

Downtown Revitalization Plan

Gothenburg, Nebraska



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Acknowledgements

This Downtown revitalization Plan would not have been possible without the feedback and input provided by Gothenburg's citizens and city officials. A special thanks to the many individuals who freely gave their time and creativity in the hopes of building a better community.

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Introduction



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INTRODUCTION

The City of Gothenburg, Nebraska in conjunction with the Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce commissioned this Downtown Revitalization Plan. The Plan was needed due to: 1) further develop a cohesive and agreeable revitalization/redevelopment effort for the core of the downtown area, and 2) a strategy for taking the plan to the Revitalization Plan to Phase II directly to Implementation. Gothenburg is a former member of the Nebraska Main Street Program.

The City of Gothenburg applied for special Community Development Block Grant funds aimed at Downtown Revitalization to fund the development of the Revitalization Plan. The Nebraska Department of Economic Development funded 75% of the total project cost of the planning project in the fall of 2008. In addition to the Planning Grant funds the Nebraska Department of Economic Development also allocated an additional \$250,000.00 to be used for implementation, provided the Planning project was completed on or before December 2, 2008.

The Gothenburg Downtown Revitalization Plan (hereafter referred to as the Revitalization Plan) addresses the physical condition of the structures/buildings within the defined study area, examines the economic conditions via a Market Analysis, and incorporates the opinions of business and building owners. The Revitalization Plan will act as a master plan for future projects and implementation strategies in the prescribed area.



View of Downtown Gothenburg 1900's

Source: casde.unl.edu/history/



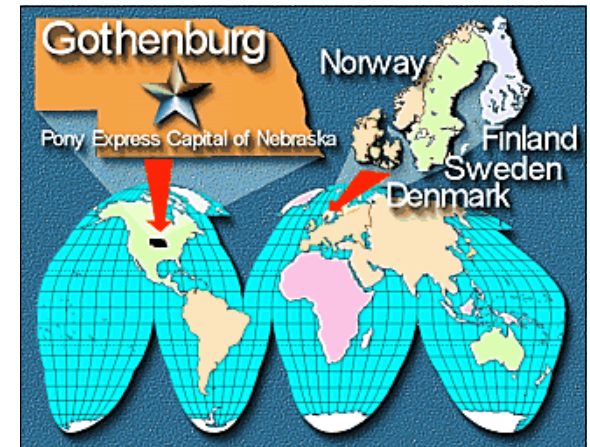
Present day Gothenburg

Source: JEO Consulting Group, Inc 2008

Background

Gothenburg is located in Dawson County, in west-central Nebraska. Located along Interstate 80, Gothenburg is approximately 189 miles west of Lincoln, NE and 295 miles east of Denver, CO. Closer to home, Gothenburg is located approximately 11 miles west of Cozad, and 38 miles east of North Platte. Gothenburg recognizes itself as the Pony Express capital of Lincoln, and along with its namesake in Sweden, is one of only two Gothenburg's (or Göteborg's) in the world!

The following demographic and economic overview is intended to inform recommendations for market development strategies. The overview includes projected populations and the economic capacity of the present (projected) population within the primary, secondary, and tertiary market areas. It considers, as well state and county employment data. Spending power density and consumer spending patterns are also evaluated over the given market areas.



Gothenburg and Göteborg
Source: www.ci.Gothenburg.ne.us

- ◇ Population in the one and five mile radius areas are projected to remain unchanged between 2007 and 2012. The number of households is projected to decrease slightly with slight increases in the average household size. Both trends indicate a stable market inside the one and five mile areas.
- ◇ Population in the 60 mile radius is projected to increase by just over 0.5 percent between 2007 and 2012, with households increasing by 0.86 percent. This also reflects a stable market in the 60 mile area.
- ◇ Median household income for the three market areas are projected to increase from 9.9 to 10.5 percent representing consistent retail sales buying power over time.
- ◇ Dawson County is home to 13 percent of Nebraska's labor force. Just over 37 percent of the county's non-farm employment is in the manufacturing sector; across the state, less than 16 percent of non-farm employment is in the manufacturing sector.
- ◇ Dividing aggregate spending by the square miles in each radius area yields a buying power density, or the number of retail spending dollars per square mile. The density of population and buying power decrease significantly over the larger five and 60 mile radius areas.

- * In the one mile area, the spending power density is \$18.65 million per square mile. Although the median household income compares favorably to the 5 and 60 mile areas, the higher population density (1,044 persons per square mile) raises the spending power density for the one mile area.
 - * In the five mile area, the spending power density is \$0.93 million per square mile. The lower population density (52 persons per square mile) reduces the spending power density.
 - * In the sixty mile area, the spending power density is \$0.23 million per square mile. Although the income level is consistent across the area, low population density (12 persons per square mile) reduces spending power.
- ◇ Although the sixty mile area offers stable growth potential and income levels consistent with the primary and secondary market areas, the dollars available for retail spending are quite modest when compared with the core market area. With the exceptions of girl's and infant's apparel, prescription drugs, medical supplies, smoking products and supplies, reading materials and transportation and auto expenses, consumer spending patterns in the primary and secondary market areas lag national trends.

Gothenburg presents a reasonable location for unique retailers who would draw from both local and regional markets as well as new and expanding retailers who would draw primarily from local markets.



Downtown Gothenburg circa 2008
Source: Wolfeworks

Downtowns in Context

Historically, Downtowns have been the center of economic activity and heart of citizen life in small communities. Downtowns in many small communities have always been everybody's neighborhood, providing a location for citizen engagement, involvement, and interaction. Over time, as new developments and businesses have located near major highway realignments and new interstates, downtowns have seen their share of struggles. What was once a special place in the daily lives of many residents slowly lost its stature. In the 21st Century, many downtowns are evolving and reinventing themselves economically for the third and fourth time. The economic history of typical downtowns goes similar to the following:

- ◊ Downtowns originally evolved as shopkeepers and businessmen established stores and services that were vital to the community and those within a trade area that was approximately a one day travel by horse.
- ◊ The second evolution was when companies like Sears Roebuck, JC Penny and Montgomery Ward came to town in the form of the catalog; the catalog forced merchants to rethink the way they did business in order to compete.
- ◊ The third did not occur in all communities but was when Sears, JC Penny and others actually built stores in these communities and introduced the concept of mass marketing to small downtowns for the first time.
- ◊ The fourth came as the shopping center was developed and Sears and JC Penny moved out of downtown, taking their shoppers with them.
- ◊ Then came Wal-Mart and big-box development, and downtowns were faced with further exodus of shoppers and the redefinition of mass merchandising and the concept of “Low, Low Prices” and this is where downtowns are at present.

Downtown is...

the traditional geographic center of commerce and government which over time has become known for its strong sense of place within the community. The downtown is a place within the community that is identifiable to current and past residents, it is an area that has left an impression on nearly everyone that has encountered the space. The downtown is central to identifying the history of the community.

Economically, communities such as Gothenburg are working hard to discover that magical elixir that will make everything better. Unfortunately, there is no magical elixir; however, with a lot of vision, imagination, hard work, and good planning a major portion of these issues can be overcome. BUT, there is one element that is necessary to tie everything together: financial investment.

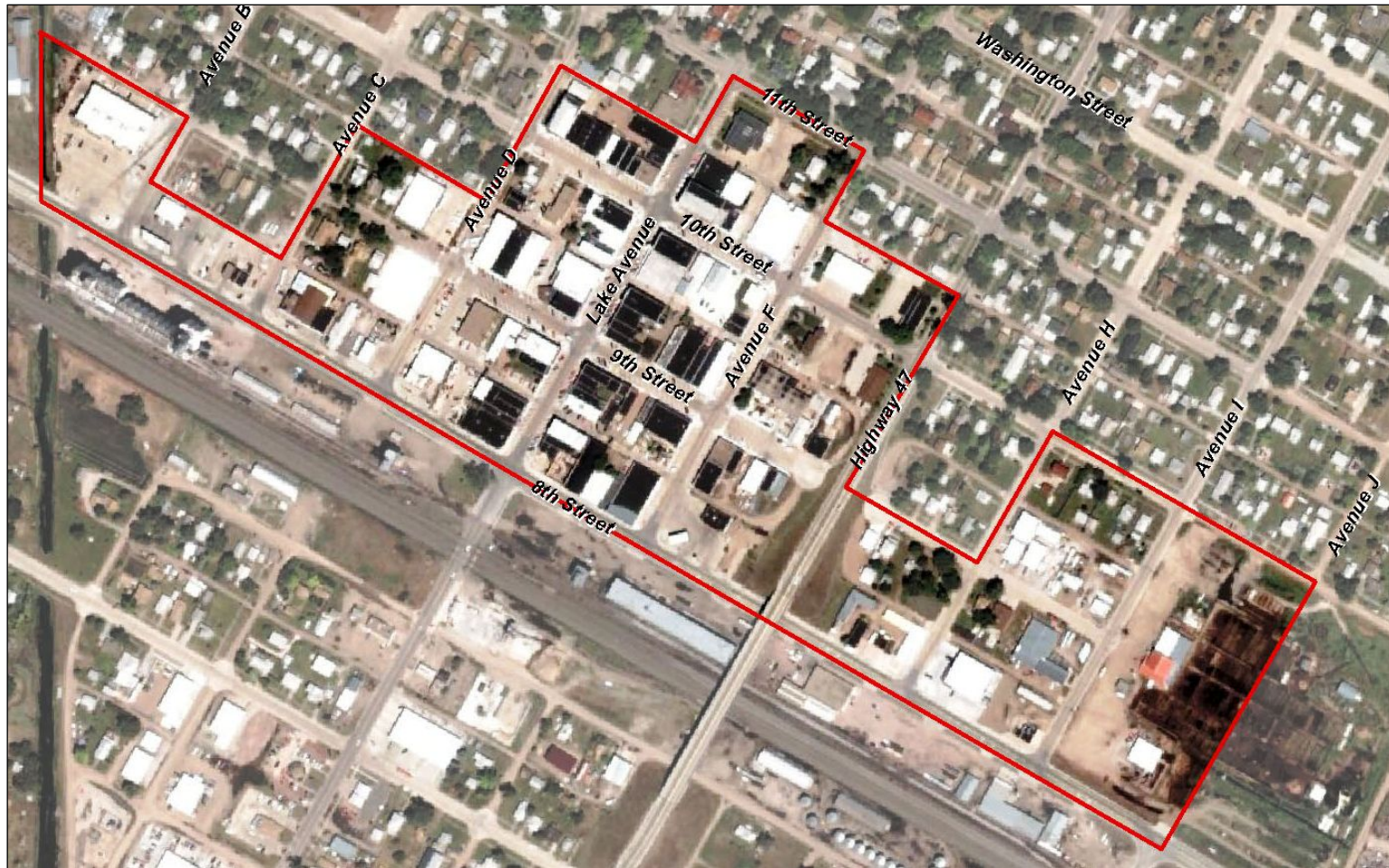
Financial investment can come in the form of local donations, personal resources, and even grant funds. Gothenburg is working towards the achievement of all of these elements, including financial investments, in the form of a share of the additional \$250,000 grant available from NEDED to assist with the implementation of this Plan. Therefore, it is critical that the community develop a reasonable plan and prioritize issues and community preferences to allocate investment funds to the appropriate activities places in order to get the best return on investment.



Downtown Gothenburg circa 2008
Source: Wolfeworks

The Study Area

The Gothenburg Study Area was established based upon the area identified in the Community Development Block Grant application for this planning project. The identified area covers the core downtown area of Gothenburg and also includes some commercial/business activities east of Nebraska Highway 47. The entire area stays north of the Union Pacific Railroad mainline and US Highway 30.



Methodology of the Plan

The Gothenburg Revitalization Plan was developed using a specific methodology, which was based on three distinct Phases. Each Phase identified key outcomes, as identified in the following project outline.

**Vision without Action is merely a Dream.
Action without Vision is just passing time.
Vision with Action can Change the World.**
- Joel Barker

PHASE I Background Research

Data Collection

- ◇ Market analysis data collection and surveys
- ◇ Inventory of available commercial buildings and Documentation of existing land uses within the study area
- ◇ Inventory of properties for the Historic Assessment

Citizen Participation

- ◇ Conduct a focus group meeting with Chamber of Commerce members, individuals involved in Economic Development, and elected and appointed officials from the City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Conduct a survey with downtown businesses and property owners
- ◇ Conduct two city-wide group meetings to determine specific likes and dislikes regarding downtown Gothenburg

PHASE II Plan Development

Study and Analysis

- ◇ Market Analysis, including an analysis of the primary and secondary downtown market areas
- ◇ Building Analysis, including building condition, building age, and existing use on main and upper levels
- ◇ Historic Analysis, including condition and age of historic structures

Project Identification

- ◇ Prioritization of potential hard projects, or those that involve physical improvements, i.e. façade updates, streetscape enhancements, and infrastructure upgrades

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PHASE II
Plan Development
(cont.)

- ◇ Prioritization of potential soft projects, or those that involve non-physical improvements, i.e. economic development programs, job training services, and community awareness and marketing campaigns

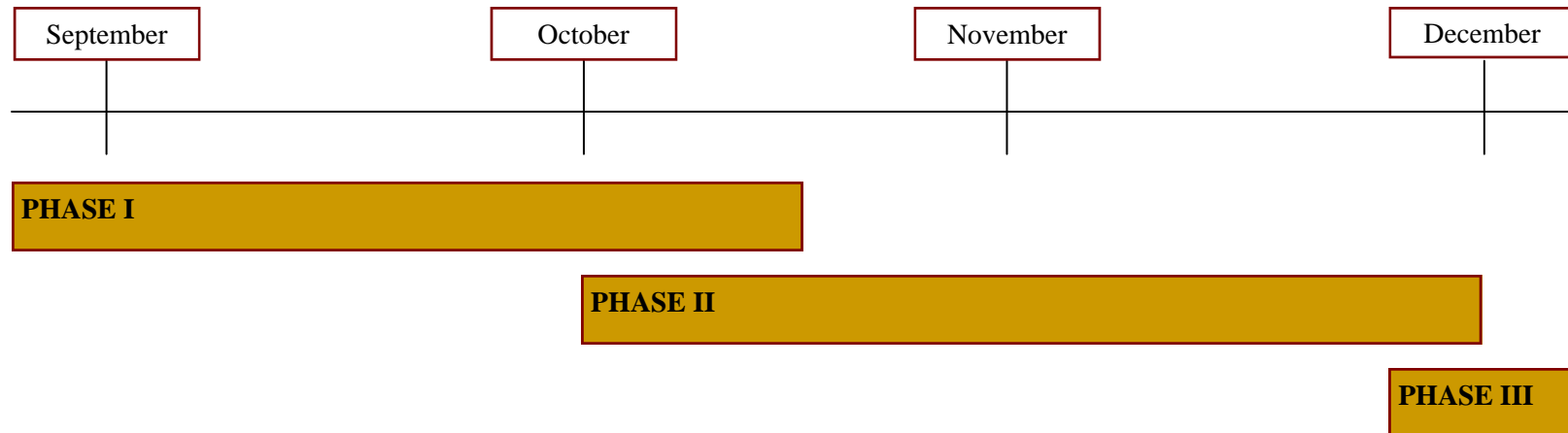
Implementation Plan

- ◇ Identification of alternative funding mechanisms and opportunities to finance planned activities
- ◇ Development of an Action Plan to specify funding preferences, timelines, personnel obligations, and general guidelines for planned activities.

PHASE III
Plan Presentation

Plan Presentation and Adoption

- ◇ Public open house meetings will allow citizens of Gothenburg to review and comment on the final Plan and provide a final round of revisions prior to final presentation.
- ◇ City Council public hearing will provide an opportunity for formal presentation of the Plan to City officials and their adoption of the Plan.



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Public Participation



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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation is paramount to any successful planning effort. Public participation is simply the gathering of opinions from individuals either directly involved in the planning effort or anyone that may have an interest in the issue at hand. Depending upon the complexity of the issue at hand there are numerous ways to collect the thoughts and opinions of the citizens.

Public participation techniques include very individualized formats such as interviews to large community-wide formats like charrettes. The following is listing of several accepted public participation techniques:

- ◇ One-on-one interviews
- ◇ Focus groups for specialized organizations
- ◇ Town Hall meetings
- ◇ Open Houses
- ◇ Survey instruments
- ◇ Charrettes

Gothenburg Public Participation Process

The public participation process for the Gothenburg Downtown Revitalization Plan was designed to maximize input from those most directly impacted; while, accounting for the limited time to develop this plan. Two methods of public input were utilized, an electronic survey and focus groups.

Electronic Survey

In order to collect several levels of information regarding downtown Gothenburg including the businesses and buildings within the study area, JEO devised an electronic survey using SurveyMonkey.com. The survey included 55 questions that included general information about individual businesses; opinions about issues in the downtown area, to what types of spending programs should be undertaken.

Once the survey was developed and finalized, the survey link was distributed to business and building owners within the study area. In addition, hard copies of the survey were handed out to those individuals that would rather answer the survey on paper. The paper copies were then collected and returned to JEO and the answers were entered into the survey database.

The survey was answered by a total of 42 business owners and/or building owners. The survey results have provided a great deal of insight into the downtown Gothenburg businesses and the attitudes toward this part of the community. The tabulated results of the survey can be found in the Appendices of this Plan.

1. The buildings in downtown Gothenburg are in good physical condition
2. The alleys in downtown are in good condition
3. The entrances into downtown are adequate
4. There are numerous empty buildings to move into within downtown Gothenburg

Focus Groups

A key to collecting specific types of information is to work directly with a smaller group of people that have a strong understanding and are passionate about the topic of discussion. These smaller groups are called Focus Groups. Focus groups tend to be personally selected based upon a specific perspective that the individuals bring to the table, as well as providing a sounding board to bounce off ideas and concepts being considered.

There were three Focus Group meetings held on November 3 and 4. The three groups were selected based upon conversations between JEO and City representatives. The three established in Gothenburg were the City Council/City staff; Youth representatives from the High School; and downtown business owners. Each of the focus groups were scheduled for approximately one hour to 1 ½ hours.

City Council/City staff

During the focus group meeting for the City Council/City staff and the downtown business owners, two questions were asked of the groups. The City Council/City staff was asked the following questions:

1. What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?
2. What do you, as a group or individually, see as a critical need in the Downtown Study area?

<i>What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?</i>
Critical need for a downtown restaurant
Need for Youth hangouts
Helping businesses be better businesses
Facades improvements – however, tried for 10 years with Lied Main Street funds to assist with fix-ups
Creative façade program
Leadership development
Business consultants
Business/Entrepreneur program
Education for “how to run a Business”
Businesses closed on Saturdays
Need regular business hours with some businesses
Niche ideas/stores
Lack of availability/merchandise
Some lighter industrial uses in downtown
<i>What do you, as a group or individually, see as a critical need in the Downtown Study area?</i>
<i>- Economic Development activities such business recruitment/retention, business expansion programs</i>
<i>- Physical improvements such building façade improvements, alleys, streets, etc</i>
<i>- A combination of these programs</i>
Low-interest loans
Business development
Business retention
Combination of projects
Use some of the money for low-interest loans and some to fund a grant program

Downtown Businesses

The downtown business owners were asked the following questions:

1. What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?
2. Since NE DED has set aside an additional \$250,000.00 for implementation of this plan, what activities will maximize Gothenburg's return on investment using this \$250,000 as a catalyst?

<i>What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?</i>
Signage/Gateway to downtown Gothenburg/Entry from Highway 30 and Lake Avenue
Accessibility assistance
Physical assistance device for getting up curbs
Growth of new businesses
Entrepreneurship/Investment in town
RV and parking for longer vehicles
Community building – old grocery store
More parking
More retail – clothing
Competition for clothing via internet
Restaurants
Business training/education
\$250,000 is truly a small amount and will need to be used with other capital
Parking is in private ownership
Get people off the Interstate
I-80 is a river of new money
Storefront improvements/Awnings
Challenging to find warehouse space
No move spaces for expanding businesses
<i>Since NE DED has set aside an additional \$250,000.00 for implementation of this plan, what activities will maximize Gothenburg's return on investment using this \$250,000 as a catalyst?</i>
Signage
Façade program
Website marketing
Business transition assistance
New business assistance
More recruitment of different businesses
Community building
More space opportunities
Programs for the youth
Sign program

Youth

The youth were asked to participate since it is these individuals that will leave the community to further their education and then they will be faced with the potential decision of moving on or moving back to Gothenburg. One key to successful long-term economic development is developing strategies that will bring today's youth back to the community sometime in the future. The youth that attended the focus group included four seniors; two juniors; and two sophomores. All eight of the attendees said that they were planning to pursue a post-secondary education.

The youth were asked four questions which were:

1. What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?
2. What do you see as being critical for the future of Gothenburg and the downtown area? How do you see the community and downtown in the future?
3. Your generation uses several means of technology to communicate and purchase different types of merchandise. How would you use this technology, if you were a business owner in Gothenburg? What could be done in Gothenburg to better accommodate the technology of today and tomorrow, when trying to attract new businesses and families, including shoppers?
4. The Nebraska Department of Economic Development has set aside an additional \$250,000.00 for implementation of this plan, what type of projects would help promote Gothenburg? Including better internet, web based marketing, physical improvements, etc?

<i>What do you see as a critical need for Downtown Gothenburg? What are some of the issues that are impacting Downtown Gothenburg?</i>
School system
Opportunities
Positive activities
<i>What do you see as being critical for the future of Gothenburg and the downtown area? How do you see the community and downtown in the future?</i>
Sporting goods store
Clothing store
Downtown WiFi
Eating establishment
<i>Your generation uses several means of technology to communicate and purchase different types of merchandise. How would you use this technology, if you were a business owner in Gothenburg? What could be done in Gothenburg to better accommodate the technology of today and tomorrow, when trying to attract new businesses and families, including shoppers?</i>
Internet marketing
Clothing and sporting goods stores
Clean library
Well kept Orschelins
<i>The Nebraska Department of Economic Development has set aside an additional \$250,000.00 for implementation of this plan, what type of projects would help promote Gothenburg? Including better internet, web based marketing, physical improvements, etc?</i>
Entrances
Community building
WiFi Coffee Shop with evening hours
Trail rides

Electronic Survey Analysis

Information regarding downtown Gothenburg was gathered from business and property owners within the study area through the use of an electronic survey. JEO designed the survey using internet survey builder SurveyMonkey.com. The survey included 55 questions that asked for responses addressing general information about individual businesses, opinions about issues facing the downtown area, and preferences for spending programs that should be undertaken.

