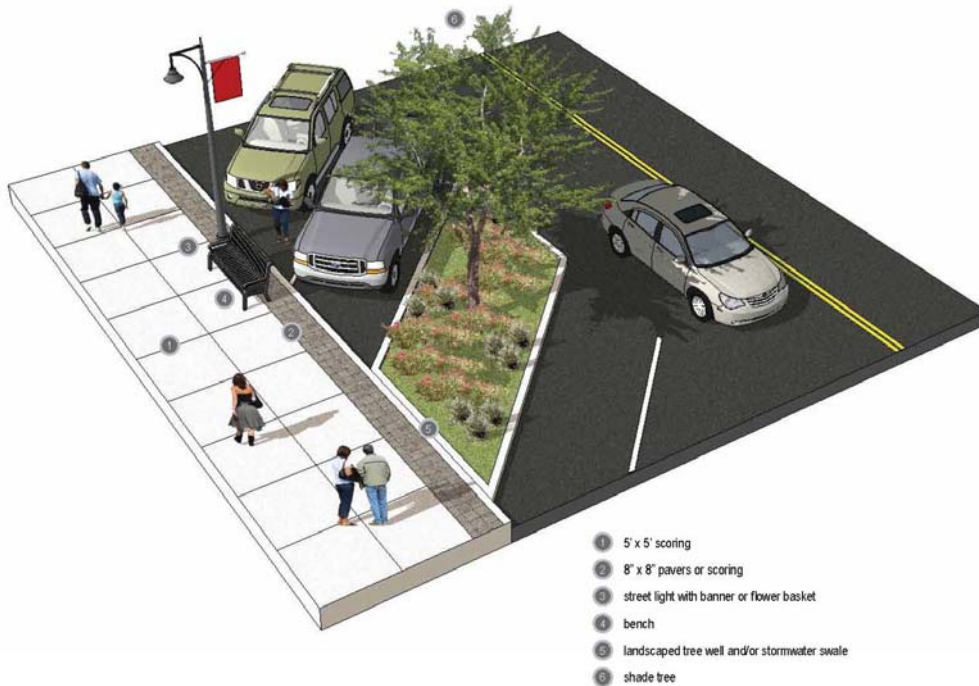


CITY OF BIGGS DOWNTOWN ACTION PLAN

Biggs, California



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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The City of Biggs is aggressively working to reverse the economic decline of its downtown over the last two decades. Towards that end, the city spearheaded a Downtown Economic Analysis (2007) and Visual Master Plan (2008) which helped create the foundation for this Visual Master Plan Phase II Project. The primary goal of this project is to create a Downtown Action Plan that details the next steps for the top three most important, high impact and implementable projects as identified by the city and the consulting team with input from the community received at public work sessions and interviews.

The elements of this action plan are:

- ◆ Priority projects chosen from a comprehensive list of community visions and desires for downtown;
- ◆ Concepts for implementation of the projects;
- ◆ A revitalization strategy, action steps, funding sources, roles/responsibilities and timeline for implementation; and
- ◆ Case studies that demonstrate how other small towns have succeeded with similar endeavors.

This action plan builds upon the 2008 Visual Master Plan that included the following components: themes and vision for downtown Biggs, design principles for a vibrant mixed use core, a framework diagram for the existing built environment, general cost and structural analysis for building rehabilitation, next steps for organizing for success and property development, supported by examples and case studies.

Since the creation of the 2008 Visual Master Plan, the Biggs community has successfully completed numerous projects — small and large — in support of downtown's revitalization. The list of accomplishments appears in Appendix 1.

While Biggs has made progress on several elements of the plan, the recommendations provided in the 2008 document remain relevant today and should be revisited by the city and downtown volunteers and continue to be used as a primary guide for organizing to take action.

To continue the downtown planning work, Chabin Concepts reconvened the team of experts from the 2008 Visual Master Plan Phase 1, a team with experience in economic development, downtown revitalization, architecture and urban design. Team members included Vicki Doll, Chabin Concepts; Mary Bosch, Marketek; and Eric Philps and Allison Wildman, SERA Architects.

The Downtown Biggs Action Plan process included the following steps:

1. Personal telephone calls to select downtown Biggs building owners.
2. A two-day site visit to downtown Biggs (February 9-10) by Marketek and SERA during which the following activities were undertaken: community tour; building, property owner and business owner visitations; personal interviews with key local stakeholders; facilitation of public meeting including Chabin Concepts to gain input on priorities for downtown; and measurement and physical assessment of selected property for near term redevelopment.
3. Preparation of sketches for the selected priority downtown projects.
4. Identification of potential funding sources to implement the priority projects.
5. Development of a detailed action plan to guide the community's next steps.

The February 9 public meeting included a brief presentation of the Vision 2020 and downtown plan; a review of community successes since 2008; identification of downtown Biggs' potential projects; selection of top projects to pursue and identification of next steps. Meeting notes appear in Appendix 2.

The community and team identified several project themes that set the framework for the recommendations that follow. They include:

- ◆ The importance of visual cues to help with place making and wayfinding;
- ◆ Repetition and consistency of design elements, particularly with streetscape improvements;
- ◆ High quality infill development and building remodels for B Street that support the new code and community's vision; and
- ◆ The importance of strategic decision-making, i.e., 'tipping point' activities to best leverage scarce resources.

The goal of this plan is to offer the city and downtown volunteers a prioritized roadmap for next steps. The project deliverables include:

- ◆ Prioritized action plan for façade and streetscape improvements, redevelopment strategies and policy updates;
- ◆ Streetscape concept for B Street, including material examples;
- ◆ Concepts for façade improvements;
- ◆ Recommended color palette for downtown buildings;
- ◆ Scenarios for redeveloping a case study property (including basic cost estimates);
- ◆ Landscape concept for improving the appearance of the Qwest sub-station;

- ◆ Potential funding mechanisms; and
- ◆ Policy recommendations.

In order to make the complex set of recommendations easy to understand and follow the Biggs Downtown Action Plan is broken into the following categories:

- ◆ Facades¹
- ◆ Streetscape²
- ◆ Redevelopment Strategies
- ◆ Redeveloper Toolbox
- ◆ Policy Updates

Following the strategy discussion and concept drawings in each section is an implementation matrix with actions, roles, responsibilities, recommended level of priority and timeframe. The city and downtown volunteers may consider adjusting the implementation schedule and priorities. Potential funding sources appear in the implementation section. The ultimate goal of this plan is to provide the city and downtown stakeholders with the information needed to make the best decisions, in the right order, concerning downtown Biggs.

¹ Façade: The primary building face along a public way.

² Streetscape: The elements that compose the pedestrian and automobile experience along a street.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

1. FACADES

For small towns that are at the beginning of a downtown revitalization effort, an excellent way to raise awareness and initiate change is by small, simple (but noticeable) steps. These may include:

- ◆ Start an annual ‘wash day’ for downtown by coordinating building, window and awning cleaning. For the buildings and awnings, use a low powered pressure washer (no more than 250 psi), along with a bristle brush, if needed.
- ◆ Encourage business owners to keep storefronts³ and windows clean.
- ◆ Keep window displays interesting and updated.
- ◆ Light storefront windows at night with energy efficient lighting.
- ◆ Create visual interest with the use of seasonal flowers and plantings near store entrances.

These are simple ways to improve downtown without incurring a lot of cost. Moving from these simple steps to the next level of façade intervention can also be relatively simple and low-cost. Often a fresh coat of paint and updating worn out awnings and/or signage can give a storefront a new lease on life. A recommended color palette for downtown has been created and using it will help create a more visually cohesive, attractive downtown district (see Figure 1).

³ Storefront: A street level business frontage, usually located along a pedestrian oriented thoroughfare.

Figure 1- Architectural Color Guidelines



SEPA
ARCHITECTURAL COLOR GUIDELINES
Biggs (CA) Downtown Master Plan - Phase II
APRIL 2010

COLOR GUIDELINES

Design intent: Utilize color to add visual interest along B Street while maintaining a consistent and cohesive character.

- Utilize the integral color of existing or historic materials where they exist i.e., brick, stone.
- Keep color schemes simple, 2 or 3 colors maximum.
- Avoid dark paint colors on building body.
- Avoid large areas of pure white.
- Avoid arbitrary paint lines and stripes; apply colors in areas dictated by architecture.

Larger transformation involves the rehabilitation or restoration of facades. Biggs has several good candidate-buildings that could benefit greatly from this type of storefront improvement. The sketches on the following pages show how downtown buildings could look with façade updates. It is important that work done on facades respect the original, historic intent and context of the building, including using large storefront windows to help 'move' pedestrians down the sidewalk.

Figure 2 – Storefront Improvement 488-490 B Street



Figure 3 – Storefront Improvements



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Design intent: Recompose building facades to conform to historic design patterns.

