



# Westover Hills Commercial District

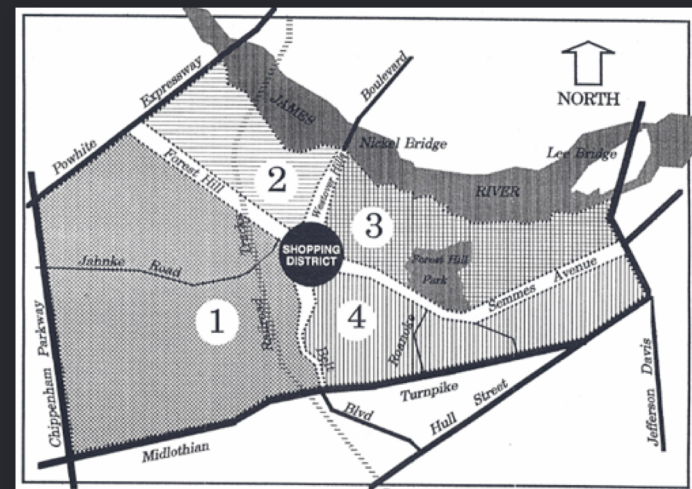
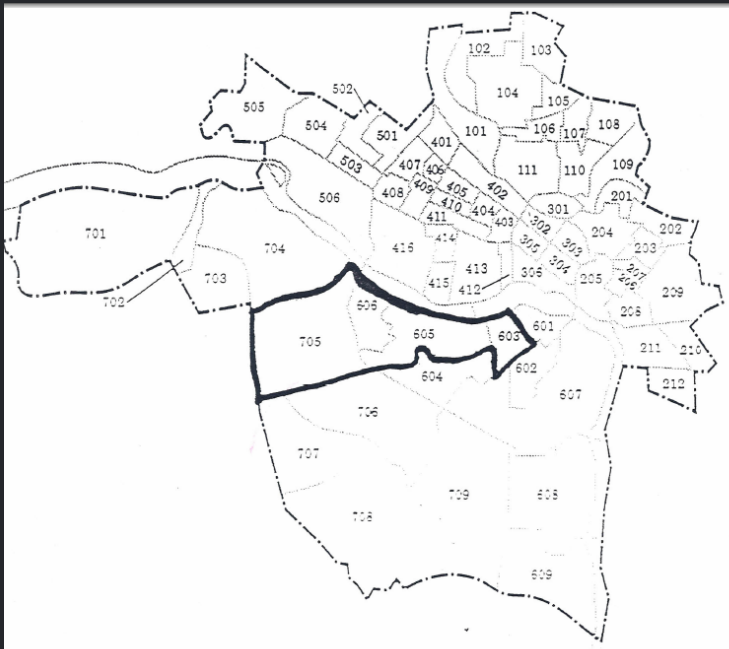
Virginia Commonwealth University – Urban and Regional Planning  
Urban Commercial Revitalization Class – Fall 2011