Once the survey was developed and finalized, business and building owners within the study area were invited to complete the survey through an internet link. For those who preferred to provide responses in written form, a written survey was also made available. The online survey was available to respondents for approximately two weeks, and individuals who were uncomfortable using the electronic process were given the same amount of time to complete their hard copy survey. Once all surveys were completed, the results of the online survey were tabulated and combined with the results provided on the hard copy surveys. All survey responses were entered into one survey database for compilation and analysis. The survey was answered by a total of 32 business owners and/or building owners. The results of these surveys provide important insight into the attitudes these residents and businesspeople of Gothenburg have toward this part of the community. Following is a summary of those results.

Typical Respondent

The typical respondent who completed the electronic survey had the following characteristics:

- ◊ Was both the business and building owner
- ◊ Has been in business 20 or more years
- ◊ Has been in the same location for 16 years or more
- ◊ Has a business location with between 3,000 and 3,500 square feet
- ◊ Employs three persons
- ◊ Is open between 41 and 50 hours per week; while the majority are not open evenings
- ◊ Utilizes newspaper ads as the most common means of advertising
- ◊ Has seen an increase in sales over the past five years
- ◊ Has experienced sales and expenses that remained relatively similar

- ◇ Rates their three largest impacts on expenses as the cost of fuel, increases in wholesale costs, and competition with larger companies such as Wal-Mart
- ◇ States the three economic conditions having the greatest impact on pricing in recent years has been fuel costs, shipping/transportation costs, and utility costs
- ◇ Believes the communities that are their biggest competitors for patrons are North Platte, Cozad, and Lexington
- ◇ Sees the top three reasons people shop elsewhere are Wal-Mart or other similar discount store, merchandise and/or services not available in Gothenburg, and locations that offer more options
- ◇ Feels the recent increases in fuel costs will make people shop more in Gothenburg

Opinions of Downtown Gothenburg

Within the electronic survey, the respondents were asked a series of questions regarding key issues facing downtown Gothenburg. There were eight specific questions asked for the purpose of determining those items that may need to be addressed in the Revitalization Plan for the downtown. The questions were:

1. Downtown Gothenburg is clean and in good condition
2. The storefronts of the buildings are in good condition
3. The streetscape in downtown Gothenburg is in good condition
4. Parking in downtown Gothenburg is sufficient

The combination of the electronic survey and the focus groups provided an excellent level of input for this revitalization project. This information will be critical to the development of the final Revitalization Plan Strategies and the Implementation Plan.

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Study and Analysis



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STUDY AND ANALYSIS

The Study and Analysis section of this Plan is an analysis of key economic and physical conditions in downtown Gothenburg. The analysis will assist in determining recommendations for the revitalization of the downtown area.

Market Analysis and Key Perceptions

The following economic information is only a small synopsis of the entire Market Study. The entire Market Study is available in the Appendices of this Plan. The market study portion of this plan is organized as follows:

- Executive Summary
- Overview of Demographic and Economic Data
- Industrial Market Opportunities
- Office Market Opportunities
- Residential Market Opportunities
- Retail Market Opportunities

Each of the Market Opportunities sections provides a market overview and specific strategies for sector development.

The data used in this document are derived from a variety of sources including several major brokerage firms, the Nebraska Realtors Association, the Urban Land Institute's publication, *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers*, the City of Gothenburg, Nebraska and Claritas, Inc. Claritas data include estimates of demographics, retail trade potential or "buying power", and actual retail sales and are based on geographies within one, five and sixty mile radii of 10th and Lake Streets.

These geographies represent, for the purposes of this study, primary, secondary and tertiary market areas as shown in the map to the right and defined as follows:

Primary Market Area

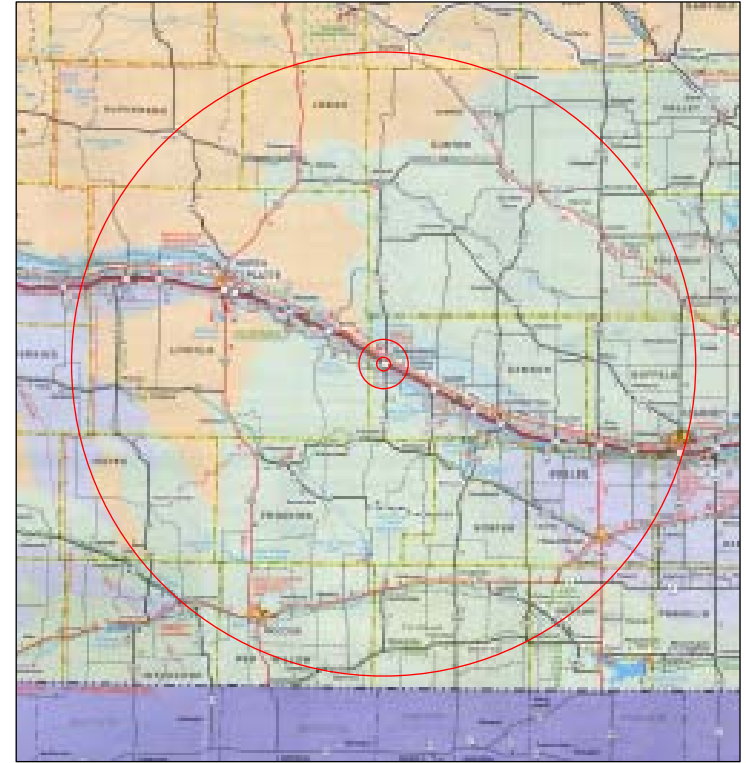
The one mile, or primary, market area extends from Lake Helen on the north, Quinn Field on the east, the I-80 interchange on the south, and almost to the north-south leg of Road 410 on the west. The one mile radius takes in the most heavily developed areas of Gothenburg and is considered representative of the city for retail analysis purposes.

Secondary Market Area

The five mile, secondary market area extends from approximately Willow Island on the east, the Thirty-mile Canal on the south, and Vroman on the west. There is no named landmark indicating the north boundary.

Tertiary Market Area

The sixty mile, tertiary market area extends approximately from Dunning on the north, Kearney on the east, Lebanon on the south and Grafton on the west.



Key Findings

Industrial and Office Market Opportunities

Over the long term, build to suit opportunities could be accommodated and should be pursued in both industrial and office markets. These types of development would further enhance and diversify area employment, reinforce new and existing commercial uses, and support improvements and use of public infrastructure. With respect to the downtown area, Gothenburg could accommodate:

- ◇ Small-scale light industrial or specialty manufacturing operations, providing there are no nuisance issues or conflicts with adjacent land uses
- ◇ Office space for modest real estate, financial or insurance operations, legal or engineering firms, medical or governmental support facilities.

This study also recommends that Gothenburg continue efforts to upgrade existing downtown office and retail space, and suggests the development of a low-interest revolving loan fund for this purpose.

Residential Market Opportunities

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 75.58 percent of the homes in Gothenburg were owner occupied, and 74.34 percent of all homes within the five-mile radius were owner occupied. These figures are well above the national rate of 66.2 percent.

Within Dawson and Gosper counties, median home prices have declined 3.5 percent from July 2006 to July 2008 and total permit activity has slowed. Home sales in Gothenburg are averaging 3.44 units per month in 2008, down from 4.75 units per month in 2007 according to Sally Jochum, President of the Dawson County Board of Realtors. A recent windshield survey indicates that Gothenburg housing stock is of generally good quality, and we are confident that the local market will continue to appeal to consumers over the long term. The July 2008 Housing Market Study for Gothenburg prepared by Hanna:Keelan Associates sees similar market strength and recommends that the City “should strive to develop up to 102 new housing units by 2013.”

This study recommends that the community continue pursuing options to develop a modest amount of housing within the downtown area. Upper floors can be converted into modest housing units, vacant buildings might alternately become live/work space. The development of downtown housing would offer the advantages of :

- ◇ Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure
- ◇ Providing options for younger and older adults to remain in the area
- ◇ Enhancing economic activity
- ◇ Supporting a more vibrant community
- ◇ Reducing development pressure on other types of land uses
- ◇ Encouraging walking and cycling



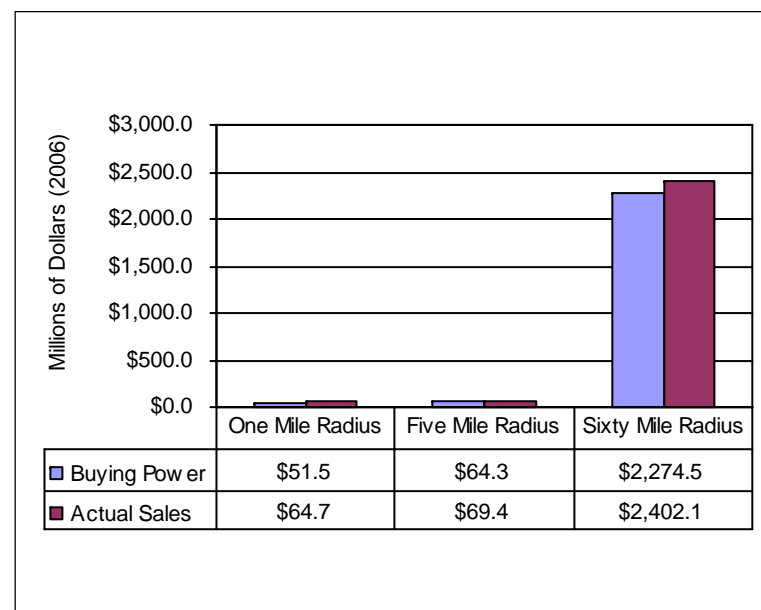
Retail Market Opportunities

Retail development ideally serves unmet community or regional needs; less desirably, it displaces or spreads spending more thinly, ultimately hurting older, existing retail establishments. Comparison of consumer expenditures and retail sales within of thirteen retail industry sectors indicates opportunities for growth. Demand consistently exceeds supply in each of in the following sectors:

- ◇ Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers
- ◇ Furniture and Home Furnishings
- ◇ Electronics & Appliances Stores
- ◇ Health & Personal Care Stores
- ◇ Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores
- ◇ Sporting Goods, Hobby, Books, Music Stores (primary and secondary markets only)
- ◇ General Merchandise
- ◇ Miscellaneous Store Retailers
- ◇ Foodservice & Drinking Places



Analysis of unmet demand in the primary market area indicates that downtown Gothenburg can accommodate between 44,000 and 47,000 square feet of additional retail space.



Architectural Assessment

A windshield survey of the downtown area was conducted on October 21st to assess the existing structures for physical condition, “Building Condition,” their age “Building Age” and potential eligibility for historic designation “Historical Buildings.” Buildings which appeared to be “Vacant” and buildings which appeared to have Vacant Upper Levels were noted however this information needs to be verified with the owners of the individual structures. Within the Study Area there were 132 structures evaluated.

Building Condition

The conditions of the buildings were assessed in the following categories; Excellent, Good, Deteriorating, and Dilapidated. Structure assessed as Excellent had no noticeable flaws. Structures assessed as Good, had easily repaired flaws, such as deteriorating paint, or broken sidewalks. Deteriorating structures were those which had flaws in the building fabricate (as opposed to the building’s finishes) such as deteriorating siding, door or window frames, or leaking roofs. The buildings assessed as Dilapidated had roofs or wall sections which had moved, generally “sagging” to the point that structural repairs will be necessary to bring the walls back to “plumb” and the roofs back to a shape that will drain properly.

Figure 1 shows how each of the 132 buildings were rated during the windshield survey. Of the 132 buildings, 39 were considered to be in “Excellent” condition; 76 buildings were in “Good” condition; 16 buildings were rated as “Deteriorating” ; and only one was considered to be “Dilapidated”. The majority of the “excellent” buildings were located along Lake Avenue between 8th and 11th Streets.



**City of Gothenburg,
Nebraska**

**Building Condition
Figure 1**

Legend

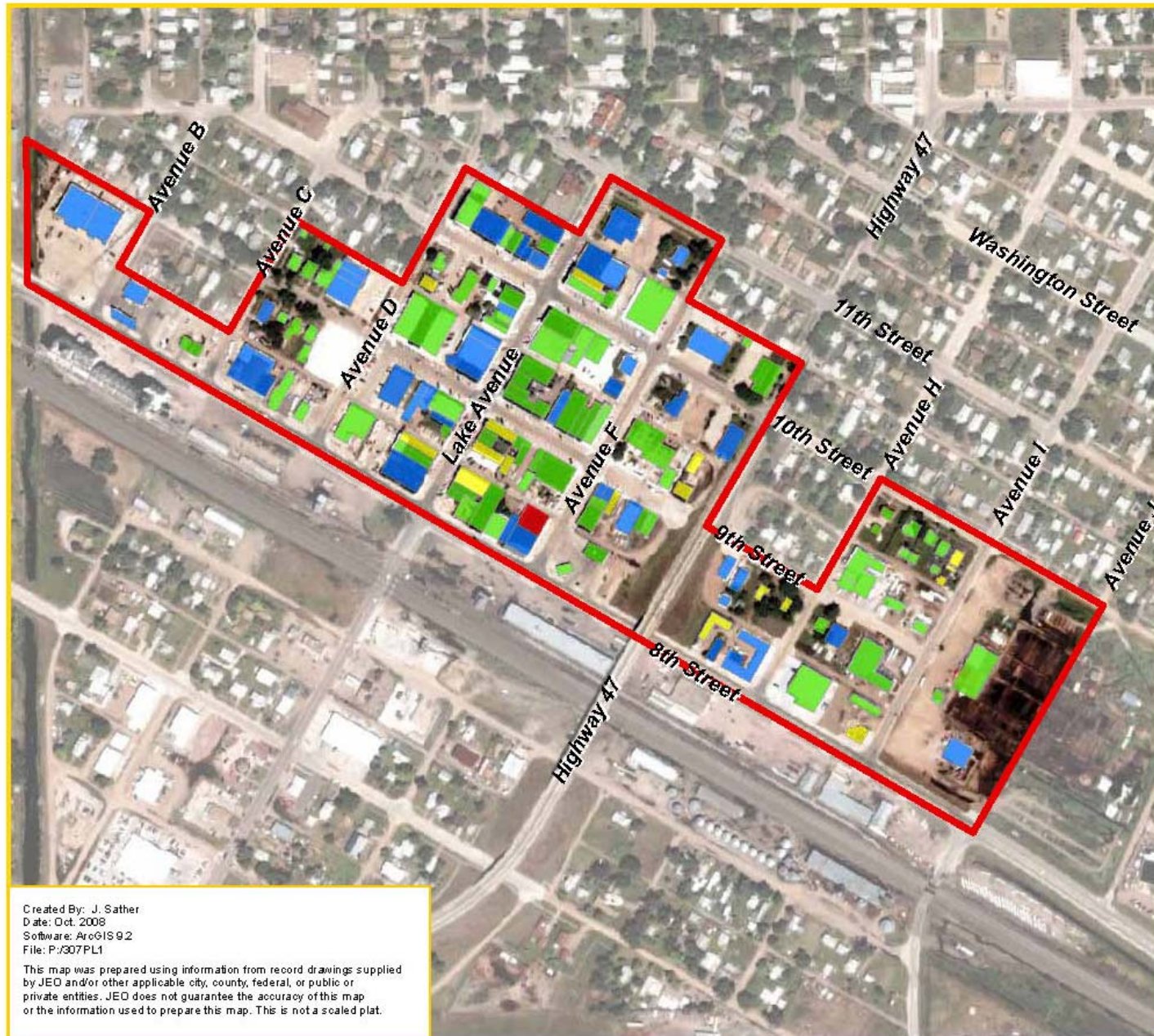
-  Study Area
- Building Condition
-  Excellent
-  Good
-  Deteriorating
-  Dilapidated

0 150 300 600
Scale in Feet



JEO
Consulting Group, Inc.

BERGGREN ARCHITECTS



Created By: J. Sather
Date: Oct. 2008
Software: ArcGIS 9.2
File: P:\307PL1

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Building Age

Where possible the windshield survey identified the age of the buildings in downtown Gothenburg. Where data was not available an estimate was made based upon the architecture characteristics, condition, and neighboring buildings. The buildings were categorized into three age groups, 0 to 25 years; 25 to 50 years; and 50 years and over.

Figure 2 indicates that there were 24 buildings 25 years of age or newer; 19 building between 25 years old and 50 years old; and 89 that were 50 years of age or older. One of the critical reasons for dating the buildings in the study area is to discover buildings that are at least 50 years of age, which is a minimum threshold for being declared historic or contributing to the historic fabric of an area.



Historic Quality

The age of individual buildings was recorded from cornerstones or entablatures whenever possible. Architectural features and/or the style of the structures were guides used to estimate the age of the structures when other evidence was not available. If a structure was estimated to be more than 50 years old, it was further evaluated with regard to its historic integrity. If the structure retained essentially all of its original architectural details, it was assessed as “Contributing” to the Historic Landscape of the Community. Structures which have been altered but appeared to have alterations which were “reversible” were assessed as “Potentially Contributing.” Buildings assessed as non-contributing were usually extremely altered making restoration unfeasible, or had deteriorated to the point the structure were dangerous.

The Study Area contained 132 structures, of which, three structures were identified as “Contributing to the Historical Landscape” and 45 were determined to be a “Building of significant Character—Potentially Contributing to the Historical Landscape”. Therefore, 36% of the structures in Downtown Gothenburg had some level of contributing to the historic landscape of the community. See Figure 3 to see how individual buildings were rated.

**City of Gothenburg,
Nebraska**

Building Age

Figure 2

Legend

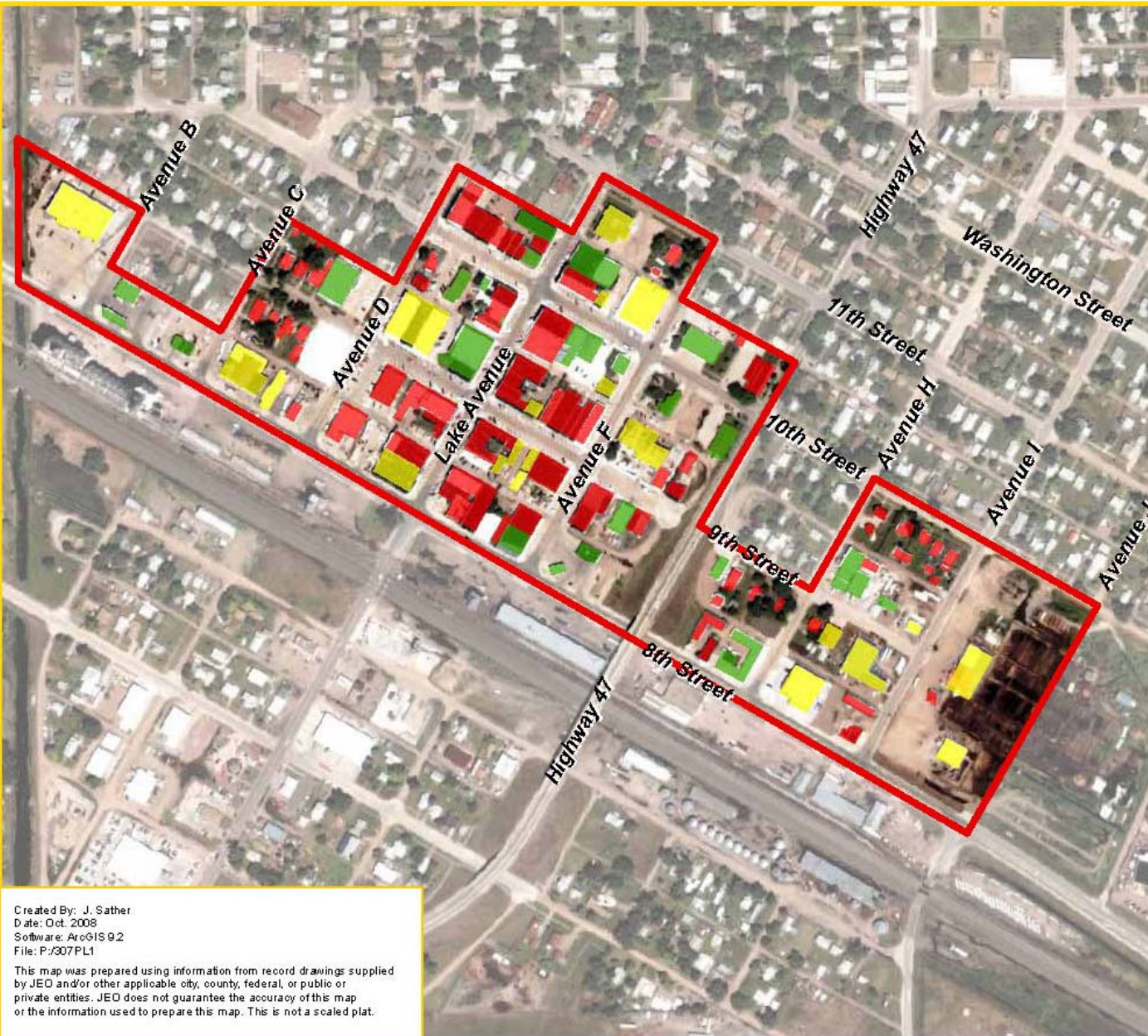
-  Study Area
- Building Age
-  0-25 years
-  25-50 years
-  50 years or older

0 150 300 600
Scale in Feet



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City of Gothenburg, Nebraska


Historical Buildings


Figure 3

Legend

 Study Area

Historical Buildings

 Building Contributes to the Historical Landscape of Gothenburg

 Building of Significant Character, Potentially Contributing to the Historical Landscape

