

NOTICE

A meeting of the City of Evansville Economic Development Committee will be held on the date and at the time and location stated below. Meetings are typically held the 3rd Monday of each month. Notice is given that members of the City Council might be in attendance. Requests for persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made by calling City Hall: (608)-882-2266 with as much advance notice as possible. The meeting will also be held virtually in response to COVID-19. To participate via video, go to this website: <https://meet.google.com/kwi-pdcb-xnj>. To participate via phone, call this number: 1 347- 754-4157 and enter PIN: 382 008 665# when prompted. (Your microphone may be muted automatically)

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**

Regular Meeting

31 S Madison, Evansville, WI 53536

Monday, March 21, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Motion to approve agenda
4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the January 17, 2022 regular meeting and approve them as printed.
5. Civility Reminder
6. Citizen appearances, other than listed agenda items
7. Monthly Reports
 - A. Community Development Update
 - a. Takeaways from Governor's Conference on Economic Development and Ehlers Public Finance Seminar
 - b. Jason and Jim's Washington D.C. Trip
 - B. Chamber of Commerce Report
 - C. Tourism Commission Report
8. Discussion
 - A. Economic Development Chapter of Comprehensive Plan
 - i. Vision
 - ii. Policies, Goals, and Objectives
 - iii. Resources
 - i. 2008 Economic Development Plan
 - ii. 2012 Ady Voldedge Retail Market Analysis
9. Next Meeting Date: April 18, 2022 at 6:00 pm
10. Motion to Adjourn

-James Brooks, EDC Chair

These minutes are submitted by the Community Development Director and are not official until approved by the City of Evansville Economic Development Committee.

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
Monday, January 17, 2022, 6:00 PM
Meeting held virtually and in-person

MINUTES

1. Call to Order. Ladick called meeting to order at 6:00pm

2. Roll Call:

	Present/Absent	Others Present
Chair James Brooks	A	City Administrator Jason Sergeant
Ben Ladick, Vice Chair	P	Community Development Director Colette Spranger
Vacant	-	Christina Slaback, Evansville Chamber of Commerce
Jason Knott	A	Bill Lathrop, Evansville Today
Abbey Barnes	P	
Sue Berg	P	
Brandon Rutz	P	

Rutz was not immediately available at roll call. Lack of quorum was discussed on whether or not to carry on with the meeting, considering there were no actionable items. The committee starting with monthly reports.

3. Civility Reminder Ladick reminded the committee of the City’s commitments to civil discourse.

4. Citizen Appearances, other than listed agenda items. None

5. Monthly Report

A. Community Development Updates. Spranger shared the Report. This month’s report included a Year in Review of economic development advancements in the community, written by Rutz. In going over 2021’s building permit data, Lathrop asked if duplexes counted as affordable housing. Spranger replied that she did not know, but the current supply of lots available for building in the City is low at the moment, and any new housing is good. Many of the permits issued at the end of 2021 were for new duplexes.

B. Chamber of Commerce Report. Slaback summarized the Chamber’s annual report. Chamber is in the middle of its membership renewals. Have had some inquiries regarding available properties/sites over the past month. New Year’s mixer was cancelled due to increased COVID numbers. Also updating the Chamber’s community guide.

C. Tourism Commission Report. Berg shared recent updates. She is going to the Historic Preservation Committee to seek a source expert relative to the mural project. Specifically, she is looking for someone to check in with on impacts to historic buildings. The mural

project is the major undertaking of the tourism commission at the moment. Next meeting is February 10th.

6. Discussion

A. CUP Compliance and Code Enforcement to Enhance Economic Development

Spranger discussed her thoughts on how to reach business owners about existing funding opportunities and other underused programs for business development, without overwhelming owners or overstepping on what the Chamber already does. Berg suggested developing a fact sheet that summarizes the resources available, and sharing it would be a good refresher for the business community. Sergeant noted that the current economic development website should be kept up-to-date, and that the fact sheet should refer back to the City's economic development website. Slaback offered the Chamber's e-blast and to share any information that was shared on the City's Facebook page. Brief discussion of WEDC's Bounceback Grant, which several business owners in the area have received. Grant funding is temporary and is available to businesses moving into previously vacant space. Slaback discussed not overwhelming the business community too many updates, as information sometimes gets overlooked.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update

i. Business Survey

Spranger inquired about the group's thoughts on a business survey. Rutz asked where the focus should be. Spranger replied that it would be good to know what things the City should be focusing on, any weaknesses they could identify, or other experiences they've had in Evansville. Sergeant talked about business retention visits, which sometimes reveals useful information about what is needed. Group discussion continued about appropriate methods of outreach.

ii. Goals for Economic Development chapter update

Spranger began by explaining the opportunity to create measurable action items in the upcoming Plan update. Sergeant pointed out that past economic development chapters have been rendered essentially useless after events like the 2008 Recession or COVID. Slaback concurred, noting that when the Chamber reaches out, they realize that businesses don't necessarily know what they want from the City. Questions the efficacy of trying to survey a large number of business owners, and instead suggested letting them know they have an opportunity to be heard. Continued group discussion about economic development strategy.

With a quorum in place, the committee followed up on housekeeping items.

7. *Motion to Approve Agenda* by Berg, seconded by Barnes, approved unanimously.
8. *Motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the December 20, 2021 meeting and approve them as printed* by Rutz, seconded by Barnes, approved unanimously.
9. Next Meeting Dates: February 20, 2022 at 6:00pm
10. *Motion to Adjourn* by Berg, seconded by Barnes, approved unanimously.



Community Development Updates

February 25, 2022 Colette Spranger, Community Development Director

Recent and ongoing community development activities:

- Colette and Jason attended the Governor's Conference on Economic Development
- Jason attended the Ehlers Public Finance Seminar
- Jason and Jim went to Washington D.C.
- Town of Union has reached out regarding a potential boundary agreement or similar
 - Committee of the Whole on a Saturday in May?
- Continued inquiries for retail/commercial space around the City

2022 Comprehensive Plan Update

- Community Survey and Visual Preference Survey: They are both live! Take it and spread the word!
 - [Community Survey](#)
 - [Visual Preference Survey](#)
 - Survey deadline extended to end of March
- After receiving feedback from the mayor and administrator, I will be handling more of the comprehensive plan chapter updating internally as opposed to in-session committee meetings.
 - Result for commission: less material to cover during regular meetings, but likely going to cover many chapters at once in April and May.
- Working with Brandon Rutz on updating the economic development chapter of the comprehensive plan
- Coordinating with Town and Country Engineering to do map updates

Building Inspection/Permitting

- YTD: 34 building permits; \$4,826 in fee revenue
- This same time last year: 62 building permits; \$19,119 in fee revenue
 - We had a rush on duplexes at the end of 2021 that we would normally see in March. Larry's been dealing with those.

