

Appendix C
Visioning Citizens Topic Group: Downtown, Subtopic: Investments
(As of 9-16-07)

Goal: “Significant investments in the physical, community, and business environment, as well as the tools to leverage economic strength, will bring vibrancy and diversity of culture, professions, and businesses, leading to major attractions and exciting destinations.”

Priority Strategy 1: Create a new management organization through public-private partnerships, whose core purpose is to make downtown a compelling city center in which to live, work, play, shop, study, and invest.

I. Who should take the lead role in implementing this strategy? (DT = Downtown)

- A. A **Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC)**, is a newly formed entity that would be a private nonprofit membership organization representing Columbia’s best businesses and property owners, as well as entrepreneurial companies, and nonprofit organizations. The *mission* will be to create a vibrant, diverse and economically sustainable DT Columbia, be the arts and cultural center of our community and region, a model of sustainable development, a residential neighborhood, an energetic work place and a setting for entrepreneurial creativity. DT Columbia is vibrant, diverse, synergistic, accessible, walkable, and livable.
1. A special **DT Vision Taskforce (DVT)** should be formed to *carry on the strategic planning process* if DT is to capitalize on our assets, address our opportunities and challenges, and to establish our DT significance as centers of commerce, civic identity and distinctive urban experiences.
 2. City Government, as a member of the DVT, must take the lead with the creation of an expanded **DT Development Concept Plan** (a plan for planning) by retaining Sasaki & Associates to cover all 422 acres within the defined DT area. (Phase 1: Bordered by 2 college and University campuses and the Library, and a Phase II: to include surrounding residential neighborhoods.)
 3. The DCLC will recognize the importance of building a modern sense of community for the 21st Century and the need to restore our region’s prosperity by presenting a strong and united voice on:
 - a. Our *guiding principles* for DT Revitalization.
 - b. A clearly defined set of development *goals, the risks and benefits*, along with sponsoring the necessary *research, an assessment* of our current conditions and an understanding of best practices.
 - c. The key importance of *new residential projects* providing many lifestyle choices that make DT 24/7.
 - d. The need to attract *high-tech business ventures*, to understand how DT functions as a *supportive environment for entrepreneurs*, and how DT becomes an *incubator on innovation*.
 - e. The need to build a *dynamic creative and cultural climate; to invest in talented people* required for creativity, innovation, and growth; and *to leverage networks of knowledge, people and technology*.
 - f. The importance to *retain, support and expand* the office, government, retail, cultural, arts, and entertainment facilities already DT.
 - g. The need to establish an *organizational structure for governance, strategy and leadership*: to develop a DT development concept, a strategic blended business and economic development plan as a guiding framework, and the steps that needs to be developed for implementation.
 4. The **Board of Directors of the DCLC** will be responsible *for financial oversight, planning, evaluation, and fundraising*. Responsibilities include: ratifying the *mission, vision, and values*; determining the *planning and programs* to implement the strategies and monitoring performance, ensuring the financial and other resources are adequate to implement its plans, enhancing the *public image* and ensuring organizational and financial integrity and accountability.

5. **Committees** will be appointed as needed to undertake special projects that support the mission of the organization. These may include the following:

- a. *Business Retention & Attraction* – the DCLC Board working with REDI to provide a *supportive physical environment and quality of life especially for small businesses and entrepreneurs*, using proactive mining of data for new businesses and researching best practices for new co-working facilities, site visits, well-publicized recognition events, and development of a relocation program and design-build alternatives with real estate developers.
- b. *DT Marketing Group* – produces quality events and celebrations, providing information and education about DT initiatives and celebrations, and facilitates a market *imaging and branding* initiative. Messages about our new DT need to be *seamless* and requires working closely with various partner organizations to develop an *integrated strategy* to provide a bigger impact while complementing each partner’s mission. Conduct research to better understand *regional perceptions* of DT and work with our partner organizations to market DT to the region and nation.
- c. *Housing and Lifestyle Choices* – will work with our community and housing partners to develop an *affordable and workforce housing* policy for DT and work toward *revitalizing/redeveloping existing neighborhoods and housing stock* in and around DT, while exploring funding alternatives and developer incentives. Track housing trends, conduct *market analysis*, and support and encourage residential development for a mix of lifestyle choices and price points along with its retail and development strategies. Produce DT Tour weekends. Be *an advocate* for associated retail and services.
- d. *Parking and Transportation* – public and private sectors will work together to improve access to and within DT with emphasis on ensuring adequate and *strategically placed parking*. Will explore free bus zone/trolley/rail trolley line DT. Will also oversee bike, walking connective *corridor designs* for access to/from campuses, surrounding neighborhoods, library, medical facilities, retail centers, etc.
- e. *Streetscape and Public Gathering Places* – will facilitate with stakeholders to influence and promote the design, development and redevelopment of our opportunities to facilitate *connectors* between neighborhoods, DT districts and campuses that can set the stage for retail placement and creates a more walkable and pedestrian oriented DT, as well as opportunities for *gathering places* for people to connect and enjoy the vibrancy of DT living, working, and relaxing for people of all ages and interests.
- f. *Membership* – the heart and soul of the Council. Charged with creating strategies for recruiting, developing and retaining members that represent the diversity of DT. The committee will work to produce luncheons, forums, and events and implement a member-only section of the DT Columbia website. Their mission is to champion the allocation of resources to DT, *support economic development opportunities*, enhance DT Columbia’s cleanliness and safety, *implement various strategies and address our DT challenges*. The committee could follow the same program and capital campaign structure as the Chamber uses for promotional marketing and sponsorship opportunities to support DT, including DT events, meetings/luncheons/forums, publications, on-line marketing, and print advertising.

B. **A Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP)** will be a newly *formed public-private partnership organization* that will be needed to spearhead not only the “*Big Deals*” (our catalytic projects), but the “*Small Wonders*” (public investments for infrastructure) as well. In doing so, the role of the DCDP will be to:

1. Coordinate the development of a comprehensive **DT Strategic Business Plan** (the working document addressing the physical, community, and business framework), **Design Guidelines** (buildings, streetscapes, gathering places), **Market Analysis** (opportunity gaps), and a **DT Existing Conditions Assessment**, and coordinate the development of a set tangible goals, establish a list of key actions and priorities, and make recommendations to the Council.
2. Identify and suggest *supportive public initiatives*: maintaining quality of life, infrastructure investments, appropriate tax incentives, assistance in acquiring non-performing or blighted properties, timely approval process, etc.
3. Leverage the close proximity to our student population, medical institutions, and residential neighborhoods through a *pedestrian linkage or connective corridor* to facilitate the potential for complementary economic activity DT.
4. Develop mixed-use, residential, retail/restaurant, entertainment and employment-generating real estate *development projects*.

5. Arrange for *capital and financing* needed to implement the plan (transitional gap financing, available and effective incentives, etc.)
6. Create *jobs* through the establishment of new businesses, the relocation of businesses, and the expansion of existing businesses, with an emphasis on creating a *supportive environment* for entrepreneurs.
7. Establish *great places and spaces*, through the use of innovative urban design principles and great architecture (called Placemaking).
8. Serve as an *advocate for the principles and goals* established in the plan in order to encourage appropriate public sector support and private sector participation (judicial condemnation when necessary, public investments, etc.)
9. The President of the DCDP should be the “**voice of DT Columbia**”, typically found to be a Master Developer/Redeveloper, actively engaged in DT projects. The President will serve as a *steward and “keeper of the vision”* through the DCDA and DCLC. Much of the activity contemplated by our DT plan will be carried out by the private sector.

C. A **Downtown Development Authority** (DCDA) will be the entity whose mission is to undertake public improvements that have the greatest impact in strengthening the DT area attracting new private investments;

1. Goals include *revolving loan funds* for the acquisition of land, building, construction and rehabilitation, equipment, and working capital; tax-exempt fixed asset financing for qualified borrowers; other goals include: identity infrastructure, transportation, business encouragement, housing, consumer home financing, developer financing, development partnerships, project proposals and bids, community services and sustainability; utilizes a **Tax Increment Financing** (TIF) mechanism to finance many of its projects, including its pedestrian improvements projects, housing grants, and studies.
2. **Committees/Functions** could include:
 - a. *Operations* (budget, finance, parking operations, power to seize derelict and neglected properties for repair and restoration)
 - b. *Capital Improvements* (construction of new parking facilities and sidewalks, repair projects)
 - c. *Partnerships* (public/private projects, housing issues, incentives for property owners to maintain and manage their properties)
 - d. *Research and Opportunities* (benchmarking, vitality index research, grant review)
3. **City Taskforces** could include:
 - a. Create *overlay zoning*
 - b. Implement *urban design guidelines*
 - c. Clarify historic *preservation criteria*
 - d. *Streamline development process*
 - e. Pursue comprehensive *parking strategy*
 - f. Create *local finance/lender consortium* with development/redevelopment financial analyst
 - g. Create a *reinvestment fund* (501c3) that would create a secondary market for loans(or local REIT)
 - h. Pursue setting-up a *DT Columbia Foundation* for contributions and donations

II. 8 Categories for Action that should be taken to help position this strategy for implementation.

A. **Complete the Visioning Process:** Community visioning sessions are now completed. Report back to community on September 13, 2007.

