DOWNTOWN ACTION PLAN

MCDONOUGH, GA
Draft - 5.30.2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This Action Plan was prepared for
THE CITY OF MCDONOUGH, GA - 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town Square of McDonough, GA, literally and figuratively sits at a crossroads. Its success will be measured not only by how the community addresses its infrastructure issues but also by how well it serves its economic and cultural needs.

This Action Plan is intended to create a road map for a prosperous downtown area - prosperity that is centered on the historic Town Square but which emanates well beyond its physical dimensions. Inherent in this plan are recommendations for key corrections to the community's hardware - its infrastructure streets, sidewalks, buildings, and even its trees that form the armature on which the community's network of social interactions and activities depend.

These action items have been organized in accordance with the Four-Point Approach (organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring) of the national Main Street program. As they note "the four points of the Main Street approach work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort."

Through extensive citizen participation in its Main Street Resource Team, several iterations of Livable Centers Initiatives, the Joint Henry County & Cities Comprehensive Plan and the National Citizens' Survey, the McDonough community has articulated a vision of McDonough as the 21st Century version of a small Southern town - It is a beautiful, welcoming, entertaining, walkable, building on its history both culturally and physically and sustaining a strong local economy that provides jobs, a variety of entertainment, recreation and shopping opportunities. To this end, the community desires to have a downtown area, centered on it's historic Town Square, with the following characteristics:

- McDonough will have the lush, quiet look, feel and charm of a 19th century Southern town with the resources and opportunities of a diverse and progressive 21st Century city that balances the natural, human and built environments; and

- The Town Square will continue to be the city's physical and cultural "heart" and its scale and character and that of the development surrounding it will be retained. The Henry County Courthouse will continue to be the dominant structure on the Square, both in mass and height. New development and rehabilitations facing the Square will continue to be subordinate to the Courthouse, although development beyond the Square may intensify in mass and height; and

- The Town Square and its surrounding commercial corridors will be economically vibrant and socially active places full of prosperous businesses in handsome, pedestrian-scaled buildings; and

- Connectivity and walkability will be hallmarks not only of the Square district but of the entire city. New development throughout the City will be focused on neighborhood districts. The Square will continue to evolve as the mixed-use district it historically has been, providing for commercial, residential, civic

and entertainment activities, public gathering spaces and opportunities for recreation.

It is expected that this Action Plan will be largely implemented through a partnership between the city and one or more non-profit organizations. Most importantly, however is the need for the downtown to have a consistent revenue stream by which to implement this plan. Without regular funding for capital projects, promotions, and other key investments, the downtown will continue to lay fallow and wreak of disinvestment and poor maintenance. Like an old shopping center, the Town Square and the rest of downtown needs to be re-capitalized and refreshed in order to attract high quality tenants and investors.

And, perhaps most critically, the excessive commuter traffic that circumnavigates the Square has created a toxic environment that discourages the vital casual shopping experience that proves successful in many vibrant downtown areas. This problem is further exascerbated by the one-way streets that extend far beyond their useful geometry to create a non-competitive retail environment, excessive speeds, and a hostile environment for pedestrian and bicyclists. The complexity of this problem cannot be solved by a twenty year old blunt instrument. Rather, it will

require a fine-tuned surgical approach to balance all of the competing needs for the infrastructure network.

The Action Plan in this report represents a strategic five-year plan for organizing, promoting, designing, and retention/recruitment that will position McDonough to revitalize the Town Square and the downtown area.
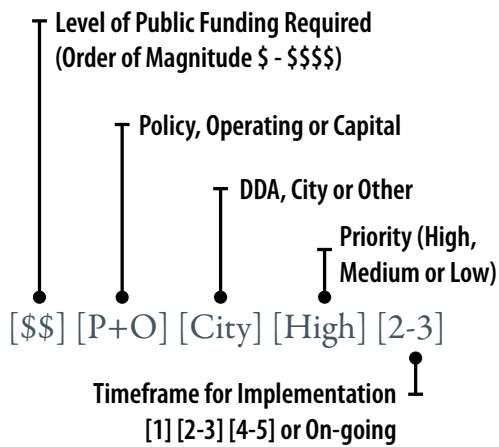
KEY ACTION ITEMS

In order for the vision and recommendations expressed by this Action Plan to be realized, specific items the City and its partner agencies will need to implement. Many of the action items seek to provide the conditions under which the vision can be achieved, by way of providing sensible land use regulation, necessary public investments, the development of appropriate programs and policies, encouraging catalyst projects and other actions. The next few pages show the list of high priority items, organized by major topic area.

The Implementation Summary Chart codes action items based on the legend. The estimated funding levels are listed according to order of magnitude in order to evaluate the relative costs of one action over another.

IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY CHART

Key to Action Items

Level of Public Funding Required
(Order of Magnitude $ - $$$$)

Policy, Operating or Capital

DDA, City or Other

Priority (High, Medium or Low)

[$$] [P+O] [City] [High] [2-3]

Timeframe for Implementation
[1] [2-3] [4-5] or On-going

Order of Magnitude	Estimated Cost Range
$	$1 - $50,000
$$	$50,000 - $250,000
$$$	$250,000 - $1 million
$$$$	$1 million+

Reference Number	Project/Task	Page Number	Level of Public Funding Required	Policy, Operating or Capital	DDA, City or Other	Priority (High, Medium or Low)	On-going	Year 1	Year 2-3	Year 4-5
ORGANIZATION										
0-1	Consolidate the Merchants Association and the Main Street in a new McDonough Downtown Development Authority	7	$	P	DDA	High		X		
0-2	Expand the Main Street boundaries to include all non-residential properties within the downtown area (move beyond the Square)	8	$	P	City + DDA	High		X		
0-3	Coordinate a common calendar for all Events and Activities in the Square	8	$	P	DDA	High		X		
0-4	Consider a Special Taxing District to fund operations/improvements/promotions specifically for the downtown area	8	$$	P + O	City + DDA	Medium				X
PROMOTION										
P-1	New Web site!!! (With mobile friendly interface)	11	$	0	DDA	High		X		
P-2	Compile and organize an inventory of tenant spaces (Retail and Office) and availability	11	$	0	DDA	High		X		
P-3	Place inventory of available spaces on the Web site with building owners' leasing representative contact information	11	$	0	DDA	High		X		
P-4	Create a full marketing package	11	$$	0	DDA	High		X		
P-5	Initiate a "Buy Local" campaign	12	$	0	DDA	Medium			X	

Reference Number	Project/Task	Page Number	Level of Public Funding Required	Policy, Operating or Capital	DDA, City or Other	Priority (High, Medium or Low)	On-going	Year 1	Year 2-3	Year 4-5
P-6	Schedule a commercial broker tour of the Downtown	12	$	0	DDA	Medium	X			
P-7	Engage regional Atlanta commercial broker and connect to ICSC Conferences	12	$	0	DDA	Medium		X		
P-8	Use social networking tools for news and cross-promotions – Facebook, Twitter, Groupon, etc	13	$	0	DDA	High		X		
P-9	Use mobile apps to interact with the community and push promotions and events	13	$	0	City + DDA	Low			X	
P-10	The DDA should limit their involvement on large events (deferring to others to organize and manage) and instead focus on more frequent small events/activities	13	$	P	DDA	Low	X			
DESIGN										
D-1	Adopt new street sections in the Downtown Code that are Complete Streets	15	$	P	City	High		X		
D-2	Adopt new Form-Based Code and related sign code	16	$	P	City	High		X		
D-3	Construct a coherent bicycle network	16	$$$	C	City + DDA	Medium	X			
D-4	Advocate for the completion of the McDonough Parkway Extension to reduce peak commuter traffic congestion through the square	16	$	P	City	High	X			
D-5	Minimize the impact of the One-Way Pair [Hold]	18	$	P + 0	City + GDOT	High		X		
D-6	Visually Reclaim Excess Pavement on the one-way approaches (Keys Ferry, Jonesboro, Macon, Griffin, and Atlanta) for Bicycles and Streetscape	18	$$$	C	City + DDA	Medium			X	X
D-7	Increase the availability of surface lots near the Square	19	$$$	C	City + DDA	Low		X	X	X
D-8	Investigate converting the existing diagonal parking to reverse angle parking	19	$$	C	City + DDA	Medium			X	
D-9	Implement new parking management strategies to created a tiered approach to improve parking utilization	19	$$	P + C + 0	City + DDA	Low			X	
D-10	Redesign the Town Square to move parking to the shopfront side, convert to reverse angle parking, and widen the sidewalks	19	$$$	C	City	High		X	X	
D-11	Install new wayfinding signs for parking areas, major downtown merchants and landmarks	20	$$	C	City + DDA	High		X	X	
D-12	Implement a variety of low cost, but highly visible projects that promote quality urban design and aesthetics	20	$	C	City + DDA + Private	Medium	X			