**City of Evansville
Evansville Tourism Commission
March 2022 Summary Submitted by Sue Berg**

The Evansville Tourism Commission does not meet in March.

A public program about the mural will be offered Thursday, April 28, at Creekside Place. Artist Lacy Shottliff and historian Ruth Ann Montgomery are the speakers.

Upcoming events with tourism potential:

- GBDGA Players Cup (Disc Golf) March 19
- SpongeBob Square Pants: The Broadway Musical April 22-24
- Cruise Night May 5
- Art Crawl May 6

Next meeting dates are April 14 and June 9.

Economic Development Vision

In 2035, Evansville's economy is thriving. Commercial and industrial development is supported by quality infrastructure, including the railroad. The renovated historic downtown accommodates a variety of businesses and residential choices. Expanded tourism and marketing related to trail development and the City's history have supported development in the downtown. Economic development is in harmony with the City's natural environment and residential areas. Employment opportunities for City residents are available both within the City and in nearby communities accessible via USH 14, STH 213/59 with support of transit options.

Policies

The goals and objectives needed to expand the economic base are provided at the end of this chapter.. The location for new business development is illustrated on the Future Land Use Map in Chapter 10. Policies supporting economic development goals are provided below:

- **Create new opportunities by providing assistance to persons and organizations interested in developing new or expanding existing businesses in the City.**
- **Continue to utilize the City's Capital Improvement Program to anticipate future budget expenses and support quality City infrastructure investments that are necessary for economic development.**
- **Promote a strong downtown business district by incentivizing mixed-use and mixed income infill development in and near the downtown to increase the density of potential customers within walking distance of the downtown.**
- **Encourage new commercial development at identified Traditional Neighborhood Activity Center nodes to meet the increased demand for goods and services from the increasing population.**
- **Use the Historic District and associated ordinances and design standards to enhance the attractiveness of the downtown.**
- **Plan for industrial traffic movement to minimize conflicts between industrial businesses and residents.**
- **Require pedestrian improvements and landscaping to screen parking in highway oriented commercial, regional and walkable business districts.**
- **Maximize the City's financial health by supporting city adopted fiscal policies, such as keeping a minimum of 50% allowable debt capacity in reserve.**
- **Leverage existing transportation assets.**
- **Enhance quality of life through sustainable and environmentally friendly economic development practices.**
- **Foster a diverse local economy that recruits new businesses that utilize Evansville's strengths.**
- **Shorten the application and review time for a new businesses to start-up in the downtown.**
- **Encourage street life in the downtown district by promoting areas for outdoor dining and retail sales.**

Economic Development Goals and Objectives

These economic development goals and objectives serve as a way to put the vision statement into action, through a series of to dos. Below are Goals and objectives for the Economic Development Chapter:

Economic Development Goal #1			
Expand economic development opportunities to “grow” and diversify the local economy and improve the City’s quality of life.			
Supporting Objectives	Champion or Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Redevelop and use the Evansville Web Page as an economic marketing tool.	City staff, EDC, Common Council	City budget	2016 and Continuously
2. Develop and make available a guide for local businesses. Include criteria for site development and information about any necessary zoning approvals.	Community Development Director	City budget	2016
3. Make a copy of this Comprehensive Plan and an executive summary of this plan available to local realtors.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
4. Coordinate with other local rural communities and local, county and state organizations to expand regional economic development opportunities.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
5. Attract new businesses through advertising, assisting business prospects through the City approval process, developing and distributing a written community profile, inventorying sites and buildings, and developing a marketing video.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous
6. Determine suitable sites for new and redeveloped commercial and industrial space for new businesses.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
7. Encourage Developers of new residential subdivisions to include sites for walkable neighborhood commercial development. Investigate new opportunities for such development on the West side.	EDC, Plan Commission, Community Development Director		Continuous
8. Study the findings of the Economic Development Committee and Chamber of Commerce Collaboration Strategies and the Evansville Economic Development Plan.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

9. Seek grants to identify and clean-up brownfield sites to create opportunities for redevelopment.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
10. Identify other sources for low interest loans to assist businesses.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
11. Provide strategic tax increment assistance to retain businesses and attract new mixed use commercial and residential development.	EDC, Community Development Director, Common Council		Continuous
12. Update ordinances to streamline approval process. Investigate temporary conditional use permits to reduce time for new businesses to open.	EDC, Community Development Director		2018
13. Coordinate with area banks to establish a participation loan fund for business improvements.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
14. Implement action items from the Ady Voltedge Retail Market Analysis.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous

Economic Development Goal #2

Develop and maintain a physical, cultural, educational, and recreational environment in the City that is conducive to business and residential development.

Supporting Objectives	Champion/ Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Ensure proper design for entrances to and exits from commercial establishments so as to promote traffic and pedestrian safety.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
2. Update performance standards as needed (e.g., signage, noise, lighting, vibration).	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
3. Evaluate and monitor the level of competitive offerings for Internet access and other telecommunication services needed by businesses and whether service providers are offering services to meet those needs at a price existing businesses are willing to pay.	EDC, Community Development Dire EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

4. Coordinate with educational and community institutions including: the Evansville Community School District, Evansville Community Theater, Eager Free Public Library, church and civic organizations to market the City's network of cultural and educational amenities.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
5. Investigate opportunities to coordinate with the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education, Humanities Council, and other arts organizations to expand local arts opportunities.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
6. Implement the adopted Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-2018.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous
7. Develop trail/bicycle way/sidewalk connections between downtown Evansville, city parks and to recreation facilities beyond Evansville (e.g. Ice Age National Scenic Trail, Evansville Country Club and Rock County Park Facilities).	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	2018
8. Consider the establishment of impact fees to finance needed capital improvements.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

Economic Development Goal #3

Revitalize the downtown to enhance its historic charm, mix of businesses, walkable amenities, and tourist potential.

