

Downtown Kingsport

April 2012

Model City Coalition

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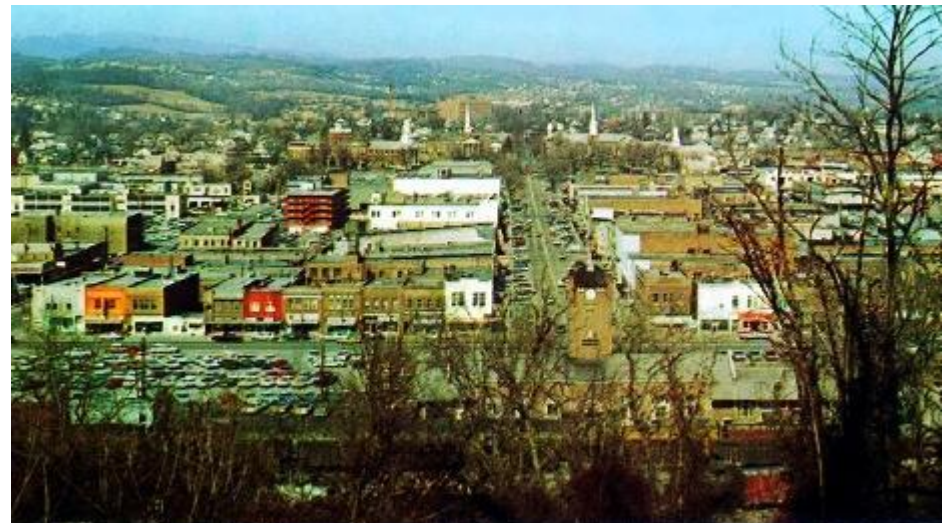
John Campbell, City Manager

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2011 ^

1967 >



Executive Summary

In 1997, the Model City Coalition was formed to make recommendations to improve Downtown Kingsport and gateway corridors. From 1998-2011, Downtown realized \$41,700,000 in private taxable investment and another \$129,000,000 in public/semi-public non-taxable investment.

Mission for Downtown

Make downtown Kingsport a viable place to live, shop, entertain & work

Accomplished to date

- ✓ Broad Street streetscaping
- ✓ Academic Village / Higher Education
- ✓ Public Art/Sculpture Walk
- ✓ Parking garage & private development
- ✓ Mountain Region Family Medicine
- ✓ New corporate office (TriSummitBank)
- ✓ Lofts in numerous buildings
- ✓ Signage (wayfinding & gateways)
- ✓ A new Farmer's Market building
- ✓ Full-service grocery store/deli/pharmacy
- ✓ Restaurants
- ✓ Specialty shops (clothing, art, accessories)
- ✓ Board of Education / Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Razed Foundry & Smith Oil
 - Landscaping at key gateways
 - Sullivan/Wilcox
 - Sullivan/Main
 - Clinchfield/Center

In 2011, Mayor Dennis Phillips requested the Model City Coalition plan be updated in

preparation for the future. A SWOT analysis was performed having the following output:

Strengths:

- Academic Village
- Loft type apartments present
- New development
- Art displays
- Design of the area (effective city layout)
- City leaders actively support
- Good original master plan
- Good litter control

Weaknesses:

- Not enough housing
- Few compelling draws (magnets)
- Original master plan lacking retail focus
- No plan oversight & accountability
- Empty poor condition building
- Few inviting spaces
- Little appeal to younger people
- Several businesses close too early

Opportunities:

- New housing
- More magnets: retail, entertainment, education
- Public space magnets (parks, festivals)

Threats:

- Others areas with higher appeal for development
- Slow/poor economy
- Funding
- Organizations conflict over direction
- Overpriced real estate
- Project size & scope – too large
- Project size & scope – too small

Mission of Model City Coalition

Develop a clear direction for Downtown Kingsport, devise the plan of action, and oversee the execution of the plan through completion.

Vision

Downtown Kingsport as a vibrant, dynamic, sustainable 24/7 community.

Recommendation

Create a small oversight team to guide and manage plan execution.

- Hold work teams accountable
- Report results
- Adjust, align & improve plan as needed

Three Focus Areas

1. Housing
 - Upscale apartments/condos
 - Lofts
 - Single family residential
2. Magnets
 - Retail
 - Entertainment
 - Sports
 - Leisure & Festivals
 - Higher Education
 - Government
3. Aesthetics, Gateways, Infrastructure
 - Wilcox Drive Gateway Corridor
 - Stone Drive Gateway Corridor
 - Nolen Square
 - Streetscaping, infrastructure

Why develop Downtown Kingsport?

