

WAYNESBORO
DOWNTOWN
MASTER PLAN

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WAYNESBORO DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

INTRODUCTION

“What a beautiful place to build a town.” This is the phrase that begins the mythical tale of the beginning of Waynesboro. Now, 211 years since its founding, the myth is still applicable. However, the difference in 2008 is that the focus of the construction and redevelopment in Waynesboro now originates in a solid Main Street Vision, a burgeoning regional economy, and a rich cultural and environmental history. Beyond being a beautiful place, Waynesboro is built on industrial fortitude, architectural diversity, and a passionate community.

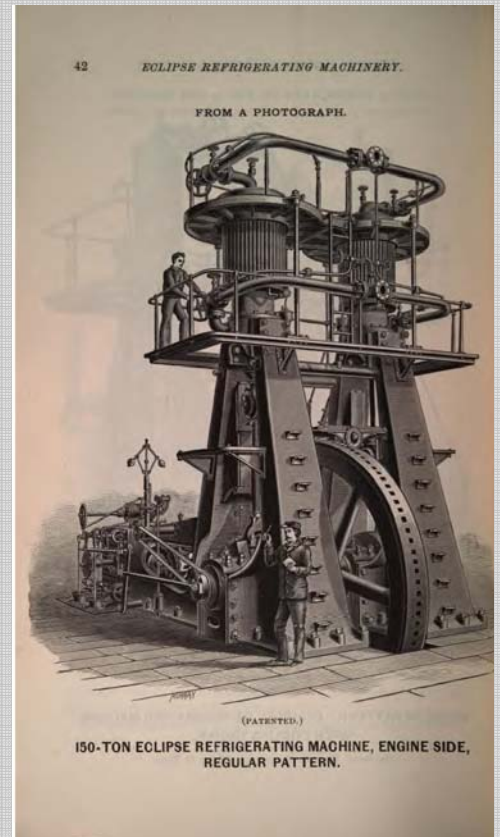
*paraphrased from the MAIN STREET
WAYNESBORO VISION STATEMENT*

To achieve the vision for the future of Waynesboro, the community must:

- Capitalize on Waynesboro’s location along the Pennsylvania-Maryland border and its proximity to the growing residential needs of the Washington, D.C. region; and
- Take advantage of regional heritage tourism and outdoor recreation assets.

Today’s market realities will enable downtown Waynesboro to:

- **Serve as the commercial and civic center** for a **growing residential market**. This shall be accomplished by **enhancing existing assets**, and developing new assets that will define Waynesboro as a **regional quality-of-life hub** for south-central Pennsylvania.
- Build upon the strengths of this quality-of-life hub in order to enhance the central business district's image as a **hospitality**



venue for the region's **many heritage tourism and outdoor recreation** tourists.

This downtown plan will address each of the **bold** elements of the vision plan noted above. These elements have been explored further and are now expanded into overarching strategies for the plan:

1. Enhance the existing commercial core district
2. Meet the residential needs of the Borough, County, and region
3. Create a hospitality venue
4. Celebrate regional outdoor recreational opportunities
5. Enhance heritage tourism

PROCESS

When creating a master plan for a community, we follow an inclusive process that insists that we always remain rooted in that community. The process begins with a kick-off meeting with key stakeholders within the community. Minutes of that meeting in Waynesboro are attached as an appendix to this report. These initial thoughts help to guide the development of the plan as we move through the rest of the process.

In addition to the kick-off meeting, we must become familiar with the community and its sense of place. This occurred when we had coffee in town, ate pizza at Frank's, enjoyed the organic fruit cup at the Hoover House, checked out the tobacco at Christie's, browsed for rare used books, indulged in chocolate from the Candy Shop, and grabbed a soda at the newsstand. We became familiar with the parks and open spaces, the residential neighborhoods, and the churches. We looked at the traffic patterns, the alleys, the



parking lots, and the sidewalks. We tested the benches, examined the lights, and watched the people. We immersed ourselves in your community. During the preliminary planning phases of this project, we visited the community several times, in summer heat, fall color, and winter cold.

OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

At this point, we moved from observation to analysis. Our analysis builds on:

- what we learned when reviewing maps, reading past plans, studying history books, and taking photos, as well as
- what we heard when listening to lifelong residents, new homeowners, business proprietors, and when we were in the fabric of the community.

