TIME AND THE PLANNING PROCESS IN SMALL TOWN CBD REVITALIZATION

BY

M. PATRICE SLAVEN

B.S. Biology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1980

A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

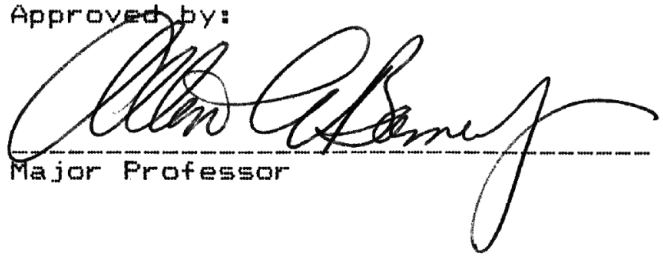
MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Department of Landscape Architecture

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1984

Approved by:



Major Professor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professors Tony Barnes, Lynn Ewanow, Richard Forsyth, and John Keller for their guidance and advice in the preparation of this thesis. I also want to thank my good friends in the Department of Landscape Architecture, who offered their help and moral support when needed. Most of all, I want to thank my parents and family for their patience and support throughout my education.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

****

INTRODUCTION

Problem Synopsis

The downtown, or central business district, has traditionally been the center of activity in the small town. It contained most functions of a community--government, commercial, educational, residential, religious, and recreational--all within the space of a few blocks. By virtue of its position as the oldest part of town, it also contains much of the cultural history of the town in its architecture.

However, changes in transportation, communication, and lifestyles have diminished the vitality of the downtown. Competition from strip development and shopping centers have caused many property owners and tenants to vacate their downtown locations for newer facilities closer to the population growth. Neglect and abandonment of the old business district have resulted in deterioration of the structures, streets, and sidewalks.

A movement toward redevelopment of these business districts is taking place in small towns in every region of the country. This movement stems from several relatively recent trends--the high cost of new housing, the energy shortage, and probably the biggest stimulus, the historic preservation movement.

While problems and solutions of urban renewal in large cities has been researched in numerous studies, it is only in recent years that any direction has been offered to small towns who seek to improve their business districts. They have often floundered about, particularly in the beginning stages of a project, unsure of how to go about organizing and planning their improvements, or even how to determine what kind of improvements they want. Not understanding the planning process and the time factors involved in various aspects of the process becomes frustrating to citizens and as a result, they may give up before they even get started.

This study analyze the role of time in the planning and implementation processes of downtown redevelopment projects in several small midwestern towns. As part of this study, the entire process and its duration--from the initial idea to redevelop through the implementation phase--was analyzed, as well as the duration of individual stages in the process.

Importance of the Study

This study is significant to both professional consultants and to the townspeople who serve as the client. The consultant can benefit by gaining an understanding of time factors. Plan-

ning and implementation processes can be made more efficient if delays are recognized and anticipated. The study also provides information to aid in adjusting fee schedules to better accommodate phases of research or planning where no visible progress is made.

By having this information, consultants can, in turn, play a role in educating the client about time frames and the factors that determine them. This will result in better communication between the consultant and the client, which should reduce the frustration a client experiences when setbacks do occur. This study is based on the assumption that if the role of time is understood by those involved in downtown redevelopment projects, then there is a greater chance for completion of the project.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To identify the planning and implementation processes leading up to improvements to the business districts of several small towns.
2. To identify the time frames of the various stages of the processes.
3. To analyze the relationships between process and time:
   a) What are the similarities and differences between the processes of the different case studies?
   b) What are the similarities and differences between time factors in these towns?
   c) Where did delays and obstacles occur in the processes?
   d) What were the beneficial aspects of the processes?
4. To determine if it is possible to amend the process so that unnecessary delays are eliminated or reduced.
5. To draw conclusions that can potentially be informative and/or applied in other small town redevelopment projects.

Scope of Study

This study deals with the aspect of time as it relates to the process utilized in redevelopment projects.

This study does not deal with:

* Economic and marketing factors of the businesses involved (such as pre-project market analyses or post-economic evaluations).
* Redevelopment in areas outside of the CBD.
* The quality of a project; the case studies are considered successful in the sense that they were carried through the construction phase.
* Variables in the towns other than those included in the criteria for selection of the towns (see Chapter Three: Methodology).

This study does not deal so much with what was physically implemented as with how this was accomplished: the procedures used and the duration of the individual stages.

Methodology

A case study method of research was employed in this study to achieve the stated objectives. Four projects from three mid-western towns are chosen for analysis. Data was collected in order to reconstruct the planning processes used in each instance. Personal interviews and newspaper searches constitute the primary means of data collection. Once the planning processes were reconstructed, they were analyzed and compared in terms of problems, successes, and delays. Conclusions are drawn as to how the processes could have been improved. Finally, recommendations were made to citizens and consultants involved in planning similar redevelopment endeavors. Important points in these recommendations cover the areas of downtown redevelopment organizations, consultant services, consultant-client communication, approval of financing methods, and citizen participation and support. The methodology is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

Chapter Outline

Chapter Two, the Literature Review, includes background information about the small town central business district: its history, its decline, and the movement toward revitalization. A hybrid redevelopment process is discussed, combining elements from a number of recommended processes. Other factors of downtown revitalization are covered, such as citizen participation, consultant roles, the role of the government, and financing of the redevelopment project.

Chapter Three gives a detailed description of the methodology employed to achieve the research objectives.

Chapter Four reports the redevelopment processes of four case studies and analyzes these processes on an individual basis.

In Chapter Five, these case studies are then compared to each other in terms of project initiation, organization, design development, and financing. Conclusions are drawn which serve as the basis for preliminary recommendations.

The preliminary recommendations are stated in Chapter Six, along with responses to them from several citizens involved in the projects selected as case studies. Final, revised recommendations and recommendations for future research conclude the thesis, with references and appendices following.

CHAPTER TWO

****

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

History of the CBD

In the early to middle 1800's, hundreds of towns were settled in the midwestern and western regions of America. As a result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, the 1850s, in particular, were boom years for the Kansas-Nebraska area. This legislation opened new territory for settlement and population rapidly increased (Reps, 1979).

Elements common to urban settlement of these areas included unprecedented speculation in town lots and excessive planning of new towns. Many of the towns were paper communities and were never realized. Others existed for a short time, only to dissolve later into ghost towns (Reps, 1979).

The railroad had an even greater impact on the settlement of towns in the midwest than the land speculators. Railroad promotional campaigns resulted in dozens of grid towns springing up as the tracks were laid, usually beginning at the site of the depot (Rifkind, 1977).

Current town planning practices of older parts of the country were unknown on the newer frontiers. New towns were developed to achieve quick settlement and speculative advantage (Reps, 1979). In order to achieve this efficiency of settlement, the grid system of parallel streets and rectangular blocks was employed almost exclusively (Rifkind, 1977). Public squares were usually included in a town plan, most often merely undivided blocks of the regular grid (Reps, 1979). Main Street bounded one side of the square and became the dominant axis of the town (Rifkind, 1977).

The downtowns of these communities were traditionally the focus of culture, economy, and government. They provided a location for socializing, information exchange, companionship, and entertainment (Rifkind, 1977). Usually the oldest part of town, the buildings downtown represented the history of the town (Craycroft, 1981). The downtown also housed the majority of the retail services of a town, as well as governmental, residential, religious, educational, and recreational functions (Rifkind, 1977).

Urban quality had not been considered in this race for settlement of the towns. Citizens felt the amenities of towns and cities elsewhere (tree-lined streets, landscaped plazas,

fountains, etc.) belonged to a more extravagent and traditional past (Rifkind, 1977).

It was only in the latter part of the nineteenth century that these towns incorporated these goals. The 1880s and 1890s saw a decline in population in the agricultural towns in the midwest while the population of larger cities and towns grew rapidly with the advent of industrialization. In order to improve the aesthetic quality of towns (and subsequently to attract industry), community improvements were implemented in the form of street trees, public fountains, rest facilities, and landscaping of public buildings (Rifkind, 1977).

In 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition was held in Chicago. The collaborative effort of landscape architects, architects, and engineers resulted in an entire "city" built at one time on the basis of one general plan. The fair was patronized by two million visitors, many of whom were inspired to return to their home towns and improve them. A direct result of the exposition was the immediate start of the City Beautiful movement, which saw the formation of numerous civic improvement associations. Activities of the movement ranged from comprehensive replanning of several large cities to smaller scale projects such as park shelters, sculptures, street furniture, and murals.

Decline of the Central Business District

The early 1900's saw changes to the CBD brought about chiefly by the automobile revolution. Downs (1979) cites five major decentralizing trends which contributed to the deterioration of downtown areas:

1) Increased automobile use generating suburbanization by making inner cities less suitable due to narrow streets, traffic congestion, inadequate parking, and higher density. It also eliminated dependence on public transportation.

2) Suburbanization resulting in the extensive building of new shopping and office facilities, competitive to the older CBD.

3) Deterioration of inner city neighborhoods

4) Withdrawal of middle-class households to the suburbs

5) Technical changes in communications, allowing separation of office functions, and changes in techniques toward single-story factories and warehouses.

Craycroft (1981) reiterates the impact of these trends and relates them to the decline of small town business districts. Again, the overwhelming popularity of the automobile since World War II is credited with the generation of other trends resulting

in the abandonment and neglect of the CBD.

The Great Depression added increased problems, causing many businessmen to minimize their costs (Weisenberger and Kline). Between 1940 and 1970, 28 million Americans moved from rural to urban centers to take advantage of better job opportunities. This had an enormous economic impact on those remaining in the small communities. Business, jobs, housing, and related services declined. There was a smaller population base on which tax and economic support depended. Between 1950 and 1970, rural areas lost an estimated 30% of their businesses (Weeks, 1976).

The neglect of CBD properties due to these factors, had severe physical repercussions. Powers-Willis (1971) lists several which are observed in typical midwest communities are:

* Physical and functional obsolescence of buildings and their environments, specifically, unattractive and poorly maintained streets and shops
* Incompatible land uses
* Cluttered, poorly maintained streets and sidewalks
* Lack of sign controls
* Circulation problems
* Inadequate, unattractive parking
* Unsafe, uncomfortable pedestrian circulation
* Failure to adhere to any total design concept
* Failure to take positive, effective action, or taking trivial, futile, or detrimental action when problems are recognized.

These physical concerns affect other aspects of the CBD: economic vitality, community pride and image, and citizen participation in community affairs.

Importance of the Central Business District

By the mid-1900's, downtowns were considered obsolete, ugly, and impractical (Rifkind, 1977). But planners and other citizens were beginning to realize the importance of the CBD and the necessity of saving it.

The CBD, while containing only 2-3% of the community's area, generates up to 30% of the local government's tax revenue and a majority of all sales tax collected. In addition, it often contains a large portion of the local work force (Rindone, 1983). The most efficient use of time and money is provided to the user in the downtown, where a wider range of facilities, retail shops, and government services are located in a more condensed, central location (Schluntz, 1973).

A small town alone cannot support two major retail shopping centers--the suburban strip development will only succeed at the demise of the CBD. Incentives for strip development include ample free parking and relatively inexpensive land--retailers

often found it easier and cheaper to build on the strip than to remodel in the central business district. The community cannot afford to lose the downtown. Not only is it a commercial and governmental center, but it is also the center of a town's history and image (Craycroft, 1981).

Renaissance of the Central Business District

Rural areas in America were typically economically depressed during the 1920s and 1930s. World War II saw a revival, in America, both physically and economically. This prosperity spread to rural as well as urban areas (Williams, 1980). The late 1950s saw towns and cities beginning to reevaluate their downtowns, creating the realization that if these areas were to be saved, it would have to be done soon (Livingston, 1965). This awareness, accompanied by certain trends, generated numerous downtown redevelopment projects across the country. These other trends include the energy shortage, which stimulated movement back toward the inner city and public transportation, the high cost of new housing, the historic/preservation interest, and the shift to smaller households (Downs, 1979). Actual physical improvements inspired by these trends began to be implemented in American towns about 1960.

While physical improvements alone cannot revitalize a dying CBD, they are necessary in conjunction with other programs. Powers-Willis (1971) places improvements in past downtown redevelopment projects into five categories:

1) Physical appearance
2) Traffic circulation and parking
3) Land use and physical arrangement
4) Public utility services
5) Consumer relations and merchandising.

Specifically, these improvements may consist of storefront restoration, street planting and furniture, sign controls, or pavement renovation.

At first, many older structures were condemned as obsolete, and demolished and replaced by new construction (Rifkind, 1977). Another movement renovated older storefronts by treatment with prefabricated metal facades. A more recent method is to work with existing structures to enhance their historic or otherwise inherent qualitites.

Numerous downtown revitalization efforts are now underway across the Midwest and other parts of the country. These projects range from more limited undertakings such as removal of garbage in streets and alleys, painting of building facades, and addition of off-street parking spaces to broad programs of redevelopment: Construction of pedestrian malls, parking garages, and promotion of new office and retail ventures (Berk, 1975).

One of the first proponents of downtown revitalization was Victor Gruen, an architect, who proposed converting Main Street into an area of landscaped malls. Kalamazoo, Michigan was the first community where such an idea was actually implemented (Livingston, 1965).

Another approach to downtown revitalization that rapidly gained popularity was the restoration concept. Corning, New York, in the early 1970s accomplished one of the most publicized restoration efforts. Corning Glass Works Foundation sponsored a program to stimulate the economy of the town's old business district. The foundation hired consultants to survey the area and develop a preliminary plan for the revitalization of the main street. Physical results of the effort were installation of new signs and awnings more in keeping with the original character. New brick sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting were also installed (Stephens, 1976).

Economic incentive is often an important consideration in CBD redevelopment. The urban economy, as described by the base theory, has two classes of activities. Basic activities produce and distribute goods and services for export outside of a defined area. They bring new money into the area. Nonbasic goods and services are consumed within this defined area, essentially recycling local money (Chapin, 1965). Many towns choose to implement a physical redevelopment project with the hope of attracting new business to the area. This would be an increase in basic activities, increasing, in turn, nonbasic activities.

This economic consideration and also the projects implemented in Corning and other towns, inspired the Main Street Project in 1976. Originated by the Midwest Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Main Street Project began a pilot program to study small town economic development within the setting of historic preservation. The aim of the project was to show that the preservation and improvement of architecturally significant CBD's can result in increased vitality to the area as well as to improve it aesthetically.

The Main Street Project was the first program to attempt a statistical analysis of the economic success of physical redevelopment of a business district. Three demonstration communities of different sizes were selected on the basis of similarity to other towns of their size, architectural character, relatively stable economy, and commitment to goals of the project. The first year was spent researching and analyzing the towns. Economic reports were compiled in order to monitor effects of the project made in terms of marketing and promotional strategies and other economic development methods. Design consultants provided design services and recommendations according to the needs of each community (Brown, 1979).

These pilot projects were successful programs. The Main Street Project then incorporated six states and thirty towns to

participate in an expanded version of the program (Walters, 1981).

Benefits of physical downtown revitalization projects take several forms. Economic results report an increase in new buildings, jobs, and tax revenues. Surveys conducted in the late 1960's by the Downtown Research and Development Center showed generally increased downtown retail sales following the construction of pedestrian malls and other improvements (Berk, 1975). For example, David City, Nebraska reported a 40% increase in business activity after its redevelopment project (University of Nebraska, 1966). A survey by Menswear Retailers of America showed substantial benefits to revitalized downtowns in terms of increased land values, rental expenses, property taxes, quality level of stores, and decreased downtown vacancy rates (Downtown Idea Exchange, 1974).

Related to the direct economic benefits are more indirect results--an increased potential for attracting workers into the CBD, general upgrading of commercial facilities in the downtown, and demands on existing downtown tenants to expand their businesses created by new retail and office space.

Increased social activity in the form of special events, entertainment, and dining often result from downtown revitalization projects. Citizens tend to take greater pride in their new business district and subsequent greater participation in community issues.

THE REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS

There are an increasing number of sources available to aid communities, large and small, in planning for downtown development or improvement projects. These sources can be found in the form of handbooks, manuals, journal articles, and brochures. Each cite a recommended planning process. Some of these processes are more developed than others, but most display similar elements which can be combined into a general planning process. A description of this typical process follows, as well as variations within the different steps.

1. **Awareness.** This is the first requirement of a redevelopment project. Awareness is simply the recognition of the need to revitalize a business district. This recognition may originate with one or more individuals or organizations (Waters, 1975).

2. **Initiating Discussion.** This usually consists of informal discussions among concerned individuals about what they would like to see happen in a community. After these casual conversations, those who remain interested should begin to identify individuals, organizations, and institutions which would have important roles in the planning and implementation of a downtown improvement effort (Berk, 1975).

3. Expanding Community Involvement. Having identified key people and organizations who should be involved, they should now be contacted. It will be decided with them how to proceed. These contacts should take place over a period of a month or two (Berk, 1975).

4. Exploratory Meetings. These people should be brought together for several meetings. The first of these meetings should be to determine how to proceed, to review problems through presentations of existing downtown conditions, to identify people who need to be involved, and to identify additional information the group may need (Berk, 1975).

5. Formation of a CBD Revitalization Organization. The range of these organizations is quite broad. Some are part of the municipal government, some are made up of private interests, and others take the form of a non-profit development corporation. Still others are loosely structured merchants associations which depend on the initiative of individual businesspeople. In some communities, one organization will operate the entire project, while in others, more than one group will be involved in different stages of the process. Likely organizations through which to work include the Chamber of Commerce, merchants associations, or the municipal commission (Berk, 1975).

