



Downtown Revitalization

Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Community Planning Resources](#)
- [Downtown Revitalization](#)
- [Business Improvement Districts](#)
- [Case Studies, Best Practices, Model Programs](#)
- [Funding Sources](#)
- [Journals](#)
- [Organizations](#)



Introduction

Many rural communities are engaged in revitalization efforts to renew downtown areas and restore them to their former prominence as a center of community activity. This guide links to full-text handbooks, planning tools, case studies, funding resources, organizations, revitalization strategies, and more to assist a community considering a downtown revitalization project.

This guide was prepared by Patricia LaCaille John, June 2005.
 This resource guide was partially revised and updated December, 2011.
 Rural Information Center Publication Series; no. 71 2005. Beltsville, MD.

The use of trade, firm, or corporation names in this publication (or page) is for the information and convenience of the reader. Such use does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by the United States Department of Agriculture or the Agricultural Research Service of any product or service to the exclusion of others that maybe suitable.

For more information about National Agricultural Library [Policy and Disclaimers](#)

Community Planning Resources

1. ***Downtown and Business District Market Analysis: Using Market Data and Geographic Information Systems to Identify Economic Opportunities in Small Cities.*** Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, Center for Community Economic Development, 2004.
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/dma/>
2. ***Managing Downtown Revitalization.*** Ottawa: Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2002. 73 p. http://www.reddi.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_6_20254_1.html

3. *A Manual for Small Downtowns*. Martin Shields, Tracey Farrigan. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 2001. 110 p. <http://retailmarkets.aers.psu.edu/images/manual.pdf>
 4. *Organizing a Successful Downtown Revitalization Program Using the Main Street Approach*. Olympia, WA: Office of Trade & Economic Development, n.d. 64 p. http://cted.wa.gov/_cted/documents/ID_160_Publications.pdf
 5. *Smart Growth at the Frontier: Strategies and Resources for Rural Communities*. Barbara Wells. Washington, DC: Northeast, n.d., 80 p. <http://www.nemw.org/RuralSmartGrowth.pdf>
-

Downtown Revitalization

1. *10 Reasons Why Maine's Homegrown Economy Matters and 50 Proven Ways to Revive It*. Stacy Mitchell. Belfast, ME: Maine Businesses for Social Responsibility, 2004. 56 p. <http://www.newrules.org/retail/mainelocaleconomy.pdf>
2. *An Annotated Webliography of Downtown Revitalization Resources*. Compiled by Nancy Lynn Kleban. Manoa: University of Hawaii, 1999. 13 p. <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~kleban/Revitalization.htm/>
3. *City Beautiful: Establishing Community Redevelopment Areas in Florida*. Melva Macfie, Karen Zagrodny. Gainesville: Conservation Clinic, College of Law, University of Florida, 1999. 24 p. http://www.law.ufl.edu/conservation/pdf/city_beautiful.pdf
4. **Downtown/Business District Economic Revitalization**. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, Center for Community Economic Development. <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/BDS.html>
5. "Downtown Revitalization: Cities Search for Solutions." *EconSouth*, No. 3 (1999): 5 p. <http://www.frbatlanta.org/invoke.cfm?objectid=87B687D8-6666-11D5-93390020352A7A95&method=display>
6. *A Local Official's Guide to Developing Better Community Post Offices*. Paul Bruhn, Emily Wadhams, Karen Horn. Burlington, VT: The Preservation Trust of Vermont, 2001. 38 p. <http://www.ptvermont.org/publications/pobook/popreface.htm>
7. "Main Street Partnering: A Key to Successful Downtown Revitalization." Kent Robertson. *Let's Talk Business*. Issue 78, (2003): 2 p. <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/lets/0203ltb.html>
8. "Organizing for Central Business District Revitalization." Gregory A. Davis. *Journal of Extension*. 37, No. 2 (1999): 4 p. <http://www.joe.org/joe/1999april/iw2.html>
9. *Reclamation and Economic Regeneration of Brownfields*. Peter B. Meyer, H. Wade VanLandingham. Review of Economic Development, Literature and Practice: No. 1. Washington, DC: U.S. Economic Development Administration, 2000. 44 p.

http://www.eda.gov/ImageCache/EDAPublic/documents/pdfdocs/meyer_2epdf/v1/meyer.pdf

