to determine work programs and to ensure goals and objectives are met in accordance with the corresponding timeframes. Furthermore, this is a flexible guiding document - revisions can be made annually to reflect any internal or budgetary changes or development changes that may arise within the city.

This Plan shall be updated every five years.

This Downtown Master Plan presents the primary goals and objectives that will set the direction for Downtown Albertville during the next ten years. Master Plans are by their nature comprehensive and contain broad statements of general goals, directions and overarching principles. A clear understanding of the Master Plan is essential to understanding and evaluating the plan's Implementation Strategies, since these strategies are specifically designed to carry out the goals of the Master Plan.

Chapter Sections:

The Process section in this document details the Planning Process, reviews the authorization for city planning in the State of Alabama, and describes the steps taken to achieve the overall goals for downtown revitalization.

The Visioning report documents the community input phase of the planning process and outlines the steps taken that determined the community Vision, as well as the goals and objectives to support that Vision. The Vision Statement is an affirmation of that Vision and its goals. The Albertville Downtown Master Plan and its concepts and strategies are rooted in the Vision and Goals, which were developed by a citizen Downtown Steering Committee in partnership with City staff and the public. The Master Plan used public feedback and structured visioning sessions with the community, the Steering Committee, and other City officials to identify and articulate the Vision that the community wants to see for Downtown Albertville at the end of this Plan's 10-year window. This statement of Vision and Goals sets the direction for the Master Plan.

The Analysis section of this document reports the current economic conditions of the city overall, and the market conditions impacting the downtown, as well as the physical conditions of the downtown, including: its regional context; transportation networks; the history of Albertville and the history of development patterns that have impacted the downtown; downtown historic structures; vehicular and pedestrian circulation; blighted structures; parking needs; infrastructure conditions; land use; urban form; infill opportunities; a façade study; design and aesthetics assessments; as well as inventory of the commercial, cultural, and historical assets of the community. At the community workshops, participants were also asked about infrastructure needs. The Downtown Study Area boundary is outlined for the purposes of this plan only. At the initial phases of analysis, planners walked the boundary, observing land use, current zoning, and character of urban form, and determined the appropriate study area based on those characteristics. The various analysis maps also identify Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict Points that require a particular degree of design emphasis.

The Concept section in the Albertville Downtown Master Plan focuses on the physical goals of the district to support the community Vision for revitalization. This section maps out the historical and cultural assets important to the community within the existing framework of the district and begins to chart out vital connections to strengthen the overall district. It also organizes the downtown district into five character areas (or subdistricts): the Downtown Commercial Core; the North Broad Street Gateway subdistrict; the Warehouse subdistrict; the Railroad subdistrict; and the Civic subdistrict. The appropriate physical goals for each subdistrict are based on land use and dimensional characteristics for zoning purposes. Design standards are addressed for the overall district and are also addressed in detail in the Design Guidelines section of the Plan. Although this Downtown Master Plan places primary design emphasis on the downtown district and its gateways, this study also address the neighborhood and educational fringe areas, and their important relation to the downtown area. The Master Plan's Concept section includes recommendations for physical improvements within the district overall, gives recommendations for the structure and organization of the district

for zoning purposes, but also gives recommendations to strengthen connections between the downtown, its gateways, and the vital community anchors within the fringe areas that support it, with the overarching goal to strengthen the district overall.

These concepts are discussed in the Plan: Opportunities and Linkages. Opportunity sites are areas where infill and redevelopment can be considered in order to stimulate revitalization of the downtown as a whole and support neighboring retail. Linkage Opportunities represent existing or potential travelways that are particularly important to the quality of life and revitalization of the area, and are appropriate sites in which to locate passive recreation to connect community assets.

Some Goals and Strategies are highlighted throughout the body of the document within the Analysis and Concept sections (particularly pertaining to physical conditions); however, all of the Strategies and Action Items are listed in the Strategy Action Plan section of this document and are organized under the four revitalization focus areas: Physical Design, Economic Structuring, Organization, and Promotion, with an overall Goal listed for each focus area.

Financial strategies and funding mechanisms for implementation of the Albertville Downtown Master Plan are provided in the Financial Strategies/Implementation section of this document.

Example design guidelines can be found in the Design Guidelines section of this document.

The Appendices section contains the detailed Economic Conditions report, as well as results from the Community Surveys and the Dot Analysis Exercises from the Community Workshops to further support and evidence the concepts and strategies of this Plan.

The References section lists the literature, case studies, and articles researched by the Downtown Steering Committee team in their effort to study downtown revitalization, as part of the planning process.

This document is not intended for use by City staff only. Making Downtown Albertville into an essential, vibrant, lively dimension of the city will require commitment from City departments, the business community, civic organizations, and private residents as well. By using the tools in this plan to work toward revitalization goals, the Albertville community will discover the economic, social and cultural benefits of a vibrant urban core.

Successful downtowns have a strong organization whose sole purpose is comprehensively revitalizing their downtown.

Successful downtowns value their historic buildings and places and treat those as their prime assets.

Successful downtowns have residents.

Successful downtowns have a mix of retail, office, and entertainment businesses, as well as open spaces.

Successful downtowns promote themselves.

Successful downtowns pay attention to details.

Successful downtowns have people who want to walk.

Successful downtowns have something for everyone.

Successful downtowns are in communities where people care about downtown.

Successful downtowns are a reflection of a strong and vibrant community.

The Planning Process

Authorization for City Planning in the State of Alabama

Sections 11-52-8 and 11-52-9 of the Code of Alabama outline the authority and purpose of a city comprehensive planning process. These paragraphs are Sections 6 and 7 of the Standard City Planning Enabling Act published by the U.S. Department of Commerce in 1928 and adopted by the State of Alabama in 1935.

"It shall be the function and duty of the City Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of such municipality. Such plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter shall show the commission's recommendations for the development of said territory, including, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets, viaducts, subways, bridges, waterways, waterfronts, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds, squares, parks, aviation fields and other public ways, grounds and open spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned or operated, for water, light, sanitation, transportation, communication, power and other purposes, the removal, relocation, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use or extension of any of the foregoing ways, grounds, open spaces, buildings, property, utilities or terminals; as well as a zoning plan for the control of the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises."

"As the work of making the whole master plan progresses, the commission may from time to time adopt and publish a part or parts thereof, any such part to cover one or more major sections or divisions of the municipality or one or more of the aforesaid or other functional matters to be included in the plan. The commission may from time to time amend, extend, or add to the plan."

"In the preparation of such plans the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth of the municipality and with due regard to its relation to neighboring territory. The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality and its environs which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, including, among other things, adequate provision for traffic, the promotion of safety from fire and other dangers, adequate provision for light and air, the promotion of the healthful and convenient distribution of population, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements."

Planning Steps. The fundamental premise for developing a comprehensive strategy for downtown Albertville lies in the formulation of a well-defined set of planning procedures. Developing a planning process requires a holistic examination of the determined solution and how the solution will materialize into implementation strategy for future development. To maximize this effort, the planning staff defined a seven step agenda that programs the development of the plan. An outline of the process is summarized as follows:

Project Orientation. The planning team held meetings with city leaders for the purpose of discussing the overall approach to be used in the development plan. This step involved city leaders in setting the direction of the effort, making necessary adjustments to better mold the plan to best serve the city's interests, and reviewing the steps and timeframe necessary for the completion of the project.

Evaluation of Current Conditions – Economic. The planning staff performed an evaluation of the current conditions of the city regarding economic conditions. This report is contained in this document.

Evaluation of Current Conditions – Physical. The planning staff evaluated the current conditions of the downtown area and immediate surrounding neighborhoods regarding physical conditions. This involves: 1) an examination of the structures of the area from a functional design standpoint; 2) a study of traffic and parking issues, including vehicular and pedestrian circulation; 3) a visual survey of the area to assess the weakness and opportunities the downtown area presents; and 4) a more specific survey of building façades to determine ways to improve the appearance of downtown buildings; 4) an assessment of infill opportunities to determine areas for redevelopment and revitalization.

Development of Community Vision and Long Range Goals. A vital part of completing the plan is attaining meaningful public participation in the planning process with the intent to obtain a consensus on a course of action. The public participation component has the purpose of setting long-range goals and supporting objectives that set forth a vision and direction for the future of the downtown area. Stakeholder meetings, community surveys, and community workshops were conducted to gain intimate local knowledge on community issues and an understanding of community values.

Concept and Strategy Formulation. Using the evaluation of current conditions, the community vision and long-range goals, and feedback from city leaders, the planning staff developed a concept for the future of Downtown Albertville. The concept includes an overall strategy to provide possible solutions to area problems and potential activities to capitalize on Downtown's assets and opportunities.

Draft Plan. Following the presentation and general acceptance of the plan concept, the planning staff used the comments regarding the concept as guidance for drafting the plan. This includes formulating an action plan that outlines the scheduling of, and responsibility for, tasks and activities that need to be undertaken.

Final Plan. In formulating the final plan, the public comments were synthesized regarding the first draft and a final plan was prepared. The final plan document was presented to the City for acceptance and adoption.

Process



Community Involvement. The Planning Commission, the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the City Council, along with the Commercial Development Authority, and the Economic Development Department, will rely on the plan when making decisions for economic and community development. These Boards were involved in the planning process of the Plan. The Downtown Revitalization Committee served as the Downtown Steering Committee for this project. Additionally, the planning process included the identification of stakeholders and general community involvement. A community survey and community workshops were used to obtain public input. The intent of the planning process for the Albertville Downtown Master Plan is for inclusiveness and transparency in order to achieve a Program that reflects the desires of the people for their community.

Process. Prior to the planning workshops, TARCOG planners focused their efforts on gathering base information. This included learning about local history, reviewing previous studies, examining the existing ordinances and land development regulations, and analyzing the physical, social, and economic characteristics of Downtown. TARCOG interviewed city officials, visited and presented to civic groups and community organizations, conducted a month-long series of stakeholder workshops, surveyed the community at large, conducted several community workshops, and consulted with the Downtown Steering Committee throughout the entire ten month planning period. Planners compiled the information gathered from site visits in a series of site analysis diagrams. The diagrams contain information and data

pertaining to land use, property ownership, parking supply, blighted structures, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, historical and cultural assets, visual assessment from stakeholder and community input, as well as dot analyses to prioritize issues and needs and to identify possible solutions. This is to gain as much community input as possible to capture the Vision the community has for its downtown. This Plan is intended to reveal that Vision, and give professional urban design and planning principles, as well as financial guidance to further support the revitalization process.



Public Awareness. A key element in preparing for the planning workshops was generating public awareness. City staff spread the word about the downtown plan by placing ads in the local newspapers, posting public notices, placing flyers in City Hall and businesses downtown, and interviewing with news media.

Data Gathering. TARCOG planners analyzed the issues affecting the city as a whole, such as economic, retail, and market conditions, growth areas, trends and forces, and the dynamics affecting the city's growth patterns, as well as obstacles affecting downtown development. Focus then turned to the

downtown study area, examining the existing urban fabric, analyzing every block and noting areas of particular importance. Planners photographed a variety of urban conditions and infrastructure issues, noting urban form, building placement, architectural character, street design, and topographic conditions. Parking supply and demand as well as potential areas for infill development were determined. Planners also highlighted buildings of cultural or historical significance and the unique conditions and characteristics of the downtown. A primary goal of the initial base information gathering was to identify crosscutting issues that dictate reoccurring conversation among community members and business people. By gaining intimate local knowledge from stakeholder SWOT analysis (identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), and analyzing over 530 community surveys, TARCOG planners were prepared to identify the major issues affecting the downtown and present these findings to the general public at the planning workshops. After the presentation, community members were asked to engage in the planning process with a series of exercises to obtain further input from the public. Citizens were asked to rank particular issues affecting their downtown, as well as analyze physical conditions. This data was collected and synthesized by TARCOG planners to further refine the community Vision for Downtown Albertville. The Visioning Report details this Vision.

Throughout the planning process, TARCOG Planners worked intimately with the Downtown Steering Committee to assess issues affecting downtown development, as well as refining the community vision. A vision statement was formulated that captured community values, ideals, and aspirations for downtown. The team also refined and prioritized long term and short term goals and objectives to achieve the vision for downtown revitalization.



This revitalization plan is the culmination of public and private efforts and is intended to be used as a guide to further those efforts to physically and economically enhance and sustain Downtown Albertville. Committed citizens of Albertville permitted TARCOG Planners to lead them through a process to identify ideas for future development in downtown. The Albertville Downtown Master Plan is a result of the collective insight and effort of Albertville city officials, staff, business leaders, and residents. The plan establishes a Vision, built on the community's aspirations for Downtown Albertville. A plan that does not involve those it hopes to serve cannot fully realize its potential. Downtown revitalization is a holistic and comprehensive process that involves four essential components:

Centro Albertville
Talleres para la comunidad
 04 de septiembre o el 09 a las 5:30 PM
 Sand Mountain Toyota Salon Comunitario

Cuando: 04 de septiembre 2014 - 5:30-7:30 PM o 09 de septiembre 2014 - 5:30-7:30 PM
 *Confirma que te lo he se puede participar

Donde: Sand Mountain Toyota Salon Comunitario - 9167 HWY 431, Albertville, AL

Porque: Ciudadana pueden participar en Albertville's Plan de Revitalización del centro

Lo que puede esperar?
 La ciudad de Albertville esta lanzando la participacion de la fase comunidad del Plan de Revitalizacion para el Distrito Central de Negocios. Basand nos en los comentarios de la comunidad, una comunidad cuestionar ejercicio de Priorizacion se llevara a cabo para ayudar a quor la dicion de plan basado en las metas y objetivo importantes para usted. Mapas y ayudas visuales sera proporcionado para activar una discusion animada!

Puede ayudar a prever el futuro del centro de la ciudad Albertville!

venga y sea parte de proceso de planificación!

Por favor confirmen su asistencia a: Melody Whitten, Director de Desarrollo Economico y Comunitario, Ciudad de Albertville, Teléfono: 256-279-0622, o por correo electrónico: mwhitten@cityofalbertville.com



- 1) Physical Design
- 2) Economic Structuring
- 3) Promotion
- 4) Organization

The integration of these four elements helped organize the goals and objectives and the implementation strategies in the final chapters of this plan. This plan provides specific recommendations and is descriptive, creative, and flexible. With leadership

and perseverance, the plan will be a tool to guide public and private investment over the next 10 years, and to secure additional grants and funding from various sources.



The Visioning Process. The Vision Statement and the Goals and Objectives are a reflection of the input and feedback from the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis) gained from the various stakeholder meetings, interviews with City leaders, community surveys results, community workshop exercises, and multiple Downtown Steering Committee meetings. From this, the Vision of the community for their downtown was determined. Goals and objectives for each focus area were formulated to achieve that Vision. Specific Action Items were listed to meet each Goal.

Primary Goals:

- 1) **Physical Design** Goal: *Create a diverse, attractive, safe, accessible, and vibrant downtown that capitalizes on existing assets.* Create vibrant community spaces. Integrate and maintain a well-proportioned, functional urban form.
- 2) **Economic Structuring** Goal: *Create a vibrant hub for commercial and community activity.* Attract diverse retail and assemble a mix of compatible uses to give downtown a competitive advantage.
- 3) **Organization** Goal: *Organize the needed capacity to implement the Albertville Downtown Master Plan.* Organize downtown stakeholders and coordinate city departments for ongoing management and implementation of revitalization efforts to ensure efficiency and achievement of goals.
- 4) **Promotion** Goal: *Promote and celebrate the unique creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville.* Promote Downtown Albertville and its business community. Celebrate Albertville's musical heritage. Cultivate a place to live, work, shop, and play.



Vision Statement:

“We will strive to develop a vibrant, unique, and diverse downtown that celebrates the creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville. One Town. One Heartbeat.”

“Downtown is a different kind of retail area because it reflects the character of the town. ..When you’re in downtown Albertville you’re supposed to know where you are. It is unique. It is the heart of the community. And that’s what everyone hopes we can recapture.”

- Nathan Broadhurst, Council President

“Your downtown or traditional commercial district is the most visible indicator of community pride, along with its economic and social health. It is either an asset or a liability in the effort to recruit new residents, new businesses and industries, retirees, tourists, and others to your community and to keep those you already have.”

- National Trust for Historic Preservation

Analysis

Historical Context

Current Conditions

Economic

Physical

Historical Context

Albertville is the largest city in Marshall County, Alabama. The town was established near its crossroads, at 406 East Main Street, where on January 13, 1860, James C. Miller established a post office and the community's first store. Miller, who was later killed during the Civil War, named the town Albertville in honor of his father-in-law, Thomas A. Albert, one of the area's first residents and town leader until his death in 1876. Albertville was first settled around 1850, but wasn't officially incorporated until February 18, 1891. It lies on Sand Mountain, a fertile plateau about 25 miles wide and 75 miles long, extending from about 40 miles northeast of Birmingham.

Albertville and the surrounding area are rich in Native American Indian history, and were inhabited by the Cherokee Indians until their removal to Oklahoma in the 1830s. It is located near the border of the former Cherokee and Creek nations and arose at the juncture of several Native American trails which afforded communication and military action between the two nations. Migration to this region began in 1844 and continued until the advent of the Civil War. The area around Albertville was the scene of several mid-level clashes between Union and Confederate forces. In 1872, knowledge of the area's rich soil and lush forest began to spread and another gradual immigration to the area began. The Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto also crossed this area during his expeditions in 1540.

By 1896, Main Street experienced a proliferation of stores and businesses. One of the first successful businesses was the Marshall County Drug Company, pictured here. The train depot was built in the early 1890s by the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway connecting trunk lines at Gadsden with water transportation on the Tennessee River at Guntersville. It remained busy until the 1940s, when passenger traffic was phased out, but still remains standing today.



In 1893, the Alabama Legislature passed an act for the establishment of an agricultural college in each of the state's congressional districts. Albertville was chosen as the site for the school for the 7th District. Hit by the Great Depression, however, it was turned over to the Albertville City Board of Education in 1936 (Burgess). The school evolved into today's Albertville High School, recognized for its award-winning music programs and whose sports teams are still known as the "Aggies."

Resilience



The Great Cyclone of 1908

On April 24, 1908, the city was virtually wiped out by a tornado that became known as "The Great Cyclone of 1908." The storm killed 35 people across northeastern Alabama, including 15 in Albertville. More than 150 houses were destroyed at a cost of \$350,000 in 1908 dollars. Relief was delivered by railroad from Gadsden, transporting doctors, nurses, and the Alabama militia guards. The wreckage covered 40 acres or more in the heart of the town, almost completely leveling Main Street. However, the town was quickly rebuilt, with an electric system and a city water system constructed in just a year after the damage. The first hospital was built in 1917, and the city flourished with the growth of the railroad and agriculture industry, a testament to the resilience of Albertville's residents.

Before the Tennessee Valley Authority built the Guntersville dam during the New Deal, flooding on the Tennessee River made the County Courthouse in Guntersville inaccessible for residents of Albertville and other areas on top of Sand Mountain. In 1919, the Alabama Legislature required the construction of a courthouse at Albertville, which is still in operation as the Marshall County Courthouse Annex.

According to Dennis Burgess, *Albertville: Images of America*, post-World War II era saw a growth boom for Albertville, as the town became a hub for the poultry processing industry. After the war, the Alabama Legislature selected the town as the site for the first commercial poultry processing plant in North Alabama. The industry grew and helped transform the region. Poultry farming appealed to cotton farmers who faced labor shortages and saw the benefit of raising and selling chickens all year as opposed to selling cotton only once a year. The industry brought feed mills, hatcheries, and additional processing plants as well as much immigrant labor from Mexico and other Latin American countries to Albertville (Burgess). During this time and throughout the 1950s, Albertville experienced formative growth.



Marshall County Courthouse, Albertville

Pride



Albertville High School – built in 1912

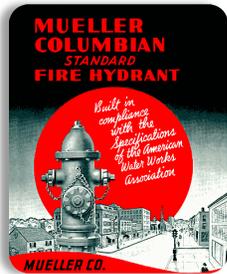
Albertville High School, built in 1912, is a great source of pride for Albertville residents and anchors the east entrance to the downtown. Its high school band was founded in the early 1920s, and has become nationally recognized, competing and performing all over the country in events such as the annual Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Super Bowl.



Albertville High School Marching Band – Macy’s Parade

Another source of pride for Albertville is the American-made Mueller fire hydrants, manufactured and distributed in Albertville since 1975, when the company relocated its operations from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Albertville. On April 11, 1990, Mueller celebrated the production of its one millionth fire hydrant manufactured in Albertville,

crowning the city “the fire hydrant capital of the world.” A 4,800-pound nickel plated hydrant was placed in the town. The Mueller Company has helped carry the name of Albertville throughout the country and overseas through its production and distribution of fire hydrants. Other locally manufactured products range from paper plates and plastic bags to processed steel. Mueller, the poultry industry, automotive suppliers and other manufacturers, along with Marshall Medical Center, have provided Albertville with steady growth to present-day.



The city of Albertville is also proud of the Albertville Regional Airport and the growth that has occurred since its activation by the FAA in July 1962. The airport, also known as Thomas J. Brumlik Field, is home to three aviation companies, BAE systems, Salex Galileo, and RainAir Aircraft Services and a campus of the Alabama Aviation College. BAE was recently named a subcontractor in a five-year, \$1.5 billion contract with the U.S. Army and will be creating even more jobs for Albertville. With the growth of the airport, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Alabama Department of Transportation recently moved the airport expansion plans up the priority list from a 10 year plan to a five-year plan, which includes relocating a state highway to allow for property acquisition and hanger expansion. The airport averages 4000 operations per year.



“Progress”

In a Downtown Revitalization Plan, it is important to understand the history of development patterns in the Albertville downtown area. The town grew up from its epicenter- the Main Street and Broad Street crossroads - with the railroad cutting diagonally through the northeast quadrant of downtown. Because of this, the downtown is comprised of a traditional four block grid pattern in the urban core, with educational facilities and light industry that grew up along the railroad running right through the city center. In 1968 plans were developed that would forever change the landscape of downtown Albertville (Burgess). The Urban Renewal policies of the late 1960s and early 1970s resulted in the loss of many buildings in downtown Albertville. One such site was an entire block of buildings on the southeast corner of East Main, as well as many other buildings, which were leveled for parking.



Pre-Urban Renewal aerial - Albertville



Unpaving Main Street to prepare for Urban Renewal



Aerial of the pedestrian mall post-Urban Renewal in Albertville ca. 1970s



1940's Main Street – Downtown Albertville

Some 60 parcels of property were acquired at a cost of over \$2 million, 75% of that coming from the federal government. One building on North Broad Street was one of Albertville's oldest buildings and had served as the town's first hospital (Burgess).

In 1977, Albertville's pedestrian mall opened stretching the length of the east side of Main and Broad streets. The street was closed off to vehicular traffic and was made into an outdoor mall, covering up many of its historic buildings. Plans for the town's urban renewal project, the centerpiece of which was the mall, had begun in 1968, with the submission of an application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program called for 75% of the project's funds to come from the federal government, with the city supplying the remaining 25%. Years later, (early to mid-90s) East Main was reopened, and through the cooperation of city leaders and merchants, the dignity of the street was restored (Burgess).



Mall marquee at the crossroads of Main and Broad



East Main Street pedestrian mall ca. 1980s



Main Street today



Downtown Albertville density – Pre-Urban Renewal efforts, ca. 1950's

Hammer's Department Store (pre-mall) ca. late 1960s



Landmarks

Downtown



Community Assets - The following are notable buildings of historical or cultural significance within the downtown central business district. These buildings have been identified by community residents as being historically and culturally relevant to the community, are located at prominent locations within the downtown, and are considered identifiable landmarks and cherished community assets.

Albertville's historic Railroad Depot is located at the east gateway to Main Street, and was cited as the most cherished and culturally significant downtown landmark. The Albertville L&N Railroad Depot was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on February 20, 1975. The oldest structure in Albertville, it was built by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway in 1892, one year after the town was incorporated. It was so well constructed it has withstood two major tornado disasters, one of which was the Cyclone of 1908. The building measures 112 by 40 feet, and is divided into three rooms: two offices and one larger warehouse space. Passenger service ended in the 1940s, although the depot remained in use for freight. The building was renovated for use as

a senior center in the mid-1990s.

Located on West Main Street, next to the City Hall, is the Marshall County Courthouse Annex, built in 1935. It not only serves as a place of justice, but also as a town square for political rallies.



Detail of the old Post Office/Board of Education pediment, representative of Classical Revival-style architecture.



The US Post Office building, located on the north side of West Main, is currently in use by the Albertville Board of Education. It was built in 1931 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 21, 1983.



Albertville City Hall is located on the south side of West Main, across from the Board of Education.

The Jewel Box, built ca. 1900, serves as a prominent centerpiece on the northwest quadrant of the Main Street/Broad Street crossroads. The building served as the first bank in Albertville, and still houses the old vault inside.





The Princess Theater building is a recognizable landmark in downtown Albertville. Located on East Main, it was once the place for entertainment downtown. It was opened in 1930 with seating listed at 325. It closed in 1961 and now houses retail.



The Barkley's building anchors the east end of Main Street and houses apartments and a tuxedo shop.



The Courington Arcade is located at the center of town, on the southeast quadrant of the Main/Broad crossroads. It houses businesses on the bottom floor and apartments on the top.



Located at the northeast quadrant in the center of town, across from the Courington Arcade, is Sebastien's On Main. It was once Hammer's department store, but has recently been restored and opened as a fine dining restaurant.



Located at the east end of Main Street next to the Depot, the Albertville Farmer's Market hosts many community events, and houses the sponsors' area for the Albertville Main Street Music Fest.

Along with Albertville High School, its Fine Arts Center is also a major landmark for Downtown. Recently constructed on the campus of the high school, the Albertville Fine Arts Center is a 1,056-seat Auditorium that presents Aggie Band events, Albertville High School show choirs and the Little Aggie theater program. The facility also hosts many other school and community events.





The Albertville Museum at Little Branch Primitive Baptist Church houses the history of all things Albertville and is located on West Main Street, just outside the downtown study area.



Entrance to the cemetery

The West Main Street Cemetery (a.k.a. Old Albertville Cemetery) is located on West Main Street across from the Little Branch Church Museum. It has rows of white marble and granite headstones, and its graves date back to the early 1800s. The gravesites of Thomas Albert, the founder of Albertville, and his family

are located here along with many other pioneers of the city. As the first highway cut through the area, road crews laid the road to curve around the cemetery. This historic site includes many rows of white marble, granite headstones with words carved into old stones of Albertville stories not found in any other archives.



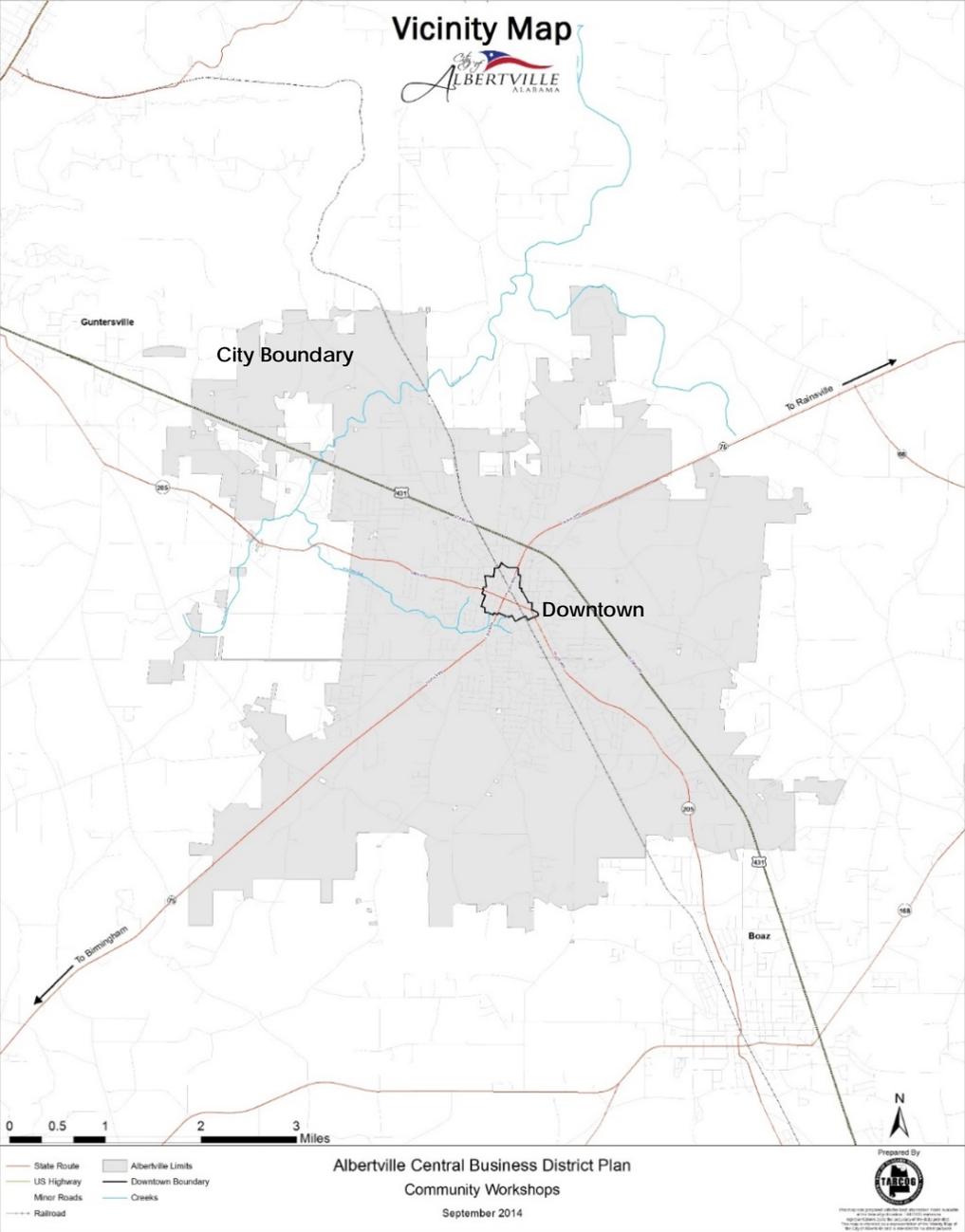
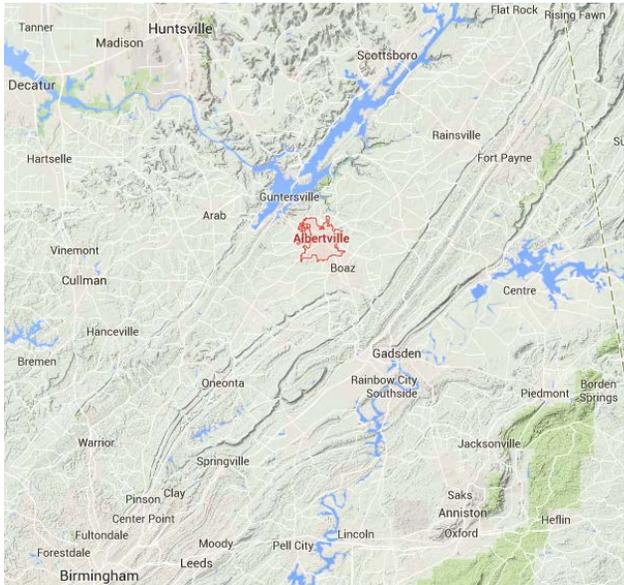
The downtown is also revered for its beautiful historic churches, five of which are located within the downtown perimeter. The First Baptist Church of Albertville has stood at the eastern gateway of Main Street since 1901. Other churches located in the downtown Central Business District are: Albertville First United Methodist Church, North Broad Street Church of Christ, and Mount Calvary Baptist Church.



Regional Context

The City of Albertville, Alabama is located in central Marshall County, atop Sand Mountain, along US Highway 431 and Alabama Highway 75. It is approximately 70 miles northeast of Birmingham, and 50 miles southeast of Huntsville. Albertville is the largest city in the county, with a 2013 Census population of 21,556, but local data numbers project it at closer to 23,000. It is among the fastest growing cities of its size in Alabama, with an average annual growth rate of around 2.3%, as population grew over 20% between 2000 and 2010. There are three industrial parks in the city that serve a diverse industrial and manufacturing base. With close proximity to I-59 (19 miles) and I-65 (44 miles) and its position at the intersection of US Highway 431 and Alabama Highway 75, Albertville is conveniently located to distribute goods and products easily. Several local industries also utilize the Alabama-Tennessee River Railroad to transport their products. In addition to housing the majority of industry in the county, Albertville serves as a retail and professional center within a 30-mile radius trade area with a population of around 180,168. This area includes Geraldine, Fyffe, Kilpatrick, and Crossville in DeKalb; Sardis, Mountainboro and Ridgeville in Etowah County; Boaz, Horton and Douglas to the south in Marshall County; and Guntersville to the north in Marshall County, and some rural communities in Blount County. Because of its location and proximity to nearby retail centers however, over the years, the city has experienced lost revenue due to significant retail leakage. A recent market study concluded about 50% retail leakage across the board for the city.

The city of Albertville has been fortunate, however, to experience population, industrial and economic growth even in the midst of a recession. Southern Parallel, Color Masters, Warren Distribution, Albertville Quality Foods, and the Albertville Regional Airport have all expanded in just



the last few years. The city is poised for continued growth, with the recent expansion of Newman Technologies (a Honda parts supplier), and the recently acquired Shoppes of Albertville, bringing in more people and revenue for the city. The City is working with GBT Realty to develop a 12+ acre parcel that will include PetSmart, T.J. Maxx, Hobby Lobby, Ross's Dress for Less, and Hibbett Sports to help fill the retail void.

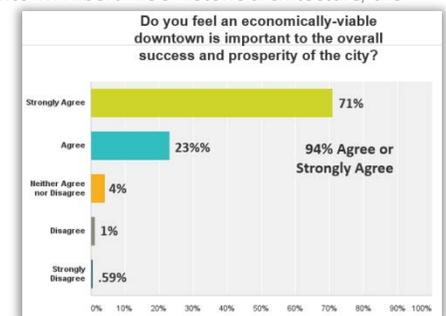
Albertville City Schools has also experienced record enrollment and have had to expand recently to accommodate growth. Albertville High School is seen as a very valuable asset to the community, and includes award-winning music band and choir programs. The campus has expanded to include a Fine Arts Center that hosts events throughout the year. In addition, Albertville has access to quality healthcare through Marshall Medical Center, and is within commuting distance to three community colleges and three universities in North Alabama.

Albertville also boasts the highest traffic counts in the county, which are comparable to interstate level with 33,000+ vehicles per day on Highway 431, and 12,000+ vehicles per day on Highway 75. The city has a very diverse industrial base with the largest daytime population, making Albertville the hub of Marshall County and the Heart of Sand Mountain.

The city has also been fortunate to experience some new development downtown with the revitalization effort led by local citizens and private investment, which resulted in the opening of two restaurants, gift shops and one ladies clothing shop in just the last year. The implementation of the Albertville Downtown Master Plan will help capitalize on and continue that momentum for Downtown Albertville.

Downtown Market Potential

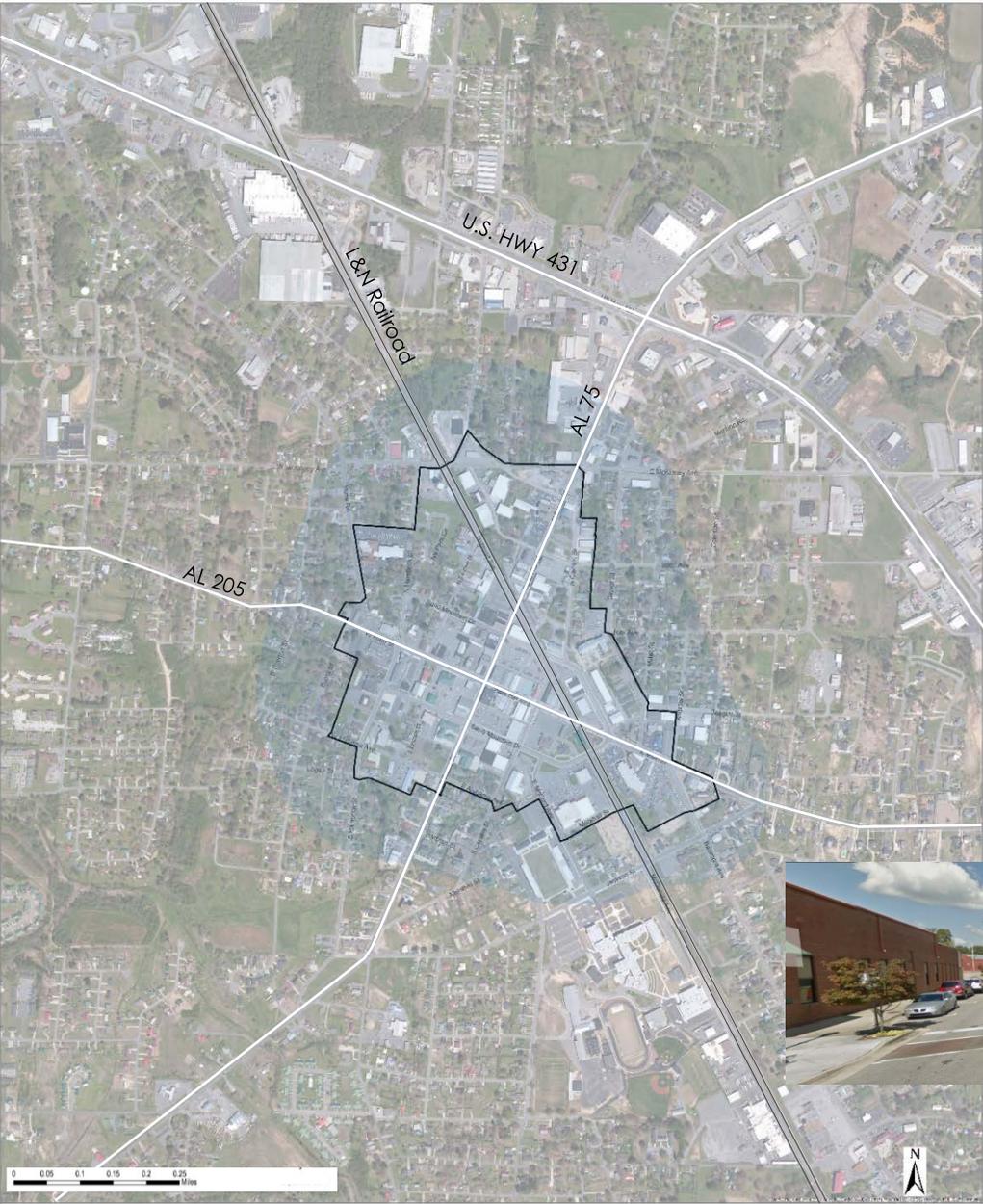
Downtown districts by their nature are largely business, shopping, entertainment, and cultural and civic centers for cities and rely upon a consistent interaction of workers, residents and visitors to generate enough activity to be considered successful. For smaller downtown environments, success typically lies in the mix of shops, restaurants and services that come together to form an engaging district that is simultaneously a commercial center and community and social gathering place ("critical mass"). Therefore an understanding of the market drivers that support these types of businesses is crucial to driving development and revitalization efforts. These drivers rely upon various sources of customers – local residents, downtown employees, workers, and visitors from a regional trade area. For Albertville's downtown, the proximity to nearby community anchors, such as the high school and recreation center, certainly plays a role in its marketability. Regional context, such as the city's location, size, and growth rate, and ability to attract major retailers and industry also play a role. The ability in which to leverage existing community assets to create regional drivers to attract a larger customer base and expand the trade area will also increase the attractiveness of Downtown to potential investors. From a market perspective, the city has good potential to support and sustain downtown revitalization efforts and create a successful downtown business environment. However, the Downtown has some strengths and weaknesses that impact commercial marketability. Some positive attributes are of course the city's size and steady growth rate. With a population of roughly 22,000, an average annual growth rate of 2.3% and continuing industrial and economic growth, Albertville's tax base is growing. Industrial growth has supported Albertville over the years, and the city has a sizable population to support a downtown retail market. Size matters in downtown revitalization to provide a strong volunteer base to help support revitalization efforts and supply a stable customer base to support retail. Location also plays a role. Downtown Albertville's location along two major state routes serves as a blessing and a curse for the downtown – while it helps to increase the commercial appeal of Downtown by capturing the needed traffic, it also presents some challenging safety issues for pedestrians. Additionally, like any historic district, aging infrastructure and aesthetics also plays a role in impacting the commercial appeal of Downtown. However, revitalization efforts, such as design standards and public improvements will help alleviate safety issues and attract customers and businesses to the downtown. Historically, the city's close proximity to several nearby retail centers, such as Boaz, Guntersville and Huntsville, has contributed to the retail leakage for the city and has proven to be a challenge to commercial development. However, the new shopping center serves as a positive sign for the city's overall marketability, and will help capture local retail dollars that the city had been losing to nearby communities. It is anticipated that this will bring in much-needed revenue to at least some degree for the city. In community meetings, it was found that there exists a great demand to shop locally in Albertville if the retail center was there. Sheer density and accessibility to many public services and activities also play a role in downtown marketability. The small size of downtown Albertville makes it easily walkable and accessible within a quarter mile radius of its main crossroads. Enhancing pedestrian connections between the downtown, its fringe residential areas, and educational and recreational anchors, as well as providing more housing options within the downtown will also strengthen its market appeal. Furthermore, there is great potential to build on Downtown's historical and cultural assets to draw more visitors and tourists regionally. By their very nature, downtowns already have great market appeal due to the simple fact that they possess the city's unique historical and cultural heritage. If revitalized, Downtown Albertville's historic architecture, the city's history as a railroad town, its unique musical heritage, and its many cultural amenities, such as the train depot and the farmers market, provide plenty for the city to market to potential visitors, enhancing and supporting neighboring retail. Successful downtowns are those that leverage their unique history to draw visitors in who want to experience and celebrate that heritage with the town. Creating vibrant community spaces to showcase the city's unique musical heritage will increase the marketability of Downtown Albertville. Building on these assets will be a key regional driver for Albertville. Marketing and promoting these unique civic and cultural destinations will play an important role in revitalization efforts. These strategies and others will be discussed in further detail in the final chapters of this document and a detailed report of current economic conditions for the city overall can be found in the Appendix section of this document, but first it is important to look at the physical environment of Downtown Albertville.



Downtown Study Area

Urban Form

The project area is the downtown Central Business District of Albertville and its environs, including the residential and educational fringe areas, and the gateways leading into downtown. The primary commercial study area is comprised of the eight block Sand Mountain Loop radiating from the main crossroads, Main Street and Broad Street, and the nineteen blocks surrounding the core loop, totaling roughly twenty-seven city blocks. This extends from McKinney Avenue in the north, to Alabama Avenue and Marshall Street at the southern perimeter, and Rose Road on the west side to the Baltimore Avenue area in the east. Like many downtowns, Albertville's city center is located several blocks away from the main highway through the city, US Highway 431, but still experiences heavy traffic volume due to the designation of Main Street (AL 205) and Broad Street (AL 75) as important state highways. The town grew up from this epicenter with the railroad cutting through the northeast portion of downtown. Because of this, the downtown fabric is comprised of a traditional four block grid pattern in the urban core, but from that, educational facilities and light industry that grew up along the railroad caused irregular street patterns to accommodate rail service. Additionally, new roads were laid out as part of the Urban Renewal projects in the downtown area that completely changed the urban landscape. The downtown study area is approximately one square mile, and comprises Albertville's traditional storefronts and other historic architecture dating back to around 1900, 1930s development, as well as post-midcentury development. The district has endured several disasters - most notably the Great Cyclone of 1908, two fires that destroyed half of Main Street around that time, and the Urban Renewal policies of the 1960s and 70s, which stripped away many of the traditional historic buildings and storefronts, leaving vast empty parcels for parking and damaging valuable infrastructure.



The downtown also was impacted by a recent tornado event in 2010. These incidences, along with unregulated growth and

other external factors, such as market trends and its age, have led to blighted conditions in the downtown area. Unregulated growth has led to irregular urban form, especially along North Broad Street, a major image corridor to the downtown. Albertville's traditional storefront row buildings are clustered mostly within the downtown core (within the center of the Sand Mountain

Downtown Albertville Central Business District Study Area



Loop, and parts of the North Broad Street corridor). (Please refer to the *Character Areas* map). Over time, some original buildings have been torn down and replaced with newer buildings or parking lots during the Urban Renewal efforts. The majority of the historic buildings along the Main Street block are brick exteriors typical of turn-of-the-century row building construction. Along the North Broad Street corridor, some façades have been modernized, several with wood siding, or aluminum veneers or covers. A popular practice in the 50s and 60s, these veneers have proved to be less durable, and unsightly, than the original façades they now cover. Also found along North Broad Street are several newer buildings that are inconsistent with downtown historic buildings. They are placed away from the street with parking in front and have pitched roofs with little window area on front façades. After the development of the historic core, national trends in construction and development financing changed. Downtown Albertville's newer buildings were typically financed and built for a much shorter lifespan than those constructed over a century ago. These new buildings are pre-engineered (referred to as "Butler buildings") and have either bare-metal façades or brick veneers. These types of buildings were designed for a specific use, limiting their adaptability when the original use ceases. In contrast, the simple rectangular shell high ceilings of the original historic buildings make them easily adaptable to a wide variety of uses. As one can guess, this unregulated growth over the years, has led to an uninviting, chaotic, and irregular urban form in the central business district, and has contributed to its blighted condition. Unequal setbacks, disjointed façade lines, irregular building heights and widths, a mix of building styles and eras have all contributed to a dysfunctional urban form. This unregulated growth, along with highway expansions, urban renewal policies, and greater emphasis on the automobile has led to places of neglect and lost pedestrian appeal, a vital element in attracting and supporting downtown retail.





Land Use

Unlike other areas in Albertville, such as the 431 corridor which is predominantly commercial strip development, the traditional downtown core contains historic architecture, dating back to 1900. It does not have a town square, but rather a traditional Main Street, containing mostly small boutique shops and retail. The current land uses in downtown Albertville are quite mixed, containing light industrial, government and municipal uses, office space, retail, restaurants, warehouses, cultural and religious activities, financial services, parking, grocery stores, some recreation, educational, and residential.



Without a doubt, the most mentioned "weakness" for the downtown area according to community residents was

aesthetics - its deteriorating conditions combined with a lack of proper enforcement and unregulated growth. In certain parts of Albertville, there are examples of "spot zoning," or nonresidential uses that were originally established legally, but through time, have become incompatible with more current development. They then become nonconforming uses, and can create a nuisance, or disrupt the overall character of the district. They also can be a deterrent to future economic development, because of either general aesthetics, or because they are not compatible with surrounding retail uses and do not share the same foot traffic, essential for downtown retail survival. Downtowns are unique in that downtown retail support and feed off of each other, rather than compete with each other. However, downtowns are more than just retail, as they contain the city's historical architecture, as well as house many community events and cultural activities, such as the Main Street Music Festival, the Christmas Parade, and the farmers' market events. Because of this, community members cited the importance to revitalize the downtown area, and to maintain that small town charm. Fringe areas surrounding downtown contain mostly older historic neighborhoods, churches, some light industry, such as Wayne Farms processing plant, and Albertville High School, adjacent to the southeast perimeter of downtown. These close-in neighborhoods are close



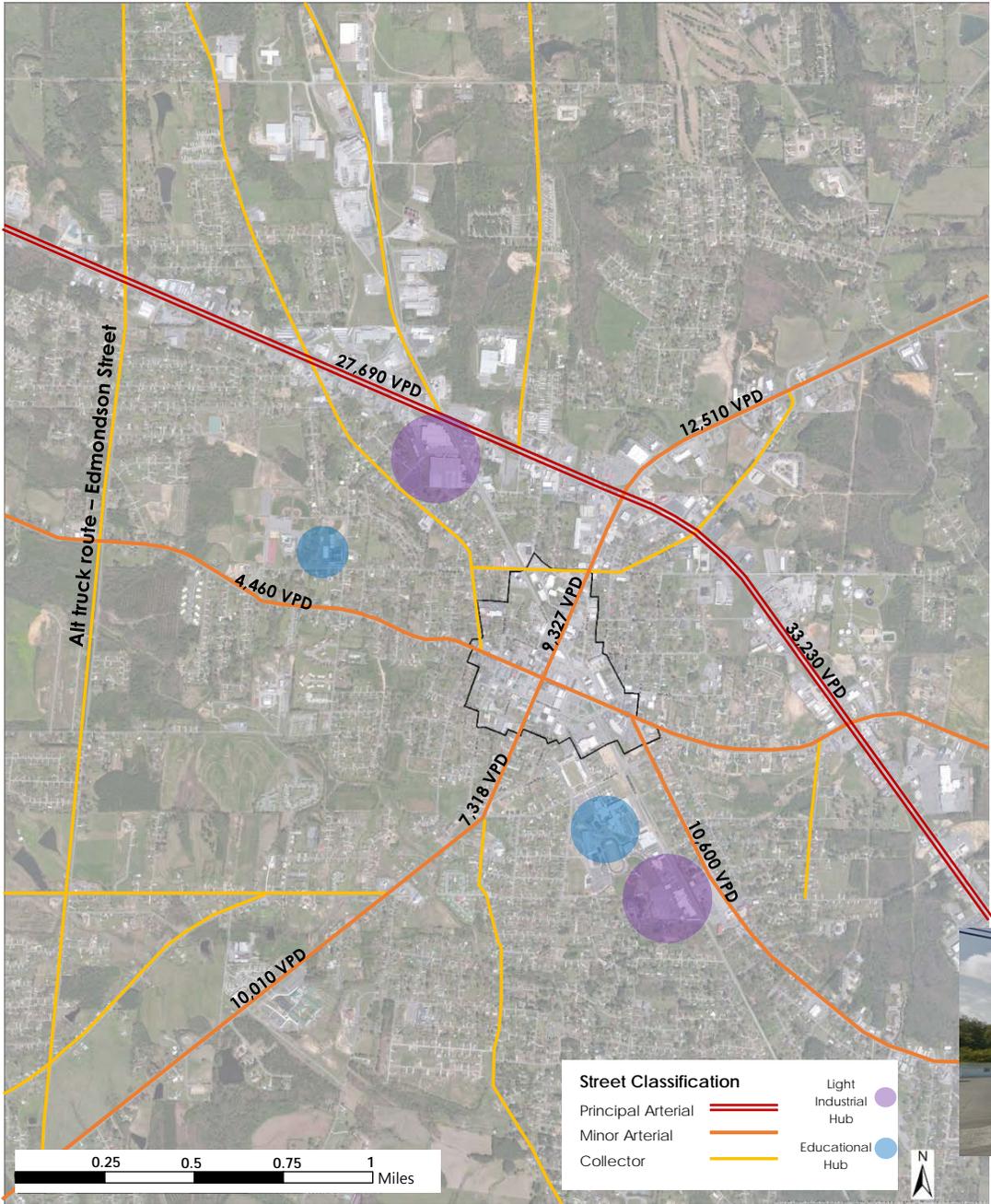
enough to the downtown area, the traditional neighborhood town center, to be readily walkable for school children and for those who live nearby.

The north and south gateways into downtown along Alabama Highway 75/Broad Street are important to the distinction and image of the downtown area. They provide a first impression into the heart of the city. The Northern Gateway (North Broad Street) generates some of the highest traffic counts in the city, because of its designation as a minor arterial and truck route, supporting poultry trucks coming in and out of the area, as well as commercial traffic to Albertville Airport and through-traffic to Birmingham. Because of this, it is considered a growth corridor. The road also supports local traffic, providing access for residential, school, and church activities, as well as local commerce. This gateway into the downtown area directly off of 431 primarily serves more service-oriented businesses, such as automobile service repair shops and financial services, and is the primary image corridor into downtown. This corridor should be treated specifically in zoning regulations. Close by, to the west of the central business district, are the recreation center, an important community asset, and Evans Elementary school. It was noted in community meetings that schoolchildren walk from Albertville High School through the downtown to the rec center on a regular basis. Currently, the downtown looks like a hodgepodge mix of activities and uses, but upon closer inspection, it is clear that different parts of the district have certain unique functions and characteristics. These “character areas” will be discussed in more detail in later sections of this document.



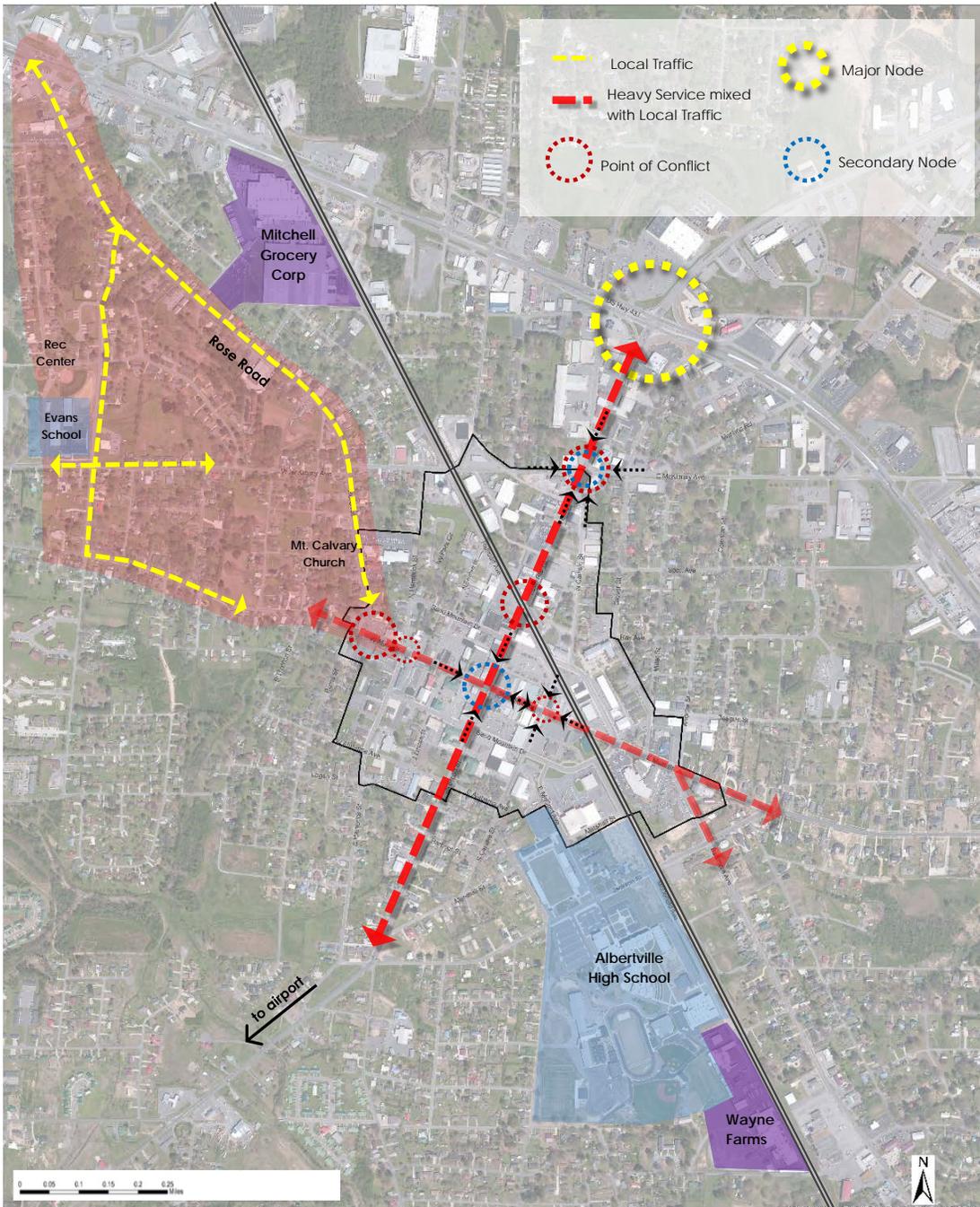
Street Hierarchy

There are approximately 68 miles of paved streets within the Albertville city limits: State Highway 75 which runs north-south through Albertville approximately five miles; State Highway 205 runs east-west 10 miles; and US Highway 431 (the principle arterial) runs six miles. The primary crossroads (Main Street/HWY 205 and Broad Street/HWY 75) runs through the heart of downtown Albertville and serve as two arterial roads for the city. Maintenance of the state and federal arteries are by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). The remaining streets are the responsibility of the City with all major resurfacing contracted out. The city was awarded \$200,000 in DOT funding to replace deteriorating sidewalks on West Main and Hambrick streets in 2000, but other parts of Main Street still require upgrades. Broad and Main experience heavy vehicular and foot traffic and have areas of crumbling curb and gutter and deteriorating sidewalk (especially along Broad Street). Alabama Highway 75 runs southwest to Birmingham and northeast to Rainesville, and Alabama Highway 205 runs northwest to south right through the heart of downtown. Because of this, the downtown experiences some of the highest traffic counts in the county. Furthermore, because of its traditional layout, and narrow streets, the expansion of these state highways some years ago has caused infrastructure and some safety problems throughout the downtown area. Just last year, the city was awarded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding to improve public right-of-way conditions along North Broad from the Main/Broad intersection to the railroad tracks (Railroad Avenue). This will significantly improve pedestrian conditions within the downtown, and enhance walkability. Because the central business district experiences the most pedestrian and vehicular traffic, it is essential that the proper safety standards be implemented in this area. The city should continue its efforts in addressing paving needs and upgrading streets to meet ADA standards, as foot traffic is essential for businesses in this pedestrian-oriented district. *The Sidewalk Conditions* map highlights pedestrian circulation and areas in need of sidewalk improvements to accommodate walkability.



Downtown Albertville is relatively easy to access from the major highways. However, it is wedged between light industrial and educational hubs, causing congestion issues. Mitchell Grocery distribution center and Evans Elementary School and the Recreation Center are located to the northwest of downtown. Wayne Farms processing plant is adjacent to Albertville High School, located at the southeast perimeter of downtown. Because of this, local traffic entering into and exiting out of the downtown area can get difficult at certain times of the day and week. There are some congestion issues entering the downtown, particularly the Rose Road access route due to multiple traffic types converging on one area. The street network surrounding the downtown is organized in four major road classifications: Highway 431 is the principal arterial into the city, generating some of the highest traffic counts in the county, averaging roughly 30,000 vehicles per day (VPD). Minor arterials such as Alabama Highway 75 and Alabama Highway 205 intersect in the heart of downtown. Collectors such as Edmondson Street, to the west of downtown, is a two-lane and serves mostly residential, but also has been designated an alternative truck route for access to Highway 75, and bypassing the downtown area to alleviate some congestion in the heart of town. Highway 75 also serves through-traffic from 431 to Oneonta, Cullman, Interstate 65, and Birmingham to the south. Highway 205 is also a major truck route and is used by poultry trucks to access Wayne Farms just to the southeast of downtown. However, the Main Street section of Highway 205 is closed off to truck traffic. These major routes are highlighted on the previous map. All other roads are considered local. It is quite obvious that the downtown area, originally designed for pedestrian and local activity, also serves industrial and service nodes.

Vehicular Circulation



Among the downtown traffic issues mentioned in the community meetings were the five points north intersection, congestion issues at the Main and Broad crossroads, visibility issues at the South Carlisle and Main Street intersections, and where Rose Road converges on west Main Street. Of particular concern as well are the points of conflict where the railroad crosses over major streets, particularly within the downtown area. Because Highway 75 and 205 are state highways, and controlled by ALDOT, the city of Albertville has limited control over these two major state routes. When the state expanded these arterials to four-lane years ago, it drastically increased traffic volume through the downtown, as well as disrupted infrastructure accessibility and the public right-of-way. The City of Albertville is actively pursuing streetscaping grants within the downtown core to make these roads safer for pedestrian activity. It is highly recommended that the city continue to encourage truck access to the Edmondson Street area to alleviate as much congestion as possible through the downtown area to ensure pedestrian safety and help support downtown retail. Although the traditional grid street network in the core of downtown offers good connectivity and circulation, the residential suburban neighborhoods in the fringe areas, particularly the Rose Road district, should be analyzed more closely. The City should consider a comprehensive thoroughfare plan and road network study to look at circulation and connectivity problems in this area, as well as city-wide. This particular area to the northwest of downtown not only acts as an access route to the district, but also serves local school traffic at the Evans Elementary school and recreation center area, church traffic for Mt. Calvary Church, as well as some industrial access to Mitchell Grocery distribution center. The Rose Road area has weak road connectivity, with roads that dogleg, and are not well-connected in some areas to be able to support the traffic volumes and multiple activities that it serves. Furthermore, because of the pedestrian nature of the downtown, the existing building enclosure and right-of-way are quite narrow and do not allow sufficient widening of roads or adequate turning radii for truck traffic. Therefore, alternative truck routes must be addressed. One way of dealing with the need for alternative routes is through improved connectivity. This is the degree to which the driver can find an alternative route that goes in the same general direction that they want to go and the ease with which one can get there. Within the downtown core, Albertville has a high degree of connectivity due to its traditional grid street pattern; however, the grid tends to break down in the fringe areas surrounding downtown and along the railroad, causing traffic issues. Some local streets, particularly

those surrounding the Rose Road area and also those serving Wayne Farms to the southeast, offer a low degree of connectivity due to cul-de-sac development and disconnected street segments. The only alternative to major roadways is a circuitous network along non-aligned local streets. Alternative routes such as Edmondson, might offer opportunities to improve traffic flow, and alleviate some congestion within the heart of downtown. Land use regulation can also be a tool to help alleviate traffic congestion problems within urban areas. For example, it is not recommended to locate parking lots at major intersections, due to shortened street segments lengths for ingress and egress of parking lots, causing traffic to halt abruptly just crossing a major intersection. It is important to maintain a steady flow of vehicular movement especially within a high density, high intensity area, such as a central business district. A thoroughfare study should be considered to help the City to determine road realignment projects, road widening projects, or new road construction in high-priority areas.