Often, an independent organization will develop from one of these groups in order to eliminate any conflict of interests which may be present. This organization provides the connection between government and business. It provides the mechanism for local leaders. citizens, institutions, and business to make decisions affecting the CBD. Since the scope of the committee is narrow and focuses only on the CBD, there is greater possibility in directing energy and resources into important areas for revitalization (Meehan, 1983).

6. Define the problem. It is now up to the committee to define the problem or purpose of the revitalization. A general direction of action is established without stating specific solutions (Meehan, 1983).

7. Research. The research stage involves three principal activities, as stated by McKee, Vieux, and Wilhm (1977):

A) The first is conducting a community resource survey, obtaining reports from technical agencies relating to community development; also, this step involves contacting community organizations in the community development process in order to find out what functions they are currently conducting and how these relate to the process.

B) Another activity involves attitude surveying, to provide information concerning the community. This provides an initial form of citizen participation by acquainting the citizen with the community development process.

C) Technical research must be done to provide an objective overview of the community's assets and problems. Development potentials and restraints are identified and help set the stage for establishment of goals. The research stage should take about two months to complete.

8. **Establish Goals and Objectives.** These goals, based on the previous research, should serve as guides for the preparation of alternative plans and are the basis for selection of the final plan. They are, however, subject to change as new information becomes available or during the preliminary design stage (Meehan, 1983).

9. **Preliminary concepts.** Alternate concepts of improvements can be developed on the basis of the goals and objectives. This is done through public hearings, meetings with various groups, and planning workshops involving consultants (Berk, 1975). This should produce a clear course of action of the kind of redevelopment desired.

10. **Design Stage.** This should be done by expert environmental designers possessing the necessary design and technical skills. The design stage involves meetings between consultant and client to discuss previous findings and goals, and to determine what kind of services are needed. Also included in this stage are preliminary design alternatives, funding alternatives, client review of the preliminary alternatives, and development of final design and funding plans (Domack, 1981).

11. **Project Implementation.** All that is left now is the bidding procedure for the construction contract and the actual implementation of improvements. The bidding procedure consists of four major steps:

1) Invitation to bid. This may be an open invitation to anyone to submit bids, a negotiable bid with a single contractor based on previous performance, or an invitational bid, inviting bids from a limited number of contractors who can all produce the desired standards.

2) Bidding period. This is the time between the bid advertisement and the bid opening where a contractor has the chance to consider the plans and specifications and to develop reasonable cost estimates; the bidding period is usually about three weeks minimum.

3) Bid opening. The bids are opened and read publicly.

4) Award of contract. This takes place after the examination of the bids; the duration of this examination period varies with the complexity of the project.

The construction itself consists of ordering and approval of materials, implementation, and supervision and inspection of the construction process.

12. **Evaluation.** This final step is, more often than not, disregarded. Since the project is usually initiated in order to solve a community problem, however, it is important that the project be evaluated to determine if its completion has had the desired impact on the community. This evaluation may consist of different kinds of data, as well as subjective judgments as to how well the project has helped the community. A written report of this evaluation will provide a historical record of the project that will aid groups in organizing and implementing future projects (Nebraska Department of Economic Development, 1977).

The processes recommended by various sources are meant to be flexible, adaptable to the individual community. Certain steps may not be necessary to some projects or may be modified or combined with other steps. They do, however, provide certain guidance to a community considering a redevelopment project.

PROJECT PARTICIPATION

There are several groups of participants in the community development process. Depending on the type of project, the degree of participation by each group will vary. Certain stages of a project will require more effort from some groups than others. The three major groups to be discussed are: 1) citizens, 2) consultants, and 3) local government officials.

Citizens

Cary (1970) states three basic assumptions regarding citizen participation:

1. People of the community should actively participate in community change,
2. participation should be as inclusive as possible, and
3. participation should be accomplished through democratic organizations.

It is important to include as many citizens as possible in a redevelopment project. Their participation is important, as they are the taxpayers, consumers, property owners, merchants, and sources of information for a project. If they are involved or represented in the planning process, they will be more likely to support the plan or use their position to influence the community (Berk, 1975).

Though there is often a limited number of people who can be realistically involved in a project, there are ways in which large groups or organizations can aid in the planning, particularly in the early stages of research and information gathering. For example, these groups can help survey and measure physical elements for a base map, or help distribute and collect survey information concerning consumer and merchant attitudes and

habits.

The business community should be involved by including in the planning process influential economic leaders such as bankers, builders, public utility officials, and owners of large department stores. General organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, service groups like the Lions and Rotarians, and specialized groups like a downtown merchants association, are important groups to include in a redevelopment project (Berman, 1984). Their involvement is beneficial in gaining necessary support and approval of the project.

The media is usually influential in forming public opinion concerning a community's assets and problems. This is often accomplished through editorial pages and by decisions on what news should be reported and how (Berman, 1984). The local news can be vital in keeping a project alive when no progress is apparent.

The academic community, if available, can provide a variety of services from technical expertise and computer services, to workshops on planning and redevelopment (Berk, 1975). Often the university extension service provides a valuable connection to these services.

A smaller group of citizens generally forms the major decision-making force behind an improvement project. They are leaders of the community who are concerned about improving the quality of life. These citizens can be from many backgrounds and professions, and possess varying qualities and characteristics. Wiledon (1970) lists certain characteristics, however, which are usually present in these "power actors":

* they have control of credit, jobs, money, or mass media
* they belong to a higher income bracket in the community
* they are successful in whatever they undertake
* they are in an above average level in age and education
* they often have had long residence in the community and have been active in community affairs
* they have a tendency to associate with other power actors and belong to the "right groups"

Wiledon goes on to hypothesize that if these key influentials or power actors can be detected early in the development process, then the entire development process may be substantially accelerated.

Consultants

Consultants may be employed by communities for various tasks throughout the planning and implementation of a project. There are several kinds of consultants who provide these services.

The Community Development Specialist. Often employed by a

state government or large corporation (such as a utility company), this consultant takes on several roles in the organization of a project. He is a catalyst in that he is a neutral observer and listener who tries to clarify statements made by community participants. He is a facilitator by organizing participants for carrying out the process, guiding their input, and expediting them when necessary. And he is a resource, providing information, analyzing, educating, counseling, and when necessary, serving as an advocate for a community with external agencies (McKee et al., 1977). His role is usually the greatest in the early stages of a project, gradually diminishing as the citizens gain the ability to take over (Biddle, 1965).

Specialized Research/Data Consultants. These consultants are often hired to conduct necessary studies and surveys concerning existing attitudes, conditions, and technical information. Depending on the type of study to be carried out, these consultants may include landscape architects, market analysts, and traffic and parking engineers (Berk, 1975).

Design Consultants. Design consultants are educated to offer the expertise to develop detailed physical plans for various systems and components of the central business district. Separate plans may be prepared for storefront renovation, sidewalk improvements, traffic circulation, a mall, parking, and utilities. Depending on what improvements are desired by a community, it may employ any combination of landscape architects, architects, engineers, or planners.

The consultant, regardless of type of services rendered, can have a major effect on the outcome of a project, not only how well it works physically, but if it reaches the implementation stage at all. The quality of consultant to client communication is critical, especially for small towns which hire consultants from outside the community, usually from a larger city. Many of these consultants do not have an understanding of the social, economic, and political aspects of a small town. They often force an urban solution on the town, because that is the framework with which they are comfortable. Lack of literature and formal education in the area of small town planning leave little other alternative to these consultants (Cohen, 1977). Cohen goes on to state that "...despite the small town's most obvious distinguishing characteristic--its smallness--planners display an amazing tendency to propose projects of enormous conceptual, if not physical, scale...The scale of what is proposed is beyond comprehension and capabilities of the residents and officials of the towns, who, boggled by it all, can only respond in catatonic shock" (p.6). The result, in many cases, is abandonment of the project.

Craycroft (1971) echoes this dilemma by observing that there is more than a difference in scale between small towns and cities. There is a qualitative difference; a small town isn't just a smaller version of a city.

Despite these problems, a sensitive and responsible consultant can have a very positive impact on the project and, in effect, be the force that drives the project to success. An out-of-town consultant, though not initially familiar with the community, often has an advantage not afforded to an in-town consultant. Walters (1981), in reporting on the Main Street Project, observes, "The first and most visible sign that the Main Street Project has come to a downtown is the appearance of the resource team, a well-dressed group of strangers who stick out on Main Street like a goggle of foreign tourists" (p.41).

Because they are outsiders, a town is often less sensitive to their criticism than to that of their own citizens, as affirmed by Clark Schoettle, a Main Street Project consultant: "...we can go into a town and make very concrete criticisms and suggestions that others, closer to the situation couldn't make without alienating people" (Walters, 1981, p.41).

Local Government

The local government will, more often than not, play some role in the planning process. Sometimes this role is a leading one, where the council forms a special committee to orchestrate the entire project. Other times, the municipal government merely grants the final approval necessary to finance and implement the plans.

The local government is made up of elected and appointed officials who, with their staff, provide the necessary functions and services to the community (Berk, 1975). The structure usually consists of a mayor or manager, who handles administrative affairs, and a council. In a small number of communities, a commission exercises both executive and legislative duties. The power is divided among a small number of elected commissioners. Each commissioner is on the city council in addition to heading one city department. A mayor who, in this case, has little authority, may be elected directly by the voters or may be chosen by the commissioners out of its own membership (Berman, 1984).

The city council is generally made up of parttime members, not seeking to make careers in politics. To them, serving on the council is a temporary situation. As such, council members are largely dependent on the city administrator to supply information and set policy. A city administrator or manager provides a certain stability and continuity of policy regarding a project that the more transient city council members and mayor do not. There is only rarely serious conflict between the council and the citizens. This is especially true in smaller communities where the citizens and council members have common backgrounds and values (Berman, 1984).

Most citizens who attend city council meetings do so only to voice opposition to an issue on the agenda. Supporters of the issues are usually not in attendence. When controversial deci-

sions have to be made, those who are in agreement with the council tend to stay away and leave the council to face the critics without any visible public support. In small towns, as in larger governmental structures, citizens are usually only occasionally concerned with council decisions, and any direct involvement with the council is with issues directly affecting them (Berman, 1984).

The smaller town council is less likely to initiate new policies or changes than their city counterparts. When decisions are made, unanimity is strived for. Dissent or disagreement are dealt with before or during council meetings so that a consensus is reached (Berman, 1984).

A downtown improvement project is often an issue of conflict in a community; there is almost always some degree of opposition. Usually the main issue involves costs, with opponents either not willing or not able to provide the necessay financial commitment to make the project work. Sometimes this conflict is worked out without the help of the local government; other times, it is the role of the council or other officials to determine if a project should proceed.

In addition to its role as mediator in conflicts between citizen groups, local government can aid a CBD redevelopment project in other ways. It is in a position to support and lead business, civic, and community groups. It can benefit a downtown redevelopment program by organizing capital improvements to complement private investment in the CBD. And it can expend public money to implement improvements.

FINANCING THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

There are several options available to a town planning a redevelopment project. These are generally in the form of conventional financing, federal and state sources, or municipal means.

Conventional Financing

Conventional financing is provided to individuals or organizations requesting private funding methods. Money is available from financial institutions, insurance companies, pension funds or private investors (Robinson, 1982). Another form of private financing is fund-raising from public relations activities and promotion of improvements (Domack, 1981).

Federal and State Financing

Federal and state governments offer many funding programs to communities that meet specific requirements. Programs which are particularly appropriate to downtown redevelopment projects are

administered by the Economic Development and Small Business Administrations in the Department of Commerce. Examples of these funding sources follow.

Project Grants/Formula Grants. These are monetary grants made on a matching or nonmatching basis. In some cases, the community is required to provide a set proportion of the total cost; in others, no local funds are required (Domack, 1981).

Direct Loans. Depending on the type of project to be implemented, these loans can be made to private or public groups and to profit or non-profit organizations (Domack, 1981).

Guaranteed or Insured Loans. In this instance, the government backs the loan, which allows the lending institution to offer lower interest rates (Domack, 1981).

Technical Assistance or Advisory Services. This form of assistence is not monetary, but does offer information assistence to the community free of charge (Domack, 1981).

Community Development Block Grants. The Department of Housing and Urban Development also makes another type of financial assistance available. This comes in the form of Community Development Block Grants. With these grants, no matching local share is required. Funds received through these grants may, in turn, be used to provide the local matching share for other federal programs. A wide range of physical improvements are eligible under this program. Highest priority, however, is given to projects directly assisting low income residents (Berk, 1975).

Another kind of funding comes in the form of general revenue sharing. In this situation, funds are made available to state and local governments. A certain percentage is allocated to the state, with the remaining being divided among counties. In each county, the total is divided among the county government, townships, and municipalities according to a formula based on population, general tax effort, and per capita income. These funds are distributed quarterly and must be spent within a given period. They may be used to make any capital expenditures authorized by state and local law or to meet operating and maintenance costs of certain facilities (Berk, 1975).

Municipal Financing

Municipal financing is a popular and commonly used method for implementing a downtown redevelopment project. It offers the advantages of equity (costs are often charged on the basis of who is to benefit) and flexibility (one or more kinds of revenues may be utilized) (Berk, 1975). Several of the more common municipal financing methods described by Berk are included below.

General Purpose Revenues. These include a number of standard sources of income which can be applied to any corporate

purposes, including CBD improvements which benefit the entire community. Of these, the largest source is the general corporate purpose property tax. Other forms of these revenues are state income tax rebates, retailer's occupation tax and service tax, and utility taxes.

Special Purpose Revenues. Receipts from these revenues can be used only for specified purposes. For example, the motor vehicle tax may be used only for road and street improvements, salaries of traffic officers, etc.

Special Assessment. A common form of financing CBD projects, a special assessment is a procedure where municipal governments assess individual property owners for improvements which provide greater benefits to them than to the community as a whole. Improvements which can be financed by this method include streets, sidewalks, street lighting, parking facilities, and pedestrian malls. Each property owner is assessed according to the estimated amount of benefit he will receive from the improvement. Special assessment financing can be a long, complex, and often controversial system of taxation. It is often used in conjunction with other municipal financing. Special assessment financing may also be referred to as benefit district financing.

Municipal Bonds. This form of funding constitutes the debt of cities, counties, or other local governing agencies. Bonds are issued to pay for the physical development of an area by spreading the cost out over a specified time. It insures that no single group of citizens will have to bear the entire cost of improvements which will also benefit the community at large. An agreement is made by the municipality to either 1) pay the face amount of the bonds plus interest at maturity, or 2) apply certain revenues (such as parking revenues) toward payment of the bonds. Types of bonds most likely to apply to CBD projects are:

1) General Obligation Bonds. These bonds usually have the lowest interest of any municipal bond. They are secured by the commitment of the city to levy taxes without limitation as to rate or amount in order to make good on the payment of the bonds. As a result, this form of bonding offers the most security and acceptable marketability. Voter approval is required.

2) Revenue Bonds. These bonds are payable from revenues derived from tolls, charges, user fees, or rents paid by those being financed. In CBD improvements, financing of parking lots is the most common form of revenue bonds.

3) Special Assessment Bonds. The bonds are issued to finance improvements on the basis of special assessments against benefited properties. They are not backed by "full faith and credit" like general obligation bonds, resulting in higher interest rates. The bonds are normally issued upon completion of the project (Berk, 1975).

The above funding methods may be used alone to accomplish a project. Most often, however, there is more than one type of financing used in various combinations. For example, in a single project, design services may be funded with donations from private organizations, storefront renovation may be financed by the individual property owners, and landscaping and lighting may be provided by the city.

CHAPTER THREE

****

METHODOLOGY

A case study approach was employed as a means to accomplish the research objectives stated previously. This permitted a more indepth investigation of redevelopment processes than could be obtained through other research methods, such as a survey approach. Though a case study cannot result in rules pertainable to all redevelopment situations, this approach would allow towns considering downtown improvements to learn from the experiences of others, both the successes and the mistakes, as will be described in this study. A detailed description of the methodological process follows.

Site Selection

Three towns in the states of Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa, that had implemented four projects were chosen for case studies. Selection was based on the following criteria:

1. Location of the town within a 250 mile radius of Manhattan, Kansas. This allowed relatively short travel distance from Kansas State University.

2. Development of a downtown redevelopment plan directed toward the improvement of, among other things, the aesthetic quality of the streetscape. This could have been accomplished through renovation of storefronts or installation of trees, pedestian lighting, street furnishings, pavement improvements, etc.

3. Completion of the project through the implementation stage to allow evaluation of the planning process by participants in the process and also to allow examination of the entire redevelopment process in retrospect.

4. Location of the improvements within the main part of the central business district.

5. A population of under 10,000 residents, the figure considered by the U.S. Census Bureau to be the division between small towns and urbanized areas.

6. Location of the town far enough away from a metropolitan area so as not to be considered part of that metropolis.

7. Availability of citizens who served as major participants in the redevelopment process who were willing to serve as information sources in reconstructing that town's process.

Based upon the aforementioned criteria, The three towns selected for the case studies were Oberlin, Kansas, David City,

Nebraska, and Red Oak, Iowa. Detailed information about these towns and their projects will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Selection of Interview Participants

It was quickly determined through inquiry who one or two of the major participants were in each project. These participants were contacted and briefly informed of the study and were requested to cooperate. All agreed to do so. Each of these individuals then supplied the names of other key participants in the redevelopment processes. These citizens and consultants would later be interviewed in order to obtain information about events which were part of the planning processes.

