

MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION EFFORT FOR THE VILLAGE OF UNION, NEBRASKA

by

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A REPORT

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Abstract

Rural communities across America are working to strengthen their economies, provide better quality of life to residents, and build on assets such as traditional main streets, transportation initiatives, and natural amenities and resources. Today, rural communities face an array of challenges. Small communities are vulnerable to the impacts of expensive commutes, lack of mobility, financial resources, and other services.

According to the USDA,

“Some small communities, have limited local government staff, experience, or funding, which can mean few resources dedicated to providing sustainable amenities, regional collaboration, and other efforts to identify shared community goals and visions that can help shape growth and development”

(USDA, 2011).

Small communities must work hard to compete with larger cities and other communities to sustain economically and become prominent. This is often noticeable when there is a lack of investment and economic prosperity.

Many rural communities have limited transportation options. Most small communities are not fit to support multiple modes of transportation, which limits access to jobs, medical care, and educational opportunities. For those who do drive, commutes to distant employment centers can be time consuming and require a large percentage of the family budget to be spent on transportation (USDA, 2011). In addition, intercity and regional mobility are drivers of economic growth in rural communities and bring tourists and other consumers to community businesses.

Rural communities and small towns should be valued for their distinctive and historic features. Communities that conserve and build upon these resources, such as historic downtowns and main streets, will be better positioned to enhance quality of life for their residents. Without revitalizing main streets we would not see the places of shared memory where people are suppose to come together to live, work, and play.



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**TAYLOR COX
PLAN 898 | SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY AMENITIES | Spring 2013**

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VISION FOR THE VILLAGE OF UNION, NEBRASKA

“The Village of Union shall move forward while honoring its history by involving our community and rural neighbors in becoming an attractive, self-promoting, clean, safe and secure community for people and business. We will provide basic and innovative public amenities and services that support the environment, our community and surrounding area. We will focus on economic development to support our region through providing reliable and sustainable infrastructure, with a well-maintained street system for vehicles and pedestrians. We will provide family-oriented programs and opportunities for play, affordable housing options, and local attractions, while cultivating a healthy environment. Through this Vision, together we will preserve our cultural and natural heritage in Nebraska, while providing opportunities for our future.”

Village of Union, NE 2012

Abstract

Rural communities across America are working to strengthen their economies, provide better quality of life to residents, and build on assets such as traditional main streets, transportation initiatives, and natural amenities and resources. Today, rural communities face an array of challenges. Small communities are vulnerable to the impacts of expensive commutes, lack of mobility, financial resources, and other services.

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“Some small communities, have limited local government staff, experience, or funding, which can mean few resources dedicated to providing sustainable amenities, regional collaboration, and other efforts to identify shared community goals and visions that can help shape growth and development” (USDA, 2011).

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Rural communities and small towns should be valued for their distinctive and historic features. Communities that conserve and build upon these resources, such as historic downtowns and main streets, will be better positioned to enhance quality of life for their residents. Without revitalizing main streets we would not see the places of shared memory where people are suppose to come together to live, work, and play.



I. INTRODUCTION

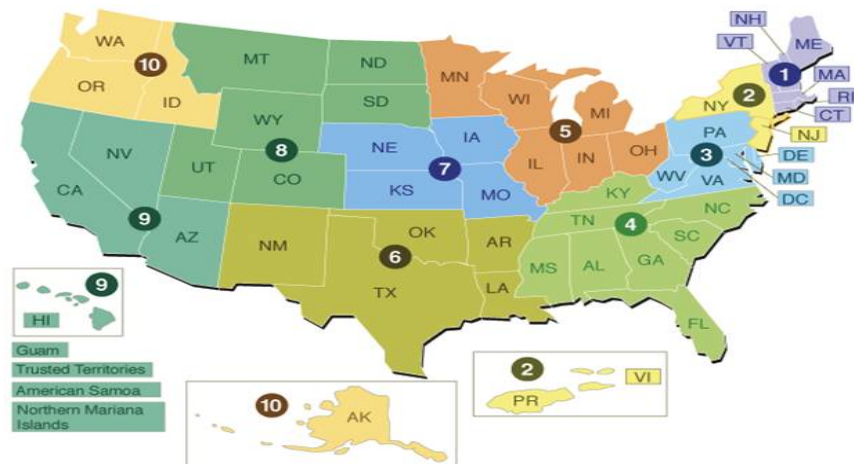
I. Introduction

A. Project Description, Boundaries and Stakeholders

A group consisting of graduate students in both Landscape Architecture and Regional and Community Planning, worked together to create Master Reports for different focus areas benefiting Sustainable Community Amenities. My report thoroughly examined ways Union, NE can implement certain amenities to residents and passers by, to reduce commute time, improve quality of life and more importantly offer a place to rest. With few amenities for its people, I proposed solutions to their immediate needs and opportunities for their future.

Brownfield: Brownfield sites are abandoned or underused industrial and commercial facilities available for re-use.

The Village of Union, NE is a town of old fashion values, strong family ties, and neighbors one can rely on. According to City Data, the population is 234 and the village is located twenty minutes north of Nebraska City and forty-five minutes east of Lincoln, NE ("City Data", 2010). They have contacted an organization called EPA's Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities Program (TAB). This is a national organization that assists communities with Brownfield redevelopment. This organization consists of a 10-region area across the United States. Kansas State University serves EPA region 7 (see Fig. 1: TAB Regional Areas) providing education to urban, rural, and tribal Brownfield's Communities.

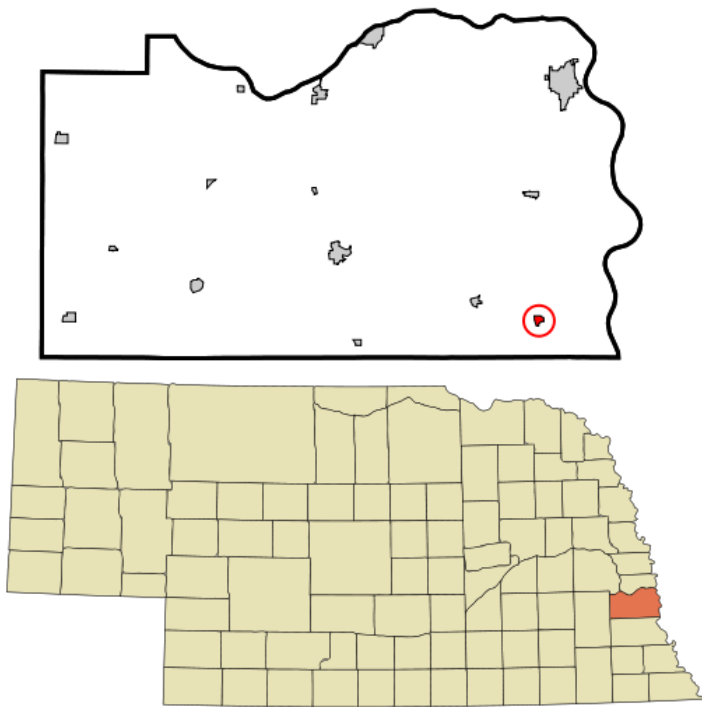


EPA's Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities Program focus regions.

Figure 1. TAB Regional Areas (TAB, 2012) Retrieved from http://epa.gov/brownfields/tools/tab_bifold.pdf

Along with my involvement in this process I worked with one additional colleague investigating the criteria and concerns that make the Village of Union, NE a candidate for this proposed redevelopment process. Stephanie Kisler and I worked with TAB and the citizens involved in the revitalization for the Village of Union, NE. The relevance of this project identified three concerns that I evaluated in relation to proper sustainable community amenities and the triple bottom line (economic, environmental, and social equity).

The research took place in Union, NE (see Fig. 2: Project Location). As stated above the location is Union, NE, which is a small Village in Cass County home to 234 citizens, 91 households, and 64 families (City Data, 2010) Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Union-Nebraska.html>. The theoretical frame that bounded this project is relative to the citizens of Union focusing on the three primary concerns listed above to



GIS description demonstrating the location of Cass County and the location of Union, NE.

Figure 2. Project Location (City Data, 2011) Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Union-Nebraska.html>.

B. Direction and Driving Forces

This project as well as others, looked to intrigue Stephanie and myself as a strong link between our profession focus areas. Existing relationship was established between Melissa Hanson and Dave Chipman, who are on the Board of Directors in Union, NE.

An additional driving force was developed through TAB, offering my colleague and I a fully funded research project that will be presented to the citizens of Union, NE on the 10th of April 2013. This report will be of assistance to the Village of Union, NE in the process of identifying, investigating, cleaning-up and redeveloping Union, NE into a sustainable community with economically feasible amenities. Figure 3; below, illustrates the Village of Union working together to clean up and identify key concerns prior to meeting TAB on Friday August 3.



Photo of the Village of Union working together to clean up and identify key concerns. Figure 3. Community Work Effort (Village of Union, NE, 2010).



II. COURSE OF ACTION

II. Course of Action

On October 8th, I had a chance to visit the Village of Union and take mental and physical images of what needed to be done and what our roles were to begin the process for this proposal and report for April 10, 2013. As I previously stated, on August 3rd, Wendy Griswold and Huston Gibson met with roughly 30 citizens from the Village of Union, NE to search for issues and items, which we could begin to resolve. The question I answered in my research proposal was how the Village of Union and myself could use continual transportation patterns derived from the Nebraska Department of Roads to distinguish possible ways of implementing amenities and enhancing economic development on Main Street. I completed my report by researching similar case studies, using surveys, evaluating my site, and working with NDOR and TAB to conduct necessary evaluations to improve the triple bottom line of Union, NE.

I completed the work following the introduction in my final year at Kansas State University to complete my Master Project. Stephanie Kisler and myself completed this document for Union, Nebraska under the umbrella Sustainable Community Amenities. We are enrolled in PLAN 898, a comprehensive application of research and planning through individual studies approved by the department faculty.

Each student in this course has a major professor guiding a set of individuals to fulfill their roles as graduate students in either Landscape Architecture or Regional or Community Planning. My Major Professor is Huston Gibson, who has been a major part of my academic career at Kansas State University. Towards the end of the summer of 2012, we were assigned our umbrella; at that time Huston informed us of a great opportunity which I have completed the development of and will present to the Village of Union, NE on the 10th of April 2013.

Wendy Griswold, a Project Manager in the Center for Hazardous Substance Research worked with Huston over summer to begin the discussion of the revitalization of Union, NE. Wendy Griswold works with (TAB) in region 7, consisting of Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri. This is an organization funded by the Environmental Protection Agency to assist communities in revitalizing Brownfields.

III. Dilemma, Question, and Developments

Stephanie and myself evaluated and researched essential characteristics to propose to Union, NE that will allow them to move forward, while honoring their history by involving the community and rural neighbors for a positive future. Using their developed list created on August 3rd, I evaluated how and what needed to be done to accomplish this vision. TAB and Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) assisted by presenting traffic studies, design and research, and funding for the report. To revitalize and promote an entire community I needed to know exactly what the citizens want and need to make the place they lived in more economically viable and sustainable by implementing amenities for each and every citizen and its visitors. By doing so, I used the whole town approach. According to Forsberg, “A whole town approach increases a small town’s ability to become more sustainable, since it can explore, discuss and resolve issues in the context of the town as a total entity” (Forsberg, 1999) Retrieved from http://www.susset.org/wts_why.html.

A. Dilemma

The dilemma that drove my project was proposing a practical planning solution to a small town with limited amenities along its main street. Union lacks amenities, which created a lack of economic backing and desire for visitors and residents to purchase basic household items and necessities.

Union, requested help to revitalize, develop sustainable infrastructure, provide public amenities, and present a well-maintained street system for vehicles and pedestrians. The Village of Union, met with TAB to focus on a list of priorities, goals, and potential funding sources to revitalize their town. A list of these priorities is listed in the appendix. By beginning the process of redevelopment it will make the district more attractive to both residents and passersby.

B. Question

My question is: How might Union, capitalize on through traffic to benefit economic development along its main street?

C. Course of Action

I proposed a process and plan targeting Main Streets and transportation concerns for the citizens and community of Union. I accomplished this by analyzing similar case studies in comparison to Union, to facilitate a plan and design proposition for citizens residing in the Village of Union.

Along with my colleague I applied their vision statement, which is located on the second page of the report. Along with the vision statement the community collaborated and made a list of priorities, needs, potential partners and themes used to develop the vision. Listed below is an outline of certain issues and needs that benefited my area of the report that was made Friday, August 3 (see appendix for complete list).

D. Group Results

Friday August 3 break out-group results – Priorities for Union

Group 1

- Storefronts and Streets fixed and cleaned
- Convenience store/café
- Public restrooms

Group 2

- Main street
 - Revenue – new businesses

- Community Center
- Food and Fuel/Electric Services

Group 3

- Main Street Businesses
 - Made more attractive
 - Park benches, flowers
- Community Welcome Center
 - Methodist church (empty)
 - Wi-Fi hot spot
 - Coffee house

Brainstorming

Opportunities

New Bridge being developed (will alter traffic patterns)

Needs Old hotel/develop into staycation spot

Longest stretch of highway 34 – longest main street in the world

Needs

No public bathroom

Visitor Center

Community center

Electric charging stations

Potential Partners

Union Pacific Rail Road

ATT – hotspot

Keep Cass County Beautiful

Grant opportunities

NPPD – Utilities (?)

SEEND

USDA Rural

Bar Owners

Welding business

Saturday Themes used to develop vision

Self-promotion

Be attractive for people and business – clean

Amenities, services – hospitality

Basic and advanced

Support the community

Attraction

“Progressive”

Community involvement

Safe and secure

Economic development that supports region

Reliable infrastructure and street system

Sustainable

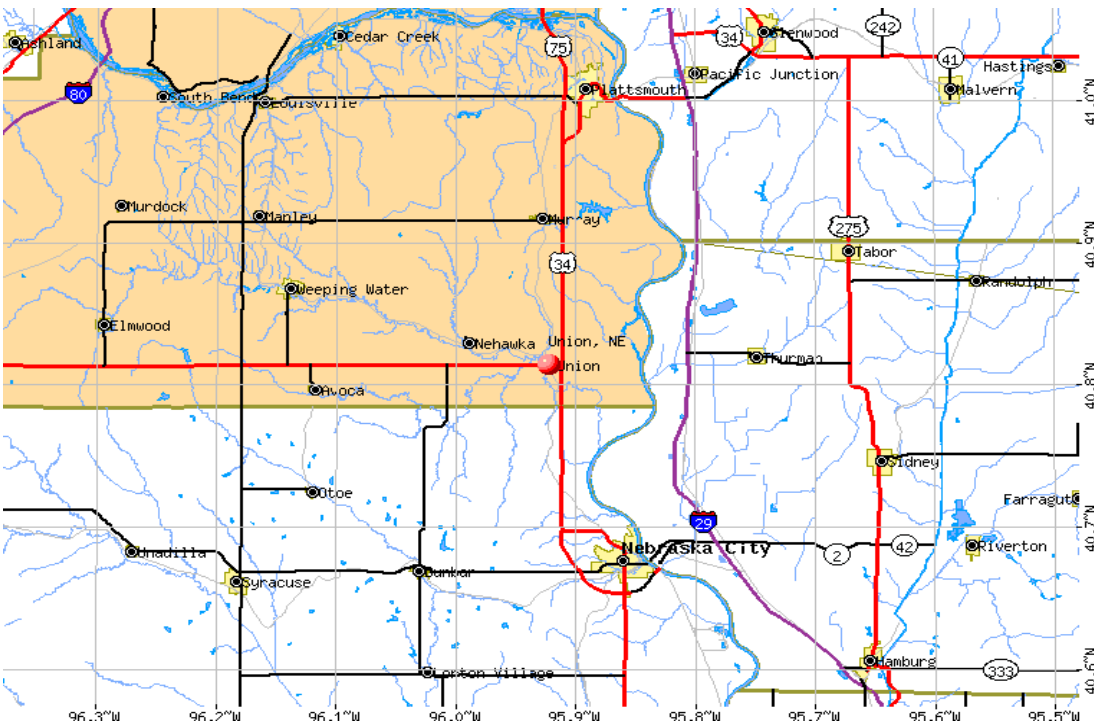


IV. PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

IV. Plan of Implementation

A. Location Concentrations

In Union, NE access to jobs, schools, shopping, and community services is a vital necessity for its citizens, as it is for many Americans living in small towns, cities, and communities. According to City Data, the average commute time to work is 27.3 minutes (City Data, 2010). Figure 4 illustrates a map of the location compared to other large cities in the area. Union, NE lacks many amenities and services including a gas station, community center, rest area and a convenience store. In my report I investigated ways to minimize the time that requires citizens living in Union to travel to obtain everyday necessities. In this report I used traffic study provided by the Nebraska Department of Roads to demonstrate and help acquire adequate information regarding time spent traveling and ADT (Average Daily Travel) from other towns, cities, and states.



GIS map illustrating travel time to nearest city Nebraska City, which is a 30-minute commute time.

Figure 4. GIS illustration of Commute Time (“City Data”, 2010) Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Union-Nebraska.html>

B. Commercial District

To ensure that small cities such as Union remain economically viable, we must preserve and enhance their downtowns while making them more walkable and accessible. These components are critical to a complete transportation system and are crucial in creating attractive and vibrant town centers. When politicians and the media mention main street, they evoke one people and one place. But there are over 10,466 streets named Main in the United States (Middleton, 2011). The street named Main Street in Union is the longest straight stretch of road in the U.S., and also one of the busiest streets in Nebraska. With this statistic it's possible to say that tourism through Union, could have a substantial impact while increasing the opportunity to differentiate and promote the town more effectively and explore their unique qualities.

The goal for Union, NE is to capture passersby by developing services and amenities, which will create a thriving vibrant town center by revitalizing their Main Street and offering a place to rest.

