

TOWN OF MENTONE

DOWNTOWN RECOVERY AND ENHANCEMENT ACTION PLAN



ABOUT THE PLAN



Through collaborative efforts and targeted interventions, this plan seeks to create a more resilient and vibrant economic landscape that positions Mentone for long-term prosperity.

STUDY AREA

The downtown corridor has been significantly impacted and the town is committed to identifying a plan to emerge stronger and more resilient. For the purpose of this planning effort, we are focusing on E. Main Street between Franklin Street and Morgan Street. While the downtown is the primary focus area, the larger community context will inform the plan recommendations.

PRIORITIES TO CONSIDER

This plan will explore creative solutions for enhancing streetscapes, connectivity, promoting and branding, business attraction and retention, and beautification.

ALIGNING PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

Planning is not a new concept for Mentone residents, businesses, and leaders. With a recently adopted comprehensive plan and a strategic investment plan in place, this process will leverage the work completed to date and continue building on the ideas that have been identified in past planning efforts.

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

The Office of Community and Rural Affairs outlines technical requirements for the recovery plan which includes eight key chapters:

- Executive Summary
- General Background
- Recovery Planning Committee
- Vision and Goals
- Post Economic Contraction Conditions
- Recovery and Community Wide Implementation Options
- Economic Recovery Action Plan
- Action Items

PROJECT TIMELINE

The steering committee will meet three times through the planning process with several public input opportunities including online engagement tools, stakeholder interviews, and a public open house. The draft plan will be presented to OCRA in April 2024.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Town of Mentone was awarded a planning grant from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) to development a COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan (CERP). This plan is intended to provide a strategic framework and actionable roadmap for revitalizing the local economic in the aftermath of the pandemic.

HOW CAN YOU STAY INFORMED?

Visit the project website at: www.tswdesigngroup.com/mentonedowntown

TELL US!

On the last board, please share any feedback regarding downtown ideas using the post-it notes provided.

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GOALS

GOAL 1: ECONOMY

- Encourage a mix of businesses to generate evening and weekend foot traffic.
- Maintain a low vacancy rate within the downtown area to increase demand and stabilize property values.
- Utilize programming and community events to bring people into the downtown.
- Develop a forum for business owners to collaborate, discuss challenges or ideas, and share resources.
- Consider implementing a business retention and expansion program.
- Create a one-stop shop for business owners and investors to access information and file for all required approvals within one agency.
- Establish and maintain a business directory with contact information, location, and business hours.

Cultivate a thriving business environment through smart investments and programs, leveraging unique assets, and providing resources and tools to support the local economy.

GOAL 2: DESIGN

- Invest in high-quality streetscape amenities such as lights, trash receptacles, and benches.
- Encourage property owners to maintain and improve their building facades.
- Promote infill redevelopment opportunities as they become available.
- Increase pedestrian connectivity and safety within the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Ensure parking is conveniently located and well-marked for downtown visitors.
- Ensure the downtown area is accessible for all people.
- Continue to explore ways to incorporate public art and façade murals within the downtown.
- Partner with INDOT to improve the intersection of Main Street and Franklin Street.
- Coordinate future pedestrian improvements with the county's blueway and greenways plan.
- Construct a sidewalk network to improve pedestrian connectivity between the school, downtown, and community park.

Elevate the visual character of the built environment through streetscape enhancements, redevelopment opportunities, and pedestrian amenities.

GOAL 3: PROMOTION

- Establish a brand for the Town of Mentone and/or the downtown area to utilize on print and digital media.
- Create and maintain a strong preference for social media and other digital platforms.
- Work with local tourism agencies to promote events and businesses within the downtown area.
- Improve local hospitality to ensure visitors have a good experience in Mentone.
- Utilize marketing materials such as community brochures to attract new businesses and tourists.
- Establish a downtown marketing plan to increase awareness of the opportunities within Mentone.
- Encourage businesses to participate in community events and explore ways to entice people to come back at a later date.
- Provide consistently branded signage throughout Mentone to direct visitors to local destinations.
- Create a central gathering place within the downtown for entertainment and leisure.
- Host a farmers market and/or makers market to bring people into the downtown.
- Explore ways to program the accessible alleys along the Main Street corridor.