1. The *DT Vision Taskforce* (DVT) will review the Downtown Vision Group’s input and create an *enhanced vision, mission, and values statement* for DT Columbia: “**Envision Downtown Columbia 2030**”. The Taskforce will guide the development of a **DT Strategic Business Plan**. This plan will be a tool to *guide development* and explore the relationship between *land use policy, design standards and guidelines, and implementation strategies* to accomplish our goals.

- a. Develop a *program game plan* with an emphasis on holding community forums, focus group meetings and working sessions; marshal resources to collaborate on executing a plan; ratify recommendations; agree to jointly spearhead the effort.
- b. To transform our challenges and capitalize on our opportunities, develop the *proper mission, core values, goals, core competencies, performance measures, and strategic partners* necessary to deliver the vision and guide the development of a greater **DT Strategic Business Plan**.
- c. Identify further *research areas and current parameters* (funding resources, staff, consultants, etc.) which could prevent the community visions from being realized or parameters to consider.
- d. Create a list of *stakeholders* for the DCLC (Leadership Council) and its future committees, the DTDP (Development Partnership), and the DTDA (Dev. Authority).
- e. Document our *critical issues and organize by category*: Preservation, transportation, pedestrian amenities, parks/plaza/open space, sustainability, housing, children & families, new infill buildings, public infrastructure, public & private management, and financial & legal.
- f. Identify where we need *technical consultants, available staff, new positions* to provide the development concept plan (Sasaki), market research, physical inventory assessment, trend analysis, and the development of the *DT Revitalization Strategic Business Plan/Design Guidelines*, etc.
- g. Organize *stakeholders' focus groups* (historic preservation, developers, institutions, agencies, retailers & merchants, and residents) for background information and solicit their input and ideas.
- h. Hold vision community workshops with the goal of combining community education, dialogue, creative thinking, and identifying organization tools for implementation. For example: *Placemaking* Weigh one workshop, working with a *technical consultant*, verses one working on a *tight budget*:

Workshop Topic: **“A vision for the future . . . putting the “market square” back DT”**

Workshop Description: a rebirth of a broader DT historic district that is desirable and identifiable for both residents and visitors. A vibrant place to dine, shop, attend concerts, go to a movie; where parents will want to bring children to play, where people come to stroll because it has things of interest to all people and all ages. New uses and activities could be developed that build upon the traditional market of yesteryear.

- 1.) Technical consultant: *Project for Public Spaces*. (PPS is used by many cities.)

PPS uses a “Power of Ten” concept a synergy of 10 sub-places or activities within a larger place forming a critical mass of activity centers with a series of destinations. We could have many *workshop groups focusing of what types of activities and destinations would draw people* to a public square. PPS has developed “criteria to analyze squares”: attractions, destinations, identity & image, flexible design, amenities, traffic-transit-and the pedestrian, inner & outer square, reach out like an octopus, management-central to the solution, seasonal strategy, and diverse funding sources.

- 2.) “Placemaking on a Budget”, a 133 page book with CD-ROM with PowerPoint presentation to introduce concepts to the groups, reviewing approaches, understanding resources and achieving implementation. We could have many workshop groups working on one placemaking idea or many ideas for DT.

2. **City Council to review and approve the enhanced DT Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, Goals and Strategies** by resolution. If the idea of ‘vision’ is to mean anything for making a better DT for Columbia and the surrounding region, we must develop the criteria, such as:

- *Be grounded in reality*. (Understand our current assets and challenges accurately; see our possibilities clearly; be rooted in real performance and *getting things done*; private sector leadership, etc.)
- *Reach for the future*. (Aspire to a future that is different from and better than the present; not more of the same: imagine that things can really change in significant ways, etc.)
- *Be shared*. (Not one person’s vision, nor one group or organization or interest; *must* come out of conversations at DT work sessions and issue forums; be the product of collaborative work across institutions; then everyone will get it, know it, understand it, and most everyone will get behind it, too.)
- *Have public leadership*. (More than shared broadly and out there for everyone to see, but carried by City government with full support from County, State and Federal partners; City government has some of the tools needed to make things happen when the market won’t, and holds the power to regulate building and land use, requires *the vision be the people’s vision*.)

B. Related Visioning and Strategic Planning at the Regional Scale: Planning on economic development and land use at the regional scale will be required to address the *challenges and potential* of DT, the City of Columbia, as well as the region.

1. Conduct an analysis of the *fundamental problems and concerns for restoring regional prosperity*. Slow employment growth and a somewhat stagnant economy dictate an immediate and comprehensive focus on *reinventing DT Columbia as a magnet for investment and creativity* necessary in a technological economy. A simultaneous focus should be on harnessing *the growth outlook and potential of nearby educational and medical institutions* to accelerate the reinvention of the DT core.
 - a. *Set new goals, reaffirm old ones, and frame a clear strategy* for continuing action. Understand the importance of always *building on our assets* and taking advantage of the efforts of past planning. Build on the inherited framework and frame the vision and strategy for DT by broader regional visions and strategies and coordinated with other local plans to achieve the maximum possible impact.
 - *The formula:* focus our investments on strategic activity areas and new DT neighborhoods; follow key principles for making a great DT; concentrate our investments in promising economic sectors; and always work to improve the urban environment for the benefit of the people who use it.
 - *The approach:* always work for practical achievements today, no matter how modest. Never lose sight of the bigger vision and the broader horizon; always work together, solving problems, building the organizational capacity to take action, and holding one another accountable to the plan. (And then, DT Columbia is poised for greatness.)
 - b. Develop a **Regional Action Plan for DT Columbia** starting with a comprehensive review regarding ways in which Columbia can achieve a *significant regional city design type development* over the next 50 years characterized by mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly areas, supporting higher densities of employment and housing.
 - Understand the *economic challenges* DT faces, the resources on which it has to draw and the context in which it must move forward. (Such as the national *trends*, the sectoral *shifts* in the region, the location of employment, emerging policies and ongoing programs, the role of DT Columbia. Columbia's *regional assets* (i.e., airport), preparing land for new development, improving transportation, and neighborhood economic development).
 - Understand DT Columbia is *mid-Missouri's government and institutional center, medical and life sciences research center, business center, service center, transportation hub, cultural and heritage center, sports and entertainment center, restaurant and niche retail center*.
 - Understand our DT *population trends*, led by migration patterns (supporting students, young professionals, young families, and aging baby boomers needs and desires; appreciating a young, talented workforce decides *where* they want to live).
 - Understand the wide range of DT *community issues*, including race, ethnicity and diversity, education, housing and neighborhoods, culture and heritage will have important implications for planning and development. The focus of our plan is *land use*, but these community issues will have an impact on how land use decisions are made. The answers this plan provides will have a major influence on *the quality of life*.
 - Understand the DT *environmental challenges*, smart growth principles, and *sustainability* factors (competitiveness of cities in the 21st Century, *quality of life* factors – parks, waterfronts, green practices).
 - Understand DT Columbia's *physical infrastructure* as a great resource and as a important challenge (the investment, maintenance, development of an expanded telecommunications and fiber optic network, and a supportive DT environment for entrepreneurs).
 - Understand Columbia's *current and long-term projections in rising costs* in term of a fiscal crisis brought on by a structural imbalance between available sources of revenue and spending on municipal services and capital investment. *Capital budgeting* will bring new levels of discipline to the process and perhaps the creation of a control board and require additional support from county, state, and federal governments.
 - Understand that our *Comprehensive Plan* needs to be based on a sound planning philosophy and sound planning principles. For Columbia, that may mean taking a *regional approach*; integrating economic, environmental and community considerations under a concept of

sustainability; and implementing principles of smart growth. Furthermore the *Comprehensive Plan* needs to be linked directly to the selection and prioritization of capital projects through the City's Capital Improvement Program. This means *revising zoning categories and districts and supporting smart growth, design guidelines, and prescribing more urban solutions.*

