

HyettPalma

# Jonesboro

Downtown  
Action Agenda  
Update  
2013

**Making Downtown Renaissance A Reality**

HyettPalma

Phone 212 620 5326

E-mail: [info@hyettpalma.com](mailto:info@hyettpalma.com)  
[www.hyettpalma.com](http://www.hyettpalma.com)

July 26, 2013

The City of Jonesboro  
and Members of the Process Committee  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

**RE: Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013**

HyettPalma, Inc., is pleased to present to you the following report titled ***Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013***.

This document is the result of a process undertaken to revisit, reconnect, refocus, and recharge Jonesboro's Downtown enhancement efforts – based on the document titled ***Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda 1999***, which was completed by HyettPalma.

We thank you for the opportunity to work once again with the Jonesboro community and to be a part of your continuing efforts to strengthen Downtown Jonesboro. We hope you will keep us informed of your success and know that – as always – we stand ready to assist in any way possible as you implement the ***Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013***.

Sincerely,

Doyle G. Hyett

Dolores P. Palma



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- The Retail Report®

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# ***Project Overview***

## I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013* was defined with involvement from the City government, the local business sector, representatives of local non-profit organizations, and members of the community.

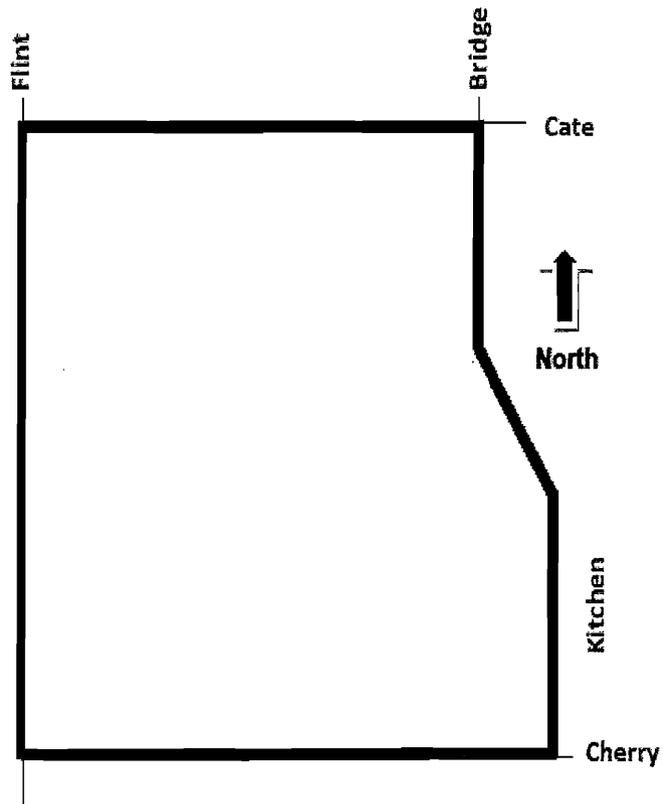
The *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013*, shown in the following pages, presents the findings and recommendations that resulted from revisiting Downtown Jonesboro and the *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda 1999*, which was completed by HyettPalma as part of the *America Downtown®* technical assistance program, offered by the National League of Cities and HyettPalma.

The purpose of revisiting Downtown and the *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda 1999* was to:

- Review progress made and identify gaps that have occurred as the *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda 1999* was implemented over the last fourteen years;
- Gauge local opinion about the Downtown enhancement effort to date and define the community's concerns and aspirations for Downtown's future;
- Refocus, as necessary, the direction that needs to be taken over the next five years to further enhance Downtown;
- Recharge the Downtown enhancement effort and all those involved in that effort; and
- Recommend specific actions that should be taken over the next five years to move Downtown Jonesboro forward in attaining the community's defined vision for Downtown and capturing the economic potentials facing Downtown.

A map of Downtown Jonesboro, as defined for this project, is shown on the following page.

## Downtown Jonesboro Boundaries



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# ***Downtown Jonesboro Tomorrow***

## II. DOWNTOWN JONESBORO TOMORROW

A series of discussions, issue sessions, interviews, and focus groups were held to define the community's preferred vision of Downtown Jonesboro – as it would ideally exist in the year 2018. A compilation of the thoughts and preferences most often expressed by community members during those sessions is shown below.

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Over the last fourteen years, Downtown has excelled in attracting arts, entertainment, and residents. By the year 2018, Downtown would have more retail boutiques, more Mom & Pop shops, and more daytime pedestrian traffic. There would also be a stronger emphasis on visual arts, through public art and more galleries.

The performing arts would have an even greater presence in Downtown, with a performing arts center – “the Strand is getting old” – that attracts both adults and children.

Downtown would have “a nice little park” with a fountain that serves as a “centerpiece” and a small amphitheater where bands can play. The park would be a “meeting place” and a “focal point” that says “you’re in Downtown.”

A Downtown hotel – or consistent transportation to and from hotels – would allow visitors to enjoy Downtown’s art, entertainment, shops and restaurants. Downtown would also be better connected to Arkansas State University, making it easier for students to go to and from Downtown.