- **Create a vibrant 24 hour a day critical mass of people** by making downtown Kingsport the unique destination for the entire region. Downtown Kingsport will be **the place** to live, shop, entertain, dine, play, and pursue education.
- The unique vibrant downtown would play an integral role in the **recruitment and retention of employees** for surrounding corporations (Eastman, Domtar, and Wellmont to name a few), because of its appeal to young professionals and to the executive level employees.
- Vibrant downtown will **attract and retain a “creative class” of workers.**
- **Bringing better quality of life to all of Kingsport** through the attractions, businesses, and experiences the new development will offer the area.
- **Change the city's image**, in a positive way not only locally, but nationally.

How to drive downtown development:

- **Create a Master Plan** to provide a common vision, leverage strengths, and address problems and obstacles.
 - *“Have a common strategy and link improvements & revitalization to a single vision”* – Fred Bonci
 - Funding in place.
 - Oversight teams that conducts regular assessment of progress.
 - Set goals, responsibilities, and timelines.

- Create the reputation with developers that **Kingsport is developer friendly.**
- **Reconnect our surrounding neighborhoods** with the Downtown urban core
- Focus on growth of **housing and new retail centers**, everything needed to be within walking distance. The physical environment must be of a character and quality that people will want to live there. Downtown must be perceived as a comfortable, safe place, and convenient.
- Develop a healthy downtown with the presence of a full range of housing opportunities for **people of all incomes.**
- Promote the **key advantages** of living downtown such as “Skip the commute, sell the mower and see that freedom can be found Downtown”
- **Create a sense of place and community.** A downtown full of **community gathering places** – the community neighborhood. Downtown possesses authentic architectural character, pedestrian walk-ability, beautiful streetscapes and public art.
- **Clustering:** Different retail/restaurant options will be concentrated into walk-able districts, creating destinations that give the area critical mass, identity, and a reason to live there
- **Achieving walkable downtown requires concerted planning and strategic implementation**
- Newly built and redeveloped housing downtown offers **investment returns.**
- There are significant fiscal and financial motivations to undertake a downtown revitalization process. Downtown development will mean **more residents and more jobs.** It also means **more out-of-town visitors** bringing more outside money into the area. Real estate in revitalized downtowns increases in value. Revitalization of downtown will increase sales and property tax revenue.
- **Keeping Up Green Space.** Open space is an important part of a neighborhood.
 - Create additional small, urban parks to further soften the landscape and give quiet, calm places to the downtown community.
 - **Green Space** is more than an attractive front door to downtown’s residential neighborhoods, we will provide activity and other recreational amenities on par with any in the metro area.
- **Creating more diverse educational opportunities.**
- **Enhancing arts/culture draw for the region.**

2012 Model City Coalition Plan Update

1-Mile Radius

	Population		Physician Count	Median Disposable Household Income			College Degree	Single	Median Age	"White Collar" Employees
	Daytime	Resident		2010	2015	Change				
Downtown Kingsport (300 Broad St)	19,220	6,348	211	\$ 24,033	\$ 26,360	9.70%	24%	59%	43.5	63.4%
Downtown Johnson City (101 E Main St)	16,734	9,753	74	\$ 22,379	\$ 23,638	5.60%	31%	65%	40.6	59.2%
Downtown Bristol (700 State St)	9,972	8,582	12	\$ 21,555	\$ 22,680	5.20%	19%	57%	42.0	61.7%
Downtown Asheville (1 N Pack Square)	24,087	8,922	217	\$ 21,711	\$ 22,748	4.80%	41%	80%	37.2	64.8%
Downtown Roanoke (1 Campbell Ave SE)	21,841	11,294	144	\$ 23,092	\$ 24,560	6.40%	20%	75%	37.8	66.6%
Downtown Knoxville (1 Market Square)	29,435	12,340	30	\$ 11,601	\$ 12,086	4.20%	36%	89%	23.9	62.9%

Planning History

The planning of the town of Kingsport was commissioned by J. Fred Johnson and the Kingsport Improvement Corporation around the time of World War I. The planning culminated in a town plan by John Nolen in 1919. Nolen's "Down Town Section" of the plan dated July 1919 established the simple structure of downtown that remains intact today. The plan illustrated the north/south main axis of Broad Street terminated on the north by Church Circle. To the south the axis was terminated by the train station backed by the topographic elevation of Cement Hill. The plan was further characterized by an irregular north/south block grid and a discontinuous alley system. Medians were illustrated in Broad, Clay and Cherokee Streets. The two blocks east and west of Broad between New and Center Streets were given over to parks that formed a bifurcated town square.

