The Rising Tide project supports vibrant, thriving communities to attract business investment and talent by creating a sustainable path toward economic stability and growth. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Talent Investment Agency, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority—collectively, the Talent and Economic Development (TED) team—have committed their assets to engaging specific communities across the state in order to empower them to shape their future and maximize economic potential. This document was produced as part of that effort.
July 2017

City of Charlotte
City Council
111 E. Lawrence Avenue
Charlotte, MI 48813

Dear City of Charlotte Council:

On behalf of the Project Rising Tide team, Place & Main Advisors, LLC, is pleased to present you with this Economic Development Strategy for the City of Charlotte. This economic development strategy is part of the city’s participation in Project Rising Tide and is provided for by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

This strategy builds off the work done by the city and the local Project Rising Tide team and is designed to be implemented with the capacity the city has. In the end, we are confident in the strategy we have put forth and the community’s ability to execute it.

Thank you for the opportunity for our firm to work with you. We have truly enjoyed our time with the City of Charlotte and have high expectations for its future.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Joe Borgstrom, Principal
Place & Main Advisors, LLC
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Overview</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Key Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Economic Development Strategy Process</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Local &amp; Regional Economic Goals</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Organizational Roles &amp; Responsibilities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Economic Development Strategy</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Directory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Maps/Yelp Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Business Round Tables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Clean-Up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tours &amp; Itineraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Mid &amp; Long-Term Projects</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond Senior Apartments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facade Improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Expansion &amp; Attraction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Factory Redevelopment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Hours Campaign</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayfinding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Diet for M-50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lot Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Floor Housing</td>
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</table>
I. Overview
The City of Charlotte is the county seat of Eaton County in the central portion of the lower peninsula of Michigan, known as “Mid-Michigan.” The City of Charlotte is also served by I-69 and M-79 and M-50, running through the heart of downtown. The city has a historic downtown core as well as more recent commercial development on the outskirts of town near the freeway. The community is served by Hayes Green Beach Memorial Hospital, a 25-bed hospital with numerous community-centric programs and three facilities. The community is also served by a city-owned airport.

**Summary of Key Information**

**Population**
According to 2013 census estimates, the city had a population of 9,265 with a median age of 37.4 years old. The average household size is 2.37 people.

**Household Income**
The median household income for the city in 2016 was estimated at $49,187 with a per capita income of $23,580 and a median net worth of $61,622.

**Labor Force**
The total labor force within the city limits was estimated at 4,246 people with 92% having a high school diploma or higher and 61% having at least some college education or higher.

**Housing**
The total number of housing units occupied in Charlotte for 2016 was 3,734 with 2,419 (64.78%) of those being owner-occupied and 1,315 (35.22%) were rental units. The median home value for the city is $118,390 and median residential rent is $570/month.

Additional key statistics can be found on Table 1 on page 7.
### TABLE I

#### KEY FACTS
- Population: 9,265
- Median Age: 37.4
- Average Household Size: 2.37
- Median Household Income: $49,187

#### EDUCATION
- No High School Diploma: 8%
- Some College: 42%
- High School Graduate: 32%
- Bachelor's/Grad/Prof Degree: 19%

#### HOUSING STATS
- Median Home Value: $118,390
- Average Spent on Mortgage & Basics: $6,055
- Median Contract Rent: $570

#### INCOME
- Median Household Income: $49,187
- Per Capita Income: $23,580
- Median Net Worth: $61,622

#### ANNUAL LIFESTYLE SPENDING
- Travel: $1,277
- Theatre/Opera/Concerts: $34
- Movies/Museums/Parks: $42
- Sports Events: $38
- Online Games: $3

#### ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD SPENDING
- Apparel & Services: $1,426
- Computers & Hardware: $119
- Eating Out: $2,237
- Groceries: $3,833
- Health Care: $4,148
II. Economic Development Strategy Process
II. Economic Development Strategy Process

The Economic Development Process used in the City of Charlotte took into specific account the unusually high number of community-focused groups with goals to move the community forward. On March 8, 2017, the city held a stakeholder session where a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) were formed by members of the non-profit group Charlotte Rising, City of Charlotte, Charlotte Downtown Development Authority, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and Charlotte Area Networking for Development and Opportunity (CANDO.) Attendees were asked to list the community’s greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. They then were asked to vote on the most important items in each area. The following are the areas for each listed by those items with the number of votes is in parentheses.