Questionnaire Development

A questionnaire was developed to guide the researcher in interviewing the citizens (Appendix A). Questions were coded for ease in recording answers, but would be asked as open-ended questions to allow related information to be more freely volunteered. Major topics of the redevelopment process and resulting improvements were covered in the form, including project initiation, organization, design development, and financing methods used.

Once it was determined what improvements were implemented, pre-design issues were addressed. These included initiation and organization of the project: Who conceived the project, how the community became involved, and how the main redevelopment supporters were organized. Answers to these questions would aid in ascertaining what, if any, vehicles for starting and organizing a project were more successful in terms of efficiency of time and effort.

The next major section of the questionnaire traces the consultant's role in the project. The type of consultant, the consultant hiring process, the design process used by the consultant, and the quality of communication between the consultant and the citizens were discussed. Length of time of the stages of the design process were also considered.

Project financing, bidding procedures, and the construction phase were then covered. Types of financing used, approval methods for the financing, and problems encountered were major topics of concern.

The final group of questions addressed issues of the entire process in general--major setbacks and problems, successes, project duration, etc. It was the purpose of these questions to delve into the facts of the process (what, how, how long), and to also obtain the opinions and insight of those actually involved in it as to successes and failures of their project.

Refining the Questionnaire

Once the questionnaire was developed, it was pretested in an interview with a former Oberlin citizen who had played a key role in the town's project and now lives in the Manhattan vicinity. The questionnaire was also given to two other people, one a research expert, the other a major participant in the Manhattan Downtown Redevelopment Project. These two resource individuals reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, content, and form.

After consideration of suggestions from the aforementioned people and the results of the interview with the Oberlin citizen, minor changes were made to the questionnaire. It was intended that the questionnaire would serve as a guide for the interviews, yet be flexible enough to accommodate the individual role of the participant being interviewed. No one subject would be able to answer every question, yet with several contacts for each town, the questionnaire would eventually be filled in.

Interview Scheduling

While the questionnaire was being revised, citizens who were to be interviewed were contacted. The study and its purpose was related to those not previously contacted, and meeting times were scheduled so that most participants could be interviewed within a short span of time, thus maximizing the use of time spent in each town.

Data Collection

The majority of data collected for each case study took place during individual town visits. There were three primary sources of information collected in order to reconstruct the redevelopment processes.

1. Photographs and maps were collected to record the kinds of improvements implemented as well as their location in the business district. These provided graphic illustrations of the physical results of the planning and organization, to be used as visual aids in the description of the project.

2. Archival information was gathered by searching through the town newspapers published during project planning and implementation. This was the most valuable source in obtaining reliable dates and specific facts, such as costs, planning stages, etc. The newspapers, being published at least once a week, were able to provide a fairly accurate record of the length of time of various phases of planning.

3. Interviews were conducted with major participants of the redevelopment process for each project. Interview information served several purposes. It was of immediate use in determining general dates and facts which facilitated the newspaper search.

The interviews uncovered many minor facts about the process not covered in the newspapers, such as how the project originated, what issues arose in opposition to the project, etc. Lastly, interview information provided first hand accounts of major setbacks, problems, successes, and benefits of various aspects of the processes. This insight was invaluable and was not to be found in the more factual, objective newspaper articles.

The interviews, with the permission of the participants, were taped for ease and accuracy of transcription. Subjects were given the option of answering the entire questionnaire, but were often able to contribute only to certain sections. This was dependent on the role which the individual played in the redevelopment process. For example, a lawyer involved primarily in the financing aspect of the project was only able to answer the financing section of the questionnaire.

Analysis of the Data

Organization and consolidation of the data was conducted immediately after the town visits to determine what information was collected, what was still missing, and if there were conflicts in the information obtained from different sources. A matrix was created to aid in organizing information about how different aspects of the process were conducted for each project (Appendix 2). The matrix, used first to aid in detecting missing information, would later be used as a mechanism in comparing and analyzing the four projects.

When it was determined what information was still required, short follow-up interviews were conducted by phone or by mail to clarify and complete the necessary data.

After the majority of information needed for the research had been gathered, it was analyzed. Analysis was first conducted within each individual project, and then by comparing all four projects, with the help of the matrix. Similarities and differences in the problems, successes, and delays were examined.

Results of this analysis served as the basis of preliminary recommendations for other small towns taking on similar redevelopment projects. The purpose of these recommendations is to guide and not to confine a town making decisions about a project.

Validation of Preliminary Conclusions

The preliminary recommendations resulting from comparative analysis of the four redevelopment processes were presented to representatives of each town, most of whom had participated in the previous interviews. These participants were requested to respond to the recommendations, i.e., to express agreement or disagreement with the recommendations and their reasons for doing so.

These opinions were reported and the preliminary recommendations revised as a result of the validation interviews. A list of final recommendations became the end product of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

****

CASE STUDIES

The four case studies to be analyzed in this research are in Oberlin, Kansas, David City, Nebraska, and Red Oak, Iowa, the latter town having implemented two of the projects under study. The planning processes used by each project are presented in this chapter as accurately as possible. Each case study begins with a brief description of the town itself and of the project. A timeline then outlines the main dates and events of the process. This information was obtained from the interviews and newspaper articles collected during the town visits. A more detailed description of the process follows. Lastly, the process is analyzed in terms of successes and difficulties encountered in the duration of the project. This is repeated for each of the four case studies.

Figure 1. Location map of the three towns involved in the case studies.

OBERLIN, KANSAS

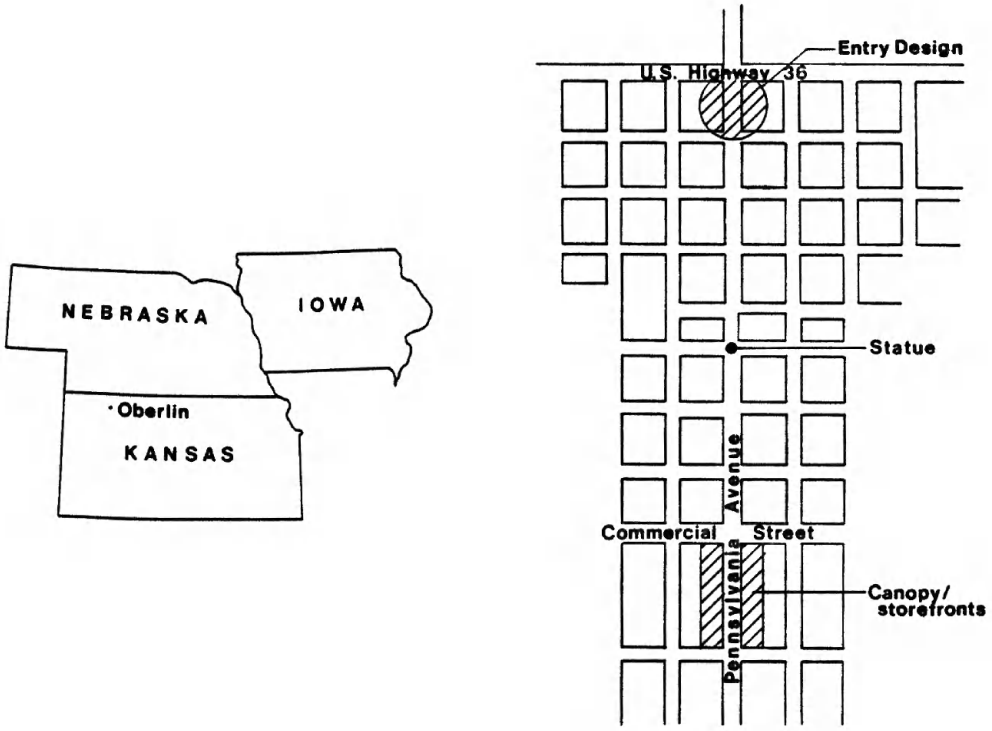


Figure 2. Area map and business district map showing location of improvements in Oberlin.

Oberlin, Kansas is located in the northwestern corner of the state. A community of 2,500, Oberlin is the seat of Decatur County. Agriculture provides the principal economic base of the region, with activities ranging from wheat and sunflower production to the raising of cattle and hogs. Oberlin supplies the retail and service needs of the surrounding area. U.S. Highway 36 is the main east-west access to Oberlin, while U.S. Highway 83 runs north and south through the town.

The heart of downtown Oberlin lies eight blocks south of Highway 36. Most of its services are contained in a one-block segment of Pennsylvania Avenue. It was this block which, in the mid-1960's, merchants and businessmen concentrated their efforts in planning and implementing a redevelopment project. It had been generally felt that there needed to be some changes made in the old, neglected structures; a new image for Oberlin was desired. But it was not until the summer of 1964 that interest became voiced through an editorial in the Oberlin Herald, de-

Figure 3. The redwood and steel canopy is the most evident result of the Oberlin business district revitalization efforts.

Figure 4. Several storefronts in the downtown area were given new appearances during the redevelopment activity.

scribing redevelopment efforts of a Canadian town, and proposing that Oberlin initiate a similar project.

Eight years later, the results of this editorial were evident. The most obvious improvement made was a steel and redwood canopy, extending over the sidewalk the entire length of the block on both sides of the street. This provided a unifying element to the downtown. In addition, a large number of businesses on the block implemented storefront renovation plans, often requiring extensive structural changes. The entrance to Penn Ave. off Highway 36 was redesigned to include a new sign and a tree-planting scheme. A statue of a pioneer family now marks the entry to the central business district.

Oberlin's downtown efforts inspired other projects in the community. Among these endeavors were organization of a county feedlot just north of the town, establishment and operation of a commercial dairy, a study of park improvements, the development of a new golf course, and the gradual formation of a "home-owned" carnival, which sets up at the annual Decatur County Fair.

Process

Timeline

July 1964	Woodward editorial "This Could Happen Here"
	Woodward presentation to Chamber of Commerce on project in St. Thomas, Ontario; subsequently asked to write to St. Thomas for more details
Sept. 1965	plans for refurbishing storefronts "on the drawing board" of Kansas City, Mo. architect
	presentation of proposed improvements by architect; sketches displayed in chamber office
Oct. 1966	first visit to Oberlin by McGraw and Weisenberger
Feb. 1967	Chamber of Commerce requests study of Oberlin by College of Architecture and Design
	KSU class visit to collect information
Feb.-Mar. 1967	community collection of information to be used by students--base map information, aerial photos, survey and questionnaire results
June 1967	student presentation of "conceptual" drawings; economic survey recommended
	Weisenberger speaks at Chamber of Commerce banquet

Nov. 1967	students meet in Oberlin with mayor and Chamber of Commerce to discuss further development of business district plans; showed slides of mall and other urban design improvements; students also made survey of downtown buildings and gathered information on town and trade area; made design of entry to CBD first goal
Dec. 1967	presentation of model of proposed entry design and sculpture; CBD design to be next goal
Feb. 1968	Oberlin bakery storefront renovation begins (designed by Nichols of Nichols Construction)
	design of storefronts by students begins with information-gathering of 6 buildings at request of owners
	discussion underway about financing entrance improvements
Mar. 1968	preliminary drawings presented on first 6 storefronts; information gathered on five more; construction to begin April 1
	five more firms request drawings (17 total to date); Weisenberger and students to visit town next week
Apr. 1968	preliminary sketches presented of storefronts, proposed mall, and entrance to Penn Ave. at a public meeting sponsored by the Chamber; methods of financing project discussed by Ernst
June 1968	22nd business asks for design
July 1968	Weisenberger and students come again; 9 out of 22 drawings completed; construction is in the works (Herald office almost completed-- the 2nd one after the bakery)
	students send prints of five more fronts (now 25 firms involved); will return again in September
Aug. 1969	canopies on main street requested by Chamber of Commerce petition to the property owners--simple majority needed; canopy was designed by KSU students and engineered by Topeka firm of Kiene and Bradley; city agreed to supply lighting and maintenance
Sept. 1969	petition signed by over 75%; is submitted to council public hearing set to give more details on canopies

Oct. 1969	council approves canopy petition
March 1970	bid opening; one bid--much higher than original estimate; action deferred till solution to the problem of extra costs is found
Apr. 1970	city to advertise for new bids; steel substituted for redwood decking to lower construction costs
May 1970	state okays matching funds for statue for entrance to CBD; sculptor to start work this summer; funds must be raised for other half of sculture
Sept. 1970	architect to meet with council to go over final plans
	bid advertisement; will have base bid on redwood decking and an alternate for lighter weight steel decking
	goal met in statue fund-raising
Oct. 1970	bid opening
	contract approved by council; Nichols Construction Co.-- estimated 60 days to get materials, 120 days to complete construction
Mar. 1971	work begins on canopy construction
Apr. 1971	canopies 25% complete
	request to extend canopy in front of courthouse at cost to county
	Farmers National Bank donates trees to entrance to Penn Ave.
May 1971	council approves extension of canopy; opposition from rural faction
	money for canopy extension donated after petition by 440 people opposing use of county funds
	canopy construction over 80% complete; delay while waiting for material shipment
July 1971	statue completed (began a year ago)
Aug. 1971	Weisenberger progress-to-date: majority of store-fronts renovated
Nov. 1971	background music to be added to project; money raised by Chamber of Commerce

music installed

Apr. 1972 — entryway trees planted; entrance will be the site of new sign marking entry to the CBD before the end of the year (spring or summer)

Description

In 1964, Ernest Woodward, owner and editor of the Oberlin Herald weekly newspaper, represented the Kansas Press Association on a visit to St. Thomas, Ontario. St. Thomas had just completed a redevelopment project consisting of a fix-up and painting movement which included renovation of the downtown area. Because of his interest in this project, Woodward photographed it extensively. When he returned to Oberlin, he wrote an editorial for the Herald titled "It Could Happen Here", relating the efforts of St. Thomas. He then made a presentation to the Chamber of Commerce, showing what had been done and reported an increase in business of 20% as a result of the renovation. He was asked by the Chamber to write to St. Thomas for more details (Weisenberger & Kline).

About a year later, the Chamber hired a Kansas City, Mo. architect to develop a design proposal for Oberlin's CBD. The architect was the brother-in-law of a member of the Chamber and was chosen accordingly. He visited Oberlin once to obtain base information. He then returned to Kansas City to develop the proposal.

The architect's recommendations were presented to the Chamber of Commerce in September of 1965. Composite elevations and sections of both sides of the main business block of Penn Ave. were shown. In addition to storefront improvements, recommendations included a 5 foot wide island running down the middle of the street with trees placed in the island. No exact cost figures were made; it was estimated, however, that the owners could expect to pay $5,000 to $10,000 per structure. There was unanimous support of pursuing the project among the 32 businessmen who attended the presentation. The drawings went on display in the Chamber office that week. The Chamber of Commerce was billed for the work done to this point.

It was not until February of 1967, that the project went back on the board. This is due to the unwillingness of the property owners to expend the amount of money which would have been required by the architect's plan. Property owners were willing to spend a maximum of $1,500 per storefront. The landscaped median strip in the architect's recommendations was considered to be unimportant to the citizens; to them, storefronts were the major issue. As a result, the architect's proposal died. The Chamber of Commerce was also occupied, during this interval, with the Herndon Dam project, which was under study. Since the Chamber was the primary force behind any downtown redevelopment in Oberlin, this probably contributed to the delay.

The Chamber did, however, take some action during this time. Jim Nighswonger, the landscape architect with the Cooperative Extension Service at Kansas State University, was invited to Oberlin to discuss community design. He went over park design, tree planting programs, and downtown landscaping. It was Nighswonger who then recommended that the Chamber contact the College of Architecture at Kansas State University to find out about the community planning short course programs conducted by the Department of Regional and Community Planning (Weisenberger & Kline).

The Chamber contacted the dean of the College of Architecture, who turned the matter over to Professors Eugene McGraw and Ray Weisenberger. They, in addition to Bill Swegle of the Department of Continuing Education, visited Oberlin in October of 1966. They met with Howard Kessinger, then editor of the Oberlin Herald, and several Chamber of Commerce and community officials. It was agreed that Prof. McGraw's Urban Design class would use Oberlin as a class project the following semester.

In February, 1967, McGraw, Weisenberger, and nine students from McGraw's design class made a 2-day visit to Oberlin. They took pictures and gathered information on Oberlin and the trade area considered necessary for the project. Expenses were paid by the Chamber, in the hope that the project would offer several creative plans for community improvements, one of which could be adopted for further development by merchants and the Chamber of Commerce. The students were to address issues such as auto and pedestrian circulation, location of parking, development of rear entrances to stores, and possibilities of combining stores to improve merchandising and facilitate movement of shoppers.

Community involvement ran high at this point, as citizens aided the students in obtaining necessary base information. The Lion's Club measured all downtown structures and developed a base map drawn to scale, showing location of all buildings. Members of the Business and Professional Women's group distributed questionnaires to local firms. Aerial photos of the CBD were taken by members of the Oberlin Flying Service. The Oberlin Jaycees ran a local survey for the project. Survey and questionnaire information would be used by the students in suggesting establishment of new firms or expansion of existing ones.

The student's presentation was held in June of 1967. Drawings presented were conceptual and not meant to be working drawings. Most designs featured a mall development, prohibiting automobile traffic on this block of Penn Ave. Parking was located behind the stores, with pedestrian passageways connecting to the mall. McGraw recommended that an economic survey be conducted to insure that Oberlin's economic base could support new businesses and changes.

Later that month, Weisenberger returned to Oberlin to speak at a Chamber of Commerce banquet. He expressed doubt that Oberlin could complete a project envisioned by the students

within a year. He urged them, instead, to think in terms of several years for development, undertaking a part of the total project each year. He advised four phases of planning: 1) information gathering, 2) analysis of information, 3) plan preparation, and 4) implementation. Weisenberger continued these discussions with citizens of Oberlin through the summer of 1967.