WELCOME

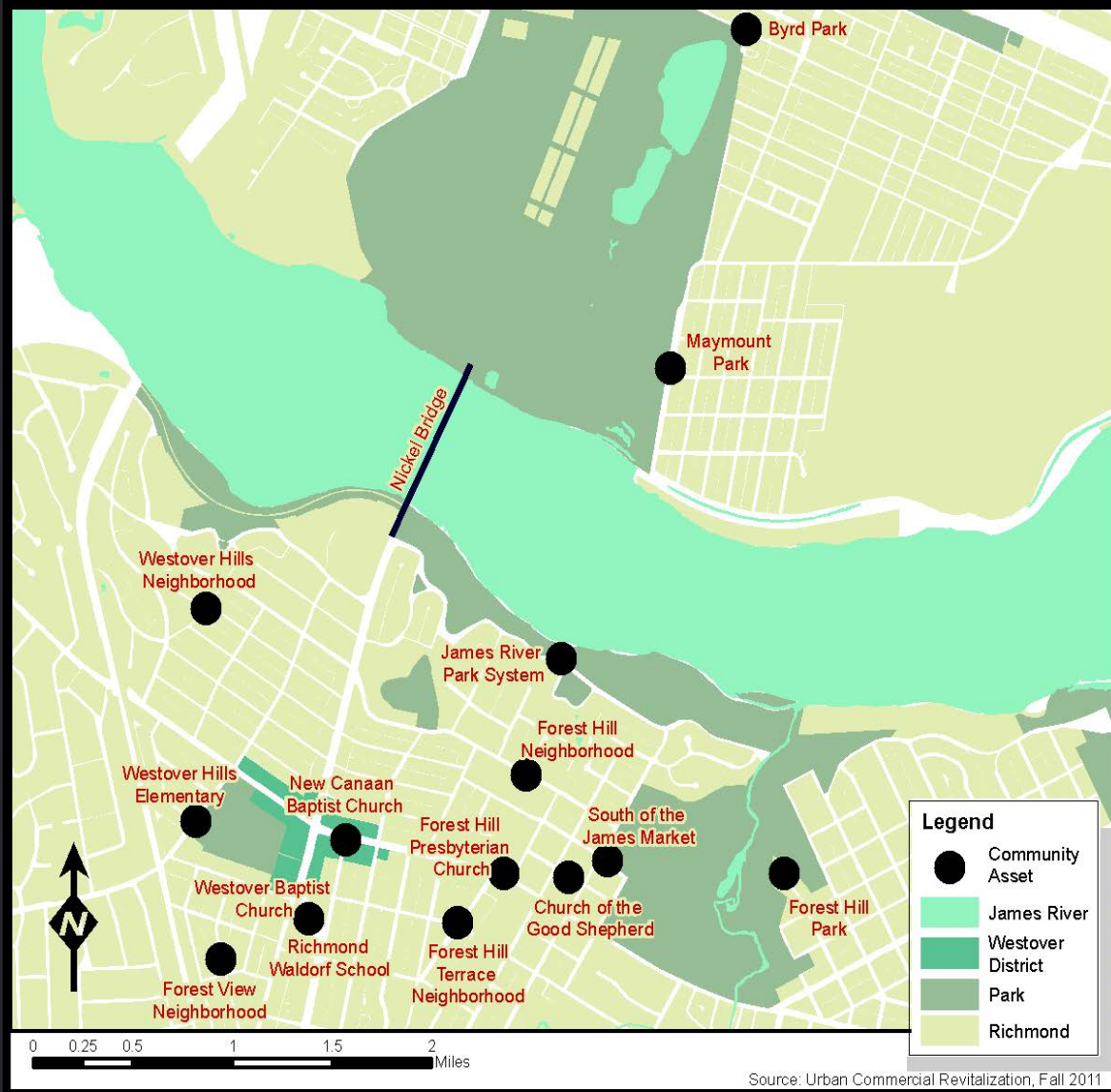


# Previous Plans

- Urban Commercial Revitalization (1990)
- Westover Hills Shopper Profile (1993)
- Walks of Westover Master Plan (1995)



