

Abstract

CREATIVE PROJECT: Revitalize Downtown Muncie by Attracting Students and elders

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This project comes from the passion of urban life, the desire to do meaningful work for Muncie, Indiana, and eagerness to create better communities. Muncie, Indiana is a good place to live, full of history, contradictions and potential. Here, groups in different areas are dedicating both money and time to build a thriving and sustainable downtown. However, the central city, especially downtown, is losing its population and vibrancy, like many other small and medium sized American cities. Even worse, the connections of downtown Muncie with Ball State University have historically not been strong. Students do not typically go downtown. However, connecting BSU with downtown physically and socially could be means to activate Downtown's vibrancy.

Based on U.S. Census data, Muncie still has significant population. More positive are the signs of population restoration. Both the enrollment expansion of Ball State University and the increasing elder population contribute to the population increases. With people returning to the city, opportunities exist to bring people back downtown to live, work, and play. There are arguable significant to attract people as an increased presence downtown. Instead of attracting them from elsewhere, it is more reasonable to revitalize downtown by increasing in numbers of those making their homes downtown. Functional and physical improvements are needed to enhance living conditions and community pride.

This creative project begins with literature review and case studies to explore strategies of small-city downtown revitalization. And then, the project exams existing development

and assets in downtown Muncie and local history when downtown was an active commercial and cultural center for the area. Since students and elders are major segments population of Muncie, the project focuses on providing comfortable living conditions to attract these two groups back downtown. It also proposes a city framework with exemplary complete street sections, and building facades; a district master plan with housing typologies, landscape systems, and a pedestrian network between campus and city; and student and elder housing detail design demonstrations. The conclusion will exam weather this creative project offers targeted residential density and enough living amenities. Also, future research will be identified in conclusion.