A Thesis

Entitled

The Voice of Urban Planning:
Recent Revitalization Efforts in Downtown Toledo

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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An Abstract of
An Analysis of Revitalization:
In Downtown Toledo with an Emphasis in Urban Planning

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Over time, urban sprawl has caused many downtowns across the United States to lose businesses, residents, and attractions. Urban planners and designers are tasked with creating plans and policies that will help to revitalize downtowns, which have been negatively impacted by urban sprawl. The purpose of this research is to give insight and suggest recommendations on key components and concepts that are used, or can be used to help revitalize downtowns, which will contribute to restoring their prominence in urban areas. The question that arises is: what can us as regulators, producers, and users do to help promote a healthier downtown? This analysis uses interviews with planning professionals, residents, and stakeholders to identify deficiencies in previous master plans and planning efforts. Reviews of case studies show trends and best practices that could be applied to revitalization. By analyzing these findings, we can create hypotheses that will aid in combating the loss of commercial and residential entities in downtown Toledo. Planners and policy makers believe that the City of Toledo is in a position for the downtown to once again be the focal point for the region and regain some of the residents and commerce lost to the surrounding areas. This can be accomplished by utilizing
proper planning practices that restore the public’s interest in the downtown. The conclusion will indicate recommendations that can be used for future master plans for the downtown, which will hopefully aid in creating a sustainable downtown.
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The City of Toledo, for many years, has struggled with the problems of urban sprawl and the relocation of businesses outside of the downtown region. Downtown Toledo has tried numerous times to help bring businesses and people to the downtown. The City of Toledo’s goal is to create a development plan for its downtown. This would include creating a sense of place for visitors and residents of the downtown, and also help provide a center for activities whether it is for business, leisure or government.

In 2002, the City of Toledo developed a plan for the direction of Toledo’s growth and future. This plan was titled the “2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan.” In this plan, the City of Toledo wanted to address the issues that surrounded the downtown and help to create a framework for the revitalization of many of its areas. Also, they wanted to create a healthy relationship with the eight center city sub-districts that the city currently identifies. In this master plan, the authors recommended a three-step method to creating a better, more vibrant downtown. They noted the importance of specifying public improvements and amenities, the completion of development projects that are underway or slated for areas in the downtown, and the foundation for economic development programs.

The city once again needed to update the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan in 2011. This new plan is known as the “2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan”, and the authors of this plan built upon and refined many of the key points of the original 2002 plan. The new 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan serves as a progress report and
update on the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan. The main goal of the new 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan is to manage and direct the resources for the downtown realm. It also analyzes and formulates market advantages that can be used to increase and sustain development from the private sector in downtown Toledo. Lastly, the new 2011 plan aims to create an awareness of what Toledo has to offer, not only to the people that live here but also to potential investors from all corners of the world.
Chapter 2

Objectives and Goals

Objectives and Goals

With the changes that we have seen across the United States in the public and private sectors, it is important to pay close attention to the health of our cities in the United States. In the process of revitalization, what can urban planning and design add? What can we as planners and designers do to revitalize our downtowns in the context of urban sprawl? How can we create a downtown that is inviting to businesses and people? What improvements can we make to resurrect the splendor and sense of place downtowns once had in the past?

This thesis has two objectives:

1. To evaluate past attempts at downtown revitalization in Toledo. To accomplish this, I will explore the urban planning and design redevelopment strategies that the city has used to create the current downtown. Have previous plans and redevelopment strategies been a success or failure?

2. To examine case studies of urban planning and design related plans and redevelopment strategies in other cities in the United States and Canada to help draw lessons for Toledo. In researching other case studies, I will formulate recommendations that can be employed for the future growth and redevelopment in downtown Toledo, which can be added to the current master plan.
Chapter 3

Toledo Historic Background

The City of Toledo was founded in 1833; it was originally formed by small towns strategically located along the Maumee River, adjacent to many of the canals used to service the outlying areas with goods and transportation. From 1840 to 1980, the City of Toledo had experienced population growth, but it was not until 1980 to present time that the city has seen a decline in population. The current population of the City of Toledo is estimated to be 281,031, in comparison to a peak population of 383,818 in the past (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015).