That fall, Weisenberger and a graduate student in planning met with the Chamber of Commerce and the City Commission. They submitted a proposal to develop further drawings for a renovation project. Oberlin would pay expenses of the project, travel, and minimal salaries for the graduate students who would be involved. Their proposal was accepted, and two additional students joined the design team. It was decided that in order to adequately determine community needs, the students would make several trips to Oberlin and meet with businessmen and property owners. The merchants supported this plan, but remained concerned about the costs.

By November, the students had made their first goal the design of improvements to the entrance to Penn Ave. at the U.S. Highway 36 intersection. They would then concentrate their efforts toward the mall design for the downtown. This would include designs for storefront renovation. Local citizens also asked that students consider the possibility of continuous canopies up and down the main business block. Students, at this November meeting, also presented slides of mall and other urban design improvements which had been implemented in various cities. During this visit, the students surveyed the downtown buildings and gathered information on the town and trade area.

In December, 1967, the students presented a model to local officials of the proposed entry. This design would feature a sign indicating the entrance to the Oberlin CBD and a sculpture of a pioneer family. A model of this sculpture was also presented. During this time, the city also passed ordinances to change codes in order to become eligible for funding for urban renewal projects. They did this in hope of eventually applying for federal funds for local improvements programs.

Design of the storefronts started in February of 1968. Students went to Oberlin to gather information on six buildings whose owners had requested designs for their fronts. Discussion was underway now to finance entrance improvements.

Preliminary drawings of the first six storefronts were presented in March. During this visit, students also compiled information on five other storefronts to be renovated. They made another trip to Oberlin that same March; by the end of the month, the total requests for storefront drawings had climbed to eighteen.

In April, construction began on the first storefront. This was the Oberlin Bakery. The design for the bakery had been done by Ernest Nichols of Nichols Construction Co. even before the

students had begun their designs. Completion of this storefront would eventually give added incentive to other owners interested in renovating their facades. A public meeting was also held in April at which preliminary sketches of the storefronts and proposed mall were presented. Recommendations also included the design of a canopy to cover the sidewalks along the main business block of Penn Ave. Professor Eugene Ernst of Kansas State University outlined 3 ways plans could be implemented: 1) through a locally financed "bootstrap program", 2) by leaving natural forces of development to take care of it over a period of years, or 3) by requesting state or federal assistance.

By the next student visit in July, 9 out of 22 drawings for requested designs were completed, with five more to be sent the following week. Construction was underway, with the second storefront nearly complete.

The canopy design took hold in August of 1969, when the Chamber of Commerce circulated a petition among the property owners of the business area. The petition, if signed by a majority of the owners, would designate the area a benefit district, requiring all properties to meet the costs of building the canopy. The canopy, designed by KSU students and engineered by the firm of Kiene and Bradley, based in Topeka, was a redwood and steel structure with globe lighting at 25-foot intervals. The cost for the structure was estimated at $38 per running foot. The city would pay for the cost of the lighting and for the maintenance of the canopy. Over 75% of the owners had signed the petition by September, and it was then submitted to the council for approval.

A public hearing was set in September to further clarify the details of the canopy. Only one property owner removed her name from the petition as a result of the hearing, and the petition gained council approval by October.

After an open advertisement for bids, the bid opening occurred in March, 1970, with one firm submitting a bid for the project. The bid was $18,000 over the architect's cost estimate, and action was deferred until a way could be found to raise the additional funds or cut the costs. It was soon decided to substitute steel for the redwood decking.

Final plans for the alternate canopy were considered and approved in September. Bids were again advertised for a steel structure with redwood decking and an alternate bid for lighter weight steel decking. Bid opening occurred in October and Nichols Construction Company was awarded the contract. Nichols estimated that it would take 60 days for receipt of the materials and an additional 120 days for construction.

Construction began on the canopy in March of 1971. It was 25% completed in April, when a request was made to extend the canopy across the front of the courthouse. This would require a county expenditure of $8,000. The city council approved this in

May, but not without opposition from the rural citizens of the county. A petition against use of county funds for the canopy was signed by 440 people. As a result of the petition, the money for the extension was donated by various individuals. By the end of May, over 80% of the canopy construction was complete.

By August, a majority of the storefronts had been completed, as well as the entryway sculpture and the canopy. Piped-in music was added to the canopy in November, the funds being raised by the Chamber of Commerce and Oberlin Promotions Council. Entry trees were planted the following year in April, 1972, with the trees being donated by Farmers National Bank. The entrance sign was constructed that same year. These activities more or less completed the Oberlin downtown redevelopment project. Sporadic storefront renovation continued to occur for several years after, and was conducted on the basis of individual wants and needs of the owner.

Analysis of Data

Oberlin encountered many difficulties throughout their business district redevelopment. Most of the problems occurred in the early stages of the process.

The merchants and businessmen seemed in general agreement that something should be done to improve the downtown. They were unsure, however, about what that something should be and how much they were willing to spend. This uncertainty was perhaps the main obstacle with the first two groups of consultants. Both consultants developed elaborate urban renewal projects inappropriate both financially and functionally for the people of Oberlin. They did not try to determine what the property owners could and could not afford to do to their properties and the fronting street. Poor communication was largely the problem with the first consultant, who spent little effort in determining the wants and needs of the town. The second "consultant", Professor McGraw's design class, on the other hand, had excellent communication and rapport with the citizens. However, they lacked the experience to determine appropriateness of, for example, a mall design, to the town. This was also partly due to the nature of redevelopment in the 1960's, when urban renewal tended toward the approach of tearing down the old and starting over, rather than the more recent preservation/renovation trend. The design class, like the architect, failed to take economic considerations into account.

The final "consultant", Professor Weisenberger's class, seeing the failings of the first two groups in meeting economic feasibility, took a financial approach to the problem. They determined how much the property owners were willing to spend, and developed their plans accordingly. Storefront renovation, canopy construction, a pedestrian mall, and more were incorporated into their designs. However, plans were phased for implementation purposes, alleviating some of the financial burden

of the property owner.

This class also had very consistent contact and communication with Oberlin citizens, visiting frequently, sometimes as often as every other weekend.

The portion of the plan which became the focus of Oberlin's redevelopment project, both in planning and in the end result, was the canopy. This aspect of the project was the center of most of the town's efforts and organization. Construction of the canopy was an all or nothing project--either the entire block participated or no one at all. Consent of the majority of the property owners was necessary in order to establish the benefit district, the primary financing vehicle used. The backing of the city council was also required, not only to officially authorize the benefit district, but also because the city undertook the purchasing of the lighting and the maintenance of the canopies.

The entry design to Penn Ave. often fell by the wayside and was planned and implemented sporadically. This was due partly to the fact that Penn Ave., at the point of the intersection with Highway 36, needed to be widened and improved before any aesthetic improvements could be made. The entry also did not appear to have high priority as compared with the canopy.

The storefront renovation efforts were the most sporatic and were spread out over the longest duration of any of the three major stages of the project. This is due to several factors. The nature of the improvements did not require the cooperation of all the property owners, and no one was pressured into implementing them. If an owner chose to improve his facade, fine; otherwise, no pressure was applied. This attitude resulted in a piecemeal form of renovation which each property owner did at his own pace or did not do at all. The first storefront was completed long before the benefit district financing for the canopy was approved. By the mid-1970's, less than half of all the storefronts had been renovated. Another contributing factor to the greater success of the canopy may lie in the fact that, if both projects had been implemented one right after the other, it would have created undue financial burden on some of the property owners. This could account for the more relaxed attitude toward storefront improvement. Again, priority was given to accomplishing canopy construction.

Approval of the benefit district proceeded with few problems. In a period of two months, the Chamber of Commerce collected signatures from 75% of the property owners, submitted the petition to the city council, and gained the council's approval. The signatures were collected in an informal manner, taking care not to pressure or alienate the merchants.

Problems surfaced again the following spring, when the bid opening resulted in a bid by one construction company, which ran well over the architect's estimated cost of the project. Some means had to be found to lower the costs of the project, or to

raise the additional funds. When this was done, a second bidding period and opening was necessary. All this delayed construction almost a year from when it would have started had the original bid been accepted. One or two cost estimates in addition to the architect's would have alerted project leaders to impending conflicts.

Once construction began, it moved rapidly. There were problems, though, convincing citizens that the canopy wasn't a major mistake. They were unprepared and alarmed when they saw its starkness in mid-construction. One citizen felt that the townspeople were not adequately "conditioned" for what was to come. Once the benefit district was approved, there was little newspaper coverage about what the street would actually look like with the canopy. The students or subsequent architect for the canopy should perhaps have held more presentations and displayed the drawings to better prepare the town.

Despite all the problems and delays encountered, implementation was still completed and is considered a success. It is therefore necessary to discuss factors which enabled continuation of the project during slow or idle periods.

First and foremost of the factors was the support of the project by the townpeople. Those who did oppose the project were not forceful about it. They showed their opposition by inaction, such as not signing the petition. But they agreed not to take any action, legal or otherwise, against the project.

Those who were the primary supporters of the project kept it alive without being too forceful or pushy. The newspaper was an important vehicle in this aspect. The Oberlin Herald kept the project in the public eye and therefore in the public mind. Whenever some progress was made in the planning or implementation, there was a story, often accompanied by a picture, as in the case of construction updates. When the first storefront was completed, much attention was drawn to it, and others were inspired to move more quickly on their own storefronts.

Good communication between the students and the town was also essential to the successful completion of the project. By working closely together, the two groups were able to keep on top of the project and make decisions and compromises without prolonged delays.

Summary

Problems

1st consultant:

1. This consultant had poor communication with client--didn't give them what they wanted or try to figure out what they wanted
2. He was located too far away to keep adequate communication.

3. There was no consideration for economic feasibility of the project.

2nd consultant:

1. Plans were too elaborate--the town was not ready for the mall idea.
2. The plans were still much too costly.
3. The consultant then told them that, with what they were willing to spend, it wasn't worthwhile continuing the project.

3rd consultant:

1. Again, the consultant was too far away--the town felt like it lost touch with the project at several points.
2. It took students a long time, in the eyes of citizens, to complete the plans because of other obligations.
3. There were problems in getting sufficient citizen support.
4. It was difficult for the consultant to work with such a small budget.

Financing:

1. It took time to gain approval for the benefit district financing.
2. The original cost estimate was too low for actual construction costs.
3. There was rural opposition to spending county funds to finance extension of the canopy in front of the courthouse.

Construction:

1. The people were not adequately prepared for what the canopy was going to look like.

In general:

1. Storeowners had double costs for awhile--the canopy and their personal storefronts. This may be the reason the storefronts didn't take hold too extensively.
2. The citizens were not adequately "conditioned"; this should have been done by someone who worked in community development to prepare the community for the money commitment and process involved.
3. The citizens didn't know what they wanted, there was a lack of organization and leadership, the chamber didn't or couldn't play a strong enough role---these all contributed to the problems that resulted in having to hire three consultants.
4. The project almost died a couple times due to insensitivity and poor communication of the part of the consultant.
5. There was too much trial and error in determining what could be done and for what costs.
6. There was frustration caused by slow progress and the general length of the process.

Factors which facilitated the process

1. Good newspaper coverage kept interest in the project.

2. There was an overall positive attitude on the part of the businessmen--they did feel something should be done.
3. The bankers were brought in early to support the project.
4. The completion of Oberlin Bakery facade inspired others to accelerate construction of their fronts.
5. There was good cooperation by the extension service--the representative arranged meetings, referred the town to KSU design services, etc.
6. There was good communication between the third consultant and the citizens.

DAVID CITY, NEBRASKA

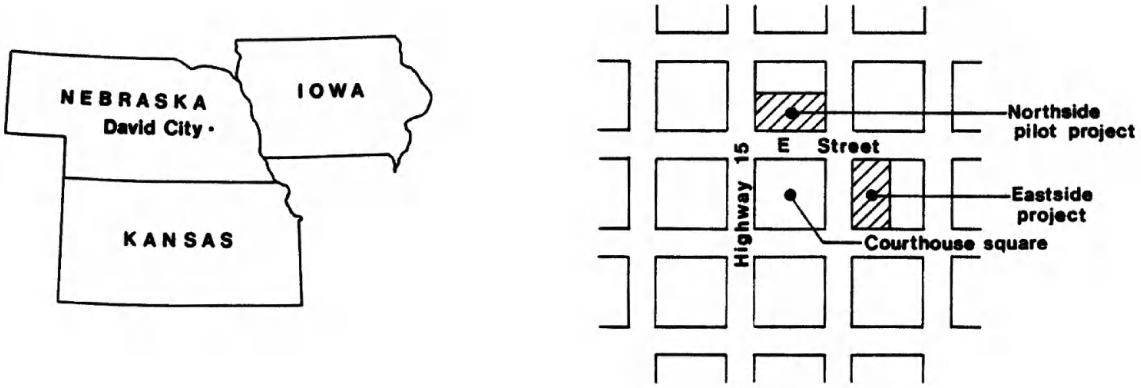


Figure 5. Area map and business district map showing location of improvements in David City.

David City, Nebraska, is the seat of Butler County. A town of 2500 residents, it is located 75 miles west of Omaha and 50 miles northwest of Lincoln. The town is served by Nebraska Highway 15 and Nebraska Highway 92 three miles south of town.

David City became a legally incorporated town in 1874. In 1875, the town council ordered all persons owning lots to plant cottonwood trees. Each tree was planted according to regulations set by the council. This ordinance contributed to the origins of David City's present character with its fine old residences and mature trees.

David City's population doubled in 1877 with the location of the Omaha and Republican Valley Railroad in town.

The primary economic activities of the community traditionally revolved around farming, cattle feeding, and retail services for the people in the area. This has changed somewhat since 1970, with the location of four new manufacturing firms and an aviation training center in David City.

The town's central business district is situated around the courthouse square. Its rundown appearance in the mid-1960's was typical of many midwestern towns of its size. The number of farm families had decreased, leaving fewer people to patronize the

Figure 6. The north side of the courthouse square served as the original pilot project in the David City storefront renovation efforts.

Figure 7. Most of the storefronts on the east side of the square were renovated a couple of years after the north side project.

retail stores. Physical deterioration of the structures accompanied economic decline. It was at this time that David City was approached by representatives of the Community Development Department of Northern Natural Gas Company in Omaha. Northern Natural was seeking a town which would be willing to serve as a pilot project. The purpose of this study was to determine if

physical improvements resulting in improved appearance of a business area would have an effect on the level of retail business activity.

A series of meetings with the merchants resulted in the selection of the north side of the square as the subject of the study. Improvements implemented were sandblasting and tuck-pointing, painting, new signage, and planting of street trees. It took approximately 18 months to accomplish the entire project.

This downtown renovation project, implemented in the late 1960's is attributed with causing several changes to the city. A survey and economic analysis of business in David City, conducted in 1965 and again in 1967 after the north side renovation took place, reported an increase in sales in the community of over 40%. This was partly a result of a good crop year in 1966. There was a 2.1% growth in consumer trade and services, considered to be significant in light of the decline of these same services in many other rural communities at this time.

The population of the town increased from 2300 to 2500 from 1960 to 1980, also a substantial growth indicator.

The renovation project prompted many other redevelopment efforts in David City--the City Hall, Public Library, Public High School, and David City Bank, to name just a few.

The improved appearance of the business district is considered to be a direct contributing factor to the location of Timpte, Inc., a truck manufacturing company, and the establishment of 3 other manufacturing firms in the town.

Process

Timeline

Feb.-Apr. 1965	meetings with Northern Natural Gas representatives to outline the proposed project
April 1965	David City Redevelopment Corporation formed; plans made to retain architect
	Chamber of Commerce received briefing on redevelopment; agreement to retain architect; 90% cooperation among merchants
	100% cooperation announced

	architect selected and authorized to begin work
Jul.-Aug. 1965	architect presents preliminary drawings to property owners
Aug.-Sept. 1965	working plans developed
Sept. 1965	bids negotiated
Oct. 1965	construction contracts awarded and delivered to the President of the Redevelopment Corp.
	composite architectural rendering placed on display
	construction begins
Nov. 1965	trees planted
Jan. 1966	fire; work on redevelopment had been nearing an end
May 1966	work began on remodelling buildings damaged in fire
May-Sept. 1966	construction continues
Oct. 1966	construction completed; ribbon-cutting ceremony

Description

The redevelopment process in David City began in February, 1965, when town leaders were approached and invited to participate in a pilot study to be conducted by Northern Natural Gas Company in Omaha. After approximately three meetings with merchants of the business district and community leaders, it was decided that David City would take part in the project. The north side of the square, where property owners were the most enthusiastic about the project, was chosen as the site of the pilot study.

In April, 1965, merchants of the north side formed the David City Redevelopment Corporation to organize and handle project matters. Plans were made to retain an architect for design consultation. By the end of the month, 100% of the merchants had agreed to participate in the project. Architectural firms were interviewed. It was decided from these interviews, that the renovation approach to redeveloping the structures would be taken, rather than the modernization approach. Most firms interviewed, however, submitted high proposals and few firms at this time handled restoration projects. Northern Natural representative, David Carson, contacted an architect friend, David Peterson. Peterson was at that time with Powers and Associates,

of Fremont, Nebraska. He was interested in developing plans for such a project as David City's. The firm was hired.

