What life have you if you have not life together?  
There is no life that is not in community,  
And no community not lived in praise of God...

When the Stranger says: “What is the meaning of this city?  
Do you huddle close together because you love each other?”  
What will you answer? “We all dwell together  
To make money from each other?” or “This is a community?”  
And the Stranger will depart and return to the desert.  
O my soul, be prepared for the coming of the Stranger,  
Be prepared for him who knows how to ask questions.

-The Rock by T.S. Eliot
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Acknowledgements

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Buffalo, Wyoming

Introduction

Buffalo rests at the heart of what remains of the vast, unspoiled wilderness of the American West. Nestled in the foothills of the majestic Big Horn Mountains, Buffalo is a crossroads along which our nation’s past and present merge. In the shadow of these foothills, several of the more important chapters in the history of the American West were written. The Bozeman trail, created during 1863 as a route to gain access into Montana’s gold fields, crossed Clear Creek within feet of where today’s Main Street intersects the same pure, snow-melt waters. During the 1880s, the red wall area in south-central Johnson County is where Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid holed-up during their outlaw exploits. Buffalo was in the heart of a region embroiled in open hostilities in 1892 between suspected cattle rustlers and the hired Texas gunmen of Wyoming’s Cattle Barons in what history has called the Johnson County Cattle Wars.

Today, Buffalo continues to grow and develop, with additional growth attributed by its unique location at the crossroads of Intestates 90 and 25. While ranching and natural resource extraction continue to play key roles in the economy of the area, they have been matched by a growing hospitality and service-based industry. The preservation of Buffalo’s historic downtown main Street and abundance of year-round outdoor recreational activities have made Buffalo a destination for prospective residents and tourists. As Buffalo continues to see healthy growth, its quality of life should also improve as a result of the committed community members who are lucky to call Buffalo home.
This chapter reviews important demographic and market characteristics that guide planning for the future of Downtown Buffalo. This market analysis considers population and demographic characteristics of the market area, and quantifies future development markets for commercial, office, and residential possibilities.
TRADE AREA DEFINITION

Buffalo is regionally known as a quality community with a historic downtown and is a gateway to the Big Horn Mountains, and historically has held great potential to become a significant regional market at the crossroads of Interstates 90 and 25.

Map 1.1 illustrates different geographic trade areas for Buffalo.

- PRIMARY. The primary market area is comprised of the corporate limits of Buffalo. Both residents and individuals in the surrounding area rely on Buffalo for their daily shopping needs, and view the city as a place where the need for goods and services can be met.

- SECONDARY. The secondary market is the area within 20-miles of Buffalo where daily needs may be met, but people within this market may travel to Buffalo for special events, tourism or destination businesses. People in this area may travel to competing communities for goods and services.

- TERTIARY. The tertiary market area considers regional retail centers within 120-miles of Buffalo. The tertiary market considers the local supply and demand of Sheridan, Gillette, Casper and Worland. Special attractions or places in a downtown district may attract residents within driving distance of Buffalo.

- TOURISM. The tourism market is more broadly defined and includes people who visit Buffalo for tourism. Visitors may be visiting the Big Horn Mountains or passing through to visit Yellowstone National Park.

The trade areas represent the basis for calculating commercial demand for goods and services in the city.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Change

Table 1.1 compares Buffalo with regional communities as well as Johnson County outside of Buffalo. Buffalo’s population grew 18% during the 1990s, increasing from 3,302 to 3,900. The local and regional growth occurring around Buffalo results in a growing eco-
nomic base for the city and conversely the downtown. The majority of surrounding communities experienced similar population growth, particularly Gillette and Sheridan.

Table 1.2 displays the historical population growth since 1940. Buffalo has been experiencing a steady population growth since the 1940s, growing gradually from 2,302 in 1940 to 3,900 in 2000. Buffalo experienced a slight decline during the 1980s but rebounded in the 1990s to reach a population of 3,900 in 2000. The 2006 population estimates prepared by RDG Planning & Design projects Buffalo at 4,315, an increase of 10.6% from 2000 or a 1.77% annual growth.

Table 1.3 presents the population of Buffalo by age cohort (5-year increments) and predicts the 2000 population by using a cohort-survival forecast method, which "ages" a five-year age range of people by computing how many of them will survive into the next five-year period. Cohort survival rates used were developed by the National Center for Health Statistics (1992), while the U.S. Bureau of the Census developed projected birth rates for the population.

The results suggest that during the 1990s, Buffalo experienced an in-migration rate of 13%. Most age groups experienced an in-migration with exception to people in their 20s, which is generally attributed to adults heading to college and beginning their careers. During the 1990s, the median age increased from 39.7 to 43.8, reflecting an aging population.

**Population Projection**

Projecting the future population of Buffalo and the market areas helps predict the future demographic character of the area. This is important for the city to make decisions regarding future investments and change, as well as understanding the city’s future possibilities. Projecting the total population could be calculated by evaluating historical trends and comparing them to the city’s rate of construction. Table 1.4 identifies population growth trends from the 1990s in order to project future population growth for the city.

---

**Table 1.1** Population Change, Buffalo & Comparable Communities 1990-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo*</td>
<td>3,302</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>4,315</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casper</td>
<td>46,742</td>
<td>49,644</td>
<td>2,902</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>52,089</td>
<td>2,445</td>
<td>4.93%</td>
<td>0.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheyenne</td>
<td>50,008</td>
<td>53,011</td>
<td>3,003</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>55,314</td>
<td>2,303</td>
<td>4.34%</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody</td>
<td>7,897</td>
<td>8,835</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>9,217</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>4.32%</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillette</td>
<td>17,635</td>
<td>19,646</td>
<td>2,011</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>23,899</td>
<td>4,253</td>
<td>21.65%</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laramie</td>
<td>26,687</td>
<td>27,204</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>25,688</td>
<td>-1,516</td>
<td>-5.57%</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheridan</td>
<td>13,900</td>
<td>15,204</td>
<td>1,304</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>16,429</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worland</td>
<td>5,742</td>
<td>5,250</td>
<td>-492</td>
<td>-8.6%</td>
<td>4,902</td>
<td>-348</td>
<td>-6.63%</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson County</td>
<td>6,145</td>
<td>7,075</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>8,014</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>13.27%</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson Co. (wo Buffalo)</td>
<td>2,883</td>
<td>3,175</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>3,534</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>11.31%</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-mile area†</td>
<td>6,138</td>
<td>7,213</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>8,246</td>
<td>1,033</td>
<td>14.32%</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-mile area†</td>
<td>198,127</td>
<td>216,221</td>
<td>18,094</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>228,138</td>
<td>11,917</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

**Table 1.2** Historical Population Change, Buffalo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Decennial Change</th>
<th>Decennial % Change</th>
<th>Average Annual Rate of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>2,302</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2,674</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2,907</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>3,394</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3,799</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3,302</td>
<td>-497</td>
<td>-13.1%</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Est.*</td>
<td>4,315</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *RDG Planning & Design
and region beyond 2000. All trade areas are expected to continue growing. Table 1.5 calculates growth rate scenarios for the City of Buffalo.

- **Natural Population Change.** A natural population change or 0% Migration (birth and death rates) to 2020 yields a total population of 3,578. In 2030, the population would dip down to 3,406. This scenario is not as dependable since the projected population for 2005 is 3,780 and the actual population according to RDG calculations was more likely 4,243.

- **14% Migration.** If the city continues to experience the immigration of 14% (not to be confused with percent change between 1990 and 2000) from the 1990’s, then the 2020 population would be 4,690 and 2030 population would be 5,111 (Table 1.5). This would translate to an annual growth in population of 40 new residents.

- **1.2% Growth Rate.** Figures from Claritas, Inc. suggest a growth rate of 1.2% from 2000 to 2012 for the City of Buffalo and the immediate surrounding area. This rate from 2000 to 2030 yields a total population of 5,578.

- **1.7% Growth Rate.** Rate experienced between 2000 and 2007 and comparable to the rate experienced during the 1990s (1.8%).

---

### Table 1.3 Predicted and Actual Age Cohort Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>1990 Actual</th>
<th>2000 Predicted</th>
<th>2000 Actual</th>
<th>Actual minus Predicted</th>
<th>% variance (Actual/Predicted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>-107</td>
<td>-47.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>-35</td>
<td>-15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-80</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,302</td>
<td>3,191</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Median Age**

39.7 43.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, RDG Planning & Design

---

### Table 1.4 Projected Population 2000-2012, Market Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (City Limits)</td>
<td>3,302</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>4,338</td>
<td>4,774</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (20-mile)</td>
<td>6,138</td>
<td>7,213</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>7,803</td>
<td>8,246</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary-Primary</td>
<td>2,836</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>3,415</td>
<td>3,472</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary (120-mile)</td>
<td>198,127</td>
<td>216,221</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>228,138</td>
<td>236,453</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary-Secondary</td>
<td>191,989</td>
<td>209,008</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>220,335</td>
<td>228,207</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claritas, Inc., RDG Planning & Design

---

### Table 1.5 Migration and Growth Scenarios for Buffalo, Primary Market

<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Population Change</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>3,780</td>
<td>3,690</td>
<td>3,628</td>
<td>3,578</td>
<td>3,506</td>
<td>3,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+14% Migration Scenario (migration b/w 1990 &amp; 2000)</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>4,044</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>4,444</td>
<td>4,690</td>
<td>4,917</td>
<td>5,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2% Annual Growth Rate (rate b/w 2000/2012 projected)</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>4,140</td>
<td>4,394</td>
<td>4,664</td>
<td>4,951</td>
<td>5,255</td>
<td>5,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7% Annual Growth Rate (rate b/w 1990 &amp; 2000)</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>4,243</td>
<td>4,616</td>
<td>5,022</td>
<td>5,464</td>
<td>5,944</td>
<td>6,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census, Claritas Inc., RDG Planning & Design
Table 1.6 2007 Estimated Median Household Income

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>2000</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (city)</td>
<td>$30,764</td>
<td>$39,703</td>
<td>+$8,939</td>
<td>+29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (20-mile)</td>
<td>$33,775</td>
<td>$44,078</td>
<td>+$10,303</td>
<td>+31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary (120-mile)</td>
<td>$36,923</td>
<td>$45,955</td>
<td>+$9,032</td>
<td>+24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census, Claritas, Inc.

Table 1.7 Work Places and Employment for Buffalo’s Downtown Trade Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Description</th>
<th>Total Establishments</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total Employed</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total Establishments</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total Employed</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Trade Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industries (All)</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3,227</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, Communications/Utilities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1,502</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claritas, Inc.

For the purposes of planning for Buffalo and its downtown, a 1.7% annual growth rate is used for the primary market, and a lesser growth rate is used for the secondary and tertiary markets. This rate yields a 2012 estimated population of 4,774. The tertiary market, expanding 120-miles from Buffalo is expected to grow at a 0.78% rate, starting at 209,008 in 2000 and reaching 228,207 by 2012.

**Income Characteristics**

Table 1.6 presents the 2007 estimated median household income for residents of Buffalo and the market areas. The median income for the region is higher than that of Buffalo. This indicates a significant number of higher income households living just outside of Buffalo. The rate at which each area’s median income is growing is comparable.

**BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT**

**Distribution by Trade Area**

Table 1.7 displays the distribution and percentages of establishments and employees for the Primary Trade Area. Within the primary market area, service and retail businesses make up nearly 62% of all establishments and account for about 67% of the market’s 3,227 employees. The twenty-miles surrounding Buffalo is 52% retail and service establishments and accounts for 79% of the market’s 1,345 employees.
## Table 1.8 Consumer Spending Patterns based on National Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL SPECIFIED CONSUMER EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Tertiary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOOD AT HOME</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD AWAY FROM HOME &amp; ALCOHOL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Beverages</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Away from Home</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY CARE, EDUCATION &amp; CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Day Care</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions (All)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTHCARE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Drugs</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Supplies</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS &amp; APPLIANCES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Textiles</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Household Appliances</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Household Equipment</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Appliances &amp; Housewares</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSING RELATED &amp; PERSONAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Expenses</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Repairs</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Services</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping Supplies</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Expenses and Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL CARE &amp; SMOKING PRODUCTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Products &amp; Services</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking Products &amp; Supplies</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PET EXPENSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPORTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic Equipment/Supplies</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Materials</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Expenses</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV, Radio, &amp; Sound Equipment</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSPORTATION &amp; AUTO EXPENSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL APPAREL</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claritas, Inc.
**Consumer Spending Patterns by Product**

Table 1.8 displays a comparison of annual consumer expenditures by product type in each trade area to the national average. National average per capita expenditures are equal to a market index of one, which is the ratio of the Annual Average Household Expenditure (AAHE) in each trade area compared to the AAHE for the United States. Therefore, scores greater than one hundred indicate that consumers spend more on a good or service than the rest of the nation. With the exception of reading materials, consumers in the Buffalo primary trade areas spend slightly less on most consumable goods and services than consumers nationwide. Within the secondary area, medical services, some household furnishings, pet expenses and used vehicles are slightly more than the national average.

Although, consumers in all three areas spend close to the national average in most consumable goods there are categories where there is greater disparity. Within the primary trade area, these include daycare, education, and apparel.

**Retail Sales**

One way of evaluating downtown’s retail role in the region is to consider its share of total regional retail sales. Table 1.10 indicates total retail sales in Buffalo and the secondary market area. Within secondary market ring, nearly two-third of retail sales were reported inside of the city limits while the remaining third were reported between the city limits and secondary market ring (Map 1.2).

---

**Table 1.9** Estimated Growth in Consumer Spending in Buffalo’s Secondary Market, 2007-2012 (in 000's)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Expenditures</th>
<th>2007 Spending</th>
<th>2012 Projected Spending</th>
<th>2012-2007 Increment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>$12,114</td>
<td>$15,222</td>
<td>$622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>$18,507</td>
<td>$24,505</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at Home</td>
<td>$19,498</td>
<td>$22,905</td>
<td>$681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>$13,936</td>
<td>$20,530</td>
<td>$1,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Equipment</td>
<td>$10,169</td>
<td>$13,038</td>
<td>$574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc Personal Items</td>
<td>$11,134</td>
<td>$13,878</td>
<td>$544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Items</td>
<td>$30,748</td>
<td>$39,964</td>
<td>$1,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food away from Home</td>
<td>$17,883</td>
<td>$23,618</td>
<td>$5,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter and Related Expenses</td>
<td>$8,933</td>
<td>$11,489</td>
<td>$2,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Expenses</td>
<td>$32,136</td>
<td>$43,397</td>
<td>$11,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Specified Consumer Expenditures</td>
<td>$156,717</td>
<td>$204,609</td>
<td>$47,892</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claritas, Inc.

---

**Table 1.10** Share of Total Retail Sales, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Retail Sales</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>$60,888,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>$25,469,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$86,358,480</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claritas, Inc.
Retail Sales Gap Analysis

Table 1.11 identifies the gap between consumer demand (expenditures) and retail sales within Buffalo and each of the community’s trade areas. A positive value results from demand exceeding supply and reflects a leakage of consumer dollars to outside markets. In other words, residents have dollars to spend but they are spending them outside Buffalo. A negative value results from sales exceeding demand and indicates a flow of regional dollars into the city’s retail market. In Buffalo, 2006 retail demand exceeded supply within Buffalo by nearly $13,000,000, illustrating the community’s leakage to other regional retail markets. Within the 20-mile ring of Buffalo, this number increases to nearly $52,000,000. Some of this leakage could be captured by Buffalo.

As downtowns across the nation compete for a share of the retail market, many have found success in specialty or niche markets. Downtown's that have successfully competed against the "big box" retailers have focused on service oriented and specialty retailing.