- c. Initiate the necessary major changes in how we *value DT* and how we *approach economic development*, how we *invest our attention* and *invest our public dollars* wisely to create a place that will attract substantial private and institutional investment that create the economic return and the pride of place that mid-MO residents want.
- Lay out a clear *set of policies, development priorities and action programs* aimed at achieving the community's overarching goal for the city: to rebuild it for the 21st century, the Knowledge Economy and the Creative Class.
 - *Build on our assets*: the character, strength, knowledge and creativity of our people; great institutions of education, medicine and science; a rich cultural life; a great legacy in the physical city of streets, parks, buildings and homes; the city's strategic location in mid-Missouri and the rest of the world.
 - Revise the *Comprehensive plan* to help Columbia achieve its goal to *transform Columbia as the urban center of the mid-Missouri region* through application of smart growth principles, targeted investments, and managed physical change to restore the economic well being, environmental health and sustainability of the city and promote an increase in population and employment.
 - Be respected *for its regional leadership*; diverse, modern economy and transportation infrastructure; educated and skilled work force, fully employed; inclusive community life and harmonious social relations; comfortable and safe neighborhoods; and a unique natural, cultural, and built heritage that has been lovingly preserved, restored and enhanced.
 - Develop a plan that follows the common sense principles that Columbia should "*fix the basics*" of municipal service delivery and maintenance of the urban environment and "*build on the assets*" of the community and its great urban heritage. It needs to identify a clear set of *development priorities for restoring the physical heritage of the city, transforming the economy, rebuilding neighborhoods and creating a greener, healthier city.*
 - Outline *key priorities for investment and development*: to achieve the plan Columbia must maintain city infrastructure; deliver quality services; transform the economy and develop the community; transform the city's economy to meet the needs and opportunities of the 21st Century and to provide the material basis for the revitalization of the whole city; reconstruct Columbia schools in supplying the new economy with capable workers; rebuild the neighborhoods, revitalizing housing and building new quality living environments that will attract city residents; restore any key assets that give Columbia uniqueness and character; and preserve the fabric of the city. These priorities need to be organized around a land use concept for 2030 that identifies primary concentrated investment corridors: DT Columbia, our airport ...
 - Identify *city governments role* (in some cases leading and in some supporting) to play in advancing each of these priorities. Other partners who have a responsibility and a capacity to contribute to implementations of these priorities and polices include *county, state, and federal government, private companies, not for profit community based organizations, and citizens' groups.*
- d. Institute changes in a *land use concept for 2030* as the city pursues its future. Changes to consider include:
- Expansion of the defined DT to include a *Phase II of DT Revitalization* – the inner ring neighborhoods.
 - Changing land uses DT to implement *key investment initiatives*, including infill housing, mixed use, public realm gathering places, co-working facilities for new business start-ups, etc.
 - Redevelopment of *strategic investment corridors* (TBD) from Sasaki's expanded Development Concept Plan. (i.e., Avenue of the Columns, campus connectors, neighborhood corridors, etc.)
 - Changes in *land use* to accommodate some former industrial sites (i.e., DT AmerenUE site, lumber yard) as redevelopment provides for a broader diversity of uses.
 - Changes to use to accommodate *better traffic flow* (i.e., extension of Elm Street), gathering places/parks/pedestrian corridors/public realm spaces, etc.

- Changes in use for *individual buildings or sets of buildings* (blocks, districts) where new uses are identified and implemented for existing buildings to be preserved. (i.e., warehouse)
 - Plan for increases in *density* will be the greatest in and around the expanded DT and in certain areas close to transit corridors and arterials.
 - *Zoning ordinance* needs to be revised in keeping with land use, urban design guidelines need to be introduced, and secondary plans for the City's Planning Districts need to be completed.
- e. To support the implementation of Columbia's Comprehensive plan and the smart growth principles on which it is based, the *City's zoning ordinance needs to be revised and updated*. A framework for the revised zoning ordinance include residential, commercial, open space, recreation/public facilities, industrial, and special zoning.
2. Formalize the *City/MU relationship*. Enhance the University's community connection (removing the barriers between the academic world and the world that we inhabit) as an actively engaged partner in our local DT community through an increased *physical presence* (Art's Center, Museum); a stronger relationship with the city's art community through collaboration to enrich, advance, and secure *the cultural resources* of our community; a **DT Entrepreneurial Development Initiative for the Region** as an engine of economic development in supporting new businesses/entrepreneurial firms in DT; and using *geographic analysis* to organize community decision making in building our community's capacity for self-improvement.
 3. Co-develop a *quarterly workshop series* with state/university personnel/funds called the **DT Columbia Revitalization for Regional Prosperity Institute** as the non-profit educational and training component dedicated to DT capacity building, organizational development, business and real estate development, marketing, and promotion and urban design. Speakers could include national experts and local leadership participants in the DT Columbia Revitalization Initiative.
- C. Review the **12 Building Blocks of our DT Strategy** while understanding a *holistic* community development strategy. Identify a set of comprehensive, interrelated strategies for making DT the best it can be:
1. *Citizen Access and Communication*: Identify our strategy/components for increased communication between citizens, businesses, and government.
 2. *DT Life in the City*: Identify our strategy to support culture, entertainment, businesses/jobs, living, and shopping in DT Columbia. Promote a real sense of place, tourism, celebrate our diversity and successes.
 3. *Community Anchors*: Businesses, organizations, neighborhoods and citizens are "the anchors of our community" because they contribute to the stability and growth of DT Columbia.
 4. *Competitive Economy*: Identify the markets to expand as technology continues to evolve, and as the 21st Century will be one of greater economic growth and opportunity (Building on our strengths, preparing for the future, supporting and facilitating economic activity, and balancing business retention/expansion and business attraction activities.)
 5. *Connecting Corridors to DT core*: connect people, neighborhoods and activity centers. Use natural corridors with streams and wooded areas that provide placid trails or places for outdoor recreation.
 6. *Our Focus Areas in DT*: Identify the focus areas or districts, public gathering places, and how they will be accessible. Focus areas will serve as centers of activity where people can feel part of the community and where they can come together in solving problems, sharing ideas, and having fun.
 7. *DT as a Healthy Community*: "Health" is an essential component that considers not only the physical health of the community but also looks at the social "health" or well being.
 8. *Investing in Critical Resources*: protect the lives of our citizens & visitors, our heritage and property; be responsible stewards, safeguard the natural environment, and develop an economically viable workforce.
 9. *Life-Long Learning*: Identify the strategy that ensures that our citizens are afforded the opportunity to learn throughout their lives and in every phase of what they do.
 10. *Moving About in the City*: Identify our transportation/mobility strategy for DT. Homes, offices, medical centers, shopping areas, and other places will be accessible through walkways and sidewalks.
 11. *Neighborhood Livability*: Columbia is a city of neighborhoods. Make our neighborhoods and our DT a more livable city. (Neighborhood connections, identity, and health. A mix of DT Housing *choices*.)

12. *Quality places to live, work, play, and, connect:* strategies toward ensuring that all types of development in DT Columbia exhibit the characteristics of good planning and good urban design.

D. Develop a Strategic Framework and Actions for our 8 Emerging Themes for DT Land Use Each theme exhibits a distinct identity and physical character that should be reinforced. It should identify growth areas; preserve historic and cultural resources; and conserves in-town neighborhoods. Eight themes serve as a defining lens for strategies, policies, and action plans to be developed. These themes are the foundations for success because each one is rooted in economic and demographic realities, as well as what the consumer wants.

1. *Employment/Knowledge Anchors:* Making people the focus of economic development -- Downtown's anchors in the knowledge-based economy: education, the Creative Class, young professionals, aging baby boomers, bioscience, and other institutions. (see separate Strategy 2: *An Enhanced Economic Development Strategy* beginning on page 16.) Actions could include:

- a. Adapt a *business recruitment program* to attract targeted businesses to leasable building space.
- b. Develop *co-working facilities* in an environment where entrepreneurs can find each other, collaborate, create great ideas and provide an environment to help secure new business opportunities.
- c. Develop a *Creative Media Sector facility* that could include industries such as: arts & cultural industries; film, TV, & radio; music; publishing; graphic design, marketing & advertising; architectural design; software & communications technologies; computer games, e-entertainment.
- d. Provide an *attractive opportunity* for employment-generating uses adaptable to changing economic conditions, such as arts, technology, and knowledge-based enterprise, within a revitalized, low-scale, mixed-use setting.
- e. Encourage the private sector to undertake *business-environment improvements*: (flexible, co-working facilities, research and development facilities, conferencing facilities, incubator office/conferencing zone).
- f. *Innovation*: integrate and expand *WiFi*; build *new partnerships*; explore *mobile technology*

2. *Downtown Living* - Implement an aggressive and comprehensive DT Living Initiative including stimulating residential investment (*supply*), increasing the region's awareness of DT living (*demand*), and addressing issues to make DT a true neighborhood (*livability*). Actions include:

- a. Encourage residential developments with a *mix of housing types, densities, price ranges, amenities*.
- b. Survey DT residents/workers to *assess* retail demand, demographics, neighborhood satisfaction, parking issues, etc.
- c. Ensure well-designed, *in-fill housing* on vacant land (provide incentives to developments that meet design standards. Create a long-range, mixed-use redevelopment strategy.
- d. Continue a regular dialogue with colleges and University administration in order to plan for future *enrollment increases* as it relates to development of new student housing.
- e. *Investment initiatives*: stimulate the market for new residences; encourage private investment, eliminate blight, redevelopment of vacant upper floors; promote workforce and affordable housing; serve as a catalyst to continued momentum; complement proposed development activity, spin off economic development.
- f. Promote the creation of a *Columbia Land Trust* to acquire and seek the donation of sites for the development of future affordability-priced housing, along with non-profit housing developers.
- g. Residential *tax-abatement program* (i.e., 10 year, 100 %, per unit cap; new construction, conversion or rehab of residential units; program availability: 2007 – 2010)
- h. *Vacant upper floors* financing program (City, foundations, private lending \$5 M revolving fund; low interest loan program to off-set development costs and addresses financing gap; lower interest rates for workforce / affordable housing; pilot program: 5 projects / 50 units; target area; select growth areas considered based on success of pilot)
- i. *Workforce/affordable housing* buyer incentives (i.e., City provides deferred 2nd mortgage up to \$10,000 per unit for up to 25 income eligible households; new construction, conversion &