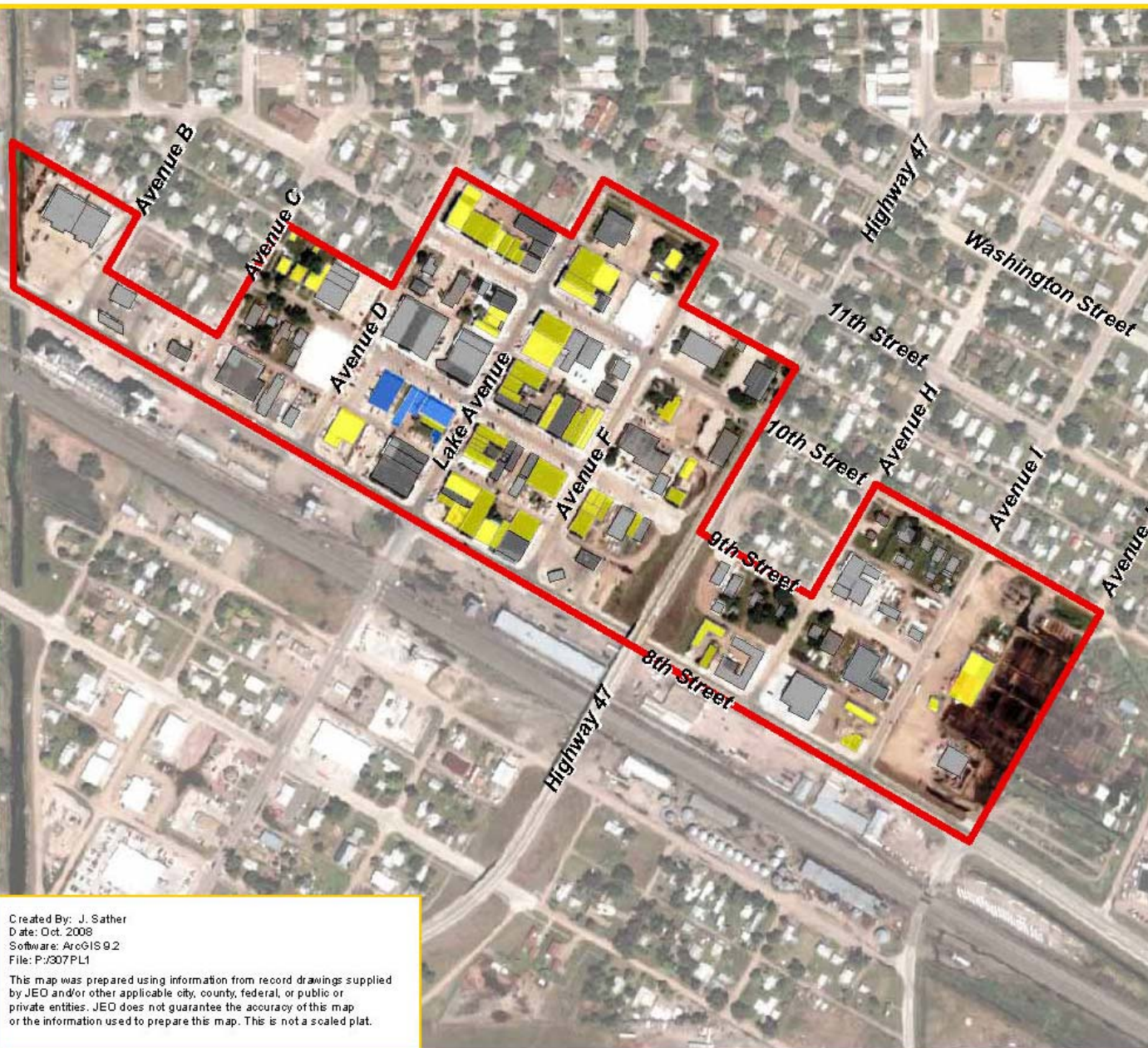
 Building Does Not Contribute to the Historical Landscape

0 150 300 600
Scale in Feet



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Existing Land Use Assessment

During the windshield survey of the downtown area was conducted on October 21st the existing land uses of the buildings was also assessed. The different buildings were listed as one of the following existing land uses. The results of the windshield survey can be seen in Figure 4 of this Plan. The 132 buildings within the study area were found to have the following land use breakdown:

◇ Residential	29 buildings
◇ Commercial Retail	54 buildings
◇ Commercial Office	25 buildings
◇ Public	3 buildings
◇ Quasi-public	1 building
◇ Storage	3 buildings
◇ Vacant	17 buildings

One of the Commercial Retail buildings will soon become a vacant building once Orschelin's relocates to their new buildings along Nebraska Highway 47, south of the downtown area.

Figure 5 indicates the existing land uses for those buildings with upper levels. Based upon the windshield survey there are 13 buildings with upper levels. All 13, at the time of the survey were vacant.

City of Gothenburg, Nebraska

Existing Building Use (Main Level)

Figure 4

Legend

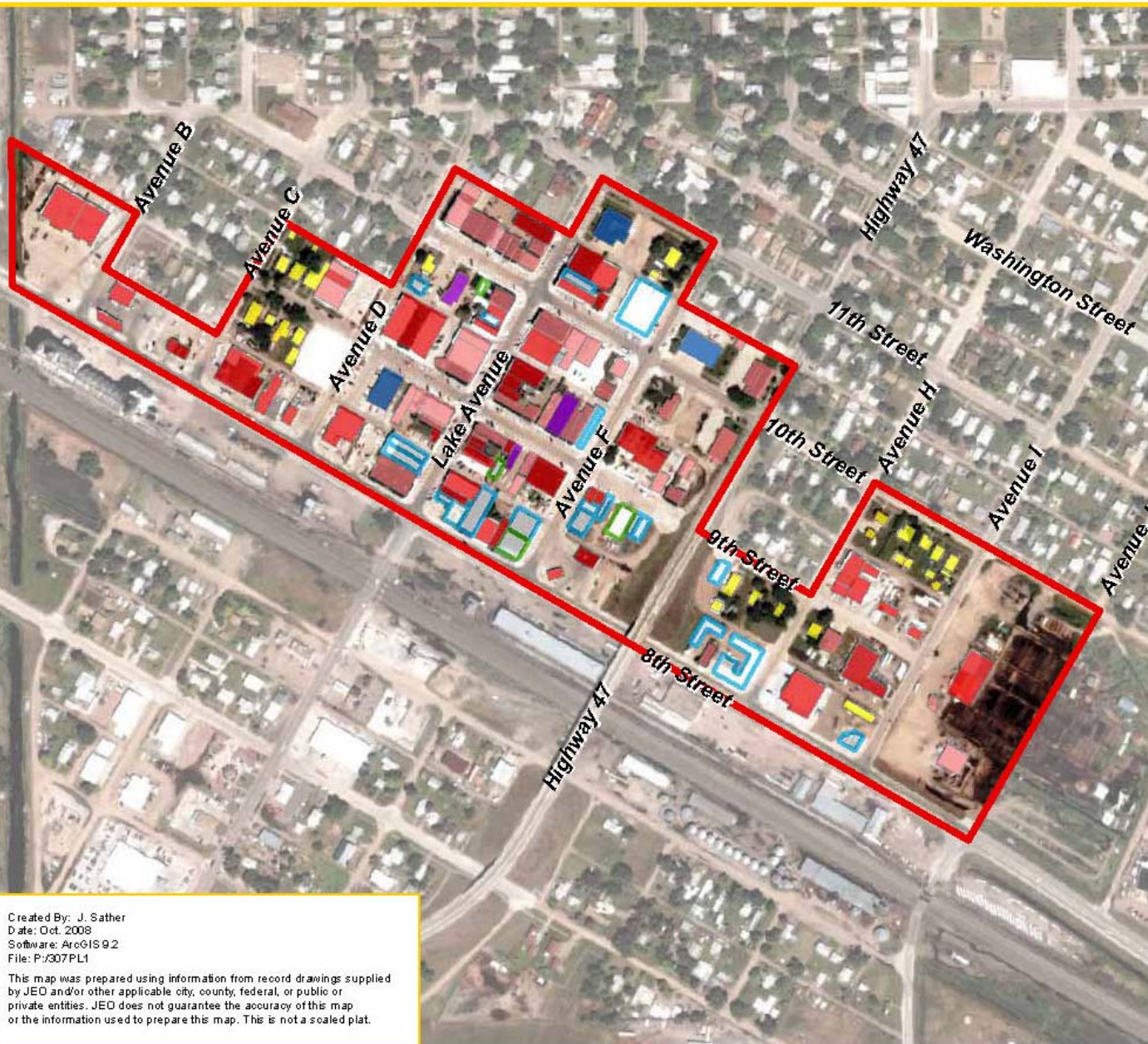
- Study Area
- Existing Building Use**
- Residential
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Office
- Public
- Quasi Public
- Storage
- Vacant

0 150 300 600
Scale in Feet



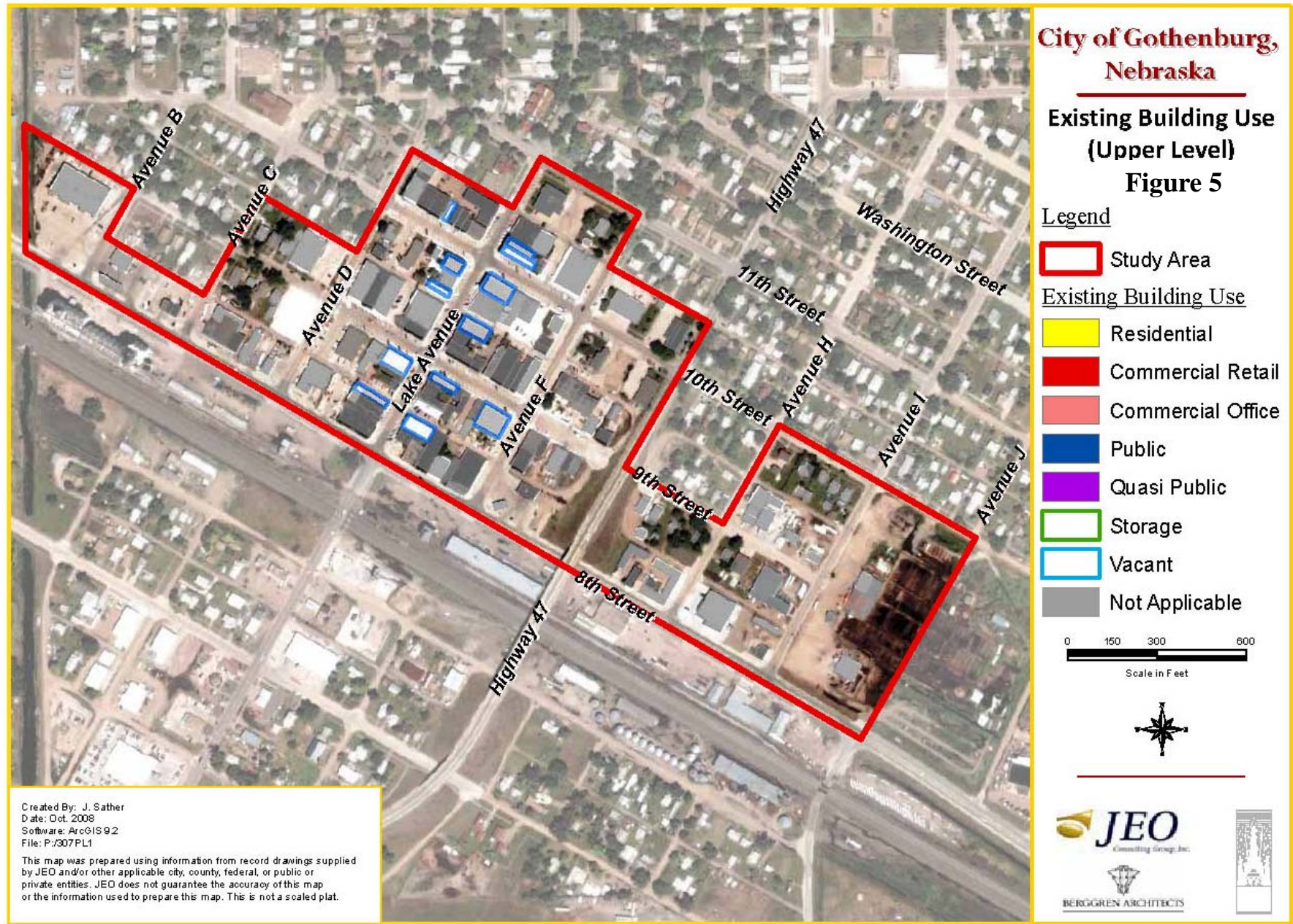
JEO
Consulting Group, Inc.

BERGGREN ARCHITECTS



Created By: J. Sather
Date: Oct. 2008
Software: ArcGIS 9.2
File: P:\307PL1

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Revitalization Plan



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REVITALIZATION PLAN

The key to a successful Revitalization Plan is to marry the Vision with a strong implementation strategy. According to Michael A. Burayidi in the publication **Downtowns: Revitalizing the Centers of Small Urban Communities (2001)**, the strongest Implementation Strategy is one that has two key elements, which include “...an active and well-organized downtown association...” and “secondly, city government needs to be a supportive partner in downtown development activities.” In other words, a successful downtown revitalization effort is a multi-faceted approach requiring multiple partners working in a cooperative unified direction.

The Revitalization Plan is organized in comprehensive manner meaning that projects identified are both physical and more programmatic related items. In addition, these items need to include simple, “sure to occur” projects with high community visibility to projects that are more long term and intensive. It is critical to accomplish those visible projects that are sure successes since success breeds success even if the success starts out as a crawl.

The Revitalization Plan for Gothenburg is organized into three subsections, Physical Projects, Economic Development Projects, and Marketing Projects. Physical Projects will include those items such as façade improvements, sidewalk accessibility. Economic Development Projects include those programs focused on Business Recruitment, Business Expansion/Retention. And Marketing Projects will include those items focused on better promotion of the downtown business district.

Physical Projects

The Physical Projects portion of this Plan lists and discusses projects related to physical cohesiveness of Downtown Gothenburg. In addition this includes physical projects that may allow downtown business owners to open more floor space by warehousing merchandise elsewhere. These include the building facades, signage, and other similar issues. The combined analysis and public participation process identified a number of key Physical issues and projects, these include: Storefront/façade improvements, Signage/Gateway to downtown, Accessibility Assistance, Awning Assistance, and Warehouse Space.

Storefront/Facade Improvements/Historic Preservation

The storefronts and facades of a downtown can tell the story, true or false, of how business is and has been within a community. These storefronts/facades can paint a picture of economic booms and busts. In addition, they are also the element that most typically define the character of the downtown area. When working with the typical storefront of older downtowns, it is critical to respect the original character and architectural characteristics of the building. The 1940's through the 1970's saw too many storefronts being covered up with newer "industrial mass produced" materials. A lot of times these makeovers were also hiding potential problems and structure in need of repair. The ideal approach to dealing with storefronts and facades is to be true to the original character when possible; however, beware that there may be some hidden expenses once the project is undertaken. This project will require a number of tasks to be completed and will involve a number of partners to see the project to completion. One critical element to making this successful will to hire one architect to work with all the building owners.

Tasks

- ◇ Establish a low-interest revolving loan fund for storefront improvements
- ◇ Identify potential support for projects
- ◇ Hire an architect and/or contractor that is EXPERIENCED in restoring older storefronts and has an understanding of potential problems that may arise
- ◇ Develop drawing and bid documents, if necessary
- ◇ Construct improvements

Participants

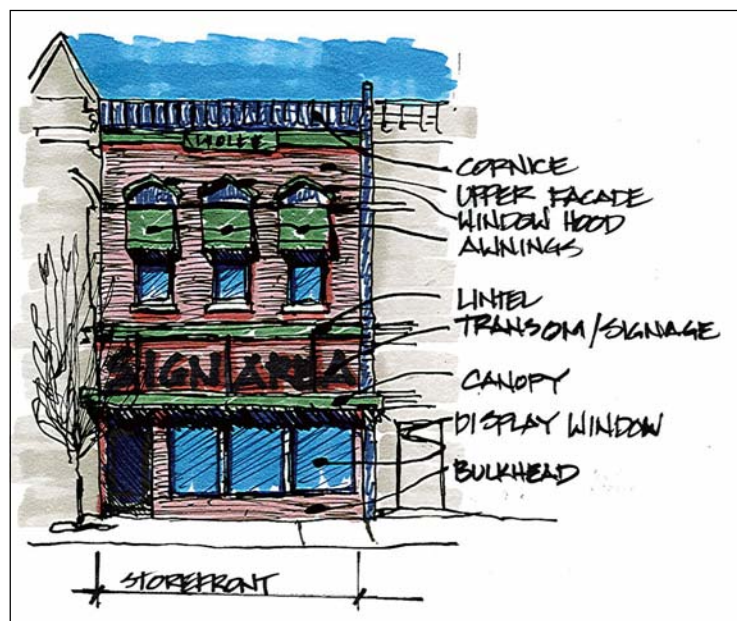
- ◇ Local business and property owners
- ◇ Qualified Architect and/or Contractor
- ◇ Legal Counsel
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce



These photo show buildings that have been modified. It appears that some restoration work has been started.



As mentioned previously, any future restoration efforts need to account for how the original building appeared, when cost effective. When a storefront/ façade is rehabilitated it can be costly to bring the original character back; however, if specific items regarding the US Tax Code, as well as other State defined items regarding the building and ownership, an individual could be in line for a number of tax incentives at the State and Federal level, which could aid in cash flow for completing the project in an appropriate manner. In addition to complying with the appropriate architectural characteristics and design, the renovation needs to closely follow the anatomy of older buildings and be sensitive to the visual elements. These elements are what provides the building with the proper proportions and character.



Typical Anatomy of an older Storefront/Facade

On the right is an example of a storefront/façade restoration - taking into account the historic characteristics of the building.



Signage Directing People to Downtown

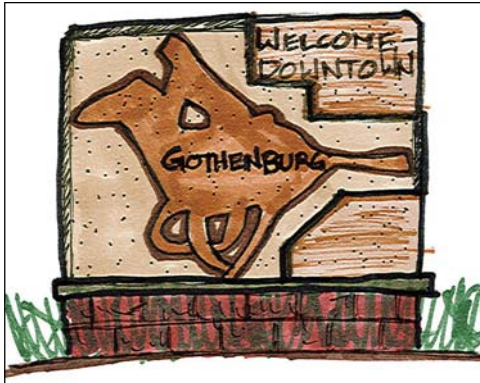
With nearly 16,000 vehicles per day passing by the Gothenburg exit along I-80 and approximately 4,300 of these exiting, there is a real opportunity to draw additional visitors to Gothenburg's downtown. The key to this is to develop a sign or system of signs to direct people to downtown. This project can be undertaken by a smaller group of people but will likely require professional assistance in creating and installing the signage.

Tasks

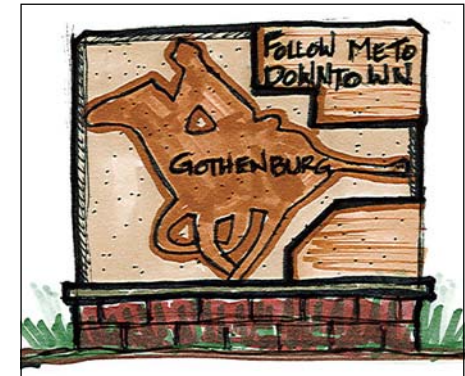
- ◇ Identify funding mechanism
- ◇ Develop design (s)
- ◇ Hire a contractor to build sign (s) and install

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners/Chamber
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Contractor



The red stars indicate approximately where a sign for downtown should be located. The sign should be located so to attract visitors attention while they are stopping at the businesses along I-80 or passing through on US Highway 30.



Accessibility Assistance

The Accessibility Assistance project is focused on two elements storefront entryway and sidewalk accessibility. One of the most difficult things for a business owner and shopper with disabilities is to deal with is an entry point into a business which is not accessible. Creating a program that will allow for business entrances to become accessible will aid those businesses which have not been able to do so in the past.

The assistance program for business entryways should be worked in a manner that is a combination of low-interest loans and grants to individual businesses. Ideally, the grant portion of the program would go to businesses needing extreme improvements to meet accessibility guidelines; however, the grant program would only be intended to cover a portion of the necessary work with a low-interest loan covering other portions of the modifications. With both programs there will need to be at least a 50% contribution by the business/building owner.

The sidewalk accessibility portion of this project will be supported through public funding sources. There was a discussion regarding the lack of support railings along portions of the sidewalk downtown for persons to grasp while stepping up from the parking areas onto the sidewalk.

Tasks

- ◇ Identify specific buildings that are in need of modification
- ◇ Identify interested participants
- ◇ Develop reconstruction plans for buildings
- ◇ Hire a contractor to work on the different projects

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners/Chamber
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Architect
- ◇ Contractor

Awning Assistance Program

The Awning Assistance Program is one that would assist building and business owners with partial funding to replace or add awnings to their building. This is a beautification project for the buildings and will enhance the property but is not critical to the structural integrity of the building. It is suggested that this project be funded as a low-interest loan program. This project will assist in further enhancement of the downtown.

Tasks

- ◇ Identify funding mechanism
- ◇ Identify interested parties
- ◇ Develop design alternative that meet the design of the existing
- ◇ Hire a contractor to build awning(s) and install

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners/Chamber
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Architect, if necessary
- ◇ Contractor

Examples of the appropriate use of awnings on older storefronts:



Warehouse Space

During the Focus Group meetings, a couple of business owners mention the need for more floor/display space within their buildings. One comment offered was if they could find warehouse space within the community to store their extra inventory, they could have more floor/display space. As an economic development activity, similar to a business incubator, options should be investigated regarding the potential of a “community” warehouse for business in need of storage space. The space would need to be security controlled and still available to all businesses making use of the facility. This option would allow a number of buildings to store inventory while sharing costs with other business owners.

Tasks

- ◇ Identify potential businesses in need of this project
- ◇ Identify potential existing buildings, if none are available identify potential sites and options for new construction
- ◇ Hire an architect/engineer
- ◇ Hire a contractor

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners/Chamber/
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Architect/engineer
- ◇ Contractor
- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ Dawson County Development Corporation

Economic Development Projects

The Economic Development portion of this Plan lists and discusses projects related to assisting existing businesses realize more sales and profitability; while recruiting new businesses to fill in economic gaps in the commercial sectors. The combined analysis, especially from the Market Analysis completed by Wolfeworks, and public participation process identified a number of key Economic Development related issues and projects, these include:

- ◇ Recruit new businesses that will fill gaps in the economic needs of the community
- ◇ Develop a Business Incubator with smaller spaces for upstart businesses
- ◇ Educational programs for development of a Business Succession Plan
- ◇ Locally sponsored educational programs for improving ones business
- ◇ Enhance existing business retention programs
- ◇ Create a Leadership Development program

The information and economic development approaches are offered as examples of strategies that can strengthen the Gothenburg economy. It is necessary to note that the community through the Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce, and/or the Dawson County Development Corporation may be working with these types of strategies, in that case, the inclusion in this plan is merely to reaffirm and, if needed, over emphasize the need and importance of the programs.