Downtown Kingsport & the region

Downtown remains the symbol of Kingsport but its characteristics and the characteristics of all of Kingsport are tightly interwoven with the greater Tri-Cities region.

Population/Age

The population of Kingsport, currently 50,851, is stable and growing at a moderate pace. This is an increase from 44,905 in the 2000 Census. Kingsport's population is mature, with a median age of 43.7. Looking just at the incorporated areas, the City of Kingsport's population is slightly older than that of Bristol (43.0) and Johnson City (37.1).

Education / Employment

Kingsport is relatively well educated with 32% having at least a college degree; compared to 29% Statewide, 28% in Sullivan County and 18% in Hawkins County. The number of residents of the City of Kingsport (over 25 years old) with a college degree increased by 74% in the past 10 years.

19.2% of Kingsport's workforce is employed in manufacturing, down from nearly 40% prior to 2000. 24.7% are employed in education and healthcare fields. A modest rate of employment growth is projected. In the past 15 years, the city's historically blue collar workforce morphed into nearly 60% employment in management, business, sales and office jobs.

Mean household income is \$54,386, compared to \$59,212 for the state as a whole; however, Kingsport's lower cost of living causes it to have virtually the same buying power.

Retail Sales

Kingsport enjoys relatively high retail sales per capita at \$26,348 in 2007, more than twice that of the state. The primary market area includes a 15-minute drive time in Tennessee and Virginia with a population of 89,942. The secondary market area includes a 45-minute drive time with a population of 433,000. The tertiary market area includes parts of Kentucky and North Carolina with a population of 603,000. 25% of the total market area has a college degree, which is projected to rise to 27.4% by 2015. The average household

income is \$50,755 and is projected to increase to \$55,259 by 2015.

Downtown Conditions

In general, the forty-four blocks that comprise downtown contain government, banking, professional offices, limited retail and consumer services in the core with light commercial, industrial and warehousing at the periphery. There was \$41.7 million in private taxable investment from 1998-2011. An additional \$129 million was invested in non-taxable investment by churches, healthcare, and higher education. More than 2,100 students now attend college classes downtown. The former Kingsport Press manufacturing facility was gifted to the City of Kingsport and it has been converted into a substantial multi-use redevelopment including medical offices, a grocery store, restaurants, a Farmer's Market, and new headquarters for the Board of Education and Chamber of Commerce. Future plans include a carousel hand carved by community volunteers. Domtar Paper underwent a half-billion dollar reinvestment and modernization that insured its future viability. Parking has been addressed with a \$4.4 million parking garage containing 364-spaces and incorporated privately developed retail/residential spaces as well. Hundreds of street trees have been added throughout downtown, but particularly on Broad Street where the Sculpture Walk and public art program have been particularly focused.

Housing

A variety of appealing and convenient housing choices is critical to maintaining a community's quality of life. Living downtown is a growing national trend that Kingsport should capitalize upon. The recent addition of a full-service grocery store, Farmer's Market, and new medical offices underpins the desirability of living downtown. Housing will help sustain and promote a 24/7 downtown neighborhood that drives economic demand.

Single Family

Kingsport has great neighborhoods adjoining downtown. A variety of 1920's-1940's traditional architectural styles create a diverse mix of housing types that are very desirable, but need some modernization to meet current demand.

- **Facilitate the redevelopment of 50 houses annually**

Apartments/Condos

A significant upscale apartment complex has not been built in Kingsport since the 1990s. As a result, employers are referring new and temporary employees to neighboring cities. If the city is going to attract/retain young professionals and others interested in urban dwelling, it must fill this void. It is critical that the city remove the perceived barriers to development in the downtown area. Otherwise, a greenfield site will almost always prevail.

- **Create an incentive package of \$1 per square foot to facilitate the development of Class "A" apartments**

Lofts

Several lofts have been developed in Downtown Kingsport in the past several years. In fact, demand exceeds supply. New loft development requires several unusual requirements like retrofitting sprinklers, installing secondary egress, and meeting current code requirements.