10. ***Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts.*** H. Ward Jandl. Preservation Briefs 11. Washington, DC: Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, 1982.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief11.htm>
 11. ***Revitalizing Maine's Downtowns.*** Augusta: Maine Downtown Center and the Maine State Planning Office, 2004. 33 p. <http://www.mdf.org/downtown/pdf/execorder.pdf>
 12. ***"Thinking Small" For a Revitalized Downtown Tallahassee: Some Thoughts About A Cultural Attractions Strategy.*** Bob Rackleff. Tallahassee, FL: Leon County, 1999. 5 p.
<http://www.co.leon.fl.us/BCC/rackleff/essay.asp>
 13. ***Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization.*** Christopher B. Leinberger. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2005. 23 p.
http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20050307_12steps.htm
 14. ***Welcome Back Downtown: A Guide to Revitalizing Pennsylvania's Small Downtowns.*** Martin Shields, Tracey Farrigan. Harrisburg: The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, n.d. 28 p.
<http://www.ruralpa.org/downtown.pdf>
-

Business Improvement Districts

1. ***Business Improvement Districts and Innovative Service Delivery.*** Jerry Mitchell. Arlington, VA: PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for the Business of Government, 1999. 32 p. <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/Mitchell.pdf>
 2. ***Let's Talk Business: Ideas for Expanding Retail and Services in Your Community.*** Madison, WI: Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin-Extension, No. 1, September, 1996-. <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/publicat/letstalk.html>
 3. ***Promoting Retail to Revitalize Downtowns: An Examination of the Business Improvement District Idea.*** Devika Gopal. Boston: Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003. 153 p.
-

Case Studies, Best Practices, Model Programs

1. ***Brownfields Showcase Community Locations.*** Washington, DC: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2000. 10 p. <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/slocat.htm>
2. ***Downtown Rebound.*** Rebecca R. Sohmer, Robert E. Lang. Washington, DC: Fannie Mae Foundation, 2001. 10 p. http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2001/05_downtown_sohmer.aspx
3. ***Downtown Revitalization: "From Concept to Reality."*** Langley, BC: Development Services, n.d. 14 p. http://www.cityoflangley.ca/_pdf/downtown_revitalization.pdf

4. **Downtown Revitalization: Pipestone.** Washington, DC: National Park Service. 3 p.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/pipestone/revitalization.htm>
5. *Downtown Revitalization in Urban Neighborhoods and Small Cities.* Barbara Wells. Washington, DC: Northeast-Midwest Institute, n.d., 18 p.
<http://www.nemw.org/DowntownRevital.pdf>
6. *Revitalizing Community: Four New York State Community Development Organizations. A Comparative Case Study.* Jonathan Shadmon. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, Department of City and Regional Planning, Community and Rural Development Institute, 2003. 53 p. http://www.cdtoolbox.net/community_planning/000163.html

Funding Sources

The following resources provide a general look at funding sources for economic development efforts. Consult grant writing resources, http://ric.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=5&tax_level=2&tax_subject=319&topic_id=1566 and *A Guide to Funding Resources* <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/fundguide.html> for assistance in preparing successful proposals and in obtaining funding applications and information for obtaining a *DUNS number* that is *required* of all organizations/entities applying for a federal grant or cooperative agreement.

Federal Funding Databases

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA). *CFDA* is an Internet database containing information about all federal domestic programs including federal grants, loans, insurance, and training programs; information is available on eligibility, application procedures, selection criteria, and deadlines. <http://12.46.245.173/cfda/cfda.html>

- *Business and Commerce,*
http://12.46.245.173/pls/porta30/CATALOG.FUNCTIONAL_AREA_RPT2.SHOW?p_arg_names=func_cat_cd&p_arg_values=B
- *Community Development,*
http://12.46.245.173/pls/porta30/CATALOG.FUNCTIONAL_AREA_RPT2.SHOW?p_arg_names=func_cat_cd&p_arg_values=C
- *Regional Development,*
http://12.46.245.173/pls/porta30/CATALOG.FUNCTIONAL_AREA_RPT2.SHOW?p_arg_names=func_cat_cd&p_arg_values=R

The Federal Funding Sources for Rural Areas Database for Rural Areas Database is an Internet database containing information about rural federal domestic programs including federal grants, loans, insurance, and training programs; information is available on eligibility, application procedures, selection criteria, and deadlines. http://ric.nal.usda.gov/nal_web/ric/ffd.php

Federal Programs

The following federal programs and private funding sources represent a sample of the resources available. For additional sources consult *A guide to Funding Resources*: <http://nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/fundguide.html>. This online guide contains links to numerous funding sources including federal, state, and private funding databases, state foundation guides, and grant writing resources and information.