Recruit new businesses that will fill gaps in the economic needs of the community

The Market Analysis completed by Wolfeworks indicated a number of areas where there were potential retail gaps within Gothenburg, including:

- ◇ Food Service and Drinking Places
- ◇ Miscellaneous Store Retailer
- ◇ Sporting Goods, Hobby, Books, Music Store
- ◇ Clothing Stores
- ◇ Health and personal Care Stores
- ◇ Food and Beverage Stores
- ◇ Electronics and Appliance Stores

When looking for new and expanded economic opportunities, these are commercial areas that need to be focused upon. However, this focus can take two forms 1) recruitment of new businesses and business owners into Gothenburg, or 2) work with existing business owners to expand their retail operations to accommodate some of these retail areas. The latter is critical in order to also protect the turf of existing businesses and business owners so they are not driven out of business by someone who may not have nearly as much invested in the community.

Tasks

- ◇ Develop strategies for businesses to recruit
- ◇ Develop strategies for business to expand into gap areas

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Dawson County Area Development Corporation
- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ City of Gothenburg

Develop a Business Incubator with smaller spaces for upstart businesses

Through discussions with the different Focus Groups, the need for opportunities for new businesses to establish themselves, more options for space, and business assistance. One key means to accomplish this task is to take a larger space and create a Business Incubator. Simply defined a Business Incubator is a location where several businesses, similar or not, can lease space for their office, display and sales floor; while sharing essential operations as receptionist, copy machines, and other similar items needed to operate a business. A business incubator allows a business owners to lease only the space needed, allows them to potential grow larger in the incubator (at some point the business is too big and needs to move to their own space); while keeping overhead costs down.

Business incubators are typically owned and operated by non-profits within the community. The non-profit status also allows the overhead to be minimized. There are numerous models of business incubators across the United States that excellent to emulate.

Tasks

- ◇ Locate potential businesses
- ◇ Locate potential locations for the incubator
- ◇ Establish the incubator from a legal aspect
- ◇ Establish the incubator (staff, equipment, etc)

Participants

- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ Local businesses and property owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Dawson County Area Development Corporation
- ◇ City of Gothenburg

Educational programs for development of a Business Succession Plan

Sustaining established family-owned businesses into the next generation is an important issue for rural Nebraska. Many businesses throughout Nebraska are family-owned, but statistics clearly show that few survive beyond the retirement of the current owner. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, only 30% of all family businesses succeed into the second generation, and of these, only 15% survive into the third generation. These alarming facts, combined with the realization that many new businesses fail within the first five years, demonstrate that losing established small businesses can severely impact economic stability.

Economic Development professionals throughout rural Nebraska have spent the past several years listening to small business-owners, community leaders, economic developers and young people talk about this issue of business succession. Several small town leaders have expressed concern about the survival or continuity of businesses considered essential to the community (such as a hardware store, auto repair shop, or restaurant) when the current owner retires. Given the fact that the majority of business-owners are 55 years and over, the immediacy of this angst cannot be overstated.

No one plans to fail, they just fail to plan. Even though this old adage of yesteryear attests to the importance of “thinking ahead,” national statistics indicate that a significant number of family- business owners are aging and do not have an exit strategy in place. For some, the thought of giving up ownership and control of a business they have built over many years of hard work is too difficult to contemplate. Others are under the misconception that someone will appear at the door ready, willing, and able to offer a fair price for the company when they want and/or need to sell their business. There are still others who are forced into selling/transferring their family-owned business because of circumstances beyond their control (e.g., health issues, age, death, bankruptcy). In any one of these situations, it is clear that transition will come.

Business succession planning is important because it helps retain businesses that, by default, may have otherwise closed due to retirement, or possibly be sold and relocated to another community. According to business succession planning experts, the ramifications of a poorly planned sale of a business can be multi-faceted and detrimental. In the event the business transition is not well managed, it can fail due to change in ownership or leadership. Purchase arrangements can create a large tax burden for the buyer, seller, or both; and if done poorly, the impact on the entire community can be emotionally and economically catastrophic. National statistics show that once an existing business closes, it is very difficult to reopen.

Tasks

- ◇ Locate potential businesses
- ◇ Develop a schedule for providing training
- ◇ Work with qualified professionals in this topic area to conduct educational sessions

Participants

- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ Local business owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Dawson County Area Development Corporation

Entrepreneurial Development—Locally sponsored educational programs for improving ones business

Community leaders in economic development are moving away from chasing major retail companies or large industrial plants (the “Silver Bullet” approach) towards a more comprehensive and sustainable approach of fostering entrepreneurial development. Unlike traditional economic development strategies that typically recruit existing businesses from other places, entrepreneurial development leads to the formation of new firms that creates local jobs, raising local incomes and adding to the overall wealth of the community.

Entrepreneurs are at the heart of the American economy because they drive innovation. Small businesses are established on the premise that they can do a better job of creating new products and services, change the competitiveness of the market, institute new and dynamic ways of doing business, reduce economic leakages within the local economy and connect the community to the larger global market. Creating value through innovation is a common theme that penetrates nearly every accepted definition of entrepreneurship.

Recent studies have shown that entrepreneurial development is most effective when it is nurtured in communities that have better access to services and larger markets found in and around metropolitan areas. In fact, during the past decade, entrepreneur growth in rural counties next to large metros averaged 3.4 percent, compared with 2.9 percent in rural counties next to smaller metro areas, and 2.8 percent in rural counties not adjacent to a metro area.

In this light, Gothenburg must recognize that business success is largely determined by the entrepreneur. Consequently, Gothenburg should pursue economic development programs that focus on the needs of small businesses owners and improving the skills of local entrepreneurs. These programs should include a entrepreneurial support organization, or ESO. This collaboration of government, business-owners and nonprofit organizations will provide an effective forum for immediate response to small business issues and concerns.

Such a consortium of resource providers will improve a small business concern’s chances of success, by building an entrepreneurial support system that nurtures entrepreneurs as they develop business ideas, create viable enterprises and grow sustainable businesses within the local economy.

At the onset, it is suggested that the ESO commission an Entrepreneurial Strategic Planning Process to create support strategies that intentionally focus on the specific needs of small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs.

The process will provide useful feedback and input for developing intervention strategies that will help entrepreneurs overcome the obstacles that face these risk-takers. This includes, but is not limited to, establishing entrepreneurial networks, access to capital, access to markets and general technical assistance.

Tasks

- ◇ Locate interested business owners
- ◇ Develop the ESO program
- ◇ Identify other economic development training programs to offer local business owners and entrepreneurs
- ◇ Offer and schedule on-going training for the business owners in downtown

Participants

- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ Local business owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Dawson County Area Development Corporation

Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) - Enhance existing business retention programs

Rural economic developers are finding success in “keeping what they have” (business retention/expansion) and “building the base” by fostering entrepreneurial development, in lieu of costly incentive packages to attract new businesses from outside the area. BR&E is a strategy that recognizes the importance of existing businesses. It grew out of the concern that too much emphasis in rural economic development was placed on attracting new firms, often at the expense of ignoring existing businesses and their issues, despite their importance to the local economy. Research has shown that upwards of 80 percent of all new jobs are created by existing firms rather than through the attraction of new businesses to the community. Furthermore, almost 90 percent of new development and investment comes from the local business already operating in the community. In a 1996 article for the *Economic Development Review*, Melissa Maples wrote, “*Recruitment as an economic development activity has its limitations. Many times, community leaders and the media are caught up in the excitement of luring new companies to their area, only to realize that they are replacing companies who have been 'lured' someplace else.*” Clearly, it is in the best interest of Gothenburg to make every effort to retain its existing businesses.

Gothenburg's downtown revitalization strategy should focus on working proactively with existing businesses to help them grow, remain in the community, and be contributing members to the greater Gothenburg economy, while diversifying its commercial base by promoting entrepreneurial development.

BR&E is a strategy that recognizes the importance of existing businesses. Its primary focus is to help existing businesses succeed by providing education and coordinating access to a variety of financial, marketing, and management resources. But, communication is at the heart of this strategy. Only through constant and ongoing communication can Gothenburg officials get a better understand of the physical and financial needs of existing businesses, design and sponsor programs to help them improve their competitive advantage in the local and global marketplace; while growing profits when the opportunity arises.

Gothenburg officials should partner with technical resource providers to offer ongoing informational seminars on issues of utmost importance to local businesses. Consideration should be given to seminars that deal with: cash flow analysis, fostering new markets for local goods and services, financial resources for working capital, physical expansion or new product development, inventory control, management techniques consultation, personnel policies, product pricing strategies, profit and loss assessments, specialized training to meet unique workplace needs and work force recruitment and retention.

Tasks

- ◊ Locate interested business owners
- ◊ Develop a set of educational programs for existing businesses
- ◊ Identify other economic development training programs to offer local business owners
- ◊ Offer and schedule on-going training for the business owners in downtown

Participants

- ◊ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◊ Local business owners
- ◊ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◊ City of Gothenburg
- ◊ Dawson County Area Development Corporation
- ◊

Leadership Development

Rural America is in the midst of the most far-reaching transformation in our history. Globalization and other forces are fundamentally altering the economic landscape and erasing many traditional sources of income and employment. In such a dynamic and uncertain environment, effective civic leadership is essential to help positively shape a community's future.

People are not the community's most important asset. The right people are. Today more than ever, communities need passionate leaders; leaders who are willing to commit time and energy into guiding others toward a common vision, showing the way by example, and creating an environment in which other team members feel actively involved in the entire process. Leadership inspires appropriate conduct beyond what is expectable; it contributes to success on the margins – it is value added.

Effective leaders build their models on the sum of their experiences, knowledge and deeds as well as their mistakes. This truth is at the core of learning how to be a winner instead of a survivor. Effective leaders go through a never ending development process that includes education, self study, training, experience and coaching and mentoring from one or several individuals that have a very positive influence on their personal development. Clearly, it is in the best interest of Gothenburg to nurturing the skills of tomorrow's community leaders. All people are not born with the same potential to lead, but effective leadership can be developed. Effective leadership development programs must take place in the community and be grounded in the knowledge of local condition; it's experiential and action based.

Tasks

- ◇ Locate interested business owners
- ◇ Develop a set of educational programs
- ◇ Identify other leadership development training programs to offer local business owners
- ◇ Offer and schedule on-going training for the business owners in downtown

Participants

- ◇ Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- ◇ Local business owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ City of Gothenburg
- ◇ Dawson County Area Development Corporation

Progress towards leadership development can be made through Leadership Development Seminars, often sponsored by local civic organizations. These seminars seek to enhance the leadership skills of citizens living and working within the community to enable them to develop and advance their civic building agenda. By participating in leadership programs, residents can:

- ◇ familiarize themselves with the Gothenburg community, and the issues, opportunities and challenges facing the area
- ◇ Meet and interact with current community leaders and expert
- ◇ Build strong business and personal networks
- ◇ Train in communication and leadership/management styles through group interaction and a structured community project
- ◇ Expose participants to community-building options, including volunteer and service opportunities

Gothenburg must recognize that, with enhanced skills, knowledge and exposure to resources and assets, individual citizens can drive sustainable neighborhood revitalization efforts and create social change.



Part of the “Home Page” from Licorice International located in Lincoln, Nebraska

Marketing Projects

The Marketing portion of this Plan lists and discusses projects related to better promotion of existing businesses and the downtown area in general. These includes the use of media, internet, signage, and other steps. The combined analysis and public participation process identified a number of key Marketing related issues and projects, these include:

- ◊ Signage directing people to Downtown (discussed in the Physical Projects Section)
- ◊ On-line shopping/Web based promotions
- ◊ Analyzing window displays and in-store merchandising
- ◊ Develop consistent hours of operation for the businesses in Downtown

On-line shopping/Web based promotions

On-line promotion of a business is an excellent means to broaden ones market area. However, cautions needs to be taken with this approach for a couple of reasons, 1) Be prepared to fill orders even if an unexpected quality is requested; and 2) Some businesses carrying national merchandise such as sporting goods may be prohibited by contractual purposes from advertising and selling in this manner. However, if this is a possibility, the internet market can dramatically change ones merchandising and trade area from local to national to global in some cases. Additional caution needs to be observed when undertaking this approach, hire a professional to develop the site, make the site as attractive as possible, make it easy to navigate, and keep it up-to-date.

Tasks

- ◊ Identify what items to sell
- ◊ Hire a professional web designer
- ◊ Continue to update site
- ◊ Maintain inventory to fulfill orders

Participants

- ◊ Local business and property owners
- ◊ Web Designers

Analyzing window displays and in-store merchandising

A major key to successful merchandising is knowing how to display the products for sale in a way that catches the buyers eye, is easy to find, allows for quick add-on sales (paint brushes next to paint cans), and the means of merchandising needs to be attractive and neat. One of the more difficult aspects of being a local business persons is that the business owner needs to not only know the merchandise and products they are selling, but they also need to know how to display the items in a way that makes sense; the days of the old “general store” where merchandise was stacked wherever are gone, if people cannot see and find it quickly they will move on. Most small town business owners work hard to accomplish both tasks successfully, but if one of the two is sacrificed, it is the merchandising and display side of the coin.

The most successful and profitable small town business can always to become more successful and profitable and one of the easiest things that can be done is becoming more educated on displaying merchandising. This includes the shelves and racks inside the store as well as the window displays. Fortunately for local business owners there are individuals who make have the know-how and understanding of merchandising in a manner that will entice shoppers to shop in these local stores. If a business is associated with a national distributor like a “True-Value” or “Ace” on the hardware side or any number of pharmacy wholesalers, then there may be some level of assistance. Otherwise there are actual consultants that can come to the community for a fee, examine existing businesses, and make recommendations for improving the display of merchandise.

Tasks

- ◇ Identify any potential businesses that are interested
- ◇ Contact a Consultant

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Consultant

Develop consistent hours of operation for the businesses in Downtown

One of the common complaints heard about the downtown businesses in smaller communities is the lack of available hours to shop local businesses. This is true of people working outside the community and those working inside the community. This is one of the hardest issues to resolve as a local business owner for a number of reasons:

- ◇ Business owners have families as well
- ◇ The number of people who come in after 5:00 pm do not justify the cost of keeping the doors open
- ◇ Local business owners are already working 50, 60, and even 70 hours a week

All of these are very true but the lack of accessibility always seems to come up when discussing downtowns in smaller communities.

The approach to this Promotional item is to develop a strategy to addresses the concerns of local business owners and the shoppers in the community. In addition, the strategy is simple; working with the Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce and the local business owners, especially those that supply merchandise and personal services need to develop a core set of hours that these businesses will be open Monday through Friday and any special hours on weekends and evenings, as well as seasonal hours during the winter holidays. These core hours need to make businesses available until 5:30 or 6:00 pm. Special evening hours could be until 7:30 or 8:00 pm. These evening hours do not need to match those of the larger cities but they do need to provide some additional convenience to the residents of the community. Initially, the sales may not meet the costs of staying open longer; however, the more people become aware of the consistent hours, they will likely take advantage of them.

Tasks

- ◇ Meeting between Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce and business owners
- ◇ Establish core hours of operation
- ◇ Publish, more than once, the new core hours
- ◇ Advertise new hours throughout the community

Participants

- ◇ Local business and property owners
- ◇ Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce

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Funding Resources



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FUNDING RESOURCES

While developing and implementing a revitalization plan is full of challenges, finding the necessary resources to implement the plan can be, literally, a taxing process.

Resources for revitalization are available from many sources. For instance, cities can apply for state or local money through a variety of programs; they can also obtain local or state funding and then apply for matching funds from the federal government. Sometimes local funding comes from an additional tax on certain types of expenditures or from the sale of bonds. Additionally, cities can seek private or charitable giving to help support projects for public use.

Perhaps implementing a strategy doesn't require funding at all. It may take facilitation from an outside organization – *experienced in downtown revitalization efforts* - to inspire, educate, train, and guide downtown stakeholders to revitalize their own downtowns.

But structuring resources is a complex process; some programs may not be appropriate for certain revitalization initiatives since there may be restrictions on how the resource can be used. The key to developing a successful resource package for revitalization efforts is to determine what type of resource works for each project, not just at the outset but for the life of the entire project.

Ultimately, the success or failure of an entire revitalization effort can depend on the structure of its resource package.

The Gothenburg Downtown Revitalization Plan represents a far-reaching commitment by downtown stakeholders to greatly improve the physical appearance, cohesiveness and economic vitality of the Gothenburg downtown area. The overall goal of the planning process was to evaluate the capital and programmatic needs of the downtown area to ensure that the downtown maintains its role as the focal point of the community.

Through the application of innovative downtown improvement strategies, the local stakeholders can demonstrate its commitment to strengthening the downtown's role everybody's neighborhood, creating a vibrant mix of uses and activities, offering residents a reason to return to the town center, increasing the economic rewards of building ownership in downtown Gothenburg, and improving downtown's physical environment and invigorates community activity.

Most successful revitalization programs draw assistance from a variety of resources, including city-sponsored programs, technical assistance, and state grant programs. Resources – *both human and financial* - are critical to changing improvement strategies into realities. Some resources are necessary to bridge the gap of capital construction costs, others provide the technical assistance for program support. Either way, injection of outside grants, loans, tax credits and technical assistance are often necessary to carry out the revitalization process.

This section will review all conceivable resources for implementation of the Plan, including federal, state, regional and local resources. Based on the projects mentioned previously, the long list of possible resources has been narrowed down to only those that have the most promise for long-term success.

A list of specific resources available for downtown revitalization is identified in the following Resource Matrix. This Matrix allows readers to easily match up projects with potential resources for implementation, and determine whether the assistance is provided in the form of funding or technical assistance.

F = Funding TA = Technical Assistance	Storefront/Facade Improvements	Signage/Gateway to Downtown	Accessibility Assistance	Awaying Assistance	Warehousing Space	Business Recruitment	Business Incubator	Business Succession Planning	Educational Programs	Business Retention	Business Leadership Development	On-Line Shopping	Window Display/In Store Merchandising	Consistent Store Hours
Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act						F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA			
Business Improvement District	F	F	F	F		F	F	F	F	F	F			
Certified Local Government Program	TA	TA		TA										
Community Development Assistance Act		F	F											
Community Development Block Grant – Downtown Revitalization Phase II	F		F											
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development RLF	F		F		F									
Community Development Resources	F		F		F					F				
Federal Home Loan Bank – Joint Opportunities for Building Success	F					F	F	F	F	F				
Federal Tax Incentive Program	F & TA													
General Obligation Bonds			F											
GROW Nebraska									TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	
Heritage Nebraska Program	TA	TA	TA	TA		TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA			
Local Organizations	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	F & TA	TA
Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840)	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F			
Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Program	F				F		F	F		F				
Nebraska Energy Office – Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program	F													
Nebraska Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs						TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	
Nebraska Workforce Development – Worker Training Program						F	F					F		
Peer Group Lending	F	F			F	F & TA	F & TA			F & TA		F & TA	TA	
Private/Charitable Foundation	F	F	F	F				F	F	F	F	F		
Rural Enterprise Assistance Project						F & TA	F & TA	TA	TA	F & TA	TA	TA	TA	
Service Corps of Retired Executives							TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA
Small Business Administration	F													
Special Assessment Districts			F											
South Central Nebraska Resource Conservation & Development	TA	TA				TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	
Tax Increment Financing	F	F	F	F	F	F	F			F				
United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Programs							F	F	F	F	F			
Value Incentive Program	F													
Venture Capital	F	F		F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	
West Central Economic Development District	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	

Below is an alphabetized list of the potential resources mentioned above, along with a brief description of the program. The reader should be advised that each program has certain eligibility requirements, so additional upfront research is highly suggested before investing much time and effort into the application process.

Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act

The Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act (BECA) grant was established by the Nebraska Legislature in 2005 and received funding for further grants in 2007. BECA provides grants to rural communities to implement collaborative projects addressing issues related to chronic economic distress, unemployment, lower-than-average per capita income, and severe population loss. The grants are designed to help depressed rural areas of Nebraska build and sustain programs that generate and retain wealth in the communities located in those areas.

To be eligible, at least two local governments (municipal or county) must collaborate on a project with a two-year completion deadline. The applicants also must provide a hard 1:1 cash match from sources other than state and federal programs. Planning grants require no match.

Eligible projects are those that address one of the following:

- ◊ provide education and technical assistance to energize small business development and entrepreneurship
- ◊ provide technical assistance to facilitate small business transfer
- ◊ build community business capacity and leadership programs
- ◊ generate opportunities that attract and retain youth and families
- ◊ provide education about philanthropy and intergenerational transfer of wealth
- ◊ build community endowments to support above activities

Business Improvement Districts

Over the past 15 to 20 years communities across the country have turned increasingly to Business Improvement Districts (CIDs) as a source of funding for augmenting existing city services and enhancing infrastructure. BIDs provide additional funding where local government taxes are insufficient.

A BID is a geographically defined district in which commercial property owners choose to tax themselves to achieve a specific purpose or purposes. BID funds can be spent on a variety of projects. Nebraska Revised Statutes (Section 19-4015 through 19-4038) allows for these projects to include

street and road construction and maintenance, sidewalks and streetlights, parking facilities, water and sewage systems, maintenance and landscaping, park facilities and recreational areas. Businesses find BIDs an attractive funding mechanism because commercial property owners vote on the self-imposed tax and the cost is proportionately distributed across the district.

Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in each state, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). CLGs then become an active partner in the Federal Historic Preservation Program and the opportunities it provides.

Community Development Assistance Act

The Community Development Assistance Act (CDAA) was created in 1985 by the Nebraska Legislature to encourage financial support by businesses to community betterment organizations in their efforts to implement community service and development projects in chronic economically distressed areas.

CDAA empowers the Department of Economic Development to distribute a 40 percent state tax credit to businesses, corporations, insurance firms or financial institutions or individuals that make eligible contributions of cash, services or materials to approved community betterment projects.

Five types of projects may qualify through the program. Eligible projects include, employment training, human and medical services, physical facility and neighborhood development services, recreational and educational activities and crime prevention.