Supporting Objectives	Champion or Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Provide financing and marketing to assist façade improvement projects.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous
2. Incorporate design standards into the ordinance for the B-2 district to support the historic character of the downtown.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
3. Support the historic design/character by investing in and maintaining needed lighting, signage, pedestrian amenities, plantings and other improvements identified in the streetscape plan.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous

4. Support development proposals that provide a mix of uses in the downtown, including residential, retail, and service establishments.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
5. Implement the adopted Allen Creek and North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan.	EDC, Community Development Director	City budget	Continuous
6. Monitor the need for parking and explore methods to improve parking availability without using up developable land.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
7. Work with the business community to explore the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID)	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
8. Implement strategies from the Evansville Tourism Assessment	EDC, Community Development Director, Tourism Commission	City budget	Continuous
9. Seek opportunities to increase residential densities near the downtown to increase the viability of downtown businesses.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

Economic Development Goal #4

Improve communication and coordination with local businesses to support the retention and expansion of local businesses.

Supporting Objectives	Champion or Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Visit existing local businesses to understand opportunities and challenges they face.	EDC, Community Development Director		Annually
2. Guide and mentor businesses about financing opportunities and the City permitting process	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
3. Support a diversified economy	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
4. Identify leakages in the supply chain of local industries, and work to bring those leakages into the local economy.	EDC, Community Development Director		2017

5. Promote attributes of workforce and city's demographics (workforce is highly educated and younger)	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
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Economic Development Goal #5

Enhance environmental, economic, and social goals through sustainable economic development.

Supporting Objectives	Champion or Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Encourage greater onsite stormwater management practices, such as green roofs, to reduce runoff.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
2. Promote the consumption of local foods (through methods such as farmers markets, community gardens and community supported agriculture (CSA)).	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
3. Educate business on sustainable practices to ensure the long term health of the Evansville Community.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
4. Identify obstacles to sustainable business practices, such as excessive minimum parking requirements.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
5. Support Ecological bio-diversity through continued and expanded certifications (e.g. Green Tier Legacy, Bird City, Tree City).	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
6. Encourage the reuse, retrofit, or redevelopment of existing structures.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
7. Pursue place-based economic development to attract businesses and workforce that are tied to the community.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
8. Encourage partnership with local utilities to conserve energy and reduce energy costs	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

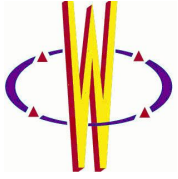
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Economic Development Goal #6**Promote Entrepreneurship**

Supporting Objectives	Champion or Partner	Potential Funding Source	Milestone Date
1. Identify opportunities to connect the local economy to entrepreneurship tools.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
2. Seek opportunities to partner with trade schools, the middle school, high school, businesses and organizations to ensure entrepreneurs have the skills needed to succeed.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous
3. Nurture the spirit of entrepreneurship to expand the diversity of local businesses.	EDC, Community Development Director		Continuous

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Evansville Economic Development Project



**Evansville
Economic Development Plan**

Final Report

Prepared by:

Whalen & Associates, Inc.

approved July 23, 2008

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608-455-2090

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Special recognition and thank you to Rebecca DeMarb, Evansville Economic Development Committee and James Otterstein, Rock County Economic Development Manager for the their efforts in drafting and editing this document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Evansville Economic Development Committee (“EDC”) contracted Whalen & Associates, Inc. in June, 2007 to design and facilitate a process that would result in an Economic Development Plan (the “Plan”). The project fulfills an action item of Evansville’s Smart Growth Plan. The Smart Growth Plan on page 133 states that Evansville “needs more commercial and industrial development to permit the City to reduce its relatively high property tax rate without reducing services.” (The related action item is #9 on page 213.) The project’s planning team consisted of Mayor Sandy Decker, City Administrator Dan Wietecha, Chamber of Commerce Promotional Director Bridgit Larsen and consultant Judy Whalen.

THE PROCESS

- EDC used a series of **information gathering activities** to provide data from which the Plan would be developed including:
 - **Focus Groups** – Five focus groups were conducted involving 26 representatives of agribusiness, manufacturing, retail, service and construction/development.
 - **Phone Survey** - 135 businesses were identified to be contacted by the UW-Whitewater Small Business Development Center (SBDC.) Thirty-three phone surveys were completed as of January 20, 2008.
 - **Summit** – The Economic Development Summit was conducted January 12, 2008 to provide business representatives the opportunity to provide further input into the topics that should be addressed in the Economic Development Plan. 94 people participated in the Economic Development Summit. A total of 58 local businesses were represented. The Economic Development Summit identified the strategic issues for the next step, the **Task Forces**.
- EDC appointed five **Task Forces**, composed of 32 community volunteers, to develop the goal, objectives and action plans for the five key strategic issues:

- Workforce Development
 - Downtown Revitalization
 - Intergovernmental Relations (This topic was later changed to: Business, Community and Government Relations).
 - Marketing
 - Entrepreneurial Environment
-
- The **Task Forces** presented their recommendations to the Economic Development Committee April 17, 2008.
 - The **Economic Development Committee** met three times to review the task forces recommended action plans, met with selected task force representatives to gain more clarity, and also met with representatives of the Evansville Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors before finalizing the Economic Development Plan.
 - The **Economic Development Committee approved the Plan** on July 23, 2008.

KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Five key strategic issues are addressed in this Plan. These are: (no priority assigned to order)

1. Workforce Development
2. Downtown Revitalization
3. Business, Community and Government Relations
4. Marketing
5. Entrepreneurial Environment

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives for each key strategic issue are:

- **Workforce Development**

Goal: To develop and nurture co-operative working networks to secure the resources to build an adaptable and skilled workforce with a positive work ethic and a strong sense of personal responsibility.

Objective #1: Access and utilize existing business networks

Objective #2: Maximize the use of existing education-based networks

Objective #3: Maximize the use of community-based organizational networks.

Objective #4: Maximize the use of government networks

- **Business, Community and Government Relations**

Goal: To develop a cooperative, intergovernmental, straight-forward, and clearly defined process to reach out, attract and retain a broad economic base for Evansville.

Objective #1: Research options that would enable Evansville to form a “stand-alone” Economic Development Alliance.

Objective #2: Improve Web internet tools for use by the members of the Economic Development Alliance.

Objective #3: Expand outreach between governmental bodies, i.e. local, county, and state.

Objective #4: Review city regulations so the regulations and process of adhering to the regulations are streamlined, simple, user-friendly and communicated in an easy to understand manner.

