Downtown Hummelstown

Master Plan
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All other photos are by Derck & Edson.
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\(^1\) The Regional Connections program was created in 2011 as an opportunity for Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) to support local planning and development efforts that help implement our regional long-range land use and transportation plans – the Regional Growth Management Plan and Regional Transportation Plan (RGMP and RTP). The program provides funding to municipalities and counties to support locally-directed, collaborative actions to improve communities, enhance community character, manage growth, maximize existing infrastructure capacity, and link land use and transportation planning decisions to create a more sustainable future for our region.
Creating a plan for continued revitalization has far-reaching impact that begins with the planning process and continues through the implementation of the plan.

As such, this plan will be available for all community stakeholders to encourage increased focus on strengthening and expanding the social, economic, and physical vitality of Hummelstown.

With continued communication and collaboration by local community leadership, these efforts will include broad based opportunities for:

- Economic development activities
- Expanded community partnerships
- Community volunteer involvement
At the kick-off meeting for the project, the Master Plan Committee described their individual thoughts on what constitutes “downtown” Hummelstown. Utilizing aerial photography and street maps, the committee began to refine the limits of downtown.

From those discussions, and the purpose of this plan, the downtown study area is identified as the core community emanating two blocks away from the square in all directions, the limits of which are indicated on the map below by the blue line.

**Public Outreach and Stakeholder Inclusion**

In Hummelstown, the master plan process began with the outreach and targeted engagement of the current community through three public participation sessions and monthly stakeholder committee meetings. The process was both deliberate and intentional in the inclusion of key stakeholders and broad public input throughout.
Public Participation

Character Preference
July 30, 2015 at the Hummelstown Fire Dept.

This meeting was designed and executed to facilitate measurable input related to 18 essential physical elements of successful downtowns (heretofore known as the Character Preference exercise).

Describing how something should look or exist in the future can be a very nebulous and therefore anxiety-inducing request for non-planners. With this understanding, the Character Preference exercise for the Hummelstown community was organized using 138 photographs exemplifying the following essential elements: awnings, benches, bicycle racks, building styles, open flags, residential retail, facades, flags & banners, landscape, lighting types, murals, gathering spaces, public art, seating, gateway features, signage, trash receptacles, and wayfinding.

Participants were given 21 individual tickets with which they were able to cast votes for individual preferences in each category, allowing them one vote for each category and three additional bonus votes for areas of particular interest.

In total, 1,098 votes were cast. Within each category, there were one or two selections that comprised the majority of votes cast. The details of each preference provided the foundation for future design and planning decisions, to ensure that all solutions were firmly rooted in community sentiment and preference.

Complete results of the exercise and support graphics are included in the appendix.

The image boards above represent a sampling of the 18 individual topics that were on display in the fire hall (shown at left) and available for voting. The ability to study each image as it relates to Hummelstown was a valuable aspect of the exercise and provided an important basis for future design concepts, strategic planning, and implementation strategy development.
**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)**
*September 24, 2015 at the Hummelstown Fire Dept.*

In conjunction with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, members of the community participated in a SWOT exercise. Each individual participant was asked to identify what they personally perceived as either strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats within the core downtown. Those individuals then collaborated in small groups to share their perspectives and reach consensus within their group to achieve a common list under each SWOT category.

Each group shared excerpts of their report with the rest of the attendees to gain insight and feedback. The results of this exercise became an important tool to guide future planning efforts.

**Blue Sky Session**
*October 22, 2015 at Lower Dauphin High School*

To ensure that every participant had an equal opportunity to express their thoughts related to public and private realm development within the community, two Sticky Walls™ were posted, and participants were asked to write their comments on individual index cards and adhere them to the adhesive wall. One wall corresponded to public realm improvements while the other wall focused on private realm improvements.

By allowing small group discussions to occur concurrently with individual participation, a broad and inclusive response was achieved. More than 200 individual responses were posted and recorded. The information gathered with this exercise provided further definition to the design concepts as well as provided the basis for future land use and development planning.

Complete results of the exercise from this meeting can be found in the appendix.

**Priority Projects/Concepts - Stakeholder Review**
*January 28, 2016 at Borough Hall*

Each of the more than two dozen development options were reviewed, analyzed against the character preferences, and prioritized. A smaller group of select projects were identified to be developed into conceptual renderings to serve the local economic development activities. The graphic depictions endeavor to combine the data collected during the process with real project opportunities in the community.