Activate the downtown by promoting businesses, destinations, and events through digital media, placemaking efforts, and programming.

GOAL 4: ORGANIZATION

- Become an Indiana Main Street community by applying for OCRA's Downtown Affiliate Network.
- Form a downtown committee that can lead the charge and align efforts regarding the downtown area and related programming.
- Continue engaging the general public as new projects or ideas arise.
- Streamline municipal processes such as the development review process to reduce the loops and time constraints.
- Expand participation in the Chamber of Commerce.
- Work with local organizations such as the Lion Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Public Library to expand capacity for placemaking and beautification efforts.

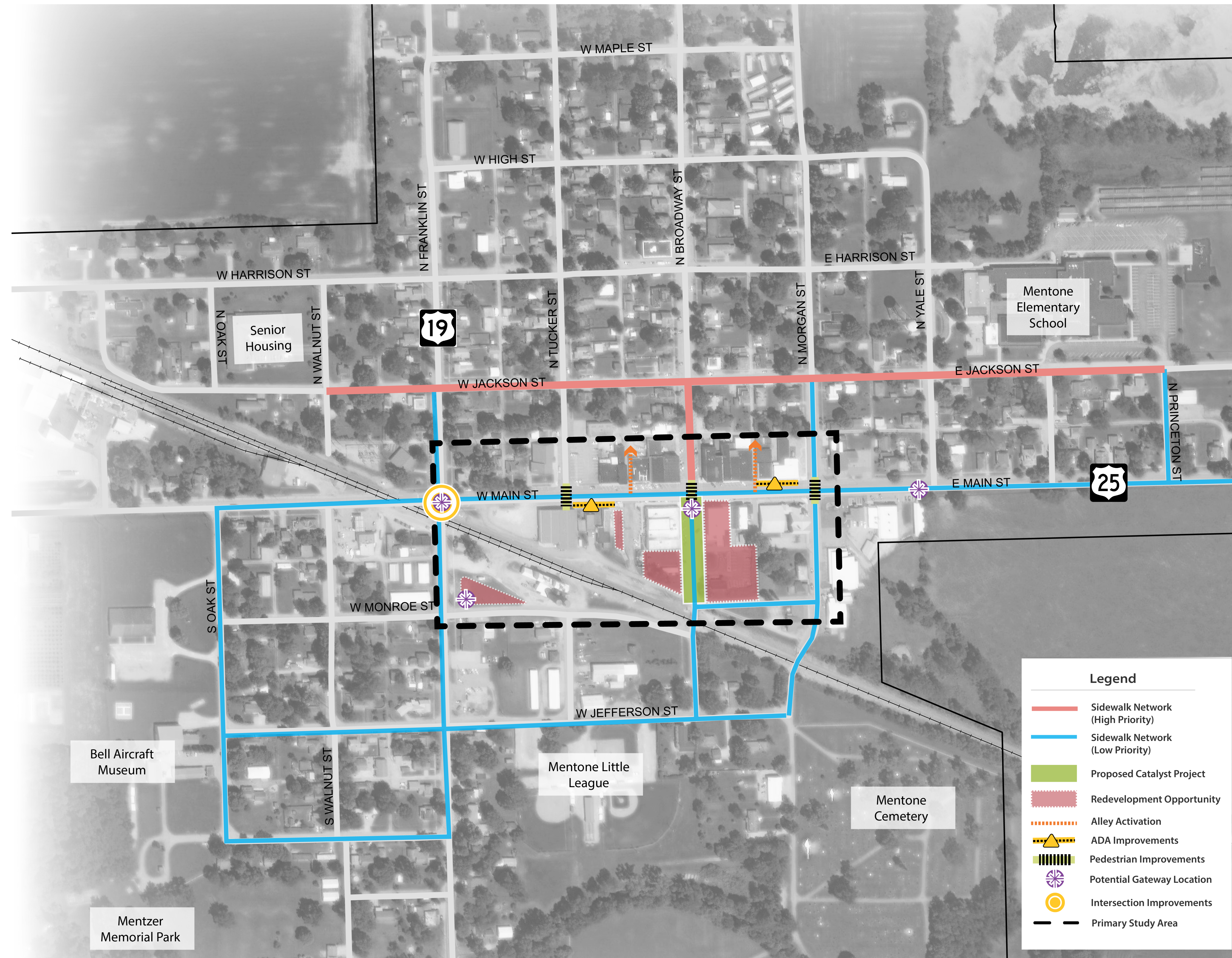
Establish and maintain strong partnerships within the downtown to help spark reinvestment and promote long-term resiliency.