Specific market sectors that appear to hold potential for Downtown Buffalo include:

- Food & Beverage stores
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Clothing & clothing accessories stores
- Miscellaneous Store Retailers (florist, gift, novelty and souvenir stores)
- Food service & drinking establishments
- General Merchandise

Although it can be difficult to compete with the bigger retailers in the clothing and clothing accessory market, Buffalo has a significant outflow of dollars in this area. For this reason the downtown should look at ways to capture this market, especially in the more specialized clothing accessory market. Likewise, general merchandise and items in GAFO (general merchandise, apparel, furniture and other represents sales that sell merchandise normally sold in department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.11 Retail Opportunity Gap and Surplus for Retailing for Buffalo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furnishing Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics and Appliances Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances, Televisions, Electronics Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer and Software Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera and Photographic Equipment Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Material and Supply Dealers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn/Garden Equipment, Supplies Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Food Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacies and Drug Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, Perfume Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical Goods Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table continues on next page*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Tertiary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline Stations</td>
<td>(9,968,577)</td>
<td>(7,487,305)</td>
<td>(391,586,509)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores</td>
<td>3,805,043</td>
<td>7,863,661</td>
<td>(215,037,081)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Gasoline Stations</td>
<td>(13,773,620)</td>
<td>(15,350,966)</td>
<td>(176,549,429)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing &amp; Clothing Accessories Stores</td>
<td>2,845,843</td>
<td>4,691,387</td>
<td>82,471,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td>2,001,281</td>
<td>3,088,252</td>
<td>57,541,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe Stores</td>
<td>393,473</td>
<td>746,270</td>
<td>13,338,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores</td>
<td>451,089</td>
<td>856,865</td>
<td>11,591,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores</td>
<td>1,268,191</td>
<td>2,490,553</td>
<td>9,556,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument Stores</td>
<td>842,206</td>
<td>1,687,890</td>
<td>3,231,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book, Periodical and Music Stores</td>
<td>425,985</td>
<td>802,664</td>
<td>6,324,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>8,617,582</td>
<td>14,452,135</td>
<td>(145,787,658)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Stores Excluding Leased Departments</td>
<td>3,916,178</td>
<td>7,329,511</td>
<td>(3,842,660)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>4,701,404</td>
<td>7,122,624</td>
<td>(141,945,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>1,919,729</td>
<td>3,126,998</td>
<td>(13,068,260)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florists</td>
<td>143,396</td>
<td>270,346</td>
<td>2,874,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Stores</td>
<td>739,015</td>
<td>1,425,624</td>
<td>(11,827,380)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>160,936</td>
<td>302,355</td>
<td>2,328,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>876,382</td>
<td>1,128,672</td>
<td>(6,443,761)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Store Retailers</td>
<td>(5,905,081)</td>
<td>(6,129,091)</td>
<td>18,122,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Shopping, Mail-Order Houses</td>
<td>(4,804,344)</td>
<td>(5,201,200)</td>
<td>29,513,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vending Machine Operators</td>
<td>72,756</td>
<td>191,546</td>
<td>6,691,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Selling Establishments</td>
<td>(1,173,493)</td>
<td>(1,119,436)</td>
<td>(18,083,065)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodservice and Drinking Places</td>
<td>368,002</td>
<td>2,756,073</td>
<td>(34,082,218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Service Restaurants</td>
<td>(1,403,075)</td>
<td>(481,778)</td>
<td>(21,135,232)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Service Eating Places</td>
<td>1,393,773</td>
<td>2,528,803</td>
<td>(5,688,531)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Foodservices</td>
<td>493,619</td>
<td>916,092</td>
<td>15,482,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Places Alcoholic Beverages</td>
<td>(116,315)</td>
<td>(207,045)</td>
<td>(22,740,595)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAFO*</td>
<td>16,301,619</td>
<td>28,816,954</td>
<td>(23,820,325)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Stores</td>
<td>739,015</td>
<td>1,425,624</td>
<td>(11,827,380)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>1,092,050</td>
<td>2,485,516</td>
<td>9,821,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores</td>
<td>1,268,191</td>
<td>2,490,553</td>
<td>9,556,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics and Appliance Stores</td>
<td>1,738,938</td>
<td>3,271,739</td>
<td>31,945,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores</td>
<td>2,845,843</td>
<td>4,691,387</td>
<td>82,471,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>8,617,582</td>
<td>14,452,135</td>
<td>(145,787,658)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* GAFO (General merchandise, Apparel, Furniture and Other) represents sales at stores that sell merchandise normally sold in department stores. This category is not included in Total Retail Sales Including Eating and Drinking Places. Source: Claritas, Inc.
stores) can be served by big box stores, yet Buffalo should still seek to compete with this market.

Note: Numbers in Table 1.11 show the difference between demand (Consumer Expenditure Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics) and supply (Census of Retail Trade from the U.S. Census Bureau). Numbers in parenthesis reflect a greater supply than demand, while numbers without parenthesis reflect a greater demand than supply. Case in point, total retail sales in Buffalo was $60,888,740 (Table 1.10), while demand was $73,714,526 for a difference of $12,825,786. This represents a greater demand than supply.

**PROJECTED ANNUAL EXPENDITURE GROWTH**

**Retail Space Potential**

Projecting the growth of retail expenditures helps determine the need for additional retail space in Buffalo. Overall, Buffalo is leaking retail dollars to larger community commercial centers but there are specific niche markets that Buffalo can further develop. Downtown is less likely to be in direct competition with big box retailers like Wal-Mart. By using the data in Table 1.12, current per capita spending can be determined. If the amount of dollars spent per individual is applied to Buffalo's future population and that of its regional market, future retail sales (based on 2007 dollar) can be calculated. Within the specific markets identified above there is a gap or a loss of dollars outside the city or region. These market areas should continue to capture projected retail sales at current rates but should also strive to capture a portion of the dollars that leak to other market areas.

Tables 1.9 and 1.10 illustrate this methodology and relate future expenditures to retail space demands. This is determined by:

- Calculating the average sales yield of retail space in Buffalo, using an estimated sales yield of $209 per square foot. This estimate is the midpoint of the median sales yield for community shopping centers ($199.13) and neighborhood shopping centers ($219.25).
- Currently, the capture rate is 83% in the primary market and 62% in the secondary (supply÷demand = capture rate). The capture rate in the tertiary market is excluded from these calculations since it covers a large geographic area and skews the total figures.
- Assuming Buffalo's share of the increment (increase between 2007 and 2012) is 55% in the primary market and 40% of the secondary market.
- Assuming downtown's proportion of the entire city's retail sales changes from 51% in 2007 to 30% in 2012 because of retail development on the periphery of the City.

The analysis indicates a potential demand for an additional 18,000 square feet of retail space in the downtown over the next five years.

**Table 1.12 Potential Demand for Retail Space in Downtown Buffalo 2012 (auto withheld)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007 Estimated Demand</td>
<td>$ 58,304,962</td>
<td>$ 35,284,929</td>
<td>$ 93,589,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Estimated Population</td>
<td>4,388</td>
<td>3,415</td>
<td>7,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Per Capita Dollars</td>
<td>13,287</td>
<td>10,332</td>
<td>11,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Projected Population</td>
<td>4,774</td>
<td>3,472</td>
<td>8,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increment 2007-2012</td>
<td>5,128,923</td>
<td>588,943</td>
<td>5,717,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture Rate</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citywide Share of the Increment</td>
<td>4,236,528</td>
<td>367,627</td>
<td>4,604,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Gap</td>
<td>1,565,392</td>
<td>15,815,665</td>
<td>17,381,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Gap</td>
<td>892,395</td>
<td>221,316</td>
<td>1,113,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gap</td>
<td>2,457,787</td>
<td>16,036,981</td>
<td>18,494,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture Rate</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Gap</td>
<td>1,351,783</td>
<td>6,414,793</td>
<td>7,766,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Increment</td>
<td>5,588,311.14</td>
<td>6,782,419</td>
<td>12,370,730</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RDG Planning & Design, Claritas, Inc.
The aggregate per capita annual spending for retail goods and services within the primary and secondary markets is estimated at $13,287 and $10,332, respectively. Future gap is determined by multiplying 2012 projected population by 2007 per capita dollars. The increment is the difference between the 2012 projected demand and 2007 demand.

A total increase of 443 new residents to this area between 2007 and 2012 may result in a demand increase of $5,717,866 for a total 2012 projected demand of $99,307,757. The existing capture rate is about 83% for the primary market and 62% for the secondary market, meaning that retail sales are less than consumer expenditures in these market areas. Percentages are calculated by dividing supply from demand. The market study assumes that these market areas will continue to perform at their existing levels. The primary and secondary market’s total share of the five-year increment is $4,604,155.

The existing gap for both primary and secondary markets is $17,381,057 and future gap is $1,113,711, or a total of $18,494,768. This study anticipates a capturing 55% of the total gap in the primary market and a 40% of the secondary market, resulting in $7,766,575 of total captured retail sales. This result combined with the five-year increment gap of $4,604,155 equals $12,370,730.

Using an estimated sales yield of $209, the citywide commercial space demand is 59,190 (12,370,730/209). Downtown’s share could be 30% in 2012, resulting in about 17,757 square feet of new retail space.

The Downtown currently has 9,500 square feet of vacant first and second story space. This portion would appear to be half of the amount of space to meet future demands not all vacant space could be considered competitive. Office and service uses could be converted to retail space or perhaps the additional space could be completed through new development. A downtown building in Buffalo typically has a 50’ frontage with a depth of 100’, calculating to a square footage of 5,000 square feet. In essence, the model suggests a five-year demand for 3 to 4 stores, each occupying 5,000 square feet.

### Table 1.13 Potential Demand for Retail Space, Downtown Buffalo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Increment Increase in Retail Sales</td>
<td>$5,588,311.14</td>
<td>$6,782,419</td>
<td>$12,370,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Yield Per Square Foot</td>
<td>$209</td>
<td>$209</td>
<td>$209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citywide commercial Space Demand (SF)</td>
<td>26,738</td>
<td>32,452</td>
<td>59,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Share of Retail Increment</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Commercial Space Demand (SF)</td>
<td>8,021</td>
<td>9,736</td>
<td>17,757</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RDG Planning & Design, Claritas, Inc.

### Table 1.14 Buffalo Residential Construction Activity 2000-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
<th>People Per HH</th>
<th>Total People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SF Units</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF Units</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>116.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition (subtract)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>625.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Buffalo, 2008
### Table 1.15 Projected Housing Development Demand, 1.75% Annual Growth Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Buffalo</th>
<th>2007 (Base)</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population at End of Period</td>
<td>4,388</td>
<td>4,774</td>
<td>5,194</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Population at End of Period</td>
<td>4,282</td>
<td>4,658</td>
<td>5,068</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People/ Household</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Demand at End of Period</td>
<td>2,001</td>
<td>2,177</td>
<td>2,368</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Vacancy Rate</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>6.20%</td>
<td>5.95%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Unit Needs at End of Period</td>
<td>2,139</td>
<td>2,321</td>
<td>2,518</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available from Previous Year</td>
<td>2,283</td>
<td>2,477</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Units</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Need</td>
<td>≈37</td>
<td>≈40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Need</td>
<td>≈184</td>
<td>≈202</td>
<td>≈386</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census, City of Buffalo, RDG Planning & Design; calculations involve rounding.

### Table 1.16 Housing Affordability Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>% of City Median</th>
<th>% of Households</th>
<th># Households in Each Range</th>
<th>Affordable Range for Owner Units</th>
<th># of Owner Units</th>
<th>Affordable Range for Renter Units</th>
<th># of Renter Units</th>
<th>Total Affordable Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0-25,000</td>
<td>0-85%</td>
<td>40.01%</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>$0-50,000</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>$0-400</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-49,999</td>
<td>85-170%</td>
<td>35.50%</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>$50,000-99,999</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>$400-800</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-74,999</td>
<td>170-255%</td>
<td>13.30%</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>$100,000-149,999</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>$800-1250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75-99,999</td>
<td>255-340%</td>
<td>6.19%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>$150,000-200,000</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>$1250-1500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100-150,000</td>
<td>340-510%</td>
<td>2.71%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>$200-300,000</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>$1500-2500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000+</td>
<td>Over 510%</td>
<td>2.28%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>$300,000+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$2500+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>29,392</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td>1,718</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census, City of Buffalo, RDG Planning & Design.
Future office occupancy is difficult to project because several forces are in play. Diversification, expansion, recruitment, and business starts generate a demand for new office space. On the other hand, downsizing of some businesses can put other space on the market. Individual decisions and preferences by entrepreneurs can also dramatically alter this estimate. Assuming that the existing ratio of office space per 1,000 residents remains the same over the next five years, Downtown should already have enough office space identified. The 2012 demand calls for 2.387 acres, which is below the existing inventory of 2.43 acres. Currently, there is about 9,000 square feet of vacant space in the Downtown; however some to this space may not be appropriate for current and future occupants creating an opportunity for new office development.

Short-term demand is from energy-oriented enterprises and real estate offices.

**RESIDENTIAL MARKETS IN DOWNTOWN BUFFALO**

Residential development has been critical to downtown revitalization initiatives in many communities and could play a role in the growth and sustaining of Downtown Buffalo. This section addresses potential housing markets in the district.

**Recent Construction Activity**

Table 1.14 displays residential construction activity within the city between 2000 and 2007. The rate of construction varied year to year, with as many as 73 housing units added in 2002 and as few as 19 added in 2004. On average, approximately 37 units were built while 1 unit was demolished every three years. Currently, the downtown housing mix includes limited upper level renter occupied units and some single-family on the periphery of the downtown. Overall the downtown lacks high quality residential options. In the future, housing opportunities located near or in the downtown district will most likely continue to be alternative forms such as senior living, town homes, multi-family, patio homes, student housing and attached housing.

**Overall Housing Demand**

Based on population forecasts developed in Table 1.5, Table 1.15 projects housing development in Buffalo to 2017. The housing demand model assumes:

- That over the last several years the vacancy rate and people per household has declined and will continue over the next ten years as the children of baby-boomers begin having families.
- One unit every other year will be removed from the market on an annual basis.

This approach results in an annual production of 38-39 new housing units for a cumulative demand of 386 units. Providing a variety of housing in appropriate settings will be essential to increasing demand and meeting future city projections. This should include housing options in and around the downtown.
Retail Impact of Housing

If Downtown Buffalo grows as a residential neighborhood, it will capture a greater share of the city’s housing production. According to the 2000 Census, the overall occupancy mix in the city is roughly 70% owner-occupied and 30% renter occupied. Table 1.15 projects a ten-year downtown housing development program based on these assumptions.

Effectively developed, downtown housing can be a unique attraction, and can often develop its own, larger market. Implementation of an overall downtown revitalization program that makes the district a more attractive place will also increase housing demand. For example, a focus on the arts can generate a special demand for housing by students and young professionals; similarly, development of senior housing can attract people from a broader area and increase overall housing demand and a skilled workforce.

Additional housing development also can influence demand for retail goods and services by 2012. Based on consumer spending data (utilized in Table 1.12) per capita annual spending for retail goods and services within Buffalo’s primary and secondary areas is estimated at $13,287. An additional 184 units would result in about 386 new residents, or an annual spending level increase in 2012 of $5,130,000. Assuming that Buffalo continues to capture about 55% of local expenditures, this growth could generate about $4,237,000 of additional consumer spending. Based on an average retail yield of $209/square foot, the potential residential market could support approximately 27,000 square feet of additional retail space for the city.

CONCLUSIONS

This analysis of population and potential markets leads to the following conclusions:

- Buffalo and the surrounding region have experienced consistent population increases since the 1990s and are expected to continue growing. The strong growth outside Buffalo indicates an increasing number of regional residents that will most likely look to Buffalo for retail goods and services.

- If the City of Buffalo is able to maintain a growth rate of no less than 1.7%, its 2017 population will be greater than 5,194.

- Half of Buffalo’s employment in the primary and secondary market is dedicated to services and retail.

- Consumer spending in the primary and secondary market is expected to grow for transportation and miscellaneous items.

- Retail sales leak to surrounding communities. As the regional population continues to grow, demand for retail goods and services in Buffalo will also increase.

- Recent retail expansion within Buffalo will likely drive the downtown to focus on specialty goods that are traditional to downtown markets. Niche markets could include Food & Beverage, Health & Personal Care, Clothing & clothing accessories, Miscellaneous Retailers (florist, gift, novelty and souvenir stores), and General Merchandise.

- Of the primary and secondary market areas, the primary market area accommodates 71% of the total share while the secondary market makes up the remaining 29%.

- People visiting from the tertiary market and other markets look for unique goods and services. Niche businesses and artisans contribute to these niche markets.

- Over the next 5 years, Buffalo as a whole could absorb 27,000 square feet of additional niche commercial space. The downtown could absorb 30% or 8,000 square feet of that additional commercial space.