- **Downtown Revitalization**

Goal: To create a healthy, vibrant and walkable downtown by expanding and attracting employment, shopping and social activities

Objective #1: Host a downtown retail start-up fair to connect entrepreneurs with information on maintaining an existing business and opening a new business and acquiring funding.

Objective #2: Develop a pilot business for the principle objective of creating a template for new business start-ups.

Objective #3: Form a steering committee to develop a user-friendly manual for city government and the public that lists a menu of low-cost tools and strategies for revitalizing Evansville’s central business district.

Objective #4: Create a green business initiative to form the “Allen Creek Collective,” a green business mall in downtown Evansville.

■ **Marketing**

Goal: To promote Evansville’s businesses, services and recreational opportunities to residents, non-residents and businesses.

Objective #1: Improve marketing to local and surrounding communities

Objective #2: Make Evansville a “destination location.”

■ **Entrepreneurial Environment**

Goal: To facilitate the interaction of entrepreneurial people, ideas, and resources.

Objective #1: Create a better networking environment for local businesses.

Objective #2: Develop greater access to high speed internet services

Objective #3: Create a Business Resource Center for the City (both web and brick & mortar)

Objective #4: Develop incentives for existing and start-up businesses

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Five key strategic issues are addressed in the Economic Development Plan. These are: (no priority assigned to order)

1. Workforce Development
2. Downtown Revitalization
3. Business, Community and Government Relations
4. Marketing
5. Entrepreneurial Environment

ACTION PLANS

The following action plans are the outcome of the work of the task forces and the review and discussion of the Economic Development Committee.

One theme is common across the Task Forces and points to the obvious area for the EDC to focus to accomplish the goals of the five Task Forces in the most efficient and comprehensive manner. Evansville needs a funded, centralized entity to direct economic development activity and move this Plan forward.

EDC believes that its primary action must focus on creating the structure for some kind of partnership with the City of Evansville, the Economic Development Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, the Redevelopment Authority, Evansville Community Partnership and/or others (identified as an “Alliance”). The goal of the Alliance will be to reduce redundancy and inefficiencies in the action being taken already within the community and to focus community leaders on a shared vision for Evansville’s economic future.

This Alliance would include a person or, perhaps, entity who would be a centralized resource and who would be responsible for implementing many of the Task Force objectives. For example, the Alliance would coordinate retail fairs, market Evansville’s economic opportunities, work as a conduit between the City of Evansville and prospective businesses, work to promote Evansville’s community development as a way to attract businesses and develop incentives for businesses.

Other communities have this type of centralized person or entity in place including Main Street Programs, Economic Development Corporations, and hybrid actions such as in Milton, Wisconsin. EDC does not have the information necessary to decide what structure would work best for an Alliance in Evansville. Therefore, EDC's first action step is to explore and identify various options and make a recommendation to the City Council by December of 2008.

While researching Alliance structures, EDC will undertake the following strategic actions immediately:

1. **Workforce Development:** EDC will work with the Evansville Community School District to investigate opportunities for a RISE Grant program to parallel the framework of the Department of Public Instruction's Framework for 21st Century Skills program. EDC will prompt this investigation by October 1, 2008.
2. **Downtown Revitalization:** EDC will work with the Chamber of Commerce to collect an inventory of available store fronts downtown. EDC will request that the Chamber of Commerce complete this inventory by October 1, 2008.
3. **Business, Community and Government Relations:** EDC is taking on the work necessary to make a recommendation to the City Council for an Alliance, as described above. This process is central to achieving the goals of this Task Force.
4. **Marketing:** Improved signage in Evansville, primarily "way-finding signs," is in progress. The signs are expected to be installed by October, 2008.
5. **Entrepreneurial Environment:** EDC will work with the Chamber of Commerce to start an Inventors & Entrepreneur's club in Evansville, with the goal of holding the first meeting by October 1, 2008. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce is working with the Eager Free Public Library to inform the community of the business resources available at the Library. A public meeting regarding these resources is scheduled for September, 2008.

These are the first steps for implementing the Economic Development Plan. Full details are included in the Appendix. EDC expects to charge the

Alliance, once it is active and empowered, with the primary responsibility for implementing the full Economic Development Plan. EDC anticipates that the Alliance will be composed of a variety of community organizations and that it will operate with the assistance of EDC, as needed. The Alliance will be accountable to the EDC for implementation of the Economic Development Plan.

OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

The Economic Development Committee will lead the progress review process of the Plan by:

- Requesting quarterly progress reports on the various strategic issues.
- Meeting with selected “champions” or others involved with implementation of the goals, as needed, to more fully understand progress or adjust action plans as needed.
- Discussing the overall progress of meeting the Plan’s goals and objectives at least once every six months.
- Reviewing the overall strategy at least once a year.
- Using the Action Plans as a guide for topics for agendas for the Economic Development Committee meeting agendas.
- Requesting measurement assessments from the appropriate parties.

APPENDIX

- **Focus Groups Report**
- **Phone Interview Report**
- **Summit Report**
- **Task Forces Report**



retain, expand, attract

Retail Market Analysis City of Evansville, Wisconsin

PRESENTED TO:

Mr. Dan Wietecha, City Administrator

City of Evansville
31 S. Madison Street
Evansville, WI 53536
608.882.2263

PRESENTED BY:

Janet Ady, President

Ady Voltedge
613 Williamson Street, Suite 201
Madison WI, 53703

DATE:

January 26, 2012

Background

The City of Evansville, Wisconsin, is relatively small (2010 population of the Evansville Urban Service Area is 5,750) but fast-growing (projected to reach 8,199 by 2030, an increase of 42.6%). U.S. Highway 14 connects the City with Janesville to the east and Madison to the north, serving as a de facto alternate route between Interstate 90/94 and U.S. Highway 12/18.

The occupations in Evansville are currently more likely to be in manufacturing, distribution, construction, and material moving and less likely to be in the service industries compared to the national average. Evansville has a long history of successful industry and a strong entrepreneurial base. Representative major employers in the area include Baker Manufacturing, Landmark Services Cooperative, Stoughton Trailers, and BlueScope Steel.

Evansville, although located in Rock County, is less than 25 miles away from Madison, Wisconsin, in Dane County. As such, it is part of the Madison Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Evansville competes with Madison and other area cities for both residents and employees; it offers a cost of living 5% lower than the national average while Madison's cost of living is 9% above the national average. Housing is the single biggest driver of the cost of living index: not surprisingly, the median home price in Evansville is \$155,000 compared to \$206,300 in Madison. Evansville has a municipally-owned electric utility, which is an advantage in the region.

