

RURAL RENEWAL: BLANCHESTER, OHIO - 2011



- A special thanks is extended to all who participated in the surveys and interviews enabling us to more accurately assess and envision a Blanchester that may further develop the great assets of its downtown and its community members.

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Results of Planning Inquiries Blanchester, Ohio

With:

**Blanchester City Council,
Chamber of Commerce,
Local Property Owners
Business Leaders**

Prepared By:

**Parker Hoar for the
Clinton County Regional Planning
Commission _ 2011**

From an interviewed pool of participants who have been invested in the community for an average of 19 years each, they revealed what they think would improve the quality of life in Blanchester, and what kind of challenges the city faces to achieving its goals.

We asked these questions:

1. Do you feel Blanchester as whole is improving?
2. What's valuable to you about Blanchester? What are 3 feelings that describe Blanchester to you?
3. What are 3 existing features, events, or facilities that are a source of community pride to you?
4. What 3 existing physical places or problems make you feel embarrassed about Blanchester?
5. What is lacking or missing in the village that could help improve the quality of life in Blanchester?
6. How important do you think it is to improve Downtown Blanchester?
7. For people to use the downtown more, what features of the town should be focused on first? (architecture, business development, sidewalks/trails, parks and open spaces, entertainment and recreation venues)
8. Would you want to live in Downtown Blanchester? Why or Why Not?
9. What are the most important issues facing the future of Blanchester?

Residents seemed to appreciate the sociable and friendly nature of Blanchester's small town atmosphere, its friendliness and the educational system provided for the youth. Sources of community pride were vested in some of the unique facilities or events that drew people to town. Facilities people had the most pride for were the schools. The library and the new Dewey Memorial Parking Lot are well kept, and a good example of care and craftsmanship that people appreciated in their built spaces. The 4th of July parade and fireworks was also sources of pride because of their entertainment values, and the ability to draw people from outside town to participate and enjoy Blanchester offerings. The movie theatre served a similar function but on a smaller scale.

Almost unanimously, people believed that improving the downtown was "very important" to the success and development of Blanchester, but that currently the town was "not improving". While they would like to do business there, they preferred to not live downtown because they felt it was cramped, noisy, and not clean or well cared for by property owners.

