



# Mansfield Alliance Strategic Redevelopment Plan Update 2006

# Downtown Goals and Progress Report

A great deal of progress has been made since work began on the Strategic Redevelopment Plan in 2002. Begun with Mayor Reid's initiative and the leadership of Chairman, Tim Lehman, the original group has not changed substantially since it's inception. The goals and directives remain exactly the same, to revitalize the downtown as an economic base and center of social activity. The means to accomplish this goal has been spelled out through the implementation of seven key goals.



**Goal 1:** Reestablish the square as the heart and economic center of Mansfield

**Results:** The central park area has been a primary focus of redevelopment through the implementation of the plan. Business recruitment activities and clean ups have focused on this particular part of the downtown. We have also moved our annual farmers market to the square. The mer-

**Goal 3:** Improve accessibility in and to downtown

**Results:** Plans are now being developed for a unified and extensive signage program for the downtown. These signs would be both directional and street signs and would allow for visitors to get around more quickly and with greater confidence. These signs will also direct people into appropriate available parking spaces and lots through downtown. Also in the works is a comprehensive Traffic and Parking Plan for the downtown. This plan is evaluating one way to two-way conversions and the impact these conversions will have on both on street and public access parking. The plan is now in stage 3 of 7. The task force is evaluating the five conversion scenarios.

**Goal 4:** Bring market rate and mixed income housing to downtown.

**Results:** Our business recruitment efforts have included adding amenities for people who live or may live in downtown. Many people are looking for condo space in the downtown and a few people have begun living in the upper floors of downtown's

chants in the central park district have been meeting and creating specific promotions for their businesses.

There are three new monuments in central park including the Martin Luther King Monument, the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the Iraq War Memorial.

The City of Mansfield Historic Preservation Commission and Main Street Mansfield worked to secure a Local Historic District Designation for the Central Park District. This district includes 33 structures constructed between 1860 and 1950.

**Goal 2:** Dramatically improve the appearance and safety perception of downtown.

**Results:** Main Street Mansfield has adopted a program and holds 4 clean ups a year to beautify the downtown. We have encouraged other organizations and businesses

retail and commercial district. Plans have been drawn to add many more condos, as well. The neighborhood housing efforts continue and more information can be read on those in the following section.

**Goal 5:** Celebrate the downtown's districts and improve connectivity between them.

**Results:** MSM has adopted the Banner Program from the Chamber of Commerce and has implemented drastic changes including the specification that all banners have a uniform look and will change 4 times a year. The carousel district will retain its current banner system and identifying banners.

**Goal 6:** Strengthen existing retail: add new retail and offices.

**Results:** Many of the original businesses in downtown Mansfield are still flourishing. In addition to this, we have seen a

to adopt their own areas, also. Many of the trees that were once blocking the entrances and signs of businesses have now been removed. The City of Mansfield has begun regular summer long bike patrols of the downtown which result in a dramatic reduction in crime and vagrants. We have also created a block watch program for the central park district that gives everyone an opportunity to discuss any safety issues or ongoing problems/concerns that may exist. Main Street Mansfield has distributed and made available numerous tools to assist property owners with the maintenance and rehabilitation of their buildings including assistance with National Register of Historic Places Nominations, Tax Credit Applications, and design assistance. MSM has also increased their matching grant for façade improvement from \$1000 to \$2500. Work continues on the implementation of an overlay zoning plan for the downtown which would compel development to meet unified standards.

major growth trend for both retail stores and restaurants. There are 47 new retail or restaurant businesses that have opened in downtown since 2002.

**Goal 7:** Establish and/or empower the necessary organizations, regulatory environment and funding to achieve a comprehensive revitalization.

**Results:** We continue to encourage and strengthen local organizations to be better advocates and supporters of the downtown development efforts. The organizations are working well together on cooperative efforts that are in the best interest of the community. A good example is the downtown housing project, which has been worked on by a variety of organizations and individuals with vested interest in the project.



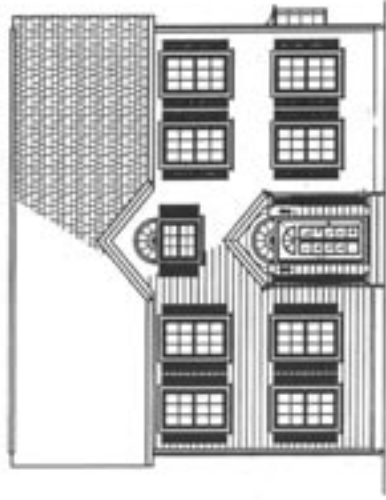
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# Chamber District Plan

## Purpose

The Chamber District stimulates and promotes the investment of human and economic capital in the downtown housing market. The goals of this project are to improve

economic conditions, including the creation and expansion of small and minority businesses necessary to a residential area, promote infill housing and increase home ownership.



the South, Bowman Street to the West, and Mulberry Street to the East. This area also contains some Mansfield cornerstone businesses, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Mansfield News Journal.