Appalachian Regional Commission

- Appalachian Regional Commission Programs, <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=8>, These programs are directed at specific counties designated as being in the Appalachian area.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

- *Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities*, <http://www.ezec.gov>. Also known as EZ/ECs, these zones are setup to assist rural underserved, high poverty areas in developing needed programs and services.
- *Forest Service - Cooperative Forestry*, <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/>
 - **Economic Action Programs** assist rural communities through three programs. The Rural Community Assistance programs help rural communities build skills, networks, and strategies to address social, environmental, and economic changes. The Forest Products Conservation and Recycling program helps communities and businesses find new and expanded business opportunities based on forest resources. The Market Development and Expansion program helps develop new markets for natural resource based goods and services. <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/eap/index.shtml>
- *Rural Development*, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>
 - **Rural Business and Cooperative Service** - Rural Business Programs include grant programs to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises located in areas outside the boundary of a city or unincorporated areas. <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/bprogs.htm>
 - **Rural Housing Service - Community Facilities Loan and Grant Programs (10.766)** provide funding to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents. <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/cp.htm>
<http://grande.nal.usda.gov/ric/funding.php>
 - **Rural Utility Service** - The RUS works with rural cooperatives, nonprofit associations, public bodies, and for-profit utilities to help provide modern utilities such as, electricity, telecommunications, as well as, water and waste disposal services to rural areas. <http://www.usda.gov/rus/electric/loans.htm>
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/index.htm>
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/prog.htm>

- **State Rural Development Offices**, http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/reed_map.html

U.S. Department of Commerce

- **Economic Development Administration**, <http://www.eda.gov/>, provides assistance to rural communities through a variety of programs including the Public Works and Economic Development Facilities Program.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- **Indian Community Development Block Grant Program (14.862)** offers block grants to Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages to improve their communities.
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/ih/grants/icdbg.cfm>
<http://grande.nal.usda.gov/ric/funding.php>
- **State Community Development Block Grant Program** provides eligible communities with annual direct grants that they can use for community projects.
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/stateadmin/index.cfm>
- **Local Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Offices**,
<http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm>

U.S. Department of the Interior

- **Indian Arts and Crafts Board**, <http://www.doi.gov/iacb/>
- **Grants, Tax Credit & Other Historic Preservation Assistance**. The National Park Service provides many technical and funding assistance programs to State Historic Preservation Offices and communities for local projects. <http://www.cr.nps.gov/helpyou.htm>
- **Federal, State, and Tribal Historic Preservation Programs**.
<http://www.achp.gov/programs.html>

U.S. Department of Transportation

- **TEA-21** program includes bicycle transportation, pedestrian walkways and other transportation enhancements. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/index.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- **Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)** empowers States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. With certain legal exclusions and additions, the term 'brownfield site' means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/mmatters.htm>
- **Brownfields Tax Incentive** removes many of the financial disincentives preventing the cleanup

and reuse of blighted property." <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/bifaxinc.htm>

Additional Funding Resources

- *Finding the Funds You Need: A Guide for Grantseekers*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, Cooperative Extension, 2001. 59 p. http://www.cdtoolbox.net/community_planning/000157.html
- First Nations Development Institute. Fredericksburg, VA. info@firstnations.org, <http://www.firstnations.org>
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation. New York, NY. <http://www.lisc.org/>
- National Trust's National Main Street Center. Washington, DC. mainstreet@nthp.org, <http://www.mainstreet.org/>
 - *State, Regional, and Citywide Main Street Coordinating Programs* <http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=2463&ion=15>
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation. West Sacramento, CA. rcacmail@rcac.org, <http://www.rcac.org/>

Journals

Appalachia

Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20235
202-673-7968
Fax: 202-673-7930
Web: <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=575>

Downtown Idea Exchange

Downtown Research & Development Center
28 West 25th Street, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10010
212-228-0246
Email: info@DowntownDevelopment.com

Downtown News Briefs

International Downtown Association
1250 H. Street, NW 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
202-393-6801

Fax: 202-393-6869

Downtown Promotion Reporter

Downtown Research & Development Center
28 West 25th Street, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10010
212-228-0246
Email: info@DowntownDevelopment.com

Journal of Housing & Community Development

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
630 Eye St., NW
Washington, DC 20001
877-866-2476
Email: nahro@nahro.org

Journal of the Community Development Society

17 South High St., Suite 200
Columbus, OH 43215
614-221-1900 ext. 217
Email: CDS@assnoffices.com

Main Street News

National Main Street Center
1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-588-6219
Fax: 202-588-6050

Planning

American Planning Association
122 South Michigan Ave.
Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60603
312-431-9100
Fax: 312-431-9985
Email: CustomerService@planning.org

Preservation

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
1-800-944-6847
202-588-6000
Fax: 202-588-6038

Public Management (PM)

International City/County Management Association
777 North Capitol St., NE
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
202-962-3675
Email: subscriptions@icma.org