Downtown would include services for its residents, such as a dog park and places to buy groceries.

Downtown would be safe and feel safe, especially for pedestrians. This would include “slowing down traffic” on Main Street, improving crosswalks, and adding police foot patrols. And, Downtown would accommodate and be safe for those

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riding bicycles.

The “edges” of Downtown – areas adjacent to the parts of Downtown that have been improved – would be “cleaned-up,” making them feel and look safe. The condition of Downtown’s alleys would be improved. And, Downtown would be free of litter, trash, beer cans, and “dog poop.”

Downtown’s two major eyesores would also be addressed. The “scrap metal yard” would be cleaned-up. And the former Citizens Bank Building would be rehabbed and reused – or it would be demolished with a new structure built in its place.

Downtown parking would be conveniently situated and well-lighted. There would be ample short-term parking for customers as well as long-term parking for those who work in Downtown.

Neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown would be improved with sidewalks, more lighting, and repaired lighting. Residents would feel safe walking to and from Downtown. “Spotty residential structures,” “over grown vacant lots,” and “junky apartment complexes” would not be allowed in these neighborhoods. Instead, private “investment that fits with the historic homes” would be encouraged. And, that investment would demonstrate potential, which would then spur additional quality investment in the areas. In this way, Downtown’s adjacent neighborhoods would complement Downtown, and vice versa.

Over the last fourteen years, major improvements have been made in Downtown Jonesboro, including:

- Greater activity, more pedestrians, Downtown is alive at night;
- Nice variety of restaurants;
- “The best food in Jonesboro is in Downtown;”
- More loft apartments;
- Investment in “our authentic architecture;”

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- Diversity – “blending of people who usually don’t blend;”
- City government “has an amazing new home;”
- Downtown is a “getaway from the same stuff on Caraway;”
- “We saved the heart of our town and our history.”

These improvements would be leveraged and added to so that, by the year 2018, Downtown Jonesboro has the following image.

***A Downtown of great energy –  
There’s so much activity and  
There are so many people that  
It’s literally hard to drive Downtown.***

***Great restaurants, great shops, a great hotel,  
Eclectic art, artists, and artisans,  
A variety that appeals to everyone –  
You can do it all and get it all in our Downtown.***

***A beautiful, historic Downtown that makes you want to  
Come and walk,  
Shop for the day,  
Visit for a weekend or a vacation,  
Go to ASU, or  
Move to Jonesboro.***

***A favorite place of locals,  
A top tourist destination, and  
The funnest Downtown of all!***

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# ***Course Of Action***

## III. COURSE OF ACTION

Downtown Jonesboro and the City of Jonesboro are very different from what they were like in 1999, when the original *Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda* was completed.

Since that time, major investment has occurred in Downtown, on the part of both the private and public sectors. Specifically, since 1999:

- Approximately \$35,000,000 in private funds have been invested in Downtown;
- 80 loft apartments have been created;
- 12 restaurants have opened in Downtown;
- Approximately 700-750 parking spaces now exist in Downtown;
- The City government has located in the Municipal Center, a new \$7,300,000 project; and
- The City has invested \$1,250,000 in parking and other infrastructure improvements in Downtown.

***It is very important to note from the above that for every dollar invested in Downtown since 1999 by the City, the private sector has invested four dollars, resulting in a 4 to 1 leveraging ratio.***

City-wide, additional opportunities have presented themselves, which bode well for Downtown. Among those are:

- The growth of Arkansas State University's student body, St. Bernard's Hospital facilities, and the City's population;

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- New improvement initiatives, such as the North Jonesboro Neighborhood Initiative and the Matthew's Medical Mile/Greenway project;
- Private sector interest along Johnson Avenue;
- New leadership at Arkansas State University, in City Hall, and in Downtown; and
- A transition from one generation to another, older to younger, with both being actively involved in leadership roles within the community.

Given all of the above – and the great enthusiasm locally about Downtown and its future – Downtown Jonesboro is now ready and able to move forward to the next level of economic success.

The following ***Course of Action*** was tailor-made to enable that to occur.

## ***Connectivity***

There is a great desire locally to connect the following portions of the city:

- Downtown;
- North Jonesboro;
- Johnson Avenue;
- Matthew's Medical Mile; and
- Arkansas State University (ASU).

## **Planning**

Connectivity should be achieved by:

- Defining a physical plan and economic development strategy for North Jonesboro, Johnson Avenue, and the Matthew's Medical Mile – very much as was done for Downtown in 1999;

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- Identifying a focus area in each of those three areas – where the physical and economic improvements should be targeted to demonstrate visible results as quickly as possible; and
- Defining an overall strategy of best ways to connect all five areas – via physical and transportation improvements.

## Goals

The goals of the above planning effort should be to:

- Ensure that each of the five areas complements – rather than cannibalizes – the others in terms of economic orientation, markets, and uses;
- Strengthen the “ripple effect” of improvements made in one area stimulating investment in the others; and
- Enable the areas to share customers and users.