Strategy: Develop a City-Wide Thoroughfare Study. Analyze areas with connectivity and circulation issues. Determine alternative truck routes to alleviate congestion within downtown.

Another dangerous intersection in town is the five points north area at the gateway of downtown, where McKinney Avenue, North Carlisle, and Highway 75 converge all at once. Local officials did mention that there had been some traffic fatalities at this location in the past. The speed limit on the North Broad/75 Gateway is 35 mph, and it was noted at the workshops that truck drivers sometimes do not obey the speed limit coming into downtown. Also of concern at the five points intersection, are limited turn arrows, and bottleneaking that occurs because of the short merge lane. One way to help alleviate this problem is the use of rumble strips, or noise speed bumps along 75, to alert drivers particularly truck and industrial drivers, that they are entering into a local district, and speeds need to be reduced. Another solution is the use of design treatments at this important node. Visual cues, such as decorative traffic arms, downtown welcome signs, as well as landscaping and street trees can be very effective measures to further alert drivers that this is a transition zone at this particular junction - where 431 service traffic transitions to more local activity. This five-way stop is where service traffic and industrial traffic converge on more local residential and retail traffic and functions as the main gateway into downtown. One also begins to see more pedestrian activity here. This particular node not only serves industrial truck traffic, but also service and commercial traffic along 75, as well as residential, school, and retail traffic. There have been two traffic fatalities at this intersection since 2000. While this is not a high accident count, it is concerning, and ALDOT should be notified to help address traffic here where state routes and local routes converge, for the safety of Albertville residents. In the community workshops, there was some mention of the possibility of closing off the North Carlisle access at this intersection, but this is not recommended, because it would disrupt connectivity and circulation issues in and out of the downtown even further. Traffic calming devices and design solutions would be a more appropriate measure and can be very effective for this particular problem. Turning arrows, however, should be considered at the traffic lights here. As previously mentioned, land use regulation can also be very effective to alleviate congestion along this corridor. Locating parking lots away from critical nodes/intersections and important crossroads helps alleviate congestion in these areas. This will also help facilitate accessibility and walkability. Furthermore, anchoring building massing at major nodes will contribute to the pedestrian façade line in areas closer to the traditional downtown core. This is illustrated in the *Sidewalk Conditions* map, as well as the *Conceptual North Broad Street Gateway Master Plan* drawing in the following sections. Because of downtown Albertville's small size, everything can be easily accessed by foot within a five minute walking distance from the Main/Broad center point out. This compactness of form, easy accessibility and walkability was seen as a major asset of downtown by Albertville residents. Enhanced connections/corridors from parking to buildings with the use of lighting, sidewalks, and street trees, will ensure safety and comfort for the pedestrian. Circulation can also be improved, at least for those unfamiliar with the area, by an improved wayfinding system. Often done in conjunction with a tourism effort, wayfinding is a system of signage that assists motorists in finding the most direct route to the most visited places in a community. The signs are designed to be easily read by motorists and are often designed with the downtown character in mind. (See also *Design Guidelines*).



Another suggestion heard at the community meetings was to install traffic lights at the Carlisle and Main Street intersection, due to visibility issues here. Currently, crosswalks are located at this intersection, as well as stop signs on Carlisle. The traditional zero lot line setbacks of the historic downtown buildings, particularly the Barkley's building, make for visibility problems for drivers turning off of Carlisle onto Main. A traffic light in this location on Main Street is not recommended, however, only because it would cause even more congestion issues along the Main Street strip, especially as angled on-street parking access is already difficult. Traffic along



Main Street must maintain a steady flow of movement in order for drivers to access and exit on street parking here. Furthermore, there is simply not enough traffic volume at this time along the Carlisle streets to support traffic lights here. The main street strip is a short block, and traffic coming off of Broad Street onto Main Street going east would be backed up even further. A four-way stop may be a better solution to handle this particular intersection. However, as growth and infill begin to occur in the downtown core, especially surrounding the Barkley's building, a detailed traffic study should be generated to analyze development changes to consider additional traffic regulations in this area. (See also *Infrastructure Conditions* map with recommendations).

In any downtown area, drivers must be made more aware that it is a residential pedestrian-oriented district, and was originally designed as such. Sidewalks, lighting, benches, street trees, building setbacks, height to width ratios, façade lines, as well as storefront windows, were all designed to entice the pedestrian shopper. Traditional downtowns were not designed with the automobile in mind, but rather for the pedestrian shopper in mind. Because of this, some traffic inconveniences are found in every downtown, and the appropriate design and streetscape improvements should help alleviate this problem, as well as foster retail growth. Burying utilities where possible, adding appropriate lighting, crosswalks, and traffic-calming devices, such as bulb-outs and chicanes, will help ensure pedestrian safety throughout the district.

Although utilities services, such as gas, water, and electric, are well-covered throughout the central business district, there are areas that have inadequate capacity, especially in regards to sewer and drainage lines. Because of its age and historic nature, the downtown area and its structures have aging out of date infrastructure, (such as 60-year-old clay pipe, sewer problems, and drainage and inlet pipes that are beyond capacity), causing problems for the merchants and the retail it supports. It is recommended that utilities be buried where possible within the downtown core, and utility experts use this as an opportunity to address other priority infrastructure problems. It is also strongly recommended that the City and MUB coordinate streetscape and public improvements projects throughout the district, and major utilities and infrastructure projects be scheduled concurrently to reduce future costs by having to dig up water lines or sidewalks repeatedly. This was a concern mentioned by utility officials. While large-scale public improvement projects such as these are recommended for the downtown area in this plan, short-term and long-term projects are addressed in the Goals and Objectives section, as well as priority needs, so that utility and design professionals have an idea of costs and scheduling associated with these kinds of improvements as funding becomes available. Unfortunately, for large-scale public projects, cities are sometimes at the mercy of state and federal funding programs in regards to scheduling and funding availability. However, taking advantage of grant programs is a more fiscally responsible option for municipalities. It may be helpful to develop an Infrastructure and Streetscaping Improvement Program to phase out large-scale projects to determine timing and costs associated for budgeting purposes. Although a detailed Capital Improvements Plan is beyond the scope of this study, it is highly recommended that the City develop a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for major public improvements projects. This will also help facilitate cost-effective planning. The accompanying *Infrastructure Conditions* map highlights the problem areas throughout the downtown with some recommendations included, and a general overview of CIP requirements is discussed in the following pages, as well as in the *Financial Strategies* section. Please also refer to the *Streetscape Improvement Areas* map to for a general streetscaping schedule.



Aging infrastructure, deteriorating façades, and buildings not meeting current code was noted as a major deterrent for prospects looking to locate in the downtown area. This is why in any downtown revitalization plan, public and private sector cooperation is vital. It is important to maintain the appropriate commercial and retail supply in the downtown area to be able to market to prospective businesses and to support existing retail. City officials should work cooperatively with property owners to the best of their ability to improve interior conditions of the downtown structures, bringing them up to code, where it is deemed financially feasible to the property owner. However, proper enforcement must be made in order to avoid future safety liability issues on the part of the City. Deteriorating façades can be addressed with the right balance of incentives and regulation. The new aesthetics and sign ordinance should help promote a uniform design theme throughout the district, while a city-implemented façade grant program might also be a much-needed solution. To encourage building owners to improve building exteriors, a local fund can be established-- either through the City, development authority, or a merchants association or some combination of funding-- as a grant or loan pool. To ensure that exterior improvements are consistent with the desired character of downtown Albertville, the grant or loan should be linked to a set of mandatory design standards.





Potential funding support and example façade improvement programs are listed in the *Financial Strategies* section of this document. Furthermore, the design guidelines and recommendations made in this revitalization plan are to be used to help guide and inform the new aesthetics and sign ordinances in regards to façade treatments.

Vacant buildings give visitors a negative impression of downtown Albertville. Psychologically, vacancies can also give visitors a sense that the area is not well-maintained or that it is unsafe. It is important for building owners to regularly maintain properties, whether occupied or not, and look for other ways to breathe life into vacant buildings. This obviously would help in marketing such properties to potential tenants or buyers as well. A creative and inexpensive way to do this is

placing artwork by local artists for school children in vacant storefronts. This can be particularly effective along highly visible image corridors. It is also recommended the City and the Downtown Revitalization Committee begin taking steps toward the creation and incorporation of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to manage and implement the revitalization programs and strategies recommended in this plan. Another strategy to improve façade storefronts would be to buy parts of highly visible storefront property, (especially along important image corridors) and convert valuable window property into small business incubators to showcase local entrepreneurs and their products and small business startups who are not quite ready financially to buy property and locate in downtown. Potential funding support for this type of program is also listed in the *Financial Strategies* section.



Strategy: Develop a City-implemented Façade Improvement Program.

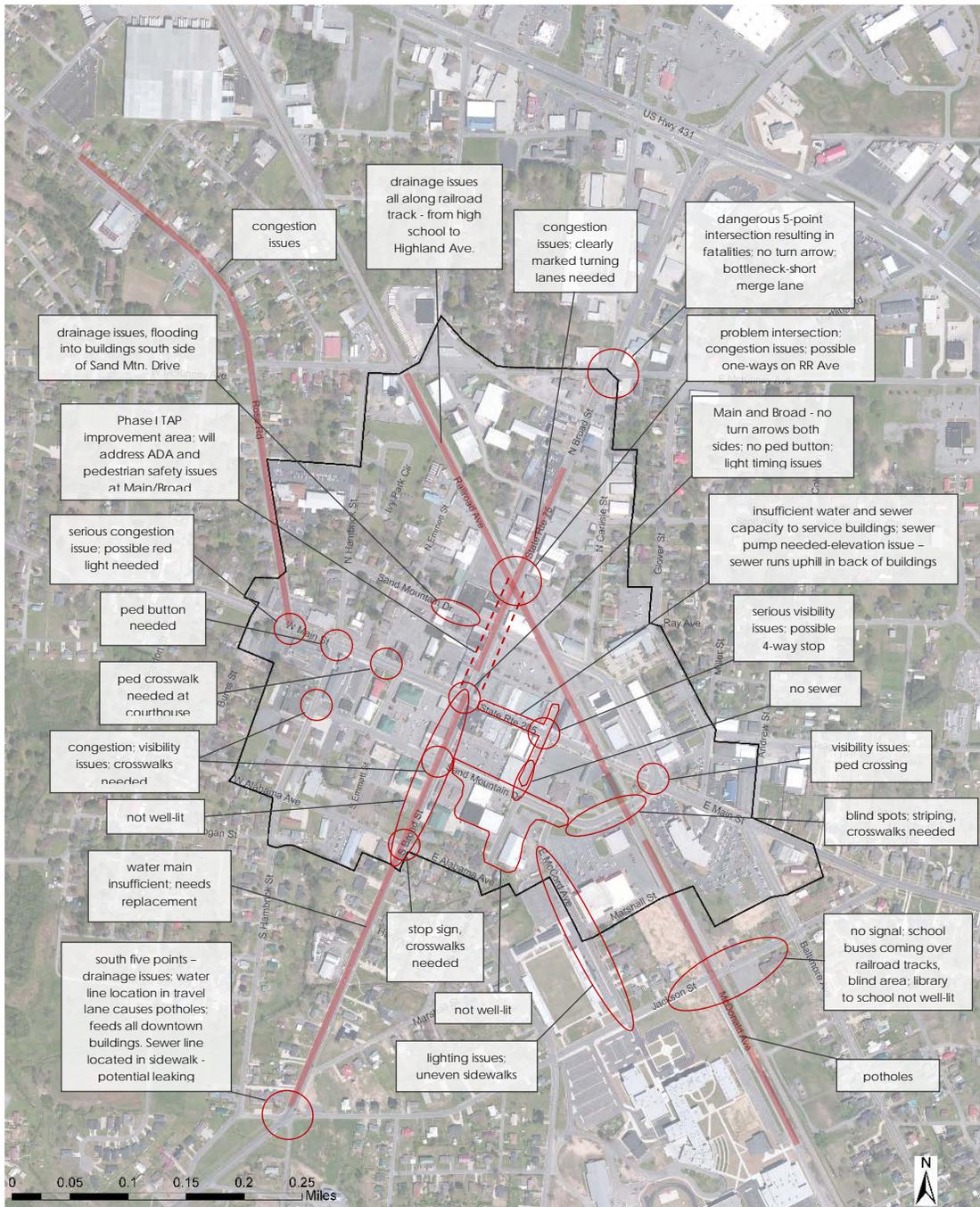
Strategy: Begin planning phase for the creation and incorporation of a Downtown Development Authority to manage and implement revitalization programs recommended in this plan.



Infrastructure Conditions

Another area of particular concern is drainage issues throughout the central business district. This can be attributed to excessive amounts of impervious hardscape (that do not allow proper storm water absorption) versus green space in the downtown. Because of this, water runoff speeds during heavy storms are particularly high, as there are minimal permeable surfaces to absorb stormwater. Excessive rate of flow causes drainage pipes to overflow, particularly around areas of large parking lots. This has led to flooding in some of the building interiors, and has caused businesses to close and merchants to leave the area. It is highly recommended that Albertville adopt and implement a green infrastructure program. Street trees, pocket parks, grassed areas, and landscaping can help alleviate this problem by absorbing excessive runoff. It was noted in the community meetings, however, that capacity and finances are limited to install irrigation systems throughout the downtown, and public works officials, along with Keep Albertville Beautiful (KAB) volunteers, have had to manually transport water to irrigate what little landscaping exists currently. Potential funding for this type of program can be found in the financial section of this document. One of the first things a person notices when arriving in the downtown is the lack of vegetation and green. This contributes to the overall bleak and blighted conditions of the downtown, and gives the impression the town is dying. It also makes for an uncomfortable pedestrian experience due to lack of shade. Furthermore, the existing Japanese Maples are out of scale with the surrounding building enclosures. Most important, their canopies do not provide pedestrian shade. They are also not the appropriate scale or color for the urban environment. Typically ornamental trees, the Maples at mature height look dwarfed next to the height and mass of the downtown structures. Street trees add to the richness and architectural character of downtown, and should be a vibrant, bright green color to contrast with the darker brick material of the buildings and give the impression downtown is alive again.

Another challenge for landscaping was the ALDOT expansion of Broad Street/AL 75 some years ago that drastically minimized the public right-of-way and the appropriate space to be able to install street trees and landscaping. This can be overcome. Streetscape techniques, such as bulb-outs and chicanes, can provide adequate room for planting pits. Aboveground brick planters can be installed where there is limited space for tree root systems and can add seating walls for pedestrians. The appropriate size, species, and





spacing of street trees should be reviewed by a landscape architect and written into ordinances to enhance the overall image and pedestrian comfort in the downtown area. There are also green infrastructure grants offered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for stormwater management projects for downtown areas. (This is listed in the *Financial Strategies* section of this document). Street trees provide multiple benefits to a downtown area: they enhance the aesthetics of the urban streetscape, provide shade and comfort to the pedestrian, help to minimize flooding by absorbing excessive stormwater, and increase property values in urban areas. An example of the importance of street trees and landscaping in downtown revitalization efforts would be Greenville, South Carolina, which began their revitalization efforts by first planting trees in the dying downtown area over twenty years ago. The trees are now mature, and property values skyrocketed where the trees were planted, going from \$50,000 a parcel (before trees) to \$1 million today. Greenville officials state that their biggest asset in the downtown is their beloved street trees, even more so than their historic architecture. It is highly recommended that the City of Albertville take an incremental approach to streetscape improvements, and take advantage of grants when funding becomes available for streetscaping improvement projects, as well as coordinate projects in a timely manner. It is also recommended that the landscaping palette include street trees that are within a more appropriate color, size and scale with surrounding structures to improve aesthetics and provide shade to the pedestrian. To avoid issues with infiltration/inflow (I/I) or tree roots damaging underground utilities, the appropriate street tree species can be determined based on shallow root systems. Examples of appropriate urban street trees are listed in the *Design Guidelines* section of this document.

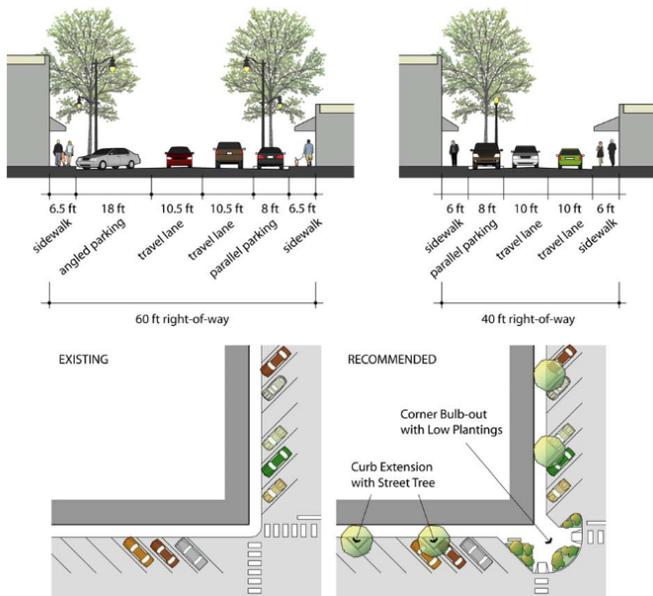


Figure 2: Streetscape Improvements. Curb extensions and corner bulb-outs create space to add landscaping and street furniture, enhancing the walking experience without sacrificing on-street parking spaces.



Current street trees on Main Street



Streetscape Improvement Areas 10- Year Schedule

Many of the improvements recommended in this report can be accomplished by means of public-private partnerships. Enhancements to existing streets can be accomplished in two ways:

- City-initiated large street/streetscaping improvement projects that should be funded by both city sources and grant funding (examples- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG))
- Site-based improvements that occur with new development projects on a site-by-site basis. Such improvements can include the provision of new sidewalks and landscaping improvements within the public ROW. These development standards work best where substantial tracts of undeveloped property are available along existing city streets.

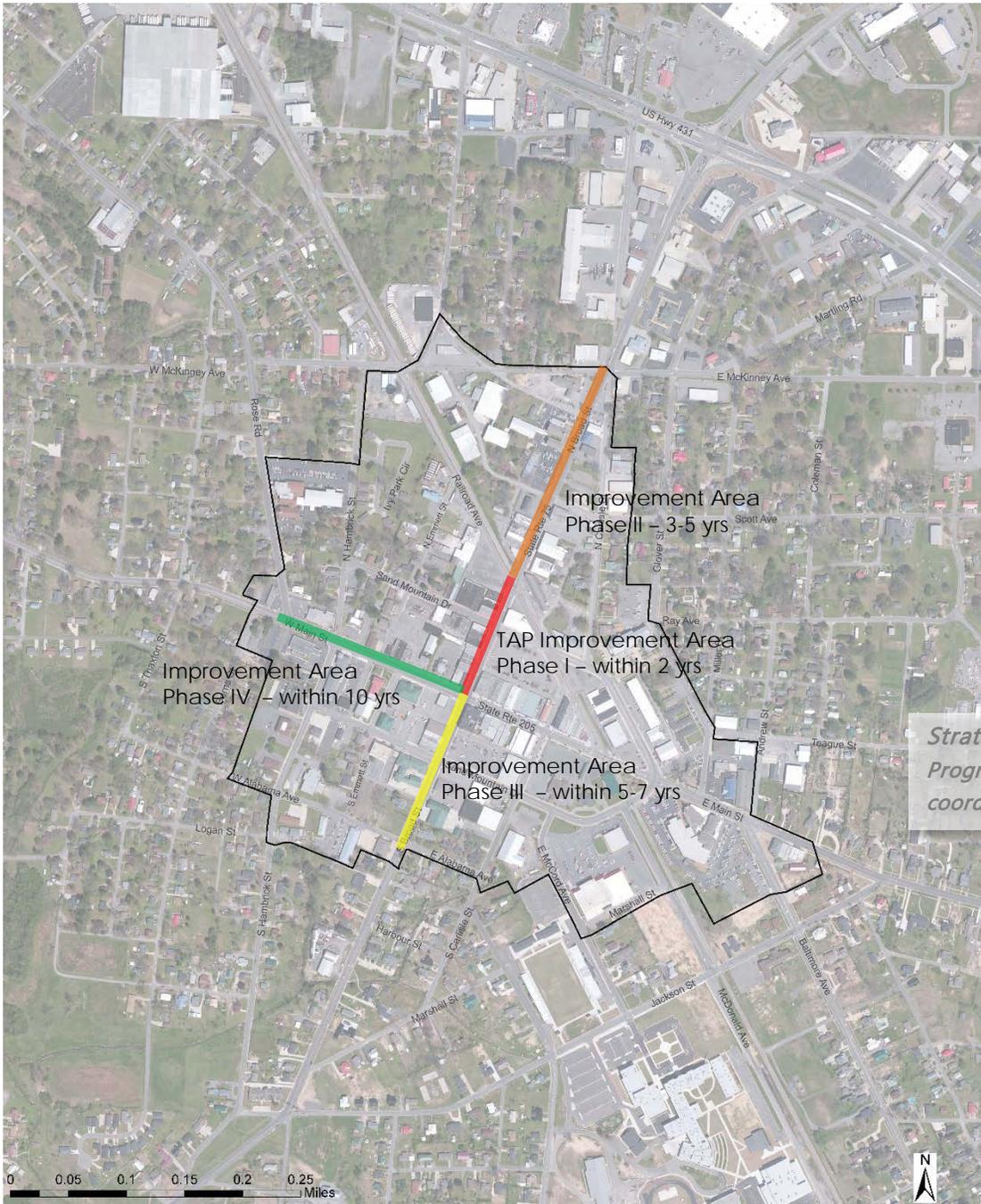
Development standards that promote walkability and connectivity should be incorporated into the City's subdivision regulations so that new streets, whether constructed by the City or by a developer, are constructed in accordance with existing ordinances. As previously known, a city-wide Thoroughfare Plan and a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) should be considered.

Lastly, the City should take advantage of grant opportunities that will support these improvements and the overall Master Plan.

Strategy: Develop Downtown Streetscape and Infrastructure Improvement Program. Develop a city-wide Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to coordinate and schedule streetscape and public improvements projects.

Conduct inventory of infrastructure and develop a prioritized list of infrastructure improvements to be programmed into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

As noted in this Plan, improving the appearance and infrastructure conditions of the Study Area, particularly in the Downtown Core area, is vital to recruiting new residents, businesses and investors. Investing in public facilities demonstrates the City's commitment to the area and creates a perception of a neighborhood or district whose value is increasing. As the Master Plan indicates, several areas need significant infrastructure improvements. (See also *Infrastructure Conditions* map).



Potential improvements fall into several categories:

- Sewer upgrades (aging pipes especially serving historic structures in the Downtown Core) (*Please refer to the Character Areas/Subdistricts map in the *Concept* section of this document).
- Curb and gutter and storm sewer improvements. (Standing water has been observed well after rain events in several Downtown locations).
- Roadway repaving. (Many road surfaces in the downtown area have worn and deteriorated surfaces. Road resurfacing will be necessary in conjunction with all curb and gutter/streetscaping and storm sewer projects; roadways with adequate stormwater management systems should also be evaluated and programmed for resurfacing as appropriate).
- Sidewalks, tree lawns and pedestrian buffers. (Sidewalks should be constructed wherever possible on both sides of all roadways within the Downtown Core area especially, and connecting to the residential and educational fringe areas). Construction of sidewalks, lighting, street trees and pedestrian crosswalks, if possible, is particularly important on portions of primary routes within the Downtown area. (Residents expressed concerns over schoolchildren and pedestrian safety, especially in the perimeter areas of Downtown adjacent to the high school, and the courthouse area, as well as the Main Street and Broad Street crossroads, where there is heavy activity).
- If possible, electric lines, telephone and other cables should be buried in conjunction with all roadway and streetscape improvement projects.

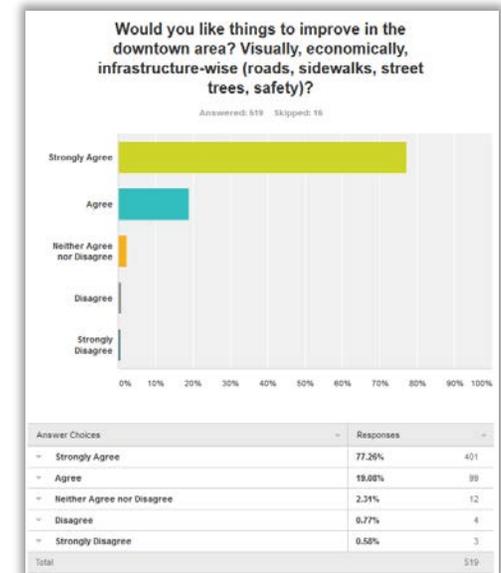
Although a detailed and prioritized inventory of infrastructure needs is beyond the scope of this project, the City should conduct such an inventory that corresponds with this Plan, and note when funding becomes available to ensure that City resources are used to leverage the greatest economic benefit. (See *Financial Strategies* in this document for funding schedules and availability for streetscaping and public improvement projects).

The inventory should address all of the elements noted above, and should record existing conditions and needed improvements for each infrastructure element in each location.

Needed improvements should then be prioritized on the basis of several predetermined elements that may include:

- urgency of need,
- potential impact on community revitalization,
- potential number of new residents gained or jobs created,
- cost of improvement,
- ability to coordinate with other improvements, etc.

A predetermined point system may prove useful, although the participants should retain the right to revise the results to accommodate other issues and needs. Potential projects identified by the Infrastructure Improvement Program (see Goals and Objectives) should be programmed into the CIP as aggressively as possible. The City should coordinate with the Municipal Utilities Board (MUB) and local utilities providers and evaluate its capital improvements budget on an annual basis in order to determine the appropriate timing and phasing of the improvements outlined above within the overall context of its citywide capital improvements. As noted, alternative funding sources, including CDBG and TAP funding, should also be pursued for these projects (Please see *Financial Strategies* section).



Parking Assessment



Parking

A review of parking needs was performed to determine a general level of parking supply and demand in the downtown area. Specific parking needs require a business by business study of floor space and employment for particular uses. However, a general idea of the level of need is possible by considering land use patterns and calculating total gross floor area per particular land use. The existing Zoning Ordinance does outline specific parking needs per land use, but may be dated. On the accompanying map, areas highlighted in green represent public parking, and areas in purple represent private parking. There are a total of 3354 total parking spaces in the downtown study area. Of those, 1172 are public spaces, and 2182 are private parking spaces. 237 on-street parking spaces exist, and are included in the total number of public parking spaces. The large public parking lot behind Sebastien's, and next to and behind Barkley's are urban renewal projects. Parking needs for the following land uses within the downtown Central Business District study area were calculated: general retail, offices, banks, industry, and restaurants. Church lots were not calculated, and are based on congregation numbers. Residential parking demand and government and municipal parking were also not included. Municipal parking needs are usually determined by the local planning and zoning officials. For the purposes of this plan, Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) formulas were used, and are based on the total gross floor area (GFA) of each particular land use, and the available usable space, currently filled or unfilled. Based on the ITE calculations, current financial land use parking needs require 165 spaces; office space (if all usable space was filled) requires 1081 spaces; industrial land use in the downtown area requires ten spaces; restaurant parking requires 536 spaces; and general retail/commercial requires approximately 1216 spaces. These land uses are primarily private sector businesses. 3008 total parking spaces are required if all available space is filled. As noted, 3354 total parking spaces exist currently in the downtown area. Even though these calculations do not include governmental and church uses, there currently exists adequate parking for current and prospective businesses in the downtown area. However, in order to revitalize the downtown based on sound planning principles, it is recommended that some parking in the downtown core be used for infill development; concentrating building density at the major nodes/intersections will strengthen the aesthetics and pedestrian appeal of the downtown area, contributing to the street edge façade line. Uniform and symmetrical setbacks on both sides of the





street create a building “wall” and sense of enclosure for the pedestrian shopper. The *Sidewalk Conditions* map highlights in blue those street edges that currently do not contribute to the façade line. Currently there are a lot of underutilized parcels and parking stalls in the downtown area during most times of the day, particularly in the public parking lot to the east of Carlisle Street where the farmers market and depot are located. There are infill spaces just adjacent to the Sand Mountain Loop perimeter that can be used for future parking, if, in the future, the City decides to concentrate development in these high-profile contributing nodes. (Please see *Conceptual North Broad Street Gateway Master Plan* drawing in the following pages).

These areas would be more appropriate for retail, rather than parking lots, because they are considered prime locations for exposure and traffic. It is also more visually appealing and provides that critical mass and density necessary for downtown growth. It is most important in downtown areas to concentrate density for commercial and retail activity, because downtown businesses, more than anywhere else, feed off of each other and share customer foot traffic. Concentrating density in this downtown core area is essential to improve economic conditions within the district. Furthermore, increasing density raises property values, as well as facilitates greater interaction and transactions in a business district, providing efficiency and higher potential for the exchange of ideas, activities, and services. In this way, cities will see a greater return on their investment by encouraging density and infill development within urban core areas. These urban design principles support economic prosperity and will be further discussed in detail in the *Concept* section of this plan. The proper planning and zoning recommendations will be made that are appropriate and reflect the needs of Albertville’s Downtown. It is important to reiterate, the importance to return the downtown to a pedestrian-oriented district, emphasizing the public right-of-way, and keeping the pedestrian shopper in mind. Pedestrian ways from parking lots to retail should be enhanced to accommodate shoppers and encourage customer foot traffic. This will make downtown more convenient and comfortable for the customer so that new businesses are attracted to the area.

It should be noted that Albertville does not exercise strict parking enforcement. There are no parking meters, and private and public entities have been cooperative in an informal shared parking practice. As Albertville is poised for more growth, and interest in the downtown area grows, parking may not be seen so much as an issue now, but will be in the future. Residents noted that parking is at maximum capacity during large community events, such as the Main Street Music Festival, which is understandable. There are some areas, especially around the courthouse, that do not have the adequate parking during court days, which sees a high number of court cases per year. Parking is close to maximum capacity during restaurant rush hour as well, especially the public parking lot behind the Sebastien’s and Mater’s restaurants. There are blighted areas on the perimeter of the Sand Mountain Loop that would be appropriate to locate public parking infill, and still provide convenient access to downtown retail and the courthouse. A shared parking practice should be continued for a downtown its size. Also, it is recommended that on street parking in the downtown core be reserved for customers and visitors. Merchants and other downtown workers can park in the public parking lot behind the buildings or nearby. Furthermore, as previously noted, parking around the courthouse during court days fills up quickly. Constructing a public parking lot in the infill areas behind the North Broad Street properties and the Board of Education building (currently dilapidated storage warehouses) can remedy this problem. Expanding this parking lot is recommended to capture overflow parking and would be convenient access to the courthouse and other government activities, as well as downtown businesses. Most parking will continue to be provided on-street, however, there are opportunities to add on-site parking through redevelopment. These opportunities are shown in the *Conceptual North Broad Street Gateway Master Plan* drawing. To encourage this, future construction in downtown Albertville should abide by a rear setback when, taking into consideration relationships and compatibility with other buildings, there is an opportunity to include an accessible parking or loading area on site. Any existing parking and open spaces should be well maintained and screened (with landscaping, street trees) particularly when they are visible from the street. As previously stated, it is strongly discouraged to locate parking at major intersections, and proper site planning of new development encouraging parking toward the rear of buildings should be included in the ordinances to enhance the public right-of-way, especially in high-visibility areas, or areas with high priority visual needs within the downtown study area. Utilize adjacent blighted areas for additional future parking. Concentrate building density at nodes within the downtown core to maintain a functional, uniform, and pedestrian-appealing façade line. Locate parking behind buildings. Do not locate parking at intersections/nodes.

Strategy: Improve downtown parking. Designate infill areas near perimeter of downtown core for additional offstreet parking that do not interfere with the downtown façade line. Where possible, encourage building density at nodes and parking lot location behind buildings.

Parking Assessment Map 4 dots/each color/per person

- **Parking areas at max capacity during business hours**
- **Areas that require more parking than provided (during business hours)**
- **Underutilized parking space (during business hours only)**

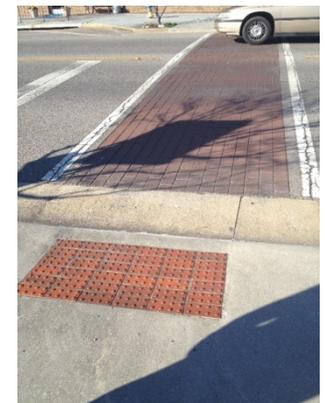


At community workshops, participants were asked to locate parking areas that were under utilized and areas that were at max capacity during certain times of the day.

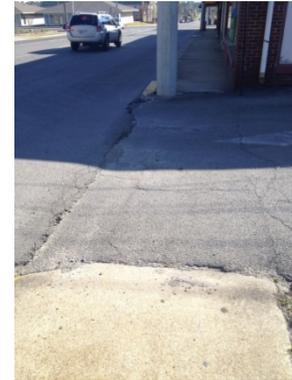


Pedestrian Circulation

The accompanying *Sidewalk Conditions* map illustrates those places where sidewalks exist and are in good condition (highlighted in green), where they need repair (red), and where they do not exist (in yellow). The five-minute pedestrian walking shed is shown with the red circle. The map also indicates the areas not contributing to the façade line of buildings, particularly storefronts. A consistent façade line provides enclosure and is another design feature that provides comfort to the pedestrian. Those lines indicated in blue represent areas where the façade line is considered non-contributing to the public right-of-way. As a traditional neighborhood town center, Albertville has sidewalks along many of its downtown streets, especially in the core area. However, areas of importance, particularly around the courthouse where there exists heavy foot traffic during court days, crosswalks and sidewalks should be considered here. Furthermore, it should be noted that residents have stated that repair is needed, especially on East Main where sidewalks were damaged during the 2010 tornado. Some squares were cracked, raised, or split due to trees falling and equipment damaging the sidewalk during the cleanup of the tornado's aftermath. (Please also refer to the *Infrastructure Conditions* map for further guidance on pedestrian conditions in the downtown area). Areas of particular importance also include fringe areas, pedestrian access from the residential areas into the downtown and student pedestrian access from the school into the downtown and to the recreation center. Discussions in community meetings noted that a lot of students walk to school through the downtown area, and walk from the rec center/Evans School anchor to the high school through the downtown. (See the *Anchors & Linkages* map). It is important that safety, lighting, and walking conditions (like ADA-compliant sidewalks) are improved and provided for Albertville students and residents of all ages. Care should be taken to make sure that sidewalks are also provided between parking lots and destinations, and in close proximity to storefronts. Street parking not only provides parking close to storefronts, but it also provides a buffer between vehicular traffic and pedestrians. Downtowns are walkable for a reason. The idea is to provide comfort and ease to make the pedestrian experience as pleasant as possible to encourage activity. Sidewalks and pedestrian ways are imperative to the success of any downtown to accommodate and encourage essential retail foot traffic. It is strongly encouraged and will be reiterated



throughout this plan that the public right-of-way and pedestrian corridors be of prime focus in improvement efforts in order to return the downtown to a more pedestrian-oriented district to support retail, an essential component in revitalization. In this way, the downtown district will become accessible and identifiable for all age groups and backgrounds, a major need expressed by the citizenry at community workshops.



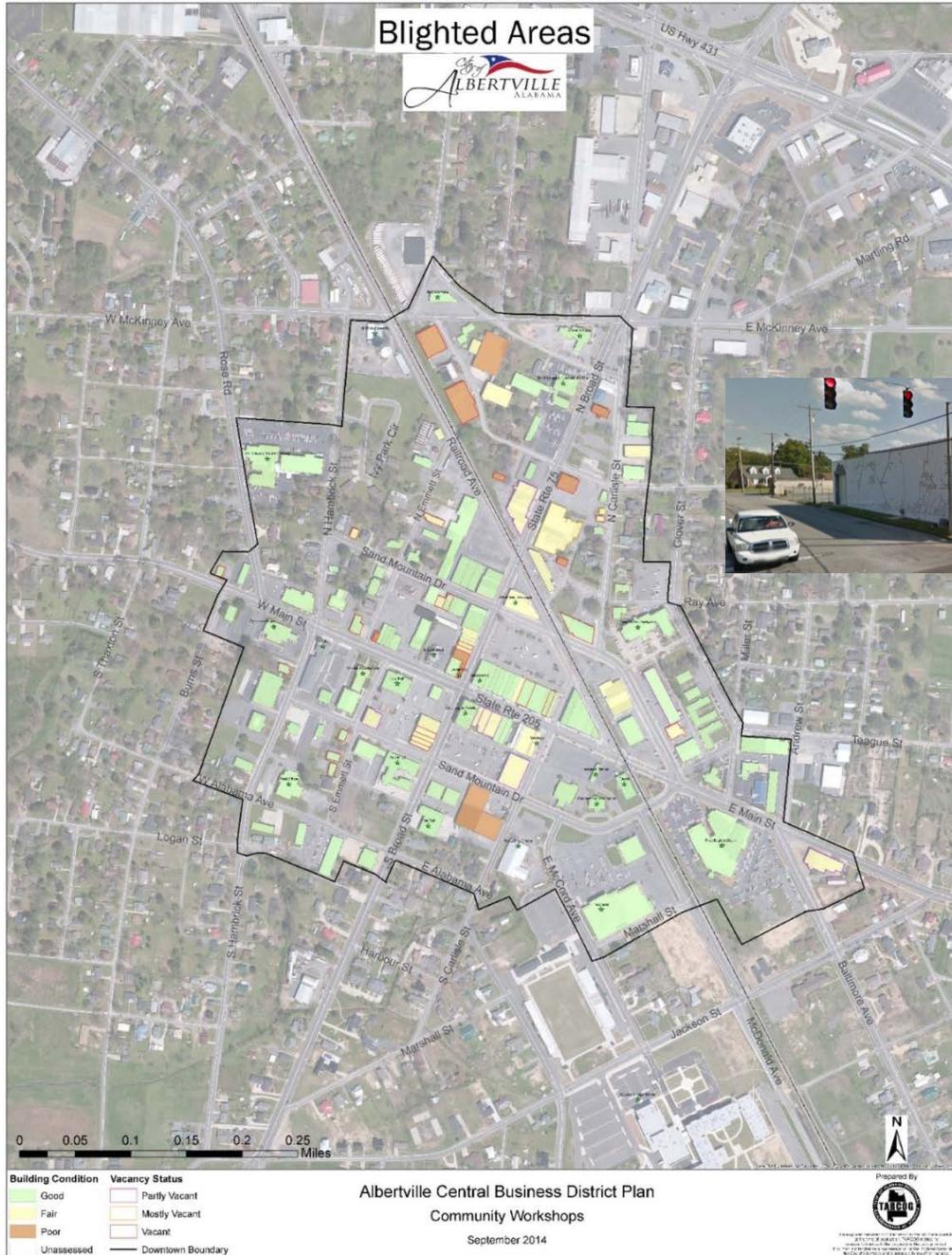
Strategy: Enhance and improve the pedestrian way. Provide for pedestrian walkability and comfort to attract customers to the downtown and encourage essential retail foot traffic. Maintain the façade line. Provide shade, lighting, and ADA-accessibility for the pedestrian. Improve pedestrian connections between downtown and its fringe residential and school areas.



Conceptual Main Street Cross-Section

Gleason '14





Blight

While the city itself is poised for more growth, lack of proper planning and zoning enforcement over the years has led to neglect and deteriorating conditions in the downtown area. However, the recent developments and economic growth is a positive sign for the blighted downtown, as more revenue is created, more public improvements can be made.

One of the first assessments made by the planning team was the evaluation of the blighted conditions in the downtown. A block-by-block analysis was conducted in the spring of 2013 examining the structural conditions and vacancies of the downtown buildings. A preliminary assessment, and then follow-up assessment, analyzed the exterior and interiors of the buildings. It was determined that although Albertville's downtown is still very viable, many of the commercial buildings are deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation, especially the second-level interiors, and qualify as blighted. There are areas on Main Street where the downtown's exteriors/facades have been kept up or improved in some cases, but this is very misleading. There is significant water damage and deterioration in some of the interiors. Furthermore, some valuable window front retail property has been boarded up with wood siding and completely blocked from view. The detailed Blight Analysis based on Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) criteria concluded that 50.7% of Albertville's Central Business District is in deteriorated or dilapidated condition, with a 31.6% vacancy rate (see accompanying chart).

Although the central business district is a viable downtown and exhibits good potential for revitalization to increase economic activity, the area also exhibits many of the characteristics of blight according to the criteria contained in the HUD guidelines. The study area is shown on the accompanying map and consists of those city blocks which make up the central portion of the downtown area and a mixed commercial and industrial area adjacent to the north of downtown. In the northern section of the district that is characterized by old industrial and warehouse structures, a Brownfields Assessment should be considered. Furthermore, some property owners have neglected maintenance and upkeep of their downtown property. A total of 43 (31.6%) of the commercial structures in the proposed study area were vacant. Additional structures can be considered mostly vacant or partly vacant. *(Please note that this initial analysis was conducted in 2013 and is used as a baseline assessment. Conditions have been subjected to some change, especially in recent months).

The sidewalks along the main block in downtown (Main Street) are in good condition where they exist. However, along adjacent and perpendicular streets (Broad Street and surrounding) where sidewalks do exist, they are in poor condition in various places, and are uneven, broken, non-continuous or non-existent in areas where heavy pedestrian traffic was noted, and are not ADA-Accessible. From a planning perspective, there is no real definition in physical form, with the exception of the Main Street block. There is significant potential for infill, especially along North Broad Street and perimeter areas of Sand Mountain loop. Street sign visibility is very poor. Local officials have noted difficulty with delivery services finding addresses and orientation. Street trees were planted many years ago as part of a streetscaping project along Main Street, however, stunted growth and girdling of the lower trunks, as well as past tornado damage, may lead to probable death/blight of some of the trees in the foreseeable future. These Japanese Maples are usually used as ornamental trees, do not provide shade, and are not appropriate with the scale of the surrounding streetscape.



Strategy: Turn perceived weaknesses into opportunities. Redevelop blighted areas into vibrant open space, infill development, or additional parking.

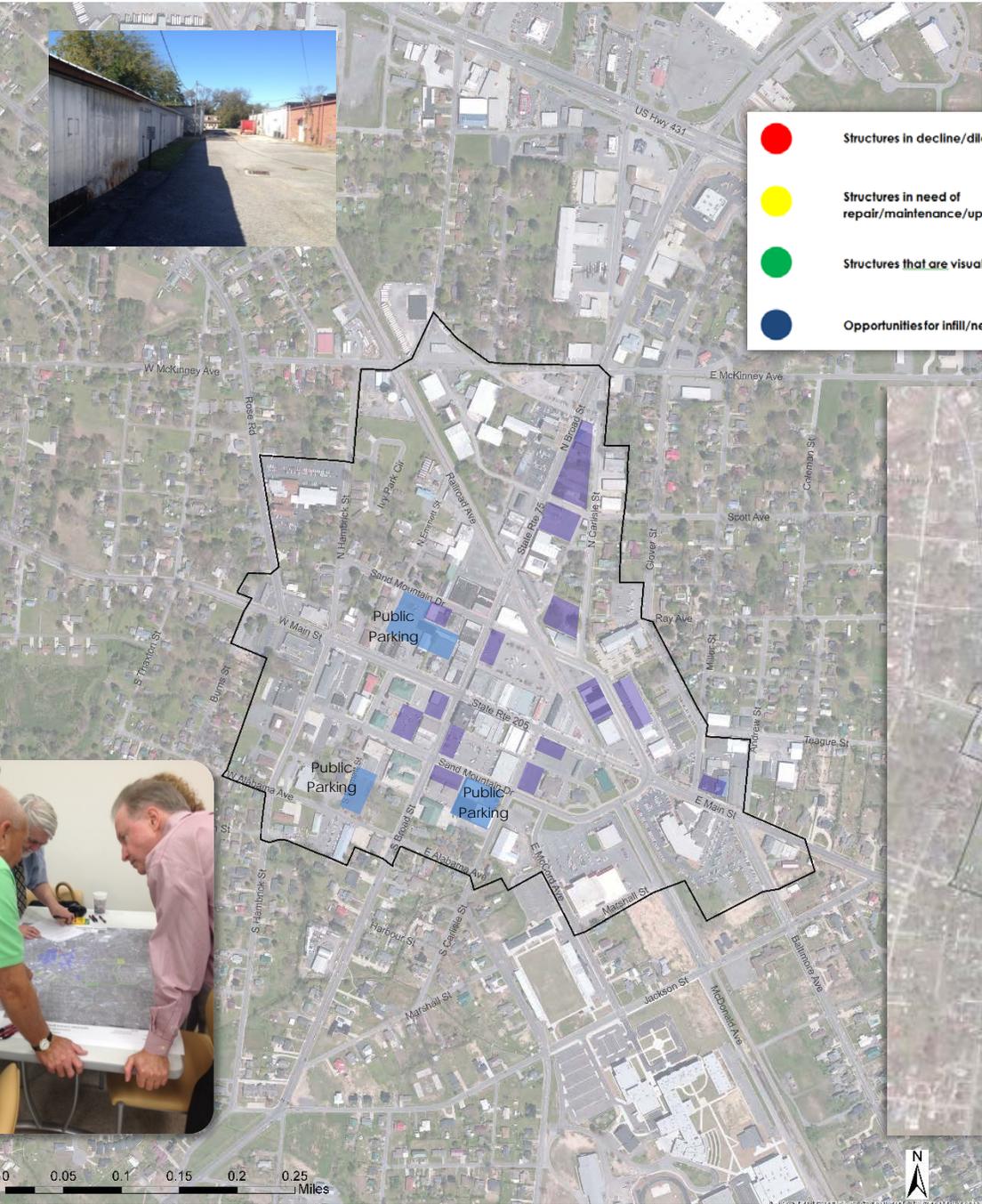
Just in the last year, Albertville's downtown has seen positive signs of improvement. The recent closing of Hammer's department store was an opportunity for a recent rehabilitation - Sébastien's on Main, a fine dining restaurant, and the adjacent Mater's Pizza Emporium, as well as King Pollo Mexican restaurant, has been a huge boost to downtown. With historic structures being restored, this is an encouraging sign of the potential market downtown Albertville promises. The accompanying Blight map shows those areas that are considered blighted properties, but should be seen as opportunity areas for new infill growth and redevelopment.

City of Albertville, Alabama																
Preliminary Survey of Structural Condition in the Central Business District																
Conducted April 15, 2013																
Block	Commercial Structures						Total Commercial	Vacant Commercial		Other Structures	Partly Vacant	Mostly Vacant	All Vacant			
	Sound		Deteriorating		Dilapidated			Number	Percent							Number
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent										
A	7	33.3%	8	38.1%	6	28.6%	21	8	38.1%	1			8	8		
B	3	25.0%	3	25.0%	6	50.0%	12	7	58.3%	0			7	7		
C	2	14.3%	8	57.1%	4	28.6%	14	4	28.6%	3			4	4		
D	1	14.3%	6	85.7%	0	0.0%	7	0	0.0%	1	2			2		
E	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	4				0		
F	5	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	1	20.0%	3			1	1		
G	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	0				0		
H	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	1				0		
I	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	0				0		
J	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	0				0		
K	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	3	1	33.3%	5	1		1	2		
L	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	3	50.0%	5			3	3		
M	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	1	16.7%	2			1	1		
N	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1	33.3%	4			1	1		
O	11	68.8%	5	31.3%	0	0.0%	16	2	12.5%	5			2	2		
P	7	41.2%	5	29.4%	5	29.4%	17	6	35.3%	6			6	6		
Q	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	0				0		
R	5	35.7%	4	28.6%	5	35.7%	14	8	57.1%	3			8	8		
S	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	4	1	25.0%	6	1		1	2		
T	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	1				0		
U		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
V		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
W		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
X		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
Y		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
Z		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0		0.0%							
Total	67	49.3%	42	30.9%	27	19.9%	136	43	31.6%	50			43	0.316176		
				50.7%												

Infill Opportunities

At community workshops, participants were asked to locate blighted areas, as well as opportunity sites for infill and new development.

- Structures in decline/dilapidated condition
- Structures in need of repair/maintenance/upkeep
- Structures that are visually appealing
- Opportunities for infill/new development

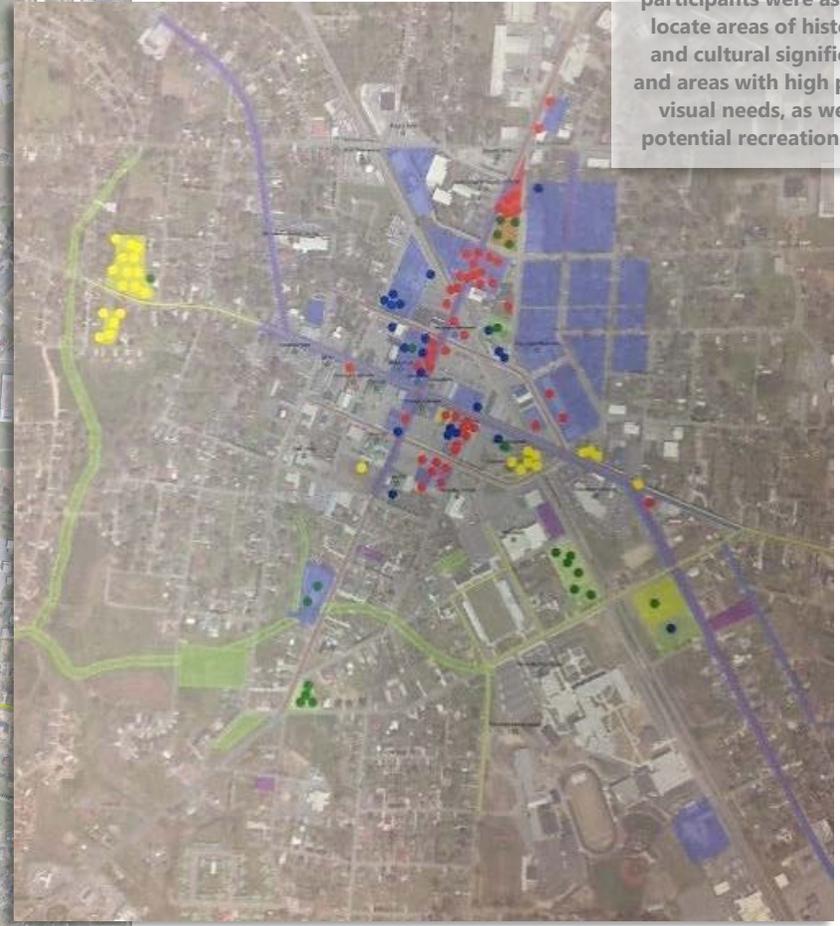


Visual Assessment



Visual Assessment

At community workshops, participants were asked to locate areas of historical and cultural significance and areas with high priority visual needs, as well as potential recreation areas.



Visual Assessment Map 4 dots/each color/per person!

- Areas of high-priority visual needs
- Areas of historical significance
- Potential park space, recreation areas
- Underutilized parcels

- Areas**
- Potential Park
 - High-Priority Visual Needs
 - Historical Significance
 - Maintenance/Update Needs
 - Empty Space
- Roads**
- Historical Significance
 - High-Priority Visual Needs

Albertville Central Business District Plan
Community Workshops
September 2014

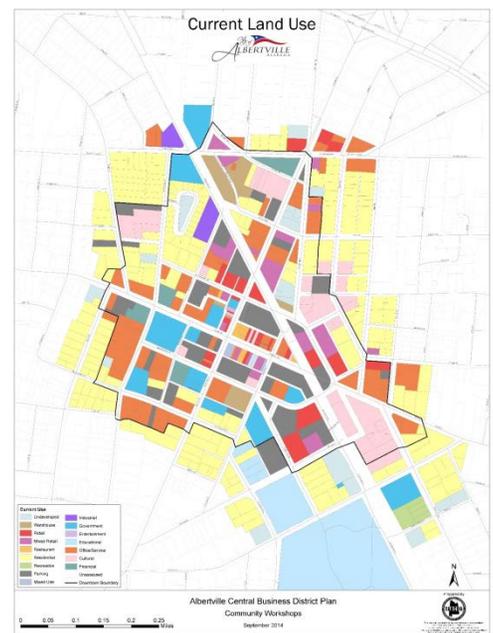
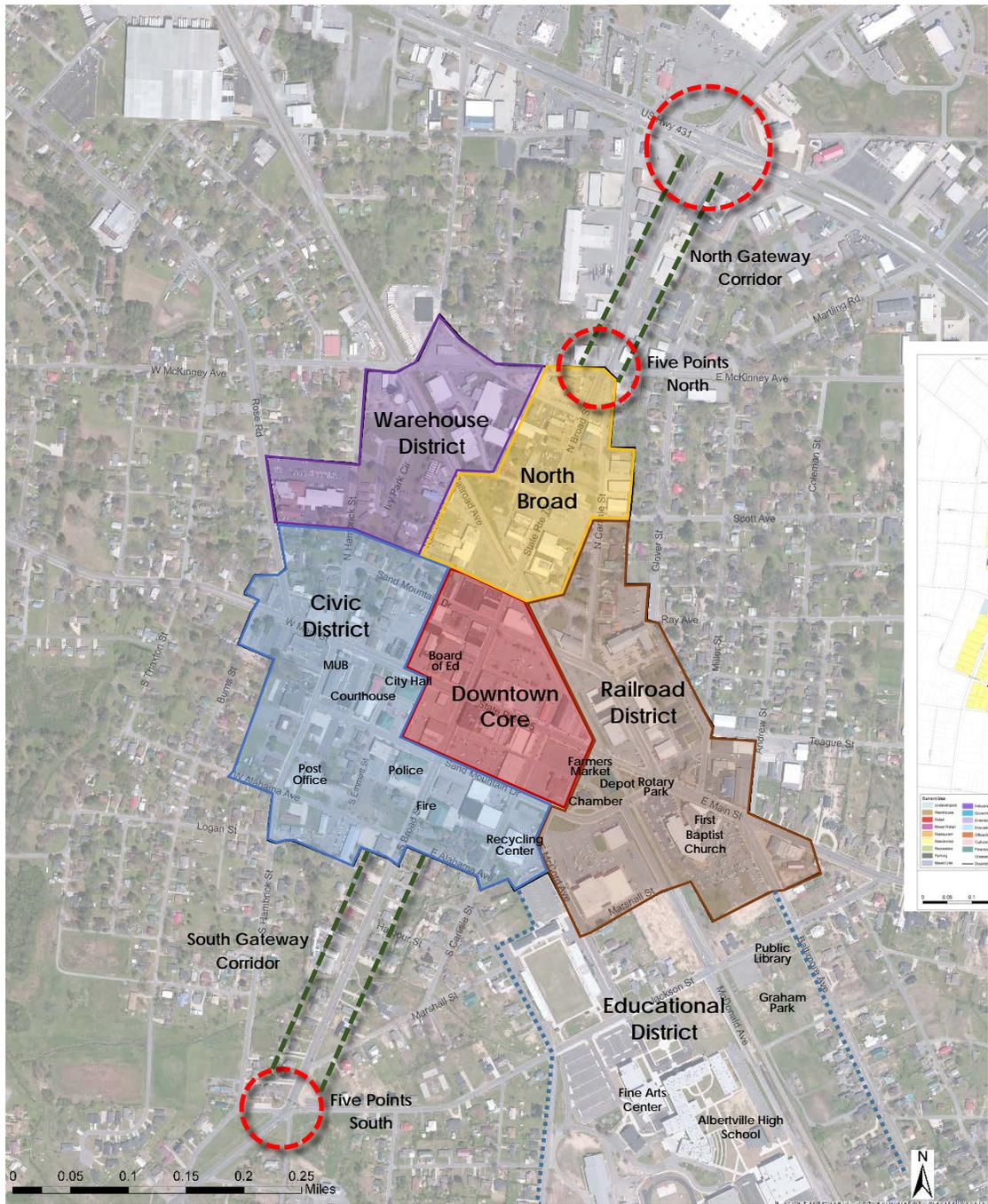


Concept

Character Areas (SubDistricts)

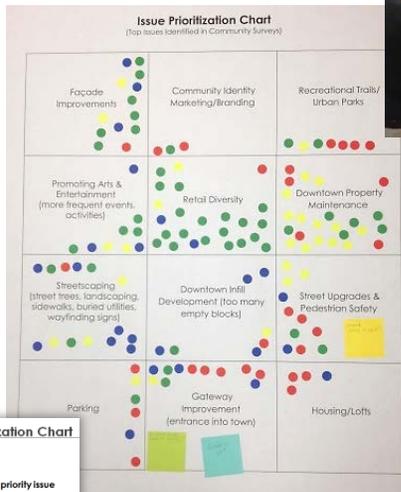
These concept and design recommendations are based on the community needs identified in the visioning process and reflect the vision and values of the community.

**Please note that the identifying labels for each particular subdistrict were named for the purpose of this plan only, and can be changed at the discretion of the City.*



From a planning and urban design perspective, several issues stand out when first observing the conditions in Downtown Albertville. They are - vast gray space versus green; parking lots and empty parcels at major nodes and connectors creating disjointed setbacks and façade lines; and the lack of uniform and orderly growth. On first inspection, Downtown Albertville looks anemic and chaotic, which is a major contributing factor to its blight. Land uses are incompatible in some areas, and setbacks are

irregular and do not contribute to the street edge or public right-of-way in a lot of areas. Understandably, planning decisions of the past were to attract anything in the downtown, due to vacancies, disinterest and market conditions. Neglect and lack of proper enforcement has led to irregular growth patterns and deteriorating conditions due to dysfunctional design. Building styles and building façades are outdated, with metal awnings and siding covering up important retail window fronts. Sidewalk and lighting conditions have not been addressed until very recently. This has negatively



impacted the pedestrian experience, which is essential for a successful downtown. Downtown businesses depend on this essential foot traffic for survival. Public right-of-way improvements, such as sidewalk and lighting amenities, encourage and attract the customer or visitor to the downtown, and therefore support downtown retail. In this way, one can see why it is important to realize how public and private sectors enhance and support each other in downtown revitalization. With proper land use regulation, enforcement, and concentration on the public realm, uniformity and order can be returned to the downtown to help support and attract residents and businesses to the area. This investment from the City will encourage and attract private investment in the downtown.

The lost revenue associated with retail leakage the city has experienced over the years and the blighted conditions of the downtown has led to a deep community concern regarding the future of the city and its downtown. The small business climate in Albertville and the effect blighted conditions have on existing and future downtown retail is of particular concern to residents. Another concern from the community, other than the aesthetics of the city overall, was outdated zoning practices, as well as outdated building codes in the downtown structures, and inadequate standards for zoning and code enforcement. This has led to questions concerning nonconforming uses within the district, and concerns that current zoning ordinances were outdated. Furthermore, it has led to limited commercial and retail space available for the City to market to prospective or potential businesses. Potential investors are often not interested due to the lack of visual appeal of current downtown businesses or incompatible neighboring property. For any revitalization effort, it is essential that an appropriate and updated zoning ordinance be adopted and reviewed regularly with the proper enforcement mechanisms in place. Albertville's Downtown and its blighted conditions simply cannot be alleviated if the proper regulation and enforcement is not upheld. It is

up to the City to make sure that its municipal codes and laws are followed. According to the stakeholder meetings, community workshops and surveys, citizens desire stronger land use regulation both in terms of compatibility of uses and regulating appearance and building condition. As part of the community workshops, Albertville residents were asked to rank issues of importance by priority, and were asked to rank common solutions the City could utilize to address certain issues. (These results can be found in the *Visioning* section of this document). Perhaps for the first time, the majority of the city seems to be on the same page when it came to zoning revisions and greater enforcement to revitalize the central business district. According to community surveys, 98% of respondents care what happens to their historic downtown, and want to see it come back to life. Furthermore, in the Community Visioning process of this plan, Albertville citizens ranked "strict code and ordinance enforcement" as the number one solution to address blighted conditions in the downtown. Perhaps now more than ever, it is clear from the public participation process, that there is a community consensus and strong desire from the community for higher standards of regulation to revitalize this cherished area of the city.