- Place to rest - area next to large road or thoroughfare such as a highway or freeway at which drivers and passengers can rest, eat, or refuel without exiting onto secondary roads (Reed, 2009) Retrieved from <http://www.roadtripamerica.com/>.

This provides the village a competitive advantage over other small communities and offers an array of possibilities to redevelop and make the village more attractive to both residents and visitors. Below in Figure 5, is an illustration of Union, current Main Street.



This photo illustrates Main Street currently today looking east on US34.

Figure 5. Main Street in Union, NE (Photo by Author, 2012).



V. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

V. Process and Methodology

According to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, “The central business district is perhaps the single most important area of the city” (NDED, u.d., p. 1). Within its confines are the centers for city and county government, diversified shopping opportunities, professional offices, housing and redevelopment opportunities. The planning process involved was a thorough inventory of condition, the formation of goals designed to strengthen the district, the formulation of strategies, and the process of developing funds to revitalize a Main Street turned Brownfield.

Work to revitalize an abandoned district involved the conduction of a rational evaluation of the area:

Preliminary Research

- 1) Review the most current comprehensive plan (2008)
 - ii. Determined if the comprehensive plan and its implementing regulations meet community needs and address the problems and opportunities currently facing the Village of Union, NE.
 - iii. Made sure the community is getting the outcomes it wants.
 - iv. Locate problems and future developments within the plan regarding Main Street and Economic Development.
- 2) Eliminate needs and concerns that will be covered in the research process of the report.
 - ii. Used existing results from August 3rd meeting to base my guidelines and research vicinity.

Detailed Assessment

- a. Photograph Site
 - i. This helped assess damage, illustrate concerns, and offer additional consideration for revitalization.

b. Stakeholders

- i. Stated necessary stakeholders and located possible assistance for Union, NE.

c. Brownfields

- i. Develop a comparable process that city's and towns use as a procedure to rejuvenate brownfield sites.

Research

d. Analyzed multiple case studies located in the document Main Street Success Stories

- i. Used text: Case Study Research: Design and Methods, 3rd Edition (Applied Social Research Methods, Vol. 5) by Robert K. Yin.
- ii. Used text: Applications of Case Study Research, 2nd Edition (Volume 34) by Robert K. Yin.
- iii. Evaluated and proposed case studies to benefit Union, NE.

e. Locate funds available

- i. In conjunction to researching case studies; I used similar goals and strategies from other towns to discover funds to assist Union, NE.

f. Compared success stories in relation to Union, NE

- i. This will motivate and inspire governments, partners, and individuals to support investing in effective development aid.
- ii. This provides the information the Village of Union, NE will need to begin the process of revitalization by offering an educational background and a basis on important steps in accomplishing a sizeable task.

Case Studies

g. Utilize traffic studies offered through Nebraska Department of Roads or the Federal Highway Administration.

- i. This offered an understanding to the Village of Union, NE about what possibilities are available for Main Street as well as their importance.
- ii. It also exemplified the results and benefits of how economic development can emerge from the implementation of future development.

h. Evaluation

- iii. Evaluated similar case studies to offer the Village of Union, NE a basis for direction and order for the process of using funding, professional organizations, and the course of action to proceed with revitalizing Main Street.

As I added above, involving the group results was important to guide the priorities primarily involving the main street in Union. I used successful case studies from towns of similar size and composition to Union as an example of how they may begin their phase of redevelopment.

As Harold Kalman stated in *Reviving Main Street*,

“The deterioration of Main Street has proceeded slowly but surely over the last few decades. The unabated spread of suburban and regional shopping malls has siphoned off vitality from town centers and left Main Streets all across the world with a far smaller share of commerce that it once was accustomed to” (Kalman, 1985, p. 31).

These renovations, often implemented in response to the new malls, have obscured or destroyed the beauties and integrity of the traditional designs and replaced them with an *mélange* of materials that can only be described as tacky or in need of demolition.

Funds to address brownfield redevelopment are available from various federal organizations and programs which leads to the primary question: It possible to channel these resources, inculcate a sense of pride and change in a downtown group, and, through professional assistance, facilitate a physical and economic change? In the United States, the National Trust’s Main Street scheme has shown that preservation and economic revitalization could go hand-in-hand rather than become a conflict. In figure 5, below, is a photograph of Main Street in Union, on October 8, 2012. I would like to add there is a barbershop, law service, apartment building, auto-body shop, and a bar that are the only operating business on Main Street.



Photograph taken looking east on Main Street in Union, Nebraska.

Figure 6. Main Street looking west (Photo by Author, 2012).



VI. REVITALIZATION PROCESS AND DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

VI. Revitalization Process and Design Implementation

An important starting point for a downtown revitalization program is often the repair and maintenance of well designed signs on buildings and established businesses (Craycroft, 1982, p.33). However, in Union, there are no signs identifying character or the location of previous establishments. Whether maintenance, repair or new design is needed, the implementation of sign improvements can quickly and dramatically enhance a downtown's visual qualities. Signs are fairly easy to install and inexpensive to construct or repair compared with other types of physical improvements. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) stated after receiving positive responses from customers, business owners are more likely to make other appropriate improvements to their buildings (NTHP, u.d., p.2). The National Trust for Historic Preservation is the only national, private non-profit organization chartered by Congress with the responsibility for encouraging public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings and objects significant in American history and culture. Throughout the development of my report I will use NTHP as a reference to evaluate and compare successful elements carried out on successful revitalization processes in rural towns.

A. Infrastructure

In Union, parking and accessibility is an important characteristic in view of the fact that it runs along U.S. highway 34/75. Road, sidewalk, and building designers should coordinate their efforts to ensure that accessible sidewalks and streetscapes are developed in new construction and alterations.

Transportation agencies differ greatly in the degree to which they address pedestrian facilities. Some areas permit developers to exclude sidewalk plans from the review of the overall construction plan and create inaccessible pathways and noncompliant buildings, while others make consideration of sidewalk plans mandatory. In Union, sidewalks along Main Street are a vital component to the revitalization process. This will offer a footpath for visitors to access shops and amenities implemented in the revitalization process.

In regards to sidewalks and streetscapes, Union has a Main Street, which is along one of the busiest U.S. highways not only in Nebraska but also in the whole country.

According to the FHWA,

“U.S. 34 is an east-west United States highway that runs for 1,122 miles from north-central Colorado to the western suburbs of Chicago. Through Rocky Mountain National Park it is known as the Trail Ridge Road where it reaches 12,183 ft, making it the highest paved through highway in the United States” (FHWA, 2000) Retrieved from <http://www.us-highways.com/us1830.htm>.

In the process, U.S. highway 34 runs right through the “main street” of the Village of Union, NE. This offers endless possibilities when I discuss the ample amount of traffic this community receives.

Main Street offers a true pedestrian friendly streetscape initiative, which offers the kind of human connection this main street sorely lacks. Creating an attractive and vibrant main street is an important goal for the vision and one that was adamantly supported by the community. As “a place to be proud of,” the residents and business owners can envision a walk-able main street with street trees, plantings, revitalized sidewalks and a destination unto itself.

B. Existing Conditions (Infrastructure)

Prior to visiting on October 8th, it was difficult to understand the

condition of the existing road and sidewalk conditions. After visiting the site, I had a basis for understanding of how the area is used today and ideas for improvement. It is easy to understand the amount of traffic and economic opportunity that Union has to offer; however, potholes are present and in need of treatment and repair. Inconsistencies in the street pavement present users the impression of an unfinished streetscape and create the potential for hazardous situations. In addition to streetscapes mentioned above, a large percentage of the sidewalks are in poor condition illustrated by cracks, deterioration, and elevated slopes not in lines with ADA regulations.

ADA regulations state:

“Surface textures are important to ensure disabled individuals with mobility devices can safely traverse the sidewalk. The texture of a sidewalk must be firm, stable and slip-resistant. Care should be taken to ensure any concrete finishing meets these requirements. Additionally, any grates inset into the sidewalk must comply; to ensure that mobility devices do not get stuck, any openings in the grate can be no larger than ½ inch across. Sidewalks also must meet slope requirements. A sidewalk must have a slope of less than 1:20; otherwise it will be considered a ramp, and will be subject to a different set of ADA standards. Further, any changes to elevation in the sidewalk must be considered. An increase in elevation of more than ½ inch will require the construction of a ramp, elevator or other compliant facility” (ADA, 2011, p.24).

The process of revitalizing the sidewalks along Main Street with current ADA regulations will offer easier ways for citizens in Union to access stores and enjoy life within Village of Union. In Figure 7, you can see the condition of the sidewalks. This will also offer an inviting factor for those who are passing by and those who are visiting. Sidewalks are the most common transportation structure in the world. If not accessible sidewalks can pose a great deal of danger to those who are disabled, injured or merely walking around.



This is a photograph illustrating quality of sidewalks along Main Street.
Figure 7. Current condition of sidewalk infrastructure (Photo by Author, 2012).

C. Existing Conditions (Building Infrastructure)

The current condition of the building infrastructure along Main Street was determined to meet the definition of a brownfield site.

Brownfield-The term "brownfield site" means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant (EPA, 2012) <Retrieved from <http://www.epa.gov/>>.

In Union's case, these are either contaminated grounds caused by pollutants or the abandonment of industrial buildings that have fallen into disrepair. A significant number of brownfield sites exist in a city or towns industrial section, on locations with abandoned commercial buildings, or other operations. In my investigation, I examine the process that communities use as a procedure to rejuvenate brownfield sites.

Many innovative financial and remediation techniques have been used in the U.S. in recent years to expedite the cleanup of brownfield sites. In the United States, investigation and cleanup of brownfields sites typically involves state environmental agencies in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Together local and national governments can provide technical help and funding for the assessment and cleanup of designated sites. As for Union, Technical Assistance for Brownfields has been in contact to identify potential funding sources and contractors for the community to help the process of revitalization.

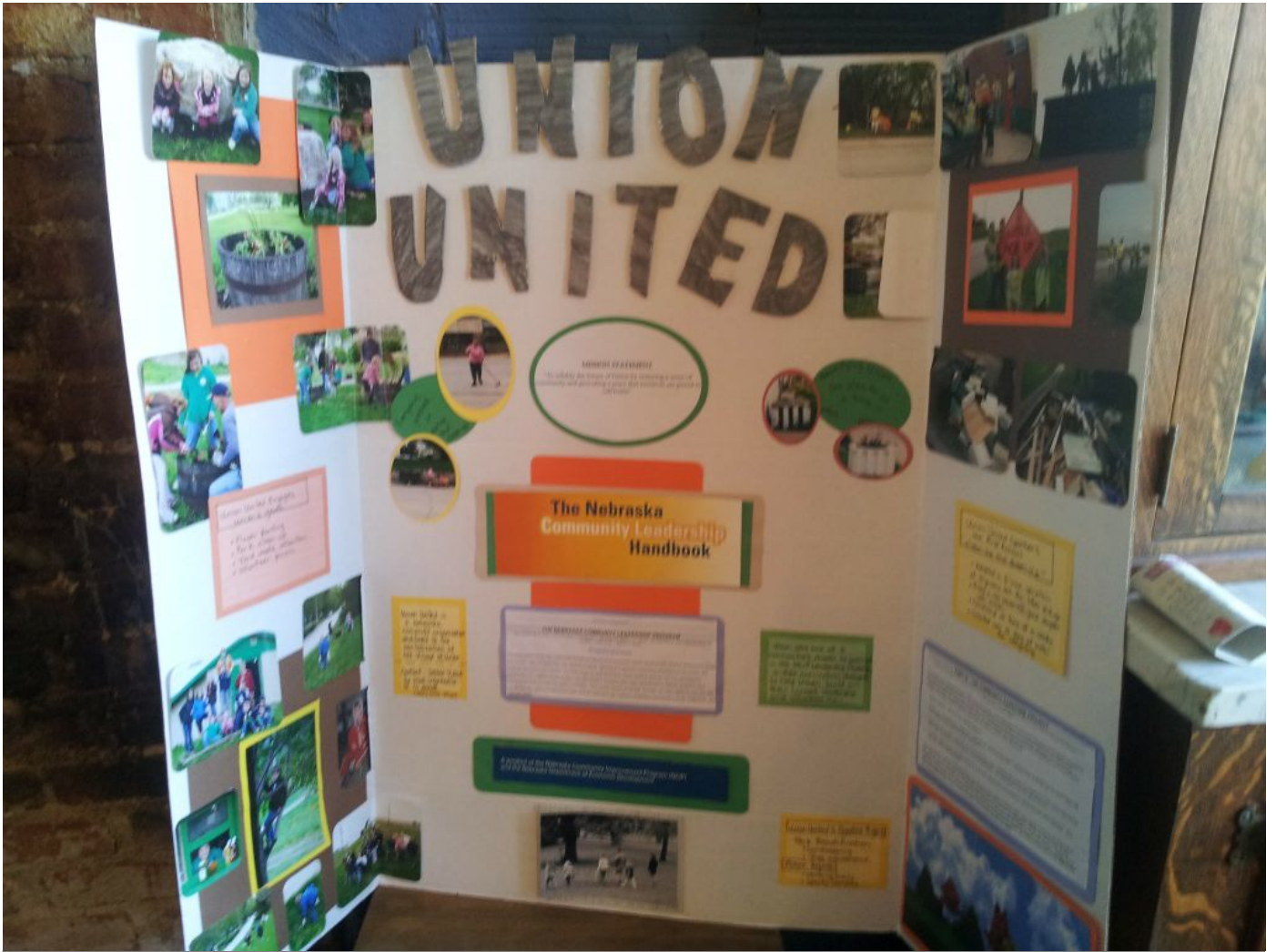
Previously in Figure 7, is a photograph taken of how Union, NE is functioning around a main street that is a brownfield site.

Most buildings along Main Street are abandoned but owned by individuals in town. In the chapter titled Elements of Importance under detailed assessment, I mention the importance of stakeholders. This assessment process aided me in obtaining the necessary results of privately owned structures along Main Street. With the majority of buildings being abandoned this offers an array of possibilities for future development. For example, the Main Street program in Ardmore, Oklahoma, offers façade grants of up to \$1,000 and a paint grant of \$100 to induce owners to make improvements to their buildings. Certain case studies of local municipalities that I included in my report aid and support the development of revitalizing one of 10,466 streets named Main Street in the United States.

Figure 8: Panorama photograph looking east on “Main Street” in the Village of Union, NE.

This is a panorama photograph taken north then west along Main Street in Union, Nebraska.
(Photo by Author, 2012).





VII. MAKING AN INITIATIVE LOCALLY

VII. Making an Initiative Locally

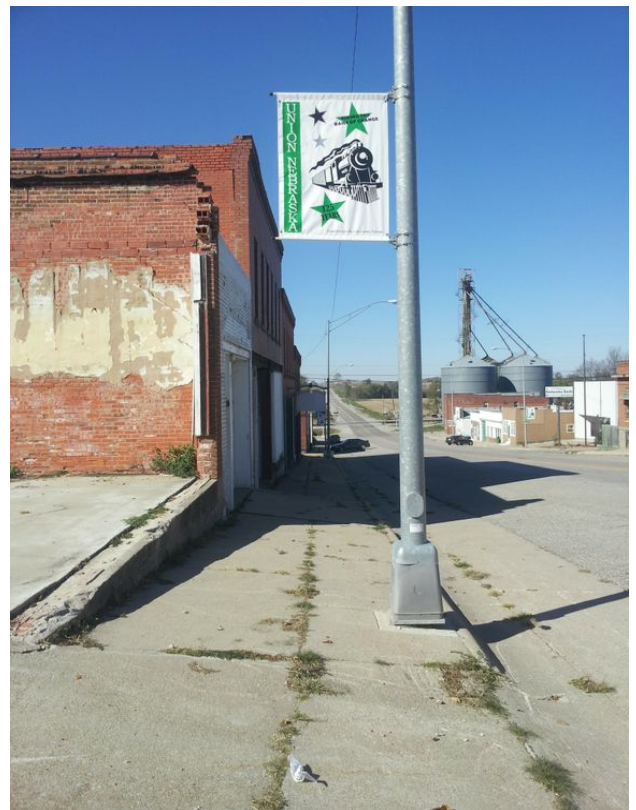
How do you get everyone in the community working toward the goal of revitalizing your main street? After meeting locally within the Village of Union, and creating a list of priorities, the result offered a decent turn out rate intended for a population of 234. This offered a guide to what the citizens were looking for and the niche it needs to turn around.

The tough work of building a consensus and getting in touch with TAB made it possible by using the common-sense formula of a volunteer driven program with an organizational structure of board and committees. It is these tireless volunteers who typically spearhead a successful revitalization effort, whether that work involves promotions on main street, fund raising for special projects, recruiting new business, applying for funds, or the day-to-day task of helping local entrepreneurs grow and prosper.

Promotions are a great way to sell the image of “Main Street” to potential investors and passersby. Union is beginning to use flags along its Main Street to show their character and history (see Figure 9).

This is a photograph illustrating outreach and history along Main Street.

Figure 9. Demonstrating outreach along Main Street (Photo by Author, 2012).



Many Main Street programs have launched effective promotional strategies that forge a positive image through advertising, special events, retail promotions, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers, usually with innovation and creativity.

Main Street Nebraska also called Heritage Nebraska is an official Main Street program that associates a network of communities across the state linked together through preservation based strategy for rebuilding the places and strengthening the businesses that make sustainable, vibrant, and unique communities. This program is in affiliation with the National Trust's Main Street Center, a community that is into the collective wisdom and experience of more than 1,500 communities in 43 state regional and urban programs. The center is the nation's largest full-service commercial district revitalization organization, and is among the premier in main street leadership, education and advocacy in the country. This organization could be appropriate for the Village of Union to become familiar with and introduce their road to success and at the same time generate possible funds for revitalization efforts. There are many ways of developing funds to initiate a redevelopment project it just involves organization, promotion, design and economic development. In this process I seek to facilitate funds from programs to assist TAB and other organizations by examining case studies for my report.