## Arts & Entertainment District

Without a doubt, great strides have been made in this section of Downtown over the last fourteen years. However, the work here is not yet complete. Therefore, the enhancement effort must remain focused in the Arts & Entertainment District by implementing the recommendations contained in this document.

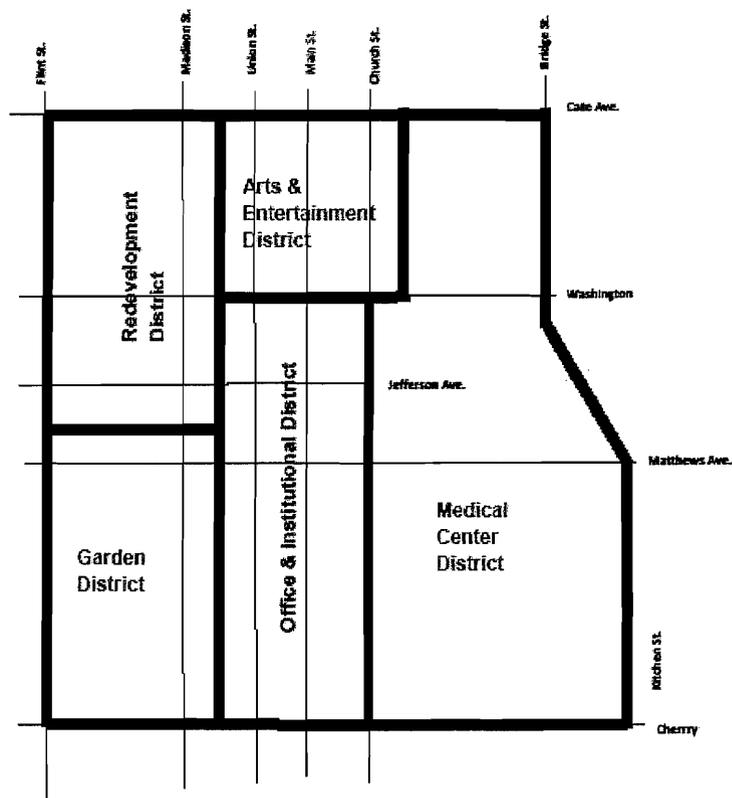
***A map identifying each of Downtown’s five districts is presented on the next page.***

## Redevelopment District

As opposed to in 1999, this district is now ripe for attention and improvement. This is due to the following catalytic projects and changes:

- The pristine property owned and operated in this area by Hispanic Community Services, Inc.;
- The pending locating of a mobile Mexican Embassy in this area; and

## Downtown Jonesboro Districts



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- The district's proximity to the improved Garden District (formerly dubbed "Urban Village") and the Arts & Entertainment District and the ripple effect of improvements made in those areas.

The next catalytic projects that should be addressed in and near the Redevelopment District are the following.

- The properties across from and to the west of the Hispanic Community Services building should be cleaned-up. Not doing so is an affront to the users of that facility and of the future Mexican Embassy.
- The scrap yard located across Cate Avenue from the Redevelopment District must be significantly cleaned-up or, preferably, relocated. As it stands now, this use is a major hindrance to the district's ability to attract private investment. A much better use for this property would be as a park – one that could accommodate the larger facilities desired by the community, such as an amphitheater and a dog run. A park in this location would help in attracting private investment to the Redevelopment District, as well as to North Jonesboro, Johnson Avenue, and the remainder of Downtown.
- The former City Hall building and soon-to-be-vacated police/fire facility should be re-used as private offices. This will bring a new customer base to the district.
- If a Downtown hotel is constructed, consideration should be given to locating it in the Redevelopment District, as close to the Arts & Entertainment District as possible.
- If a new performing arts center is developed, it would ideally be located in or near the Arts & Entertainment District, and near the Redevelopment District.
- Once the above projects are underway, the market for housing in the Redevelopment District – single family, townhouse, and small apartment buildings – will increase and development of such should be encouraged.

## **Remaining Downtown Districts**

The remaining Downtown districts – Office & Institutional District, Garden District, and Medical Center – are all experiencing the ripple effect from improvements that have been made in the Arts & Entertainment District. And, as a result, market forces have led to private investment in these three areas. Therefore, no market stimulation or manipulation are required in the Office & Institutional District, the Garden District, or the Medical Center at this time.

## ***Anchor Projects***

Unlike in 1999, the following anchor projects can now be successfully realized. These projects should be undertaken at this time to not only further strengthen the Arts & Entertainment District, but to also increase the ripple effect of pushing that success out to other portions of Downtown and the city.

## **Former Citizens Bank Building**

This building appears to be widely viewed locally as an all too visible eyesore and obstacle to Downtown's economic development. While private sector interest has been shown in improving and reusing the building, others believe doing so is not feasible and that the building should be demolished instead, due to structural issues.