- Current level of office space adequate for next five-years. Although a new office development may allow current office uses to relocate from Main Street, opening storefronts for commercial uses.

- As population and housing development continue to increase, the demand for retail goods and services will increase, resulting in a possibly $4,600,000 of additional spending in Buffalo and 27,000 square feet of additional retail space. Downtown could capture 30% of this growth.
This chapter examines existing conditions and opportunities in the corridor. It provides a basis for thinking about the future of the district.
THE STRUCTURE OF THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Located at the foot of the Big Horn Mountains, Buffalo has long been a crossroads in Wyoming. Originally, Buffalo was laid out on a grid pattern following a bend in the military crossing of the Bozeman Trail across Clear Creek. Known today as Main Street, the area of the trail surrounding the Clear Creek crossing became the center of Buffalo’s commercial district. The buildings surrounding this section of Main Street were built to the property lines, largely in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The arrival of the automobile changed the structure of downtown and Main Street. As a result, people relied less on trains for transportation, leading in 1953 to the closing of the Wyoming Railroad line. By the 1940s two major highways intersected at Buffalo, US Highways 16 and 87. The development of Highway 87 in the 1930s followed the original alignment of Main Street through Buffalo. This decision ensured the survival and integrity of many of the building facades along Main Street. More often than not the building of America’s highways has led to major changes to the surrounding built environment. Yet, like with most communities the structure of the community was altered by these routes, changing them from a pedestrian-oriented place to one oriented around the automobile. This new orientation led over time to the spreading of commercial uses out from the traditional core to the edges of the community. The construction of Interstates 25 and 90 on the edge of Buffalo have further reinforced this outward movement of commerce. These changing development patterns distinguish downtown into distinctive sub-districts, including:

- **Main Street Business District.** This section of Buffalo runs from West Foote Street to Bennett Street, with the majority of buildings fronting onto Main Street. These buildings range from one to three stories in height, built to the property line with awnings extending from the face of the buildings. On-street parallel parking is available, while off-street parking limited to side streets. This area is still the heart of the community and continues to experience significant reinvestment.

- **Highway-oriented.** Most prevalent along the northern edge of Main Street, these uses are characterized by individual buildings separated from one another with minimal landscaping. Concrete and asphalt parking lots in front of these structures dominate the entrances into these developments. In addition, they often disrupt the continuity of the surrounding urban fabric, because of setbacks that pull them away from the city street.

- **Neighborhood Commercial.** A cluster of businesses at Fort Street and DeSmet Avenue provide neighborhood services to the surrounding area, including a grocery store and pharmacy (which is the only one in the county).

- **Clear Creek.** Flowing down from the majestic Big Horn Mountains, Clear Creek is at the center of the community’s park and trail networks. From the juncture of US Highway 16 and Interstate 25, the Clear Creek Mountain Park and Trail System follows the stream up to Mosier Gulch in the Big Horn National Forest. At the Main Street crossing in downtown Buffalo, Clear Creek is channeled and lined with trees. The Occidental Hotel takes advantage of this tranquil setting with the placement of an outdoor restaurant and seating along the north side of the creek.
BUFFALO, WYOMING

MAP 2.1:
Development Structure
Table 2.1 summarizes building use in the business corridor study area. The overall district provides approximately 569,355 square feet of gross floor area, with about 523,141 square feet on street level and 46,214 additional square feet on upper levels. Street level space in the district has a low vacancy rate of about 3%, although some is in marginal use. The upper level spaces include a mixture of uses with most occupied spaces being used for residential units.

Among occupied commercial space users, consumer uses, including retailing, personal services, and hospitality, account for about 210,796 square feet, while private office uses occupy about 105,943 square feet. Civic (churches and non-profits) and governmental institutions occupy over 118,153 square feet.

The remaining square footage is associated with light industrial uses behind Main Street. The Building Use Map (Map 2.2 and 2.3) indicates the geographic distribution of these uses in the district.

This analysis identifies potential opportunities for redevelopment or adaptive reuse by relating building occupancy and historic significance. Buffalo exhibits several examples of late nineteenth and early 20th Century commercial architecture. The goal setting process, discussed in Chapter Three, indicates that stakeholders in the District appreciate the traditional downtown ambiance, and that historic preservation is an important community value. The Main Street Historic District ensures that the culture and heritage of Buffalo’s commercial center is preserved for future generations.

Many of the most beloved structures in the Buffalo Main Street Historic District are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While many buildings are listed for their architectural importance, many more are listed because of their importance to the history of their communities, state and the country as a whole. Those structures listed on the registry in Buffalo, while architecturally important to the integrity of their environs, are perhaps more important for the link they provide to the city’s past. Those structures in Buffalo that are listed on the registry include:

- Buffalo Main Street Historic District
- Buffalo Post Office
- Carnegie Public Library
- Holland House
- Johnson County Courthouse
- Methodist Episcopal Church
- St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
- Union Congregational Church

The Buffalo Main Street Historic District includes 11 structures. The boundary of this existing district, according to the State Historical Preservation Office, could be expanded to include a broader area. These boundaries are described in Map 2.4.

Several programs for the rehabilitation and protection of historic structures currently exist, both at the state and federal level. The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program offers property owners either a 10 or 20 percent tax credit towards the rehabilitation of a property. Those structures that are certified historic and undergo a certified historic rehabilitation are eligible for a 20 percent tax credit. Alternatively, structures that are non-historic but built before 1936 are entitled to a 10 percent tax credit.

Another federal level program available to communities nationwide is the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program. Offering assistance to communities through a “Four Point Approach” of organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring for the revitalization of older commercial districts. Currently, Buffalo is applying to become a member of the Wyoming Main Street Pro-
Buffalo, Wyoming

gram, which has provided guidance and funding for revitalization projects through a low interest revolving loan fund.

Also, whether it is preserving a vintage downtown or converting an old warehouse into a corporate headquarters, experience has shown that historic preservation is usually most successful when local people work at the local level to protect and reuse local historic resources. The Certified Local Governments program (CLG) recognizes that local efforts need support, and that communities can benefit from working with state and federal partners. The program is a federal-state-local partnership that enables eligible communities to conduct a wide range of preservation activities in cooperation with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office and the US Department of the Interior, including surveys of historic resources and nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Individual property owners can also ensure the continued preservation of their property through the allowance of preservation easements. Preservation easements are a voluntary legal agreement that protect historic, archeological, or cultural resources. These easements provide assurance to owners of historic properties that important historic features will be preserved by subsequent owners. According to the National Park Service, “under the terms of an easement, a property owner grants a portion of, or interest in their property rights to an organization whose mission includes historic preservation. Once recorded, an easement becomes part of the property’s chain of title and usually ‘runs with the land’ in perpetuity, thus binding not only the owner who grants the easement but all future owners as well.”

While rights to change or destroy a structure or specific building feature are lost, a property owner still retains ownership of the property. Furthermore, easements can be tailored to meet business needs in order to ensure continued profitability. For example, a hotel may create an easement to protect the historic integrity of its public spaces and rooms. Yet, the easement could be tailored so that renovations can be made to bathroom facilities within the rooms without the need for oversight.

The property owner may be able to receive a Federal income tax deduction equivalent to the value of the rights given away to a charitable or governmental organization. Further financial benefits may also be available either in the form of estate, gift, or reductions to local property tax burdens. Those considering donating a preservation easement should consult an accountant, tax attorney, or the IRS for help in determining the financial incentives of a potential easement.

TRANSPORTATION

Street System

Transportation is vital to the Downtown framework. Downtown’s primary streets include Main Street and Fort Street and Hart Streets (US Highway 16). Fort and Hart Streets, move traffic generally east/west through the City, while Main Street, moves traffic north/south through the City. Also, Interstates 25 and 90 move traffic north/south and east/west along the outer edge of the City. Both Main and Fort Streets connect to these major road networks on the north and east sides of the City.

The balance of traffic movement through the Downtown is provided by the local street grid. The north/south streets provide direct access to surrounding residential neighborhoods, schools, parks and civic centers of the City. Main, Fort and Hart Streets form the two central arteries to commercial businesses and the most distinguishable destination in the city. Fort Street is the perpendicular axis to
CHAPTER 2

Existing Conditions

Map 2.2:
First Floor Building Use

Building Use
- Residential
- Residential Multi-Family
- Hospitality
- Retail
- Office / Financial
- Service
- Restaurant / Entertainment
- Commercial Recreation
- Auto
- Civic
- School
- Public Facility
- Light Industrial
- Vacant

Land Use
- Residential
- Residential Multi-Family
- Mobile Home Park
- Parks and Recreation
- Open Space
- Public
- Vacant
Buffalo, Wyoming

Table 2.1: Building Use in Downtown Buffalo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Use Type</th>
<th>Main Level (SF)</th>
<th>Upper Level (SF)</th>
<th>Total (SF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Floor Residential</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24,856</td>
<td>24,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family Residential</td>
<td>46,104</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>19,173</td>
<td>11,976</td>
<td>31,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>105,943</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>105,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>48,974</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>13,830</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>97,085</td>
<td>4,108</td>
<td>101,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Entertainment</td>
<td>25,816</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>55,980</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>55,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Uses</td>
<td>35,309</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industrial</td>
<td>35,355</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Recreation</td>
<td>3,675</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Facility</td>
<td>26,864</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Space</td>
<td>9,033</td>
<td>5,284</td>
<td>14,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>523,141</td>
<td>46,214</td>
<td>569,355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RDG Planning & Design, 2008

Map 2.3: Upper Floor Building Use
Map 2.4: Historic Quality Inventory

- **Building Ratings**
  - Landmark
  - Strongly Contributing
  - Background Contributing
  - Significant New
  - Not Contributing
  - Negative
  - Major Medi-Visions
  - Not Razed

- **National Register Sites**
  1. Carnegie Public Library
  2. Johnson County Courthouse
  3. Valdosta House
  4. US Post Office
  5. Methodist Episcopal Church
  7. Union Congregational Church and Parsonage

- **Designated Buffalo Main Street Historic District, 2008**
- **Potential Main Street Historic District**
Burritt, Carrington, DeSmet Avenues and Klondike Drive. Burritt Avenue provides access to Buffalo's public schools on the south side of Clear Creek, with the majority of residents to the north.

Traffic in the district moves smoothly with exception during special events. Improvements could enhance the safety and movement for motorists and pedestrians, particularly at the intersections of Main and Fort Streets and Main and Hart Streets where traffic is heaviest. Participants to the planning process rated traffic circulation low, 2.9 on a 1 to 5 scale with 5 being excellent, while the overall streetscape of the corridor rated high, 3.5 on the 1 to 5 scale. A large number of participants perceive that traffic circulation would be best served by improvements to the availability of parking within the corridor.

The personality of Fort and Main Streets changes from day to night. During the day the street experiences activity with shoppers and tourists, while during the evening many businesses close, resulting in few destinations for visitors to downtown.

**Trails and Recreation**

Buffalo rests at the gateway to some of the most pristine wilderness in North America. The Big Horn National Forest and Cloud Peak Wilderness are a diverse landscape of mountains, glacial carved valleys, lush grasslands and alpine meadows. With more than 189,000 acres of unspoiled wilderness and 1,500 miles of trails, opportunities abound for outdoors enthusiasts at any level of experience. Outfitters in and around Buffalo can also help with the creation of horseback pack trips of up to a week into this magnificent national park. This wealth of outdoor activities is linked to Buffalo by the Clear Creek Trail System (CCTS) that stretches from Mosier Gulch to the junction of Highway 16 and Interstate 25. The existing CCTS is comprised of 17 miles of non-motorized, multi-use trails, connecting key commercial, residential, and community facilities to the City's greenbelt. This 261 acre open space along Clear Creek is one of Buffalo's greatest assets and creates an entirely unique environment as it tumbles through the Downtown area. Markers along existing trail segments tell the history of the community, including the story about the Fischer Brewery.

**Parking Supply**

Quantity and quality of parking is an important issue for the district. The core retail district, along Main Street from West Foote Street to Bennett Street, furnishes about 1,176 parking stalls, 326 of which are on-street. Map 2.4 Parking Inventory illustrates the location and nature of this parking supply. Table 2.3 below calculates parking demand for Downtown, based on existing building use, and Table 2.2 inventories the parking supply. Map 2.6 shows the surplus and deficiency of parking in the downtown. The blocks facing Main Street from Fort Street to Bennett Street has a significant parking demand that is not being met by current supply. Although parking is available on side streets and nearby surface lots, visitors perceive that parking is unavailable for patrons. This perception is reinforced by comments received during the public participation process.

### Table 2.2 Parking Supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Spaces</th>
<th>% of Total Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Street</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RDG Planning & Design

### Table 2.3 Parking Demand in Downtown Buffalo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Area (SF)</th>
<th>Projected Parking Ratio Spaces/ 1,000 SF</th>
<th>Required Parking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Floor Residential</td>
<td>24,856</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family Residential</td>
<td>46,104</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>31,139</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>105,943</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>48,974</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive</td>
<td>13,830</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>101,192</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant / Entertainment</td>
<td>25,816</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>35,980</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Uses</td>
<td>35,309</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industrial</td>
<td>35,355</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Recreation</td>
<td>3,675</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Facility</td>
<td>26,864</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>569,355</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RDG Planning & Design
CHAPTER 3

Strategic Planning

Map 2.5:
Parking Inventory, 2008
Map 2.6:
Parking Demand, 2008
CHAPTER 3

Strategic Planning
Chapter 3

Strategic Planning

This chapter reviews the public participation process, which gave stakeholders the opportunity to frame the goals and directions of the Downtown Buffalo Plan. This plan recommends policies largely based on opinions and perceptions of those who know the community best—its residents and business and property owners.
While focus groups in a downtown planning process typically include business and property owners, every resident of Buffalo has an interest in the heart of the city.

The specific components of the public participation process included:

**Downtown Questionnaire**
A questionnaire was circulated to the public in December 2007. The results of the process identify preliminary issues and goals, which were addressed in more detail during focus group meetings.

**Community Presentation**
A community presentation was given on January 15th, 2008. The event allowed the public to become more familiar with the concept of planning for downtown, and to become more familiar with strategies that other communities have pursued to market their downtown.

**Focus Group Meetings**
Focus group meetings were held on January 16-17, 2008. Specific focus groups include residents, business and property owners, financial institutions, public officials and students participated in roundtable discussions to share their opinion of Downtown and its future opportunities.

**Design Workshops**
Design workshops were held on March 26th and 27th, providing citizens, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to share their ideas, issues and concerns informally with planners and designers, while actively drawing their concepts for the future of downtown. A presentation followed the workshops to discuss initial concepts and ideas for improving downtown.

**Open House**
The MSBD Steering Committee, consisting of key stakeholders with background from both the private and public sectors, led an awareness campaign to encourage people to attend the public open house on May 27th. The open house provided the public an opportunity to review and provide comments to the development concept prior to its adoption.

**Main Street Business District Steering Committee**
A MSBD Steering Committee met at key points during the planning process to review the progress of the plan and make revisions to the draft concepts.

**DOWNTOWN QUESTIONNAIRE**
In order to measure the opinions and perceptions of Downtown Buffalo, a questionnaire was solicited to the public via Buffalo Bulletin Newspaper and e-mail. Over one-hundred sixty responses were received. This chapter summarizes the major findings.

**Rating of Buffalo’s Features**
Survey participants completed a “report card” questionnaire, asking respondents to rank various features of downtown on a “5” to “1”
Respondents to the questionnaire generally perceive downtown negatively. Of the twenty-two features, three are considered strengths while seven are considered weaknesses (rating below 2.5). Participants perceive downtown Buffalo to be lacking in business options and opportunity. This is due to issues with parking and a lack of investment by property owners in their buildings.

Respondents identified the following as substantial strengths of downtown:
1. Streetscape and Public Environment (3.50)
2. Overall Appearance as a District (3.40)
3. Tourism (3.30)

The following features received consistently low rankings by respondents:
1. Business Variety (2.10)
2. Restaurant and Entertainment Facilities (2.10)
3. Business Growth During the Last 5 Years (2.20)
4. Future Business Prospects (2.40)

Participants were asked to reply to ideas and actions for improving downtown. Again, respondents were providing a ranking of ideas on a “5” to “1” scale, five representing greatest importance and one representing least importance. Respondents generally support activities for improving downtown. The restoration of historic structures, the creation of special events and activities, and the improvement of trail connections all received high ratings. Increasing parking and the creation of neighborhood events received high ratings, as well.