As of the 2013 American Community Survey, Toledo, Ohio has roughly 138,382 housing units in its metropolitan area, which reflects the five regions in the City of Toledo; North, South, East, West and Central (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015). These five regions are made up of neighborhoods, which have diverse characteristics within themselves. Downtown Toledo is located in the central region of Toledo. Historically, the central region of Toledo served as the hub for activity in the community. Commercial zoning and usages were primarily located in the downtown, and many of the other regions were residentially zoned with varying densities. Some regions had smaller lots and allowed for closer setbacks on structures, which others allowed for more open space and larger lots. In the past, Toledo had a vast streetcar and public transportation system that made it easy for people to travel in and out of the city center where business was conducted. The prosperity that Toledo had seen contributed to the growth of these neighborhoods, which caused businesses to relocate.
out of the city center and closer to the public that had a demand for their products. The automobile also made it possible for the public to travel further to obtain these goods and services allowing small villages and suburbs to grow in size and demand; however, this growth also led to fragmentation of the physical appearance of downtown Toledo.

**Toledo Downtown Plan Background**

The 2011 Toledo Downtown Plan supersedes the 2002 Downtown Master Plan and was designed to help promote growth and rejuvenation in the downtown. The updated plan used analyses, case studies and proposed projects to hopefully sustain and expand the role the downtown plays in the economic, social, cultural, and residential viability of the entire region (2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, 2011). The specific reason for the update was to address the physical changes experienced in the downtown over the past nine years (2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, 2011). As we have seen from the past, trends can change and create different demands that can ultimately affect the downtown. Have planners and decision makers accounted for this in the best way possible? What can be added or stressed upon to help propel a healthy downtown?

In past years, the downtown has seen positive changes, which include the new Huntington Center, and the conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets. The Downtown Plan describes the Huntington Center as a key component in what is referred to as the urban trifecta. This urban trifecta consists of the Seagate Convention Center, Fifth Third Field, and the Huntington Center (2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, 2011). The Downtown Plan also acknowledges that the urban trifecta should be utilized as core

Most recently, game-changing news has rocked the revitalization efforts in downtown Toledo. On August 18, 2015, the Toledo City Council voted 11-0 to grant final approval to ProMedica Health System to relocate their headquarters to downtown Toledo and build a parking garage on a portion of the Promenade Park. ProMedica is slated to build a new corporate headquarters in the former Toledo Edison Steam Plant building along with the existing KeyBank Building. The new headquarters will house 1,000 employees and require a six-story parking structure with one level underground for a total of seven stories (Messina, 2015). This positive forward movement in the revitalization of downtown Toledo all started in 2014, under the Mayor D. Michael Collins administration. It was then taken over and approved by Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson’s administration after the death of Mayor Michael Collins in February 2015. With the approval of the ProMedica development plans, this has created a new outlook on plans and needs in the downtown. Decision makers in Toledo feel that this is the key to help spark the revitalization of the downtown.

Along with these positive changes, the downtown area has also seen setbacks in the past several years. For example, the relocation of Owens Illinois-OI to Perrysburg, and the increase in the vacancy of skyscrapers such as the Nicholas, Spitzer, and Nasby/Wayne building in downtown Toledo (2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, 2011). These setbacks can be drawn upon to understand what went wrong and how can we, as planners and residents, stop this from happening and create sustainable usages in the downtown.
Introduction

One of the essential concepts planners must consider in creating a vibrant city is urban design and the urban makeup of the city. According to Hamid Shirvani, author of The Urban Design Process, “Urban design affects the way individuals live, work, and socialize. Effective urban design, therefore, requires an understanding of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, civil and transportation engineering, real estate development, and psychology” (Shirvani, 1985, p. 2). Urban design and planning can have an everlasting effect on the community, and if done correctly, it can withstand the test of time. In the world today, some cities are in need of proper growth management for their rapidly growing population, and others are in need of new innovated ideas to help stop the decay of their urban fabric. Specifically, in North America, many cities have grown so rapidly that the urban sprawl of those cities has lead to their decline and a lack of a vibrant urban center.

A city is defined as a center of population, commerce, and culture of significant size and importance. These three things are key in having a lively city, which people can call home. Just as in an organism, a city is comprised of mutually interdependent parts, which in turn provide vital processes in the collective identity of a city. Urban design and planning play a major role in the appearance and functionality of a city, therefore helping bring people to the cities and fueling economy by attracting businesses as well. Many of the decaying cities of the U.S. have numerous recurring problems, such as, lack of
money, lack of infrastructure and lack of public interest. By exercising superior urban
design and planning techniques, many believe that the problems we face can be solved
over time.

