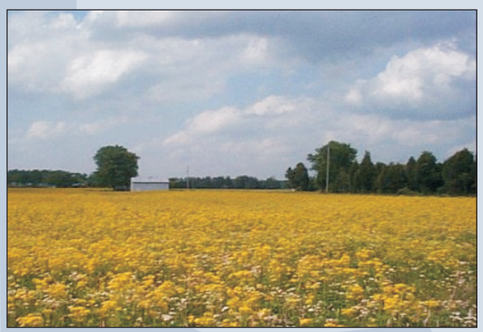
Once a major downtown attraction, the Crump Theater at Third and Washington Streets was partially restored in 2001.

Columbus' most notable attraction is its architectural history – six buildings, built between 1942 and 1965, are National Historic Landmarks, and 60 other buildings maintain the community's presence as a showcase of modern architecture. Columbus is recognized around the world for its modern architecture. In 1991, the American Institute of Architects ranked Columbus 6th among U.S. cities in architectural quality and innovation.

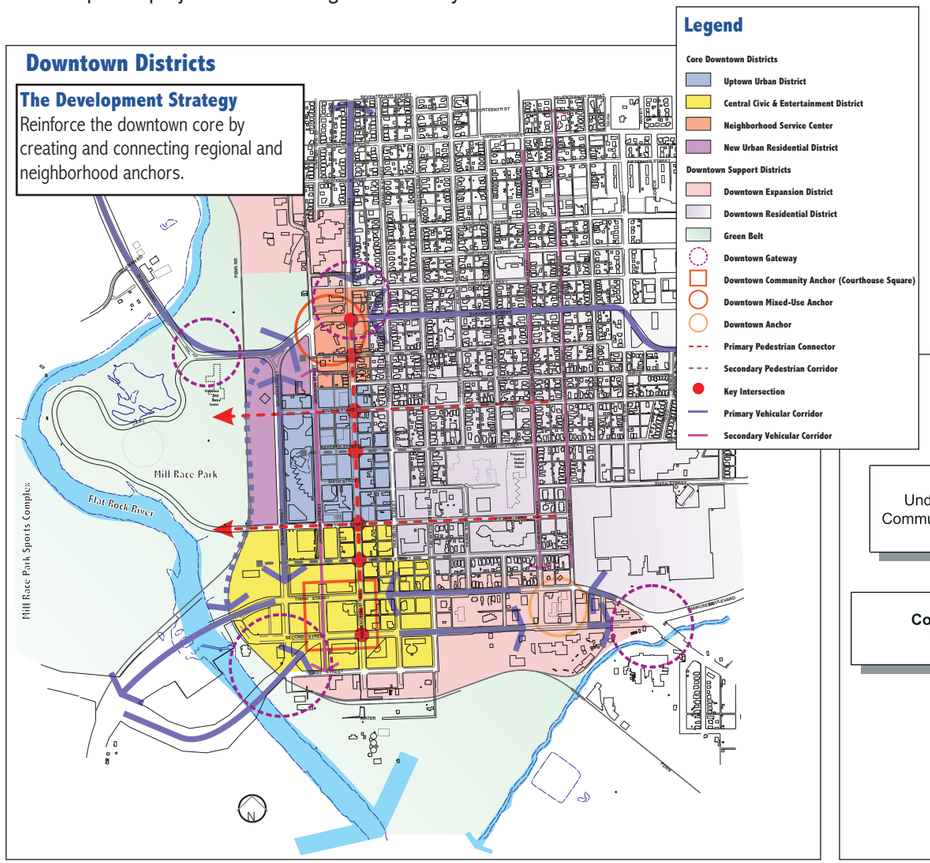


Columbus is the seat of Bartholomew County in rural southern Indiana. The balance of Bartholomew County is principally agricultural and small towns.

