



empower the **PAST,**

embrace the **FUTURE**



Downtown Strategic Plan For
SPRING VALLEY, ILLINOIS



Peoples
Economic Development Corporation

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INTRODUCTION, HISTORY AND SUMMARY

Spring Valley was founded in 1884 in the heart of the coal fields of Northern Illinois for the express purpose of mining coal. The establishment of Spring Valley was the enterprise of Henry J. Miller, one of the first settlers of this area, and his son-in-law, Charles J. Devlin. They conceived the idea of establishing a coal metropolis, in the valley and on the slopes of the bluffs bordering Spring Creek, in the southeastern corner of Bureau County and to that end they acquired the mineral rights of 5,000 acres and purchased 500 acres on which to build a town.

Two companies were formed, the Spring Valley Coal Company and the Spring Valley Townsite Co. Backed by the nearly unlimited resources of the coal barons, these two companies spent over 2 ½ million dollars in less than four years in the building of the town.

The boring of the mine commenced in 1884 and the town was surveyed and platted. Spring Valley did not grow from a crossroads store or a farmstead. It was planned with the hope that it would become a large city. Broad streets were laid out and lots were allocated for public buildings, schools and churches. Spring Valley was officially incorporated on February 8, 1886.

Spring Valley was immediately a boomtown, its growth so rapid that it became known as the "Magic City." In less than four years time the Chicago & North Western railroad had laid a line from DeKalb, Illinois, four mines had been sunk and the town had 3,000 inhabitants. Spring Valley was a brawling and boisterous place and was to remain so until competition from the Southern Illinois coal fields forced the mine to close in late 1927. The town gained a reputation as a rowdy place, but with a cultural side as well.

Over the past few decades, the City of Spring Valley began to lose its identity. The historic fabric that tells the story of the community was disappearing. Buildings, especially those located in the downtown, were beginning to deteriorate or be lost entirely to fire or neglect.

Recently, in a measure to stem the decline of Spring Valley, the City contracted with Peoples Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) to assist in planning for the redevelopment of the downtown area. Services included providing façade assessments on selected structures throughout the downtown illustrating the current state of the buildings, with renovation recommendations and renderings depicting restored facades after renovation implementation. In addition, PEDC was retained to assist Spring Valley in planning, marketing and promoting the Downtown as a Tourism Destination.

As a result, Spring Valley has recently implemented many new programs in the community to help retain and attract businesses

to the commercial district and to the community as a whole. These programs include a Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program, the creation of a Business Association and a Shop Local Program.

The purpose of this Plan is to build on the existing foundation of successes and to provide strategies and recommendations that will help ensure business retention and future economic development and thereby propel Spring Valley's downtown into becoming a sustainable, healthy, and thriving district in perpetuity.

Why is your downtown so important to your community?

Your downtown is the most visible indicator of community pride, and its corresponding economic and social health. It can be either an asset or a liability in the effort to recruit residents, new businesses, tourists and others to your community and in keeping those you have in place. Your downtown is the visual representation for your community's heritage. The architecture of your commercial district is a physical expression of your community's history.

Points to Remember:

1. Downtown districts are employment centers.
2. The downtown district is a reflection of community image, pride, prosperity and level of investment – critical factors in business retention and recruitment efforts.
3. Downtown represents a significant portion of the community's tax base. If the district declines, property values drop, placing more of a tax burden on other parts of town.
4. The traditional downtown commercial district is an ideal location for independent businesses which have the following effect:
 - ▲ Keeps profits in town with local owners
 - ▲ Supports other local businesses and services
 - ▲ Supports local families with family-owned businesses
 - ▲ Supports local community projects
 - ▲ Provides a stable economic foundation with direct ties to the community
5. Downtown is the historic core of the community. Its buildings embody the community's past and its visual identity.
6. A vital downtown area reduces sprawl by concentrating business in an area complete with existing infrastructure.
7. A healthy downtown core protects property values in surrounding residential neighborhoods.

8. The downtown district is identified as a governmental center and is where important public buildings such as city hall are located.
9. Downtown provides an important civic forum where members of the community can congregate. Special intangible sense of community.
10. Downtown represents a huge public and private investment. Imagine how much it would cost to recreate all of the buildings and public infrastructure in your downtown.

OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

Planning for future rehabilitation and preservation in downtown Spring Valley requires an understanding of how the area relates to its larger regional economy and how the downtown district fits into the Spring Valley community as a whole.

The Opportunities Analysis identifies key regional, local and existing downtown assets that can be leveraged to enhance the downtown. Identifying these assets lead to six broadly defined opportunities to translate existing assets and emerging trends into economic progress within the downtown and a vision statement for the future of the downtown.