It is important to understand that these graphics are philosophical in nature, which is to say they inspire a type of development thinking and pattern that reflect the community input gathered during the planning process. Each sketch is an optional scenario that showcases a number of replicable design elements applied to a sample property in the community. In no way are these plans and sketches fully entitled nor do they imply any approval, rather they encourage creative thinking and aspiration within the built environment of Hummelstown.
The Main Street Approach begins with creating a vision for success on Main Street that is rooted in a solid understanding of the market realities of the district, and is informed by broad community engagement. Main Street promotes a community-driven process that brings diverse stakeholders from all sectors together, inviting them to be proactive participants in the revitalization process. This essential step provides a foundation for outlining the community’s own identity, expectations, and ideals while confirming real and perceived perceptions, needs and opportunities. It also ensures that the vision is a true reflection of the diversity of the community.

from the National Main Street Center
The Vision for Downtown Hummelstown

Downtown Hummelstown is emblematic of a Norman Rockwell painting. It is a civic focal point for a broad region of citizens, serving as a place for education, community building, shopping, dining, and personal services.

The quaint and charming town square is the nucleus of the community, representing the character and aesthetic that forms the foundation for the future.

Hummelstown will cultivate a traditional commercial core, foster open communication, and promote a sense of nostalgic small-town spirit to strengthen their sense of place and community pride.

Using the Main Street approach, Hummelstown will:

1. Encourage infill and adaptive reuse in the core downtown to accommodate…
   - experiential dining
   - boutique retail
   - high-quality housing choices
   - small to mid-sized professional offices
2. Engage the community through…
   - coordinated web presence
   - diverse promotional activities
   - organized volunteerism
   - diverse special event calendar
3. Enhance the Rockwell-ian charm and ambiance by…
   - embracing public art
   - expanding branding throughout the core
   - curating all visual design elements

The transformation of Downtown Hummelstown will occur with broad stakeholder input and coordination with local and regional municipal leadership.
Revitalizing a downtown or neighborhood commercial district requires focusing on the underlying Economic Vitality of the district. This work is rooted in a commitment to making the most of a community’s unique sense of place and existing historic assets, harnessing local economic opportunity and creating a supportive business environment for small business owners and the growing scores of entrepreneurs, innovators, and localists alike. With the nation-wide growing interest in living downtown, supporting downtown housing is also a key element of building Economic Vitality.

from the National Main Street Center
Market Scan

The following pages represent excerpts from an analysis of the market context for the development of the Downtown Hummelstown Master Plan.

The report summarizes economic and demographic conditions impacting the downtown Hummelstown study area (noted by the pin), the potential market support for retail, commercial, and support uses in the study area, and examines a varying trade area defined by 10, 30, and 120 minute drive-sheds.

Within the larger map above, drive sheds are depicted:
- **Green** - 10 minute drive
- **Red** - 30 minute drive
- **Blue** - 120 minute drive

These geographic areas encompass other strong markets which can both be competitors and assets to build upon with economic development activities.
Economic Situation

Hummelstown’s geographic location, (situated along US Route 322 between Harrisburg and Hershey and within close proximity to major transportation corridors of Interstate 81 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike) allows for a very unique trade area determination. At a national level, Hummelstown and all of Dauphin County is identified by the US Census Bureau as part of the Harrisburg-Carlisle-Lebanon Combined Statistical Area, which recognizes that a portion of the trade area relates to a unique regional context compared to other Pennsylvania communities. Locally, Hummelstown is in Southcentral export region defined by DCED and the Dutch Country Roads tourism region.

Census Quick Facts

The 2014 population of Hummelstown Borough is estimated by the US Census at 4,544 (which represents 1.7% of Dauphin County).

The average commute time to work is 18.5 minutes for a Hummelstown resident.

Comparative median income results:

- Hummelstown Borough $58,325
- Dauphin County $54,337
- Pennsylvania $52,548
- United States $53,046
Economic Restructuring

Trade Area Determination

Demographic and consumer expenditures information was collected in the following areas determined by reasonable driving distances:

1. 10 minute drive-shed (a hyper local trade area) – could be considered a convenience trade area

2. 30 minute drive-shed (a regional trade area) - loosely corresponding to the Lower Dauphin School District, an area spanning 5 municipalities and 90 square miles, of which Hummelstown is the hub

3. 120 minute drive-shed (a more tourist or macro-regional trade area) – could be considered a destination trade area, particularly given the proximity to Hersheypark.

Consumer Spending Patterns

Spending patterns on retail goods and services in these drive sheds are as follows:

1. 10 minute – consumers are spending between 10-25% more than the national average
2. 30 minute – consumers are spending between 0-7% more than the national average
3. 120 minute – consumers are spending between 10-15% more than the national average

Based on the broad demographic and market reality, retailers that can draw customers from a hyper local trade area can begin to tap into a more robust spending habit when compared to the national average. Noting the median incomes on the previous page, the 10 minute drive shed represents the strongest median income levels and may also offer increased sales opportunities.