Community Development Block Grant Program

The Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, administered through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, helps smaller local governments fund community projects that might not otherwise be financially feasible. Through funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the program allows each community to determine which projects are most needed, with a focus on Housing, Neighborhood Revitalization, Commercial Revitalization and Economic Development.

The national objectives of the program are to benefit low- and moderate-income persons, eliminate slum or blight, and address urgent community development needs.

Community Development Block Grant – Downtown Revitalization Program, Phase II

The objective of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Downtown Revitalization Funding Category is to provide for investments in Nebraska communities that will contribute to the revitalization or redevelopment of downtown infrastructure, address health and safety concerns, and develop a capacity for greater growth. Activities will assist communities in carrying out a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan to stabilize and enhance clearly defined downtown areas that will provide a benefit to low/moderate income residents of the community, or aid in the elimination of substandard or blighted structures or areas in the downtown.

Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Revolving Loan Funds are flexible financing tools for communities to provide loans to local businesses, which in turn, create jobs and leverage other private investment while helping a community diversify and stabilize its economy. While revolving loan funds are usually created through grants from the federal or state government, they are locally administered. All decisions are made in the community and as loans are repaid to the fund, the money is available for additional lending to other local start-up or expanding businesses

Community Development Block Grant – Tourism Development Initiative

The objective of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Tourism Development Initiative is to provide financing to offset the cost of projects that are, or will be, a tourism attraction. Tourism attractions (for profit or non-profit, public or private) are sites that are expected to annually draw 2,500 or more visits from origins of at least 100 miles away. Tourism attractions are sites and facilities that draw visitors because of their scenic, historic, cultural, scientific and/or recreational attributes. Examples of eligible attractions are: historic restorations, museums, participatory sports facilities and convention centers. Examples of ineligible businesses are those that more often serve as tourism-support facilities than attractions, such as eating and drinking establishments, commercial sleeping accommodations, gasoline service stations and gift shops.

Community Development Resources – New Market Tax Credit Business Loan

Community Development Entities (CDE's), such as Community Development Resources, apply to the Treasury Department for an allocation of New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC). The credits are awarded competitively based on a CDE's performance, accountability, and record of success providing capital or technical assistance to disadvantaged businesses or communities.

Once a CDE secures an allocation of credits, it would sell the tax credit certificates to private investors. Investors in a qualified CDE would receive a tax credit for their investment worth 30 percent of the amount invested (net present value) over seven years. Investors would receive a tax credit certificate to attach to their federal income tax forms claiming a 5% tax credit for the first three years and a 6% credit for the remaining four years.

The CDE would then use the capital generated from sale to provide loans, equity, and other forms of credit to qualified low-income community businesses (QLICB), including non-profit corporations, in targeted distressed areas. The tax credits are subject to recapture if the entity ceases to be a qualified CDE or the proceeds of the investment cease to be used for qualified low-income community investments.

Federal Home Loan Bank – Joint Opportunities for Building Success

The Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) of Topeka promotes housing and community development by offering its member financial institutions a variety of programs to meet the housing and economic development needs of their communities. The FHLB's Joint Opportunities for Building Success (JOBS) program is an economic development funding program of the Federal Home Loan Bank that assists bank members in promoting employment growth in their communities.

Federal Tax Incentive Program

Since 1976 the Internal Revenue Code has contained provisions offering tax credits and favorable tax treatments for historic buildings rehabilitated for income-producing purposes. The historic preservation tax incentives have been successfully used throughout the state, promoting the reuse of historic buildings and stimulating private investment in older areas of Nebraska communities. The State Historic Preservation Office promotes these incentives by providing assistance to property owners in qualifying projects under this program.

General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation (GO) bonds are backed by property taxes, and are issued by the City for a wide array of community betterment projects. See Section 16-6, 108 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

GROW Nebraska

Welcome to GROW Nebraska™, an outreach program and affiliated fund of the Central Plains Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to maximize the state's entrepreneurial and small business spirit. Through their site, Internet users can buy Nebraska made products, experience tourism treasures throughout the state, and learn about marketing and training programs.

Heritage Nebraska Program

Building on the success of the 14-year-old Nebraska Lied Main Street Program, Heritage Nebraska is an umbrella organization for: Main Street; a Nebraska Preservation Fund within the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Preservation Partners offering specific education and technical assistance to be augmented, early next year, by two half-time field staff. Main Street helps communities in organizing, promoting, and strengthening the economic base and improving the appearance of downtown using the National Trust Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach™. There will be few visible changes in the way Main Street is seen in the communities.

Local Organizations

A community pulls itself together through the local civic groups' active in the area. Business leaders and individuals form and participate in various activities found through common interests. Gothenburg is home to numerous civic groups that can play an important role in the downtown revitalization process, including,

Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840)

This act allows Nebraska municipalities to appropriate and spend local sales and property tax revenues for economic development purposes. The objective is to allow Nebraska communities more freedom on how to spend their tax dollars for development purposes.

A community economic development plan is required. The plan may underwrite the following activities: payment for salaries or contracts with individuals or organizations to carry out provisions of the plan; grants or loans for job training; grants for public works; direct loans or grants to qualifying businesses for working capital or fixed assets; loan guarantees; real estate acquisition; technical assistance to businesses; and expenses for industrial recruitment activities.

For cities with a resident population of 2,500 or greater, a qualifying business is any corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or sole proprietorship that derives its principal source of income from any of the following: manufacturing; research and development; processing, storage, transport or sale of goods or commodities that are sold or traded through interstate commerce; sale of services in interstate commerce; telecommunications; tourism-related activities; and headquarter facilities for a corporation involved in activities outlined above. For cities with populations of 2,500 to 10,000, retail is also a qualifying business.

Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act

The Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act will be administered by the Department of Revenue. The purpose of the program is to provide investment tax credits (equal to 20 percent of the investment) to applicants for creating or expanding micro businesses (5 or fewer employees) that contribute to the revitalization of economically depressed areas through the creation of new or improved income, self-employment, or other new jobs in the area.

Nebraska Energy Office – Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program

The Nebraska Energy Office (NEO) has achieved more than \$125 million in energy efficiency improvements through its Dollar and Energy Saving Loan Program. The program is delivered through private financial institutions at over 600 locations throughout the state.

The program works as a revolving fund, using payments from previous borrowers to offer new loans at 5% interest. The Nebraska Energy Office makes the loans available to homeowners, small businesses, farmers, and local government agencies for energy efficiency improvements.

Nebraska Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs

The Nebraska Enhancing Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs (EDGE) is the umbrella organization for rural entrepreneurial training programs hosted by local communities, organizations and associations. Since 1993, the NebraskaEDGE has assisted more than 1,800 entrepreneurs, small business owners and their partners start and enhance their businesses. Over 85 training courses have been held from Scottsbluff to Omaha, and in many communities in between.

The EDGE program is primarily for existing businesses or potential start-up businesses. It is designed to teach better business practices. Students produce a comprehensive business plan to guide business decisions and activities during their participation in the class. As entrepreneurs develop their business plan they learn how to: 1) initially organize and later manage their business; 2) market their products or services; 3) compile and utilize their financial statements; and 4) seek opportunities for funding.

Nebraska Workforce Development – Worker Training Program

The Nebraska Worker Training Program is a workforce development incentive program to further develop employment opportunities for existing employees while meeting the skill and human resource needs of employers and communities throughout the state.

The Program gives priority to the creation and retention of living wage jobs and focus on employers in industries that promote high-skill, high-wage jobs and on the demand occupations that provide those jobs.

Peer Group Lending

Individual entrepreneurs are frequently denied loans because banks believe they lack sufficient collateral or that the entrepreneur will be unable to repay the loan. Peer-group lending collects collateral and spreads the risk among a group of entrepreneurs, increasing an entrepreneur's chances of obtaining a loan. Peer groups are composed of entrepreneurs gathered together by neighborhood groups, non-profits, or banks. The availability of a loan is dependent on the repayment schedule of others in the group. Since group members are dependent on the success of their peers, they work together to support each other. Most loans are based on character rather than collateral. Members alert each other to business opportunities and critically look at other member's business plans.

Private/Charitable Foundation

Private/charitable foundations are legal entities set up by an individual, a family or a group of individuals, for a purpose such as philanthropy.

Rural Enterprise Assistance Project

Rural Enterprise Assistance Program (REAP) was started by the Center for Rural Affairs in 1990 to meet the needs of self-employed persons in the rural Midwest. It provides individuals with business management training, technical assistance, lending capital, loan packaging, and networking opportunities for starting and growing a business. Roundtables and/or associations of micro-entrepreneurs are formed in addition to individualized services in rural areas of Nebraska and are the supporting vehicle for the delivery of these services. The REAP program operates on a statewide rural basis through regionally based Business Specialists.

REAP's revolving loan program is a step-up borrowing process where loans of between \$100 and \$10,000 are made. The community or association must raise a loan loss reserve between \$500 and \$2,500 that is matched by REAP on a 10:1 ratio (\$5,000-\$25,000) to give association members access to REAP's revolving loan program. Step-up borrowing limits: A first-time borrower can borrow up to \$1,000, and each subsequent loan can be doubled up to a maximum \$10,000 with established repayment record.

REAP operates Nebraska's only Small Business Administration funded Women's Business Center (WBC) with the goal to help meet the business assistance needs of today's start-up and existing rural Nebraska women entrepreneurs.

Service Corps of Retired Executives

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) is an extensive, national network of more than 10,000 retired and working volunteers who are experienced entrepreneurs and corporate managers and executives. They provide free and confidential business counseling and advice to all types of businesses in all stages of development—from idea to start-up to success. SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneurial education and the formation, growth, and success of small businesses across the country. SCORE also is a resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Offices in Nebraska: Omaha, Lincoln, Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, Norfolk and Columbus.

Small Business Administration

Small businesses that meet the Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards and program requirements can apply for SBA guaranteed loans through participating lenders. Although administered through a participating bank, loans are federally guaranteed so that if the small business does not do well, the bank is not at risk. These loans are intended to assist businesses not successful in obtaining funds through commercial lenders, and decrease the lending risk to banks.

SBA 7(a) Program

The 7(a) loan program is the SBA's general business loan program. The SBA is authorized to guarantee between 75 percent and 80 percent of a loan, up to a maximum of \$750,000, for small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending opportunities. This includes acquisition of real estate, business expansion, machinery and equipment purchases, furniture and fixture purchases, working capital, and inventory purchases.

Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program

The SBA 504 program provides businesses with opportunities to start or expand their operations by offering long-term and fixed-rate financing. Businesses can seek 504 Loan counseling and financing through the Nebraska Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO). Businesses eligible for SBA 504 loans vary, however, 504 financing is not available for businesses that have a tangible net worth exceeding \$7.5 million, or average net income more than \$2.5 million for the two preceding years. The maximum loan amount allowed through the 504 Program is \$1 million. Typical 504 business loans are for land, building, and equipment (fixed assets).

Micro-loan Demonstration Program

Through the Micro-loan Demonstration Program the SBA makes loans to private, non-profit, and quasi-governmental organizations who will make short-term, fixed interest rate micro-loans (up to \$25,000) to start-up, newly established, and growing small business concerns. Funds are then provided with marketing, management, and technical assistance. The program helps women, low-income, and minority entrepreneurs who lack credit. Micro-loans can be used to purchase machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures, inventory, supplies, and working capital. This is not part of the 7(a) program and funds cannot be used to retire existing debt. Loans must be repaid on the shortest term possible, no more than six years, depending on the

earnings of the business. Each organization has individual collateral requirements; assets bought with the loan are automatically considered collateral. Personal business owners guarantees are also commonly required.

CAPLines

CAPLines is used by SBA to help small businesses meet short-term and cyclical working-capital needs. Loans can be used for finance seasonal working-capital needs, finance direct costs needed to perform construction, service, and supply contracts, finance direct costs associated with commercial and residential building, construction without a firm commitment for purchase, finance operating capital by obtaining advances against existing inventory and accounts receivable and consolidation of short-term debt.

Low Documentation Loan Program (LowDoc)

LowDoc is one of the SBA's most popular programs because of its one-page application form and rapid turnaround time (two to three business days) for loans of up to \$100,000. Borrowers must meet the lender's credit standards before applying for a LowDoc loan. Business start-ups and businesses with fewer than 100 employees and with average annual sales of less than \$5 million over the past three years are eligible for LowDoc.

FA\$TRAK

FA\$TRAK makes loans of up to \$100,000 available without requiring lenders to use the SBA process. Approved lenders use existing documentation and procedures to make and service loans, and the SBA guarantees up to 50 percent of the loan. Maturities are 5-7-years for working capital and up to 25 years for real estate or equipment.

Patriot Express

The U.S. Small Business Administration has announced the SBA's Patriot Express Pilot Loan Initiative for veterans and members of the military community wanting to establish or expand small businesses. Loans are available up to \$500,000 and qualify for SBA's maximum guaranty of up to 85 percent for loans of \$150,000 or less and up to 75 percent for loans over \$150,000 up to \$500,000. For loans above \$350,000, lenders are required to take all available collateral. The Patriot Express loan can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases,

working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases. Patriot Express loans feature SBA’s lowest interest rates for business loans, generally 2.25 percent to 4.75 percent over prime depending upon the size and maturity of the loan.

South Central Nebraska Resource Conservation and Development

The goal of the resource assessment for Resource Conservation and Developments (RC&D) is to provide information on natural resources within the RC&D, as well as economic and recreation information. The data found within these profiles were collected through the Census of Agriculture, numerous Nebraska State Agencies, and Nebraska NRCS statewide databases on conservation practices. The profiles are designed to be use as a tool to help RC&Ds identify conservation opportunities and direct technical and financial resources to the appropriate areas.

Special Assessment Districts

Certain improvements, such as parking lots and sidewalk improvements can be financed by special assessments. This method of financing is a tax upon a property owner for a portion of the costs incurred by the City for a particular improvement. See Section 17-522 of the Nebraska Revised Statues.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax Increment Financing (TF) is a tool that encourages private development in areas experiencing blight and disinvestments, typically areas in or near downtown. A TIF program provides a method for financing public costs associated with a private development project by using the projected increase in property tax revenue resulting from the private development. TIF bonds allow the developer to retire the “public costs” over a period of 15 years. During the time the bonds are outstanding, each taxing jurisdiction receives its original share of tax revenue or “pre-TIF project tax revenues.” The advantage of TIF is that it enables a local government to borrow against future tax revenues generated by a redevelopment project. See Section 18-2101 through 19-2154 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development

Community Facility Loan Program

This program provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 people. Grants are awarded on a graduated scale; small communities with low population and income will receive a higher percentage of grants.

Program monies can be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities, such as constructing, enlarging, or improving community facilities for healthcare, public safety, or public and community services (such as the physical construction of a new building to house and display museum items and artifacts). Requests can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation.

Guaranteed Community Facility Loan Program

The purpose of the Guaranteed Community Facilities Loan Program is to work with local lenders - including banks, savings and loan associations, mortgage companies, and Farm Credit System banks to offer loan guarantees to help build essential community facilities and purchase equipment in rural areas. Community service facilities include: fire and rescue buildings and/or equipment, streets, utilities, community buildings, libraries, senior citizen centers, day care centers, airports, industrial parks, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants

The US Department of Agriculture Rural Development Office provides grant funding to finance the development of small business enterprises in rural communities with populations less than 50,000. The grant program is geared to stimulate capital investment by providing grants to third party lenders to establish a revolving loan program. Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) funds can be used for acquisition and development of land; construction of buildings, plants, equipment; access streets and roads; parking areas; utility and service extensions; refinancing, fees; technical assistance; and start-up operating costs and working capital.

Rural Business Opportunity Grant

The purpose of the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) is to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs by focusing on communities that have experienced trauma due to natural disasters or fundamental structural change, persistently poor, long-term population decline or job deterioration. Focusing on communities where the project is sustainable over a long term through local effort without long-term external subsidies

The RBOG Program provides matching grant monies for technical assistance, training, and planning activities, in an effort to improve economic conditions in rural areas. Examples of eligible project include: identify and analyze business opportunities; identify, train, and assist existing or

prospective rural entrepreneurs; establish business support centers; conduct community or multi-county economic development planning; establish centers for training, technology, and trade; and conduct leadership development training.

Valuation Incentive Program

The Valuation Incentive Program (VIP) assists in the preservation of Nebraska's historic places. The program allows a property tax "preference" for a historic property that has been rehabilitated. The preference can be described as a temporary "hold" on increases in property tax assessment that result from improvements made to preserve a historic property. The Valuation Incentive Program (VIP) is a property tax incentive that assists in the preservation of Nebraska's historic buildings.

Properties participating in the Valuation Incentive Program must be designated as a "historically significant real property" before work on a project, listed on the National Register of Historic places and taxable.

Venture Capital

Venture capital refers to equity investments in businesses with the hope that they will grow and become profitable. Although risky, equity investments can lead to enormous payoffs when the companies invested in are extremely successful. The prosperity of many of today's corporate giants can be directly linked to the venture capital investments they received when they were infant businesses. Recognizing this, neighborhood groups can encourage the use of venture capital as an option for financing small businesses and projects in their communities. Two effective ways of increasing the venture capital available to local businesses is to 1) coordinate databases that assist in matching up potential investors with businesses, and 2) promote the area to specific venture capital firms.

West Central Nebraska Development District, Inc.

West Central Nebraska Development District (WCNDD) is a 18-county regional development organization that encourages cooperation between local government officials, community based organizations and the private sector. WCNDD provides the "link" between federal and state programs and the local level where development actually occurs. WCNDD's goal is to address economic opportunities and challenges identified through a Community Economic Development Strategy.

Appendices - Gothenburg Market Analysis

On-Line Survey



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MARKET CONDITIONS STUDY FOR GOTHENBURG, NEBRASKA

**PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF GOTHENBURG, NEBRASKA
IN CONJUNCTION WITH 2008 DOWNTOWN MASTER PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

**PREPARED BY
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OCTOBER 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides a market analysis and positioning strategy with respect to retail, office, industrial and residential real estate market sectors for the City of Gothenburg, Nebraska. Gothenburg is located in Dawson County; it is situated on I-80 approximately 25 miles west of Lexington and 33 miles east of North Platte, Nebraska.

This market study is organized as follows:

- Section 1. Executive Summary
- Section 2. Overview of Demographic and Economic Data
- Section 3. Industrial Market Opportunities
- Section 4. Office Market Opportunities
- Section 5. Residential Market Opportunities
- Section 6. Retail Market Opportunities

Each of the Market Opportunities sections provides a market overview and specific strategies for sector development.

The data used in this document are derived from a variety of sources including several major brokerage firms, the Nebraska Realtors Association, the Urban Land Institute's publication, *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers*, the City of Gothenburg, Nebraska and Claritas, Inc.¹ Claritas data include estimates of demographics, retail trade potential or "buying power", and actual retail sales and are based on geographies within one, five and sixty mile radii of 10th and Lake Streets.

These geographies represent, for the purposes of this study, primary, secondary and tertiary market areas as shown in the map to the right and defined as follows:

- The one mile, or primary, market area extends from Lake Helen on the north, Quinn Field on the east, the I-80 interchange on the south, and almost to the north-south leg of Road 410 on the west.

The one mile radius takes in the most heavily developed areas of Gothenburg and is considered representative of the city for retail analysis purposes.

- The five mile, secondary market area extends from approximately Willow Island on the east, the Thirtymile Canal on the south, and Vroman on the west. There is no named landmark indicating the north boundary.

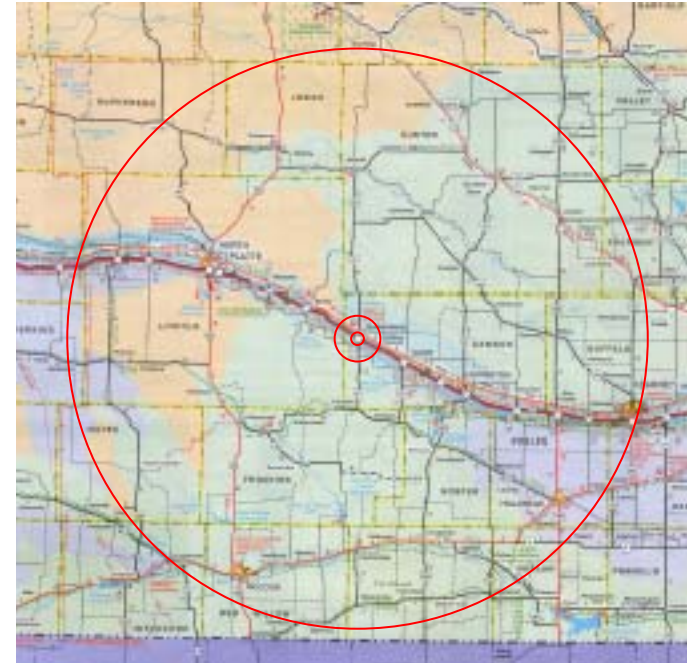


Figure 1.1 Gothenburg, Nebraska Market Areas

¹ Data from these sources constitute a reasonable standard of information; data are generally deemed reliable but they are not guaranteed.

- The sixty mile, tertiary market area extends approximately from Dunning on the north, Kearney on the east, Lebanon on the south and Grafton on the west.

Key Findings

Industrial and Office Market Opportunities

Over the long term, build to suit opportunities could be accommodated and should be pursued in both industrial and office markets. These types of development would further enhance and diversify area employment, reinforce new and existing commercial uses, and support improvements and use of public infrastructure.

With respect to the downtown area, Gothenburg could accommodate:

- Small-scale light industrial or specialty manufacturing operations, providing there are no nuisance issues or conflicts with adjacent land uses
- Office space for modest real estate, financial or insurance operations, legal or engineering firms, medical or governmental support facilities.

This study also recommends that Gothenburg continue efforts to upgrade existing downtown office and retail space, and suggests the development of a low-interest revolving loan fund for this purpose.

Residential Market Opportunities

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 75.58 percent of the homes in Gothenburg were owner occupied, and 74.34 percent of all homes within the five-mile radius were owner occupied. These figures are well above the national rate of 66.2 percent.