Strengths
The group identified the following areas of strength for Charlotte:

- Main Street Organization (27)
- Crandall Lake/Parks/Camp Francis (14)
- #CharlotteRising/Social Media (14)
- Regional Access/ I-69/Regional Community (12)
- Collaborative (7)
- Charlotte Schools -Free College (7)
- Partnerships with Others Outside the Community (6)
- Entrepreneurs (6)
- Downtown Building Stock (5)
- Community Leaders (5)
- Al!ve (4)
- Positive Community Momentum (4)
- Courthouse Square (3)
- Philanthropy (3)
- Airport (2)
- Industry Expanding (2)
- Real Estate Values/Opportunity for Growth (2)
- Community Engagements (2)
- Willingness to Change (2)
- Local Newspaper (2)
- Agri-Business (1)
- Windwalker Gallery (1)
- Charlotte Performing Arts Center
- Aquatic Center
- Farmer’s Market
- Hospital/Local Specialty Docs
- Library
- Strong History/Historic Character
- 2 Exits/Entrances
- Tech Center
- Festivals
- Walkability
Weaknesses

The group identified the following areas of weakness for Charlotte:

- Negative Thinkers/Too Proud to Change (25)
- Talent Attraction (25)
- Truck Traffic (14)
- Lack of Political Leadership (12)
- Lack of Retail (11)
- Deferred Maintenance on Properties (8)
- Communication (8)
- Lack of Quality Attainable/Affordable Housing (6)
- Lack of Diverse Job Opportunities (6)
- Competition from Other Communities (4)
- Lack of Youth/Millennial Engagement (3)
- County Seat (3)
- Lack of Anchor (3)
- Lack of Diversity (2)
- Sunday Shutdown/Roll Up Sidewalks (2)
- Shortage of Skilled Trades Workers (1)
- Not Good at Assimilating/Accepting New People (1)
- 3 Exits/Entrances off freeway
- Low Funding of DDA
- Transient population
- Higher Expectation of Girls (than boys) to go to College
Opportunities
The group also identified the following opportunities:

- Leverage Rising Tide/MMS (23)
- Crandall Lake/Parks (19)
- Beach Market (14)
- Shop Local/Downtown Enhancement (12)
- Small & Large Business Recruitment (11)
- Improve Downtown (10)
- Youth Engagement (7)
- Food Trucks (6)
- Unified Community Brand (6)
- Proximity to Lansing for Commuters (6)
- Single & Multi-Family Housing (6)
- Land Available for Development (4)
- Large Industrial Buildings Not Used (3)
- Unused Upper Floors (2)
- Grow Local Microbrewing (1)
- Increase Enrollment in Schools (1)
- College Credit for HS Classes
- Improve Real Estate Values
- Better Utilize/Improve Events
- Retail Niches
- Local Lending
- Put Energetic People in Elected Positions
- Leverage Pure Michigan Partnerships

Threats
The following threats were identified by attendees:

- External Perception (28)
- Apathy (24)
- Lack of Money (24)
- Negative Social Media (24)
- Competition from other Communities/Big Box (6)
- Lack of Clear Communication (6)
- Lack of Incentives (4)
- Rerouting Traffic (2)
- E-Commerce (1)
- Aging Population
- Teen Drug Use
III. Local & Regional Economic Development Goals
III. Local & Regional Economic Development Goals

For an economic development strategy to follow best practices put forth by the Redevelopment Ready Communities program, the individual objectives must tie back to one or more of the local goals and goals identified in the regional context. Each of the goals put forth in this strategy meets this criterion.