Market Leakage Within

- Furniture and Home Furnishings $6,699,370.00
- Lawn and Garden $1,065,530.00
- Specialty Food Stores $1,691,566.00
- Beer, Wine, and Liquor $5,365,838.00
- Shoe Stores $2,514,751.00
- Sporting Goods/Hobbies $7,622,867.00
- Books, Periodicals, Music $2,426,825.00

Leakage represents existing opportunity for capturing spending that is leaving a specific geographic area. Within a 10-minute drive of the square, the retail categories detailed at left are leaking consumer spending to surrounding areas. Effectively, this is money being spent by the more than 47,000 people living within 10 minutes of the square that leaves that same area and therefore represents potential market share that could be gained by retail establishments in the community. Combining the categories at left with the vision statement begins to highlight parallels with desire and opportunity in the marketplace.

Market Surplus Within

- Health and Personal Care $28,318,520.00
- Clothing* $52,002,407.00
- Jewelry, Luggage, Leather* $369,487.00
- General Merchandise* $60,060,644.00
- Florists $129,029.00
- Office Supplies, Stationery, Gifts $2,605,320.00
- Full Service Restaurants** $23,284,237.00

Within the same 10-minute drive of the square, the following retail categories indicate a surplus of consumer spending in the immediate area. Effectively, this is money being drawn into the region from those living beyond the 10 minute drive-shed. In a surplus situation, there is the ability to identify the types of retail activities that are bringing people into your region and begin to strategically align new businesses to the categories shown at left to create value added experiences in the downtown for these customers.

*Tanger Outlets at Hershey is included
**Hershey downtown is included
Promoting Main Street can be done through highlighting cultural traditions, celebrating and preserving important architecture and history, encouraging local businesses to market cooperatively, offering coordinated specials and sales, and hosting special events aimed at changing perceptions of the district and communicating to residents, investors, businesses, and property-owners that this place is special.

from the National Main Street Center
Promotions

The National Mainstreet Center emphasizes that “promoting Main Street takes many forms, but the ultimate goal is to position the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and the hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community’s unique characteristics.”

Within Hummelstown, the physical geography of the town square and the collection of existing events and activities have begun to establish the downtown as the civic and commercial core. Through the planning process, several concepts for expanding the promotional efforts in the community include the following:

- Working with local auto clubs to create car-themed events (e.g. style, era, or brand focused events)
- Expanding the park events to include additional movie events and music activities (consider partnering with Derry Township on sequel and theme events)
- Creating programs to assist businesses with community engagement and retail merchandising
- Implementing downtown awards for maintenance (e.g. Golden Broom or Shovel awards)

In addition to the promotional activities, strategies for recruitment and retention of businesses is directly related to maintaining downtown as the hub of activity.

CURRENT DOWNTOWN EVENT LISTING
for Hummelstown Borough

JANUARY
Winter Fling

FEBRUARY

MARCH
Community Easter Egg Hunt @ Hummelstown American Legion
Hummelstown Fire Company Ham Smoker

APRIL
Spring Bash
Comcast Clean Up Day
Arbor Day Celebration

MAY
Memorial Day Parade/Ceremony
Art Walk

JUNE
Hummelstown Fire Company Carnival

JULY
Hummelstown Business & Professional Association
Taste of Hummelstown

AUGUST
FFO, Inc. Carnival
Recreation Board Movie in the Park

SEPTEMBER
Hummelstown Arts Festival
Diversity Day

OCTOBER
Lions Club Spaghetti Dinner
Miss Hummelstown Pageant
Halloween Parade

NOVEMBER
Hummelstown Fire Company Turkey Smoker

DECEMBER
Hummelstown Business & Professional Association
Holiday Happenings
Christmas Tree Lighting

*Monthly Bingo is offered at the Fire Company
Business Retention and Recruitment

It is important to note that businesses and communities have a vital, two-way relationship, especially when it comes to community downtowns. One can’t succeed without the other. Businesses create much of the life and buzz in the downtown and in the community by attracting customers and visitors. Those same customers and a community’s residents shop downtown, and in doing so, make it possible for the downtown businesses to succeed and grow.

This master plan is all about capitalizing on that two-way relationship and investing in downtown Hummelstown. Whether we are talking about streetscape beautification, promotional events, physical redevelopment, or efforts to retain and recruit businesses, this plan represents the Hummelstown community’s intent to invest in its downtown.

Easily overlooked in the desire for new and different businesses downtown, supporting and strengthening existing downtown businesses is an important part of downtown revitalization initiatives. Existing businesses have already made a significant investment in the community in terms of space, goods and services, marketing, and a connection with a loyal customer base. Hummelstown intends to capitalize on that investment and partner with existing businesses as they strive to grow and prosper.

At the same time, new businesses can help fill gaps in downtown offerings and bring the latest in retail goods and services to a community. Hummelstown-focused retail market research has uncovered certain business sector opportunities where the local area demand is greater than the local area supply. In addition, certain existing properties possess ideal reuse/redevelopment potential. Hummelstown plans to undertake a number of business support activities and expects that they will benefit both new and existing businesses.