Design is how the citizens of Union must begin to develop their main street in proper physical shape to implement amenities and offer an incentive for passersby. An inviting atmosphere created through window displays, proper parking, signs, sidewalks, updated lighting systems, and proper landscaping can convey a visual impression of Main Street, what it is and what it may have to offer. Furthermore, this offers a lasting impression that physiologically forces passersby to travel at slower speeds, creating a safer environment for shopping, lingering, and outdoor activities.

As I mentioned above many local Main Street programs have orchestrated amazing transformations of their districts through innovative tools and incentives for revitalization. Previously mentioned was the town of Ardmore, Oklahoma, which offered grants to improve their buildings and the appearance to generate a more inviting design.

Revitalizing Main Street promotes many things for Union but primarily an economic restructuring. Helping existing enterprises expand and recruiting new ones, such as a service station or restaurant, will help the Main Street system grow and expand. A single statement that exemplifies the importance of Main Streets was stated by Suzanne Dane (1997), “Main Street programs help convert unused space into productive property and sharpen the competitiveness of merchants and other business owners.”

Along with organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring, the National Trust for Historic Preservation discusses eight principles that become associated with every redevelopment process. They are discussed below:

1). Comprehensive

Recognizing that commercial district revitalization is a complex process requiring a simultaneous, comprehensive strategy, each successful Main Street program has used a variety of tools and strategies to turn their communities around.

2). Incremental

Each successful Main Street program has learned that baby steps come before walking. Basic, simple activities lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the revitalization process and help members of the community develop skills to tackle more complex problems and ambitious projects.

3). Self Help

Local leaders in all communities that have revitalized Main Streets in the United States have demonstrated the will and desire to mobilize local resources. That means convincing residents and business owners alike of the rewards for investing their time and money to maintain Main Street as the heart of the community.

4). Partnership

When developing and redeveloping, both public and private sectors become involved to take an important stake in these commercial districts. Partnership means that all those with a vested interest in the district are contributing time, money, and expertise to maintain a sustainable Main Street. Each partnership is unique when it comes to success stories but each partnership will respond to its local challenges and opportunities.

5). Assets

With each Main Street having history to set a background for them in their future it also gives residents a sense of belonging and something to appreciate. This allows them to capitalize on unique assets they already may have such as distinctive buildings, shop owners, and the constant traffic from U.S. 34.

6). Quality

Each Main Street was built to last, and local revitalization from the Village of Union ensures continuing a long life for their district through top quality community involvement, whether through renovation, new construction, public improvements, business recruitment, or marketing campaigns. The involvement and leadership of the programs will demonstrate a high standard of quality that will have to be set for every aspect of the commercial district.

7). Change

In almost every revitalization process there will be a skeptic, who turns into a believer. At the beginning of every stage in revitalization money is the concern. This generates skeptics, which create a major shift in involvement. Change in attitude in almost every project takes time, but eventually most towns see a major shift in their Main Street's use, purpose, and future.

8). Implementation

When most communities began Main Street programs, they already had enough plans to last them into the next century. What we need to focus on in the Village of Union, NE is the focus on future planning while simultaneously creating visible change and activity from day one.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development calls the National Trust's Main Street program's "one of the most successful economic development strategies in the United States" (NHTP, 2012, para. 2)

Cumulatively, the 1,200 communities that have taken part in the Main Street program have generated \$5.87 billion in new investment, with a very impressive average of \$30.02 billion in new investment for every dollar used to support local downtown revitalization efforts. Participating towns and cities have also witnessed a net gain of more than 115,000 new jobs and 33,000 new businesses, as well as the rehabilitation of more than 34,000 commercial buildings (NHTP, 2011).

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program has tracked the economic impact of historic preservation and retaining community character from 1980 to date and reflects activity in over 1,650 communities.

Being a Main Street community means implementing a comprehensive economic revitalization effort, which is based upon the Main Street Approach:

- A. Organization - Building partnerships to create a consistent economic development and revitalization strategy. Diverse groups, merchants, bankers, educators, public officials, the chamber of commerce, and civic groups must work together to improve the community.

- B. Promotion - Re-establishing the community's image as a compelling place for shoppers, investors, and visitors. This means not only improving sales but also sparking community excitement and involvement. Promotions can range from street festivals to retail merchandising, from community education to aggressive public relations.
- C. Design - Enhancing the visual quality and image of the community. Attention must be paid to all elements of the business district not just buildings and storefronts, but also public improvements, rear entries, signs, landscaping, window displays, etc.
- D. Economic Restructuring - Strengthening the existing economic assets of the business district while diversifying its economic base. Activities include recruiting new businesses to provide a balanced retail mix, converting vacant buildings into housing, offices, entertainment or cultural facilities, and sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants.

(Eppley, 2012) <Retrieved from <http://volunteer.truist.com/bvu.html>>



VIII. TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VIII. Transportation and Economic Development

Why is transportation so important to main street? Transportation networks (such as local streets, county roads and state and federal highways) and transportation modes (such as air, rail, boat, bus, automobile, bike and foot) tie a community together and link it to other communities. Streets provide safe and reliable access to work, schools, shopping and residences. The livelihood of a community depends on how goods and services are imported or exported, thus there is a strong connection between main street viability and transportation networks.

The relationship of main streets and transportation can be viewed in terms of access management. Access management is a set of strategies that are intend to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic by reducing congestion and decreasing the number of accidents while simultaneously preserving community character through land use planning and site design. Access management can also promote economic development and protect the public's investment in the transportation network system.

Upon review of the general importance of main street's and transportation to the viability of a community, it is helpful to look at how other communities have also examined the use of access management, and in doing so I created an outline for identifying where they are and where they would like to go.

In the text "Main Street Success Stories", a useful reference in the development of my research, I identified similar instances where goals and revitalization efforts were used to examine the condition of their main street, similar to what the Village of Union did on August 3, 2012.

A Main Street Success Story

Pottsville, Pennsylvania's CBD Revitalization Goals and Recommendations:

Pottsville, Pennsylvania critically examined the condition of their Main Street in the Central Business District (CBD) section of their comprehensive plan. As part of the city's new Main Street program, a survey of downtown shoppers, residents and local business owners was conducted. The results of this survey were used to help the City design an effective Main Street program that targets the CBD's weaknesses and attempts to build on its strengths. The following are some important highlights of the preliminary findings. The list has been modified to reflect some general concerns as they apply to Main Street. (Dane, 1997, 131)

Similar to the survey results below, it's easy to identify a relationship between the two locations. Improving downtown, empty storefronts, safety, preservation and high numbers of vacancy all correlate with each other offering the stakeholders vital information on development goals and recommendations.

Survey Results from Pottsville, PA:

- Building renovations and business recruitment efforts have improved the downtown in recent years.
- The spirit of partnership that exists between business owners and the City is one of downtown Pottsville's major strengths.
- Empty storefronts, perceptions about a parking problem and a feeling among some people that nothing has really changed are still significant concerns.
- The following are perceived as assets in the downtown area:
 - Public safety and crime prevention efforts
 - Relations between business and local financial institutions
 - Pedestrian and traffic circulation
 - Historic preservation
- The following are perceived as weaknesses in the downtown area:
 - The need for more enhancement of public spaces
 - Empty buildings and vacant storefronts
 - Lack of attractions that appeal to various age groups
 - Availability of convenient parking

(Dane, 1997, p.132)

Economic development and transportation are closely linked. Economic development stimulates transportation demand by increasing the number of workers commuting to and from work, customers traveling to and from services areas, and products being shipped between producers and consumers. Additional demand can then trigger the need for transportation improvements. Improvements, which decrease transportation costs and increase safety, may, in turn, stimulate further economic development.

Transportation improvements do not guarantee increased economic development. To increase economic development, an improvement needs to decrease transportation costs or make transportation more reliable and dependable. A proper economic climate must also exist, as well as other support services. With these factors in place, transportation improvements can become catalysts for economic expansion on main street. While this issue concentrates heavily on freight and passenger vehicle issues related to economic development, NDOR recognizes that economic development cannot come at the expense of our environment or quality of life.

Economic development is a broad concept referring to the material aspects of community welfare. There are numerous facets of development: growth in income and wealth, equitable distribution of income, decreased infant mortality rates, increased literacy rates, and other indicators of the "quality of life" in a community or a state. However, one consistent factor in any consideration of development is economic growth, in relation to the excess amount of continual traffic through Union. This section examines the link between transportation and economic growth.

A. Statistical Evaluation

Good transportation facilities support economic growth and development by lowering the transport costs of users of the transportation network. Direct user benefits are reductions in travel and commute times, fuel consumption, increased reliability, and increased safety in the movement of people and goods. As users' transportation costs are reduced, and resources are freed for other purposes.

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) completed a transportation study of Union, NE in 2010. The results were promising, presenting abundant statistics for a town in

need of repair. The NDOR collected a traffic count at the junction of US34 and US75 east of Union in 2010. The volumes collected in 2011 were affected by flooding along the Missouri River. However, it was discussed that previous data should be similar to data collected in 2010. At the north leg of junction US34 & US75 the data was collected by studying Average Daily Trips or (ADT), which concluded 4 evaluations totaling= 4320 ADT. In addition, also included in the statistics were the evaluation of heavy truck ADT= 385 (the 385 is included in the 4320). This is also included in each evaluation for the reason that this is a major highway in the United States commonly used by commercial transportation.

-The south leg of Union at junction US34 and US75: ADT=4370, and a count of heavy truck ADT=500.

-The west leg of Union at US34 and US75: ADT=1730, and the heavy truck ADT=235.

-The final evaluation was done just west of Union near Main Street on US34: ADT=1555, and a heavy truck ADT=210.

(NDOR, 2010)

No information is available on the origin or destination of the vehicles evaluated in the study. However, as I stated in section IV, the average commute time to work is 27.3 minutes (City Data, 2010) Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Union-Nebraska.html>.

As I previously discussed, businesses within the Village will directly benefit when the citizens impact on local economic development improvements within Union. In addition, both businesses and individual's benefit when their travel times and costs are decreased. Besides the inherent value of increased mobility, individuals can benefit from increased employment options as their range of feasible commuting is expanded and becomes a noticeable place for passersby to become familiar with. At the same time, the supply of labor to area employers increases as more potential employees fall within their commuting range. It is also common in small towns such as Union to see a decreasing return rate as adolescents attend and graduate college. However, Union, NE has a positive outlook on residents residing within Union, illustrating a low age rate populating households within the village.

According to City Data:

The median age in the village was 36.1 years. 26.6% of residents were under the age of 18; 6.5% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 26.5% were from 25 to 44; 30.1% were from 45 to 64; and 10.3% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the village was 55.4% male and 44.6% female ("City Data", 2010). <Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Union-Nebraska.html>>

There are also indirect effects of the transportation system on economic growth. These secondary effects may include the expansion of existing businesses as reduced transport costs result in greater profitability and/or increased market share. This can lead to increased employment and incomes as businesses grow. Furthermore, economic activity may expand as these growing businesses in turn demand more raw materials and components from their suppliers. Finally, retail and service businesses can grow as employees spend their additional incomes.

It is widely recognized that wise transportation investments and economic development are mutually reinforcing processes. Superior transportation facilities support economic growth, which then leads to more travel, movements of goods and passersby, which in turn leads to an increased demand for transportation facilities such as gas stations and revitalization along main street.

Tourists that use this U.S. highway as a mode of transportation depend on timely and convenient connection throughout their travel. In response to the statistics backing this major highway, and if the connections are seamless, then tourists will be encouraged to travel more widely and return more often or utilize amenities implemented to intrigue not only citizens of Union but tourism related travel. This would lead to more tourism related business in the Village of Union, more employment opportunities in those businesses, and more indirect economic benefits as those local businesses purchase goods and services in Nebraska.

Tourists use higher volume interstates, state highways and lower volume roads as they travel to rural vacation spots as we see along US 34 and US 75. A highway network that minimizes travel times and costs makes tourist travel easier and cheaper, thereby encouraging more of it and freeing tourist dollars for other expenditures in the state, but will also encourage return visits.

Transportation is considered as an essential part of human life and backbone of national, regional and local economy. Deprived rural regions are always struggling from services and facilities aspects due to their remote and scattered locations. Transportation is a tool, which can mitigate rural regional problems by providing proper accessibilities and links to employment, health, education and services. “Transportation planning surveys are appropriate tools to collect relevant data for sustainable development of remote regions and backward communities” (Haghshenas & Vaziri, 2012; Black, 1996, pg.1).



IX. PRECEDENT STUDY

IX. Precedent Study

Certain communities have captured rich renovations that stand out as a model for other rural towns facing enormous obstacles in their fight to revitalize the heart of their communities, their Main Streets. Using these precedent studies or success stories helped understand the source of their problems and how it has helped their communities grapple with the changes in the new sustainable amenities that is impinging on similar downtowns. Understand that these communities have large differences among populations but the impact that these case studies offered a way to gather knowledge and unique characters of how each community began a course of action that drove them one step closer to revitalizing their main street systems.

These case studies were derived from “Main Street Success Stories” written by Suzanne G. Dane (1997). The criteria for choosing these success stories were evaluated by the use of local programs with well-rounded, volunteer-driven revitalization initiatives that employ the basic principles of the Main Street Approach and have achieved long-term success and sustainability.

The importance of these case studies are research that focuses on and gathers in-depth information about communities offering an understanding to the Village of Union, NE about what possibilities are available for Main Street as well as the importance. This offers explanations as to why certain characteristics of reinvestment and rehabilitation along “Main Streets” in America demonstrate outstanding economic progress. It covered key principles the Main Street Revitalization program can use to formulate a rehabilitation process appropriate for the Village of Union, NE.

Ardmore, Oklahoma “In Main Street We Trust”

In the beginning according to Maureen Realty (2009), “...The advent of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1887 marked the beginning of Ardmore. It was named by Santa Fe Railroad agents after Ardmore, Pennsylvania, which had been named after Ardmore By-the-Sea, Ireland and means ‘high-point’ for it’s lighthouse” (p.3).

- **Problem:** Empty, boarded up store fronts, grass-choked sidewalks, and a decayed infrastructure led many of Ardmore’s citizens to think that tearing down the businesses would be the best plan.
- **Solution:** Sheryl Ellis, a downtown Main Street member of the design committee illustrated the image of a “town full of visionaries”, enabling it to become a notable Main Street town in 1989. Figure 10, below, is Ardmore, OK today revitalized and redeveloped.



This is Ardmore, OK present day after the revitalization of their Main Street.

Figure 10. Present Day Ardmore, Oklahoma (Ardmore, OK, 2010).

- **Process:** This began through positive media coverage, advertising, volunteer groups and grants from façade paintings estimated a \$600,000 loan pool; allocated the beginning of free technical assistance programs. Developing a Main Street Authority enabled Ardmore, OK to continually generate funds to support and continue the process of revitalizing their downtown still to the present day. Below are Tables 1 and 2, explaining the community profile and overall economic activity.

Community Profile	Information
Organization	Ardmore Main Street Authority
Location	Ardmore, Oklahoma
Population	30,000
Year Started	1989
Type	Nonprofit

Table 1. Ardmore, Oklahoma’s community profile (Dane, 1997, p.20).

Economic Activity	Information
Financial Reinvestment	\$10,911,657
Number of Rehabilitations	160
Net New Businesses	76
Net New Jobs	138
Vacancy Rate at Start	9%
Vacancy Rate Today	1%
Average Rental Rates at Start	\$3/square foot
Average Rental Rates Today	\$5.50/square foot

Table 2. Ardmore, Oklahoma’s economic activity as of 1997 (Dane, 1997, p.20).

Conrad, Iowa “The Little Town That Could”

Conrad, a town of just 970 people, has achieved successes as a bedroom community closer in size to Union. They discovered their problems, and implemented it with a passion that became pervasive among its citizens and visitors. However, there was nothing considerably wrong with Conrad before it became a Main Street town. Primarily there just wasn't much happening, which is common among small rural towns of this size.

- A) **Problem:** People weren't moving into town, and storefronts were substantially dull.
- B) **Solution:** A task force was formed to discover the process of the “Main Street Approach” to introduce new ideas to the community. Figure 11, below, is how the Main Street in Conrad, Iowa is functioning today.



This photo demonstrates the revitalization efforts that transformed the Main Street in Conrad, Iowa.

Figure 11. Present day Conrad, Iowa (Conrad, Iowa, 2011)

- **Process:** As stated above a task force was formed to prepare an application for Iowa's Main Street program thus providing grants and strategic plans for maintaining and expanding their businesses. In relation to Union, NE, Conrad extended a volunteer offer to Iowa State University to deliver strategic planning services customized to revitalize the footprint for their Main Street program. Below are Tables 3 and 4, explaining the community profile and overall economic activity.

Community Profile	Information
Organization	Conrad Main Street
Location	Conrad, Iowa
Population	970
Year Started	1989
Type	Nonprofit

Table 3. Conrad, Iowa's community profile (Dane, 1997, p.40).

Economic Activity	Information
Financial Reinvestment	\$338,381
Number of Rehabilitations	19
Net New Businesses	22
Net New Jobs	3
Vacancy Rate at Start	15%
Vacancy Rate Today	1%
Average Rental Rates at Start	\$2.75/square foot
Average Rental Rates Today	\$2.75/square foot

Table 4. Conrad, Iowa's economic activity as of 1997 (Dane, 1997, p.40).

Peabody, Kansas “Main Street Rises from the Ashes of Adversity”

What was largely vacant, crumbling in disrepair, and had weeds growing in the majority of its sidewalks was a ghost town in Kansas known as Peabody. This town had a Main Street similar to Unions, which lays crumbling in disrepair. Auctions and fund raising were initiated to offer support and focus group to involve citizens within the community.