Multi-Level Approach

Creating and implementing new ideas for the historic commercial business district in Spring Valley requires understanding of the larger context and how the district fits into the economy and landscape of its surroundings. This Opportunities Analysis looks at Spring Valley's downtown business district from three distinct levels that together lead to key assets and opportunities that will form the foundation of the downtown plan.

First, the analysis looks broadly at Spring Valley's larger regional economy, then the focus zooms to the unique assets of the City itself, and finally, the physical environment of the downtown is examined. The multi-layer approach helps identify the key assets of the region and community that drive the local economy, give Spring Valley its unique identity, and create new economic and site development opportunities for the downtown.

Community/Local Setting

The physical and economic landscape of the City of Spring Valley is multi-faceted. The City is home to many fine establishments that provide a wealth of goods and services to its residents. Most businesses are located either downtown or on Dakota Street.

Key Assets and Opportunities

- ▲ Located on the Illinois River and the Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway.
- ▲ Steeped in mining history
- ▲ St. Margaret's Hospital
- ▲ Barto Landing
- ▲ Mostly intact Downtown district
- ▲ Strategically located near major interstates
- ▲ Walmart Distribution Center
- ▲ City Economic Development Director
- ▲ Represented by the Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce

Downtown Opportunities

Downtown Spring Valley is the centerpiece of the community and is strategically located on the Illinois River. Recently volunteers opened their own Historical Museum.

Downtown Spring Valley has many vibrant businesses and offers friendly personal service. You will also find a variety of restaurants. In addition, many businesses in Spring Valley have contributed money, goods, and services to their schools, local organizations, and community activities.

- ⤴ Mostly intact downtown building stock
- ⤴ Downtown Mini Park for events and concerts
- ⤴ Limited Niche Retail
- ⤴ Annual Walleye Tournament
- ⤴ Ample parking
- ⤴ Many Dining opportunities

Demographic and Economic Profile

Spring Valley's demographic profile and local economy provides further insight into the community and its key assets than can drive the downtown planning process.

Population - City	5,558
Population - County	34,978
Age	founded 1884
Median Age	40.3 yrs.
Median Family Income	\$45,205
Top Employers	
Wal-mart	825-1,000 employees
St. Margaret's Hospital	650 employees
Other Employers	
Riverfront Machine	75 – 80 employees
Ronken Industries	45 – 60 employees
Western Sand & Gravel	35 – 40 employees
Marmon Keystone	25 – 35 employees
Aqua Control	25 – 30 employees
Valley Forms	10 employees
Graphic Electronics	10 employees

Honeywell/Hobbs that employed 150-250 closed in 2011.

Travel Industry Analysis/Travel Trends

National Tourism Trends

The State of the American Traveler Survey-July 2009

Destination Analysts, Inc.

- ⤴ Survey of 1,014 adult leisure travelers' shows that Americans are taking fewer trips and reigning in expectations for future travel and spending. Of those surveyed, 24% say they have take a "staycation" at home in the past 12 months and nearly one-third of travelers 29.8% are planning to decrease their travel spending over the next two summer vacations.
- ⤴ In response to current economic pressures, Americans plan to actively look for travel discounts and bargains (53.3%), shorten the distance of their trips (34.9%) and reduce the number of days spend on their trips (25.4%).
- ⤴ Travelers are increasingly turning to the Internet to make their travel plans and look for attractions and events. Of those surveyed, 46.5% selected a hotel or place to stay online and 43.2% booked the hotel stay online. Nearly 40% of travelers made the decision to visit a particular destination based on time spent on the web. However, only 27.5% of respondents cite using the website of a local Convention and Visitors Bureau or Chamber of Commerce/Tourism to help plan any travel.
- ⤴ While on leisure trips, travelers cite participating in the following top activities: dining in restaurants (72.7%), visiting friends or relatives (64.7%), shopping (60.7%), going to a lake/recreation area (47.7%), sightseeing (42.1%), visiting a historical attraction (40.3%).

State Tourism Trends

The Economic Impact of Travel on Illinois Counties

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Illinois Leisure Visitor Demographics:

- ⤴ Average Age: 45
- ⤴ Average annual household income: \$72,900 (slightly higher than the national average of \$65,900)
- ⤴ Four in ten Illinois visitors are from households with one or more children

Illinois Travel:

- ⤴ One third of Illinois leisure travel is dedicated to visiting friends and relatives (VFR)
- ⤴ Weekend getaways account for 13% of all Illinois rave, which is at a five-year high
- ⤴ Day trips account for approximately six in ten of leisure travel parties
- ⤴ July is the most popular month for travel; January is the lowest month for visits

Top Activities:

- ▲ Shopping
- ▲ Dining
- ▲ Entertainment
- ▲ Sightseeing
- ▲ Visiting museums and art exhibits

Direct Impact of Travel in Illinois:

- ▲ Direct spending by domestic and international travelers in Illinois totaled \$30.8 billion in 2008, a 3.0% increase from the previous year
- ▲ Expenditures directly generated 303.5 thousand jobs in the state
- ▲ Domestic and international travelers' spending in Illinois directly generated \$5.5 billion in tax revenue for federal, state and local governments

Local Tourism Trends

Travel Expenditures – Money spent by travelers on such things as public transportation, food service, auto transportation, lodging, retail, and entertainment/recreation.