In addition, the Metropolitan Housing Authority is renovating and will soon be moving into a property located in the district. The Chamber District is surrounded by substandard houses and includes an under-utilized football practice field owned by the Mansfield City School District. This field is the closest thing that area residents have to a city park, but is currently only used for the school practice field and not for public use.

## Background

The neighborhood under renovation is located in downtown Mansfield. It is a rectangular-shaped area bounded by Fifth Street to the North, Third Street to

## Objectives

This project is targeted to single family homes and small businesses that are not otherwise served by traditional redevelopment efforts

- Encourage inner city residential redevelopment
- Encourage current property owners to use existing economic development tools and remain in the district
- Encourage downtown and infill housing

## Results

The City of Mansfield has invested a great deal of funding and time in this project. The project is a true community collaboration and has many partners within Richland County. Utilizing the inmates from Richland Correctional Institute and Mansfield Correctional Institution for plan drawing and frame building allows the project to keep costs at a minimum. General contractors then assemble the homes on site with no additional labor costs. The

main focus is to offer prospective homeowners a quality home at the lowest cost possible. Due to the size and scope of this project, community meetings will continue to be held allowing current and potential Chamber District residents constructive opinion in the projects direction.

A charette showcasing the neighborhood and surrounding land has been designed by The Seckel Group. Many of the vacant properties have been acquired by the City of Mansfield. The Central City Economic Development Council, the City's leading housing authority has built four new homes on the acquired land through the Tax Credit Program. Seventeen deteriorated dwellings have been demolished over the past five years and the land is ready for new homes. The Chamber District has the potential for 50 new homes. The City of Mansfield will offer tax abatements to potential buyers or builders of homes in the Chamber District further enticing the consumer to invest in this area.

The City of Mansfield has contracted with the Mansfield City School District to use the current practice field located between Bowman and Mulberry Streets as a community park. The City of Mansfield and inmates from MANCI have cleared the park removing brush, trash and an old fence. The park looks fantastic and the progress throughout the District has been incredible.

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**Before**



**After**

# Renaissance Theater District

The Renaissance Performing Arts Association, the organization which operates the 1,400 seat historic Renaissance Theatre (built in 1928) and the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra (est. 1931), is a successful performing arts organization serving a large region of north central Ohio. The Renaissance Theatre is a well-known regional landmark and has been a significant part of downtown Mansfield for more than 75 years.

RPA offers three main subscription Series, including the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra Series, The Renaissance Broadway Series, and the Renaissance Marquee Series (featuring a variety of programs). In addition to the successful series attractions, RPA plans many single events each season, including dance, country, nostalgic rock, comedy, gospel, movies and educational and outreach programs. In addition to RPA's busy schedule, there are many important rental clients who utilize the beautiful Renaissance, including the Miss Ohio Scholarship program and the Children's Theatre Foundation (offering school day programs to more than 25,000 kids every year).

The Renaissance Theatre has already established itself as the preeminent performing arts facility in north central Ohio. The earned income budget of RPA has grown by an average of 9% per year in the ten-year

history of the consolidation, proving that the market reach encompasses at least eight neighboring counties. Each season, tens of thousands of people enjoy attractions in the beautiful surroundings of the Renaissance.



The Renaissance is poised to become a truly world-class performing arts center. With

planned renovations, the theatre will be brought up to 21st century standards in production capability while particular attention will be paid to preserve and enhance its rich historic value. Moreover, the planned renovations

coincide perfectly with a master plan of downtown revitalization. Through the efforts of the Mansfield Alliance, the Renaissance Theatre project will serve as a catalytic endeavor in-

viting economic growth and business in the downtown district. Not only will the project mean more performing arts opportunities for all of north central Ohioans, the addition of a multi-purpose room fills the need for smaller, more inti-



mate performances as well as much needed meeting space.

The Mansfield Alliance is following a strategic plan to take advantage of the already established and potential districts in the downtown area. One the most promising parts of the recommendation involves establishing a Renaissance Theatre District

The vision of a truly regional performing arts center in downtown Mansfield serving a large region of north central Ohio is well within the grasp of the community. With a multi-pronged approach of garnering support for this exciting goal, the community will have considerable pride in the final outcome. The result will be that not only has the priceless historical value of the Renaissance Theatre been preserved, but a truly 21st century performing arts complex will become a catalytic anchor to the rebirth of downtown.