Local Economic Goals
The City of Charlotte has set forth the following goals for its local economic development efforts:

1. Increase economic opportunity for Charlotte residents and businesses
2. Improve the appearance of downtown, key corridors and neighborhoods
3. Increase number of residential units downtown
4. Redevelop blighted or underused properties
5. Create a more walkable and pedestrian-friendly community

Regional Economic Goals
Prosperity Region 7, which encompasses the southern portion of the Tri-County area surrounding Lansing, Michigan, including the City of Charlotte, has identified the following goals for the region’s economic development goals:

1. Create demand, attention and growth for all other communities in the region by concentrating on investment in downtown core of Lansing
2. Build sense of community by creating districts within the region with distinctive identities.
3. Increase downtown density by re-purposing buildings for more housing and business development.
4. Provide activities beyond “eat and live” in the downtown.

These goals are directly referenced in the Economic Development Strategy Chart (Table II on page 20)
IV. Organizational Roles & Responsibilities
IV. Organizational Roles & Responsibilities

The City of Charlotte is fortunate to have several organizations with capacity to lead and/or assist with various economic development activities. Charlotte Rising recently led Charlotte’s efforts to become a Select Level Community in the Michigan Main Street program, the Charlotte Area Networking for Development and Opportunity (CAN DO!) has long served as a locally-based, action-oriented think tank, the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, and the Charlotte Downtown Development Authority (DDA) as well as the City of Charlotte itself, presents an impressive group of private and public sector professionals who have committed time and resources to improving the Charlotte community. However, recently these entities have struggled with which organization should be doing which activities. After spending some time with each entity, the following areas of responsibilities have been determined as the best areas of focus for each entity:

Charlotte Rising (Charlotte Main Street program)
**Goal:** Make Downtown Charlotte Stronger
**Activities:** Real Estate Development, Downtown Business Promotion, Extended Hours Campaigns, Placemaking Activities, Upper Floor Housing, Downtown Clean-up, Events, Façade Improvements, Business Recruitment & Expansion, Promote Downtown Good News

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce
**Goal:** Make Charlotte Area Businesses Stronger
**Activities:** E-Commerce Training, Social Media Training, Advocacy & Leadership Development, Events (Business of the Year, EXPOs, etc.), Entrepreneurship Training, Connection to SBAM Resources, Ambassador Group, Small Business Saturday

Charlotte Area Networking for Development and Opportunity (CANDO)
**Goal:** Promoting Greater Charlotte Community
**Activities:** Promote Positive News Stories about the Community, Act as “Instigator of Ideas,” proposing and piloting innovative concepts and programs for the community.

Charlotte Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
**Goal:** Making Downtown Infrastructure Better
**Activities:** Wayfinding, Streetscape

These organizations’ responsibilities are reflected in the Economic Development Strategy Chart on Page 20.
V. Economic Development Strategy
V. Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy is a direct reflection of the input of stakeholders and professional redevelopment staff. It balances the desires of the community with market feasibility and the city’s capacity for this strategy’s execution. The projects outlined in the section focus solely on objectives that are substantially within the city’s ability to execute.

Strategic Objectives

Branding- The city and area lack a cohesive brand to define and market itself to potential residents, businesses and tourists. The entities mentioned above should work collaboratively with each other and other local stakeholders to identify funding and a contractor to help the community go through the branding process. There should be an overarching brand for the community, and brands identified for each entity outlined above. The implementation of the branding should be fully committed to by all parties.

Main Street District Assessment- As one of the first services Charlotte will receive from the Michigan Main Street program, the downtown will undergo an assessment from the Michigan Main Street staff which will identify additional potential projects in the areas of Organization, Design, Economic Vitality and Promotion. These projects should be held in equal weight to projects proposed in this strategy.

Business Directory- A traditional service by Chambers of Commerce, a comprehensive list of local businesses is a crucial component to informing the public of the various businesses and what they offer the community. This directory should not only be available in print form, but also online.