Reference Number	Project/Task	Page Number	Level of Public Funding Required	Policy, Operating or Capital	DDA, City or Other	Priority (High, Medium or Low)	On-going	Year 1	Year 2-3	Year 4-5
D-13	Conduct "lunch and learn" sessions by outside experts for local businesses on a variety of topics related to running a successful downtown business	20	$	O	DDA	Low	X			
D-14	Encourage new business signage that is creative and interesting	21	$	P	City + DDA	Low	X			
ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING										
ER-1	Provide streamlined tenant improvement and new business permitting	23	$	P	City	High		X		
ER-2	Customer service within the city structure should be oriented to the needs of small businesses	23	$	P	City	High	X			
ER-3	Use facade grants to secure easements for master leasing, design, and temporary use	24	$$	C	DDA	Low	X			
ER-4	Improve storefronts block-by-block beginning with the Square and working outward	24	$$$	C	DDA + Private	Medium		X	X	X
ER-5	Fill empty storefront with temporary uses (pop-up retail), temporary retail displays and public art	24	$	O	DDA	High	X			
ER-6	Fill empty spaces with working art studios – Bring the artists to the Square	24	$$	P	DDA + Private	Medium	X			
ER-7	Food/Restaurants are a key cluster – Enhance existing and recruit more	24	$	O	DDA	Medium	X			
ER-8	Recruit and attract things to do for children	25	$	O	DDA	Medium	X			
ER-9	Recruit and attract things to do for adults (e.g., Fitness Facilities)	25	$	O	DDA	Low	X			
ER-10	Attract the Henry Players Community Theater to downtown	25	$$$$	C	DDA + City + Private	High		X	X	
ER-11	Work to eliminate other barriers (Water/Sewer Charges, Tenant Upfit Requirements, etc.)	26	$$	O + C	DDA + City	Medium	X			
ER-12	Support indigenous retail – Continue prioritization of recruitment and retention assistance programs for locally-based retailers	26	$	P	DDA	Low	X			
ER-13	Recruit developer to construct housing in the Downtown (160 – 200 units) – within walking distance from the Square	26	$$$$	C	Private	Low				X
ER-14	Work with the county to focus recruitment efforts on major employers who use the airport/ freight system to begin building population and improving the depth of the demographics	26	$	O	Others	Low	X			
ER-15	Aggressively pursue film and TV production	26	$	O	DDA + Others	Low	X			

ORGANIZATION

2

"Organization establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups that have a stake in the commercial district."

"By getting everyone working toward the same goal, your Main Street program can provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy for the downtown or neighborhood business district. Through volunteer recruitment and collaboration with partners representing a broad cross section of the community, your program can incorporate a wide range of perspectives into its efforts. A governing board of directors and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of volunteer-driven revitalization programs. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders." - National Main Street Center. (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/)

The present state of the Main Street organization in McDonough does not appear to be as mature as one might expect from an organization with a 10+ year history.

There is no clear mission or plan. There is no inventory of its assets (existing and available spaces). There is no clear understanding of the taxable value of the Town Square area relative to the rest of the community. There is no clear membership beyond existing board members, who are self-selected. Communication amongst the merchants and property owners is fragmented.

And, perhaps most importantly, there is a clear lack of faith in the existing leadership to implement any real change.

In spite of this commentary, there should be more cause for opportunity than for further derision. In the end, leadership is so fundamental to the success of any action that it must be made a priority. From this leadership will grow the seeds of success.

O-1. Consolidate the Merchants Association and Main Street into a new McDonough Downtown Development Authority

The fragmentation of leadership and resources between the more formalized Main Street and the more loosely knit Merchant Association is a distracting activity. The community is too small to support a diverging set of organizations particularly when their common resources and energy are so desperately needed. Additionally, the apparent lack of tools available to either group to foster a successful strategy must be enhanced in order to achieve success. The creation of a new Downtown Development Authority in accordance with O.C.G.A. §36-42-1 et seq presents a fresh start with new leadership under the umbrella of a more robust organization.

The statutory purpose of downtown development authorities is to "develop and promote for the public good and general welfare trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities and promote the general welfare of this state by

creating a climate favorable to the location of new industry, trade, and commerce and the development of existing industry, trade, and commerce within the municipal corporations of this state. Revitalization and redevelopment of central business districts by financing projects under this chapter will develop and promote for the public good and general welfare trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities and will promote the general welfare of this state."

The following are powers that are specifically provided to the DDA created under the Downtown Development Authorities Law of 1981:

- To sue and be sued.
- To adopt and to change as necessary a corporate seal.
- To make and execute contracts and other agreements, such as contracts for construction, lease or sale of projects or agreements to finance projects.
- To purchase and own property, real or personal and to sell or otherwise dispose of property, lease or rent property. The authority's property is tax-exempt.
- To finance projects by loan, grant, lease or otherwise.
- To finance projects using revenue bonds or other obligations of authority.
- To borrow money. (requires permission of city council)
- To apply for and receive government grants, loans, loan guarantees or other financial assistance.
- To receive and use city tax monies. (The City can levy a tax up to three mills for the support of the authority (See O.C.G.A. 48-5- 350).
- To employ an executive director for the downtown revitalization efforts.
- To prepare plans for the downtown area or to hire others to prepare plans.
- To exercise any power of public or private corporations under state law, which does not conflict with the authority's public purpose.
- To serve as an urban redevelopment agency under the Urban Redevelopment Law
- To serve as a redevelopment agency under the Redevelopment Powers Law.
- To contract with a city government to carry out City Business Improvement District services in a downtown.

The practice of using this tool is so widespread in Georgia, McDonough is an oddity amongst its peers. As of 2012, according to the Georgia Municipal Association, there were 148 registered DDAs. The city can still continue to participate in the Georgia Main Street program, permitting

them to continue to receive the technical assistance benefits provided through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). [$] [P] [DDA] [High] [1]

O-2. Expand the Main Street boundaries to include all non-residential properties within the downtown area (move beyond the Square)

To limit the coordination of activities to only those properties and merchants around the Square does not reflect the actual market of the overall downtown. The additional resources, human and capital, that can be incorporated into the larger discussion will be crucial to the long-term viability of the entire area. There will always be need to have a particular focus on the frontages surrounding the Square and the Square itself, but when it comes to long-term sustainability, it must move beyond the historic core.
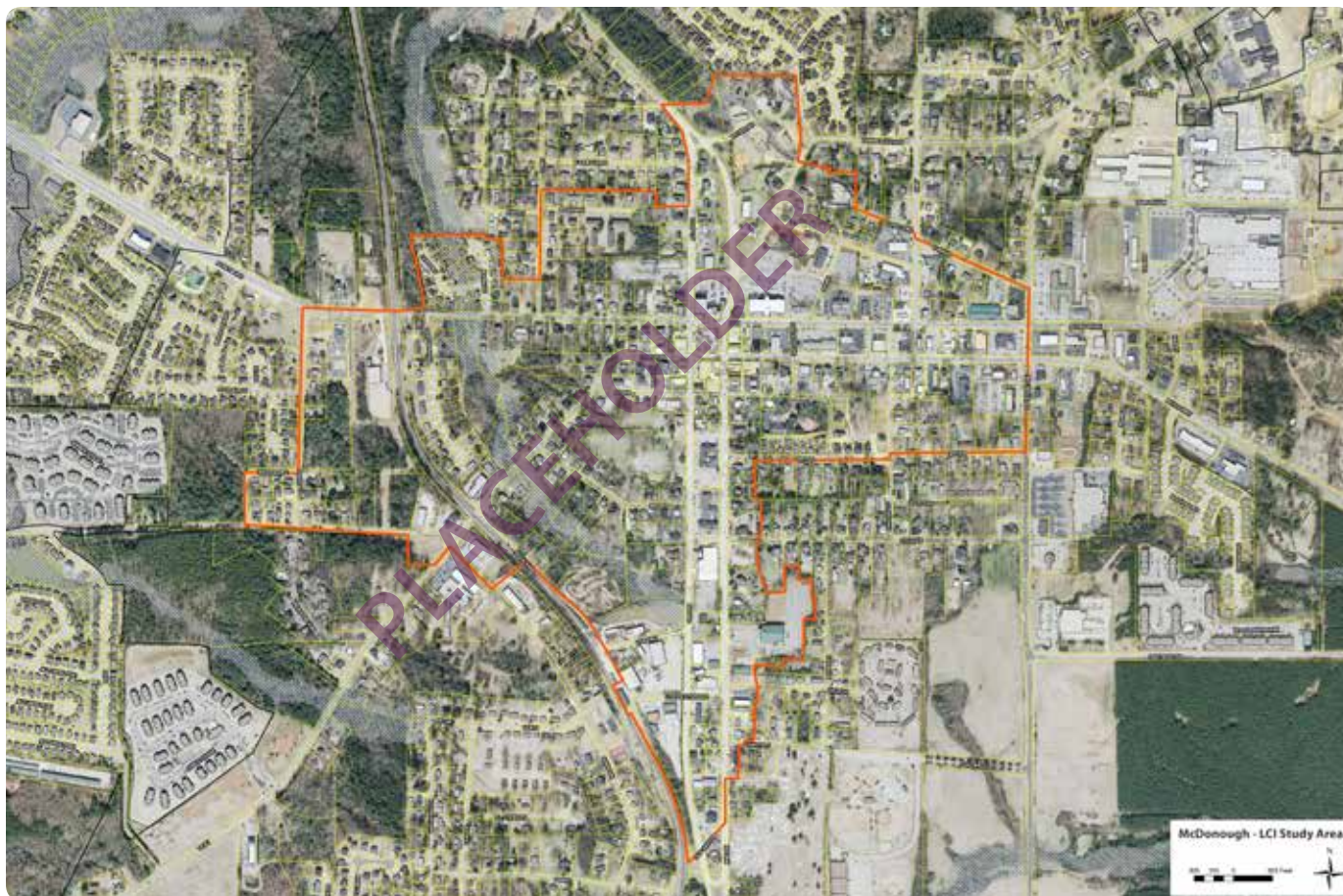
In general, the larger area should encompass the entire LCI Town Square focus area though it may not be practical to include the industrial/artist area so far south of the main corridors. In general, the area should include those corridors where the continuity of urbanism is relatively consistent - extending generally to the east of the Town Square area to the node at Zach Hinton Parkway. [$] [P] [City+DDA] [High] [1]