Within Dawson and Gosper counties, median home prices have declined 3.5 percent from July 2006 to July 2008 and total permit activity has slowed. Home sales in Gothenburg are averaging 3.44 units per month in 2008, down from 4.75 units per month in 2007 according to Sally Jochum, President of the Dawson County Board of Realtors. A recent windshield survey indicates that Gothenburg housing stock is of generally good quality, and we are confident that the local market will continue to appeal to consumers over the long term. The July 2008 Housing Market Study for Gothenburg prepared by Hanna:Keelan Associates sees similar market strength and recommends that the City “should strive to develop up to 102 new housing units by 2013.”²

This study recommends that the community continue pursuing options to develop a modest amount of housing within the downtown area. Upper floors can be converted into modest housing units, vacant buildings might alternately become live/work space. The development of downtown housing would offer the advantages of

- Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure
- Providing options for younger and older adults to remain in the area
- Enhancing economic activity
- Supporting a more vibrant community

² Gothenburg, Nebraska Housing Market Study – 2013, Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., July 2008, page 1.

- Reducing development pressure on other types of land uses
- Encouraging walking and cycling

Retail Market Opportunities

Retail development ideally serves unmet community or regional needs; less desirably, it displaces or spreads spending more thinly, ultimately hurting older, existing retail establishments. Comparison of consumer expenditures and retail sales within of thirteen retail industry sectors indicates opportunities for growth. Demand consistently exceeds supply in each of the following sectors:

- Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers
- Furniture and Home Furnishings
- Electronics & Appliances Stores
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Books, Music Stores (primary and secondary markets only)
- General Merchandise
- Miscellaneous Store Retailers
- Foodservice & Drinking Places

Analysis of unmet demand in the primary market area indicates that downtown Gothenburg can accommodate between 44,000 and 47,000 square feet of additional retail space.

The recommendations given below are based on broader retail development trends. Gothenburg has already implemented of many of these recommendations; we do, however, want to encourage the community to continue to pursue these important strategies:

1. Grow your own. Promote local entrepreneurship, and look for ways to provide sustained support for new and existing businesses. Do not depend on people and organizations from outside the community to make things happen; if the community does not promote and support its own businesses, then there is no reason for anyone from outside the community to do so.
2. Provide unique products and services. The development of facilities offering quality goods and services distinct from those offered by general or mass merchandise stores creates “buzz” and raises visibility. Unique products and services draw regional as well as local customers. Gothenburg has an established reputation for unique retail shops, and it needs to build on that reputation. Possible shop/service combinations might include: a children’s book and toy store that hosts weekly puppet shows put on by the high school art and drama clubs, a specialty wine and cheese shop that offers catering and Saturday afternoon tasting events, a women’s dress shop that provides personal shopping services, a lighting or light fixture store that sells new, and accepts and recycles used, compact fluorescent bulbs.
3. Use the internet. Tell the world that you are here; at a minimum post your hours and phone number and let people know what kind of goods and services you offer. Show your stuff, (a picture is worth a thousand words), sell your stuff. Email customers and let them know when you are having a sale or when a special event is taking place.

4. Claim your community. Find every opportunity to bring people together to relax, and enjoy themselves. Events programming can bring people into the downtown area when they might not otherwise have a reason to visit or be there. “Community” can and should include Gothenburg and Dawson County residents as well as members of various interest groups who live elsewhere. Host a pet parade or antique car rally, conduct an arts fair, sponsor a street dance. Remember that relationships increasingly make the difference between successful and languishing retail operations and community events offer an important mechanism for finding new friends and building relationships.
5. Put your best foot forward. Appearances count: well kept buildings, attractive signage, comfortable street furniture and fresh window displays let visitors know that
 - a. They are welcome
 - b. The community wants them to be comfortable during their visit
 - c. The community wants them to stay and explore
 - d. There are worthwhile goods and services available

OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA

The following demographic and economic overview is intended to inform recommendations for market development strategies. The overview includes projected populations and the economic capacity of the present (projected) population within the primary, secondary, and tertiary market areas. It considers, as well state and county employment data. Spending power density and consumer spending patterns are also evaluated over the given market areas.

1. Populations in the one and five mile radius areas are projected to remain unchanged between 2007 and 2012. The number of households is projected to decline slightly with slight increases in the average household size. Both trends indicate a stable market inside the one and five mile areas.
2. Population in the 60 mile radius is projected to increase by just over a half percent between 2007 and 2012 with households increasing by 0.86 percent. This also reflects a stable market in the 60 mile area.
3. Median household income for the three market areas are projected to increase from 9.9 to 10.5 percent representing consistent retail sales buying power potential over time.
4. Dividing aggregate spending by the square miles in each radius area yields a buying power density, or the number of retail spending dollars per square mile. The density of population and buying power decrease significantly over the larger, five and sixty mile radius areas.
 - a. In the one mile area, the spending power density is \$18.65 million per square mile. Although the median household income compares favorably to the 5 and 60 mile areas, the higher population density (1,044 persons per square mile) raises the spending power density for the one mile area.
 - b. In the five mile area, the spending power density is \$0.93 million per square mile. The lower population density (52 persons per square mile) reduces the spending power density.
 - c. In the sixty mile area, the spending power density is \$0.23 million per square mile. Although the income level is consistent across the area, low population density (12 persons per square mile) reduces spending power.
5. Although the sixty mile area offers stable growth potential and income levels consistent with the primary and secondary market areas, the dollars available for retail spending are quite modest when compared with the core market area. With the exceptions of girl's and infant's apparel, prescription drugs, medical supplies, smoking products and supplies, reading materials and transportation and auto expenses, consumer spending patterns in the primary and secondary market areas lag national trends.
6. Gothenburg presents a reasonable location for unique retailers who would draw from both local and regional markets as well as new and expanding retailers who would draw primarily from local markets.

Table 2.1. Area Population Projections

Year	1 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	5 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	60 mile Radius Area	Percent Change
2000	3,285		4,096		139,879	
2007	3,277	-0.24%	4,107	0.26%	140,964	0.78%
2012	3,281	0.12%	4,123	0.39%	141,692	0.52%

Table 2.2. Area Household Projections

Year	1 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	5 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	60 mile Radius Area	Percent Change
2000	1,331		1,641		54,699	
2007	1,296	-2.63%	1,607	-2.07%	55,482	1.43%
2012	1,283	-1.00%	1,596	-0.68%	55,957	0.86%

Table 2.3. Median Household Income Projections

Year	1 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	5 Mile Radius Area	Percent Change	60 mile Radius Area	Percent Change
2000	\$36,710		\$36,227		\$35,419	
2007	\$43,794	19.3%	\$43,581	20.3%	\$42,799	20.83%
2012	\$48,351	10.4%	\$47,905	9.92%	\$47,311	10.54%

Table 2.4 State and County Employment Data 2006 (July 2008)

	Nebraska	Dawson County	Percent of State
Labor Force	968,169	12,593	13.0%
Employment	954,557	12,177	12.8%
Unemployment	31,612	417	13.2%
Unemployment Rate	3.2% 3.6% (July 2008)	3.3% 7.3% (July 2008)	
Total Non-Farm Employment (TNEF)	952,186	11,199	11.8%
Goods Producing (% of TNFE)	150,033 (15.8%)	4,179 (37.3%)	2.8%
Service Producing (% of TNFE)	802,152 (84.2%)	7,020 (62.7%)	0.9%

Table 2.5. Spending Power Density

	1 Mile Radius Area	5 Mile Radius Area	60 mile Radius Area
Aggregate Spending (\$ millions)	\$58.56	\$73.00	\$2,598.51
Area (square miles)	3.14	78.5	11304
Spending Power Density (\$millions per square mile)	\$18.65	\$0.93	\$0.23

Table 2.6. Consumer Spending Patterns in Terms of Market Index Values*

Total Specified Consumer Expenditures	1 Mile Radius Area	5 Mile Radius Area	60 mile Radius Area
Day Care, Education & Contributions			
All Day Care	88	89	79
Contributions (All)	64	65	73
Education	66	66	86
Food at Home			
Alcoholic Beverages	95	95	99
Food	93	93	92
Food Away from Home & Alcohol			
Alcoholic Beverages	93	93	91
Food Away from Home	88	88	96
Healthcare			
Medical Services	94	94	93
Prescription Drugs	108	110	106
Medical Supplies	106	107	105
Household Furnishings& Appliances			
Furniture	85	85	86
Household Textiles	81	81	83
Major Household Appliances	94	94	93
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	101	100	99
Small Appliances & Housewares	93	94	96

*The market index value is the ratio of the Annual Average Household Expenditure for the geography that is being reported as compared to the annual average household expenditure for the United States.

Table 2.6. Consumer Spending Patterns in Terms of Market Index Values (continued)

Personal Care& Smoking Products			
Personal Care Products & Services	88	88	90
Smoking Products & Supplies	126	126	121
Pet Expenses	89	91	95
Sports & Entertainment			
Photographic Equipment/Supplies	92	92	95
Reading Materials	102	102	104
Sports & Recreation	87	87	88
Travel Expenses	83	83	85
TV, Radio & Sound Equipment	87	87	90
Transportation & Auto Expenses	98	100	107
Total Apparel			
Women's Apparel	71	71	81
Men's Apparel	78	78	86
Girl's Apparel	102	101	89
Boy's Apparel	99	100	90
Infant's Apparel	107	107	96
Footwear (excluding infants)	81	81	86
Other Apparel Products & Services	71	72	76

INDUSTRIAL MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Industrial activity enhances area employment, reinforces commercial uses and supports improvements and use of transportation corridors. As transportation costs increase, industrial activity also provides access to locally produced goods. National trends away from manufacturing employment and toward service businesses do not bode well for many communities, yet there always remains some potential for industrial development. While industrial activity does not necessarily fit in a downtown, or Main Street environment, there are exceptions and a community should always be in pursuit of industrial opportunities.



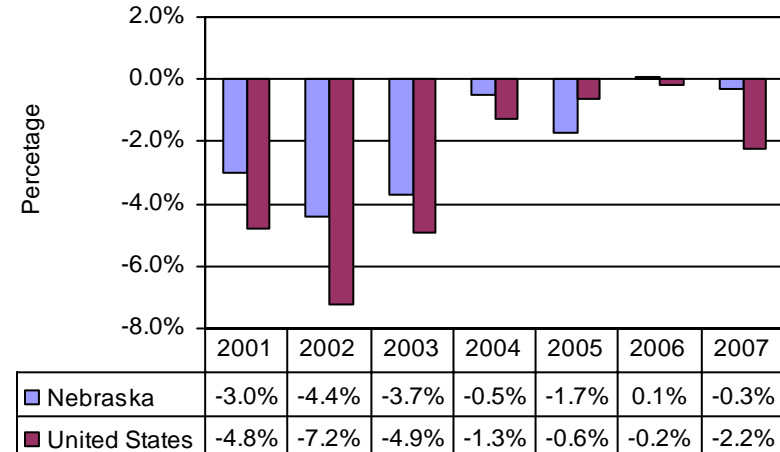
National and Regional Overview

Large commercial brokerage firms regularly track industrial space, which is classified by use. Classifications include distribution, warehouse, flex space and manufacturing. Nationally, the vacancy rate for all industrial space has risen to over 10 percent. While 79 million square feet of space was completed in the first half of this year, net absorption, the primary measure of demand, was negative in the first two quarters of 2008. Because completions are outpacing absorption, the vacancy rate is expected to rise further to 10.5% in the third quarter 2008.

The major industry sectors driving performance in industrial sector commercial real estate are distribution and manufacturing. While a weaker dollar has diminished capital flows, it has been a big boost to exports and by extension the distribution sector. Low industrial vacancy rates are evident in areas that have seen a moderate increase in industrial space completion and that have relatively stable manufacturing and distribution industries largely due to their involvement in international trade. By contrast, significantly higher vacancy rates are found in areas where losses in the manufacturing sector have not been fully offset by stabilization or gains in distribution and completions have outpaced absorption.³

Throughout the 1990s, the number of Nebraska manufacturing jobs increased each year, generally faster than the national rate. However, since 2002, both the national and Nebraska manufacturing job growth rates have been largely negative. During July 2008, preliminary state Department of Labor estimates show the number of Nebraska manufacturing jobs averaged 101,019, or 773 less than during the same

Figure 3.1. Rate of Manufacturing Job Change



Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development

³ National Association of REALTORS®.

month of 2007.⁴ Rates of change in the number of Nebraska and national manufacturing jobs are shown in Figure 3.1
Gothenburg currently offers a good variety of industrial jobs, and will soon be adding the Monsanto Learning Center to its roster of industrial employers. Area employers include:

Baldwin Filters	Mann Hay Company Inc
Employment: 150 – 199	Employment: 10 -19
336399 Air filters for equipment & motor vehicles	311119 Alfalfa pellets & meal
Farmland Industries	Mid Plains Industry & Supply
Employment: 10 -19	Employment: 5 - 9
311119 Animal feeds manufacturing	333111 Farm equipment
Farmland Service Coop Inc	332323 Steel fabricated stairs, catwalks
Employment: 75 - 99	332312 Structural steel buildings
325312 Blended fertilizer	Nebraska Transmission & Engine Inc
Frito Lay Inc	Employment 1 - 4
Employment: 10 -19	333921 Fabrication of lifts for boats & jet skis
311211 Grain cleaning & drying	Parker Tech Seal Division
Gothenburg Feed Products Company	Employment: 100 -149
Employment: 10 – 19	339991 Fabricated seals & gaskets for automotive
311119 Dehydrated alfalfa pellets	oil filters
Liquitech Inc	Quick Chop Inc
Employment: 5 – 9	Employment: 1 - 4
311119 Liquid feed, protein cattle supplement	333111 Stalk cutters, cultivator main frames

Industrial Market Sector Opportunities

Industrial growth and development is essential to the well-being of any community's economy: we must be able to produce goods in order to consume them. Under present circumstances, speculative development is not recommended, but build to suit opportunities or reuse of existing industrial buildings can be accommodated and should be pursued. Small-scale light industrial or specialty manufacturing facilities are an option for the downtown area providing there are no nuisance issues or conflicts with adjacent land uses.

⁴ Recent Trends in Selected Nebraska Economic Numbers, Updated September 30, 2008, Nebraska Department of Economic Development .

OFFICE MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Office space like industrial space is also tracked by large commercial brokerage firms. Office space is categorized according to class, indicating age of the space, the level and quality of the finish, location and desirability of the property. Distinctions among the classes of office space have little relevance in smaller communities, although age, location and quality of space can still convey important messages about the soundness of a business.



National and Regional Overview

The office market like the industrial market is experiencing rising vacancy rates. The financial crisis on Wall Street is exacerbating the effects of a slow economy. Job growth, particularly in office-using industries, has been declining, and demand for office space has been negatively impacted. New development construction has slowed due to higher construction costs and tighter financing. Nationally, the office vacancy rate is projected to edge up slightly, from 13.2 percent in the second quarter of 2008 to 13.3 percent in the third quarter. Detroit, Dallas, Tucson and Phoenix currently have vacancy rates of 21.4, 20.7, 19.1 and 18.8 percent, respectively.⁵ The office market is highly oversupplied, and will be for some time to come.

Against that backdrop, the office market is seeing increasing innovation as small scale businesses and entrepreneurs work from home offices; share an office suite or find “flex space” suited to their needs. This trend is common to both major metropolitan areas and smaller communities. Office space is also seen as a significant asset in “mixed-use” settings because it is a good complement to industrial, retail and residential uses. It also fits more easily into older buildings with limited access or smaller floor plates, and so is an attractive option in revitalizing older or historic settings.



Office Market Opportunities

Office growth, like industrial growth reflects employment opportunities and economic diversity. Gothenburg should always be prepared to pursue and accommodate the types of service sector jobs that would use office space. Gothenburg is a market for modest real estate, financial or insurance operations, legal or engineering firms, medical or governmental support space. Present market conditions do not support speculative construction; building, or rehabbing to suit offer the most reasonable strategies at this time.

This study also recommends that existing office space be upgraded, and suggests the development of a low-interest revolving loan fund for this purpose. The presence of well-maintained, attractive office space sends the broader message that Gothenburg is a community that welcomes, and supports and takes pride in its businesses.

⁵ National Association of REALTORS®.

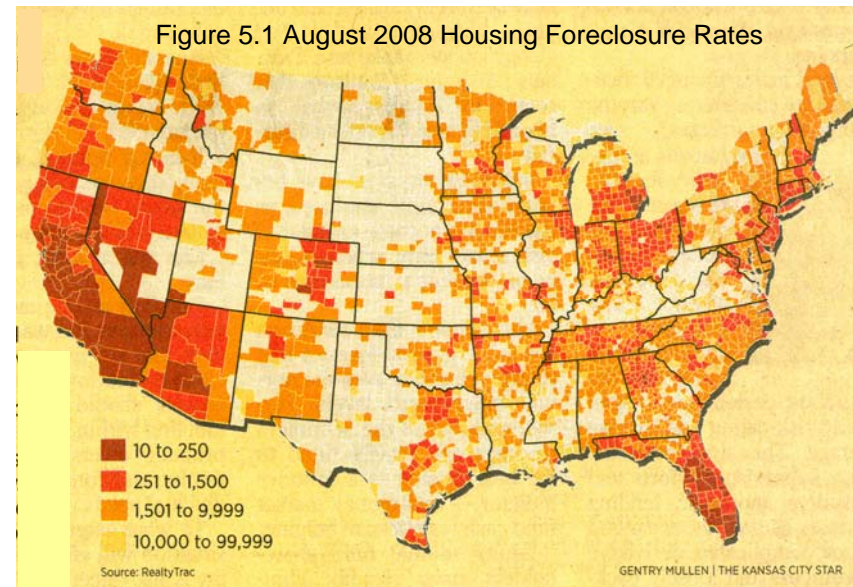
RESIDENTIAL MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Housing has long been considered the main engine of the nation's economic growth. That engine has virtually ceased to operate. Problems in the mortgage industry are now having significant impact on the financial, housing, and other real estate markets. Of course, all real estate is local and trends vary from community to community.

National and Regional Overview

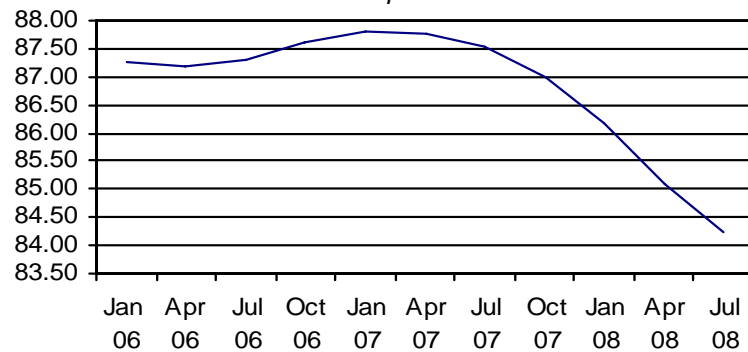
- According to Commerce Department data, sales of new homes fell 11.5% in August 2008 from the previous month. The sharp decline is attributed to sagging confidence among potential buyers and banks' reluctance to lend. The backlog of unsold homes rose to 10.9 months, up from 10.3 months in July. The median sales price for a new home was \$221,900, a 5.5% drop from July and a 6.2% decline from August 2007.
- Existing-home sales were down in August following a healthy gain in July as tight mortgage credit curtailed activity, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Sales rose in the Midwest and South but fell in the Northeast and West. Nationally, existing-home sales – including single-family, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops –declined 2.2 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.91 million units in August. This figure reflects a decline from the pace of 5.02 million in July, and is 10.7 percent below the 5.50 million-unit pace in August 2007.
- Inventories of homes on the market declined, but still remain high. At the current sales pace it would take 10.4 months to exhaust the inventory. The falling inventory is also being helped by builders having drastically cut back production. With fewer new homes to compete with existing homes, inventories are expected to be trimmed.
- Buyers continue to have the clear edge over sellers to negotiate for a lower price. Not surprisingly, the national median existing home price in August fell by 9.5 percent from a year ago to \$203,100. Prices were lower in all four regions. The price decline was the sharpest in the West region, falling 23.9 percent. Prices were lower by 3.8 percent in the Northeast, 3.4 percent in the South, and 5.6 percent in the Midwest.
- Remove the four states of California, Arizona, Nevada, and Florida that saw speculative booms and sharp declines, and the 46 remaining states have experienced little change in price. Many areas have seen a price change of only plus or minus 5 percent from one year ago.
- Nationwide, foreclosure filings – default notices, auction sales notices



and bank repossessions – increased by 12 percent from July. The proportion of distressed sales (short sales or foreclosure sales) continued to be about 35% to 40% of total sales. California, Florida and Arizona accounted for more than half of the nation's foreclosure activity in August. The map in Figure 5.1 shows foreclosure frequency by county across the country. The foreclosure rate in Dawson County was 1 per 4,924 housing units.

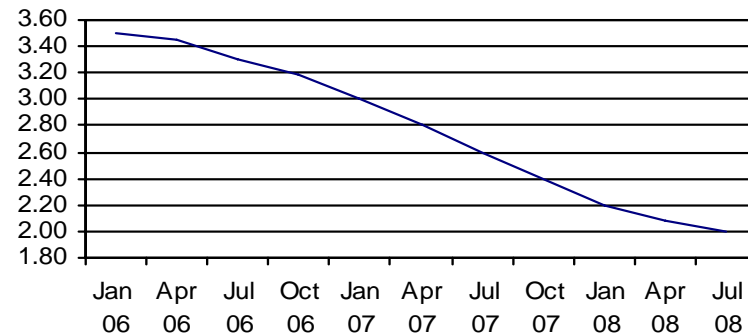
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 75.58 percent of the homes in Gothenburg were owner occupied, and 74.34 percent of all homes within the five-mile radius were owner occupied. These figures are well above the national rate of 67.2 percent.

Figure 5.2. Median Home Price (Thousands)
Dawson and Gosper Counties



Source: HousingIntelligence.com

Figure 5.3. Total Permits for Dawson and Gosper Counties



Source: HousingIntelligence.com

Within Dawson and Gosper counties, median home prices have declined 3.5 percent from July 2006 to July 2008 and total permit activity has slowed. Home sales in Gothenburg are averaging 3.44 units per month in 2008, down from 4.75 units per month in 2007 according to Sally Jochum, President of the Dawson County Board of Realtors. A recent windshield survey indicates that Gothenburg housing stock is of generally good quality, and we are confident that the local market will continue to appeal to consumers over the long term.