- **Extend the incentive package of \$1 per square foot**

Recommendations - Housing

1. **Insure Kingsport's permitting process is effective, streamlined, and fast.**
2. **Incent developers of downtown housing with a \$1 per square foot incentive package**
3. **Acquire and/or control strategically critical developable property in Downtown**
4. **Aggressively market the opportunity to key urban developers.**

Magnets

Develop six magnet areas to ensure that downtown is a destination.

1. Retail
2. Entertainment
3. Sports
4. Leisure & Festivals
5. Higher Education
6. Government

Retail

Recruit/develop a variety of magnets to ensure that downtown is a destination. Concentrate efforts within the pedestrian zone near Broad Street to maximize the critical mass and cross-traffic.

- **Identify and assess the feasibility of 3 major retailers in the following categories:**
 - Hunting / fishing / outdoors / equipment
 - Home furnishings / décor / outdoor furniture / modern furniture
 - Fashion clothing & accessories
- **Identify and target 6 smaller retailers or restaurants in the following categories:**
 - Café / art / nightlife / music
 - Kids / baby / toddler clothing
 - Fashion jewelry and accessories
 - Bedding, bath towels, cookware, fine china, bridal and gifts
 - Office supplies, printer ink, toner, electronics, computers

- High end designer resale shoe store
- Sub sandwiches, soups, deli

- **Identify restaurateurs to backfill key bank-owned locations**

- BBQ
- Coffee-lunch
- Full service restaurant / microbrewery

Entertainment

- **Identify entertainment operators to backfill key bank-owned locations**

- Live music venue
- Live performance/movie venue

- **Identify and assess feasibility of 2 new entertainment venues**

- Theatre (cinema)
- Entertainment, birthday parties, arcade

Sports

- **Facilitate an indoor sports/training venue**

Leisure & Festivals

- **Develop Main Street & Centennial Hill**

Main Street and Cement Hill are the historic anchors at the south end of Broad along the railroad tracks. The City should acquire Cement Hill and re-brand as “Centennial Hill” in honor of the City’s centennial in 2017. A master plan should be commissioned develop Centennial Hill

and the adjoining Main Street Festival Space of the recently-acquired land and easements secured from the Chamber Foundation and private property owners. A master plan should consider the coordinated development of these properties as a space for passive recreation and public gatherings/festivals, emphasizing the importance of preserving/enhancing green space in an urban environment. Attention should be given to adequate infrastructure like a stage, power, water, restrooms and lighting. Consideration should be given to adding a train element to the park plan that reflects the city’s heritage, attracts train enthusiasts, and supports the Santa Train’s annual trek into Downtown Kingsport

- **Support the Carousel Round House**
Support the development of the Kingsport Carousel adjacent to the Farmer’s Market.
- **Renovate Glen Bruce Park**
This park should be improved as the adjoining Library is expanded/renovated. A determination should be made on the future of the gazebo. Care should be exercised towards integrating Founder’s Fountain into the design.
- **Open a Kingsport history & heritage museum**

Higher Education

- **Academic Village, Phase 2**

Develop the next phase of the Academic Village by expanding existing institutions and attracting new ones. As new campus buildings are added, consideration should be given to an additional parking garage.

Government

- **Strive to retain government offices**

Downtown is the governmental center of our community and should remain so. As city, county, schools, or federal office space needs increase, care should be exercised to keep them downtown and backfill the vacated space with offices currently outside downtown.

Recommendations – Magnets

1. **Target & recruit high potential retailers and restaurants**
2. **Acquire and/or control strategically critical historic entertainment properties**
3. **Target & recruit high potential entertainment venues to open in Downtown**
4. **Facilitate sports/training venue**
5. **Develop Main Street & Centennial Hill**
6. **Support completion of the Carousel project**
7. **Renovate Glen Bruce Park**
8. **Develop Phase 2 of Academic Village**
9. **Retain government offices downtown**

Aesthetics, Gateways & Infrastructure

Regional entry into downtown is made from Interstate 26 through two corridors: Wilcox Drive and Stone Drive. The City is to be commended on the new Wayfinding & Gateway signage program, which presents a wonderful visual image and directs travelers to downtown and other major points of interest.

