

PURPOSE & INTENT

Clarksville, Tennessee, the county seat of Montgomery County and its only incorporated area was founded in 1785 and served the region for over 150 years as a transportation hub for the profitable tobacco trade which has created a rich cultural legacy. Clarksville continues to thrive and grow in economic strength and population that consistently outpaces national averages. Ft. Campbell and Austin Peay State University are two of its most important assets in addition to many viable industries.

This growth, however, has not followed in the Downtown and the River District. Suburban shopping centers and the relocation of many governmental agencies, both city and county, has weakened the District's health. Growth and renewal in the District has not kept pace with the balance of the community. The tornado of 1999 and the Flood of 2010, while creating opportunities have, on balance, also weakened the fabric and viability.

Responding to this, the existing Downtown District Partnership and the River District Commission proposed a merger in 2008 to combine the strengths of the organizations hoping to achieve a synergy that is greater than the sum of the parts, resulting in the formation of the Two Rivers Company. The organization moved to identify and address key issues facing the District as follows:

- While various plans and studies have been prepared for the downtown over the past decade, many of the ideas have not been implemented. The riverfront planning is an exception, as much implementation has occurred there.
- Past efforts for on-going revitalization of the downtown have received insufficient funding to achieve success.
- Both the general public and public officials need to be convinced of the importance of the downtown/riverfront and educated on related issues.
- Because of the proximity and continued growth of APSU, it has tremendous potential for benefiting the downtown if physical linkages and destinations can be provided to attract the APSU community. Lack of connectivity to assets is an impediment to growth.
- Despite apparent demand for downtown housing, there is still substantial vacant upper floor space in existing buildings. Financial incentives for housing may be required as well as regulatory revisions.
- Riverside Drive serves as a physical and psychological barrier between the river and downtown and the volume and speed of traffic discourages many types of desirable activities.
- The Two Rivers Company needs a detailed mission, a strategic plan, office space and staffing.
- Stable long-term funding sources will be critical to Two Rivers' future success.

The creation of a Strategic Plan is intended to establish a framework and direction to provide for the District's growth and increased prosperity. The Plan is specific in its direction, but not in details or timetables. Developing project details, timetables and programs will be left to the Two Rivers Company (TRC) Board. The TRC Board of Directors is responsible for the implementation of this Plan, and is composed of individuals with a demonstrated interest in the District who are appointed by the City Council.

Downtown Clarksville and the River District are cherished public assets. Clarksville's citizens will be placing a great deal of trust in the TRC to be faithful stewards of these assets. It is the intent of this Plan to provide a fair, thoughtful and constructive vision of the District's future development, forged with positive input and realized through its careful implementation.

VISION STATEMENT & MISSION

Vision Statement

Clarksville, Tennessee is one of the state's oldest cities with historic, natural and economic resources which rival any city of its size. Clarksville continues to grow at a high rate and is consistently ranked nationally as a desirable community to live in.

The Downtown and River District provides Clarksville with an extremely important sense of community, history and identity. The heart and soul of the community is manifest in its historic Downtown fabric. The citizens of Clarksville recognize that the identity and vitality of the city would be irreparably harmed by any significant degradation of the Downtown and River District.

To prevent further degradation and foster revitalization the District must be continually improved and strengthened as the city's suburban commercial centers continue to develop. Given appropriate attention to its infrastructure, appearance and promotion, the Plan envisions the continuation of the District as a prosperous and attractive commercial and cultural center – one which is a desirable place to work, live, shop, visit and recreate.

The Plan envisions a District that is user-friendly, safe, secure and healthy. The Downtown must also maintain a diversity of businesses, and institutions, housing and attractions. It is important to the success of the District area to improve the ease of access for all people, whether walking, biking or driving. These elements must be accomplished while maintaining the ambience and historic character of the District area. Especially important is preserving and enhancing the community's heritage, reflected in the physical beauty and cultural vigor of the Downtown and its River District.

A significant investment of time and money is essential for this vision to become a reality. Since resources are finite, the Plan acknowledges that decisions and priorities must take into account costs and benefits with regard to accomplishing the primary desired result. The Plan recognizes that resources must be drawn from numerous sources, public and private, and that projects must be funded by the most appropriate means.