As mentioned, an area of concern for stakeholders and city officials was how to address zoning issues that arise with nonconforming uses. Non-conforming use is a variance of an existing zoning ordinance, permitting the use of land which was allowed prior to the current ordinance. How the zoning law responds to continued non-conforming use protection depends on the zoning ordinance, the zoning authority, and the effect of the use itself (American Planning Association/APA). Municipal zoning ordinances are enacted to regulate the development of real estate within the municipality. Typically, municipalities are divided into zoning districts that permit a particular use of property: residential, business, or industry (or a combination of these), for example. Within these types of zoning districts, land use and dimensional aspects are typically regulated - density and building height (dimensional) and the type of activity operated (use). Zoning attempts to conserve the value of property and to encourage the highest and best use of land throughout a district. When zoning is established however, the ordinance cannot eliminate structures already in existence. Thus, if the district is rezoned residential, for example, the neighborhood service station becomes a nonconforming use (if it is not listed as a permitted use in the new zoning ordinance). However, these businesses can legally remain even though they do not fit the predominant classification of real property in the zoning district. Under well-established law, a property owner who has exercised lawfully and in good faith all the requirements necessary under existing regulations, applied for and acquired a building or construction permit, has "vested rights" to continue operating that use. In this case, the nonconforming use is "grandfathered" in and the property owner has a vested right to continue operating as he normally would under the previous ordinance. A grandfathering provision is made at the local level that pertains to existing uses (now considered "nonconforming" under the new ordinance) and is specified and included in the local ordinances. As long as the property does not change, this status is protected. When change does occur, for instance substantial alterations to the nature of the business, expansion of property, or if it is partially destroyed or damaged somehow, these types of actions result in the loss of the nonconforming use status and may result in the closing of the business. If the business stops operating at the nonconforming use site, zoning ordinances generally classify this as discontinuance and revoke the nonconforming use status. Discontinuance due to repairs, natural disasters, foreclosures, condemnation, etc. is not



regarded as intent to abandon the nonconforming use status if the situation is beyond the business owner’s control. Another tool to end nonconforming use is amortization, where the nonconforming use of the structure must cease within a zoning district at the end of the structure’s estimated useful economic life. A new zoning ordinance may compel the elimination of a nonconformity over a reasonable period of time through the establishment of an amortization period or “sunset clause” allowing the owner the opportunity to recoup some portion of their investment in the structure, use, or lot prior to termination (American Planning Association/APA).The City can determine the high priority of the elimination of a certain type of legal nonconformity, and a shorter amortization period can be established in the zoning ordinance.

Alberville’s original Zoning Ordinance for the Central Business District CBD, Zone B-4, states “this district is designed to provide a concentrated central core of retailing: services, government facilities; public safety facilities; and administrative, professional and government offices. The district regulations are intended to promote convenient pedestrian shopping and stability of retail development by encouraging continuous building frontage in a concentrated area.” Compatibility of uses is very important for a downtown district. Incompatible uses within the downtown area were of particular concern to Alberville residents and city leaders and were seen as detrimental to retail growth resulting in lost revenue for the City.

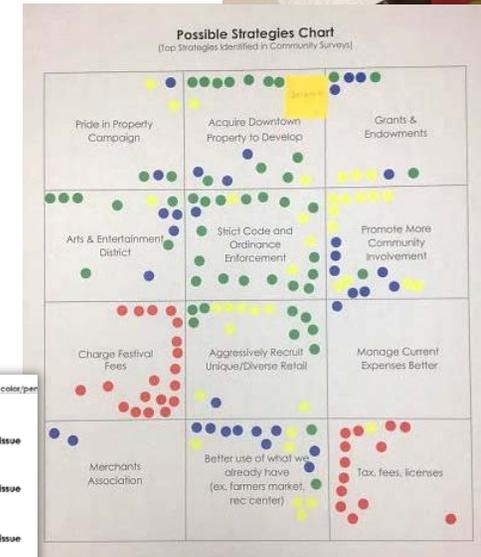
One way to minimize this confusion in permitted land uses within the Central Business District is the use of subareas or “character areas,” sometimes called subdistricts or “special districts.” These subareas in a zoning ordinance represent an attempt to escape a rigid structure of segregated uses by combining complementary compatible uses within a certain designated area to enhance the particular character or function of that area. Since individual communities and their downtowns have unique characteristics, it may be necessary to establish special districts to meet a particular need. Examples of such special districts or subareas are civic center zones, public and semi-public use zones, educational-cultural zones, historical districts, downtown core areas, and the like. These zones grow out of the characteristics of the community, are designed to fit a specific function and are intended to enhance or preserve parts of the community, supporting and encouraging economic growth within the district overall. Aesthetics and urban form, as well as character, function and use, are of focus in special districts, rather than just land use, and are appropriate for downtown zoning, no matter the size. It should be emphasized that the use of character areas is a flexible zoning mechanism. The use of zones such as transitional zones and buffer zones between subdistricts can minimize the uncertainty about abrupt land-use and zoning changes. Character areas, or subdistricts, can combine and contain multiple complementary uses, rather than incompatible uncomplimentary uses, and are based more on the overall character and function of activities within that area. For example, an educational-cultural zone or corridor may include civic spaces, schools, cultural facilities, recreational amenities, tourism activities, community houses, historical resources, as well as residential and some commercial activities, if they complement and enhance each other and are appropriate to the overall function and behavior of that particular subdistrict. In this way, the uses complement each other, rather than compete with one another, facilitating economic activity, rather than conflicting with it. This also helps to minimize any confusion in across-the-board ordinance enforcement and ensures architectural control over the structures in a particular zone, as well as increased predictability for prospective developers and investors by lowering risk and expanding their options. This can help reassure them



that if they locate within a particular area, what is expected of them will also be expected of their neighbor. In the new zoning ordinance, it is recommended that the City clearly define and state what it considers incompatible uses.

Alberville Downtown Character Areas (SubDistricts):

Downtowns are special places in any city, because they provide multiple activities, and every downtown is unique. Public and private activities, governmental and municipal services, commercial and retail businesses, and community activities and events all take place in the downtown area. It is truly the identity, history, and heart of the city, and because of this special purpose, should be treated with particular care. Upon first glance, downtown Alberville seems like a hodgepodge of land uses. But looking closer, there are distinct “subareas” or “subdistricts” that have their own distinct character and concentration of specific activities and functions within the district. Specific land uses in downtown Alberville are quite mixed throughout the area, however, certain land uses predominate in five distinct areas. The downtown area of Alberville, or the central business district, can be considered to have a core area, and surrounding subdistricts, (or character areas) - the downtown commercial core, in the heart of downtown; the North Broad gateway area, a mix of uses, but primarily service, and functions as the primary gateway into downtown; a civic district in the southwest portion of downtown, comprised of mostly municipal and government uses; a warehouse district in the northwest portion of downtown, comprising a mix of uses, but some light industrial; and a railroad district in the southeast quadrant of



the downtown, which contains more educational and cultural land uses, such as the historic Railroad Depot, the farmers market, First Baptist Church, and is adjacent to the high school educational fringe area. These districts need to be strengthened. From an urban design standpoint, one of the biggest weaknesses in the downtown area is a lack of order and uniformity – incompatible land uses mixed with irregular building heights, unequal setbacks, and irregular scale and proportion makes for a disorienting experience for the visitor and does not support the development. These distinct districts in the downtown area are important to emphasize, as they provide definition and character, provide a sense of organization for zoning purposes, and set standards for highest and best use based on compatibility.

The accompanying map shows the various character areas within downtown Albertville. The central business district has been broken up into five main subdistricts based on the predominant and prevailing uses in each area. Please note that the use of character areas is for zoning purposes only. A unified design theme, including decorative street signs, streetscaping elements, wayfinding signage, sidewalks, lighting, etc., is to be considered throughout the entire district to enhance the overall identity and aesthetics of the downtown. Each individual subdistrict has its own distinct and useful combination of activities, aesthetics, form, character and development, and contributes in its own unique way to the overall character of downtown. Development and zoning should reflect the unique characteristics of each subdistrict, and will help eliminate incompatible uses. Compatible, complementary uses should be listed as the permitted uses in each subdistrict based on its unique character and function.

The character areas are: (Also see accompanying *Character Areas* map).

- 1) **The Downtown Core**, represents a higher intensity of activity and density of development, with a more traditional and historic downtown setting. Here you will find your traditional row buildings that share a common party wall with a series of façades making up whole city blocks. Zero-lot line setbacks distinguish this historic district, as buildings are anchored toward the street. Intensity of activity and density is usually highest in this downtown commercial core, with parcels of mixed-use activity. Predominate uses are retail and commercial activities, such as restaurants, boutiques, and office space, as well as urban loft living, and have a higher concentration and compactness of form. Traditional storefronts, with multiple levels house retail on the bottom, and living spaces and/or office space on the top floors. Buildings are not freestanding, but share a common party wall. In a traditional downtown core, it is all about the pedestrian. Increased pedestrian activity along with increased vehicular traffic is usually found in this important city center. Concentration on the public right-of-way and safety standards are important in this subdistrict. Landscaping is minimal, with more hardscape instead of grassy lawns, and urban street trees along sidewalks provide shade for pedestrians. Design elements such as decorative lighting features, traffic arms, buried utilities, sitting benches, litter receptacles, signage, crosswalks, historic markers, and decorative street signs are usually found in an historic commercial core to orient the traveler and enhance the pedestrian experience. Albertville's commercial core houses some of the oldest buildings in the city, dating back to 1900, which require a level of prioritization and commitment in order to preserve the historic nature of the downtown and the city's history. Of particular historical significance in Albertville's downtown core are the Jewel Box, dating back to 1900, the Barkley's building, the Princess Theater building, Courington Arcade, Hammer's Hall, and the historic post office/Board of Education. A certain degree of care should be exercised in this historic downtown core, and should be reflected in the zoning and aesthetics ordinances. For example, the City should designate these historic structures for preservation purposes. This would help to minimize any confusion with any future modifications made to these beloved structures, should a property owner want to drastically impair or change the exterior façade, material, or aesthetics. Façade regulations within the Design Guidelines are recommended to preserve their historic qualities, as contributing to the historical significance of the community. Usually, property values are higher in this subdistrict due to centrally-located accessible prime retail location and suitable amenities. A higher degree of land use regulation and development standards should be exercised to support the vital commercial and community activity characteristic of this area. It is the heart of the city and the downtown district, with the major crossroads, Main Street and Broad Street, located here. This makes for a higher intensity of traffic movement as well as pedestrian activity, and so requires a higher level of safety measures. Special attention and care should be prioritized in this historic and commercial activity center of the city. Goals should be outlined for each district, with historic structures and sites highlighted for preservation.



- 2) **The Civic District** is located in the southwest quadrant of the downtown study area, and comprises a higher concentration of government and municipal activities. City Hall, Municipal Utilities Board, the County Courthouse, the post office, Albertville Police and Fire, and the recycling center are some of the government buildings within this district. There is also some commercial, but mostly financial, as well as doctors' and lawyers' offices scattered about. With the exception of the courthouse, the municipal buildings are typically newer development and in better condition than the older downtown core. Density is lower in this area, and style and characteristics of building form are more modern and utilitarian for the proper government uses. However, landscape requirements and design details should be appropriately addressed in this very important subdistrict, containing multiple activities and higher intensity of civic activities during certain times of the day and week.



- 3) Located in the northwest portion of downtown, is **the Warehouse District**, so named because of the concentration of freestanding structures, such as storage units, warehouses, and light industrial activities, such as MUB waterworks, and storage tank facilities. There is a residential development here, as well as a large freestanding church, and minimal retail. Density is much lower in this area, as it accommodates more light industrial uses. Compatible permitted uses should be outlined here as well.



- 4) **The North Broad Gateway** subdistrict has an important function and contribution to the overall district - it is the major gateway corridor leading to downtown, and introduces the city. It gives the first impression of downtown, and is appropriately named because of the concentration of activity scattered along this major corridor. One begins to see a higher intensity of development in this area coming into the downtown, as it transitions from a more service-oriented activities to the urban commercial core. It is characterized by a mix of activities, including service stations, retail and offices, as well as churches, financial, with development concentrated along this important image corridor. This gateway has an important role to play in introducing the downtown, and gives the first impression of the downtown, as well as establishes the identity of the city. A certain degree of attention and care should be given to this area because of this important function. Currently, irregular growth patterns, asymmetrical setbacks, non-uniform structures, underutilized parcels, abandoned parking lots, incompatible uses, metal buildings, and abandoned and blighted eyesore buildings, are scattered along this major image corridor. Piecemeal development has led to a mix of building frontages, setbacks, and building heights and widths. Building structures located here are

newer than the traditional downtown core. In its current state, this corridor gives the entire area a chaotic, disorderly, and blighted feel, and should be designed and developed to minimize a disorienting state. Furthermore, the North Broad subdistrict contains two important points of conflict - five points north, and the convergence of the railroad track at Broad Street. These important intersections require particular design focus, and should be considered opportunity areas to address aesthetics, and traffic and safety issues. There are two distinct urban design behaviors that happen along a gateway to a downtown destination. They are: "compression and release" and "prospect and refuge." Pedestrian activity also becomes more frequent here as one gets closer to the downtown core. Because of this, visual connection and a sense of destination, as well as traffic and pedestrian safety, is important along this gateway corridor. Also, because of these important behaviors that the traveler experiences, the North Broad gateway corridor should have a high degree of design and visual appeal - particular attention should be focused on uniform setbacks, symmetrical open space or developed space (on both sides of the street and especially at intersections), uniform building height and width ratios, and traffic calming safety hazards, as it also functions as a transition zone from a more service and auto-oriented district into a more local/community district, designed for the pedestrian. This provides the traveler with a sense of destination and orientation, guiding them to a particular place. If, for example, there is significant open space on one side of the street, the other side should reflect the same characteristic. Open space should mimic the opposite side's current open street shed. By providing residents places to congregate, recreate, and interact, in the form of urban parks or plazas, quality of life is enhanced throughout the community. Planning and urban design principles are measures to support and enhance the overall economic conditions of an area by preserving or increasing property values, and attracting people to the area. Empty lots or underutilized parcels have a negative effect on adjacent properties. For example, it is well known among real estate developers the economic value of integrating green space throughout the district and the positive effects it has on adjacent property values. Redeveloping empty space into vibrant community parks can increase property values throughout the District. For communities, this in turn increases revenue and attracts people and families to the area by enhancing quality of life and providing options to its citizenry. Opportunities along the North Broad Street corridor include a welcoming "gateway" pocket park introducing the city, as opposed to an empty parking lot that is currently greeting visitors. These green spaces can also serve as additional parking for community or church events. (Please see *Conceptual North Broad Street Gateway Master Plan* on the following pages).



North Broad Gateway currently – eyesore blighted buildings; parking at the intersections and along the road breaking up sidewalks; irregular setbacks; irregular form



North Broad Gateway currently - Uneven building heights; irregular form and style; irregular setbacks; dated obtrusive metal structures

- 5) Finally, located in the southeast portion of the downtown, is what is appropriately named, the Railroad District. This subdistrict is of particular importance, because it contains a high concentration of multiple community and cultural uses. Adjacent to the Albertville High School educational district, the public library, and Graham Park, this subdistrict possesses some of the most important historic and cultural assets of the city. Located here are railroad amenities, such as the historic depot, a beloved Albertville landmark, the farmers market, the Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood grocery stores, First Baptist Church, First United Methodist Church, and the Albertville High School and the Fine Arts Center, as well as historic homes and neighborhoods along East Main ("Million Dollar Avenue"). These community assets are all located in this particular area, and can be leveraged and revitalized into vibrant cultural spaces. Educational activities and school pedestrian traffic are particularly concentrated in this educational-cultural-arts district. There is also underutilized vacant open space that can be developed into pocket parks and community space. Some of the highest property values are also within this area, and particular attention should be given in proper development and zoning of this subdistrict, as well as its residential and educational fringe. Some commercial and retail activity can be found here as well. This area has great potential to offer numerous activities for all age groups and multiple design opportunities to help overall revitalization efforts of the downtown, as well as enhance the overall quality of life of the city. This particular area was cited as an important and vital community asset to

residents. In the SWOT Analysis, surveys, and community workshops, “strengths” and “assets” of Albertville were asked, with the top answers being the depot and the high school, making this district very important to the cultural fabric of the city. Design opportunity should be focused in this area to capitalize on these assets. For instance, the historic train depot is currently housing the senior center. This is not the best and highest use of this historic site. In community meetings, citizens stressed the value of preserving the depot and revitalizing this space for community events. Considered a beloved landmark by the community, residents expressed their concerns that the depot had outlived its use of providing senior services due to issues regarding ADA-accessibility inadequacies and temperature control problems. Furthermore, it has limited space to provide for a more active senior lifestyle, such as computer use and physical activities. The oldest building in Albertville, built in 1892, (and appropriately located next to the Chamber of Commerce), perhaps a better use for the building would be a museum and a community house to hold certain events and gatherings, such as weddings, reunions, and special events, and showcase the town’s history. As a beloved Albertville landmark that introduces the downtown, there is great design opportunity here to expand this area to include a depot and farmers market outdoor space, instead of covering up this landmark with the parking that is currently there. This will not only enhance revitalization efforts and increase property values in the district, but also increase visitor and tourism traffic to the area to help support commercial and retail activity. A top priority issue repeated time and again in the community workshops and surveys was the serious need for urban parks, trails, and open space for passive recreation and community gathering places, especially for Albertville youth. This particular subarea ranked the highest by residents in community workshops as having the most historical and cultural significance. (Please refer to *Dot Analysis* in Appendix section of this document). This area is of particular importance to enhance the overall quality of life and identity of the city, and particular care should be taken in zoning and development efforts to include open space and park space for community activities, such as musical venues. In addition, underutilized warehouses are located along the railroad in this area, which can be converted into artist warehouses or community space, with potential space for an urban pocket park. (Please refer to *Urban Parks and Trails* map on the following pages). There is also great opportunity to connect the school with the depot and farmers market and other green spaces throughout the district via a linear park along the railroad. Capitalizing on this very important asset opportunity area is necessary to bring life back to the downtown. In response to the desires of the community, and considering the ample gray space throughout the district, it is recommended that the City inventory underutilized open space within the downtown to redevelop into vibrant recreational spaces. The East Fork of the Drum Creek (typically undevelopable land) offers great opportunity for recreational trails that would connect the downtown with other amenities in the area, such as the high school, the rec center and Evans School, and historic sites, such as the cemetery and Little Branch Baptist Church, as well as the neighborhood fringe. Waterways, creeks, and drainage areas offer opportunities for passive recreation and provide connections and linkages to tie the community together. Furthermore, according to community surveys, a large portion of Albertville residents travel out of the city to other places for recreational activity. This subdistrict has great potential to offer numerous community activities to all age groups and backgrounds and would significantly contribute to the revitalization and quality of life of the city overall – offering something for everyone.



After distinguishing the downtown area into these unique activity centers, goals for each subarea should be listed to ensure proper care be taken when updating the zoning ordinance to reflect these character areas. This organizing method is intended to be used as guidance for growth to help channel development/activity to a particular area based on compatibility and uniformity. For instance, it would not make sense to locate an institutional activity next to the commercial activity within the downtown core subdistrict, because they do not share the same traffic, and their uses do not support and enhance each other. This is not an appropriate activity for a commercial core, and could instead be listed as a conditional use in this particular character area. The importance of combining and pairing retail together is essential for the sustainability of downtown. Here, adjacent businesses, or businesses within close

proximity of each other support each other, rather than compete with each other. Another scenario that can be avoided with the use of character areas would be if light industry were to locate next to recreational or residential activity. To avoid these scenarios, the use of character areas/subdistricts to guide growth in a downtown area becomes particularly useful. The City should outline the appropriate land uses per subdistrict based on the aforementioned compatibility of uses and character of each subdistrict.

Character areas, or subdistricts, help to organize the city center, support economic activity, and help orient pedestrians and visitors to minimize confusion. It is recommended that the City utilize a design overlay zone for the downtown area. Overlay zones consist of regulations that address specific subjects in particular areas in the City. Overlay zone regulations are in addition to regulations in the base zone and modify the regulations of the base zone. The design overlay zone is applied to areas where design and historical character are of special concern. In any of the designated districts, the location, density, form, scale, height and bulk of the buildings, the provision of offstreet parking, or other open space, intensity of use and activities, can be identified and included in the zoning ordinance to support the overall character of the particular subdistrict and the overall character of the downtown. These include the provision of conditional uses, offstreet loading and unloading, required buffers, landscaping percentages, frontages and setback requirements, square footage, site design, parking, building scale, accessory uses, etc. Development within the zones can be reviewed for appropriateness and appearance by the designated Design Review Board, Planning Commission, or Board of Adjustment, before permits are issued or construction is started. Appropriate discretion for this type of zoning tool should be exercised in special exceptions, and conditional uses should be reviewed by the appropriate boards. This kind of zoning mechanism is intended to bring order and predictability to a blighted urban area, while at the same time encouraging a mix of compatible activities within the appropriate locations to strengthen the overall district. Each subdistrict should have an outlined Goal the City has in mind that reflects the specific nature and characteristics of the subdistrict. From that goal, permitted uses can be established. Implementation strategies can be listed to reach the overall goals for each area. Compatible permitted uses should be outlined for each, as well as the chosen design standards.

Design Review Overlay zones are administered on the basis of district-specific design standards. It is recommended that the City conduct a Visual Preference study to include various stakeholders and Albertville residents in the design standards decision-making process. A community visioning process such as this will help build consensus on what the community desires for the physical form of Albertville's downtown. This can also be done for HWY 431 development, and the use of overlay zones for these areas will help ensure consistency in development and a more visually appealing environment throughout. Design standards should be published and made available to the public, and include both text and graphic representations of acceptable and unacceptable alternations. These standards give developers a sense of predictability, and reassure them that their neighbors will be held to the same standards. Design standards may address several aspects of the built environment (based on form and function/use), including:

- specific styles and types of signage (e.g. awning, projecting and wall mounted signage); *(See example Design Guidelines in this document).
- fenestration and storefront windows;
- the use of specific types of building materials for new construction and renovated buildings (e.g. brick);
- colors that are appropriate for the area;
- orientation of buildings so that the primary entrance or façade faces the appropriate direction (typically the street the building is fronting on); and
- style and massing of new or renovated buildings that reflect the surrounding environment.

The level of design standard ultimately adopted by the City should be of a nature that the City is comfortable in regulating and implementing on a consistent basis. In order to begin this process, the City should conduct a Visual Preference study to include city officials and chosen members of the appropriate boards, as well as community members to begin to develop a visual consensus on what and how they want Albertville to look like and how they want it to grow. Differing levels and degrees of detail in design standards will be appropriate to different districts. The City should be able to include Design Standards in the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with Alabama Code Section 11-52-72 which states:

*"Such [zoning] regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, **to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses** and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such municipality."*

And Alabama Code Section 11-52-70, which states:

*"Each municipal corporation in the State of Alabama may divide the territory within its corporate limits into business, industrial and residential zones or districts **and may provide the kind, character and use of structures and improvements that may be erected or made within the several zones or***

districts established and may, from time to time, rearrange or alter the boundaries of such zones or districts and may also adopt such ordinances as necessary to carry into effect and make effective the provisions of this article."

Design guidelines are particularly important for the Downtown Core subdistrict because of the extremely high visibility, intensity of activity, historic value, and pedestrian nature of this district. The same idea applies to the North Broad Gateway subdistrict, and the Railroad subdistrict, for they serve a particular function to the community.

It is recommended that the Planning Commission serve as a Design Review Board to ensure architectural standards within the overlay districts. It is also recommended that the City incorporate the sign and aesthetic ordinance into the zoning ordinance to ensure internal consistency in the review process. Furthermore, the City should develop a "Developers Guide Handbook." Each handbook will summarize zoning, sign, and design guidelines using text and graphics and will be available to entities desiring to develop in districts addressed by a Design Review Overlay.

Strategy: Establish Design Review Overlay District for Downtown and targeted corridors. Establish subdistricts based on character, form, and compatibility of uses in ordinances. Determine goals for each subdistrict and list the appropriate mix of permitted uses within each. Conduct a community-wide Visual Preference study for overlay districts. Determine Design Standards for entire Downtown based on character and function of subdistricts.

It must be stated that a regulatory approach (zoning or other land use controls) is not the only avenue to achieve targeted market improvement and revitalization in Downtown Albertville. What is clear is that a proactive and long-term comprehensive strategy of revitalization is necessary to drive the market into Downtown. This will take a combination of concentration on the physical environment and the fiscal environment. These components, along with strengthening the organizational capacity of the community to implement revitalization efforts, and marketing Downtown to visitors and locals will be necessary. The key method to drive a sustainable business climate is to attract a wider customer base to the community. The core customer base should include local residents, residents from nearby towns, and regional visitors. One way to achieve this is to incorporate civic and cultural destinations in Downtown. The assets are already there, ready to be leveraged. This would include the integration of pocket parks and trail systems and vibrant cultural and community spaces, such as the Railroad Depot and Farmers' Market expansion. The revitalization strategies already mentioned thus far in this document combined with economic structuring strategies to build the needed capacity and resources to implement this Plan are listed in the Strategy/Action Plan section. Other strategies to build capacity will include the establishment of a Merchants Association and a Downtown Development Authority to manage and implement programs recommended in this Plan. (This is discussed in further detail in the Financial Strategies section of this document).

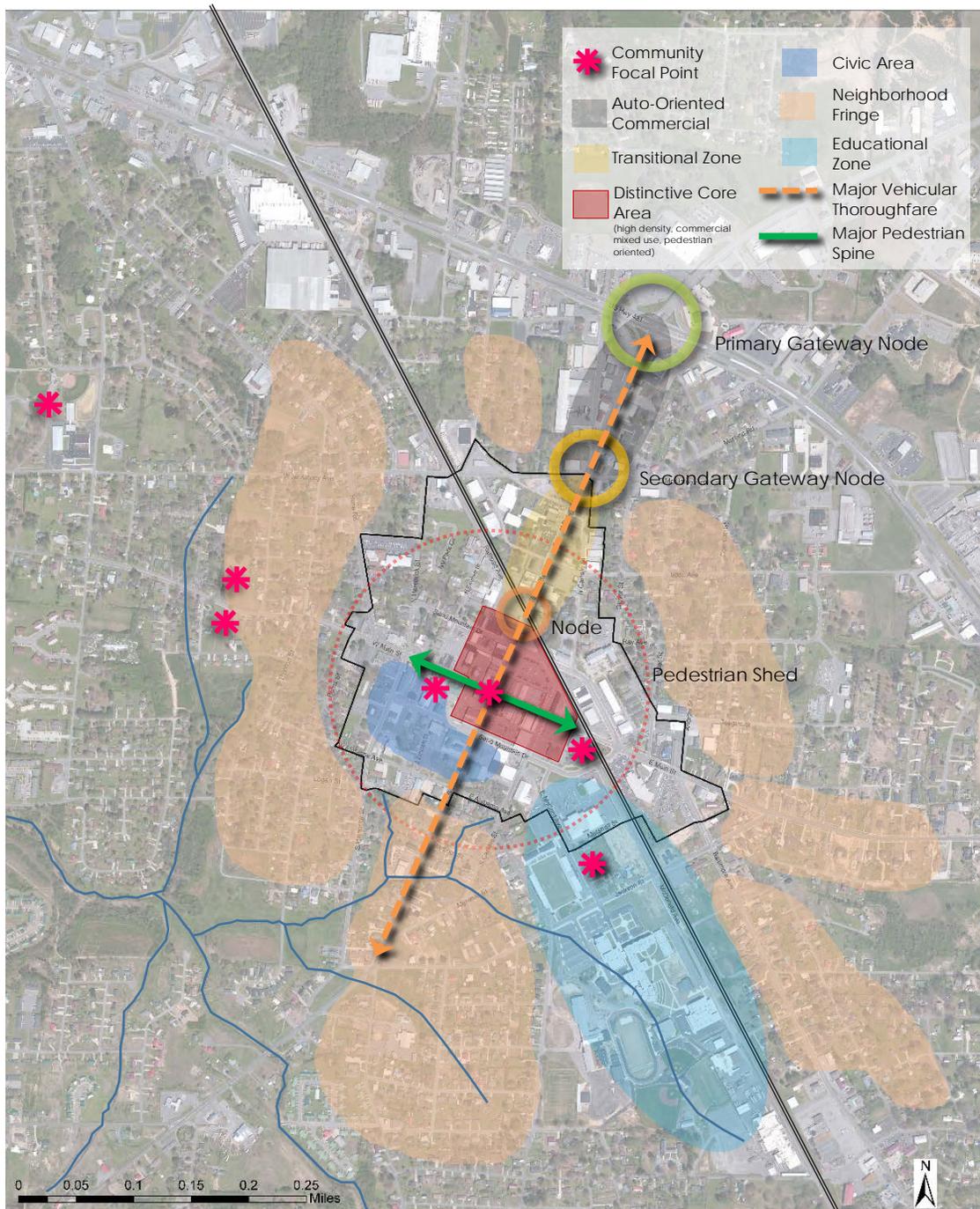
Increasing density and providing for mixed uses within the Downtown Core will also help draw people to Downtown Albertville. Residential loft apartments will lure the young professional, and according to city leaders, there already exists a demand for urban living in Downtown Albertville. People want density. They want quick access to work, shopping, dining, and entertainment amenities. There is a market there. This demand can yield good revenue for the City in the future. Leveraging Albertville's music, arts and cultural assets as well as creating recreational opportunities, will draw a larger market to Downtown and help keep those that already live here. So while there are challenges, there are also existing strengths and multiple opportunities within the downtown that the City can take advantage of to boost revitalization efforts. With these "flagship" projects, the City and Albertville residents will begin to see a return on investment. In the near term, it is important to concentrate on the improvement of the physical environment of Downtown and build the needed capacity to implement these programs. Through various grant programs and ordinance updates, this can be accomplished at limited expense to the City and can be undertaken immediately. With this preliminary concentration on the physical environment – (streetscape projects, façade improvements, updating ordinances to include mixed use residential and green space, combining the appropriate mix of compatible uses, and encouraging meaningful infill development based on established design standards) - the community will begin to see a marked improvement in their downtown. These initial first steps will begin to lure more people and businesses to Downtown, building the essential critical mass necessary to drive a sustainable business climate in Downtown Albertville.

Existing Framework

As part of the Analysis process and the way in which to come up with concepts and strategies, a first step in town planning is to organize the existing urban framework. Understanding the layout of the city and the relationships between nearby amenities is a standard planning principle to help begin to make connections and link important areas within the urban fabric. Highlighting districts, critical nodes, passageways, vital infrastructure, and natural features help to reveal the existing framework unique to the city that begins to make sense for conceptualizing planning concepts. Good urban design begins with this simple organizational method. For Albertville, we begin to see important connections within the downtown district and its environs. There exists a distinct urban core, critical nodes, important community focal points, and primary pedestrian and vehicular corridors. It is clear that the Main Street corridor is a major pedestrian and vehicular corridors. This, of course, presents a point of conflict at the Main and Broad crossroads, requiring a certain degree of design focus. Certain districts and zones are also very apparent – upon entering the downtown area, there is a distinct transitional zone along the North Broad Street Gateway (the primary entrance into downtown), the north section is an auto and service-oriented commercial district, and closer to the downtown core, land use and dimensionality begin to change to a more traditional neighborhood commercial district. Albertville’s downtown can be described as having: a distinct urban core, surrounding districts, and residential and educational fringe areas. In highlighting existing amenities, an important feature stands out – the Drum Creek waterway. The proximity of Drum Creek to the Downtown area presents great opportunity to tie important aspects of the community together.

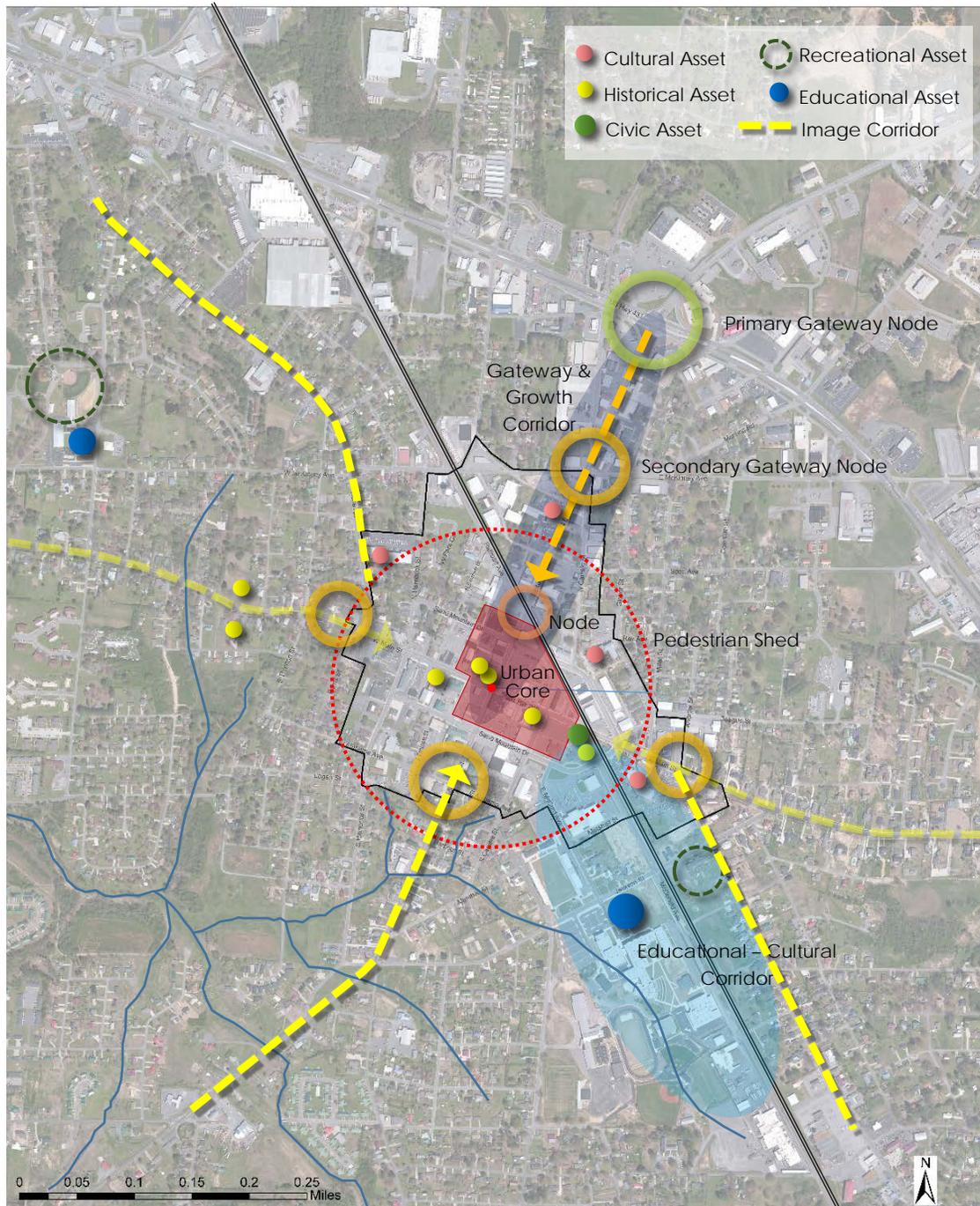
Albertville Downtown can be described as having:

- 1) *Neighborhoods*
- 2) *Core & Districts*
- 3) *Gateways & Corridors*
- 4) *Critical Nodes*
- 5) *Anchors & Linkages*
- 6) *Focal Points*



Downtown Context Map

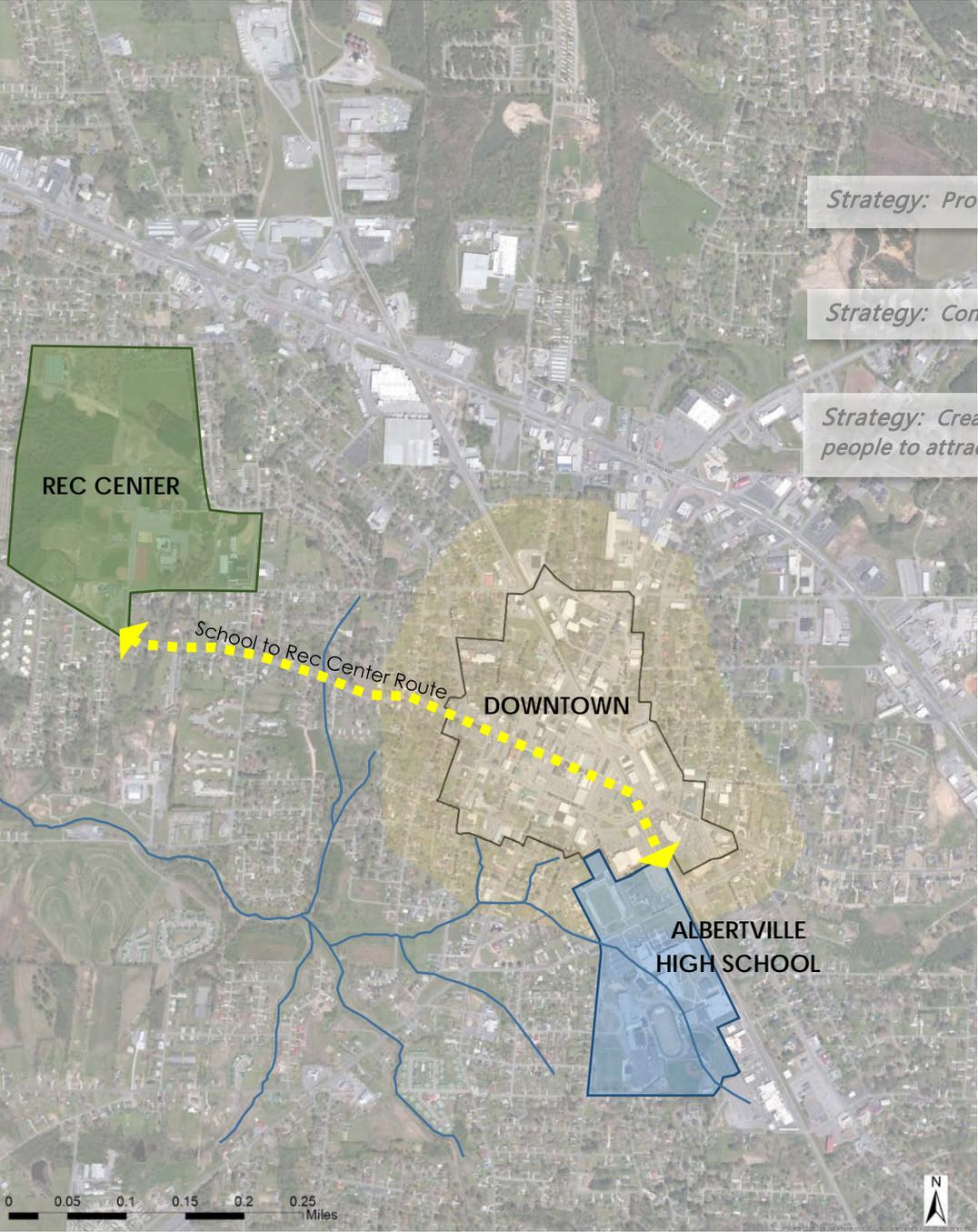
Another planning principle is to map out existing community assets – cultural, historical, educational, recreational, and civic. In doing so, an organizational framework from which to build upon is revealed. Albertville residents were asked to point out significant cultural assets and features within the community - sacred historic sites and buildings, recreational spaces, places of worship, educational assets and community spaces to congregate. In this exercise, we began to see special places of value to the community. Important image corridors and gateways into Downtown were also highlighted. With this exercise, distinct zones of interest are revealed. For instance, there exists an important educational-cultural corridor at the southeast fringe of downtown that provides multiple opportunities for revitalization. Albertville High School and the Fine Arts Center act as an important anchoring institution to help support and sustain a commercial market for Downtown. Additionally, the close proximity of historical sites, such as the Albertville Cemetery and Museum, natural amenities, such as the Drum Creek waterway, and recreational assets, such as the Parks and Recreation Center on the western fringe of downtown, provide multiple opportunities to link these important community anchors together. These important features in the landscape will provide for a solid framework for revitalization of Albertville’s Downtown district. The close proximity and walkability to and from these important community centers are a huge asset for the revitalization and sustainability of Downtown. These important community anchors support and enhance each other. Connecting these amenities together will enrich the downtown and strengthen the community, by providing vibrant community spaces to attract people to the area.



- Capitalize on and strengthen your assets (historic, cultural, recreational, and educational) by connecting them together
- Emphasize and enhance the pedestrian way – return downtown to the pedestrian shopper
- Highlight long-standing family-owned businesses.
- Encourage a mix of appropriate and compatible uses within the designated subdistricts.
- Strengthen the gateway



Anchors & Linkage



Strategy: Provide for areas to play and recreate.

Strategy: Connect vital community anchors via trails and linkages.

Strategy: Create vibrant cultural spaces to attract people. Attract people to attract retail = Building Critical Mass.

In the community workshops, residents pointed out a frequent pedestrian route school children make from the high school through the downtown to the parks and recreation center every day. This important linkage should be emphasized. By mapping out this route, one begins to see the relationship between these areas, and how important the rec center and the high school anchors are for the downtown.

Principles for Urban Revitalization from "Creating a Vibrant City Center" by Cy Paumier, 2004

- Promote diversity & compatibility of use
- Encourage compactness & uniformity
- Foster intensity of development
- Ensure a balance of activities
- Provide for accessibility
- Create functional linkages/connections
- Build a positive identity

Cultural Opportunities

Urban Parks & Trails Concept

Strategy: Capitalize on existing assets. Revitalize and expand the Depot to create farmers market and depot plaza. Connect school with urban pocket parks and other community assets via linear railroad park. Connect historical and cultural sites via urban parks and trails system.



Design Opportunities

By highlighting these important pedestrian ways and existing features, opportunities begin to emerge. The Drum Creek East Fork offers an important connector to link these assets together and provide for recreation for the community, something residents expressed was a great need for the city. Another opportunity for revitalization is the many undeveloped parcels throughout the downtown that can be easily redeveloped into vibrant pocket parks and connected by way of a linear park along the railroad. By converting the depot and farmers market area into a vibrant community plaza, the history of Albertville is emphasized. An urban parks and trails system connecting these amenities will highlight these important historical sites, strengthen the Downtown, and enhance quality of life in the community overall.



Capitalize on your assets.



Railroad Linear Park Concept with Farmers Market & Depot Plaza





Gleason '14



North Broad Street Albertville, Alabama



Façade Study – North Broad Street Albertville, Alabama







Gleason '14



Strategy

Action Plan
Goals & Objectives

Strategy - Action Plan

Goals & Objectives. The following chart outlines the strategy developed to achieve the community's vision established in the Albertville Downtown Master Plan. These goals and objectives are intended to be used as a guide for both the public and private sectors in their efforts to physically and economically enhance and sustain downtown Albertville. Throughout the planning process, TARCOG staff worked closely with the Albertville Downtown Steering Committee to develop these action items for implementation. This coordinated, comprehensive strategy lays out the paths the community will follow in achieving their vision within the framework of four essential components of revitalization:

Design represents the function and form of downtown, how all of its physical parts work together and create the best possible experience for visitors, along with supporting economic conditions.

Economic structure is the recipe for Downtown business success – taking advantage of the right financial opportunities appropriate for the City to give it its most economic advantage, as well as help to carry out the revitalization plan.

Organization is the assembly of diverse stakeholders and organizations, all with different types of authority and influence, to carry out revitalization tasks in a coordinated manner.

Promotion raises awareness of Downtown's economic, governmental, and cultural assets. This includes marketing Downtown to locals, visitors, tourists, and potential investors.

Using this framework, the intent of the Albertville Downtown Master Plan is to:

- 1) enhance the physical design of Downtown Albertville
- 2) expand the economy of Downtown Albertville
- 3) provide for the organization and capacity necessary to carry out the Plan for revitalization
- 4) promote Downtown Albertville, its history and its business community, through effective marketing

Goals for each focus area are outlined, along with a number of action items for implementation. These actions are selected and designed so that upon their completion, the overall goal will be achieved.

Responsibility. The responsible lead organization and supporting organizations for implementation of each specific action is listed in the strategy chart. Final determinations of responsibility for implementing specific actions will be undertaken in the course of preparing the annual work program.

Timeframe. Throughout the planning process, priority actions were determined. For each action item listed, a timeframe is given that indicates whether it should be undertaken immediately, in the short term, in the long-term, or whether the action is ongoing. "Immediate" actions are those that should be undertaken within the first or second year of the planning period. If an action listed will not be undertaken until the second year, project planning for the action should at least be started within the first year. "Short-term" actions are those that will be undertaken within the first two years of planning. "Mid-term" actions should be undertaken within five years; and "long-term" actions are those that, because of the nature or cost, will take considerable time for programming, or more than five years. Ongoing actions are those that are of a policy nature rather than project specific. These actions should be started early in the planning period and on a regular continual basis in order to achieve the stated goals.

Cost. The cost of implementation is one of the key items in determining whether an action is possible. An action may have a high priority, but because of the cost associated, it may not be possible to perform. Many times, local funding for an action will not be sufficient unless it is combined with funding from other sources or other financial mechanisms. The funding sources and financial mechanisms are listed in the *Financial Strategies - Implementation* section accompanying this document. In any case, the performance of all actions must be made with fiscal responsibility in mind.

Funding Program Acronyms – Quick Guide

- CDBG** – Community Development Block Grant (HUD program/ADECA administered)
- HUD** - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- TAP** – Transportation Alternatives Program (FHWA program/ALDOT administered)
- FHWA** - Federal Highway Administration
- ALDOT** – Alabama Department of Transportation
- ADECA** - Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
- ARC** – Appalachian Regional Commission
- DDA** – Downtown Development Authority
- CDA** – Commercial Development Authority
- EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency
- ADEM** - Alabama Department of Environmental Management
- RTP** – Recreational Trails Program (FHWA program/ADECA administered)
- LWCF** – Land and Water Conservation Fund (NPS program/ADECA administered)
- SBA** – Small Business Administration
- NEA** – National Endowment for the Arts
- NPS** – National Park Service
- LMI** – Low to Moderate Income persons (CDBG program reference)

Physical Design Goal: Create a diverse, attractive, safe, accessible, and vibrant downtown that capitalizes on existing assets. Create vibrant community spaces. Integrate and maintain a well-proportioned, functional urban form.

Action	Responsibility / Lead Org	Supporting Orgs	Timeframe	Possible Sources	Cost
Conduct a Visual Preference exercise to establish Design Standards for Downtown; (this will include architectural standards on form, character, density, scale, ht-to-wdth ratios, color palette, landscaping and urban street tree palette, ROW). Incorporate into new ordinances and subdivision regs	City/Planning Commission; Downtown Steering Committee	Alberville community; TARCOG	Immediate	TARCOG	None to low
Determine boundaries for Downtown Business District (DBD); create Overlay Design district for Downtown, 431, and important corridors; establish subdistricts within the DBD based on character; list goals for each subdistrict; establish permitted uses within each subdistrict; Planning Commission to review all new development to ensure compliance with Design Standards in new Zoning Ordinance (ZO)	City/Planning Commission	TARCOG	Immediate	TARCOG consultation and ZO review	None to low
Develop and adopt Ordinances: Include Sign and Aesthetics/Design Ordinance in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure internal consistency in review process; review and revise ordinances pertaining to Downtown development with the recommendations made in this Plan to support compact, identifiable, and walkable town center characteristics and uniformity of growth (emphasizing character areas, compatible land uses, the public ROW, and established Design Standards); Develop Zoning Map if needed	Planning Commission; City Council	Downtown Steering Committee; TARCOG	Immediate	Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map development or update available from TARCOG	None to low
Enforce Ordinances. Practice across-the-board enforcement standards outlined in ordinances	Building Inspector; Enforcement Officer; Fire Marshall	City	Ongoing	None	None
Explore Infill opportunities for new development (and set parameters in ZO); maintain a consistent façade line/urban form; encourage density in the Downtown Core (see recommendations made in this Plan)	City; Downtown Development Authority (DDA) (see Org chart in the following pages)	CDA	Ongoing	CDBG (Blight removal)	Medium to high
Downtown Streetscape & Infrastructure Improvement Program - (includes green infrastructure, drainage, utilities, sewer, safety, sidewalks, street trees, landscaping). Coordinate all public improvements projects with MUB and utility	City	Downtown Development Authority/Downtown Steering Committee; MUB; KAB; utility provider	Immediate – long term; contingent on availability of funding	ALDOT/TAP; CDBG; City	Medium to high

providers; include in Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) – also see Organization chart this section; see Financial section for guidelines					
Improve traffic flow and circulation. (See recommendations made in this Plan). Consider street connectivity study/thoroughfare plan	City	Downtown Development Authority	Long Term	ALDOT (State routes); City (local roads); thoroughfare and transportation plans available from TARCOG	Development of thoroughfare plan – low; CDBG planning grants available for this
Gateway Improvement Program (includes streetscaping projects). Refer to <i>North Broad Gateway Master Plan</i> drawing	Downtown Development Authority; City	KAB; Planning Commission	Long Term (more than 5 yrs)	AL Tourism Dpt; ALDOT; EPA; CDBG; City (also see funding section for additional resources)	Medium to high
Downtown Wayfinding and Street Sign program (refer to this Plan and Aesthetics/Design Ordinance)	Downtown Development Authority	KAB; City; Planning Commission; TARCOG	Mid term	AL Tourism Dpt; City	Low to medium
Improve Downtown Parking; designate infill in the perimeter areas for additional offstreet parking that do not interfere with the Downtown façade line/ROW. (see recommendations made in this Plan).	City; Downtown Development Authority	CDA; Planning Commission	Mid to long term	CDBG (blight removal); City; County	Medium to high
Downtown Green Spaces/Cultural Spaces Program - Urban Parks & Trail/Depot Plaza (see recommendations made in this Plan)	City; Downtown Development Authority	Parks & Rec; TARCOG	Ongoing/Long term	RTP; LWCF; TAP (Depot Park); City	Medium to high
Downtown Façade Improvement Program	Downtown Development Authority; City	AL Historical Commission; TARCOG	Short Term, but (contingent upon funding)	CDBG; private investors; property owners; City	Low
Downtown Building Rehabilitation	Merchants; Property Owners	DDA;CDA; City	Ongoing	Tax credits; SBA loans	(see Financial section in this document)
Improve connection/linkages between Rec Center, Downtown, and schools; maintain and improve pedestrian ways in fringe areas (between Downtown, residential, & school district- this includes safety measures-sidewalks and lighting).	City; Downtown Development Authority	schools; Rec & Senior Center;	Ongoing	CDBG, TAP, City	Medium to high
Designate public and private Historic buildings for preservation/restoration. (Set standards in ordinances for the possible preservation or maintenance of historic buildings). (See also Design Guidelines recommended in this Plan).	City; County; property owners	Downtown Development Authority; Alabama Historical Commission; county arts council; TARCOG;	Short to long-term	Historic Tax Credits; National Trust for Historic Preservation	Medium to high

<p>If need be, revisit ZO: Encourage a mix of compatible land use patterns and uniform development in the appropriate subdistricts that support economic development; highlight and enhance Downtown subdistricts; encourage mix of housing options in Downtown; encourage parks and open space in Downtown; enhance and emphasize pedestrian ways; encourage density in urban core; integrate these principles into new ordinances (Based on the recommendations made in this Plan).</p>	<p>Planning Commission; Board of Adjustments</p>	<p>Downtown Development Authority City; TARCOG</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Adopt Aesthetics/Design Ordinance with unified design theme and Design Standards established and adopted based on visual preference exercise (see Design Guidelines example in this Plan); Planning Commission to review new development to ensure compliance with Design Standards</p>	<p>Downtown Development Authority; Planning Commission</p>	<p>City; KAB; TARCOG</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

Economic Structuring Goal: Create a vibrant hub for commercial and community activity. Attract diverse retail and assemble a mix of compatible uses to give Downtown a competitive advantage. Pursue financial tools for plan implementation.

Action	Responsibility / Lead Org	Supporting Orgs	Timeframe	Possible Sources	Cost
Develop Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to prioritize large scale public improvements projects– see Financial section for guidelines	City; Downtown Steering Committee/DDA	MUB	Immediate	None	None
Develop Annual Work Program for each year for funding and budget for this Plan; determine project goals for each year; coordinate with CIP; determine cost & financial feasibility; determine funding - grants or other means - to apply for based on annual projects/goals	Downtown Steering Committee/DDA; City	TARCOG (also refer to Financial Strategies section in this Plan)	Immediate & ongoing	None	None
Formalize Downtown Steering Cmte – create Downtown Development Authority to implement projects/programs recommended in this Plan(see also Organization chart this section and refer to Financial section)	Downtown Steering Committee; City	TARCOG	Immediate	None	None
Encourage the creation of a Downtown Merchants Association; poll existing Downtown merchants for interest (also under Organization chart next pages)	Downtown Steering Committee	Chamber; City	Immediate	TARCOG can help with development of merchants' poll/survey	None
Consider implementation of Arts & Entertainment District downtown; determine feasibility, structure and parameters	Downtown Steering Committee/DDA; Downtown Merchants Assn.	County Arts Council; City	Short-term	AL Tourism Dpt; AL Arts Council; NEA	Low
Consider use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to invest in Downtown public improvement projects in addition to grants (see Financial section)	DDA	City	Ongoing	TIF Bonds	Contingent on project cost; bond term and rate
Determine market niche to target for Downtown. Recruit variety of retail (especially those w/nighttime and weekend hours); encourage retailers to locate in Downtown next to compatible businesses (per zoning recommendations made in this plan)	City; CDA	Chamber	Ongoing	None	None
In Zoning Ordinance, assemble a mix of compatible land uses to give Downtown a competitive advantage - encourage compatible mixed use within the Downtown Business	City; Planning Commission; DDA	TARCOG	Immediate	None	None

District to strengthen commercial activity					
Consider Downtown Small Business Incubator located in downtown buildings (Identify entrepreneurs; identify location)	DDA	City; Chamber; TARCOG	Mid-term	ARC; CDBG	Medium to high
Land acquisition of blighted properties for infill development	DDA; CDA	City	Ongoing	CDA; DDA; CDBG (blight removal)	Medium to high
Contact/recruit successful businesses in Albertville to possibly expand to Downtown	City	Chamber	Ongoing	None	None
Explore business location and/or expansion incentives for Downtown retail (such as TARCOG Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and Tax Credits- see Financial section); list incentives on City website	City	CDA; DDA;	Ongoing	TARCOG; NPS/tax credits (see Financial section)	None

Organization Goal: Organize the needed capacity to implement the Albertville Downtown Master Plan. Organize downtown stakeholders and coordinate city departments for ongoing management and implementation of revitalization efforts to ensure efficiency and achievement of goals.

Action	Responsibility / Lead Org	Supporting Orgs	Timeframe	Possible Sources	Cost
Establish Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to manage and implement Master Plan; formalize Downtown Steering Committee into DDA; determine organizational structure	City; Downtown Steering Committee	TARCOG	Immediate	(guidance for incorporation is contained in the Financial Strategies section of this document)	None
Develop Annual Work Program each year for Plan implementation (to include budget and schedule); each year should include <i>at least</i> one action item from each of the four focus areas. Set priorities and goals achieved for each year. Develop First-Year Work Program (based on framework provided at end of this section); coordinate with Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)	Downtown Steering Committee/Downtown Development Authority; City	TARCOG	Immediate	None	None
Form a Merchants Association; establish organizational structure	City; Downtown Steering Committee; Downtown Merchants	Chamber; TARCOG	Short-term	Fundraisers; possibility of membership fees (poll merchants for interest)	None to low
Consider the development of a Downtown Manager/Coordinator position or a City Planner position to manage and coordinate Albertville Downtown Master Plan actions and financing	DDA; City	Planning Commission	Mid-term	(Possible office location in a Small Business Incubator in a Downtown building); Alabama Tourism Department; CDBG	Medium; must have financial plan to sustain position
Develop funding program, fundraising activities, work projects, and volunteer base (for seed money for Merchants Association, or any other downtown project the Downtown Committee deems necessary)	Downtown Steering Committee/DDA	TARCOG; Chamber	Ongoing	Establish an annual fund-raising strategy and budget; develop fund-raising activities for specific projects; establish committees/boards/orgs and work programs as necessary; recruit and organize volunteers	None to low
Look into Food Truck ordinance for reoccurring events planning Downtown	Planning Commission	City; DDA	Short-term	In "special events" in city ordinance	None
Identify Sponsors/Develop Sponsorship Program	DDA	Chamber; Area businesses	Ongoing	None	None
Intergovernmental cooperation, coordination and support of Downtown	All City departments; DDA; CDA; Chamber		Ongoing	In order to accomplish revitalization/the goals in this plan, it is imperative that every city department be in support of	None

<p>revitalization efforts. Perform Work Sessions to review and discuss status of the Albertville Downtown Master Plan with the appropriate city departments on a recurring basis.</p>				<p>the revitalization of Albertville's Downtown and this Downtown Master Plan. Revitalization efforts must be a priority in every departmental work program and city budgets. The revitalization of Albertville's Downtown can only be realized if there is a consensus from the community and from the City.</p>	
<p>Consider joining Main Street Alabama program</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>TARCOG</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>	<p>Alabama Tourism Department; City</p>	<p>Medium; would have to create Main Street coordinator position</p>

Promotion Goal: Promote and celebrate Albertville’s unique history, creativity, and community spirit. Promote Downtown Albertville and its business community. Celebrate Albertville’s musical heritage. Cultivate a place to live, work, shop, and play.

Action	Responsibility / Lead Org	Supporting Orgs	Timeframe	Possible Sources	Cost
Branding/Theming/Logo (publicize the overall revitalization effort)	DDA	TARCOG	Short-term	TARCOG or AL Tourism Dpt	None to low
Downtown Events Program – annual & reoccurring; daytime/nighttime & weekend activity (this includes coordinating and extending downtown business hours in cooperation with possible Merchants Association)	DDA; Downtown Merchants Assn	City; Chamber; County Arts Council	Ongoing	AL Tourism Dpt	*Contingent
Advertising/Marketing & Promotional Campaign (includes creating and distributing Downtown Albertville marketing materials and media relations)	DDA; City	Chamber; TARCOG; County Arts Council; merchants; media; community and civic groups	Ongoing	AL Tourism Dpt; TARCOG; City	Low
Promote history of Albertville and its Downtown	Museum Board; DDA; City historians	Chamber; County Arts Council	Ongoing	None	None to low *contingent on activity
Coordinate with schools and Parks & Rec Center on events to promote and support Downtown and local businesses	DDA	Schools; civic groups; Chamber; Rec Center	Ongoing	None	None
Promote Downtown merchants (develop advertising strategy for Downtown business community)	DDA; Chamber; Downtown Merchants Assn	Sand Mtn Reporter; other media outlets	Ongoing	Private sources	None to low
Continue pride in property campaign (awareness)	City; Albertville community; KAB; property owners	Chamber; civic groups	Ongoing	None	None
Maintain inventory of available Downtown properties to market Downtown to potential investors and prospects	City; DDA	CDA	Ongoing	None	None
Organize and hold joint retail promotions/events	Downtown Merchants Association	DDA; Chamber; City	Ongoing	City; Chamber; Merchants Assn	Low
Schedule visits to successful downtowns; get ideas from others (keep studying downtown revitalization)	City; DDA	TARCOG	Ongoing	City	Low

Establish downtown website/FB page/post on City website	DDA; City	TARCOG	Ongoing	City	Low
Encourage community involvement: Promote Downtown and the Downtown Revitalization efforts- not just to visitors, investors and business prospects, but to locals to instill pride in their town again. Raise awareness about Albertville's Downtown revitalization	City; DDA; Albertville community; Chamber; Civic groups	TARCOG	Ongoing	None	None
Partner with local school fine arts programs, band and choir programs, to develop activities and events leveraging musical heritage/school talent to be integrated in Downtown events programming—"Music in the Heart" series; Albertville Star music competition, examples). Locate areas for outdoor performance stages, amphitheaters.	City; Albertville schools	County Arts Council; Chamber	Ongoing	NEA Our Town grants (see in Financial section).	None to low
Promote local artists. Showcase local artwork from residents or from schoolchildren in empty window storefronts Downtown. ("Art in the Heart"); use underutilized parcels in Downtown for arts warehouse (see North Broad Conceptual Master Plan drawing).	DDA; City; County Arts Council	Chamber	Ongoing	NEA Our Town grants	*Contingent
Multicultural events planning	DDA; City; Chamber		Ongoing	NEA	*Contingent
Promote Albertville heart-theme with downtown logo; incorporate theme in all downtown events and marketing. Be "Heart of Sand Mountain" again.	DDA; City	Chamber	Ongoing	TARCOG	None to low

**Please note – all programs/projects recommended in this Master Plan can be consulted with the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG), for planning projects, zoning ordinance consultation and review; grant and funding information, and grant writing and administration.*

Guidance for First-Year Work Program:

This is a 10-Year Plan and should be updated every five years. It should be reviewed annually to determine an annual work program that includes schedule, budget and responsible parties. This serves as a framework for a successful program for ongoing improvement of Downtown Albertville. Each annual work program should include at least one action item from all four focus areas - Physical Design, Economic Structuring, Promotion, and Organization.

Year One will primarily be a planning & capacity-building year - building a strong foundation - Develop a work plan for the upcoming year that clearly defines the goals for that year. List projects and specific tasks to meet that goal. Develop a timeline and budget for each task, and delegate the projects to specific individuals. Develop a budget based on this work plan. City departments should develop capital improvements plan (CIP) in coordination with work program. (See Financial Strategies section for further assistance with this).