- **Problem:** A historic town that had fallen into disrepair at the turn of the century to a virtual ghost town by the 1980s.
- **Solution:** Ruth and Larry Bull former citizens of Wichita, KS brought with them knowledge of the Main Street Approach. First and foremost, as most organizations should do, is target statewide programs that initiates grants for such projects. Figure 12, below, is a photograph of completely renovated town through outstanding revitalization initiatives.



This photograph allows you to better understand the importance of initiatives and efforts behind developing groups to help revitalize a virtual ghost town.

Figure 12. Present day Peabody, Kansas (Dane, 1997, p.117).

- **Process:** With little reliance on statewide organizations Peabody chose to use funds grossed from auctions that were done within the community to strictly use for revamping their Main Street. Some items include: college and pro football tickets, golf passes, miscellaneous items, and works of art. The winner of the auction could buy or assist in raising funds for a memorial brick walkway along their street system that embraced the slogan, “Take Stock in Your Community”. In addition, this town achieved additional assistance by using newspaper articles, television commercials, and flyers at tourist centers. Below are Tables 5 and 6, explaining the community profile and overall economic activity.

Community Profile	Information
Organization	Peabody Main Street Association
Location	Peabody, KS
Population	1,410
Year Started	1988
Type	Nonprofit

Table 5. Peabody, Kansas’s community profile (Dane, 1997, p.116).

Economic Activity	Information
Financial Reinvestment	\$1,740,547
Number of Rehabilitations	87
Net New Businesses	10
Net New Jobs	27
Vacancy Rate at Start	30%
Vacancy Rate Today	0%
Average Rental Rates at Start	\$.12/square foot
Average Rental Rates Today	\$.16/square foot

Table 6. Peabody, Kansas’s economic activity as of 1997 (Dane, 1997, p.116).

Pontiac, Illinois “Pontiac’s Second Rebellion”

Similar to Union, NE is the location of Pontiac, Illinois. Located just off Interstate 55 and historic Route 66, is a county seat now known for its current services, agriculture, manufacturing and retail businesses. As large retail began to construct near the location of Route 66, Pontiac began losing big and small businesses drastically.

- **Problem:** Decrease in revenue and economic development due to new construction along a major highway. Thus, producing problems for business owners in Pontiac, Illinois.
- **Solution:** Merchants and business owners worked with the city to cast a comprehensive solution targeting the Main Street system of downtown revitalization. The photograph below in Figure 13, illustrates how Pontiac, Illinois advanced on economic development to redevelop their Main Street.



This photograph demonstrates the efforts that a community put forth to revitalize their central business district.

Figure 13. Present day Pontiac, Illinois (PROUD, 2010, p.23).

Process: With no statewide organization assisting them, Pontiac created “Pontiac Redeveloping Our Downtown” of PROUD in 1988. This is a nonprofit organization that reaps the benefits of tax increment financing and membership dues paid by businesses, individuals and industries. To get this program started, PROUD contracted with the National Main Street Center for a three-year term. This offered a grant that revitalized their town into what it is today. In addition, PROUD is still used today as an organization that helps other towns begin the process of revitalization. I believe this would be an excellent organization for Union to follow as an assistance program for their revitalization process. If you look below at Tables 7 and 8, you can see the outcomes that this town has achieved through this process.

Community Profile	Information
Organization	Pontiac Redeveloping Our United Downtown
Location	Pontiac, Illinois
Population	11,428
Year Started	1988
Type	Nonprofit

Table 7, Pontiac, Illinois’s community profile (Dane, 1997, p.120).

Economic Activity	Information
Financial Reinvestment	\$5,344,126
Number of Rehabilitations	25
Net New Businesses	68
Net New Jobs	72
Vacancy Rate at Start	24%
Vacancy Rate Today	2%
Average Rental Rates at Start	\$3/square foot
Average Rental Rates Today	\$3.60/square foot

Table 8, Pontiac, Illinois’s economic activity as of 1997 (Dane, 1997, p.120).

Evaluation Process

After reviewing Main Street success stories, there are certain criteria that benefit the success of economic restructuring within each town. The differences in criteria differ greatly; however, the four selected success stories all created a sustainable commercial district from what was previously depressed and neglected. This collection of success stories was chosen for evaluation because they compare to Union by illustrating proper amenities, infrastructure, size, organization and lasting economic stability. In the following text, I discuss in detail reasons why main streets have implemented such details in their development process and what common infrastructure would be a beneficial addition to propose to the Village of Union, NE as an important edition to main street to capture passersby on US 34.



X. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Successful main street revitalization begins with a vision. With the help of community involvement and current organizations comes the process of implementation. The four point Main Street Approach, also discusses the importance of design. Without proper design implementations provided by the fundamental organizations and proper promotions within the community, economic restructuring may not occur. Creating design guidelines with proper amenities entices passersby to approach, stimulating economic development and a sustainable future.

Each substantial piece of infrastructure implemented in a successful main street redevelopment has its own constructive aspect in regards to the revitalization process. There are many different approaches to supporting these organizations responsible for their success. The primary item in common among the given success stories were proper design guidelines. They establish a shared idea of how alterations to properties and new development fit in with the existing and desired appearance and character of the community.

Maintaining a design scheme for any business district can enhance its existing physical assets and minimize its detractions. Design can serve to improve the district's appearance and unify diverse elements and strengthen its image as a cohesive area, providing balance between variation and consistency (Holdsworth, 1985).

Design guidelines begin by using elements from our own communities to establish our own authentic character. This helps guide Union to think about renovations, improvements, and new construction that maintains the historic feel of their business district.

Storefront Revitalization

Storefront revitalization does not have to mean expensive, authentic restoration; very often all the features for a handsomely designed façade exist, just waiting to be discovered or enhanced. In Ardmore, Oklahoma, their organization began by simply painting doors and trim with accent colors and proceeding to more complex and costly tasks gradually. In most cases the original design, its materials, windows and details provide the clues to successful revitalization.

In Union, many unstable buildings are constructed using materials such as brick and concrete. Brick is actually one of the most environmentally friendly and efficient building materials on the market today. Not only is it an excellent insulator, its extremely durable and long lasting, and requires little to no waste when manufacturing. Recycled brick can be just as useful as newly manufactured brick. Recycling brick is an excellent alternative for Union; it promotes the use of current materials and eliminates unnecessary use of funds. In addition, it is common for most Main Street organizations to require the use of existing materials in some fashion to benefit the architectural character of main street revitalization. A company by the name of Earth 911 specializes in the reuse of bricks in new development processes. They claim, “Used brick is becoming more and more sought after because of its unique and aged look, as well as its historic appeal in revitalization” (Earth 911, 2011) <Retrieved from <http://earth911.com/>.>

In addition, bricks are a very durable material. Once they are built they remain weatherproof and age proof. Bricks don't age like similar man-made materials, so the material requires virtually no upkeep or repairs. Bricks don't rust or erode, rot or decay, bend, twist or warp. They are a great protector in extreme climates and provide an excellent material in construction as they have for ages.

Another key material beneficial in the revitalization and development process of Main Street is concrete from dilapidated buildings. Similar to the reuse of brick, concrete is also a common material in the construction process of historic buildings. By eliminating the cost of removing old concrete and factoring in savings on disposal costs, potential use of recycled materials, and potential road damage from transport of virgin or waste materials, some Main Street organizations such as Pontiac, IL have estimated savings of up to 50% to 60% from using recycled concrete versus buying new concrete.

Concrete and brick recycling is a great way to make further use of materials that would otherwise have an adverse affect on the environment. What was once considered rubble is now a valuable tool for an eco-friendly and sustainable Main Street revitalization process. Figure 14 shows an example of how Pontiac, IL reused bricks and concrete to redevelop their Main Street façade to continue with the historic framework of their design guidelines.



Figure 14: The reuse of brick to rebuild structures and maintain architectural style in Pontiac, Illinois (PROUD, 2010).

Storefronts

Commercial architecture on Main Street, no matter what period or style, is made up of three basic segments: storefront, upper façade, and cornice (Holdsworth, 1985). Main Street in Union, NE consists of both storefronts and upper façade. The storefront at the pedestrian level is designed to display consumer goods.

Robert Inwood, a main street developer states,

The lower portion of the storefront usually consists of a short 'knee wall' which supports the picture windows. Doors are often inset, largely to prevent them from swinging into the faces of passing pedestrians. At the same time, an inset door allows additional display glass. The transom area, over the doors and windows, can be given a variety of opaque or translucent finish (Inwood, 1986).

This consistent architectural style offers a considerable amount of indirect lighting for store interiors along the main street in Union. Additionally, the upper façade of buildings can be utilized as additional offices, meetings rooms, living quarters, or merchant space. According to *Main Street Success Stories*, "upper façade detailing includes window openings, window surrounds, and surface treatments that are variously plain or elaborate, depending on the their period of construction" (Dane, 2011, p.14). Main Street in Union, NE consists of primarily of commercial one-story buildings, which can present a positive characteristic in regards to funding and revitalization costs. Basic components previously mentioned can increase costs dramatically when considerable amounts of restoration or artistic work becomes involved in the redevelopment process.

Among the selected Main Street success stories the cornice is one of the main components to grasp the consumer's attention to benefit the community. According to *The Anatomy of a Main Street Building*, "Cornice is the projecting elements at the top of a wall" (Houser, 2011, p.34). Robert Inwood states, "The results in demonstrating positive consistent commercial change are signals that a new life is breathed into the downtown" (Holdsworth, 1985, p.54). In the revitalization process of Main Street in Union, NE it will be important to develop a similar consistency among the commercial buildings along Main Street. Again ways to understand the buildings previous character is by locating past photographs commonly in black and white print. This provides a rough sense and understanding of relative proportions when developing an architectural style. Discussed in the case studies for successful revitalizations was the solution for façade paintings in the town of Ardmore, OK. Their Main Street Authority mentioned, "That simple color additions to highlight architectural features and harmonizing elements will demonstrate a clean successful addition to the community and visitors" (MSA, 2012).

GOAL 1: Encourage a renovation project that retains elements of the original commercial façade.

STRATEGY 1.1.A: Work towards removal of dilapidated buildings while reusing beneficial materials to control costs of commercial renovation and meet funding requirements. In addition, create an inviting Main Street commercial district with consistent forms of architecture aimed at making a storefront commercial district more attractive and noticeable to passersby.

In relation to successful Main Street projects I propose a list derived from Main Street Redevelopment written by the Kansas Department of Economic Development specifically targeting Main Streets. The list below describes key items to consider in regards to redevelopment of Main Street in Union, NE;

To emphasize a feeling of containment a storefront on a Mainstreet should set back slightly (6" to 12") from the front. Indenting the storefront any deeper will remove it from pedestrian activity.

As discussed before most storefronts have a recessed door. Recessing the entry door creates a physiological feeling of intimate, inviting entry while keeping the display windows close to the sidewalk for easing viewing.

The most important part of the storefront is the display windows. They should be designed to be as large as possible. These windows attract people to the storefront therefore they should be transparent so the displays and interior are clearly visible. With this limited barrier between the store and the sidewalk they become one, inviting the shopper in.

Decoration, architecture, patterns, textures, and signs are very key elements of the revitalization process. However, because the entry door and windows are so important other elements should be simple and unobtrusive. The passerby should look through the storefront not at it.

(KDED, 1983, p.71)

Finally, the selection of material is important as I previously discussed when planning a storefront remodeling or renovation project. Keeping in mind the windows and door are most important, incompatible material combinations or sloppy design installation can destroy the appearance of an otherwise pleasing design. The problem becomes evident

at the edges where the storefront touches the upper façade or an adjacent building. The joint between storefronts should have a neat and controlled appearance.

The construction of the new buildings is encouraged. New construction must be considered throughout Main Street because of the current state of the building. The new building(s) should look new but also enhance and respect the surrounding structures. Since each site is different there are not specific guidelines that can be developed without proper community involvement and consensus. There are however general ideas I listed below that make a new façade contribute to the existing structures and the district.

Height: The commercial buildings in the district should share a similar height, whether its meets the zoning requirements or consistency of currently constructed buildings.

Width: The new building should reflect the characteristic façade width of other structures. Again, whether it meets the zoning requirements or consistency of currently constructed buildings.

Proportion: The relationship between height and width of façades should be considered.

Relationship to Street: The new building should have a consistent setback in relation to its neighboring buildings.

Roof Form: The roof form should be similar to adjacent buildings. Most buildings along main streets have a flat roof not visible on the front façade.

Composition: The components of the façade consisting of cornices, doors, and windows should be similar to that of surrounding structures as I previously discussed.

Rhythm: The window spacing and display window spacing that is evident through the block should be incorporated into the new structure.

Proportion of Openings: The size of window and door openings should be similar to those on surrounding façades.

Materials: The new building material should be constructed of material that will compliment the adjacent structure.

Color: The colors chosen for the new building should be compatible with surrounding colors.

In conclusion, the most important characteristic is quality. If the design, construction, and maintenance of the façade exhibit craftsmanship and pride, then the facade is an asset to its surroundings and the district as a whole.



XI. SIGNAGE

Signs are both a blessing and curse for Main Streets. They provide useful characteristics and variety to the environment. If they become too numerous, oversized or poorly designed they can create confusion, obscure the character of the architecture, and destroy the image of a small town trying to revitalize to a sustainable community.

Sign Control

Many communities have adopted ordinances to control the size, type and placement of signs. In Union if sign ordinances are not enacted, it may be necessary to hold a committee to enact a compliance with the Main Street merchants to a set of guidelines that are equally effective by improving the image of "Main Street". Signs should have a compatible size, design, color, and placement among the building. According to *Reviving Main Street*, "...five percent of the façade area is a good rule of thumb for signs projecting from the building" (Craycroft, 1982, p.117). Back lighted plastic signs, manufacturer's signs, and portable signs should be avoided altogether (Craycroft, 1982, p.174).

An important starting point for a downtown revitalization program is often the repair and maintenance of well-designed signs to capitalize on new development. Whether maintenance, repair or new design is needed, sign improvements can quickly and dramatically enhance downtowns visual qualities, because signs are fairly easy to install and inexpensive to construct or repair compared with their types of physical improvements. Sign improvements also illustrate the value of good quality of design and, thereby, help cultivate a positive climate for more design work. Cumulatively these small design projects improve the overall appearance of the district, thus strengthening its image and effectiveness to passersby.

The purpose of these strategies provides information on the design, construction, and placement of signs that enhance and deliver positive outcomes of economic development along main street.

This section consists of multiple goals and strategies to communicate the understanding of all concerns when it comes to sign usage.

GOAL 2: Utilize private signage that enhances the image of the individual business, the structure to which it is attached, and the Main Street district as a whole.

STRATEGY 2.1.A: Encourage business owners to install compatible yet distinctive signs.

This varies from building to building and business to business. Signs call attention to pedestrians, passersby and specific businesses by creating an individual image.

Understanding that most signs in the district will be distinctive to the individual business there must also be consideration that in some way the sign itself should complement the district as a whole. Buildings along a main street should be constructed to compliment a sign while reflecting both the materials and style of the façade as well as the character of the business.

Before designing a sign its purpose must be defined. Is it strictly for identification?

Should the individual personality of the store be reflected? Should information about products or services be provided? Should it attract a particular segment of the public?

Below are general items a business owner should consider to properly display a sign on a main street.

Reviving Main Street addresses:

Type: There're three different types of signs that are available to merchants. The 'word sign' identifies and describes the business. The 'symbol sign' uses a recognizable symbol to describe the business. An 'object sign' utilizes tools of the trade to identify a business.

Materials: Signs can be made from an array of materials such as wood, metal, plastic, stone, neon, canvas, paint on glass, paint on brick, and items involving etching. Among these materials the main factor should compliment the material of the façade.

Size: All signs should be clearly visible to the shopper. In addition, the sign should never dominate the façade. Its size, shape and proportions should fit the façade just as the door or window fits.

Location: The sign location is primarily determined by the façade design. Common locations among successful case studies that I have researched are under lower cornice, painted on the glass, on the side of the building, hanging

from the building, or on an awning flap in front of the building. The desired location should compliment the façade rather than compete with it.

Message: The message the sign conveys should be simple and to the point as it will be viewed by passersby and an environment accompanied by other written and visual messages.

Color: Similar to architectural appeal the colors of the sign should be compatible with the façade and adjacent structures. The best results are usually achieved by selecting a simple color scheme of three colors. In addition, keep in consideration that flashy colors will attract attention but in most cases it is negative attention.

Lighting: Lit signs on Main Street are effective after hours primarily for food and drinking establishments. It is also common to see lighted signs at service stations especially service stations along major interstates in rural areas.

Quality: The construction and workmanship of a quality business sign can benefit the district and business significantly. A simple, well-made sign is far more effective and attractive than an extravagant sign that is sloppy in appearance.

(Holdsworth, 1985, p.183)

STRATEGY 2.2.B: Propose a sign control ordinance.

It is a common strategy considered by successful main street projects to consider a sign ordinance if there isn't one already passed. As stated before signs are an integral part of the mainstreet district and can contribute to its overall image. As the central commercial district, signs belong to the community; without signs it would not be visually exciting or appealing.

I propose this ordinance with the intent to establish a sense of order to signing, not to prohibit it. This ordinance should not restrict creativity nor individuality but provide a framework within which graphic messages can be conveyed in a more beneficial manner.

GOAL 3: Utilize signs that are pedestrian oriented for a high volume of vehicles and pedestrians.

It is important for a merchant to display an identification sign that is visible to motorists.

Also it is important to remember that signs only function is to identify the business and its location. With high amount of average daily trips along US 34 additional information may be lost to passing motorists because they are more concerned with other activities that demand their attention. Important to the Village of Union, NE is that the physical layout of the district precludes shopping from a vehicle. Passersby must be separated from the vehicle and become a pedestrian before they become a potential customer. Three strategies listed below are effective considerations to business owners to identify their business to pedestrians and passersby.

STRATEGY 3.1.A: Use signs painted on display windows and doors.

