

Rushville Downtown Revitalization Plan

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Following PLAN 261 Guidelines

Anas Almassrahy

Ball State University

Instructor: Dunaway, M. Lisa

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Abstract

Downtown Rushville has a positional for revitalization. This paper will focus on some revitalization proposals to better the center of the city. Following a site inventory and then a site analysis for the downtown using Sketch Up as a primary tool, illustrator, and hand drawing, this paper present five suitable proposals for a downtown revitalization. The five suggestions focus on enhancing the Facades of the buildings, encouragement of more tree plantation, improving sidewalks and pathway, raise the awareness of the historical and cultural district, and focuses on the heart of the downtown the courthouse.

Introduction

Rushville Downtown has strengths that provide support to build a great downtown and overcome its weaknesses. Instead, to boost Rushville Revitalization, this paper is a guide that leads Rushville to more sustainable, healthy, and luxurious lifestyle. Those proposals have gone through the following process, site analysis, site inventory, research for case studies, and decision making. Although Rushville is doing great, planting street trees, enhancing the façade, and taking care of the Historical/Cultural district will undoubtedly improve the downtown in the eyes of many.

Street Trees

Upon visiting the suggested area of focus, trees were hard to notice on the main streets, such as Main St, 1st St, and 2nd St. According to Burden (2006) Urban Street Trees have 22 benefits to the town, its safety, economy, and happiness. He claims that \$250 - \$600 of planting cost including three years of regular maintenance, single street returns about over \$90,000 of benefits (aesthetic, social, and natural). Emphasizing more on the importance of street trees Burayidi (2001) says:” Specific recommendations on street trees suggest that they should be required on all roads and should be placed no further than thirty feet apart in planter strips or tree wells between the curb and the sidewalk.” Also, he says there are different kind of trees to deal with, however; the primary purpose is to make a shaded walkable street. The following paragraphs will tell more about the benefit of the street trees. (Burayidi, 2001, p126)

Street trees reduce and provide some control over the urban traffic speeds. When trees are lined up making a wall, and that wall makes the drivers more focused and centered. Burden noticed that speed was reduced from 30 mph to 15 mph. Next, street trees create a safer walking environments. Street trees on both sides of the streets act as a human

shield from motors, and that also might apply when an island or a median of street trees were made. Medians in urban areas help reducing crashes by fifty percent or more. Trees also, create secure pathway as a part of a pleasant walking environment. Street trees improved and increased the income of different businesses on the trees capped streets by twelve percent. (Burden, 2006)

Street trees also play a role as a shelter from rain, sun, heat, and sunburn. Usually, walking under a tree on a hot summer day, it reduces the heat by an average of ten degrees. Also, trees and its shade improve the overall emotional and psychological health and reduce the blood pressure. Also, street trees help creatures to connect to nature and connect the human to its senses. Another benefit of a street tree is it provide a longer pavement life as the studies show in some cities in the state of California. The shade of street trees help to add forty to sixty percent of the asphalt life. Indeed, street trees establish comfort and natural beauty to the landscape. (Burden, 2006). So upon this analysis regarding the importance of street trees, Rushville Downtown is in need of more trees to be planted on its sidewalk, lights, and neighboring businesses. Businesses might be encouraging to have little moms by the doors. This process takes time and effort, and one way to start is to work together as a community and covering the designated area block by block.

Facades

David Sucher, the author of the City Comforts book, talks about how to build an urban village and in one of his chapters he speaks of the Three Rules of Urban Design. Rule one says that buildings should be constructed to the Sidewalk/ the property line. By doing that, it helps to create a stronger tree wall that each building is meeting the sidewalk. Adding to that, the main floor should be at the sidewalk level. Rule number

two, building front must be permeable. It helps to connect the inside of the building to the sidewalk and then to the outside through permeable windows and doors. Also, mirrored glass will not help to make the inside of buildings visible. Also, it helps to apply Jane Jacobs concept of "eyes on the street." (Jacobs, 1961) Rule three is to allow on-street parking, as of stop and go because of its importance to the commercial district. (Sucher, 2003, p45-65)

Applying those three rules to Rushville Downtown Analysis, the following proposals are essential for Rushville Downtown Development. First, some buildings had high permeable facades. Other buildings, especially the ones with commercially zoned, are in need to open up and be visible to the sidewalk to draw customers in by showing them what this place has. Second, to provide you with an example here, in Vancouver, Canada Business District shops have completely open doors and windows, where merchants are advertising their goods looking directly to the sidewalk. His social habit brings an unlimited number of benefit to the community, economy, social life, and safety. (Sucher, 2003, p48)

Historic and Cultural Districts (Courthouse)

Rushville Courthouse is breath taking the building. It tells by its look, a lot about the area, the county, and the city. There is always something to learn about Rushville's history. Raising awareness about the county/ city history is very needed to promote the courthouse, its beauty, history, and rich culture. An example of an engaging courthouse/ State Capitol is the Michigan State Capitol; people like to visit well design buildings, and the city of Rushville has a teaser. Using the Rush County Courthouse as a vocal and a tourism destination will help generate many benefits which will make the City and its businesses, social life, cultural and historical heritage alive and vibrant.

Conclusion

All in all, the suggested Rushville Downtown Revitalization Plan where planting street trees, enhancing the façade and taking care of the Historical/ Cultural district. Very clearly, seeing that the City of Rushville is doing a great job promoting a healthy lifestyle, bettering the education, and caring for the city businesses, there is a great hope that this revitalization plan will help the city reaching its goal and continue great future long.

References

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