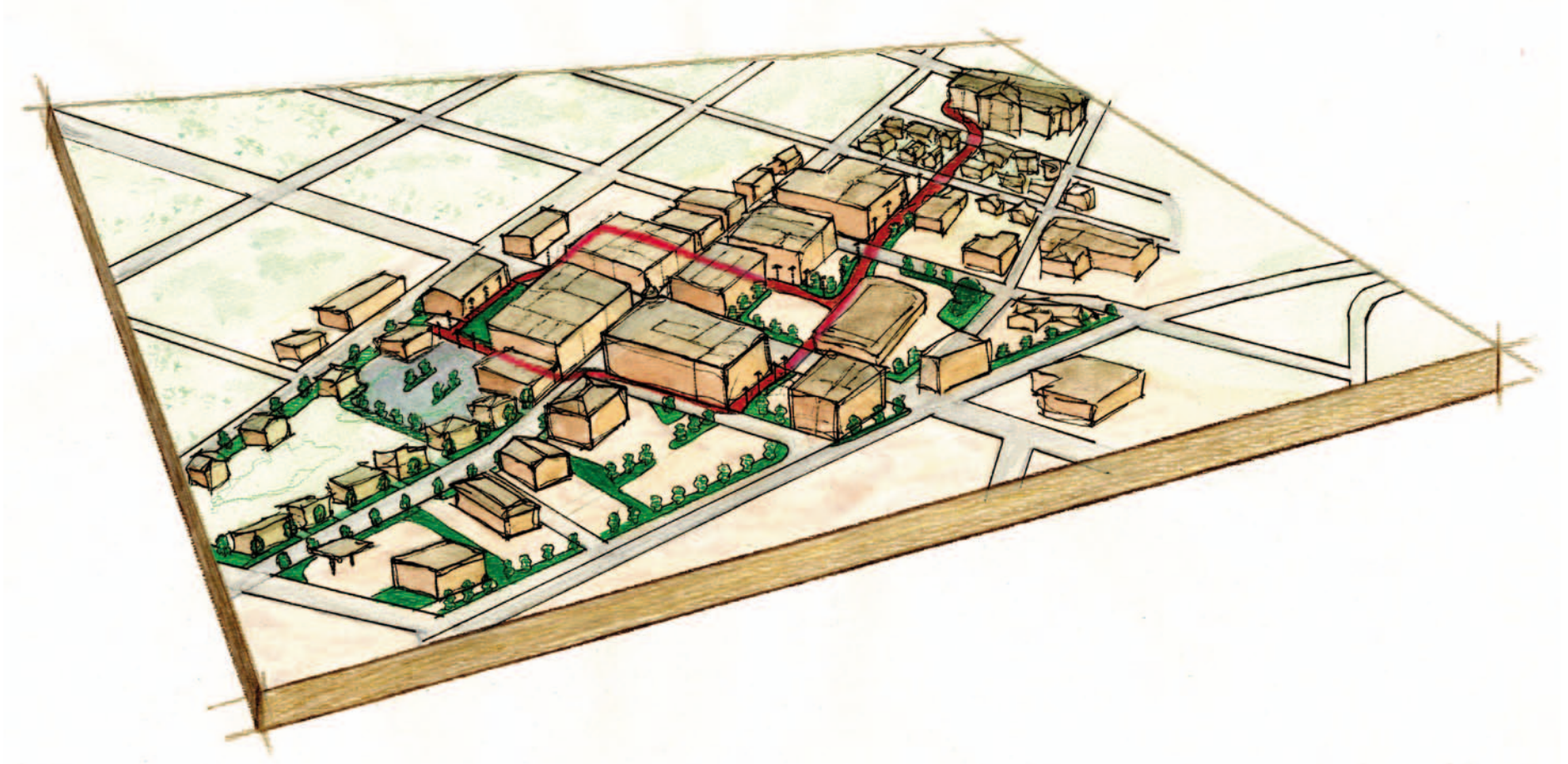
To get people to use the downtown, most agreed that there needed be a focus on attracting new businesses to town, and at the same time there needed to be an investment in the maintenance of the downtown architecture and streetscape. The physical qualities of the downtown were a common concern because people felt it deters visitors and new businesses from coming to Blanchester. Things people find most objectionable were the deteriorated or unkempt nature of the streets and sidewalks, as well as the building facades and power lines.

The second most heard response believed a step to increasing the use and development of Blanchester appeared to pertain to quality of life for the residents, with suggestions for better recreational, and entertainment space with events held more frequently. When asked about specific things that would improve the quality of life in Blanchester the answers were diverse. One of the most frequent responses wished for family entertainment and community activities that instilled a sense of caring and interest in the town. The other major response was improved recreational space in town. People felt that the park at the edge of town could be improved to include spaces to sit and chat, and it could be integrated into a trail or green space where entertainment could occur more regularly.

Retail shopping, more restaurants, and specifically ones that make use of the outdoors would be appreciated. If greenery could be brought to the sidewalks it would also improve the experience of using downtown businesses.

Responses were unanimous when it came to one major issue facing the future of Blanchester. They believed the need to attract new business to town was the most important issue, but that people would have to be more open to change, and that there needed to be the leadership to implement new strategies.

Downtown Blanchester Concept



Plan Features

- Multi-use paved path circling downtown and connecting municipal building and playground
- Tree plantings to break up seas of pavement
- "Reading Garden" in the current location of a vacant laundromat
- "Arcade Pavilion" in the lot next to Ettalee's

Downtown Blanchester Concept



Plan Features “Arcade Pavilion”

-This park features a bandstand circled with festive lighting and tree plantings. The bandstand includes public restrooms and water fountains. With adequate room for dancing, seating, or other programable space. The park is bordered by a leg of the multi-use paved path. An archway over Broadway signifies both the park and the pathway