The barrier to addressing this issue appears to be the property's ownership structure. Therefore, a "good agent" is needed to step in and move the project forward. And, the only likely entity that can fill this role is City government. Therefore, it is suggested that the City step forward, gain ownership of the property through any reasonable means possible, and sell it to the private sector. Whether the building is reused or demolished for new construction, the parcel should be put to the following use:

- A mixed-use structure;
- Retail on the first floor; and
- Housing and/or offices above.

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## **Central Park**

As in 1999, there is a great desire locally for green space within the heart of Downtown that would serve as a focal point, a meeting place, and a “reprieve.” This park should be highly visible and centrally located within the Arts & Entertainment District so that it has the potential to create spin-off business for Downtown’s restaurants, shops, and galleries.

Ideally, Downtown’s “Central Park” should be located on the northwest corner of Main and Monroe, where there is now a City parking lot. The park should be designed to include a water feature and public art, as well as landscaping that coordinates with that found in Downtown’s planters.

## **Downtown Hotel**

With all the improvements made since 1999, Downtown’s environment is now highly conducive for attracting a hotel – given Downtown’s restaurants, entertainment, and other amenities. Therefore, the feasibility of constructing a Downtown hotel should be discussed with hotel developers and owners – whose hotels are located in other historic Downtowns. In addition, the City should open discussions with ASU regarding that institution’s interest in jointly seeking a hotel developer.

## **Performing Arts Center**

There is a great desire locally to have a Downtown performing arts center, as a means of offering a broader range of entertainment in Downtown. At the same time, it has recently been determined that the Forum Theater – a community theater operated by The Foundation of Arts (FOA) and formerly known as the Strand Theater – is in need of some \$2.5M in renovations just to be brought up to code standards.

The FOA is moving forward with the concept of creating a performing arts center in Downtown, and taking the appropriate steps to do so. As such, the FOA is considering two possibilities: either renovating and expanding The Forum into a performing arts center or constructing a new performing arts center building.

Whether to renovate/expand the Forum or build a new structure is a decision that

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will be made by the FOA Board of Directors. In deliberating that decision, HyettPalma would urge the FOA Board to consider that a new structure – in a more highly visible location that is in or near the Arts & Entertainment District – would bring spin-off benefits to all of Downtown. If the FOA Board decides to move forward with building a new structure, the City should be open to providing help if needed – such as assisting with land assembly.

## **Parking Structure**

There does not appear to be a shortage of parking spaces in Downtown at this time – particularly during daytime hours. However, the time when parking demand becomes greater than parking supply is nearing, as more retail shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues open in Downtown, and as Downtown becomes more of a 24-hour commercial and residential center. Therefore, the City should:

- Continue to monitor parking occupancy levels;
- When it appears that demand has exceeded supply, bring in a parking expert to quantify the parking shortage; and
- Address demand in the future by building a parking structure on an existing municipal parking lot – as opposed to demolishing buildings to accommodate the structure.

It should be noted that:

- A parking structure might be needed on both the east and west sides of the Arts & Entertainment District;
- Parking structures must be designed, lighted, and monitored in a way that makes motorists feel safe in using them;
- Attention should be paid to the exterior design of any parking structures built to ensure that they complement and “fit” with Downtown’s historic architecture; and

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- If the structure is located in an area where there is pedestrian traffic, consideration should be given to designing the structure so that it has retail space on the ground level.

Finally, if Downtown is successful in attracting a hotel developer, the City should consider constructing a parking structure as a joint venture with that developer.

## **ASU Presence**

There is a great desire locally to see a greater ASU presence in Downtown. With new leadership at ASU and in City Hall, the time is perfect to open a discussion of ways this can be accomplished.

Bringing ASU functions to Downtown that complement the Arts & Entertainment District should be particularly considered, such as art exhibits, music, theater, food, and related classes.

## ***Housekeeping***

While Downtown is now ready and able to tackle large projects, such as those above, attention also must be paid to housekeeping – since it is often “the little things” that have a large impact on a Downtown’s ability to attract private investors.

## **Traffic & Parking**

Traffic and parking are both large issues of concern locally, which should be addressed through the following actions.

- ***Traffic***

The one-way traffic on Main Street was a large concern in 1999 and it remains so today. Therefore:

- A goal should be established of returning Main Street to two-way traffic while keeping parking on both sides of Main;
- The City should request that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conduct an analysis of returning Main to two-way traffic;

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- The MPO analysis should also consider the best ways to accommodate deliveries to businesses on Main, enhancing crosswalks on Main, providing safe access to bicycle riders in Downtown, and the appropriate placement of “art racks” (as can be seen at [www.DavidByrne.com/art/bike-racks/](http://www.DavidByrne.com/art/bike-racks/), under the heading Art & Books) in Downtown; and
- The City should diligently enforce the speed limit on Main Street and the “yield to pedestrians” law.

- **Parking**

As was stated above, the time is probably near when a parking structure or two will be needed in Downtown. Until that time the following actions should be taken.