Respondents identified the following as substantial actions/ideas for downtown:
1. Restoration of Historic Business Facades (3.71)
2. Special Events and Activities (3.66)
3. Improved Trail Connections (3.65)
4. More Parking (3.52)
5. More Neighborhood Events (3.43)
6. Better Advertising and Promotion (3.42)

**Geographic Priorities**

Survey participants rated downtown's geographic areas on the same “5” to “1” scale in terms of their overall health and quality. An understanding of these perceptions helps to identify target areas for improvement.

The intersection of Fort and Main Streets received the highest rating overall. Main Street from Fort Street to Bennett Street received moderate ratings, while Lobban Avenue received the lowest rating. The Development Concept of this plan should address the condition and function of these street segments and provide strategies for improving their quality.

3.21 Intersection of Fort and Main Streets
2.98 Main Street from Fort Street to Upper Clear Creek
2.97 Main Street near Upper Clear Creek
2.94 Main Street from Fort to Hart Street
2.86 Main Street from Upper Clear Creek to Bennett Street
2.35 Lobban Avenue
Desired Businesses for Downtown

The survey included an unprompted question asking survey participants to list three businesses for downtown Buffalo. Respondents would like to see more retail businesses in the downtown along with restaurants. A total of 229 short-answer responses were received. The list of responses is as follows by category:

135 Retail
34 Specialty retail
20 General retail
15 Affordable apparel
10 Art Galleries and Antiques
8 Toy store
7 Bookstore
4 Outdoor sporting goods
37 Other related comments

75 Restaurants
65 Quality, serving 3-meals a day
3 Bakery
3 Café / Coffee Shop
3 Micro-brewery/Brew Pub
1 Internet Café

5 Services
3 Pharmacy/Medical
1 Drycleaners
1 Shoe repair

14 Other, general or unspecified

Downtown Buffalo’s Perceived Assets

Survey participants were asked to list downtown's three greatest assets. A total of 349 short-answer responses were received. The list of responses is as follows by category:

150 Physical Condition
37 Clear Creek
25 Occidental Hotel
24 Crazy Women Square
15 Streetscape
Downtown Buffalo's Perceived Liabilities

In contrast to a consideration of its assets, survey participants were asked to list downtown's three greatest liabilities. A total of 367 short-answer responses were received. The list of responses is as follows by category:

172 Business Development
49 Lack of retail
29 Lack of restaurant choices
14 Conversion of retail to office
11 Tourism stores
10 Lack of family needs (clothing, shoes)

9 Limited Office Space
7 Loss of Businesses
6 High rent
5 Hours of Operation
32 Other related comments

82 Parking/Transportation
50 Lack of Parking
21 Circulation
11 Lack of Sidewalks/Crosswalks

70 Physical Condition
30 Deteriorated condition of buildings
32 Vacant buildings
4 Hotel Idlewild
2 City Hall/Courthouse
2 Vacant Lots

32 Overall Downtown
6 Lack activity & entertainment
5 Lack of public restrooms
5 Lack of affordable housing
4 No community support/apathy
3 Lack of central theme
9 Other

11 Streetscape
2 Approaches to Downtown
2 Clear Creek and bridges
7 Other

Actions and Projects

An open-ended question asked participants to list types of actions they would like to see in the district. A total of 394 short-answer responses were received. In order of frequency, responses included:

166 Streetscape and Transportation
91 Aesthetics/Landscape/Street Design
28 Additional parking
10 Crosswalks/pedestrian lights
7 Improve and expand trails
7 Improve directional aides
Questionnaire Conclusions

The questionnaire’s conclusions about the current situation and future of downtown Buffalo suggest that an improvement strategy should consider:

- The historic integrity of Main Street is an important characteristic to Downtown Buffalo and should be retained.
- Redevelopment and improvement projects should improve the relationship between areas of downtown, creating a sinuous and smooth transition. The intersection of Fort and Main should be enhanced.
- Distinguishing Downtown as a unique and special district. Participants identify Downtown as a priority for public improvement because of its visibility and potential for restoring its destination appeal.
- Enhancing downtown’s image with streetscape improvements, additional landscaping, and open spaces. Respondents indicated that improvements should reflect a theme for Buffalo and be used for marketing the community to its residents and visitors. The history of the community could be capitalized by physical improvements.
- Providing additional on- and off-street parking facilities in strategic locations. While these facilities should accommodate for demand, they should be designed in a manner that improves the pedestrian environment.
- Redeveloping vacant and underutilized sites with parking, open space or commercial mixed-use buildings is desirable. Important business types to attract include both restaurants and specialty retail that provide residents and visitors an opportunity to enjoy during evenings and weekends. Downtown businesses should excel in providing outstanding customer service to patrons.

FOCUS GROUPS

A second vital part of the goal-setting process was a program of nine focus groups, inviting stakeholders and residents of Buffalo to discuss Downtown’s future in informal, round-table discussions. The focus group proceedings are integrated into all elements of this Downtown Plan. Focus groups ranged from business and property owners, city and county representatives, students, real estate and development, civic institutions, artisans and residents at-large. Discussions generally considered three questions:

- What do you like about Downtown Buffalo?
- What don’t you like about the downtown?
- How would you change downtown?

The proceedings are summarized by issue areas, in declining order of consideration.
Buffalo, Wyoming

**ISSUE: Downtown as a Destination**

- “Theming” or branding Buffalo and the downtown will help the community’s marketability. Possible themes include historic west, Buffalo, and Big Horn Mountains. Several participants cited communities that left a strong image in their minds because of the theme of their downtown.
- Planning should focus on developing an experience for families, couples, retirees and teenagers that could include an assortment of restaurants, entertainment, theaters, bars, events, attractions, and lodging. Downtown should develop memories for growing children, visiting tourists, and residents.
- Downtown needs life during the evening or a perceived appearance of activity to draw people to the other.
- Public restrooms should be available for people visiting downtown.
- Main Street needs to be more distinguishable and visible from Highways and Interstates.
- Buffalo should continue to market to regional cities, while also coordinating with the state to attract national and international visitors.
- The town square could be improved to host community activities and celebrations. A stage could be programmed into the space for performances. The farmer’s market, art displays and craft sales could happen periodically throughout the summer to encourage people to visit the city.

**ISSUE: Traffic Circulation and Parking**

- Develop attractive parking lots behind the Main Street. These lots should be designed to improve the safe movement of both pedestrians and vehicles.
- The intersection of Main and Hart Streets should be a major entrance leading to downtown.
- Businesses should direct staff to park in designated parking spaces located away from Main Street. Spots closest to stores should be reserved for patrons. All spots should remain free for users.

**ISSUE: Clear Creek and Region**

- Clear Creek is a significant natural feature in Buffalo that is underutilized. Restaurants could overlook the river and provide a unique setting for dining. Another possible idea to consider is developing housing and offices overlooking the creek. The creek area could become a signature feature for downtown.
- Clear Creek should be programmed into the City’s overall greenway and trail system.
- Big Horn Mountains are a major attraction and Buffalo’s proximity at the foot of the mountains make for a unique setting.

**ISSUE: Business Development**

- Retailing, with an emphasis on limited and specialty retailing and neighborhood services, is an important component for Downtown Buffalo. Restaurants and bars are essential for creating activity. Outdoor dining is possible off the sides of buildings but not possible in front because of the short sidewalks. Offices and religious institutions do not generate the foot traffic needed
for downtown, although these uses could operate in the upper-story of buildings or on side streets. The growing number of realtor businesses and offices, albeit good businesses, threaten the retail character of downtown.

- Parking should be accessible for businesses. An adequate supply of available parking may encourage businesses to locate to downtown.
- An architectural pattern book should be developed for downtown building owners. The pattern book should encourage good practices for improving and maintaining building facades and provide instructions for financing improvements.
- Businesses need to respond to customer needs, offering more convenient (and potentially uniform) hours. Small business owners should exercise exceptional customer service.
- Retail services should focus along Main Street while office and service-oriented uses should locate along side streets. Cost of rent for space along Main Street is high, resulting in space that is unaffordable for retail businesses, but more affordable for office uses.
- Downtown businesses should collaborate on a business marketing plan to strengthen the downtown business environment and to withstand possibly retail dollar leakage to other communities.
- Financial mechanisms should be adopted to allow businesses to remodel or expand instead of relocating to areas outside of downtown. Businesses that generate foot-traffic should receive priority. City should consider assistance programs for revitalizing downtown, including tax incentives.
- Buildings that are being neglected should be preserved. Awnings and signage should complement the historic character of the district.
- Market strategy for downtown focuses on three types of customers: year-round residents, seasonal residents, and tourists. Sales peak during the summer while tourists are in town and dip during the colder seasons.

**ISSUE: Development and Redevelopment Opportunities**

- Areas behind Main Street businesses should be maximized, providing space for parking and passageways for pedestrians.
- Alleyways should be enhanced and become safe places for pedestrians to walk. Fetterman Street, following the creek, appears as an alley because of its neglect.
- The Old Middle School could be redeveloped for an alternative use. The building program could cater to all ages and include space for multi-use gym floor (dance, basketball, volleyball), indoor recreation, lounge, meeting and classroom space, senior services, and kitchen.
- Businesses relocating from downtown to other areas of the city should be perceived as an opportunity for new commercial uses in the downtown. The space vacated by Ace Hardware should return to retail use, not flipping to an office use.
- Upper floor uses could be used for housing, offices or other commercial uses. Adapting these floors for active uses is expensive, making some of them not economical to rehabilitate because of fire and building codes.

**ISSUE: Streetscape, Urban Design, and Wayfinding**

- Streets need to be more attractive for pedestrians and passersby. Trees lined streets, benches, planters, ornamental lights, banners, graphics, historical markers, and art should be programmed into the streetscape design.
- Streetscape design should express a community values and theme. Details of the design could include build from existing expressions, including branding marks at the bridge and decorative rings around the base of light poles.
- Wayfinding signage should be installed to direct traffic from Interstates 90 and 25 and Highways 16 and 87 to downtown businesses. Parking, tourist sites and regional destinations should be identified.
- Benches and resting areas with shade should be located along Main Street.
- Street lighting in downtown should remain unique and perhaps extend beyond the core downtown to follow Hart Street.
- Interpretative displays showing historic images and describing
Buffalo residents working with community planners and designers.

Buffalo, Wyoming

the background of Buffalo could be installed in the downtown area.
- Maintaining streets and sidewalk is critical to building a positive impression of downtown.
- More sculptures and public art should be displayed.
- Bump-outs or nodes should be developed at intersections to shorten crossing distances, protect parked vehicles, provide planter space, and enclose the corridor.
- New development should be pedestrian in scale and be consistent with the character of Main Street.
- Powerlines are unappealing and distract from the beauty of downtown. Street improvement projects should consider burying these lines, keeping them out of sight.

ISSUE: Recreation Lifestyle

- Buffalo should be a place of activity, encouraging people of all ages to exercise and use the recreational resources within the city and the downtown.
- Quality sidewalks should connect neighborhoods and major destinations, including downtown, school and other community destinations.
- The Clear Creek Trail System bisects Main Street but remains largely an under identified amenity through the downtown area.

ISSUE: Youth Activities

- Downtown should be a destination welcoming to youth.
- Many students are selective about places for employment. Few businesses appeal as places to work.
- DeerField is a popular local gathering place for youth. Students are able to meet others without feeling the obligation of purchasing a $5 drink. Students appreciate these types of businesses.
- Members of the Steering Committee recognize DeerField as a critical community center for all ages.
- Youth Center or community center could be developed and provide indoor and outdoor activities. Area for dancing, lounging, and performances should be part of the building program.

ISSUE: Residential Uses In and Surrounding Downtown

- Downtown should be accessible to surrounding neighborhoods. Sidewalks and bikeways should link into downtown, connecting parts of the city to each other.
- Upper-story housing should be tied to using proper preservation techniques. Safety codes should be enforced, limiting the possibility of fires or allowing hazardous living conditions.

ISSUE: Sustainable Practices

- New construction or redevelopment of property or buildings should be completed with quality craftsmanship and be consistent with the existing architectural patterns of downtown and downtown theme. Billboards or buildings that obstruct views of the Big Horn Mountains should not be constructed.
- On-going maintenance costs should be kept to a minimum. Energy-saving practices should be pursued by the city and encouraged for private building owners.

DESIGN WORKSHOPS

The workshops encouraged citizens, residents, business owners and other stakeholders with an interest in Downtown Buffalo the opportunity to share their ideas, issues and concerns informally with planners and actively draw their concepts for the future of downtown using markers, draft paper, and maps. It also provided people the opportunity to creatively think about possible solutions for downtown and define a vocabulary of urban design improvements. Overall, the intent of the design workshops was to consider possible opportunities for maximizing the use of property and improving traffic circulation. During the workshop, graphics and supporting illustrations were developed. A public presentation of these ideas and drawings followed the workshops, providing an opportunity for citizens to react and improve ideas and recommendations. This entire process allowed the public to participate and have a chance to see the results of a cooperative effort to improve the city.


**Preliminary Concepts**

Throughout the preparation of the preliminary concepts for downtown, public discussion began to develop consistent themes and priorities:

**Crazy Woman Square.** Crazy Woman Square should become a signature public space in the community where celebrations, reunions, weddings, family activities and outdoor events can be held. The Cowboy Carousel (see page 52 for more information) could be programmed into the site along with public restrooms. Public art and sculptures could adorn the site.

**Clear Creek Corridor and Adjacent Land.** The area surrounding Clear Creek could be redeveloped, integrating the ecology and urban development. Fetterman Street could be redeveloped to connect the creek to Crazy Woman Square. New development could overlook the waterway.

**Parking Adequacy.** Adequate parking supply for patrons, business operators, and residents is critical for drawing people to shop and work in downtown. Parking lots that are adjacent to one another should be consolidated to improve parking efficiency and traffic circulation. Other parking lots need to be redesigned to improve accessibility; Access to parking should be easy and identifiable while encouraging pedestrian movement.

**Gateway and Intersection Enhancements.** Main Street should have a significant gateway feature leading into the business district.

**Recreation Opportunities.** Integrating the Clear Creek Trail into the business district and making it an attractive destination for residents and visitors.

**Lobban Avenue Artisans District.** Lobban Street could become a quality arts district.

**Facilities.** Participants generally perceived that the Clear Creek Middle School should be reused rather than become a redevelopment site. Also, potential long-term projects could be included in the development program, including a new public library.

**Masonic Temple.** The Masonic Temple could also be reused for educational and cultural, possibly including a community college presence.
Main Street Vision

A DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN BUFFALO

The first three chapters of the Main Street District Plan addressed the people and economics of Buffalo and potential markets for Downtown; existing conditions; and the perceptions and insights of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders as they think about the district’s future. This section presents an ambitious but realistic vision for Downtown Buffalo, based on its special assets and potential markets.
BUFFALO'S DOWNTOWN TELLS THE RICH AND MULTI-LAYERED STORY OF THE OLD WEST AND HAS BEEN THE TRADITIONAL CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT ITS 130 YEAR HISTORY. Physically, it is a beautiful and evocative district, marked by its historic buildings, human scale, and the waters of Clear Creek rushing through its center and tying the district visually to the Big Horn Mountains and the surrounding wilderness. As such, Downtown, with its distinctive businesses and institutions, has been a memorable destination for its residents and visitors, including travelers from surrounding cities. In recent years, efforts like the restoration of the historic Occidental Hotel, the combination of traditional retail anchors with innovative and unusual businesses, and regular events such as weekly jam and jazz sessions and a full program of community activities sustain the district's vitality. Yet, many stakeholders feel that some of this liveliness has been lost as retailing changes and some Main Street storefronts are replaced by less active office uses. The character of Main Street Buffalo is indeed a precious and valuable asset. Ultimately, initiatives that reinforce this character and add life to the street will also reinforce the business and retail environment, and assure that this special district prospers for another 130 years and more. This plan builds on the special features and resources of Buffalo to create a reinvigorated town center.