O-3. Coordinate a common calendar for all events and activities in the Square

While seemingly self-explanatory, this is an issue that is not in any way isolated to McDonough. The explosion in web-based technologies and mobile apps has dramatically simplified the expertise needed to construct a community calendar. The challenge lies not in the interface but rather in the coordination and distribution of the calendar. Most communities the size of McDonough have found that only one calendar is required and this is best coordinated by either the Chamber of Commerce or the local government depending on who has the better resources. The ability to be able to key activities to geographies (and organizations) will also help sort the database to weekly e-blasts or twitter feeds to the appropriate population. [$] [P] [DDA] [High] [1]

O-4. Consider a Special Taxing District to fund operations/improvements/promotions specifically for the downtown area

One of the challenges of the current funding arrangement is that it is predominately reliant upon a direct allocation from the City. While seemingly generous, it is also quite limiting. Main Street organizations that become dependent

Proposed Map of Downtown

upon the general revenues of the local government tend to underperform in achieving the true independence necessary for success.

Many Main Street organizations utilize a Business Improvement District (BID) to primarily fund enhanced services that are not already being provided by the local government. A BID is very similar in function to a Common Area Maintenance (CAM) charge that is common amongst shopping centers, malls, and multi-tenant buildings. In addition to their rent, this CAM charge helps pay for those elements that the tenant shares in common with other tenants - parking area maintenance, common promotions, site landscaping improvements, and building maintenance and improvements (e.g., new awnings, paint).

Georgia Statutes specify how this type of district is established through the approval of a majority (51%) of the property owners. Once established, an additional property tax (1- 3 mils) and/or business license surcharge is levied against all real property and businesses in the district, the

revenue from which may only be used for the betterment of those who were taxed. These funds can be used for a wide variety of activities including advertising, promotion, sanitation, security, and business recruitment/retention.

Additionally, Community Improvement Districts (CID) can be established to pay for "exceptional infrastructure needs" such as street construction/maintenance, parks and recreation facilities, utilities, and parking lots and decks. Unlike BIDs, CIDs are established only through a local act of the General Assembly, a Resolution of the City and County, and written consent of a majority of the property owners. CIDs are valuable for the funding of larger capital improvements that require bond issuance. [$$] [P+O] [City+DDA] [Medium] [4-5]

PROMOTION

3

"Promotion takes many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that will **rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence** in your commercial district. "

"Advertising, retail promotions, special events, and marketing campaigns help sell the image and promise of Main Street to the community and surrounding region. Promotions communicate your commercial district's unique characteristics, business establishments, and activities to shoppers, investors, potential business and property owners, and visitors." (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/)

P-1. New Web site!!! (With mobile friendly interface)
The current web site promotes a negative image of the downtown area and does not provide any substantive information for potential patrons, tenants and investors. The website should be visually engaging and full of well-organized and easy to read information including a robust calendar of events, available spaces/properties, links to businesses, parking locations, and common promotions. The Downtown Authority of Athens has an excellent web presence that is robust and attractive. Also, given the explosion in web browsing using mobile devices, it is important to provide a mobile-friendly interface as well. [$] [O] [DDA] [High] [1]

P-2. Compile and Organize an Inventory of Tenant Spaces (Retail and Office) and Availability
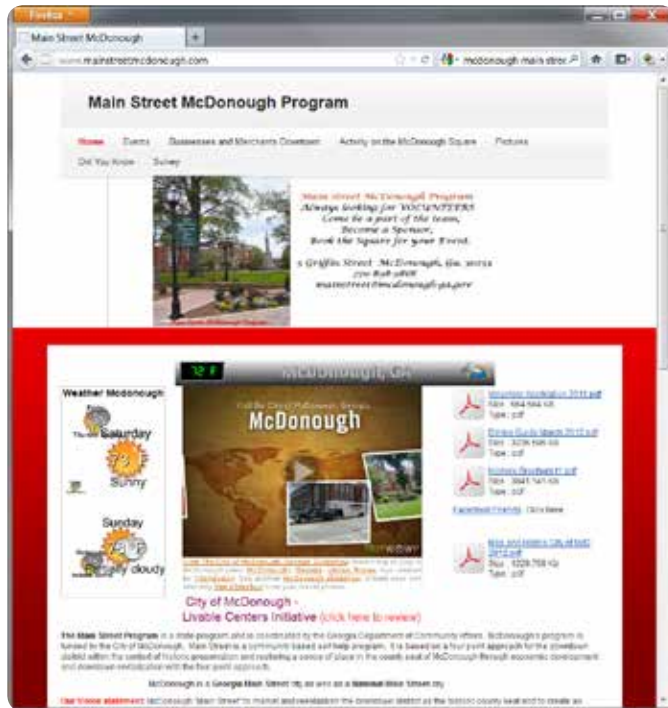Before the McDonough DDA can effectively assist in the marketing of available space and land, it must first compile a thorough database of each space and parcel in the district. At a minimum, the database should include the following: property name, property location, status (for rent, for sale, occupied), type (building or land), owner contact information, broker contact information, zoning, total floor area, total parcel size, as well as property pictures. This can be easily assembled using either a spreadsheet (e.g., Microsoft Excel) or a database (e.g., Microsoft Access, FileMaker). [$] [O] [DDA] [High] [1]

P-3. Place Inventory of Available Spaces on the Web Site with Building Owners' Leasing Representative Contact Information
Once compiled, the inventory of available space should be placed on the DDA's web site so it is easily available to interested tenants and investors. Ideally the available information should include the Property Name, Property Location, Status (For Rent, For Sale), Type (Building or Land), Available Space, Owner Contact Information, Broker Contact Information, Zoning, as well as property pictures. [$] [O] [DDA] [High] [1]

P-4. Create a Full Marketing Package
Compile a full marketing package that includes summary information on the area, demographics

Current Main Street McDonough Web Site

Downtown Athens Web Site

on the trade area, key market strengths (e.g., major employers, Town Square, major events), and demand potential by market segment. This package will combine the market study compiled by Noell Consulting Services (2012) and the Space Inventory noted previously. It would be appropriate to differentiate between office, retail, and land/development opportunities. [$$] [O] [DDA] [High] [1]

P-5. Initiate a "Buy Local" campaign

A "buy local" campaign helps to create greater awareness amongst the greater McDonough community of its local businesses and services and transfers market share from non-locally owned businesses outside of the community to local independently owned business. The restaurants in the Square are already very destination-oriented, drawing customers from outside the downtown and the community. However, the mainstay in any community is the local population. The ability to create a larger pool of buying-power amidst this group and encourage greater allegiance to the downtown will helps to increase downtown's competitve edge over all of the regional shopping centers.