Public Works

Hanley Wood, LLC
426 South Westgate St.
Addison, IL 60101
630-543-0870
Email: pweditor@hanleywood.com

Rural Development News

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development
Iowa State University
107 Curtiss Hall
Ames, IA 50011-1050
515-294-8321
Fax: 515-294-3180
Web: <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/rdn.html>

Small Town

Small Towns Institute
Box 517
Ellensburg, WA 98926
509-925-1830

Organizations

American Planning Association

122 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60603
312-431-9100
Fax: 312-431-9100
Email: CustomerService@planning.org
Web: <http://www.planning.org/>

A non-profit, public interest group that focuses on research, policy, education and information dissemination for practicing planners, officials, and citizens involved with urban and rural planning issues. Also has the Small Towns and Rural Planning Division with specific small town focus.

Downtown Research & Development Center

28 West 25th Street, 8th Floor

New York, NY 10010
212-228-0246
1-800-232-4317
Fax: 212-228-0376
Email: info@DowntownDevelopment.com
Web: <http://www.DowntownDevelopment.com>

Analyzes and reports on downtown problems and solutions. Conducts research, publishes books, reports and studies, holds seminars and workshops and acts as the international clearinghouse on downtown revitalization.

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

777 North Capital Street, NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
202-289-4262
Web: <http://www.icma.org/>

The "professional and educational organization representing appointed managers and administrators in local governments." Services include: annual conference; publications; research; and special focused initiatives that include brownfields, sustainable communities, Intelligent transportation systems, performance measurement, military base reuse smart growth and best practices symposium are just some of the many programs.

International Downtown Association

1250 H Street, NW 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
202-393-6801
Email: question@ida-downtown.org
Web: <http://www.ida-downtown.org/>

Dedicated to the revitalization of downtown areas and their adjacent neighborhoods. Focuses its programs on effective management of downtowns, including retailing, security, maintenance, physical design, business development, transportation, culture and entertainment.

National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT)

444 North Capitol St., NW
Suite 397
Washington, DC 20001-1202
202-624-3550
Email: natat@sso.org
Web: <http://www.natat.org>

Provides technical assistance, educational services, and public policy support to local government officials of small communities across the country. Conducts research and develops public policy recommendations to help improve the quality of life in small communities.

National Center for Small Communities

444 N. Capitol St., NW
Washington, DC 20001-1202
202-624-3550
Email: ncsc@sso.org
Web: <http://www.natat.org>

Provides small-town decisionmakers with the tools to govern effectively and the skills to expand local economies, protect natural resources and preserve community character. Offers access to training materials, community problem-solving strategies, public policy research and other resources.

National Main Street Center

1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-588-6219
Email: mainstreet@nthp.org
Web: <http://www.mainstreet.org>

Assists states, communities and citizens in the revitalization of business districts within a preservation context. Provides information and consultation on downtown revitalization, through technical assistance, the National Main Street Network, conferences, products and Main Street Certification Institute.

Small Towns Institute

Third Ave. and Poplar St.
P.O. Box 517
Ellensburg, WA 98926
509-925-1830

Collects, assembles and disseminates information of value to small town planning, revitalization and environmental programs

Urban Land Institute

1025 Thomas Jefferson St., NW
Suite 500 West
Washington, DC 20007
1-800-321-5011
202-624-7000
Email: reliance@uli.org
Web: <http://www.uli.org/>

Encourages effective urban planning and development through research and education. Nineteen councils conduct studies of industrial potentials, downtown problems and new area development.

[Regional Rural Development Centers](#)

The four regional centers, <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/about/rrdc.html> coordinate rural development research and extension education through out the United States. They focus on social and economic problems common to rural areas of the region through a cooperative multi disciplinary effort, including

financing, public services, fiscal analyses and leadership roles. They studies economic development, improved community facilities and services, capacity building and natural resources.

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Iowa State University
107 Curtiss Hall
Ames, IA 50011-1050
515-294-8321
Fax: 515-294-3180
Web: <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu>

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

The Pennsylvania State University
7 Armsby Building
University Park, PA 16802-5602
814-863-4656
Fax: 814-863-0586
Web: <http://www.cas.ncrcrd.psu.edu>

Southern Rural Development Center

Mississippi State University
Box 9656
410 Bost Extension Building
Mississippi State, MS 39762
662-325-3207
Fax: 662-325-8915
Web: <http://srdc.msstate.edu/>

Western Rural Development Center

Utah State University
8335 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-8335
435-797-9732
Email: wrdc@usu.edu
Web: <http://wrdc.usu.edu/>

***USDA, Rural Information Center
National Agricultural Library
10301 Baltimore Ave., Room 115
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
ric@ars.usda.gov
1-800-633-7701***