- Building-mounted canopies mark entries and shade pedestrian space.
- Wood storefront creates fine building scale.
- Windows above building canopy (where possible) provide better day lighting.
- Second floor windows punctuate the upper portion of the façade.
- Building mounted lighting and signage create visual interest at the pedestrian level.

IMPLEMENTING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Good design is an integral part of a revitalized downtown, and as such, it will be important to develop design guidelines for the downtown district. Across the country, downtowns of all sizes have implemented Design Guidelines⁴ to help ensure façade renovations contribute to downtown's overall appeal and economic health. Guidelines are just that – guided 'suggestions'. If the city and downtown stakeholders want to take downtown design to the next level, then Downtown Design Standards should be implemented. These are written into code and must be followed by property owners who want to rehab their storefronts. However, many downtowns use a flexible, option-based approach to their Design Standards that give the property owner or developer more choice in renovation/improvement approaches while accomplishing the desired design goals.

Simple changes to the façade, as indicated above and on the previous page, make a big difference in the visual appeal of the building.

⁴ Design Guidelines: developed on a local level to provide a basis for understanding, discussing and assessing the design quality of proposed preservation, renovation and new construction projects located within the boundaries of a downtown district or other area.

LOOKING AHEAD: DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE FAÇADE PROGRAM

In order to encourage and provide incentive for property owners to make needed changes to their storefronts, many downtowns have façade matching grant programs. This is an important selling point and tool for property redevelopment (see Redevelopment Toolkit section.) Biggs should pursue a façade program and funding options. Often, the creation of a three-year downtown matching grant program is the impetus needed to move downtown revitalization efforts forward. The community should work with 3Core Economic Development District to investigate possible funding sources for a local façade grant program.

See Appendix 3 for example of façade programs.

Matrix 1

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS							
Strategy 1: Start simple to improve the look of facades (and downtown!).							
1.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Phase I 2010-12	Phase II 2013-15
Coordinate annual 'wash day' for downtown.	Each spring develop a coordinated 'event' to pressure wash storefronts and awnings. Make sure pressure is low (no more than 250 psi). Use a bristle brush if necessary - - <u>NO</u> sandblasting!	Downtown Volunteers	Downtown Property Owners	n/a	H	➡	
1.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15
Clean windows & glass doors regularly.	Monthly, clean storefront windows & glass doors, etc., to make the business 'shine'.	Business Owners	n/a	n/a	H	➡	
1.3	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15
Create interest through window displays.	Create eye-catching window displays that change on a regular basis. Light display windows at night using energy efficient fixtures and bulbs.	Business Owners	High School Students	n/a	M	➡	
1.4	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15
Use color to help entice shoppers.	Highlight the business using colorful planters near entries. Change plantings with seasons.	Business Owners	Downtown Volunteers	Private	M	➡	
1.5	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15
Repair and replace.	Repair or replace deteriorated awnings or storefront signage to improve downtown's looks. For signs, keep away from back-lit plastic signs (see Policy section).	Business Owners	Downtown Volunteers	Private	L	➡	

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process

● Project phasing: Single project

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Strategy 2: Develop a comprehensive Downtown Façade Program.

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline	
						2008-10	2011-13
2.1	Create Façade Guidelines for Downtown.	Using new color palette and façade guidelines from comparable downtowns, create guidelines for improving facades in downtown.	Downtown Volunteers	City of Biggs Property Owners	n/a	H	●
2.2	Action	Develop an informative, appealing brochure that outlines the new Downtown Façade Guidelines. Provide outreach to property owners.	Downtown Volunteers	City of Biggs	Grant with 3CORE's Help	H	↻
2.3	Action	Explore Façade Matching Grant Program examples. Create Façade Grant Program for Biggs.	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	M	●
2.3	Action	Develop an information packet for the Façade Matching Grant Program, including application forms. Provide outreach to property owners.	City of Biggs	Downtown Volunteers 3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	H	↻

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low ↻ Project phasing: Ongoing process ● Project phasing: Single project

2. STREETScape

In downtown development there are always more projects than money to do them, that said; smart downtown advocates know the value of good planning, finding efficiencies, and being flexible and persistent. Comprehensive updates to a downtown streetscape are one of the highest-ticket items, from a public infrastructure perspective.

However, an inviting and attractive streetscape can do much to:

- ◆ Convince potential investors that downtown is a high priority because of on-going investment;
- ◆ Entice new business and property owners;
- ◆ Make downtown more inviting and appealing to shoppers.

The importance of an updated downtown streetscape is not only in its visual appeal but that it is a catalyst for private development. One of the most telling statements regarding this fact came from a developer who specialized in downtown projects visiting a small Oregon community. When he saw the deteriorated condition of a particular community's streetscape, he said, "Why does this community want me to invest in its downtown when the city hasn't invested in its own infrastructure (streetscape)? Until this community has enough faith to invest in its own future, I wouldn't want to invest here." So even if the funding comes through grants, investing in, and updating, a deteriorated downtown streetscape is very important.

For this project, a conceptual streetscape design for B Street has been developed with the idea of 'calming' or slowing traffic and providing a more pleasant and inviting pedestrian experience. *The concept considers the need to balance pedestrian safety and with the requirements of rice trucks to move through downtown in an unimpeded fashion.* In addition, examples have been provided of similar downtowns with updated streetscapes, along with design examples of specific elements. These follow with a general cost estimate on the next four pages with guiding principles below.

"Until this community has enough faith to invest in its own future, I wouldn't want to invest here."

- Anonymous downtown developer

Streetscape Improvements

Design Intent: Augment the existing streetscape along B Street with a variety of design treatments to enhance the pedestrian realm and spur private investment on adjacent parcels.

- Existing trees should be replaced with a species that is better suited to the climate and site conditions. Consider flowering or ornamental trees to define the district.
- Existing driveways should be narrowed or eliminated to reduce pedestrian/automobile conflicts in the pedestrian realm. The existing alley system should be utilized for rear access to parking lots.
- If replacing sidewalks, a custom scoring pattern (5'x5' suggested) with a 24-inch paver band behind the curb should be applied.
- Construct storm water swales / landscape areas to help visually narrow the street (traffic calming), break up parking bays, capture and pre-treat storm water, and provide shade without encroaching on the sidewalk.
- Curb extensions should be constructed to narrow the distance a pedestrian must cross to get across the street and improve visibility at both 6th and 7th Streets.
- Art or monument features should be installed in the curb extensions to create a gateway to the retail district; for example a clock tower or flag pole.
- Colored/textured intersections can serve as an excellent district announcement feature and traffic calming element.
- Coordinated street furniture and pedestrian-scale light fixtures should be established on both sides of B Street.

Figure 4 - Conceptual B Street Streetscape Improvements

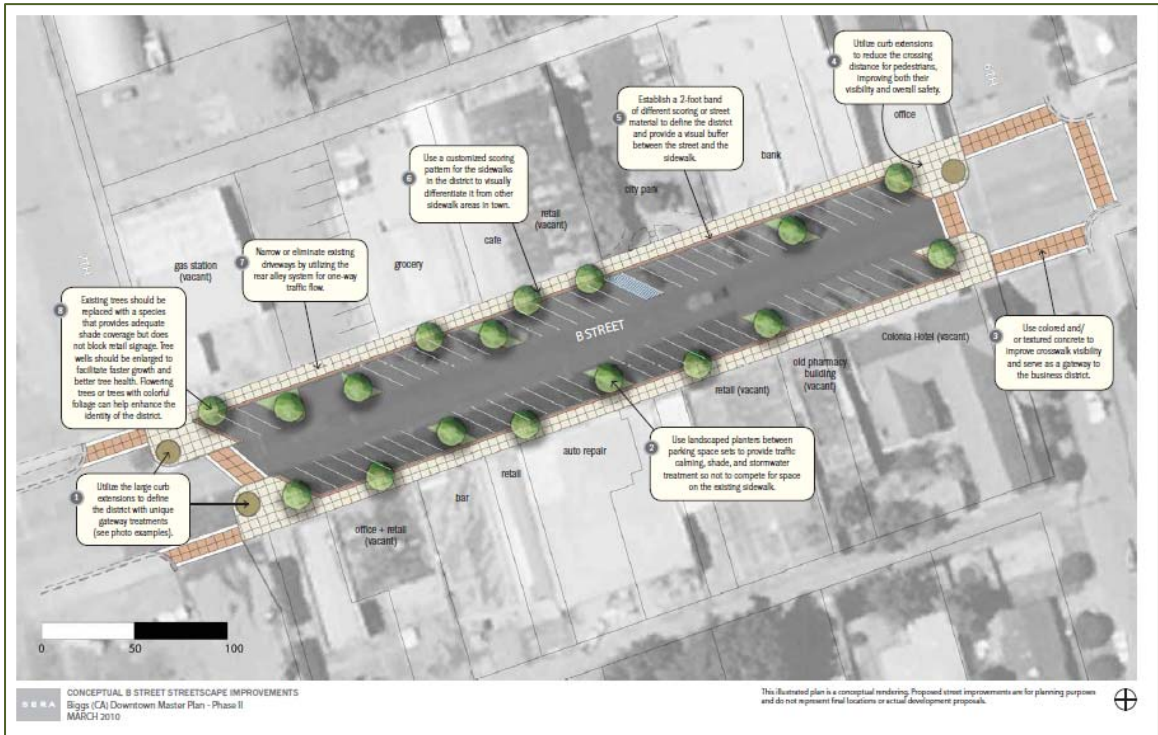


Figure 5 - Examples of Curb Extensions/Gateway Treatments



Figure 6 - Pedestrian Realm Details



Figure 7 - Façade Improvement Cost Estimates

Façade Improvement

481 B Street Façade

Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Masonry Replacement	Demo/Replace	sf	100	\$40	\$4,000
Masonry Repair	Repair/Repoint	sf	280	\$20	\$5,600
Windows	New (Clad Wood)	ea	4	\$700	\$2,800
Storefront	New (Wood)	sf	200	\$90	\$18,000
Canopies + Signage	New	ea	1	\$7,000	\$7,000
Total Construction Cost					\$37,400
			Design Fees	12%	\$4,488
			Permit Fees	10%	\$3,740
			Contingency	10%	\$3,740
Total Project Cost					\$56,368