- rehabilitation for sale / condo projects; 0% deferred payment loan, due on sale or conversion to rental property; units must be owner-occupied)
- j.** Selection criteria limited to 2007-2009, and does not include Housing Authority owned property.
 - k.** Develop and maintain close relationships with property managers in order to promote the objectives.
 - l.** Increase the *marketability of neighborhoods* (promote variety of housing types: i.e., care options for seniors/aging baby boomers using universal design features and aging in place support systems and programs; partner with realtors, property owners, DT organizations and local businesses to promote unique qualities and benefits of living in historic neighborhoods .
 - m.** Lead a DT effort to locate a *grocery store, farmers market*, and other supportive retail in support of residential living.
- 3. *Great Neighborhoods:*** Vibrant urban neighborhoods are an *economic asset*: The great neighborhoods that can result from the city’s neighborhood conservation, historic preservation and mixed-use strategies. Surrounding Downtown Neighborhoods, such as East Campus Neighborhood, North Central Neighborhood, etc., are all part of our DT vision. Actions include:
- a.** Identify neighborhoods that would be eligible for *state and federal assistance* for housing rehabilitation and other neighborhood improvements.
 - b.** Design *connective corridors / linkages* with retail, art, cultural activities for connecting /gathering.
 - c.** Establish *conflict resolution committee* to resolve conflicts. Provide adequate notice to neighborhood residents regarding formal proposals for new development or redevelopment that would impact existing residential communities
 - d.** Encourage developers to work extensively with abutting neighborhood residents to *resolve community concerns* prior to formalizing development plans.
- 4. *Art’s and Entertainment / Warehouse District:*** The economic importance of *being different*: the art, culture, and entertainment scene that will attract the “creative class” and visitors alike to downtown. Ground floor retail, restaurants, and cafes would help enliven this space. Actions include:
- a.** Our current Art’s District would be an opportunity to create a “*live-work*” atmosphere in DT.
 - b.** *Loft-style apartments* are particularly appropriate for buildings in this area.
 - c.** Residents would also establish a “built-in” market for businesses and restaurants, even public plazas, which would serve as identifying features and gateway elements and include benches, public areas, retail kiosks, and special monuments.
 - d.** A plan for *shared parking* would be needed.
- 5. *Distinctive Shopping / Mixed Use Character:*** Create a *wide variety of shopping and dining* opportunities that will make downtown appealing for people who live there, people who live elsewhere in the region, and visitors. Mixed-use should provide for a *compatible mixture* of residential, commercial and service uses, and mixed-use development projects. However, restrictions on housing development are recommended for particular locations where commercial and employment activity is desired. *Public markets* are making an unprecedented comeback and are an essential building block of great cities/a vital public space. Actions include:
- a.** Recruit a *general merchandise store* to locate in DT.
 - b.** Work closely with colleges and University to seek a higher utilization of *key retail properties*. And expand local retail opportunities
 - c.** Encourage neighborhood *commercial development* as part of the large residential neighborhoods
- 6. *Civic Center:*** The symbolic heart of Columbia is home to our most important public institutions - city and county government. The objective is to strengthen its role as the symbolic and governmental center of the City, encouraging the presence of civic, cultural and public service institutions and augment the character of the area with a supportive mixture of uses. Actions include:

- a. Establish Columbia’s prominence in the area of *e-commerce services* and provide an array of business assistance services and information to local entrepreneurs.
 - b. Enhance the flexibility and user friendly qualities of *local permitting* to encourage commercial expansion and construction services.
 - c. Clearly articulate the city’s *development standards and requirements* to development community.
 - d. Make the *development review, permitting process* more user-friendly for individuals not familiar with the city’s process by providing more personalized plan review during pre-proposal stage.
7. *Great Places/Great Spaces/Great Experiences*: The quality and uniqueness of *historic buildings* and great public spaces provide identity, amenity and opportunities for civic gatherings. It is also central to the notion of a “sustainable community”, integrating urban and natural elements. Actions include:
- a. Seek *community consensus on the top quality of life features* that must be preserved in the future and adopt methods for evaluating the impact of future development will have on these quality of life factors. On top on the list is keeping DT Columbia *clean and safe*.
 - b. Communicate to the development community those factors that are most important to the community for their *open space, scenic, environmental and recreational qualities* and seek community support for their protection.
 - c. Initiate an *on-going dialogue* with the general public about growth and development issues. Use the city’s web site, neighborhood meetings, and resident surveys to *educate*. Seek input about issues.
 - d. Create unique attractions that will create an *exciting sense of place*.
 - e. Greenways, streetscapes, and parks, as well as all public realm amenities will contribute to the *walkability* of DT. Civic plazas and outdoor spaces are a necessary part of public life in the community. Beauty inspires creativity and loyalty to place.
 - f. “Putting the *market square* back into DT” (vibrant place to dine, shop, attend concerts; make it clean & safe; use the “Power of Ten” – the creation of sub-spaces within a larger space; traffic and parking sensitive to users & functions; new users and activities to stimulate positive growth)
 - g. DT Vision Taskforce to *work with local consultants* in translating schematic design into actual design and construction drawings for implementation purposes.
8. *The Connected Downtown*: The distinctive sense of place derived from using *traffic circulation strategies, pedestrian connectivity, bicycle flow, gateway entrances, and park-once strategies*. Transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and auto mobility supports the DT land use concept and is based on the idea that DT will provide for convenient multi-modal movement. Actions include:
- a. Implement parking solutions for expanded, convenient, and attractive parking. A *shuttle system* should be explored - will be an amenity that can only help entice new businesses to locate here.
 - b. Transit can only help bring worker to their jobs, reduce the need for parking and allow visitors to *park only once* while they spend their day DT.
 - c. Multiple *physical and visual linkages* will create a more integrated and accessible DT, especially from a pedestrian point-of-view.
 - d. Visual *gateways* along major arterials are equally important, as are focal points and activity nodes to distinguish special places and orient and direct people.

E. Analysis and Strategic Planning Phase for DT Revitalization

- 1. Conduct *Market Analysis*: Designed to help local business leaders, entrepreneurs, developers, and economic development professionals understand the changing marketplace and identify business and real estate development opportunities that are realistic and make sense for their communities.
 - a. Part I: *Understand Market Conditions*
 - Create a Building and Business Inventory
 - Survey Business Operators

- Analyze our Business Mix
- Analyze our Trade Area
- Analyze Local Economics
- Analyze Customer Demographics and Lifestyles
- Focus Groups
- Conduct Consumer and Stakeholders Surveys and Interviews

b. Part II: *Identify Market Opportunities by Sector*

- Evaluate Retail Opportunities
- Evaluate Service Business Opportunities
- Evaluate Restaurant Opportunities
- Evaluate Arts & Cultural Opportunities
- Evaluate Residential Opportunities
- Evaluate Office Market Opportunities
- Evaluate Lodging / Tourism Opportunities

c. Part III: *Draw Conclusions and Developing Recommendations*

- Business Retention and Expansion
- Niche Recommendations
- Space Utilization
- Marketing Plan
- Business Recruitment Recommendations

2. Hold strategic *planning sessions*: Identify *issues, strengths, barriers and opportunities* so we have a better understanding of what initiatives and resources could be implemented.
 - a. Prepare *base maps* and complete an *urban form study*.
 - b. *Collect best practice initiatives* as examples of strategies/actions that address targeted opportunities.
 - c. Prepare a *toolkit of funding sources* to assist in obtaining funding support.
 - d. *Identify an inventory of underutilized parcels* for possible business expansion and *potential sites for new development and mixed-use projects*.
 - e. The first bi-product of the Analysis Phase will be the **Existing Conditions Assessment Report**, outlining the major issues that face Columbia from physical, design and social capital perspectives.
3. *Build Stakeholder Consensus*: Discuss the DT Concept Plan, the Existing Conditions Report, trend analysis, and other research. This will form the basis for the next round of community meetings and workshops. Input from these meetings will be used in the development of guiding principles, future goals and general policies for achieving them.
4. Develop a set of **DT Physical Development Goals, Objectives and Strategies**
 - a. It is a vision that *builds on Columbia's history*:
 - The types, location and mix of *new developments as well as preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures*
 - New development should be consistent with the scale, density, and *urban design features* of historic area
 - Update *zoning*, provide *sufficient capacity*, enhance the *visual environment*, provide *open space* and *public amenities*, to encourage residential development
 - Strengthen DT economic vitality by providing opportunities for *new business development*-provide for a growing employment center as well as *co-working facilities*
 - Attract *new arts and entertainment* uses DT, something for all ages, family oriente
 - Uncover *creek from Peace Park to Providence* as a natural and economic asset