Business retention and recruitment is multi-faceted.

Here’s How

Existing businesses possess clientele whose shopping interests go beyond that one business that originally attracted them to downtown. For example, there are as many as 19 salon/personal care service businesses in downtown Hummelstown. Retail market data indicates that those businesses attract many customers from outside of Hummelstown. Those individuals can be encouraged to extend their stay in downtown Hummelstown with cross promotional activities involving salon/personal care service shops and related businesses of interest.

Direct promotion at the community level can be effective to attract visitors to a community and its downtown, setting up the opportunity for individual businesses to draw those visitors into their store(s). Hummelstown Borough, the Hummelstown Fire Company, the Hummelstown Business Professional Association, and a number of other community organizations already maintain a slate of events throughout the year. Widespread listing of these events on the internet and social media is an established goal articulated by the Master Plan Committee as is the addition of certain strategic new events to spread the word and bring more people to Hummelstown.
Promotions

An inviting and welcoming downtown will help attract both customers and businesses. Streetscape improvements including new curb and sidewalk, more street trees and planters, façade renovations, public art, outdoor dining, and pocket parks are all part of this plan. Welcoming gateways to downtown and distinctive wayfinding signage to parking and points of interest will signal that downtown Hummelstown is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and consumer friendly retail environment.

As existing businesses identify opportunities for growth, there may be a need for technical know-how as to financing that growth, expanding inventory, or re-branding the business. Numerous, minimal-cost training resources will be made available to address those and other business needs. At the same time, the Hummelstown community’s median household income of $58,325, putting it in the ranks of Atlanta, GA and Dallas, TX, is the kind of information that prospective businesses want to know. That along with other demographics, proximity of schools and the Hershey Medical Center, quality residential neighborhoods, promotional partnership opportunities, and parking availability downtown is just some of the information that will be made part of a Hummelstown business recruitment package and will be communicated as Hummelstown reaches out to developers, businesses, and property owners to discuss new businesses and redevelopment potential in downtown.
A strong organizational foundation is key for a sustainable Main Street revitalization effort. This can take many forms, from a standalone non-profit organization, to a special assessment district, to a program housed in a municipality or existing community development entity. Regardless of the organizational type, the focus is on ensuring that all organizational resources (partners, funding, volunteers, etc.) are mobilized to effectively implement the Community Transformative Strategies.

from the National Main Street Center
Organizational Approach

There are a number of different organizational structures that could be utilized to implement a revitalization initiative in Hummelstown. Regardless of how the initiative is formed, the Main Street Approach of: Economic Restructuring/Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization should be the structure for the revitalization initiative. These four components (and when needed, a fifth component of Safe, Clean & Green) facilitate a comprehensive revitalization initiative. For some communities, these four or five components provide the structure of the committees, for others they provide the outline to organize the implementation strategy. Either way, they provide a proven framework for community revitalization. Based on the dialogue and feedback throughout the planning process, the following approach to organizational structuring is proposed:

The Borough of Hummelstown will act as the implementing entity for the revitalization initiative creating very detailed and specific cooperation agreements with certain operational and active local non profits, with an IRS 501-c-3 designation, which may from time to time be available to act as a fiscal agent. This fiscal agent would then be eligible to apply for and receive grants and other funding that the Borough may not be eligible for, as well as raise funds and provide federal tax deductible benefits for financial contributions made to the revitalization efforts. Currently, the following organizations present unique opportunities for partnerships that should be pursued:

- The Hummelstown Community Foundation (HCF) could collaborate with the Borough as the implementing entity for the revitalization initiative, the Clean, Safe, and Green arm of the initiative, or it could act as the fiscal agent to the effort with the Borough or another organization taking the lead.
- The Hummelstown Business and Professional Association (HBPA) could act as the implementing entity for the revitalization effort, or the Promotional arm of the initiative. If HBPA would lead the effort, they would need to have a fiscal agent agreement with HCF as HBPA is not able to provide federal tax deductible benefits for financial contributions made to their effort, and may not be eligible to apply for some grants.

Designation

A key avenue for Hummelstown to formally evolve their revitalization strategy is to become a recognized Main Street effort, through designation under the Keystone Communities Program with the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). As fully described within their program guidelines (Keystone Communities Program Guidelines, 10-05-2015 – www.newpa.com):

“The Keystone Communities (KC) Program offers 4 designation types (Keystone Main Street, Keystone Elm Street, Keystone Communities, and Enterprise Zone) and 4 grant types that can for the most part be independently awarded (Planning, Implementation, Keystone Communities Development Grant, and Accessible Housing Grants). Each community’s needs and circumstances will determine what component of Keystone Communities best fits their needs/goals (Designation and/or Grant Funding). Communities do not need to become designated in order to receive grant funding with the exception of Implementation Grants and Enterprise Zone Revolving Loan Fund Grants.