488 B Street Façade

Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Stucco	Patch and Repair		900	\$12	\$10,800
Windows	New (Clad Wood)		6	\$700	\$4,200
Storefront	New (Wood)		390	\$90	\$35,100
Canopies + Signage	New		3	\$3,500	\$10,500
Total Construction Cost					\$60,600
			Design Fees	12%	\$7,272
			Permit Fees	10%	\$6,060
			Contingency	10%	\$6,060
Total Project Cost					\$90,492

490 B Street Façade

Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Stucco	Patch and Repair		236	\$12	\$2,832
Storefront	New (Wood)		340	\$90	\$30,600
Canopies + Signage	New		1	\$7,000	\$7,000
Total Construction Cost					\$40,432
			Design Fees	12%	\$4,852
			Permit Fees	10%	\$4,043
			Contingency	10%	\$4,043
Total Project Cost					\$60,370

Note: The cost summary above is intended as a rough draft, order of magnitude forecast is adequate for planning purposes only. A detailed design and cost forecasting should be executed prior to commencement of any construction projects. No allowance has been included for cost escalation

SIMPLE NEXT STEPS FOR THE SHORT-TERM

While downtown advocates explore funding opportunities for big-ticket streetscape improvements, there are several small and inexpensive steps that can be taken to make the existing streetscape look better.

1. Keep downtown sidewalks and public areas super neat and clean. This means business owners sweep sidewalks and pick-up trash outside their businesses on a daily basis. Commit to being the neatest and cleanest downtown around!
2. Brighten downtown with coordinated flower baskets and planters. Have a plan for watering and maintenance and change out the plantings as the seasons dictate. Live, colorful plants make downtown more appealing.

LOOKING AHEAD: IMPLEMENTING COMPREHENSIVE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The larger project to make downtown Biggs' streetscape more appealing and functional is comprehensive streetscape improvements. The following lays out the specific design, cost estimating and construction process for moving this effort forward.

STREETSCAPE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

I. Conceptual Design – Complete

The conceptual design may need to be revisited if an extended length of time occurs between the design's development and actual project funding. In any case, some revisions may need to be made to the conceptual plan based on construction costs, parking issues that may need resolution and other issues that may need to be resolved, etc.

II. Design Development

- A. Prepare Accurate Existing Conditions Base Plan for entire project area including side streets. This may include additional survey work and/or assembly of all current information. This should also include all above ground and below ground utilities.
- B. Prepare a Streetscape Improvements Master Plan in auto-cad. This should include:
 1. Existing Right of Ways
 2. Modified and new streets, curbs, and sidewalks and plazas
 3. Proposed landscape areas and street trees

4. Proposed street light locations
 5. Furnishings, including benches, litter receptacles, bike racks etc.
 6. City-owned property (if applicable)
 7. Improvements to adjacent private property (if applicable)
- C. Prepare engineering for Preliminary Utility Improvements Plan. This would include the following:
1. Storm water drainage improvement, including potential bio-swales and detention
 2. Sanitary sewer system
 3. Domestic water
 4. Electric power
 5. All other utilities
- D. Prepare detailed cost estimates for all streetscape improvement work. Itemize estimate so that strategic areas can be broken down. For example:
1. "B" Street and affected side streets where intersection improvements are planned:
 - a. Street paving and infrastructure
 - b. Utility improvements breakdown
 - c. Street trees and landscaping
 - d. Irrigation
 - e. Street lights and furnishings breakdown
- E. Based upon cost estimate and priorities, determine a Preliminary Phasing Plan. Determine scope of Phase I work. Can all the envisioned work be implemented in one phase? This is definitely the most cost effective way to proceed. However, if there are budgets or other constraints, the project may be broken into multiple phases.

III. CONTRACT DOCUMENTS FOR PHASE I

These documents would be prepared to obtain bids, inform construction and close out the project. These may generally include, but are not limited to:

- A. Demolition, Site Preparation and Erosion Control Plans
- B. Engineering for all street infrastructure including sidewalks, plazas etc.
- C. Engineering for all utility work (storm/sanitary sewers, power etc.)
- D. Landscape Plans for planting areas, street trees, bio-swales etc.
- E. Irrigation Plans

- F. Furnishings Plans
- G. Specifications
- H. Bid Forms and Contract Requirements
- I. "As Built" Drawings for all new improvements

Matrix 2

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS								
Strategy 1: Start Simple to improve the downtown streetscape.								
1.1		Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Phase I 2008-10	Phase II 2011-2013
Keep sidewalks spotless.		Commit to making downtown super clean and neat. This means business owners must take responsibility for keeping sidewalks clean in front of businesses. Pride is the key.	Business & Property Owners	Downtown Volunteers City of Biggs	n/a	H		
							➡	
1.2		Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-2013
Make the streetscape more inviting.		Use flower baskets and planters in the downtown core to improve the streetscape appearance. Coordinate a design theme for plantings and update seasonally.	Downtown Volunteers	Business & Property Owners	Private	M		
							➡	
Strategy 2: Explore implementing a downtown streetscape project.								
2.1		Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline 2008-10	Timeline 2011-2013
Explore funding sources & process for downtown streetscape improvements.		Funding for streetscape project should include design development, detailed design, construction documents, construction and close-out. Proceed with application for streetscape grant as funding allows.	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	Grant	M		
							●	
2.2		Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-2013
Coordinate smaller streetscape improvements with building projects.		Find ways to efficiently make improvements to the streetscape coordinating them with building rehabs and new construction.	City of Biggs	Property Owners	Impact fee	L		
								➡

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low ➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process ● Project phasing: Single project

3. REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

It is not unusual that the most difficult aspect of downtown revitalization is the private development component. Yet it is a critical lynchpin in a downtown's overall revitalization strategy. Sadly, this important piece of the puzzle is sometimes 'held hostage' by market forces and speculative property owners who believe their property is worth more than it actually is – making redevelopment projects incredibly difficult, if not impossible, because they do not pencil out.

Understanding downtown market dynamics in Biggs is a crucial piece of the redevelopment strategy. It is recommended that a special Property Redevelopment Committee be assembled that will focus on mapping and analyzing downtown redevelopment opportunities, marketing opportunities and working with developers. This volunteer team should include a banking or finance specialist, a commercial realtor with good contacts and information (but no vested interest), a City representative and a downtown advocate.

The group should begin with a downtown property analysis to determine the status of existing buildings and vacant property. A sample approach and results illustrated for rural Veneta, Oregon appears in Appendix 4. The analysis was pivotal in helping the redevelopment team prioritize downtown 'opportunity sites' and focus efforts. A well functioning and focused Property Redevelopment Committee can make all the difference in moving redevelopment efforts forward. The Implementation Matrix at the end of the report outlines tasks this committee should undertake.

Another important step is to work with property owners who are willing and interested in improving their buildings. Through this project, a preliminary feasibility analysis was undertaken for one such downtown Biggs property — the Biggs Building at 488 B Street. **The subject property owner attended the community meeting to which all property owners were invited. The consulting team was invited to tour the property and provide advice and direction.** Following are two redevelopment options to make the space marketable and improved to a ready-to-occupy condition, general cost estimates to pursue one of the redevelopment options, and a simple pro forma to understand the potential financing gap in taking the project forward. There is also a summary outline for each approach.

BIGGS BUILDING PROPERTY

488 B Street Redevelopment Option A

Design Intent: Retain as much of the existing building while improving the quality of the tenant spaces.