The heart of a community is in its quality of life, and hence the immeasurable return of arts and culture to its people. RPA has already proven itself as a viable and thriving performing arts entity in the region, bringing together nearly 150 combined years of rich history of the Mansfield Symphony and the Renaissance Theatre. Now it is time to fill the mission of RPA to serve even more of north central Ohio with the highest quality performing arts and to provide a premier regional destination to downtown Mansfield.

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# Miracle Mile Goals and Progress Report

The Miracle Mile has seen a lot of activity in the last 18 months. The area has significantly improved and is much healthier, commercially speaking. We have seen new real estate and retail developments as well as property improvements by existing owners. The Miracle Mile Strategic Alliance continues to examine issues and policies that it feels will benefit the area to enhance its appearance and foster the commercial success, which the area is experiencing now.



There has been a lot of new development along the Miracle Mile including the Kroger store in the Kingsgate Shopping Center and the Walgreens drug store on the corner of Trimble Road and Park Avenue West. Other additions to the Mile include the Taco Bell at the Kingsgate Shopping Center and the purchase of the old Phar-Mor building by Crossroads Community Church, which is growing and looking to become a bigger part of the

community. Steve & Barry's clothing store has moved into the Kingsgate Shopping Center and there has been new retail space constructed, now occupied by the relocated Curves Fitness. Out lot development opportunities are also being explored at the West Park Shopping Center.

As well as new development, the Mile has seen improvements in the appearance of many properties.

Whitey's Auto Mall just completed a substantial renovation to their facility. There is also a general consensus among property owners to improve property appearance as evidenced by the amount of minor improvements and deferred maintenance continually being addressed.

The future of the Miracle Mile

park and ride location.

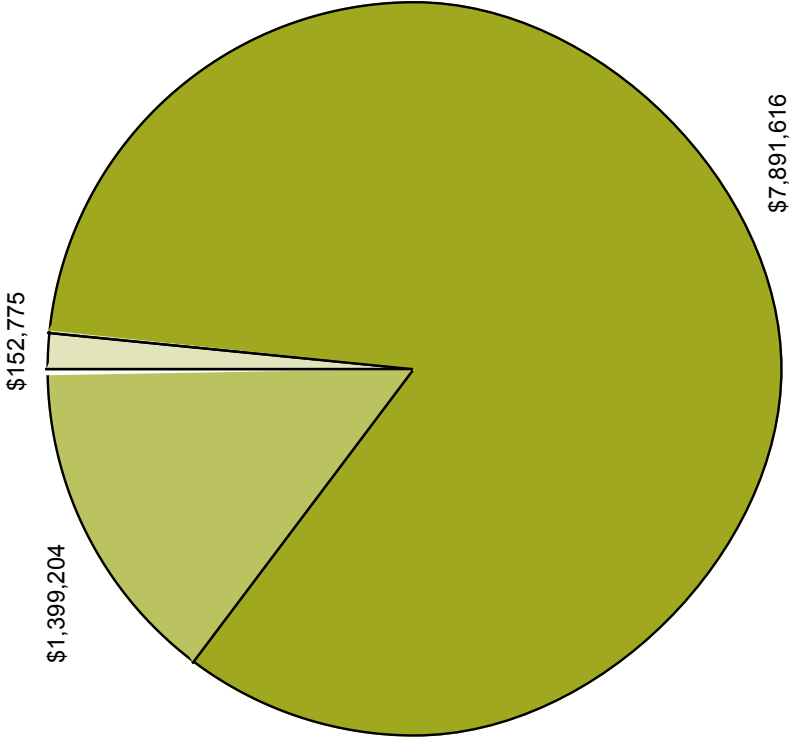
We feel our efforts are raising an awareness that the Miracle Mile property owners have never experienced and it is making a positive difference. We will achieve our goal of changing the face and business climate of the Miracle Mile to establish it as a preferred location and destination for business and shopping versus just another option, providing our progress, support and success continues.

**For more information, please contact Steve Stadler, Skilken Properties, 614-418-3100, stadler@skilken.com**  
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as it pertains to the Strategic Alliance has various components. We continue to address the issues of implementing a zoning overlay that will govern the future of development and impose architectural standards on property alterations. Many ideas of pedestrian level and streetscape improvements are being discussed, prioritized and investigated for feasibility, including the construction of a bike path interchange for a Park Avenue West and the potential for a



## Total Downtown Investment 2002-2005



### Legend

- Public Improvements
- Façade Restoration
- New Construction and Building Rehab.

Total Investment = \$9,443,596

### Other Stats:

- Net Increase in business since 2002 = 38
- New Employees = 223
- New Housing Units = 24
- Volunteer Hours for Main Street Mansfield = 8300