For the next 3 to 4 months, Peterson developed plans for the renovation of the north side. He met with individual property owners and tenants to discuss their ideas about what should be done. He drew up preliminary plans and developed preliminary cost estimates. These plans and estimates were presented individually to the property owners and collectively to the merchants for approval or changes in July, 1965. Individual presentations were made to the property owners and one main presentation to the occupants of the structures. After minor changes were made, approval was given from all but three owners. While Northern Natural felt that 100% participation was desirable, they decided to continue with the project without the three properties. These three owners, however, joined in the project within a week.

With approval granted, the architect spent the next two months developing the working drawings for the project. These were completed in September. The bidding for the construction contract was negotiated. The project was unusual and too small to interest general contractors. Negotiations were carried out with small companies that specialized in masonry restoration, many of them referring to themselves as waterproofing contractors. The bid was awarded and the contracts delivered to the president of the Redevelopment Corporation in October. Construction began at the end of the month.

Project implementation ran fairly smooth until January, 1966. With the project nearly complete, a fire on the north side destroyed the two easternmost structures, with others reporting smoke and water damage. It became unclear as to whether or not the project would be completed. Northern Natural representatives, the David City Banner-Press, and other supporters of the project kept it alive in the minds of the community, and it was decided to continue. Construction to replace the two destroyed structures began in May, 1966. This construction, as well as what was left of the renovation project, continued through the summer. Work was completed and the ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in October, 1966, marking the end of the project.

About two years after completion of the north side, merchants on the east side of the square decided to repeat the general process. Full participation of the property owners was never achieved, but improvements were implemented on enough of the structures to have an overall impact on the block. It took approximately two years to complete this project. This block, like the north side, was considered to be a successful project.

Analysis of Data

David City underwent a relatively quick and uncomplicated redevelopment project on the north side of its courthouse square. Other than the fire, which threatened to abort further renovation

efforts, there were no major obstacles to overcome. This is due to several factors.

Probably the major of these factors is the role of Northern Natural Gas representatives. These people, first of all, instigated the project in David City. They conceived the idea and worked to sell it to the merchants. The project was a fulltime effort on their part and they were devoted to seeing it through. They were organized and knew how to organize others by setting up meetings and presentations.

Second, the Northern Natural Gas representatives served as consultants in the organizational stage. They told the town what the next step was, and often did the legwork in helping to accomplish that step, as in hiring the consultant.

Another factor which appears to have eased the planning process was the establishment of the David City Redevelopment Corporation. This incorporated group of merchants was the organizational vehicle used to represent the merchants and to deal solely with project issues. By establishing an actual redevelopment organization, structure and purpose was given to its members. This helps eliminate confusion and hostility which can result when certain information is told to some merchants and not to others, or when misinformation is released.

Finally, enthusiasm of the merchants was a vital element to the project. If these property owners and tenants hadn't wanted the project in the first place, Northern Natural representatives would have picked up and gone to the next town with their proposition (as they had previously done), and the project would never have gotten off the ground. Less enthusiasm was present on the east side of the square, causing the project there to start off more slowly and take more time.

Summary

Problems

North Side of the Square:

1. The absentee property owners were generally apathetic to the problems of the town.
2. There were some problems in convincing merchants it was a viable project.
3. Northern Natural Gas had to overcome suspicion on the part of the citizens.
4. The fire caused construction delays and dampened the momentum and enthusiasm of the project.
5. There was some negotiating done in order to come to agreement on design details.

East Side:

1. There were more absentee owners than on north, creating more opposition.
2. More structural repairs were necessary.

3. There was generally not as much interest in the project; property owners were not as cohesive a group or as willing to take a chance.
4. Northern Natural Gas had different representatives who weren't as enthusiastic as the previous ones had been.

Events Facilitating the Process

1. The consultant was located close enough to have good contact with the community but was removed enough to do what needed to be done without apprehension.
2. The outside consultation and organization of Northern Natural alleviated many organizational problems; consultants offered experienced advice and aid.
3. Property owners on north side were generally very interested and enthusiastic.
4. A special downtown redevelopment corporation was formed for the express purpose of getting the job done.

RED OAK, IOWA

Red Oak, Iowa is a town of 6,800 located 50 miles southeast of Omaha, Nebraska. The county seat of Montgomery County, Red Oak is the service and trade center for the surrounding agricultural area.

The core of Red Oak's central business district surrounds Fountain Square, a block-square civic park. In this area, 75 structures offer a wide variety of retail goods and services. The early 1970's saw the renovation of most of the buildings facing the square. These storefronts received facelifts via cleaning and tuckpointing of brick, painting, and sign renovation. The project, from inception to the beginning of construction, spanned a period of about three years. It was partly this project which generated the more recent sidewalk renovation project. This endeavor resulted in the new sidewalks, curbs, gutters, lighting, street overlays, water mains, storm sewers, and trees in a 12 block area (Fountain Square and one block in each direction). Individual descriptions of each of the projects follow.

RED OAK STOREFRONT RENOVATION PROJECT

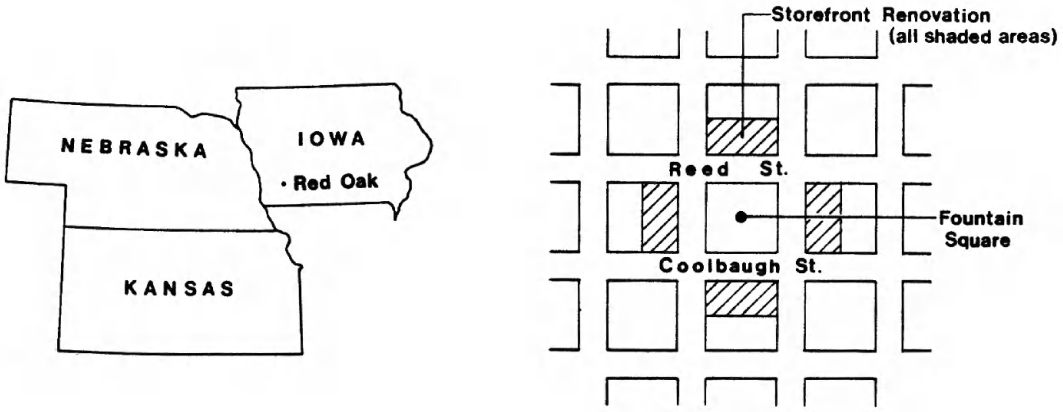


Figure 8. Area map and business district map showing location of improvements of Red Oak's storefront renovation.

Figures 9 and 10. Typical examples of the results of the store-front renovation project in Red Oak.

Process

Timeline

1968	Houghton State Bank introduced idea for beautifying storefronts
	research and study conducted
May-June, 1969	consultant hired to begin on drawings
July 1969	county fair--drawings displayed
Jan. 1970	banquet to present project to merchants and businessmen
Jan.-Mar., 1970	leaders discuss plan with each individual property owner on their block
Mar. 1970	contractor contacted to negotiate construction contract
Jun.-Jul., 1970	implementation of first group of buildings (primarily east side of square)
Jun. 1971	implementation of remaining structures
Jul. 1971	BBQ held to celebrate project completion

Description

In 1968, administrators of Houghton State Bank in Red Oak decided to do something for the community to celebrate the town's upcoming centennial. They determined they would attempt to initiate some kind of downtown redevelopment project for the town square. For several months, under the leadership of Neil Hammett, vice-president of the bank, redevelopment alternatives were explored. Studies and research regarding the subject were conducted. Trips were taken to towns in the region (including David City) which had already undergone some form of downtown renovation project.

It was eventually decided to pursue a storefront renovation plan for the structures around Fountain Square. A local commercial artist, who had done some advertising work for the bank, was hired in May or June of 1969 to develop drawings of proposed storefront improvements. The drawings would be displayed at the county fair in July. After six weeks, the drawings were completed in time for the fair.

It was not until January, 1970, that the bank assembled the merchants from around the square to formally present the plans and to determine how much interest there was in such a project. Ten to fifteen merchants immediately agreed to participate in the

project. (There were approximately 24 businesses located around the square.) Block leaders were assigned at this time to sell the project to the remaining merchants on their respective block. They achieved this primarily by discussing the project and preliminary costs with each individual property owner.

This was accomplished by about March, when the contractor was notified to negotiate a construction contract with the town. Van's Waterproofing Company from Nebraska was retained for the job. It was about the only company considered, since it was one of the few in the area to do the kind of work involved--tuckpointing, sandblasting, and staining. Also, it was the same firm which had implemented the improvements in David City, a town which Red Oak citizens had become familiar with through their own project.

Construction of the improvements began in June. The majority of the east side of the square was completed, as well as scattered structures on the other sides, within about 6 weeks. No more improvements were implemented until the following summer, when other property owners decided to follow the example of the east side. After four weeks, the majority of the businesses were renovated. Nearly 100% of the properties had been improved. In July, 1971, a barbecue was held to celebrate the completion of the entire square of storefronts.

Analysis of Data

Red Oak's storefront renovation project ran fairly well with no major problems. Initiation and organization of the project was engineered by Houghton State Bank, particularly by the vice-president of the bank. This man s enthusiasm was one of the major forces behind the accomplishment of the project. He persuaded merchants to participate who he knew were financially able to implement improvements. And he was in a position to aid those who were not financially able to pay for improvements all at once.

The bank itself was a vital supporter. It hired and paid the consultant to develop conceptual plans for the storefronts. It also organized the merchants to take action, chose the contractor, and negotiated the contract for much of the renovation.

Much of the ease and success of the project is considered, by those involved, to be due to the way the planning process was organized. The merchants had no part in the pre-design or design meetings and presentations. It is felt that, in this way, all problems were worked out before the merchants were brought in. The process was therefore allowed to run much smoother and quicker. There was something to show the merchants when discussing the possibility of implementation; the project, in effect, sold itself. Any design changes were minor, regarding only colors or signage.

While this system of planning evidently worked well in this instance, it could also have backfired on the bank, who took all the initial financial risk. Had the merchants decided they didn't want the project (possibly just because they had not been consulted before), the bank would have been out time and money. As it was, the bank was presenting the plans as a gift to the town for its centennial, resulting in good public relations at the very least. But had this been done under different circumstances or by a different, non-profit organization, events could have taken a different turn and caused greater hardship.

Summary

Problems

1. There were no major problems except that it took a little time and effort to sell the project to the merchants on the Square.

Supporting Factors

1. Houghton State Bank (and vice-president) were willing to take on the initial planning and design costs.
2. The bank provided leadership to hire the design consultant, help sell the project, organize the merchants, and negotiate with the contractor.
3. "Block leaders" were designated to help sell the project by talking individually with the merchants.

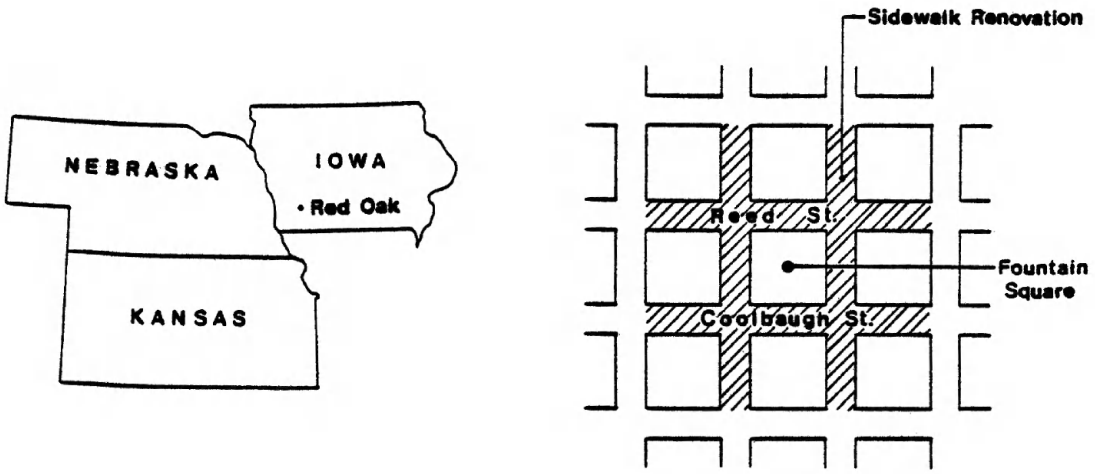


Figure 11. Area map and business district map showing location of improvements of the Red Oak sidewalk renovation project.

Process

Timeline

1973-74	community concern about sidewalk conditions
Feb. 1976	written request presented to city council for "rejuvenation" of sidewalks and curbs around Fountain Square and one block in each direction of the square council response: 1 - appointed advisory committee 2 - employed consultant
Feb.-July 1976	3 or 4 meetings Phase I - "Study and Report" 1. Determine needs 2. Establish goals 3. General scope 4. Schematic drawings 5. Preliminary cost estimates 6. Funding alternatives 7. Recommendations
July 1976	presentation of Phase I to the council

Figure 12. Curbs were extended at the corners and at mid-block points to allow for planting areas and to increase pedestrian safety.

Figure 13. Sidewalks were outlined with a brick-patterned concrete edging.

Sept. 1976	public information session--minimal support from business community no subsequent action
April 1979	council approves proceeding with assessment schedules and other legalities merchants' survey reported 80% of the property owners contacted were in favor of reconstructing sidewalks
May 1979	council tabled discussion of the project till they inspected the sidewalks to determine need (opponents of the project had raised the issue) slide show was viewed showing a history of previous redevelopment and amount of deterioration in sidewalks street lighting discussed
April 1980	council voted 3-2 to approve expenditures for Phase II planning; still dissention as to whether or not project needed
Apr.-Oct. 1980	Phase II - "Preliminary Design" 1. Surveys and measurements 2. Data collection 3. Consider alternatives 4. Preliminary drawings 5. Evaluate plan 6. Refine cost estimates 7. Finalize scope
Oct. 1980	Phase II presented to ad hoc committee; committee recommended the city proceed with the project council review public hearing
March 1981	council approves advancing to Phase III; still opposition Phase III - "Final Design" 1. Working drawings 2. Project specifications 3. Contract documents 4. Quantities of work and materials 5. Final cost estimates 6. Agency approval and permits 7. Inform public

June 1981	design work 90% complete
	council reviewed detailed cost estimates and updated plans--agreed to continue
	discussed proposed financing
July 1981	consultant instructed to include improved water lines in overall redevelopment project (this would not affect the overall cost of the project)
	council approved "resolution of necessity" stating project needed to be done
Aug. 1981	public hearing for assessment schedule--action deferred to September
Sept. 1981	council OK's assessment schedule
	construction schedule established; advertised for bids
	public hearing to review plans and specs
Oct. 1981	bid opening; contract awarded
Apr.-Nov. 1982	construction 95% complete
summer 1983	project completion

Description

Community concern about the condition and appearance of the sidewalks in Red Oak's business district arose among some of its citizens soon after completion of the storefront renovation project. Beginning in about 1973-74, the idea didn't take hold until February, 1976, when a group of merchants backed a request to the city council to look into the matter. The sidewalks were in poor condition, partly due to obsolete underground steam tunnels which had caused them to sink in several places. This resulted in unevenness in the sidewalks and unsafe walking conditions.

The council responded by appointing an ad hoc advisory committee to handle the complaint. This committee was composed largely of Chamber of Commerce members. The council also, at this meeting, approved the hiring of a consultant to develop a preliminary assessment schedule for assessing the property owners. The consultant was McKeown and Associates, an engineering firm located in Red Oak, chosen on the basis of past performance in handling city projects.

Jerry Shellberg, a civil engineer, represented the firm. In July, he presented a preliminary design for reconstruction and

landscaping of the sidewalks and streets in the Fountain Square area. The report, which was emphasized to be strictly in the conceptual stage, addressed the issues of traffic signs, lighting, sidewalks, streets and curbs, street furniture, and the costs and financing of the project. The plan offered three phases of construction: 1) street surfacing, new curbs, sidewalk replacement and street lighting, 2) curb and crosswalk extensions and plantings, and 3) street furniture. Preliminary cost estimates were quoted, with the consultant recommending a special assessment form of financing. This study and report later became referred to as Phase I of the planning process.

A public information session was held to present the report to interested public. Less than 25 people attended and the plans met with lack of enthusiasm. They were subsequently shelved for the next 3 years.

In April of 1979, the problem of poor sidewalk conditions was again approached. This time, Nick Hildreth, owner of a farm equipment business, became chairman of the Downtown Redevelopment Committee. The committee had existed prior to this time. However, it wasn't until Hildreth, whose business was located on the edge of town, was appointed chairman, that the committee really gained credibility and leadership.

Hildreth provided the results of a survey taken of the merchants and businessmen in the area under consideration. He reported that about 80% of the property owners and tenants contacted said they were in favor of reconstructing the sidewalks. The council now approved the funds needed to proceed with assessment schedules and preliminary specifications. The city attorney was instructed to establish procedures for setting up a special assessment district.

The first council meeting in May saw opposition raised to these plans. The council was challenged by a businessman in the Fountain Square area, saying the sidewalks were in excellent condition and that he felt further action was a waste of money, energy and time. The council members decided to table the matter until they had personally inspected the sidewalks. At that same meeting, a slide show was presented by Shellberg, showing a history of previous redevelopment and the amount of deterioration in the sidewalk. A related item, street lighting, was also on the agenda, and the city administrator was directed to work with Iowa Power and Light in determining cost estimates for the downtown area.

It was not until April of 1980 that the council approved expenditures for the development of Phase II of the planning process. This phase, which was presented to the ad hoc committee the following October, included the cost estimate, field surveys, alternative plans, and working drawings. The committee recommended that the city proceed with Phase III. The council reviewed the plan later that month, and a public hearing was held, but approval for beginning Phase III was not given until March, 1981.

This approval followed an hour and a half of debate between the four councilmen and almost 50 downtown merchants, but the decision was unanimous.