Current Economic Development Situation in Evansville

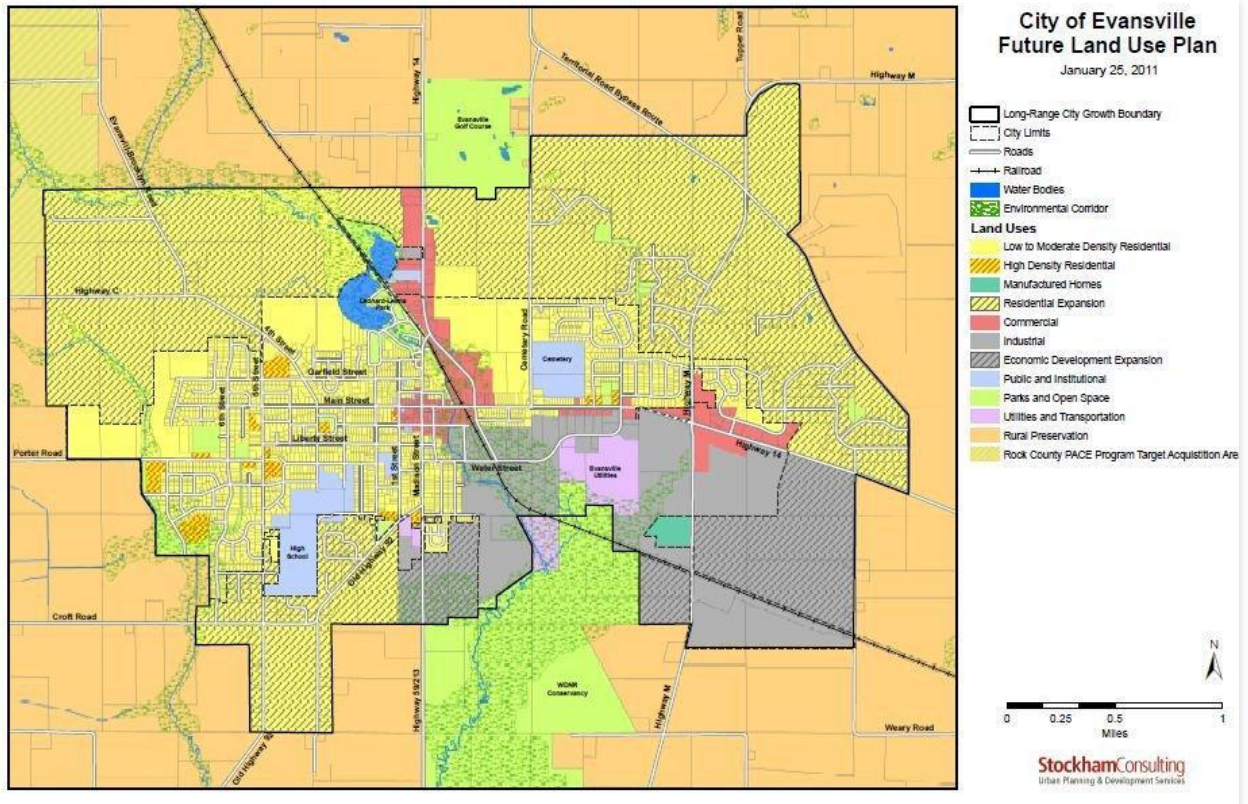
The City of Evansville adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2005. It has regularly reviewed and updated the plan, including the most recent revision adopted by the Common Council in June 2011. The City also underwent a formal Economic Development Planning process in 2008, resulting in adoption of that plan.

Today, the City is experiencing or anticipating several situations that present both opportunities and challenges:

- Struggling or failed retail stores, especially in the downtown business district
- A reputation as a clean, safe, quiet small town, with many well-maintained historic homes and store fronts
- Relatively fast population growth
- Poor cellular and fiber-optic service
- Interest in attracting and retaining talent, especially young talent
- Adjacency of a railroad with the Economic Development Industrial Expansion Area
- A foundation of entrepreneurialism
- Growth coming down from Fitchburg to the north, especially with the recent approval of the Highway 14 interchange, which is expected to drive additional traffic south on Highway 14 toward Evansville
- Reputation of a strong, local school system

A copy of the City's most recent Land Use Plan is shown on the following page. The planned Economic Development Industrial Expansion Area is shown in gray, southeast of the downtown area.

retain, expand, attract



retain, expand, attract

Objectives

The City of Evansville retained Ady Voltedge to identify likely retail businesses, primarily for its downtown area but also for the Highway 14 corridor. A second path of work, not yet approved, would develop “target industries” that will help maintain and grow the tax base by attracting new industrial or office businesses to the City.

Overview of Work Plan

Proposed Work Plan for City of Evansville, Wisconsin Retail Business Analyses								
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
1. Retail Gap Analysis Evaluate availability of retail establishments relative to predicted demand; identify potential business types for downtown business district and Highway 14 corridor.		•						
2. Input from Local Stakeholders One day of stakeholder input from area businesses, elected officials, etc. (can be a mix of stakeholder meetings, focus groups, one-on-one meetings, etc.)				•				
3. Recommendations for Retail Businesses Prioritize the types of businesses that the City should focus on attracting					•			
4. Retail Businesses Marketing Plan Create a plan for marketing to prospective retail businesses, most likely including commercial brokers and other decision influencers.								•
5. Presentation								•
6. Implementation								>

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Detailed Findings

Step 1: Retail Gap Analysis

Ady Voltedge conducted numerous retail business analyses, most of which were shared as part of the two Stakeholder Groups that were held in Step 2. These handouts are shown in **Appendix A**.

Some key findings:

- The 10- minute drive time shows some areas where supply is less than demand, namely:
 - Looking at all the retail categories together, the supply and demand are essentially in balance (demand weighted average index of 101)
 - The only category that is significantly in under demand is “Day care, education, and contributions” (at an index of 85)
- However, once a 20-minute drive time is taken into account, most categories are in balance or there is actually pent up demand
 - Looking at all the retail categories together, the demand is 9% above the national average (demand weighted average index of 109)
- Looking at the 30-minute drive time, there is an under-demand in most categories, the main ones being:
 - Housing related and personal (Index of 88)
 - Food at home (90)
 - Day Care, Continuing Education, & Contributions (91)
 - Total Apparel (92)
 - Pet Expenses (93)
 - Household furnishing and Appliances (94)

Based on this desk research, it appears as if most truly “local” needs are being satisfied well locally but that there could be needs that are more regional in nature that are not being met that Evansville might be able to provide.