- ◆ Two (2) retail spaces reconfigured to provide access directly from the street. Each retail space includes a dedicated office and storage room.
- ◆ Original building entry reconfigured to provide access for office spaces.
- ◆ Four (4) retail tenant spaces are renovated.
- ◆ New interior ramp provides ADA accessibility to northern portion of the building.
- ◆ Kitchenette and toilets are remodeled and shared by all building tenants.
- ◆ New windows provide daylight along east façade.
- ◆ New terrace provides covered outdoor space and secondary building egress.
- ◆ Building to receive new wood storefront, three steel entry canopies, renovated stucco façade, new roof, repair re-clad east and north façades.

Figure 8 - Redevelopment 488 B Street - Option A



488 B Street Redevelopment Option B

Design intent: Reconfigure the building as required to provide high quality retail and office space.

- ♦ Access to office spaces is moved to the west, along the wall shared with the adjacent restaurant. This allows access to daylight from all office spaces.
- ♦ This scheme provides a single, larger retail space. Retail space includes a dedicated office and storage room.
- ♦ Two (2) large office suites accessed by a single corridor.
- ♦ New interior ramp provides ADA accessibility to northern portion of the building.
- ♦ New toilets are shared by all building tenants.
- ♦ New windows provide daylight along east façade.
- ♦ New terrace provides covered outdoor space and secondary building egress.
- ♦ Building to receive new wood storefront, two steel entry canopies, renovated stucco façade, new roof, repair re-clad east and north façades.

Figure 9 - Redevelopment 488 B Street - Option B

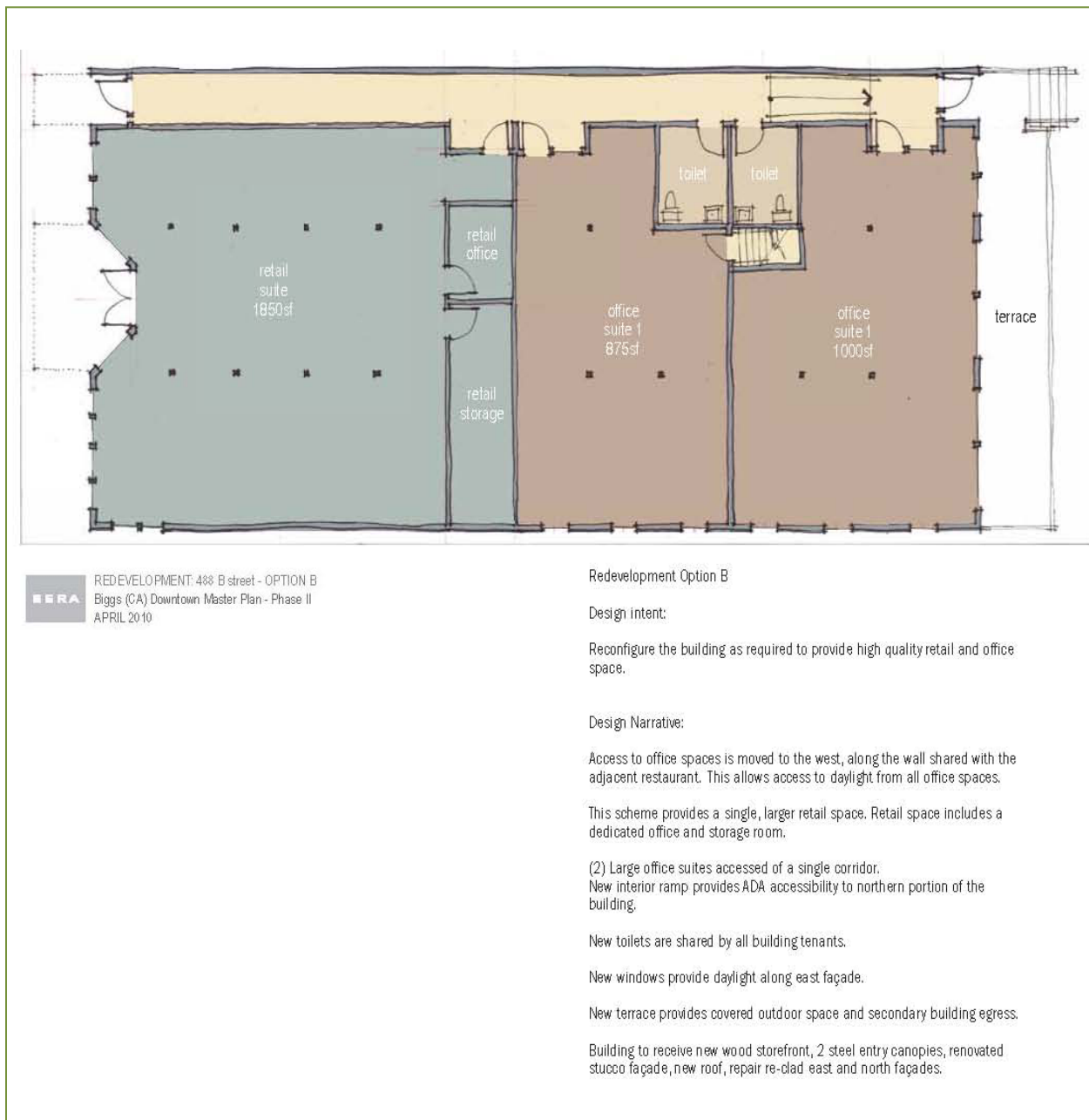


Figure 10 - Scheme B Cost Estimate

488 B Street - Scheme B

Location	Item		Quantity	Unit Cost	Sub Total
Interior					
	Office Suite 1	Major remodel	875	\$35	\$30,625
	Office Suite 2	Major remodel	1000	\$45	\$45,000
	Retail	Major remodel	1850	\$30	\$55,500
	Other	Major remodel	1275	\$25	\$31,875
	Unisex toilets	New	2	\$4,000	\$8,000
Exterior					
	South Façade				
	Stucco	Patch and repair	900	\$12	\$10,800
	Insulation	New	2200	\$1	\$2,200
	Windows	New (Clad Wood)	6	\$700	\$4,200
	Storefront	New (Wood)	390	\$90	\$35,100
	Canopies + Signage	New	2	\$3,500	\$7,000
	East façade				
	Demo/Prep		2200	\$2	\$4,400
	Cementitious Siding	New	2200	\$8	\$17,600
	Insulation	New	2200	\$1	\$2,200
	Windows	New (Fiberglass)	8	\$400	\$3,200
	North façade				
	Demo/Prep		950	\$3	\$2,850
	Cementitious Siding	New	950	\$8	\$7,600
	Windows	New (Fiberglass)	6	\$400	\$2,400
	Roof				
	Demo/Prep				
	Roofing	New	5000	\$1	\$5,000
	Insulation	New	5000	\$5	\$25,000
	Terrace				
	Concrete + Stair + Rail	New	400	\$15	\$6,000
	Roof Demo/Prep		400	\$1	\$400
	Roofing	New	400	\$5	\$2,000
Total Construction Costs					\$313,950
Soft Costs					
	Design Fees	Arch +MEP	12%		\$37,674
	Permit Fees		10%		\$31,395
	Contingency		10%		\$31,395
Total Project Cost					\$414,414

Figure 11 - New Construction Cost Estimate - 488 B Street

488 B Street - New Construction

Location	Item		Quantity	Unit Cost	Sub Total
Interior	New single story bldg	New Construction	5000	\$165	\$825,000
	Total Construction Costs				\$825,000
Soft Costs	Design Fees	Arch +MEP	10%		\$82,500
	Permit Fees		10%		\$82,500
	Contingency		7%		\$57,750
	Total Project Cost				\$1,047,750

Note: The cost summary above is intended as a rough; order of magnitude forecast and is adequate for planning purposes only. A detailed design and cost forecasting should be executed prior to commencement of any construction projects. No allowance has been included for cost escalation.

Development Cost Analysis

Each development option (A and B) and individual components were evaluated using a thirty-year cash flow. The scenarios assumed fee simple ownership of the property by the developer/property owner and conventional financing. Detailed analysis is provided in Appendix 5.

Estimates of construction costs, both hard and soft, were based on estimates provided by SERA Architects. The numbers assumed by developers may vary substantively, depending upon variations in design and finish quality. To keep the cost analysis straightforward, the assumption was made that the building is already owned out-right and no acquisition or previous debt is present.

Financial assumptions were made with respect to lending terms based on recent small business lending practices. The interest rates are a bit above current levels, reflecting our expectation that rates will be higher by the time that this project proceeds. A summary of financial assumptions used in the analysis follow:

- ◆ Income and expense assumptions were based upon the professional opinion of Marketek, and necessarily assume a fairly generic product. These include the following:
- ◆ The assumed rental price of \$12 per square foot for retail space and \$10 per square foot for office is a typical rent found in the current market in small town downtown buildings that have been renovated. The same can be said for the assumption of \$5 per square foot for expenses.
- ◆ While we feel that these numbers are appropriate baseline assumptions, developers evaluating project feasibility may vary in their assumptions, which would either increase or decrease their perceived need for assistance.

Other assumptions included a short period of construction (three months) negating the need for a separate construction loan.