In June, when the design work was 90% complete, the council reviewed detailed cost estimates and updated plans. These plans included excavation of the areas under the sidewalks and curb and gutter, storm drains with new pipes, manholes, etc., installation of new lighting (conduit and fixtures), excavation and refilling of the steam tunnels, new sidewalks, permanent pedestrian crosswalks, and resurfacing of the streets. The proposed assessment procedure was outlined. According to this schedule, for every $1 to be assessed, 50 cents would be based on business front footage. The other 50 cents would be based on the width and depth of the total property and its location relative to the entire project: those properties located furthest from the Square would be generally assessed less than those located directly on the Square. This system was developed in response to claims that the previous system was unfair to landowners located a block off the Square. The revised assessments met with little opposition.

In July, the council directed Shellberg to include new water distribution lines in the downtown project to eliminate deficiencies in the firefighting capabilities. Costs of the lines would be absorbed by a contingency fund. That same month, despite continued opposition to the project, the council passed a resolution of "necessity", stating the project was needed. A public hearing to review the assessment schedule was also scheduled.

The hearing, held in August, resulted in no action being taken. It was deferred, instead, to September, when the council approved the schedule. Soon after, bids were invited, and opened in early October. The contracted was awarded, and construction began that fall. Little was implemented, however, until spring, 1982. By November, 95% of the improvements were constructed. The projected was completed the following summer of 1983.

Analysis of Data

It took approximately 10 years from the time the community became interested in renovating their sidewalks to the time this task was actually completed. Of that time, over half of it was spent in relative inactivity or in futile actions. The following discussion regarding delays, problems, and other factors in the process are compiled from observations made by some of those involved in the Red Oak project and by the researcher in analyzing the process.

In the case of Red Oak, several factors affected the length of the overall project. It took two to three years for interested merchants and businessmen to become organized enough to approach the city council with their request for the redevelopment project. This was probably due to insufficient leadership and organization resulting from a lack of real enthusiasm.

Once the council was approached, two actions were taken--1) to form an ad hoc committee of mostly Chamber of Commerce members, and 2) to hire a consultant to work up a preliminary assessment schedule. This was done without obtaining any indication as to the extent of the support among all the merchants and businessmen involved. Expenditures were approved to compile a report, which was tabled for three years when it was found there was not enough support for the project at that time. Five months were spent preparing schematic drawings, preliminary cost estimates, funding alternatives, etc., later determined to be more indepth than the council had desired. Poor communication seemed to be a factor here.

When interest started up again in 1979, one of the first things done was a survey of businessmen in the area. Support of the project was finally determined to be given by 80% of the merchants. Things now began to move in a relatively steady and organized fashion. Delays, however were caused at various intervals by the continued opposition of several merchants. This resulted in hesitation on the part of the city council in making decisions. Things could probably have been handled better if the council had determined necessity immediately after the merchant's survey in 1979 and had held to that decision. Instead, the issue of the project's necessity arose whenever it was time to move on to the next stage. It was not until July of 1981 that the council actually approved a written "resolution of necessity" stating that the project needed to be done. Had this resolution be passed in 1979, considerable time could have been saved.

The assessment schedule affecting the cost of the project to each merchant involved also produced some controversy which had to be resolved over a period of time. This seemed to cause no serious delays. The main issue was unfairness of the schedule to owners and tenants farthest from the Square. It was felt these businesses should not have to pay the same cost as those located directly on the Square. A new assessment formula was eventually approved which reduced costs to properties as they became further away from Fountain Square. The time involved probably would have been difficult to reduce without shortchanging someone in the process. This form of assessment was developed by a trial and error process; other towns could look at the results and save the time used in Red Oak.

Summary

Problems Encountered

Preliminary stage.

1. There was opposition and apathy to the project.
2. There was a lack of organization and leadership.
3. The plan was too "elaborate" for the public to accept.
4. The council was not sincere in the desire to really do anything.

Design stage.

1. A Phase II of planning (not normally needed) was included because of complexity of the project.
2. There continued to be opposition.
3. The council "dragged its feet" in making decisions.

Financing.

The main problem was in obtaining an assessment schedule which was considered to be equally fair to all involved.

Construction stage.

1. Bad weather delayed construction to such an extent that it had to be carried over into the next year.
2. There was a breakdown in communication--people were first told the project would be implemented on a block by block basis; then it was all torn up at once in order to install the new sewer and water pipes.
3. The trees were not incorporated in the plan until construction had already begun, causing some changes to be made during this stage.

Factors which facilitated the process

1. There was a physical need for the new sidewalks of such extent the project almost sold itself.
2. There was good leadership among some of the citizens that kept the project going even in its slowest points.
3. The consultant effort was good and achieved good results.

What citizens felt should have been done differently:

1. The tree-planting program should have been included in the original plan.
2. The consultant took the lead role in the preliminary stages--it was later thought it would be better to stay in the background and let someone else sell the project.
3. The project should have been shorter--if it goes on too long even the strongest supporters lose interest. In this case, try to have more work done on a preliminary basis as far as figures and estimates go. Also, try and have a stronger commitment to the project and have someone who is willing to fight for it.
4. There should have been better communication between those running the project and those affected by it--lack of good communication caused some misinformation to get out. This takes time to rectify and can result in future mistrust and skepticism of the project.

CHAPTER FIVE

****

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

In analyzing the planning/implementation processes in the David City, Oberlin, and Red Oak projects, it is evident that each town took a different approach to its project. Though there were many differences, there were also some similarities in the case studies. Various stages of these processes can, therefore, be compared and preliminary conclusions drawn regarding factors which contributed to the duration of these stages.

Project initiation, organization, and design development will be discussed in terms of communication, participation, financing, and approval mechanisms used.

Comparative Analysis

Initiation. The David City storefront renovation project was initiated by an outside agency--Northern Natural Gas Company of Omaha. The town didn't go through the often laborious process of a project conceived within the community. Northern Natural Gas was able to come into David City and sell the project in a matter of approximately two months.

The Red Oak storefront renovation project was also initiated by an established organization, the Houghton State Bank. The bank took matters into its own hands in organizing the project, hiring the consultant, displaying the designs and subsequently in selling the project to the town. They had both the finances to do this, and the experienced personnel (the bank vice-president provided the leadership for the project). By not waiting on the rest of the town, many of the early stages of the project (community discussion, exploratory meetings, formation of a redevelopment organization, etc.) were considerably shortened or were eliminated altogether.

Unlike David City and Red Oak's storefront renovation, Oberlin and the Red Oak sidewalk renovation project had to rely on the selling power of the towns' citizens. These promoters were only able to devote part of their time and energy to the project, unlike the professionals from Northern Natural Gas. They had little, if any, experience in motivating a community to take on a redevelopment project. Ideas and advice of these citizens were also easier to put off or ignore than those of the "outsiders" in David City, who projected an image of immediacy and competence. (If the citizens didn't accept Northern Natural's proposition quickly, it would never be offered again.) Oberlin and Red Oak citizens, on the other hand, slowly progressed through a trial and error process of initiation, consisting largely of informal discussions and speculation among interested citizens.

Organization. Organization is a problem faced by nearly all initiators of downtown improvement projects. The main task of organization doesn't usually occur until the town has decided whether or not to seriously explore redevelopment possibilities. Prior to that point, any organizing is mainly in the form of group discussions or meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, city council, prospective consultants, etc. to discuss the potential of a project. For example, in David City, merchants from the entire square met 2 or 3 times with Northern Natural representatives to discuss taking part in a pilot project. It was then decided that only the north side of the square would participate in the pilot study. This was prior to any actual organization.

Once the community agrees to pursue a project, developing a formal organization is often the first step. David City formed the **David City Redevelopment Corporation** for the express purpose of dealing with project matters. The corporation was made up solely of the merchants and businessmen who would be affected by the project. No outside groups such as civic leaders or Chamber of Commerce members were represented. This was possible, in this case, since the only approval needed for the renovation of the storefronts was that of the property owners of those particular structures. Financing was conventional and provided by each individual owner, so no outside agencies were involved.

The Red Oak storefront project resulted without formation of a redevelopment organization. Citizens had little to do with planning the project. The bank (primarily its public relations department) handled all planning and organizational matters.

Oberlin worked through the **Chamber of Commerce**, an organization devoted to the downtown project, but also one involved with other matters of concern to the town. For example, the project made very little headway from September 1965, when the first consultant's plans were rejected, to early 1967, when the KSU students became involved. The Chamber was, during that time, very active in the Herndon Dam Project, which was in the planning stages in that part of the state. Things also slowed in 1969-70, when other development activities diverted the town's attention. A study of park improvements and the organization of a program to construct a new public golf course were two of these activities. It could be speculated that, had the Chamber formed a separate committee or an independent organization to deal with the downtown project, it might have moved at a quicker pace.

Red Oak's sidewalk renovation project was turned over in its early stages to the city council. The council, in turn, appointed an **ad hoc committee** of mostly Chamber of Commerce members. These members had been meeting informally prior to enlisting the help of the council, calling themselves the Downtown Redevelopment Committee. The responsibility of this committee was to review plans and financing alternatives and to make recommendations to the council. The council made all final decisions. The committee was a useful mechanism in providing a link between the merchants and the council, but it did not appear to carry much

influence as far as advancing the project along various phases. The power of the committee was limited to that of an advisory capacity; it was the city council who made the final decisions. It was also the council that often delayed the project with indecision and backtracking. While it was inevitable that the project be approved by the council, it did not seem to be the best vehicle for planning. More of the decisions should have been left to the committee, whose sole purpose was the downtown improvement project, rather than to the council, whose time was divided among numerous issues. In addition, council members come and go during the course of a project of such length, while the committee members could remain relatively constant.

Design Development. The type of physical improvements each town worked toward were varied. This created different requirements in the design process and in financing (and subsequent approval) methods.

In David City, the project was handled as a joint effort by a group of property owner to improve their storefronts. These improvements were to be financed individually by each property owner. No municipal funding was requested. The only improvements to the actual streetscape were the installation of street trees, also financed privately by the owners. Since the merchants were allowed to make their own decisions about their own expenditures, approval took less time in David City than in the other towns. If one or two owners decided not to participate in the project, the rest could still go on, though the overall results may not be as effective.

Red Oak's storefront project was also financed by the individual property owners. These were approached individually by "block leaders" to discuss the project. Nearly 100% of the owners implemented the improvements, but the project could have continued with less.

In Red Oak's sidewalk renovation project, on the other hand, the city council made the decisions concerning the project. The council represented not only the affected merchants, but also the community at large, who would have to finance a share of the project. As a result, the council moved carefully, constantly reviewing the necessity of the project, and delaying progress with indecision. Opposition to the project by some of the property owners contributed to the hesitation of the council. Many months of inaction can be attributed to the council's procrastination in advancing the project to its next stage. It was not until the design work was near completion in 1981 that the council passed its "resolution of necessity", stating that the project needed to be done. Had this resolution been presented and approved in 1979 when the project was getting underway, considerable time could have been saved.

Oberlin, like Red Oak, had benefit district financing, requiring approval by the city council. But the council was not involved in any of the planning decisions. When the petition to

declare a benefit district was submitted to the council with 80% of the owners' signatures, the decision was made to approve the financing in a relatively short time.

Another factor in the design process which had an effect on project duration was in the communication between the design consultant and the client organization: Did the client know what kinds of improvements it wanted, or not? If so, how well was this conveyed to the consultant? If not, did the consultant work with the client to set goals and guide the course of the project? Did the consultant determine how much the town was willing to spend on a project, and then design accordingly? Issues such as these can determine the completion or abandonment of a project.

With the guidance and direction of Northern Natural Gas Co., David City merchants quickly decided to focus on storefront improvement. This narrowed the redevelopment alternatives considerably. It then became a matter of which approach to storefront redevelopment to take, for example, modernization, renovation, etc. It took only a few meetings with various design consultants before it was determined to go with the renovation method.

Red Oak followed a similar approach to its storefront project. Houghton State Bank representatives researched the matter and chose the renovation course. They then hired a consultant to design the improvements.

Oberlin went through a quite different process. Project organizers needed a consultant to help determine what kind of improvements to undertake, whether it be storefront improvement, mall construction, etc. This took a very long time (about three years) and three different consultants before the direction of the project was defined. Had there been better communication with the first consultant, the architect, the process might have taken a different course. As it was, this consultant established little contact with the property owners to hear their ideas on what improvements would be appropriate to their business district or on how much money they would be willing to spend. The result was a storefront redevelopment plan with a planted median running down the middle of the street. While the merchants weren't entirely opposed to the plan, they were indifferent to the median strip and were totally opposed to the financial demands the project would make. While this set the project back considerably, it still remained in the minds of several of the citizens; the architect did not.

When it was decided to attempt the project again, leaders turned to Kansas State University design resources. The second group of consultants, the urban design class, had a much better rapport with the citizens of the town, taking much time to discuss the project with the merchants. They still, however, made the same mistakes as the first consultant as far as designing for financial and functional feasibility. All of the students developed mall designs, which were in keeping with contemporary urban

design, but which also skyrocketed the costs of the project till it was again out of reach of the town.

The third consultant group took what proved to be the most successful approach to the project. The students discussed financial restrictions with the merchants and worked toward meeting these requirements while still accomplishing a new image for Oberlin. The end result was a more realistic design in terms of financial and functional aspects of the town's needs; it was also phased to make it more affordable.

Red Oak had no difficult decisions in determining what kind of redevelopment it needed after the storefront project. The poor conditions of the sidewalks dictated priorities. This project ran into another problem which contributed to its slow start. There simply was not enough support or enthusiasm for the improvements on the part of the citizens. Though the sidewalks were in poor condition, many merchants regarded them as the responsibility of the individual owner; they didn't consider a large scale project involving the entire square to be necessary. Many merchants were unwilling to pay the costs involved. Apathy was also a result of what was considered to be too "elaborate" a plan, containing alley renovation, pedestrian linkages, etc. The plan died for three years, until the need for the project again was raised. This time the plan was trimmed of several features, and the project was approved. Again, poor communication between client and consultant was a factor, but even more so, was the poor support given to the project in its initial stages. If more effort had been made to convince the town of the necessity of the project, perhaps there would not have been so much time wasted in repeating so many activities (the design, decisions, etc.). If the town could not be convinced of project necessity, this should have been determined early in the project, before design and engineering services were utilized, thus saving time and money.

Facilitating Factors. Early planning and design costs were paid for by organizations, not by individual property owners. Despite the many problems previously discussed, all three communities succeeded in implementing their projects. In most of the projects, one of the primary vehicles for keeping the project alive in the public mind, was the local press. The Oberlin Herald and the David City Banner-Press, both weekly papers, and the Red Oak Express, published biweekly, all covered the progress of their respective projects. The Express usually did this by reporting the city council meetings, covering the redevelopment project as an item on the agenda. The Herald and the Banner-Press handled the project in news items, progress reports, and editorials. Editorials were generally favorable to the projects and, as in the case of David City when a fire threatened project completion, offered encouragement to continue the redevelopment effort and rebuild the damaged structures. In all three papers, stories were generally front page items, accompanied by pictures when appropriate.

Another factor which appeared to ease project development was inclusion of one or more bankers early in the project. Bankers (and certain other community leaders) seem to provide leadership the town respects. Their control over the money which will help many merchants finance their share of the project, tends to demand attention. If a project is not backed by the bank, chances are the merchants will become apprehensive about supporting it also. A bank's active participation in a project is most evident in the case of Red Oak's storefront renovation, instigated by Houghton State Bank. Though, in most cases, banks won't participate to this great an extent, they may be considered possible resources for aid in financing design costs or in producing a representative to serve on the redevelopment committee.

All the projects under discussion had their initial planning/design costs supplied by a group or agency other than the downtown merchants--Oberlin by its Chamber of Commerce, David City by Northern Natural Gas, Red Oak's storefront renovation by Houghton State Bank, and the sidewalk renovation project by a government grant. By not expecting the merchants to pay these costs, much time was saved in obtaining their approval. They were more likely to approve a project after they had seen actual plans and sketches than before anything tangible had been presented. If the merchants had been approached to pay these costs, chances are they would have been reluctant to take the risk and the project would have died before it got started.

Preliminary Conclusions

Several factors appear to contribute to either accelerating or decelerating the rate of the progress of a downtown redevelopment project. In the preceding comparative analysis of the case studies, generalizations were made concerning the relationship between planning procedures and length of time of certain stages of the project. These generalizations serve as the basis for the following conclusions. The conclusions, in turn, led to preliminary recommendations which were presented to several of the citizens and consultants involved in the case studies.

1. **Project Initiation.** Projects introduced by organized agencies appear to have a quicker and easier start-up time than those conceived by individuals or informal groups of citizens. The David City and Red Oak storefront projects are good examples of this, where Northern Natural Gas Company and Houghton State Bank, respectively, served as the project initiators. Both projects took only a matter of months to be approved.

Citizens or citizen groups who wish to initiate a redevelopment project in their community should investigate potential organizations who have the influence and expertise to sell the project to the town. The organizations can come from various sectors of the community--banks, newspapers, a large industry, or an organization interested in the welfare of the community (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce). Support from one or more of these

groups can produce or raise funds for initial project costs. In most of the case studies, planning and design costs were paid for by some organization other than the merchants. This is quite possibly a reason why some projects get as far as completing the design stage; the initial financial risk was taken by someone else, making the merchants and others more open to the idea of a project.

2. **Project Support.** It should be determined through survey methods early in the project if there is sufficient support of the endeavor among the affected citizens. If there is not at least a majority of supporters (75% or more was achieved in the case studies), investigators should probably abandon the project or wait until adequate support is obtained. When local government approval is required, a resolution of necessity should be passed at this time.