The stakeholder meetings in the next step were used to confirm, deny and refine our initial hypotheses.

Step 2: Input from Local Stakeholders

Two stakeholder input sessions were completed.

Date	Composition of Group	Number of Attendees	Number of City Representatives/ Consultants
December 9, 2011	Property Owners	11	5
December 12, 2011	Business Owners	8	5

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John Morning, Morning Ridge Development (Chamber president)
Sue Farnsworth, Farnsworth Insurance
Steve Hagen, Hagen Insurance
Dave Mosher, Dave Mosher Insurance (President, New Glarus Chamber)
Matthias James, Allen Creek Gallery
Brian Fick, Appliance Works
Lori Allen, Allen Realty
Lisa James, Allen Creek Gallery
Jean Peterson, Berg Management
Jill, Hagen Insurance
Jeff Farnsworth, State Farm Insurance

December 12, 2011 Meeting Participants

Sarah Bauer, Sarah and Company
Sandy Franklin, Sew Many Threads
Shelley Meredith, Evansville Hometown Pharmacy
Blase Strobl, Core Physical Therapy
Jim Kopecky, Kopecky Piggly Wiggly
Wendy Pryce, Interested in opening bakery
Daun Fugate, Real Coffee at Daun
Raj Patel, Cobblestone Inn & Suites

Word clouds, summarizing key themes, can be found in **Appendix B**.

Findings from these groups include the following:

Macroeconomy – Uncontrollable Items

- Property owners are under a lot of pressure, carrying the costs of unrented spaces and facing a very competitive rental market.
- The overall economy is still difficult. Retail business start-ups have slowed down, at least locally.

Assets

- The downtown area looks nice, quaint, clean for the most part.
- Evansville has a library, post office, and community center near to each other –a real downtown, unlike some other small communities.
- Evansville is close to two regional metropolitan areas: Madison and Janesville.
- Evansville has room to grow, e.g., new residential developments, vacant retail space, available industrial and commercial properties.
- There is good complementarity in the current mix of retail businesses.

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- The Chamber and the Evansville Community Partnership have shared goals with landlords and merchants.

Marketing Challenges/Opportunities:

- Both property owners and business owners noted that they don't know enough about other businesses in town, and what merchandise and services are currently available.
- There are residents of Evansville who don't patronize the local stores or know what is provided locally.
- Residents don't seem to make the connection between buying local and a thriving community economy.
- Schools provide a lot of the sense of community, and already have communication networks in place.
- There is a perception that people who live in Janesville but work in Evansville tend to shop in Janesville and that people who live in Evansville but work in Madison tend to shop in Madison. Either way, Evansville loses.
- Some events are successful at drawing crowds: Olde Fashioned Christmas, Art Crawl, Business Expo, Inside Out Days, 4th of July.
- The Historic District house tours were a big draw, but they haven't been done in a few years.
- The primary goal of most of these events varies; creating retail traffic is often a secondary goal or incidental.
- Potential tenants expect retail properties to be advertised prominently. However, some landlords rely primarily on word of mouth. Therefore, there is a gap between expectations and current practice.
- There is no single type of marketing that is most impactful for all stores, although billboard advertising, direct mail, event marketing, and referral marketing were some of the most common ways.
- Advertising individually can be very expensive for retailers.

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Operational Items

- Some businesses reported good foot traffic over the lunch hour. Others reported that weekends are their busiest days. Both landlords and business owners noted that many Evansville residents commute out of the area most workdays. Yet many businesses close weekdays at 5:00 or 6:00, close early on Saturdays, and are not open on Sundays at all.
- Discussion about parking – perception that parking is hard to get (especially downtown) and that property owners or business owners take the most convenient spots in front of the businesses.
- Questions on whether the process for opening a new business can be simplified or made more transparent, e.g., permitting, business mentoring or a starter kit

Strategic Choices

- What is our theme? Is it the right one for us? The tourism survey came back loud and clear on this question: they see Evansville's main draw as the Historic District.
- Destination businesses: Losing Windmill Antiques was a loss to many businesses, as they were a destination store that brought people in from out of town to patronize other businesses. What other businesses could draw people? (Bakery from Farmers Market?)
- How can we attract more businesses to Evansville (employers, such as the phone company, banks, and other business offices) to support more shops and stores?
- For aspiring entrepreneurs, what assistance is available?
- Collaborative community marketing to residents, visitors, and potential businesses

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Step 3: Recommendations for Retail Businesses & Step 4: Retail Business Marketing Plan

Setting the Stage

1. Retail is just one component of community and economic development, and the one that is the focus of this project. Other generally recognized components include business retention and expansion, business attraction, entrepreneurialism, and tourism.
2. Downtowns and retail areas are vital to the health of a city. Perceptions of these areas can make a city attractive (or unattractive) to live, recreate, or grow a business.
3. We believe that Evansville's retail areas hold much promise, and there is great potential to "raising the boat" for everyone, but that the effort to implement the recommendations must be driven by stakeholders – business owners, property owners, civic groups, and others with a "stake" in the success of the local economy.

Recommendations for Evansville

4. Refine a cohesive vision for the downtown shopping area:
 - a. Its theme, or how it is positioned, e.g., The Historic District.
 - b. The mix of consumers it would like to attract – local/regional, destination/every-day shoppers, etc.
 - c. The types of retail operations that would fit in well downtown (new businesses that would both help support existing businesses at the same time be supported by existing businesses)
 - d. The types of hours, parking, etc. that will be required to reach these customers and meet business goals
5. Describe a cohesive vision for the east side shopping area:
 - a. Its theme, or how it is positioned
 - b. The mix of consumers it would like to attract – local/regional, destination/every-day shoppers, etc.
 - c. The types of retail operations that would fit in well in that area (new businesses that would both help support existing businesses at the same time be supported by existing businesses)
 - d. The types of hours, parking, etc. that will be required to reach these customers and meet business goals
6. Identify and act on areas of shared needs among business owners – activities that would provide benefits to individual business owners as well as to the shopping areas as a whole. Examples?