Summary of Findings

Neither of the scenarios is viable given the above mentioned assumptions. Neither would be able to obtain financing for even 50 percent of the construction costs. The following tables summarize the overall development costs and the calculated financing gap associated with each of the development programs evaluated. Yet, this challenge is not uncommon for downtown redevelopment projects. Financing the 'gap' or difference between total project costs and the obtainable loan amount from private funding sources may be accomplished through a variety of means including: selected public funding/sources (examples in Appendix 6), property owner capital contributions or formation of a community ownership group or a community-based investment fund. A key next step is for the property owner to meet with representatives of 3 Core to discuss the potential to access any available loan programs.

BIGGS CA - OPTION A

INCOME SUMMARY:

	Total SF	Avg. Price/SF	Gross/ Net Income
Office Space	1,625	\$10	\$16,250
Retail	1,860	\$12	\$22,320
TOTAL	3,485		\$38,570
Less Vacancy Rate	10%		\$3,857
GROSS INCOME			\$34,713
Expenses (NNN)		\$5	\$17,425
NET OPERATING INCOME			\$17,288

COST SUMMARY:

	Per SF	TOTAL
Acquisition Cost	\$0.00	\$0
Hard Construction Cost	\$88.34	\$327,168
Soft Costs	\$19.91	\$69,380
TOTAL	\$113.79	\$396,548

ESTIMATION OF VIABILITY GAP

	Rate	Term	Loan Amt
Permanent Loan	6.00%	30	\$185,000
Total Calculated Gap			\$211,548
Overall Gap as % of Development Cost			53.35%

BIGGS CA - OPTION B

INCOME SUMMARY:

	Total SF	Avg. Price/SF	Gross/ Net Income
Office Space	1,875	\$10	\$18,750
Retail	1,850	\$12	\$22,200
TOTAL	3,725		\$40,950
Less Vacancy Rate	10%		\$4,095
GROSS INCOME			\$36,855
Expenses (NNN)		\$5	\$18,625
NET OPERATING INCOME			\$18,230

COST SUMMARY:

	Per SF	TOTAL
Acquisition Cost	\$0.00	\$0
Hard Construction Cost	\$92.71	\$345,345
Soft Costs	\$19.66	\$73,234
TOTAL	\$113.79	\$418,579

ESTIMATION OF VIABILITY GAP

	Rate	Term	Loan Amt
Permanent Loan	6.00%	30	\$195,000
Total Calculated Gap			\$223,579
Overall Gap as % of Development Cost			53.41%

Other project possibilities

Through the onsite visit and public input, the consultants identified several other key redevelopment projects in addition to facades, streetscape and property redevelopment. These redevelopment projects also have the potential to significantly enhance downtown Biggs and are organized below by: Renovation, New Construction and Public Infrastructure with a summary of next steps, technical assistance needed and an approximate fee estimate for services.

Renovation (private):

- ◆ Colonia Hotel
 - Next step: Building Evaluation and Design/Feasibility Study
 - Team: Architect, Structural Engineer, Cost Estimator and Market Analysis
 - Fee Estimate: \$8,500 - \$9,500
- ◆ Pharmacy Building
 - Next step: Building Evaluation and Design/Feasibility Study
 - Team: Architect, Structural Engineering, Cost Estimator, and Market Analysis
 - Fee Range: \$7,000 - \$8,000
- ◆ Grocery Building
 - Next step: Building Evaluation and Design/Feasibility Study
 - Team: Architect, Structural Engineering, Cost Estimator, and Market Analysis
 - Fee Estimate: \$7,000 - \$8,000
- ◆ Carnegie Library
 - Next step: Building Evaluation and Design/Feasibility Study
 - Team: Architect, Structural Engineer, and Cost Estimator
 - Fee Estimate: \$6,500 - \$7,500

New Construction:

- ◆ Gas Station Site
 - Next step: Design and Feasibility Study
 - Team: Architect, Structural Engineer, Cost Estimator, and Market Analysis
 - Fee Estimate: \$6,500 - \$7,500

Public Infrastructure Projects:

(Due to the number of variables involved, fee estimates have not been compiled for these projects).

- ◆ Alley Improvements
 - Next step: Confirm existing conditions and document improvements
 - Team: Surveyor, Civil Engineer
- ◆ Curb extension at Colonia Hotel
 - Next step: Traffic Design Study
 - Team: Urban Designer, Surveyor/Civil Engineer
- ◆ Railroad crossing improvements

- Next step: Traffic Design Study
- Team: Urban Designer, Surveyor/Civil engineer, Railroad Specialist

Design fee ranges are intended for planning purposes only and do not include any allowance for consultant travel. Design fees are estimated on a per project basis and could be reduced significantly if several are executed concurrently by the same design team.

Matrix 3

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 1: Create special group focused on downtown redevelopment.

1.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-2015
Organize a focused redevelopment committee.	Assemble small team of highly committed volunteers who will focus on mapping and analyzing redevelopment opportunities (see Strategies below), marketing opportunities and working with developers.	Downtown Volunteers	City of Biggs 3CORE Economic Development District	n/a	H	●	

Strategy 2: Map and monitor 'opportunity sites', redevelopment costs and general feasibility

2.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-2015
Map and track downtown redevelopment opportunities.	<p>Create a downtown map & spreadsheet that includes information on key redevelopment sites.</p> <p>Include information on assessed value and asking price (broken out by sq. ft.).</p>	Redevelopment Team	City of Biggs Local Developers Commercial Realtors	n/a	H		
2.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-2015
Determine ball-park redevelopment costs per square foot for downtown.	Obtain realistic sq.ft. estimates for redevelopment that include land acquisition, impact fees, construction costs, permits, developer & loan fees & interest.	Redevelopment Team	City of Biggs Local Developers Commercial Realtors	n/a	L		

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process

- Project phasing: Single project

Matrix 3

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES						
2.3	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline
Determine range of lease rates & building expenses for downtown properties.	Talk to building owners, developers & commercial realtors to determine cash flow numbers for downtown buildings (lease rates vs. building/loan expenses).	Redevelopment Team	Commercial Realtors Property Owners Downtown Developers	n/a	L	2013-2015
					➡	
2.4	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline
Run simple calculations to determine most feasible downtown projects.	Using the info gathered in 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3, above, run simple calculations to determine which mapped 'opportunity sites' have the best chance of redevelopment. Begin working on these prioritized sites. Update information on an annual basis.	Redevelopment Team	City of Biggs	n/a	L	2013-2015
					➡	
Strategy 3: Build & nurture relationships with developers.						
3.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline
Grow relationships with local developers (both private & non-profit)	Build on existing relationships with developers who are interested in downtown. Cultivate and nurture new relationships, as well.	Redevelopment Team	City of Biggs 3CORE Economic Development District	n/a	M	2013-2015
					➡	

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low ➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process ● Project phasing: Single project

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 4: Market downtown as an opportunity.

4.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline		
						2010-12	2013-2015	Timeline
Attractive and informational materials to sell downtown as an opportunity.	Develop marketing packet for developers that includes vision and design concepts for the redevelopment of downtown, information on market strengths and opportunities, permitting, tools and incentives, etc.	development Team	City of Biggs 3CORE Economic Development District	Grant	M	●		

Strategy 5: Assemble properties for redevelopment.

5.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Timeline		
						2010-12	2013-2015	Timeline
Larger tracks of land are desirable to developers.	As strategic opportunities arise, consider opportunities to assemble properties (through options or purchase) to assist in their redevelopment.	Redevelopment Team	City of Biggs 3CORE Economic Development District	Private or Grant	L		●	

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process

● Project phasing: Single project

4. REDEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX

There is little doubt that a city that can offer tools and incentives to help initiate and leverage revitalization activities can be more competitive in the downtown development marketplace. Until now, the City of Biggs has not used redevelopment incentives and has seen very little reinvestment into the downtown commercial area. To help spur interest, the City should identify and package a redevelopment toolbox of incentives to encourage and leverage a greater level of private reinvestment in the downtown district.

The creation and marketing of a comprehensive Redevelopment Toolbox and Incentives is an essential component that will help downtown Biggs achieve a more economically vital and attractive downtown. The following programs, materials, and incentives are made up of specialized tools for different types of projects. Every item listed should be in the 'tool box' with the understanding that the City Administrator is empowered to decide which programs or incentives are appropriate for individual projects, then negotiate in good faith before going to the City for final project approval.