Preliminary Physical Observations

I. Main Street:

- a. Some building facades and display windows are out of date and uninviting
- b. Physically appears that ample parking is available
- c. Minimal outdoor seating exists for eateries along Main Street
- d. Pedestrian connections between public parking lots and Main Street are lacking definition and not inviting (perceived unsafe)
- e. Despite interesting buildings and architectural character, there are still many vacancies

- f. Retail mix does not provide for many day-to-day needs or services for local residents - these needs are instead being met in strip retail centers and other locations outside the borough
- g. No real gateway or sense of arrival, nothing to tell people that there is something to see/do or pull people to the center square or other main street vendors
- h. Existing signage directs people around the downtown 'core' instead of just driving into it
- i. No uniform signage in the core downtown, leading to disjointed appearance and incongruent visual identity
- j. No bicycle racks, bicycle signage, or bicycle accommodations in town

II. Center Square:

- a. Very auto-oriented environment with pedestrian accommodations on the fringe
- b. The center of town but not the center of activity
- c. Lacks definition and a 'sense of arrival'
- d. Not branded as a landmark/destination
- e. Does not appear to be a gathering space
- f. Interesting architecture on square is not matched by existing streetscape character

III. Parking:

- a. Lacks definition and is uninviting



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- b. No definition of edges and entrances/exits, no separation from alleys
- c. Existing signage system is deficient to direct traffic to public parking areas, especially in alleys behind Main Street and to help define public parking areas versus private parking lots - very difficult to tell which lots are for public use
- d. Upgrade lighting as needed to improve sense of safety in evening and at night

IV. Parks & Open Space:

- a. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections as needed from adjacent residential areas to school property, and Main Street core
- b. Adjacent vacant property could be used for additional park space if needed (if it is not developed into residential property)
- c. Need a well-defined connection to Main Street

V. Downtown Strengths

- a. Architectural diversity both in downtown commercial buildings and surrounding residential areas, including many Victorian-era design elements
- b. High quality open spaces surround the community and provide various recreational facilities and opportunities for residents and visitors (including access to the Appalachian Trail)
- c. Geographically, Waynesboro is close to population centers in southern



Pennsylvania and northern Maryland, and Interstate 81 and US Route 15 for access, and close to Chambersburg, PA and Hagerstown, MD.

Preliminary Market Analysis

Bedroom Community

Based on the commuting times to and from workplaces, noted in the comprehensive plan, Waynesboro has characteristics of a bedroom community, meaning people travel away from town for employment.

Bedroom communities are known to be fairly quiet in the evenings because people have already done their driving and are now *home*. Shorter commute times increase the likelihood of getting those in this demographic to shop and dine in the evening. In other words, the longer the commute times, the smaller the geographic market area for the businesses in the bedroom community.

Destination businesses are the exception to this rule and have a different trade area than the average local business. Certain destination businesses find that customers will travel several hours to reach them and often plan day-trips or weekend excursions around this type of shopping or dining.

Therefore, for many businesses in Waynesboro, location is a key consideration. Waynesboro is located near two areas of competition, both related to Gettysburg: a mid-point shopping outlet mall on US Route 15 and tourism shopping in downtown Gettysburg. These two areas of retail competition capture significant customers away

from Waynesboro and it is unlikely that Waynesboro can compete head-to-head in these areas.

This scenario is not unique to Waynesboro. In most small towns, “consumer needs” are not met in the core of a small town business community. The exception to this situation is the bedroom community where there are desirable amenities, a good location, and most importantly, desirable housing stock.

That said, in Waynesboro, there is a window of opportunity that could capitalize on natural and cultural amenities. Businesses would need to reach into the immediate surroundings to create a complete package of offerings but Waynesboro is in a great location to do just that. Together with the surrounding township(s), Waynesboro could create a “living destination” for a specific segment. Defining the specific segment will drive the retail mix for the future.

Living Destination Segment Options

Active adult communities have golf courses, lakes, hiking trails, activity centers, active religious elements, libraries, public transportation or at least shuttle service, access to good medical care (doctors and hospitals are important), and universal design (accessible design for different abilities) in housing. In some cases, downtown and close-in neighborhoods can be packaged as one of these active communities for those that want diversity and no gates.