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- a. Referral strategies: Maps and descriptions to help refer customers to one another's businesses; promotions that involve patronizing or visiting multiple stores; new partnerships with potential "driver" businesses who are not located either downtown or on the east side.
 - b. Co-op advertising and marketing strategies. Take a poll to see what types of advertising and marketing are of interest to local businesses. Instead of each business buying a quarter-page ad, buy a whole page and promote every participating retailers' business. Same could be done for a billboard, direct mail campaign, etc.
 - c. Targeted customer marketing
7. Work to increase the *awareness* and *interest* in local shops among area residents.
- a. Joint marketing through the school district and school events
 - b. Welcome Wagon-type connections and information to new residents (maps, coupons, etc.)
8. For a community of its size, Evansville has a good history of events, many of which are known about even outside of the community.
- a. Work to build awareness and interest of local retail options into these events.
 - b. Consider organizing additional events that support the themes identified for each main shopping area.

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9. Publicize available retail properties more widely.
 - a. Do not rely simply on word-of-mouth for advertising. In these tough times, potential tenants have more options and will follow those that are easiest for them. These include online listings that can be found and reviewed over the internet.
 - b. Put together a “Why Evansville?” brochure or packet that summarizes why someone might want to open up a business in Evansville. Talk about consumers with 10-, 20- and 30-minutes, the growth in Evansville’s population, cost of living advantage, quality of school district, quality of workforce, investment in downtown revitalization, community support for entrepreneurs, the perception of Evansville as a tourist destination for its historic downtown (per the Visitors Survey), sample rents per square foot relative to competing communities, etc.
 - c. Given the “vision” developed for each shopping area and the types of businesses identified, consider which of these would be good fits for your available properties. Contact associations or groups of these types of companies and advertise your openings, why you think it would be a good fit, and other information about Evansville.

Step 5: Presentation

Present the retail business marketing plan to the project work team.

Step 6: Implementation

Assist with implementation as desired

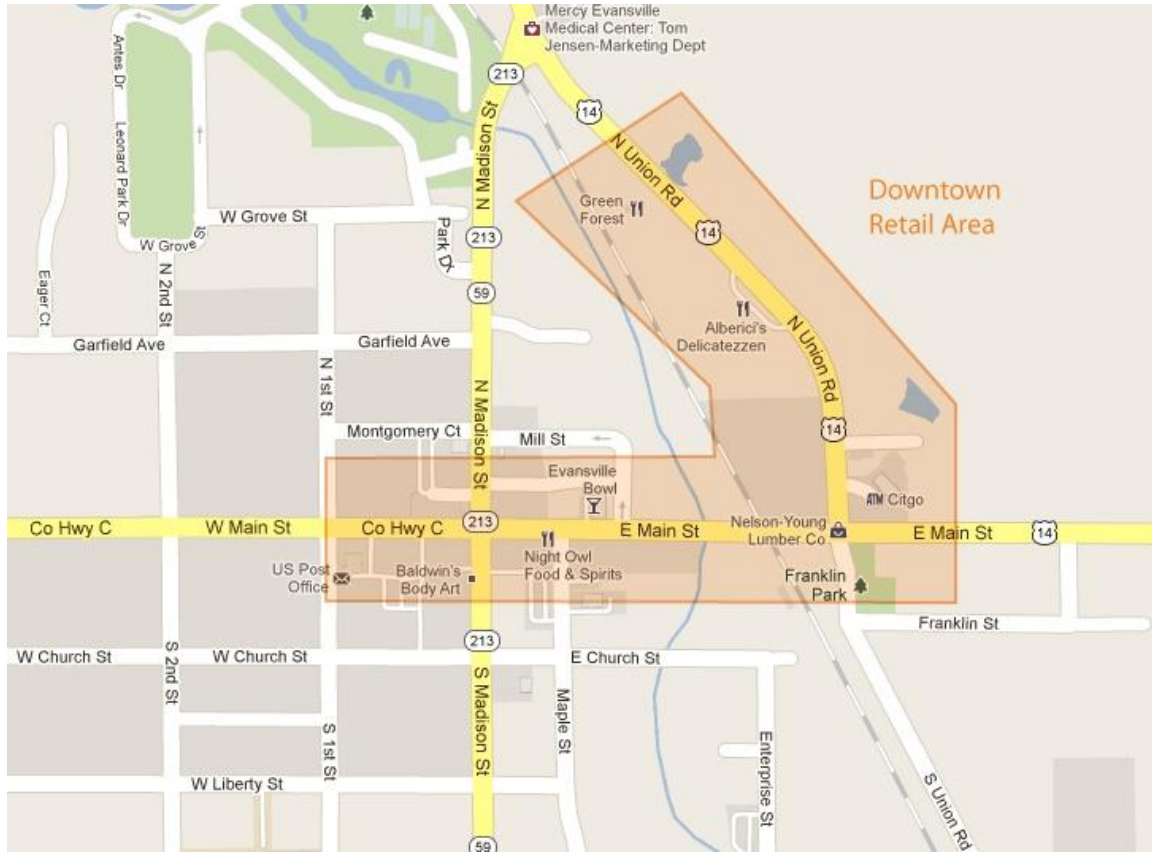
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Evansville Main Retail Areas



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Evansville Downtown Retail Area



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Evansville Brown School Retail Area



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Evansville Basic Demographic Data	
Population (2011 estimate)	4,655
Unemployment Rate	10.2%
Job Growth (since 2000)	-2.81%
Cost of Living	95 (US average is 100)

Demographic Data (by drive time)			
	10 Minute	20 Minute	30 Minute
Population	7,600	25,186	203,640
Population Growth (since 2000)	21.21%	19.05%	7.53%
Median Age	37.12	37.21	33.13
Median Household Income	\$55,844	\$64,326	\$48,240
High School Graduation Rate	90.97%	92.56%	90.82%
Average Commute Time	27.58	26.59	22.47

Evansville Retail Business Information			
	Total Employees	Sales (in Millions)	Establishments 20+ Employees
Building Materials, Garden Supply and Mobile Homes	7	.9	0
General Merchandise Stores	8	.5	0
Food Stores	72	12.2	1
Automotive Dealers and Gas Service Stations	62	14.7	1
Apparel and Accessory Stores	0	0	0
Home Furniture, Furnishings and Equipment	11	1.7	0
Eating and Drinking Places	187	8.5	3
Miscellaneous Retail	15	2.0	0
ALL RETAIL	362	40.5	5

*retain, expand, attract***Consumer Spending Patterns:**

Consumer spending patterns by category on a 10 minute, 20 minute, and 30 minute drive time are listed on the following page.