Over the past few years, in cities across the U.S., many projects have taken place
involving urban design and planning. These projects range from large metropolitan areas
to smaller cities. Each city has a unique urban identity. Some cities are old industrial
cities that have declined over the years with the loss of population and jobs. Others are
cities that are still in the growing process. Many also include cities that are known as
world cities, not only for their economical presence in the world but their cultural
presence as well. One of the key attributes of a city is the downtown area. Downtowns
are an essential part of a city and are characterized by their central location, a variety of
function, and maximum intensity of land use (Cook, 1980). Many of the characteristics in
a well-designed and walkable downtown area should be the determining factors in the
form of the urban environment. These characteristics can be anything from face-to-face
contacts to diversity of choice, and opportunities for participating in the surroundings.

The question that I want to explore in this literature review is what type of urban
planning and design concepts and techniques have been used to help revitalize
downtown, and create a more pedestrian-friendly setting? To answer this question, we
must look back in history to understand how and why downtowns began. “American
downtowns originally arose as marketplaces where people came together to barter or buy
and sell goods” (Cook, 1980, p. 12). Transportation dictates the locations of these
downtowns. This is one reason why many large cities are the location on waterways in
the U.S, which at the time was the fastest way of transportation. Cities also had to be
located for easy access via foot travel and horseback travel. In the 1900’s, downtowns became city centers; these areas that were typically home to retail, service, finance, government, and culture. In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, cities were compact and walkable, with architectural details and the scale of the region was oriented to the pedestrian (Cook, 1980). One of the problems that were faced in the downtowns of these early times was the issue of land use.

**Urban Planners, Urban Designers, Architects**

What sets urban planners, urban designers, and architects apart? These people all play influential roles in the planning and design of a city. “Planning decisions have a powerful impact on the shape of a city by determining density levels, the location of public facilities, the amount of mix uses, and traffic routes” (Cook, 1980, p. 23). Not to forget planning also has a hand in policies within and around the built environment.

Architecture is another piece of the puzzle in creating a city. “Architects plan the arrangement of materials to define the form of spaces and thus the kinds of experiences these spaces offer” (Cook, 1980, p. 23). Architects have a relationship more so with their clients, and not with the public. So the question arises who works with the public? It is the job of the urban planners and designers; who essentially make the public their client. An urban designer and planner attempt to influence someone else’s design, unlike the architect who does the actual design. This individual must be able to create concepts and designs that help captivate the public and please the decision makers of a city. The situation is not an easy task since designers and planners need a great understanding of users, producers, and regulators.
Roles and Challenges

In the past few years, we have seen growing attention on the subject matter of urban design. In urban design and planning, three major individuals affect design and planning efforts: the regulators, producers, and users. Regulators are primarily the government and the roles in the economy it has, and in the urban development process, it is mainly reflected in the planning process (Madanipour, 2006). Producers refer to those that build the city; these include developers and their financiers. The producers also include the designers and construction companies (Madanipour, 2006). The users can be considered the most important of these three dynamics. Users are the ones who visit, work, or live in the city, which requires them to use the urban space in some fashion (Madanipour, 2006). When it comes to urban development these three actors are not separated by any means, in fact, they overlap in roles and functions (Madanipour, 2006).

As stated earlier in the text, we know that cities have undertaken a large amount of change from the past to the present. As globalization changes the world, it is also changing the form and significance of cities. It is creating new and innovative ways to reach all parts of the world, which helps create a more desirable and quicker connectivity to cities around the world. Also, many places in the world that at one point in the past were not able to take part in the global market now have the opportunity to do so (Madanipour, 2006). Now we see that many jobs can be performed at an off-site location, which tends to draw people to the developed urban areas where an increase in jobs can be seen.

At the turn of the millennium, we have witnessed a significant shift, which can be dubbed a new urban revolution (Madanipour, 2006). For the first time in history, we see
that the number of urban dwellers became larger than the number in rural areas, which accounts for more than half of the world’s population living in cities (Madanipour, 2006). The increase in urban dwellers can be credited to the demographic and economic changes that are taking place around the world, which in some instances are considered to cause globalization. The countryside of many countries can no longer create benefits for the people that live there and call it home, so in turn, they are forced to move to the most developed areas or urban areas to seek out better opportunities.