New families are usually looking for areas with schools, playgrounds and sport fields, youth cultural activities, townhouses and homes. They

want a place for families to grow and children to grow up.

Waynesboro has room to continue to grow either of these living destination segments - active adults or new families - within the borough limits. Making a conscious decision to pursue one or the other will benefit Waynesboro. Why? Because those who “move in” often come in groups. These groups tend to be clearly defined by both age and economics. Age and economics can then translate into the type of housing that is desired.

This is where downtown and the immediate close-in neighborhoods of Waynesboro have a real opportunity to capture some of this market.

Overarching Needs

Bedroom communities have a number of things in common no matter which group arrives.

- Residents are looking for convenience. They already spend enough time in the car.
- Retail does great in the early morning, especially restaurants and coffee shops for a quick breakfast or coffee and bagel to go.
- It should not surprise us that retail operations suffer during the midday hours when the target customer is at work or at school. Opening early or staying open late is the key.
- Retail operations that do well in the evening include service providers: cleaners, drug stores, grocery stores, restaurants (especially if they offer carry out or pre-made meals). Cleaners that have drive thru or easy drop off points, also do well after 5 p.m. as folks arrive home.
- Weekends offer more options for more traditional shopping to this group.

An example, young professionals are looking for creative downtown apartments or condominium living with convenience and something to do in the evening or on weekends. Young families are often the ones who purchase fixer-upper houses in the historic neighborhoods. New townhomes and suburban-style neighborhoods offer families a place to grow. Price points determine the economic diversity of this group.

Main Street Analysis

Retail Space

Strive for first floor, small space retail and service offerings. Most existing spaces will be 20-25 feet wide and 100 feet deep. This width is acceptable, but shallower retail space is also desirable.

Look for convenience first. Rethink old stereotypes. For instance, banks used to require the 100% corner and were great drivers of customer traffic. With the advent of ATMs, the traditional bank is now almost the white elephant and no longer serves as a driver of customers. Now you see Walgreens and other major drug chains taking the 100% corner. They provide convenience in a number of areas of customer need.

Clustering

If there is a sufficient office or professional market, the downtown can be a lunch location. However, creating a lunch-time destination will require three to five lunch places. Just as you see McDonald's, Wendy's, and fast food spots clustered in a strip development, Waynesboro also needs to create that density to present a dining location that will be recognizable by the consumer.

Clustering is the key to another niche – gifts. Small downtowns are often viewed as the place where you get that special gift - a unique piece of jewelry, an artistic item, or a wedding gift. These types of shops need a grouping of stores to create a gift cluster.

With the location of the Gettysburg outlet mall and other clothing options (most notably catalogues and on-line shopping), it is unlikely

that Waynesboro will return as a place to purchase clothing. The exception to this is the high-end, exceptional service destination clothing store for either women's or men's wear. These types of stores tend to be one-of-a-kind and are still found in downtown locations.

Other elements that tend to fill downtown buildings are things like dance and karate studios. They do little for retail and the vibrancy of the downtown and are often there because the space is the right size and rents are cheap. Unless the goal is to create an active youth block with a wealth of these options and a vibrant coffee shop or wine bar in the center of it for parents to wait and mingle, these businesses often serve as *occupied vacancies*.

Retail Hours of Operation

Returning to the concept of living destination segments, knowing who your desired customer is will dictate what you offer in your downtown and when. Consider the active adult segment. They are available and active during day-time hours. They often eat lunch out and link their shopping trips to their lunchtime excursions. Consider that grandmothers are the largest purchasers of high-end children's gifts and apparel. Offering an appealing lunch spot next to the baby shop can be a smart way to pair businesses.

Looking to the other side of the cash register, a number of downtowns have seen a growth in shops that are owned by retirees. Be careful. These shops are often run as a hobby, have irregular hours, or are closed down for periods of time when the owner wants to travel or take a break. It is important to ensure that these creative retirees

operate their business in your town in the way that is truly beneficial to the retail community.

Finally, being realistic about the downtown and when it will be active is critical to measuring its success. (Again considering the living destination segments, if your downtown is busy and active until 7 p.m., is that meeting the needs of your retailers or would it be better for activity to continue until 9 p.m.?) Is it acceptable for some retailers operate under their own schedule or does everyone have to be open at the same time? The reality of who is shopping in your downtown and when they are shopping can change our perspective of downtown Waynesboro.