The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) provides excellent resources through their "Think Local First How To Kit" and includes resources for marketing and communications planning, campaign implementation, and additional marketing tools such as coupon books, gift

cards, local currency, and facilitating business to business purchases. [$] [O] [DDA] [Medium] [2-3]

P-6. Schedule a commercial broker tour of the Downtown

With a "spit shine" and some seasonal color, a series of broker awareness lunches should be sponsored that reach out to the commercial and residential brokerage communities of greater Atlanta. These events should provide lunch and provide a walking tour of possible spaces for retail and restaurants. The goal is to create a buzz among those that represent possible retailers and restaurateurs that are seeking new or expanded locations. Every participant should be provided with a "goodie-bag" that includes the full marketing package and specific information on available space. These "lunch and learns" should be conducted in the spring and the fall to take advantage of the full bloom of the landscaping. [$] [O] [DDA] [Medium] [On-Going]

P-7. Engage a regional Atlanta commercial broker and connect to ICSC Conferences

The city needs a "high powered, high octane" commercial broker who is directly engaged with marketing the downtown McDonough area throughout the region and nationally. In addition, they should be charged with providing a visible presence at the regional International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) conference in Atlanta as well as at the national conference. Good brokers will

also assist in crafting the appropriate message to convey to various potential merchants and investors. [$] [O] [DDA] [Medium] [1]

P-8. Use social networking tools for news and cross-pomotions – Facebook, Twitter, Groupon, etc

The boom in social networking sites provides a fertile ground for cross marketing of ideas, space, and events. Creating a new Facebook page and using other tools such as Twitter will enable the downtown to push a message to a broad population with the click of a button. Gone are the days of the postcard mailer. Today's wired world delivers messages about events, activities, and promotions in the downtown to the palm of your hand. But, it is not enough to simply have a presence in the social network - downtown needs to be an active participant. An active Twitter feed is critical - weekly or monthly tweets or posts are considered inactivity and lose their audience quickly. Additionally, the downtown and its member merchants should explore the use of sales promotion sites such as Groupon that push daily specials to their subscribers. [$] [O] [DDA] [High] [1]

P-9. Use Mobile Apps to interact with the community and push promotions and events

The web has extended to the mobile environment of phones and tablets. Reliance on the web only will lose an growing population, particularly young adults, who rely upon their iPhone and Android devices to provide information at their fingertips while sitting in a restaurant (what else is around me?) or walking along the sidewalk (where can I get something to eat). Increasingly, local governments and downtown organizations are creating specialized "apps" for these devices to help consolidate information

Mobile App for Wake Forest, NC

and push data to the end users in a branded format. For the downtown, the two most essential databanks that can be utilized in this end user experience are a community events calendar and merchant promotions. A number of communities are using stock apps such as Civic Plus as well as customized and branded apps to help engage their citizens and further reinforce their brand. The latter is always if possible, though apps like Civic Plus help to engage users who are travelers or infrequent guests

to the community. Though not necessarily specific to the downtown, a community app for McDonough would help to highlight just how much there is to do in the downtown and reinforce its status as the cultural and social center for McDonough.

Wake Forest, NC just released a mobile app for its residents. Among its many functions, the Wake Forest app allows users to:
• Contact the Town for prompt action on street maintenance, lights, potholes and graffiti, using the app to send a photo and exact location of the problem
• Locate Town parks using Google maps
• Pay Wake Forest Power bills online
• Access Town news
• Access the Town's Facebook page
• Receive breaking news messages
• Link to job listings
• Access contact information for every Town department
[$] [O] [City+DDA] [Low] [2-3]

P-10. The DDA should limit their involvement on large events (deferring to others to organize and manage) and instead focus on more frequent small events/activities

The DDA should continue to support the existing calendar of events and activities but should be careful not to fall into the trap of devoting a substantial amount of their physical and volunteer resources to event promotion and management. This is a sure-fire way to burn out membership. Far too often, downtown organizations focus on events that promote general community awareness of the downtown but do not translate directly into direct sales receipts for the merchants. Large festivals that close streets and bring dozens of small vendor tents do little to generate sales during that day and in fact have oftentimes decreased sales. In short, they are good for the community but generally not good for business.

The rule of thumb for a downtown organization is that it should be involved in just a few, if any, large events (which often can be managed by a third party or the city) and instead focus its attention on providing more frequent smaller events and activities. More frequent small events that appeal to specific user groups and populations such as Friday Night Music on the Square and Ladies Night Out are more appropriate. These events provide a more predictable platform for local residents to regularly come downtown to enjoy these activities as well as shop and dine. [$] [P] [DDA] [Low] [On-Going]

D E S I G N 4

Design means getting Main Street into **top physical shape and creating a safe, inviting environment** for shoppers, workers, and visitors. It takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in a commercial district by directing attention to all of its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, window displays, and promotional materials.

It takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in a commercial district by directing attention to all of its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, window displays, and promotional materials. An appealing atmosphere, created through attention to all of these visual elements, conveys a positive message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the district's physical appearance through the rehabilitation of historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, educating business and property owners about design quality, and long-term planning. (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/)
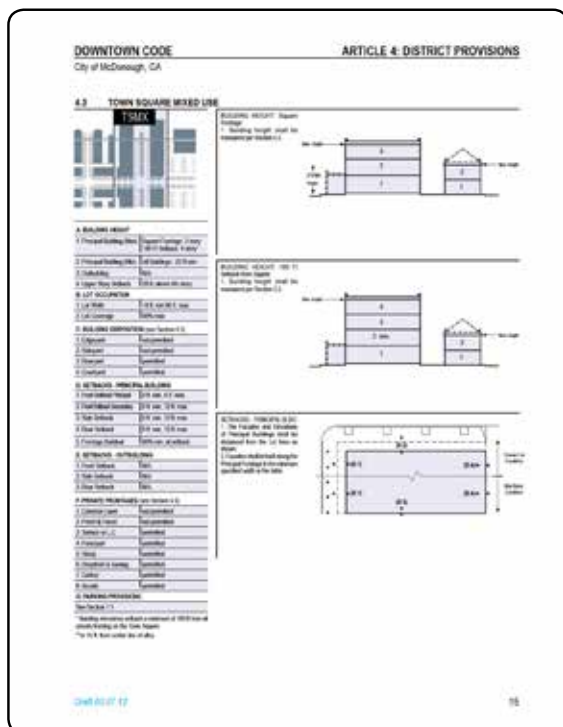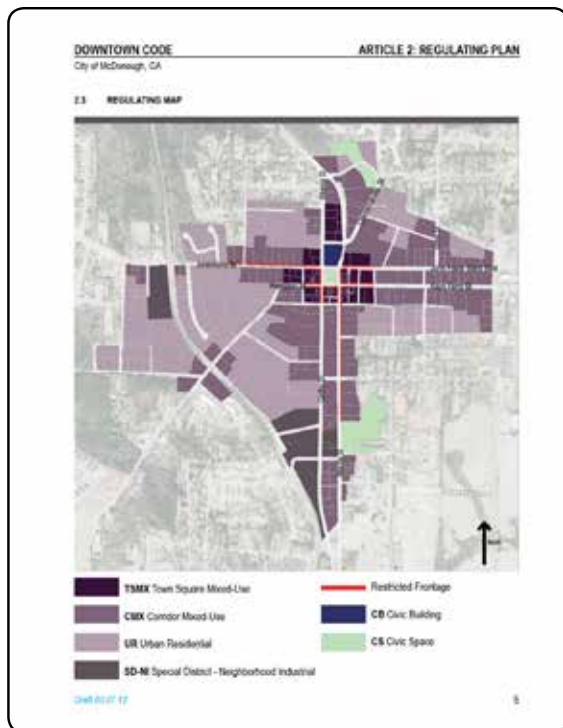
D-1. Adopt new street sections in the Downtown Code that are Complete Streets

The term "Complete Streets" is defined as a principle by which all roadway facilities are designed to accommodate all modes of motorized and non-motorized mobility in an equitable and safe manner. This is consistent with GDOT's Context-Sensitive Design Online Manual ver 1.0. The partnership aims to provide more transportation choices; support existing communities through transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling (that is, reuse of abandoned, vacant, or under-used properties for redevelopment); and value communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods. These principles are consistent with the direction in community planning and walkability that McDonough has embraced in Downtown.

In general, these typical street sections have been evaluated in terms of how they serve and balance the needs of many different groups, including the following:
- motorists;
- pedestrians (including transit riders);
- emergency service providers
- transit operators;
- bicyclists; and

Pages from the proposed Form-Based Code for Downtown McDonough

▪ people living, working, or otherwise using the adjacent land uses. [$] [P] [City] [High] [1]

D-2. Adopt new Form-Based Code and related sign code

The code prepared as a companion document to this Action Plan is a form-based code. While conventional codes focus their standards on building setbacks and minimum parking requirements, form-based codes focus on the construction of human-friendly civic realms that include pedestrian and bike-friendly streetscapes, lively shopfronts, and a range of housing choices in close proximity to walkable, town centers. The form-based code that was created as a companion document to this Action Plan is intended to completely replace the current zoning standards within the Downtown LCI area. Additionally, the current sign ordinance requires significant changes to bolster business in the area by facilitating more unique and interesting signs. [$] [P] [City] [High] [1]