## Project Purpose

The purpose of the *Downtown Columbus Strategic Development Plan* is to:
1) conduct a market analysis to assess the economic conditions of the study area using both conventional (demographic data and Census information) and supplemental means (resident surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and public open houses);
2) establish a framework for directing future growth and development in Downtown Columbus;
3) identify potential revenue-generating projects for activating downtown; and
4) prepare a development strategy and accompanying implementation program for new Downtown investment.
The result of this effort is a redevelopment strategy with economic, physical, and organizational development recommendations that are derived from an understanding of the residents' and visitors' needs and desires, market indicators, physical conditions, and real estate market economics.

The *Downtown Columbus Strategic Development Plan* planning process has resulted in a framework that will leverage limited public funds to promote private investment. Proposed development will reconnect Downtown Columbus to one of its greatest assets – riverfront green space. The implementation program and the short-term development strategy focus on redefining the intersection of Fourth and Washington Streets as the enhanced entertainment destination for Columbus and the region. The program includes provisions of public improvements and amenities, the completion of development projects and reconfiguration of key blocks.




## Planning Process

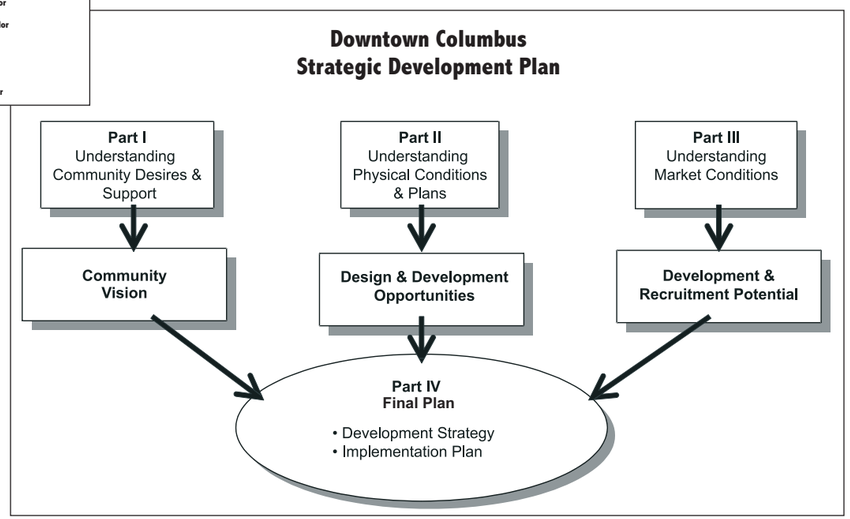
The *Downtown Columbus Strategic Development Plan* is the result of a ten-month planning process involving community leaders and residents in a series of public open houses and working committees. The planning process began in August 2004 with an extensive physical analysis of Downtown Columbus by the consulting team. During this time the team also collected market and real estate information. A working committee, comprised of residents, business and property owners, City of Columbus representatives, and other concerned citizens met on eleven occasions throughout the planning process. The first working committee meeting was held in late August 2004.

From November 2004 through January 2005, Development Concepts, Inc. hosted three public open houses during which the planning team presented the public with their initial findings. Participants were asked to endorse or modify the team's existing conditions analysis and express their thoughts on preliminary ideas and potential development directions for downtown revitalization.

In March 2005, two additional open houses were held to gather input on the preliminary redevelopment strategy. This final public meeting allowed participants to review the planning team's recommendations and to contribute their ideas and opinions regarding the final steps of the planning process.

Key elements of each part of this process included:

Understanding Community Desires & Support
- Open Houses
- Focus Groups
- Key Stakeholders (Vision 20/20 Committee)
- Surveys (Community, Students, Employees, Businesses)

Understanding the Physical Conditions & Plans
- Inventory of current land uses
- Inventory of key destinations and landmarks
- Reviewed current and past plans

Understanding Market Conditions
- Demographics
- Analysis of key markets; live, work, play, shop
- Projection of market opportunity