Residential Market Sector Opportunities

The July 2008 Housing Market Study for Gothenburg prepared by Hanna:Keelan Associates sees similar market strength and recommends that the City “should strive to develop up to 102 new housing units by 2013.”⁶ The report further specifies that of those 102 new units, 69 should be owner-occupied, accommodating entry-level to upper income households in single family configurations as well as patio and town home units for individuals and households 55 and older . The balance of homes should be rental units accommodating families, elderly and special population households.

⁶ Gothenburg, Nebraska Housing Market Study – 2013, Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., July 2008, page 1.

This study recommends that the community continue pursuing options to develop a modest amount of housing within the downtown area. Upper floors can be converted into modest housing units, vacant buildings might alternately become live/work space. The development of downtown housing would offer the advantages of

- Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure
- Providing options for younger and older adults to remain in the area
- Enhancing economic activity
- Supporting a more vibrant community
- Reducing development pressure on other types of land uses
- Encouraging walking and cycling



RETAIL MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Retail development is all about retail sales. Retail development ideally serves unmet community or regional needs; less desirably, it displaces or spreads spending more thinly, ultimately hurting older, existing retail establishments. This section provides a brief overview and an analysis intended to identify retail sectors where there may be unmet needs and development opportunities.

National Overview

Retail development has long been considered the most dynamic of all real estate sectors, but today, communities across the country are grappling with rising vacancies as retail chains close underperforming stores and, in some cases, go out of business. The International Council of Shopping Centers is projecting the closing of 144,000 stores this year, including restaurants, retail establishments and car dealerships. This represents a 7 percent increase from 2007 and the largest increase in the 14 years the council has been tracking closings.⁷ Where retail development is occurring, we see the intermingling of residential, retail and office space in “new neighborhoods,” “lifestyle centers” or “urban villages.” Some communities will recognize these “new” development patterns in what remains of their original Main Street or downtown areas.

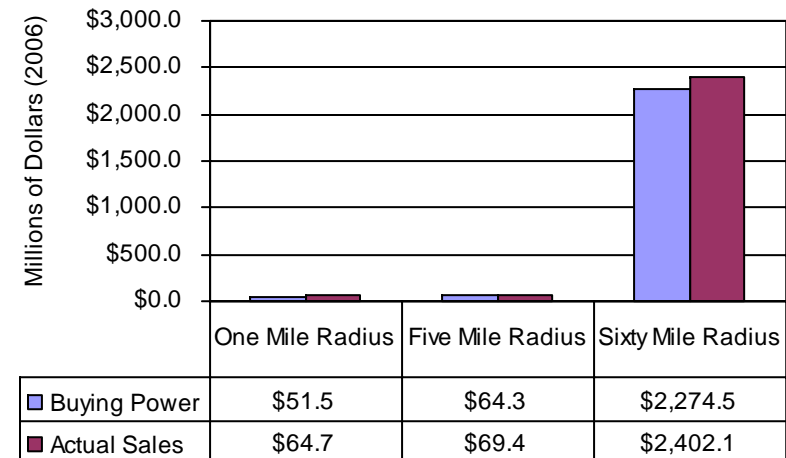
Retail Sales Analysis

A comparison of estimated retail buying power and sales⁸ can indicate potential retail development opportunities within a given geography. This analysis considers geographies within one, five and sixty mile radii of 10th and Lake Streets as previously described.

The graph to the right shows that, effectively, sales within the one, five and sixty mile areas exceed the total buying power generated among residents within the one, five and sixty mile areas respectively. Sales exceed buying power by \$13.2 million in the one mile area, \$5.1 million in the five mile area, and \$127.6 million in the sixty mile area. This broadly suggests little need for more retail space. A more detailed analysis of thirteen individual retail



Figure 6.1. Total Retail Sales



⁷ Kansas City Star, Tuesday, September 2008.

⁸ The data reviewed in this section were obtained from Claritas. Retail sales estimates are based on the Census of Retail Trade (CRT), in addition to monthly and annual surveys of retail trade data from the Bureau of the Census and current-year demographic estimates. Sales forecasts at the national level by NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) code were validated against the 2002 Economic Census (NAICS Majors only) and County Business Patterns sales forecasting data provided by the Census Bureau. The annual update of the supply side county level data is derived from ES202 data, Retail Sales Tax data, and Business-Facts® (a proprietary Claritas product).

industry sectors does, however, indicate opportunities for growth. Comparison of consumer expenditures and retail sales within of thirteen retail industry sectors does, however, indicate opportunities for growth. Table 6.1 show consumer expenditures (demand) relative to retail sales (supply) within the one, five and sixty mile radius market areas respectively. Where demand exceeds supply in any of the given retail sectors, there is potential for retail development.

Table 6.1 Consumer Expenditures and Retail Sales Revenue for One, Five and Sixty Mile Areas

NAICS Sector	Consumer Expenditures	Retail Sales	Gap/ Surplus
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers - 441			
One mile radius	\$10,449,178	\$7,955,589	\$2,493,589
Five mile radius	\$13,136,193	\$10,388,693	\$2,747,500
Sixty mile radius	\$484,180,489	\$410,088,796	\$74,091,693
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores – 442			
One mile radius	\$1,300,447	\$0	\$1,300,447
Five mile radius	\$1,615,633	\$0	\$1,615,633
Sixty mile radius	\$56,291,476	\$31,551,292	\$24,740,184
Electronics and Appliance Stores – 443			
One mile radius	\$1,149,668	\$957,590	\$192,078
Five mile radius	\$1,427,802	\$965,836	\$461,966
Sixty mile radius	\$51,429,632	\$46,281,938	\$5,147,694
Building Material, Garden Equip Stores - 444			
One mile radius	\$5,860,652	\$9,533,987	(\$3,673,335)
Five mile radius	\$7,216,445	\$9,601,834	(\$2,385,389)
Sixty mile radius	\$243,931,576	\$342,299,895	(\$98,368,319)
Food and Beverage Stores – 445			
One mile radius	\$6,158,706	\$9,275,974	(\$3,117,268)
Five mile radius	\$7,676,189	\$9,356,309	(\$1,680,120)
Sixty mile radius	\$262,901,781	\$132,395,789	\$130,505,992

Table 6.1 Consumer Expenditures and Retail Sales Revenue for One, Five and Sixty Mile Areas (continued)

NAICS Sector	Consumer Expenditures	Retail Sales	Gap/ Surplus
Health and Personal Care Stores - 446			
One mile radius	\$2,829,585	\$1,054,774	\$1,774,811
Five mile radius	\$3,547,060	\$1,063,857	\$2,483,203
Sixty mile radius	\$119,796,181	\$84,598,357	\$35,197,824
Gasoline Stations - 447			
One mile radius	\$5,783,318	\$12,510,622	(\$6,727,304)
Five mile radius	\$7,253,019	\$12,793,044	(\$5,540,025)
Sixty mile radius	\$259,902,364	\$596,477,761	(\$336,575,397)
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores – 448			
One mile radius	\$2,004,624	\$360,108	\$1,644,516
Five mile radius	\$2,492,487	\$375,922	\$2,116,565
Sixty mile radius	\$92,710,319	\$22,971,910	\$69,738,409
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores-451			
One mile radius	\$909,525	\$119,967	\$789,558
Five mile radius	\$1,126,244	\$146,332	\$979,912
Sixty mile radius	\$41,335,706	\$48,188,530	(\$6,852,824)
General Merchandise Stores-452			
One mile radius	\$6,000,978	\$4,023,414	\$1,977,564
Five mile radius	\$7,470,020	\$4,777,509	\$2,692,511
Sixty mile radius	\$262,077,059	\$242,773,130	\$19,303,929
Miscellaneous Store Retailers-453			
One mile radius	\$1,384,536	\$513,728	\$870,808
Five mile radius	\$1,722,542	\$612,153	\$1,110,389
Sixty mile radius	\$60,572,172	\$42,248,773	\$18,323,399

Table 6.1 Consumer Expenditures and Retail Sales Revenue for One, Five and Sixty Mile Areas (continued)

NAICS Sector		Consumer Expenditures	Retail Sales	Gap/ Surplus
Non-Store Retailers-454				
	One mile radius	\$3,054,777	\$15,077,344	(\$12,022,567)
	Five mile radius	\$3,797,482	\$15,207,174	(\$11,409,692)
	Sixty mile radius	\$134,403,638	\$224,405,512	(\$90,001,874)
Foodservice and Drinking Places-722				
	One mile radius	\$4,659,008	\$3,287,642	\$1,371,366
	Five mile radius	\$5,774,364	\$4,069,053	\$1,705,311
	Sixty mile radius	\$204,919,258	\$177,862,935	\$27,056,323

Demand consistently exceeds supply in each of the following sectors:

- Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers
- Furniture and Home Furnishings
- Electronics & Appliances Stores
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Books, Music Stores (primary and secondary markets only)
- General Merchandise
- Miscellaneous Store Retailers
- Foodservice & Drinking Places



A gap analysis, provided in the following table allows for an estimation of the potential for additional retail space where appropriate. In this analysis, the gap value for a particular market sector is divided by estimated sales volume per square foot to yield potential for additional retail space. Estimates of sales volume per square foot are based on values found in the Urban Land Institute's *Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers 2006* for community shopping centers.⁹

⁹ Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers 2006.

Table 6.2 Potential for Additional Retail Space within One Mile Area Based on Consumer Expenditures and Retail Sales Revenue

Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers - 441			Commentary: Additional motor sales may not necessarily be an appropriate fit for a downtown setting; this is a retail (and manufacturing) sector that is particularly vulnerable to rising energy costs and tightening credit. This sector, more than any other, will be undergoing significant changes in the future.
Consumer Expenditures	\$10,449,178		
Retail Sales	\$7,955,589		
Gap/Surplus	\$2,493,589		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	Not available		
Potential for Additional Space	-		
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores - 442			Commentary: The recent closing of a furniture business in Cozad may create an opportunity for additional furniture sales in Gothenburg.
Consumer Expenditures	\$1,300,447		
Retail Sales	\$0		
Gap/Surplus	\$1,300,447		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$259		
Potential for Additional Space	5,020 sf		
Electronics and Appliance Stores - 443			Commentary: Sales within this sector are strong; existing retail operations might be encouraged to expand or diversify stock to include radios, televisions and cameras.
Consumer Expenditures	\$1,149,668		
Retail Sales	\$957,590		
Gap/Surplus	\$192,078		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$294		
Potential for Additional Space	650 sf		
Building Material, Garden Equip Stores - 444			Commentary: Building material and garden equipment needs are adequately met within the community.
Consumer Expenditures	\$5,860,652		
Retail Sales	\$9,533,987		
Gap/Surplus	(\$3,673,335)		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	Not available		
Potential for Additional Space	None		

Table 6.2 Potential for Additional Retail Space within One Mile Area (continued)

Food and Beverage Stores – 445			Commentary: Gothenburg is extremely fortunate to have a downtown grocery store; any potential for additional food and beverage sales should be pursued in a manner that complements rather than competes with this business.
Consumer Expenditures	\$6,158,706		
Retail Sales	\$9,275,974		
Gap/Surplus	(\$3,117,268)		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$378		
Potential for Additional Space	none		
Health and Personal Care Stores – 446			Commentary: the potential for additional drug and pharmaceutical sales may be more limited than data suggests; increasingly, households are using internet resources for these purchases. The sector also includes cosmetics, beauty supplies, perfume, optical goods and other health and personal care items; existing businesses may consider including or expanding these offerings.
Consumer Expenditures	\$2,829,585		
Retail Sales	\$1,054,774		
Gap/Surplus	\$1,774,811		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$218		
Potential for Additional Space	8140 sf		
Gasoline Stations – 447			Commentary: The need for gas stations is being adequately met within the community.
Consumer Expenditures	\$5,783,318		
Retail Sales	\$12,510,622		
Gap/Surplus	(\$6,727,304)		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$1,354		
Potential for Additional Space	None		
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores-451			Commentary: Data indicate a need for retail space in all sub-categories within this classification; retail space could potentially offer sporting goods, hobby items, toys, games, sewing and needlework supplies, books, periodicals, music. We note, however, that the internet is dominating the music market, particularly among younger segments of the population.
Consumer Expenditures	\$909,525		
Retail Sales	\$119,967		
Gap/Surplus	\$789,558		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$216		
Potential for Additional Space	3,660 sf		

Table 6.2 Potential for Additional Retail Space within One Mile Area (continued)

Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores – 448			Commentary: Competition from retailers in larger communities, and catalogue and internet sales make this a particularly difficult sector to attract and sustain. Data indicate that jewelry sales exceed area demand.
Consumer Expenditures	\$2,004,624		
Retail Sales	\$360,108		
Gap/Surplus	\$1,644,516		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$216		
Potential for Additional Space	7,600 sf		
General Merchandise Stores-452			Commentary: While general merchandise stores are typically larger in scale than indicated by the figure here, they are also known to have a detrimental effect on downtown businesses. The community must be careful in balancing its needs and the interests of smaller retailers.
Consumer Expenditures	\$6,000,978		
Retail Sales	\$4,023,414		
Gap/Surplus	\$1,977,564		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$173		
Potential for Additional Space	11,430 sf		
Miscellaneous Store Retailers-453			Commentary: This sector includes florists, office supplies, stationery, gift, novelty, souvenir and used merchandise stores. Existing businesses may consider expanding or modifying present offerings.
Consumer Expenditures	\$1,384,536		
Retail Sales	\$513,728		
Gap/Surplus	\$870,808		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$167		
Potential for Additional Space	5,210 sf		
Non-Store Retailers-454			Commentary: Vending machines, mail order and particularly electronic sales are increasingly important elements of the economy.
Consumer Expenditures	\$3,054,777		
Retail Sales	\$15,077,344		
Gap/Surplus	(\$12,022,567)		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	Not available		
Potential for Additional Space	None		
Foodservice and Drinking Places-722			Commentary: Data suggests stronger opportunities for full service restaurants, special foodservices or drinking places rather than limited service eating places.
Consumer Expenditures	\$4,659,008		
Retail Sales	\$3,287,642		
Gap/Surplus	\$1,371,366		
Sales Volume Per Square Foot	\$278		
Potential for Additional Space	4,930 sf		

Retail Market Sector Opportunities

Retail market demand in Gothenburg is unmet in eight of thirteen market sectors within primary, secondary and tertiary market areas, a ninth market sector is unmet in primary and secondary market areas. A sector by sector analysis shows that the primary market area can accommodate the addition of just under 47,000 square feet of retail space¹⁰.

A second analysis sums individual sector gap figures for the primary market area, divides by the median sales per square foot of all gross leasable area for community shopping centers in small town settings¹¹ and yields a slightly lower need for retail space:

$$\$9,921,148/(\$226.20/\text{square foot}) = 43,780 \text{ square feet}$$

Although Gothenburg retailers are very likely to be operating under different “sales per square foot” values; the two sets of calculations provide a reasonable mid term planning and development target of an additional 44,000 to 47,000 square feet of retail space. Although needs are evident in specific market sectors, this analysis should not limit consideration of any alternate retail development opportunity that reasonably complements existing retail activity.

The recommendations given below are based on broader retail development trends. Gothenburg has already implemented of many of these recommendations; we do, however, want to encourage the community to continue to pursue these important strategies:



a women's dress shop that provides personal shopping services, a lighting or light fixture store that sells new, and accepts and recycles used, compact fluorescent bulbs.

1. Grow your own. Promote local entrepreneurship, and looks for ways to provide sustained support for new and existing businesses. Do not depend on people and organizations from outside the community to make things happen; if the community does not promote and support its own businesses, then there is no reason for anyone from outside the community to do so.
2. Provide unique products and services. The development of facilities offering quality goods and services distinct from those offered by general or mass merchandise stores creates “buzz” and raises visibility. Unique products and services draw regional as well as local customers. Gothenburg has an established reputation for unique retail shops, and it needs to build on that reputation. Possible shop/service combinations might include: a children's book and toy store that hosts weekly puppet shows put on by the high school art and drama clubs, a specialty wine and cheese shop that offers catering and Saturday afternoon tasting events,

¹⁰ Calculations omit motor vehicle and parts dealers.

¹¹ Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers 2006, p. 172.

3. Use the internet. Tell the world that you are here; at a minimum post your hours and phone number and let people know what kind of goods and services you offer. Show your stuff, (a picture is worth a thousand words), sell your stuff. Email customers and let them know when you are having a sale or when a special event is taking place.
4. Claim your community. Find every opportunity to bring people together to relax, and enjoy themselves. Events programming can bring people into the downtown area when they might not otherwise have a reason to visit or be there. "Community" can and should include Gothenburg and Dawson County residents as well as members of various interest groups who live elsewhere. Host a pet parade or antique car rally, conduct an arts fair, sponsor a street dance. Remember that relationships increasingly make the difference between successful and languishing retail operations and community events offer an important mechanism for finding new friends and building relationships.
5. Put your best foot forward. Appearances count: well kept buildings, attractive signage, comfortable street furniture and fresh window displays let visitors know that
 - a. They are welcome
 - b. The community wants them to be comfortable during their visit
 - c. The community wants them to stay and explore
 - d. There are worthwhile goods and services available



APPENDIX A

NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) Code Listing Categories and Sub-Categories

Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers-441	Health and Personal Care Stores-446
Automotive Dealers-4411	Pharmacies and Drug Stores-44611 2
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers-4412	Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores-44612
Automotive Parts/Accessories, Tire Stores-4413	Optical Goods Stores-44613
	Other Health and Personal Care Stores-44619
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores-442	
Furniture Stores-4421	Gasoline Stations-447
Home Furnishing Stores-4422	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores-44711
	Other Gasoline Stations-44719
Electronics and Appliance Stores-443	
Appliances, TVs, Electronics Stores-44311	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores-448
Household Appliances Stores-443111	Clothing Stores-4481
Radio, Television, Electronics Stores-443112	Men's Clothing Stores-44811
Computer and Software Stores-44312	Women's Clothing Stores-44812
Camera and Photographic Equipment Stores-44313	Childrens, Infants Clothing Stores-44813
	Family Clothing Stores-44814
Building Material, Garden Equip Stores -444	Clothing Accessories Stores-44815
Building Material and Supply Dealers-4441	Other Clothing Stores-44819
Home Centers-44411	Shoe Stores-4482
Paint and Wallpaper Stores-44412	Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores-4483
Hardware Stores-44413	Jewelry Stores-44831
Other Building Materials Dealers-44419	Luggage and Leather Goods Stores-44832
Building Materials, Lumberyards-444191	
Lawn, Garden Equipment, Supplies Stores-4442	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores-451
Outdoor Power Equipment Stores-44421	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Inst Stores-4511
Nursery and Garden Centers-44422	Sporting Goods Stores-45111
	Hobby, Toys and Games Stores-45112
Food and Beverage Stores-445	Sew/Needlework/Piece Goods Stores-45113
Grocery Stores-4451	Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores-45114
Supermarkets, Grocery (Except Convenience)	Book, Periodical and Music Stores-4512
Stores-44511	Book Stores and News Dealers-45121
Convenience Stores-44512 301,618 0 301,618	Book Stores-451211
Specialty Food Stores-4452	News Dealers and Newsstands-451212
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores-4453	Prerecorded Tapes, CDs, Record Stores-45122

General Merchandise Stores-452

Department Stores Excl Leased Depts-4521

Other General Merchandise Stores-4529

Warehouse Clubs and Super Stores-45291

All Other General Merchandise Stores-45299

Miscellaneous Store Retailers-453

Florists-4531

Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Stores-4532

Office Supplies and Stationery Stores-45321

Gift, Novelty and Souvenir Stores-45322

Used Merchandise Stores-4533

Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers-4539

Non-Store Retailers-454

Electronic Shopping, Mail-Order Houses-4541

Vending Machine Operators-4542

Direct Selling Establishments-4543

Foodservice and Drinking Places-722

Full-Service Restaurants-7221

Limited-Service Eating Places-7222

Special Foodservices-7223

Drinking Places -Alcoholic Beverages-7224

Gothenburg Downtown Revitalization Plan

1. Business Name		
		Response Count
		40
	answered question	40
	skipped question	2

2. Name:		
		Response Count
		39
	answered question	39
	skipped question	3

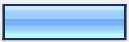

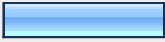


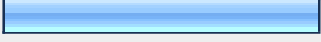
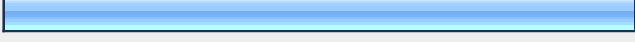
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		Response Count
		38
	answered question	38
	skipped question	4

4. email address:		
		Response Count
		34
	<i>answered question</i>	34
	<i>skipped question</i>	8

5. website, if any:		
		Response Count
		18
	<i>answered question</i>	18
	<i>skipped question</i>	24

6. Please indicate which of these best describes you.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Building Owner	<div></div>	5.3%	2
Business Owner/Building Owner	<div></div>	68.4%	26
Business Owner/Lease Building	<div></div>	26.3%	10
Other (please specify)			5
	<i>answered question</i>		38
	<i>skipped question</i>		4

7. How many years have you been in business?


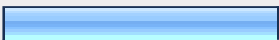
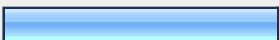
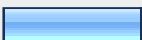




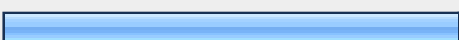
		Response Percent	Response Count
0-2 years		7.9%	3
3-5 years		7.9%	3
6-10 years		10.5%	4
11-15 years		5.3%	2
16-20 years		5.3%	2
20-30 years		21.1%	8
more than 30 years		42.1%	16
		<i>answered question</i>	38
		<i>skipped question</i>	4

8. How many years at the present location?

		Response Percent	Response Count
3-5 years	<div><div></div></div>	29.4%	10
6-10 years	<div><div></div></div>	14.7%	5
11-15 years	<div><div></div></div>	2.9%	1
16-20 years	<div><div></div></div>	11.8%	4
20-30 years	<div><div></div></div>	17.6%	6
more than 30 years	<div><div></div></div>	23.5%	8
		<i>answered question</i>	34
		<i>skipped question</i>	8

9. Do you own or lease your business location?


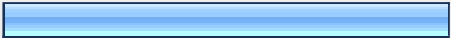

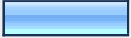


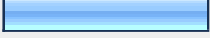
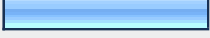
		Response Percent	Response Count
Own	<div><div></div></div>	77.8%	28
Lease	<div><div></div></div>	22.2%	8
		<i>answered question</i>	36
		<i>skipped question</i>	6