STRATEGY 3.2.B: Implement signs under awnings.

STRATEGY 3.3.C: Use small distinctive overhanging signs.



XII. TRANSPORTATION

Union provides opportunities that most main streets don't necessarily have. The location of Main Street in Union, NE is located on a U.S. highway that connects tourists from the Rocky Mountains to the suburbs of Chicago, IL. Why is transportation so important to main streets? There are several reasons. Transportation networks such as local streets, county roads and state and federal highways tie a community together and link it to other communities and destinations. In Union, streets provide a reliable access to work, school, shopping and residences. The transportation network along Main Street can be known as a connection between other transportation networks. With sufficient amounts of average daily trips, the main street is an access management tool that will be the primary use to develop and maintain sustainable economic development along the central corridor.

Transportation needs and trends change. To accommodate current and future change, I propose a goal accompanied by a strategy that targets concerns among the importance and need of transportation along Main Street for the process of revitalization in Union, NE.

GOAL 4: Provide a safe and convenient traffic circulation system through Union, NE by capitalizing on passersby.

STRATEGY 4.1.A: Provide adequate use of the comprehensive plan to propose a safe and successful transportation system by improving signage, installing traffic calming devices, and suggested parking information for a successful Main Street.

Transportation signage is a way to direct and control vehicular by being recognizable by the motorist. In Union, NE, US 34 accommodates heavy truck traffic as well as passenger vehicle traffic. Changing the size, color, or design of stop signs, highway identification, speed limit signs, etc. is not permissible. However, updating the current sign to meet the Department of Transportation standards may improve the image of the district as well as make it more noticeable to passersby. An alternative is to mount standard traffic signs, being able to organize them in a controlled manner, and introducing a distinctive streetscape feature to the district.

To capitalize on this strategy I propose Union, NE conduct a visual inventory of all existing public signs in order to replace outdated or damaged signs, eliminate duplicate signs, combine messages, and install needed signs such as parking, and directional signs. Additionally, utilize the identification of entrance signage. Union, NE offers two main entry points that could identify the site to tourists who are unaware of the location. This site should be determined by the appropriate setting that would be visible to the motorist.

GOAL 5: Enhance the entries into the community to illustrate economic prosperity to passersby.

STRATEGY 5.1.A: Propose a plan to demonstrate incitement into the community by creating a landscape plan along US 34.

The appearance along the entries of these routes provides an initial impression of Union, NE to the visitor and sets the stage for a Main Street district itself. The success of these entries can be attributed to several factors, which include use of existing landmarks, the appearance and maintenance of existing properties, speed limits, and landscaping. Taken into consideration, these factors present the visitors of Union, NE with a positive appearance that becomes a lasting impression.

GOAL 6: Reduce speeds on through traffic.

STRATEGY 6.1.A: Propose traffic calming devices that captures passersby, reduce speeds of heavy truck traffic, and offer an accessible safe pedestrian friendly Main Street.

Traffic calming consists of measures put in place for the intention of slowing down traffic. I propose a successful traffic calming system along Main Street in Union, NE to capture passersby and reduce speeds of continuous daily traffic. According to Lockwood, "Bringing traffic calming to an area of high volumes of traffic can have many different impacts on travelers, residents, businesses, and neighborhoods but more importantly most traffic calming transportation routes become very successful" (Lockwood, 1998, p.16). Below I support my proposition for the use of traffic calming along Main Street with supporting text to understand the necessary use for high volumes of traffic on US 34.

According to Litman (2002),

Economic Revitalization and Property Values –Traffic calming can increase residential and commercial property values, which attract wealthier residents to the area (gentrification) and can increase retail sales and bring economic revitalization to a commercial corridor.

Attractiveness and Safety – Traffic calming creates more attractive environments, reduces auto speed, and increases safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and other users of the street, which is good for business. Additionally, it provides the opportunity for reuse of materials more importantly street pavers for pedestrian friendly access.

Sales and Attracting Customers – Traffic calming encourages local residents to buy in their own neighborhoods, and also attracts customers from a wider area due to reduced travel time, hassle, and cost. Traffic calming can also help people live less car-dependent lifestyles, which will increase the amount of discretionary income they can spend on things other than transportation.

Parking – Traffic calming offers a better opportunity for parking along major streets. In addition, it provides for a safe opportunity for visitors to maneuver their vehicle and an added opportunity for economic opportunities.

Impact on Employees – Traffic calming offers a pedestrian friendly alternative to providing employees a safer way to navigate to work, school, and home without the use of a vehicle.

Construction and Costs – Traffic calming projects often require only minimal “down time” for construction, and most do not require any investment from business owners.

(Litman, 2002, p.123)

Traffic calming can bring increases in economic productivity, employment, business activity, investment, and other kinds of economic development. Consumers place a premium on high-quality pedestrian environments such as pedestrian-oriented communities. Retail and employment, especially in rural areas, may become more economically competitive if walking conditions improve. “Pedestrianized commercial districts can be important for rural revitalization because they can help create a lively and friendly environment that attracts residents and visitors” (Litman, 2002, p.86).

Traffic calming in successful Main Street revitalization processes has used a variety of devices in order to slow traffic. These devices include speed bumps, speed humps, tabletop speed humps, and curb extensions containing landscaping. However, these

devices often result in the intention for many drivers to select an alternative route to their destination. For the Village of Union, NE, a community trying to capitalize on passersby, I believe there is alternate traffic calming devices that better support this revitalization process. After reviewing Chapter 4 of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, an idea was proposed to use pavers for pedestrian friendly access to Main Street. However, instead of the reuse of bricks that can be supplemented for the redevelopment processes of buildings, there is a company that provides an adequate alternative to extensive traffic calming. This company is called Traffic Calming USA; they deliver a synthetic asphalt material that replicates the appearance of bricks.

According to Traffic Calming USA,

TrafficPrint is hot-applied, stamped, synthetic asphalt surfacing material with the appearance of brick pavers that is ideally used for crosswalk treatments, sidewalks, medians and road delineation. TrafficPrint is quick to install and can be opened to vehicles and pedestrians in less than an hour.

This durable pavement solution is the eco-friendly choice for decorative surface treatments utilizing cutting edge and environmentally responsible components including natural resins, vegetable derived oils and recycled glass. The result is a product that resists fading and holds its pattern while having little environmental impact. Replicating the look of brick pavers, sometimes confused with stamped asphalt, the TrafficPrint material is colored throughout, resulting in a product that retains its pattern and resists fading even after years of exposure to nature's elements and high traffic. TrafficPrint maintains its fresh appearance, helping eliminate the need for costly and bothersome repairs.

(TrafficPrint, 2012)

The suggested use for this system is crosswalk treatments, intersections, sidewalks, medians, roundabouts, and road delineation demonstrated in Figure 15. This successful application has been used in streetscape projects as well as community revitalization projects. This alternative is proposed because it has been a successful alternative with quick installation.

Below is a list of product advantages to TrafficPrint,

- Quick Installations – average intersection finished in 1 1/2 days, preventing the need to shut down an entire intersection or road for weeks or even months at a time to do full depth construction Open to traffic in one hour or less after installation;
- Designed for high traffic volumes (60,000+ vehicles daily);
- High resistance to cracking and softening (won't rut or deform in shape, unlike asphalt);
- Two installation options available: Total Inlay (flush to surface); and Overlay (on top of surface) with 16 inch transitional keyways;
- Wide variety of colors, patterns and paving combinations;
- Withstands snowplows and is not affected by petroleum products or road salts;
- Paving options which are sensitive to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act);
- Eco-friendly natural and recycled components (TrafficPrint)

(TrafficPrint, 2012)

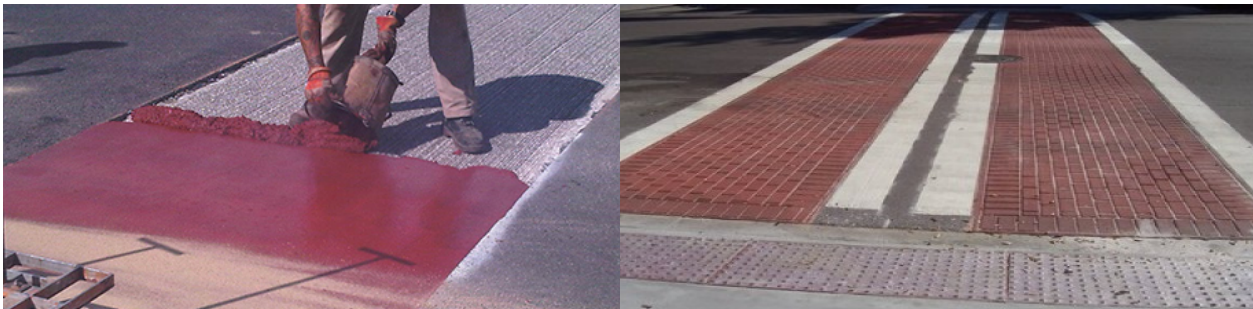


Figure 15: TrafficPrint being applied and utilized successfully as a traffic-calming device (TrafficPrint, 2012).



XIII. PARKING

GOAL 7: Propose a unified approach to a successful Main Street parking strategy.

STRATEGY 7.1.A: Propose a practical solution to parking along Main Street for passersby and residents, additionally identify ways to update and maintain parking systems in accordance to ADA regulations.

The planning, design and development of parking in small communities (see Figure 16) differs significantly from that in medium and large cities and is completely unlike that for suburban malls and shopping centers. Before a parking system can be managed effectively, the community must adopt a unified approach to planning and operation that constitutes for an effective travel route with a reasonable space allocated for parking.

With the shortage of personnel and financial support, how do parking plans and programs for downtown areas get done? In such cases, there must be volunteer effort to ensure that the plan is technically accurate and broad in scope, instead of limited to the wishes of special interest groups. In this scenario, volunteers are best used for basic



Figure 16: Main Street volunteer driven program demonstrating a successful parking strategy for a small community in Adams County Iowa (Adams Chamber, 2008).

data collection and field surveys such as parking inventories, parking occupancy, and turn over surveys. In the Parking Handbook Paducah, KY, for example, the Main Street board chairman organized a group of retired engineers to conduct parking surveys (Jackson, 1994, p.22).

Of all types of parking, angled parking has the highest incidence of accidents (Jackson, 1994). Studies have shown reductions of 19 to 63 percent in annual accident rates when angled parking has been eliminated (Jackson, 1994, p.22). In most cases these studies have led most state transportation departments to propose to eliminate angled parking on state routes. Given these facts, is there ever a reason to use on-street parking? The value of ample, convenient parking along Main Street is disputable, especially in Union, NE when walking distances are short. However, there are situations where angle parking is a viable consideration and can be implemented with minimal adverse results. I propose that Union, NE considers Main Street in Greenville, SC as an example of how they converted a four-lane street with parallel parking to two lanes with angled parking. The criteria below outlined from "Angle vs. Parallel Parking" by G.L. Fisher demonstrates conditions that should be followed if angled parking along US 34 should be reconsidered:

- 1) The street contains primarily local traffic, usually indicated by low traffic volumes and operating speeds of 15 to 20 miles per hour (mph).
- 2) The street is not a major through-route; a street of less than three to four miles is not usually a through-route.
- 3) The street is a through-route; but a nearby street can be used for through traffic instead, allowing the subject street to serve local traffic.
- 4) The street has sufficient width – 50 to 60 feet – to comfortably accommodate parking maneuvers.
- 5) The street is geared toward pedestrians and visitors, with substantial building density, zero lot line development and a critical mass of retail activity or through traffic.

(Fisher, 1994, p.38)

I would like to add that I propose that Main Street in Union does not implement a time limit on parking for the reason that this has an effect of discouraging consumers to have higher turnover rates restricting retail activity.

Handicapped Parking

Consider other necessities in relation to parking such as requirements for ADA accessible parking on street. More handicap spaces should be provided on street than are required in off-street parking facilities, with one space per block located in the most convenient location. The number and location depends on several factors, including the number of retail stores, the slope of the street, type of parking and primary destination of the user. The most practical locations for handicapped parking are at the street corners, adjacent to the alley entrance or at pedestrian crosswalks. Additionally, handicapped parking should be clearly marked. The American with Disabilities Act of 1992 stated that for every 1 to 100 spaces require 1 handicapped space for every 25 spaces (Fisher, 1994, p.35).

Parking Expansion

An easy way to categorize your results for the number of parking that is necessary for the location is by taking the average annual traffic and dividing that by the daily traffic results on the survey day, which will give you your factoring result (Parking Handbook, 1994, p.64). The following example illustrates it more clearly:

$$\frac{5000 \text{ vehicles/day}}{4500 \text{ vehicles on survey day}} \quad \text{Factor: 1.11}$$

50 vehicles survey/block X 1.11=55.5 or 56 would be reasonable for that block.

(Fisher, 1994, p.38)

Parking Design

Parking angles refer to the angle between the curb or wheel stop and the centerline of the parked vehicle. Angled parking is roughly 30 to 80 degrees and requires about 285 square feet. The parking design should resolve around three components:

GOAL 8: The design should be easy to understand and convenient for the user.

STRATEGY 8.1.A: The facility should be safe; stall and aisle dimensions should be wide enough to allow easy access, and adequate landscaping for pleasing appearance.

GOAL 9: The design should be efficient in terms of land utilization and operation.

STRATEGY 9.1.A: The type of user should determine the width of the aisles: wide stalls for shoppers and short-term users, narrow stalls for long-term users. Wider stalls are recommended for short-term users because there is greater daily turnover for these spaces and, therefore, greater need for easy access to the stall.

GOAL 10: The parking lot fit into long-range plans for the Central Business District (CBD).

STRATEGY 10.1.A: The parking should be compatible with adjacent building uses and traffic circulation patterns.

Incorporating the design it will be important to consult regulations provided by the Department of Transportation to meet requirements for length and width of stalls along Main Street. Additionally, mentioned above was improving the appearance of landscaping in parking areas for a pleasing appearance. This enhances the visual environment, moderates heat, wind and other local climate effects produced in parking designated areas of high traffic volumes. Because plants absorb and disperse some noise and sound, landscaping can also reduce noise levels slightly. When landscaping around parking stalls and crosswalks it is important to maintain a level of pattern to continue the visual effect of the storefront. However, this provides an appealing downtown commercial district for each business and user.

This strategy helps with problems associated with transportation concerns and more importantly parking issues. It is suggested Union reviews the current ordinance detailing parking along Main Street prior to advancement. This consideration helps set new regulations to existing parking standards. In addition, it is important to consult any existing business owners regarding the concern and adjustment to demonstrate how the effective enforcement will be a benefit to the downtown business.



XIV. BEAUTIFICATION

Beautification on main streets is one of the strongest elements to providing a lasting impression on its visitors. On main street, landscaping takes on a special importance: it softens the hard atmosphere of the buildings, pavement, and automobiles; they bring variety and life with the changing of seasons; and it provides the opportunity for shade for shoppers while reducing the need for air conditioning. Main Streets, even in the smallest communities, need to accommodate a wide range of uses and functions from pedestrians, motorists, and cyclists. This includes pedestrian furniture, lighting, landscaping and trash receptacles to deliver a lasting impression to its passersby.

GOAL 11: Preserve and restore the role of landscaping in the community to create an identity for the district.

STRATEGY 11.1.A: Establish a master plan to consult a profession in regards to selecting the most appropriate species, and providing guidelines for installation.

Street Trees

Street trees provide a multitude of benefits to a street environment. Street trees provide shade, and aid in creating an aesthetically pleasing streetscape. In the design of Main Street, "...the most effective expenditure of funds to improve a street would probably be on trees" (Watson, 2003, p.6-7). Although the benefits of implementing street trees are great, there are some basic things to consider when placing and spacing the plants. In general, landscape designs should be arranged to permit a sufficiently wide, clear, and safe pedestrian walkway (AASHTO, 2002, p. 44). Furthermore, sightlines and spacing are elements of street tree planting that greatly affect the character and safety of a street.

In situations, inadequate planting structures, particularly ones with too little soil volume, are the leading cause of an epidemic of urban street tree deaths (Watson, 2003, p.7). The standards dimension for a tree pit has varied over the last few decades. Recent standards determine pit sizing based on soil conditions and tree size. In healthy, well-drained soils, a tree pit 6 inch deeper than the root ball and at least 6 feet square is adequate for most street tree species. (Watson, 2003, p.13)

Street tree spacing is effectively determined by the amount of space and planter configuration within the amenity sub-zone. If possible, it is best to incorporate a continuous planter strip to allow for maximum tree coverage within the Main Street. In general, the specific spacing of street trees is subject to community preference and priority, but some standards have been created from other successful streets.

“Wherever possible, a maximum spacing of 35 ft. is an accepted standard for continuous tree lined streets. (Watson, 2003, p.87)” “The minimum spacing for street trees is somewhat ambiguous and can depend on species selection. As a rule, the minimum width for tree spacing should be between 20 and 25 ft” (Urban, 2008, p.348).

- For more information on implementing vegetation along a street, consult the AASHTO: A Guide for Transportation Landscape and Environmental Design.

Beautification features or amenities are the features that enhance the street environment and increase livability. Beautification amenities serve multiple functions within a street, from serving outdoor activity to increasing safety and comfort for pedestrians and motorists alike; such as lighting, seating, and trash receptacles. Every Main Street is unique and has its own conditions; the design decisions should reflect this fact. Below is a list of 22 beneficial reasons landscaping and the implementation of street trees is beneficial to the revitalization of Main Street in Union, NE.

According to Dan Burden, an urban street tree designer states:

- 1) **Reduced and more appropriate urban traffic speeds.** Urban street trees create vertical walls framing streets, providing a defined edge, helping motorists guide their movement and assess their speed (leading to overall speed reductions). Street safety comparisons show reductions of run-off-the-road crashes and overall crash severity when street tree sections are compared with equivalent treeless streets. (Texas A and M conducted simulation research which found people slow down while driving through a treed scape).
- 2) **Create safer walking environments,** by forming and framing visual walls and providing distinct edges to sidewalks so that motorists better distinguish between their environment and one shared with people. If a motorist were to significantly err in their urban driving task, street trees help deflect or fully stop the motorist from taking a human life.