- ▲ State of Illinois - \$29.3 billion
- ▲ Bureau County - \$45.28 million

Payroll – Wages and salaries paid directly to employees serving the traveler, in such areas as: public transportation, food service, lodging, entertainment/recreation, travel planning, retail and auto transportation.

- ▲ State of Illinois - \$8.10 billion
- ▲ Bureau County - \$5.4 million

Employment – The actual number of jobs supported by Illinois Tourism. Jobs vary from executive/management to service oriented occupations.

- ▲ State of Illinois - 287,500
- ▲ Bureau County - 220

LOCAL ISSUES

Interviews with Stakeholders

Interviews were conducted with both City officials and downtown retailers. There appears to be a widespread sentiment among retailers that there is a lack of City support for the downtown business community. This is particularly apparent at a personal level where it is perceived that City officials don't patronize or visit the businesses of their downtown constituents.

The stakeholders are concerned with the condition of the downtown buildings. The appearance of downtown buildings is an important factor for anyone looking to start a business in Spring Valley. The inaction of the City in making efforts to remedy this problem is a reflection on the entire community. The present condition of the downtown is a deterrent to promoting Spring Valley as a location for opening new businesses.

Another common complaint among stakeholders is the lack of a local Chamber of Commerce or other such organization capable of listening to concerns and representing interests within the community. Spring Valley is under the umbrella of the Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, which works on a regional basis and does not become involved within each community on the local level. Many needs are not identified and consequently remain unaddressed. The retailers would like to see a business organization formed to meet some of these needs. Spring Valley's Economic Development Director is now working on this project and has identified business owners willing to become involved and is spreading the word to grow interest in this important group.

An additional observation is the dilution of the effectiveness of the Economic Development Director due to the lack of a downtown organization. The Director's duties presently include far ranging responsibilities that limits the intended focus on true Economic Development.

Building Condition/Architectural Quality

- ⌘ Most downtown properties need improvement.
- ⌘ Many current owners of poorly maintained properties are not receptive to making improvements.
- ⌘ As a result of PEDC's building studies by our partnering architect, a façade improvement matching grant program has been put into place by the City.

Restoring the downtown landscape usually begins with the downtown's buildings. Collectively they define the essence of downtown Spring Valley. Improving the downtown's buildings means restoring their historic character through a process called "rehabilitation." Rehabilitation not only improves a building's

appearance but also increases its value by enhancing its marketability as commercial space. More generally, improving the appearance of downtown's buildings reinforces downtown's distinctive character, enhancing its appeal to local customers and visitors.

Retail Issues

- ✦ Downtown needs more of a retail mix.
- ✦ Spring Valley needs to start a Shop Local Campaign. (recently started)
- ✦ Spring Valley needs to develop improved marketing.
- ✦ Stores hours are inconsistent and often single shift due to the prevalence of single person owner/operators. There is perceived difficulty in expanding the employee base due to the complexity of hiring and payroll.
- ✦ Downtown buildings are in ill repair and will not attract new businesses in their current condition.

Other Issues

- ✦ Downtown lacks evenings activities.
- ✦ Downtown lacks public restrooms.
- ✦ More downtown events need to be established.
- ✦ A retail group should be established.
- ✦ Downtown needs overnight accommodations.
- ✦ There is a lack of volunteers for projects.
- ✦ Downtown needs streetscape improvements to make downtown more appealing.
- ✦ Downtown needs a beautification program.
- ✦ Ordinances/incentives need to be created to encourage building owners to improve their properties.
- ✦ There is widespread sentiment that there is a lack of City support for Downtown retailers.
- ✦ A personal perception exists that City officials don't patronize or visit Downtown businesses.

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

As part of the research to develop this Strategic Plan a downtown survey was given to stakeholders. Following are the questions and a summary of the answers.