Our primary goal is an economically thriving District that attracts investment, stabilizes and strengthens the tax base and supports the vitality and diversity of Clarksville and Montgomery County as its social and cultural center. This Plan hopes to ensure the vitality of the District for the foreseeable future and to make the District the center of the community in which all citizens can participate and take exceptional pride.

Mission

The Two Rivers Company is a non-profit organization focused on enchancing Clarksville, Tennessee's, downtown and riverfront areas. Two Rivers employs a holistic approach to address all facets of the downtown and riverfront, including organization, design, economic restructuring and promotion. It serves as a catalyst by partnering with other entities and the private sector to attract investment to this area. Two River's long-term goal is to make downtown and the riverfront premier locations in Clarksville to live, work and play, which will require sufficient and permanent financial resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES**1. Strengthen the District's economic vitality.**

Action A: Commission a real estate economist to conduct a market analysis to serve as the basis for future business and housing development efforts.

Action B: Capitalize on easily targeted market segments already coming to the downtown area, such as the APSU community and church congregations.

Action C: Make housing a high priority for the Two Rivers Company.

Action D: Provide more conveniently located and better managed parking.

Action E: Facilitate continued commercial development.

Action F: Initially target efforts to a relatively small geographic area within the broader District.

Action G: Pursue one or more anchors to attract more people to the District.

2. Create awareness of the activities, benefits and importance of a viable District to the community and government.

Action A: Initiate a campaign to promote the District.

Action B: Brand the District with a strong and clear identity.

Action C: Make engaging public input a foundation of all activities and plans.

Action D: Improve communications among district stakeholders.

3. Provide leadership and support for District stakeholders.

Action A: Represent and advocate on behalf of District stakeholders regarding local and community-wide issues that impact the District.

Action B: Provide leadership and spearhead initiatives that benefit the District.

Action C: Provide a clearinghouse and forum for discussing and assessing governmental impacts on the District.

4. Manage all circulation issues (traffic, parking, pedestrian, bicycling) to improve the District as a safe and convenient destination to live, work and play.

Action A: Create stronger connections among the riverfront, downtown and APSU.

Action B: Improve overall accessibility, including pedestrian safety, particularly at intersections.

Action C: Evaluate the effectiveness of public transportation within the District.

Action D: Accommodate bicycles as a means of reducing parking and automotive circulation requirements.

Action E: Work with the Parking Authority to improve the management of parking.

Action F: Develop consistent and effective delivery and loading zone policies.

Action G: Maintain and enhance the appearance and safety of sidewalks, alleys and parking lots.

5. Insure that the District remains the center of government, finance and culture with a historic sense of place.

Action A: Avoid the loss of desirable institutional uses from the District, and attract new ones.

Action B: Make historic preservation a high priority by reviewing the City's existing preservation program, ordinance and design standards to identify any needed improvements.

Action C: Encourage the growth of cultural activities.

Action D: Encourage public art within the District.

6. Maintain an attractive, secure, safe and healthy environment which will promote living, working and playing in the District.

Action A: Improve the appearance and adequacy of lighting, while remaining compatible with the desired character of the District.

Action B: Increase public safety in the District through alternatives to automobile patrols (foot patrols, bicycle patrols or electronic personal transporters).

Action C: Provide public restrooms within the core of Downtown.

Action D: Update and modernize District wayfinding signage, kiosks and historic plaques.

Action E: Pursue centralized services, such as trash removal, recycling, wi-fi, and other consolidated services.

7. Coordinate all public and private policy and planning efforts to insure maximum beneficial effect and conservative allocation of resources.

Action A: Review local public policies to identify opportunities to improve them for the benefit of the District.

Action B: Implement the best recommendations from past downtown/riverfront plans based upon a market analysis and community priorities.

8. Pursue environmental sustainability for the District.

Action A: Encourage the City to adopt development standards that further sustainability goals.

Action B: Introduce sustainable design solutions into public works projects, such as the use of bio-swales to accommodate stormwater drainage.

Action C: Pursue a recycling program for solid waste disposal within the District.