D-3. Construct a coherent bicycle network

As part of the Complete Streets principles embedded into the street sections in the Downtown Code, the City should aggressively construct a network of bicycle facilities throughout the downtown as a means to facilitate non-motorized transportation into the downtown. A complete bicycle network will include a range of bicycle facilities including multi-functional neighborhood streets, multi-use paths, sharrows (shared bicycle and automobile travel lanes), dedicated bicycle lanes, and cycle tracks.
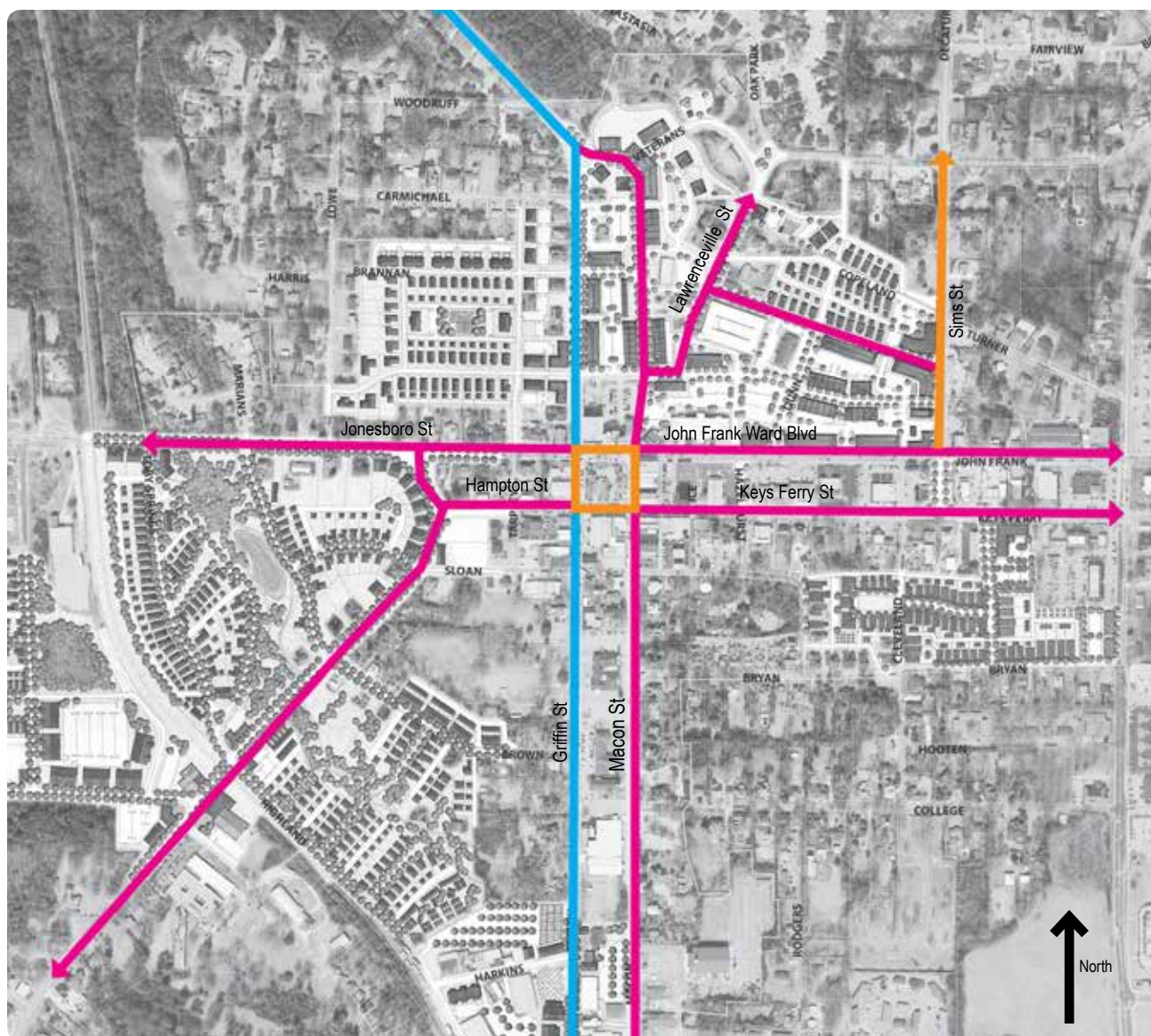
Major bicycle facilities have been located as follows:
▪ Shared Route (Sharrows): Jonesboro Street, Hampton Street, Macon Street, Lawrenceville Street, John Frank Ward Blvd, and Keys Ferry St
▪ Dedicated Bicycle Lane: All Streets in the Square, Simms Street
▪ Cycle Tracks: Griffin Street to Atlanta Street
[$$$] [C] [City+DDA] [Medium] [On-Going]

D-4. Advocate for the completion of the McDonough Parkway Extension to reduce peak commuter traffic congestion through the Square

What hampers McDonough's transportation system the most is its lack of choice particularly with regard to how residents to the east access I-75 on the western boundary. Most importantly the traffic through the Square appears to be primarily commuter-driven with peaks in the morning and evening but far more manageable traffic throughout the rest of the day and on the weekends. The McDonough Parkway is an essential part of the overall transportation network and provides a second choice for residents to the east to access I-75 and head north into Atlanta. While such bypasses can draw too much traffic from the downtown leaving it feeling desolate and empty, GDOT traffic projections still show an

The bicycle network plan shown above illustrates the complete bicycle facility network for the downtown area
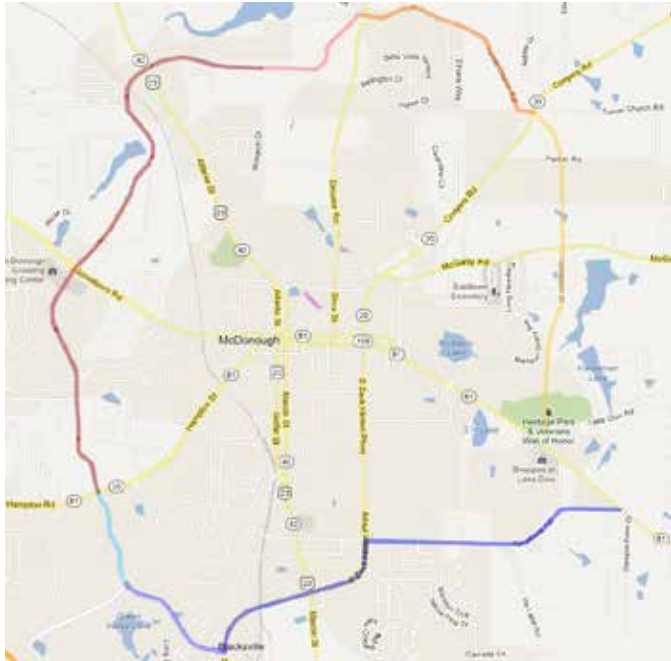
Bicycle Facility Type

Cycle Track	
Dedicated Bike Lane	
Shared Route	

Map of the planned circumferential roads serving commuter traffic that will provide relief to the excessive commuter patterns that are currently degrading the Square at peak times
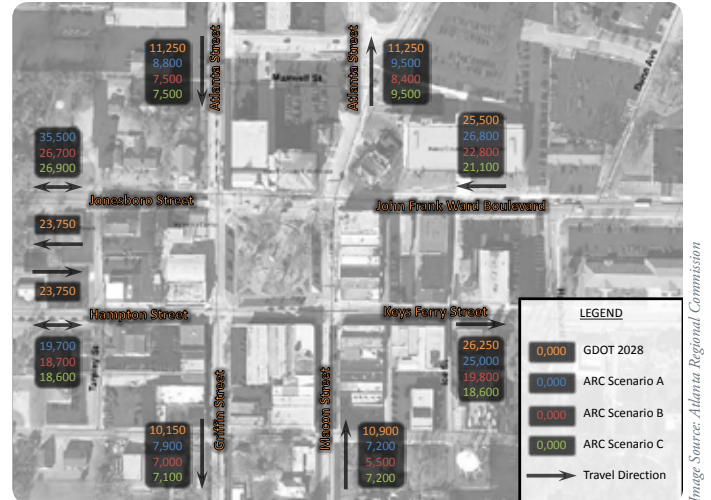
Traffic forecasts completed by the Atlanta Regional Commission under the direction of Fuss and O'Neill that illustrate the future traffic around the Square under different scenarios in which the new circumferential roads including the McDonough Parkway are completed. Only the GDOT projections that don't factor in these new roads show traffic increases. With the exception of Jonesboro Street, all other scenarios show dramatic decreases in traffic.

acceptable level of traffic moving through the downtown without overwhelming it as it does now at certain times of the day.

One important caveat to note is that it is essential that property along the Parkway not be permitted to develop in a strip commercial pattern as is so often the case with such roads. Rigid access management and careful zoning must be enforced throughout the corridor to prevent it from being degraded as well as providing additional commercial competition to the downtown area. [$] [P] [City] [High] [On-going]

D-5. Minimize the impact of the One-Way Pair [Hold]
By reconfiguring the one-way proposal to return to two-way within one or two blocks of the Square, the City can solve the congestion issue while minimizing the impact to the commercial viability of the corridors. Walkability can also be enhanced by reducing the overall length of the corridors impacted by one-way traffic.