***After a strong foundational base is in place, the City can go on to "flagship projects" – examples - revitalizing property for community space, urban parks & trails system, renovating the depot, etc., around year five or six. This can begin earlier, if the City determines it as a priority project, but it is important to focus on public safety issues first).*

Also take advantage of "low-hanging fruit"– planning and project development; grants (phase 1 streetscaping and infrastructure improvement projects,); conduct a Visual Preference exercise with the community, develop Design Standards determined in Visual Preference exercise & finalize and adopt ordinances; send out surveys to downtown merchants to gauge interest in developing a Merchants Association; determine structure and capacity of Downtown Development Authority and file for incorporation (refer to Financial Strategies section for this). Assign tasks to those involved in order to complete these actions (refer to the above Strategy Action Plan for responsible parties; the Downtown Steering Committee can determine which member(s) will focus on these tasks.

Goals and Objectives - determine Goal(s) for each year; determine tasks/action items

Who – determine who will do what

Work Program - develop work program to reflect Goal(s) - work on Organizational Structure & Capacity, Schedule, Budget

Establish Downtown Development Authority

Capital Improvement Plan (need to work with multiple City departments on this; this will take some time, but can be begun in Year 1).

Visual Preference Study (involve the community) to establish Design Standards for Ordinances

Poll merchants – Merchants Association

From each focus area - Physical Design, Economic Structuring, Organization, and Promotion – at least one Action Item should be accomplished each year for ongoing improvement

Goals for Year One - Albertville Downtown Master Plan: Goal: (Planning Year) - Build capacity and organizational foundation.

Develop Year 1 work program. Include these action items: (Steering Committee to determine order of these projects).

1. The Albertville Downtown Steering Committee should organize and hold an Albertville Downtown Master plan "kickoff" meeting with various city departments, administration, council members, etc to go over this Master Plan and discuss budgets and review various work elements from the four focus areas, and determine exactly who all from the community will be involved in implementation efforts. An initial work program can be developed from priorities that came out of this meeting, to include these foundational elements:
2. Begin developing organizational structure for Downtown Development Authority, including membership, duties, authority, bylaws. (please see: **ALA CODE § 45-8A-20.03 : Alabama Code - Section 45-8A-20.03: FILING OF APPLICATION; AUTHORIZATION OF INCORPORATION BY GOVERNING BODY OF CITY** in Financial Strategies section of this document. Follow that format).
3. Begin planning for Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to prioritize large-scale public improvements projects. (Some municipalities establish a Capital Planning committee: create a committee of representatives of the major departments or local government organizations that will be involved in carrying out and funding the projects outlined in

the capital improvement plan. This committee is usually comprised of members of city planning and budgeting departments and municipal representatives. Please see references on this in Financial strategies section, follow format).

4. Conduct a *Visual Preference Study* (involve the community) to establish Design Standards for Ordinances. (TARCOG can assist in the development of this project). ****This can be the first project the Steering Committee implements.***
5. Merchants Association survey - Develop survey questionnaire to gauge interest from downtown merchants in the formation of a Merchants Association. Determine duties and structure of Merchants Association prior to polling merchants. (TARCOG can assist with this project).
6. Grants - in coordination with the Capital Improvements Plan, the Steering Committee can determine funding sources for each priority project. However, grants can be written at any time during implementation process. These funding programs are listed in the Financial Strategies section of this document. (TARCOG can assist with any questions regarding this activity).

***It is important to remember not to overwhelm the first year work program. Good planning and foundational capacity must be in place first in order to accomplish a sound framework for implementation and set reasonable goals so that City departments- -and budgets- do not get overwhelmed.*

Implementation

Financial Strategies

Financial Strategies & Implementation - Albertville Downtown Master Plan 2015

Grants, Loans, Financing Programs & Additional Resources

To achieve the goals and objectives of the Albertville Downtown Master Plan, proper funding will be necessary. Public funding mechanisms for redevelopment include Alabama Tax Increment Financing, Business Improvement Districts, grants from public and private sources, general obligation bonds approved by the public, donations and general fund expenditures. Funding assistance for private development and economic development includes New Market Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Federal Loan Guarantees to financial institutions, federal matching funds for Small Business Investment Corporations, and revolving loan funds set up by local financing institutions for redevelopment and business creation.

Downtown Development Authority

(Please see enabling legislation governing the AUTHORIZATION OF INCORPORATION BY GOVERNING BODY in accordance with ALA CODE § 45-8A-20.03 at the end of this section).

Downtown Small Business Incubator

(Please see HUD/CDBG guidance regarding the use of CDBG funds for small business incubators at the end of this section).

City-Implemented Façade Improvement Program

Will need to apply for possible CDBG funding of this. TARCOG can assist with grant writing for this. (Also see example Façade Improvement program at the end of this section).

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

It is highly recommended that the City of Albertville develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to coordinate large-scale public improvements and development projects concurrently to help minimize future costs. A capital improvement plan is a community planning and fiscal management tool used to coordinate the location, timing and financing of capital improvements over a multi-year period — usually 4-6 years. Capital improvements refer to major, non-recurring physical expenditures such as land, buildings, public infrastructure and equipment. The CIP includes a description of proposed capital improvement projects ranked by priority, a year-by-year schedule of expected project funding, and an estimate of project costs and financing sources. The CIP is a working document and should be reviewed and updated annually to reflect changing community needs, priorities and funding opportunities. Annual Capital Budgeting Preparation of the CIP and annual budget are closely linked. The first year of the CIP, known as the capital budget, outlines specific projects and appropriates funding for those projects. It is usually adopted in conjunction with the government's annual operating budget. Projects and financing sources outlined for subsequent years are not authorized until the annual budget for those years is legally adopted. The out years serve as a guide for future planning and are subject to further review and modification. Plan Implementation: The CIP is a powerful tool for implementing a community's comprehensive plan, strategic plan, and other planning documents. Capital investments such as utility extensions, highway improvements, and the purchase of parkland or environmental corridors can have a substantial impact on patterns of growth and development. By providing funding for strategic investments at a given time and location, the CIP helps ensure that development occurs consistent with a community's plans and vision. (APA, Center for Land Use Education). Please also see: http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/PlanImplementation/Capital_Improvement_Plan.pdf; and http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/ndwc/articles/OT/SU04/CapitalWS_SU99.pdf

As noted in the Master Plan, improving the appearance and infrastructure conditions of the Albertville Downtown Study Area, particularly in the Downtown Core area, is vital to recruiting new residents, businesses and investors. Investing in public facilities demonstrates the City's commitment to the area and creates a perception of a neighborhood or district whose value is increasing. As the Master Plan indicates, several subdistricts need significant infrastructure improvements.

Potential improvements fall into several categories:

- Sewer upgrades (aging pipes especially serving historic structures in the Downtown Core)
- Curb and gutter and storm sewer improvements
- Roadway repaving. (Road resurfacing will be necessary in conjunction with all curb and gutter/streetscaping and storm sewer projects; roadways with adequate stormwater management systems should also be evaluated and programmed for resurfacing as appropriate).
- Sidewalks, tree lawns and pedestrian buffers. (Sidewalks should be constructed wherever possible on both sides of all roadways within the Downtown Core area). Constructions of sidewalks, lighting, street trees and pedestrian crosswalks, if possible, is particularly important on portions of primary routes within the Downtown area.
- If possible, electric lines, telephone and other cables should be buried in conjunction with all roadway and streetscape improvement projects.

Although a detailed and prioritized inventory of infrastructure needs is beyond the scope of this project, the City should conduct such an inventory that corresponds with this Plan, and note when funding becomes available to ensure that City resources are used to leverage the greatest economic benefit. (See this section for funding schedules and availability for streetscaping and public improvement project grants).

The inventory should address all of the elements noted above, and should record existing conditions and needed improvements for each infrastructure element in each location.

It is recommended that the City coordinate all streetscape improvement projects with a local engineering firm, utilities providers, Municipal Utilities Board, in conjunction with a licensed Landscape Architect to determine appropriate site conditions for urban street tree placement, lighting, and other streetscape amenities.

Needed improvements should then be prioritized on the basis of several predetermined elements that may include:

- urgency of need,
- potential impact on community revitalization,
- potential number of new residents gained or jobs created,
- cost of improvement,
- ability to coordinate with other improvements, etc.

A predetermined point system may prove useful, although the participants should retain the right to revise the results to accommodate other issues and needs. Potential projects identified by the Streetscape and Infrastructure Improvement Program (see Goals and Objectives) should be programmed into the CIP as aggressively as possible. The City should coordinate with the Municipal Utilities Board (MUB) and local utilities providers and evaluate its capital improvements budget on an annual basis in order to determine the appropriate timing and phasing of the improvements outlined above within the overall context of its citywide capital improvements. Alternative funding sources, including CDBG and TAP funding should also be pursued for these projects.

CIP General Outline:

Establish a Capital Planning committee.

- Create a committee of representatives of the major departments or local government organizations that will be involved in carrying out and funding the projects outlined in the capital improvement plan. This committee is usually comprised of members of city planning and budgeting departments and municipal representatives.

Define capital projects or purchases.

- Draft a list of capital projects or purchases to be included when writing a capital improvement plan. (These projects usually include repairs to municipal buildings, parks and pools and improvements or new additions to schools, public places, city streets and local government buildings).

Calculate the estimated costs for each project.

- Each project must be assigned a value to be included in the capital improvement plan. This figure will include costs for material, equipment and labor. This value will determine the year the project will be completed and how much of the city's budget is allotted to it.

Evaluate capital assets.

- Capital assets are the funds that a municipality can draw from for renovations and local improvement projects, including those listed in the plan.
- Each project's planned completion date will depend on when the project costs can be allotted from the capital assets.

Prioritize projects.

- Assign the list of capital projects an order of completion based on the needed funds and the urgency of the project.
- Repairs to dangerous roads or hazardous buildings in the community will be prioritized first in the interest of public safety.
- Strategically spread out large projects throughout the plan's time frame. This will avoid unnecessary strain on the municipal budget. It will also allow for time to alert the public about construction or road closures.

Plan funding.

- Outline the allotment of capital assets and public funding according to the prioritized list of projects. Be sure to include any donations or funding from local charitable organizations being used to fund public projects.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The Alabama legislature has enacted a law governing Tax Increment Financing (Acts 1987, No. 87-824, p. 1660, & sect. 4; Acts 1988, 1st Ex. Sess., No. 88-918, p. 512, & sect. 1). The law outlines the procedures for the creation of redevelopment districts that are funded through the issuance of revenue bonds supported by tax increment of new development or redevelopment. Tax Increment Financing is the use of increased taxes from increases in property value to fund redevelopment district costs. The funds can be used as a revenue stream for issuing and paying bonds. Revenue bonds funded by tax increment do not constitute a portion of the public debt secured by the general fund, and are tax exempt for state and municipal tax purposes. At the creation of the Downtown Redevelopment District the County Tax Assessor compiles the aggregate value of all of the property in the redevelopment district. The assessment acts as the starting value or basis of the district. As property values rise, any tax collected in excess (the increment) of the original tax on the basis is placed in a "special fund", as specified in the legislation. The monies in the special fund are used to implement the Downtown Redevelopment District-Project Plan.

TIF is a mechanism to capture the net new or incremental taxes that are created when a vacant or underutilized property is redeveloped and use those revenues to help finance the project. The value associated with the property's original use is called the Base Valuation and the revenue generated by it will always be paid over to the original taxing entities throughout the term of the TIF Area.

The process for enabling tax increment financing is as follows.

- a. The City of Albertville begins the creation of the Redevelopment District through a public hearing that includes prior notice to all local government and taxing entities.
- b. The District is created by a publicly approved ordinance that contains; a designation of the district boundaries; a starting date for the district, a name and number for the district; findings that the district will benefit the real property of the district by preventing the spread of slums or blighted areas, or discouraging the loss of commerce or employment; and establishment of a special fund for any funds to be used for implementing the district.
- c. Once the District is created the City must prepare a Project Plan for the district that includes:
 - A statement listing the kind, number, and location of all proposed public works or improvements within the district;
 - A detailed list of estimated project costs;
 - A description of the methods of financing all estimated project cost and time when related costs or monetary obligations are to be incurred;
 - A map showing existing uses and condition of real property in the district;
 - A map showing proposed improvements and uses therein;
 - A map showing proposed changes of zoning;
 - A master plan map;
 - Cross reference to building codes;
 - Other ordinances or resolutions affecting the district;
 - A proposed plan for the relocation of families, persons, and businesses to be temporarily or permanently displaced from housing or commercial facilities in the district by implementation of the plan.
- d. The City of Albertville must hold a public hearing to allow public comment on the proposed project plan and must serve notice prior to the public hearing notice to any taxing entities in the Redevelopment District.
- e. The City of Albertville approves the Project Plan by an ordinance that is adopted within one year of the County Assessor's evaluation of basis, and the ordinance must contain a finding of economic feasibility.

The City of Albertville can create a Downtown Redevelopment District (also called a TIF District).. A Project Plan should be produced based on the findings of the Downtown Master Plan. Under the law governing Tax Increment Financing, the City is empowered to designate a City employee, group of employees, or a board to handle the affairs of the Downtown Redevelopment District. The City should institute a Downtown Development Authority/DDA (sometimes called a Downtown Redevelopment Authority/DRA) that is representative of the area stakeholders and the City. (Please see ALA Code enabling legislation at the end of this section detailing DDA incorporation). In addition to the Downtown Development Authority, the City should hire a Downtown Manager or City Planner to implement the approved Downtown Redevelopment District Project Plan. It should be noted that these economic development project options suggested in this Plan would require an authority or managing organization to oversee such projects, such as a TIF, a Façade Improvement Program, a Small Business Incubator, or an Arts and Entertainment District.

Basics — Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) creates a redevelopment district in which infrastructure improvements and/or project developments are financed based upon an anticipated future increase in property values. The idea is that the development improvements will eventually result in higher property taxes and therefore, the financing "increment" is justified. TIF can be initiated either by a private developer or the municipality itself. Once the redevelopment district is determined, a base property value assessment is performed, and the revenue to agencies other than the redevelopment authority is "fixed" at a present-day amount. Any increase in tax revenue through increase in property value will accrue to

the redevelopment authority. The TIF district is created for a set time period, usually between 5 and 30 years, and once the time period ends, the increase in revenue from the property value increase reverts to the baseline taxing structure. In other words, the money would begin to accrue back to the municipality, county, schools, etc., rather than to the redevelopment authority (American Planning Association/APA).

Historical and Legal Implications— Use of TIF began in the 1950s, in California, as a method of supplementing federal urban renewal funds. Today, all states except for Arizona, have passed enabling legislation that allows municipalities to utilize TIF. In the past, many states have required that the TIF meet a public purpose. To meet this requirement, the courts have required: (1) a finding of blight in the redevelopment area, and evidence that the investment will not only improve the area, but allow for a change in assessed value; or (2) a showing that "but for" the financing, the intended project would not be able to come into fruition. The recent trend, however, has been a loosening of those standards as local governments have increasingly seen the need to offer developer incentives to attract business (American Planning Association/APA).

Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a special taxing district created with the consent of its property owners that allows the City to levy a tax to pay for specific services and improvements agreed upon by the City and property owners. BID's are used to pay for such things as street cleaning and maintenance of special features, landscaping and irrigation, planters and street furnishings, maintenance of parking areas, etc. The City should encourage the Commercial Development Authority (or a future Downtown Development Authority) and a Downtown Development Coordinator to work congruently to implement these specific sections of the Albertville CBD Revitalization Plan.

EPA Brownfield Redevelopment Sites

The term 'brownfield site' means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Brownfields grants continue to serve as the foundation of EPA's Brownfields Program. These grants support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities. Brownfields Assessment Grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants provide funding to capitalize loans that are used to clean up brownfields. Brownfield Job Training Grants provide environmental training for residents of brownfields communities. Brownfield Cleanup Grants provide direct funding for cleanup activities at certain properties with planned greenspace, recreational, or other nonprofit uses.

Grants

There are a number of federal grant programs available for redevelopment and community enhancement purposes as well as grants for infrastructure and historic preservation. Federal programs such as the TAP, CDBG, and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) are commonly used for redevelopment and revitalization. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) also has grants for infrastructure, including funding for roads and highways, railroad depot renovations and innovative transportation grants for research and implementation of alternative transportation (TAP). CDBG has several programs municipalities can utilize for infrastructure improvement and economic development. It should be noted that a tax increment special fund can accept grants from foundations and private grantors. (all grants described in detail in the following pages).

Tax Credits

Tax credits can be very powerful funding incentives for private development. There are three basic credits now available now that have application in redevelopment: New Market Tax Credits; Federal Housing Tax Credits; and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. The rules for tax credit investment are laid out in the US Internal Revenue Code. Tax credits allow a dollar for dollar reduction in tax (not income) and thus are of use to anyone with a need for tax reduction. Tax credits are often sold (securitized) to investors, allowing non-profits and project owners unable to use them to gain funding for construction and other allowable project cost.

New Market Tax Credits require the designation of eligible census tracts by the federal government. The City of Albertville would need to apply through the United States Department of Treasury to determine eligibility in the Downtown Redevelopment District. The New Market Credit was authorized by Congressional House Bill 12392, which outlines the availability and terms of use for the tax credit (more information can be found at www.cdfifund.gov)

Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits require that the project be in a historic district as a contributing structure or that the structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places to be able to receive 20 percent tax credit for renovation purposes. However, the program can also be applied for structures built before 1936 for a 10% tax credit.

The 20% rehabilitation tax credit equals 20% of the amount spent in a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure

The 10% rehabilitation tax credit equals 10% of the amount spent to rehabilitate a non-historic building built before 1936.

Although the process is lengthy, it is still available for property owners to take advantage of, and many Alabama downtown revitalization efforts have utilized this helpful program for blighted, but still viable and contributing to the character of downtown. Please see: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/about-tax-incentives-2012.pdf> and <http://www.preserveala.org/taxcredits.aspx> ; <https://www.google.com/search?q=Alabama+historic+tax+credits&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8> ; <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC's) can be used for providing housing to households at or below 60 percent of median income and provide either four percent or eight percent credits. Area 60 percent of median household income by household's size is calculated every year by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is not necessary for all units in a building to be affordable to receive the tax credits; the credit applies only to those units that are eligible. To receive the credit, the units must be kept affordable for fifteen years to receive ten years of tax credits.

Rehabilitation tax credits and LIHTC's can be applied on the same project. This means that in implementing affordable housing units in downtown Albertville, that a credit from 24 to 28 percent could be achieved in redevelopment.

An information program to familiarize developers and property owners with tax credit opportunities should be undertaken by the City. This could be performed effectively as an addition to the City web site, which is an excellent resource. Elements would include explanations of the tax credits, links to credit websites, and downloadable information and application forms. Pro forma templates for calculating tax credits would also be useful for those not familiar with credits. TARCOG can offer assistance with this.

Small Business Investment Corporations

Small Business Investment Corporations (SBIC) are business development venture funds for business creation and development that are regulated by the Small Business Administration. The federal government will match local funding at a three to one ratio. What this means is that if local investors, banks and others form a SBIC with \$1 million in start-up funding, it may be possible to get grants of up to \$3 million to match. Since the Downtown Master Plan calls not only for infrastructure, but also new businesses to provide the services that are desired by residents, the formulation and operation of a Albertville SBIC could be a means for creating and retaining business in the downtown area. SBICs are allowed to use funds for investment in small business and to act as an advisory resource. This means that the SBIC employees could fund and advise businesses on issues such as effective use of information technology, effective retailing practices, financial management, employee management, efficient use of resources, etc. One option for the City of Albertville would be to collaborate with the Albertville Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses in the formation of a SBIC. Because the Federal program offers three-to-one leveraging of local funding SBIC's can be more effective in using local funds than business assistance organizations that do not have access to the program.

Revolving Loan Funds

A Revolving Fund is a low-interest financing pool set up by the local lenders acting together to meet Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) obligations. The funds are not grants; borrowers are expected to pay back the loans to finance future loans. The fund can have its own investment criteria regarding the type of lending that will be underwritten. In addition to meeting CRA obligations, revolving funds also generate customer loyalty to participating institutions and serve to keep local money from interest payments and administration costs in local circulation. The Top of Alabama Council of Local Governments (TARCOG) has a revolving loan fund program in place. It is recommended that the City collaborate with TARCOG in the administration of funding to qualifying small business entrepreneurs throughout the city, in particular the Downtown Central Business District.

Downtown Merchants Association

Throughout the course of discussions with the steering committee, it became clear the need for a Downtown Merchants Association, to coordinate such things as hours of operation during community events, and support for retail marketing and promotional efforts. Fundraisers, such as Taste of Albertville, could be leveraged for seed money to encourage this. A survey should be developed to poll existing merchants for interest. The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments can conduct this survey.

Grants, Loans, & Programs Guide for the City of Albertville 2015

INTRODUCTION: This guide was prepared by TARCOG staff to assist the City of Albertville with information about the most commonly used federal and state grant and loan programs for counties and municipalities. While there are many other types of funding that may, from time to time, be available to local governments and other entities through a combination of public and private funds, these are the programs that, to date, have been the most reliable and useful to our members on a regular basis.

Of course, everything is subject to change and a particular program may not be allocated funding in a given fiscal year, or may see its allocation reduced from what it had been in previous years. These realities will always be a factor in seeking funding assistance, so it is always best to contact the funding source or TARCOG staff to confirm that the program will be offered during the year in which you intend to apply, get the pertinent details about how much you can request, and verify that your project activity is eligible.

SEARCHING FOR GRANTS ONLINE: A number of web sites are available to find grant announcements. Some of the most useful are listed below. Additionally, you can sign up for email grant alert services; however, visiting the funding agency's current web site is the best way to ensure the information is timely and accurate. A word of caution, simply searching by a topic or something as general as "Grants" when looking for grants online can yield some very outdated information and may even lead you to believe a program is available when it hasn't existed for many years. Always try to confirm the details of the program before you get too far along in the development of your project.

- Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance : www.cfda.gov
- Grants.gov : www.grants.gov
- USA.gov: www.usa.gov
- Americantrails.org: www.americantrails.org
- Alabama Historical Commission: http://preserveala.org/pdfs/OTHER/GRANTS_PAGES/ALABAMA_FUNDING_SOURCES.pdf
- Alabama Tourism Department: <http://tourism.alabama.gov/forms/matching-grants/> ; <http://tourism.alabama.gov/content/uploads/2015-MG-Guidelines.pdf>

PREPARING TO APPLY FOR GRANTS: Many agencies are now requiring that applicants register with SAM, the System for Award Management www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. SAM is a Federal Government owned and operated free web site that consolidates the former CCR/Fed Reg, ORCA, and EPLS functions into one site. You must register your entity in order to do business with the federal government or use federal grant funds, including federal funds that come to you from the state. If you were previously registered with CCR, the Central Contractor's Registry, you will need to update your registration in SAM. Registration must be updated annually to remain ACTIVE in the system. In addition, you must maintain your username and password by changing it at the prescribed intervals. For assistance contact the SAM help desk 1-877-771-9512.

IMPORTANT ITEMS YOU WILL NEED FOR SAM REGISTRATION:

- Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS): www.dnb.co/us
- Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN or EIN): [www.irs.gov/Business/Small-businesses-&Selfemployed/Employer-ID-Numbers-\(EINs\)](http://www.irs.gov/Business/Small-businesses-&Selfemployed/Employer-ID-Numbers-(EINs))
- North American Industry Classification System code (NAICS): www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/

The 2012 NAICS code and description for units of local government is: 921140 Executive and Legislative Offices, Combined. Some agencies request that applications be made online. This, too, means your entity and a designated/authorized individual will need to register with that agency's system and create a username and password, and then make sure these stay updated. Maintaining multiple registrations and updating passwords can be a daunting task. It is recommended that all departments be aware of the different registrations that your local government may have. It is not uncommon for the Police or Fire Department, for example, to have a separate DUNS number that is different than the DUNS number issued to the city or county. Keep track of all the numbers so that when registrations or applications are made the correct identification numbers will be used and they will match up with the SAM registration if it is required.

CONFIRM YOUR ELIGIBILITY: It is always good to know where to find some of the basic information used to determine your eligibility for programs that have such requirements. To assist you, population figures, county distress designations for ARC and HUD CDBG, and several items used with the State's CDBG program are provided as references via TARCOG. Please let us know if we can assist you in any way with your project. Your regional planning commission serves as the designated planning agency for the following programs:

- Affiliate State Data Center
- Appalachian Regional Commission: Local Development District (LDD)
- Economic Development Administration: Economic Development District (EDD)
- Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

As the LDD and EDD, TARCOG provides complimentary grant writing and technical assistance to our member governments for these and other programs to support your community and economic development efforts.

GRANT PROGRAMS:

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS: www.adeca.alabama.gov

CONTACT: COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Mr. Shabbir Olia, CED Programs Manager
(334) 242-5468 shabbir.olia@adeca.alabama.gov

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

Note: "Proposed FY14 funding levels" are listed. Levels may change after federal budget appropriation.

A. FUND TITLE: Competitive Fund, Single purpose or multi-purpose activities

GRANT CYCLE: Application workshop held in February, application due date between May - June. Award announcements are typically in the fall with a mandatory compliance workshop to follow.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Non-entitlement cities (excludes members of the Jefferson or Mobile consortium), counties (excludes Jefferson and Mobile). Applicants must maintain active registration with SAM. Activities: Water, Sewer, Streets, Drainage, Housing Rehabilitation, Neighborhood and Downtown Revitalization, Professional Services e.g., engineering, administration within fee scale limits. Requirements: Benefit at least 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries, or eliminate slum and blight, or address an urgent need resulting from an immediate health threat. See current program year thresholds. No open Competitive or Enhancement grant. Annual close-out deadline is March 30.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: County \$350,000; Large City (2010 Census population 3,000+) \$450,000; Small City \$350,000. Match Requirement: 10% Source: Cash/In-kind, Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials. Disbursement Method: Grant

Note: Waiver of match available for applicants with 2010 Census population of 1,000 or less.

B. FUND TITLE: Community Enhancement Fund

GRANT CYCLE: Application workshop held in February, application due dates between May – June. Award announcements are typically in the fall with mandatory compliance workshop to follow.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Non-entitlement Local Governments. Applicants must maintain active registration with SAM. Activities: Water, Sewer, Streets, Drainage, Housing Rehab, Senior or Community Center, Demolition, Recreation, Boys & Girls Clubs, Fire Protection, Misc. Requirements: Benefit 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries, or eliminate slum and blight, or address an urgent need resulting from an immediate health threat. See current program year thresholds. No open Competitive or Enhancement grant. Annual closeout deadline is March 30.

FUNDING LEVELS (Proposed for FY14) Maximum Request: \$250,000. Minimum Request: \$50,000; Match Requirement: 10% Source: Cash/In-kind Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials. Disbursement Method: Grant

Note: Waiver of match available for applicants with 2010 Census population of 1,000 or less.

C. FUND TITLE : Economic Development Fund

GRANT CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Award upon approval and as funding is available. Application workshop held in February and compliance workshop held in the fall.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Non-entitlement local governments. Applicants must maintain active registration with SAM. Activities: Land, facilities and infrastructure to benefit industry that will create jobs. Requirements: Create minimum of 15 permanent jobs to benefit 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries. See current program year thresholds. May have open Competitive, Enhancement or Planning grant.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$200,000. Minimum Request: \$50,000, Match Requirement: 20% Source: Cash/In-kind Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials Disbursement Method: Grant

Note: Waiver of match available for Applicants with 2010 Census population of 1,000 or less. State may also waive the grant ceiling for projects that demonstrate significant long-term economic benefit to the State.

D. FUND TITLE: Economic Development Incubator projects

GRANT CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Award upon approval and as funding is available. Application workshop held in February and compliance workshop held in the fall.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of local government. Applicants must maintain active registration with SAM. Activities: Facility, infrastructure or program support. Requirements: Program must benefit at least 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries. These type projects must commit to create jobs. See current program year thresholds.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$250,000. Match Requirement: 20% Source: Cash/In-kind Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials, Disbursement Method: Grant

Note: Waiver of match available for Applicants with 2010 Census population of 1,000 or less. State may also waive the grant ceiling for projects that demonstrate significant long-term economic benefit to the State.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION: <http://www.dot.state.al.us>

CONTACT ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Ed Austin, Innovative Programs Bureau Chief
(334)242-6751 austine@dot.state.al.us

CONTACT ALDOT MULTI-MODAL DIVISION
Cecil Colson (334)353-6403 colsonc@dot.state.al.us or
Bob Kratzer (334)353-6442 kratzerr@dot.state.al.us

SPECIAL PROGRAMS:

A. FUND TITLE: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

GRANT CYCLE: Applications due in April (this is second year of two-year funding cycle under Map-21)

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of local government. Activities: Construction of on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrian, cycling and non-motorized transportation (includes streetscaping of combined lighting, sidewalks and landscaping), infrastructure for safe routes; conversion of abandoned railroad corridors; construction of turnouts, overlooks; community improvement activities (removal of outdoor advertising, historic transportation facilities preservation and rehab, vegetation management and erosion control, archaeological activities); and environmental mitigation activities; construction engineering and inspection for infrastructure projects.

REQUIREMENTS: Project must be for public use. Public involvement meeting required, plans must meet ALDOT Local Public Agency (LAP) Manual, environmental review and Davis Bacon reporting must be included.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$400,000, Match Requirement: 20% Source: Cash, Disbursement Method: Reimbursement.

TAP flexibility and exceptions for matching eligibility:

In general, funds from one Federal program cannot provide the non-Federal share to match funds from another Federal program, *except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs.*

The TAP Guidance lists three exceptions to allow Federal-to-Federal match.

- Projects funded under the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) set-aside from TAP retain the Federal share and flexible match and donation provisions available under 23 U.S.C. 206(f) and 23 U.S.C. 206(h). These provisions also remain in effect for prior year RTP funds. See [RTP Federal Share and Matching Requirements](#). Please note that recreational trail projects funded from other TAP funds (not from the RTP set-aside) are subject to the general match requirement for TAP funds.
- Section 120(j) allows Federal agency funds to pay the non-Federal share of the cost of any transportation project that is within, adjacent to, or provides access to Federal land, for projects funded under title 23 or under Chapter 53 of title 49.
- Section 120(k) allows Federal land and tribal transportation funds to pay the non-Federal share of the cost of any project that is funded under title 23 or under Chapter 53 of title 49 that provides access to or is within Federal or tribal land.

A few other Federal programs may allow their funds to match other Federal program funds, or to be matched with other Federal program funds. Two programs relevant for TAP are:

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [Community Development Block Grants](#).
- Federal programs for youth conservation or service corps, such as [AmeriCorps](#) under [42 U.S.C. 12571](#), may receive funds from other Federal programs as match. See AmeriCorps guidance for further information. Note: There is not necessarily authority to use Federal funds for youth corps programs to match Federal-aid highway program funds.

Please see: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/qandas/qatap.cfm>

ALABAMA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS: www.arts.state.al.us

CONTACT: Albert B. Head, Executive Director,
Cultural Facilities (334)242-4076, ext. 245, Al.Head@arts.alabama.gov

PROGRAM: For list of programs and fund titles, <http://arts.state.al.us/grants>.

GRANT CYCLE: As announced for various programs

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of local government, school boards, Private educational institutions and Nonprofits with 501 (c)(3) status, Colleges and Universities.

ACTIVITIES: Visual Arts, Arts Education, Performing Arts, Literary Arts, Community Arts, Cultural Facilities, Folklife projects.

REQUIREMENTS: See agency guidelines and seek assistance from a program manager prior to submitting an application

Alabama Tourism Department grants: to help fund projects like events, wayfinding programs, marketing and advertising, and coordinator positions.

<http://tourism.alabama.gov/content/uploads/2015-MG-Guidelines.pdf> ; <http://tourism.alabama.gov/forms/matching-grants/>

Matching Grants Coordinator, Alabama Tourism Department (334) 242-4169

Past distribution types: \$5,000 for attractions, \$2,500 for events, \$15,000 for wayfinding activities (product development grant)

· Brochures: promoting and advertising the recreational, historical or travel attractions and/or related events within the State of Alabama. Brochures funded with matching grant monies may not be resold and are for free distribution only.

· Websites / Free Smartphone Apps: promoting and advertising the recreational, historical or travel attractions and/or related events within the State of Alabama.

· Advertising Out of State: promoting the recreational, historical or travel attractions and/or related events within the State of Alabama

The deadline for application has recently changed. It is now September 1st according to the ADT website. No award deadline is noted; applications from this past fall are still pending according to my last contact with ADT in December of 2014.

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC): www.arc.gov

CONTACT STATE ADMINISTERING AGENCY: ADECA
Jimmy Lester, ARC Program Manager
(334) 353-4490 jimmy.lester@adeca.alabama.gov

GRANT CYCLE: Pre-application due date in August. Applicant notified in October if a full application is requested. Award announcements typically made in May.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: State and local units of governments, public bodies, and non-profit entities. Eligible counties in West Alabama: Bibb, Fayette, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa. Activities: Water and wastewater facilities, telecommunications, health care, planning activities, leadership development, education and training programs, business development, and entrepreneurship.

REQUIREMENTS: Project must meet one of ARC's goals: increase job opportunities and per capita income, strengthen the capacity of people to compete in the global economy or develop and improve infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive. Construction projects funded by ARC must have an "Administering Agency" such as ADECA, USDA Rural Development or TVA. The project will be administered by and take on the requirements of that agency.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$200,000, Match Requirement: 50% cash/in-kind. FY14 Marshall County noted as "Transitional" Source: Cash/In-kind. Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials. Disbursement Method: Grant

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA): www.eda.gov

CONTACT STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE:
Ms. Stacey Webb, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration,
401 West Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 1820,
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
(404) 730-3020 swebb@eda.gov

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS:

- A. Investments for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities**
- B. Economic Adjustment Assistance**

GRANT CYCLE: Applications are taken throughout the year at quarterly deadlines; March, June, September and December. Award upon approval and as funding is available.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of State and Local Governments, Public and State controlled institutions of Higher Education, Federally recognized Native American tribal governments, others (see FFO).

Activities: Construction, Non-construction, Revolving loan funds, Technical Assistance projects. Requirements: Project must commit to create or retain jobs and leverage private investment.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: Based on average of \$10,000 per job Minimum Request: Match Requirement: Varies based on level of distress Source: Cash/In-kind Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, Equipment, Materials. Disbursement Method: Grant

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA): www.fema.gov

CONTACT STATE ADMINISTERING AGENCY: Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA)
Kelli Alexander
(205) 280-2269 kelli.alexander@aema.alabama.gov

PREPAREDNESS AND NON-DISASTER FUND TITLE: All Due in December

- A. Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)** <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants>
- B. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)** <http://www.fema.gov/staffing-adequatefire-emergency-response-grants>
- C. Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S)** <http://www.fema.gov/fire-prevention-safety-grants>

HAZARD MITIGATION FUND TITLE: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>

- A. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)** Grants to states and local governments to implement long term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the HMGP is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.
- B. Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)** Funds to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, communities, and universities for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Funding these plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. PDM grants are to be awarded on a competitive basis and without reference to state allocations, quotas, or other formula-based allocation of funds.
- C. Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)** Funds to assist States and communities implement measures that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and others structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program.
- D. Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC)** Funds to assist states and communities to reduce flood damages to insured properties that have had one or more claims to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- E. Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL)** Funds to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to severe repetitive loss structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program.

GRANT CYCLE: As announced for individual programs

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: States and units of local government. Activities: As noted for individual programs. Requirements: See online individual program information and/or most recent HMGP Unified Guidance.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$ (may vary with announcement)

Match Requirement: 25% Source: Cash/In-kind, Eligible In-Kind Contribution: Labor, equipment, materials. Disbursement Method: Reimbursement

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT: www.rurdev.usda.gov/al

CONTACT: HUNTSVILLE AREA OFFICE

Area Director: Mr. Woodrow Williams

1300 Meridian Street, Suite 23-C, Huntsville, AL 35801-4616

256-532-1677 ext 5

BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS:

A. FUND TITLE: Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)

GRANT CYCLE: Applications are taken on a continuous basis.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Public bodies, private non-profit corporations, and federally recognized Native American tribal groups in all areas except cities of more than 50,000 and their adjacent and contiguous urbanized areas. Activities: Purchase and develop land, establish a revolving loan fund, construct buildings, plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utility and service extensions, technical assistance, rural distance learning networks. Requirements: Must be used for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses, help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum request: No maximum, however, grants generally range from \$10,000 up to \$500,000. Match Requirement: N/A Disbursement Method: Grant

B. FUND TITLE: Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

GRANT CYCLE: Applications are taken on a continuous basis.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Public bodies, private non-profit corporations, and federally recognized Native American tribal groups in all areas except cities of more than 50,000 and their adjacent and contiguous urbanized areas.

Activities: Technical assistance, leadership training, establishment of business support centers, economic development plans. Requirements: Must be used to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Project period limited to two years.

FUNDING LEVELS: Maximum request: \$50,000, Match Requirement: None, Disbursement Method: Grant

C. FUND TITLE: Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)

The REDLG program provides funding to rural projects through local utility organizations. Under the RED Loan program, USDA provides zero interest loans to local utilities which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. The ultimate recipients repay the lending utility directly. The utility is responsible for repayment to the Agency. Under the RED Grant program, USDA provides grant funds to local utility organizations which use the funding to establish revolving loan funds. Loans are made from the revolving loan fund to projects that will create or retain rural jobs. When the revolving loan fund is terminated, the grant is repaid to the Agency.

Who is eligible? To receive funding under the REDLG program (which will be forwarded to selected eligible projects) an entity must: Have borrowed and repaid or pre-paid an insured, direct, or guaranteed loan received under the Rural Electrification Act or, be a not-for-profit utility that is eligible to receive assistance from the Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Program Be a current Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Programs Borrower.

What types of projects are eligible? REDLG grantees and borrowers pass the funding on to eligible projects. Examples of eligible projects include: Capitalization of revolving loan funds, Technical assistance in conjunction with projects funded under a zero interest RED Loan, Business Incubators Community Development Assistance to non-profits and public bodies (particularly job creation or enhancement) Facilities and equipment for education and training for rural residents to facilitate economic development, Facilities and equipment for medical care to rural residents, Telecommunications/computer networks for distance learning or long distance medical care.

D. FUND TITLE: Community Facility Grants

OBJECTIVES: Community Programs provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. In addition, applicants must have the legal authority necessary for construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed facility and also be unable to obtain needed funds from commercial sources at reasonable rates and terms.

FUND USES: Grant funds may be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services. This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. A grant may be made in combination with other CF financial assistance such as a direct or guaranteed loan, applicant contributions, or loans and grants from other sources.

The Community Facilities Grant Program is typically used to fund projects under special initiatives, such as Native American community development efforts; child care centers linked with the Federal government's Welfare-to-Work initiative; Federally-designated Enterprise and Champion Communities.

MAXIMUM GRANT: The amount of grant assistance for project costs depends upon the median household income and the population in the community where the project is located and the availability of grant funds. In most instances, projects which receive grant assistance have a high priority and are highly leveraged with other loan and grant awards. Grant assistance may be available for up to 75% of project costs. Grant funding limitations are based on population and income, economic feasibility, and availability of funds.

Projects will be selected based on a priority point system. Projects that will receive priority are those that: Serve small communities - with the highest priority going to projects located in a community with a population of 5,000 or less. Serve low-income communities with the highest priority going to projects serving communities with median household incomes below the higher of the poverty line or 60% of the State non-metropolitan median household income. Provide healthcare, public safety, or public and community services

LIMITATIONS: Grant funds cannot be used to pay any annual recurring costs, including purchases or rentals that are generally considered to be operating and maintenance expenses construct or repair electric generating plants, electric transmission lines, or gas distribution lines to provide services for commercial sale, pay costs to construct facilities to be used for commercial rental where the applicant has no control over tenants and services offered construct facilities primarily for the purpose of housing State, Federal or quasi-Federal agencies or finance recreational facilities or community antenna television services or facilities.

E. FUNDING TITLE: Predevelopment Planning Grants

PURPOSE: Predevelopment planning grants may be available, if needed, to assist in paying costs associated with developing a complete application for a proposed project

ELIGIBILITY: The applicant must meet the eligibility requirements of Part 1780.7 of RUS Instruction 1780. The median household income of the proposed area to be served by the project must be either below the poverty line or below 80 percent of the statewide non-metropolitan median household income. The eligible predevelopment items funded with these grant funds must be agreed to and accepted by the Agency prior to disbursement of the predevelopment planning grant. Applicant must provide financial information to document

that they do not have the resources to pay predevelopment expenses on their own. Grants are limited to projects the Agency expects to fund soon after the application is submitted. PPG costs are those necessary expenses to be incurred to develop a complete application and are limited to eligible grant purposes.

REQUIREMENTS: State Directors are authorized to make PPG up to \$30,000 or 75 percent of the project costs, whichever is less. Funding for the balance of the eligible project costs not funded by the PPG must be from applicant resources or funds from other sources. PPG funds advanced will be considered when calculating the amount of loan and grant funding needed, and will be subtracted from the total grant eligibility, if the Agency provides additional funds for a portion of the project. PPG funds cannot be used to pay for work already completed. If the Agency does not provide additional funds for any portion of the project, the grant will not require repayment.

Alabama Historical Commission

2015 Capital Enhancement Grants Program

The Alabama Historical Commission is accepting grant applications for capital enhancements to non-state owned or operated historical properties and sites. Grants will be awarded for the coming fiscal year 2015. Local historical sites and parks operated by, non-profit or tax exempt organizations, county or municipal governments are eligible. The grants will be awarded so that grant recipients reflect the geographical diversity of the State. Only applicants that did not receive historical grants in fiscal year 2013 are eligible. Religious institutions/organizations are not eligible.

Applications must be postmarked or emailed by August 15, 2014. Hand-delivered applications must arrive by 5:00 pm on August 15, 2014.

The AHC will award grants in amounts not to exceed \$10,000 for any one historical site or park. Nonprofit groups and government entities interested in applying for a grant should review the application and contact John Powell at john.powell@preserveala.org or 334 230-2654.

These grants are made possible by Act 2014-284 passed by the Alabama Legislature in April 2014.

The Daniel Foundation of Alabama: <http://danielfoundationofalabama.com/community-needs/?grant-category=community-needs>

Community Needs: The Daniel Foundation supports programs that provide for basic human needs and promote the development of life skills in an effort to improve the quality of life for Alabama's individuals and families. Another path towards improving the quality of life in our communities is the stimulation of business growth and entrepreneurship. All of the work we support hinges on the availability and development of leaders who have the vision and capacity to address these challenges.

Alabama has an estimated 400,000 total veterans, representing 8 percent of the state's population. We believe that, given the sacrifices made by our military personnel, they deserve access to services and opportunities that enable them to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Funding Priorities:

- Programs that offer an effective approach to job training, readiness and placement
- Programs that encourage and support the growth of entrepreneurship in Alabama
- Community revitalization initiatives
- Projects that meet the needs of Alabama's veterans
- Leadership programs that demonstrate success in training leaders for the Nonprofit, government and business sectors

Maximum Grant Amount: Variable

Application Deadline: Variable

Contact Information: the Daniel Foundation, 510 Office Park Dr. Suite 210
Birmingham, AL 35223, telephone: (205) 874-3523, fax: (205) 874-3526

Gwyn Turner Endowed Fund: www.PreservationNation.org/resources/find-funding

This fund is administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, in partnership with Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation. Nonprofits and governmental agencies can obtain funding for preservation planning, heritage education, workshops, conferences and special interventions. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and require a 1:1 cash match.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their project with the National Trust Southern Office before submitting an application.

Contact the Southern Office at 843.722.8552, or e-mail soro@nthp.org.

National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP): <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding>

The National Trust Preservation Fund of the NTHP offers several types of financial assistance to nonprofit organizations, public agencies, for-profit companies, and individuals involved in preservation-related projects. In 2005, the National Trust Preservation Fund provided almost \$17 million in assistance and direct investment to support preservation in cities, towns, and rural areas all over the United States.

NTHP Preservation Services Fund This fund provides up to \$5,000 for rehab plans and specs, feasibility studies or historic structures reports; heritage education, and conferences. For more information on NTHP grants, contact the Southern Regional Office at 843.722.8552.

Please see website for additional preservation and rehabilitation grants from the national trust for historic preservation: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Mitchell> ; please also see: <http://blog.preservationnation.org/2013/01/14/find-funding-how-to-apply-for-grants-from-the-national-trust-preservation-fund/#.VLsofnuzqQc>

LOAN PROGRAMS:

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (ADECA): www.adeca.alabama.gov

CONTACT - COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED Division)
Mr. Shabbir Olia, CED Programs Manager
(334) 242-5468 shabbir.olia@adeca.alabama.gov

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

A. FUND TITLE: Economic Development Loans

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Award upon approval and as funding is available. Application workshop held in Feb with compliance workshop held in the fall.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Non-entitlement units of local government. Activities: Land, building, site improvements, facility construction or renovations, operating capital, administration, or any CDBG-eligible activity. Requirements: Benefit at least 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries. Project must commit to create or retain permanent jobs. See current program year thresholds.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$250,000 Minimum: \$50,000

Disbursement Method: Loan

B. FUND TITLE: Economic Development Float Loans

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Award upon approval and as funding is available. Application workshop held in Feb with compliance workshop held in the fall.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of local government. Activities: Acquisition, site preparation, facility construction or renovations, operating capital, machinery and equipment, refinancing, or any CDBG-eligible activity. Requirements: Benefit at least 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries. Project must commit to create or retain permanent jobs. See current program year thresholds.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$10,000,000 Minimum: \$100,000

Disbursement Method: Loan

Term: One year with optional one-year extension

C. FUND TITLE: Section 108 Loan guarantees

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Award upon approval and as funding is available. Application workshop held in Feb with compliance workshop held in the fall.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Non-entitlement units of local government. Activities: Economic development activities. Requirements: Benefit at least 51% low and moderate-income beneficiaries. Project must commit to create or retain permanent jobs. See current program year thresholds.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$10,000,000 with waiver provision

Disbursement Method: Loan guarantee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENERGY LOAN PROGRAM

CONTACT: ADECA ENERGY DIVISION

Jennifer Young, Program Manager

(334) 353-3006, jennifer.young@adeca.alabama.gov

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Municipal and county governments, K-12 boards of education, and universities.

Activities: Energy assessments and energy conservation improvements of buildings, water treatment plants, street and sports field lighting and traffic signals.

Requirements: The facility must be owned by the applicant, recipients must agree to repay the loan within 10 years, the energy conservation measure must demonstrate a simple payback period of 10 years or less, and each energy conservation measure must have a useful life at least equal to the estimated payback.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$350,000 Minimum: \$50,000

Disbursement Method: Loan, Term: 10 years

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (ADEM): www.adem.state.al.us

CONTACT: Mr. James Dailey

(334)271-7805, jwd@adem.state.al.us

STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) FUNDING TITLES:

A. Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

B. Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

LENDING CYCLE: Pre-applications due by December 31. Applicants selected for funding must submit a full application by May 1. Loans are typically made available for disbursement in December.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Units of local government, water boards and authorities

Activities: Engineering, inspection and construction costs, water or wastewater treatment works, sewer rehabilitation, drinking water storage facilities, rehabilitation or new construction of water source wells, transmission/distribution mains. Drinking water projects primarily intended to serve future growth are not eligible. Requirements: Facilities must be publicly owned. Applicant must show ability to repay the loan and meet other specified standards. Project must comply with Davis Bacon and the Buy American Act.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$10,000,000 Minimum: \$100,000

Disbursement Method: Loan, Term: 20 years, fixed rate, typically 1.5% -2.0% less than the municipal bond rate.

ALABAMA LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES: <http://www.amfund.com>

CONTACT: Mr. Greg Cochran

(334)386-8130, gregc@amfund.com

AMFUND LOAN

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Any authorized representative of an Alabama municipality

Activities: Debt refinancing, infrastructure, fire and police vehicles, capital improvement projects, equipment leasing, City halls, local match for grants. Requirements: Last three years' financials.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$ Based on Municipal debt limit Minimum: \$150,000.

Disbursement Method: Loan, Term: Up to 30 years

ALABAMA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION: <http://www.alruralwater.com>

CONTACT: Kathy Horne, Executive Director
(334)396-5511 khorne@alruralwater.com

ARWA Revolving Loan Fund (established with funds from USDA Rural Business Service)

LENDING CYCLE: Continuous - applications are taken throughout the year. Applications may be submitted on-line at web address above.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants: Municipalities, authorities, non-profit corporations and cooperatives with up to 25,000 population for incorporated areas, no limit for unincorporated areas. Activities: Equipment and small capital improvement projects, local match for grants. Requirements: Promissory note or equivalent authorized by the governing body. Most recent annual audit or year-end financial statement, names of officers including addresses, contact numbers and terms of office. Borrower is responsible for closing costs and is required to pay a onetime processing fee of 1.5% of the loan amount.

LENDING LEVELS: Maximum Request: \$100,000. RLF loan can finance up to 75% of total project cost. Disbursement Method: Loan Rates: Based on current USDA Rural Utility Service quarterly interest rate. Rates are fixed for the life of the loan.

Term: Up to 7 years

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM: <http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/Recreation/LWCF%20Documents/01%20LWCF%20Program%20Summary.pdf>

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (ADECA)

Recreational Programs Division

Maureen Neighbors, Unit Chief

(334) 242-5467 maureen.neighbors@adeca.alabama.gov

"The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program was established by the LWCF Act of 1965 to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring to all citizens of the United States of present and future generations such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation. The program provides matching grants to States and through States to local units of government, for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities." LWCF assistance can be used to acquire land and water interests for park purposes, develop new outdoor recreation facilities, and in certain instances, renovate existing recreational facilities. Virtually all public outdoor recreation activities are eligible for assistance under the program including playgrounds, ball fields (including lights – concrete poles only), court sports, picnic areas, camping area, tracks, trails, splash pads, zip lines, etc. In addition, support facilities such as concession stands, comfort stations, park access roads, parking areas, utilities, and site preparation necessary to make a recreation activity area usable may qualify for assistance. The project sponsor must either own, or have a perpetual interest in land that is developed with LWCF assistance.

The LWCF program provides up to 50 percent of project costs (not to exceed \$50,000.00) to the project sponsor. The project sponsor must match these funds dollar for dollar with cash or in-kind match. If the project exceeds \$100,000.00, the project sponsor must pay the excess project costs. The LWCF grant funds are distributed on a cost reimbursable basis. The maximum grant size is determined by the amount of the state's apportionment. A maximum grant amount of \$50,000.00 is anticipated during this funding cycle. An applicant does not have to request the entire grant amount and ADECA may provide partial funding for projects, if necessary.

GRANT CYCLE: Application workshop held in February, application due date between May - June. Award announcements are typically in the fall with a mandatory compliance workshop to follow.

Recreational Trails Program:

<http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/Recreation/LWCF%20Documents/01%20LWCF%20Program%20Summary.pdf>

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (ADECA)

Recreational Programs Division

Maureen Neighbors, Unit Chief

(334) 242-5467 maureen.neighbors@adeca.alabama.gov

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is funded by the U. S. Department of Transportation and provides funding assistance to federal agencies, states, local governments and nonprofit organizations for the development and improvement of recreational areas such as walking, jogging, cycling, skating, backpacking, off-highway vehicle and horseback riding trails.

The Recreational Trails Program was created in 1998 to assist in acquiring, developing or improving trail and trail-related resources. Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private sector organizations.

The Federal share for the program is 80 percent of the total eligible project costs up to either \$50,000 or \$100,000. The non-Federal share (20 percent) may come from state, local or private sources, including volunteer labor and donated materials. Other Federal shares cannot be included unless specific legislation allows funds to be used for the matching share (e.g., HUD Community Development Block Grants, Public Works Employment Act of 1976). Grant funds are distributed to project sponsors on a cost-reimbursable basis.

Applications may be submitted for the following activities:

- Development of urban trail linkages near homes and workplaces (includes trail linkages to schools, parks, and existing trails)
- Maintenance of existing recreational trails
- Restoration of areas damaged by usage of recreational trails and back country terrain
- The provision of features which facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities
- The acquisition of easements for trails or for corridors identified in the state trail plan
- The acquisition of fee simple title to property from a willing seller for trail development
- The construction of new trails on state, county, municipal or private lands where a recreational need for such construction is shown
- Development of trail-side and trail-head facilities that meet goals identified by the National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (This includes trail components or associated facilities which serve the purpose and safe use of the recreational trail and may include but are not limited to the following: 1) Drainage, 2) Crossings, 3) Stabilization, 4) Parking, 5) Signage, 6) Controls, 7) Shelters, and 8) Water, Sanitary, and Access Facilities.)
- Purchase of trail maintenance equipment (certain restrictions apply)
- Only as otherwise permissible, and where necessary and required by the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), Construction of new trails crossing federal lands, where such construction is approved by the administering agency of the state, and the federal agency or agencies charged with management of all impacted lands, such approval to be contingent upon compliance by the federal agency with all applicable laws.

GRANT CYCLE: Application workshop held in February, application due date between May - June. Award announcements are typically in the fall with a mandatory compliance workshop to follow.

EPA Green Infrastructure Grants:

[EPA Clean Water Act Nonpoint Source Grant \(Section 319 Grants\)](#) - Congress amended the Clean Water Act in 1987 to establish EPA's Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program because it recognized the need for greater federal leadership to help focus state and local nonpoint source efforts. Under Section 319, states, territories, and Indian tribes receive grant money which supports a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of projects that have been implemented.

[EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund \(CWSRF\)](#) - EPA's CWSRF program has provided more than \$4.5 billion annually in recent years to fund water quality protection projects for wastewater treatment, stormwater management, nonpoint source pollution control, and watershed and estuary management. View the CWSRF document: [Green Infrastructure Approaches to Managing Wet Weather with Clean Water State Revolving Funds \(PDF\)](#)

[EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment \(CARE\) Grants](#) - The U.S. EPA CARE Cooperative Agreement Request for Proposals (RFP) supports community-based partnerships to reduce pollution at the local level. Eligible applicants include county and local governments, tribes, non-profit organizations, and universities.

[EPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds \(OWOW\) Funding](#) - OWOW has created this website to provide tools, databases, and information about sources of funding to practitioners and funders that serve to protect watersheds.

[Appalachian Regional Commission](#) – Each year the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) provides funding for several hundred projects in the Appalachian Region in a wide range of program areas including community infrastructure and asset-based development.

[DOE Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program](#) – The Department of Energy's Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program provides grants, technical assistance, and information tools to states, local governments, community action agencies, utilities, Indian tribes, and overseas U.S. territories for their energy programs. The program could be used to encourage green infrastructure as part of the weatherization process.

[DOI Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program](#) – The mission of the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) is to assist community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. RTCA staff provide guidance to communities so that they can conserve waterways, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.

[DOT Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\)](#) – The Federal Highway Administration's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) activities offer funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through [12 eligible TE activities](#) related to surface transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. These activities could include green infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff.

[EDA Funding Opportunities](#) - The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides grants to support a range of business and industrial development activities that create or retain jobs, including infrastructure development. EDA also capitalizes Revolving Loan Funds to encourage new business development activity in economically distressed communities.

[HUD Community Development Block Grant Program](#) - The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that works to ensure decent affordable housing, provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities, and create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses. CDBG-financed projects could incorporate green infrastructure into their design and construction. Chicago, for example, has used CDBG to put a new green roof on its historic Cultural Center.

[HUD Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program](#) – The Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program allows future Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocations to be used to guarantee loans for neighborhood revitalization projects, including construction or installation of public facilities and infrastructure. Section 108-guaranteed projects could incorporate green infrastructure into their design and construction.

[HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants](#) - The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program supports metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: (1) economic competitiveness and revitalization; (2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; (3) energy use and climate change; and (4) public health and environmental impact.

[USDA National Urban and Community Forestry Program](#) - The US Forest Service's National Urban and Community Forestry Program seeks to establish sustainable community forests that improve the public's health, well-being, and economic vitality, and create resilient ecosystems for present and future generations. When funds are available, the program offers cost-share grants to support urban and community forestry projects that have national or multi-state application and impact.

[Rural Development Community Facilities Loans and Grants](#) - The Department of Agriculture's Community Programs provide loans and grants and loan guarantees for water and environmental projects, as well as community facilities projects. Water and environmental projects include water systems, waste systems, solid waste, and storm drainage facilities. Community facilities projects develop essential community facilities for public use in rural areas and may include hospitals, fire protection, safety, as well as many other community-based initiatives.

Tax Incentive Programs - Some tax incentive programs administered by federal agencies can be used to attract financing to green infrastructure projects. Below are two examples of programs whose missions are broad enough to support green infrastructure projects.

- Department of Energy administers a range of [energy efficiency tax incentives](#), and green infrastructure could be integrated into project design to claim the incentive. An example of how this might work is found in Oregon's Energy Efficiency Construction Credits. In Eugene, Oregon, a new biofuel station built on an abandoned gas station site included a green roof, bioswales and other urban landscaping. In this case, nearly \$250,000 worth of tax credits reduced income and sales tax for the private company that built and operated the project.
- Department of Treasury administers the multi-billion dollar [New Markets Tax Credit program](#), which encourages private investment for a range of project types (typically real estate or business development projects) in distressed areas. Awards are allocated to non-profit and private entities based on their proposals for distributing these tax benefits.

Please see for additional information: http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/gi_munichandbook_funding.pdf

http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/gi_munichandbook_incentives.pdf

Alabama Power's Good Roots Grants Program, in partnership with the Alabama Urban Forestry Association, awards up to \$1,000 per grant to help cities and nonprofit organizations plant trees and keep communities beautiful and vibrant. The foundation provides grants to cities, towns and nonprofits to purchase trees and improve communities. This year, the foundation has awarded 38 grants totalling more than \$33,000. To date, the foundation has awarded more than \$650,000 in Good Roots grants. There are also grants offered from Arbor Day Foundation and Keep America Beautiful for tree planting programs.

NEA Our Town grants:

<http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction>

OUR TOWN: Introduction

Art works to support creative, economically-competitive, healthy, resilient, and opportunity-rich communities. Excellent art is an essential part of building a strong community, as important as land-use, transportation, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety. Artists and community development practitioners across our nation --sometimes one and the same, sometimes working together -- are striving to make places more livable with enhanced quality of life, increased creative activity, a distinct sense of place, and vibrant local economies that together capitalize on their existing assets. The NEA defines these efforts as *Creative Placemaking*.

Through Our Town, subject to the availability of funding, the National Endowment for the Arts will provide a limited number of grants for creative placemaking projects that contribute towards the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Our Town prioritizes partnerships between arts organizations and government, private, and nonprofit organizations to achieve livability goals for communities.

Our Town offers support for projects in two areas:

- **Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects** that represent the distinct character and quality of their communities
- **Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking**

Through Our Town projects, the NEA intends to achieve the following outcome: *Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts*. See "Intended NEA Outcome" for more details.

Go to our new [Exploring Our Town](#) online resource, which includes case studies of more than 60 Our Town grants with an insights section of lessons learned.

- See more at: <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction#sthash.o95VWuti.dpuf>

OUR TOWN: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects - Grant Program Description

Arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and be carried out by a local government entity in partnership with a nonprofit organization.

Projects

The Arts Endowment plans to support a variety of projects across the country in urban and rural communities of all sizes. Please review the [list of grants](#) on our website to see the types of projects that have been funded recently through Our Town. You might also want to look at examples of projects in the online storybook of Our Town projects called '[Exploring Our Town](#).' While these grants are illustrative, they represent only a sample of the types of projects that Our Town supports.

Projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and must reflect the following:

- A vision for enhancing the livability of the community.
- A systemic approach to equitable civic development.
- Support for artists, design professionals, and arts organizations by integrating the arts and design into the fabric of civic life.

Projects may include arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects such as:

Arts Engagement

Arts engagement projects support artistically excellent artistic production or practice as the focus of creative placemaking work.

- Innovative programming that fosters interaction among community members, arts organizations, and artists, or activates existing cultural and community assets.
- Festivals and performances that activate spaces not normally used for such purposes.
- Public art that improves public spaces and strategically reflects or shapes the physical and social character of a community.

Cultural Planning

Cultural planning projects support the development of artistically excellent local support systems necessary for creative placemaking to succeed.

- Creative asset mapping.
- Cultural district planning.
- The development of master plans or community-wide strategies for public art.
- Support for creative entrepreneurship.
- Creative industry cluster/hub development.

Design

Design projects that demonstrate artistic excellence while supporting the development of places where creative activities occur, or where the identity of place is created or reinforced.

- Design of public spaces, e.g., parks, plazas, landscapes, neighborhoods, districts, infrastructure, bridges, and artist-produced elements of streetscapes.
- Community engagement activities including design charrettes, design competitions, and community design workshops.
- Design of rehearsal, studio, or live/work spaces for artists.
- Design of cultural spaces – new or adaptive reuse.

We understand that creative placemaking projects are often multi-year, large-scale initiatives. Please specify in your application which phase or phases of your project are included in your request for NEA funding. All phases of a project -- except for those for facilities noted below -- are eligible for support. The NEA reserves the right to limit its support of a project to a particular phase(s) or cost(s). All costs included in your Project Budget must be expended during your period of support.

Where appropriate, Our Town applications should demonstrate how the project will align with other place-based federal grant programs and policies, including, but not limited to, those from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), such as Consolidated Plans, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Long Range Transportation Plans, and Asset Management Plans.