A Comprehensive Redevelopment Toolbox includes:

- ◆ High quality marketing and outreach materials to send to potential developers. The Property Redevelopment Committee should be the lead in developing marketing materials based on their findings and recommendations (as to redevelopment priorities, etc). The materials should also include information on programs available to assist in the redevelopment process.
- ◆ Documented permitting process that includes flexibility and streamlining (i.e., if 'x, y, z' criteria are met, then the project qualifies for fast-track permitting).
- ◆ Free design or other specific assistance for developers (i.e., 15 hours of professional architectural or pro forma assistance). Many Redevelopment Directors can attest to the value of this tool.
- ◆ Façade Improvement Program. A new façade program should include a very low or zero percent interest loan program with a ten-year payback. As a special add-on, a small grant of up to \$2,500 for signage (no back-lit plastic signs) could be offered in conjunction with a \$25,000 loan.
- ◆ Signage Grant Program designed as 1:1 matching grant of up to \$1,000 for signage upgrades.
- ◆ Waive, reduce or defer (up to five years) Impact Fees following staff review (i.e., 'trading' Impact Fee charges associated with redevelopment of commercial storefronts with required façade upgrades. The rationale behind this is that an existing building has already paid for its impacts and that requiring the amount that

would be paid in Impact Fees to be put directly into the façade is a win for both the City and property owner).

- ◆ Buy-down of loan rates on commercial redevelopment loans. This is another tool to help get projects moving. As interest rates rise, this incentive becomes more popular and necessary.
- ◆ Forgivable debt. If certain performance criteria are met within a specified length of time, the project loan transfers to a grant (i.e., The Dalles, Oregon had a program where a demolition loan for \$50,000 turned into a grant if the property is built upon within two years of demolition). This is a creative and flexible program that helps ensure that the right things happen in a timely manner.
- ◆ Grants or zero percent loans for required seismic or ADA upgrades. This is another tool to help prompt redevelopment when there is a change of use and/or occupancy.
- ◆ Streetscape improvements as part of specific redevelopment projects.
- ◆ Host a Developer Day event where commercial developers (who specialize in smaller downtown-type projects) are invited in as a group. They are given a packet of materials on the priority 'opportunity sites' then taken on a walking tour of downtown, looking at the buildings and talking about the vision for a revitalized downtown Biggs. Then the group is brought back for a Q&A over lunch. Follow up after the event with personal visits or phone calls.
- ◆ Promote Energy and Historic Tax Credits for redevelopment projects. Often, developers are not aware of state and federal tax credit programs that might be a good fit for their projects.
- ◆ Option downtown 'opportunity site' properties for redevelopment, making sure the option is transferable to the developer. This tool allows the City to proactively engage in the property redevelopment process without actually purchasing the property. The decision to move forward with the option process should be based on properties that are of strategic importance or offer an immediate opportunity.

Having a good Redevelopment Toolbox in place and effectively marketing it will be helpful in getting the redevelopment ball rolling. Remember that once a Toolbox is developed, it needs to be marketed; all too often, we see towns with good redevelopment tools in place but they are never marketed – so they are never used.

Matrix 4

REDEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX									
Strategy 1: Create a redevelopment toolbox to help spur redevelopment.									
1.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	Phase I 2010-12		Phase II 2013-15	
Tool 1: Flexibility & streamlining in permitting.	Develop an incentive where, for example, if 'x, y, z' criteria are met, then the project qualifies for fast-track permitting.	City of Biggs	Downtown Volunteers	n/a	L		↻		
1.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12		2013-15	
Tool 2: Free professional assistance.	This could include 15 hrs of architectural, pro-forma or other needed assistance to help move the project forward.	City of Biggs	Downtown Volunteers CSU Chico Small Business Development Center	n/a	M		↻		
1.3	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12		2013-15	
Tool 3: Façade Improvement Program (see 'Façade Improvements' section of matrix).	A façade program should include a very low, or zero, percent interest rate with a ten year payback.	City of Biggs	Local Banks or Other Funding Sources (grants)	Grant with 3CORE's Help	H		↻		
1.4	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12		2013-15	
Tool 4: Signage grant (as part of façade improvements.)	A signage grant could be designed as a 1:1 matching grant up to \$1000 for signage improvements (no back-lit plastic).	City of Biggs	Local Banks 3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	H		↻		

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low ↻ Project phasing: Ongoing process ● Project phasing: Single project

Matrix 4

REDEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX							
1.5	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15
Tool 5: Waiving, reducing or deferring impact fees for a period of time.	For redevelopment projects, impact fees could be waived, reduced or deferred (up to 5 yrs). Impact fees could be 'traded' for improvements to the façade.	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	n/a	L		➡
1.6	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 6: Buy down loan rates on commercial redevelopment loans.	While loan rates are still relatively low, this program is not as necessary. But when rates rise it is an excellent tool.	City of Biggs 3CORE Economic Development District	City of Biggs Local Banks	Grant with 3CORE's Help	L		➡
1.7	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 7: Forgivable debt where performance criteria are met.	If performance criteria are met within a specific timeframe, then the loan becomes a grant (ie. A demolition loan becomes a grant if rebuilding occurs within 2 yrs.)	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	M	➡	
1.8	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 8: Grants or loans for seismic or ADA upgrades.	This is another tool to promote redevelopment when there is a change in use.	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	M		➡

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process

● Project phasing: Single project

Matrix 4

REDEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX							
1.9	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 9: Streetscape Improvements as part of redevelopment project.	Provide specific site streetscape improvements in coordination with redevelopment projects.	City of Biggs	3CORE Economic Development District	Grant with 3CORE's Help	M		➡
1.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 10: Host a Developer Days Event.	When redevelopment priorities and materials are developed, host a Developer Days event to bring potential developers to the table.	City of Biggs	Downtown Volunteers 3CORE Economic Development District	n/a	M		➡
1.11	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 11: State & Federal Energy & Historic Tax Credits.	Collect info on state and local tax credits for redevelopment projects. Incorporate into marketing materials.	City of Biggs	Property Redevelopment Committee	n/a	L		➡
1.12	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2008-10	2011-13
Tool 12: Option downtown 'opportunity site' properties for redevelopment.	When optioning priority 'opportunity sites', make sure the option is transferable to the developer. The properties optioned should be of strategic importance or offer an immediate opportunity.	City of Biggs	Property Redevelopment Committee 3CORE Economic Development	City 3CORE Econ Dev District	L		➡

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process

● Project phasing: Single project

5. POLICY UPDATES

This section contains two overarching community and economic development strategies and several supporting recommendations regarding this plan and public policy. They include:

1. Maximize and invest in downtown Biggs as the focus of community culture and heritage. The first step is for the City to adopt this 'next steps' action plan as an official document.
2. Pursue diverse downtown economic development opportunities that maximize the return to the community.

The policy matrix below summarizes a series of action steps in support of these strategies.

Matrix 5

POLICY									
Strategy 1: Maximize and invest in downtown Biggs as the focus of community culture and heritage									
				Phase I			Phase II		
1.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Adopt the Downtown Action Plan		City of Biggs	City Council	n/a	H	●			
1.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Enhance public amenities to increase downtown's appeal	Create/pursue fund development plan for streetscape improvements	City of Biggs	3CORE	n/a	H	●			
1.3	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Increase awareness of Biggs' rich agriculture history	Develop proactive visitor marketing program	Community volunteers	Butte County Tourism		M	●			
Strategy 2: Pursue diverse downtown economic development opportunities that maximize return to community									
2.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Retain and encourage existing downtown business and property owners	Package and promote business and developer resource toolkit	City of Biggs	Butte College SBDC, 3CORE	n/a	M	●			
2.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Encourage a mix of uses in downtown as the civic heart of town	Recruit more service oriented and convenience retail businesses to downtown	City of Biggs	Community business development volunteers	n/a	M	●			
2.3	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority	2010-12	2013-15		
Encourage public-private partnership on downtown revitalization	Review and adopt the redevelopment toolkit and promote to development partners	City of Biggs	Community business development volunteers	n/a	M	●			

Legend: Priority - H = High, M = Medium, L = Low ➡ Project phasing: Ongoing process ● Project phasing: Single project

IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the City of Biggs Downtown Action Plan addresses 'what happens next, how it happens, and potential funding sources.