STRATEGIES AND ACTION ITEMS

Following our observation and analysis, we developed strategies that will help Waynesboro achieve the desired end-result and action items that are a means to that end. These strategies and action items are presented here.

Note: In some cases, you may notice that a particular action item relates to more than one strategy. This is desirable and allows you to concurrently address multiple challenges and opportunities within the downtown.

I. Enhance the existing commercial core district

- a. Sign Design Guidelines – amend current zoning guidelines to permit blade signs meeting certain criteria within the downtown
- b. Parking management strategy for downtown
 - i. Review and amend current ordinances
 - ii. Explore opportunities to provide shared parking within the downtown business district
- c. Encourage downtown business owners to utilize the Design Guidelines developed through the Main Street Program
 - i. Offer a monthly newsletter highlighting elements of the guidelines
 - ii. Offer incentives for redeveloping according to the guidelines
- d. Provide a variety of social spaces within the fabric of Main Street

- i. Center Square – larger gatherings
 - ii. Pocket Parks – smaller gatherings
 - iii. Streetscape – individual seating areas
- e. Encourage and recruit appropriate retail to the Main Street area
 - i. Boutique retail
 - ii. Experience shopping
 - iii. Theme shopping
- f. Provide an inviting and cohesive Main Street experience
 - i. Build upon existing successes, i.e. Walk Waynesboro, Festivals, etc.
 - ii. Provide public relations and marketing materials
- g. Establish the square as the center of commerce and civic pride in town
- h. Create gateway signage at the west and east entrances to the Main Street district

II. Meet the residential needs of the Borough, County, and region

- a. Create infill housing projects within the Borough
 - i. Higher density development
 - ii. 2nd and 3rd floor residential units over downtown businesses
 - iii. Residential density adds 24-hour vibrancy to downtowns
- b. Provide options for housing types within the community
 - i. Single-family attached
 - ii. Townhouse
 - iii. Live/Work Units
 - iv. Loft Apartments

- v. Condos (market rate and higher)

III. Celebrate regional outdoor recreational opportunities

- a. Add dedicated bike lane/signage on Second Street, Third Street, Potomac Street and Church Street
- b. Consider developing an outfitters shopping district along Walnut Street
 - i. Hiking (draw from the proximity to the Appalachian Trail)
 - ii. Golfing (draw from local and regional golf destinations)
 - iii. Skiing (draw from proximity to Whitetail Resort, Ski Round-top and Liberty Mountain)

IV. Enhance heritage tourism

- a. Architectural history
 - i. Walking tours
 - ii. Seasonal home tours
- b. Relation to Civil War, French and Indian War, Underground Railroad and surrounding sites
 - i. Defined cultural attraction in region
 - ii. Capturing pass by traffic
- c. Industrial Heritage themes for:
 - i. Sculpture
 - ii. Architecture

V. Create a hospitality venue

- a. Target a variety of restaurateurs to develop projects in town (using existing attractions to market and promote these opportunities)
 - i. 1,200-1,500 square foot options
 - ii. 1,500-2,500 square foot options

- iii. 2,500-7,500 square feet options
- iv. 7,500 square feet and up options
- b. Cluster overnight accommodations that relate to the needs of your market segment (recreational, weekend Civil War travelers, shopping, etc.)
- c. Develop an evening and weekend attraction

APPENDICES

The following appendices are included describing particular areas of downtown where the strategies of this Master Plan were applied to help visualize the results:

- Appendix A – Walnut Street Low Impact
- Appendix B – Walnut Street Medium Impact
- Appendix C – Walnut Street Sketch
- Appendix D – East Gay Street Corridor A
- Appendix E – East Gay Street Corridor B
- Appendix F – East Gay Street Corridor C
- Appendix G - Residential Infill
- Appendix H – Memorial Park Infill A
- Appendix I – Memorial Park Infill B
- Appendix J – East Main St./Middle St.
- Appendix K – East Main St./East Gay St.
- Appendix L – Enhanced Streetscape
- Appendix M – West Main St./Middle St.
- Appendix N – Main Street Enhancement
- Appendix O – Alley Enhancements
- Appendix P – Town Square Low Impact
- Appendix Q – Town Square Medium Impact