Business Maps/Yelp Integration- Hand in hand with the business directory, an accurate map of local businesses should be created for potential customers to locate them. Furthermore, efforts should be made to ensure all locally-owned businesses are listed on popular third-party sources, such as Yelp, Urban Spoon, and others, to ensure they can be found in mediums preferred by customers.

Downtown Business Round-tables- Monthly or quarterly meetings of downtown business owners should be conducted to provide direct communication with these stakeholders as well as facilitate conversation among businesses.
**Downtown Clean-Up** - Most communities do an annual downtown clean-up. Charlotte is no exception, but this clean-up should be extended to at least once a month for the months of April to November. Various service groups can be engaged to provide help such as local churches, Boy/Girl Scout troops, National Honor Society and others. Engaging these groups broadens the number of volunteers, and in many cases, engages youth, in revitalizing the area in a very concrete way.

**Sample Tours/Itineraries** - Many times, small towns do not think of themselves as tourist destinations. However, Charlotte has a lot to offer both tourists and non-tourists alike from an architecture tour to parks and physical activities (walking, biking, etc.) to local history. Several tours and/or itineraries of “must dos” can benefit both tourists and introduce existing residents to the many opportunities Charlotte has.

**Pocket Park** - The blighted structure (now art display) across from City Hall is scheduled to become a pocket park. This project should move forward to demolish the building and construct the park.

**Real Estate Redevelopment** - A review of the community shows the need to prioritize the redevelopment of three sites. The following sites should be prioritized in the following order:

**Former Chair Factory** - A key property on the edge of downtown is the former chair factory on Cochran Avenue. The property has been purchased recently and the owner is contemplating uses. This property could be redeveloped as either office or residential.
Former Grocery Store- This site is currently being proposed for affordable housing and has been approved by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA.) Regardless, this represents the single biggest chunk of land for redevelopment downtown. Careful consideration for highest and best use should be considered, whether the existing affordable housing proposal or redevelopment into a mixed-use market rate.

Former Bank- The former bank at 120 S. Cochran is a notable and very visual vacant property in downtown. This building could be converted to a restaurant, retail or possibly mixed-use.

Former Furniture Store- The former Christensen's Furniture Store at the main four corners in downtown represents the most visual vacancy in the community. The building was recently purchased and the owner is contemplating redevelopment. Every effort should be made to assist the owner in redevelopment, including use of Michigan Main Street design services to assist in possible upper floor renovation and conversion to residential.
# Charlotte Economic Development Strategy

## Project Rising Tide

### Economic Development Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Local Goal(s)</th>
<th>Regional Goal(s)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Actual Start Date</th>
<th>Actual End Date</th>
<th>Success Measurement</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Main Street Assessment</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Assessment Completed</td>
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<td>2.A. Conduct Assessment with National Main Street (NMS) staff</td>
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<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>2.B. Coordinate project with National Main Street (NMS) staff</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>2.C. Meet NMS staff</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>2.D. Receive NMS Assessment</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>2.E. Develop a strategy to implement NMS Assessment</td>
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<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<td>2.F. Work plan with committee</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.G. Assist work plan</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Bryan Marks, City of Charlotte</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.C. Work with graphic designer on creating printed and online format</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Tyler Fry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>Jun 2020</td>
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## Charlotte Economic Development Strategy