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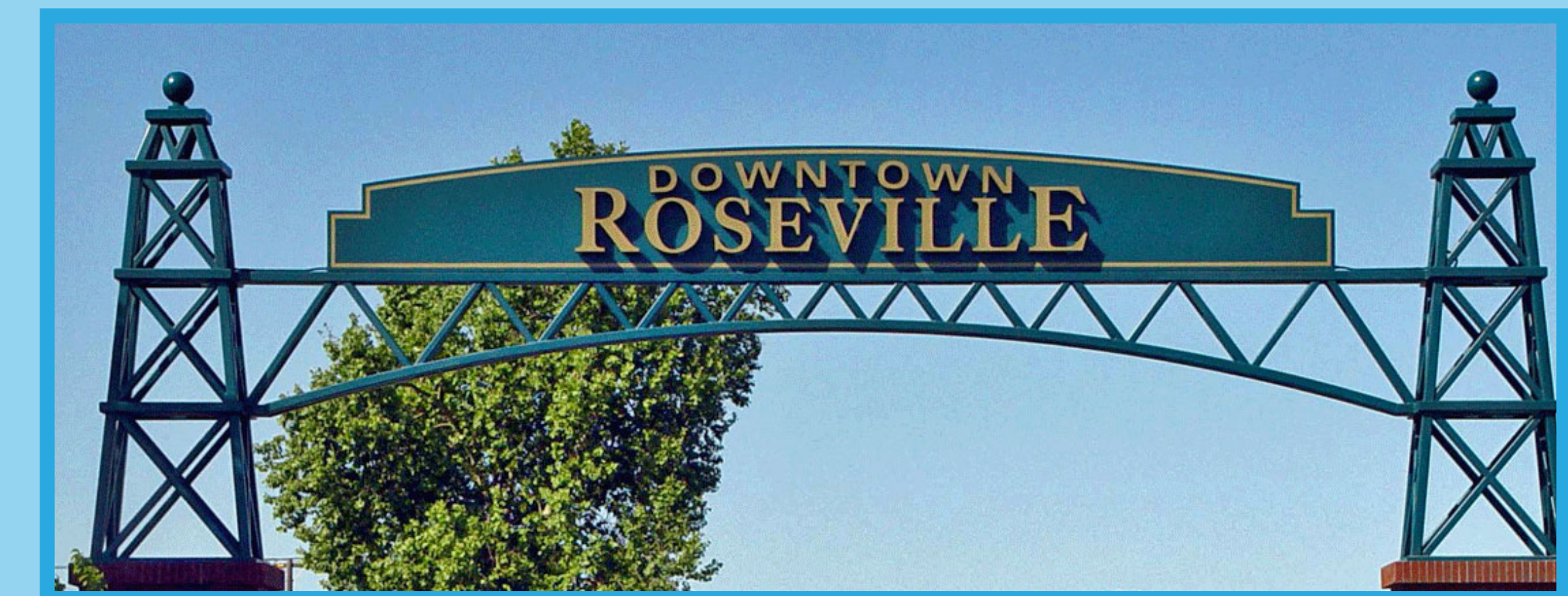
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CONNECTIVITY



GATEWAYS



CONNECTIONS



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Using post it notes provided, **please provide feedback** on the draft downtown goals, objectives, and big ideas regarding the public square.

GIVE FEEDBACK

WHAT DO YOU LIKE?



WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