1. What are the biggest non-work reasons that you visit downtown Spring Valley?

Answers: food, friendly business people, drug store, supermarket, dollar store, bakery, Spring Valley Swap Meet

2. During a typical week, how often do you eat breakfast, lunch or supper in a Spring Valley restaurant?

Answers: 3-4 times per week, daily, 3, 2-3, 2, 6 times a year, none, 3

3. What community or downtown assets would you like to see developed?

Answers: return to what it looked like in 50-60's, fill empty buildings with businesses, more stores, parking lot, hardware store, specialty shop, insurance office, clothing, shoe store, bookstore.

4. When you go out of town to shop, where do you go and what are you shopping for?

Answers: groceries, sporting goods, maintenance material, Walmart, Menards, Peru Mall for clothing, gas, groceries, ethnic foods.

5. If you lived in a neighboring community, what would you travel to Spring Valley to do or shop for?

Answers: restaurants (3), fish, antique store, fishing, bakery, Mexican grocery, church, small shops, historical values

6. Name another small community that you feel has a vibrant and attractive downtown?

Answers: Princeton, Utica, Ottawa, Lake Geneva, Peru, Sandwich, Delafield, WI, Ottawa, Princeton, Galena, Sheffield

7. Which events in Spring Valley have you attended in the last 12 months?

Answers: all, parades, car cruise, concerts, carnival, Hall of Fame Banquet, football games.

8. Would you like to see more events, and if so, what would you like to see started?

Answers: flea market, burgoo event, more outside events, more events in mini park, seasonal events, farmers market, craft market, Italian Fest, Carnival, craft market

9. What business would you most like to see open in Spring Valley?

Answers: hardware store (4), antique store, ice cream shop, bookstore.

10. If you could change one thing about Spring Valley, what would it be?

Answers: attitude, more people shopping, clean-up buildings and alleys, political climate, outdated thinking, people need to support each other, local support

ASSETS – OPPORTUNITIES – VISION

In looking at Spring Valley's regional economy, local assets and the downtown landscape, specific assets emerge. Identifying these assets and considering their potential value to the downtown is necessary in the strategic plan process. Opportunities and vision form the foundation of this Plan and the site-specific ideas included in this document.

Mining History

Spring Valley was founded in 1884 in the heart of the coal fields of Northern Illinois for the express purpose of coal mining. Two e Spring Valley Coal Company and the Spring Valley Townsite Co. were founded. Backed by the nearly unlimited resources of the coal barons, these two companies spent over \$2½ million in less than four years in the building of the town.

John Mitchell

John Mitchell was born to one of the many poor Irish families that had immigrated to Illinois to work in the coal fields. His is a story of a man who rose from working as a boy laborer in the mines to become president of the United Mine Workers of America. From this position he led coal miners through one of the most significant strikes and victories in the history of labor.

The Spring Valley Historical Museum was recently opened through an amazing all volunteer effort. The museum features items related to John Mitchell and Coal Mining.



Illinois River Road Scenic Byway

The Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway provides a strong mechanism to unite communities along its route and to promote all there is to offer for the visiting public. The Byway serves to educate potential visitors and promote the habitats, values, and recreational activities available along the Illinois River watershed.

Downtown Mini-Park

The Downtown Mini-Park has enormous potential as the active centerpiece of Downtown Spring Valley. The creation of an attractive amenity in place of a vacant hole in the downtown was a far sighted endeavor requiring a relatively minor investment. Events are in place that capitalize on the Mini-Park, but a more consistent usage pattern, along with additional features and a tie-in to an improved Streetscape could dramatically benefit the Downtown.

Barto Landing

Barto Boat Landing in Spring Valley is situated on the Illinois River. It offers a deep lagoon for launching from the ramps and is the only calm-water public access to the Illinois River for forty miles.

Barto Landing provides opportunities for boating enthusiasts as well as those who travel to Spring Valley to utilize its unique, deep lagoon launching capabilities. It is also the only place on the Illinois River where you can launch a boat and travel 50 to 60 miles without locks. The Illinois River and Barto Landing also offer excellent fishing and watersport opportunities.



Master's Walleye Circuit

For more than 20 years, Spring Valley's Barto Landing has been the first stop on the Cabela's MWC Tournament Schedule, the biggest Walleye competition in the state, drawing fishermen from all over the United States. The river has become known as the "Sauger Capital of the World".

The MWC tournament is the oldest consecutively run professional walleye tournament in the country. It has one of the highest team format payouts and a win carries great honor in the industry.

The Walleye tournament has benefited the community over the years with thousands of dollars spent in the Illinois Valley area. MWC and walleye club monies have also been used to dredge

the river, improving the Barto Landing Launch facilities and helping to keep its usage free.

The Masters Walleye Circuit tournament is the largest and longest lasting event held in Spring Valley. And its success and the improvements in fishing and water quality in the Illinois River have drawn several other smaller tournaments throughout the year. In addition to the MWC several other fishing tournaments are held in Spring Valley annually.