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task Description</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Create Business Maps, Third Party App integration</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A. Work with graphic designer to create local map highlighting businesses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. B. Create training on social media training and maximizing third party app, like Urban Spine &amp; Tail</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify space for training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Promote training (paid/self-fund for Chamber members, pay for non-members)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Conduct training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. S. Solicit feedback to improve training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Tyler Pry, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce&lt;br&gt;Joe Pray, Charlotte Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conduct Downtown Business Roundtables</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Develop list of all downtown businesses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Determine optimal monthly meeting date</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Determine best location (rotating or rotating)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Develop monthly agenda and feedback loop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<td>9. Downtown Clean-Up</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Determine frequency of clean-up (quartermly, monthly or weekly)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Develop list of potential volunteers, volunteer groups (tango scout, national honor society, etc.)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Develop work plan of tasks and frequency (reinforcement clean, painting, trash pick-up, etc.)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Invite groups/individuals to sign up for specific dates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Provide refreshments for volunteers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Photograph and write press releases of events</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Jay Pray, Charlotte Rising&lt;br&gt;Bryan Markle, City of Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Create and promote Town / Natural area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Brainstorm with stakeholders buildings to sea things to do, heritage sites, trails, etc.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Map out locations of items in 17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Find connections between items (location, elevation, etc.)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Create written narrative around each item</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not Started&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR&lt;br&gt;Bill Raman, CarDeR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6. Post to web, explore self guided mobile technology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>Joe Fray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Create Pocket Park</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.A. Get permits for demolition of vacant buildings</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.B. Identify funding for demolition, construction of park</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.C. Design park with input from stakeholders</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.D. Solicit bids for work</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.E. Award bid</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.F. Execute contract</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.G. Demolish building, construct park</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.H. Celebrate success</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Started</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Mid & Long-Term Projects
VII. Mid and Long-Term Projects

In addition to the Economic Development Strategy, the community needs to keep several economic development projects in mind for the mid and long-term:

**Pedestrian Reorientation of M-50 Downtown** - The narrowing of one of the main thoroughfares through downtown would significantly aid in making the area more pedestrian friendly. The city is working with Beckett & Raeder, Inc, to examine traffic flow and is working with stakeholders to develop a design that creates a more pedestrian friendly environment which will increase foot traffic. Increased foot traffic is an important outcome that directly benefits businesses downtown.

**Edmond Senior Apartments** - Conversion of the former grocery store site into senior apartments would significantly bolster the number of residents downtown. This project, combined with the renovation of the former middle and high school building, located diagonally from this site, are two major projects that could add tax base and additional spending to downtown businesses. MSHDA has recently approved Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) for the project and it appears it will move forward.

**Façade Improvements** - While the interiors of many buildings downtown are in decent shape, the exterior façades of numerous buildings could use significant improvements. The appearance of downtown, from the buildings to the streetscape, is an important indicator to prospective businesses (both downtown and industrial) of the overall financial health and wellbeing of a community. Improving the exterior façades will increase both the value of the individual buildings and increase the attractiveness of the city to potential new businesses.

**Beach Market** - This former market area has been identified as the site for a new farmer’s market. It would serve as an excellent location for this purpose and could function as a community gathering spot beyond just the farmer’s market function. In addition, the market will increase the community’s access to fresh fruits and vegetables, particularly those on the west side of the city, which technically meets the definition of a “food desert,” according to the definition by U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**Business Expansion & Attraction** - Successful communities and business districts do not leave business expansion and attraction to chance. Downtown should use the market data gleaned from the recent Michigan Main Street services to create a group of downtown business owners that disseminate this information to existing business owners and use it to help attract new businesses as well.

**Chair Factory Redevelopment** - The redevelopment of the former chair factory should be a high priority for the community. Currently owned by a successful local serial entrepreneur, redevelopment of this historic space into potential office space would add a large boost to the community’s economic development efforts.

**Extended Hours Campaign** - Currently, not many businesses outside of bars or restaurants are open much past 5pm downtown. The average commute time for residents is 20 minutes. Meaning, even if businesses close at 5pm, more than half of their community does not have the opportunity to shop downtown on a daily basis. Convincing business owners of this is a long, difficult process. However, by creating an extended hours campaign, even once a month, can help get downtown businesses owners thinking of extending their hours so they start to capture this additional spending.
Acknowledgments

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- Mr. Tyler Pray, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. William Barnes, CAN DO!
- Ms. Darice Darling, Charlotte Rising
- Charlotte Rising Board of Directors
- Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- Charlotte Downtown Development Authority Board
- CAN DO! Board of Directors
- Michigan Main Street Staff, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Mr. Nate Scramlin, Michigan Economic Development Corporation