- Downtown employers and employees who are abusing the two-hour on-street parking limit – particularly in the Arts & Entertainment District – should be strongly urged to park elsewhere. If they do not voluntarily comply, the City should enforce the two-hour limit after giving chronic over-parkers fair warning. And, fines for over-parking should be substantial, such as \$50 or \$100 per ticket.
- The number of “2-Hour Parking” signs now on Main Street should be reduced.
- The on-street stripes marking parking spaces on Main Street should be removed. The stripes marking the beginning and end of a parking run (the parallel stripes which denote the outside limits of on-street parking spaces) and handicap spaces should be maintained.
- The City should continue to keep all municipal parking lots well-maintained and well-lighted to encourage their use.
- An element of the Downtown marketing campaign – recommended later in this chapter – should entail communicating to the buying public where Downtown parking is located.

## **Clean & Safe**

“Clean and safe” has become a mantra in the business of Downtown enhancement, because a Downtown that is not perceived as being clean and safe will never be able to attain its full economic potential.

- ***Clean***

The following facets of cleanliness must be addressed in Downtown Jonesboro.

- **Business Trash** – This has become an issue due to the number of food establishments located in Downtown. To maintain sanitary conditions – free from odors, flies, rodents – the City must require Downtown businesses to contain trash and have it removed in a timely manner. This is particularly important during the warm months. The City Health Department and State Health inspectors should both be asked to look at current conditions.
- **Dog Droppings** – This has become an issue due to the increase in the number of Downtown residents. To address this issue, the City and the Downtown Jonesboro Association are jointly having “pet stations” installed in Downtown. In addition, the City should fine those who do not clean up after their pets.
- **Litter** – The City should continue their diligent maintenance of streets, walks, parking lots, and other public spaces. In addition, the City should consider more frequent emptying of on-street trash receptacles and purchasing a “Green Machine” (see [www.source-mme.com/GreenMachine.html](http://www.source-mme.com/GreenMachine.html)). And, every Downtown business owner should pick up any litter that appears near their front and rear entrances.
- **Weeds** – Throughout Downtown, the City should bear down on private property owners who allow weeds to grow up in their yards and on their vacant lots.

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- Old Signs – The City should remove or replace, as appropriate, old public signs that have rusted or been damaged.

- **Safe**

The following steps should be taken to make Downtown feel safer.

- Foot Patrols – Police officers walking the beat should be added to Downtown from approximately 5PM to 2AM, so that evening users perceive Downtown as being safe.
- Lighting – Lighting levels along sidewalks and in parking lots should be assessed in the Arts & Entertainment District and the Office & Institutional District to make sure they are adequate.
- Crosswalks – In the Arts & Entertainment District, crosswalks need to be made more visible. While methods of accomplishing this should be assessed in the MPO study recommended above, consideration should also be given to installing in-street strobe lights at crosswalks. (See [www.xwalk.com](http://www.xwalk.com) for more information.)
- It is anticipated that the Police Department will be vacating its current Downtown building and moving to another location. When this occurs, consideration should be given to keeping a police precinct station in Downtown, preferably near the Arts & Entertainment District.

## ***Visual Appeal***

While Downtown is far more visually appealing than it was in 1999, the following further enhancements should be made.

- The erection of billboards should no longer be allowed in Downtown.
- Temporary signs should not be allowed on Downtown buildings, except in accordance with the City's zoning ordinance.

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- Business signs that are not professionally made should not be allowed in Downtown.
- Consideration should be given to adding colorful flowers to Downtown's planters.
- Consideration should be given to placing hanging flower baskets on Downtown's street light poles. However, this should only be done if a system can be put in place to guarantee that the baskets will be routinely and consistently watered.

## ***Public Art***

To create a strong City identity – and further connectivity between various portions of Jonesboro – the City is in the process of determining locations for the placement of permanent and temporary public art, with the help of the Foundation of Arts and interested citizens.

As it relates to Downtown, public art should be placed in the recommended "Central Park" and at its gateways, at a minimum. And, that art should reflect Downtown's character, history, and economic niches.

Public art placement in Downtown should take into consideration and be sensitive to the narrowness of Downtown sidewalks and the high number of Downtown pedestrians – especially in the Arts & Entertainment District. Therefore, a concept that should be considered for the Arts & Entertainment District is "art in air" – art banners or other installations that can be mounted on Downtown street light poles or strung across Main Street.

## ***Retail Business Recruitment***

While the community has made major strides in attracting food establishments and some specialty retail to Downtown, an aggressive effort should be made to attract more specialty retail in order to take full advantage of recognized economic opportunities, better serve the needs of trade area residents, and make Downtown more of a destination.

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## **Focus**

A diligent effort should be made over the next few years to attract more specialty retail businesses to the Arts & Entertainment District. The recruitment effort should be undertaken by a staff person, not volunteers.

## **Target Businesses**

Given all the substantial improvements and business development that has taken place in Downtown over the past several years, Downtown has a good environment now for attracting more businesses, including specialty retail and additional dining establishments.

Specific attention should be given to the attraction of the following types of additional businesses in the immediate future:

- More specialty apparel to build on the draw created by businesses such as Gearhead and Soho House of Style;
- More quality art galleries like the Sara Howell Gallery, with work and display space, and instructional classes;
- Children's apparel, educational products, and toys;
- Gift shops;
- Home decorating products;
- Restaurants, particularly fine dining establishments like Omar's; and
- Specialty food for home consumption, such gourmet and specialty food markets.