GOALS FOR MAIN STREET DEVELOPMENT

A Downtown development program for Buffalo should:

- **INCREASE BUSINESS AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT.** A successful downtown planning and development program creates an environment that encourages new investment. The ultimate success of this program will be greater stability for existing businesses, reinvestment in buildings, new retailers and services, and other responses that strengthen the district. Initial investments in the public realm can create conditions for economic growth – it is not likely to happen spontaneously. These investments will pay returns by preserving and expanding property values, increasing sales tax revenues, and creating a central district that brings both residents and visitors to the city.

- **STABILIZE RETAIL BUSINESS ON A YEAR ROUND BASIS.** Unlike areas with a large winter sports market, retailing in Buffalo is seasonal in nature, stronger during summer than winter. As a result, visitor-oriented retailers must support themselves on revenues realized during a relatively short period. Strategies that reduce this seasonal dependence by retaining local business and attracting residents of other regional cities can strengthen retailers who now are operating at the margin of profitability. In addition, techniques that “brand” Buffalo and expand retail markets through remote purchases can also help support retailers through off-season months.

- **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DISTINCTIVE MARKETS.** Chapter One’s analysis indicates that Buffalo exports consumer dollars – that is, local residents spend more money outside the city than outside shoppers spend in town. If Buffalo were a nation, it would have a negative “balance of trade” of about $13 million. Clearly, the goals of a retail strategy should be to retain more local consumer spending and to increase external spending in town. The presence of two much larger retail centers within an hour’s driving distance (Sheridan and Gillette) complicates the problem of retaining local spending, although high fuel costs may affect the frequency of trips. On the other hand, these nearby large markets provide opportunities for Buffalo if the experience, amenities, and businesses offered by the town encourage destination shopping. Based on this, Buffalo’s major potential markets, along with their specific needs, include:
  - The local residential and consumer market, primarily residents of Buffalo and immediately adjacent areas. Business and development niches that serve this market segment include food and beverage, health and personal care, clothing, miscellaneous retail, food service, and general merchandise. By 2012, additional consumer spending potential of $5 million is projected for the primary
- The secondary Buffalo region. This secondary market includes people and communities within a 20-mile radius of Buffalo. By 2012, additional consumer spending potential of $600,000 is projected for this secondary trade area.

- The visitor market. Visitors present a significant business growth potential for Downtown Buffalo. The major focuses of this market include permanent residents within 120 miles of Buffalo, and tourists from greater distances. The "permanent" visitor market comes to the community because of festivals, historical character, school activities, the county museum, unique shopping experiences and culture. The "tourist" group makes long distance trips to destinations such as Yellowstone National Park and the Big Horn Mountains, and also includes seasonal residents. The tourist market is especially sensitive to the district's quality and environment, and the presence of specialty retailing, entertainment, and eating destinations.

- ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING DOWNTOWN. The idea of "experience" continues to be fundamental to business in Downtown Buffalo. This experience takes place at a number of levels – a visitor to the Occidental Hotel staying in the same room once occupied by Theodore Roosevelt; the welcoming atmosphere of innovative local retailers to Buffalo's young people; the connection with the countryside and the Old West that the traveler feels when crossing Clear Creek at the site of the old trail ford. In their book The Experience Economy, B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore note:

  Experiences have always been around, but consumers, businesses, and economists lumped them into the service sector along with such uneventful activities as dry cleaning, auto repair, wholesale distribution, and telephone access. When a person buys a service, he purchases a set of intangible activities carried out on his behalf. But when he buys an experience, he pays to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a company stages – as in a theatrical play – to engage him in a personal way.

This theory applies to downtown environments as surely as to individual companies. People have distinct memories of Downtown Buffalo that include shopping, eating at a special restaurant, or even going to a movie. These experiences have very long lives, staying with people with great clarity for decades – indeed, for lifetimes. This power is unique to downtowns and special business districts. While mass retailers have their place, they make a commodity out of the retail experience. Improving the experience of being downtown by filling its streets with life and activity, a community can increase the satisfaction that people feel from the city center. In turn, local pride and frequency of return trips will also grow.

- IMPROVE PLACES FOR PEOPLE. Green spaces and community commons are important to the life of traditional town centers. Downtown Buffalo and the surrounding area have significant public spaces, including Crazy Woman Square, the Clear Creek pedestrian bridge adjacent to Main Street, the creek channel, the ballfields, and the superb Washington Park. Yet, these attractive spaces do not connect well. Narrow streets line the creek, preventing convenient pedestrian access or viewing from all sides but the adjacent Occidental. The Square is also separated from the creek and fenced off from Main Street.

But an improved square with direct creek frontage could be a wonderful public park and an important site for gatherings and special events. Better access to Clear Creek could make this stream a great downtown amenity, and better linkages to the parkland to the west could tie the Main Street district to neighborhoods and community recreational features. Great places enhance the Downtown experience, and motivate private redevelopment efforts.

- ENHANCE THE PRESENCE OF CLEAR CREEK. The shape and development of downtown was directly influenced by the presence of Clear Creek. This natural feature is the green artery through Buffalo and links the many parts of the community. The creek should be celebrated and visible to all, while also remaining a sustainable greenway.

- INCREASE THE NUMBER OF REASONS THAT BRING PEOPLE DOWNTOWN. Many downtowns are most alive during the day, but are largely deserted at night. Buffalo's Main Street district does enjoy considerable evening activity, including jam and jazz sessions twice a week, restaurants and bars, and the signature Occidental Hotel. Yet, more activity and reasons for being in the district, both during the day and into the evening, are welcome, and the district should invite greater local use. Downtown districts are at their best when people view them as the center of many aspects of community life. New downtown uses and features that extend hours and variety of activities provide new markets that support retailing and services.
EXPAND THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN DOWNTOWN. Visual, plastic, and performing arts are important to life in many of Wyoming’s mountain cities and are increasingly important to Buffalo as well. Many of the city’s arts establishments and events are highly participatory, while others offer high quality work by area artists. A strong and committed local arts community can expand the importance of art in Downtown, and, if supported by moderate civic investment, catalyze further downtown development. Innovative forms of development, such as live/work units, can take advantage of potential residential markets while providing affordable workshop and gallery space for regional artists.

STRENGTHEN KEY BUSINESS NICHES. While downtowns nationwide have struggled to preserve their traditional retail roles, successful districts have been able to rebuild with business niches that have a demonstrated ability to attract people to town centers. These include stable traditional local businesses, restaurants and entertainment, specialty retailing, and offices.

- Traditional local businesses. Downtown Buffalo has both long-standing signature retailers such as Sports Lure and Margo’s and newer local businesses that continue to adapt to change and serve as anchors of their districts. These key businesses sustain downtowns, and become regional attractions that bring customers into town. Many of the city’s young people display a remarkable affinity for these important local businesses, who offer a friendly social environment, interesting goods and services, and employment opportunities.

- Restaurants and entertainment. Restaurants have often been the vanguard of downtown revitalization. While they have faced challenges in Downtown Buffalo, they have begun to expand in scope and offerings.

- Specialty Retailing. With the loss of mainline downtown retailers in an era of mass retailing and on-line sales, specialty shops have become increasingly important to central district retail revitalization. These shops typically require relatively high visibility and a pedestrian environment that encourages browsing. Buffalo should offer an environment that nurtures and reinforces existing specialty retailing and provides opportunities for new development. The market analysis discussed in Chapter One reports a possible demand for 18,000 square feet.

- Offices. Office development is an important part of downtown, bringing employees to the town and providing markets for both housing and supporting services. Offices and professional services typically are more stable Main Street occupants than retailers. In the absence of alternative locations, they become increasingly dominant, and can reduce the street’s vitality and interest to visitors. In Buffalo, offices of energy-related enterprises have also occupied downtown space. Offices should be downtown, but need not be directly on Main Street. Providing alternative and attractive sites off the retail center can keep offices and their visitors and employees downtown without diminishing the retail environment.

- Education. A community college could locate in Buffalo and be a catalyst for attracting people to live in or visit Buffalo.

MANAGE CIRCULATION AND IMPROVE THE SUPPLY AND CONVENIENCE OF PARKING. Downtown should provide a safe and comfortable pedestrian atmosphere while moving traffic smoothly. Main Street is a state highway and
Buffalo, Wyoming

has regional transportation functions, but these should not compromise the district's character. Additionally, Downtown should provide convenient parking without letting parking dominate the district. Chapter Two indicates that Downtown has less parking than it needs. But more efficient parking layouts, improved supply, and clear routes to lots can successfully solve this problem.

- **CONNECT DOWNTOWN TO SURROUNDING RESOURCES.** Nearby open spaces and community facilities such as the ballfields, Washington Park, the YMCA, the pool, the middle school and its playing fields, and the Senior Center are near Downtown and are enormous community assets. Better connections to the central district could increase the importance and casual use of Downtown by users of these important facilities. The Clear Creek Trail is a superb open space resource that in theory connects the Downtown, the Hart Street commercial corridor, and highway-related lodging to the east, and the park and greenway system and ultimately the Big Horn wilderness to the west. Yet this connecting thread is severed in the center of the city, where it should be most evident. Strong connections in this east-west direction complement the north-south Main Street corridor and draw the community closer to its civic heart.

- **DOWNTOWN HOUSING.** Rehabilitating upper stories of existing buildings, adaptive reuse, and new construction could provide opportunities for more downtown housing, serving both rental and equity markets. The analysis presented earlier in this document indicates a significant capacity to absorb downtown housing, in turn adding life and ownership to the district. Adapting upper stories is often economically challenging to meet fire and building codes, requiring significant investment and often financial assistance.

THE PROGRAM FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

The Downtown concept begins with establishing a program, much like the architectural program for a building project. The program establishes the ingredients of development – the amount of space that markets can absorb, present and future community needs, current projects that are pending, and other opportunities. The development program for Main Street Buffalo includes the following:

- **Significant new retail development.** Buffalo serves both local customers and traditionally attracts regional customers to specialty retailers. Downtown now accounts for about 50% of the city's current retail space, although that percentage is changing with new development along the Hart Street corridor and in other parts of the city. The analysis presented in Chapter One indicates a community-wide potential for about 60,000 square feet of new retail and allied consumer space. Assuming that one-third of that demand is allocated to Downtown, Main Street retailing generates a demand for about 18,000 square feet of new space.

- **About 40 to 60 residential units during the next ten years, or an average annual output of four to six units.** This projection assumes an average annual citywide demand of 40 units annually, and downtown absorption of about 10 to 15% of that demand. This projection includes specialty housing, such as live/work units.

- **Capacity for additional office space.** Buffalo appears to have adequate space to meet local service needs, but has experienced growth in such specific areas as energy-oriented businesses and real estate sales. These sectors gravitate toward available storefront space on or near Main Street, which in turn dimin-
ishes the retail character of the street. Capacity for new office development near but not on Main Street avoids competition for storefront space and adds economic activity without displacing retailers.

- **Public open space.** While central Buffalo has abundant public open space, these resources may be underutilized, not designed for maximum use, or not fully connected to Downtown. For example, demand for Crazy Woman Square is high, yet the square is largely undeveloped and fenced off from the surrounding street. Public space should be the central focus of Downtown, and the district’s two primary green features, the Square and Clear Creek, should create a strong image. In addition, other regional open spaces, including Clear Creek Trail, the ballfields, and Washington Park, should be a greater part of the life of Downtown.

- **Increased parking.** Parking supply and access are issues for Downtown Buffalo. The most visible district parking is along Main Street and is relatively scarce. Customers have more difficulty finding parking behind Main, on either Western or Lobban Avenues. The district also lacks easy or convenient parking for recreation vehicles.

- **Lobban Avenue Artisans District.** The arts are vital to the life and vitality of Buffalo and should be reinforced by the Downtown development plan. A number of retailers have a specific arts focus and other workshop and studio spaces are distributed throughout the district. An arts district or corridor should be related to but off Main Street, incorporating both existing artists and new space. This would logically occur along Lobban Avenue. An arts corridor may also include live/work units that incorporate both residential and studio/gallery space.

- **Emerging public uses.** The downtown program should be able to accommodate other significant public uses, some of which may emerge in future years. These include:
  - **A new public library.** The existing public library is located on North Adams Street, just north of Fort Street. While the current building is an attractive contemporary structure, it is nearing capacity and has limited expansion space. While the city may not need a new library for a decade, the downtown plan should include a potential site.
  - **Clear Creek School.** The historic school, now housing the Boys & Girls Club of the Big Horns and other community uses, will probably be reopened for school use

for the foreseeable future. The school, adjacent to but on a hill above Main Street, should have improved connections to the downtown district and function as part of a campus with the county courthouse and the Jim Gatchell Museum. In addition, the Boys & Girls Club of the Big Horns, a very important community youth program, should either be included at the school campus or incorporated into the downtown community.

### A FUNCTIONAL AGENDA

In addition to the Downtown development goals presented above, the Main Street program should also address several functional issues. These include:

- **Clear Creek Trail connectivity.** This excellent trail resource now extends east and west of Downtown. The eastern segment extends from a trailhead on South Bypass Road south of Hart Street (US Highway 16) west along the creek to Lobban and Trail Street. To the west, it proceeds from Western and Fetterman along the south creekbank, through Washington Park, and west to the Wyoming Veterans Home at Fort McKinney and ultimately into the Big Horn Mountains. This scenic trail connects Downtown to the Hart Street corridor with its visitor services and to the mountain environment to the west. Yet, between the Trail Street and Western Avenue trailheads, the trail loses continuity. These endpoints should be linked through the town center, leading trail users directly into the retail core.

- **Downtown entrance signage.** Many travelers arrive in central Buffalo along Hart Street (US Highway 16) from the I-25 and I-90 interchanges. At the Main and Fort Street intersection, US 16 turns west along Fort Street, while Main Street continues straight ahead. A galvanized truss sign bridge supports highway directional signage, but the nature of the signs encourages a right turn away from the downtown district. Without compromising its principal directional purpose, this entrance should encourage people to enter the Main Street district and not direct them away from it.

- **Lobban and Benteen intersection.** Lobban Avenue is not aligned across this intersection, and this jog, combined with limited visibility, creates collision hazards with traffic exiting the mobile home park to the east. A realigned intersection can improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.
1. Relocated Fettermen Street
2. Stage and Screen
3. Carousel
4. Concession and Restrooms
5. Creek Walkway
6. New Mixed-Use
7. Parking
8. Share-the-Road
9. Trail Connection
10. New Construction
11. New Construction
12. Realigned Lobban Ave.
13. Trail
14. Trailhead
15. Gateway Truss
16. Outdoor Dining
17. Improved Crossing
18. Creek Promenade
19. New Office
20. Passageway
21. New Parking
22. Prosinski Plaza
23. Trail Access
24. RV Parking
25. Clear Creek Middle School
26. Redesigned Parking
27. New Residential
28. Improved Crossing
29. Masonic Temple Reuse
30. Redesigned Bennett St
31. Downtown Gateway Feature
32. Parking Structure
33. Future Library/Parking
34. Overlook
35. Redesigned parking
THE DOWNTOWN CONCEPT

The vision for Downtown Buffalo emerges by following the program based on markets, existing projects and priorities, and community-wide needs. The components of this vision include:

- **The Downtown Framework**, a conceptual diagram showing the relationships of major downtown elements.
- **Major Project Areas**, self-contained projects that, together, create a transformed downtown district.
- **Connections**, address the fabric that links major projects together and links the District to the larger Buffalo community.
- **Policies**, describing in more detail methods by which various needs and markets are met and projects are implemented.