- 3) **Trees call for place making planting strips and medians**, which further separate motorists from one another, pedestrians, buildings and other urban fabric. This green area adds significantly to aesthetics and place making. Urban area medians with trees are safer than those without trees (R. Ewing, Caltrans Study, circa 2003). Medians reduce crashes by 50% or more.
- 4) **Increased security.** Trees create more pleasant walking environments, bringing about increased walking, talking, pride, care of place, association and therefore actual ownership and surveillance of homes, blocks, neighborhoods plazas, businesses and other civic spaces.
- 5) **Improved business.** Businesses on treescaped streets show 12% higher income streams, which is often the essential competitive edge needed for main street store success, versus competition from plaza discount store prices.
- 6) **Less drainage infrastructure.** Trees absorb the first 30% of most precipitation through their leaf system, allowing evaporation back into the atmosphere. This moisture never hits the ground. Another percentage (up to 30%) of precipitation is absorbed back into the ground and taken in and held onto by the root structure, then absorbed and then transpired back to the air. Some of this water also naturally percolates into the ground water and aquifer. Storm water runoff and flooding potential to urban properties is therefore reduced.
- 7) **Rain, sun, heat and skin protection.** For light or moderate rains, pedestrians find less need for rain protection. In cities with good tree coverage there is less need for chemical sun blocking agents. Temperature differentials of 5- 15 degrees are felt when walking under tree canopied streets.
- 8) **Reduced harm from tailpipe emissions.** Automobile and truck exhaust is a major public health concern and contains significant pollutants, including carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and particulate matter (PM). Tailpipe emissions are adding to asthma, ozone and other health impacts. Impacts are reduced significantly from proximity to trees.
- 9) **Gas transformation efficiency.** Trees in street proximity absorb 9 times more pollutants than more distant trees, converting harmful gasses back into oxygen and other useful and natural gasses.
- 10) **Lower urban air temperatures.** Asphalt and concrete streets and parking lots are known to increase urban temperatures 3-7 degrees. These temperatures increases significantly impact energy costs to homeowners and consumers. A properly shaded neighborhood, mostly from urban street trees, can reduce energy bills for a household from 15-35%.

- 11) **Lower Ozone.** Increases in urban street temperatures that hover directly above asphalt where tailpipe emissions occur dramatically increase creation of harmful ozone and other gasses into more noxious substances impacting health of people, animals and surrounding agricultural lands.
- 12) **Convert streets, parking and walls into more aesthetically pleasing environments.** There are few streetmaking elements that do as much to soften wide, grey visual wastelands created by wide streets, parking lots and massive, but sometimes necessary blank walls than trees.
- 13) **Soften and screen necessary street features** such as utility poles, light poles and other needed street furniture. Trees are highly effective at screening those other vertical features to roadways that are needed for many safety and functional reasons.
- 14) **Reduced blood pressure, improved overall emotional and psychological health.** Ugly or attractive environments impact people where they spend time. Kathlene Wolf, Social Science Ph.D. University of Washington gave a presentation that said “the risk of treed streets was questionable compared to other types of accidents along with the increased benefit of trees on human behavior, health, pavement longevity, etc.” She noted that trees have a calming and healing effect on ADHD adults and teens.
- 15) **Time in travel perception.** Other research and observations confirm that motorists perceive the time it takes to get through treed versus non-treed environments has a significant differential. A treeless environment trip is perceived to be longer than one that is treed (Walter Kulash, P.E.; speech circa 1994, Glatting Jackson).
- 16) **Reduced road rage.** Although this may at first seem a stretch, there is strong, compelling research that motorist road rage is less in green urban versus stark suburban areas. Trees and aesthetics, which are known to reduce blood pressure, may handle some of this calming effect.
- 17) **Improved operations potential.** When properly positioned and maintained, the backdrop of street trees allow those features that should be dominant to be better seen, such as vital traffic regulatory signs. The absence of a well-developed Greenscape allows the sickly grey mass of strip to dominate the visual world. At the same time, poorly placed signs, signals, or poorly maintained trees reduce this positive gain, and thus proper placement and maintenance must be rigidly adhered to.

- 18) Added value to adjacent homes, businesses and tax base.** Realtor based estimates of street tree versus non street tree comparable streets relate a \$15-25,000 increase in home or business value. This often adds to the base tax base and operations budgets of a city allowing for added street maintenance. Future economic analysis may determine that this is a break-even for city maintenance budgets.
- 19) Provides a lawn for a splash and spray zone, storage of snow, driveway elevation transition and more.** Tree lawns are an essential part of the operational side of a street.
- 20) Filtering and screening agent.** Softens and screens utility poles, light poles, on-street and off-street parking and other features creating visual pollution to the street.
- 21) Longer pavement life.** Studies conducted in a variety of California environments show that the shade of urban street trees can add from 40- 60% more life to costly asphalt. This factor is based on reduced daily heating and cooling (expansion/ contraction) of asphalt. As peak oil pricing increases roadway overlays, this will become a significant cost reduction to maintaining a more affordable roadway system.
- 22) Connection to nature and the human senses.** Urban street trees provide a canopy, root structure and setting for important insect and bacterial life below the surface; they act as essential lofty environments for song birds, seeds, nuts, squirrels and other urban life. Indeed, street trees so well establish natural and comfortable urban life it is unlikely we will ever see any advertisement for any marketed urban product, including cars, to be featured without street trees making the ultimate dominant, bold visual statement about place.

(Burden, 2006, p.4-9)

Lighting

GOAL 12: Enhance the viewer's appreciation of the nighttime environment and activities.

STRATEGY 12.1.A: Propose the implementation of lighting sources along Main Street to define and describe the forms of things, which would otherwise be in darkness.

Lighting along a main street is also intended to help people move around safely after dark, either on foot or in vehicles. Its purpose may be partly to give us pleasure, by describing and explaining the form of what we see. By its mood and color, lighting can influence our emotional reaction to every scene. It's important to consult certain regulations regarding color for US 34 for visibility reasons. However, for the

revitalization of a Main Street, tungsten lighting is a common choice because its both warm in color and random in composition (Donald, 1979, p.59).

“Well placed trees allow even and attractive lamp placement. It is important that lamps provide proper levels of illumination to create welcoming and comfortable walking environments. Generally lamps are placed mid- way between trees, allowing for some variation between other essential furniture such as seating and fire hydrants.”

(Burden, 2006)

Placement and Design

Generally the height of all pedestrian lighting elements should be set to a height below that of 12 to 15 ft. In essence, it is best to ensure lighting elements do not shine into second-floor windows (Crankshaw, 2009, p.41). New lighting fixtures can create and encourage a pedestrian friendly environment, which is especially beneficial to neighborhood business districts. Pedestrian lighting improves walkway illumination for pedestrian traffic and enhances community safety and business exposure. Lighting for pedestrians is especially important along Main Street, mixed-use streets and local connectors, and in other locations where the land use supports large volumes of pedestrians and vehicles.

Additionally, when selecting proper fixtures for the revitalization process it is important to maintain consistency among façades and architectural style chosen for Main Street to enhance the design appeal for passersby. This process is primarily a priority developed from the committee as an additional proposal for an ordinance amendment to propose new lighting fixtures along Union’s main street.

Seating

GOAL 13: Organizing proper arrangement for seating along Main Street..

STRATEGY 13.1.A: Organize proper placement for seating to offer an accessible environment for pedestrians to visit and socialize along Main Street.

Organization is an important aspect for seating on a main street. Seating can be organized and oriented in a variety of ways. According to Urban Streetscapes, depending on the situation, seating can be organized for the following situations:

- Inward focus for user and storefront interaction;
- Outward focus for dual use purposes;
- Functional seating near traffic stops, cafes, or congregation areas;
- Avoid placing seating only from an aesthetic point of view; this can result in unused or unnecessary elements cluttering a street.

(Gibbons, 1991, p.86)

Basic considerations should be considered when selecting the appropriate style of seating and characteristic similar to lighting fixtures as well as human characteristics. Most pre-fabricated features meet these basic human needs. Basic factors to consider when choosing the appropriate style and location for seating elements include;

- Comfort;
- Sun and shading effects;
- Maintenance;
- Style;
- Function.

(Gibbons, 1991, p.92)

Trash Receptacles

GOAL 14: Propose the implementation of trash receptacles to continue the cleanliness of Main Street.

STRATEGY 14.1.A: Research and select an appropriate style of trash receptacles for a main street to promote cleanliness and eliminate the enticement of litter.

In relation to seating specifications, there are little standards for trash receptacles as well. In relation to other main streets it is important to understand the size difference and elements that allocate the need for the location for trash receptacles. With this in mind some elements for location and visibility are important to consider.

- A fundamental standard for the placement of trash receptacles is every 90 ft. If adjacent land uses result in large quantities of debris such as fast food retail, it may be prudent to provide trash receptacles more frequently. Additionally, keep in mind size relations to other towns it may be acceptable to adjust placement.
- Trash receptacles may be placed in various locations. In some cases, hanging refuse bins can be fixed to light poles, wall mounted, or freestanding. All scenarios are viable and specific placement is at community discretion.
- Generally, refuse bins should be evident and opportune, but not obtrusive or problematic to street patrons.

(Gibbons, 1991, p.44)



XVI. SIDEWALKS

GOAL 15: Provide an interconnected network of sidewalks and walkways throughout Union’s main street that allow pedestrians to safely access their destinations including transit stops, places of employment, recreation facilities, schools and residences.

STRATEGY 15.1.A: Propose the redevelopment of sidewalks and walkways to meet ADA regulations provided by the NDOR that allows pedestrians to safely access their destinations including transit stops, places of employment, recreation facilities, schools and residences.

Keep in mind that it is important to recognize and support the range of benefits a well-designed streetscape provides for all pedestrians, including people with disabilities. For this reason, it will be a necessary factor to consult a professional industry or the NDOR to review streetscape design elements very carefully to ensure that the materials, dimensions and design elements meet safety and accessibility requirements. In addition to the aesthetic and practical benefits of a well-designed streetscape, NDOR must meet state and national safety and access standards for streetscape design.

The elements of a proper-implemented sidewalk are broken down into three parts; the Frontage Zone, Pedestrian Zone, and Landscape/Furniture Zone plus Curb.

- **The Landscape/Furniture Zone**
 - Defined as the area between the roadway curb face and the front edge of the walkway. The minimum width of this zone is 5½ ft feet except in locations adjacent to high and intermediate capacity transit stations. Objects in the landscape/furniture zone must be setback a minimum of 3’ from the face of the street curb. This zone buffers pedestrians from the adjacent roadway and is the appropriate location for street furniture, art and landscaping. It is also the preferred location for street trees, and other elements such as pedestrian lighting, hydrants and below grade utility hatch covers. Transit Zones are also located in the landscape/furniture zone and are designated for transit customer waiting, loading and alighting and may include transit signage, shelters, benches, litter receptacles, and pedestrian scaled lighting. Some requirements may differ state to state.

- **The Pedestrian Zone**
 - This is the area of the sidewalk corridor that is specifically reserved for pedestrian travel. The minimum width of this zone is 6 feet, except in locations adjacent to high and intermediate capacity transit stations. Street furniture, plantings, and other fixed items should not protrude into travel routes.
- **The Frontage Zone**
 - This is defined as the area between the property line and walkway. Where sufficient right-of-way exists, a frontage zone should be provided that is a minimum of 2 feet wide, except in locations adjacent to high and intermediate capacity transit stations. Frontage zones can accommodate sidewalk cafes, store entrances, retail display or landscaping. A frontage zone is not needed if the sidewalk corridor is adjacent to a landscaped space.

(SDOT, 2010)

It is important to keep in mind that the above measurements may differ from state to state with regards to state regulations and requirements. Additionally, the Nebraska Department of Roads establishes a set of criteria regarding use and requirements of materials. Provided below is a set of proposal guidelines that Pontiac, IL incorporated as a way of proposing a systematic approach to their sidewalk organization. Concluding this process, some measurements and guidelines changed to meet standards.

- **Standard Construction of Sidewalks**
 - A standard sidewalk is constructed of Portland cement concrete and is located at least 5½ feet from the face of the curb and 2 feet from the property line. The sidewalk may be located closer to the property line when necessary to attain the minimum 5 foot planting strip width and 6 foot sidewalk.
- **Construction of New Sidewalks**
 - On streets where the existing sidewalks are greater than 6 feet in width, the new sidewalk shall match the existing sidewalk width. In residential zones, when more than half the block on the project side of the street already has a sidewalk and planting strip, new sidewalks and planting strips may conform to the existing location, unless otherwise directed. On streets in non-residential zones where the existing sidewalk is not in the standard location, NDOR shall determine the location of any new sidewalk or sidewalk replacement, based on the need for street trees and the desire to retain existing neighborhood character. New concrete sidewalks may not be installed without a curb.

- **Sidewalk Width**

- Sidewalks shall be a minimum of 6 feet of unobstructed, linear sidewalk space that is free of street furniture, street trees, planters, and other vertical elements such as poles, fire hydrants and street furniture. Point obstructions such as poles and fire hydrants may encroach into the sidewalk area, but the sidewalk must have 5 feet clear width remaining.

(NDOR, 2010)

Wider sidewalks are required in some cases consistent with the Land Use Code or when the sidewalk must be placed adjacent to the curb because of topography or right of way limitations. Sidewalks may be located adjacent to the curb when there is inadequate right of way or in steep topography areas where grading to a full street width would cause too great of an impact (NDOR, 2010).

- **Sidewalk Path of Travel**

- Sidewalks should keep as much as possible to the natural path of travel parallel to the improved roadway. Ideally, they will align with the crosswalk. While sidewalks do not need to be perfectly straight, curves that direct the pedestrian away from the natural path should not be introduced solely for aesthetic reasons.

- **Setback**

- A three foot distance between vertical objects on the sidewalk and travel lanes in the roadway is required to minimize conflicts with vehicle activity. Relocation of existing utilities may be required to meet clearance requirements.

- **Clearance from Obstructions**

- The sidewalk shall be clear of all vertical obstructions, such as poles, fire hydrants, street furniture, and other elements for a width of at least 5 feet. These obstructions should be placed in the landscape / furniture zone or behind the sidewalk. Relocation of existing utilities may be required to meet clearance requirements.

- **Utility Access Points**

- Where practical, handholes, vaults, and other utility access points shall be located out of the sidewalk area and in the landscape/furniture zone. Where this is not practical, these access points must match the level of the sidewalk and be coated with a non-slip surface.

- **Slope**

- Sidewalk cross slope must be a minimum of 0.5% but may not exceed 2%.

- **Sidewalk Finish**
 - Sidewalks shall be constructed and finished per the Standard Plans and Specifications. Additional treatments (non-standard scoring patterns, coloring, texturing) should be approved by NDOR, the design review board or the design commission.
- **Visibility**
 - No obstructions to pedestrian visibility should be present within 30 feet of an intersection. These include parked cars, street trees, signal control boxes, sandwich boards, utility poles and landscaping mounds.
- **Variations from Standard Sidewalk Construction**
 - In general, variations from standard sidewalk construction are required to meet ADA requirements. Additionally, on residential streets where natural drainage is being installed, variations will be considered based on planning and design principles often found in your stormwater infrastructure plan.
- **Maintenance Responsibility**
 - The area between the curb and property line, including sidewalks, is the maintenance responsibility of the abutting property owner. When the existing sidewalk adjacent to a project is in disrepair or is damaged during construction, it shall be repaired or replaced by the property owner.
- **Accessibility**
 - Pedestrian facilities shall be designed to allow all users to logically connect to other pedestrian facilities (e.g. – length of sidewalk transitions and placement of objects near walkways). They shall be in compliance with current ADA requirements in all cases. Sidewalks and walkways should be constructed with accompanying curb ramps, including companion ramps, as required by current ADA standards.
- **Sidewalks in the Vicinity of Transit Stations**
 - Applicants proposing new development in the block adjacent to a high or intermediate capacity transit station must accommodate high volumes of pedestrians in the vicinity as follows. In the block adjacent to the transit station, the sidewalk shall be 18-25 feet as follows:
 - **Frontage zone:** (3 feet) If the project has a plaza or other space accessible to pedestrians and free of obstructions adjacent to the property line, the frontage zone requirement may be waived.
 - **Pedestrian zone:** (10-12 feet) The pedestrian zone shall consist of a paved linear walkway that is free from obstructions.

(NDOR, 2010)

The NDOR should be available to work accordingly with sidewalk dimensions in the Village of Union, NE.

Stated throughout this section, it is important to keep in mind that regulations differ from state to state. Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) creates a set of requirements and guidelines that help assist in the design process of the sidewalks along Main Street. To make a successful revitalized Main Street, it is important to redevelop the sidewalks to make them accessible by any individual and more importantly appealing to visitors and passersby. In the appendix section of this report is a list of key considerations provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to consider when consulting individuals about sidewalk redevelopment.



XVII. EMPLOYMENT

After reviewing successful redevelopments I identified four success stories that would benefit the Village of Union, NE in their revitalization process. These four Main Streets have successfully revitalized in a variety of ways and are still successful today. One way they have successfully revitalized is by creating the opportunity for employment. Below, is a list of new jobs created since the finalization of the redevelopment process, according to Main Street Success Stories:

- Ardmore, Oklahoma: 138 new jobs
- Pontiac, Illinois: 72 new jobs
- Peabody, Kansas: 27 new jobs
- Conrad, Iowa: 3 new jobs

(Dane, 1997)

Each example differs greatly, but the importance is that it demonstrates growth. Time is an important variable to consider when looking at the examples listed above. The reason for this is because it takes time to generate economic development, which in turn offers that opportunity for the allocation of jobs. Additionally, illustrated previously in the document are vacancy rates before and after the completion of each success story. Below I listed vacancy rates provided by Main Street Success Stories to illustrate the positive outcome that generated employment opportunities.