If relevant to your project, you will be required to provide information in accordance with the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) and/or the [National Historic Preservation Act](#).

Partnerships

A key to the success of creative placemaking is involving the arts in partnership with committed governmental and private sector leadership. All applications must demonstrate a partnership that will provide leadership for the project. These partnerships must involve two primary partners: 1) nonprofit organization, and 2) local government entity, as defined by these guidelines. One of these two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. The highest ranking official of the local government is required to submit a formal statement of support designating the project as the only one being submitted for the local government. See "[How to Prepare and Submit an Application](#)" for more information.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as state level government agencies, foundations, arts organizations and artists, nonprofit organizations, design professionals and design centers, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, community organizations, council of governments, rural planning organizations, transportation agencies, special districts, educational organizations, as well as public and governmental entities.

You may find it helpful to contact your local arts agency as you begin the process within your community.

- See more at: <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/arts-engagement-cultural-planning-and-design-projects-grant-program-description#sthash.Qp3UuuDz.dpuf>

Streetscaping and Transportation Projects

Many of the improvements recommended in this report can be accomplished by means of public-private partnerships. Enhancements to existing streets will be accomplished in two ways:

- City initiated large street/streetscaping improvement projects that should be funded by both city sources and grant funding.
- Site based improvements that occur with new development projects on a site by site basis. Such improvements can include the provision of new sidewalks and landscaping improvements within the public ROW. These development standards work best where substantial tracts of undeveloped property are available along existing city streets.

Development standards that promote walkability and connectivity should be incorporated into the city's subdivision regulations so that new streets, whether constructed by the city or by a developer, are constructed in accordance with existing ordinances. A City-wide Thoroughfare Plan should be considered.

Lastly, the City should aggressively pursue grant opportunities that will promote the overall Master Plan. Below is a suggested list of some of the grants that are available for planning (downtown revitalization), infrastructure, and streetscaping improvements. **While new road construction projects are not usually competitive, infrastructure projects that promote or can be linked to economic development are very competitive.** Additional information relating to potential grants has been attached.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) - The EDA is an agency in the United States Department of Commerce that provides grants to economically distressed communities to support projects that will attract investment, generate new employment, help retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth.

<http://www.eda.gov/programs.htm>

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) – The Appalachian Regional Commission awards grants and contracts from funds appropriated to the Commission annually by Congress. ARC provides funding to state and local agencies and governmental entities (such as economic development authorities), local governing boards (such as county councils), and nonprofit organizations. ARC provides funds for basic infrastructure services, including water and sewer facilities that enhance economic development opportunities.

<http://www.arc.gov/funding/ARCGrantsandContracts.asp>

Department of Housing and Urban Development/Community Development Block Grant Program (HUD/CDBG) - The Community Development Block Grant Program is a program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development administered at the state level by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). This program provides funding for a variety of projects to include: infrastructure extension/rehabilitation, housing rehabilitation, neighborhood and downtown revitalization, street and drainage improvements, community planning activities, (comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization plans and regional plans) and business development projects that create or retain jobs. . <http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/cdp/Pages/CDBG.aspx>

Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) – The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a new program of the Federal Highway Administration administered by ALDOT. Funds may be used for projects or activities that are related to surface transportation to include: construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation; and construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs. https://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/enhancement_section.htm

Table 1 on the following page provides a matrix of sources for financing transportation improvements according to allowable activities under each funding source. The purpose of this table is to serve as a quick guide while looking for a funding source to cover a specific transportation activity.

Keys:

The following are the program keys for the table below.

- TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program
- RTP – Recreational Trails Program
- FH – Forest Highways
- PLHD – Public Lands Highways Discretionary
- PLHAP – Public Lands Highways Administration and Planning
- SRTS – Safe Routes to School (this program now housed under TAP)
- HSIP – Highway Safety Improvement Program
- CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program
- ER – Federal-aid Highway Emergency Relief Program
- USDA-CF – USDA Rural Development Housing & Community Facilities Programs
- ADHS – Appalachian Development Highway Program
- LARP – Local Access Road Program (ARC)
- CDBG – Community Development Block Grants
- AL-IARB – The Alabama Industrial Access Road and Bridge Program

***Please note that there are also green infrastructure grants for streetscaping and stormwater management offered by the EPA that are not included in the table below, but are discussed in detail above.**

Project Type	Programs													
	TAP	RTP	FH	PLHD	PLHAP	SRTS	HSIP	CMAQ	ER	USDA-CF	ADHS	LARP	CDBG	AL-IARB
Acquisition of Easements or Right of Way	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Parking			✓	✓						✓				
Sidewalks	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Crosswalks	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Signal Improvements	✓					✓	✓	✓						
Spot Improvements	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Curb Cuts and Ramps	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Paved Shoulders	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Other Safety Improvements							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Bicycle Lanes	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	
Bicycle Paths / Trails	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓					✓	
Shared Paths / Trails	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					✓	
Hike / Bike Trails	✓	✓												
Highway / Trail Intersection	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
Bike Racks on Buses	✓							✓						
Bicycle Parking	✓					✓		✓						
Bridge Construction / Improvements	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Highway / Rail Road Crossing						✓	✓		✓					
Traffic Calming						✓	✓	✓						
Maps						✓		✓						
Safety Education / Material	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						
Coordinator Position						✓		✓						
Training	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓						
Landscaping & Beautification	✓												✓	
Environmental Mitigation	✓							✓						
Transportation Planning			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	
Signage			✓	✓		✓	✓							
Emergency Repairs									✓				✓	
Road Construction									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*** Please note that utilities relocation is eligible under TAP and CDBG programs.*

Resources:

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):

- FHWA Guidance for Transportation Alternatives Program http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/
- State TA Program Details and Contact Information <http://www.enhancements.org/stateprofile>

Recreational Trails Program (RTP):

- FHWA Guidance for Recreation Trails Program <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/guidance.htm>.
- State RTP Program Details and Contact Information <http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/Recreation/Pages/default.aspx>

Federal Lands Highway Programs:

- FHWA Guidance for Federal Lands Highway Program <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/plh/>.
- State FLH Program Details and Contact Information from Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division <http://www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/>.

Safe Routes to School Program (now housed under TAP)

- FHWA Guidance for Safe Route to School Program <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/guidance/>.
- State SRTS Program Details and Contact Information <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts/alabama>

<http://saferoutestoschool.crdl.ua.edu/>

Highway Safety Improvement Program:

- FHWA Guidance for Highway Safety Improvement Program <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/>
- Intersection Safety Guidance and Manual <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/>

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ):

- FHWA Guidance for CMAQ Program http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/

Federal-aid Highway Emergency Relief Program:

- FHWA Emergency Relief Program Manual <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/erm/er.pdf>

USDA Rural Development Housing & Community Facilities Programs:

- USDA Guidance for Community Facilities Program http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF_CF.html

ARC - Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS):

- ARC Guidance for Appalachian Development Highway System <http://www.arc.gov/adhs>

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG):

- HUD Guidance for CDBG Program http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs
- State CDBG Program Guidance <http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/cdp/Pages/CDBG.aspx>

The Alabama Industrial Access Road and Bridge Program:

- ALDOT Guidance for Industrial Access Road and Bridge Program <https://www.dot.state.al.us/adweb/Industrial%20Access.htm>

Innovative Finance Resources:

- AASHTO Finance <http://www.transportation-finance.org/>

Advocacy Groups and Non-Profit Organizations:

- Traffic Calming Resources <http://www.trafficcalming.org/>
<http://www.stopspeeders.org/index.html>
http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/speedmgt/traffic_calm.cfm
- Pedestrians and Bicycle Information Center <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/>
- America Bikes – Advocating for Positive outcomes for bicycling in the Federal Transportation Bill <http://www.americabikes.org/index.html>.
- People for Bikes/ Bikes Belong Coalition <http://www.peopleforbikes.org/>
- The League of American Bicyclists <http://www.bikeleague.org/index.php>
- Active Living Resource Center <http://www.sustainable.org/living/education-training-and-lifelong-learning/196-active-living-resource-center-library>

<http://activelivingresearch.org/>

<http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/events-resources/resources/active-living-resource-center>

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>
- National Recreational Trails <http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/>
- Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/index.htm>

Programs:

Main Street Alabama Program

Contact: Ms. Mary M. Helmer, CMSM, P.O. Box 483, Birmingham, AL 35201

205-910-8819, <http://www.mainstreetalabama.org/become-a-mainstreet-community.php>

Main Street Alabama began in 2009 and incorporated in 2010 to serve as state coordinator of the Main Street program. It follows a 30-year-old model for community revitalization that has seen great success nationwide. A nonprofit organization, Main Street Alabama stresses public-private partnerships, broad community engagement, and strategies that create jobs, spark new investment, attract visitors, and spur growth. Main Street builds on the authentic history, culture, and attributes of specific places, to bring sustainable change.

Main Street programs are locally driven, funded, organized, and run. They are independent nonprofits or city agencies located in the community and affiliated with the statewide coordinating Main Street organization and a network of other Main Street organizations within the state. Typically, interest in developing a local Main Street program comes from business or property owners, city government, bankers, civic clubs, the chamber of commerce, historic preservationists, or other civic-minded groups. They contact the statewide coordinating Main Street organization to find out about the application process, discuss goals, establish an organization (Main Street programs are usually independent, nonprofit organizations), raise money to hire a Main Street director, and create volunteer committees and a board of directors to carry out the work. Once the program has been established, Main Street Alabama will work with the local community to examine the commercial district's needs and opportunities and develop a long-term, incremental strategy based on the Main Street Four-Point Approach™. Main Street Alabama provides consulting services, support, training, materials, and information to assist a revitalization organization throughout its growth.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program & Local Preservation Tools

Preservation through Partnership: this is the goal of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program. Local, State, and Federal governments work together in the Federal Preservation Program to help communities save the irreplaceable historic character of places. Through the certification process, communities make a local commitment to historic preservation. This commitment is key to America's ability to preserve, protect, and increase awareness of our unique cultural heritage found in the built environment across the country.

How

Jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), each local community works through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Once certified CLGs become an active partner in the Federal Historic Preservation Program. Each community gains access to benefits of the program and agrees to follow required Federal and State requirements. See [How To Become a CLG](#).

Why

Community certification opens doors to funding, technical assistance, and other preservation successes.

- **Funding:** States receive annual appropriations from the Federal Historic Preservation Fund. States are required to give at least 10% of their funding to CLGs as subgrants. These grants can fund a wide variety of projects including: surveys, National Register nominations, rehabilitation work, design guidelines, educational programs, training, structural assessments, and feasibility studies, to name a few.
- **Technical Assistance:** As a CLG, communities have direct access to SHPO staff for assistance with their commission, building assessments, surveys and nominations, and general preservation assistance. State staff and NPS offer regular training for CLGs as well, an added benefit of the partnership. Each SHPO has a designated CLG Coordinator.
- **Sustainability:** Historic preservation has proven economic, environmental, and social benefits. Studies show that historic districts maintain higher property values, less population decline, more walkability and greater sense of community.

Being a CLG demonstrates your community's commitment to saving what is important from the past for future generations. As a certified community it becomes easy to demonstrate a readiness to take on successful preservation projects, making your community able to compete for new opportunities.

Policy Guidance on the Use of CDBG Funds for Small Business Incubators

Incubators which offer both space and business assistance to small businesses are quickly gaining in popularity, especially in smaller communities. If there is a sufficient demand for such a facility in a community and then it is planned, executed and operated by experts, incubators can be very effective in promoting and developing all and new businesses which is where the majority of all new jobs in the U.S. are currently being created. Communities can also convert underutilized properties in their inventories into incubators.

This notice explains how Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds can be used for the development and operation of an incubator, or for an individual business housed within an incubator. This guidance applies to both the Entitlement and the State CDBG program. The portion of this guidance that describes how to meet the national objective of benefiting low and moderate income persons through job creation will likely be applicable to most of the assisted activities, yet this is the most complex part of the guidance. Accordingly, prior to the provision of assistance, the feasibility of the incubator and the ability of the CDBG recipient to meet all of the program requirements should be carefully analyzed. Furthermore, a necessary or appropriate determination is required whenever assistance is provided to an operator of a for-profit incubator or to a for-profit business within an incubator.

Although it is recognized that CDBG funds have already been used to assist some incubators, this guidance will apply only to those activities for which CDBG funds are first obligated at least 30 days after the issue date of this notice. Incubator activities that were funded before this time should continue to comply with prior guidance disseminated by HUD. This notice should be used in conjunction with the memoranda from Jack R. Stokvis, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, on economic development activities dated May 19, 1987 and June 2, 1987, for the State and the Entitlement programs.

Incubators are multi-tenant buildings that provide affordable, flexible space along with a variety of office and professional services to small and/or new businesses. Incubators are different from other types of commercial and industrial facilities in that their purpose is to create an atmosphere conducive to the creation and growth of fledgling businesses. Incubators can be either for-profit or non-profit, and their developers typically focus on either generating a financial profit or new jobs.

CDBG funds can be provided either to the developer or operator of an incubator, or to one or more of the businesses located within the incubator, as long as the activity is eligible and meets one of the program's national objectives. The guidance provided here should be used in conjunction with the two CDBG memoranda on economic development dated May 19, 1987 and June 2, 1987.

Examples of Eligible Activities

A wide range of activities that pertain to the development and operation of an incubator or to a business within an incubator are eligible for CDBG funding. Examples of these types of activities are listed below with citations to the CDBG regulations at 24 CFR Part 570, Subpart C:

- acquisition of land and buildings for an incubator (570.201(a); 570.203(a,b)),
- architectural, engineering and design costs for any construction or rehabilitation of an incubator (570.201(c); 570.202; 570.203(a,b)),
- construction of a new incubator (570.201(c); 570.203(a,b)),
- demolition of existing buildings to clear land for an incubator (570.201(b); 570.203(a,b)),
- rehabilitation, preservation, or renovation of existing buildings for use as incubators (570.201(c); 570.202(b, d, e); 570.203(a,b)),
- public improvements integral to an incubator including curbs, gutters, water/sewer improvements, street improvements, and lighting (570.201(c)),

- development of feasibility studies, business assistance strategies, market assessments, and tenant selection plans either for a specific business (570.203(b)), or as part of the grantee's incubator project plans (570.205(a)(4)(iii)),
- operational costs, such as utilities and maintenance, and equipment for an incubator or a business within the incubator (570.203(b)), and
- technical assistance (570.203(b)).

Prior to the provision of CDBG funded financial or technical assistance to a for-profit business for economic development activities, the grantee must carry out a "necessary or appropriate" determination in which the amount of assistance relative to the needs of the business and the public benefit to be gained are considered.

Documenting Eligibility: Documentation must be maintained verifying that each assisted activity is eligible; this includes maintaining records for each "necessary or appropriate" determination. For this determination the grantee's records must contain the required analysis of the business' need for assistance as well as the public benefit factors considered in making the decision that assistance is necessary or appropriate.

Meeting a National Objective: To qualify for CDBG funding, each assisted activity must meet one of the national objectives of the CDBG program. Assistance for the development and operation of an incubator or s within an incubator must either benefit low and ome persons, or prevent or eliminate slums or blight (24 CFR Par). Because of the nature and function of incubators and the businesses within them, it is highly unlikely that an activity would ever meet the urgent needs objective.

I. As with any other business assistance, the low and moderate income persons benefit objective may be met by either the creation/retention of jobs or the provision of services to an area containing a sufficient concentration of low and moderate income residents.

When CDBG assistance is provided directly to a business in an incubator, each such business must meet the objective independently from the other businesses in the incubator.

When CDBG funds are used to assist the incubator operator rather than any of the businesses therein, the objective based on jobs creation/retention may be met by considering all of the businesses in the incubator in the aggregate. Specifically, the objective may be met by aggregating the jobs from all of the businesses initially occupying the incubator, using the following ground rules:

1. Firms "initially occupying" the incubator are:

- those businesses that occupy space in the incubator at the time the CDBG assistance is provided, PLUS
- any other firms that move into the incubator after the assistance has been provided until enough firms are included in this count so that the total amount of space these firms occupy (or occupied) is equal to the total square footage of space in the incubator.

2. Count jobs created by each business described above as follows:

- for those businesses already housed in the facility when the assistance is provided, count the jobs created for three years from the date of the assistance OR until the business moves out of the incubator, whichever comes first,
- for those businesses that enter the facility subsequent to the time of the provision of assistance, count the jobs created over a three year period from the date of their initial occupancy OR until the business moves out of the incubator, whichever occurs first.

3. To help ensure that each business fulfills its responsibilities for meeting its share of the low/mod job requirements and for maintaining the necessary records and providing periodic reports, the agreement between the operator of the incubator and the business should specify these requirements and describe the financial penalties or lease termination if the requirements are not met.
4. Include in the count any jobs created or retained by the incubator and the business, but exclude any positions held by the business owners and any others having a substantial equity in the business.

II. Under the slums/blight objective, the assistance may be for the development of an incubator facility:

1. Which is or will be in a slum or blighted area, if the assistance is for an activity which addresses at least one of the conditions which qualified the area as such (e.g., rehabilitation of a blighted building), or
2. Located outside of a slum or blighted area, if the assistance is for demolition, rehabilitation, or historic preservation designed to eliminate specific conditions of blight or physical decay on a spot basis. Under this criterion, rehabilitation is limited to the extent necessary to eliminate specific conditions detrimental to public health and safety. Relocation and property acquisition activities may also be assisted if they are an integral part of the demolition, rehabilitation or historic preservation activities.

Documentation on Meeting National Objectives: Grantees are required to maintain documentation demonstrating that each activity assisted with CDBG funding meets one of the national objectives:

- Low/Mod Jobs Benefit: When CDBG assistance is to be provided to a business on the basis of low/mod job creation/retention, the grantee should enter into a written agreement with the business prior to the provision of assistance to ensure that adequate documentation will be maintained to show the number and types of jobs created (both projected and actual), what hiring process was used, which low and moderate income persons were interviewed for which jobs, and which of the low and moderate income interviewees were hired.

A "first source" hiring agreement can be incorporated in the standard lease with each assisted business. These agreements obligate the business to go to a state, county or local government agency, or a Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) entity first when new jobs become available, and to give serious consideration to hiring low and moderate income applicants referred by such entities. The assisted business should be required to maintain documentation on which of these referrals were interviewed, whether or not they were offered a job, and which accepted a job with the business.

- Low/Mod Area Benefit: Documentation must identify the service area of the activity and show that the required percentage of the residents of this area are of low and moderate income. When CDBG assistance is provided to an individual business, these records must be maintained only for that business. When assistance is provided to the operator of the incubator, records documenting compliance with this benefit objective must be maintained for each firm initially occupying the incubator.

- Area Slums/Blight Objective: The documentation that is required to show that this objective has been met includes a designation of the boundaries of the area, a description of the conditions which qualified the area at the time of its designation, identification of the factors that qualified it under the state or local law (including the applicable statutory citation), and the way in which the assisted activity addresses one or more of the conditions which qualified the area as slum or blighted.

- Spot Slums/Blight Objective: The records to be maintained to show how this objective has been met are: (1) A description of the specific condition of blight or physical decay that was treated; (2) For rehabilitation carried out under this category, a description of the specific conditions detrimental to public health and safety which were corrected, and (3) Details and scope of CDBG assisted rehabilitation, by structure.

Alabama Code - Part 1: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ALA CODE § 45-8A-20.03 : Alabama Code - Section 45-8A-20.03: FILING OF APPLICATION; AUTHORIZATION OF INCORPORATION BY GOVERNING BODY OF CITY

(a) The authority may be organized pursuant to the provisions of this part. In order to incorporate such a public corporation, any number of natural persons, not less than three, who are duly qualified electors of the city, shall first file a written application with the governing body of the city, which application shall:

(1) Contain a statement that the applicants propose to incorporate the authority pursuant to the provisions of this part;

(2) State the proposed location of the principal office of the authority, which shall be within the corporate limits of the city;

(3) State that each of the applicants is a duly qualified elector of the city; and

(4) Request that the governing body of the city adopt a resolution declaring that it is wise, expedient, and necessary that the proposed authority be formed and authorizing the applicants to proceed to form the proposed authority by the filing for record of a certificate of incorporation in accordance with Section 45-8A-20.04.

(b) Each such application shall be accompanied by such supporting documents or evidence as the applicants may consider appropriate. As promptly as may be practicable after the filing of the application with it in accordance with the provisions of this section, the governing body of the city shall review the contents of the application, and shall adopt a resolution either (1) denying the application or (2) declaring that it is wise, expedient, and necessary that the proposed authority be formed and authorizing the applicants to proceed to form the proposed authority by the filing for record of a certificate of incorporation in accordance with the provisions of Section 45-8A-20.04. The governing body with which the application is filed shall also cause a copy of the application to be spread upon or otherwise made a part of the minutes of the meeting of such governing body at which final action upon the application is taken.

(Act 85-319, p. 239, §4.)

ALA CODE § 45-8A-20 : Alabama Code - Section 45-8A-20: LEGISLATIVE INTENT

Example – Anniston, AL

The revitalization and redevelopment of the central business district of the City of Anniston in Calhoun County develops and promotes for the public good and general welfare, trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities and promotes the general welfare of the city and state by creating a climate favorable to the location of new industry, trade, and commerce, and the development of existing industry, trade, and commerce. Revitalization and redevelopment of such central business district by financing projects under this part will develop and promote for the public good and general welfare, trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities and will promote the general welfare of the city and state. It is therefore in the public interest and is vital to the public welfare of the people of Anniston and of Alabama, and it is hereby declared to be the public purpose of this part, to so revitalize and redevelop the central business district of the City of Anniston. - See more at: <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/alcode/45/8A/2/1/45-8A-20#sthash.x1bC5Mj5.dpuf>

ALA CODE § 45-8A-20.04 : Alabama Code - Section 45-8A-20.04: PROCEDURE TO INCORPORATE; CONTENTS AND EXECUTION OF CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

(a) Within 40 days following the adoption of the authorizing resolution the applicants shall proceed to incorporate the authority by filing for record in the office of the Judge of Probate of Calhoun County a certificate of incorporation which shall comply in form and substance with the requirements of this section and which shall be in the form and executed in the manner herein provided.

(b) The certificate of incorporation of the authority shall state:

- (1) The names of the persons forming the authority, and that each of them is a duly qualified elector of the city;
- (2) The name of the authority, which shall be "The Anniston Downtown Development Authority";
- (3) The period for the duration of the authority (if the duration is to be perpetual, subject to the provisions of Section 45-8A-20.19, that fact shall be stated);
- (4) The name of the city together with the date on which the governing body thereof adopted the authorizing resolution;
- (5) The location of the principal office of the authority, which shall be within the corporate limits of the city;
- (6) That the authority is organized pursuant to the provisions of this part; and
- (7) Any other matters relating to the authority that the incorporators may choose to insert and that are not inconsistent with this part or with the laws of the state.

(c) The certificate of incorporation shall be signed and acknowledged by the incorporators before an officer authorized by the laws of the state to take acknowledgments to deeds. When the certificate of incorporation is filed for record, there shall be attached to it (1) a copy of the application as filed with the governing body of the city in accordance with the provisions of Section 45-8A-20.03, and (2) a certified copy of the authorizing resolution adopted by the governing body of the city. Upon the filing for record of the said certificate of incorporation and the documents required by the preceding sentence to be attached thereto, the authority shall come into existence and shall constitute a public corporation under the name set forth in the certificate of incorporation. The judge of probate shall thereupon send a notice to the Secretary of State that the certificate of incorporation of the authority has been filed for record.

(Act 85-319, p. 239, §5.)

ALA CODE § 45-8A-20.08 : Alabama Code - Section 45-8A-20.08: POWERS OF AUTHORITY

(a) The authority shall have the following powers, together with all powers incidental thereto or necessary to the discharge thereof in corporate form:

- (1) To have succession by its corporate name for the duration of time (which may be perpetuity, subject to the provisions of Section 45-8A-20.19) specified in its certificate of incorporation;
- (2) To sue and be sued in its own name and to prosecute and defend civil actions in any court having jurisdiction of the subject matter and of the parties;
- (3) To adopt and make use of a corporate seal and to alter the same at pleasure;

(4) To adopt and alter bylaws for the regulation and conduct of its affairs and business;

(5) To acquire, whether by purchase, construction, exchange, gift, lease, or otherwise and to refinance existing indebtedness on, improve, maintain, equip, and furnish one or more projects, including all real and personal properties which the board of the authority may deem necessary in connection therewith, regardless of whether or not any such projects shall then be in existence;

(6) To lease to others any or all of its projects and to charge and collect rent therefor, and to terminate any such lease upon the failure of the lessee to comply with any of the obligations thereof;

(7) To sell, exchange, donate, or convey and to grant options to any lessee to acquire any of its projects and any or all of its properties whenever its board shall find any such action to be in furtherance of the purposes for which the authority was organized;

(8) To issue its bonds for the purpose of carrying out any of its powers;

(9) To mortgage and pledge any or all of its projects or any part or parts thereof, as security for the payment of the principal of and interest on any bonds so issued and any agreements made in connection therewith, whether then owned or thereafter acquired, and to pledge the revenues and receipts therefrom or from any thereof;

(10) To execute and deliver, in accordance with the provisions of this section and Section 45-8A-20.09, mortgages and deeds of trust and trust indentures, or either;

(11) To finance (by loan, grant, lease, or otherwise), construct, erect, assemble, purchase, acquire, own, repair, remodel, renovate, rehabilitate, modify, maintain, extend, improve, install, sell, equip, expand, add to, operate, or manage projects and to pay the cost of any project from the proceeds of bonds, or any other funds of the authority, or from any contributions or loans by persons, corporations, partnerships (limited or general), or other entities, all of which the authority is hereby authorized to receive and accept and use;

(12) To issue and use the proceeds thereof for the purpose of paying, or loaning the proceeds thereof to pay all or any part of the cost of any project and otherwise to further or carry out the public purpose of the authority and to pay all costs of the authority incident to, or necessary and appropriate to, furthering or carrying out such purpose;

(13) To make application directly or indirectly to any federal, state, county, or municipal government or agency or to any other source, public or private, for loans, grants, guarantees, or other financial assistance in furtherance of the authority's public purpose and to accept and use the same upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed by such federal, state, county, or municipal government or agency or other source;

(14) To enter into agreements with the federal government or any agency thereof to use the facilities or the services of the federal government or any agency thereof in order to further or carry out the public purposes of the authority;

(15) To contract for any period with the State of Alabama state institutions or any city, town, municipality, or county of the state for the use by the authority of any facilities or services of the state or any such state institution, city, town, municipality, or county, or for the use by any state institution or any city, town, municipality, or county of any facilities or services of the authority, provided such contracts shall deal with such activities and transactions as the authority and any such political subdivision with which the authority contracts are by law authorized to undertake;

(16) To extend credit or make loans to any person, corporation, partnership (limited or general), or other entity for the costs of any project or any part of the costs of any project, which credit or loans may be evidenced or secured by loan agreements, notes, mortgages, deeds to secure debt, trust deeds, security agreements, assignments, or such other instruments, or

by rentals, revenues, fees, or charges, upon such terms and conditions as the authority shall determine to be reasonable in connection with such extension of credit or loans including provision for the establishment and maintenance of reserve funds, and, in the exercise of powers granted hereby in connection with any project, the authority shall have the right and power to require the inclusion in any such loan agreement, note, mortgage, deed to secure debt, trust deed, security agreement, assignment, or other instrument of such provisions or requirements for guaranty of any obligations, insurance, construction, use, operation, maintenance, and financing of a project, and such other terms and conditions, as the authority may deem necessary or desirable;

(17) To acquire, accept, or retrain equitable interests, security interests or other interests in any real property, personal property or fixtures by loan agreement, note, mortgage, deed to secure debt, trust deed, security agreement, assignment, pledge, conveyance, contract, lien, loan agreement, or other consensual transfer in order to secure the repayment of any monies loaned or credit extended by the authority;

(18) To appoint, employ, contract with, and provide for the compensation of, such officers, employees, and agents, including but without limitation to engineers, attorneys, contractors, consultants, and fiscal advisors, as the board shall deem necessary for the conduct of the business of the authority;

(19) To provide for such insurance as the board may deem advisable;

(20) To make, enter into, and execute such contracts, agreements, leases, and other instruments and to take such other actions as may be necessary or convenient to accomplish any purpose for which the authority was organized or to exercise any power expressly granted hereunder;

(21) To require payments in lieu of taxes to be made by the lessee of the project to either the authority or the city;

(22) To receive and use the proceeds of any tax levied by a municipal corporation to pay the costs of any project or for any other purpose for which the authority may use its own funds pursuant to this part;

(23) To encourage and promote the improvement and revitalization of the downtown development area and to make, contract for or otherwise cause to be made long-range plans or proposals for the downtown development area in cooperation with the city or Calhoun County;

(24) To exercise any power granted by the laws of the State of Alabama to public or private corporations which is not in conflict with the public purpose of the authority; and

(25) To do all things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers conferred by this part.

(b) All projects of the authority shall be located wholly within the corporate limits of the city and shall be in the downtown development area, which area shall be established by an ordinance of the city governing body. *(Act 85-319, p. 239, §9.)*

See All Other Sections:

Section 45-8A-20 LEGISLATIVE INTENT

Section 45-8A-20.01 DEFINITIONS

Section 45-8A-20.02 USE OF PHRASES

Section 45-8A-20.03 FILING OF APPLICATION; AUTHORIZATION OF INCORPORATION BY GOVERNING BODY OF CITY

Section 45-8A-20.04 PROCEDURE TO INCORPORATE; CONTENTS AND EXECUTION OF CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

Section 45-8A-20.05 AMENDMENTS TO CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
Section 45-8A-20.06 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Section 45-8A-20.07 OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY
Section 45-8A-20.08 POWERS OF AUTHORITY
Section 45-8A-20.09 BONDS OF AUTHORITY
Section 45-8A-20.10 PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF BONDS
Section 45-8A-20.11 REFUNDING BONDS
Section 45-8A-20.12 NOTICE OF BOND RESOLUTION
Section 45-8A-20.13 EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION
Section 45-8A-20.14 LIABILITY OF CITY
Section 45-8A-20.15 EXEMPTION FROM USURY AND INTEREST LAWS
Section 45-8A-20.16 EXEMPTION FROM COMPETITIVE BID LAWS
Section 45-8A-20.17 FREEDOM OF AUTHORITY FROM STATE SUPERVISION AND CONTROL
Section 45-8A-20.18 EARNINGS OF THE AUTHORITY
Section 45-8A-20.19 DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION AND VESTING OF TITLE TO PROPERTY IN THE CITY
Section 45-8A-20.20 EXISTENCE OF THE AUTHORITY TO PREVENT INCORPORATION OF ANOTHER BY THE CITY
Section 45-8A-20.21 POWER OF EMINENT DOMAIN
Section 45-8A-20.22 LOANS, SALES, GRANTS, ETC., OF MONEY PROPERTY, ETC. TO AUTHORITY BY COUNTIES, MUNICIPALITIES, ETC

See more at: <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/alcode/45/8A/2/1#sthash.eUZtAWju.dpuf>

EXAMPLE Façade Improvement Grant - Dothan, Alabama

FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT POLICY- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Administered By: Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Financial Assistance Provided Through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development/CDBG

OVERVIEW

The City of Dothan is receiving annual entitlement grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Housing and City Development Act of 1974 as amended. The Board of City Commissioners of the City of Dothan has determined that a part of the annual grant is to be set aside and used to conduct façade improvements that will benefit qualified businesses in a designated target area. This area includes commercial buildings facing the streets of Foster Street on the west, E. Crawford Street to the south, Museum Ave. to N. Appletree on the east, and Depot St. over to N. Foster to the north. This policy is adopted to set forth the procedures and guidelines under which this program will be conducted. It is meant to remain in force and effect from program year to program year unless amended or rescinded by the Board of City Commissioners. The Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority administers this program.

FACADE IMPROVEMENT – PURPOSE AND DEFINITION:

The purpose of the façade improvement program is to encourage economic development in targeted areas. The term “façade improvement” as used herein is defined as: General upgrading of a building’s external appearance with the façade being visible from the street.

Limitations:

- The façade improvement must be visible from the street.
- The target area is included in a Historic District and façade improvements may therefore be required to be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
- The maximum grant amount of \$5,000 will be matched dollar for dollar by the owner or other person who has permission to make such an improvement.
- An applicant may apply once per year per physical address.

If physical addresses are for a conjoining structure, the façade must not conflict with the rest of the structure.

- The building will not be required to be occupied to be eligible but must be in adequate condition to be occupied at the time of the application.
- The façade improvement upon completion must be maintained for a three-year term. The sale of the building during this term will result in a prorated amount being refunded to the City's CDBG program by the applicant.

Below are examples of eligible work, which include but are not limited to the following:

Permanent exterior improvements, including:

- Masonry repairs and tuck-pointing;
- Repair/replace/preserve historically significant architectural details;
- Storefront reconstruction;
- Cornice repair;
- Exterior painting and stucco;
- Awnings and canopies;
- Window and door repair or replacement;
- Permanent exterior signage;
- Permanent exterior lighting in relation to façade;
- Repair/replacement of gutters and down spouts;
- Visible roof repairs in conjunction with structural improvements;
- Decking and stairs;

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Dothan Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Façade Improvement Program is administered by the Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DDRA) by direct assignment from the Dothan Board of City Commissioners. By law, the Dothan Board of City Commissioners must administer the program through assignment and adoption of this policy.

APPLICANT SELECTION

Final determination of priority for each applicant for façade improvement participation will be based on numerical assignment after initial processing has been completed, and the applicant has provided essential documentation.

POLICY PROCEDURES

Outlined below are the eligibility and procedural guidelines that will be used in the Façade Improvement Program.

A. Eligibility Requirements:

In order to participate in the Façade Improvement Program an applicant must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

Business Owner/Building Owner

The applicant must be the owner of the building or have permission from the owner to make the improvements.

2. Taxes— All property taxes of the building must be current. There must not be any IRS tax liens attached to the property.

3. Location — The building must be within the target area. It may face the roads that are the boundaries of the target area.

4. Façade Improvement — The building must meet the definition and limitations as contained in this policy.

5. Matching Funds — Progressive payments will be made to applicants in minimum increments of \$500 (minimum paid bills submitted \$1,000) until the \$5,000 grant limit has been reached.

6. Entities — Both non-profit and for-profit entities qualify may apply for this program.

B. Applications— Advertisements, public service announcements, and other media may be utilized in making places of application acceptance known. CDBG staff personnel will assist in application preparation, as well as to answer any question an applicant might have concerning the program. Application forms will be available and each applicant must sign the form acknowledging that the information given is true to the best of his/her knowledge. All applications will be kept in strictest confidence and used only by the DDRA and CDBG staff.

C. Application Processing— Each application accepted will be reviewed in phases in order to eliminate those applicants who are clearly not eligible for program participation for any number of stated reasons. In every case, each applicant will be notified within four weeks of application submission in writing as to the status of the application and reasons relating to that status. Phases of the application on processing follow:

1. Ownership— Each applicant must provide a copy of the deed to the property or other documentation indicating permission to improve the façade.
2. Preliminary Review —The CDBG staff will review each completed application to determine the applicant's ownership/permission status and the condition of the building.
3. Plan, Estimate, Timeline—Applicants will need to submit a plan of the improvements with a cost estimate and expected timeline with the application.
4. Historic Preservation Commission Approval—If applicable, those applicants who pass the preliminary review will need to obtain approval for the façade improvements by the Historic Preservation Commission before their application can be finalized. A copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness will then need to be submitted to CDBG staff.
5. Final Application Approval—Based on the results of all steps above the final approval of an eligible application will be made by the Planning and Development Director of the City of Dothan on the recommendation of the CDBG staff. Applicants shall be notified by letter of approval for the grant amount.

D. Contracting—All contractors used for the façade improvement program must be licensed to do business in the City of Dothan. At the time of contract award the funds for the grant will be designated for contract payment. Funds may be dispensed according to contract progress. During construction, the CDBG staff may conduct periodic inspections to ensure general contract compliance, but does not guarantee the work of the contractor. During construction the applicant may request progress payments based on paid invoices. The amount of 50% of paid invoices submitted will be paid to the applicant. These payments will be made in \$500 minimum increments as invoices are submitted until the maximum grant amount is paid. The final payment may be in an amount less than \$500 if applicable.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A. General

Any person who believes he has been aggrieved by;

1. Determination by CDBG or DDRA staff as to eligibility, or
 2. A failure on the part of the CDBG or DDRA staff to correctly carry out his/her responsibilities in connection with the inspection and work write-up, or eligibility verification process (excluding contractor performance which is to be conducted under contract procedures),
- may file a complaint and have his case reviewed by the CDBG Administrator.

B. Methods of Presentation by Claimant

1. Oral: A person may talk over his case either alone or with the assistance of another person with the CDBG Administrator within the time limits set forth below in section C. This oral presentation does not preclude the making of a written presentation. The oral presentation will be allowed within 15 days of the making of such request.
2. Written: If the claimant does not receive satisfaction from an oral presentation, or should he desire to forego the oral presentation, a written statement of his beliefs as to what he desires may be made to the CDBG Administrator.

C. Time Limits for Making Complaints

Generally speaking, a complaint may be filed for review no later than 90 days after the date that a person is informed of ineligibility or the person alleges that the CDBG or DDRA Staff failed to correctly carry out responsibilities. Extensions of time limits may be granted for good cause on an individual basis.

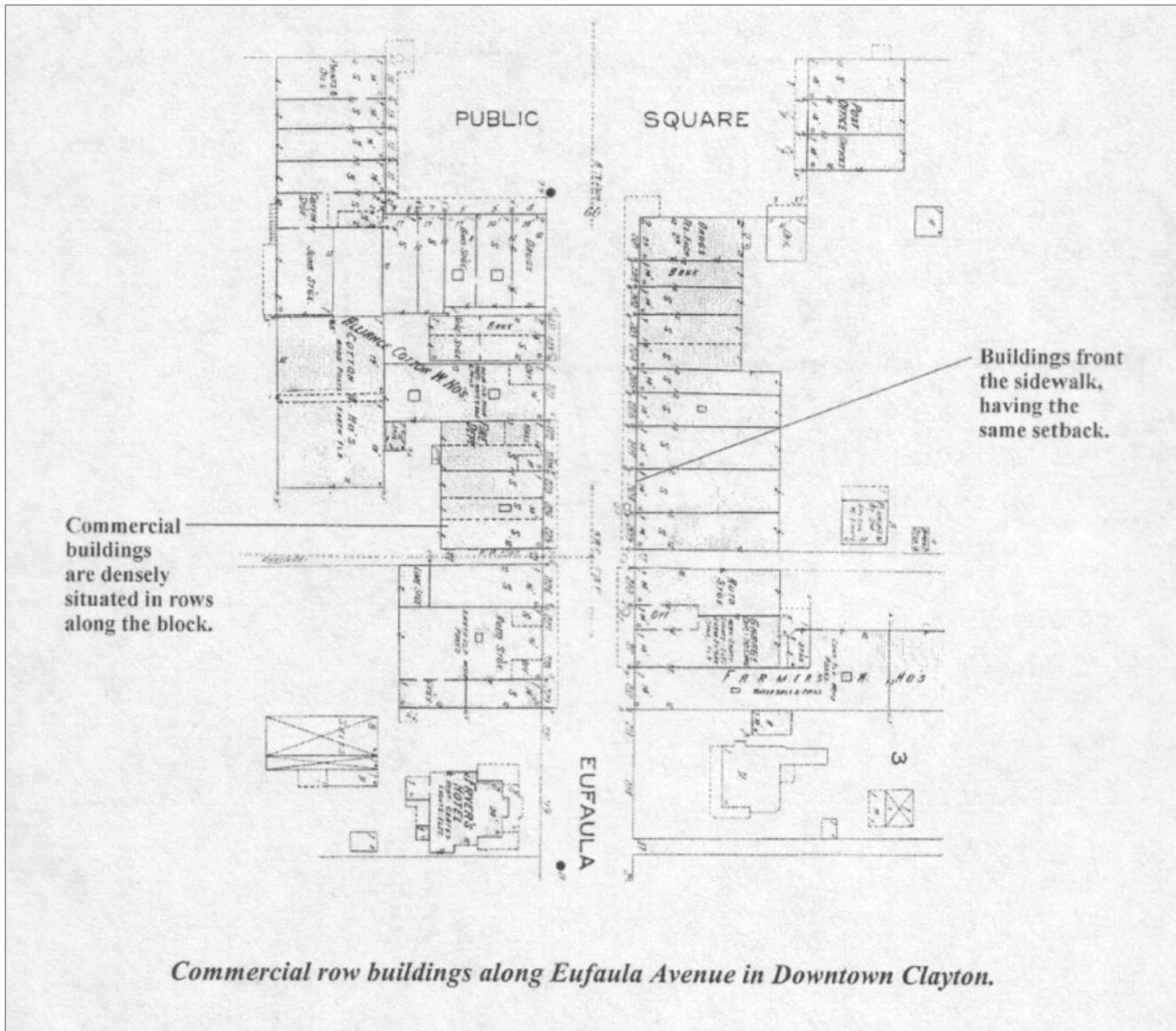
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Conflicts of Interest - No person who is an employee, agent, consultant, officer, appointed official, or elected official of the City of Dothan who exercise or have exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to CDBG activities, or are in a position to participate in a decision-making process, or gain inside information with regard to such activities, may obtain a personal or financial interest or benefit, or have an interest in any program assistance, either for themselves or those with whom they have family or business ties, during their tenure or for one year thereafter. In all cases where an apparent conflict of interest exists, HUD will make a finding regarding the eligibility of the applicant. Assistance shall not be granted unless approved by HUD. The conflict of interest process may add, at minimum, forty five (45) days to the eligibility process.

Design Guidelines

ALBERTVILLE DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

(Some of these design guidelines represent examples from other communities, but fit the needs of Albertville's Downtown. They are example guidelines only.)



ELEMENTS OF A STREETScape

The streetscape is as important to the visual character of a "Main Street" or Downtown commercial district as are the buildings themselves. The overall appearance of the streetscape is the result of a combination of factors including the layout of streets and lots, the way buildings were placed on the property and how buildings relate to each other and to open spaces. Generally, entire blocks in the downtown commercial district were developed from end to end, creating a continuous pattern or row of storefronts and densely developed blocks.

Row commercial buildings share common "party" walls and are not seen as individual structures but as a series of facades in a block along the street. Downtown commercial buildings typically have zero lot lines, covering the entire width of the lot with no front or side yards. They also typically front the sidewalk with no setback, creating a pattern of street - curb - sidewalk - building.

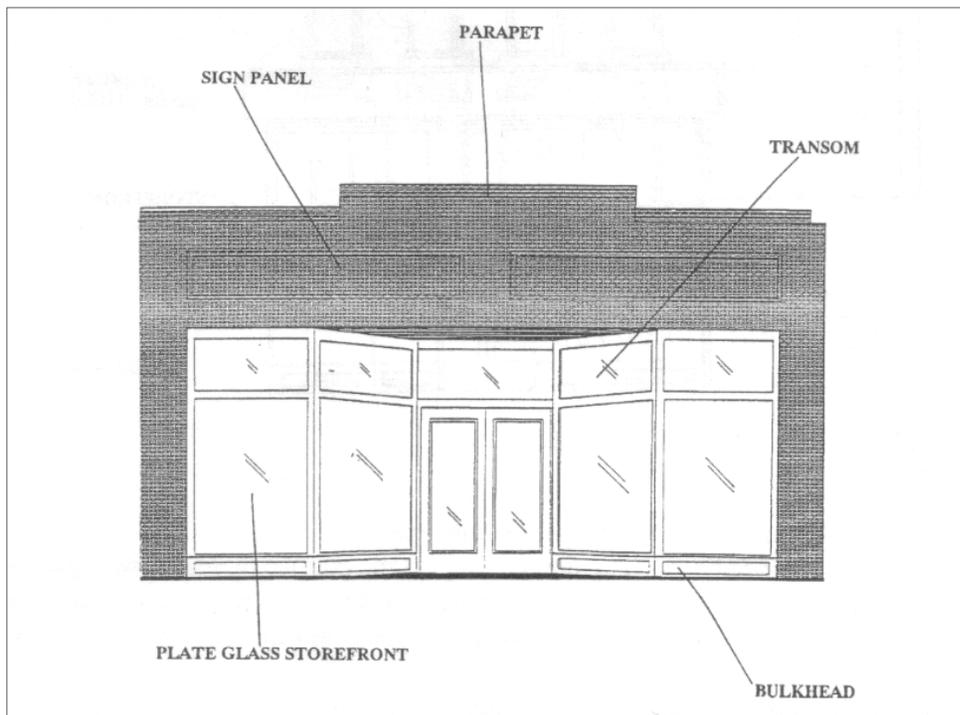
Other elements of the Downtown streetscape may include: street trees, landscaping, lighting fixtures, site

furnishings (e.g., sitting benches, litter receptacles), signage, sidewalk materials and/or patterns, utilities (e.g., telephone poles, power lines), traffic signals, historical markers, et al. The size, design, location and appearance of these features can greatly impact the overall quality of the downtown streetscape.

ELEMENTS OF DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

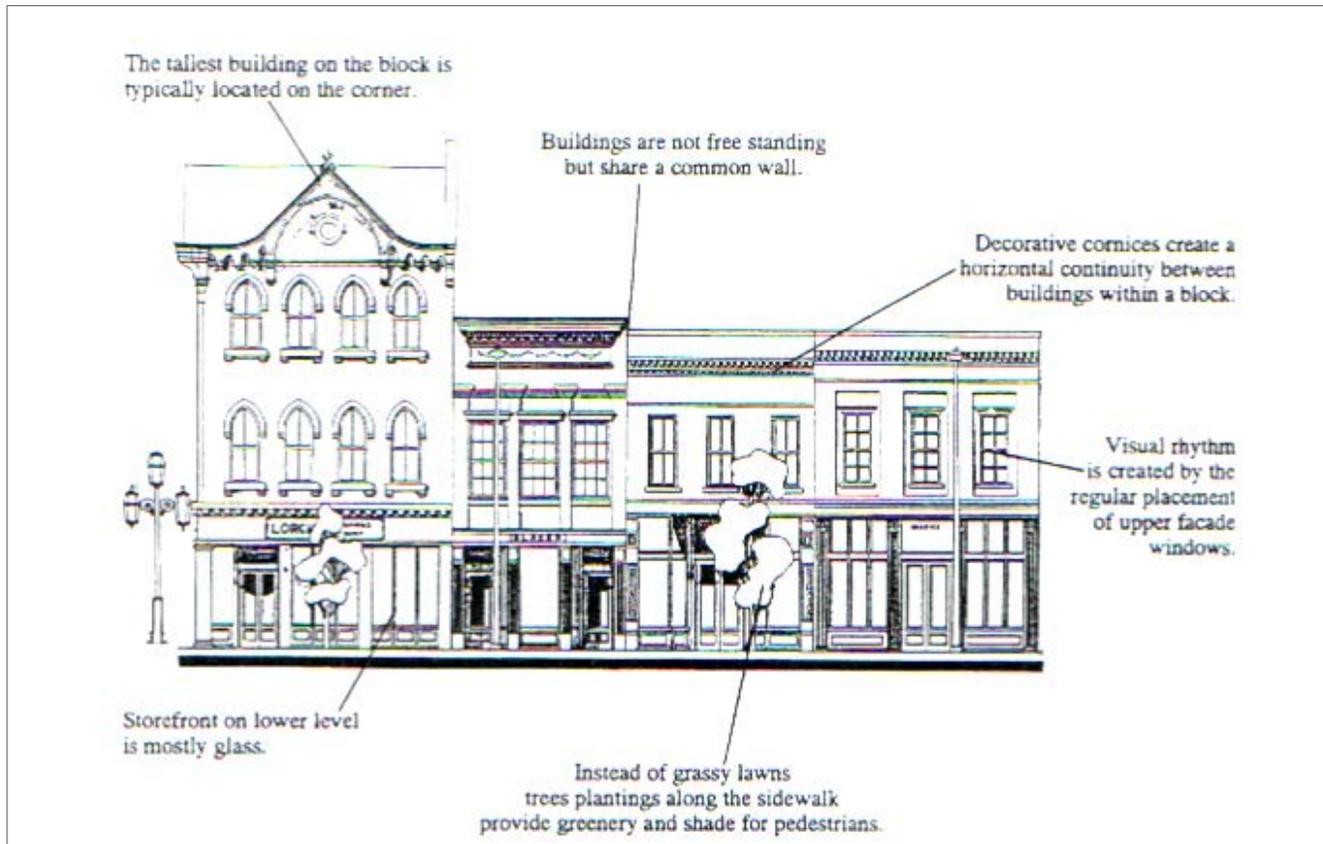
First generation commercial buildings in Alabama were traditionally constructed of wood. As communities grew and downtowns evolved, the early frame buildings were replaced with fire resistant masonry construction. Masonry buildings comprise most of the existing period commercial structures remaining in central business districts today. These buildings generally date from the mid to late 19th century into the early twentieth century. Their character-defining features are derived from the technological advances and tastes popular in the Victorian era - manufactured bricks, plate glass storefronts, cast iron support columns, awnings or canopies, decorative cornices, window hoods and a variety of signs. These are the key visual features of the commercial building façades evident in the downtown portion of Alabama’s communities today.

Although there are good examples of numerous commercial styles in Alabama, the majority of the central business district commercial buildings are not easily classified by style. Most Alabama commercial buildings are local interpretations of styles popular in America from the mid 19th through the early 20th century, and are best described by the particular “elements of style” they display.



Single Story Commercial Buildings

Downtown commercial buildings in Alabama range in height from one to six stories, with the vast majority of buildings being only one or two stories tall. Single story commercial storefronts generally share a combination of one or more typical features: a plate glass storefront framed in wood or cast iron; a sign panel; a parapet; and a cornice.



Multistory Commercial Buildings

In multistory commercial buildings activity was focused on the first level. The upper stories were utilized for a variety of purposes including offices, storage and/or living space for merchants.

Multistory commercial building façades can be visually divided into three horizontal sections: (1) the storefront on the street level which was comprised mostly of glass; (2) the upper story or stories that were most often defined by the upper story windows; and (3) the cornice or a parapet, often featuring an elaborate cornice at the top, that crowned the whole composition.

Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards: An Example

The downtown design guidelines and standards presented here are an example taken from the City of Hopkins, Minnesota. The community should review these guidelines as well as others including those prepared by the Alabama Historical Commission and prepare their own guidelines and standards tailored to the specific needs of the community. Design guidelines and standards should further the following objectives.

- Preserve the unique, small-town character of the community.
- Complement the existing historic architecture.
- Enhance the pedestrian orientation of downtown and encourage streetscape design that is inviting and on a human scale.
- Communicate the community's vision for the area.

Guidelines are intended to convey desirable elements. They are not requirements but are recommendations unless public financing is involved in the construction or rehabilitation of the building.

Standards are required by regulation and are enforced by the City. Standards apply to the following:

- All newly constructed buildings;
- All exterior building improvements and signage changes under \$150,000 that require a building and/or sign permit (only standards applicable to the changed element apply);
- Renovation over the Conditional Use Permit threshold, currently set at \$150,000 in value (all applicable standards apply);
- All new or reconstructed parking areas with 5 or more spaces; and
- Any building, parking area or sign that lawfully exists at the time the guidelines are enacted, which would not otherwise be permitted, may be continued as legal, though non-conforming, in the same manner as existed before the effective date.

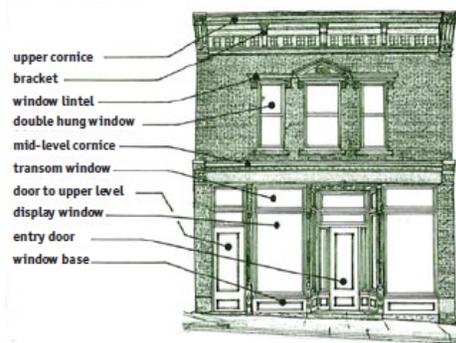
Storefront Design Principles



Sketch of a Main Street facade with re-stored storefront windows and new corner signage



Warehouse building converted into a successful storefront (NE Sumner St and MLK Blvd)



- upper cornice
- bracket
- window lintel
- double hung window
- mid-level cornice
- transom window
- door to upper level
- display window
- entry door
- window base

The storefront, arguably the most important segment of a commercial building, is often the portion that pedestrians and drivers notice the most.

The Importance of the Storefront

The storefront establishes the visual relationship between the interior of a shop and the sidewalk, and presents the character of a business. Framed by the building façade and structure, the storefront is transformed in time with each new owner. Its design is crucial to successful advertising and merchandising. Storefronts activate and unify the street and should be visually integrated with the building itself.

Rebuilding Storefronts

Over the years, storefronts frequently undergo many transformations, some better than others. Problems arise in storefront design when the storefront fails to remain within its defined opening. This makes the storefront appear “pasted on” the front of the building. Reducing the amount of glass in the storefront is another common problem. With a little research and investigative digging, it may be possible to restore a storefront to its original design or recreate it to meet the goals of the district.

Historic photos and original construction drawings are invaluable for defining original proportions and details. The basement or ceiling may show original layouts, such as a recessed bay for the entry door. Decorative architectural features may still exist, hidden behind more recent “improvements”. Finding knowledgeable consultants to help with this process can be helpful.

Modern buildings with contemporary materials can still utilize many of these traditional elements in a new storefront design.



PROPORTION AND SCALE

The Importance of Proportion and Scale in a Downtown

Main Street Building Block.

Proportion is the relationship between the facade's height and its width. In Albertville's downtown, buildings on the south side of the Main Street block are taller, with various heights and widths. Some Facades have multiple bays, but primarily have 2 and 3-story structures, with an average height of 35 to 40-foot and a 30-foot width, with the exception of the two anchors on Main Street that are the tallest structures – the Barkley's building – 3 story; and the Courington Arcade – 3-story building. Both house apartments on the top levels, and commercial on the bottom. It was not was not an unusual practice to anchor the tallest building on the end of the blocks in traditional turn of the century downtowns. The north side of Main Street's row buildings are slightly more modern (rebuilt in 1930s), due to a structure fire destroying half of Main Street in Albertville's history. They were rebuilt lower to the ground, and are typically one story row structures, with parapet wall, and have an average height-to-width ratio of 1:1 and 1:1.5.

It is interesting to note that "The Golden Section," the "perfect" proportion, is 40 to 25; it seems that 19th century architects were well-schooled in this principle of design. Later buildings tended to be more block-like, with proportion of height to width much closer,(like that found on the north side of Main Street). The same can be said of streetscapes and public right-of-ways (street enclosure – street cross-section – street width to building height; street tree height to building height) to accommodate the pedestrian/human scale.

Guideline on Proportion

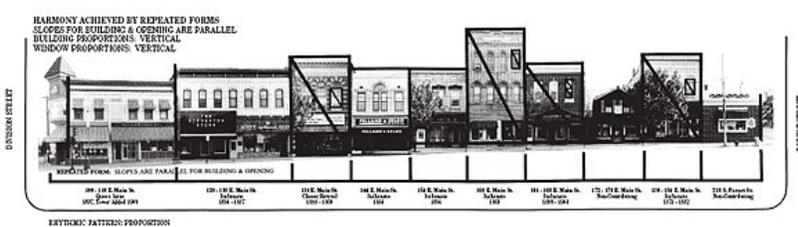
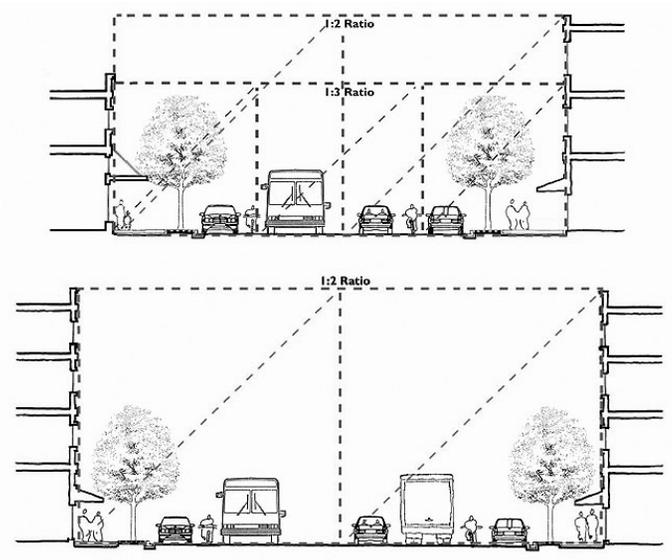
On a block-by-block basis, the proportions of new buildings should reflect the desired building proportions characteristic to that block.

WINDOW PROPORTION

In each architectural style, window proportions vary: in the Italianate style, windows are tall and narrow; in the Classical Revival style, they are broad and square. The proportion for window openings is often similar to the proportion of the building facade itself: a tall, narrow building will have tall, narrow windows; a building that is more square in facade proportion will have windows that are more square. This harmonious relationship between proportions of window openings and the proportion of the facade itself makes for a pleasing architectural design. It is not unusual to see buildings where new windows have replaced original ones, or they have been bricked up. When the new windows are significantly shorter than the window opening, the new window changes the proportion of the opening and jeopardizes the harmony of the building facade.

Guideline for Window Proportion

In blocks where windows are consistently proportioned, new construction or remodeling of existing buildings should maintain this proportion and spacing of windows. Where old sash will be replaced with new sash, make the replacement with sash of the same size and appearance rather than blocking part of the window opening and therefore changing its proportion.



100 East Main Street Block (North Elevation)



Heights

Objective: New development and redevelopment should complement the existing pattern of building heights.

Standard: Buildings in the downtown district may not exceed four stories and 45 feet in height.

Setbacks

Objective: Buildings should work together to create the "wall of buildings" effect associated with traditional downtown cores.

Standard: New construction and infill buildings must maintain the alignment of facades along the sidewalk edge. Exceptions may be granted if the setback is pedestrian-oriented and contributes to the quality and character of the streetscape. An example would be for outdoor dining. In instances where there are parking areas abutting the street, the sidewalk edge must be delineated with street trees, pillars or fencing that is consistent with the streetscape façade line. Egress and ingress of parking lots should be directed away from the main thoroughfare and located on side streets if possible.

Roofs and Parapets

Objective: Rooflines should mimic the separate yet complementary rhythm of historic buildings.

Guideline: Flat roofs (slightly sloped to drain) are preferred with parapets that articulate the rhythm of the buildings. Parapets should be embellished with brick detailing and stepped or sloped to achieve a visually interesting yet harmonious sequence along the building façade.

Standard: Sloped roofs are not allowed unless the roof form is concealed by a parapet or false front. Exceptions may be granted if the sloped roof is used on top of a multi-story building to help reduce the overall height of the façade and define the residential character of the upper floors.

Building Width

Objective: To break up the monotonous appearance of long facades.

Standard: A building more than 45 feet in width should be divided into increments of no more than 45 feet through articulation of the façade. This can be achieved through combinations of the following techniques:

- Divisions or breaks in materials;
- Window bays;
- Separate entrances and entry treatments;
- Variation in roof lines;
- Building setbacks.





Awnings

Objective: To enhance the historic feel of downtown while providing sun protection for display windows, shelter for pedestrians, and a sign panel for businesses.



Guideline: Retractable or operable awnings are acceptable. Long expanses of awning should be broken into segments that reflect the door or window openings beneath them.



Standard: Awnings cannot extend across multiple storefronts and/or multiple buildings. Awnings must be constructed of durable, protective, and water repellant material, however, plastic or fiberglass awnings are not allowed. Backlighting or illuminating awnings are not allowed. Awnings must project a minimum of 36" from the building.



Signage

Objective: Signs should be architecturally compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building and with other signs on nearby buildings, while providing for adequate identification of the business.



Guideline: Symbolic and historic three-dimensional signs such as barber shop poles and appropriately-sized projecting signs are encouraged. Signage should have the capability of being lit in the evening, although the source of light must not be visible to motorists or pedestrians.





Signs constructed of natural materials such as metal or wood are preferred. Permanently painted window signage is encouraged if compatible with the architecture of the building. Painted window signs should not consume more than one-third of the glazed area of the window.



Temporary window signage is limited to one-third of the window surface area.



Neon signs are permitted on the exterior of the building and in display windows, if not covering more than one-third of the window surface area.

Standard: Internally illuminated signs (not including neon) are prohibited except for theater signage. Pylon and monument signage is prohibited downtown core. The combination of neon signage, permanently painted signage and temporary signage should not exceed a total of two-thirds of the window surface area.



Projecting signs must be no greater than 12 square feet and have a maximum width of three feet and cannot extend beyond the first floor of the building. No less than 10 feet of clearance shall be provided between the sidewalk elevation and the lowest point of the projecting sign. Maximum distance between sign and building face is one foot. Signs cannot block or obliterate design details, windows or cornices of the building upon which they are placed.



Lighting

Objective: Lighting in the downtown should serve to illuminate façades, entrances and signage and provide an adequate level of personal safety while enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the buildings.

Guideline: Avoid colored lighting schemes in order to achieve continuity in building lighting within the downtown.

Standard: Building and signage lighting must be indirect, with the light source(s) hidden from direct pedestrian and motorist view. For exterior sign illumination, shaded gooseneck lamps are encouraged.