THE FRAMEWORK

The Framework establishes the overall structure for the Main Street development program. Its key elements include:

- A public common, made up of an expanded and improved Crazy Woman Square and an intersecting Clear Creek corridor between Western and Lobban Avenues, marking the historic crossing point of the Bozeman Trail and the creek.
- A reinvigorated Main Street retail and civic core from about Bennett Street on the south to about Benteen Street on the north.
- The Clear Creek greenway, bringing major community parks and amenities into the center of Downtown. This greenway is made up of Washington Park and the ballfields to the west and the Clear Creek Trail to the east, and funnels along Clear Creek to Crazy Woman Square.
- Major development and thematic districts along the streets that neighbor Main Street, and including a Lobban Avenue Arts and Culture Corridor, from Benteen to Bennett Street, and a "Back of Main" corridor along Western from the creek to Angus Street.
- Three major downtown entrance corridors, each different in theme and character: Hart Street, an improved and more attractive major highway entrance linking the I-25 and I-90 interchanges into the center of town; the North Main corridor, a transition between the highway and fine-grained pedestrian environment of Downtown; and South Main, linking the south I-25 interchange with Downtown through a largely residential historic district. Each of these transitional points is marked by a functional gateway.
- Residential and mixed use development on major sites that surround Downtown.
- Major parking facilities developed along the peripheral streets to the core retail district and connected by strong pedestrian ways to Main Street.

The Framework Diagram and overall master plan illustrate these components.

MAJOR PROJECTS

The Downtown Buffalo concept includes five major project areas:

1. CRAZY WOMAN SQUARE & CLEAR CREEK PROMENADE
2. MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENTS
3. BACK OF MAIN
4. LOBBAN AVENUE ARTISANS DISTRICT
5. PUBLIC LIBRARY & PARKING STRUCTURE
Main Street Vision

Major Project Areas

• CRAZY WOMAN SQUARE & CLEAR CREEK PROMENADE
• MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENTS
• BACK OF MAIN
• LOBBAN AVENUE ARTISANS DISTRICT
• PUBLIC LIBRARY & PARKING STRUCTURE
1. CRAZY WOMAN SQUARE & CLEAR CREEK PROMENADE

The crossing of Main Street, once the Bozeman Trail, of Clear Creek was the historic center of Buffalo and should again become its civic heart. The rushing water of this mountain stream and the well-located if not fully developed Crazy Woman Square can together become a great public space that will pulse with life and reinvigorate the Main Street retail environment. Yet, the potential of this important intersection is not yet realized. An alley on the north and Fetterman Street on the south block pedestrian access to the creek. Only the dining deck of the Occidental Hotel gives a promise of how the creekbank could be used. And Crazy Woman Square is still largely potential, a strategically located trapezoid of grass that is not fully utilized.

Program

The program for this central common area includes:

- A signature public square that attracts people of all ages, and provides a special destination for Buffalo's growing population of young families.
- Greatly expanded public visibility and access to Clear Creek for people experiencing Downtown Buffalo outside of an automobile.
- Services and features that provide for the needs of visitors to town.
- Strong continuity for the Clear Creek Trail through the center of the Main Street district.
- Supporting private development opportunities that take advantage of the creek’s scenic character and the urban design context of Main Street Buffalo.

Components of the Concept

Fetterman Street Realignment. Realigning Fetterman Street to the south sets the stage for an improved public square by its area and providing direct creek frontage. The relocated Fetterman Street would intersect Main Street adjacent to the existing Hitching Post and Joy Appliance stores. The relocation also improves the alignment of the Fetterman and Lobban intersection. The relocated Fetterman Street provides two-way traffic, improving circulation to the center of town. The existing, single-lane Fetterman Street west of Main Street would be converted to a pedestrian promenade along Clear Creek with adequate access for emergency and service vehicles.

Crazy Woman Square. With the Fetterman Street relocation, Crazy Woman Square now has direct creek frontage and can be developed as a distinctive open space for the city. Components of the plan for the Square include:

- Cowboy Carousel. The Cowboy Carousel, currently located at the Historic Bozeman Crossing development, has been offered to the city at reduced cost if relocated to the Square. The carousel is a highly valued community feature and could be a focus that attracts both visitors and families to the area. The plan concept provides a prominent location for a carousel building in the Square. The enclosing building should be both colorful and transparent to exhibit the carousel's movement and light. The building should include adjacent space for an attendant, concessions, and public restrooms.
- Performance Space. This facility would provide a permanent raised stage or band shell with lighting and amplification for small concerts and other events. The structure should have a flexible design that could include public viewing of movies and other visual media. Paved or stone sets, set along curves, could define seating arrangements and engage children in play.
- Interactive Water Spray. An interactive water feature is a proven favorite in urban spaces. Users can activate the feature by pressing a button, allowing children of all ages to control the touch and feel of the water. Spray jets should use potable water from the city's water supply. In cold weather or during events, the water is turned off and the surface becomes added plaza space for seating or other activities.
- Shade and Passive Seating. The new Square should provide shade and park furniture for more passive uses and people watching.

The square's design should also meet the functional and servicing needs of adjacent retail businesses, providing adequate maneuvering area for parking and deliveries.

Clear Creek Promenade. The existing Fetterman Street on the south side of the creek and the alley on the north side between Lobban and Main would be replaced by a pedestrian promenade on both sides of the creek. The promenades are designed for pedestrians rather than cars, but should also accommodate emergency and maintenance vehicles when necessary. The promenade is part of the
Left: Concept map of Crazy Women Square and Clear Creek Urban Plaza district.
Below: Facing east on the Clear Creek Plaza, bridge connecting the Clear Creek Corridor with Crazy Women Square.
Clear Creek Trail, connecting to Lobban Avenue and the trail on the east, and bringing the trail into the center of the district from Washington Park to the west. The north side of the creek between Main and Adams Streets incorporates the Occidental’s dining deck, which then leads to a more conventional trail to the Adams Street bridge. The promenade’s special features include:

- **Attractive, durable paving materials** that reinforce the walk’s pedestrian character while having the ability to support service vehicles. The primary promenade segments on the north side of the creek between Lobban and Main and on the south side between Main and the Overlook should be between 15 and 20 feet wide.

- **Pedestrian scaled lighting and street furnishings.** Promenade and Crazy Woman Square lighting may use the “acorn” standards found throughout the Main Street district, although a special fixture could set off the distinctiveness of these features.

- **Pedestrian bridges** at mid-block between Main and Lobban and between the Overlook and the trail extension on the north side of the creek. These bridges increase connections between the two creek banks, and provide a place where people can view the creek away from vehicular bridges. The existing pedestrian bridge adjacent to Main Street would be renovated.

- **A creek bank that increases the connection between people and the waters of the creek.** Terraced steps, made of natural stone, lead in places from the promenade to the edge of the creek, providing a place for people to sit, talk, or even fish along the creek under the shade of the surrounding trees. Overlooks could also be cantilevered over the bank from the promenade. The rest of the creekbank should be maintained in its natural state.

- **An Overlook near the ballfields and roughly across from Clear Creek School.** This node would include special lighting, furniture, and interpretive material, and marks the transition from the formal downtown promenade to the more informal Clear Creek Trail that ultimately extends into the Big Horns.

- **Places for outdoor dining,** including the Occidental’s dining deck, and accommodations for movable tables on other segments of the promenade.

**Adjacent Development.** While the Crazy Woman Square and Clear Creek Promenade projects will produce a more vital business environment throughout the district, the opportunities that they open...
Buffalo, Wyoming

for adjacent new development can provide a substantial return on investment for the city. The concept envisions adjacent development that includes:

- **Live/Work Development.** The live/work concept provides workshop, retail, or gallery space at the street or promenade level, with housing for proprietors above. A more conventional approach provides residential development over first floor retailing. This project would replace existing vacant or available buildings along the north side of the proposed promenade between the alley and Lobban Avenue. They also reinforce the concept of a Lobban Avenue Arts Corridor, discussed below. Garages for these units would be provided to their rears. The circulation and parking concept would also accommodate residents of existing upper-level units on Main Street who now park along the alley along Clear Creek.

- **Office Development.** A site along the promenade near the ballfields provides an excellent opportunity for office uses, providing a high-amenity alternative for office uses to Main Street storefronts. This proposal would redevelop several small buildings that are now either vacant or used for storage. This development is also discussed below as part of the Back of Main concept.

- **Modifications of Existing Buildings.** The promenades increase exposure and potential of the side elevations of existing buildings along the creek. This may allow for more windows, additional storefronts, and outdoor cafes in these areas. Margo’s on the north side of the creek already uses this exposure for outdoor art and a secondary entrance.

**Main Street Crossing.** The promenade crosses Main Street at midblock, already a frequently used but unprotected pedestrian crossing. This key location, where pedestrians cross a state highway, should be designed to promote pedestrian safety and lower vehicle speeds through the heart of the town center. Features of this concept include:

- **Replacing the center left-turn lane with a pedestrian refuge median.** Converting the existing Fetterman Street and alley to pedestrian use removes any need for a left-turn movement. A pedestrian refuge here may use a combination of a contrasting paving surface and a rise in level, with or without a raised median. Selection of materials (pavers or color conditioned concrete) influence the cost of building the project. Median refuges ease pedestrian crossings and have a proven ability to calm traffic.
• **Curb bump-outs at the crossing point.** Curbside parking should not extend into this crossing zone. This technique moves the curb out to the edge of the moving lane, further reducing the required pedestrian crossing distance. Moving lane width between the curbline and the edge of the refuge median should be about 16 feet.

• **Define crosswalks with contrasting paving patterns or surfaces.**

• **Increased traffic control.** Techniques may include a pedestrian actuated signal, flashing warning lights with a compulsory stop for motor vehicles when pedestrians are in the crosswalk, or a required stop for Main Street traffic.

The crossing of Main Street, once the Bozeman Trail, of Clear Creek was the historic center of Buffalo and should again become its civic heart. The rushing water of this mountain stream and the strategic if not fully developed Crazy Woman Square provide an unusual opportunity to create a great public space that will pulse with life and invigorate the Main Street retail environment. Yet, the potential of this important and fortuitous intersection is not yet realized. An alley on the north and Fetterman Street on the south block pedestrian access to the creek. Only the dining deck of the Occidental Hotel gives a promise of how the creekbank could be used. And Crazy Woman Square is still largely potential, a strategically located trapezoid of grass that is not fully utilized.

**Program**

The program for this central common area includes:

• A signature public square that attracts people of all ages, and provides a special destination for Buffalo’s growing population of young families.

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• Greatly expanded public visibility and access to Clear Creek for people experiencing Downtown Buffalo outside of an automobile.

• Services and features that provide for the needs of visitors to town.

• Strong continuity for the Clear Creek Trail through the center of the Main Street district.

• Supporting private development opportunities that take advantage of the creek’s scenic character and the urban design context of Main Street Buffalo.
Above: Crazy Women Square from Lobban Ave looking west.
Left: Clear Creek Corridor, looking towards the northeast from Crazy Women Square.
2. MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENTS

Buffalo upgraded the Main Street district’s streetscape during the 1990s with new street lighting and other features. As a result, the basic elements of the Main Street environment – sidewalks, street surface, and lighting – are in excellent condition. Relatively minor enhancements, combined with the Crazy Woman Square and Clear Creek Promenade concepts, could strengthen the district’s presentation to visitors, update its image, and add color and amenity. Recommendations for the Main Street environment include:

**Graphics and Color.** Street graphics can add color and symbolism to this historic district. Many town center projects use light pole mounted canvas banners effectively, but more permanent features such as special medallions or metal “banners” can present more refined quality with lower maintenance. The design of these features should reflect community or district themes. Flower baskets mounted on poles or in sidewalk planters can also add seasonal color to the streetscape. Light poles must be structurally able to support the weight and forces (including horizontal wind forces) of banners and other mounted elements. Tiles, designed by children illustrating life in Buffalo, could be inlaid into the streetscape.

**Benches and Street Furnishings.** Benches at intersection nodes or selected mid-block locations can add a welcome amenity for downtown customers. Benches work best if provided with shade by an adjacent tree. Trash receptacles consistent with the bench design should be located at convenient locations along the street.

**Business Signage.** Business signage along Main Street in south of Hart Street should be attached to the building or, if detached, be provided by ground or monument signs. Attached signage includes wall, awning, or projecting signs. Freestanding pole signs should be avoided in a pedestrian-scaled environment.

**Markers and Plaques.** Signage could be inlaid into the walkway or mounted to buildings describing the historic quality of the building and city.

**Crosswalk Definition.** Crosswalks should also be marked by a paving pattern or surface that contrasts with the street. Treatments include textured or colored concrete, concrete with a contrasting scoring pattern, or pavers. Painted crosswalk markings also alert motorists of pedestrian crossing points not controlled by traffic signals or signs. Ladder or “zebra” markings are recommended because of their greater visibility than parallel lines.

**Northgate Entrance Feature.** The intersection of Fort (Highway 16 West) and Main Streets marks the most frequently used entrance to the Main Street historic district. Yet, the use of a conventional highway-oriented sign-bridge and highway signs blocks the Main Street view and seems to direct travelers away from the downtown district. A new gateway arch could establish a welcoming entrance to Downtown, while still accommodating necessary highway directional signage. The arch could include regional materials, such as rough cut stone facing and brick on the base that alludes to the architecture of Wyoming and identifies the transition to the historic town center.

**Southgate Entrance Feature.** The intersection of Main and West Onderdonk Streets roughly divided the Downtown commercial and civic district from the residential precinct to the south. A downtown gateway at this point could include the materials and character of a larger Northgate feature, while retaining a smaller, neighborhood scale.
Bennett Street Parking Plaza. The Buffalo Theater at Main and Buffalo is an important downtown feature and community asset. However, parking can be an issue for the theater and other destinations, including the Post Office, on the south side of the Main Street district. Combining the Bennett Street right-of-way between Main Street and the east alley with the theater’s existing parking can provide a two-bay parking plaza between the Post Office and the theater while still retaining through access to Main Street along Bennett. This new plaza should be well landscaped and define pedestrian paths along Main Street to the theater entrance.

Development Focuses. While occupancy along Main Street is relatively solid, two important opportunities exist: the former Ace Hardware building and the Masonic Temple, both on the block between Bennett Street and Clear Creek. The Masonic Temple has upper level access from the east alley. In addition to existing civic and potential retail use, the possibility of a learning center location for Sheridan College or community center should be explored. An educational presence could add another group of Downtown users to strengthen the local retail and service market and provide young skilled labor to the workforce.

Sidewalk Maintenance. Pedestrian safety and comfort are vital for a downtown distance, making good sidewalk repair and maintenance especially important. The district and its businesses and property owners should continue to assure well maintained sidewalks that are kept clean and clear of snow and ice in bad weather.

Wayfinding. A wayfinding system in Downtown Buffalo should provide easy to understand directional information to parking, community features, parks, and civic spaces. Such a system should function at both vehicular and pedestrian scales and could be integrated into a community-wide directional graphics system. The system could also integrate improved directional graphics to the Clear Creek Trail.

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Top: Installation of streetlights and plaquards - Shenandoah, IA
Middle: Business Signage in Historic District - Dubuque, IA
Bottom: Paver median as a pedestrian refuge - Washington, DC
3. BACK OF MAIN

The area south of Clear Creek west of Main Street to Burritt Ave potentially links Downtown to Washington Park, Buffalo’s signature public recreation area. This great park and its facilities, including the city pool, YMCA, and ballpark, should be part of the fabric of Downtown. However, vacant, storage, and light industrial uses between the alley and Western Ave present a barrier to this desirable linkage. The concept for the Back of Main area provides new development opportunities, better connections between Buffalo’s parks and Downtown, and additional parking to support Main Street.

Program

The program the Back of Main area includes:

- New office development related to Main Street while relieving pressure for office occupancy of Main Street storefronts.
- Expanded parking for automobiles and recreation vehicles.
- Improved pedestrian connections to Downtown from Washington Park, the Clear Creek Trail, and the ballfields.
- New residential development on infill sites.

Components of the Concept

Office Development. The concept recommends redevelopment of several vacant or storage buildings on the northwest corner of the Main to Western/Angus to Fetterman block with a new office building and supporting parking. This site, fronting the creek and the promenade, would provide a very high value location for quality office tenants. The building form should reflect the potential urban setting of the site, and define a visual connection between the promenade and the revitalized ballfield complex. The building could be up to three stories with adequate parking support.

Ballfield Enhancements. The Washington Park ballfields are an important resource that can add activity to the town center and should have a direct relationship to the Clear Creek promenade. The backstop and adjacent bleachers should be upgraded to define a plaza and exterior façade, on a far smaller scale but similar to traditional ballparks like Chicago’s Wrigley Field. The plaza, on a visual axis with the office building and the promenade, could include flagpoles, public art, and commemoration of well-known local ballplayers who have used the field. Sidewalks should be provided along Western Avenue and Fetterman Street, with a connection to the West Overlook and a pedestrian bridge to the north side trail as well as to the proposed office project.