Every effort should be made to attract mom & pop, unique shops with an established track record of success. In this vein, existing businesses of the type desired for Downtown Jonesboro should be induced to move to Downtown Jonesboro or open an additional business in Downtown Jonesboro.

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Due to the high attrition rate of start-up businesses, they should not be encouraged to locate in the Art & Entertainment District at this time.

## **Scouting for Prospects**

Business prospects should be sought by making personal visits to desired existing businesses located in the Jonesboro trade area, Little Rock metro area, Memphis metro area, and other college communities in Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Kansas.

When an interested prospect is identified, they should be invited to visit Downtown Jonesboro and encouraged to locate a business in Downtown.

As previously noted, prospecting should be undertaken by a qualified staff person. The staff person should work with all prospects throughout the attraction process, offering any appropriate assistance to the prospect in an effort to have them move to Downtown Jonesboro or open an additional business in Downtown Jonesboro.

## **Offices Moved Up**

As Downtown continues to attract more retail and food establishments, the demand for first floor space, particularly in the Arts & Entertainment District, will intensify. As this happens, offices located in first floor space in the Arts & Entertainment District should be encouraged to relocate into upper floor space in that district, or in appropriate space in other Downtown districts, in order to free-up first floor spaces for retail and food establishments.

## **Blocked/Darkened Windows**

First floor windows in Downtown businesses should not be blocked or darkened. This creates an unwelcoming environment for customers and patrons, and creates a potentially dangerous situation since potential interior problems cannot be easily observed by public safety personnel.

If necessary, the City's zoning ordinance should be amended to prohibit the blocking of interior views on first floors, including darkening, boarding-up, placement of temporary signs or other obstructions in windows.

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## **Vendors**

Some consideration is being given locally to the possibility of allowing mobile vendors to operate in Downtown – such as a hot dog stand. It is strongly recommended that such mobile vendors not be allowed to serve products in Downtown Jonesboro. Given the large number of restaurants in Downtown, and the emphasis that is being placed on filling existing buildings with permanent businesses, it would not be appropriate to allow transient businesses to unfairly compete with businesses willing to pay rent or buy a building to operate a legitimate business in Downtown Jonesboro. And, given the narrow sidewalks and large number of pedestrians who frequent Downtown, there is really no room for mobile vendors to safely operate in Downtown Jonesboro.

Temporary vendors would be appropriate, however, in association with periodic special events approved by the City.

## **The Retail Report®**

As with the 1999 *Action Agenda*, an updated version of **The Retail Report®** is presented in the Appendix of this *Action Agenda*.

The report presents a projection of the retail dollars being spent in the Jonesboro Primary Retail Trade Area for goods typically found in a Downtown setting.

## ***Marketing***

Given how far Downtown Jonesboro has come since 1999 – and how much it has to offer today – the time is right to launch a high profile Downtown marketing effort.

## **Marketing Plan**

A professional marketing firm should be retained to create a comprehensive marketing campaign for Downtown. The marketing campaign should be devised to communicate with Downtown's varied markets, including:

- College students;
- Young professionals;
- Families;
- Seniors;

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- Residents of Jonesboro and Northeast Arkansas; and
- Residents of the Little Rock and Memphis areas.

The campaign should market Downtown as a whole – as a great place to live, work, visit – and the Arts & Entertainment District in particular, since this is where Downtown’s consumer draws (food, entertainment, shops) are primarily located.

## **Signature Events**

By definition, a “signature event” is one that is held annually, grows in attendance each year, is truly unique, and creates a “brand” for its location. Downtown Jonesboro has one signature event right now, in the form of the “Downtown Jonesboro BBQ Festival.”

Consideration should be given to creating one or two additional signature events that reinforce the economic orientation of the Arts & Entertainment District. This might include:

- A Festival of the Arts; and
- A Taste of Jonesboro.

## **Holiday Decorations**

Downtown should be decorated for the holidays in a way that makes it a destination during this time of year. An example of a Downtown that does just that extremely well is Rochester, MI.

(See [www.downtownrochestermi.com/events/big-bright-light-show/](http://www.downtownrochestermi.com/events/big-bright-light-show/))

## ***Management***

To create the future Downtown Jonesboro that is now desired by the community, the Downtown Jonesboro enhancement effort must focus on economic development, specifically:

- Recruiting specialty retail businesses; and
- Bringing to fruition the anchor projects recommended in this document.

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## **Alliance**

At this time, there does not appear to be a single entity or an individual focusing on Downtown economic development. To be successful in retail recruitment and anchor project implementation, emphasis, leadership, and influence must be brought to these issues. This should be accomplished by creating a Downtown Economic Development Alliance, a group whose purpose would be to spearhead retail recruitment and anchor project realization, and which should include:

- The Mayor of Jonesboro;
- The CEO of St. Bernard's;
- The Chancellor of ASU;
- The CEO of the Chamber of Commerce;
- The CEO of a Downtown bank;
- A major Downtown business owner;
- A major Downtown property owner;
- A respected Downtown developer; and
- Other community leaders, as deemed necessary.