Destination for Recreation, Shopping, Dining and Entertainment

Position Spring Valley as an Adventure Destination for Eco-Outdoor Tourism with focus on the Illinois River, the Illinois River Road Scenic Byway and linkages to Starved Rock Area State Parks, the Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park and State Fish and Wildlife Areas. Position Downtown Spring Valley to serve as the Retail, Dining and Entertainment Center for the region, catering to both tourists and residents.



Keys to Making this Happen

- ⤴ Creating a positive, interactive relationship between all community leaders and retailers.
- ⤴ Start a business association within the community (in progress)
- ⤴ Encourage more consistent business hours – capitalize on tourism market (open weekends instead of Mondays)
- ⤴ Create a business retention program
- ⤴ Start a downtown business incubator
- ⤴ Partner with the U of I Extension Service to develop workshops to identify prospective new business owners
- ⤴ Design a marketing plan for the downtown business district with logo and branding of eco-tourism
- ⤴ Create new business investment and development group
- ⤴ Strengthen physical ties to the Illinois River, Barto Landing and the Illinois River Road Scenic Byway
- ⤴ Encourage River to Downtown development – explore markets such as "Fisherman's Inn"
- ⤴ Implement Downtown improvements – streetscape project, beautification program, infill construction, new complementary businesses
- ⤴ Develop Coal Mine Park into a walking/biking trail and outdoor coal museum with linkages to regional Byway and trail system
- ⤴ Expand upon current events – i.e. Farmer's Market Days
- ⤴ Create a unique festival based on celebration of the outdoors and recreation
- ⤴ Create a full time Economic Development Director position
- ⤴ Review City codes and ordinances - refine to encourage redevelopment of the downtown
- ⤴ Ensure that City codes and ordinances are enforced and that buildings are maintained

Vision for Downtown Spring Valley

Future planning and development activity in the downtown should be guided by an all-encompassing vision that articulates the community's aspirations for what the downtown is and what it should become.

Spring Valley is strategically located on the Illinois River and does have the capability to become a tourist destination. It is also and importantly located near three major interstates.

Spring Valley has seven public parks which provide baseball diamonds for youth softball leagues, shelters for group get-togethers, a public swimming pool, tennis courts, bike trails, volleyball and horseshoe pitching areas. A recently awarded Open Space Land Acquisition and Development grant has also provided for a new soccer field, a roller hockey area and a handicapped accessible exercise station area.

Several successful events are in place and can be built upon both by enhancing the existing events and by creating new events that tie-in to an overriding theme.

In July 2011 the Historical Society Museum was opened to the public. Spring Valley is steeped in mining history and can capitalize on this unique and interesting background.

The goal in developing an identity for Spring Valley is to combine its many strengths and then to build upon them in order to create a unique and marketable Downtown. Considering the strongest assets, the proximity to the Illinois River, Barto Landing, the Illinois River Road Scenic Byway, the Master's Walleye Circuit and the exceptional local sports facilities helps to define an identity for Spring Valley as a Recreational Center and Outdoor Enthusiasts Destination.

PRIMARY STRATEGIES

Downtown Aesthetics

In Spring Valley, many buildings are in need of immediate care and attention. This is a poor reflection on the downtown and reflects on the entire community. The message sent to prospective new businesses considering a downtown location is not positive. Downtown is a complex place made up of different components: buildings, trees, signs, lights, sidewalks, parking, et.al. Improving the appearance and function of these components is fundamental to building a better downtown.

Past attempts to create a downtown business investment group were unsuccessful. The creation of a new business investment group with a Business Plan to ensure its success could help dramatically in business recruitment and additionally would build confidence in the existing retailers, with the knowledge that they are receiving much needed support for their own businesses.

Tourism Enhancement

To date Spring Valley has not made a concerted and organized effort to build tourism. The obvious tourism attractions are the proximity to the Illinois River and the location on the Illinois River Road Scenic Byway. At this time, there is only one event in place to take advantage of being located on the Illinois River and that is a successful "Masters Walleye Tournament". This event brings in 500 participants making up 100 teams. This event should be enhanced and more events need to be developed not only to utilize the river location, but also to bring participants and visitors to downtown Spring Valley for shopping and dining.

The Downtown Spring Valley Mini-Park is another underutilized asset. Summer concerts are held at the mini-park but should be increased. Possible features could include a series of bands or a regularly scheduled Children's Event. The key is to make this a consistent event that people can count on and schedule their weeks around. Then, restaurants should be encouraged to get involved offering specials or discounts for all that attend the event.

Growing existing events is a relatively simple way to enhance the downtown. The Farmer's Market is such an event and could benefit from increased and varied vendors and possibly activities and entertainment.