Parking Improvements. The Back of Main area should provide convenient parking with good linkages back to Main Street. The concept includes three large parking areas:

- The redevelopment area east of Western Avenue and south of the proposed office building. This lot would serve both Downtown needs and support the office facility. The lot’s design allows it to serve as a turnaround for Western Avenue vehicles. The alley configuration permits emergency and service access to Main Street commercial building.
- Western Avenue. Perpendicular parking should be defined where possible on both sides of Western Avenue adjacent to the ballfields. Tree islands should be provided periodically to avoid unbroken rows of parking and add shade. Consolidation and management of curb cuts can increase the parking supply along the east side of the street.
- Fetterman Street. Parking on the north side of the ballfields along Fetterman Street should be provided and designed to accommodate both cars and RV’s.

The “Wedge”: Pedestrian Passageway and Parking. The shift in Main Street’s alignment creates a triangular void between the rear facades of Seney’s Soda Fountain and J&K Frame Shop. This space can become a distinctive pedestrian passageway between Main Street and new parking lots in the Back of Main area. Special paving and festive overhead lights can make this a particularly interesting and functional space. Access to Main Street would be provided by an easement through the frame shop, with a separated vestibule with windows that allow users to see into the store. This concept
Buffalo, Wyoming

increases both store traffic and visibility, while connecting the Back of Main area to Main Street.

Housing Development. A vacant lot on the southeast corner of High and Angus Streets provides an excellent site for new urban housing. These units could be designed in a traditional style, with porches to the front and garages to the rear served by an alleyway. This site affords excellent views for four detached units on small lots.

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Top: Improved ballfield and plaza looking southwest.
Middle: Photograph of “The Wedge”
Bottom: Aerial photo of “The Wedge”
4. LOBBAN AVENUE ARTISANS DISTRICT

Lobban Avenue mirrors the Back of Main corridor and has been emerging as an industrial-arts district in recent years, with the development of arts studio, educational, and gallery space. Continuing and expanding this trend could provide an additional source of vitality and business for Downtown Buffalo. The Buffalo region boasts a talented and varied community of artists and, as such, the arts should be an expanding downtown development theme. In addition, Lobban Avenue is the entrance point of the eastern segment of the Clear Creek Trail into Downtown. This is especially important because of existing and new lodging and visitor services that are developing to the east along Hart Street. Public realm improvements and private reinvestment can strengthen Lobban Avenue’s identity as a center for both innovation and experience.

Program

The program for the Lobban Artisans District includes:

- Additional studio and gallery space through new construction and reuse or adaptation of existing buildings.
- A clear connection for pedestrians and bicyclists between the existing terminus of the Clear Creek Trail at Lobban and Trail Street to the creek promenade and the western trail segment.
- Supporting parking and open space for arts-related activities.

Components of the Concept

Lobban Avenue Realignment. Powder River Heating and Cooling may be outgrowing its current location at Lobban and Benteen. If the company relocated, the Lobban Avenue alignment should be shifted to the west, providing a safer and more attractive intersection. This revised intersection should be posted with a four-way stop and should include features that define the Lobban corridor.

Clear Creek Trail Extension. The Clear Creek Trail would be extended south from its current trailhead at Lobban and Trail Street along the creekbank to Benteen Street. A cantilevered structure could be used where the creektop is too narrow to accommodate the trail. The trail would extend south as a continuous sidewalk between Benteen and the promenade on the west side of the street. The cycling connection would use a shared route along Lobban Avenue, using the “sharrow pavement marking” to the promenade. The promenade itself should be a fully pedestrian zone where bicycles would be walked.

Railroad Depot Interpretive Plaza and Trails. The historic Buffalo Railroad Depot now houses the Potter’s Depot, an innovative enterprise that combines gallery space and arts education. A realignment of Lobban Avenue creates the possibility of an interpretive plaza in front of the depot. Carrying with the art theme of the overall district would be a kiosk or monument allowing visitors to look back on the history and heritage of Buffalo and rail travel in the late-19th and early-20th century, while providing information on the Clear Creek Trail and other points of interest. A pedestrian crossing should connect the Depot Plaza and Lobban Arts Park, described below.

Lobban Avenue Artisans Park. Combining the remainder of the Powder River Heating and Cooling site with an adjacent vacant lot can create a Lobban Arts Park, a new green space flanked by two new structures providing artist’s studio and gallery space, or other arts related business. The arts park could provide a place for out-
door exhibitions, small events, and passive activities. Alternatively, one of the building could accommodate a needed expansion of the Buffalo Bulletin’s building, keeping the newspaper in a downtown home.

**Main Street Link.** A pathway connection and stepped walk could connect the Arts Park to Main Street north of the Chamber of Commerce building. This plan suggests that the Chamber maintain a presence in the downtown area. A downtown location for the Chamber recognizes the importance of the Main Street district as the city’s image center and eloquently states a sense of confidence in the future of this special and historic district.

**Live/Work Units, Crazy Woman Square, and Clear Creek Promenade.** These critical initiatives, described above, are woven into the Lobban Avenue Artisans District.

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5. PUBLIC LIBRARY & PARKING STRUCTURE

A special, long-term concept for the Lobban Avenue Artisans District is the possibility of a major project between the relocated Fetterman and Bennett Streets, housing a new library and a major addition to the city’s parking inventory. Participants in the downtown planning process discussed the eventual need for a new public library, resulting from the current facility’s popularity and inability to expand at its current site. This future demand for a new library, combined with an ongoing need for additional convenient parking suggests the possibility of a joint use facility – a library located over a parking structure.

The proposed site for this development is used primarily for surface parking. These lots are separate and located at different levels along the steep Lobban Avenue grade that rises to the south above the Clear Creek valley. The concept replaces these lots with a parking structure with two full flat plate parking levels, using Lobban Avenue as an external ramp. The lowest level is accessed from the low point on the north, with second level access at mid-block. Each level provides about 120 stalls. One level is devoted to private use, replacing the private parking currently on the site, while a second level is entirely devoted to public use. Both levels also have both pedestrian and vehicular access points off the alley. The proposed library has about twice the area of the existing facility, and would also provide community meeting space. An outdoor plaza on the building’s north side offers views of the Big Horn Mountains and Downtown. This outdoor deck could be replaced by a library addition if necessary.

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CONNECTIONS

The previous discussion has considered the design of the district's major development projects that make up the heart of the downtown development program. This section describes link features of the District together and connect it to the rest of the city. It also considers institutional connections—partnerships that can support many of the initiatives identified in this plan. Connections include:

- **LINKAGES TO CLEAR CREEK**
- **COMMUNITY VOCABULARY**
- **INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTION**
- **WAYFINDING ENHANCEMENTS**

**LINKAGES TO CLEAR CREEK**

Flowing water invariably attracts people to the degree that cities often invest heavily to create artificial streams and water features. This is, of course, unnecessary in Buffalo, where Clear Creek and its adjacent trail connects Downtown to both its mountain surroundings and many community features. The overall downtown program will reinforce this connection and link other parts of the city to the stream through the following strategies:

- **Crazy Woman Square and Clear Creek Promenade**, as described above.

- **Clear Creek Trail System**. Lobban Avenue and the Promenade connect the two separated segments of the trail together through the heart of Downtown. The Clear Creek system will connect to an overall regional trail system, with about 17 miles completed and an additional 13 miles planned.

- **Bridges** that connect the two sides of the creek through Downtown. New pedestrian bridges are envisioned as part of the Crazy Woman Square development at the mid-block alley between Lobban Avenue and Main Street; and at the Overlook between Main Street and Burritt Avenue. A stepped walk could be developed to Clear Creek School, connecting this site to the creek corridor.

- **Interpretative Information and Public Art**. Historic markers along the trail exist already. Expansion of this concept could improve the trail experience by connecting the trail to community history. A public art program could include commissioned and consignment pieces that reinforce community themes and stories.

- **Wayfinding**. Clear Creek and the Clear Creek Trail should be identified as significant destinations in a citywide wayfinding system. The trail system itself should have directional and distance information along the route to orient users.

The Clear Creek Greenway also connects Downtown to major visitor services along the East Hart Street corridor and can connect Downtown to more auto-oriented retailing along that street. Trail branches should lead from the primary greenway to strategic entrance points along Hart Street, helping to unify these separate components of Buffalo's retail community.

**COMMUNITY VOCABULARY**

The historic business district is a unique destination in Buffalo. The spirit of the community can be expressed through unified themes that are apparent at strategic sites or frequently visited locations. Buffalo is expressing its nature in several symbolic ways. For example, the City of Buffalo currently uses the image of a bison inlaid into the letter B as the city's logo. Throughout the downtown streetscape, collars around the base of light poles exhibit a buffalo emblem. The pedestrian crossing at Clear Creek exhibits various branding burns in the wood, connecting ranch culture to Buffalo.

- **Community Logo**. The image of a bison is a logical symbol for the city. A common image for the downtown business district and city could strengthen the city's marketing image. Other details to consider are colors and font style.

- **Materials**. Harmonious construction materials in the public environment reinforce an impression of caring and quality for the entire city. For example, planters and street furnishings used in the Main Street district should be consistent in materials and form.

- **Plantings**. Plant selection in the public environment should reinforce community themes. Street trees planted at regular intervals can define major corridors and provide shade. Consistent palettes of plants used in planters, flower baskets, and other locations within close areas can also strengthen the composition of individual elements in the public realm.

- **Streetlighting and traffic signals**. Main Street has established a vocabulary of ornamental street lamps. These lights may be used in other key areas of the Main Street district. A limited fixture vocabulary may emphasize special areas such as Crazy Woman Square or nodes along the promenade. Existing traffic signals on standard galvanized poles or trusses compromise the physical character and scale of the historic district.
Traffic signal poles and masts and truss sign bridges should be upgraded for greater consistency with the quality of the district. The sign truss at Fort and Main should be replaced by a Downtown gateway arch that also accommodates necessary signage.

**INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTIONS**

While physical linkages to the outside community are very important, institutional connections will be as critical to realizing the plan. A vital Downtown increases the community’s ability to attract new investment and people, and expands the base of support enjoyed by each institution. This plan recommends an alliance among several primary institutions in the city:

- **The City of Buffalo.** City government will be central to achieving the vision for the future of Downtown Buffalo. The city may be actively engaged in financing public projects and may assist with land purchases for redevelopment.

- **Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition.** The coalition’s mission is to enhance the vitality of economic activities within the north-central region of Wyoming and provide a high level of regional leadership, coordination, and cooperation between local, state and federal entities.

- **Buffalo Chamber of Commerce.** The Chamber will be a key supporter of the downtown development corporation and may assist in the coordination of events, projects and promotions for the Downtown community.

- **Johnson County.** County courthouse is a significant destination for community and county residents, who travel to Buffalo for government services. The County Fairgrounds is another major destination in the community, and event at the Fairgrounds may be coordinated with promotions for Main Street businesses. A program to improve and develop the Fairgrounds should also encourage linkages to the Main Street corridor and to the town center.

- **Community College.** The possible introduction of Buffalo’s first institution for higher education provides the opportunity to build the educational base of the community, and provide citizens with ongoing adult education and training opportunities. An institution could attract people to downtown and contribute to the living and working in environment in Downtown Buffalo.

- **Jim Gatchell Frontier History Museum.** The museum is a significant visitor destination in Buffalo that presents the story of the region and the people who made it unique.

**WAYFINDING ENHANCEMENTS**

Buffalo should implement a community wayfinding system to provides useful direction to visitors and display attractions available in the city. The system should reinforce the connections between Downtown and other community destinations. Individual signs should be located along these key connecting routes to help visitors to Buffalo attractions find Downtown. Key destinations that provide structure to the wayfinding system include:

- Downtown Main Street & Crazy Woman Square
- Lobban Avenue Artisans District
- Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum
- Prosinski Park
- Washington Park and Pool
- Clear Creek Trail System
- Buffalo High School
POLICIES

The previous elements of this vision plan establish the physical parameters of the Downtown Development Concept. This section addresses policy considerations for key issues and components of the plan. Principles of policy address the following general issue areas:

- RETAIL AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT
- HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY
- UPPER-STYLE HOUSING

Some of these principles repeat concepts that have been discussed earlier. In these cases, they will simply be restated.

RETAIL AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Overall Policy:

- Consolidate and strengthen the existing retail and service environment, focusing on solidifying existing retailers, expanding the number of people who come Downtown for activities, filling available space, and, in some situations, expanding the supply of space.

- Concentrate new businesses in areas of demonstrated potential strength for Downtown: food and beverage, health and personal care, clothing, clothing accessories, miscellaneous goods, food service, and general merchandise stores.

- Increase the demand for retail space in the market by increasing the number of people who use Downtown as a destination.

Major approaches to these policies include:

- To the maximum degree possible, encouraging retail rather than office or service use of available storefronts in the retail core along Main Street between Fort and East Bennett Streets. Encourage alternative office developments that are related to Main Street but off the major retail corridor. However, it is important to realize that office or service occupancy is far preferable to vacant storefronts.

- Directing desirable changes in land use patterns by developing small projects that, in the face of growing retail and entertainment demand, provide alternatives for non-retail downtown businesses. These can include mixed use and adaptive reuse projects with upper level office space and housing. Live/work units and office development in the Back of Main area implement this strategy.

- Implementing a low cost retail education and consulting program after establishing a Community Development Corporation and/or after receiving designation as a Main Street Wyoming community. These consulting services can advise retailers as needed on marketing, window display, and merchandise presentation. In addition, engage Buffalo's proven and innovative retailers as mentors for potential new retail and service entrepreneurs.

- Aggressively marketing and recruiting retailers in Downtown, while matching needs with available space. Focus on areas of demonstrated potential for Downtown and in-town retailing, as well as for areas where substantial "gaps" between consumer expenditures and retail supply occur.

- Reinforcing the City's program of events with other special themes and promotions. Providing high quality ongoing events that complement traditional celebrations like the rodeos, and extend fun and festivity throughout the year.

- Promoting high standards of customer service to strengthen the district's identification with local consumers. Publicizing these standards through a Customer Commitment Contract, prominently posted in all retail and consumer service businesses.

- Taking extra steps to put fun and festivity into the Downtown shopping experience. New amenities should enrich the experience of living and working in the District.

- Identifying special niches and help put projects together that respond to these concepts. Some may include aggregates of service providers into a single large space. A good example of this in Buffalo is an Arts Cooperative where start-up enterprises share a storefront or a cooperative art gallery.

- Considering new or innovative community-based retail forms. For example, a community-owned cooperative department store can provide good quality goods and retain local consumer spending in Buffalo. Cooperative department stores have been used effectively in Wyoming cities such as Torrington and Powell.

- Participants in the planning process proposed the concept of a gas co-op among existing gas stations.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY

Historic preservation and adaptive reuse are extremely important to Downtown Buffalo, which has many buildings listed on the National Historic Register. Community history is important to Buffalo’s image and downtown stakeholders consider the district’s historic buildings to be a core community asset. This plan strongly recommends a building development policy that uses preservation and adaptive reuse as cornerstones.

Components of this policy may include:

- Adopting flexible building codes that encourage upper level residential adaptive reuse. Housing development has been a foundation of successful downtown revitalization around the country and has also been important to Buffalo. Federal tax incentives, construction costs, the nature and preferences of residents in urban districts, and the knowledge of successes in other Wyoming cities and historic districts can encourage residential use of upper levels. Buffalo’s future building codes should encourage adaptive reuse without compromising health, safety and welfare, and help downtown property owners to rehabilitate downtown structures. It should also consider design standards in the central district that guide reuse and rehabilitation projects.

- Providing gap financing for major rehabilitation projects. Appropriate historic rehabilitation may not be economically feasible without some form of financing assistance or participation. Elements of a potential financing program for projects in Buffalo include:

  - Historic tax credits. The historic tax credit provides a 20% investment tax credit against passive income for certified rehabilitation projects.

  - Tax Increment Financing. The city should consider TIF to leverage substantial rehabilitation efforts. Use of TIF depends on local tax rates. Alternatively, a portion of other, energy-related revenue sources may be used to assist with financing of downtown projects.