- Provides a wide variety of *housing options* in terms of type, location, size, and price
- Provide *recreational amenities* to serve DT residents and their pets and the connections to open spaces and recreational amenities
- *New buildings* should respect and enhance their surroundings
- Inviting, interesting, well-landscape and designed *streetscapes, water features, gathering places*
- DT *sub-districts* (distinctive, yet complementary) that support each other, linked economically and visually
- Enhance *gateways* into DT
- Provide pleasant ways to *walk and bike* between sub-districts and surrounding neighborhoods
- Enhance pedestrian connections to public facilities, recreational amenities surrounding DT
- Improve *bicycle network* leading to and through DT
- Improve *access to transit* and more *choice of transit modes*
- Provide beautifully landscaped *public realm* areas: gathering places, plazas, squares, etc.
- *Park-once* and visit many destination; campus and neighborhood connectors
- Maximize the use of *transit and transit corridors*
- Update and enforce *property maintenance standards*
- Adopt strategy for *passive land / property owners*

b. It is a vision that creates *a more dynamic and multifaceted metropolitan* center that will be the focus for commercial, civic and cultural activities for *our region*. To achieve this goal, DT must add or enhance three key elements to its spectrum of activities:

- Continue to create and construct *regional facilities* and attractions that attract people from throughout the city and the region and make DT Columbia a regional destination
- Foster *inviting neighborhoods* for those who want the convenience and excitement of urban living and connect DT to strengthened neighborhoods surrounding DT
- Attract additional *retail services* and business activity to serve the growing residential population and increased concentration of *commercial activities*

Strategy to transform DT Columbia

1. Regional Attractions

Government Campus, Arts, Culture & Entertainment,
Open Space, Nature & Water, Access & Parking Strategies
(Airport, transit, gateway corridors)

Columbia

- Historic Character
- Livable Neighborhoods
- Families/students/young prof./boomers
- Easy Access
- Gathering places

3. Residential Neighborhoods

Predictable Dev. Pattern, Streetscapes & Amenities,
Integrated & Stable Surrounding Neighborhoods (Height
& Design standards), Increased Support for Retail

2. Commercial Services

Focus Retail in Central Spine

Metropolitan Center

- High Density
- Variety
- Multi-modal transportation
- DT living/housing choices
- Nature & Water connections
- Regional Destinations

F. Develop a **Public Policy Framework** that will support our guiding principles and provide the basis for our planning concept that will support our goals.

1. Develop *incentive-based approaches* into these categories: allowing density to occur; providing information to facilitate development; providing financial incentives through regulatory relief; and providing direct financial assistance to developers.

2. Develop *regulatory approaches* that facilitate appropriate higher density, as regional growth meets the supply.

- a. Develop *LT Public Parking Program*
- b. Reduce *planning and information costs to developers*
- c. Provide *direct financial incentives for development*
- d. Provide *indirect incentives for development*
- e. Provide *regulatory relief*
- f. Work to maintain *high demand for working and living in DT Columbia*
- g. Conduct a *public awareness campaign*
- h. Require *high density within DT*
- i. Develop a *developer's marketing program*

G. Define **Sustainable Development** for DT Columbia: development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment. This would include:

1. *Community Development*: civic engagement; accessibility, quality of life, public safety, community history, community identity, etc.
2. *Economic Health*: meaningful work, business variety, economic vitality, economic self-reliance, economic feasibility, pricing, etc.
3. *Social Equity*: who gets the benefits, who gets the costs, fairness to other communities, fairness to future generations, affordability and access, etc.
4. *Ecological Health*: carrying capacity, land use, resource use, water reduction, energy, cleans water, clean air, healthy buildings, peace & quiet, etc.
5. *Connections*: public-private partnerships, the big picture and addressing issues, trade-offs in the community/outside the community, etc

H. The **DT Strategic Business Plan**: this phase will *refine the strategies*; use all of our data sources to objectively create benchmarks and perform analysis to identify opportunities and measure progress.

1. *Prioritize development strategies*: “Fix the basics” (quality services, adequate infrastructure) in order to move forward and always “build on our assets” (heritage, people, vibrant DT, economic expansion). Priorities depend on our success in growing the DT economy and the larger regional economy so that it can justify and support the massive investments that fulfillment of the “Big Deals” will require.
2. Focus efforts on embracing innovation, encouraging talent, welcoming diversity and enhancing the quality of life by *creating environments* that recognize the impact these characteristics have on ideas, events, places, organizations and people. Efforts include:
 - a. Identify *preliminary design concepts* (corridors, public realm gathering places, co-working facilities, housing options, etc.) as well as detailing and prioritizing *organizational and economic development strategies* to rejuvenate DT Columbia.
 - b. Create an emerging *development concept diagram* highlighting catalytic opportunity projects, potential improvement areas and key concepts for site organization. (Sasaki Plan for Planning)
 - c. Develop a set of *recommendations for each DT theme or district DT and strategy framework*: Protect and restore the urban fabric. Identify, protect, and restore historic architecture and adopt urban and regional design guidelines to make sure the new is as good as the old. Reinvest in the unique physical structures. Link to a greener and more accessible water features. The DT Leadership Council to refine.
 - d. Produce an *Implementation Schedule* to outline key action steps and funding sources best suited to achieving desired results.
3. Requires *flexible discipline*: always ready to do what it takes to retain existing businesses and take advantage of new opportunities. Not “anything goes.”, but stick to the plan and focus our attention on

building out the strategic investment areas, supporting key DT activities, fostering growth in emerging economic sectors, following stated development principles, and investing in deliberate increments to expand the DT economy and improve its environment.

4. *Reconstruct the schools*, providing the physical means to educate a *high-quality workforce* for the economy of the future, giving confidence to families with children to live in the city, and providing an element in a coordinated investment strategy to *redevelop Columbia's neighborhoods*.
5. *Rebuild neighborhoods*, working with citizens to produce detailed neighborhood plans, striving to focus and coordinate investments for the greatest impact on physical conditions and investment environment, *linking neighborhood development initiatives to jobs creation projects*, and using demolition, rehabilitation and new construction to manage the housing stock to meet needs of a population expected to shrink further but then grow again.
6. *Quantify the DT Goals*:
 - a. Establish a *specific goal (\$1 Billion) in new private and institutional investment* over the next 20 – 30 years and be prepared to make certain strategic public investments in support of that private and institutional investment.
 - b. Develop the *processes and programs* that leverage a sustained stream of private investment (catalytic projects), not just stand alone projects.
 - *2,000 new or rehabilitated DT residential units* (conventional, lofts, condos) for 3,000 new residents (students, young professionals, college and university professors and staff, empty nesters and active seniors). Commission private market analysis to determine opportunity gap.
 - *2 million sf of new and rehabilitated commercial/institutional space* and the employees and visitors it will house – beginning with harnessing the largely untapped energy that exists with our college and university students to create new synergies that attract compatible, tax-paying commercial investments.
 - *Enhanced appearance of DT* – public sector needs to complement new investment by simultaneously improving the appearance of our public spaces, parks, streetscapes, sidewalks, lighting, trees and landscaping, comprehensive welcoming and wayfinding signage, and the budget sufficient to maintain these investments.
 - c. Leverage public assets to *lift and promote our DT, our City, our County, and our Region*: secure and strategically invest *\$30 million DT* over next 20 years to enhance the DT and leverage the first components of the billion-dollar capital investment strategy:
 - *\$10 million for residential development*
 - *\$10 million to begin infrastructure and public realm improvements*
 - *\$10 million for an opportunity fund* (acquisition and redevelopment of parking structures and development inducements)
7. Develop *Measurement Criteria for Success*: 1) innovation: number of businesses created, concentration of high-tech versus non high-tech output; 2) talent: number of bachelor degrees or better per capita and number of creative sector occupations per capita; 3) diversity: number of foreign born per capita, Bohemian index (artist, musicians, etc.), people of color and integration index; and 4) workforce: occupational clusters, industry clusters and creativity census. Graphic illustrations will convey final preferred concepts.
10. An **Economic Development and Revitalization Strategic Business Plan** document will be prepared. Implementation can begin after plan is approved.

III. Implementation Actions will be much more effective if it ties together into a strategy in which each action builds on previous efforts and supports other activities.

1. Set the Framework: *Update Regulations and Administrative Procedures*

Begin the formation of *new organizational structures* to lead the strategic planning and the development of DT Strategic Business Plan for a new regional vision for DT Columbia. The *Development Concept Plan* (the plan for planning) with Sasaki's input is critical. Updating the *regulatory codes and implement the parking management strategies*. Revising the *development codes and establishing design standards* will require some capital investment but will ensure that new development will conform to the DT vision. Revision to *zoning code standards and permitted uses* will be adopted concurrent with the plan adoption, but should be monitored over time and amended as needed to encourage the desired results.

2. Plant a Seed: *Initiate a High-Visibility, Transformational Project*

Show significant City commitment to DT with a project that will *foster substantial development and add a new dimension to DT activities*. Two projects meet these criteria: DT streetscape improvements and our New City Hall building.

3. Strengthen Teamwork: *Initiate or Enhance Cooperative Programs to Address Ongoing Needs*

Building a successful DT Columbia is more than funding signature projects and directing new development. Continuous *public/private efforts* to keep DT safe, clean, comfortable, attractive, and accessible are necessary. We will need to work together on issues such a event planning, maintenance, graffiti removal, business promotion, and other related efforts.