One very important element for tourism development is the availability of local lodging opportunities. Spring Valley sorely lacks overnight accommodations. This is a long term goal, but one that is imperative to successful tourism efforts. Efforts to capitalize on Spring Valley's Recreational assets by physically connecting the Downtown to the Illinois River would be ideal.

Business Retention and Development

A healthy and vibrant local economy depends on the wellbeing of a community's existing businesses. Thus efforts aimed at helping local businesses survive and grow in the local community are key to successful downtown economic development. Although business development is important, the first step towards development is retaining the businesses you already have.

- ✦ Keeping an existing business is often easier and less costly than recruiting a new business.
- ✦ Businesses considering locating in Downtown Spring Valley will talk to existing businesses. Happy existing business owners become community boosters and good will ambassadors.
- ✦ Viable, healthy businesses are likely to remain in communities that demonstrate constant and visible commitment. Support of existing business demonstrates the City's support of job creation and developing increased community cash flow.

Shop, Dine and Play Local Campaign

Spring Valley has started a Shop Local Campaign. Shop local campaigns are very popular and can significantly impact your hometown economy. This program can go a step further by expanding the campaign to include dining and entertainment. The enhanced campaign would help engage all of your downtown businesses. The buying power of local citizens can be a powerful tool to help sustain independent businesses and the Shop Local program will be a constant reminder to keep Spring Valley's downtown businesses in mind for all possible needs.

Shop Local Campaigns

- ✦ Keeps profits in town with local owners
- ✦ Supports other local businesses and services
- ✦ Supports local families with family-owned businesses
- ✦ Supports local community projects
- ✦ Provides a stable economic foundation with direct ties to the community

Business Organization

Spring Valley has also recently formed a business group. Spring Valley does not have its own Chamber of Commerce and is under the umbrella of the Illinois Valley Area Chamber. There is no organization in place to act as the downtown advocate, nor does

a downtown retailer's group exist to address issues specific to downtown needs. Spring Valley is fortunate to have a Economic Development Director, however current job responsibilities are far reaching and don't enable a focus on the Downtown. Hence, many areas of the Downtown are not being given the proper attention.

To improve this situation, Spring Valley needs to create a business association within the community to work with the City Economic Development Director and business owners to build a partnership to strengthen downtown and the entire community. This business organization will be responsible for communicating to all groups and citizens in the community, assign tasks, and delineate responsibilities to all involved. The organization will be responsible for guiding the downtown business district implementation projects from concept to completion.

Façade Matching Grant Program

Spring Valley has also started a Façade Matching Grant Program. Attractive building facades support and encourage local businesses and can have a significant impact on the marketability of your community. The grants encourage business and building owners to reinvest in the downtown. A façade grant program is a great way to stimulate downtown businesses for a relatively minor investment. It generates reinvestment dollars in your community and increases general sales tax dollars.

DOWNTOWN BUILDING FACADES

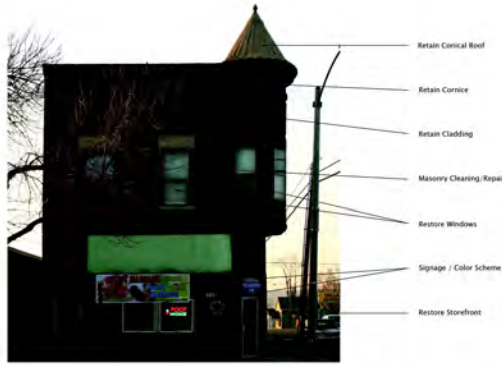
Analysis and Renderings

In the interest of improving the appearance of the Downtown, Peoples Economic Development Corporation was contracted to study fifteen (15) buildings along St. Paul Street. The City of Spring Valley worked with PEDC to determine which buildings would likely benefit the most from Façade services.

A Façade Analysis was then performed on the selected structures. Here each building was photographed, researched and annotated in order to devise a prescription for appropriate building improvements, including retainage of historic elements, removal of non-historic and inappropriate additions and recreation of a historically correct façade. Renovation suggestions are divided into categories from easiest to accomplish to those requiring the greatest commitment.

Façade Depictions were then produced for each of the selected buildings. The Depictions are computer generated renderings illustrating the appearance of the facades following implementation of all suggestions outlined in the Façade Analysis. A public meeting was then held in order for PEDC and their associated architects, Kennedy Hutson Associates, to present the Façade studys to the building owners and the general public.

Following are reduced versions of the Façade Analysis and Façade Depiction drawings.