Utility Areas and Mechanical Equipment Screening

Objective: Utility areas and mechanical equipment should be designed so that they do not detract from the aesthetic appeal of the area.

Standard: The screening of exterior trash and storage areas, service yards, loading areas, transformers and air conditioning units must use the same materials, color and/or style as the primary building in order to be architecturally compatible with the building it is adjacent to.



If the utility area is separate from the building it serves, it should be consistent with the streetscape theme. All roof equipment must be screened from public view if visible from the street.



All exterior trash and storage areas, service yards, loading areas and air conditioning units must be screened from view. Camouflaging air conditioning units is an acceptable screening method.





Fenestrations

Objective: To encourage large, open views into the commercial space enhancing the pedestrian experience by providing a visual connection to the use inside the building. On upper levels, windows should provide privacy while aesthetically and functionally serving the building.

Guideline: The restoration or renovation of a storefront should attempt to return the façade to its original character. Preserve original materials or details and the shape and size of original window openings. Replace missing original elements such as transom windows.

On upper floors, the windows should be vertically oriented. Arched tops, columns framing the windows and decorative lintels are encouraged.

Standard: A minimum of 30% of the ground level façade and sides of buildings adjacent to public right of ways shall be transparent (windows and doors). A minimum of 15% of the building's rear façade facing a public right of way, parking area or open space shall be transparent. Reflective or glass tinted more than 40% is not allowed. Bricked in or barricaded windows are not allowed.



Materials and Detailing

Objective: Rehabilitation or redevelopment projects should be constructed to be long lasting and use materials and detailing that maintains the distinct character and harmony of the subdistrict/character area and all of downtown.

Guideline: Traditional materials including brick, stone (including cast stone) and stucco should be used as the primary building materials.

Tile, stone, glass block, copper flashing, metal and wood should be considered for accent materials. Preferred is a high level of design and architectural detail. At rear entrances the primary materials should be used in a way that highlights the entrance.



Infill construction should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in window shape, cornice lines and brick work.

Building renovation and alterations should restore architectural details of cornices, brickwork, transom, display windows and bulkheads.



Standard: The following materials are not allowed on the façades or sides of buildings adjacent to public right of ways:

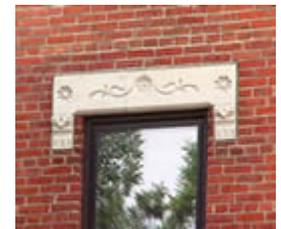
- Concrete block or brick larger than 4" in height, 12" in length;
- Aluminum, vinyl or fiberglass siding or roofing materials;
- Concrete masonry units;
- Materials that attempt to mimic traditional materials. An example would be fiberglass panels that are molded to look like brick;
- Painting previously unpainted brick is not allowed unless it would instead enhance the façade and is used to uplift deteriorating facades, and as long as it is within the color palette/scheme chosen for the district.



Color

Objective: To encourage a varied but complimentary use of color.

Guideline: The color of buildings should complement the adjacent buildings' colors. The color of brick or other natural building materials should dictate the color family choice. Bricks in the red and brown tones are encouraged. Buildings should use primarily earth tones with light and bright colors use only as minor accents. The accent colors should complement the primary color.





Franchise Architecture

Objective: To maintain the unique character of downtown, buildings should not be branded using an architectural style of a company.



Standard: Franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) is not allowed. Franchises or national chains must follow these standards to create a unique building that is compatible with downtown.

Streetscape



Objective: The streetscape should be uniform so that it acts to provide enclosure and continuity throughout the downtown, and is comfortable for the pedestrian shopper (pedestrian scale).

Streetscaping, Landscaping and Street Trees



Guideline: When making improvements to private property, including the addition of benches, trash receptacles, fences, bike racks, or trash enclosures, owners should match the approved styles for these elements.

Standard: When a redevelopment project disturbs existing streetscape elements those items must be replaced with approved streetscape elements.





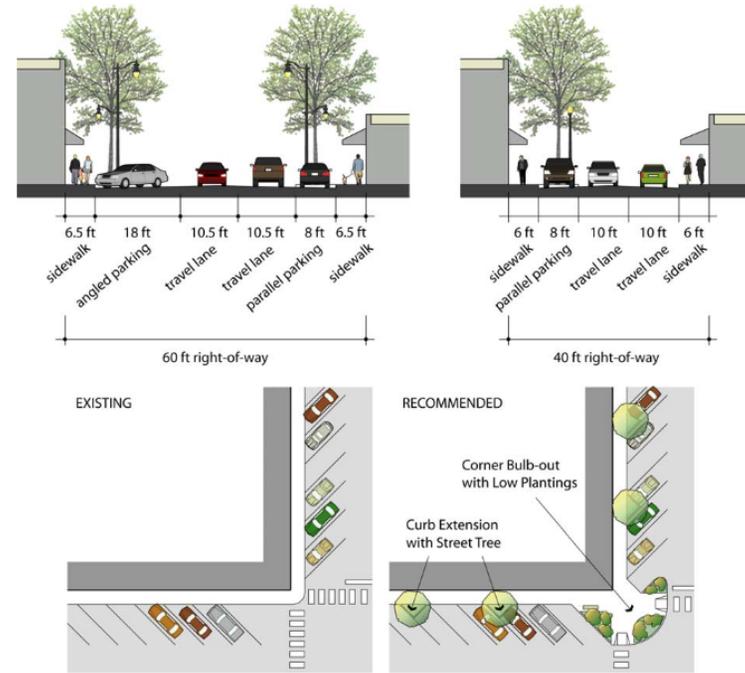


Figure 2: Streetscape Improvements. Curb extensions and corner bulb-outs create space to add landscaping and street furniture, enhancing the walking experience without sacrificing on-street parking spaces.



Importance of Street Trees to Downtown Quality of Life and property values.

(Please see good examples of urban street trees at the end of this section).







Objective: Landscaping treatments should be used to enhance the pedestrian experience, provide shade, and complement architectural features and/or screen utility and parking areas.

Guideline: The use of flower boxes, planters and hanging flower baskets is encouraged.



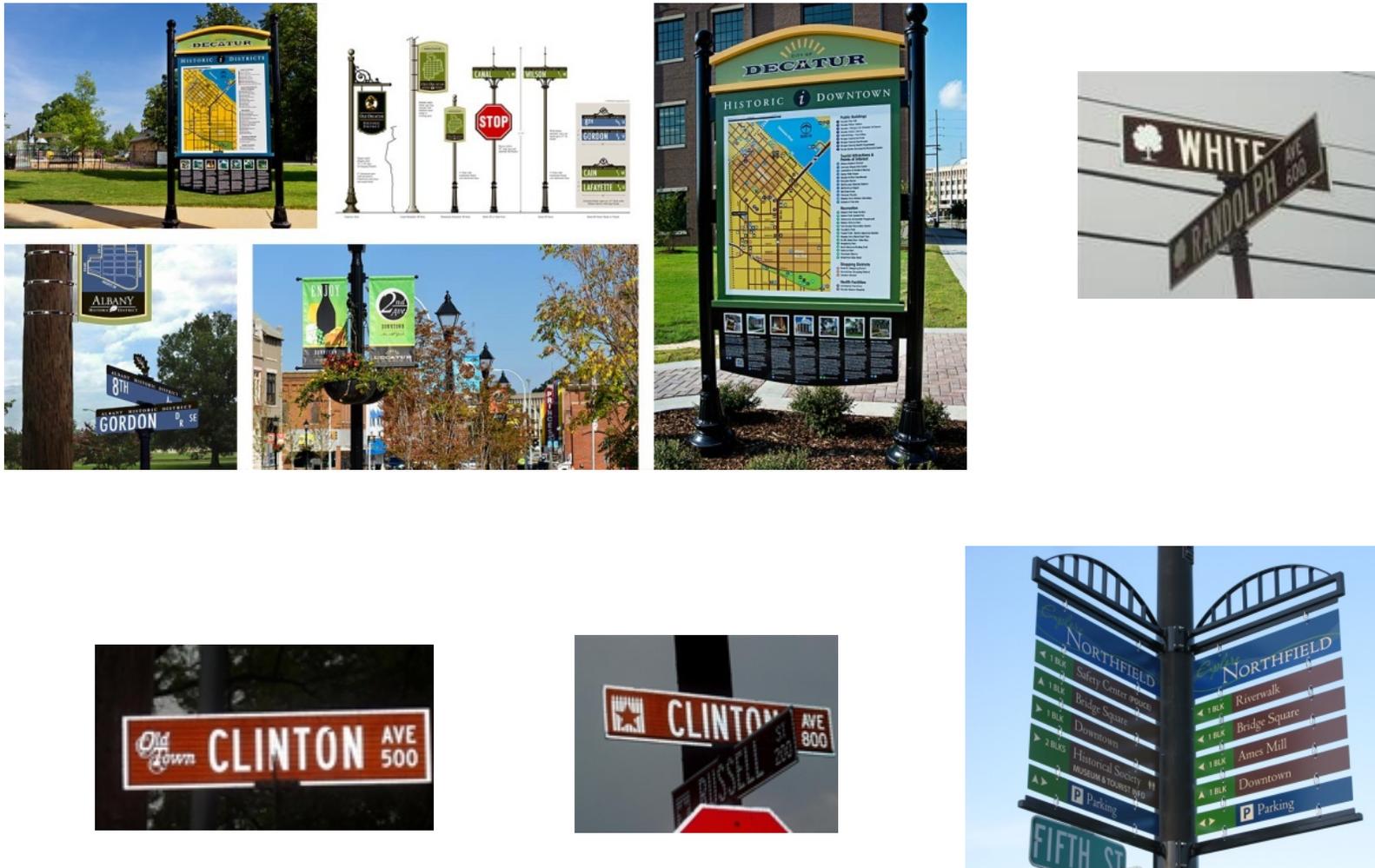
Rear Entrances

Objective: To provide a rear entrance to the buildings on the main street that is welcoming.

Guideline: The rear entrance should be clean and well maintained. A small sign, awnings, display windows and planter boxes can improve the appearance.



Example Street Signs and Wayfinding



PARKING

Objective: Parking in the downtown should adequately serve the users without detracting from the street edge/façade line and compact design that makes it a successful commercial center. Where possible, it is highly recommended parking be located behind buildings with any new construction or infill, and building massing be anchored toward the street. Whenever possible, landscaping and street trees should be used to buffer/screen parking lots.

Guideline: Parking lots should be kept small and close to the businesses served. Larger parking lots should have visual breaks of four-season landscaping treatments.

Standard: Off-street parking must be located in the rear of buildings wherever possible within the downtown district, but especially in the downtown commercial core. Never locate parking at intersections.



ALBERTVILLE FAÇADE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Retain paint color and awning; Retain cornice
- Retain window size and design
- Replace awning
- Bury utilities where possible
- Remove siding; Add new storefront



- Incompatible use; Enforce Zoning Ordinance to encourage compatibility with surrounding uses
- Replace awning; Retain window front
- Retain tile
- Add landscaping and bulbouts where possible

- Replace awning per design guidelines/aesthetics ordinance
- Remove batting from interior; designate a transparency percentage for window fronts in ordinance s
- Sidewalk improvements per TAP project



- Replace awning; Remove clutter; set parameters for window transparency
- Underutilized window front; not the best use of property
- Bury utilities where possible; enhance ROW

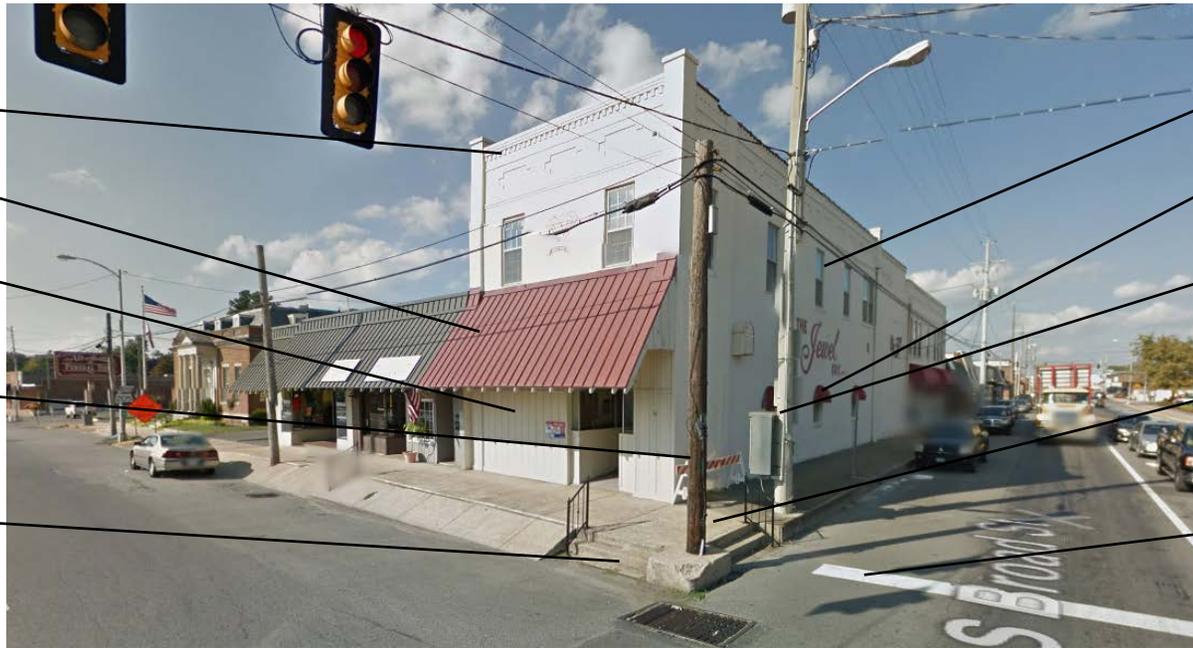


North Broad Street - Albertville, Alabama BEFORE



North Broad Street - Albertville, Alabama AFTER

- Retain paint color;
Retain cornice
- Replace metal
awnings
- Remove siding;
Restore window fronts
- Bury utilities where
possible
- Install streetscaping
elements; ADA-
compliant sidewalks;
bulbouts;
landscaping pit



- Retain original
windows
- Retain original
awnings
- Replace with traffic
arms
- Decorative street
lighting at bulbout
- Install pedestrian
crosswalk

- Never locate
parking next to
street edge in a
downtown
setting,
especially at an
intersection
(node); Anchor
buildings to street
edge and locate
parking in back
- Bury utilities
where possible;
Screen parking
with street trees



- Ideally, metal
mansard roof not
acceptable in
downtown setting;
certain exceptions
apply
- Never brick in
windows in a
downtown setting;
Restore original
windows where
possible
- Replace with
decorative seating

Vintage Painted Signage



The vintage painted building signage on the historic buildings adds a unique character and appeal to Albertville's downtown. A dying (fading) art, vintage signs are very rare and Albertville's downtown has some of the most in the state. These are very important to preserve and enhances the overall character and appeal/dignity of downtown and showcases beautiful artistry and craftsmanship. It is highly recommended that the existing painted signage that has faded over the years be restored. Careful consideration should be applied here because of their rarity and novelty. They truly make Albertville's downtown unique and one-of-a-kind.



DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

(Please see *Concept* section of this Master Plan).

- **Alberville Urban Park & Trail Concept**
- **Alberville Railroad Linear Park/Depot & Farmers Market Plaza Concept**



Northeast Alabama Model Railroad Club being evicted from depot in Albertville

By Cindy West
Times Staff Writer

ALBERTVILLE — The Northeast Alabama Model Railroad Club pays tribute to the past, when steam engines hauled passengers and freight all across the South and United States.

But what sounded like good news to the city of Albertville sounds like the end of an era to the railroad club.

Club president Charles Dick was notified late last month that the club and its exhibits are being evicted from the Albertville Depot, its rent-free home for the past dozen years.

The city recently got a federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, or ISTEA, grant through the state Department of Transportation. The \$100,000 Albertville received will put a new metal roof on the depot and provide handicap accessibility ramps. But those renovations won't begin until March, after the railroad club has moved out.

The city plans to move the senior center from its home at the Cecil Wright Drop-in Tutoring Center in the old armory to the

'We are sorry to have to do this, but we feel we are acting in the best interest of our community.'

— Mayor Larry Hillsman

depot because the tutoring center is not owned by the city. The old armory is deteriorating, and the city school board needs the space there, officials said.

Putting the senior center downtown would mean that seniors could be more involved in the community, and the depot would be cared for every day, a letter from Mayor Larry Hillsman said.

"We are sorry to have to do this, but we feel we are acting in the best interest of our community," Hillsman said in the letter.

What kind of renovations can be made to the Albertville Depot is one of the questions Hillsman must answer before work starts, a railroad club member said.

Joey Powell said the Albertville Depot is on the National Register of Historic Landmarks.

"The depot is 100 years old. It was finished

in 1893, and it was opened officially in 1894. It was placed on (the register) in 1972, I believe," Powell said.

Few of the old depots are left, particularly the truss-and-saddleblock style made before steel was used. This depot was built by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad.

"I don't think the mayor realizes that he is very limited in what changes he can make to a national landmark," Powell said. "From what I understand, if they do everything they're going to have to do to make a senior center out of it, we'll have to pay the grant back — plus they'll be destroying a historical treasure."

"It's something we'll have to check out," Hillsman said.

Joe Stamm, one of the club's founders, had not heard about the club's eviction until a reporter called him.

"My dad and uncles worked for the railroad, and I grew up with it in my system," Stamm said. "I worked for a railroad for a while. I grew up on the south side of Chicago."

EVICTED continued on B2



SHEET PH 0065056

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Alabama
 COUNTY: Marshall
 FOR NPS USE ONLY
 ENTRY DATE: FEB 20 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME
 COMMON: Albertville Depot
 AND/OR HISTORIC: L & N Railroad Depot

2. LOCATION
 STREET AND NUMBER: East Main Street
 CITY OR TOWN: Albertville CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: IV
 STATE: Alabama CODE: 01 COUNTY: Marshall CODE: 095

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted No: <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
 OWNER'S NAME: City of Albertville, Department of Urban Renewal
 STREET AND NUMBER: 206 North Emmett Street
 CITY OR TOWN: Albertville STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
 COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Marshall County Courthouse
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: Guntersville STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
 TITLE OF SURVEY:
 DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

STATE: Alabama
 COUNTY: Marshall
 ENTRY NUMBER: FEB 20 1975
 DATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed
 (Check One) (Check One)
 Altered Unaltered Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If Known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Albertville Depot is a one story board and batten structure which measures 112 feet by 40 feet. The roof is gabled with 8 foot overhangs supported by wooden brackets.

The entrance to the structure is on the north side and it is this portion of the building which made up the offices of the depot. A concrete platform extends across the northern facade of the building and around the sides to a distance of forty feet. At this point on either side of the building wooden steps lead to a loading platform which encircles the remainder of the structure.

There are two single doors on the northern facade. Both are wooden with simple wooden frames and a two lite transom above. Two windows alternate with the doors and these windows are double hung with six lites per sash.

The east elevation, which faces the tracks, has two large seven and one half foot wide doors which open onto the loading platform. Similar doors are located on the western facade.

The northern end of the east elevation has one door with a two lite transom above and three windows, double hung, with 4 lites per sash, while the same section of the west elevation contains one door and four windows. There are no doors or windows on the south elevation.

The interior of the structure is divided into three rooms. The large (80 feet by 40 feet) room on the southern end of the building is the warehouse space and the two small rooms of the northern end measure 40 feet by 16 feet each and were used as office space. The interior has not been altered.

RECEIVED
 SEP 30 1974
 NATIONAL REGISTER

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century

15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1892

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal Education Political Urban Planning

Prehistoric Engineering Religion/Phil. Other (Specify) Local History

Historic Industry Isosphy

Agriculture Invention Science

Architecture Landscape Sculpture

Art Architecture Social/Humanitarian

Commerce Literature Italian

Communications Military Theater

Conservation Music Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Albertville Depot is one of Marshall County's older transportation landmarks and is the oldest building in a town which was leveled by a tornado in 1908.

The city of Albertville had its beginnings in the 1860's when a post office was established, but the town did not begin to grow until the 1890's, and was not incorporated until February 18, 1891.

Since the 1850's efforts had been made to connect the navigable waters of the Tennessee and Coosa Rivers by rail. In 1890 the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad undertook the completion of the project and on October 3, 1892 the first official run was made between Guntersville and Gadsden with a stop in Albertville.

The depot was erected in that same year and the town's economy was given a tremendous boost; by 1897 it had two newspapers and at least 33 businesses and professional establishments.

A series of disasters, which included two fires in 1905 and a tornado in 1908, left the depot as the only surviving business structure of the 1890's.

At present the depot is threatened by demolition and local citizens wish to restore the building for use by civic groups.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Duncan, K. M. and Smith, L. S. The History of Marshall County, Alabama. Albertville, Alabama: Thompson Printing Company, 1969.

Owen, Thomas McAdory. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	O	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	R	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		
NW	34° 15' 59"	86° 12' 22"					
NE							
SE							
SW							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE:	COUNTY:	CODE:

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: W. Warner Floyd

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission DATE: Sept. 25, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 725 Monroe Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: W. B. Howard Jr.

Title: SAPO Ala

Date: Sept. 26, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

W. B. Montanese
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 2/20/75

ATTEST:

Gene W. Huntley
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 2/20/75

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

L.H. 0 6/1/66
18/5 5/74
379/1/2

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE ALABAMA	
COUNTY MARSHALL	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
FEB 20 1975	

(Number all entries)

ADDEMDUM

7. DESCRIPTION

Alterations to the station, which was built as a freight depot have been minor and include the addition of several coats of paint throughout the years and the installation of electricity.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

The building has not been used as a depot for several years and until recently the entire structure was occupied by the Albertville Roofing and Supply Company. At present the building is owned by the City of Albertville, Urban Renewal Department, and the office sections are being used for storage.

While the building has no great architectural significance, it is one of the few older structures in the town and located as it is in an area which features corrugated metal warehouses, recent brick stores and parking space, its simple dignity adds a measure of warmth to an otherwise undistinguished section of town.



Example Urban Street Tree List

Scientific Name	Common Name	Well (Planting Pit)	Parkway (Planting Strip)	Spacing	Size	Comments
<i>Acer buergeranum</i>	Trident Maple	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium	Native to China. Small tree with a height of 20-25 feet. Adaptable to urban conditions. Good tree for tight locations and under utility lines. Displays a nice red or orange fall color.
<i>Celtis australis</i>	European Hackberry	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Mediterranean native. The Asian woolly aphid is a new pest as of summer 2002. Do not plant in areas where aphid drip would be a problem. Until recently this tree has been free of problems. A good large growing shade tree well adapted for urban use. This is a large tree that can reach 70'. No fall color.
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Common Hackberry	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to North East America. The Asian woolly aphid is a new pest as of summer 2002. Do not plant in areas where aphid drip would be a problem. Until recently this tree has been free of problems. Smaller than the European Hackberry reaching a high of 50'. No fall color.
<i>Celtis sinensis</i>	Chinese Hackberry	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to East Asia. The Asian woolly aphid is a new pest as of summer 2002. Do not plant in areas where aphid drip would be a problem. Until recently this tree has been free of problems. Smaller than the European Hackberry reaching a height of 40'. This tree has shiny leaves and is the best of all the Hackberries. No fall color.
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern Redbud	3' x 3'	2' - 4'	20' - 30'	small	Native to Eastern USA. Great small tree that can grow in a standard and multi-trunk form. This tree displays great flowers in March and April. Good tree for tight locations and under utility lines.

Cercis canadensis 'Oklahoma'	Eastern Redbud 'Oklahoma'	3' x 3'	2' - 4'	20' - 30'	small	Native to Eastern USA. This cultivars has a shiny leaf and raspberry flower. It is more attractive than the standard Eastern Redbud but slower growing. Great small tree that can be grown in a standard and multi-trunk form. This tree displays great flowers in March and April. Good tree for tight locations and under utility lines.
Cercis mexicana	Mexicana Redbud	3' x 3'	2' - 4'	20' - 30'	small	Native to Mexico. This tree is smaller than the eastern redbud and has ruffled leaves. Great small tree that can grow in a standard and multi-trunk form. This tree displays great flowers in March and April. Good tree for tight locations and under utility lines.
Cercis reniformis 'Texas White'	Redbud 'Texas White'	3' x 3'	2' - 4'	20' - 30'	small	Native to Texas and Oklahoma. Great small tree similar to the Eastern Redbud but with white flowers. This tree displays great flowers in March and April. Good tree for tight locations and under utility lines.
Cinnamomum camphora	Camphor	N/A	8' +	35' - 40'	large	Native to China and Japan. This is a slow growing but attractive evergreen tree that needs a lot of space. Drops a lot of leaves in the fall. The root system is very aggressive. This tree grows large. Should not be used in or around hardscape.
Fraxinus americana 'Autumn Purple'	Autumn Purple Ash	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern USA. Fairly fast-growing tree. Has a wonderful purple fall color. Handles our heat well. Likes water and makes a better turf parkway tree than a concrete cut out.
Fraxinus americana 'Rosehill'	Rosehill Ash	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern USA. Fairly fast-growing tree. Has a red orange fall color. Handles our heat well. Likes water and makes a better turf parkway tree than in a concrete cut out.
Fraxinus excelsior	Hessei Ash	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern USA. Fairly fast-growing

'Hessei'							tree. No real fall color. Handles our heat well. Likes water and makes a better turf parkway tree than in a concrete cut out.
Ginkgo biloba 'Autumn Gold'	Ginkgo 'Autumn Gold'	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	large		Native to China but once grew world wide. Great street trees with great fall color. Leaves turn gold and drop all at once. They work well around hardscape, are adaptable to urban conditions and there are not currently any disease or pest problems.
Ginkgo biloba 'Princeton Sentry'	Ginkgo 'Princeton Sentry'	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium		Native to China but once grew world wide. This cultivars has an interesting leaf form that is different that the other ginkgos. The fall color is not as good. Great street trees with great fall color. They work well around hardscape, are adaptable to urban conditions and there are not currently any disease or pest problems.
Ginkgo biloba 'Saratoga'	Ginkgo 'Saratoga'	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	large		Native to China but once grew world wide. This cultivars has an interesting leaf form that is different that the other ginkgos. The fall color is not as good. Great street trees. Leaves turn gold and drop all at once. They work well around hardscape and are adaptable to urban conditions. There are not currently any disease or pest problems.
Ginkgo biloba 'Shangri-la'	Ginkgo 'Shangri-la'	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	large		Native to China but once grew world wide. More compact form than the Autumn Gold. Great street trees with great fall color. Leaves turn bright gold and drop all at once. They work well around hardscape, are adaptable to urban conditions and there are not currently any disease or pest problems.
Koelreuteria paniculata	Goldenrain	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium		Native to China. This is a small, slow growing tree around 25' that flowers in the summer. Avoid planting in litter sensitive areas. This tree is drought tolerant. Good under utility

						lines.
Lagerstroemia indica	Crape Myrtle	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	25' - 30'	small	Native to China. Showy summer flowers. Different cultivars have flower colors red, pink and white. Good as a multi-trunk and standard form. Good tree for tight spots and utility lines.
Laurus nobilis 'Saratoga'	Laural Saratoga	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium	Mediterranean native. This is a small, slow growing evergreen tree. The foliage is dark green. Good tree for tight places. It can be planted close together for screening.
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip Tree	4.5' x 4.5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to the Eastern USA. A large, fast growing tree that flowers in late spring. Aphids can be a problem but all in all a good street tree.
Magnolia 'Elizabeth'	Elizabeth Magnolia	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	15' - 20'	medium	Medium size deciduous trees with beautiful tulip flowers. This cultivars has white flowers. Blooms in mid-spring before it leafs and may have some blooms in the summer.
Magnolia 'Galaxy'	Galaxy Magnolia	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	15' - 20'	medium	Medium size deciduous trees with beautiful tulip flowers. This cultivars has bright red purple flowers. Blooms in mid-spring before it leafs.
Magnolia grandiflora	Southern Magnolia	5' x 5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	large	Large growing evergreen tree with waxy dark green leaves and white flowers. It tolerates wet soils. An attractive tree but messy.
Magnolia 'Rustica Rubran'	Rustica Rubran Magnolia	3' x 3'	3' - 6'	15' - 20'	small	Small deciduous trees with beautiful tulip flowers. This cultivars has rose red flowers. Blooms in mid-spring before it leafs.
Pistacia chinensis	Chinese Pistache	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium	Native to China. This is a medium to large growing shade tree. Height is generally around 40' but can reach 50'. It's a great street tree that is well behaved around concrete. The

						fall color is great. This tree does not like soggy, poorly drained soils.
Pyrus kawakamii	Evergreen Pear	4.5' x 4.5'	4' - 6'	25' - 30'	medium	Native to Asia. This is a small to median size semi-deciduous tree. Blooms great in early spring. Makes a great street tree where space is limited. They are prone to fire blight.
Quercus agrifolia	Coastal Live Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to California. Evergreen of variable size 40'-70' and equal in width. Smooth, dark gray bark and dark green leaves that are glossy on the surface. This tree does not like to be over watered and likes areas without turf.
Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern North America. Deciduous tree with broad, open, round crown and short trunk reaching 60' with an equal spread. Moderate to fast growth. Will tolerate sun, shade, wind and wet conditions. Fall color varies from yellow-brown to red.
Quercus calliprinos	Palestine Live Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to Palestine. Evergreen tree 40' to 50' tall and equal spread. Tree is quick growing and well adapted to California climate.
Quercus castaneafolia	Chestnut-leaved Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Deciduous, spreading tree with somewhat pendulous branches. Leaves are sharply toothed, glossy, dark green above, gray beneath. This is a large tree that grows up to 100'.
Quercus chrysolepis	Canyon Live Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to the foothills in California and eastern Oregon. Handsome evergreen with a height that reaches 50'. Leaves are shiny and medium-green in color. Does not like to be over watered.
Quercus frainetto	Forest Green Oak	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	35' - 40'	large	This is an upright growing, vigorous oak with a strong central leader. Drought resistant and adaptable, its glossy deep green foliage and strong symmetrical shape make it one of the

best looking trees all summer

Quercus lobata	Valley Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to California. This is a large drought tolerant deciduous tree. It is considered to be the monarch of the oak species. This tree can reach 70' or greater with an equal spread. Does not like to be over watered.
Quercus muehlenbergii	Chinkapin Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to central and eastern US. This is a large tree that can reach 100'. Leaves are sharply toothed and bright green. Fall color variable from ruddy-brown to burgundy. Moderately quick growth rate.
Quercus nigra	Water Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Medium to large tree to 60' with semi-evergreen leaves, rather thick and leathery. Lovely rounded crown, tiny acorns, good lawn tree. Fall color is orange and red.
Quercus phellos	Willow Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Broadly spreading, deciduous tree to 90'. Leaves are narrowly oblong, smooth, bright green. The bark is gray and smooth. No fall color.
Quercus rubra	Red Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern USA. Medium to large tree can reach 70'. Leaves are matte dark green and has a wonderful red fall color. Deep rooted.
Quercus shumardii	Shumard Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to eastern USA. Medium to large tree can reach 70'. Tolerates urban conditions. Has a dependable fall color in orange and reds.
Quercus suber	Cork Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to the western Mediterranean and North Africa. Evergreen tree of moderate growth rate to 70'. Trunk and main limbs covered with thick, corky bark which add a lot of interest. Leaves are shiny dark green.
Quercus virginiana	Southern Live Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large	Native to southern coast plains in the US.

							Large growing evergreen tree with waxy dark green leaves. This is a moderate to fast grower that handles turf well.
Quercus wislizenii	Interior Live Oak	5' x 5'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large		Native to interior California and southern Oregon. An evergreen tree of medium size up to 50'. Wide-spreading branches with attractive green foliage.
Zelkova serrata 'Green Vase'	Green Vase Zelkova	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large		Native to Eastern Asia. Medium to large, moderate to fast growing tree. Can reach a height of 50'. Has smooth gray bark and narrow, oval, saw-toothed leaves. This cultivars is taller than the Village Green.
Zelkova serrata 'Musashino'	Musashino Zelkova	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large		Native to Eastern Asia. Medium to large, moderate to fast growing tree. Can reach a height of 45'. Has smooth gray bark and narrow, oval, saw-toothed leaves. This cultivars is very upright and only spreads 20'. Ideal for tight locations.
Zelkova serrata 'Village Green'	Village Green Zelkova	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40'	large		Native to Eastern Asia. Medium to large, moderate to fast growing tree can reach a height of 40'. Has smooth gray bark and narrow, oval, saw-toothed leaves. This cultivars is shorter and more upright that the Green Vase.
Ulmus parvifolia 'Emer II' (parent plant)	Allee Elm/Chinese Elm	6' x 6'	6' - 8'	35' - 40' (smaller cultivars of Allee Elm can be planted closer together)	large		Native to northern and central China, Korea, and Japan. Trees reach 50 to 82 feet high with slender branches forming a broad, round head. Bark is an attractive mottling of orange, green, grey, and brown.

Visioning

Stakeholder SWOT Analysis

Community Surveys

Community Workshops

Dot Analysis

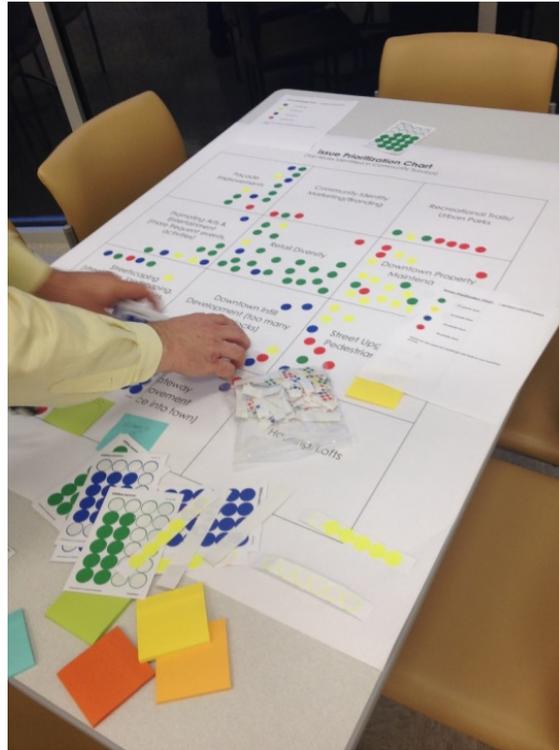
Issues Prioritization

Strategies Identification

Downtown Steering Committee Work Sessions

Vision Statement

Goals & Objectives



This Plan represents the vision the community of Albertville has for its Downtown. All concepts and strategies recommended in this Plan are based on community input from the citizens of Albertville – community surveys, meetings, planning workshops, and issue prioritization exercises. This Plan and its Vision are a true reflection of the values and desires of the citizens of Albertville, Alabama. Therefore, this Plan and its contents is the product of the community and belongs to the people of Albertville.

A key ingredient to the success of the plan lies in the community being an integral part of developing the plan.



Community planning is a public activity based on citizen participation among residents, business owners, community leaders and planning facilitators to guide future development. The Albertville Downtown Master Plan demonstrates this type of teamwork in downtown revitalization planning.

The planning process for the Albertville Downtown Master Plan began in April 2014, and includes seven essential steps: project orientation, evaluation of current economic conditions, evaluation of current physical conditions, development of community vision and long-range goals, concept and strategy formulation, draft plan, and final plan and adoption. The most important step in this process is the community visioning and citizen engagement component to gain consensus and guide the direction of the plan to best represent the vision and values of the community. A vital part of the planning process is attaining meaningful public participation in the planning process with the intent to obtain a consensus on a course of action. The public participation component has the purpose of setting long-range goals and supporting objectives that set forth a vision and direction for the future of the downtown area. Stakeholder meetings, community surveys, and community workshops were conducted to gain intimate local knowledge on

community issues and an understanding of community values. This included a series of intensive planning workshops, as well as obtaining local input via online and door-to-door surveys.

In the first month, TARCOG planners conducted a series of stakeholder workshops to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting the downtown area. The stakeholder groups included participants representing property owners, developers, business owners, bankers and economic development experts, utilities and public infrastructure professionals, design professionals and beautification experts, city staff, and other interests who have a stake in the success of Downtown Albertville. The next series of planning workshops involved community citizens at large, including Albertville residents, school students, churches, and other civic groups, as well as the stakeholder groups. The intent of the planning process for the Albertville Downtown Master Plan is for inclusiveness and transparency in order to achieve a program that reflects the desires of the people for their community. TARCOG interviewed city officials, visited and presented to civic groups and community organizations, conducted a month-long series of stakeholder workshops, surveyed the community at large, conducted several community workshops, and consulted with the Downtown Steering Committee throughout the entire ten month planning period. A Vision Statement was formulated that captured community values, ideals, and aspirations for Downtown. The team also refined and prioritized long-term and short-term goals and objectives in order to achieve the community Vision for downtown revitalization.



By gaining intimate local knowledge from stakeholder SWOT analysis (identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), and analyzing over 530 community surveys, TARCOG planners were prepared to identify the major issues affecting the downtown and present these findings to the general public at the planning workshops. After the presentation, community members were asked to engage in the planning process with a series of exercises to obtain further input. Citizens were asked to rank particular issues affecting their downtown, as well as analyze physical conditions. This data was collected to further refine the community Vision for Downtown Albertville. This Visioning Report details that Vision.

This revitalization plan is the culmination of public and private efforts and is intended to be used as a guide to further those efforts to physically and economically enhance and sustain Downtown Albertville. Committed citizens of Albertville permitted TARCOG Planners to lead them through a process to identify ideas for future development in Downtown. The Albertville Downtown Master Plan is a result of the collective insight and effort of Albertville city officials, staff, business leaders, and residents. The plan establishes a Vision, built on the community's goals and aspirations for Downtown Albertville.



Primary Goals:

Physical Design Goal: Create a diverse, attractive, safe, accessible, and vibrant downtown that capitalizes on existing assets. Highlight the history of Albertville. Create vibrant community spaces. Integrate and maintain a well-proportioned, functional urban form.

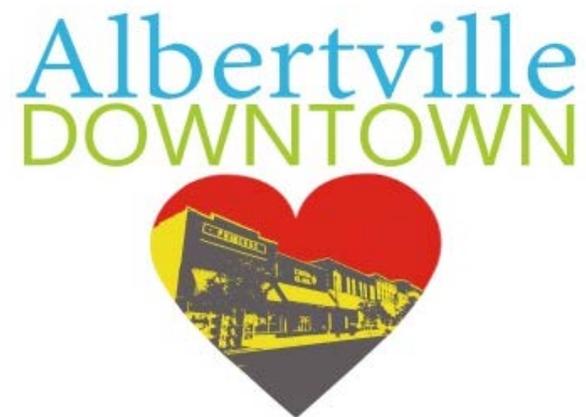
Economic Structuring Goal: Create a vibrant hub for commercial and community activity. Attract diverse retail and assemble a mix of compatible uses to give downtown a competitive advantage.

Organization Goal: Organize the needed capacity to implement the Albertville Downtown Master Plan. Organize downtown stakeholders and coordinate city departments for ongoing management and implementation of revitalization efforts to ensure efficiency and achievement of goals.

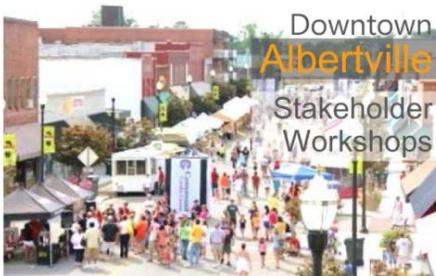
Promotion Goal: Promote and celebrate the unique creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville. Promote Downtown Albertville and its business community. Celebrate Albertville’s musical heritage. Cultivate a place to live, work, shop, and play.

Vision Statement:

“We will strive to develop a vibrant, unique, and diverse downtown that celebrates the creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville. One Town. One Heartbeat.”



Downtown Albertville Stakeholder Workshops



SAVE THE DATE
We need your input!

Municipal
Monday April 7, 2014
Group 1: 10:00-12:00
Group 2: 3:00-5:00

Business
Tuesday April 8, 2014
Group 1: 8:30-10:30
Group 2: 3:00-5:00

Aesthetics
Tuesday April 15, 2014
3:00-5:00

Property
Wednesday April 16, 2014
Group 1: 8:30-10:30
Group 2: 1:30-3:30

Economic Development
Thursday April 17, 2014
Group 1: 8:30-10:30
Group 2: 3:00-5:00

Other
Monday April 21, 2014
Group 1: 10:00-12:00
Group 2: 1:30-3:30

What steps you can to ensure the economic vitality of Albertville's Central Business District?

DOWNTOWN ALBERTVILLE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS <small>Location: Albertville City Hall, 116 W Main Street</small>		
Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance professionals • Banks • Commercial Development & Recruitment 	Municipal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Dept • Planning & Zoning • Public Safety • Utilities • Public Works 	Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Owners • Developers • Realtors
Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small businesses • Merchants • Small retailers • Restaurants • Grocers • Boutiques 	Aesthetics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Historic Preservation • Beautification • Garden Clubs • Design professionals • Marketing/Promotion • Keep Albertville Beautiful 	Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School reps • Civic groups • Other organizations • Chamber of Commerce • Citizens

The Visioning process for the Albertville Downtown Master Plan included four main community engagement phases: 1) Stakeholder meetings; 2) Community Surveys; 3) Community Workshops; and 4) Downtown Steering Committee work sessions held throughout the planning period.

This includes a series of intensive planning workshops to identify the ideas, needs, concerns, and vision of city leaders. These workshops were held at Albertville City Hall, with roughly 10 to 15 participants per meeting. The following pages contain a synthesis of those SWOT results.

Community surveys were distributed to the community and 536 surveys were collected and analyzed. This is an incredible response rate, representing a good cross-section of the community, and demonstrates the groundswell of interest in this project. Citizens answered roughly thirty questions regarding general values, activities, priorities and demographics. Value questions used a Likert scale to determine the general interests of the community. Some questions were close-ended multiple-choice, and some questions were open-ended. These questions had between 300 and 400 responses each.

The next series of workshops involved community citizens at large, including Albertville residents, school students, churches, and other civic groups, as well as the stakeholder groups. Two community workshops were held at the Sand Mountain Toyota community room throughout the month of September, with roughly sixty to seventy participants per workshop. TARCOG Planning staff presented a PowerPoint presentation of general economic, physical, historic, and survey analysis results, and two exercises were completed by participants. An Issues Prioritization exercise was conducted to rank priority issues of the community. An Issues Identification chart (of issues identified in the community surveys) was presented and participants were asked to rank issues based on importance to them.

Second, a Possible Strategies chart was presented, where participants were asked to be a part of the planning process, and make possible recommendations to be considered in the Plan. A simple Dot Analysis was used to collect input. 34 x 44 GIS analysis maps were presented at each table representing data gathered from TARCOG staff, including slum and blight assessment, sidewalk conditions, parking assessment, current land use, and a visual assessment map, representing high priority visual needs obtained from the aesthetics and various stakeholder groups. Albertville citizens were asked to conduct a Dot Analysis and use colored dots to pinpoint high priority areas and needs. A number of questions were asked for input and each color was assigned a certain degree of priority. Instructions for the dot analysis were presented at each table. These exercises were to obtain community input to further refine the vision of the community. The community surveys, along with the community workshops, were a way to include citizens in the planning process to gauge community values and interests, guiding the overall direction and vision of the plan. (The detailed results of the dot analyses, the community surveys, additional quotes and comments from the community, and the economic conditions report can all be found in the Appendix section of this document). It should also be noted that the following SWOT results are a synopsis of recurring conversations throughout the interview process. Detailed meeting notes were obtained, and the following summarizes those notes.



Stakeholder and Community Survey SWOT Results:

The purpose of a SWOT Analysis is to identify the strengths and assets to capitalize on, the weaknesses to minimize and overcome, the opportunities to take advantage of, and the threats in which to avoid. Use strengths to overcome weaknesses, and turn perceived weaknesses into opportunities.

Strengths:

The people – stakeholders emphasized that community will power is huge right now – there is a deep passion for Albertville an, the downtown and incredible community spirit. The people in Albertville work hard to enhance the quality of life of their community, which was noted as a major strength. Participants also pointed out the community stewards who have been willing to invest and locate their businesses downtown and noted that their success is good evidence of downtown market demand. Long-standing family-owned businesses that have been in the downtown for over 50 to 60 years were also mentioned as a major strength. Residents like the traditional small town charm the downtown offers, and intimate customer service you cannot get anywhere else. They also enjoy the many different businesses, such as banks, hardware stores, and grocery stores, located there. They also enjoy the new businesses and restaurants that have located in the downtown. Residents also mentioned the downtown’s compact size and proximity to residential areas make it walkable, accessible and convenient, noting that this also makes it easy to capture local foot traffic for retail. Everything is walkable within a quarter-mile radius of the Main Street/Broad Street crossroads, which was noted as a major strength for Albertville’s downtown. The nearby historic neighborhoods were also seen as a strength. Residents enjoy the many community activities that take place in the downtown, such as the Main Street Music Festival and the Christmas parade, and that community interaction and fellowship you cannot find anywhere else. They pointed out that the downtown offers Albertville residents many opportunities to strengthen community ties through community interaction and fellowship. This was stated as a major plus for the city overall. This was seen as a major plus for the city overall. This also benefits downtown retailers and restaurants, gaining more business from the large crowds. They stated that being part of the community fabric was important for businesses in the downtown. The huge volunteer base and community spirit in Albertville was also stated as a major strength – especially organizations such as Keep Albertville Beautiful (KAB) and the Recycling Center - that have made huge contributions and progress in the community. The Albertville High School and its history of award-winning band and choir music programs was repeatedly mentioned as a major strength for the community, noting that the area is rich in musical heritage. Music was noted as a major asset to capitalize on.



Stakeholders and community members emphasized that Albertville’s history, encapsulated in the downtown and its historic structures, especially the train depot, was seen as a major asset to the community to preserve and leverage. The unique history and experience of the downtown was stated as a major strength to capitalize on. They emphasized that people identify with the downtown, because it is their history. It also offers a variety of activities and services to citizens. Participants emphasized that the downtown is the center of the Albertville’s strengths – community, history, prosperity, and identity.

Residents stated that another major strength of the downtown area was that it contained the majority of the city’s historic, cultural, educational, and recreational assets. The proximity to Albertville High School and Fine Arts Center was seen as a major asset that anchors the downtown, and community members pointed out that they support each other. The historic churches within the district were also listed as cherished assets. Residents stated that they enjoy the historic nature of the downtown, especially the vintage signage still visible on the old buildings, such as the Princess theater, the Jewel box, the Farmers’ Market, and other downtown structures, emphasizing the need to preserve these community treasures. Participants also felt the cultural diversity of Albertville was a strength, presenting great opportunity for fellowship.



Albertville Downtown Master Plan

Stakeholders noted a major plus for Albertville’s downtown is its location along two major state routes that provide exposure for businesses to capture good retail foot and vehicular traffic. For the downtown area, one of the advantages of businesses locating there is that exposure and that they feed off each other, strengthening and supporting each other,

Centro Albertville
Talleres para la comunidad
04 de septiembre a 09 a las 5:30 PM
Sand Mountain Toyota Salon Comunitario

Cuando: 04 de septiembre 2014 - 5:30 - 7:30 PM o 07 de septiembre 2014 - 5:30 - 7:30 PM
*Confirma que fecha se puede participar.

Donde: Sand Mountain Toyota Salon Comunitario - 9147 HWY 431, Albertville, AL

Porque: Ciudadanos pueden participar en Albertville's Plan de Revitalización del centro

Lo que puede esperar?
La ciudad de Albertville está lanzando la participación de la fase comunitaria del Plan de Revitalización para el Distrito Central de Negocios. Basados nos en los comentarios de la comunidad, una comunidad cuestiona ejercicio de Priorización se llevara a cabo para ayudar a que la dirección de plan basado en las metas y objetivos importantes para usted. Mapas y ayudas visuales sera proporcionado para activar una discusión animada!

Puede ayudar a prever el futuro del centro de la ciudad Albertville!

Venga y sea parte de proceso de planificación!

Por favor confirmar su asistencia a Melody Wilson, Director de Desarrollo Económico y Comunitario, Ciudad de Albertville, Teléfono: 256-279-0622, o por correo electrónico: mel@ciudadalbertville.com



yielding a high demand. They stated that you just can't beat the location and exposure the downtown offers for business and retail. Participants also noted that the demand is there for mixed retail and mixed use residential, and that there are plenty of underutilized parcels that could be redeveloped into rich community spaces. Albertville stakeholders also expressed their excitement to see a nightlife from the new businesses in the downtown, noting that they had never had a nightlife before. However, they also stated that there is still not enough, and that the city needs to make greater strides at recruiting diverse retail to the downtown, especially businesses with night hours. They also noted that the industrial growth the city has been experiencing has brought in more people and families to the area. However, participants did mention that there have been a lot of families that have left the area and moved to nearby communities to live. They were very concerned that the blighted conditions of the community were causing people to leave.

Participants noted the simple fact that the community is getting together and is behind this revitalization effort is incredible for the city. They cannot stand to see their hometown deteriorate any further and want to do something about it. They were excited there will be a plan in place and noted that it is a huge step forward for the city. Community pride and momentum is huge right now, and Albertville residents pointed out that it is the first time in a long time that the majority of folks were on the same page. Administratively, the council, the business people, city officials, the community, are all headed in the same positive direction for the city and they are very excited about it.

Weaknesses:

Residents pointed out how easy it is to live in Albertville – low cost of living, low property taxes, low sales tax, Marshall Medical Center - offering great quality of life services. However, they were worried that the aesthetics and deteriorating conditions of the town were pushing people and businesses out of the area, and they want to see this reversed. They emphasized that they would like Albertville to become a stronger community for future residents, and a place where their children will want to live. In the community surveys, when asked if "you had plans to move from Albertville?" twenty-one percent of respondents answered "yes, or considering it if things don't change." This was a very concerning statistic for Albertville residents.



When asked about the weaknesses affecting Albertville and its downtown, the number one answer was aesthetics and the deteriorating conditions of the downtown giving the impression of a town that is dying. Albertville residents have expressed a deep desire for stricter ordinances and development standards for the city overall, and stricter enforcement methods. Residents expressed a serious concern about the blight taking over the city center, and that it gives a negative impression of a town that doesn't care. They emphasized that they want a place that they and others can believe in again, a source of pride. In community surveys, when asked "what the revitalization of Downtown Albertville would mean to you?" The number one answer was "pride in my hometown again."

Retail leakage and a concern over community loyalty and the lack of support for local businesses was mentioned as a major weakness for the city. The lack of family entertainment, such as bowling and movie theaters, was also seen as a need for the city, and the limited nightlife and reoccurring live music entertainment was seen as a weakness. Residents desire places to hang out, congregate, and recreate. They expressed their serious disdain to travel an hour or more out of their way for shopping, recreation, and entertainment. Community residents emphasized that they do not want to shop out of town, they would rather shop locally in Albertville.



Albertville Downtown Master Plan

was also mentioned as lacking, and residents stressed the need for façade improvements. The concern is that the conditions of downtown are deterring potential business prospects to the area.

Citizens expressed that vast empty spaces and vacant parcels in the downtown area also contributed to its blight. They stated that there is way too much gray space, and not enough green space. Albertville residents stressed the importance of landscaping and street trees in the downtown area to not only help the town feel alive again, but provide shade for pedestrians and improve property values. They also pointed to areas that were not very well-lit, presenting safety issues for school children. They also emphasized that concentration on pedestrian right-of-ways was essential for safety and to support downtown businesses. Albertville residents also expressed a great need for a parks and trails system for the city, and that currently they have to travel out of town for hiking and recreational activities. Blighted structures and boarded up storefronts were also mentioned as a major weakness for downtown. Stakeholders noted the great need for façade improvements and zoning enforcement throughout the district, as well as addressing incompatible uses, to help attract the needed retail. Aging infrastructure and deteriorating façades was cited as a major deterrent for prospects looking to locate in downtown, noting that this presents lost revenue for the city. Perhaps a positive sign out of this is the fact that Albertville residents have become extremely concerned with the physical conditions of their community, and are very serious about doing something about it.



Opportunities:

Albertville citizens listed several opportunities the community could take advantage of to help revitalize the area: the unique history and historical structures in the downtown, noting that “by revealing our history, this will help sustain and instill pride in our community again.” Other opportunities that were mentioned were: highlighting and connecting these historic and cultural sites throughout the district; the creative spirit of Albertville expressed in its musical heritage and the schools’ award-winning musical programs; opportunity for the city to strengthen zoning, aesthetics, and sign ordinances; a great opportunity to incorporate green space throughout the downtown, suggesting to turn perceived weaknesses into opportunities, such as utilizing empty parcels for infill development; better coordination and cooperation between city departments, chamber, and downtown merchants; and promoting the downtown more. They also felt that the City should take advantage of grants more frequently. Residents expressed a desire for recurring events in the downtown area, something like an arts and entertainment district, that would be a great opportunity to highlight the musical spirit of Albertville. And finally, the strong volunteerism and community spirit of Albertville citizens was stated as a great strength to leverage.

Citizens emphasized the extraordinary volunteerism and community activism that exists in Albertville, and the great pride people have here for their community reflected in the hard work that is put into each and every activity. The many community organizations and activities were mentioned as great assets to the community that showcased this community spirit:



- KAB
- Albertville Recycling
- United Way Day of Caring
- Veterans Day Ceremony
- Relay for Life fundraiser
- Second Saturday Cruise-In
- Main Street Music Festival
- Albertville Airshow
- Taste of Albertville
- Power of Giving
- Farmers’ Market events

“You’d be amazed how much trash piles up after the festivals, all the time, and with just a little education and awareness, and KAB and the recycling center coming in, people are now cleaning up after themselves. It’s amazing. Just in a year. Awareness is powerful.”

Assets (to promote/leverage) Id’ed in Community Surveys:

- locally-owned businesses; longtime stable businesses mixed with new eating and shopping establishments
- vacant property/developable land
- cultural diversity
- historic buildings/history
- high school/Fine Arts Center/band/musical heritage
- the fact that we have a downtown to improve!
- church campuses
- Albertville’s citizenry and pride in our community
- traffic/location
- Courthouse brings in county residents who spend money downtown
- public facilities downtown
- Rec Center, Farmers Market, Depot
- catalysts like Sebastian’s, Mater’s, King Pollo
- beautiful creeks, outdoor areas to turn into parks/trails
- historic neighborhoods
- hard-working, friendly people

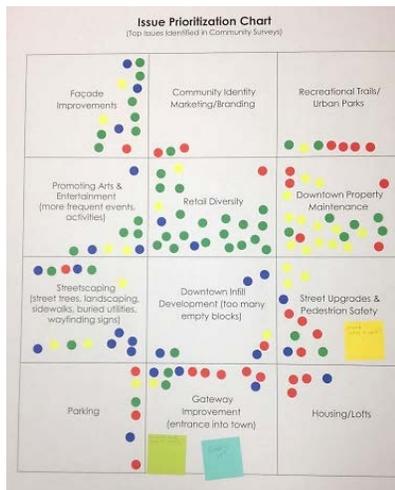
VISION:

To establish the Vision for Downtown, the community was asked numerous questions in interviews, meeting, surveys, and workshops. Perhaps the most important of these questions is "What do you want Downtown Albertville to be like in the next 10 to 20 years?" Asking this question engaged very passionate responses. Some quotes and responses from the community can be found in the following pages, with more listed in the Appendix section.



First, it is abundantly clear that the majority of Albertville citizens want to see change in their downtown. Perhaps for the first time, the community and the city are willing to make the commitment to turn things around. The serious concern over the deteriorating and blighted conditions in the downtown has been a wake-up call for the community. They cited that losing a majority of their downtown to the Urban Renewal efforts, they lost a lot of their history and that it was a huge loss to the community. They expressed a deep desire to bring it back to life again. Most residents feel that the downtown is the heart of the city, and pointed out that if it begins to die, then the city itself will die. The majority of respondents want Albertville to keep growing, but are worried they are losing residents to other communities with better conditions, downtown areas and more opportunities. Most especially, the Albertville community wants the deteriorating conditions in the downtown area to improve, economically and aesthetically. They want to see a vibrant hub for commercial and community activity. They want to see a bustling, vibrant, and strong downtown business environment again. They want a downtown that is accessible, safe, and one that provides something for everyone, every background and every age. They would like to see more entertainment options, and retail diversity. Albertville residents would like to see their history encapsulated in downtown highlighted and expanded upon. They would like to see a downtown that serves as a regional destination, to attract a larger trade area to the community. They would like to see more green space and recreational options in the downtown area for community activities, but to also breathe life into the downtown. They would like to see stricter controls on zoning and design standards for their downtown. They would like to make it easily walkable and accessible for all age groups. Furthermore, they want to promote and celebrate the downtown - the site of many community activities and events to showcase Albertville's unique creativity, history and community spirit. They would like to leverage and promote their rich musical heritage in the downtown area. They would like to have access to community space for musical events on a reoccurring basis. They want something to do, and places to shop. They would like a nightlife and more entertainment options for all age groups. Albertville residents feel that this will attract people to the area, and keep those that already live here. Finally, nothing is more apparent than the love Albertville residents have for their community and their downtown, the deep passion they have for their hometown, and the desire to improve it. They want to see it become the heart of Sand Mountain again, and want to see it revived. *And so the Vision Statement became:*

"We will strive to develop a vibrant, unique, and diverse downtown that celebrates the creativity, history, and community spirit of Albertville. One Town. One Heartbeat."

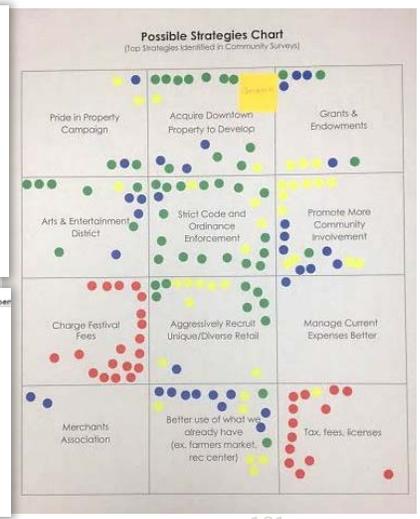


Top Priority Issues id'ed at Workshops:
 1.retail diversity 2.downtown property maintenance 3.façade improvements/beautification/aesthetics 4.streetscaping/infill development/urban parks, trails=tied 5.crossgenerational activities 6.leverage arts and entertainment 7.gateway improvement 8.pedestrian safety 9.historic preservation/parking=tied



Top Strategies id'ed at Workshops:
 1.stricter codes, ordinances, & enforcement 2.acquire downtown property to develop 3.recruit unique and diverse retail 4.create a downtown A&E district 5.promote community involvement 6.capitalize on existing assets (depot, rec center, farmers market) 7. Take advantage of grants 8.Merchants Assn

Top Values id'ed in Surveys:
 1.building an attractive community 2.recruiting diverse retail 3. Promoting an active/identifiable downtown 4.more rec/entertainment options 5.downtown building rehab 6.strengthening community image 7.historic preservation 8.safer streets for pedestrians and vehicles 9.urban parks; trails 10.promoting arts and music 11.improving basic infrastructure



“I would like to see some life coming back to the downtown.”



“The downtown is the center of our strengths – our history, our past prosperity. It is the identity of our city.”

“I would like to see an urban walking and biking “Trail of Albertville History.” We need more green space. Our city looks like it's dying. Green space would make it look alive again.”



“Revitalization of Downtown Albertville would mean we are creating a self-worth for our city and a sense of PRIDE!”

“Something for everyone. And all ages.”

“The depot is a very cherished landmark in our community. A source of pride. We would like to see a better use for it.”



“We want to be the heart of Sand Mountain and the heart of Marshall County again.”

“There is a lot of history in Albertville. We just need to highlight it.”



“Blight anywhere hurts development everywhere. If your downtown is blighted, you’re essentially dying from the inside out.”

“When it comes to our reputation, we are legendary across the country for music, show choir, and band. Everybody equates the city with that. We are music city. Our school systems are phenomenal.”

“We don’t want to travel to Huntsville or Birmingham to shop. We would rather shop in Albertville.”

“Historically, they wanted property on 431. But now the business climate has changed and they want to be downtown.”



“One of our biggest strengths now will be having a plan in place. The problem in the past was no plan, no vision.”



Albertville Downtown Master Plan

“From a business perspective, the biggest strength of doing business in downtown is LOCATION. LOCATION. LOCATION. Downtown property is cheap, and improvements and rehabilitation needs to happen, but you cannot beat that traffic, that exposure-- that prime property to market yourself.”



“The time is now. We’ve got to catch that wave, that momentum. If we don’t take advantage of it now, we might as well move out. Timing is everything.”

“The future of your downtown and its success really hinges on trying to figure out what is special about Albertville. A lot of times we hear well we want to be like them, or we want to be like that downtown, but the most successful downtowns are those that really capture a special quality and identity that is uniquely Albertville, that is its unique history and heritage, and when the community celebrates it, people will want to celebrate it with you.”



“This town has been good to all of us. And we need to continue to make it better for the future. We all need to continue to support the place and do whatever it takes to get it going again.”