Downtown Blanchester Concept

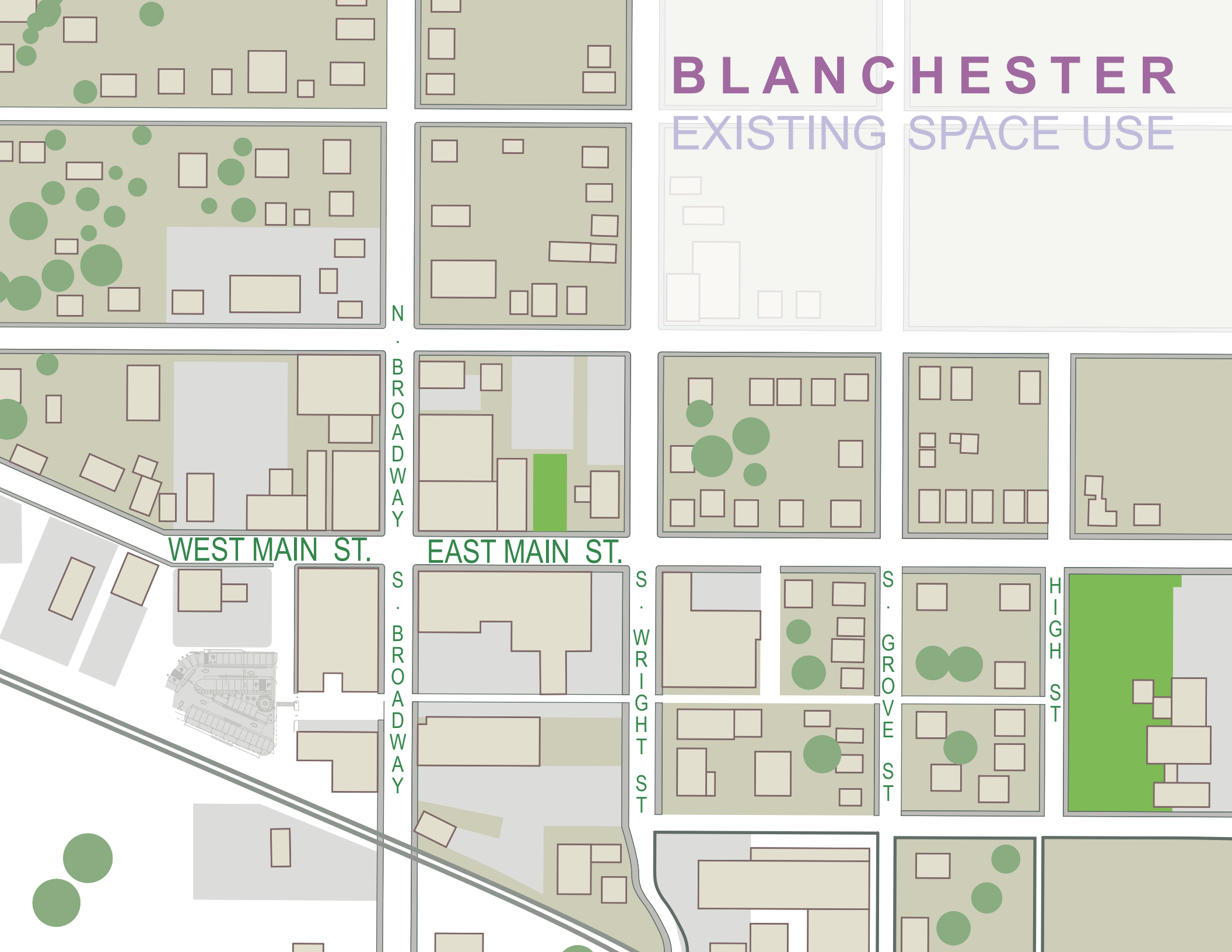


Plan Features “Downtown Renaissance”

-The current view of downtown Blanchester is muddled by unsightly wires, dated facades and poor lighting. The plan calls for a remodel of many building storefronts using modern techniques. In this respect, Blanchester will appear as a village rooted in its past, living in the present, and looking toward the future.