“Annual Avg. Household” refers to the annual average household expenditure by category (e.g. the average household, on a 10 minute drive time from Evansville, spends \$7,178 per year on “Housing Related and Personal”).

“Avg. Annual % Growth” is based off of annual average household expenditure by category and measures the percentage that each category grows or declines per year (e.g. the average household, again on a 10 minute drive time from Evansville, spent 2.58% more money on “Housing Related and Personal” than they did the previous year).

Finally and probably the most important, “Index to the USA”, compares the annual average household expenditure of the specific area (10 minute, 20 minute, and 30 minute drive time from Evansville) to the annual average household expenditure of the USA as a whole.

The U.S. average is benchmarked at 100 so, for example, a number above 100 means that this specific area spends, on average, more on that category than the average U.S. household and vice versa (e.g. the average household, again on a 10 minute drive time from Evansville, spends about 2% less than the U.S. average on “Housing Related and Personal”).

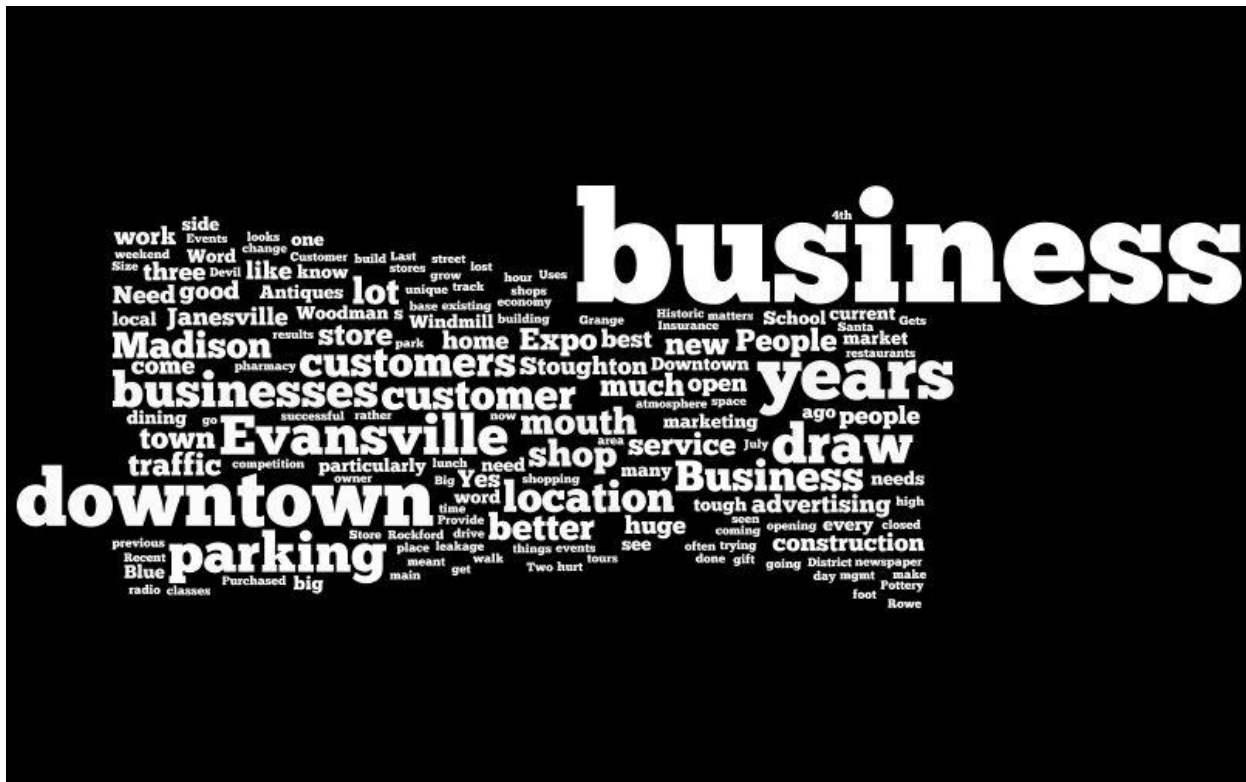
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Consumer Spending Patterns (by drive time)

	10 Minute			20 Minute			30 Minute		
	2011 Annual Avg. Household	Avg. Annual % Growth	2011 Index to USA	2011 Annual Avg. Household	Avg. Annual % Growth	2011 Index to USA	2011 Annual Avg. Household	Avg. Annual % Growth	2011 Index to USA
Food at Home	5,956	1.74	100	6,100	1.59	102	5,391	0.89	90
Food Away from Home & Alcohol	4,044	1.86	103	4,214	1.68	106	3,834	0.79	96
Day Care, Education, & Contributions	3,013	2.38	85	3,558	2.25	98	3,579	1.22	91
Healthcare	5,268	3.25	106	5,705	3.03	115	4,771	2.17	96
Household Furnishings & Appliances	2,614	3.04	103	2,925	2.84	116	2,398	1.90	94
Housing Related & Personal	7,178	2.58	98	7,604	2.44	106	6,582	1.51	88
Personal Care & Smoking Products	2,196	3.01	114	2,220	2.71	115	1,988	1.86	103
Pet Expenses	631	3.1	109	692	2.81	120	540	2.14	93
Sports & Entertainment	5,430	6.12	102	6,046	6.03	114	5,119	4.96	98
Transportation & Auto Expenses	11,502	2.24	115	12,582	2.03	126	10,434	1.12	103
Total Apparel	7,673	3.42	98	4,234	3.35	106	3,799	2.50	92
TOTAL AVERAGE	51,197	2.62	101	55,353	2.45	109	48,105	1.54	94

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Business Owners' Comments, 12/12/11



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Key Implementation Steps	Target Dates	Leader	Benefit	Difficulty	Cost	Priority
1. Refine vision for downtown shopping area						
2. Describe vision for the east side shopping area						
3. Identify and act on areas of shared needs among business						
4. Work to increase the <i>awareness</i> and <i>interest</i> in local shops among area residents						
5. Make outside community aware of Evansville events and businesses						
6. Publicize available retail properties more widely						