Wilcox Gateway Corridor

The Wilcox | Sullivan | Center Corridor into downtown is approximately 3.8 miles in length. The corridor connects with 1-181 at the John B. Dennis/Wilcox and Meadowview Parkway interchanges. It passes through the Meadowview Overlay District; past the Eastman Manufacturing Complex to the east; across the Holston River Bridge; through the Eastman Headquarters campus and then continues left onto Sullivan and left onto Center into the core of downtown

Recommendations

- **Improve interchange plantings**

The John B. Dennis/Wilcox and Meadowview Parkway interchanges with 1-26 should be appropriately landscaped to identify them as entries into the City. The plantings should be native/adaptive species; and should be a mixture of evergreen/deciduous; and should emphasize seasonal color/bloom. The

City should explore transportation grant funding for this enhancement to 1-26.

- **Improve the corridor streetscape**
- **Improve the Holston River bridge**
as maintenance opportunities arise add bicycle/pedestrian lanes along the outside shoulder. Install lighting when possible. Coordinate with adjacent property owners to install trees and landscaping to soften industrial views along Wilcox Drive on Long Island between Riverport Road and Industry Drive.
- **Develop the Wilcox/Sullivan portal**
The Wilcox / Sullivan intersection should receive additional landscape improvements to identify it as an important portal into downtown.
- **All surfaces of the railroad underpass should receive natural stone.**
Research public/private partnerships to landscape, grass, and beautify the area along East Sullivan and East Main near the old foundry site.
- **Develop the Sullivan/Center portal**
The Sullivan / Center intersection should receive landscape and signage improvements to identify it as a portal into downtown. Signage improvements should be made south of the intersection to prepare the motorist for the left turn onto Center Street. Landscape improvements in the form of low walls

shielding surface parking, street trees and a seasonal color bed will emphasize the intersection's important position.

Aesthetics, Gateways & Infrastructure (continued)

Stone Drive Gateway Corridor

The Stone/Clinchfield/Center corridor connects downtown to the Wellmont Outpatient Campus and East/West Stone Drive.

Recommendations

- **Implement interchange plantings**
The Stone Drive interchange should be appropriately landscaped to identify it as a major entry into the City. The plantings should be native/adaptive species; should be a mixture of evergreen/deciduous and should emphasize seasonal color/bloom. The City should explore federal transportation enhancement grant funding for this enhancement to I-26
- **Improve the corridor streetscape**
Stone Drive should receive street trees along the periphery. The Stone/Lynn Garden grade separated intersection should receive appropriate plantings.
- **Develop the Center/Clinchfield portal**
Landscape corner opposite the Farmer's Market

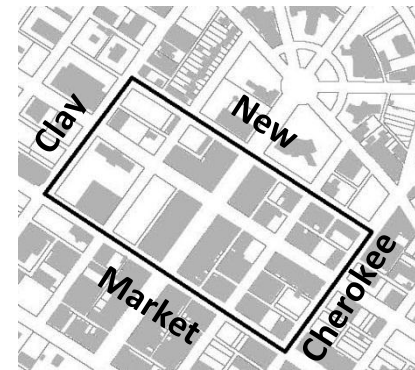
Nolen Square

Downtown continues to derive much of its visual character from the central element of the original Nolen Downtown Plan - the axis of Broad Street connecting Church Circle to the train station with the dramatic backdrop of Cement Hill. The cross-axial streets of Sullivan, Center and Main also occupy important positions in the Nolen Plan. The Nolen Square streetscape should be further defined to give identity to the core of downtown

Recommendations

- **Further develop the Center & Main Street streetscapes**
with sidewalk improvements, curb extensions for pedestrian crossings, crosswalk improvements, street tree plantings, and street light enhancements
- **Landscape and beautify between City Hall and Justice Center**
to enhance this important civic space
- **Develop curb extensions**
for protected pedestrian street crossings as well as to provide a position for street trees and other landscape enhancements
- **Extend the downtown standard pedestrian scale light pole and fixture to all of Nolen Square streets.**
Provide city standard street light fixtures at intersections

- **Up light the street trees on Broad**
Instead of wrapping the trees with lights each year.
- **Continue the Façade & Redevelopment Incentive Programs**
The highly successful façade and redevelopment incentive programs should be continued. Ongoing funding should be earmarked.



Parking

While there is no apparent shortage of parking in downtown at this time, the subject of convenient parking continues to be an availability issue at certain locations and times. As development activity warrants, it is recommended that a detailed parking study be undertaken in the downtown area to assess emerging parking needs.

- **On-Street Parking Core Area**

Downtown Kingsport has on-street parking - parallel or angle - on most of the streets in the downtown core.