# Surrounding Influences





# Surrounding Commercial



- Parkway Plaza
- Stratford Hills
- Southside Plaza
- Carytown



Characteristics: Central Management,  
Anchor Stores, Large Shopping Centers

# Existing Conditions

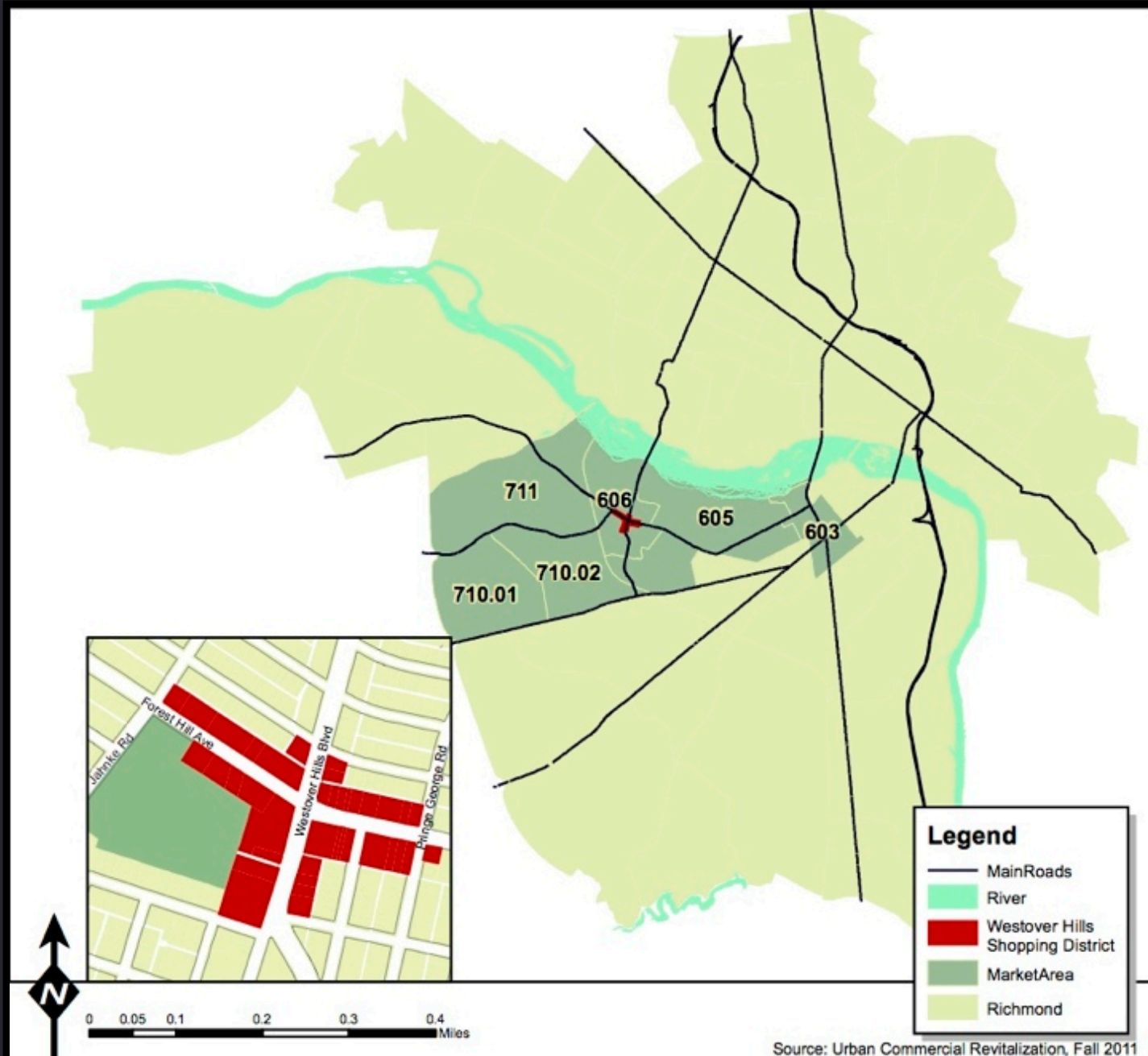
- Neighborhood District
- Active Commercial District
- High Traffic
- Close to Various Attractions
- Vacant Land
- More Affordable and Smaller Spaces
- Independent and Eclectic Businesses
- Unique Design Features



# Qualitative Market Research

- Parking is not as big an issue to shoppers as it is to merchants.
- Customer base is local.
- Perceptions differ on issues of crime and safety.
- Most see the aesthetic conditions of the corridor to be a detriment to business.
- Shopping behaviors were consistent across demographic groups.
- Level of engagement from merchants and property owners is low.

# Market Area





# Quantitative Market Research

- Significant Competition Nearby
- Mismatch Between What Stakeholders Want and What the Market Can Support
- Potential for New Entrepreneurial and Independent Businesses

# SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- Unique Location
- Retail Environment
- Invested Stakeholders

## Weaknesses

- Lack of Cohesive Identity
- Curb Appeal
- Organization & Collaboration

## Opportunities

- Vacancies & Underutilized Space
- Population Growth
- High Traffic Volume
- Connectivity to Nearby Assets
- Young Families Staying in the Area

## Threats

- Nearby Commercial Competition
- Perceptions of Safety
- Absentee Landlords and Property Owners
- Business/Leadership
- Succession/Continuity



# The Four Points

## **Organization**

Establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among various groups that have a stake in the commercial district.

## **Promotion**

Takes many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that will rekindle, and continue to build community pride.

## **Business Development**

Strengthens the districts existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base.

## **Design**

Getting the district into top physical shape and creating a safe, inviting environment for shoppers, workers, and visitors.