## **Staff**

The Alliance will need a staff director to assist with and coordinate the work of the group. This individual should be highly professional in demeanor, in order to convey a positive image for the Alliance and for Downtown.

## **Funding**

To fund the Downtown enhancement effort, consideration should be given to the following sources:

- Advertising & Promotion Commission bed tax monies;

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- Creation of an Improvement District, to establish a steady stream of funds for Downtown marketing;
- Creation of a Tax Increment Financing district, if feasible, to capture increments resulting from Downtown improvements and a steady funding stream;
- Contributions from major institutions, such as ASU and St. Bernard's – both of which use Downtown as a successful recruitment tool;
- City funds; and
- Grants.

## Roles

For smooth, timely, and quality implementation of the recommendations contained in this document, the following roles are suggested.

- City of Jonesboro
  - Connectivity
  - Traffic and Parking
  - Clean and Safe
  - Visual Appeal
  - Public Art
- Downtown Jonesboro Association
  - Marketing
- Downtown Economic Development Alliance
  - Anchor Projects
  - Retail Recruitment

## Adopt

It is hoped that the Jonesboro City Council will adopt this ***Jonesboro Downtown Action Agenda Update 2013*** as the Downtown element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

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# *Appendix*

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# THE RETAIL REPORT®

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**Downtown Jonesboro  
Primary Retail Trade Area**



**THE RETAIL REPORT® was specifically prepared for Downtown Jonesboro, Arkansas. This document presents information concerning the characteristics of the Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area. The report was prepared in 2013 by HyettPalma, Inc.**

**THE RETAIL REPORT® presents:**

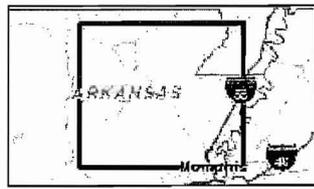
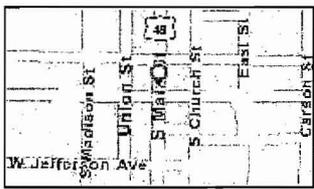
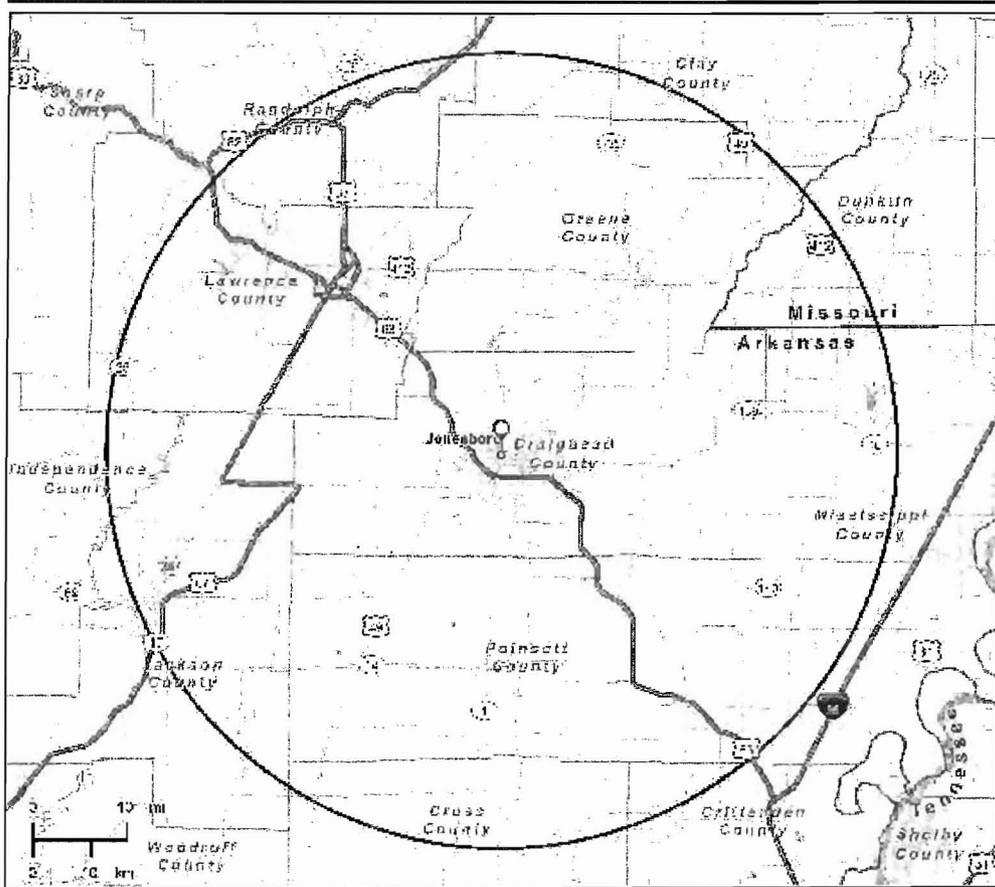
- **The Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area map;**
- **The current demographic and socio-economic characteristics of customers in the Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area;**
- **A five year projection of changing demographic and socio-economic conditions in the Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area;**
- **A projection of the number of retail dollars that residents in the Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area spend on retail goods that most often are found in healthy Downtowns; and**
- **A projection of the total retail spending potential for 24 classes of retail goods sought by customers in the Downtown Jonesboro primary retail trade area most often are found in healthy Downtowns.**