4. Sustain Steady Progress over Time: *Complete Other Recommended Actions as Opportunities and Priorities Emerge*

Because each action will depend on *funding source and a sponsor* to initiate the work, the relative priority and urgency of projects will change over time. Take advantage of *opportunities* as they emerge. Review the plan annually. Determine which actions should be pursued in light of the City's overall priorities.

IV. Measuring Success

As more and more cities work to bring forth urban renewal and downtown revitalization we are learning from the successes/best practices of past projects in many mid and large metropolitan cites across the country. There are now entire organizations, as well as plans from hundreds of communities around the country, with thousands of pages of "how to plans" for cities, which wish to move forward and strengthen their local economies and rid the city of the blight and crime in trade for *more jobs, investment and local tourism*. Everyone wins in downtown redevelopment, especially we, the people.

NOTE: Nine pages of success indicators and/or benchmarks that address success were listed with reference notes in a previous paper based on the research conducted for this visioning initiative and needed to be cut for this shortened version. These pages can be reviewed in previous paper on Form C.

Priority Strategy 2: Create an enhanced economic development strategy that acknowledges the link between economic prosperity and the central city promoting Columbia as a “cultural, business, entertainment, and educational center” for the region while attracting jobs, people, and opportunities.

“The bottom line is that cities need a people climate even more than they need a business climate. This means supporting creativity across the board – in all of its various facets and dimensions – and building a community that is attractive to creative people, not just to high-tech companies. . . . Creative people have always gravitated to certain kinds of communities, such as the Left Bank in Paris or Greenwich Village. Such communities provide the stimulation, diversity and a richness of experiences that are the wellsprings of creativity. Now more of us are looking for the same thing.” Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*

Understand all the City’s and regions economic assets will play a role in our future economy. A vital, dense DT is a *critical keystone* in a much larger, much more important, and much more strategic economic development strategy. And, DT is not just for the City of Columbia; it is *key to the ongoing economic success of the entire region*.

DT Columbia is a vibrant city center that is a great place to raise a family and start a business. Downtown Columbia, as a **Creative City**, will foster an array of economic opportunities for the workforce of today and tomorrow. Our DT economic strategy must be based on *demographic and economic analysis, customer and business surveys, and community input*. The strategy advances *shared goals* by targeting key market opportunities, branding key DT strengths, and applying successful approaches from other communities’ experiences. A *community / region-wide commitment* to implementation with many organizations assuming new activities is central to the strategies success.

I. Who should take the lead role in implementing this strategy?

(DT = Downtown)

- A. **Three newly formed organizations** will work in concert to direct our focus and path to restored prosperity for the citizens of Columbia and our region by providing a DT environment suited for a knowledge-based economy:

1. **A Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC)**
(see Strategy 1 on creating a new management structure)
2. **A Downtown Columbia Development Partnership (DCDP)**
(see Strategy 1 on creating a new management structure)
3. **A Downtown “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy” Taskforce (The Triple E Taskforce)**

The Triple E Taskforce addresses the *supportive environment* for entrepreneurs in DT Columbia’s Vision through:

- a. making the case, accessing the resources that give a “big picture” understanding of the role of entrepreneurs in DT Columbia,
- b. learning what other communities and places are doing to *create environments*,
- c. asking the *tough questions*,
- d. developing our *local goals and specific action steps* for growing our DT target sectors,
- e. enhancing *entrepreneurial activity* (working, connecting, shopping, dining, recreating, and living DT), and business retention efforts,
- f. building DT *strategies* based on our *types* of entrepreneurial talent and potential, and
- g. arriving at a *better understanding* of our DT readiness level by exploring all the elements of a supportive environment for our **DT vision for entrepreneurs** (the vision, the opportunity, the assets - the human, financial, and physical infrastructure, the investment, and sustainability factors).

II. Action Steps that should be taken to help position this strategy for implementation.

A. Accept and understand the implications that *the rules of economic development have been transforming dramatically*. The rules of the urban development game must transform. To succeed and thrive, regions must *attract, retain, and develop the Creative Class* - people who make their living thinking and adding creative content as their value-add to the work they perform. The U.S. Census Bureau last fall (2006) reported an almost unbelievable number: *Self-employed individuals who have no paid employees operate three-fourths of U.S. businesses*. And this trend is increasing. The **Creative Sector** comprises over *one-third of the US workforce*, accounts for more than 50% of the payroll, is the “raw material” of the current and future economic engine, and is *mobile* (first time in history, human capital can choose to live wherever it wants).

1. Compete effectively in attracting, retaining, and developing these *mobile, creative sector people assets*. Foster each of the “4Ts”: *Technology* assets, *Talent* assets, *Tolerance* (or diversity and variety) assets, *Territory* (unique quality of place) assets. The key is organizations with the jobs will *be attracted to the places* where there is a supply the Creative Class and creative people will be attracted to where the jobs are.
2. Connect the dots: *the DT Revitalization Strategic Business Plan* (retail, housing, office, arts / culture / entertainment, public places and transportation, and infrastructure improvements) must connect to the *DT Economic Development Strategic Plan*. This calls for thinking creatively beyond the box. Develop a **“Downtown Columbia Blended Plan”**.
3. Examine the *relationship between our amenities, our arts and culture, our creativity, technology and e-commerce, and land use* in making our region competitive and our ability to attract the best and brightest.

B. Special Economic Development Support Strategy 1: Set-up an “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy Taskforce” (The Triple E Taskforce) for DT Columbia and regional planning in order to:

1. Seize the Opportunity for Developing a *DT Supportive Environment for Entrepreneurial Business*
The mission is to *promote and support entrepreneurship and small business development* in DT Columbia: Supporting entrepreneurship in a community is a component of economic development that involves both a *cultural shift and the dedication of resources*. A successful entrepreneurship program requires coordination of resources (*such as co-working facilities, live-work flex housing units, and learning-living housing options*), information, and various network groups. “Lifestyle” small businesses have different support needs. Those needs include *sharing challenges and obtaining insight* on innovative solutions, *developing perspectives on issues* that affect competitiveness, and *networking with others* who are making advances and providing support to the technology industries. By working together, members can help each other grow and elevate our region’s profile in ways that attract new business, venture capital and skilled employees. Membership could include one-person enterprises, university spin-offs, mid-sized firms poised for growth.
 - a. Confront the need for this reality: *How do we energize and create an entrepreneurial economy?*
 - b. Turn economic development upside down: *Create an entrepreneur-friendly city-business and community*
 - c. Understand the national perspective on importance of Entrepreneurship Development
 - d. Develop a local perspective on importance of Entrepreneurship Development
 - e. Address why we need a mindset supportive of entrepreneurs: *supportive environment, supportive culture*
 - f. Address whether our city and our region has a supportive entrepreneurial culture
 - g. Answer how we energize an Entrepreneurial Economy: *creating a community environment*
 - h. Address the steps for getting started: *identify our assets, what they need, the gaps: develop the program*
 - i. Understand our assets: *move beyond traditional econ. development notion of assets-think outside the box*
 - j. Utilize a tool for Asset Mapping: *start with people who really know the business development resources*
 - k. Understand the range of entrepreneurs: *those aspiring, survival, lifestyle, growth, or serial oriented*
 - l. Explore what our entrepreneurs in our community need/want: *opp. for networking, mentoring, education*
 - m. Create and expand community support for successful Entrepreneurship Development Programs
 - n. Explore some models in other cities to consider: *Georgia, Nebraska, Colorado, New York*
 - o. Things we can do as City and regional leaders: *be a champion, create a spark, have an advocate, listen*

2. **Promote DT Columbia as an incubator of ideas and dreams:** DT is more than bricks and sticks, it's more than the preservation of a building or adding an extra parking garage, it's more than adding new pavers, planters, or decorative lights; *it's about people and dreams*. DT is a place where entrepreneurs set out on a *journey* to capture their piece of the American pie; it is a place where the *freedom* to make your own rules exists and where your *destiny* is determined by your own hard work. *The DT of today is the new frontier for entrepreneurs.* The two operative words are *different* and *fun*. DT Columbia is really all about creating *an experience economic development strategy!* The DT must be a WOW, and fun is part of that WOW.

DT Columbia must be home to a **Columbia Technology Council** to help Columbia's technologies companies grow and thrive by offering:

- a. opportunities for meeting business contacts, networking, mentoring, and innovating 24/7
- b. guidance on business development
- c. exclusive discounts on DT business and housing lifestyles, products and services
- d. workforce placement and development initiatives
- e. knowledge-sharing forums, educational programming and entrepreneur mentoring programs

A DT **Open Technology Business Center** could use city-provided seed funding; be a non-profit corporation; and supply start-up assistance to open technology companies. DT Columbia would be an ideal location because of the following:

- a. importance of a central city to create a *sense of place* to a community
- b. Regional Center – where highest density jobs and housing will occur
- c. development styles expensive to build with multiple stories and structured parking
- d. historic center of town, a happening place with killer experiences

3. **Community Level Policy** plays a central role in creating a *stimulating and supportive environment* for entrepreneurs by making policy choices and decisions that produce a positive climate for entrepreneurship and by investing in infrastructure that supports entrepreneurs.