- 48 = Clay Street (Main to New)
- 44 = Shelby Street (Main to New)
- 199 = Broad Street (Main to Sullivan)
- 61 = Commerce Street (Main to New)
- 47 = Cherokee Street (Main to New)
- 98 = New Street (Clay to Cherokee)
- 57 = Center Street (Clay to Cherokee)
- 68 = Market Street (Clay to Cherokee)
- 52 = Main Street (Clay to Cherokee)

674 = Core On-Street Parking Spaces

- **Parking Garage**

A new 364 spaces parking garage opened in 2011 at 215 Shelby Street adjoining the full 200-block of Broad Street.

- **Off Street Public Parking**

Downtown Kingsport has 10 existing off-street parking areas with 1,231 **free** parking spaces serving downtown within easy walk time of Broad/Center.

- 215 Shelby Street (Parking Garage)
364 spaces, 3 minutes
- 201 East Market Street at Commerce
90 spaces, 3 minutes
- 218 Clay Street (Academic Village)
65 spaces, 3 minutes
- 425 Shelby Street (at Library)
166 spaces, 3 minutes
- 420 Cherokee Street (at Five Points)
77 spaces, 4 minutes
- 175 Cherokee Street
149 spaces, 5 minutes
- 330 East Sullivan Street at Cumberland
23 spaces, 5 minutes
- 102 Shelby Street (Academic Village)
37 spaces, 5 minutes
- 399 West Market St (Academic Village)
18 spaces, 6 minutes
- 201 Clinchfield St (Academic Village)
101 spaces, 7 minutes
- 101 Clinchfield Street (Academic Village)
141 spaces, 8 minutes

Recommendations

- **Maintain on-street parking**

on all streets where practical in order to maximize convenient customer access

- **Enhance public off street parking**

All off street parking areas should

eventually have a defined edge (peripheral plantings, etc.), internal tree plantings and appropriate lighting.

- **Consider private development opportunities for parking lots**

as long as public parking is replaced with a parking deck or other nearby surface parking opportunities

2012 Model City Coalition Plan Update

Fiscal*	Rank	Project	Request	Total
2013	1	Control Super Market Row (Bray + adjacent prop)	\$ 2,800,000	
2013	2	Control property at General Shale (72 of 112 ac)	\$ 2,000,000	
2013	3	Control vacant land at Cement Plant (E Main St) 3.4 ac	\$ 300,000	
2013	4	Stone facing of underpass at Wilcox	\$ 100,000	
2013	5	Control former Gas Station at Market/Sullivan	\$ 300,000	\$ 5,500,000
2014	1	Install permanent "up" lights on trees on Broad St.	\$ 40,000	
2014	2	Centennial Hill Park Phase 1	\$ 1,000,000	
2014	3	Nolen Square Streetscape Ph 1	\$ 225,000	
2014	4	Beautify between City Hall & Justice Center	\$ 50,000	
2014	5	Plantings at Market/Sullivan	\$ 30,000	
2014	6	Open a Kingsport history & heritage museum	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,845,000
2015	1	Centennial Hill Park Phase 2	\$ 1,000,000	
2015	2	Nolen Square Streetscape Ph 2	\$ 225,000	
2015	3	Improve entrance landscaping Wilcox/meadowview/126	\$ 750,000	
2015	4	Plantings & walls at Sullivan, Center, Wexler	\$ 30,000	\$ 2,005,000
2016	1	Centennial Hill Park Phase 3	\$ 1,000,000	
2016	2	Nolen Square Streetscape Ph 3	\$ 225,000	\$ 1,225,000
2017	1	Nolen Square Streetscape Ph 4	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
2018	1	Landscape corner Center & Clinchfield	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
				\$ 10,900,000
OPERATING				
2013		Facilitate State Theatre & make operational	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
2013		Facilitate construction of indoor sports/training facility	\$ 120,000	\$ 170,000
2013		Façade Grants	\$ 100,000	\$ 270,000
2013		Redevelopment Incentive Grants	\$ 100,000	\$ 370,000
2013		Housing Incentives (\$1 per sf)	\$ 25,000	\$ 395,000
ACTIVE CIP PROJECTS THAT IMPACT DOWNTOWN				
		Justice Center Expansion	\$ 6,000,000	
		Library Expansion	\$ 8,000,000	
		Improvements to support Carousel Round House	\$ 750,000	
		Additional Building(s) at Academic Village	\$ 5,000,000	
		Additional Parking Garage for Academic Village	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 23,750,000