## Site Map

Downtown Jonesboro Primary Trade Area  
5 Main St & Washington Ave, Jonesboro, AR, 72401  
Ring: 35 Miles

DATE: 7/11/13  
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July 11, 2013



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## Demographic and Income Profile

Downtown Jonesboro Primary Trade Area  
 S Main St & Washington Ave., Jonesboro, AR, 72401  
 Ring: 35 mile radius

July 11, 2013  
 10:26 AM CDT

Summary	Census 2010	2012	2017	
Population	223,779	216,731	224,962	
Households	83,100	84,398	87,480	
Families	56,713	57,106	58,822	
Average Household Size	2.48	2.48	2.49	
Owner Occupied Housing Units	53,402	54,122	56,119	
Renter Occupied Housing Units	29,698	30,277	31,361	
Median Age	36.3	36.6	37.2	
<b>Trends: 2012 - 2017 Annual Rate</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>National</b>	
Population	0.75%	0.69%	0.68%	
Households	0.72%	0.74%	0.74%	
Families	0.59%	0.63%	0.72%	
Owner HHs	0.73%	0.78%	0.91%	
Median Household Income	3.03%	2.91%	2.55%	
		<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>	
<b>Households by Income</b>		Number	Percent	
<\$15,000		18,861	22.3%	
\$15,000 - \$24,999		12,365	14.7%	
\$25,000 - \$34,999		11,471	13.6%	
\$35,000 - \$49,999		12,400	14.7%	
\$50,000 - \$74,999		14,558	17.2%	
\$75,000 - \$99,999		7,186	8.5%	
\$100,000 - \$149,999		5,439	6.4%	
\$150,000 - \$199,999		1,135	1.6%	
\$200,000+		784	0.9%	
Median Household Income		\$34,430	\$39,961	
Average Household Income		\$46,688	\$50,980	
Per Capita Income		\$18,917	\$20,557	
	<b>Census 2010</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>	
<b>Population by Age</b>	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0 - 4	14,609	6.8%	14,747	6.8%
5 - 9	14,593	6.8%	14,681	6.8%
10 - 14	14,484	6.8%	14,412	6.6%
15 - 19	15,611	7.3%	15,106	7.0%
20 - 24	15,909	7.4%	16,365	7.6%
25 - 34	28,027	13.1%	28,841	13.3%
35 - 44	27,314	12.8%	26,894	12.4%
45 - 54	28,847	13.5%	28,314	13.1%
55 - 64	24,280	11.4%	25,683	11.9%
65 - 74	16,783	7.9%	18,111	8.4%
75 - 84	9,708	4.5%	9,773	4.5%
85+	3,611	1.7%	3,904	1.8%
	<b>Census 2010</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>	
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	187,469	87.7%	188,388	86.9%
Black Alone	17,051	8.0%	18,083	8.3%
American Indian Alone	811	0.4%	960	0.4%
Asian Alone	1,317	0.6%	1,412	0.7%
Pacific Islander Alone	63	0.0%	82	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	1,777	1.8%	4,210	1.9%
Two or More Races	3,290	1.5%	3,596	1.7%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	7,171	3.4%	8,039	3.7%

Data Note: Income is expressed in current dollars.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Est forecasts for 2012 and 2017.

July 11, 2013

# HyettPalma

PRODUCT	DEMAND
Food At Home	43,774,279
Food Away From Home	26,423,325
Alcoholic Beverages	4,527,172
Household Textiles	1,553,553
Furniture	4,752,824
Floor Coverings	615,087
Major Appliances	2,391,058
Small Appliances & Miscellaneous Housewares	1,392,830
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	8,964,896
Men's Apparel -- 16 and Over	3,880,478
Boy's Apparel -- 2 to 15	1,444,152
Women's Apparel -- 16 and Over	7,071,767
Girl's Apparel -- 2 to 15	1,298,003
Children's Apparel -- Under 2	1,205,182
Footwear	3,573,623
Other Apparel Services & Products	3,661,573
Prescription Drugs & Medical Supplies	6,786,499
Entertainment Fees & Admissions	6,009,984
Audio & Visual Equipment	9,318,010
Pets, Toys & Playground Equipment	4,432,830
Other Entertainment Supplies & Services	6,278,054
Personal Care Products & Services	5,991,027
Reading	1,405,715
Tobacco Products & Smoking Supplies	3,679,729
<b>TOTAL DEMAND BY PRODUCT TYPE =</b>	<b>\$160,431,650</b>