101 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



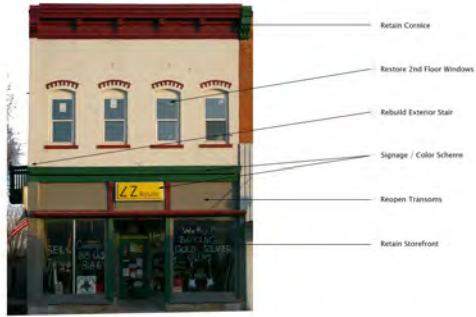
101 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



101 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



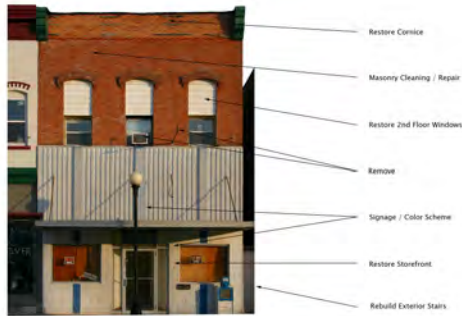
101 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



120 E. ST. PAUL STREET



120 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



122 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



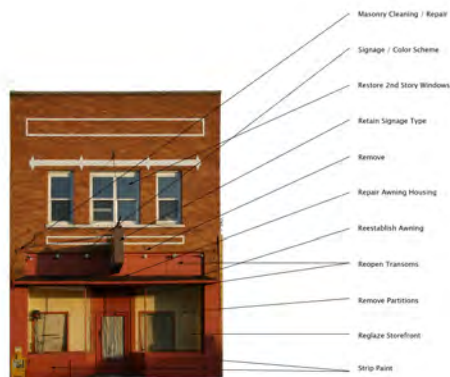
122 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



123 E. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



123 E. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



124 E. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



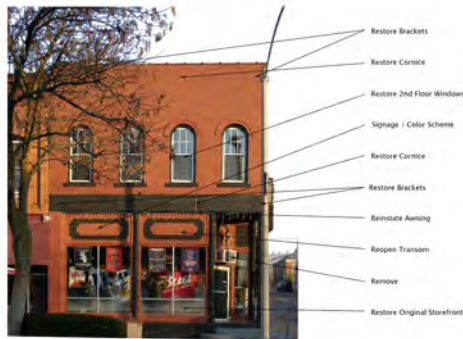
124 E. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



219 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



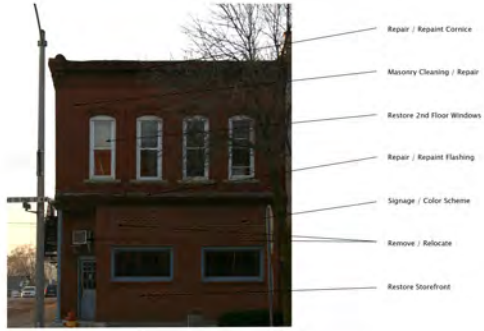
219 E. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



100 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



100 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



101 W. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



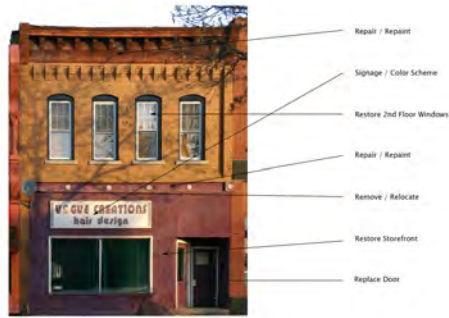
101 W. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



101 W. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



101 W. ST. PAUL STREET
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



102 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



102 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



107 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



107 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



- Restore 2nd Story Windows
- Signage / Color Scheme
- Masonry Cleaning / Repair
- Restore Storefront
- Retain Storefront

123 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



124 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



- Masonry Cleaning / Repair
- Signage / Color Scheme
- Restore 2nd Floor Windows
- Reopen Transoms
- Remove
- Restore Entry
- Remove Bulkheads
- Replace Door

126 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



126 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Introduction

The high level of vision and the many development opportunities described in this Strategic Plan can help Spring Valley realize an almost unlimited potential for spring boarding its downtown into a fully functioning regional destination.

Implementation Structure

In many communities, roles in implementation of the named goals in this plan would be borne by existing organizations. Spring Valley, however, does not currently have a local Chamber of Commerce, a business organization or an economic development committee. Hence, the burden of implementation falls directly on the City, a potential new business organization, the building/business owners and any other stakeholders. Achieving results will require a well-coordinated effort. It is imperative to bring all together in the short term to begin working in a collaborative fashion to truly leverage the expertise and resources that each has to offer.

The creative vision and multiple development opportunities outlined in this Plan can provide Spring Valley with a great catalyst for the transformation of the City into a fully outfitted, regional recreation destination.