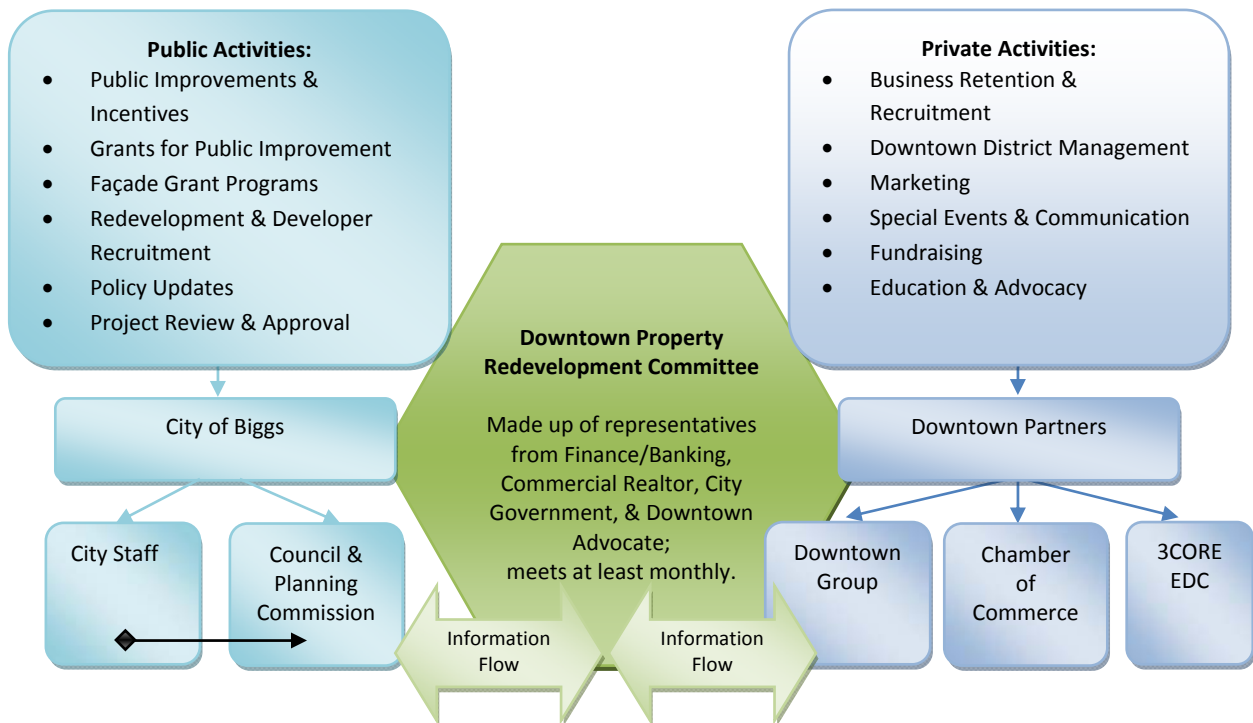
Undertaking significant redevelopment of a downtown district is both an art and a science. It also depends on leadership, timing and flexibility. The implementation matrix that follows is a roadmap to help guide the city and downtown advocates. It should be updated on an annual basis as projects are implemented and new opportunities arise. The basis for decisions on prioritizing and incentivizing projects should be those that:

- ◆ Support quality economic growth
- ◆ Increase the value of adjacent properties
- ◆ Encourage greater marketability of the Biggs historic district
- ◆ Encourage better community design
- ◆ Provide for a greater intensity and mix of uses, including downtown housing
- ◆ Provide a gain in ground-floor retail
- ◆ Support the recommendations in the Downtown Visual Master Plan

Using these criteria to continually 'sift projects' that will keep downtown Biggs on track especially if and when new opportunities arise.

1. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Implementing a successful downtown revitalization effort is a complex task because there are many types of projects and a variety of public and private players. The following flowchart outlines two categories of redevelopment activities that should be undertaken for downtown Biggs and includes the roles and responsibilities within each. It also indicates the creation of a Downtown Property Redevelopment Committee. This working alliance is a critical component of Biggs' redevelopment effort.



2. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS BY CATEGORY & RESPONSIBILITY

This Downtown Action Plan for Biggs targets a select number of priority projects but still requires redevelopment of downtown through a more integrated and comprehensive approach. The following exhibit identifies recommended 'next steps' by categories and responsibilities. The numbers before each category name do not indicate a prioritized order for implementation, as work within all the categories is intended to advance simultaneously.

A detailed Implementation Matrix with tasks and timelines for each of the categories follows.

Next Steps by Category & Responsibility			
Project Category	Lead Entity for Implementation		
	City	Downtown Group	Property Redevelopment Committee
1. Façade Program		●	
2. Streetscape Improvements	●		
3. Property Redevelopment			●
4. Redevelopment Toolbox	●		
5. Policy Updates	●		

3. FUNDING SOURCES

Downtown revitalization programs and activities are typically funded by a multitude of sources including local governments, private sources (business/property owners), grants, fundraising drives, special events and other sources.

This section provides a synopsis of popular public and private funding sources that can be tapped for various aspects of downtown/community/economic revitalization initiatives. An overview of sources is provided in the exhibit with more detailed program descriptions and contact information provided in the body of the report.

Funding Sources

RURAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE GRANT (RBEG) PROGRAM

(USDA Rural Development)

The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses help fund business incubators, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities.

How much are the grants?

There is no required maximum level of grant funding. However, smaller projects are given higher priority. Generally grants range \$10,000 up to \$500,000

Who is eligible?

Rural public entities (towns, communities, State agencies, and authorities), Indian tribes and rural private non-profit corporations are eligible to apply for funding. At least 51 percent of the outstanding interest in any project must have membership or be owned by U.S. citizens or resident aliens.

Define Rural

Rural is defined as any area other than a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 and the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town according to the latest decennial census.

What types of projects are eligible?

The RBEG program is a broad based program that reaches to the core of rural development in a number of ways. Examples of eligible fund use include: Acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction, conversion, renovation of buildings, plants, machinery, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utilities; pollution control and abatement; capitalization of revolving loan funds including funds that will make loans for start ups and working capital; training and technical assistance; distance adult learning for job training and advancement; rural transportation improvement; and project planning. Any project funded under the RBEG program should benefit small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Small and emerging private businesses are those that will employ 50 or fewer new employees and have less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues.

How to Apply

To apply for funding for the RBEG program, please contact your [Rural Development State Office](#).

Availability of Funds

Each year, Congress provides program funding as called for in the Federal Budget. Fiscal Year funding levels will be made available as soon as possible after the beginning of each Fiscal Year.

Funding Sources

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY GUARANTEED LOANS (B&I) (USDA Rural Development)

The purpose of the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. This purpose is achieved by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans which will provide lasting community benefits. It is not intended that the guarantee authority will be used for marginal or substandard loans or for relief of lenders having such loans.

How does the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program compare to the Rural Energy for America Program Guaranteed Loan and Grant?

To assist you in determining which program best fits your needs, this [comparison chart](#) identifies the programs' common and distinct requirements in an easy to read format.

Who May Borrow?

A borrower may be a cooperative organization, corporation, partnership, or other legal entity organized and operated on a profit or nonprofit basis; an Indian tribe on a Federal or State reservation or other Federally recognized tribal group; a public body; or an individual. A borrower must be engaged in or proposing to engage in a business that will:

Provide employment;

1. Improve the economic or environmental climate;
2. Promote the conservation, development, and use of water for aquaculture; or
3. Reduce reliance on nonrenewable energy resources by encouraging the development and construction of solar energy systems and other renewable energy systems.

Individual borrowers must be citizens of the United States (U.S.) or reside in the U.S. after being legally admitted for permanent residence. Corporations or other nonpublic body organization-type borrowers must be at least 51 percent owned by persons who are either citizens of the U.S. or reside in the U.S. after being legally admitted for permanent residence. B&I loans are normally available in rural areas, which include all areas other than cities or towns of more than 50,000 people and the contiguous and adjacent urbanized area of such cities or towns.

How May Funds be Used?

Loan purposes must be consistent with the general purpose contained in the regulation. They include but are not limited to the following:

Business and industrial acquisitions when the loan will keep the business from closing, prevent the loss of employment opportunities, or provide expanded job opportunities.

- Business conversion, enlargement, repair, modernization, or development.
- Purchase and development of land, easements, rights-of-way, buildings, or facilities.
- Purchase of equipment, leasehold improvements, machinery, supplies, or inventory.

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDIES: CREATIVE AND TRADITIONAL FUNDING MECHANISMS

Scotland Neck, NC (population est. 2,400)

- To aid downtown merchants, the town established the Round-Up program. Residents have the option to round up their utility bills to the nearest dollar. Revenues from this fund local grants to help downtown merchants renovate building facades.
- Round-Up awards grants on the basis of \$1 reimbursement for every \$2 invested by the owner. Maximum grant of \$1,000 per project.
- Since 2000 the Round-Up program has generated more than \$10,000 for cosmetic improvements to small businesses on Main Street.

City of Gridley, CA (population est. 6,400)

- USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant helped fund a Business Coaching Program that provided assistance to business owners on financing, budgeting, merchandising, marketing, etc.
- Dozens of businesses received assistance via workshops and personal consultations.
- An e-commerce website (right) was designed and populated providing ongoing marketing and exposure to a broader customer base for downtown merchants.



Sweet Home, OR (population est. 8,500)

- The Sweet Home Economic Development Group, Inc. (SHEDG) www.sweethomeoregon.org is a non-profit 501(c) 4 corporation governed by a nine member Board of Directors made up of civic groups, partner organizations, the school district and local businesses.
- SHEDG was formed in 1989 to provide leadership and create an economic development plan. Goals for four major building block categories were established — business development, workforce development, physical infrastructure, and quality of life.
- Sweet Home Active Revitalization Effort (SHARE) is a sub-group of SHEDG that focuses on downtown Sweet Home, OR. SHARE is made up of a Steering Committee, Finance Committee, Planning Committee, and Program and Marketing Committee.
- SHARE's Mission is to (1) create a downtown that is thriving, diverse and aesthetically pleasing; (2) plan and lead efforts to make the business district successful through funding, opportunities, and developing and promoting standards; (3) serve the community, business owners and visitors, advise and support SHEDG, the Chamber and the City.