3. **Project Organization.** Formation of a formal redevelopment organization is critical to any project. Not only does it provide full dedication and commitment to the project, but it also gives active participants a structured organization to work through. It is best if this group has no other purpose than to realize completion of the project. This would insure complete attention on project issues that could otherwise become diverted by other matters, thus slowing the process.

4. **Citizen Participation.** It is beneficial to get as many citizens involved with the project as possible without styming progress. This can by done in two ways.

A small group of citizens (approximately 10 or less) should group to form the redevelopment organization previously discussed. There are certain members of a community whose support of an improvement project is particularly advantageous. These include:

* The editor of the local newspaper, who controls much of what a town learns about local events.
* One or more members of the banking community, who control money and credit.
* Members of the local government, who have both political influence and leadership characteristics.
* Merchants or businessmen whose opinions and news are considered to be valuable and beneficial to the community.
* One or two members of the community who have no financial or employment interest in the downtown area, to represent patrons of the area under consideration.

Another way to involve a greater number of citizens in a project is to recruit them to help collect necessary base and survey information, as well as to perform required research. The more people involved, however slightly, the less chance of

creating hard feelings.

5. Consultant Services. Retaining a consultant throughout the project is a necessity. Depending on the needs of the town, the consultant may be hired as early as the organizational stage or as late as the design stage. Sometimes more than one consultant may be appropriate, one to handle early organizational aspects of the project and another to supply the design services. Regardless of the case, care should be taken to select a consultant who can aid the town in organizing and directing their own project.

General traits a town should look for in a consultant should include:

A) the ability to communicate with and organize citizens in a redevelopment effort,

B) knowledge of or genuine interest in the town and its social, economic, and political structure,

C) demonstrated experience in similar downtown improvement projects

D) proximity of the consultant's office to the town. In many circumstances it may be better to employ a consultant from outside the town. This permits a more objective angle and eliminates added pressures caused by working for friends and acquaintances. It is possible for a consultant to make enemies of project opponents; however, this isn't so much a problem for out of town consultants. Also, there is less chance that these consultants would be taken advantage of in terms of non-billable time. On the other hand, it is also unwise to hire a consultant who is located too far away unless the town is willing to bear the additional costs. There is less tendency towards communication breakdown if the consultant is located within a 50 to 75 mile radius.

The consultant should offer specific services to facilitate the redevelopment process for the town. These services would also be advantageous to the consultant in competing for redevelopment contracts. These services should include:

A) Incorporation of organizational services into the consultant's package to help the town in the early stages of the project. If a design consultant were to enter a project in these early stages, chances are that consultant would also be retained to provide the design services. This would be of benefit to both the consultant, in terms of profit, and to the town, who would benefit from a consultant's knowledge and rapport with community leaders and

citizens.

B) The consultant should be familiar with and able to identify potential funding alternatives for a town dependent on its individual needs.

C) The consultant should be able to estimate project costs of various kinds of redevelopment activities.

D) The consultant should be able to communicate to the town what it will have to sacrifice in time as well as money.

E) A preliminary sketch design phase should be incorporated at the beginning of the design process. This phase would consist of several quick, varied design alternatives with a range of costs. Preliminary cost figures (for relative comparison) would be included, and the alternatives presented to the citizens. At this point, it would be decided whether or not to go on with the project, and if so, which type of improvements to choose.

F) Throughout the design phase of the project, the architect should present, and have displayed, perspectives, sections, plans, elevations, models, etc. for public perusal. This will hopefully keep interest in the project and avoid poor communication problems (hard feelings, surprise at actual physical results, etc).

6. **Financing the Project.** There are usually several funding alternatives available to a town planning a redevelopment project. These have been discussed in Chapter 2. Towns who wish to implement a project quickly and with the least amount of red tape usually use some form of municipal or private financing rather than higher governmental methods.

The earlier in a project that financing methods are approved, the better. As soon as a town decides it seriously wants to implement a project, it should determine the feasibility of financing it. The town should then decide whether or not to approve the financing. Otherwise, further efforts toward planning the project may be in vain, with the chance that it may be abandoned at any time. The ideal time for this approval would be after the consultant presents the preliminary concepts and cost estimates to the town.

As discussed earlier, it is wise to try to get some group, political or otherwise, to produce the front-end costs of organizing and designing the project. If the merchants themselves are expected to produce these costs before the project has been solidly supported, chances are they won't, and the project will die.

In summary, it can be concluded that the slowest stages of a

project occur in the early, organizational efforts, that communication between the consultants and citizens is critical to eliminating unnecessary problems, and that financing methods and alternatives must be considered early in the project and approved as soon as possible.

CHAPTER SIX

****

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preliminary Recommendations

The following preliminary recommendations were developed, based on the conclusions discussed in Chapter 5. Their purpose was to serve as a tool for soliciting the response of thirteen of the townspeople and consultants involved in the case studies. The recommendations were presented, one at a time, to those who had the greatest involvement in the projects. Their general response(s) follow each individual recommendation.

1. Citizens who wish to initiate a downtown redevelopment project in their town should turn the project over to an organized group as soon as possible. This group can sell the project to the rest of the town easier and also aid in project planning costs.

It was agreed by the citizens interviewed that it would be easier for an existing organization to introduce the project to the community and offer support and experienced leadership. A few stated that this organization should be the Chamber of Commerce. It was also voiced that local people should be primarily responsible for selling the project.

2. It should be determined as soon as possible, through a survey, if there is enough support to continue with the project. If there is less than 75% support, the project should be abandoned.

Nearly all the participants in the interview felt that 75% support so soon in the project is too much to expect. More information (including some design development) would be needed before there would be that many supporters. A simple majority is all that is needed at this point. Several suggestions were made as to how to better gauge support: 1) Wait to conduct the survey until preliminary designs and cost estimates are in, then aim for 75%, 2) take several "opinion polls" at various stages of the project, anticipating greater support as the project progresses, 3) survey on a block by block basis (in larger towns) to see if a particularly receptive block may serve as a pilot project; often others will follow the example of such a project.

3. If city council approval is required for the project, a resolution of necessity should be passed at this time and adhered to throughout the project.

While it was agreed that city council support of the project was beneficial to have as soon as possible, it was stressed that if you move too fast for this support, you may not get it. It is

better to wait until a little later in the project when you have achieved a 70-80% level of support in the affected district. Several felt that a formal resolution is not necessary, that simply a show of support by the council is all that is needed.

4. A formal redevelopment organization completely devoted to the project should be formed to deal with project issues in a structured manner.

There was little disagreement with this statement. Nearly all citizens interviewed felt such an organization was very important to the project. Only one person felt that the smaller towns would have trouble finding enough good people to be on such a committee and that it was the role of the Chamber of Commerce to handle the project.

5. Involve as many citizens as possible in the planning by:
   A) including them in the formal redevelopment organization (maximum 10 members), trying to include members from the following groups: bankers, newspaper representatives, merchants, businessmen, local government representavies, and patrons of the downtown area,
   B) involving citizens and citizen groups (Lion's Club, Jaycees, etc.) in collection of necessary survey and other research data.

There was general agreement with "A". It was felt that including a cross-section of people, both from the effected district and from the community in general, was a good idea. It was also a consensus that 7-10 members on the redevelopment committee was the maximum number for effective decision-making.

There was some agreement with "B", but the point was made more than once that, while it's good to get the support of such community groups, they should not be expected to accomplish the footwork; they have other purposes and interests. It was suggested that students may be willing to help out in this area.

6. A consultant should be hired to provide design services. These services should include the following:
   A) Organizational services to aid the town in forming a redevelopment committee, in determining project support, and in investigating funding sources for the project.
   B) A preliminary sketch phase resulting in several quick and varied design alternatives, including preliminary cost estimates. This stage is to aid in determining what type of redevelopment the town wants.
   C) Close communication throughout the entire project with the redevelopment committee by a specified number of town visits, presentations, etc. The redevelopment committee should, in turn, keep the rest of the town informed of progress, plans, etc.

Most participants in the interview felt that it was not necessary that the consultant provide the organizational services in "A", that the redevelopment committee should provide them. The point was made that these services are too time-consuming at this stage of the project and therefore too expensive to the town. A few citizens, however, did agree that it would be helpful for design consultants to be able to do this.

It was agreed that "B" was a good idea, and that a town should not limit itself right away to one kind of redevelopment idea. It was also a general consensus that "C" was a valid point. Participants expressed the opinion that communication was a very important factor to accomplishing a redevelopment project. They felt it was important in helping to avoid misinterpretation of events and subsequent controversy. Some suggested that the local media be used to facilitate this idea.

7. Traits to look for in a consultant should include the following:

A) ability to communicate with the citizens in terms of costs, time of completion, and types of improvements desired by the town,
B) knowledge of, or an understanding of, the town itself (or of similar towns),
C) experience in downtown improvement projects,
D) location within a 75-mile radius of the town to insure adequate communication and to avoid great expense to the town, and
E) location outside of the town itself to avoid potential conflict of interest and to provide greater objectivity in project decisions.

There was no disagreement expressed toward "A" and "B". A few interview participants felt that experience was not always a necessary trait in a consultant, as long as he or she has good ideas and is able to work at a small town scale.

Most citizens felt that "D" was not a valid consideration. They pointed out that, in many small towns, there may not be a consultant within a 75-mile radius. They felt that, as long as a town is willing to take on the additional expense, it does not matter how far away the consultant is.

Several participants also disagreed with "E". These citizens felt it was <u>better</u> if the consultant was from inside the town, since he or she would already be familiar with physical, social, political, and economic aspects of the town. It was expressed that as long as the consultant had a strong enough personality to deal with conflict and was qualified, that he/she shouldn't be excluded for being a citizen of the town. Other participants, however, agreed with the point made in "E", saying that it was important that the consultant be outside the "local, social, and political structure" of the town. This was qualified by saying this is only a problem in small communities where the consultant meets people socially who oppose the project.

8. **Necessary approval of financing methods should be achieved directly after the preliminary design stage. This would prevent further expenditure of time and money should the project be abandoned later.**

While it was believed to be a good idea to get approval of funding methods after the preliminary design stage, many felt this should not be done too quickly. They believed you risk losing support altogether if there's not enough information. One of the participants suggested that preliminary funding methods be approved with preliminary design drawings, that funding is a step by step process which should run parallel to design.

Final Recommendations

Taking the citizens' responses to these preliminary recommendations into consideration, final recommendations were developed as follows.

1. **Citizens who wish to initiate a downtown redevelopment project in their town should solicit the aid of an organized group as soon as possible.** This organization can more easily sell the project to the rest of the town and is often a source of funding for initial project costs. It can be a local or an outside organization as long as the local citizens are not alienated from the project. Local establishments which may serve as the primary mover at this stage of a project include banks, the local newspaper, the Chamber of Commerce, the city council, or an existing merchants association. Out of town organizations who may be approached to serve this function may be the state department of economic development, an organization such as PRIDE, or the university extension service.

2. An early, informal poll should be taken to determine if a simple majority of the affected merchants support the project. Then, after the preliminary design stage, a more formal survey should be taken to determine if support warratns continuation of the project. A good percentage to look for is 75% (all of the case studies had at least that amount of supporters). If there is less than 75%, a different approach should be taken to the project, such as conducting a pilot project on just one of the blocks.

3. A formal resolution of necessity should be passed as soon as possible in projects where city council approval is eventually needed. It should not be requested until after a solid level of support among the merchants is achieved (75%).

4. **A formal redevelopment organization completely devoted to the project should be formed to deal with project issues in a structured manner.** This is an ad hoc organization, initiating with the project and dissolving (or at least changing its intent) once the project has been implemented. This may be a subcommittee of an existing organization such as the Chamber of Commerce,

city council, or merchants association.

5. Involve as many citizens as possible in the project by:

A) Including them in the formal redevelopment organization (7-10 members), trying to include members from the following groups: bankers, newspaper representatives, merchants, businessmen, government representatives, and patrons of the downtown area, and

B) presenting the project ideas to various citizen groups (church groups, Jaycees, Rotarians, etc.), asking them for their support of the project. The more citizens who are personally exposed to the project, the better the communication, and the better the chances are of the project being formally approved.

6. A consultant should be hired to provide design services. These services should include the following:

A) Organizational services to aid the town in forming a redevelopment committee, in determining project support, and in investigating funding sources for the project. A consultant who is familiar with the early stages of a redevelopment process and knows how to alleviate difficulties which can arise at this time, should offer these services in the complete design package. While a town may often use other means of accomplishing these activities, there are some who would benefit from the experience of an expert in these issues. The earlier the consultant can become involved in the project, the better.

B) A preliminary sketch phase resulting in several quick and varied design alternatives, including preliminary cost estimates. This stage will aid the town in determining what type of redevelopment is best suited to its needs.

C) Close communication throughout the entire project with the redevelopment committee by a specified number of town visits, presentations, etc. The redevelopment committee should, in turn, keep the rest of the town informed of progress, plans, etc. The local newspaper is an excellent vehicle for accomplishing communication with the community on a project.

7. Traits to look for in a consultant should include the following:

A) The consultant should have the ability to communicate with the citizens in terms of costs, time of completion, and types of improvements

desired by the town.

B) Knowledge of, or and understanding of, the town itself (or of similar towns), is important in order to avoid large scale design solutions inappropriate to a small community.

C) Experience in downtown improvement projects, if possible, is beneficial. It is not always possible to find a consultant in the vicinity with previous experience with such projects. It is necessary, however, to find a consultant who has the ability and willingness to work at a small town scale.

D) If a consultant is available in the town, he or she must has a strong enough character to be able to withstand the tide of opposition that often accompanies a redevelopment project. One way to eliminate this problem while still having the advantages that hiring a local consultant offers, is to retain an out-of-town consultant for the conceptual design stage, which is usually the most controversial phase. Then employ the local consultant to develop the final detailed plans and shop drawings. The local consultant will be able to save the town time and money, having knowledge of the local utilities and being available for construction observation and supervision.

E) It is advantageous, although not a necessity, if the consultant is located within a two- or three-hour drive to the town. This saves the additional expense it takes to bring the consultant to town and also tends to improve the quality of communication between the two.

8. Approval of preliminary funding methods should be obtained immediately after the preliminary design stage. This should be the point where it is determined whether or not to proceed with the project through implementation. When the final drawings and cost estimates are in, the final financing arrangements should then be approved. The financing and design considerations should be approved hand in hand to avoid any guesswork and backtracking.

The intent of these recommendations is not to serve as rigid rules to be strictly followed. They may, however, be used as general guidelines in future downtown redevelopment projects undertaken by communities of similar character to the towns used in the case studies.

Recommendations for Future Study

There are several areas of study related to this research

which it would be beneficial to investigate:

The economic effects of redevelopment. There has been much attention given to this already, but it is of growing importance. Too many towns, especially larger ones, with shopping malls to rival the downtown business districts, are finding that physical improvements alone do not increase the health of an economically blighted area.

The role of the consultant. A more detailed investigation into the relationship of the consultant to a small town is needed. It should be determined how a consultant from a large city can effectively design for smaller communities--what kind of information is needed, how to best collect this information, how to communicate with the citizens of the community without alienating them, etc.

The movers and shakers. Who are the influential leaders in the community and how do you find them? This is an area which would benefit consultants and citizens alike who are trying to obtain funding and leadership for a project. There has been some research in this area, though not necessarily in terms of downtown revitalization efforts.

Project completion. This thesis dealt with projects which were implemented. There are probably even more that never get off the ground. Why not? What did they lack that those who completed a project did not?

Post-construction evaluation. Much analysis of successfully completed projects is needed to determine not only economic success of the project, but also ongoing successes. Was there any maintenance of the project after it was completed or was it left to run down as before? Were any other projects in the town inspired by the downtown improvements? What kind of town keeps the enthusiasm alive while in others it dies once the project is over?

The role of various participants. There are many groups and organizations who, by involvement in the redevelopment process, can help reduce or eliminate potential problems. These groups include the local government, the local media, and the banking community. It would be beneficial to explore, in depth, the role of each of these and how their functions can be used to the advantage of a downtown improvement project.

Downtown revitalization for different sizes of towns. This study analyzed downtown revitalization processes for towns of under 10,000 population. The same research could be down for towns of other categories: 10,000-25,000, 25,000-50,000, etc. Planning processes would differ vastly and it would benefit the consultant to know how to deal with various sized communities as he or she takes on projects there.

Final Conclusions

In conclusion, the planning process used to achieve a downtown redevelopment project does affect the length of a project. It is not so much the physical designing and implementation that takes up most of the time. Rather, it's the actions required to organize the project, gain support, and obtain the necessary financing of the improvements.

The consultant, by understanding the process and time relationship, can give the town an estimate up front as to how long the project will take. For example, based on the results of this study, a town contemplating a storefront renovation project using conventional financing can expect the process to take about 1 to 2 years from start to finish. A streetscape project, on the other hand, which requires substantial support and mandatory financing from all the merchants could take as long as 7 or 8 years.

We can assume that, by knowing more about time factors and planning processes, the consultant can better inform the town of what they can expect in a project. This gives the citizens the option of abandoning the project before too much time and money has been spent; or, if they do choose to go with the project, their knowledge of the planning process and related time factors will hopefully minimize their frustration with the inherent delays and enable them to maintain their enthusiasm for achieving their redevelopment goals.

REFERENCES

Books, Periodicals, Reports

Berk, Emmanuel. (1975). Downtown Improvement Manual (Vol.1). Chicago: ASPO Press.