For the east-west pair, by limiting the extent of the pair to within a couple of blocks of the Square, the City has the opportunity to control the destiny of the project and realize an expedited implementation of the west side conversion. Success of that conversion will likely afford an opportunity

to shorten the east side pair as well at a later date.

In concert with the above two recommendations, the one-way segments beyond the proposed crossovers should be converted back to two-way traffic. This action creates a more business-friendly pattern of two-way traffic for businesses and slows traffic to create an enhanced walking and cycling environment.
[$] [P+O] [City+GDOT] [High] [1]

D-6. Visually reclaim excess pavement on the One-Way approaches (Keys Ferry, Jonesboro, Macon, Griffin, and Atlanta) for bicycles and streetscape
The present pavement and right-of-way widths for a number of the roads approaching the Square is excessively wide, encourage high speeds, and lack any aesthetic investment to create proper pedestrian-oriented gateways into the center of the community. Particularly for Griffin Street and Macon Street to the south of the Square, the relatively low traffic volumes do not justify the over-abundance of asphalt.

Because of the amount of right-of-way and pavement width, the city will need to carefully weigh the costs of full street reconstruction that are involved in moving curbs and drainage with the expediency of better adapting the pavement width with lower cost solutions. Regardless, each

corridor should be as visually narrow as feasible while still permitting the expected level of afternoon/evening peak traffic through the area.
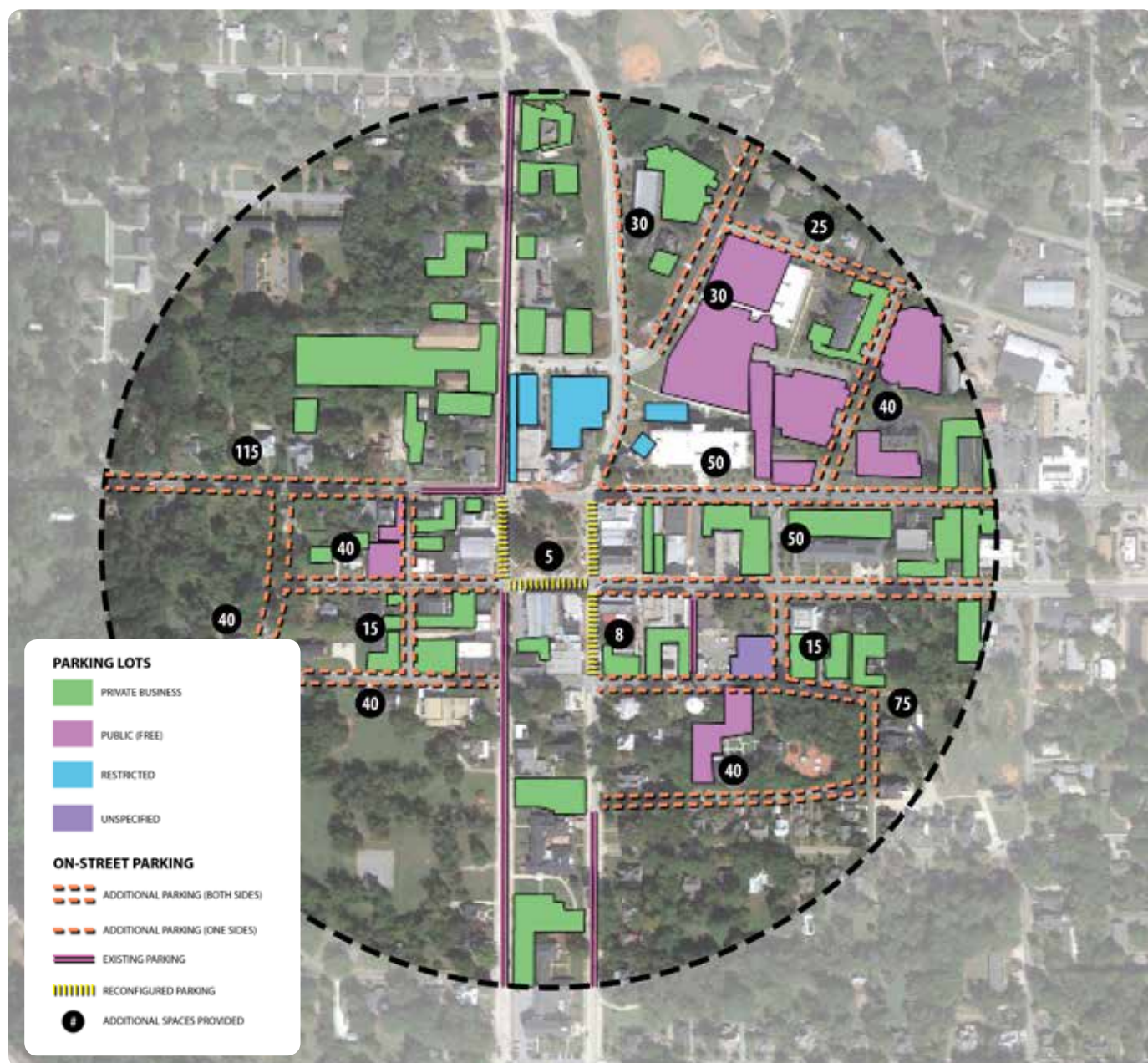
Where possible, the city should plant trees and relocate overhead utilities to create beautiful civic streets that will attract investment and encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity. [$$$] [C] [City+DDA] [Medium] [2-3, 4-5]

D-7. Increase the availability of surface lots near the Square
Any new surface parking should be constructed in

conjunction with new or redevelopment, and should incorporate lighting and landscaping. They should also be well-connected to the pedestrian network, and wayfinding should be incorporated. Number of spaces should be "right-sized" for Downtown using the modified parking ratios for Downtown and provisions for shared parking should be considered. [$$$] [C] [City+DDA] [Low] [1, 2-3, 4-5]

D-8. Investigate converting the existing diagonal parking to reverse angle parking

PARKING LOTS

- PRIVATE BUSINESS
- PUBLIC (FREE)
- RESTRICTED
- UNSPECIFIED

ON-STREET PARKING

- ADDITIONAL PARKING (BOTH SIDES)
- ADDITIONAL PARKING (ONE SIDES)
- EXISTING PARKING
- RECONFIGURED PARKING
- ADDITIONAL SPACES PROVIDED

Proposed Parking Plan for the Downtown Area

Image of a centralized parking pay kiosk that can replace multiple individual meters and free up valuable sidewalk area

Example of education signage to explain the maneuver necessary for reverse angle parking (left) and reverse-angle parking on a main street (below)

By shifting the parking configuration from head-in to back-in angle adjacent to the Square, the current issue with backing out of parking spaces and limited sightlines can be minimized. The idea was first explored as part of the original ARC work, and the configuration also has the added benefits of corralling children toward the curb with open car doors instead of toward the street, and also allowing loading of trunks from the sidewalk and not from in the street. Signage and education are recommended to be implemented to assist in the change for motorists and patrons. [$$] [C] [City+DDA] [Medium] [2-3]

D-9. Implement new parking management strategies to created a tiered approach to improve parking utilization

By considering parking management as an overall holistic element of the Downtown strategy and not as an exaction for development, McDonough can alleviate an overabundance of parking in Downtown, freeing up valuable real estate for redevelopment opportunities while insuring the "right" amount of parking to support that development potential. Currently, there is no gradation in parking hierarchy among the on-street parking supply in Downtown. The spaces around and adjacent to the Square are the most premium of spaces and should be treated as such. Therefore, it is recommended that the following time limits be imposed for the various parking within Downtown:

- On-street spaces on the Square and adjacent block should be time-limited to two hours;
- On street spaces 2-4 blocks from Square should have four hour time limits; and
- Surface lots and on-street spaces outside the 4 block area should have 8 hour time limits.

By creating a hierarchy of parking regulation, the most premium spaces nearest the Square will have the highest turnover and owners and employees will be discouraged from taking those spaces.

As part of this comprehensive strategy, a kiosk-based parking system should be considered that eliminates the sidewalk clutter caused by the existing parking meters. Additional benefits are that these pay stations can be configured to accept credit cards, merchant tokens, and payment by cellphone. [$$] [P+O+C] [City+DDA] [Low] [2-3]

D-10. Redesign the Town Square to move parking to the shopfront side, convert to reverse angle parking, and widen the sidewalks

At present, the only on-street parking that is adjacent to the shopfronts on the Square is along Keys Ferry Street and both Macon Street and Griffin Street/Atlanta Street have less than desirable sidewalk widths and poor streetscaping. In the most successful retailing environments, the parking is located on the shopfront side and the sidewalks are as wide as practical, preferably 16 feet, to
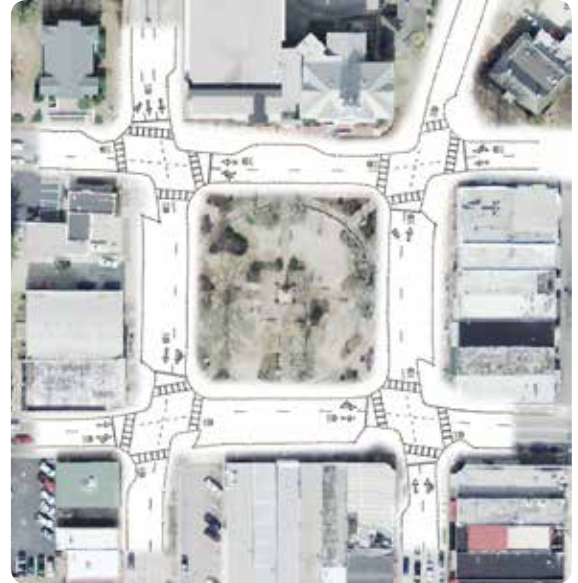
permit outdoor dining.