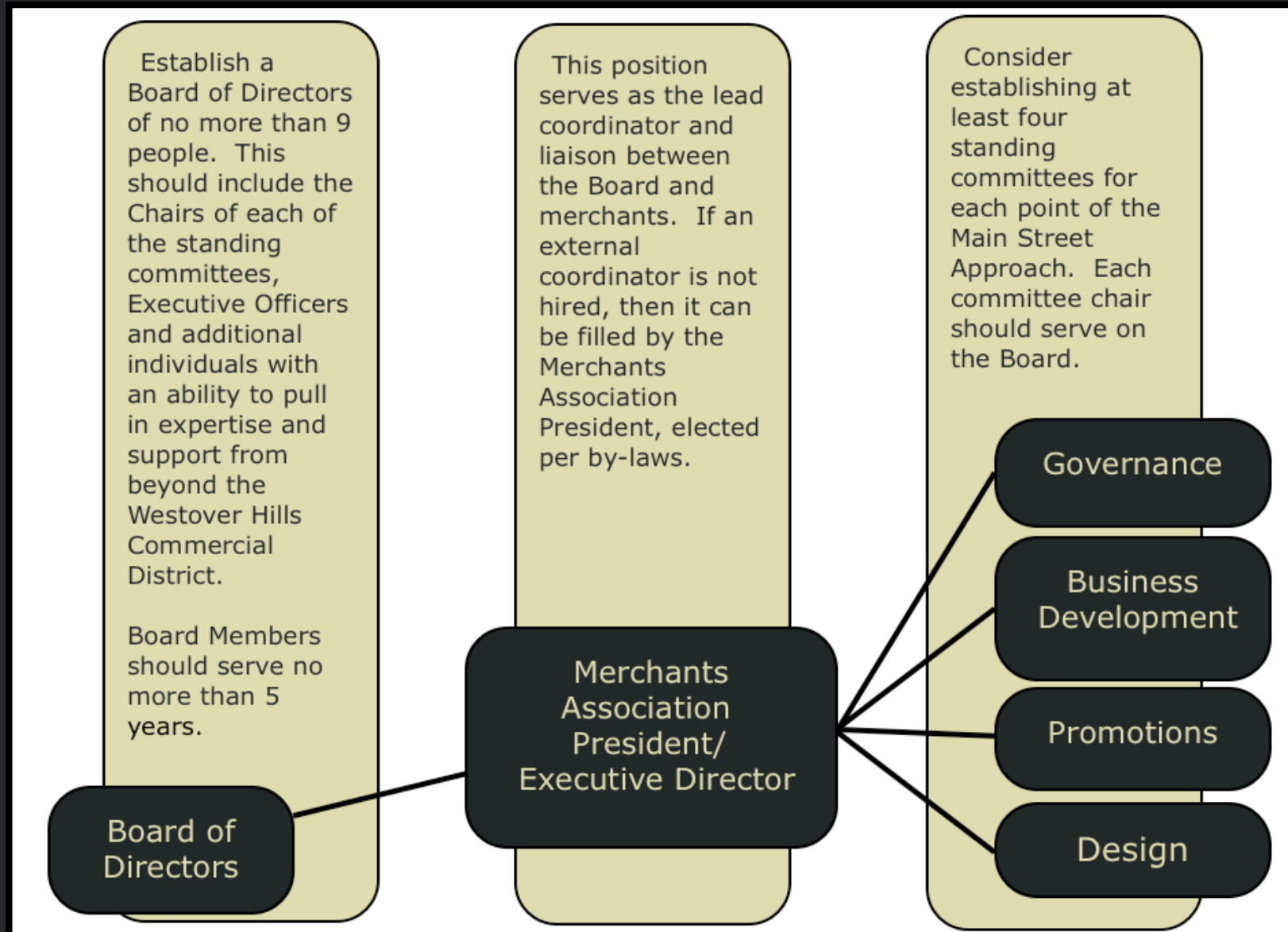
# ORGANIZATION

# Build Membership of Merchants Association

- Leadership Development
- Benefits of Membership Packet
- Merchant Outreach
- Annual Membership Drive