10. Approximate square footage of your businees				
			Response Percent	Response Count
0-1,000 square feet			6.1%	2
1,001 -2,000 square feet			18.2%	6
2,001-2,500 square feet			18.2%	6
2,501-3,000 square feet			9.1%	3
3,001-3,500 square feet			3.0%	1
3,501-4,000 square feet			6.1%	2
4,001-4,500 square feet			6.1%	2
4,501-5,000 square feet			3.0%	1
over 5,000 square feet			30.3%	10
	answered question			33
	skipped question			9

11. How many floors/stories does your building cover?		
		<div>Response Percent</div> <div>Response Count</div>
1	<div></div>	<div>69.4%</div> <div>25</div>
2	<div></div>	<div>22.2%</div> <div>8</div>
3 or more	<div></div>	<div>8.3%</div> <div>3</div>
	answered question	
	skipped question	

12. Choose what best describes your space needs in your current facility (Choose one)		
		<div>Response Percent</div> <div>Response Count</div>
About right - Fully utilizing space	<div></div>	<div>58.3%</div> <div>21</div>
Need more - Could expand if had more space	<div></div>	<div>36.1%</div> <div>13</div>
Too much - Have unused space and could downsize or rent out space	<div></div>	<div>5.6%</div> <div>2</div>
	answered question	
	skipped question	

13. How many paid employees besides yourself?

		Response Percent	Response Count
0 people		2.7%	1
1 person		29.7%	11
2 persons		21.6%	8
3 persons		8.1%	3
4 persons		5.4%	2
5 persons		5.4%	2
6-10 persons		13.5%	5
more than 10 persons		13.5%	5
		<i>answered question</i>	37
		<i>skipped question</i>	5

14. How many hours a week are you open?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
0-20 hours	<div><div></div></div>		5.4%	2
21-30 hours	<div><div></div></div>		5.4%	2
31-40 hours	<div><div></div></div>		27.0%	10
41-50 hours	<div><div></div></div>		37.8%	14
51-60 hours	<div><div></div></div>		13.5%	5
60 hours or more	<div><div></div></div>		10.8%	4
What hours are you open?				34
			<i>answered question</i>	37
			<i>skipped question</i>	5

15. Are you open any evenings during the week?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		27.8%	10
No	<div><div></div></div>		72.2%	26
Which evenings				10
			<i>answered question</i>	36
			<i>skipped question</i>	6

16. Would you be willing to be open any evenings if organized by the Chamber of Commerce?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	23.5%	8
No	<div><div></div></div>	41.2%	14
Not sure	<div><div></div></div>	35.3%	12
Other (please specify)			1
answered question			34
skipped question			8

17. Nature of business?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Hardware store		0.0%	0
Hair care including barber and stylist		0.0%	0
Grocery store	<div><div></div></div>	2.8%	1
Men's clothing/shoes		0.0%	0
Women's clothing/shoes		0.0%	0
Convenience store		0.0%	0
Accounting		0.0%	0
Plumbing supply	<div><div></div></div>	2.8%	1
Electrical supply		0.0%	0

Lumber yard		0.0%	0
Florist	<div></div>	5.6%	2
Bank/financial services	<div></div>	8.3%	3
Insurance agency	<div></div>	8.3%	3
Liquor store	<div></div>	2.8%	1
Bar/tavern		0.0%	0
Restaurant/cafe		0.0%	0
Gift shop	<div></div>	13.9%	5
Pharmacy	<div></div>	2.8%	1
Attorney/legal services	<div></div>	5.6%	2
Medical office	<div></div>	5.6%	2
Auto dealer		0.0%	0
Auto repair shop		0.0%	0
Appliance store	<div></div>	2.8%	1
Bakery		0.0%	0
Movie theater	<div></div>	5.6%	2
Museum		0.0%	0
Variety Store/General Store	<div></div>	2.8%	1
Discount Store		0.0%	0
Sporting goods		0.0%	0
Children's clothing/shoes		0.0%	0

Other (please specify)	<div></div>	55.6%	20
	answered question		36
	skipped question		6

18. What is your busiest time of year?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Spring	<div></div>	43.8%	14
Summer	<div></div>	37.5%	12
Fall	<div></div>	34.4%	11
Winter	<div></div>	34.4%	11
Christmas season	<div></div>	21.9%	7
Sports season	<div></div>	3.1%	1
Comments			8
	answered question		32
	skipped question		10

19. What is your most common means of advertising your business and sales? (Check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper	<div></div>	45.7%	16
Radio ads	<div></div>	2.9%	1
Group promotions		0.0%	0
Window displays	<div></div>	5.7%	2
Word of mouth	<div></div>	25.7%	9
Yellow pages	<div></div>	2.9%	1
Community support advertising (sports posters, etc)	<div></div>	2.9%	1
Other	<div></div>	14.3%	5
Other (please specify)			20
	answered question		35
	skipped question		7

20. What resources do you see available to increase promotion of your business? (Rank 1 to 6, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important)								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
Chamber promotions	10.0% (2)	25.0% (5)	25.0% (5)	15.0% (3)	10.0% (2)	15.0% (3)	3.35	20
Sidewalk sales	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	16.7% (3)	22.2% (4)	44.4% (8)	11.1% (2)	4.33	18
Christmas promotion - Magic of Mainstreet	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)	11.1% (2)	3.33	18
Farmers Market	10.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	15.8% (3)	21.1% (4)	10.5% (2)	42.1% (8)	4.47	19
Halloween promotion	5.6% (1)	38.9% (7)	16.7% (3)	22.2% (4)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	3.11	18
Other	52.6% (10)	10.5% (2)	5.3% (1)	5.3% (1)	10.5% (2)	15.8% (3)	2.58	19
	<i>answered question</i>							27
	<i>skipped question</i>							15

21. In the past five years have you seen sales increase, decrease, or stay about the same?			
			Response Percent
			Response Count
Increase	<div></div>	64.5%	20
Decrease	<div></div>	9.7%	3
Stay about the same	<div></div>	25.8%	8
What do you think attributed to this?			22
	<i>answered question</i>		31
	<i>skipped question</i>		11

22. Have your sales kept ahead of, fell short of, or stay similar to your increase in expenses?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Kept ahead of expenses	<div><div></div></div>	29.0%	9
Fell short of expenses	<div><div></div></div>	22.6%	7
Stayed similar	<div><div></div></div>	48.4%	15
To what do you think attributed to this?			14
	answered question		31
	skipped question		11

23. What increased expenses do you contribute to any change in businesss sales? (Please rank 1 to 7 with 1 being the most important and 7 the least important)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Fuel prices	59.1% (13)	9.1% (2)	9.1% (2)	9.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (2)	4.5% (1)	2.27	22
Increases in wholesale costs for merchandise	20.0% (4)	25.0% (5)	20.0% (4)	15.0% (3)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (2)	3.10	20
Sales taxes	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	44.4% (8)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)	5.22	18
Unemployment/employment changes	4.8% (1)	14.3% (3)	4.8% (1)	28.6% (6)	9.5% (2)	14.3% (3)	23.8% (5)	4.62	21
Competition with larger companies such as Wal-Mart	15.8% (3)	10.5% (2)	31.6% (6)	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)	5.3% (1)	15.8% (3)	3.68	19
The Internet/e-shopping	0.0% (0)	18.8% (3)	12.5% (2)	31.3% (5)	12.5% (2)	25.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.13	16
Other	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	18.2% (2)	9.1% (1)	27.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	4.00	11
Other (please specify)									6

	<i>answered question</i>	26
	<i>skipped question</i>	16

24. What has been the one economic factor that has impacted your pricing in recent years? (Please rank 1 to 8 with 1 being the most important and 8 the least important)										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Rating Average	Response Count
Fuel costs	45.0% (9)	10.0% (2)	25.0% (5)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (2)	2.60	20
Utility costs	5.0% (1)	30.0% (6)	25.0% (5)	20.0% (4)	10.0% (2)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.30	20
Rent	0.0% (0)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	15.4% (2)	23.1% (3)	30.8% (4)	6.08	13
Interest rates	5.3% (1)	5.3% (1)	21.1% (4)	10.5% (2)	26.3% (5)	26.3% (5)	5.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.47	19
Banking crisis	10.0% (2)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	15.0% (3)	45.0% (9)	5.0% (1)	5.50	20
Shipping/transportation costs	11.1% (2)	33.3% (6)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	3.28	18
Competition	18.2% (4)	13.6% (3)	9.1% (2)	31.8% (7)	9.1% (2)	9.1% (2)	4.5% (1)	4.5% (1)	3.68	22
Other	23.1% (3)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	15.4% (2)	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	30.8% (4)	4.62	13
Other (please specify)										8
	<i>answered question</i>									27
	<i>skipped question</i>									15

25. What community do you consider to be your biggest competition for business? (Please rank 1 to 9, with 1 representing the largest impact and 9 the smallest impact)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Rating Average	Response Count
Lexington	0.0% (0)	40.0% (8)	25.0% (5)	15.0% (3)	5.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.55	20
Cozad	40.0% (8)	10.0% (2)	25.0% (5)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	2.95	20
North Platte	35.3% (6)	29.4% (5)	23.5% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	5.9% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	5.9% (1)	2.53	17
Kearney	5.9% (1)	5.9% (1)	23.5% (4)	29.4% (5)	5.9% (1)	11.8% (2)	11.8% (2)	5.9% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.35	17
Grand Island	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	11.8% (2)	5.9% (1)	35.3% (6)	11.8% (2)	11.8% (2)	23.5% (4)	0.0% (0)	5.76	17
Lincoln	6.3% (1)	6.3% (1)	6.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	18.8% (3)	6.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	56.3% (9)	7.00	16
Broken Bow	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	5.9% (1)	17.6% (3)	17.6% (3)	17.6% (3)	29.4% (5)	5.9% (1)	5.9% (1)	5.88	17
Holdrege	0.0% (0)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	26.7% (4)	13.3% (2)	33.3% (5)	6.7% (1)	13.3% (2)	6.33	15
McCook	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	16.7% (3)	5.6% (1)	38.9% (7)	11.1% (2)	6.22	18
Comments											9
	answered question										22
	skipped question										20

26. Why do you think people shop in Community "X" as opposed to Gothenburg? (Please rank 1 to 7 with 1 the most important and 7 the least important)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Selection of similar merchandise	11.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	22.2% (4)	44.4% (8)	5.6% (1)	4.89	18
More opinions (multiple merchants)	15.8% (3)	31.6% (6)	15.8% (3)	15.8% (3)	21.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2.95	19
Merchandise and/or services not available in Gothenburg	30.0% (6)	35.0% (7)	15.0% (3)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	2.50	20
Price	9.5% (2)	19.0% (4)	19.0% (4)	23.8% (5)	14.3% (3)	9.5% (2)	4.8% (1)	3.62	21
Shopping environment	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	22.2% (4)	22.2% (4)	27.8% (5)	16.7% (3)	11.1% (2)	4.72	18
Wal-Mart or other similar discount store	47.6% (10)	23.8% (5)	19.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.8% (1)	2.10	21
Other	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (2)	70.0% (7)	6.50	10
Other (please specify)									2
	<i>answered question</i>								28
	<i>skipped question</i>								14


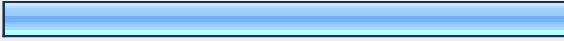
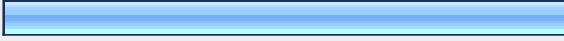
27. With recent increases in gasoline and diesel costs, do you think people will be shopping in Gothenburg more?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	43.8%	14
No	<div><div></div></div>	12.5%	4
Not sure	<div><div></div></div>	43.8%	14
Comments			8
answered question			32
skipped question			10

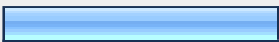
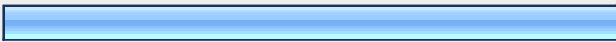
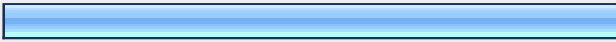
28. What are your future plans for your business?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Expansion into more space	<div><div></div></div>	42.4%	14
Move to a new location		0.0%	0
Remain the same	<div><div></div></div>	51.5%	17
Retirement	<div><div></div></div>	6.1%	2
Sell business		0.0%	0
Going out of business		0.0%	0
Comment			15
answered question			33
skipped question			9

29. If you are looking at retirement within the next five years, have you developed a business transition plan for evolving your business into new ownership?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		25.0%	6
No		37.5%	9
Not yet		37.5%	9
What is a Business Transition Plan?		0.0%	0
Comment			7
answered question			24
skipped question			18

30. If looking at retirement in the next five years, would you be interested in a program that could match retiring business owners with potential business purchasers?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		18.2%	4
No		40.9%	9
Not sure		40.9%	9
Comments			3
answered question			22
skipped question			20

31. If "Going Out of Business", what is/are the primary reason(s)?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of sales and customers	<div><div></div></div>		50.0%	1
Recent economy	<div><div></div></div>		50.0%	1
Burn out			0.0%	0
			Comment	5
	answered question			2
	skipped question			40

32. Would there be anything that could assist you and your business in order to avoid "Going out of Business"?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		50.0%	5
No	<div><div></div></div>		10.0%	1
Not sure	<div><div></div></div>		40.0%	4
			Please specify	9
	answered question			10
	skipped question			32

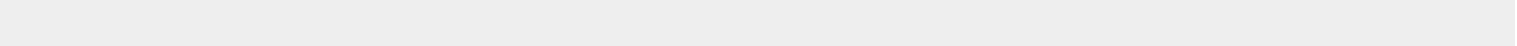
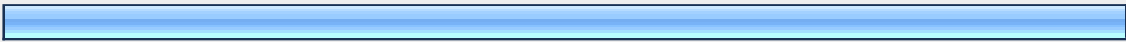
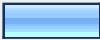

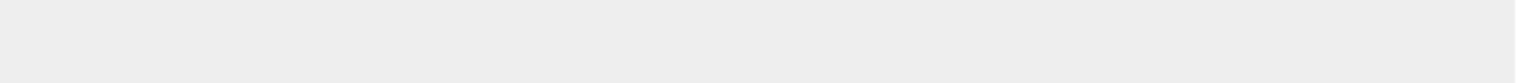
33. Does the local economic development organizations do enough to assist with protecting the interests of local businesses while marketing the community to prospective new businesses?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	37.5%	12
No	<div><div></div></div>	25.0%	8
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	37.5%	12
If no, please provide a detailed list of your needs and what tools local organizations can develop to meet those needs			7
answered question			32
skipped question			10

34. If you were to expand your business, what is/are the biggest obstacle(s) to this occurring?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Retirement	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	1
Small business financing	<div><div></div></div>	20.0%	6
Available space	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	10
Existing economic conditions	<div><div></div></div>	43.3%	13
Transportation costs	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	1
Local tax base	<div><div></div></div>	6.7%	2
Building condition (Deterioration)	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	3
Building condition (Asbestoes, lead paint, other hazardous materials)	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	1

Employees	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	3
Local support	<div><div></div></div>	16.7%	5
Other (please specify)	<div><div></div></div>	30.0%	9
	answered question		30
	skipped question		12

35. Downtown Gothenburg is clean and in good condition.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	12.1%	4
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	72.7%	24
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	3.0%	1
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	12.1%	4
Strong Disagree		0.0%	0
Comments			9
	answered question		33
	skipped question		9

36. The storefronts of the buildings are in good condition.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree		75.0%	24
No Opinion		6.3%	2
Disagree		18.8%	6
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Comments			8
		<i>answered question</i>	32
		<i>skipped question</i>	10

37. The streetscape in downtown Gothenburg is in good condition.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	3.1%	1
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	75.0%	24
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	15.6%	5
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	2
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
		Comments	3
	answered question		32
	skipped question		10

38. Parking in downtown Gothenburg is sufficient.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	6.1%	2
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	60.6%	20
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	6.1%	2
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	24.2%	8
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.0%	1
		Comments	9
	answered question		33
	skipped question		9

39. The buildings in downtown Gothenburg are in good physical condition.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree	<div></div>	53.1%	17
No Opinion	<div></div>	28.1%	9
Disagree	<div></div>	18.8%	6
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Comments			4
	answered question		32
	skipped question		10

40. The alleys in downtown are in good condition.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree	<div></div>	50.0%	16
No Opinion	<div></div>	31.3%	10
Disagree	<div></div>	12.5%	4
Strongly Disagree	<div></div>	6.3%	2
Comments			1
	answered question		32
	skipped question		10

41. The entrances into downtown are adequate.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	3.1%	1
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	59.4%	19
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	2
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	21.9%	7
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	9.4%	3
Comments			9
answered question			32
skipped question			10

42. There are numerous empty buildings to move into in downtown Gothenburg.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	45.5%	15
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	11
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	18.2%	6
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.0%	1
answered question			33
skipped question			9

43. The following types of amenities are missing in downtown Gothenburg. (Check all that apply)			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Hi-speed internet	<div><div></div></div>	5.6%	1
Wireless internet	<div><div></div></div>	11.1%	2
Seating	<div><div></div></div>	27.8%	5
Adequate Parking	<div><div></div></div>	50.0%	9
Event notices	<div><div></div></div>	38.9%	7
Information Kiosk	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	6
Other (please specify)	<div><div></div></div>	22.2%	4
	answered question		18
	skipped question		24

44. What types of businesses/services do you feel need to be recruited to downtown Gothenburg?		
		Response Count
		19
	answered question	19
	skipped question	23

45. The monies allocated for Phase II would best be used for Business development/improvement grant or low-interest loan program.				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>		6.7%	2
Agree	<div><div></div></div>		76.7%	23
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>		16.7%	5
Disagree			0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree			0.0%	0
Comment				3
	answered question			30
	skipped question			12

46. The monies under Phase II would best be utilized for storefront improvements through either a grant program or low-interest loan program.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	22.6%	7
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	48.4%	15
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	12.9%	4
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	12.9%	4
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.2%	1
Comments			4
	answered question		31
	skipped question		11

47. The monies under the Phase II portion of this project should be used for further streetscape improvements.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree	<div></div>	30.0%	9
No Opinion	<div></div>	26.7%	8
Disagree	<div></div>	36.7%	11
Strongly Disagree	<div></div>	6.7%	2
Comments			4
	<i>answered question</i>		30
	<i>skipped question</i>		12

48. The monies from Phase II should be used for public infrastructure (water, sanitary sewers, etc) improvements.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		0.0%	0
Agree	<div></div>	20.7%	6
No Opinion	<div></div>	31.0%	9
Disagree	<div></div>	31.0%	9
Strongly Disagree	<div></div>	17.2%	5
Comments			1
	answered question		29
	skipped question		13

49. The monies from Phase II should be used for grants/low-interest loans for business recruitment.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	15.6%	5
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	50.0%	16
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	25.0%	8
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.1%	1
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	2
Comments			3
	answered question		32
	skipped question		10

50. The monies should be used for grant/low-interest loans for energy efficiency improvements.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	12.9%	4
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	45.2%	14
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	29.0%	9
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	6.5%	2
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	6.5%	2
Comments			4
answered question			31
skipped question			11

51. The monies should be used for grant/low-interest loans for ADA (accessibility) improvements.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	1
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	36.7%	11
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	43.3%	13
Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	13.3%	4
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	1
answered question			30
skipped question			12

52. The monies under Phase II should be used for a combination of the items mentioned previously.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	<div><div></div></div>	31.0%	9
Agree	<div><div></div></div>	51.7%	15
No Opinion	<div><div></div></div>	13.8%	4
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree	<div><div></div></div>	3.4%	1
Comments			3
	answered question		29
	skipped question		13

53. Of the previous questions, rank which is most important to your business. (Please rank from 1 to 7 with 1 the most important and 7 the least important)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Business development/improvement	26.1% (6)	34.8% (8)	8.7% (2)	17.4% (4)	8.7% (2)	4.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.61	23
Storefront improvements	28.0% (7)	24.0% (6)	24.0% (6)	8.0% (2)	4.0% (1)	8.0% (2)	4.0% (1)	2.76	25
Further streetscape improvements	0.0% (0)	16.7% (4)	8.3% (2)	25.0% (6)	20.8% (5)	16.7% (4)	12.5% (3)	4.50	24
Public infrastructure	8.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	12.0% (3)	8.0% (2)	24.0% (6)	24.0% (6)	24.0% (6)	5.08	25
Energy Efficiency	4.8% (1)	19.0% (4)	33.3% (7)	19.0% (4)	14.3% (3)	9.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.48	21
ADA (accessibility) improvements	4.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	12.0% (3)	16.0% (4)	16.0% (4)	28.0% (7)	24.0% (6)	5.20	25
Business recruitment	37.5% (9)	8.3% (2)	4.2% (1)	8.3% (2)	12.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	29.2% (7)	3.67	24
	<i>answered question</i>								32
	<i>skipped question</i>								10

54. Of the previous questions, rank which is most important to the downtown community as a whole. (Please rank from 1 to 7 with 1 the most important and 7 the least important)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Business development/improvement	45.5% (10)	18.2% (4)	13.6% (3)	9.1% (2)	9.1% (2)	4.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.32	22
Storefront improvements	20.8% (5)	16.7% (4)	33.3% (8)	8.3% (2)	8.3% (2)	8.3% (2)	4.2% (1)	3.08	24
Further streetscape improvements	0.0% (0)	18.2% (4)	9.1% (2)	22.7% (5)	9.1% (2)	18.2% (4)	22.7% (5)	4.68	22
Public infrastructure	4.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	8.7% (2)	13.0% (3)	21.7% (5)	21.7% (5)	30.4% (7)	5.35	23
Energy Efficiency	0.0% (0)	22.7% (5)	13.6% (3)	22.7% (5)	22.7% (5)	13.6% (3)	4.5% (1)	4.05	22
ADA (accessibility) improvements	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.5% (2)	14.3% (3)	28.6% (6)	33.3% (7)	14.3% (3)	5.29	21
Business recruitment	33.3% (8)	25.0% (6)	8.3% (2)	16.7% (4)	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	12.5% (3)	2.83	24
	<i>answered question</i>								30
	<i>skipped question</i>								12

55. Please provide an overall comment on what you feel are the most important needs that you have and the most important needs you feel the downtown community as a whole has.	
	Response Count
	14
	<i>answered question</i> 14
	<i>skipped question</i> 28