  - Community Development Block Grants. CDBG funds can be used to provide gap financing for projects that meet statutory requirements for the program. CDBG funds are administered by the Wyoming Business Council and awarded to small cities on a competitive basis. However, program income from loan repayment ordinarily remains with the city, for use in other program eligible activities.

- HOME Housing Investment Partnership funds through the Wyoming Community Development Authority may also be used for projects, including new construction ownership developments that are targeted toward low and moderate income households.

- Other local public and private resources. The public and private sectors could collaborate to offer financing that provides a real incentive to participants. The result could have major benefits to both property owners and the community’s business community.

- Utilizing design guidelines. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards provide an excellent starting point for evaluating downtown rehabilitation projects. Particularly important is restoration of buildings that have been “modernized” or severely modified with unsympathetic facades. New development in the downtown core should preserve the scale, materials, and character of traditional architecture in the District.

- When a building is removed or replaced, retaining a strong street orientation and the fabric and patterns of Downtown. On occasion, rehabilitation will not be feasible under any circumstances because of severe structural deterioration. Downtown growth is a process, and natural growth requires change as well as preservation. However, new buildings should maintain a strong orientation to Main Street, even if the project’s architecture is contemporary in nature. A retained or reconstructed façade may also provide a gateway to support parking lots behind the main street.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Overall Policy: Place a high public and private priority on new housing development and adaptive reuse of upper levels for residential development.

As discussed above and in the market analysis section, housing is a key element of most downtown revitalization programs and is important to this plan’s vision of the future of Downtown Buffalo as a lively mixed use neighborhood. Residential development adds 24-hour occupancy to the district and helps downtown become a living neighborhood.

Housing development policy in Downtown Buffalo includes both upper level adaptive reuse and new construction where opportunities present themselves. Many upper-level units will initially
be rental-occupied, although some may provide owner-occupied apartments for people who live over their businesses or otherwise seek equity settings. Existing tax-driven incentives such as the Low-Income Housing tax Credit and Historic Tax Credits are oriented to rental housing.

Public actions and policies necessary to encourage delivery of downtown housing include preservation codes and building permit policies that encourage upper level reuse, production financing programs including the use of available federal tax credits, and dedication of some spaces in off-street parking lots for residential use. In some cases, shared vertical circulation and cooperative development of several adjacent buildings can improve project feasibility.
Implementation

The Buffalo Downtown Plan presents an ambitious and varied program that helps the district take advantage of its economic potential. This chapter considers several factors critical to implementing the Downtown Plan, including:

- ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK
- PRIORITY CRITERIA
- FUNDING TECHNIQUES
The Downtown Plan and its scheduling will inevitably change over time. Some projects may advance as opportunities or demands open, while others will fade in importance. Yet, the overall vision is compelling and will result in a more vibrant, productive downtown. This section provides tools to allow the city and downtown stakeholders to mark progress and make necessary “mid-course corrections” on the journey to accomplishing this vision.

**ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

Successful downtown development requires capable organizations and partnerships. Downtown Development Corporations (DDC) are similar to shopping center managers – they handle promotions and marketing, maintain the character and sense of a place, stage events, improve the quality of the district, and provide a unified public voice for Downtown. They can also serve as agents for development, buying and selling property and taking other actions that promote private investment. A DDC could oversee and manage a business improvement district. This section considers organizational aspects of Downtown and offers recommendations that can strengthen the support structure. A Downtown Development Corporation can operate as separate entities and may operate under an administrative agreement under the Chamber of Commerce, but not in the structure of the Chamber of Commerce.

**The Downtown Buffalo Development Corporation**

The Downtown Buffalo Development Corporation should be organized as a nonprofit corporation, with 501 (c)(6) status, a common IRS category for downtown and other economic development organizations, responsible for initiating, promoting and supporting the growth of downtown Buffalo. Ideally, the corporation should also have 501(c)(3) status, permitting it to accept contributions from philanthropic foundations. Several existing entities with non-profit status may act as the platform for the Downtown Buffalo Development Corporation.

The focuses of a development corporation should include:

- Increasing the number of businesses and employees, business sales volume, property values, average household income, and number and variety of cultural activities and venues.
- Maintaining and managing Downtown improvement projects and facilities.
- Measuring success in improving the condition of Downtown.

**Organizational Recommendations**

Often, start-up downtown development or main street organizations lack adequate resources to accomplish their work over the long term. The following recommendations address the nexus between organizational and development goals, and establish key directions that can help maintain the corporation as a leader of the Downtown revitalization effort.

- Establish a strong fiscal base so that the corporation maintains working capital for investment.
- A corporation may consider a role in real-estate development. This plan identifies a number of substantial developments, and a downtown development corporation can be an excellent vehicle to do what city government cannot – have a direct stake in projects. With initial capital, a development corporation may act as an equity partner, using strategic investments in market-based projects to expand its assets.
- If involved in development projects, choose real estate very carefully and strategically. It should only hold property to encourage a transition from one use to another, and should not be a long-term owner of real estate. The greatest benefit comes from turning over property for uses that increase property values in the district.
- Continue to increase interfaces with other community organizations, including the City, the Chamber, the Johnson County Economic Development Corporation, Historic Occidental Hotel Museum, Jim Gatchell Museum, and others. Cooperation and joint marketing materials can encourage visitors to the city to also visit Downtown.
- Expand the District’s program of events. In addition to the Johnson County Fair and Rodeo Parade and Big Horn Mountain Festival, downtown should offer regular programming during the course of the year to keep things happening in the district. Concepts such as “A Taste of Buffalo,” featuring...
Downtown or community restaurants; a monthly art walk as more galleries and workshops open; concerts utilizing local and regional talent; a band festival; and others are examples of activities that could maintain a high level of activity and engagement in Downtown Buffalo. The plan concept provides a series of public venues for events, such as the Band shell. These should be filled with activity.

- Ultimately, operate as a “mall manager” for Downtown. Strong retail downtowns share characteristics of a unified shopping center, and a development corporation, probably funded through a special improvement district (SID), is a logical manager for the downtown enterprise.

**PRIORITY CRITERIA**

The Downtown Plan establishes four major project areas, in addition to an ongoing streetscape development effort. Certain projects are especially beneficial because they create spin-off development, creating conditions that encourage a maximum private sector response. The criteria used to establish priorities include the following:

- Does the project generate substantial community support or consensus?
- Does the project support the growth of existing businesses?
- Does the project attract both local residents and visitors, increasing business traffic and creating new reasons for people to be downtown?
- Does the project respond to specific or high-profile community issues or needs?
- Does the project capitalize on established, but unmet, market needs?
- What is the project’s potential to transform the image of Downtown?
- Can the project be realistically implemented within a reasonable time frame with potentially available resources?
- Does the project generate maximum private market response?

**FUNDING TECHNIQUES**

A variety of financing tools can help finance the Downtown vision, including:

- Buffalo Charities
- Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program
- Certified Local Government Grants
- Community Development Block Grants
- Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program
- Direct Public Investments
- Downtown Bond Issue
- Estate Taxes
- Johnson County Economic Development Alliance
- Joint Powers Act Loan Program
- Land Sale Proceeds
- Main Street Program
- Private and Foundation Philanthropy
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Rural Development Programs
- Small Business Administration
- Special Improvement District
- Wyoming Department of Transportation
- Transportation Enhancements (TE)
- Transportation Enhancements Activities Local (TEAL)
The following discusses the application of these individual techniques and how they apply to specific recommendations in the plan.

**Buffalo Charities**

Buffalo Charities is a 501(c)3 charitable foundation affiliated with developing Downtown Buffalo. This foundation has been instrumental in supporting local community projects.

For more information, contact Buffalo City Hall at 307-684-5566.

**Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program**

Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program provides financing for publicly owned infrastructure that serves the needs of businesses and promotes economic development within Wyoming communities. Cities, towns, counties, joint powers boards and both Tribes are eligible to apply for funding. Public infrastructure that is eligible for funding includes water, sewer, streets, airports, rights of way, telecommunications, land, spec buildings, amenities within a business park/site/district, landscaping, recreation/educational facilities, and other physical projects in support of primary economic and educational development.

For more information about the Business Ready Community and Loan Program, visit www.wyomingbusiness.org or contact the Wyoming Business Council at 307-777-2800.

**Community Development Block Grants**

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) offers grants to Wyoming communities for improving local facilities, addressing critical health and safety concerns, and developing a greater capacity for growth. CDBG is a “pass through” administered by the Wyoming Business Council and funded from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development authorized by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383). They offer funds for projects that can range from housing and street repairs to industrial loans and job training.

For more information about Community Development Block Grants, visit www.wyomingbusiness.org or contact the Investment Ready Communities Director at 307-777-2811.

**Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (CFP)**

The Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (Wyoming Statute 9-12-801) assists communities to secure grant and loan funding to construct local enhancements to a school building or facility or preserve former school and government facilities that have existing or future community uses. All projects must be related to economic development or quality of life enhancement. Facilities may be space for community gatherings and functions, recreational, swimming and athletic facilities for community members, particularly youth.

For more information about the Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program (CF), contact Community Facilities Program Manager at 307-777-2841.

**Certified Local Government Grants**

Whether it is preserving a vintage downtown or converting an old warehouse into the headquarters of a new .com, experience has shown that historic preservation is usually most successful when local people work at the local level to protect and reuse local historic resources. The Certified Local Government program (CLG) recognizes that local efforts need support, and that communities can benefit from working with state and federal partners who share the
same goals. It is this spirit of partnership, which gave rise to Wyoming’s CLG program. The program is a federal-state-local partnership that enables eligible communities to conduct a wide range of preservation activities in cooperation with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. Department of the Interior, including surveys of historic resources and nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Becoming a CLG entitles a community to apply for CLG matching grants. Ten percent of the historic preservation funds that Wyoming receives from the federal government each year is set aside for these grants; in a typical year about $50,000 is available to CLGs in Wyoming to identify their historic, architectural, and archaeological resources through surveys, and to nominate eligible properties and districts to the National Register of Historic Places. Grants can also be used to further community education on historic preservation, and preserve and rehabilitate historic properties.

Cities and counties in Wyoming are invited to apply for certification. The chief elected official can identify a contact person to take the lead in ensuring that a community’s Certified Local Government program is coordinated.

Communities work closely with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office after they become a CLG, receiving materials and guidance on an ongoing basis or on special request. Certified communities may apply for GLG grants to work on a wide range of preservation projects under guidance of the Wyoming SHPO, including surveys to identify the community’s historic and archaeological resources, and research and preparation of forms for nominating local buildings, sites, or historic districts to the National Register of Historic Places or local registers of historic properties.

Downtown Bond Issues

General obligation bond issues are appropriate to finance major public projects or improvements, and are secured by general city revenues. These revenues typically include taxes or other municipal revenues, including sales taxes. Revenue bonds may also be utilized for projects that generate income, such as public parking stalls leased on a monthly basis. Some states permit directed sales taxes, whereby taxes generated in a retail district may be directed back to the financing of improvements in that area.

Johnson County Economic Development Alliance

The Johnson County Economic Development Alliance has a 501(c)3 status, although the organization has become inactive. The organization could be restructured to facilitate the improvement of Downtown Buffalo.

For more information, contact Buffalo City Hall at 307-684-5566.

Joint Powers Act Loan Program

The Office of State Land and Investments, under Wyoming Statute 16-1-109, provides $28 million in funds from the Permanent Mineral Trust Fund to counties, municipal corporations, school districts, community college districts, special districts and Joint Powers Boards for the planning, construction, acquisition, improvement, emergency repair, acquisition of land for, refinancing of existing debt for, and operation of revenue-generating public facilities.

The Board can only award loans for facilities that generate revenue and the revenue must be sufficient to service the debt and represent a prudent use of state funds. The Board can award loans for 100% of the project cost as long as the facility generates sufficient revenue.
to service the debt and represents a prudent use of state funds. The Board has authority to set interest rates for Joint Powers Act Loans from 6 to 12% based upon similar securities in the commercial market. The interest is reviewed annually by the Board. Origination fees may apply.

Normally the Director limits loan terms to 30 years, although up to 40 years is allowed. The Director also recommends that the loan term coincide with the economic life of the project financed. For more information about the Joint Powers Act Loan Program, contact the Office of State Land and Investments at 307-777-7331.

**Land Sale Proceeds**

Proceeds from sale of land to development projects should be allocated back to Downtown improvements and acquisition for other redevelopment activities.

**Main Street Program**

The Wyoming Rural Development Council administers the Main Street Program, which provides Wyoming communities with opportunities to strengthen downtown districts. The program has a revolving loan fund, providing low interest loans to help with storefront renovations.

For more information about the Main Street Program, visit www.wyomingmainstreet.org or contact the State Program Coordinator, Evan Medley, at 307-777-6430.

**Private and Foundation Philanthropy**

The Downtown Buffalo Plan provides a variety of opportunities for individual or foundation contributions. Private philanthropy, with appropriate recognition and commemoration, is a critical part of the downtown implementation program, and is especially appropriate for major public projects, and other public open spaces proposed by the plan. The Sheridan-Johnson Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Wyoming Community Foundation can be local resources.

For more information, visit www.wycf.org or contact the Wyoming Community Foundation at 307-721-8300.

**Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**

The EDA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program provides matching grants to eligible recipients to create revolving loan fund programs to provide loans to businesses located in economically distressed areas in accordance with an approved Revolving Loan Fund Plan. Typically, EDA Revolving Loan Funds are used to match other state and local funds to leverage private sector loans for businesses that will address needs to diversify a distressed economy, to stimulate job creation or to assist in job retention. Eligible recipients generally provide matching funds equal to 50 percent of the capital required to establish the revolving loan fund.

For more information, contact U.S. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration at 406-449-5380.

**Rural Development Programs**

United States Department of Agriculture administers rural community development programs. Each program and initiative promotes self-sustaining, long-term economic and community development in rural areas. The programs demonstrate how every rural community can achieve self-sufficiency through innovative and compre-
hensive strategic plans developed and implemented at a grassroots level. The programs stress continued local involvement and decision making which is supported by partnerships among private, public and nonprofit entities.

Housing and Community Facilities Programs (HCFP) helps rural communities and individuals by providing loans and grants for housing and community facilities, including funding for single family homes, apartments for low-income persons or the elderly, housing for farm laborers, childcare centers, fire and police stations, hospitals, libraries, nursing homes, schools, and more.

For more information, visit http://ocdweb.sc.egov.usda.gov or call the USDA State office at 307-233-6700.

**Small Business Administration**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has financial assistance program which provide access to debt and equity primarily from banks or other private sources. SBA evaluates each loan application on two levels; the first is for eligibility, which varies by industry and SBA program, and second on credit merits of the application. SBA programs and services support small business owners, connecting businesses to loans, government contracting opportunities, disaster assistance and training programs to help your business succeed. For more information, visit www.sba.gov.

**Special Improvement District (SID)**

Special Improvement Districts (SID’s) or Business Improvement Districts (BID’s) are special assessment districts, permitting businesses within a district to finance public capital improvement projects and district management, promotion, and maintenance. SID’s are created by the City following a specific process established by State Statute and administered by a SID Board. While SID’s are a valuable tool, assessments should not burden downtown retailers. We recommend a policy of public financing of major capital projects, with required SID funding of maintenance and district management and promotion.

**Wyoming Department of Transportation**

Transportation Enhancements (TE). The TE program provides 80% federal financing for such projects as enhancements to major transportation corridors, trails and other non-motorized transportation projects, and the preservation of historic transportation structures. The program is administered by the Wyoming Department of Transportation. TE funds are appropriate for financing such projects as:

- Streetscape improvements.
- Intersection and crosswalk improvements.
- Trail development and bicycle route connections.

Transportation Enhancement Activities Local (TEAL). Public agencies, city, county, state or federal agencies (excluding the administering bodies), tribal councils, joint powers boards and school districts are eligible applications. The purpose is to fund projects that are off the state highway system (non-highway department), transportation related and that will add community and environmental value to the transportation system. Project types include non-motorized transportation (walking/bike paths), scenic beautification (roadside landscaping), and historic preservation (transportation related). The grant funding ranges from $100,000 to $200,000 per project with a minimum local match of 20%. The source for funding is through the Federal Transportation Act (TEA-21).