With the majority of the "convenience" parking located across two circulating lanes of heavy traffic, it is very challenging to cross on foot during certain times of the day. In fact, numerous outside agencies and firms have declared the situation to be dangerous to pedestrians. While there will be disruption associated with the reconstruction of the Square, the current situation needs an immediate fix to avoid any potential pedestrian injuries or deaths.

The proposed plan removes the angle parking from the Square and slightly shifts the lane approaches to accommodate a new offset caused by the flipping of the parking from one side to the other. In addition to the placement of the parking in the correct location, the slight lane offset should also serve as a traffic calming device, slowing traffic moving around the Square.

Lastly, the plan suggests the use of the child and bicycle-friendly reverse angle parking consistent with the other recommendations in this Action Plan. Because reverse angle parking uses slight less space than conventional diagonal parking, the additional space available can be allocate to a slightly wider sidewalk (up to 4 feet in certain locations). [$$$] [C] [City] [High] [2-3]

D-11. Install new wayfinding signs for parking areas, major downtown merchants and landmarks

The promotion of parking areas, particularly those behind buildings is a perennial challenge for downtowns. However, with appropriate signage and wayfinding, visitors to the area can more easily navigate the downtown and find their destination. A comprehensive signage and wayfinding plan should be developed that creates a plan for the location and type of sign along with a specific theme that is unique to McDonough. This signage plan should be extended to all of the key gateways of McDonough as funding permits. [$$] [C] [City+DDA] [High] [1, 2-3]

Proposed reconfiguration of the Square to move the parking to the merchant side of the street and install reverse angle parking to widen the sidewalk

A comprehensive wayfinding system is critical to the viability of any commercial center

Examples of low cost, high visibility projects in walkable, urban environments

D-12. Implement a variety of low cost, but highly visible projects that promote quality urban design and aesthetics

It is vitally important for every shopping district who strives for success that there is a clear sense of caring for the details wherever customers walk. As pedestrians, people experience a substantial amount of detail that is not apparent from a car. Brick textures, smells emanating from a vent, sounds of children laughing, and the color burst of fresh flowers all serve to excite the senses in a walkable urban environment.

These urban details provide opportunities for successive years of layering by multiple groups - from individual businesses to the city government. Some are necessary to coordinate while other can simply happen more organically. When properly executed these layers of small details serve to energize a street and entertain its occupants. The DDA should solicit ideas and maintain a running list of potential small projects that make a big difference and encourage various individuals and groups to adopt their installation. The following list is by no means comprehensive but it representative of the types of small projects that are low cost but highly valuable:

- Seasonal Color (Flowers in pots and hanging baskets)
- Benches (Possible public art opportunity)
- Pedestrian Crosswalks
- Public Art

[$] [C] [City+DDA+Private] [Medium] [On-going]

D-13. Conduct "lunch and learn" sessions by outside experts for local businesses on a variety of topics related to running a successful downtown business

Because it is often very difficult for small business owners to leave town to attend continuing education and professional development course, many DDAs have taken to providing such opportunities on a local basis through a series of "lunch and learn" or similar format meetings/presentation. Because of the depth of the Atlanta market, it should be very easy to tap regional experts for nominal fees (or perhaps on a voluntary basis) to provide such content. To encourage participation, consider a drawing for a higher value item (e.g., iPad, weekend vacation) for those who attend more than half of the session. Such session could include:
- Storefront design
- Merchandising
- Signage
- Financial management
- Promotions and advertising
- Social Networking and Online Sales

[$] [O] [DDA] [Low] [On-going]

D-14. Encourage new business signage that is creative and interesting
The current sign ordinance is far too limiting for a vibrant business district but there is also a lack in creativity expressed within that framework. Today's signage options are as varied as the businesses and provide a welcome whimsy and interest that helps to contrast the business from the plain facades. Through the "lunch and learn" program previously noted and expanding the facade grant program to include signs, businesses should be encouraged to update from the outdated, internally-illuminated cabinet signs and other outdated signage. [$] [P] [City+DDA] [Low] [On-going]

Examples of non-traditional signage that enlivens a downtown environment

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

5

Economic restructuring strengthens the community's **existing economic assets** while **diversifying its economic base**.

Economic restructuring strengthens the community's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base.

This is accomplished by retaining and expanding successful businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of business owners, and attracting new businesses that the market can support. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district. The goal is to build a commercial district that responds to the needs of today's consumers. (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/)

ER-1. Provide streamlined tenant improvement and new business permitting

One of the least expensive improvements that any city can make to help facilitate the reinvestment in older buildings is streamlining the development review and permitting process. Given the small size of the City, the improvement in overall customer responsiveness can play huge dividends in the overall perception of McDonough as being "open to business." The City of Spartanburg, SC has been a leader in helping potential building owners and tenants to identify key code building code issues

in a non-binding Preliminary Code Walkthrough. Very similar to a home inspection or a voluntary OSHA audit, this process is widely regarded in the city as being a key tool in helping to revitalize their core downtown. [$] [P] [City] [High] [1]

ER-2. Customer service within the City structure should be oriented to the needs of small businesses

To add a staff person with the orientation and responsibility of supporting small businesses in McDonough would be short sighted. It is necessary that everyone who provides services, from the receptionist to the plan reviewer to the parking officer understand how their actions can contribute to a business-friendly and perhaps most importantly a citizen-friendly environment. Small businesses in the downtown area have frequently noted the lack of sympathy on the part of some staff for their unique and specific needs.

And while the city is charged with administering the regulatory structure, the tone and approach of that administration can go a long way toward creating a true partnership between the city and its customers. Frequent and friendly communication is critical to this as are the creation of simple "how to" guides to help customers navigate the system.

Finally, it is important to note that city is not the

only player in the regulatory environment but it can serve as an advocate for local constituents to Henry County and statewide agencies and organizations that both regulate and provide services. [$] [P] [City] [High] [On-going]

ER-3. Use facade grants to secure easements for master leasing, design, and temporary use

The city facade grant program was being used in the past to help facilitate storefront improvements, primarily, new awnings and signage. However, in granting this assistance, the downtown is missing out on the opportunity to create a master lease arrangement similar to what is found in shopping centers and malls. Under this arrangement, other downtown organizations have successfully used this tool to provide additional assistance to property owners through joint marketing and tenant recruitment, common store hours, and the continued activation of storefronts when a tenant moves out (pop-up retail and temporary displays) to eliminate the blank storefront. While these tools are not appropriate to enforce through regulation, they are ideal in a contractual relationship between the owner and the McDonough DDA much like a standard lease in nearly every other professionally managed multi-tenant building. [$$] [C] [DDA] [Low] [On-going]

ER-4. Improve storefronts block-by-block beginning with the Square and working outward

The vacancy in many of the blocks cannot be cured with a shotgun approach. While clearly tenant recruitment is often dependent upon the building owner, the "biggest bang for the city's buck" will be achieved by focusing on certain blocks, stabilizing them, filling them with quality tenants, and then moving on to the next block.

The city simply doesn't have the resources to simultaneously focus on every block. For the consumer, the perception of a continuity of activity and use in the storefronts is the most important element in encouraging cross-shopping in a downtown. As such it is important that the downtown focus on the most visible blocks first. While this may not mean being able to fill each space with a preferred tenant, there are some temporary strategies that can be employed to eliminate the negative perceptions that visitors might have:

Identify key storefronts needing renovation, key vacant spaces, and blank walls on a block-by-basis and prioritize the resources of the DDA to begin with those storefronts that directly face the Square and work around and then outward.