The KC Program is designed to encourage the creation of partnerships between the public (governmental) and private (non-governmental) sectors in the communities that jointly support local initiatives such as the growth and stability of neighborhoods and communities; social and economic diversity; and a strong and secure quality of life. DCED strongly encourages community-based organizations, public agencies, business leaders, private developers, financial institutions, and private citizens to work in partnership with local government to develop a comprehensive approach to address community development and housing needs. These partnerships can and will create more attractive places to live and will encourage business and job expansion and retention in Pennsylvania.

DCED will work with the community and tailor assistance to meet the real needs of each community’s revitalization effort; accounting for the community’s ability to implement the proposed programs. A competitive review process will ensure the best “asset-based” projects are rising to the top and focus greater resources on those communities most likely to show the greatest return on the investment of state funds. Designated communities/organizations requesting funding are prioritized when funding decisions are finalized; however, designation does not guarantee funding.
DCED intends to designate communities as Keystone Main Streets, Keystone Elm Streets, Keystone Enterprise Zones, and Keystone Communities as long as the organization implementing the program is financially sustainable and can hire a full-time manager to administer the program over the five-year designation term. Additionally, all applicants requesting designation must describe how the designation strategy fits in with and complements other goals with the community during the designation period and afterwards.

Organizational Leadership

As noted above, through the planning process, Hummelstown Borough is identified to be the implementing agency and of the four (4) designation types, Keystone Communities Designation will provide the most suitable framework for implementation of the strategies identified within this planning process. As described in DCED’s guidelines, Keystone Community Designation:

“is for communities wishing to undertake an alternative approach to revitalization which may include one or more of the aspects of the Main Street, the Elm Street, or the Enterprise Zone approaches as defined above.

The applicant must present a specific Five-Year Strategy to DCED that is consistent with program activities. Financial sustainability of the local organization is required and can be demonstrated by the employment of a full-time manager or coordinator who spends at least 60% of his/her time implementing the Five-Year Strategy (with the balance of time spent on other community related projects/activities). The designation term is five consecutive years.

The Keystone Main Street designation requires a full-time manager to be devoted to the central business district, whereas a Keystone Community designation allows a bit more flexibility to the effort, but still requires a full-time manager, providing at least 60% of their time to the central business district. The Keystone Community designation could include efforts provided to Borough-wide code enforcement, housing programs, industrial development, etc.”

Committee Structures

Prior to official designation, it is advisable to begin to formalize the committee structures of the Main Street program and begin to recruit volunteers to fill each committee. The following committees should be created with established term limits, leadership roles, and reporting expectations:

1. Organization subcommittee, consisting of seven (7) members
2. Design subcommittee, consisting of five (5) members (with a minimum of three (3) current HBPA or Community Foundation board members)
3. Economic Development/Finance subcommittee, consisting of five (5) members
4. Promotions subcommittee, consisting of seven (7) members (with a minimum of three (3) current HBPA board members)

and if desired:

5. Clean, Safe, and Green subcommittee, consisting of five (5) members (with a minimum of three (3) current Community Foundation board members)

In addition to the local organizational structure, it will be important to build sustainable partnerships with other regional economic development agencies. There are potential funding opportunities, implementation approaches, and promotional capacities that would greatly benefit from regional approaches.
The development of the overall plan focused on several guiding principles geared toward the strengthening of the core downtown and the enhancement of a traditional downtown sense of place. Among these principles were the following:

1. Expand the overall tax base within the core downtown and study area.

2. Continue to enhance the central core with signage, lighting, and streetscape enhancements.

3. Grow a broad continuum of housing in the downtown, preferably on upper floors.

4. Create more street-level activity and interactions to enhance walkability, pedestrian energy, and duration of visitor stays.

5. Encourage the use of diverse construction materials, architectural styles, and built forms to continue the evolution of downtown and protect against homogeneity.

6. Emphasize opportunities for adaptive re-use of unique and under utilized downtown architectural stock.

7. Provide business support for growing employment base, including dining, retail, and service.
Implementation - Plan and Goals

To achieve the vision of the Downtown Hummelstown Master Plan, goals and action items were derived from the planning process. Input gathered from field reconnaissance, stakeholder interviews, board meetings, public outreach efforts, business interviews, and community collaboration formed the guiding principles of these goals and action items, with one very clear constant: the plan and its goals should respect the spirit and character of Hummelstown while continuing to revitalize the community in the future.

The individual goals are organized within broad categories defined by Pennsylvania’s Keystone Communities program, which houses the Main Street program. The approach defines organization, promotion, economic development (asset enhancement), and design as the four proven focus areas of nationwide downtown revitalization efforts. The following categories are built from that Main Street Approach developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and are consistently used across the country and fully endorsed in Pennsylvania.