# Develop Strategic Plan for Merchants Association



# Increase Revenue Streams for the Merchants Association

- Hold an Annual Fundraising Event
- Create an Annual Fundraising and Budget Plan
- Identify and Apply for Appropriate Loans, Grants and Foundational Support





# Recruit and Engage Volunteers

- Develop a Volunteer Bank of At Least 25 Committed Volunteers
- Hold Annual Volunteer Recognition Event



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

# Support Existing Businesses

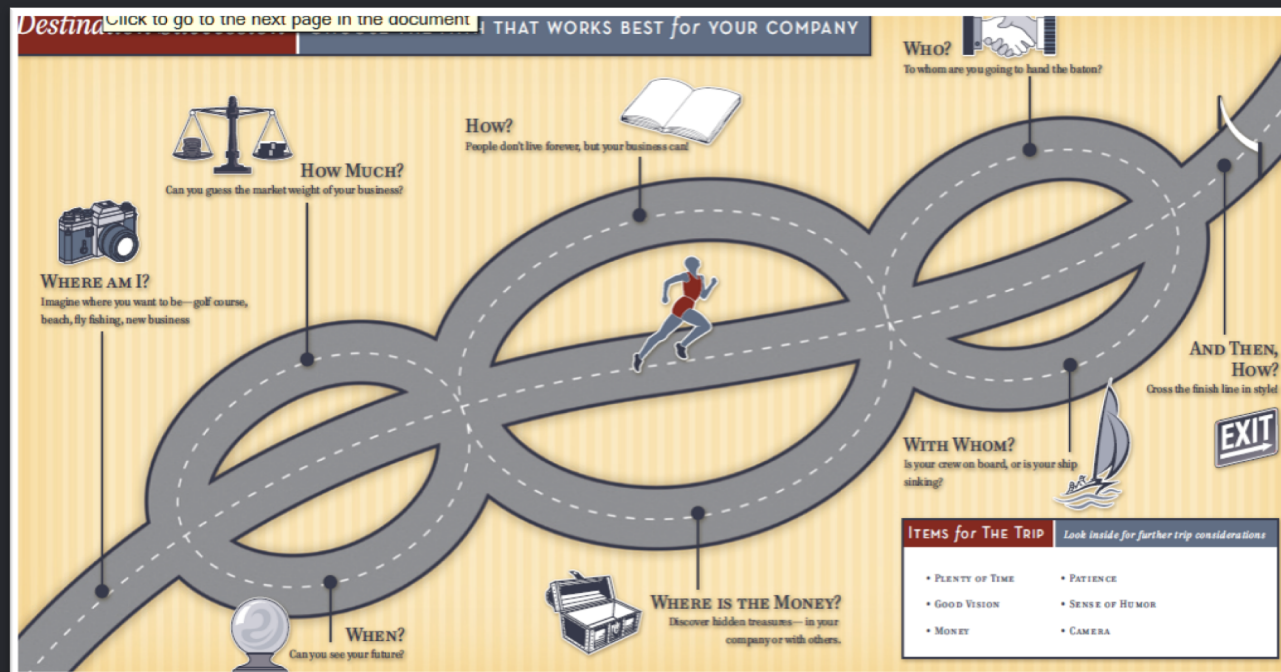
- Business Improvement Seminars
  - Customer Service
  - Social Media Marketing
  - Setting Up An Online Store Front
  - Money Management For Entrepreneurial Businesses
  - Topics That Are Of Interest To Merchants Within The District



# Support Existing Businesses

- Succession Planning

- According to recent studies by the Small Business Administration (SBA), family businesses are the most dominant form of business in the United States and represent nearly 90% of the total businesses in the US (*Davis, P. S. and Harveston, P. D. (1998). The Influence of Family on the Family Business Succession Process: A Multi-Generational Perspective. Family Business Review. 22*).
- The SBA also reports that less than one third of family businesses survive the transition from first- to second-generation ownership.



# Support Existing Businesses

- Resource Center at Library
  - The International Council of Shopping Center's Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers®
  - The SCORE® 2008
  - The Small Business Source Book
  - Small Business Administration Industry Guides
  - Small Business Tax Information from the IRS
  - Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey
  - Small business publications, Main Street tools, and other resources should be compiled and kept at the Westover Hills Library.