“I’d like to see an overall change in attitude around town. We are starting to see the blight takeover and it’s getting to be bad conditions in some places and we’re starting to get a bad reputation for a dying rundown city.”

“I’d like to see it like it was 20 to 25 years ago, when there were a variety of things to do. I’d like to see loft living, apartments downtown, activities for children. We have a lot of young families here and moving in here. Teenagers have nothing to do, and they don’t have that pride in downtown like we did when we grew up here.”



Albertville Downtown Master Plan

“Embrace our multiculturalism. Celebrate it.”



“I love our downtown – it’s where it all began. It brings a sense of pride because it is what Albertville was, is, and what we will become. A link to our past, present, and future. Our history. Our identity. Community events. It showcases our community spirit. It is a cherished part of our community. And so we need to care for it.”



“I'd like to see more reoccurring events in downtown. You've got to have that variety again - a seamless flow from day to night, something for all age groups.”



“My business was in Boaz. So moving to Downtown Albertville was huge because the stores coming in, and Sébastien’s and Mater’s, we have a lot of customers that come down from eating and come shop. They park one place, eat, and then walk down to our place. So that foot traffic is vital.”

“When the business climate downtown died, it was twofold really. It was the Urban Renewal that came in in the 60s and 70s, but also the same time that happened, the outlet malls opened in Boaz. And then big-box retail started moving in.”

“The city has woken up from its slumber, and realized, we have to do something. We have a new mayor, a new council, and we want to be proactive to save our city from disrepair”

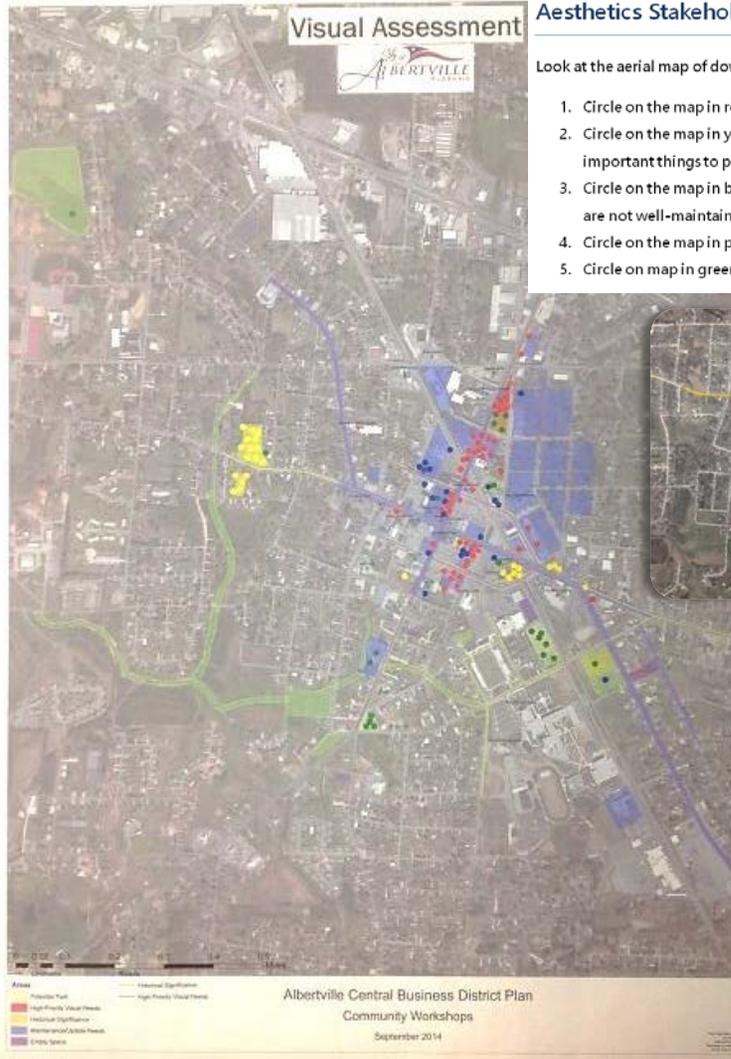
What would the revitalization of Downtown Albertville mean to you?

Age **Albertville** Approach Attract New Business
Business and Entertainment Buy **Citizens** Destination
Downtown Earlier **Historical** Huntsville Hurt **Live**
Mean Money Older PAST Positive **Preserve** Priority
Return **Shop** Strong Surrounding Cities Identity
Town True **Worth Saving** **Pride**

Appendix

Dot Analysis Results
Economic Conditions Report
Community Survey Results
Community Comments
References

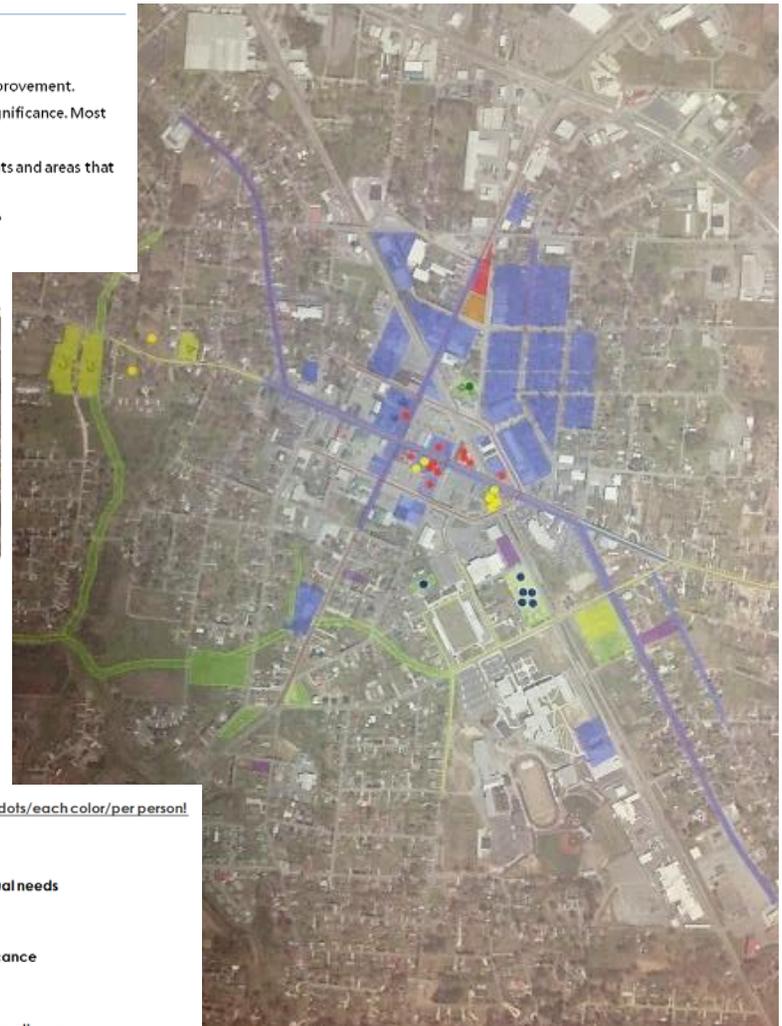
Dot Analysis and Issues Prioritization Exercise from Community Workshops (September 2014)



Aesthetics Stakeholder Group

Look at the aerial map of downtown Albertville.

1. Circle on the map in red – areas of highest priority for visual improvement.
2. Circle on the map in yellow – areas of historical/architectural significance. Most important things to preserve in downtown.
3. Circle on the map in blue – areas in need of façade improvements and areas that are not well-maintained.
4. Circle on the map in pink – empty spaces/underutilized parcels?
5. Circle on map in green – pocket parks? Existing and potential.

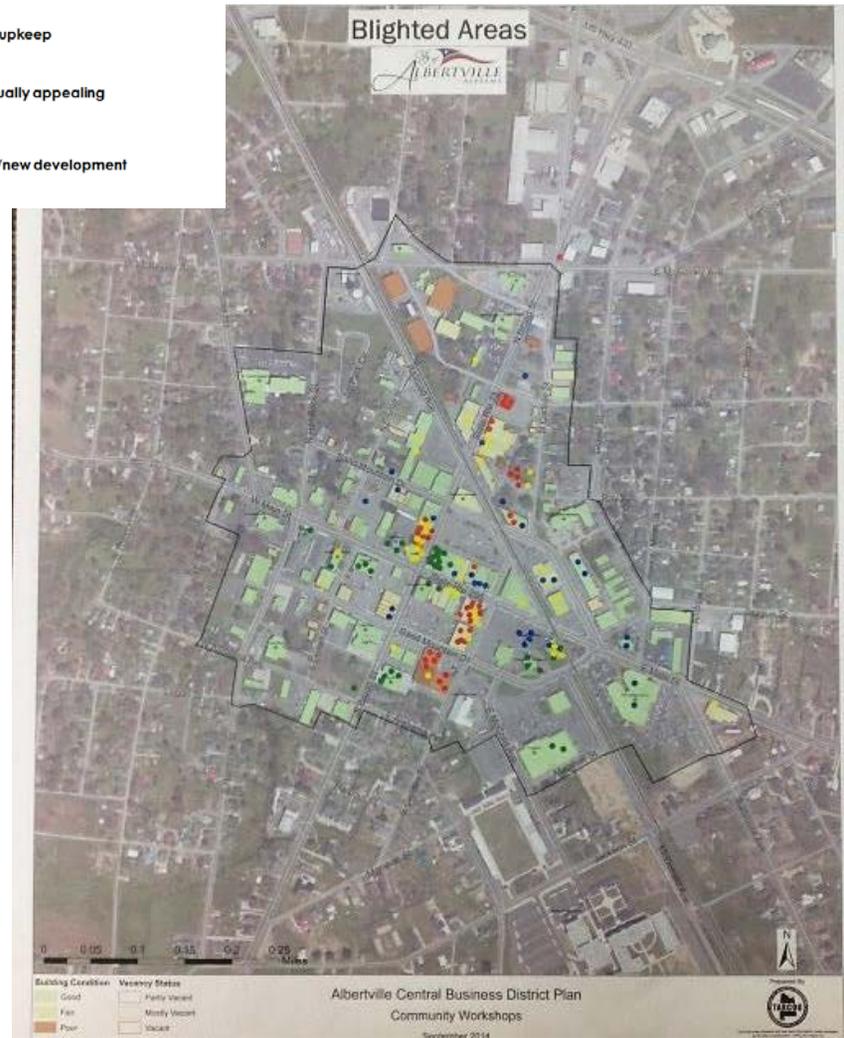
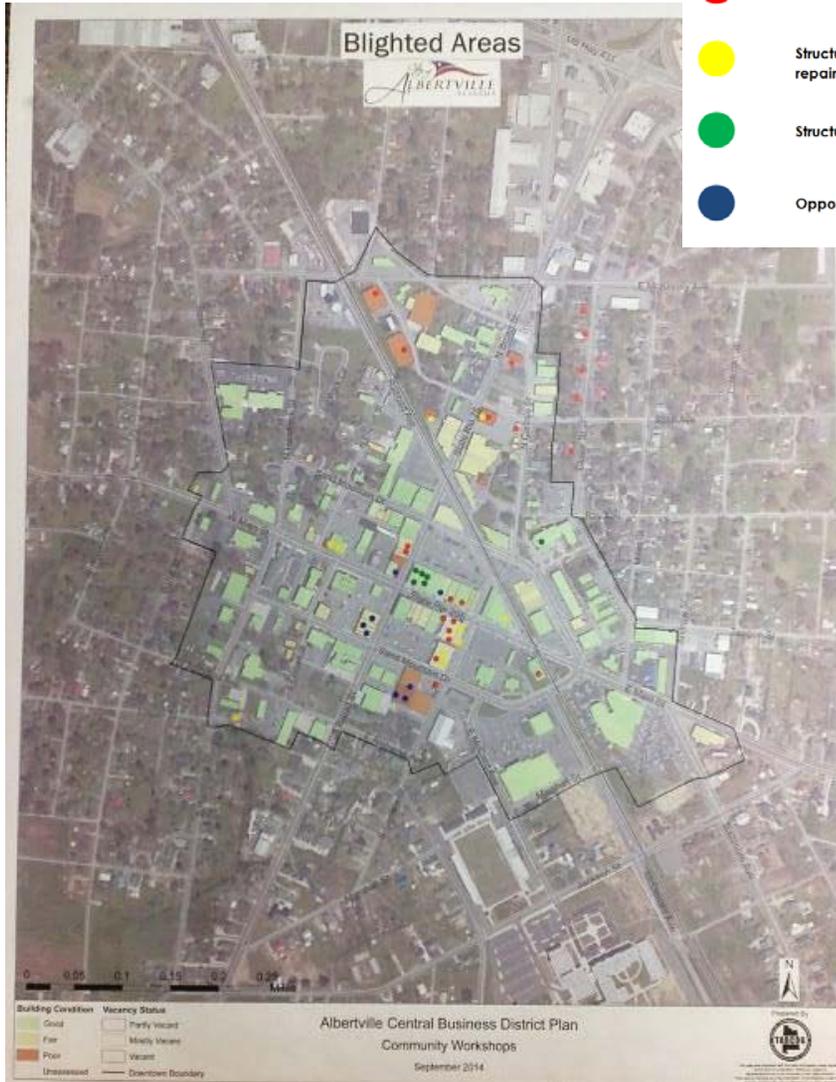


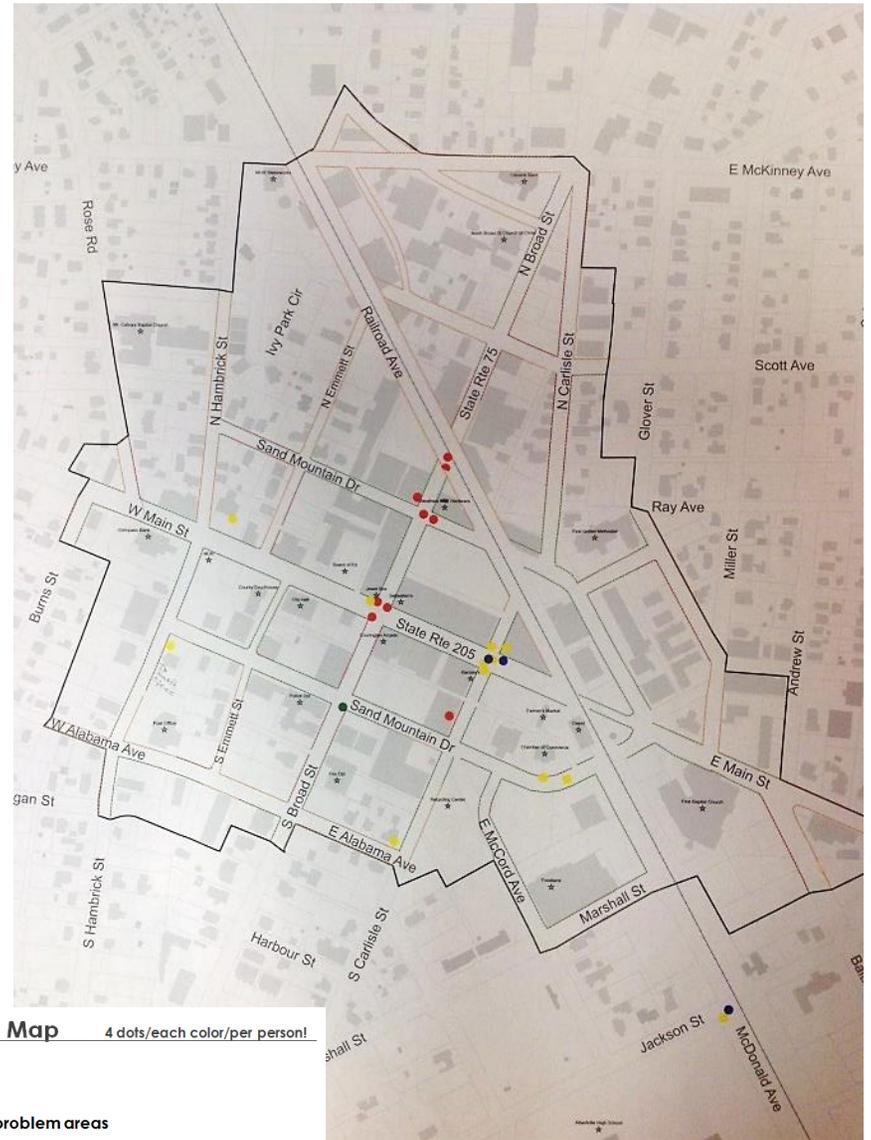
Visual Assessment Map 4 dots/each color/per person!

- Areas of high-priority visual needs
- Areas of historical significance
- Potential park space, recreation areas
- Underutilized parcels

Blighted Areas Map 4 dots/each color/per person!

- Structures in decline/dilapidated condition
- Structures in need of repair/maintenance/upkeep
- Structures that are visually appealing
- Opportunities for infill/new development





Sidewalk Conditions Map 4 dots/each color/per person!

- Congestion problem areas
- Dangerous intersections/safety/visibility issues
- Areas in need of crosswalk, traffic lights, stop signs



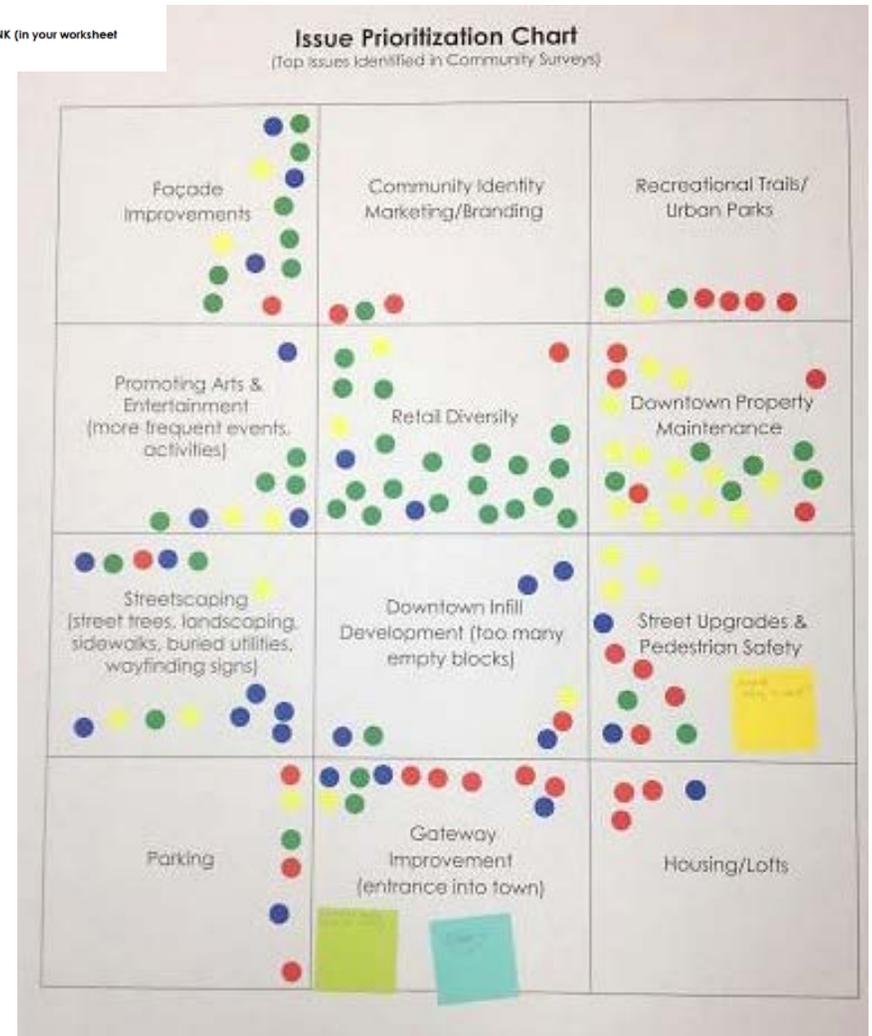
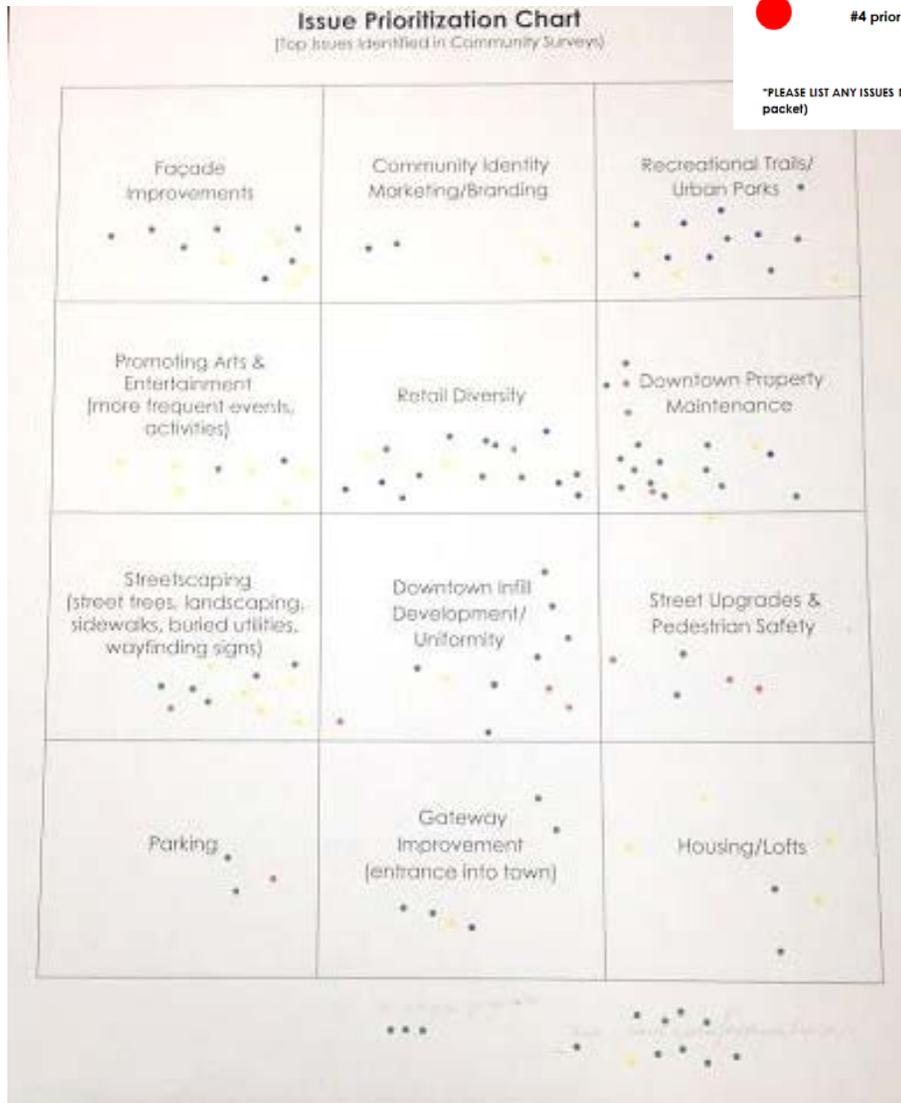
Parking Assessment Map 4 dots/each color/per person

- **Parking areas at max capacity during business hours**
- **Areas that require more parking than provided (during business hours)**
- **Underutilized parking space (during business hours only)**



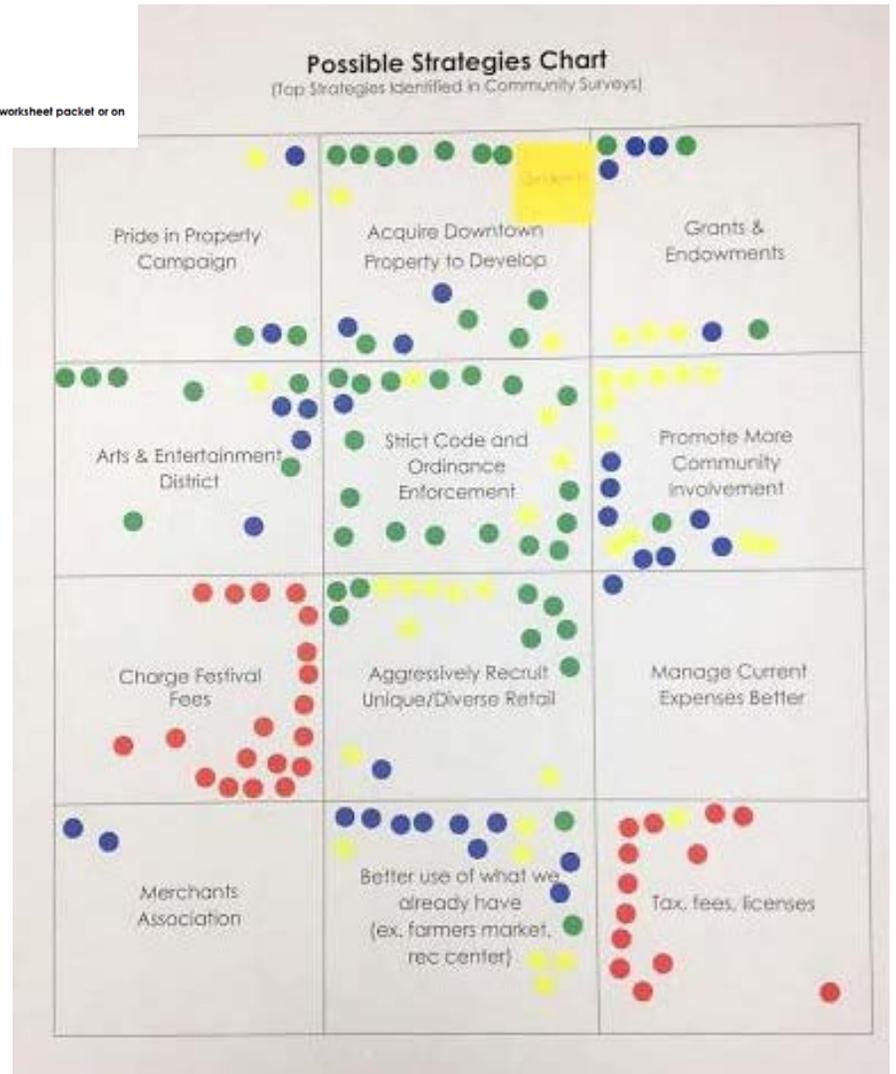
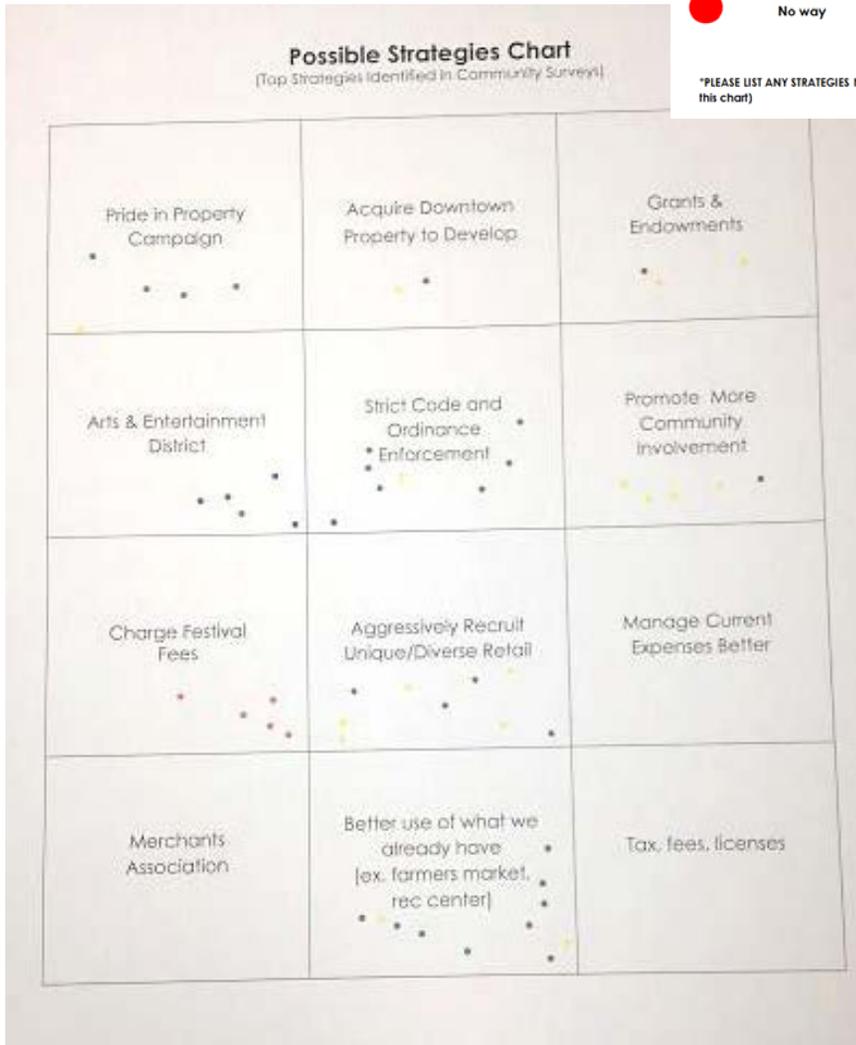
Issues Prioritization Chart 1 dot/each color/per person

- #1 priority issue
- #2 priority issue
- #3 priority issue
- #4 priority issue



Possible Strategies Chart 2 dots/each color/per person

- #1 best strategy to address a certain issue
- #2 best strategy to address a certain issue
- #3 best strategy to address a certain issue
- No way



Current Economic Conditions Report

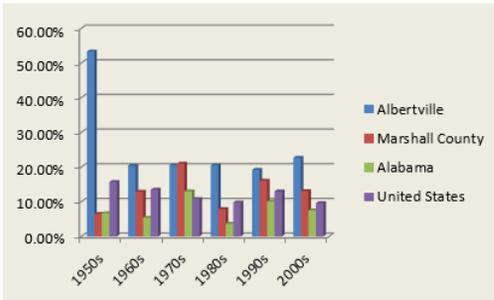
Community Growth and Population

Population Growth. Albertville is among the fastest growing cities of its size in Alabama. In 1910, the population was 1,544. Its population increased steadily from 5,395 in 1950 to 8,272 in 1960, representing a 53.3% growth and defining Albertville's greatest growth period. By 2000, the city's population was 17,247 and in 2010 it was 21,160, representing a 10-year growth rate of 22.7%, and an average annual growth rate of around 2.3%. Albertville makes up about 22.7% of the population of Marshall County, which had a 2010 population of 93,019. Using this annual growth rate, the city is projected to have a population of 27,029 by 2025. Albertville's population was estimated by the Census to be 21,556 in 2013.



Median Age. According to the Census, Albertville's median age in 2000 was 34; by 2010, it was 32.3, representing a younger population. This does not correspond with the current county, state, and national statistics, which represent an aging population. Marshall County's median age in 2000 was 36.9, by 2010 it was 38.2. Alabama's median age in 2000 was 35.8; whereas in 2010, it had increased to 37.9. When compared to the United States, the median age in 2000 was 35.3; and in 2010 it had increased to 37.2. When compared to comparable and nearby cities, Cullman's median age in 2000 was 41.2; and 39.7 in 2010. Athens had a median age of 37.5 in 2000; and 39.2 in 2010. Scottsboro had a median age of 39.6 in 2000; in 2010, this had increased to 42.2. Huntsville's has stayed relatively the same, with a 36.7 median age in 2000; and 36.5 median age in 2010. Finally, Guntersville's median age in 2000 was 40.8; and in 2010 it was 43.9. It should be noted, however, that due to the large migrant population in Albertville, it is difficult to obtain true figures.

Population Growth Rates

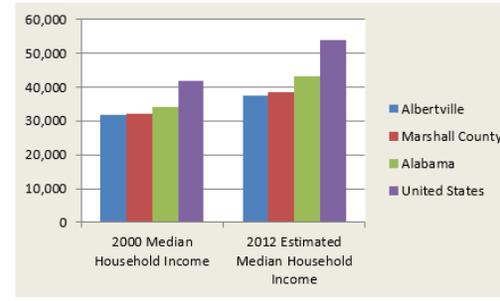


Albertville Historical and Projected Population

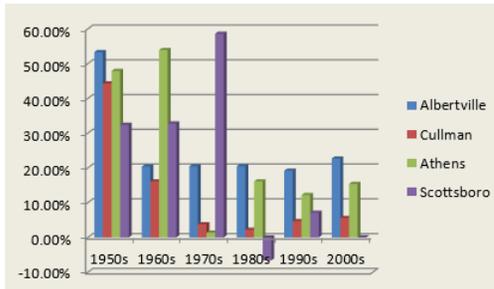
Year	Population	% Change
1950	5,395	
1960	8,272	53.3%
1970	9,963	20.4%
1980	12,001	20.5%
1990	14,462	20.5%
2000	17,247	19.2%
2010	21,160	22.7%
2025	27,029	22.7%

Income

Median Household Income. Median household income levels in Albertville had increased from \$31,893 in 2000, to \$37,385, according to the Census 2012 estimates. This is just slightly lower than Marshall County's median household income levels that were at \$32,167 in 2000, and \$38,649 according to 2012 estimates. Alabama's median household income was at \$34,135 in 2000, and \$43,160 by 2012 estimates.

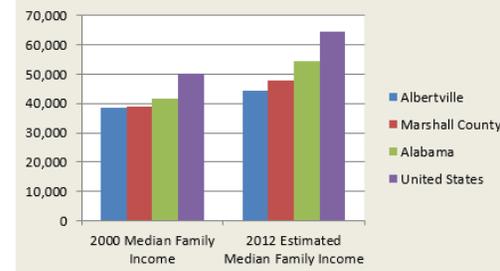


Comparative Population Growth Rates



Marshall County Historical and Projected Population

Year	Population	% Change
1950	45,090	
1960	48,018	6.5%
1970	54,211	12.9%
1980	65,622	21%
1990	70,832	7.9%
2000	82,231	16.1%
2010	93,019	13.1%
2025	111,296	13.1%

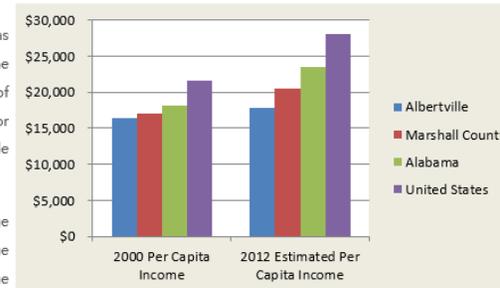


Median Family Income. Albertville's median family income in 2000 was \$38,508. By 2012, it was estimated at \$44,315 (ACS 2008-2012 Estimates). For Marshall County, this was \$38,788; and \$47,883, respectively. Alabama's figures were \$41,657 in 2000, and estimated at \$54,326 2012.

When compared to nearby cities of comparable size and nature, Albertville shows steady growth over the past sixty years. Similar towns its size, such as Cullman, Alabama in Cullman County, Scottsboro, Alabama in Jackson County, and Athens in Limestone County show fluctuations in growth rate since the 1950s, whereas Albertville had its greatest growth spurt in the 1950s, with the burgeoning poultry industry, and has maintained a steady growth rate of around 2.3% annually up to today. Albertville was #1 in percentage growth from 2000 to 2006 for micropolitan areas in Alabama, and #3 in Alabama for percentage growth from 2000 to 2006 for all areas. In 2000, the population density was 664.6 people per square mile, and in 2012, there were 829 people per square mile, representing a 24.7% change in density over 12 years.

Per Capita Income. In 2000, Albertville's per capita income was at \$16,366, and by 2012, it was estimated at \$17,904. This compares to Marshall County's per capita income of \$17,089 in 2000, and \$20,480 estimated in 2012. For the state of Alabama, the 2000 per capita income was at \$18,189, and in 2012, it was estimated at \$23,587. Albertville's per capita income is slightly lower than comparable cities its size. Cullman, Alabama has an estimated 2012 per capita income at \$21,738; and Scottsboro's was \$22,939. It should be noted that these figures are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates for 2008-2012, therefore they are just estimates and do not reflect true data point collection. However, comparative analysis ratios are accurate.

Housing Units and People Per Household. The Census reports that there were 7,090 total housing units, with an average household size of 2.59, and average family size of 3.08. By 2010, there were 8,128 total housing units, with an average household size of 2.79, and average family size of 3.27. In 2000, the average household size in Marshall County as a whole was about the same, at 2.5 average household size, and 2.96 average family size. In 2010, the average household size for the county was 2.57; and the average family size was 3.05.



According to Census ACS 2008-2012 5-Year estimates, the largest percentage of the civilian labor force in Albertville (1,176 people) makes between \$35,000 and \$49,999 income. The second largest pool (1,175 people) makes between \$50,000 and \$74,999. Yet 19.4% of all families had an income that was below the poverty level. This is higher than the state's level of 13.9%, and the county's level at 15.6%. In 2000, about 14.1% of families and 16.7% of the population were below the poverty line, including 21.8% of those under age 18 and 21.0% of that age 65 or over. The median household income for Albertville is \$37,385.

Employment

Employment. Manufacturing is by far the largest employment sector in Albertville and Marshall County. However, this sector has experienced slight decline in employment. The table below indicates the employment for selected non-farm employment sectors according to the Economic Census of 1997, 2002, and 2007. (This does not include government employment).

Employment in Selected Non-Farm Employment Sectors

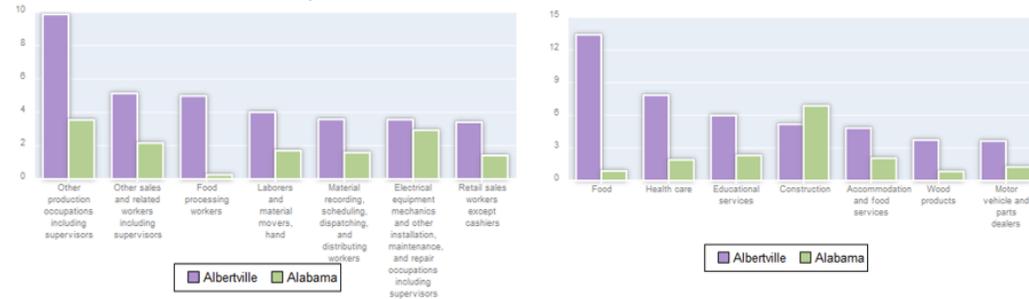
Sector	1997	2002	2007
Manufacturing	4391	4440	3840
Wholesale trade	984	683	867
Retail trade	1325	1397	1330
Information	N/A	191	154
Real estate and rental and leasing	225	187	442
Professional, scientific, and technical services	176	210	245
Administrative and waste services	369	1482	3890
Health care and social assistance	506	644	841
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	56	23	26
Accommodation and food services	849	563	590
Other services (except public administration)	188	113	88

The most common occupations in Albertville are in production. Second common occupation is in sales; and food processing is the third most common occupation and Albertville. The food industry, by far, represents the dominant industry in Albertville. Healthcare and educational services are the second and third most common industries in Albertville, respectively.

The following charts indicate most common occupations in Albertville, and most common industries, compared to state figures.

Most Common Occupations (%)

Most Common Industries (%)



Industry. Albertville currently ranks 17th in the nation for industrial growth and expansion according to Site Selection Magazine. According to the Albertville Chamber of Commerce, there are approximately 11,299 jobs in Albertville with the highest share of those jobs being in manufacturing (34.2%). Retail trade has the second highest share with 1,447 workers. Many of the largest employers in the Albertville area are poultry processing plants, with as many as 7,000 employed in the industry. Pilgrim's Pride, a poultry processing plant, is the largest employer in the Albertville area with approximately 1,900 employees located on two sites. Tyson Foods, Inc., a poultry processing plant within Albertville, employs 1,041; Wayne Farms (poultry processing) employs 985; and AlaTrade Foods, also poultry processing, employees approximately 700 workers. Mitchell Grocery (grocery distribution) employs 538; Progress Rail, a railroad and locomotive parts manufacturer, employees 500; Albertville City Schools employs 495; and Mueller Company, a fire hydrant manufacturer, employs 450. Albertville Quality Foods, another poultry processing plant within Albertville, employs 400, and Diamond Foods, also poultry, employs 340. Colormasters, a plastics manufacturer, employs 300, while Huhtamaki, manufacturer of mold fiber products, employs 200. Newman Technology, a Honda automotive parts supplier, just recently located in Albertville and employees 227; and Southern Parallel, forestry products manufacturer, employs 159 workers.

Albertville Top Employers

Name	Location	Product	# Employees
Pilgrim's Pride	Albertville, Guntersville	Poultry processing	1900
Tyson Foods, Inc.	Albertville	Poultry processing	1041
Wayne Farms	Albertville	Poultry processing	985
AlaTrade Foods	Albertville	Poultry processing	700
Mitchell Grocery Corp.	Albertville	Grocery distribution	538
Progress Rail	Albertville	RR & locomotive parts	500
Albertville City Schools	Albertville	Education	495
Mueller Company	Albertville	Fire hydrants manufacturer	450
Albertville Quality Foods	Albertville	Poultry processing	400
Diamond Foods	Albertville	Poultry processing	340
Colormasters, LLC	Albertville	Plastics manufacturer	300
Huhtamaki	Albertville	Mold fiber products	200
Newman Technology	Albertville	Automotive supplier	227
Southern Parallel	Albertville	Forestry products	159
Paragon	Albertville	Wall décor	90
B & G Supply	Albertville	Transportation trucking	95
Propac Images	Albertville	Framed artwork	55
Fabco	Albertville	Metal fabrication	50
Bakery Feeds	Albertville	Bakery recycling facility	45
Plasticraft	Albertville	Plastic injection molding	42
Americold Logistics	Albertville	Refrigerated warehousing	40

Marshall County Top Employers

Name	Location	Product	# Employees
Pilgrim's Pride	Albertville, Boaz, Guntersville	Poultry processing	1900
Marshall Medical Centers	Guntersville, Boaz	Healthcare	1331
Tyson	Albertville	Poultry processing	1041
AlaTrade	Albertville, Boaz	Poultry processing	1,000
Wayne Farms	Albertville	Poultry processing	985
Marshall County School System	Countywide	Education	800
TS Tech	Boaz	Automotive supplier	700
Mitchell Grocery Corp.	Albertville	Grocery distribution	538
Progress Rail	Albertville	Education	500
Albertville City Schools	Albertville	RR & locomotive parts	495
Mueller	Albertville	Fire hydrants manufacturer	450
Albertville Quality Foods	Albertville	Poultry processing	400
Arab City Schools	Arab	Education	350
Diamond Foods	Albertville	Poultry processing	340
Colormasters	Albertville	Plastics manufacturing	300
Boaz City Schools	Boaz	Education	267
Federal Mogul	Boaz	Automotive supplier	250
Newman Technology	Albertville	Automotive supplier	227
Huhtamaki	Albertville	Mold fiber products	200
Atrion	Arab	Medical products manufacturer	181
Kappler Safety Group	Guntersville	Protective clothing manufacturer	177
Southern Parallel	Albertville	Forestry products	159
Paragon	Albertville	Wall decor	90

Travel Time to Work

Travel Time	Percent of Working Population
Less than 10 minutes	25%
10 to 14 minutes	25%
15 to 19 minutes	18.6%
20 to 24 minutes	10.9%
25 to 29 minutes	2.5%
30 to 34 minutes	7.7%
35 to 44 minutes	1.7%
45 to 59 minutes	2.9%
60 or more minutes	5.8%

Commuting Patterns. According to U.S. Census American Community Survey 2008- 2012 5-Year Estimates, 96.7% of the working population drove to work. 78.3% drove alone, while 18.3% carpooled. 0.3% walked to work, while 0.8% took a taxi, motorcycle or other means to work. 2.2% of Albertville's working population worked out of their home. 97.7% of the working population in Albertville worked within the state of Alabama. 84.2% of the working population worked in Marshall County, while 13.6% worked outside of the county. 2.3% worked outside of the state. According to these estimates, 50.6% of the working population in Albertville works within the city, while 49.4% work outside of the city of Albertville. The mean travel time to work was 18.1 minutes.

According to the City of Albertville, there are three industrial parks in the City that serve as home to a diverse industry and manufacturing base. With close proximity to I-59 (19 miles) and I-65 (44 miles) and its position at the intersection of US Hwy 431 and Alabama Hwy 75, Albertville is conveniently located to distribute goods and products easily. Several local industries also utilize the Alabama-Tennessee River Railroad to transport their products.

The Albertville Regional Airport is home to the Alabama Aviation College (part of the Ozark-Enterprise Community College), BAE Systems, RainAir Aviation & Mid-South Aviation along with six corporate hangers and thirty-six T-hangers with additional construction imminent.

The City has a very aggressive Industrial Development Board, an Economic Development Department, as well as a Commercial Development Authority. Since the economic downturn, the city's industrial development has seen steady growth. Recently, the City has acquired a new Toyota dealership, a Raceway gas station, Warren Distribution, and Newman Technology (a Honda automotive parts supplier), representing \$101 million in capital investment and over 500 new jobs. Colormasters also recently expanded their operations with two additional sites in Albertville and BAE Aviation has been named a subcontractor in a Department of the Army five year contract that will increase their business and hiring capabilities.

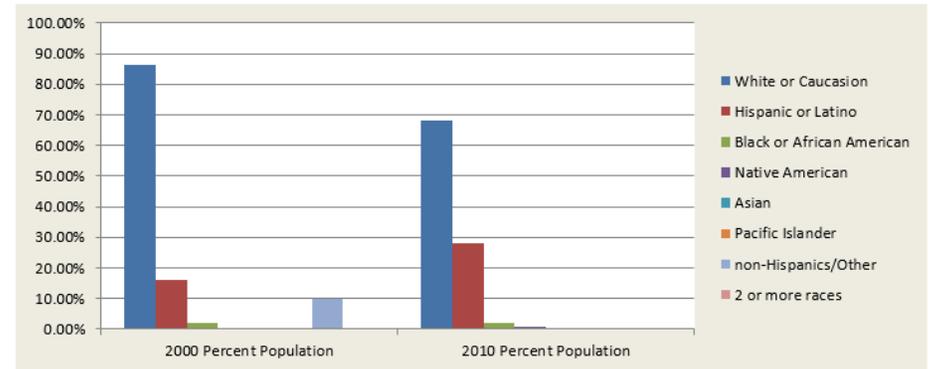
Local industries make up a large percentage of the city's major source of income. According to Marshall County records, some items which are locally produced or manufactured are paper plates by the Chinet Co., fire hydrants by Mueller, steel castings and hubs from Alloy Resources, and processed steel from Progress Rail. Other locally-produced products are poultry and eggs from Tyson Foods, Wayne Farms, and Alatrade, and breeder pullets from Aviagen. Southern Parallel operates a saw mill and lumber yard in the Albertville area.

Commercial/Retail. Although Albertville has seen strong industrial and manufacturing recruitment, especially in recent months, commercial and retail activity over the years has shifted from the heart of downtown to US Hwy 431, which has contributed greatly to the blight of the downtown. There are approximately 11,299 jobs in Albertville with the highest share of those jobs being in manufacturing (34.2%). Retail trade, however, only employs 1,447 workers. Recognizing the competitive nature of small business and retail development, the city's administration offers incentives packages based on capital investment, employment and increased sales tax revenue.

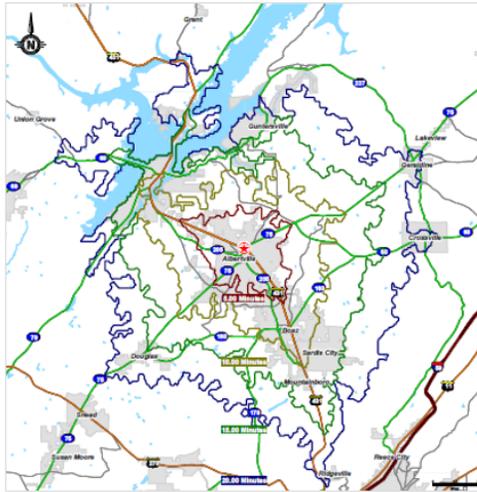
Unemployment. According to Census 2000, the unemployment rate in Albertville in 2000 was at 3.6%; its lowest since then was in 2007, when the city had an unemployment rate of 2.9%. During recessionary years, it reached 10.4% in January 2010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The unemployment rate in Albertville has steadily decreased since 2010, and as of April 2014, it was at 6.10%. This is compared to the state's April unemployment rate of 6.9%, and 6.3% nationally. Albertville's unemployment rate is slightly higher than its long-term average of 5.94%.

Demographics. According to the Census, in 2000, the racial and ethnic composition of the city was 86.15% White, 2.05% Black or African American, 0.31% Native American, 0.26% Asian, 0.10% Pacific Islander, 9.78% from other races, and 1.35% from two or more races. 16.08% of the population was Hispanic or Latino. By 2010, this had changed to 68.1% non-Hispanic white, 1.9% Black or African American, 0.8% Native American, 0.5% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 0.1% non-Hispanics reporting some other race, 2.1% reporting two or more races, and 27.9% Hispanic or Latino.

General Demographics



Retail Trade



In addition to being an industrially-oriented community, Albertville serves as a retail and professional center within a 30-mile radius trade area with a population of around 180,168. This area includes Geraldine, Fyffe, Kilpatrick, and Crossville in DeKalb; Sardis, Mountainboro and Ridgeville in Etowah County; Boaz, Horton and Douglas to the south in Marshall County; and Guntersville to the north in Marshall County, and some rural communities in Blount County.

The nearest city with a population of 50,000+ is Huntsville, AL (37.9 miles), and the nearest city with a population of 200,000+ is Birmingham, AL (61.8 miles).

Albertville is located near several higher learning centers, including Snead State Community College, Gadsden State College, Northeast State Junior College, Jacksonville State University and the University of Alabama at Huntsville.

In 2012, the City of Albertville conducted a retail market analysis to determine retail potential and leakage. A study was generated, detailing commercial and retail businesses within the downtown area and the greater Albertville area, specifically the commercial development along Highway 431. Number of employees was calculated, along with the location, the primary specialty, credit rating score, and the approximate sales volume.

Currently, the City is in the process of inventorying retail and other businesses within the downtown Central Business District (CBD) specifically. A more detailed analysis of commercial entities within the CBD will be included in the Current Physical Conditions report, the next phase in the Albertville Downtown Central Business District Plan. Of the 85 total number of retail stores examined in the Retail Leakage Analysis report, 52 are located along Highway 431. Of the total number of retail stores, 17 are restaurants, nine are automobile dealers or automotive-related; seven are service stations; six are convenience stores; only two are apparel; and four are grocers. The largest retail employer is Kmart, located on Highway 431, and employing 100. The second highest employer is McDonald's, located on Highway 431, and employing 70 workers. For the purpose of estimating the potential growth of retail sales, the historic spending patterns of the Albertville area were used, supply (retail sales) and demand (retail potential) was calculated and projected future sales were calculated to determine retail leakage and surplus.

The findings were thus: Albertville was experiencing the most retail leakage in these NAICS Industry Subsectors: first, sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; second was gasoline stations; and third was food services and drinking places. More detailed retail leakage and surplus measures within Industry Groups suggested that the largest leakage was occurring in drinking places; followed by book, periodical, and music stores; and used merchandise stores came in third. Florists came in fourth, furniture stores industry group had the fifth greatest retail leakage: jewelry, luggage, and leather goods stores was sixth; and department stores industry group was seventh. Limited-service eating place was next, representing a leakage factor of 21.

Greatest Retail Leakage in Albertville

Industry Subsectors (NAICS)	Industry Groups
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	Drinking Places
Gasoline Stations	Book, periodical, and music stores
Food Services and Drinking Places	Used merchandise
	Florists
	Furniture stores
	Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods
	Department stores
	Limited service eating places

Leakage and Surplus Factor

Industry Subsector (NAICS)	Industry Group (NAICS)	Leakage (+) Surplus (-) Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor vehicle and parts dealers		-50.7	62
	Automobile dealers	-54.4	42
	Other motor vehicle dealers	14.9	4
	Auto parts, accessories, and tire stores	-32.0	16
Furniture and home furnishings stores		-27.8	7
	Furniture stores	32.8	4
	Home furnishings stores	-78.3	3
Electronics and appliance stores		-29.6	7
Building materials, garden equipment, and supplies stores		-40.3	20
	Building materials and supplies dealers	-40.9	17
	Lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores	-33.8	3
Food and beverage stores		-43.7	19
	Grocery stores	-44.2	14
	Specialty food stores	2.3	3
	Beer, wine, and liquor stores	-42.9	2
Health and personal care stores		-31.8	12
Gasoline stations		18.1	8
Clothing and clothing accessories stores		-0.7	15
	Clothing stores	-6.4	9
	Shoe stores	9.5	3
	Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods stores	28.7	3
Sporting goods, Hobby, book, and music stores		37.9	4
	Sporting goods/hobby/musical instrument stores	-10.5	3
	Book, periodical, and music stores	78.1	1
General merchandise stores		-19.9	10
	Department stores	23.2	6
	Other General merchandise stores	-51.0	4
Miscellaneous store retailers		-26.3	26
	Florists	36.3	3
	Office supplies, stationary, and a gift stores	-4.3	4
	Used merchandise stores	42.3	4
	Other miscellaneous store retailers	-44.5	15
Nonstore retailers		-18.1	2
	Electronic shopping and mail-order houses	0.0	0
	Vending machine operators	-10.9	1
	Direct selling establishments	-23.3	1
Food services and drinking places		4.8	37
	Full-service restaurants	-100.0	22
	Limited service eating places	21.8	13
	Special food services	-74.1	2
	Drinking places – alcoholic beverages	100.0	0

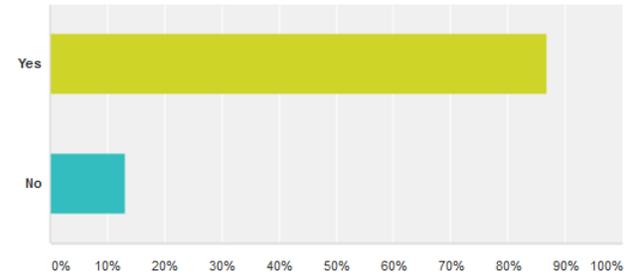
Source: The Shopping Center Group

What would the revitalization of downtown Albertville mean to you?

Age **Albertville** Approach Attract New Business
 Business and Entertainment Buy Citizens Destination
 Downtown Earlier Historical Huntsville Hurt Live
 Mean Money Older PAST Positive Preserve Priority
 Return Shop Strong Surrounding Cities Identity
 Town True Worth Saving Pride

Do you or does your family own property in Albertville?

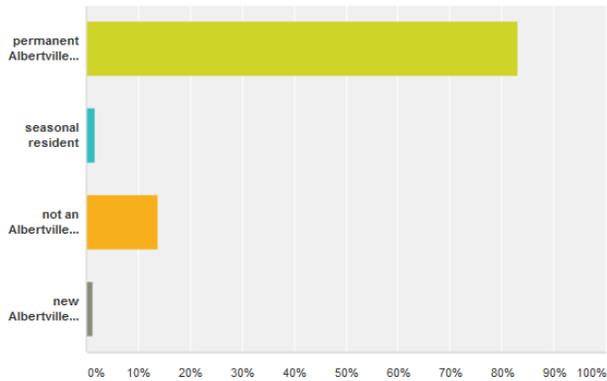
Answered: 524 Skipped: 11



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	86.83% 455
No	13.17% 69
Total	524

I am a..

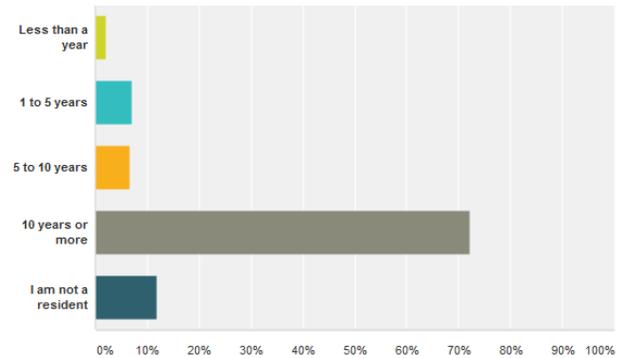
Answered: 526 Skipped: 9



Answer Choices	Responses
permanent Albertville resident	83.08% 437
seasonal resident	1.71% 9
not an Albertville resident	13.88% 73
new Albertville resident	1.33% 7
Total	526

How long have you lived in Albertville?

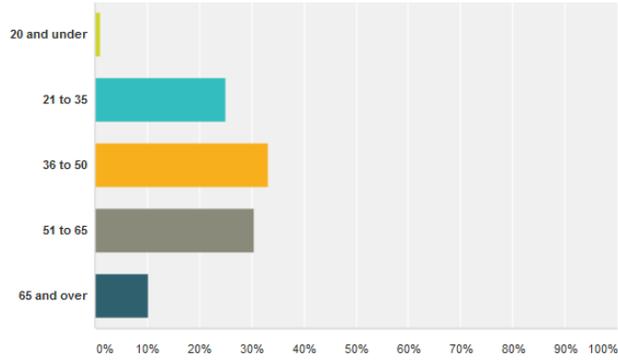
Answered: 528 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses
Less than a year	2.08% 11
1 to 5 years	7.20% 38
5 to 10 years	6.63% 35
10 years or more	72.16% 381
I am not a resident	11.93% 63
Total	528

Which age group do you belong to?

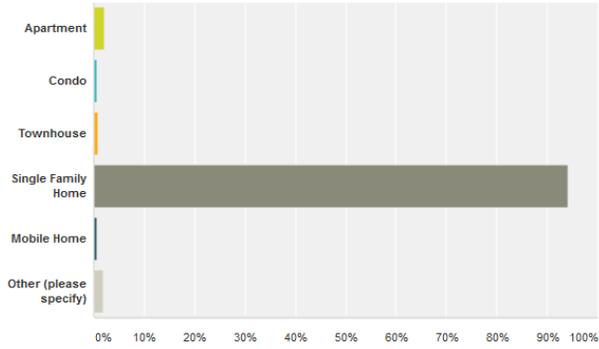
Answered: 523 Skipped: 12



Answer Choices	Responses
20 and under	1.15% 6
21 to 35	25.05% 131
36 to 50	33.27% 174
51 to 65	30.40% 159
65 and over	10.13% 53
Total	523

What type of residence do you reside in?

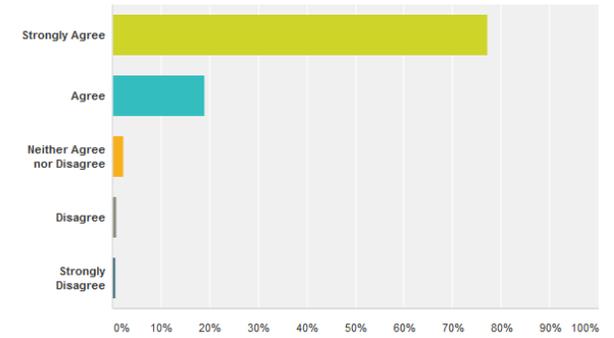
Answered: 523 Skipped: 12



Answer Choices	Responses
Apartment	2.10% 11
Condo	0.57% 3
Townhouse	0.76% 4
Single Family Home	94.07% 492
Mobile Home	0.57% 3
Other (please specify)	1.91% 10
Total	523

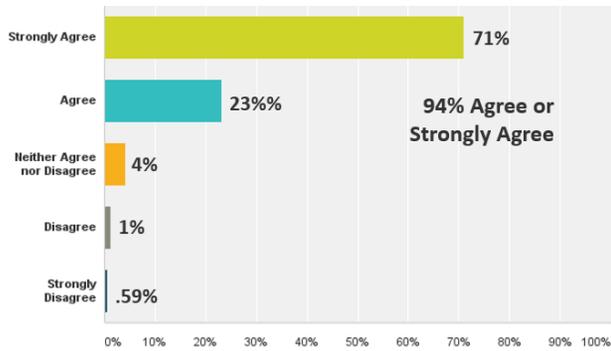
Would you like things to improve in the downtown area? Visually, economically, infrastructure-wise (roads, sidewalks, street trees, safety)?

Answered: 519 Skipped: 16

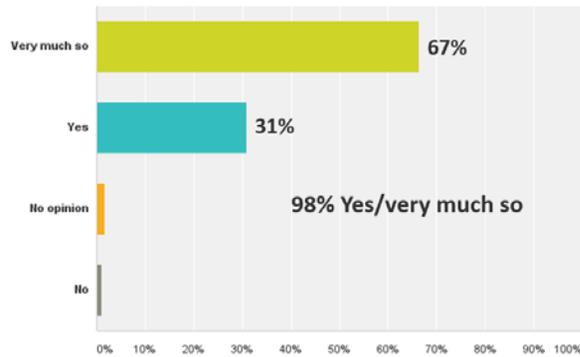


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	77.26% 401
Agree	19.08% 99
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2.34% 12
Disagree	0.77% 4
Strongly Disagree	0.58% 3
Total	519

Do you feel an economically-viable downtown is important to the overall success and prosperity of the city?

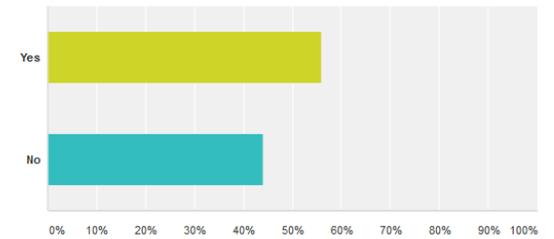


Do you care what happens to downtown Albertville?