Implementation

The presence of a strong local leadership makes application for Main Street designation through the Keystone Communities program a crucial first step. Additionally, the following initiatives should be considered as implementation tools beyond the traditional private investment activities that are encouraged and highly desirable:

1. **Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District** – In areas where existing tax base is low, TIF Districts can be an effective tool for redevelopment. Improved properties in the district generate higher taxes than the pre-development tax base. The increments generated can be reinvested in a variety of public improvements specifically contained in the TIF District. A TIF district requires participation by taxing bodies (county, local, and/or school district), although not all of them are required. They may choose to participate at varied levels to mitigate their tax impact.

2. **Public Grants** – Although they are very competitive and require local match money, public grants still represent a viable implementation strategy. Grants for consideration should include Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program, Commonwealth Finance Agency Greenways Program and Multi-Modal Program, Growing Greener Program (DCNR), various DEP programs, and others.

3. **In-Kind Support** - Local planning support, guidance, and advocacy should not be overlooked as a viable resource for redevelopment. The organization and its partner relationships offer a vast array of information that can positively impact the nature of a development project in the community.
A focus on Design supports a community’s transformation by enhancing the physical elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set the commercial district apart. Main Streets enhance their appeal to residents and visitors alike with attention to public space through the creation of pedestrian friendly streets, inclusion of public art in unexpected areas, visual merchandising, adaptive reuse of older and historic buildings, more efficiently-designed buildings, transit oriented development, and much more.

from the National Main Street Center
The map below graphically depicts several focus areas for economic development activities within the study area. Visualizations of a variety of preliminary enhancement options follow. While these recommended improvements are shown to be location-specific, the concepts behind them are intended to be transferable to other properties and locations throughout the downtown, where opportunities arise.

Utilizing the results of the information gathering phases, including an area-wide photo inventory and field analysis, the following preliminary enhancement options were developed. Each design graphic embodies the character preferences expressed during the community meeting and depicts the enhancement in locations specifically noted during the planning process.

The intent of these graphics is not to portray the exact details and final design of the improvement, but rather reveal the inherent opportunities to further enhance the sense of place in Hummelstown and interpret the community’s voice in real-world settings.

The key map below indicates the location of the following 20 conceptual revitalization graphics, indicated in green below. The purple dots represent the following enhancements: 23 - Additional Planters, 19 - Facade Renovations around the square, 12 - Curb Appeal, 18 - Facade Lighting, and 13 - Park Master Plan.
Façade renovations have been a staple of the Main Street program, one that has been met with much success and accolades across the state and country. Commercial properties that have long since deteriorated from their original condition and are now visual detriments to the surroundings can become assets to their community once again through façade improvements. Working to recreate the original look of a business such as Hummelstown Auto through elements such as vintage signage, murals, and fresh paint can bring out the former history and grandeur of a property. Interactive displays such as classic automobiles, besides enhancing the streetscape and playing on the history of an establishment, can increase pedestrian curiosity and traffic within the downtown.
Protecting pedestrians and providing clear paths of travel are the first steps toward improving walkability within a community. Projects intended to draw out the history and significance of local buildings and businesses through murals such as depicted here at the site of the former downtown lollipop factory, can complement walkability efforts by increasing pedestrian curiosity and traffic in areas that would normally appear nondescript and uninviting. By implementing these improvements, the downtown community would present visitors yet another reason to visit and get out on foot to explore Hummelstown.
Small streetscape improvements can make a large impact in the cohesiveness, aesthetics, and functionality of a community. In this scene, a brick band at the sidewalk edge creates visual continuity with other walks within the core downtown district of Hummelstown. Adding low brick planters creates opportunities for pockets of seasonal color and texture along the streetscape. These low walls also can function as impromptu seating for pedestrians passing by or nearby building patrons looking for an opportunity to sit outside for a break. With all streetscape improvements, special attention should be paid to lighting. In this scene, a wall sconce adds needed light and enhanced safety to the ATM area in place of the more jarring overhead fluorescent light.
Walkability is not simply defined by the presence of sidewalks. The sidewalks must provide the space and alignment to move people where and how they want to get around. Narrow walkways can cramp pedestrians and discourage foot traffic on a particular block. Providing wider sidewalks ensures that users are able to walk side-by-side, push strollers, pass on-coming walkers, and generally utilize the sidewalk without barriers. Adding brick banding to coordinate with other sidewalks within Hummelstown can both help identify it as part of the core downtown community, as well as provide visual interest. Adding trees along the streetscape can help beautify the area as well as provide environmental benefits such as reducing reflected heat. These improvements characterize a consistent and cohesive approach to streetscape enhancements within the core downtown district.
Wide streets that lack sidewalks can promote faster vehicular traffic while also discouraging pedestrian traffic. Bumping out curbing to allow room for sidewalk and green strips is a proven traffic-calming device which also allows for safe pedestrian access to buildings and businesses along the strip. The opportunity to add color and trees to these bump outs can also be an impactful benefit to the look and feel of the streetscape. Implementing crosswalks directs pedestrians where to cross and provides visual cues to vehicular traffic to slow down. Additionally, the extra space permits projecting signage on the businesses which increases visual interest.
Outside dining spaces are visual cues that a downtown is vibrant and open for business. These spaces promote local eateries by providing attractive seating opportunities for patrons, as well as enhancing the downtown environment by providing activity on what would otherwise be an empty corner. In this scene, brick crosswalks formalize the intersection and improve pedestrian safety by providing strong visual cues to motorists that pedestrians are crossing. Implementing additional streetscape elements such as a light pole selected as the standard for Hummelstown with each successive project downtown provides opportunities to create a more cohesive and attractive downtown experience.
Large expanses of pavement such as convenience store parking lots can be eyesores in otherwise attractive downtown communities. Landscape buffers that are commonplace in modern zoning and land development ordinances can be retroactively fitted into these expanses of pavement to buffer the parking areas from the surrounding streetscapes. Reducing the amount of pavement with pockets of green infrastructure also positively affects the environment by lessening the heat island effect and providing opportunities to capture and infiltrate stormwater run-off rather than continuing to send it to increasingly overloaded storm systems. Carving out these landscape buffers also creates opportunities for low sign walls as depicted here at the corner of the property. These sign walls can be used as an alternative to typical, utilitarian building signage, or as opportunities for branding.
Within any downtown master plan, the notion of infill development should be present. Creating opportunities for local businesses to grow and prosper is integral to any downtown planning project. Vacant parcels can be the key to these opportunities for growth. The final form and use of any infill project is predicated largely upon market conditions, demand, and the available financing. The multi-story structure depicted draws on historical forms in the community while embracing the concepts of form-based development. Awnings, creative signage, and large glass storefront windows will animate the streetscape environment, while streetscape details such as brick banding and planters will visually coordinate the block with the larger downtown community. Wide sidewalks allow traffic to move effortlessly around visitors stopping to investigate sidewalk sales and peer in windows.
Facade Renovation