- a. Community leaders must work to create *an environment where entrepreneurs want to live, play and plant their businesses*. This approach requires thinking a bit differently about community infrastructure to support entrepreneurs DT. In effect, leaders must keep an “entrepreneurial impact statement” in their heads. When considering new ideas or initiatives, they must ask themselves “*what does it mean for local entrepreneurs?*” Much like an environmental impact statement, this concept ensures that leaders “*do no harm*” to their local entrepreneurial climate. *Other policies* community leaders to consider are:
 - A formal entrepreneur visitation program sends a *powerful message* that we are interested
 - Create an entrepreneur advisory group provides a *pathway to share and get involved*
 - Engage youth in school - a powerful way of creating a *cultural shift* toward entrepreneurship
 - Establish an award programs to *honor entrepreneurs* and provide *role models* to others
 - Draw attention to their importance to our economy with a *branding campaign*(sense of identity)
- b. In terms of *physical infrastructure*, community leaders need to consider how well connected their community is to regional, national and even international markets and services. Entrepreneurs need access to *high speed, broadband* Internet service. Entrepreneurs also need access to *different types of space* as their business grows—something different from the industrial park. *Entrepreneurs need co-working facilities and living/learning residential models.*
- c. Entrepreneurs also need *support infrastructure*—the collection of service providers who can help with finance (micro loan programs), technical assistance, mentoring, networking, information needs. Community leaders can make a commitment to invest in the types of support infrastructure needed in the community just as they have invested in roads and industrial parks in the past. Links to regional, national, and international expertise are essential to filling the service gaps that exist close to home.
- d. A supportive entrepreneurial environment also includes *quality of life infrastructure*. Entrepreneurship is about the people. **KEY POINT:** Entrepreneurs choose to locate their businesses in places where they

wish to live. Communities that invest in quality of life infrastructure (good schools, fine recreation programs and facilities, cultural venues like museums and theatres, quality community facilities such as renovated downtown markets and a preserved natural environment) are more likely to attract entrepreneurs from outside the community and keep those who are homegrown. Infrastructure policies:

- Community policies toward *home-based businesses* should make it easy for start-up entrepreneurs to begin in their basements, garages or spare bedrooms.
- Help entrepreneurs through the *regulatory maze* by creating a one-stop shop.

4. **The “Energizing an Entrepreneurial Economy” Taskforce** (The Triple E Taskforce) is to *work in tandem* with the **Downtown Columbia Development Partnership** (DCDP) to develop joint recommendations to *create new live/work environments DT*, new areas as business parks for office, light industrial, technology-based businesses, a park system to connect to the live/work environment, promote DT as a destination for local citizens, visitors and new businesses and new investments, place pedestrians first while maintaining DT’s integrity and history by defining the DT Columbia experience through its buildings.
 - a. Develop an *agreement* of the size and shape of the potential retail, housing and office markets, including impact and demands generated by MU and our colleges.
 - b. Give attention to how DT Columbia will *differentiate* itself from our competitive cities.
 - c. Show the two plans combined and overlaid in a way that *creates much more synergy*.
 - d. As *blending process unfolds*, include combined and related retail, connectivity, mixed uses adjacent to and incorporated into MU, adjacent residential uses/areas, office uses, shared spaces and places, incompatible uses, and intentional barriers.
 - e. Identify *specific functional areas* to address: reuse of selected buildings, recreational areas (also for kids), mix uses, design for bicycles, where to walk your pet, naming and branding of DT, etc.
 - f. Highest priority is *housing*: name a *champion* to ensure effective implementation of a **Downtown Housing Plan** addressing different segments based on financial means, life styles, and resulting needs and wants (singles, mingles, jingles, tingles). MU faculty are prime candidates for urban downtown life style (along with aging baby boomers in general) and could help achieve the *critical mass* necessary to crystallize the attracting of other Creative Class assets to DT (provide incentives for faculty to relocate adjacent to campus.)
 - g. Research an *Active Adult Urban Retirement Housing Opportunity* (the tingles). This has been an emerging national trend (*over 100 to-date*) with significant proportions of baby boomers seeking more sophisticated retirement options (DT, urban, active, cultural, close to medical facilities). Would serve to increase the density and diversity of the DT population and *help accelerate the speed of housing* development DT. This potential opportunity should be factored in the DT Housing Plan.
 - h. A High Priority is an *Expanded Warehouse District* that has potential to be a very important vital, specialized commercial asset that yearns to be exploited. *Naming / branding* can help ignite the development potential. Could be the place to proactively develop *a cluster* of live music venues, bars and clubs, and non-chain restaurants. The presence of “nightlife” – a live music and entertainment scene for local residents (and tourists) is the *key to attracting and retaining young singles* to live and play DT (think Austin, Texas). Encourage upper floors for location of design-oriented business, office and studios. Target architectural and landscape offices, graphics designers, interior design, designer showrooms (lighting tile, kitchen & bath fixtures, flooring, wall covering, window treatments, etc. Also, photographers, ad agencies, dance studios, art galleries, artist live/work studios, etc. (think Charlotte, NC). Also Job Corp facilities and other community service providers would be appropriate. Given proper planning and encouragement, coupled with appropriate designed in-fill buildings the *DT Columbia Warehouse District could develop into a dynamic differentiating asset for DT*. Need a dedicated *Warehouse District champion* within the DT Development office to make it a reality – too high a priority!

- i. View DT's small parks, plaza, public open spaces, and fountain areas as a series of oases that could be linked to achieve greater *synergy and connectivity* as well as places for rest or to connect to trails.
- j. Talent Development, as a critical economic driver in the New Economy, the ability to attract retail and develop skilled talent is a vital economic development resource. Need to identify and *target 3-5 key focus industries*. Pursue a concerted Workforce Development effort coordinating the activities of higher education and Technical and Vocational Training Programs for developing skilled talent in industry target areas.
- k. Endorse a plan for surrounding *Neighborhood Preservation and Enhancement* to preserve, protect and enhance the residential neighborhoods adjacent to DT. Nurture these areas to protect the current residents and to encourage the blossoming of each neighborhood's natural character. Foster community centers, appropriate connectivity, %age of affordable housing (It is the right thing to do, builds a sense of community, authenticity, and diversity, and is an essential ingredient of a vibrant DT capable of attracting and retaining the full range of talent we need.)
- l. Partner with involved *community groups* – have much to contribute to the ongoing planning and implementation process of DT: valuable insight, design energy, communications and leadership to inform and energize the planning and implementation process.
- m. Must shift the *thinking paradigms* in planning and development: emphasize density, mixed uses, pedestrian friendly streets and scale. Need different design principles. Need a deliberate approach to re-orient and educate the city and development professionals, maybe invite in experienced professional urban mentors for brown-bag lectures, share case studies, make group field trips and evolve benchmarks and design guidelines of the new paradigm.
- n. A Wi-Fi enabled DT is a great *competitive advantage* in attracting and retaining Creative Class assets. There is an important opportunity for Columbia to demonstrate progressiveness and to garner national attention that we have free Internet access on a massive scale by covering all of DT. Could have our very own “*virtual interactive billboard and directory*” of housing, restaurants, entertainment, shopping resources, cultural and sports events, job postings, etc.
- o. Accelerating the *collecting and connecting function*: Timely, *accurate information* can act as an accelerant for urban and economic development. Knowing where the resources are and connecting decision makers to development opportunities faster can serve to “perfect” market behavior and speed up the organic development process for DT. A well-done portal can effectively serve this function at many levels. An example: of one such collecting and connecting service worth benchmarking is *Pittsburgh's Cool Space Locator* (www.coolspacelocator.com). Columbia could develop a similar effort and give higher visibility to DT development and to accelerate desired market behavior. This could help people locate available DT housing opportunities, developers find available sites, entrepreneurs find available spaces and anyone know where the available “Cool Spaces” are. (DT Development Partnership could serve this function.).

C. Special Economic Development Support Strategy 2: Neighborhood Ventures Create a dream of building successful, vibrant, walkable *neighborhood commercial centers* in surrounding DT neighborhoods. Create a nonprofit economic development organization whose mission is to “*interject vitality into the heart of each neighborhood by creating or revitalizing its business district*”. Organize a *business member advocacy* organization, to *take neighborhood economic development to a new level* in the surrounding neighborhoods of DT Columbia and develop *broad community support* of community volunteers and a staff of trained economic development experts. Create an organization with a captivating work plan, using proven redevelopment models to revitalize our neighborhood business districts. Commit to working with all area stakeholders to revitalize neighborhood business districts.

- a. The goals would be to:
 - Capture *entrepreneurs and create successful businesses* in neighborhood business districts.
 - Implement effective, sustainable *economic development tools* for neighborhood business districts.
 - Improve *public and private infrastructure* in neighborhood business districts.