BLANCHESTER

EXISTING SPACE USE



BLANCHESTER

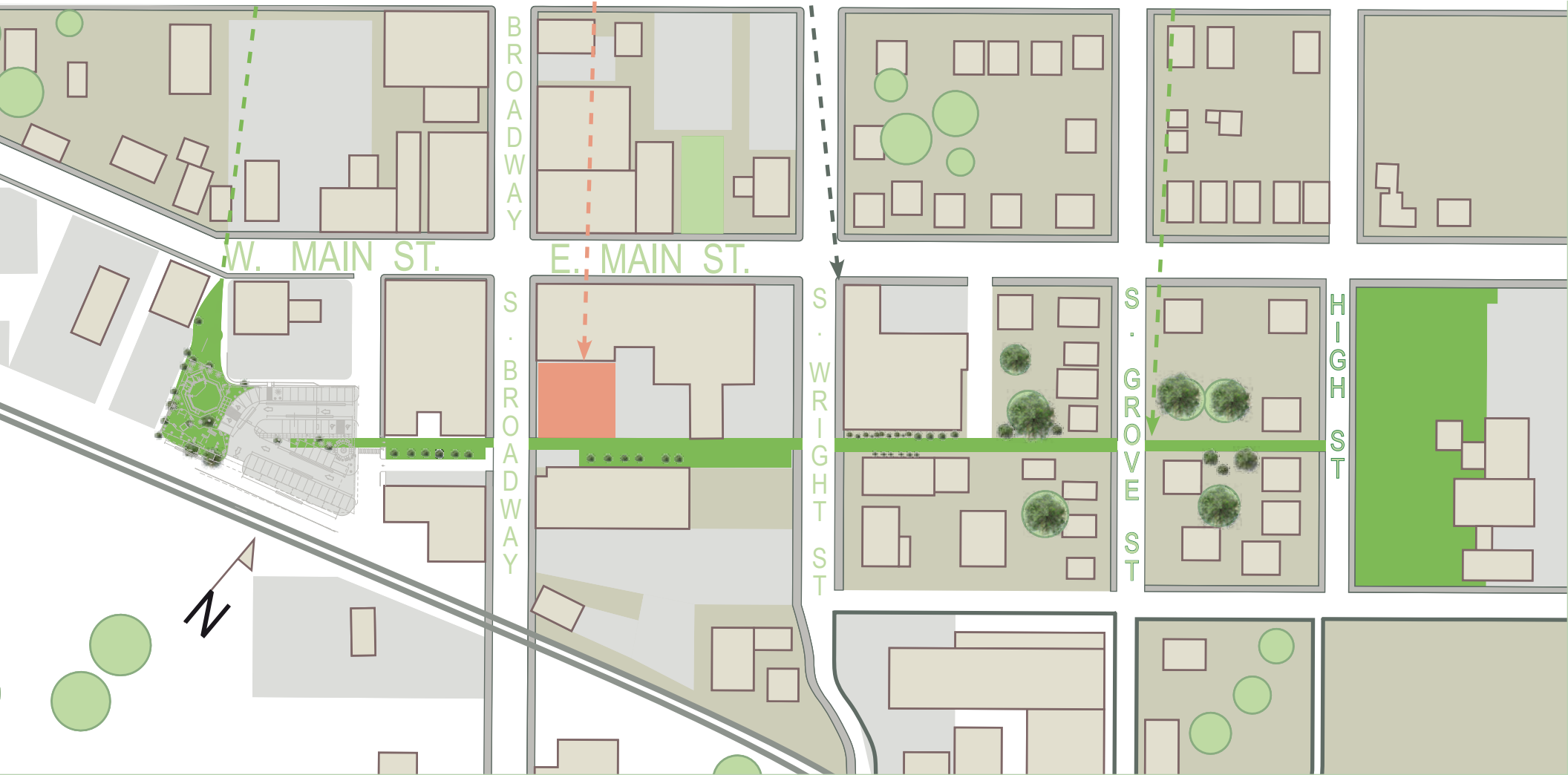
PROPOSED REDESIGN

Develop existing parks into places of leisure + recreation.

Create areas for outdoor entertainment in under used parking lots.