- In 1992 to raise funds for community projects, SHEDG sponsored the first annual Oregon Jamboree in Sweet Home. The Jamboree is now the Northwest's largest annual country music and camping festival, featuring three days of superstar entertainment for nearly 20,000.
- Through this Jamboree a stable source of revenue is available for economic development and match funds for grants.
- Funds from the Jamboree help support an economic development position that works with the existing business community, encourages tourism and helps recruit businesses to Sweet Home.

Case Study: Selma, North Carolina

Location

- 30 miles east of Raleigh; 115 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean; 75 miles south of Virginia; and 115 miles north of South Carolina
- 1 mile from the nearest interstate highway (I-95)
- Population 6,948 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2008)
- 4.63 square miles

Background

Downtown Selma had become depressed after textile mills closed. Revitalization efforts undertaken in the 1990s were successful and Selma's central business district was doing better.

Using federal, state and local funding sources, the city also renovated a train station to serve two Amtrak lines (New York to Charlotte and New York to Savannah). The objective was to capitalize on tourism dollars from the new and increased traffic. The newly renovated depot opened in 2002.

Challenge

The Amtrak riders were staying at the Depot rather than heading into Selma's downtown. The culprit was a four-block area between the Depot and the downtown that remained neglected and depressed.

Solution

City realized that revitalizing the blighted four-blocks required more than mere façade improvements. Buildings were in need of significant repairs and a strong policy tool was needed to help property owners.

The city did not want to encourage development in one area at the expense of property owners elsewhere in the city. Any program or incentives offered would not use other taxpayers' dollars. City of Selma initiated a tax grant incentive to encourage property owners to improve blighted buildings in the four-block area. Here's how it works:

- Property owners pay their property taxes as usual
- If improvements are made, property owners receive a cash grant of \$0.49 per \$100 of the difference in the tax value before and after improvement.
- The grant is awarded each year for five years.

Resources

Tax grant was established in partnership with and as an extension of neighboring Downtown Smithfield's revitalization program.

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Case Study: Arbuckle, California

Location

- An unincorporated community in rural Colusa County
- 2000 population approximately 2,300 (market population estimated at 5,550)
- Excellent opportunities with location on Interstate 5
- Surrounding land use and primary industry base is agriculture and ag-related

Background

The Arbuckle Revitalization Committee (ARC) was formed by citizens interested in creating and maintaining a vibrant downtown. For years the ARC worked on various projects, accomplishments from 2001 to 2003 include:

- Raised and invested nearly \$50,000 in community projects, downtown renovations and special events (car shows, crab feed, barbeques, Cinco de Mayo celebration flea markets, etc.)
- Developed the Veteran's Memorial Park which serves as the town center for many community activities
- Created a master plan and acquired land for a second downtown park
- Negotiated a land lease from Southern Pacific Railroad beginning their plans to restore and preserve a 125-year old railroad depot

Challenge

The ARC members had become stalled in their revitalization efforts. Long dependent on volunteers and no direct funding from the state or county, the organization needed help to re-energize the members, prioritize activities, and determine the next steps to move projects forward.

Solution

Colusa County assisted Arbuckle with funding through a California Department of Housing and Community Development, Community Development Block Grant to help the group with their revitalization efforts.

Process included multiple community meetings to define projects, interests, opportunities, and priorities. These meetings resulted in Action Teams being established around four priority initiatives on which ARC would concentrate – Public Relations and Promotions, Community Gateway Enhancement, Park and Depot Development, Downtown Beautification.

Results

- Phase I of the first priority project, Downtown Park & Depot Development, has been completed (see photos).
- Work continues on acquiring ownership and revitalizing the Rail Depot next to the park.
- A number of new downtown shops and restaurants have opened.
- New welcome signs and landscaping at the north and south gateways to the city.

Keys to Success

- Each ARC member identified and committed to contacting additional community members who might be interested in becoming involved in one or more of the initiatives, thereby expanding “manpower” and energizing the Committee with new ideas.
- The Action Plan, developed to move the projects forward, was based on the community’s financial and human resources and capacity to execute.

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Arbuckle's Downtown Park in 2003 (top) and today (2009)

Case Study: Downtown Walla Walla, WA

Location

- Southeastern region of Washington; 13 miles north of Oregon border; 180 miles south of Spokane; 260 miles (4-hour drive) southeast of Seattle
- 2008 population estimated at 31,350
- Ag industry include onions and other produce, and a growing wine industry and tasting rooms

Challenge

In the early 1980s, downtown Walla Walla's economy was failing. Shoppers and retailers alike were heading to two new regional malls opened outside the city. Downtown's vacancy rate was nearly 30 percent.

Solution

In 1984 concerned business and property owners organized the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation and adopted the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ to revitalization – design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring. The Foundation, which is 100 percent membership funded, manages special events, advertising campaigns, educational opportunities for downtown businesses, and promotes a low-interest loan program to local businesses.

Timeline of Results

- 1988 – Downtown Walla Walla Redevelopment Plan completed
- 1989 to 1991 – work on the Landscape Improvement District (LID) and streetscape project; city council approved LID, contracts awarded, and construction begins
- 1992 – streetscape improvements were completed and spurred additional activities; the private sector responded by reinvesting in downtown and renovating the Liberty Theater; all of this was a critical component of a business retention effort aimed at keeping Macy's department store downtown
- 2001 – winner of Great American Main Street Award
- 2002 – named Sunset Magazine's Best Main Street in the West
- 2004 – Downtown Revitalization Plan adopted
- 2010 – Potential expansion of LID and streetscape project



Keys to Success

- A primary challenge to forming the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation was overcoming property owners', business owners', and other's resistance to change. The grass roots efforts and perseverance of a few key community leaders helped to build personal relationships and was key to the successes.
- A self-imposed tax supported streetscape and infrastructure improvements.
- Design guidelines are established although have not been adopted as code. "Enforcement" is accomplished by the Foundation publically promoting and acknowledging those who make improvements and follow the guidelines.
- Self-imposed taxes and improvements have helped the community receive Federal funds to make structural improvements to a downtown bridge and collaborate with the Army Corp of Engineers.
- Much of what the Walla Walla Foundation accomplishes is due to the participation and commitment of very active committee members.
 - Design – promotes good maintenance practices and the physical appearance of the commercial district, encourages appropriate new construction, long-term planning, window displays, parking, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, landscaping
 - Economic Restructuring – helps to boost the profitability of the district by: sharpening the competitiveness of existing business owners, recruiting compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to consumers, converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property
 - Promotions – sells a positive image of the commercial district, encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the downtown with retail promotions, advertising, special events, and marketing campaigns implemented by volunteers
 - Organization – provides the leadership to implement the Foundation's work plan and ensure long-term viability of Downtown and the Foundation; builds and sustains a committed membership and volunteer base; long-term funding solutions and short-term fundraising efforts; builds awareness of the Downtown Plan and partnerships with appropriate organizations
 - Retail Merchants Task Force – primary advisers for the downtown businesses including helping to determine sales, marketing and promotion events; the sounding board for all the businesses and organizations; works closely with the promotion committee
 - Property Owners' Task Force – facilitates communication and share information between city, the Foundation, property owners, and businesses; is the main source of information on vacancies and availabilities; shares lease information; gathers and maintains database of all property owners in the downtown area

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CONCLUSION

The Biggs Downtown Action Plan identifies priority projects and simple 'next step' ideas to help get downtown revitalization moving. While redevelopment efforts are still at an early stage, Biggs is fortunate to have a growing number of engaged leaders eager to move the downtown plan forward. The next step is to bring people back together and begin to formalize a public-private structure for getting things done. As the group moves forward, keep in mind a few key principles to small town downtown success:

- ◆ Create Visible Results, Especially Early On
- ◆ Demonstrate and Promote Your Passion For Making Things Happen
- ◆ Encourage Innovative and Creative Approaches
- ◆ Take Incremental Steps and Celebrate As You Go
- ◆ Maintain Public-Private Partnerships and Leadership
- ◆ Reinforce And Reward Volunteer Involvement
- ◆ Stay Focused On Your Vision For Change

With the winning combination of leadership, a positive attitude and having the roadmap in place, Biggs is now better poised to meet its downtown redevelopment challenges and opportunities.

APPENDIX

1. Accomplishments
2. Community Meeting Notes 020910
3. Façade Success Stories
Sandy, UT Façade Program
Program Guidelines
4. Redevelopment Analysis, Veneta, OR
5. Option A. Pro Forma Analysis
Option B Pro Forma Analysis
6. Funding Sources
Overview of Funding Resources
7. Final Design Package 031710
8. CD : Action Plan, Appendices, PowerPoints, Notice of Public Meetings & Outreach