Architecture with deep front yard setbacks from the street, while still functional, can appear removed from the pedestrian experience, and consequently detract from the downtown aesthetic. In this scene, entry awnings project color onto the blank façade, and help to break down the scale of the building in relation to the sidewalk. Ornamental trees in beds of annuals and perennials and can also provide color and texture to the front yard and the building exterior and brighten the downtown community. Accent lighting on the trees adds visual interest at night, and benches allow both building occupants and people passing by an opportunity to sit and enjoy the landscape features.
A lack of windows looking into a restaurant, or windows that are too small or covered over, can create an unwelcoming face to the establishment and potentially impact a patron’s choice in dining options. Large windows are an effective way to create visual interest from the street and reveal the personality and activity of an establishment to people passing by. Awnings enhance the architecture of the building with vertical relief along the facade, and removing parking along that side of the street creates the opportunity to provide a wider concrete walk with simple patio furniture for informal seating. A curbed island with brick crosswalks and street trees formalizes the parking lot entrance while also breaking up the large expanse of pavement.
Adaptive Reuse

Outdoor dining is a broadly accepted hallmark of vibrant, creative, and livable communities when they are located in highly visible locations. Coupled with façade improvements, there is an opportunity to enrich an otherwise empty building. The addition of a low evergreen hedge and ornate fencing can help mitigate the impact that passing traffic may have on diners. On the building, incorporating a ghost sign (a wall painted logo that is weathered to appear older) can create visual interest on an otherwise blank building wall, creating an opportunity to reinforce the community character and image, as well as helping to advertise the establishment. In this scene, activity within the restaurant seen through large roll-up doors may pique pedestrians’ curiosities and draw them inside.
Food trucks provide greater choices to downtown patrons in search of food, without burdening owners with the expense of leasing commercial space in buildings. By recognizing and enhancing the food truck experience, Hummelstown can create an opportunity for lively outdoor scenes downtown. Furthermore, as a significant gateway experience, the food truck sets a vibrant tone for incoming traffic along South Hanover Street. Additional improvements such as rain barrels and permeable pavers can both improve the aesthetics of the property as well as capture stormwater run-off that would otherwise overload storm systems. Informal outdoor seating such as picnic tables (with umbrellas) allows patrons an opportunity to sit with their meals on a nice day, and adds a sense of permanence to the space.
Simple streetscape improvements can go a long way in enhancing the appearance, walkability, and livability of a downtown. In this image, a stone wall draws on the adjacent building façades and reduces maintenance on a steeply sloped lawn while helping to screen the parking lot from the street. Realigning the sidewalk away from the curb and creating a green strip between the walk and street creates a more comfortable experience for pedestrians. Street trees benefit both the aesthetics of the streetscape as well as the livability of downtown by helping to curb the heat island effect as well as improving air quality.
Adaptive reuse projects can infuse new life and uses into a building to meet or exceed its former grandeur, such as the diner depicted in this former auto showroom. These projects may also take on a more additive approach as in paint, awnings, planters, and large windows meant to improve the viability of a property such as the lofts shown. Color can add a level of depth and character to a building while awnings can be effective for breaking down and injecting color onto an otherwise blank façade. Large windows draw visitors’ eyes and interest into the first floor commercial space, which would otherwise offer only a blank wall. As an alternate to sign panels, branding can be painted onto the exterior, and here an opportunity was realized to draw out the history of the building and community in the naming of the lofts.
Facade Renovation