- Ardmore, Oklahoma:
 - Vacancy Rate at Start: 9%
 - Rate as of 1997: 1%
- Pontiac, Illinois
 - Vacancy Rate at Start: 24%
 - Rate as of 1997: 2%
- Peabody, Kansas
 - Vacancy Rate at Start: 30%
 - Rate as of 1997: 0%
- Conrad, Iowa
 - Vacancy Rate at Start: 15%
 - Rate as of 1997: 1%

(Dane, 1997)

Taking into consideration the vacancy rate of the four selected success stories of other Main Street towns, I believe it is important to propose acceptable amenities for Main Streets as well as for the Village of Union, NE.

Acceptable Amenities

GOAL 16: Utilize existing properties that are possible considerations for demolition.

STRATEGY 16.1.A: Consult with TAB and other resources to identify state of existing structures. Propose considerations for additions along Union's Main Street.

One source suggested is *20 Small Business Ideas for Small Towns*, written by Becky McCray. This book offers simple suggestions that are common successful business used everyday to benefit economic development. With continual visitors and passersby, I believe the simple considerations listed below will help generate ideas to select profitable business for Union's Main Street.

Becoming more local may again produce jobs, generate economic development, and increase population. More importantly for Union, it reduces commute time and offer more local spending. One part of surviving in a small town small business is competing with the world. Below are 15 suggestions created by Becky McCray as successful small town businesses appropriate for Union, NE;

1) Local Pride Clothing

- a. Create clothing that promotes local pride, and your place in the state or the region. Go beyond the usual high school mascot items, and promote your own local flavor. Expand this idea with local pride items such as tote bags, kids wear, hats and visors.

2) Local Jewelry

- a. Customize jewelry that commemorates your city, town or village. Extend this concept to key chains and other jewelry items. Look for local jewelers to help with manufacturing.

3) Local Photos

- a. Make local photos into postcards, posters, or mounted and framed art. You can target tourists, students or other part-time residents and visitors. The photos can be your own, or licensed from local photographers.

4) Personalize Local Postcards

- a. Customize local postcards by adding a personal picture of the buyer to photos of local landmarks. This type of business would be great at your local festivals, in your downtown business area, or at the local souvenir shop.

5) Local Hospitality

- a. Create a summer camp for the family or children. Take advantage of the area's unique climate and culture. Incorporate the local heritage.

6) Add Value through Local and Organic Foods

- a. Local food and organic food are two ways to make a more profitable small farm, restaurant, cafe, food market, or other food business. Food -borne illnesses have made headlines from huge commercial production and from imported foods. It's better for the environment because of the lower transportation distances. Local food producers of all kinds should capitalize on this opportunity.
- b. If you grow produce, get certified as organic or dedicate more acres to organic items. Focus on local markets, promoting your local advantage. Develop direct marketing methods to go direct to consumers or consumer groups. Restaurants can seek out local partners and organic sources. If you serve local and organic items, promote it in all your marketing.

7) Cater to Local Sports

- a. Target the changes in outdoor sports. Almost any type of business could expand to cater to the new types of outdoor sports bringing visitors to small towns.

8) Reference Guides

- a. Share your knowledge with students, professionals, or people new to your field. Laminated guides created by bar-charts could be customized and marketed to college bookstores, to business associations, and directly to local students. This is a great idea for recent students, teachers, and ex-teachers.

9) Fix Things to Resell

- a. Use your skills to buy damaged items from online auctions sites or local dealers, repair them, and then resell them. Focus on only items your can repair well, and that have a strong resale market.

10) Buy Locally to Resell in Larger Markets

- a. Take local resources into a larger market. Find local sources of overstocks, scraps of by-products. Add some additional value by cleaning, researching, matching or improving the item. Then take it to a larger market such as a larger city, an online auction, or on consignment in larger stores. It could be something as simple as buying local garden produce to resell in big city farmers' markets.

11) Buy Global to Resell in Local Markets

- a. Bring your international experience to your local market by importing handcrafts. Those who have spent significant time in a different country and returned home, have a unique perspective on items that could be profitable sellers.

12) Share your Skills as a Taxi

- a. Be more than a coach, be a taxi. That means to take students and learners out of the classroom and into the culture. Take your citizens out in the world, and help them enjoy the deeper dimensions of the experience away from the classroom.

13) Paint Business Windows

- a. If you can draw, start a business to encourage visitors to develop a lasting impression. Painting windows in your downtown only requires a vehicle, paints, brushes, and some talent.

14) Share your Space and Creativity

- a. Take old buildings or structures, in town or out in a rural setting, and convert them for creative conference space and artistic residences.

15) Target the Small Town Market

- a. Small town markets are a visitor's first choice and a citizen's finest attraction when commute times are a variable. Markets can be utilized by a number of resources that are provided locally.

Additional Amenities

The average commute time for citizens in Union, NE is 27.3 minutes (City Data, 2011). Johnson's Gas N Go on US 75 is the closest accessible gas station to the Village of Union, NE; which is 3.9 miles away or roughly 6 minutes.

The citizens of the Village of Union, NE may consider an additional gas station on US 34 amongst the commercial district of their main street. This will not only decrease commute time but capitalizes on heavy truck and passenger vehicle traffic that consumes the main street commercial district. By implementing a gas station, this increases the opportunity of generating revenue for businesses along the main street corridor.

Many filling stations in the United States have commonly combined themselves with convenience stores to offer the sale of some kind of good and service. Some have even become part of the propane business for refilling propane tanks for cooking and other needs. Conversely, some chain stores, such as supermarkets, discount superstores, warehouse clubs, or traditional convenience stores, have provided filling stations on the premises.

The location of Main Street in Union offers excellent possibilities with the amount of visitors that utilize US 34. Today almost every vehicle dependent individual traveling on US 34 requires the service of gasoline to get them from destination to destination safely. Traffic speaks volumes when you're discussing potential revenue profits at gas stations. Whether or not a station is branded, much of the income comes from service, convenience stores and other services. For example in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, an unbranded gas station on their main street generates revenue of approximately \$2 million yearly with two service bays. It pumps 60,000 gallons per month with cash flow approximately \$78,000. This is primarily generated from heavy truck traffic. The U.S. has approximately 145,000 gas and convenience stores that account for \$624 billion in annual sales (NACS, 2010). Additionally, gas and convenience stores located on highway locations have the potential to service 1,100 customers a day. The U.S. Industry report of 2009 stated, contributing to the income of gas stations are car washes, which generate a revenue of over \$6 billion. Gas stations are always a profitable endeavor because of society's unwillingness to give up the privilege of driving. Even the rising cost of gasoline hasn't harmed the profit index of the gas station business. The guide provided below derived from Kelly Bansaki-Sons, designed an instructional guide to help you through the process of starting a gas station in a rural town or small city.

- 1) Make a choice to either buy an existing gas station or build one from the ground up. Your decision should be based on several things. Location should be considered. Is there a gas station for sale in a high-traffic area at a price you can handle? Perhaps you have the perfect location in mind but it is currently a vacant lot. Use resources to inquire about vacant land.
- 2) Write a detailed business plan for starting a gas station. Include financing options, marketing plans, future goals and how you will manage employees. You should also include ways to deal with theft as well as natural disasters and how you will deal with competitors. You can hire a professional business plan writer for this task.
- 3) Gather funds to buy a gas station or locate possible national funding. You can begin by talking with financial institutions. Take your business plan, and talk with loan officers about business loans. Consider taking on investors. A business broker can help you with additional options in your state.
- 4) Talk with the company whose gas you plan to sell about franchising options. You will be selling another company's gas and thereby be required to negotiate a franchise contract and pay a franchise fee. Contact several gas companies to find the best options for your particular situation.

- 5) Obtain all necessary licenses and permits. Contact your local city hall to inquire about fees for the permits you will need. You will need a business license, and if you plan to sell cigarettes, lottery tickets or beer you will need additional permits. You are also required to register with the local fire department.
- 6) Plan a spectacular grand opening. Decorate in engaging colors using banners and balloons. Advertise opening specials, giveaways and other tactics to invite customers. Hand out flyers, and advertise in local papers.

Additionally, a gas station can consist of other amenities that can benefit the customer while providing the owner with more income. Many stations provide toilet facilities for customer use, window cleaning items for highway travel, and air compressor facilities. Many stations have integrated convenience stores, which provide the customer with food, beverages, motor oil, and other accessories. These options could be an excellent addition to Union, NE; and offer passersby with a nice rest area location.

UNION MAIN STREET
BUILDINGS STUDY
VILLAGE OF UNION, NEBRASKA
CONCEPT 2 & 3 Sketch



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XVIII. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

As for any funding questions seeking professional guidance should be considered in order to insure compliance. The advantages of funding opportunities for restoration, redevelopment, and revitalization projects depend greatly upon the individual situation, the building, and the project itself.

GOAL 17: Encourage restoration, renovation, redevelopment, or remodeling of existing buildings by providing funding information, financial information and incentives.

STRATEGY 17.1.A: Inform building owners and the Village of Union, NE about funding opportunities and tax credits from success stories and the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981.

According to Main Street Success Stories,

The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 has significantly revised the historic preservation tax incentives first authorized by Congress in the Tax Reform Act of 1976. The provisions have provided an incentive to encourage capital investment in older buildings and to spur revitalization.

The law establishes a three-tier investment tax credit (ITC) for qualified rehabilitations of older buildings. For substantially rehabilitated buildings 30 years or older a 15 percent ITC is available; for those 40 years or older a 20 percent ITC can be used; and for certified historic structures a 25 percent ITC is allowed. Except for certified historic structures no credit may be taken for the rehabilitation of a building less than 30 years old. Each of these credits may be used in conjunction with a 15, 35 or 45 year cost recovery period for the adjustment basis of the building(s).

(Dane, 1997, p.107)

In Union, NE eligible structures include those used buildings subject to depreciation that have been substantially rehabilitated and retain 75 percent or more of the existing interior walls in the rehabilitation process. Substantial rehabilitation means that the rehabilitation costs must exceed the greater of \$5,000 or the adjusted basis of the property. Stated above, I strongly advise seeking a professional for qualification standards and up-to-date information regarding tax and financial incentives. In addition, it is common to consider Industrial Revenue Bonds, Community Development Block Grant, and a local Development Corporation. The four case studies that I have chosen differ greatly when it comes to funding and I will list opportunities they used to

redevelop their main street. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides a funding opportunity commonly known as HOPE VI. This funding opportunity was used in Pontiac, IL and Ardmore, OK as a way to seek to rejuvenate their Main Street while retaining the area's traditional and historic characters.

The purpose for HOPE VI Main Street Program is to provide assistance to smaller communities in the development of affordable housing that is undertaken in connection with a Main Street revitalization effort. To become eligible for these grants the size of the communities must have a maximum population of 50,000 and 100 or less physical public housing units. To apply for assistance you must apply at Grants.Gov. There they offer a downloadable application with instructions.

STRATEGY 17.2.B: Understand the qualifications for funding opportunities provided by the USDA Rural Development program.

There are many ways programs such as USDA provide support to communities looking to redevelop business districts; however, USDA specifically provides assistance to rural communities looking to redevelop by offering direct or guaranteed loans, grants, technical assistance, and research and education (USDA, 2011).

The REDLG program provides funding to rural projects through local utility organizations. Under the REDLoan program, USDA provides zero interest loans to local utilities which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas (USDA, 2011).

To receive funding under the REDLG program (which will be forwarded to selected eligible projects) an entity must:

- Have borrowed and repaid or pre-paid an insured, direct, or guaranteed loan received under the Rural Electrification Act or,
- Be a not-for-profit utility that is eligible to receive assistance from the Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Program
- Be a current Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Programs Borrower.

(USDA, 2011)

When applying for loans and grants it is important to remember that they require certain projects to qualify. Projects eligible for REDLG:

- Capitalization of revolving loan funds
- Technical assistance in conjunction with projects funded under a zero interest REDLoan
- Business Incubators
- Community Development Assistance to non-profits and public bodies (particularly job creation or enhancement)
- Facilities and equipment for education and training for rural residents to facilitate economic development
- Facilities and equipment for medical care to rural residents
- Telecommunications/computer networks for distance learning or long distance medical care.

(USDA, 2011)

To better assist the community of Union I will explain ways to apply for each incentive I discuss. Additionally, it will be important to consider these resources to assist in the process of revitalization for Main Street in Union. Considering the listed incentive possibilities I would advise to do additional research to conclude the qualifications of incentive opportunities.

How to apply:

To apply for the REDLG program for Union, please contact USDA Rural Development State Office for Nebraska or (402) 437.5551, for more information on how to get started.

Please consider additional opportunities that USDA may offer which will provide assistance in further ways.

STRATEGY 17.3.C: Understand the qualifications for funding opportunities provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) provides innovative initiatives in many ways specifically to communities in the state of Nebraska. Nebraska is truly in the middle of it all, offering an array of advantages that make exploring, living, working

and doing business here a wonderful and rewarding experience. Below is a list that provides information on advantages that Nebraska has to offer.

- **World class telecommunications infrastructure**
- **Business friendly regulatory atmosphere**
- **Wage credits, including teleworkers**
- **Research and development credits**
- **Available sites and buildings**
- **Low cost, reliable power**
- **Key transportation routes**
- **Unmatched work ethic**
- **Real estate tax refunds**
- **Investment tax credits**
- **Minimal congestion**
- **Speed to markets**
- **Centrally located**

(NDED, 2013)

The NDED offers Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) incentives such as;

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)- Downtown Revitalization
- Community Development Block Grant Recovery (CDBG-R)- Indian Preservations
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster (CDBG Disaster)- long-term recovery efforts for damage caused by the severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding related to the federal disaster.
- Community Development Block Grant NSP1 (CDBG NSP1)- provide emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities.
 - CDBG NSP1 funds may be used for the following activities.
 - Establish financing mechanisms for the purchase and redevelopment of foreclosed upon homes and residential properties, including such mechanisms as soft-seconds, loan loss reserves, and shared-equity loans for low-and moderate-income homebuyers.
 - Purchase and rehabilitate homes and residential properties that have been abandoned or foreclosed upon, in order to sell, rent, or redevelop such homes and properties.

- Establish land banks for foreclosed homes.
- Demolish blighted structures.
- Redevelop demolished or vacant properties.

(NDED, 2013)

To apply for NDED assistance I believe it would be important to get in contact with the Lincoln office. The contact information is: (402) 471.3778.

This organization not only can offer grant assistance but planning assistance on starting a small business by offering business plans. In addition to USDA, it will be important to conduct further research to better associate Union with qualifications of each funding opportunity.

STRATEGY 17.4.D: Offer important contacts for Union.

During the research process I was in touch with the director of Heritage Nebraska which is Nebraska's Main Street organization on the National level. Their Director, Elizabeth Chase is interested in the process that I have presented to her regarding the revitalization of Main Street. Her contact information is;

- Office: (402) 323.7337
- Cell: (402) 499.3703
- Website: www.nebraskamainstreet.org

I would strongly encourage Union to consult this professional regarding further assistance and the approach to successfully revitalizing their main street, given the opportunities discussed early in the document concerning location, size, and overall opportunities. She has seen successful redevelopments on main streets throughout Nebraska including: Alliance, Beatrice, Falls City, Fremont, Grand Island, Kearney, Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, Sidney, Wayne and York. Their associate member communities include: Bassett, Elkhorn, Hastings, Lexington, McCook, Osceola, and Schuyler

The funding opportunities that I have discussed are most commonly used on main street redevelopments in Nebraska according to Elizabeth Chase and Heritage Nebraska.



XIX. CLOSING

XIX. Closing

The economic performance of rural areas is lagging that of urban areas in the United States and also in many other parts of the world. While there have been many efforts to foster economic development in rural areas involving substantial public and private investments, most have failed, which is what we see on Main Street in Union, NE. In addition to these economic changes, local government in rural areas often finds itself sandwiched between the growing demands for government services and continuous reductions in state and federal funding. Through a series of development decisions, these communities must create new ways to provide essential public services and secure a strong economic base by implementing amenities to capture passersby.

Development decisions must be based on the human and physical resources available to the community, the current and expected economic situation outside the community, such as the consistent flow of traffic and the eligible stakeholders who united with the village to foster the task of revitalizing a community in poor condition. Promoting rural community economic development requires a realistic understanding of community resources, the opportunities for using those resources, and any trends in state and national economies that are likely to affect the community and its resources. In addition to economic development, the literature I have examined over the previous nine months will offer support to community involvement in this process by addressing environmental and human health concerns presented by potential brownfields in Union, at the same time it helped me investigate ways US 34 and US 75 continually becomes utilized by transportation, thus presenting amenities and enhancing economic development on Main Street in the Village of Union, Nebraska.



XX. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION EFFORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

prepared for

THE VILLAGE OF UNION, NEBRASKA

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY AMENITIES
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

prepared by

Taylor Cox

APRIL 2013

Introduction

A group consisting of graduate students in both Landscape Architecture and Regional and Community Planning, worked together to create Master Reports for different focus areas benefiting Sustainable Community Amenities. My report thoroughly examined ways Union, NE can implement certain amenities to residents and passers by, to reduce commute time, improve quality of life and more importantly offer a place to rest. With few amenities for its people, I proposed solutions to their immediate needs and opportunities for their future.

This report will be of assistance to the Village of Union, NE in the process of identifying, investigating, cleaning-up and redeveloping Union, NE to a sustainable community with economically feasible amenities. Please view the report for full in-depth detail of each strategy.