Resource Center at C3, 2006



# Attract New Businesses

## Business Recruitment Packet

- Location
- Current Businesses
- Market Potential
- Unmet Demand
- Merchants Association Information
- Calendar of Events
- Relevant Press Information

### DOWNTOWN MOUNT JOY

*Borough of Mount Joy, Pennsylvania*



*Downtown Mount Joy Streetscape, East Main Street, Southside*



*East Main Street, North side*

The Central Business District is walkable & made up of a collection of small local-serving businesses. The greater Mount Joy region is experiencing a strong economy with considerable residential growth, especially by empty nesters.

#### Mount Joy Borough Accessibility

- Mount Joy Borough, incorporated in 1851, is a municipality with an area of 2.3 square miles.
- Originally developed as a regional agrarian community centered around several crossroad intersections, Mount Joy served as an intermediate point between the villages of Manheim and Marietta and the cities of Lancaster and Harrisburg.
- Today, although crossroad intersections still exist, Mount Joy is centered on an elongated narrow Main Street corridor extending approximately two miles east and west through the Borough.
- The Main Street corridor is Route 230, a state highway that since the construction of Route 283 now carries primarily local traffic from Lancaster to Harrisburg.
- Mount Joy is also served by an Amtrak rail line, located within the Downtown area, connecting Philadelphia and points east with Harrisburg and points west.



*Rendering of Downtown Mount Joy  
Plan the Keystone Corridor Report 2010  
Glamming Jackson Consultants*



*This is an Effort of Main Street  
Mount Joy, a 501c3 organization  
for Downtown Revitalization.*

# Attract New Businesses

## Targeted Business Recruitment

- High Level of Unmet Demand:
  - Music Products
  - Personal Services
  - Household Products
  - Tobacco Products and Smoking Supplies
  - Entertainment



# Attract New Businesses

- Business Open House Event



**PROMOTION**

# Use Marketing and Promotional Strategies to Identify Westover Hills as a Shopping Destination

- Develop an Asset Map
- Develop an Identity and Brand
- Create a Cohesive Design for Promotional Materials



**BRAND**



**IDENTITY**



**LOGO**



# Use Marketing and Promotional Strategies to Identify Westover Hills as a Shopping Destination

- Promote Westover Hills as a Shopping Destination
- Share Positive News Stories
- Create and Maintain A Website



# Develop Retail Marketing and Promotional Strategies

- Expand Social Media Advertising



- Design Attractive Window Displays
- Cross Promotional Advertising

# Organize and Promote Special Events in Westover Hills

- Organize Special Events



- Create and Maintain a Calendar of Events

**DESIGN**



# Establish the Westover Hills Commercial District as a Distinct Place in the City of Richmond

- Install Banners that Visually Identify the Westover Hills Commercial District
- Install Way-finding Signs to Connect the Westover Hills Commercial District to Nearby Attractions
- Place a Design Feature at Each Gateway

# Design Feature At Gateway



# Improve the Curb Appeal of the Commercial District

- Upgrade Building Facades
- Investigate Options for Putting Vacant Lots on Forest Hill Ave. to Productive Use

# First Design Alternative for the Vacant Lot





# Second Design Alternative for the Vacant Lot





# Make the Intersection of Westover Hills and Forest Hill the Visual Focal Point of the District

- Make the Intersection the Focal Point
- Make the Intersection Safe for all Users
- Increase Safety for Pedestrians Crossing the Street

# Traffic Circle



# Make the Commercial District Pedestrian Friendly

- Increase Safety for Pedestrians Crossing the Street
- Repair Broken Sidewalks in the District
- Expand and Improve Landscaping Features

# Median Extension with Pedestrian Refuges





# New Crosswalk in Front of Vacant Lot With Trees





# Create a Bicycle-Friendly Environment

- Incorporate Bicycle Usage
- Install Bicycle Parking Racks

# Create A Bicycle-Friendly Environment



# Improve Parking Accessibility

- Improve On-Street Parking
- Improve Off-Street Parking



# Improved On-Street Parking



# Conclusion

- Website For Report & Links
- Appendices
- Implementation Timetable
- Implementation Handbook

<http://www.has.vcu.edu/usp/MURP/urbcomm>



Thank You!  
Discussion

<http://www.has.vcu.edu/usp/MURP/urbcomm>