Repair streetscape + renovate architecture

Connect spaces of similar activities + improve recreation opportunities in existing alleys



1. Streetscape +
Architecture

W. MAIN ST.

E. MAIN ST.

S · B R O A D W A Y

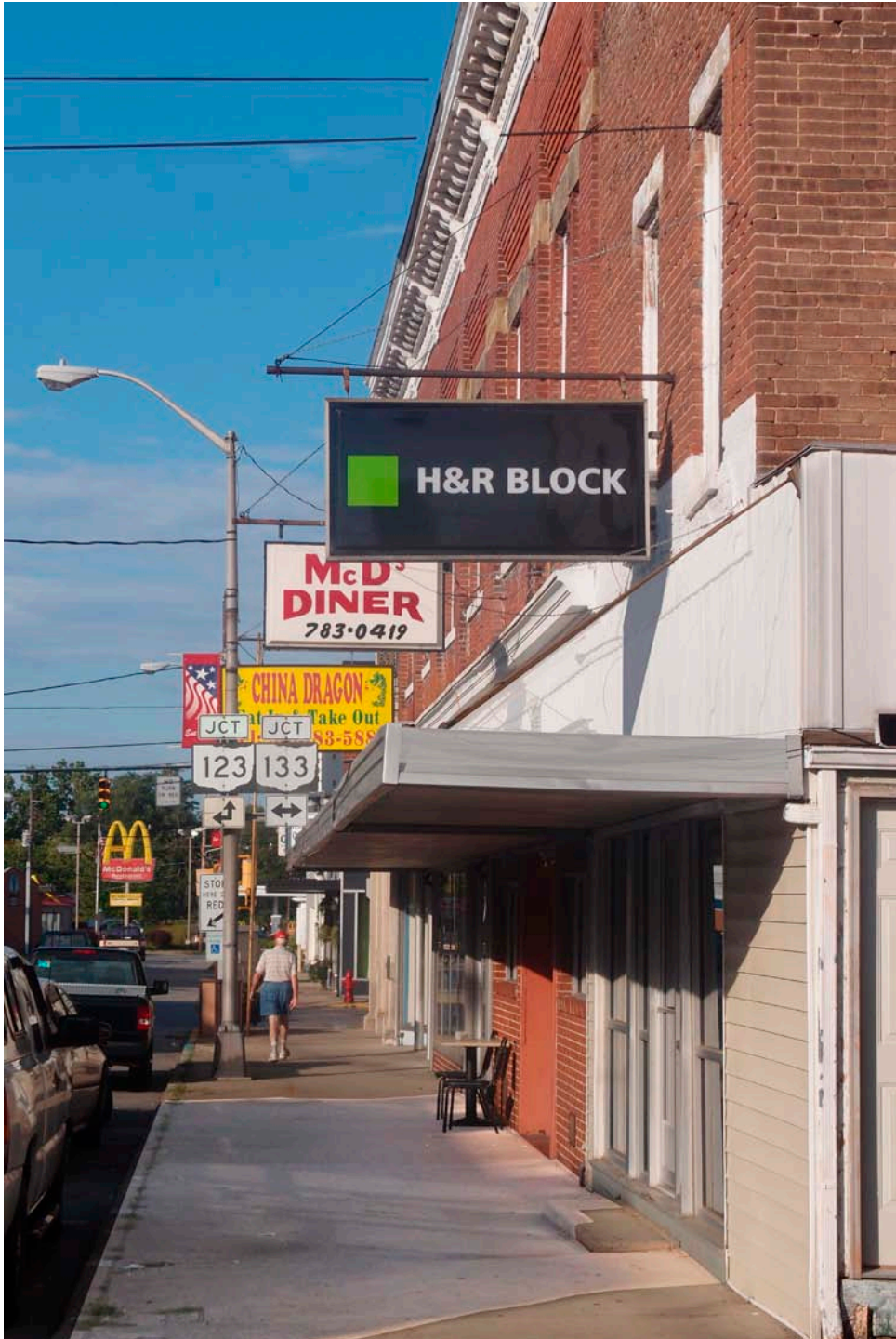
S · W R I G H T S T

2.
Park
Development

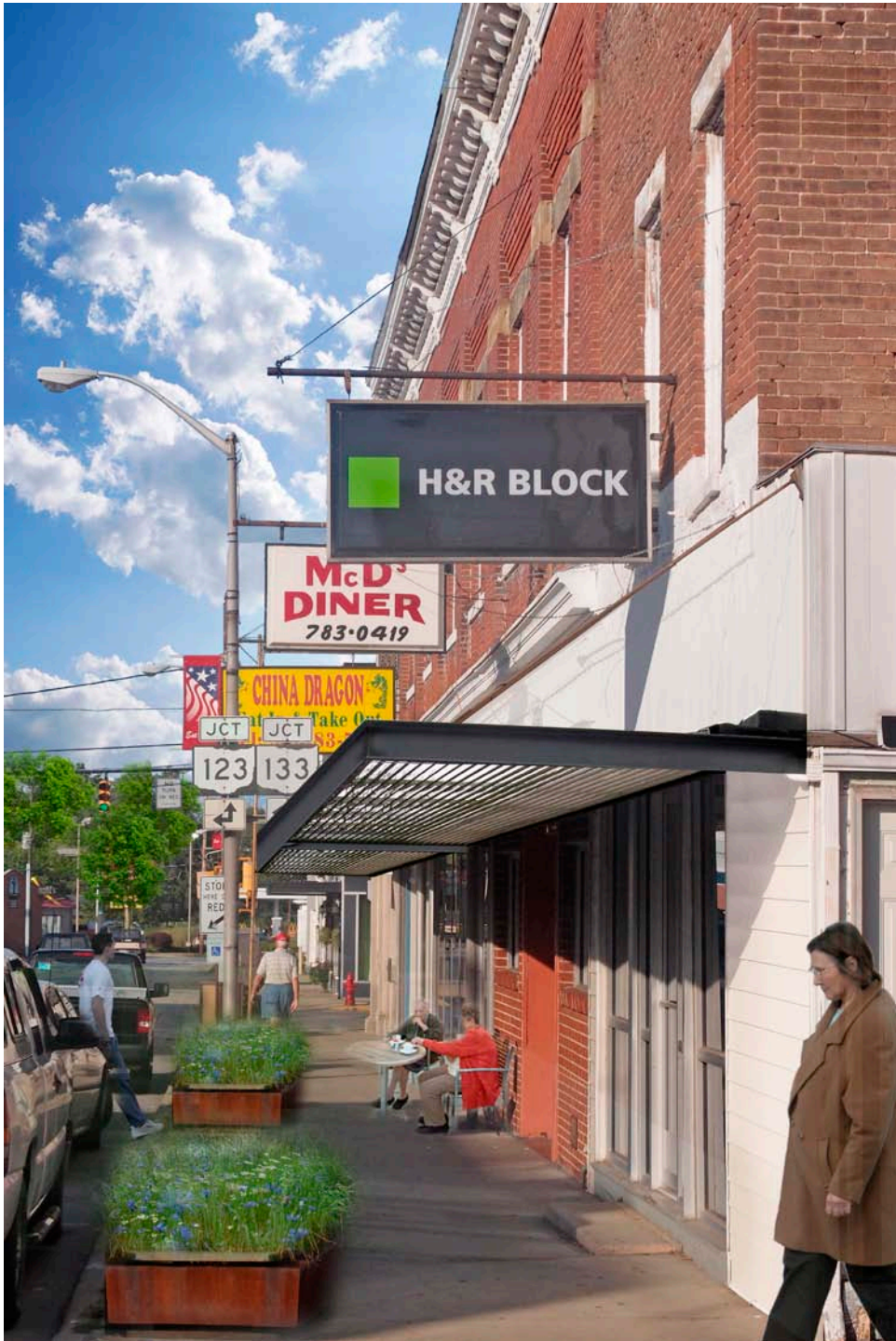
3.
Outdoor Seating
for Restaurants +
Alley Activities

4.
Improve Alley
Into Usable
Trail

STREETSCAPE + ARCHITECTURE EXISTING CONDITIONS 1.



STREETSCAPE + ARCHITECTURE PROPOSED REDESIGN 1.



2. **PARK SPACE** EXISTING CONDITIONS



2.

PARK SPACE PROPOSED REDESIGN



3.

PARKING SPACES

EXISTING CONDITIONS



3.

PARKING SPACES PROPOSED REDESIGN



4. ALLEY TO TRAIL