- Improve *image* of neighborhood business districts and increase the use of *individual businesses*.
- b. Work in partnership with local areas to assist them in achieving their goals, *revitalizing business districts!* By providing technical assistance, tangible trainings and services, and assisting in bringing to fruition sustainable economic development tools, local businesses and neighborhoods can be greatly improved while maintaining grassroots control of their areas. Neighborhood Ventures provides many of *the tools and resources* needed to comprehensively revitalize the heart of each neighborhood, which is its business district.
 - c. There is significant opportunity to reinvent our local and regional economy through growing our own local businesses, in the core of the city, in the heart of our region. The effect of Neighborhood Ventures is that the dream of successful, vibrant, walkable, diverse, sustainable neighborhood commercial centers throughout the city's neighborhoods will become a reality - creating jobs and creating communities!
- D. Special Economic Development Support Strategy 3: Build on the Arts:** Great arts and cultural venues will be the department stores for the 21st Century. Our arts potential will draw thousands of visitors and valuable new business activity to our hub. For economic and civic reasons, the public and private sectors need to provide support and funding for the expansion of the arts community DT and across our entire city.
1. Columbia, as a “Regional Cultural Center”: forging the art-economic development nexus requires a broad range of new economic development strategies. Establish a sustainable “Creative Alliance” by offering *compelling incentives* for artists and art organizations to relocate from other parts of the world (diversity in our cultural arts) and *to invest in the city and its future*. Goals for this initiative include:
 - a. Increase *home ownership* and support quality restoration by
 - Partnering with a financial institution to offer *100% financing* of both acquisition and rehab costs for owner-occupied residences and live-work spaces.
 - Working with the city government to offer *property tax abatements* to bring homeowners in
 - Negotiating with utilities to offer *reduce energy costs* for artists and residents.
 - Providing *architectural services* to homeowners, through the School of Architecture at MU.
 - b. Attract affluent residents to DT in order to *balance the housing mix* and goods and services.
 - c. Apply leading-edge *public space principles* to promote interactions between people with diverse ideas, encourage social equity, and build a strong unified neighborhood identity, in a mixed income and mixed-race community.
 - d. Increase *tourism* to support the city's cultural offerings, restaurants, and hotels.
 - e. Improve the *tax base and revenues* through increased property values, as well as through business licenses and contractor permits.
 - f. Generate *business* for the construction industry, the trades, furniture and interior suppliers, shipping, and many other local and regional business and revitalization activities.
 - g. Create *long-term demand for a range of businesses* that cater to the needs of the artists, area residents and art entities that relocate, as well as visitors.
 - h. Design and implement a *national/international marketing plan* organized around a single comprehensive website that will become the central information and attractions in and around the city.
 - i. Attract national and international *press coverage*.
 2. Collaboration with *local organizations/institutions* can provide organizational development, management assistance, and *business development services*. *Bring leaders in the cultural sector together for consideration of current trends and issues* by creating a continuing forum for planning.
 3. Integrate creative sector into economic development efforts as a way to jumpstart the local economy. The work of Richard Florida and others speak to the development of “creative communities”, geographically defined sectors that combine artist live-work spaces with mixed retail and other land use. This is viewed as a viable strategy for DT and neighborhood revitalization and very apropos given Columbia's recent launch of a major DT revitalization planning process. It also impacts formulation of *new workforce development*

initiatives, using the magnet of the creative workforce to attract footloose companies, thereby creating more options, and thereby improving our city’s overall quality of life.

E. Special Economic Development Support Strategy 4: Coordinate and expand business attraction and retention, as well as assist existing business activities: Columbia has a diverse business base, but may need to reuse several DT vacant buildings or lots and expand its retail diversity to appeal to a larger customer base.

Action steps include:

1. Develop a “Business Activity Support Plan” to encourage *active networks and business events* in Columbia (create a DT business group as part of the Chamber Small Business initiative: identify space requirement for business groups; establish an annual City budget to support selected events; and develop a marketing campaign to promote available sites and buildings to companies outside the region.
2. Develop a *communication plan* for the City that identifies the most effective means to reach businesses, increases the access of city information for businesses and strengthen two-way communications. Develop a “How to Do Business in Columbia” packet, enhance business information on City’s web site.
3. Determine the appropriate role of the City in addressing *workforce issues* and support key workforce issues: workforce development, links between business and school-to-work efforts, retraining workforce potential, effective transportation system, land (re)development and adequate infrastructure, identify current telecom capacity, areas of potential growth to ensure adequate facilities, ideas for timely and cost-effective services.
4. Enable businesses to easily *start or expand* their enterprise: investigate on-line applications for common licenses or permits; ensure regulations and codes are consistent with or complementary to one another; and are easy to understand and implement.
5. Support high quality of life and growing diversity: ensure economic development efforts include minority business groups; develop a *multipurpose facility* that supports both business and cultural activities; and promote active partnerships between business and community.
6. Focus business recruitment on our *target businesses*: retail, home furnishing, restaurants, food stores, etc.
7. Designate a *business recruitment coordinator* to coordinate strategy implementation, undertake direct marketing, and serve as the contact person and ombudsman for firms.
8. Create a *recruitment package* with effective collateral materials to make the case for locations DT and mid Missouri and provide useful information on how to start a business. Key materials include Market Profile on DT’s customer markets; a Community Profile on Columbia and Central MO as a place to live and do business; a Guide to Starting a Business in Columbia; a DT Revitalization Brief on the DT improvement strategy; and an up-to-date listing of DT space to lease.
9. Undertake an initiative to *recruit target businesses*. A mix of formal and informal approaches are needed to reach existing businesses, new entrepreneurs and people interested in moving to DT and recruit businesses.
10. Expand efforts to develop vacant and underused buildings DT. Need a combination of community pressure, stronger enforcement of city codes, and identifying new owners with an interest in acquiring the property.

F. Building DT Columbia, as a Creative City for the Creative Sector of our Community and the Region

1. Create a DT *supportive environment* for the Creative Economy. Plays out on four economic development levels with place (DT) being critical:
 - a. General creativity is a source of competitive advantage for business and regions competing on innovation. Creativity is the ability *to generate and link new ideas, to conceptualize*, as an integral part of many businesses and technologies.

- b. Creative *practices in art, design and media* are increasingly important to growing “creative industry sectors” as well as to the next evolution of some information and communications technology sectors.
 - c. Creative industry *jobs*, creative people’s *residential preference*, and *innovation* (smart people with ideas, tolerance for risk, a supportive market for new ideas and places to share ideas) *migrate to DT locations*.
 - d. Creativity needs constant inputs, resources and stimuli and thrives on reinvention.
2. DT Columbia needs to *supply* the:
- a. *Resources*: digital resources for maintaining portfolios of people’s learning and production life, access to potential employees and collaborators, mentors and knowledge: easy access to micro-finance, and the underwriting of risk in business loans.
 - b. *Spaces and meeting places* – brokers and agencies that combine sector-specific expertise and local knowledge, that provide a point of connection to new opportunities; physical places that build networks on the model of guilds and open members’ clubs that provide a place for building informal relationships.
 - c. *Stories* – a constant supply of stories provided by public agencies through competitions, research and awards that reflect back how the sector works and grows, and the value it creates.
 - d. *Toolkit* that enables the creative class to produce for themselves – *non-stop, all day, every day*.
 - e. *The ecosystem* to support their work – the layers, the galleries, the studios, the clubs, the clients, the co-working facilities, the living-learning residential, live-work flex housing, quality of life attributes, etc.
3. Make DT Columbia the *solution* to the Creative Economy
- a. Alter our *economic development approach* to make sure we have considered both their desirability and their difference.
 - b. All our *challenges* of sustainability, resource consumption, health, access to opportunity, innovations to keep us *competitive in a global economy*, poverty, or how we’re going to live together despite our differences, are addressed in DT Columbia.
 - c. Eliminate *anything that compromises* our DT ability *to be the solution* to these looming problems.
 - d. Cater to *young women* DT (20% more likely than young men to have a college degree), *young adults, boomers, businesses/entrepreneurs and parents with children* – means *money is coming back to the city!*
 - e. Get the *basics* right. DT needs to be clean, green, attractive and safe; good schools nearby, affordable housing. The key to attracting them is to give them *plenty of opportunity* to live the kind of lives they want to live.
 - f. Urban leaders need to *understand how people want to live in cities today* and translate that into action.
4. Areas in most urgent need of *fresh thinking and planning* for DT Columbia. The *things* DT must be really good at making:
- a. *Columbia as The Talented City* develops, maximizes, attracts and retains talent.
 - b. *Columbia as The Connected City* fosters connections that link people with ideas to talent, capital and markets; DT to region; and regions to the global economy.
 - c. *Columbia as The Distinctive City* capitalizes on local differences to build local economic opportunity.
 - d. *Columbia as The Innovative City* fosters innovation and entrepreneurship.

Columbians deserve a great DT. Without it, we lose access to *opportunity* for those who need it most. How will Columbia *retool* its DT for our future so that mid-Missourians future will be secure?

Provide a *killer experience*, with appealing lifestyle options, on top of *iconic design*.
Provide an *attitude in our economic development marketing* that conveys the following:

“*Opportunity is available for you to achieve your goals.*”
“*You are welcome here.*”
“*Bring us your best and we’ll put it to work.*”

III. Measuring Success NOTE: Seven pages of indicators and/or benchmarks were listed in previous paper.