Materials and colors are important architectural elements that can leave a lasting impression on visitors when they leave a community. Careful stewardship of the historic building stock around the square will ensure that the impression taken away from Hummelstown reinforces the nostalgic sense of place that is paramount to their vision for downtown. In certain cases, removal of siding materials can reveal the original façade materials, often in varying degrees of disrepair. With creative use of financial incentives, these historic façade materials can be restored to and beyond their original beauty, particularly with additional elements like colored awnings, window box planters, and ornamental signage.
Murals can be a relatively inexpensive means of improving a downtown streetscape, taking an otherwise blank façade and creating a visually-striking feature within the downtown community that may also serve to inform and educate the community about local culture. In this example, the bland green aluminum siding of a historic downtown furniture retailer can become a canvas for colorful murals depicting catalog scenes from the multiple decades that the store has anchored the center square, educating visitors and the community to the use and history of the site that would otherwise go unnoticed.
Adaptive Reuse

Re-imagining uses for the inventory of downtown building stock is essential to any downtown master plan. In this image, existing office space could be transformed into a downtown winery and tasting room. Large casks and an outdoor patio project from the existing structure toward the street, inviting attention, curiosity, and visitors. Redevelopment projects such as these also present opportunities to implement green infrastructure projects, such as adjusting the curb alignment along the street to add a linear bio-retention facility to treat stormwater runoff infiltration, while also buffering the adjacent sidewalk from traffic.
Open spaces can help screen unintended views and improve the streetscape aesthetic within the core downtown district. Here, colorful annuals and perennials insert color and texture into the surrounding streetscape, while a low wall (matching the iconic brownstone of the adjacent church) and evergreen trees screen the lawn and the side porches of surrounding apartments. The net effect of this improvement is additional small scale open space in the community in an under utilized side yard. Other similar situations could include benches, sculpture, signage, or recycling containers.
One of the most beneficial development projects in a community is one that utilizes existing building stock in a new, imaginative, and economically-viable way. Abandoned gas stations have long blighted communities with their deteriorating, utilitarian construction. Renovating the original structure and providing improvements such as large windows, paint, outdoor seating, and brick paving can transform a vacancy into a viable and lively asset to the community, such as a brewpub. Building from the original gas station and maintaining elements such as antique gas pumps creates a palimpsest and precedent within the downtown community for building on what came before rather than always tearing down and starting over.
Contrast in pavement materiality provides clear delineation of vehicular versus foot traffic in what is currently a curbed island carved by traffic patterns in a sea of pavement. In this scene, marked crosswalks and cobblestones direct pedestrian traffic and cue motorists to slow down, improving walkability at an iconic intersection which is currently dominated by vehicular traffic. Breaking up the asphalt pavement with a cobblestone pattern also creates an opportunity to visually connect the island to the adjacent downtown block. Planting and maintaining annuals and perennials within the parklett strengthens and enhances the existing planter and light post which are connected to the community’s history.
Conclusion

The Downtown Hummelstown Master Plan is the result of intentional collaboration, broad public outreach, copious stakeholder input, creative vision for the future, and an appreciation for the history and present focus of Hummelstown.

It is also a living document that must evolve as implementation occurs. Many of the strategies and action items in this plan document are already in progress which speaks to the appetite and energy for fresh perspectives and an aspirational blueprint for the core downtown.

The time period between updated Master Plans varies based on progress and economic realities within each community. At a minimum, an internal audit occurring yearly is advisable to keep track of progress on projects and initiatives within the overall framework of the plan. At five to seven year intervals, a more substantial review of the guiding principles and progress of the projects identified in the Preliminary Enhancements section may be warranted. At the seven to ten year interval, a complete plan update is recommended.

Other Planning Documents

This plan does not stand alone within the broader Hummelstown community and was developed to provide areas to create synergy and collaborative opportunities with other planning documents. Of particular importance and focus are:

• the Regional Bicycle Plan
• Comprehensive Plan updates
• Regulatory Ordinances

Contributing Consultants

The following firms provided direct support and information during the process. Support information provided by each is included in the appendix.