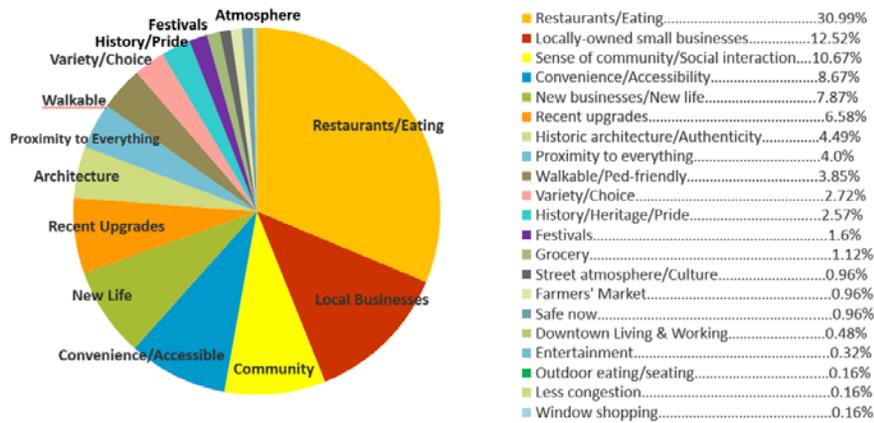
Do you live in or near the downtown area?

Answered: 516 Skipped: 19



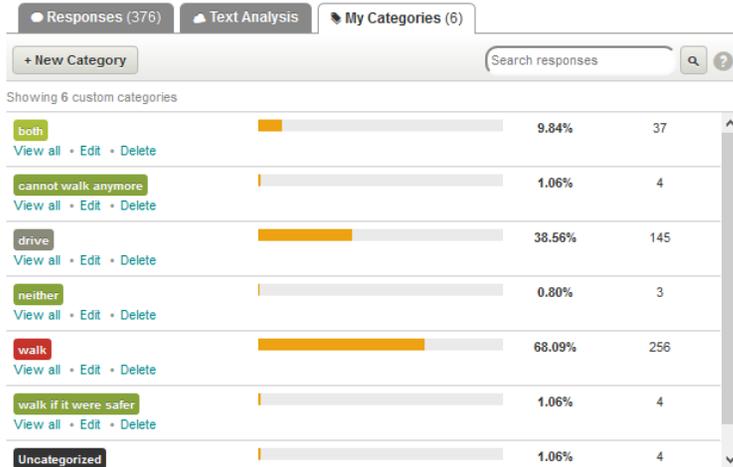
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	56.01% 289
No	43.99% 227
Total	516

What do you enjoy most about downtown Albertville?

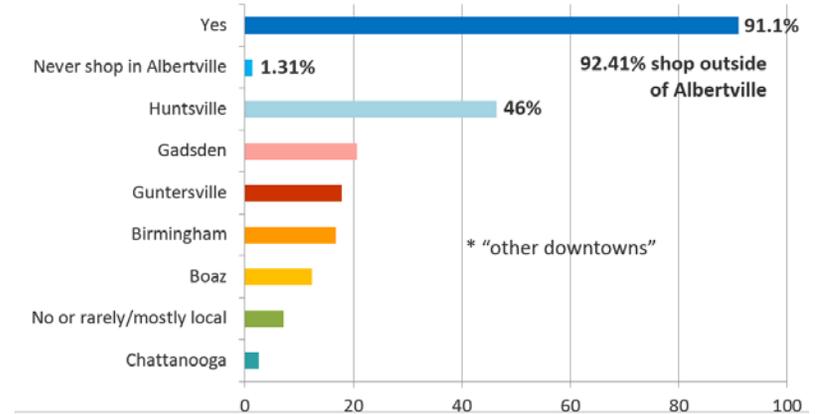


Would you rather walk or drive to shop, work, or eat in Albertville?

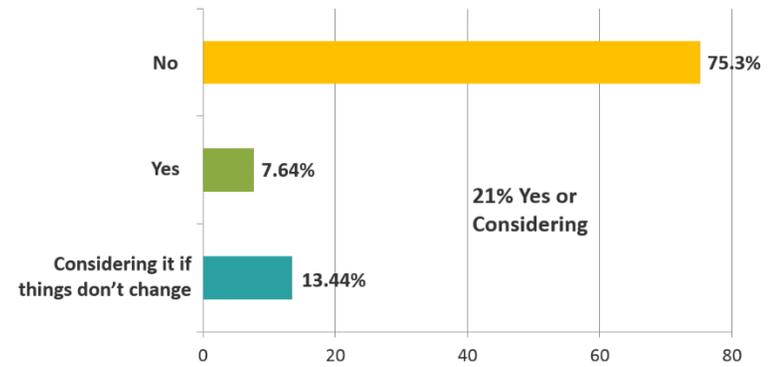
Answered: 376 Skipped: 159



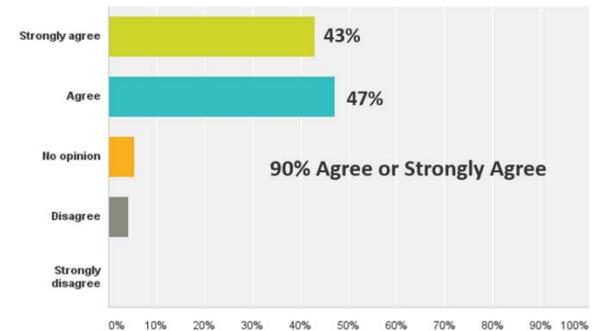
Do you travel out of town to shop, & if so, where?



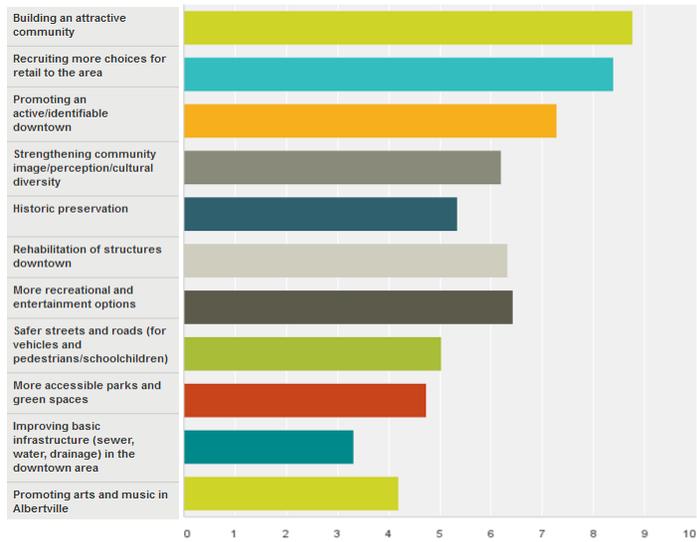
Do you have plans to move from Albertville?



Do you feel a focus on the downtown area is necessary at this time?

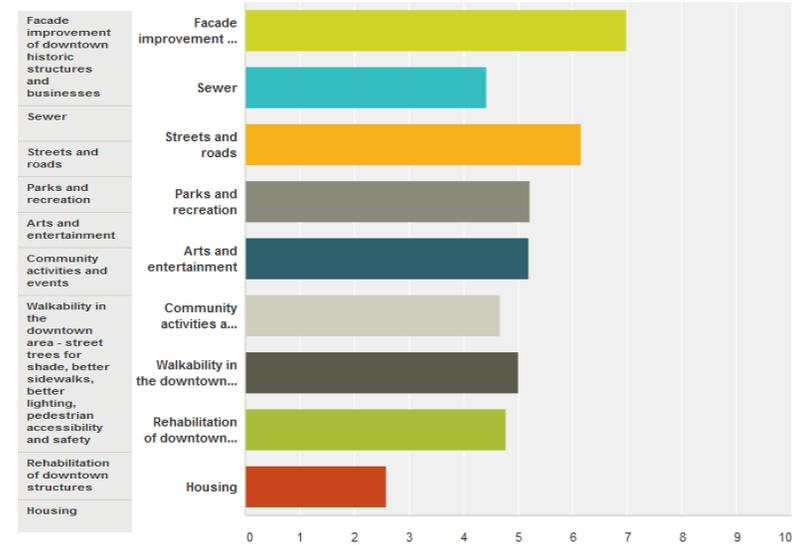


Which of the following do you value (or think should be prioritized) the most?



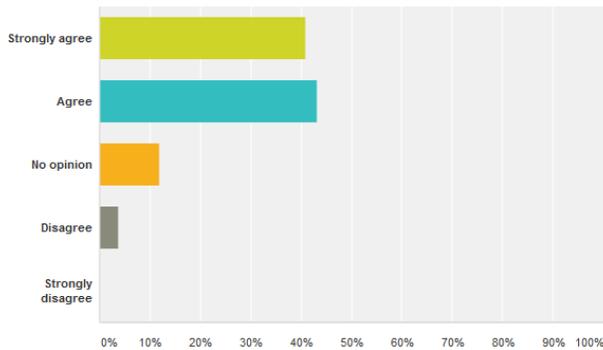
In your opinion, what basic city services or infrastructure needs should the city be focusing on the most? (Please rank).

Answered: 342 Skipped: 193



Do you feel it is important to protect the history of Albertville that is encapsulated in the downtown?

Answered: 364 Skipped: 171



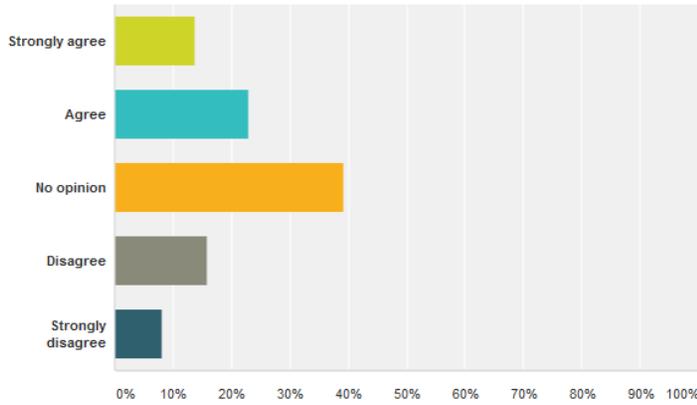
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly agree	40.93%	149
Agree	43.13%	157
No opinion	11.81%	43
Disagree	3.86%	14
Strongly disagree	0.27%	1
Total		364

Q: What would you like to see more of in the Downtown?

#	Need	%
1	Restaurants/cafes/diners/delis/dining variety	49.59
2	Office & Retail variety/affordable shopping	40.92
3	Façade improvements/curb appeal/cleaner/aesthetics/inviting storefronts/window fronts updated & occupied/uniformity in signage and storefronts	
4	Locally-owned small businesses/unique specialty stores/boutiques/"keep downtown small"	
5	Night Life/evening dining/live music/entertainment/later store hours	
6	Green space/downtown park/downtown walking/biking trail/common space/play area/farmers market	
7	Building rehabs	
8	Recurring Events/concerts/cultural events/A&E District	
9	Kid-friendly events/youth & family entertainment/theater	
10	Public improvements - Better sidewalks/lighting/ped accessibility/"walk & shop" Streetscaping/crosswalks/traffic flow/ street repaved/buried utilities/Street trees/landscaping	
11	Coffee/ice cream/tea room	
12	Renovate historic properties, esp depot/community space/weddings/reunion halls	
13	Affordable shopping	
14	Outside eating/seating	
15	People/downtown loft living/mixed use	
16	Antique shops	
17	Craft/hobby store	
18	Shoe store	
19	Residential fringe n'hood improvement	
20	Safety	
21	Chain stores	
22	Infill empty lots	
23	Parking	
24	Update rec center	

Would you like to see more housing options within the downtown area?

Answered: 370 Skipped: 165

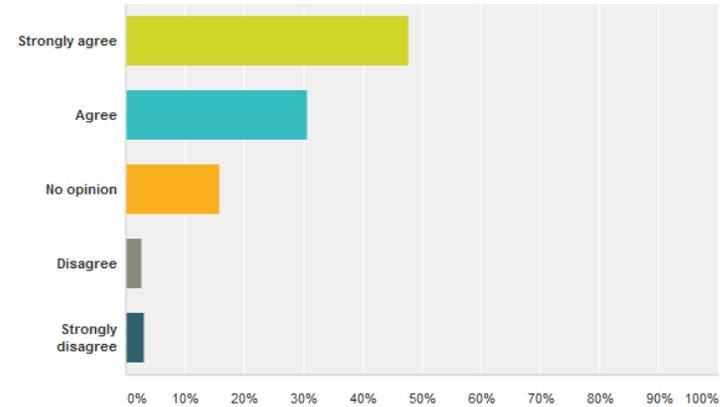


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly agree	13.78%	51
Agree	22.97%	85
No opinion	39.19%	145
Disagree	15.95%	59
Strongly disagree	8.11%	30
Total		370

*There were "only if" responses to this question; in the comments section, the majority of respondents said they would like to see loft living in the downtown area, only if other things were improved, and they were upscale second-story loft apartments, rather than low-income housing.

How do you feel about an "Arts and Entertainment District" in downtown Albertville like that found in Guntersville or Huntsville?

Answered: 392 Skipped: 143



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly agree	47.70%	187
Agree	30.61%	120
No opinion	15.82%	62
Disagree	2.81%	11
Strongly disagree	3.06%	12
Total		392

What do you want Albertville to be like in the next 10-20 years?

Albertville Beautiful Clean Cleaner
 Community Course Downtown Area
 Entertainment Growing Guntersville
 Heart of Sand Mountain Huntsville Improvement Junky Life Lots
 Main Street Modern Move Forward Place Population Preserved
 Prosperous Safe Shopping
 Thriving Downtown Town
 Young People

What would the revitalization of downtown Albertville mean to you?

Age Albertville Approach Attract New Business
 Business and Entertainment Buy Citizens Destination
 Downtown Earlier Historical Huntsville Hurt Live
 Mean Money Older PAST Positive Preserve Priority
 Return Shop Strong Surrounding Cities Identity
 Town True Worth Saving Pride

Do you or does your family travel out of the city for shopping, eating, or entertainment regularly? If so, what types of businesses are they and where are they located?

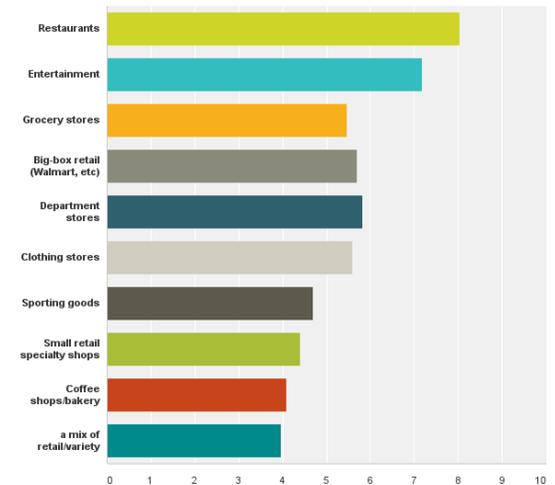
Antique stores View all · Edit · Delete	0.52%	2	Grocery View all · Edit · Delete	4.45%	17	recreation View all · Edit · Delete	0.79%	3
Atlantata View all · Edit · Delete	1.05%	4	Guntersville View all · Edit · Delete	17.80%	68	restaurants View all · Edit · Delete	44.50%	170
atmosphere View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	hardware View all · Edit · Delete	5.50%	21	seafood restaurants View all · Edit · Delete	2.62%	10
Birmingham View all · Edit · Delete	16.75%	64	hobby View all · Edit · Delete	4.97%	19	shoes View all · Edit · Delete	4.97%	19
Boaz View all · Edit · Delete	12.30%	47	Huntsville View all · Edit · Delete	46.34%	177	specialty shops View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1
book stores View all · Edit · Delete	2.09%	8	i never shop in Alb View all · Edit · Delete	1.31%	5	sporting goods View all · Edit · Delete	9.42%	36
Bowling View all · Edit · Delete	0.52%	2	ice cream View all · Edit · Delete	1.31%	5	steak View all · Edit · Delete	1.83%	7
Chain stores View all · Edit · Delete	16.23%	62	Leeds View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	Target View all · Edit · Delete	12.57%	48
Chattanooga View all · Edit · Delete	2.62%	10	live music View all · Edit · Delete	2.09%	8	thrift stores View all · Edit · Delete	0.52%	2
childrens stores View all · Edit · Delete	1.05%	4	Malls View all · Edit · Delete	5.24%	20	Trussville View all · Edit · Delete	0.79%	3
coffee shops View all · Edit · Delete	0.79%	3	medical View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	variety View all · Edit · Delete	3.40%	13
Cullman View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	Montgomery View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	Walmart View all · Edit · Delete	9.95%	38
department stores View all · Edit · Delete	19.37%	74	mostly local View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	wine and craft beer View all · Edit · Delete	0.79%	3
Entertainment View all · Edit · Delete	9.42%	36	movie theater View all · Edit · Delete	18.32%	70	Yes View all · Edit · Delete	91.10%	348
everything View all · Edit · Delete	3.66%	14	Nashville View all · Edit · Delete	0.79%	3			
family entertainment View all · Edit · Delete	2.36%	9	No or rarely View all · Edit · Delete	6.81%	26			
fish market View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	nursery View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1			
Foley View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	Occasionally View all · Edit · Delete	2.09%	8			
Fyffe View all · Edit · Delete	0.26%	1	Organic grocers View all · Edit · Delete	1.57%	6			
Gadsden View all · Edit · Delete	20.68%	79	other downtowns View all · Edit · Delete	2.88%	11			
			parks View all · Edit · Delete	2.88%	11			

Do you or does someone in your family commute to another city for work? If so, where and how long is your/their approximate driving time?

1 1/2 hrs	1.43%	5	commute to Alb	1.14%	4
1 hr	2.57%	9	Cullman	0.29%	1
1 hr 10 mins	0.57%	2	Dekalb Co	0.29%	1
1 hr 15 min	0.29%	1	Eufaula	0.29%	1
10 mins	2.86%	10	Gadsden	3.14%	11
100+ miles round trip	0.29%	1	Guntersville	4.57%	16
15 mins	2%	7	Huntsville	5.14%	18
15-20 mins	1.43%	5	Lincoln	0.29%	1
2 hrs	0.57%	2	N/A	3.43%	12
20-25 mins	0.86%	3	no	57.71%	202
30 mins	4%	14	no but did for yrs	0%	0
4+ hrs	0.29%	1	not anymore, but did f yrs	1.43%	5
45 mins	2.86%	10	not yet	0.29%	1
5 mins	0.86%	3	Rainbow City	0.29%	1
all over	0.86%	3	retired	1.14%	4
Altoona	0.29%	1	Sylvania	0.29%	1
Arab	1.14%	4	Tennessee	0.29%	1
Atalla	0.57%	2	Trussville	0.29%	1
Birmingham	1.14%	4	yes	34.86%	122
Boaz	5.43%	19			
Collinsville	0.29%	1			

Q17 What types of stores and businesses would you like to see more of in Albertville? (Rank these based on need).

Answered: 399 Skipped: 137



Visioning – Top Issues Identified in Community Surveys & Workshops

Top Issues Identified in Stakeholder Meetings, Community Surveys, and Community Workshops:

- 1) Downtown Aesthetics
- 2) Downtown Identity
- 3) Niche market
- 4) Marketing/Promotion/Theming
- 5) Connection of past to future
- 6) Variety of retail
- 7) Thriving local businesses
- 8) Abandoned property or property maintenance/Pride in property/absentee property owners
- 9) Non-conforming uses
- 10) Spot zoning
- 11) Non-compliant zoning
- 12) Slum lords
- 13) Code and Ordinance Enforcement, (even if it upsets friends, neighbors)
- 14) Beautification/Aesthetics Improvements (this includes facades, streetscaping, landscaping, gateway improvement, signage)
- 15) Historic preservation
- 16) Urban parks, trails, green spaces
- 17) Pedestrian-friendly, "walkable"
- 18) Urban form uniformity, continuity, Orderly growth/infill
- 19) Empty lots
- 20) Activities and resources for all generations
- 21) Public/Private partnerships, collaboration
- 22) Cultural Diversity/Inclusiveness
- 23) Community Involvement
- 24) Leverage arts, music, entertainment
- 25) Senior Center
- 26) Rec Center
- 27) Farmers Market
- 28) Parking
- 29) More events – something to see/do every weekend
- 30) More night life/street atmosphere/outdoor eating/seating
- 31) Museum/multi-purpose cultural center
- 32) Store hours
- 33) Family-friendly events/activities
- 34) Downtown as a regional destination
- 35) Diverse housing options in downtown
- 36) Leverage Depot

Top "Priority Issues" Identified at Community Workshops:

- 1) Retail diversity
- 2) Downtown property maintenance

- 3) Façade improvements/Beautification/Aesthetics
- 4) Streetscaping, downtown infill development, urban parks/trails = tied
- 5) Promote cross-generational development/activities (this includes new Senior Center, activities for teens, attracting young people to area)
- 6) Leverage arts & entertainment
- 7) Gateway improvement
- 8) Street upgrades and pedestrian safety
- 9) Historic preservation, parking = tied

Others:

Promoting Community Identity/Marketing; Downtown Housing/Lofts = tied

Top Values/priorities Identified in Community Surveys:

- 1) Building an attractive community
- 2) Recruiting more unique and diverse retail to the area
- 3) Promoting an active/ identifiable downtown
- 4) More recreational and entertainment options
- 5) Rehabilitation of downtown structures
- 6) Strengthening community image/ perception
- 7) Historic preservation
- 8) Safer streets and roads for pedestrians and vehicles
- 9) Urban parks, trails, green spaces
- 10) Promoting arts and music
- 11) Improving basic infrastructure needs

Top Strategies Identified at Community Workshops:

- 1) Stricter codes and ordinances & stricter enforcement
- 2) Acquire downtown property to develop
- 3) Aggressively recruit unique and diverse retail
- 4) Create a downtown Arts & Entertainment district
- 5) Promote more community involvement
- 6) Capitalize on our existing assets (ex. Farmers market, depot, rec center)
- 7) Take advantage of grant programs
- 8) Merchants Association

No Way: charging festival fees; raising taxes, fees, licenses

Assets (to promote/capitalize on) Identified in Community Surveys:

- Locally-owned businesses
- Developable land
- Cultural diversity
- Beautiful historic buildings/heritage
- High school/ fine arts Center/music/band/musical heritage
- The fact that we even have a downtown to improve/expand upon!
- Church campuses
- Albertville's citizenry and pride in our community
- Vacant property to develop (lots of open, unused areas that can be expanded to fill our business needs)
- Traffic/ location
- Courthouse brings in lots of county residents who spend money downtown
- Public facilities downtown (to easily patrol an A&E District, for ex)
- Rec Center, farmers market, depot
- Catalysts like Sebastien's, Mater's, King Pollo
- Downtown is more than just retail - private and public sector interaction - history, community, social interaction, identity
- Beautiful creeks and outdoor areas to turn into parks/trails

- Historic homes/neighborhoods/ bungalows
- Longtime stable businesses mixed with new eating and shopping establishments
- Hard-working, friendly people
- Music

Some Comments from Community Surveys:

Assets/Opportunities Identified:

"It's really a great layout. Lends itself well for events inasmuch that it can be blocked without creating a traffic nightmare through the city. We just need to utilize the space. Why not have an event most weekends during the summer? Food truck weekends? Craft beer festival? BBQ competition? (Could make it smoked chicken competition given our strong poultry industry). Cornhole tournaments, concerts, or seasonal or holiday music festivals. We could start some summer festival in honor of our founder or something. Point is, we should do something. Why not?"

"The cultural diversity of downtown with the shops and restaurants is an asset. The Hispanics saved downtown from decay and blight. City should promote more opportunities for ethnic fellowship."

"Small hometown feel you don't find just anywhere. A unique downtown can bring pride to our city that has been lost for several years due to a run down downtown area."

"The space is there, just make the best use out of it while keeping the look of the "history"

"A city without a downtown simply devolves into a loose collection of businesses scattered along the major thoroughfares. Downtown provides the soul."

"Population base. I don't understand why other cities of Albertville's size (Cullman, Fort Payne, Scottsboro, Alexander City) have been able to attract more restaurants than Albertville. Of course, as for Cullman and Fort Payne, the interstates help, but Cullman especially has a lot of development downtown and away from the interstate. Even Boaz and Guntersville, despite being much smaller than Albertville, have been more successful in getting sought-after businesses (Publix) and restaurants (Chick-fil-A, Applebee's, etc.). Also, Albertville has a better housing situation than Boaz or Guntersville. It seems people live in Albertville but shop and eat elsewhere."

"Leadership and a great Chamber of Commerce. We have a nice downtown area - it just needs some improvement. Albertville should be known for something? Whatever is the most remarkable - based on your survey results - should be that which you should capitalize."

"First, decide on the identity we want to have, then work with businesses, city leaders, the schools, all age groups. The Fine Arts dept. is a gold mine and has many very talented and creative students. A plus to emphasize is convenient parking and personal service. Maybe highlight a business of the month and ask the Reporter to do a feature on it. Publicity is so important: if no one knows about it, they won't come to it, an event or a place."

"Key on the historical aspects of Albertville and the buildings. Many need to understand our history. School and fine arts programs."

"I think if the owners and merchants feel strongly about the downtown area then pride of ownership will take care of the downtown area. I don't think it is the city place to fix up someone property. Everyone is in business for profit."

"AHS band and choral programs are top notch. Need to capitalize on these in some way. may be a spring music theme featuring band and choral programs in down town area. Emphasize historic area and building facades. Beefup Christmas parade and Christmas centered downtown. Establish a walking trail or trails that passed through downtown areas. Greenway involving downtown. need to focus on improving access roads to downtown area, ie. Rose Road, Baltimore avenue."

"I think parks and green areas could easily be built. I believe this community has a strong resources for local music and could be capitalized on there. I believe add the new shops and the 2 new restaurants gave the downtown area a great boost. Now if other shops/businesses would follow that would be great!"

"Promote community pride again."

"Albertville has a great opportunity to embrace the variety of cultures we have in our community compared to some areas of the state. We should work to highlight these in ways that are both visually appealing and accessible to everyone (both English and non-English speaking residents)."

"Location on 2 major roads - High traffic corridor running through downtown area, pulling patrons into the area to stop and shop/dine. Capitalize on high traffic by improving downtown feel/aesthetics, which should encourage motorists to stop in."

"I'm proud that we are the fire hydrant capital of the world! It's identifiable and fun... adds to our character and pride. We have great schools with an incredible arts program and athletics. We have so much to be proud of as a community, if we could just compete and pull in some larger retail and entertainment options, we could keep more dollars in the city."

"The downtown area is where your city shows its own pride/identity. 431 is where outsiders come to win over your dollars to corporate giants. Downtown is who we are."

"a progressive town with a thriving downtown and people with a vested interest in keeping it that way by investing in the short and long term."

"Busy, friendly city that has a lot to offer all ages and business possibilities."

"Embrace the blended ethnicity. Downtown should appeal to all cultures in our town. Involve the Hispanic community in the planning process, they are a valuable asset. (I am not Hispanic, Caucasian male born and raised in Alabama)"

What would you like Albertville to be in the future?

"I would like to see a thriving downtown that bustles instead of shoves. I would like to visit all of the stores whatever the culture they represent."

"I would like for Albertville to have opportunities for the younger generation so they will want to stay in Albertville. A thriving downtown is necessary to keep our identity."

"I would like to see us become a better area for the future of the children, and for the adults. More active business, more entertainment, more of all the things that make a city worth visiting and living in."

"I want Albertville to be a city of its own, not just the place between Boaz and Guntersville. Albertville needs to make a name and brand for itself, besides the fire hydrant capital of the world, and if downtown is the way to make that happen, then it needs to thrive."

"A safe place and a place where kids can play. A place that people want to drive to and see. A place where people come when they are looking for something to do."

"Yes I would like to see a more modern city with more to offer us."

"I want my children to still want to live around here they will be well into adulthood by then and we want them and our grandkids to be able to enjoy this place."

"I want new and fresh place to shop and eat without compromising the historic integrity. I want the downtown area to thrive."

"Your keyword is thriving! I hope Albertville will be thriving and industries will be clamoring to invest here."

"New economic development. Opportunities and solid reasons to keep my children living in this area. Downtown can be the start of that progress."

"I want us to be more than Guntersville and Boaz. We are the heart of this county and I think we should thrive as such."

"A place for all age groups to find something to do & places to shop"

"Small town feeling of community that involves Hispanics and Anglos, larger town amenities, convenient stores, offices, and good leadership. Of course I want downtown to thrive!"

"A destination for people to come to which starts with preserving our downtown."
 "I want it to be a place my husband and I are thankful to have the opportunity to raise a family in. We love Albertville and believe that any improvement downtown will continue to propel the city forward. It also can help create a unified front with varying ethnic groups."
 "Prosperous and self-supporting"
 "I want to see Albertville become the leader in Marshall county as it used to be. Now we seem to just be something that you drive through in order to reach businesses in Guntersville or Boaz. And of course I would love to see our downtown thrive with shops and restaurants."
 "I want it to be a thriving downtown where people of all backgrounds and cultures work and play together."
 "Safe, modern functioning city representing the largest city in Marshall County- which it isn't right now."
 "I would love to see growth. I would love to see a blending of culture that would lead to working as a community to be a place someone would want to visit."
 "I do want to see a thriving ,happy, successful beautiful downtown meetings the needs of its citizens."
 "Downtown could be a very beautiful area but it takes all working together to accomplish it"
 "I would love to see a thriving town that all the citizens can be proud of and not have to say, "yeah, i'm from that town known for 'insert negative comment'"
 "Albertville - Live, Work, Play.. and Stay"
 "Thriving, history preserved and public educated of the history."
 "I would love for Albertville to be a place that other communities come to when they go out because of all the entertainment options available."
 "More versatile, diverse."
 "Downtown entertainment district with shops, events, would make downtown thrive."
 "still small town atmosphere but with enough shopping and entertainment not to travel outside of the area"
 "continue to move forward."
 "Great downtown area with lots of walking area for shoppers."
 "I want Albertville to be like Franklin Tennessee....the best of both worlds ! A quaint downtown with a lot of great diverse shops and a great big box retail with every store you could imagine!"
 "I would like Albertville to be a traditional looking small town with big town opportunities. Yes, I would love to see a thriving downtown! "
 "more middle class"
 "To be a strong community, the downtown needs to thrive."
 "A thriving downtown area with arts and entertainment. Hustle and bustle."
 "A clean,safe, small town with an urban flair that offers its citizen opportunities to work, shop and play at home."
 "culturally-diverse and close-knit"
 "Still a community that cares. Growing without loosing that community spirit."
 "Embrace cultural diversity in a positive way. You cannot blame individuals for desiring a better life for themselves and their family. We should assist them rather than build an invisible fence around them. Incorporate the old and new. It is unrealistic to assume that you can go back in time. I encourage city leaders to reflect on the past, protect history (buildings, etc), but look ahead to the future."
 "I hope that we can bring back a thriving downtown area. I am sure it will take some time and strict control from an oversite committee."
 "A place where our young people can return after school, have career opportunities and raise their families in a great environment."

"To be a vibrant and thriving city with a highly identifiable profile."
 "I'd like to see Albertville be a place for all ages to thrive and enjoy."
 "Yes, I want to see an aesthetically pleasing downtown with great restaurants, quaint shops, an art & entertainment area, friendly, familiar faces and a sense of pride in what we've become!"
 "Continue the tradition of fostering job growth by coordinating with sister cities. Enhance the infrastructure of the local neighborhoods to make them more attractive. Enhance the reputation we already have as a community full of diversity in music and the arts."
 "I would love to see us grow with some bigger name businesses and a nice park area for families."
 "A more attractive community with diverse retail, entertainment options"
 "I would love to see a bustling downtown with places to go and things to do!!!!!!!!!!!!!"
 "Definitely want to see a thriving downtown and I would love to see the downtown full of stores, restaurants, and business and people out walking the sidewalks and being lively."
 "A place where families can raise their children that is clean, safe, and friendly and a city they are proud to call home."
 "more "community," people socializing and helping each other. Yes!"
 "Where everyone knows your name; locals can hang out"
 "Green and thriving!"
 "a town with plenty of things to do but still have that hometown look and feeling."
 It is the first impression of the city and it sets the tone for the city.
 IF WE REVITALIZE OUR OLD DOWNTOWN, IT LINKS US TO OUR PAST AND WILL MOVE US FORWARD TO A PROSPEROUS FUTURE...NOT ONLY DOWNTOWN, BUT ON 431 AS WELL.
 I believe it is important that we focus equally on downtown and Hwy 431 retail recruitment and development as well as strong recruitment for industrial recruitment to bring in new jobs.
 WE NEED MORE REVENUE !!!!! INSTEAD OF JUST GETTING BY !!!!!
 Albertville has a nice start going on right now in revitalizing downtown, and also this seems to be a growing movement in cities across the country.
 Yes. It is growing, lets help it grow and keep and support the new businesses who have recently located there. Making great strides and have good momentum and I think strong support of residents, strike while iron is hot!
 Any improvement to the city is necessary. Things are going downhill here, and we are a better town than that. There is strong interest and pride in bringing life to the downtown area. The new stores have given us hope that others will follow. While the momentum is strong our leaders are wise to continue the progress.
 If we don't focus on downtown, I feel Boaz & Guntersville will "EAT our lunch even more!"
 A vibrant downtown would encourage other business opportunities.
 I feel that our city is the area necessary of the focus at this time. The downtown area is available to have some great things happen to it, but at the same time Highway 431 looks like dessert land. I've never seen so many run down buildings and, places of business doing no business, ever before. It's disheartening to see this poor excuse of a town every day driving down 431. I believe Albertville, as a whole, has potential and has the opportunity to turn this town around.
 The city should buy the buildings downtown, clean them up and restore them. Bring in retailers and restaurants at very low rent (or no rent) to energize our downtown and start creating new sales tax revenues. Downtown needs to be a destination again which will never happen with the current owners of much of the property.
 IF DOWN TOWN FURTHER DETERIATES TOWN WILL DECAY

As citizens we are constantly told to shop and eat local. How can we do this if we do not have any decent, affordable places to shop and eat? Also, restoring and preserving historical structures show the world that we are proud of our past and take care of our community.

Alberville has lost out for the last 30-40 years. If Alberville is ever going to revive it needs to be done now.

If it is not done now, I think it will be a long time before it is done? If ever. Then our city will die.

Yes. For one thing, it's the trend, but mostly because it wasn't preserved years ago. So, investment in the CORE of Alberville is essential. A MUST, if we are to survive. Step outside the box... project and anticipate 20, 30, 40 years down the road.

if not now, when?

A town should ALWAYS focus on their downtown and have both a short-term and long-term vision

As someone said, it's our living room and it should be inviting to visit or locate in.

The downtown area is what will either make Alberville a fun, interesting place to live with an active engaged community vs. just a place where enough people who have nothing to do with each other live so we call it a town.

Because of community pride

Downtown area is what holds us together. To me the downtown, East Main and school district is Alberville, not on 431.

Downtown is the heart of the city

Sebastians and Maters have improved the downtown area and King Pollo brings in a lot of business at lunch. I believe and hope continued focus on the downtown area at this time will spur additional interest and investment. The current administration seems to work well together and get things done so we need to take advantage while we can.

To do and upgrade and bring more entertainment to the downtown would be great.

Can only get worse if ignored.

The downtown should be the showcase of the city. With more and better retail we can attract more shoppers and hence more tax dollars. We need those dollars to repair roads and infrastructure

It would bring more consumers to this area.

We need to offer a better community to our children. Let's fix it NOW while it's all fixable instead of waiting and having to invest more money and prolonging the image of our town.

Our city is growing. We want it to continue to grow but in a positive way. If we do not focus on the center and our expectations of what we want to look like to the outside world, we will continue to have dilapidated buildings. We will look like an ugly and dirty city.

There are so many options and possibilities. I myself would love to open a business if I had the time and money. I've talked about it many times with my fiancé.

But with a companion focus on the 431 corridor

Re-vitalize it to the the 50's and 60's status. Hometown folks doing business with hometown folks !

A LINK TO THE PAST AND A PORTAL TO THE FUTURE

It is definitely worth saving, but I don't think it should be completely redone, just improved on what's already there. There is so much history in downtown, and memories, that need to be preserved.

It would give me pride in my town again and I would shop here first.

positive effect on additional retail recruitment/jobs

Downtown should be our city's identity again. A thriving business and entertainment district.

Making shopping more appealing & make spending time downtown more appealing

it would make me more likely to continue to live here and the same goes for many people I know

yes Yes I do. We need it to keep our community strong.

Revitalization of downtown Alberville would mean we are creating a self worth for our city and a sense of PRIDE!

It is very important!! It is our history!! I love the old facades of the buildings! I love to walk the sidewalks, eat and shop there. Reminds me of my childhood!! It is so small town America!! It is so worth saving!!! I love the atmosphere.

We have a good start with renovations and businesses locating back in the downtown area so we need to capitalize on the start and energy that these have produced.

The downtown area could be seen as what binds a community together. It gives a town an identity.

Yes. we do not need to lose momentum.

To build a sense of community in Alberville.

It may be a trend, but downtown revitalization projects are successful for a reason around the country. We have to do what the population prefers!

Visitors to the City receive a neg impression when touring the City.

Chance to improve the heart of our community

A FUN AND, PROUD PLACE TO LIVE !!!!! YES !!!!!

With the other shopping conveniece,s. all this in one local area.

I LOVE THE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS PUT ON BY THE HIGH SCHOOL AND LIL AGGIES THEATRE. I WOULD LOVE HOWEVER TO HAVE MORE OUTDOOR CONCERTS IN CLASSICAL OR OTHER GENRES OF MUSIC.

Community pride and engagement can only be increased with more opportunities available to residents and visitors to visit downtown and interact with each other and shop and dine.

IT WOULD BRING LOTS OF REVENUE !!!!! AND, WOULD BE GREAT TO HAVE SOMETHING TO GO TOO

This would not only give a much needed entertainment area to the city but would increase business in some of the newer nicer shops...

This would help bring in new business and provide revenue for the city.

More Trees Down Million Dollar Avenue !!!! It Just Doesn't Look Like Alberville Anymore !!!!

More tree and shrub plantings where possible. Still just seems to be lots of asphalt and concrete.

parking, and walking

the railroad depot, dining with live music

It needs to be cleaned up and updated; the empty stores need to be filled.

Restrictions on signage and curb appeal of existing businesses as well as vacant spaces for rent. Parking improvements for businesses with limited "front door" parking.

Right now with the empty buildings, it reminds me of the beginnings of Detroit. Buildings need renovated and parking is a must. I feel it is viable because this represents our town and it is the first impression visitors get of our city.

THE STRENGTH OF ALBERTVILLE RESIDES IN HER CITIZENRY. WHEN WE CAN REVITALIZE THE DOWNTOWN AREA, THEN NOT ONLY WILL WE REENERGIZE THE LOCAL POPULATION, BUT WE WILL ALSO SHOW OTHERS THAT VISIT OUR CITY WHY ALBERTVILLE IS SPECIAL. THIS UNIQUENESS WILL NOT ONLY BRING OTHER "GOOD FOLK" TO ALBERVILLE, BUT OTHER BUSINESSES AS WELL. WE WON'T BE LOSING THEM TO GUNTERSVILLE. ALSO, I KNOW SAND MOUNTAIN IS CALLED "METH MOUNTAIN", BUT IF WE CLEAN UP OUR CITY, REVITALIZE IT WITH OPPORTUNITIES... THEN YOUNG PEOPLE WILL HAVE THINGS TO DO, PEOPLE WILL HAVE JOBS, CITIZENS WILL TAKE PRIDE IN OUR TOWN... THEN THE DRUG DEALERS AND USERS WILL MOVE ON.

If Alberville's downtown is "economically-viable" we can spend our money within the city, and will not have to go to the surrounding towns.

Monthly Downtown festivals, along with appealing/affordable stores are always a major draw for families. They also appeal to out of town visitors, along with people from the surrounding cities.

People want to live and, visit a town !!!! That looks inviting !!!! And, They will return as visitors !!!! Or, Possibly chose to live in Alberville !!!!

With a viable downtown area that includes dining, shopping and entertainment it can only increase revenues for the city. Business invites business. The more businesses we have to support the more tax dollars stay here in our town to be used in the growth of our schools, businesses, appearance & desirability. This is an advantage that is vital to the prosperity of our town. I think what is taking place downtown is the best thing that has happened in years. People like to go to a downtown area, eating is the main thing with shops that are open later for people to browse in before or after dinner

The downtown is the heart and soul of the city. Business on a by-pass or nearby highway appeal to a fast service society that changes rapidly. A downtown commercial area has an obvious history that links to the people it serves. This on going heart of a town should be welcoming in every aspect. The downtown area shows our heritage and where we are going.

Corporations come and go but small business owners and local business owners are the heart of any community. People will go to the Wal-Marts and K-Marts and big box retailers but we need improvements and incentives to get businesses downtown. Sebastians and Maters are great first steps but we need more than restaurants. A small bar would be nice as would some antique shops that are willing to stay in business longer than a few months.

I think that the downtown area is the "heart" of this town. That's where it all started, where the town was founded. I believe the look and impression that the "heart" of this town gives to its residents and even tourists makes an impact on how anyone would feel about the city as a whole.

I don't want our city to look old and like we are dying a slow death! We should look like we are progressive in order to attract more businesses and young families.

Interest in our downtown area shows our citizens care about our town. It has been ignored long enough. Let's put Albertville back on the map by showing the rest of Marshall Co and outlying communities that we are open for business and are worthy of living in a wonderful community like Albertville.

Multiple studies have shown that when new industries look at locating in a community one of the first things that they do is drive through downtown. A dead downtown is a dead town.

East Main. If ordinances are not enforced why do they exist? Enforcement of ordinances would go a long way in helping the appearance of the city.

I would like for Albertville to have opportunities for the younger generation so they will want to stay in Albertville. A thriving downtown is necessary to keep our identity.

Yes, thriving downtown w/ A & E district, restaurants and more shopping alternatives, expansion of farmer's markets and local small businesses and artisan days, a dog park more downtown, historic buildings preserved, the "down home" feel of the main street area preserved.

Industry/business/entertainment to attract younger people and get them to want to stay here!!!

Albertville must invest in itself first before we can ask retail and industry to invest. Progressive and thoughtful investments will encourage others to invest as well. When we as citizens demand that our city leaders spend money with the intent of making money in other ways we will be better served. For far too long Albertville residents have been given things for free at the expense of the city as a whole. This mentality must change. I think most people expect to pay for great services and facilities. But first we must offer them great services and facilities...not just adequate services and facilities. I want Albertville to look like this in 10 years...whatever this is?

I want it to be less of an eye-sore.

I want Albertville to be the city of attraction between Huntsville and Birmingham.

I want a town I can be proud of again.

A beautiful community that people would love to make their home

I do want to see a thriving ,happy, successful beautiful downtown meetings the needs of its citizens.

I want to see Albertville become the leader in Marshall county as it used to be. Now we seem to just be something that you drive through in order to reach businesses in Guntersville or Boaz. And of course I would love to see our downtown thrive with shops and restaurants.

I want it to be a place my husband and I are thankful to have the opportunity to raise a family in. We love Albertville and believe that any improvement downtown will continue to propel the city forward. It also can help create a unified front with varying ethnic groups.

prosperous and self supporting

Growth. Albertville is ready to bust. All it needs is a push and greedy people to back up and let it happen.

I want Albertville to be a city of its own, not just the place between Boaz and Guntersville. Albertville needs to make a name and brand for itself, besides the fire hydrant capitol of the world, and if downtown is the way to make that happen, then it needs to thrive.

A safe place and a place where kids can play. A place that people want to drive to and see. A place where people come when they are looking for something to do.

A destination for people to come to which starts with preserving our downtown.

A place for all age groups to find something to do & places to shop

thriving downtown and more entertainment

Yes of course. A cultural and art filled close knit community.

yes/you always want to see a town prosper and grow never die and fade away

In step with the times, which includes a thriving downtown

New economic development. Opportunities and solid reasons to keep my children living in this area. Downtown can be the start of that progress.

Downtown is definitely worth saving. Revitalization will bring economic growth. Downtown is a part of the history of Albertville that many say revitalizing the downtown would bring back part of Albertville has been missing for many years.

When my wife and I looked to relocate to the area (versus other cities with job opportunities)

It is the heart of our city - of course it is worth saving. If we do not invest in our community - you can guarantee others will not even consider investing in industry growth or other opportunities.

It is the heart of our city - of course it is worth saving. If we do not invest in our community - you can guarantee others will not even consider investing in industry growth or other opportunities.

A nice, community friendly area where all types of people can shop/eat/be entertained rather than looking outside of the city for these options. Yes, worth saving!

yes Yes, it is worth saving. It would show that Albertville is alive and an active community.

Increased opportunities to shop local

a new life for this city

I would love the downtown from earlier days when you could go to town for no reason and just walk and go into any store you want and see local people selling and be able to buy clothes and go to the local dollar store (not a chain) -this would fill up a Saturday afternoon.

Strong community

yes Yes need owner buy in

We have such a rich history, and much to be proud of. Revitalizing our downtown would mean revitalizing our city as a whole to me! It is definitely worth saving!

We have to start somewhere and downtown is the logical place to do it. I like the focused approach rather than the shot gun approach of trying to correct some things here and there that not many people notice.

The revitalization of DT needs to be more than paint and asphalt. It needs to be theme that is carried on through the year. If you want to revitalize DT it has to be a place that its citizens want to be, a place that want to go and get the things they need whether that is food, entertainment, cultural and spiritual fulfillment. If we move all things to the easy access points and spread them out you lose the sense of the community that we all need.

I would spend more time in Albertville which would result in a financial gain locally

would spend more money here if what I was looking for was available

I think it has improved very much in this administration. Previous leaders did little to help Albertville.

I think it's worth saving--it's what I remember about being a kid in Albertville. I don't think, however, that we can put downtown above basic infrastructure services--I don't know anything about which of those need upgrading.

I would spend more time in the downtown area during work hours and bring my family to visit if there were interesting things to do!

More business in Albertville is good for all, provide more tax dollars for infrastructure

I could keep my \$\$ local and it is worth saving

yes Yes, historical value is a great heritage and can be a great point of interest.

I would love to shop more downtown and walk as I do so and then eat a nice lunch or dinner or a cup of coffee with a pastry.

Definitely worth saving.

I believe it is important for the life of Albertville and so our city doesn't end up blending with Boaz/G'ville on 431.

Downtown is definitely worth saving. Revitalization will bring economic growth. Downtown is a part of the history of Albertville that many Sa Revitalizing downtown would bring back part of Albertville that has been missing for many year.

When my wife and I looked to relocate to the area (versus other cities with job opportunities) we actually wanted a city with a "quaint" downtown area. We were disappointed after driving through Albertville, but chose the area regardless. Having a vibrant downtown area is crucial in recruiting new talent to the area because it says a lot about the vision and pride of a city. It definitely is worth saving!

Closer proximity to amenities from my home and definitely worth saving

Preservation of Albertville's historical past

yes It would make it more appealing to younger citizens. Yes, it is worth saving.

yes Yes, we're still a small town and a downtown brings a strong sense of community. We still need our local shop owners, restaurants, drug stores, etc.

yes It would mean a strong, vibrant economic, cultural, and civic identity. Yes, it is well worth saving.

Help the town grow. Provide better wages to City employees. More services

We have to revitalize the downtown because it is the heart of our city.

yes Yes it is worth saving.

Albertville can still save its historical appearance if clean up and repair are started now. If the city waits, the downtown area will soon be beyond repair without an extreme amount of money being spent.

It would enhance the perception of people moving into the area and 150% agree it is worth saving.

Always worth saving a downtown district; look at the success of the towns that have.

want to live here until i am retired, i want my kids to grow up here, the health and appearance of the entire town are important to me. i would love to see ordinances about the appearance on any houses or businesses on any main road or hwy, 75/205/431. i

would like to see a lot the run down renter houses removed to make room for nicer newer houses.

yes I would keep my dollars in the city to bring in more revenue. Yes, downtown is certainly worth saving. I saw what happened when Gadsden revitalized their downtown area and it is very nice.

Definitely worth saving!

Means my money goes to Albertville and not the surrounding cities. It is definitely worth saving.

Pride

It would be a key area of commerce for the city. I am very appreciative of other cities who resurrect their historic downtowns and make them a destination point for visitors as well as its residents.

I would want my children to return here to live and raise families. It would be fantastic!!!!!!!

It would make Albertville marketable.

yes Yes it is worth saving.

It means a lot because our children are our future and I want my kids to be proud to live in Albertville and want them to stay here just like I have.

If we had a nice place to shop downtown, then more people would come to our town.

I think it would make me more likely to shop local and take pride for living here. Yes, it's worth saving. Maybe having a nice, respectable downtown area would give teens a place to hang out instead of going elsewhere and making bad choices.

I think it would be great to be able to shop downtown once again. There was a time when there were several dress shops and no matter the age group, you could bring your family to Albertville to shop. We were a thriving community. Albertville was the center of attention...not Guntersville or Boaz. I would like to see it go back to those prosperous days.

It would encourage me to "Shop Albertville." It is definitely worth saving.

yes more pride; yes definitely a keeper

It would mean that I, as a teacher at Albertville City Schools, was guaranteed job security because more and more people would want to move to this area or stay in the area to raise their families. It would also be nice to have places for our friends to gather without having to go out of town.

I would like not having to drive to Huntsville or Gadsden to buy things.

It would give me pride in the city i live in...rt now that is not there

More pride in the City and wanting to spend time and money in Albertville

More people and industry would want to live and work here

Vision: What do you see for the downtown in 5, 10, 20 years? (asked of all Stakeholder groups)

- I think capitalizing on our musical heritage and reputation is something that we could build upon.
- I would like to see it continue to grow in the direction like Sebastian's and maters - live, work, play, walk, shop. I work downtown and love walking to these places for lunch.
- Defining what downtown is and pride in ownership. Something that draws people to town, a regional draw. Family oriented, activities for all ages. Moderately priced restaurants that cater to young teenagers who can't afford Sebastian's and maters. Diversifying the types of restaurants low-end to high-end. But for people to be able to walk around and get to these places we got to provide park benches, pocket parks, green spaces, sidewalks, tables, we've got to provide those public spaces.
- I would like to see the aesthetics improve on the outside of the buildings. I would like to see the empty lots and empty spaces filled with beautiful green space, gathering spaces.
- More events, recurring events. Second Saturday Cruise-Ins have been very popular. The farmers market. Leverage the restaurants already downtown, but the Sandwich host, to cater/sponsor these events. Address ordinance to reflect these special events.
- I feel like we've just scratched the surface, and I'm very optimistic about the timing and what's going on right now. I see a robust downtown, I see a clean better looking well lit a downtown. I think we need to get more people participating in taking more pride in their property, especially downtown and the city as a whole in how it looks. From the city's perspective, I'm excited about this to be able to grow our revenue streams and doing a better job of maintaining our infrastructure and growing our infrastructure.
- The Council is interested in doing things zoning wise, aesthetic wise, ways to increase revenue in the city, my vision for downtown is more restaurants, tapping into opportunities for special events and music with our schools and clubs and organizations. I think we need do more specialty shops open for later hours so you can eat and places to walk we need pavilions, performing areas green spaces, a performing stage, amphitheater, different types of events. Whatever your kids are doing, the parents are doing. Entertainment opportunities for adults, and loft apartments is a good potential for downtown. More professional services and businesses. It's very important to me that we put the proper uses, retail, in those buildings downtown like they were originally zoned. We have improper usage of the buildings we've got to get into compliance, they need to be in compliance with fire codes before we began to shut money into the downtown. We need that healthy buy-in from the property owners. Not only would their property values increase, but return on investment increase.
- Communication with downtown merchants - that public/private partnership. I think we are doing them a disservice if we don't give them ideas on how they can be more successful. It may be a chamber role to do that, not the city's, because they don't want the public sector telling them what to do. But since the city hosts these events, we should be doing a better job of encouraging the businesses to be more involved and stay open later, because it would benefit them as well. Economic development dept has advertising money in the budget, and I'm sure the chamber does as well. I'm sure we could partner on that. We could do a better job of marketing and communications of events in downtown. We have to coordinate better with restaurants and business hours during events.
- A lot more retail
- buildings extended down West
- more green and alive; Street trees, landscaping, pocket parks, urban parks, urban trails, pedestrian enhancements.
- aesthetically pleasing areas; clean
- "commerce way"
- alive and thriving; bustling
- music and entertainment
- having this plan in place - the problem in the past was no plan, no vision.
- Green spaces that are maintained (city funded). More mature landscaping
- Revisiting history;
- live entertainment
- rec center to tie into school
- neighborhood planning
- recreation, games, retail, and entertainment, but people need a place to stay! - Need hotels to support this thought!
- Cohesive - old and new coming together (like Cullman).
- A healthy mix of shopping, dining, arts and entertainment downtown. I want to draw from the past. I see the depot as a major landmark. I'd like to see a museum, some of our history back into the depot. It is a very cherished landmark in our community. It can be a focal point for community gatherings, downtown city events, class reunions, school functions, class memorabilia, etc. I think restaurants are vitally important. People love to come to downtown to eat and walk around and shop. Restaurants go hand-in-hand with shopping. A nightlife, a healthy mix. And of course, lots of different activities for all ages.
- I like to see it like it was 20 to 25 years ago, when there was a variety of things to do. I'd like to see loft living, apartments downtown. Activities for children. We have a lot of young families here and moving in here. Teenagers have nothing to do, and they don't have that pride in downtown like we did when we grew up here.
- We've got to capture that retail leakage. We've got to have things to do. A swimming pool, a drive-in movie theater, a bowling alley things for kids to do. We used to have fashion shows downtown. People from Geraldine and Crossville came into the county to shop in Albertville. We need to extend our trade area out 30 miles, because people from DeKalb County are coming in to shop, and always have. We are a destination place for all the surrounding smaller communities. And when I was growing up here, it was the focal point of the county, the county seat, the largest city in Marshall County, the heart of Sand Mountain. It was the focal point back in the day and I think that's what we're trying to recapture. But in a new way.
- A unique regional draw. Fine arts, music, and recreation and sports are our entertainment in the city, and our strengths that we should capitalize on.
- We are starting to see an evolution where people are our migrating away from the big-box retail, and only want to shop local. That's what I'm starting to see here. We used to say we have a shopping population of 100,000, and we do, because they come in from the County and surrounding communities.
- Overcoming our image and perception problems, but when it comes to reputation of our music and show choir, we are legendary across the country for music, show choir, and band. Everybody equates the city with that. Our school systems are phenomenal.
- I like to see an overall change in attitude around town. We are starting to see the blight takeover and it's getting to be bad conditions in some places and were starting to get a bad reputation for a dying or run down city. I hear negative comments well there's nowhere to shop, the first thought is always to load up and go to Huntsville. And I don't know if they're really looking, because we do have great local family business atmosphere that is been here for generations. So I think just changing that mindset of having a more positive vibe around town is needed.
- More infill and expanding the footprint of downtown, or density, will deliver a greater rate of return, and increase revenue for the city. Residential will be a big part of that, because there's only so much business that the downtown can support. **
- We want to be the heart of Sand Mountain and the heart of Marshall County again.
- The city needs to be very selective about how they spend their money, and what capital projects/grant opps to put money toward. Being fiscally responsible is also important to us.
- A place for cross-generational activities - got to have that adaptability - every city does - Albertville must adapt or die.
- "What Sebastian's has done for the downtown has been awesome. Everyone thinks Sebastian's is the centerpiece of downtown. We thought she was crazy coming in, but it has been wildly successful. She has been the catalyst. We have seen three, four, five more businesses come in after her. I think Albertville is on a roll right now. We've got to keep up that momentum. Other businesses will feed off that. We need to support it anyway we can. It's a regional draw."
- "More festivals more events. As a business downtown, were already counting down the days to the Main Street music Fest, because we know what kind of crowds it will draw. Second Saturday's and first Fridays and things like that we need more of that downtown support our businesses. Our first location was around the corner on Broad Street, and nobody knew where we were. So when an opportunity opened up, we decided to move to a building on Main Street, it has made a world of difference for the business. We want to be in the heart of it all. We want that foot traffic. We want to stay. Visually exposure, it has helped. We did move far at all, but locating on Main Street made a huge difference. It made all the difference."
- George Wells - "Wells Clothing was on Main Street at one time, and my dad and the landlord disagreed on raising the rent. So they moved to North Broad instead of Main Street, and we starved for about five years. So when the opportunity came, we went back to Main Street by buying out Moody's. People wouldn't turn the corner to come up to Wells even though we had been in business for many years. So yes, location is everything."
- "My business was in Boaz. So moving to downtown Albertville was huge because the stores coming in, and Sébastien's and maters, we have a lot of customers that come down from eating and come shop. They park one place, eat, and then walk down to our place. So that foot traffic is vital."
- A beautiful gateway to lure traffic into the downtown and give good first impression.

NEEDS

- Public/private partnership/working together
- a balance of incentives and enforcement for property improvements; across the board enforcement
- façade grant program (CDBG grant opps)
- Create/enhance Gateway into the downtown from 431
- mixed use town center in the downtown/residential; Character Areas
- downtown park and walking trails
- A & E District
- SB Incubator
- possibility of a TIF district
- capacity-building – create position for downtown coordinator or City Planner position
- volunteer program
- investment incentives for businesses/investor incentives
- unique regional draw (large retail shopping AS WELL AS a unique downtown)
- better coordination, communications, and marketing for downtown businesses
- aesthetics program: façade improvements grant incentive/pride in property campaign awareness/ordinance enforcement/urban design principles
- partnering with the chamber on better marketing and communications for recurring events downtown
- RR Park - better usage of the depot - possibly a museum; renting the depot for events –dinner, reunions, weddings, if the museum was downtown it would give something else to the downtown atmosphere. The current museum in the Little Primitive Baptist Church is now too small. Design a railroad park around the depot.
- Downtown street tree program (remember ALDOT will not let you have more than a 4" caliper tree along state routes)
- green space and pocket parks program (RTP; LWCF)
- recreational urban trail to connect downtown with surrounding suburban/residential and school and rec center fringe areas
- Albertville supporting Albertville campaign
- Merchants Association & Formal Downtown Authority
- Gateway 75 Corridor improvement program
- Cross-generational activities for adults and youth / multicultural events programming
- wayfinding program
- possibility of a green infrastructure/landscaping program put in place to help alleviate drainage problems with overburdened storm sewer pipes flooding of existing buildings; too much impervious surfaces/parking lots has caused storm water runoff problems; also needed for aesthetics (EPA grants opps)
- capitalize on assets: history, historic buildings
- TAP grant applied for North Broad to the RR tracks. TAP grant to rehab Depot
- Albertville experiencing an older population, so the need for ADA upgrades is there.
- Aesthetics ordinance; sign ordinance; zoning ordinance currently working on
- adopt a color palette; adopt street signage in a particular style and color to let you know you are in the downtown district; street trees species and landscaping palette adoption
- enhance/focus on pedestrian ways; encourage necessary foot traffic as much as possible to support downtown retail

- improved traffic conditions, visibility and better wayfinding
- infrastructure upgrades
- urban design improvement plan – use of character areas/subdistricts & form-based code
- coordinate with/utilize county historical/arts commission better (Mountain Valley Arts Council in Guntersville) to help promote history & arts
- façade improvement program
- opportunities for design
- room for growth; infill development
- sell the local flavor - live here, buy here. Shop local. Support local.
- Leverage and capitalize on music, arts, culture, history
- Fundraisers
- Civic Center/community center/museum – at the Depot
- entertainment options
- coordination between city and school functions
- coordination between city, chamber, and merchants (merchants Association)
- better lighting throughout district
- make pedestrian access safer in the fringe areas surrounding downtown, residential areas, and the school, and their connection to downtown
- Make a landscaping minimum requirement for all new development in the aesthetics ordinance
- Graham Park or rec center could be used for amphitheater/outdoor movies
- RR Linear Park to connect cultural amenities – depot, RR, school, farmers market, urban pocket parks, trails
- need more hospitality, hotels to keep up with visitor population during game day events
- A NW and SE alt truck route
- better road connectivity and circulation esp at Rose Road area
- benches and eating areas outside. Currently not suitable to the pedestrian. The city needs a greenway corridor that runs all the way through town. Opportunity – Drum Creek (Waterways are not developable land. Best use is for recreation, passive recreation). People used to walk that creek to school.
- As a landscape architect, first thing you do is highlight the hydrology, drainage – you begin to see opportunities – greenways, trails.
- A pedestrian connection between the rec center through the downtown to the school. Connect the anchors.
- Visual cues to let you know you are in a special place - street lights are different, street tree species is different, signage is different color, streetscaping is different, wayfinding. Landscaping, flowers, hanging baskets, banners. Things that show we are worth coming back for a visit. Continuity/uniformity throughout.
- Albertville needs a thoroughfare plan.
- North gateway, railroad park at the depot, and a Greenway linking amenities to downtown; infill opps in blighted areas for future parking
- Develop/create a downtown/city that is worth saving and caring for again; to bring back a sense of pride in hometown

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Other Downtown Revitalization plans from communities in Alabama

....and many, MANY more!