Development and Redevelopment Projects

Numerous potential projects are identified in this report that range from the physical design of the downtown to broad economic development concepts.

Identified Potential Projects

PEDC has identified potential projects for downtown Spring Valley and have categorized them in short term and long term goals:

Projects #1 and 5 have already been created.

The projects are:

1. Create a Façade Improvement Matching Grant program to help building and business owners spruce up the outside of their buildings.
2. Enhance the tourism development of the Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway ties to the community.

3. Create a Streetscape Enhancement and Beautification program.
4. Adopt City ordinances to help clean up downtown buildings that are not maintained to create a better environment for current businesses, potential businesses, residents and visitors.
5. Create a business association within the community.
6. Improve marketing of the many community assets – recreation, retail, business, special events, housing, healthcare, schools and industry.
7. Create a branding campaign for the downtown district.
8. Create more consistent store hours.
9. Expand development of Farmer's Market Days.
10. Create a unique, recreation based festival.
11. Develop Downtown to River lodging.
12. Create a new business investment group.
13. Adopt new codes and refine those already in place.

Short Term:

- ⤴ Implement Downtown beautification projects.
- ⤴ Create additional Downtown retail. Strategize on business recruitment by creating and implementing a business retention and development program.
- ⤴ Coordinate regular merchant hours to support tourism.
- ⤴ Enhance existing events and build on their success by creating additional events to bring visitors and residents to downtown Spring Valley on a more consistent basis.
- ⤴ Develop workshops to identify potential business owners.
- ⤴ Create a new business investment group.
- ⤴ Market downtown by starting with a Local - Shopping, Dining and Playing Campaign.
- ⤴ Improve code/ordinance enforcement. Educate building owners to the benefits of improvements to their downtown properties.

Long Term:

- ⤴ Create a branding campaign for the downtown district.
- ⤴ Enhance the existing Streetscape. Apply for Illinois Transportation Enhancement Grants, available annually.
- ⤴ Continue business retention and development program.

- ⤴ Continue updating and enforcing ordinances and codes to enhance downtown development.
- ⤴ Create a unique recreation based festival.
- ⤴ Encourage building owners to continue downtown improvements/restoration that will draw new business investment.
- ⤴ Continue enhancing and developing new events.
- ⤴ Research and develop lodging opportunities near the Downtown and in conjunction with increased recreational amenities.
- ⤴ Develop workshops, possibly partnering with the U of I Extension Service, to help identify new business start ups.

Funding Sources

Securing funding for projects requiring direct public expenditures is often a challenging component of downtown redevelopment planning. Some beneficial funding tools already in place in Spring Valley include a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, a Revolving Loan Fund, and a Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program.

Visual improvements are very important. Minor public improvements such as the creation of beautification projects can often be completed at a relatively low cost, but will have a large and immediate positive impact on the aesthetics of downtown Spring Valley. It is important to accomplish as many short term goals as possible to show positive progress and to keep building momentum. More extensive improvements such as a new streetscape can be significantly more expensive and should be placed on a long term track so that they are initiated as they become financially feasible.

In the long term a Special Service Assessment (SSA) could be investigated as a possible funding alternative. SSA is an economic development tool that utilizes the levy of the real estate property tax in raising funds to provide special services for a targeted area. Property owners choose to tax themselves in order to provide extra services. The services funded through the SSA tax are in addition to services generally provided by the City. These services must predominately benefit those properties that are located within the SSA boundaries. Services might include sidewalk maintenance, beautification, landscaping, business recruitment, and parking and safety programs.

Other sources of funding could include grants such as the USDA or the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program for streetscape, green space and signage. Grant opportunities, while changing frequently, remain available.

CLOSING

Peoples Economic Development Corporation has researched many aspects of downtown Spring Valley. There has been a great deal of invaluable input from the City of Spring Valley, downtown business and property owners and interested citizens. Opportunities for building a successful downtown and creating a regional tourism draw have been identified along with the key stakeholders, downtown assets and historic resources available to make them happen. Challenges and solutions to overcome them have been outlined. The information has been synthesized and developed into both short and long term goals and projects.

Spring Valley is strategically located on the Illinois River and the Illinois River Road Scenic Byway. Access to transportation via three major interstate highways is excellent. Downtown buildings need improvement but are mostly intact and not beyond repair. Other assets include the Downtown Mini-Park, some very good events, a variety of dining options and some niche retail. The key henceforth is to build upon the combined strengths and to identify Spring Valley as the unique and colorful focus of a Recreation and Eco-tourism based Regional Center.

The proposed Strategies and Recommendations herein are meant to create a road map for action to propel Spring Valley's downtown district into a Regional Tourism destination resulting in a sustainably higher level of strength and vitality.