Most small downtowns like McDonough can only support between four and eight blocks of continuous retail and restaurants. In McDonough, this means that three blocks around the Square are likely at least half of the total capacity. The next priorities should be on the two southern legs of the Square - Atlanta Street and Macon Street. [$$$] [C] [DDA+Private] [Medium] [1, 2-3, 4-5]

ER-5. Fill empty storefront with temporary uses (pop-up retail), temporary retail displays and public art

As has been mentioned previously, filling the gaps in storefronts is the highest priority. Until such time as quality, longer-term tenants may be secured, the DDA should strongly encourage the occupation of empty storefronts with temporary uses ("pop-up" retail - retailers leasing space on a week-to-week or month-to-month basis), the placement of temporary retail displays from other area retailers, and art work. Retailers in other locations in McDonough or elsewhere in the region can use the "pop-up" as a means to test whether they want to make a longer-term investment in the downtown without the upfront tenant improvement costs or to test a new concept, product, or service. [$] [O] [DDA] [High] [On-going]

ER-6. Fill empty spaces with working art studios – Bring the atists to the Square

The growing number of artists in the McDonough area has the opportunity to provide transformative energy to the downtown. Like Asheville, NC and the Tannery Row in Buford, GA, artists and their studios not only lease hard to fill spaces, but they contribute to the public realm as their artwork and whimsy spills onto the streets. It is important to keep in mind that artists have one key factor that drives their leasing choices - cheap rent. So, like other temporary uses noted previously, studio space may not be a long term strategy without some type of subsidy. Grants from public agencies and private foundations can help bridge this gap as means to sustain their valuable long-term presence, particularly once rent levels begin to increase over time with success. [$$] [P] [DDA+Private] [Medium] [On-going]

ER-7. Food/Restaurants are a key custer – Enhance existing and recruit more

The most successful cluster of business in the downtown area is its restaurants. As the DDA begins to market space, the continued focus on restaurants further reinforces the downtown as a destination. Restaurants thrive when there are variety of choices. The ideal tenant is an existing

restaurant in another location in the region who is seeking to expand their operations. Focus on expanding the current offerings with the following categories of offerings:

- Coffee shop
- Yogurt/Ice Cream Parlor (Independent or chain e.g., Red Mango, Yoforia, Menchises, Pinkberry, Ben & Jerrys)
- Family Oriented (e.g., Fellini's Pizza /La Fonda, Chow Baby)
- Sports Bars (e.g., Buffalo Wild Wings, Taco Mac)

[$] [O] [DDA] [Medium] [On-going]

ER-8. Recruit and attract things to do for children

McDonough is a family-oriented community with a large number of families with young children. It is not enough, therefore to simply have shops and restaurants. The most successful shopping centers, malls and business districts know that a diversity of entertainment and recreation is critical to providing the maximum amount of potential customers within arm's reach of making a sale. Attracting both retailers and organizations that are more activity-oriented will also extend the hours of customer presence in the downtown into the early morning and late at night. Such children-oriented offerings could include, but are certainly not limited to the following:

- Make your own books, pottery, etc
- Dance studio
- Hands-on science
- Children's learn and play

The goals is to provide other reasons for people to be in the downtown. For some categories, particularly those that involve a parent dropping off a child for a dance class or a lesson, this is an opportunity to attract that parent and perhaps their other children to shop and buy during their wait. [$] [O] [DDA] [Medium] [On-going]

ER-9. Recruit and attract things to do for adults (e.g., Fitness Facilities)

Bringing more adults to the downtown outside of the lunch hour is necessary to provide added life and vitality in the morning and evenings. Fitness facilities serve a vital role during the "off-peak" hours in driving traffic to the downtown. While not directly creating a cross shopping environment (most people do not like to shop after a workout), they do provide another reason for people to be in the area, increase overall foot traffic and improves other's perception of safety and overall activity. Most importantly they are anchors that bring people past

shopfronts, increasing the number of potential "eyeballs" on a storefront display or restaurant's menu with the end result of encouraging a return trip. [$] [O] [DDA] [Low] [On-going]

ER-10. Attract the Henry Players Community Theater to downtown

There has been a strong desire for sometime to re-activate the former Clay Theater to accommodate the Henry Players. While the interior will need substantial remodeling/renovation to better suit the needs of an active theater (it was originally a movie theater though even most of those arrangements have been lost to time), the location and the building's exterior and location on the Square make it ideally suited for this type of venture. This would help to expand activity in the downtown into the evening and would be a boost to restaurants whose current dinner crowds are sagging.

Though parking is somewhat limited immediately adjacent to this building, the currently under-utilized surface lots behind the County Courthouse as well as the strategic striping of new angle parking spaces along Jonesboro Road and Keys Ferry Street would provide a number of easily accessible spaces.

While capital intensive, this catalytic project would be transformative for the downtown and provide an essential unique differentiator among competing downtowns and shopping areas in the south Atlanta market. [$$$$] [C] [DDA+City+Private] [High] [1, 2-3]

ER-11. Work to eliminate other barriers (Water/Sewer Charges, Tenant Upfit Requirements, etc.)

As is so often the case in downtowns, older buildings pose unique challenges for tenants as they upfit the interior space for their needs. There are a number of older buildings that have not been upgraded for decades and while the owner of the building is willing to offer rent concessions, start-up retailers and fixture-intensive restaurants are not prepared to make the significant upfront investment to bring their space and/or building up to current building code standards. The same is true for upsizing existing water and sewer services to buildings, particularly for restaurants, salons/day spas and other water-intensive business who need more than a standard water service in addition to backflow preventers and grease traps.

The city's building inspection staff can take a page from

the successful Feasibility Inspection program by the City of Spartanburg, SC.

> *"A feasibility inspection is a helpful tool for business owners and property owners who are planning to open a new business in the City of Spartanburg. The City of Spartanburg provides this service at no charge to make tenants aware of building code issues that will need to be addressed in their buildings prior to opening for business."*

This program has been very well received and has proven to be very proactive in heading off any unbudgeted expenses once commitments have been made.

With regard to water and sewer upgrades, there are two basic approaches. First, when streetscape work is done and sidewalks are widened, the city can install new services to each building as a part of the streetscape program. This ensures that upgrades are not disruptive to the sidewalk or street and are comprehensive. Second, the city can provide incentives/discounts on capacity charges and tap fees for redevelopment areas, such as the downtown. Such incentive programs can be funded though a direct grant by the city or by the use of a Business Improvement District or similar localized-funding option.
[$$] [O+C] [DDA+City] [Medium] [On-going]

ER-12. Support Indigenous Retail – Continue prioritization of recruitment and retention assistance programs for locally-based retailers

Successful, locally-based business should continue to serve as the cornerstone of any revitalization effort. While attracting new tenants will help to fill vacancies and improve pedestrian traffic, such efforts cannot be done without the proper support of existing business. More about this support is noted in the Promotion section. Additionally, the DDA should also encourage and prioritize the relocation or new location of homegrown business. Locally-based business owners are much more likely to be good civic stewards, volunteers, and philanthropists for local needs. Additionally, their ties to the McDonough community will expand the network of friends and family who will come to the downtown to live, work and shop. [$] [P] [DDA] [Low] [On-going]

ER-13. Recruit developer to construct housing in the Downtown (160 – 200 units) – within walking distance from the Square

More people living within a five or ten minute walk of the Square is essential to create a critical population to attract new investment. People within walking distance are excellent candidates for downtown businesses because they can choose the low maintenance and recreational mode of transportation, walking or biking in lieu of using a car to fight traffic in other shopping areas.

The focused encouragement of infill housing throughout the downtown area on a scattered site basis as well as the construction of a single housing project within walking distance from the Square are critical to improving the downtown area's demographic mix. And, with the Southern Crescent Technical College set to open its doors in the downtown, providing some quality housing that students might consider further serves to buoy this opportunity. There are few quality options for rental housing currently in the McDonough market so there is an opportunity in the next 3-5 years to attract a developer to the downtown to create urban housing that complements the Square and the historic nature of the downtown. Potential locations for such projects are noted in the conceptual plan and include locations to the west, northwest, or perhaps as part of a redevelopment project along the under-utilized John Frank Ward Boulevard to the east of the Courthouse. [$$$$] [C] [Private] [Low] [4-5]

ER-14. Work with the County to focus recruitment efforts on major employers who use the airport/freight system to begin building population and improving the depth of the demographics

Jobs drive growth for housing which drives demand for retail and services. It is a simple equation and yet very difficult to implement in smaller communities. Given McDonough's location along the I-75 corridor and the prevalence of freight-related services a key recruiting component should be a similar operation seeking a Henry County address. While such a business will necessarily be located closer to the Interstate, the back office operations and logistics could be located within the downtown area. Regardless, solid employment will help to drive sustainable growth into the future and will help to bolster the downtown's success. [$] [O] [Others] [Low] [On-going]

ER-15. Aggressively pursue film and TV production

According to the State of Georgia's web site, "film and TV production professionals know that Georgia is a Camera Ready state, with highly desirable financial incentives, location diversity, production resources and professional support to make any size production a true success." As a "Camera-Ready City," McDonough can leverage the

Conceptual Plan showing potential locations for infill housing within a 5 and 10 minute walk of the Square

quintessential small town character embodied around the Square to attract film and TV productions to the downtown area. The Henry County Chamber of Commerce serves as the "Camera-Ready Liaison" for the county. [$] [O] [DDA+Others] [Low] [On-going]