Developments

The dilemma that drove my project was proposing a practical planning solution to a small town with limited amenities along its main street. Union lacks amenities, which created a lack of economic backing and desire for visitor and residents to purchase basic household items and/or impede to redevelop and make the district more attractive to both residents and passersby.

My question is: How might Union, capitalize on through traffic to benefit economic development along its main street?

I proposed a process and plan targeting Main Streets and transportation concerns for the citizens and community of Union. I accomplished this by analyzing similar case studies in comparison to Union, to facilitate a plan and design proposition for citizens residing in the Village of Union.

The goal for Union, NE is to capture passersby, by developing services and amenities, which will create a thriving vibrant town center by revitalizing their Main Street and offering a place to rest.

- Place to rest - area next to large road or thoroughfare such as a highway or freeway at which drivers and passengers can rest, eat, or refuel without exiting onto secondary roads (Reed, 2009) Retrieved from <http://www.roadtripamerica.com/>.

This provides the village a competitive advantage over other small communities and offers an array of possibilities to redevelop and make the village more attractive to both residents and visitors.

Considerations

In Union, parking and accessibility is an important characteristic in view of the fact that it runs along a U.S. highway 34/75. Road, sidewalk, and building designers should coordinate their efforts to ensure that accessible sidewalks and streetscapes are developed in new construction and alterations.

The importance of these case studies are research that focuses on and gathers in depth information about communities offering an understanding to the Village of Union, NE about what possibilities are available for Main Street as well as the importance. It covered key principles the Main Street Revitalization program can use to formulate a rehabilitation process appropriate for the Village of Union, NE.

The four chosen case studies are:

Ardmore, Oklahoma

Conrad, Iowa

Peabody, Kansas

Pontiac, Illinois

After reviewing Main Street success stories, there are certain criteria that benefit the success of economic restructuring within each town. The differences in criteria differ greatly; however, the four selected success stories all create a sustainable commercial district that was previously depressed and neglected. This collection of success stories was chosen for evaluation because they compare to Union by illustrating proper amenities, infrastructure, size, organization and lasting economic stability. In the following text, I discussed in detail reasons why main streets have implemented such details in their development process and what common infrastructure would be a beneficial addition to propose to the Village of Union, NE as an important edition to main street to capture passersby on US 34.

1. Architectural Character

Storefront revitalization does not have to mean expensive, authentic restoration; very often all the features for a handsomely designed façade exist, just waiting to be discovered or enhanced. Brick is actually one of the most environmentally friendly and efficient building materials on the market today. Not only is it an excellent insulator, its extremely durable and long lasting, and requires little to no waste when manufacturing. Recycled brick can be just as useful as newly manufactured brick. Recycling brick is an excellent alternative for Union; it promotes the use of current materials and eliminates unnecessary use of funds. In addition, it is common for most Main Street organizations to require the use of existing materials in some fashion to benefit the architectural character of main street revitalization. A company by the name of Earth 911 specializes in the reuse of bricks in new development processes.

STRATEGY 1.1.A: Work towards removal of dilapidated buildings while reusing beneficial materials to control costs of commercial renovation and meet funding requirements. In addition, create an inviting Main Street commercial district with consistent forms of architecture aimed at making a storefront commercial district more attractive and noticeable to passersby.

Listed below describes key items to consider in regards to redevelopment of Main Street in Union, NE;

To emphasize a feeling of containment a storefront on a main street should set back slightly (6" to 12") from the front. Indenting the storefront any deeper will remove it from pedestrian activity.

As discussed before most storefronts have a recessed door. Recessing the entry door creates a physiological feeling of intimate, inviting entry while keeping the display windows close to the sidewalk for easing viewing.

The most important part of the storefront is the display windows. They should be designed to be as large as possible. These windows attract people to the storefront therefore they should be transparent so the displays and interior are clearly visible. With this limited barrier between the store and the sidewalk they become one, inviting the shopper in.

Decoration, architecture, patterns, textures, and signs are very key elements of the revitalization process. However, because the entry door and windows are so important other elements should be simple and unobtrusive. The passerby should look through the storefront not at it.

(KDED, 1983, p.71)

There are however general ideas that make a new façade contribute to the existing structures and the district.

- A. Height: The commercial buildings in the district should share a similar height, whether its meets the zoning requirements or consistency of currently constructed buildings.
- B. Width: The new building should reflect the characteristic façade width of other structures. Again, whether it meets the zoning requirements or consistency of currently constructed buildings.
- C. Proportion: The relationship between height and width of façades should be considered.
- D. Relationship to Street: The new building should have a consistent setback in relation to its neighboring buildings.
- E. Roof Form: The roof form should be similar to adjacent buildings. Most buildings along main streets have a flat roof not visible on the front façade.
- F. Composition: The components of the façade consisting of cornices, doors, and windows should be similar to that of surrounding structures
- G. Rhythm: The window spacing and display window spacing that is evident through the block should be incorporated into the new structure.
- H. Proportion of Openings: The size of window and door openings should be similar to those on surrounding façades.
- I. Materials: The new building material should be constructed of material that will compliment the adjacent structure.
- J. Color: The colors chosen for the new building should be compatible with surrounding colors.

2. Signage

Signs are both a blessing and curse for Main Streets. They provide useful characteristics and variety to the environment. If they become too numerous, oversized or poorly designed they can create confusion, obscure the character of the architecture, and destroy the image of a small town trying to revitalize to a sustainable community.

STRATEGY 2.1.A: Encourage business owners to install compatible yet distinctive signs.

Below are general items a business owner should consider to properly display a sign on a main street.

Reviving Main Street addresses:

Type: There're three different types of signs that are available to merchants. The 'word sign' identifies and describes the business. The 'symbol sign' uses a recognizable symbol to describe the business. An 'object sign' utilizes tools of the trade to identify a business.

Materials: Signs can be made from an array of materials such as wood, metal, plastic, stone, neon, canvas, paint on glass, paint on brick, and items involving etching. Among these materials the main factor should compliment the material of the façade.

Size: All signs should be clearly visible to the shopper. In addition, the sign should never dominate the façade. Its size, shape and proportions should fit the façade just as the door or window fits.

Location: The sign location is primarily determined by the façade design. Common locations are under lower cornice, painted on the glass, on the side of the building, hanging from the building, or on an awning flap in front of the building. The desired location should compliment the façade rather than compete with it.

Message: The message the sign conveys should be simple and to the point as it will be viewed by passersby and an environment accompanied by other written and visual messages.

Color: Similar to architectural appeal the colors of the sign should be compatible with the façade and adjacent structures. The best results are usually achieved by selecting a simple color scheme of three colors. In addition, keep in consideration that flashy colors will attract attention but in most cases it is negative attention.

Lighting: Lit signs on Main Street are effective after hours primarily for food and drinking establishments. It is also common to see lighted signs at service stations especially service stations along major interstates in rural areas.

Quality: The construction and workmanship of a quality business sign can benefit the district and business significantly. A simple, well-made sign is far more effective and attractive than an extravagant sign that is sloppy in appearance.

(Holdsworth, 1985, p.183)

STRATEGY 2.2.B: Propose a sign control ordinance.

I propose this ordinance for the intent to establish a sense of order to signing, not to prohibit it. This ordinance should not restrict creativity nor individuality but provide a framework within which graphic messages can be conveyed in a more beneficial manner.

STRATEGY 2.3.C: Use signs painted on display windows and doors.

STRATEGY 2.4.D: Implement signs under awnings.

STRATEGY 2.5.E: Use small distinctive overhanging signs.

3. Transportation

Transportation needs and trends change. To accommodate current and future change, I propose a goal accompanied by a strategy that targets concerns among the importance and need of transportation along Main Street for the process of revitalization in Union, NE.

STRATEGY 3.1.A: Provide adequate use of the comprehensive plan to propose a safe and successful transportation system by improving signage, installing traffic calming devices, and suggested parking information for a successful Main Street.

To capitalize on this strategy I propose Union, NE conduct a visual inventory of all existing public signs in order to replace outdated or damaged signs, eliminate duplicate signs, combine messages, and install needed signs such as parking, and directional signs.

STRATEGY 3.2.B: Propose a plan to demonstrate incitement into the community by creating a landscape plan along US 34.

The appearance along the entries of these routes provides an initial impression of Union, NE to the visitor and sets the stage for a Main Street district itself.

STRATEGY 3.3.C: Propose traffic calming devices that captures passersby, reduce speeds of heavy truck traffic, and offer an accessible safe pedestrian friendly Main Street.

I propose a successful traffic calming system by the use of TrafficPrint along Main Street in Union, NE to capture passersby and reduce speeds of continuous daily traffic.

Below is a list of product advantages to TrafficPrint,

- Quick Installations – average intersection finished in 1 1/2 days, preventing the need to shut down an entire intersection or road for weeks or even months at a time to do full depth construction Open to traffic in one hour or less after installation;
- Designed for high traffic volumes (60,000+ vehicles daily);
- High resistance to cracking and softening (won't rut or deform in shape, unlike asphalt);
- Two installation options available: Total Inlay (flush to surface); and Overlay (on top of surface) with 16 inch transitional keyways;
- Wide variety of colors, patterns and paving combinations;
- Withstands snowplows and is not affected by petroleum products or road salts;
- Paving options which are sensitive to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act);
- Eco-friendly natural and recycled components (TrafficPrint)

(TrafficPrint, 2012)

4. Parking

STRATEGY 4.1.A: Propose a practical solution to parking along Main Street for passersby and residents, additionally identify ways to update and maintain parking systems in accordance to ADA regulations.

The criteria below outlined from “Angle vs. Parallel Parking” by G.L. Fisher demonstrates conditions that should be followed if angled parking along US 34 should be reconsidered:

- 6) The street carries primarily local traffic, usually indicated by low traffic volumes and operating speeds of 15 to 20 miles per hour (mph).
- 7) The street is not a major through-route; a street of less than three to four miles is not usually a through-route.
- 8) The street is a through-route; but a nearby street can be used for through traffic instead, allowing the subject street to serve local traffic.
- 9) The street has sufficient width – 50 to 60 feet – to comfortably accommodate parking maneuvers.
- 10) The street is geared toward pedestrians and visitors, with substantial building density, zero lot line development and a critical mass of retail activity or through traffic.

(Fisher, 1994, p.38)

5000 vehicles/day
4500 vehicles on survey day Factor: 1.11

50 vehicles survey/block X 1.11=55.5 or 56 would be reasonable for that block.

5. Beautification

Street Trees

STRATEGY 5.1.A: Establish a master plan to consult a profession in regards to selecting the most appropriate species, and providing guidelines for installation.

Lighting

STRATEGY 5.2.B: Propose the implementation of lighting sources along Main Street to define and describe the forms of things, which would otherwise be in darkness.

Seating

STRATEGY 5.3.C: Organize proper placement for seating to offer an accessible environment for pedestrians to visit and socialize along Main Street.

Trash Receptacles

STRATEGY 5.4.D: Research and select an appropriate style of trash receptacles for a main street to promote cleanliness and eliminate the enticement of litter.

6. Sidewalks

STRATEGY 6.1.A: Propose the redevelopment of sidewalks and walkways to meet ADA regulations provided by the NDOR that allows pedestrians to safely access their destinations including transit stops, places of employment, recreation facilities, schools and residences.

Stated throughout this section, it is important to keep in mind that regulations differ from state to state. Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) creates a set of requirements and guidelines that help assist in the design process of the sidewalks along Main Street.

7. Funding Opportunities

STRATEGY 7.1.A: Inform building owners and the Village of Union, NE about funding opportunities and tax credits from success stories and the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981.

STRATEGY 7.2.B: Understand the qualifications for funding opportunities provided by the USDA Rural Development program.

STRATEGY 7.3.C: Understand the qualifications for funding opportunities provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

STRATEGY 7.4.D: Offer important contacts for Union.

During the research process I was in touch with the director of Heritage Nebraska which is Nebraska's Main Street organization on the National level. Their Director, Elizabeth Chase is interested in the process that I have presented to her regarding the revitalization of Main Street. Her contact information is;

- Office: (402) 323.7337
- Cell: (402) 499.3703
- Website: www.nebraskamainstreet.org

I would strongly encourage Union to consult this professional regarding further assistance and the approach to successfully revitalizing their main street, given the opportunities discussed early in the document concerning location, size, and overall opportunities.

Closing

Development decisions must be based on the human and physical resources available to the community, the current and expected economic situation outside the community, such as the consistent flow of traffic and the eligible stakeholders who united with the village to foster the task of revitalizing a community in poor condition. Promoting rural community economic development requires a realistic understanding of community resources, the opportunities for using those resources, and any trends in

state and national economies that are likely to affect the community and its resources. In addition to economic development, the literature I have provided examined over the previous 9 months will offer support to community involvement in this process by addressing environmental and human health concerns presented by potential brownfields in Union, at the same time it helped me investigate ways US 34 and US 75 continually becomes utilized by transportation, thus presenting amenities and enhancing economic development on Main Street in the Village of Union, Nebraska.



XXI. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

XXI. Glossary of Terms

Terms	Meaning	Source
Access Management	When used in traffic and traffic engineering circles, generally refers to the regulation of interchanges, intersections, driveways and median openings to a roadway. Its objectives are to enable access to land uses while maintaining roadway safety and mobility through controlling access location, design, spacing and operation.	("Hacker", 2011)
Average Daily Trips	Is a measure used primarily in transportation planning and engineering to evaluate vehicle traffic of a highway for a year divided by 365 days.	("Hacker", 2011)
Brownfield	Brownfield sites are abandoned or underused industrial and commercial facilities available for re-use. The land may be contaminated by low concentrations of hazardous waste or pollution and has the potential to be reused once it is cleaned up.	("Hacker", 2011)
Demolition	Demolition contrasts with the element of deconstruction, which involves taking a building apart while carefully preserving valuable elements for re-use.	("Hacker", 2011)
Economic Development	Generally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of policymakers and communities that promote the standard of living and economic health of a specific area.	("Hacker", 2011)
Footpath	Is a type of thoroughfare that is intended for use by pedestrians but not other forms of traffic, such as motorized vehicles. They can be paths within an urban area that offer more expedient of safer routes, or rural paths, such as a trail.	("Hacker", 2011)
Heavy Truck ADT	Under Average Daily Trips are the largest tucks allowed on the road, they primarily consist for the purposes of long-haul purposes and categorized as semi-trailer configurations.	("Hacker", 2011)
Implementation	To add, put, plan, a decision.	("Hacker", 2011)

Main Street	This is the primary retail street of a village, town or small city in many parts of the world. It is usually a focal point for shops and retailers in the central business district, and is most often used in reference to retailing and socializing.	("Hacker", 2011)
Mélange	A metamorphic rock formation created from sediments and rocks scraped off the top of a downward-moving tectonic plate in a seduction zone.	("Hacker", 2011)
Municipality	Municipality is usually an urban administrative division having corporate status and usually powers of self-government. This is a general-purpose administrative subdivision, as opposed to a special purpose district.	("Hacker", 2011)
Niche	A place or position suitable or appropriate for a person or thing, also a distant segment of a market.	("Hacker", 2011)
Preservation	Is an endeavor that seeks to preserve, conserve and protect buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historical significance.	("Hacker", 2011)
Streetscapes	The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees and open spaces.	("Hacker", 2011)
Sustainability	In a general sense is the capacity to support, maintain or endure environmental, economic, and social dimensions towards resources.	("Hacker", 2011)
Transportation	Is the movement of people, animals and goods from one locations to another, They include air, rail, water, cable, pipeline, and space.	("Hacker", 2011)
Walkable	Is a measure of how friendly an area is to walking. This can evaluate health environment, and economic benefits.	("Hacker", 2011)



XXII. WORK PLAN



XXIII. APPENDIX

XXIII. Appendix

A. Group Results

Friday August 3 break out-group results – Priorities for Union

Group 1

- Storefronts and Streets fixed and cleaned
- Convenience store/café
- Farmers market/swap meet
- Natural gas hookup
- Public restrooms
- RV park
- Smoke pit

Group 2

- Main street
 - Revenue – new businesses
- Children's Program
 - T-Ball
- Safety and Security
 - Nuisance Abatement
- Community Center
- Food and Fuel/Electric Services

Group 3

- Signs
 - What union has to offer
- Main Street Businesses
 - Made more attractive
 - Park benches, flowers
- Restrooms and ball field
 - Public restrooms
- Community Welcome Center
 - Methodist church (empty)
 - Wi-Fi hot spot
 - Coffee house
- Refurbish caboose
- Update park/playground equipment
 - Splash park

- Affordable housing

Brainstorming

Opportunities

New Bridge being developed (will alter traffic patterns)
 Needs Old hotel/develop into staycation spot
 Slattery village estate – yurts, booked solid, spill over
 Union orchard
 Three-year vision
 Big pavilion
 Weddings/events
 Longest stretch of highway 34 – longest main street in the world
 Tree city USA designation – should apply for
 Arbor day - -originated in Nebraska City
 Wagon trails outside of town – potential bike trails
 Factory Ville
 Old school house
 More railroads with sleeper cars
 Underground Railroad sites - newly commissioned in NE
 Fault line
 Antiques

Needs

No public bathroom
 Free shows
 Kids programs
 Bunco
 Keno
 Movie projections
 More banner campaigns on Main Street
 Visitor Center
 Community center
 Union hill Vineyards
 Keno
 Electric charging stations
 Farmer's Markets

Potential Partners

Union Pacific Rail Road
 ATT – hotspot
 Keep Cass County Beautiful

 Grant opportunities

NPPD – Utilities (?)
SEEND
USDA Rural
Bar Owners
Welding business

Saturday Themes used to develop vision

Self-promotion
Be attractive for people and business – clean
Amenities, services – hospitality
 Basic and advanced
Support the community
Attraction
Embrace history
Family oriented
Play and programs
Cultivate healthy environment /trees
Affordable housing options
“Progressive”
Community involvement
Safe and secure
Economic development that supports region
Reliable infrastructure and street system

Sustainable



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