Berman, David R. (1984). State and Local Politics (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Biddle, William W. (1965). Community Development Process: The Rediscovery of Local Initiative. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.

Bramblett, Larry. (1975). Reasons for Retail Center Transitions. In Larry Bramblett (Ed.), Thoughts on the Revival of Downtown USA (2nd ed.). Athens: University of Georgia.

Brown, Patricia Leigh. (1979). Main Streets Get Street-Wise. Historic Preservation, 31(1), 29-39.

Cary, Lee J. (Ed.). (1970). Community Development as a Process. Columbia, MO: University of Columbia Press.

Catanese, Anthony James. (1974). Planners and Local Politicians. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Chapin, F. Stuart, Jr. (1965). Urban Land Use Planning. 2nd edition. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Cohen, Richard A. (1977). Small Town Revitalization Planning: Case Studies and a Critique. Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 43(1), 3-12.

Craycroft, Robert. (1981). Small Town Public Policy: Strategies for Downtown Revitalization. In Michael W. Fazio and Peggy Whitman Prenshaw, Order and Image in the American Small Town. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Domack, Dennis. (1981). Art of Community Development: A Wisconsin Experience. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Downs, Anthony. (1979). The Future of Downtowns. Small Town, 10(1-6), 28-31.

Downtown Idea Exchange. (1974). 22(4). New York: Downtown Research and Development Center.

Falk, Emanuel. (1960). The Future of Downtown: A Six-Point Program. In Howard A. Schretter, 1967, Downtown Revitalization. Athens: University of Georgia, Institute of Community and Area Development. (Reprinted from the Journal of Property Management, 1960, December).

Kansas State University. (1974). Impact of the Physical Quality of Small Town Business Districts on Economic Growth and Development (Tech. Rep. No. 7). Manhattan: Kansas State University, Center for Regional and Community Planning.

Larson, Robert W. Once Upon a Town... Centerville: Iowa Southern Utilities Company.

Livingston, Lawrence, Jr. (1965). The Downtown Counterattack. In Howard A. Schretter, 1967, Downtown Revitalization. Athens: University of Georgia, Institute of Community and Area Development. (Reprinted from The Appraiser's Journal, 1965, April).

Mace, Ruth L. (Ed.). (1961). Guidelines for Business Leaders and City Officials to a New CBD. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina. Papers presented in April and May 1960 at the Central Business District Seminar Series.

McKee, Dennis, Vieux, J. Michael, and Wilhm, John. (1977). Community Development Handbook. Topeka: Kansas Department of Economic Development.

Meehan, Patrick J. (1983, August). Ways to Develop a Cookbook Approach to Downtown Development. Small Town, 14(2), 13-16.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development. (1977). Take Five for Your Community: A Community Development Process. Lincoln, NE.

Nebraska Public Power District. (1982). Industrial Facts: David City, Nebraska. Columbus: NPPD, Area Development Department.

Northern Natural Gas Company. The David City Story [Film]. Omaha, NE: Northern Natural Gas Company, Area Development Department.

_____. A Small Town Success Story. Omaha, NE: Northern Natural Gas Company, Area Development Department.

_____. David City: Before and After. Omaha, NE: Northern Natural Gas Company, Area Development Department.

Powers-Willis and Associates. (1971). Central Business District Improvement Manual for Iowa Communities. Des Moines, IA: Division of Municipal Affairs.

Reps, John W. (1979). Cities of the American West: A History of Frontier Urban Planning. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Rifkind, Carole. (1977). Main Street: The Face of Urban America. New York: Harper and Row.

Rindone, Michael. (1983). Downtown Theme Development for Geneva, Nebraska. Dimensions, 4(3), 24-25.

Robinson, Carla J. (1982). Downtown and Commercial Revitalization in Region J. Research Triangle Park, North Carolina: Triangle J Council of Governments.

Schluntz, Roger L. (Ed.). (1973). Design for Downtown. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Stephens, Suzanne. (1976). Nostalgia de la Rue. Progressive Architecture, 57, 70-75.

Underwood, Tim. (1977, March). Preservation of Missouri Town Encouraged by Private Industry. Small Town, 7(9), 16-18.

United Telephone System. (1974). Community Development Handbook. United Telecommunications.

University of Nebraska. (1966). David City Retail Trade Area Survey. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Bureau of Business Research.

Walters, Jonathan. (1981). Main Street Turns the Corner. Historic Preservation, 33(6), 37-45.

Waters, John C. (1975). Environmental Aspects of Revitalization. In Larry Bramblett (Ed.), Thoughts on the Revival of Downtown USA (2nd ed.), Athens: University of Georgia.

Weeks, Silas B. (1976, June). More About Controlling Demographic Change. Small Town, 6(12), 4-6.

Weisenberger, Ray B. and Kline, Thomas. Small Town Business Area Physical Redevelopment: Science or Serendipity? Omaha, Ne: Northern Natural Gas Company.

Wiledon, Arthur F. (1970). Community Development: The Dynamics of Planned Change. Totowa, N.J.: Bedminister Press.

Williams, William H.A. (1980, July-August). Small Towns Look to the Future: Strtegies for Growing Up Small. Small Town, 11(1), 8-19.

Newspapers

David City Banner-Press, selected articles, 1965-66.

Oberlin Herald, selected articles, 1964-71.

Red Oak Express, selected articles, 1976, 1979-83.

Interviews

David City:
- Chris Dahmke, president, Chamber of Commerce
- James Howe, president, First National Bank
- James Norton, attorney, David City Redevelopment Corp.
- David Peterson, architect, Powers and Associates
- David Carson, Northern Natural Gas Co. representative
- William Spitzenberger, Northern Natural Gas Co. representative
- Jack Tarr, editor, Banner-Press
- Everett McCracken, mayor, vice-president David City Redevelopment Corp.

Oberlin
- Howard Kessinger, editor, Oberlin Herald
- Kent Rinehart, county extension agent
- Ken Rydquist president, Chamber of Commerce
- Stan Morgan, city attorney
- Ray Weisenberger, professor, Dept. of Community and Regional Planning, KSU
- Phil Finley, county extension agent

Red Oak
- Steve Eden, manager, Chamber of Commerce
- Mark Mayne, president, Montgomery County National Bank
- Jerry Shellberg, civil engineer, McKeown and Associates
- Allen Nelson, commercial artist
- Harold Cozad, merchant, Jessen's Clothing Store
- Nick Hildreth, chairman, Downtown Redevelopment Committee, city council member

APPENDIX A - THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TOWN:

NAME:

POSITION DURING PROJECT:

POSITION NOW (if different):

MAILING ADDRESS:

PHONE:

DATE OF INTERVIEW:

****

A. PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

What improvements were implemented?

- [ ] storefront renovation
- [ ] pedestrian paving
- [ ] circulation/parking improvements
- [ ] street furniture
- [ ] landscaping
- [ ] signage
- [ ] alley renovation
- [ ] other

Where were these improvements implemented?
(indicate boundaries on town map)

B. PRE-DESIGN ISSUES

Who originated the idea to redevelop the business district?

- [ ] businessman
- [ ] utility representative
- [ ] newspaper representative
- [ ] town leader (specify position)
- [ ] citizen
- [ ] other (specify)

How was community interest in redevelopment initiated?

- [ ] town council meeting (item on agenda)
- [ ] special meeting for redevelopment purposes
- [ ] individual business-to-business approach
- [ ] other

How long did it take from the initial idea to the time the community became involved?

- [ ] less than two weeks
- [ ] 2-4 weeks
- [ ] 1-3 months
- [ ] 3-6 months
- [ ] 6-12 months
- [ ] 1-2 years
- [ ] over 2 years

What kind of physical improvements did the citizens anticipate at this time?

- [ ] storefront renovation
- [ ] pedestrian paving
- [ ] circulation/parking improvements
- [ ] street furniture
- [ ] landscaping
- [ ] signage
- [ ] alley renovation
- [ ] other

At this time, how long did you think it would be before project completion?

- [ ] less than 6 months
- [ ] 6-12 months
- [ ] 1-2 years
- [ ] 2-4 years
- [ ] over 4 years

How did the citizens involved on the project organize themselves for the project planning?

- [ ] formed a formal association/corporation to deal specifically with the redevelopment issues
- [ ] appointed an informal committee
- [ ] organization such as Chamber of Commerce
- [ ] appointed an individual to head the project
- [ ] other

C. THE CONSULTANT:

What was the name of the firm/individual hired?

What kind of consulting firm was it?

- [ ] architectural
- [ ] multi-disciplinary firm
- [ ] landscape architectural
- [ ] planning
- [ ] engineering
- [ ] university students (class project)
- [ ] other

How was the firm selected?
- [ ] recommended by citizen of the town
- [ ] recommended by another town who underwent redevelopment
- [ ] the firm approached the town first
- [ ] investigation by the town into various firms in the area
- [ ] other

In what town was the firm located? How far from the client town?

How long did the hiring process take? (from the time it was decided to hire a consultant to the time the consultant was actually hired)
- [ ] less than one week
- [ ] 1-2 weeks
- [ ] 2-4 weeks
- [ ] 4-8 weeks
- [ ] more than 8 weeks

What actions were taken prior to the design stage of the project?
- [ ] identification of the problems
- [ ] determination of needs
- [ ] establishment of goals
- [ ] scope
- [ ] schematic drawings
- [ ] preliminary cost estimates
- [ ] funding alternatives
- [ ] recommendations
- [ ] other

At what points were presentations or meetings held?

What problems were encountered in this stage?

How long did this stage of the project take?
- [ ] less than one month
- [ ] 1-3 months
- [ ] 4-6 months
- [ ] 7-9 months
- [ ] 10-12 months
- [ ] over 12 months

What services did the design stage consist of?
- [ ] surveys
- [ ] data collection
- [ ] consideration of alternatives
- [ ] preliminary drawings
- [ ] evaluation of plans
- [ ] refinement of cost estimates
- [ ] finalized scope
- [ ] working drawings
- [ ] specifications

[ ] contract documents
[ ] work and materials estimation
[ ] final cost estimation
[ ] agency approval and permits
[ ] informing of the public
[ ] other

At what points were presentations or meetings held?

What problems were encountered in this stage?

How long did this stage of the project take?

How long did it take for approval of the final plans?

Do you feel the communication between the town and consultant was: (READ)
[ ] very open and productive
[ ] adequate
[ ] poor

Do you feel citizen participation was: (READ)
[ ] better than expected
[ ] adequate
[ ] should have been better

Do you feel the consultant was: (READ)
[ ] overcompensated
[ ] compensated according to actual work done
[ ] underpaid, considering time spent on the project

Would you recommend hiring a consultant to anyone attempting a similar redevelopment project? Why or why not?

FINANCING, BIDDING, CONSTRUCTION

What kinds of financing was used?
[ ] benefit district
[ ] private funds of property owners
[ ] private donations
[ ] federal assistance
[ ] special assessement bonds
[ ] general obligation bonds
[ ] revenue bonds
[ ] city budget
[ ] other

How long did it take to obtain this financing?

What problems occurred in this financing?
- [ ] too much red tape
- [ ] gaining consent of those to bear the financial burden
- [ ] securing loans
- [ ] raising independent funds (as in fund-raising drives, etc)
- [ ] other

What kind of bidding for the construction contract was used?
- [ ] competitive
- [ ] invitational
- [ ] negotiated
- [ ] other

How much time was allowed in the bidding period?
- [ ] less than 3 weeks
- [ ] 3-4 weeks
- [ ] 4-6 weeks
- [ ] over 6 weeks

How much time lapsed between the bid opening and the awarding of the contract?
- [ ] less than one week
- [ ] 1-2 weeks
- [ ] 2-4 weeks
- [ ] 4-6 weeks

What consultant activities made up the construction phase?
- [ ] project administration
- [ ] scheduling
- [ ] approval of materials
- [ ] construction of improvements
- [ ] imspection and testing
- [ ] certification of completion

What problems were encountered in this phase?

What was the duration of this phase?

E. IN GENERAL:

What do you consider to be the major problems or setbacks that occurred throughout the process?

Were there any times where the project totally or nearly halted? Where did these occur?

What events facilitated the process?
- [ ] cooperation of financiers
- [ ] exceptional citizen involvement
- [ ] volunteer labor
- [ ] money donations

[ ] good relationship with between consultant and client
[ ] other

Was the duration of the entire project
[ ] faster than anticipated
[ ] about what expected
[ ] slower than anticipated

What would you do differently if you had to do it again?

Do you feel the project was a success? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B - MATRIX

	DAVID CITY, NEBRASKA	OBERLIN, KANSAS	RED OAK, IOWA STOREFRONT RENOVATION	RED OAK, IOWA SIDEWALK RENOVATION
PROJECT INITIATION	Town was approached by Northern Natural Gas Co. to initiate project.	Newspaper editorial was published by Woodward.	Project initiated by Houghton State Bank for the town's centennial.	Project began due to concern for poor sidewalk conditions.
LENGTH OF TIME UNTIL PROJECT TOOK HOLD	approx. 2 months before commitment to project	one week until Chamber of Commerce involved	1 to 1 1/2 years till the town was involved	1 to 2 yrs. before city council involved
ORGANIZATIONAL VEHICLE	David City Redevelopment Corporation	Chamber of Commerce	Houghton State Bank (public relations dept.)	Downtown Redevelopment Committee (ad hoc comm.)
CONSULTANT HIRING PROCESS	interviewed some firms in the area; N.N.G. rep. contacted arch. he knew who became interested	1st arch. relative of Chamber member students recommended by extension service	hired commercial artist who had done advertising for the bank	hired by city council on the basis of previous work for the city
CONSULTANT'S PROFESSION AND LOCATION	architect, Fremont, Ne. (50 miles from D.C.)	1) architect, K.C., MO 2) Manhattan, KS 3) Manhattan, KS	commercial artist, Red Oak	civil engineer, Red Oak
PRE-DESIGN ACTIVITIES	orientation mtg. to show what could be done mtgs. to decide on what approach to take	Woodward presentation to Chamber investigation into Canadian project	pre-design mtgs. research: visited other towns, viewed David City film	Phase I study and report presentations to council & public, slide show, and merchants survey
LENGTH OF TIME BEFORE DESIGN STAGE BEGAN	3 to 4 months	approx. 1 year	approx. 1 year	approx. 2 years
LENGTH OF TIME OF LITTLE OR NO ACTION	none	2 years	approx. 6 months	5 to 6 years
LENGTH OF ENTIRE PROJECT	1 1/2 years	8 years	3 years	9 to 10 years
NUMBER OF MERCHANTS AFFECTED BY PROJECT	10	50	75	24
% OF MERCHANTS SUPPORTING PROJECT	100% (north side)	75-80%	nearly 100%	80%
PROJECT OPPOSITION	very little; 3 owners 1st, then no opp.	some; no one actively fought project though	very little, eventually almost none	very vocal opp.; project source of much debate
GROUP(S) NEEDED TO APPROVE PROJECT	merchants only	merchants, then city council	merchants only	merchants, then city council
FINANCING MECHANISMS	private funds of property owners	benefit district, city funds, private donations & fed. grant, Chamber of Commerce	bank paid consultant, private funds of prop. owners	benefit district, city funds
QUALITY OF CONSULTANT CLIENT COMMUNICATION	good: arch. easily accessible	1st consultant: poor students: very good	good (once the citizens were consulted)	good: consultant in Red Oak so accessible
QUALITY OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE	very good	very good	fair	very good
BANKER(S) INVOLVED IN PROCESS	yes	yes	yes	yes
INVOLVEMENT OF AN ESTABLISHED GROUP IN EARLY STAGES	No. Natural Gas Dept. of Econ. & Community Development--early stages	some guidance by the county extension agent	Houghton State Bank	none
PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTED	sandblasting, tuckpointing, painting of facades, signage street trees	canopy lights storefront renovation entry--sign, trees,etc.	sandblasting, tuckpointing, staining, signage	street trees sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street overlay, water main
PHYSICAL OR EXTERNAL SETBACKS	fire	none	none	poor weather conditions for construction

TIME AND THE PLANNING PROCESS IN SMALL TOWN CBD REVITALIZATION

by

M. PATRICE SLAVEN

B.S. Biology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1980

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Department of Landscape Architecture

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1984

ABSTRACT

The downtown, or central business district, has always been the center of activity in the small town. Now, however, due to commercial strip development, obsolete circulation, aging structures, and suburban growth, the existence of these downtowns is in danger. A movement is taking place to redevelop these areas in small towns all across the country. Direction is needed to help such towns realize their goals. One problem which can often delay or even terminate a prospective revitalization endeavor is lack of understanding of the time factors involved with various aspects of the project.

This study analyzes the role of time in the planning and implementation processes of small town business district redevelopment projects. Four projects implemented in three midwestern towns served as case studies in the research. Planning processes used in each project were reconstructed by newspaper searches and interviews with participants of the projects. These processes were then analyzed in terms of efficiency, problems, and delays. Recommendations were made as to how the processes could have been improved to minimize obstacles and increase efficiency.

It was concluded that planning processes do have an effect on the length of a project. It is not so much the physical designing and implementation that consumes time. Rather, it's the actions required to organize the project, gain support, and obtain the necessary financing. Based on this study, a town contemplating a storefront renovation project using conventional financing can expect the process to take 1 to 2 years. A streetscape project requiring mandatory financing from all the merchants may take as long as 7 or 8 years.

By having a better understanding of time factors and planning processes, a consultant can better inform the town of what it will take to complete a project. This enables the town to make decisions accordingly and, hopefully, to reduce the amount of frustration which could otherwise occur.