The connection between these cities has also seen rapid growth with the help of globalization. This plays a helping hand in the development of a new division of labors across the world, whereby economic activities move around in search of higher productivity and lower cost (Madanipour, 2006). Now, as a result, we see industrialization in some low-wage areas and deindustrialization in many higher-wage areas (Madanipour, 2006). An example of this can be seen in various cities located in the western hemisphere that was the center of the manufacturing industry at one point in time. Now globalization has turned cities in the west into centers of innovation and control, as well as exchange and consumption (Madanipour, 2006). Globalization creates a structural change in the economic base of the city, which becomes reflected in its social and spatial organizations (Madanipour, 2006). “It is an overall change in which the roles of those who produce, regulate and use the city have changed substantially” (Madanipour, 2006, p. 176).
Urban Design

How does urban design play a role in this? “Urban design contributes to the task of adjusting the city to this structural change, by creating a new spatial organization and projecting a new image that benefits a new society” (Madanipour, 2006, p. 176). Also, urban design becomes a tool that is developed to facilitate the change by shaping the urban fabric in new ways (Madanipour, 2006). Urban design plays an integral part of the urban development process. Therefore, it shapes the urban spaces in a city. Urban design also lends a hand to many different areas of master planning, housing market renewal and growth, infill and mix-use development in urban centers, as well considerations for liveability in cities (Madanipour, 2006). Very often we see urban planning and urban design as being merely a combination of vision and mission statements written down on paper, basically, a scenario that has little to do with the realities of a place. It becomes essential to realize that vision in urban design should be embedded in concrete situations (Madanipour, 2006). This will help bring together the fragments caused by social, economic and technological changes in cities (Madanipour, 2006). “To achieve this embeddedness it often calls for paying attention to the spatiality of the vision that is being prepared for a particular place and people” (Madanipour, 2006, p. 182). With that said, an important role that urban design must execute is to add the flesh and bones of the newly created visions and general policy statements. Urban design gives us the chance to imagine what the future might look like (Madanipour, 2006).
Zoning in Urban Design

In the past, many cities did not have zoning laws and guidelines for development and proper urban growth. This issue led to many bad decisions in the development of areas in the downtown locale. “Offensive land uses were sometimes placed in inappropriate locations” (Cook, 1980, p. 41). This had to be changed and hence the development of zoning laws and guidelines was created. Not only are these new laws good for cities, but also it is good for society and the social make-up of the cities. In some cases, it allows for the fair treatment and opportunity for individuals in the downtown area. It helps give the landscape of a downtown region a more distinct look and use of its area.

Zoning laws also help many companies perform at their full capabilities. With the mixture of land uses in downtowns it enables more companies to locate their facilities in these downtowns. As businesses move into downtowns, they bring revenue to the city, create jobs in the downtown area and people who are in search of employment and a new place to live. We tend to see an increase in population around the central business districts (CBDs) of downtowns. The increase in population is due to job opportunities located within the CBDs. A real example of this is New York City, where we see areas that are primarily dominated by businesses and commerce. Adjacent to these areas, we also see pockets of residential areas. The residential areas range from single-family homes to multi-family homes to high-density apartment living. Zoning makes it possible for a downtown to function in an efficient way. It helps city planners and designers get the most use out of the downtown area.
Years ago, two significant inventions helped change the way downtowns were created. Some see these changes as progress toward higher economic yields. On the other hand, some people feel that these two inventions are the biggest cause of the current disarray of our downtowns. It also had a profound and lasting effect on the physical form and quality of the social environment of downtowns (Cook, 1980). These effects can be seen as either good or bad.

The first invention was the high-rise building. Before the 1900’s, buildings were limited on how high they could have been built. Typically, it was normal to see buildings no more than five stories high. But this normalcy changed once the elevator and improved construction technologies were developed. This pivotal change that the new high-rise building caused had a profound effect on the city. These new high-rises allowed for a larger concentration of people in a small land area and theory allowed for higher population densities in the city, which helped control the effect of urban sprawl (Cook, 1980). There now was a need for public transportation due to high-rises allowing for the higher-density development. One of the main creations that occurred in this period was the subway system in New York City. The subway would later catch on in other parts of the United States, primarily in large cities. It was seen by many as a testament to how important transportation would be in the downtown setting. Not only did the higher density development help create the subway system, but it also paved the way for better infrastructures as well. Also, subways can give the downtowns a sense of place and character, which is not found in rural areas. This new form of public transit helped create less traffic in the cities due to not needing an automobile to get around. When people hear the term “subway systems” most think of major heavily populated areas. To manage and
create harmony in these higher density developments, the concepts of urban planning and urban design were developed to help control and organize the urban environment.

**Transportation**

When the automobile made its first appearance in society in the late 1800s – early 1900s, it created a sense of freedom for the American people. Socially, it was a luxury for people, but it would turn out to be troublesome for cities. The automobile allowed people to live away from the city (Cook, 1980). Having access to an automobile encouraged people to move out of the downtowns and further away from the congestion that accompanied these urban areas. The creation of road networks made it easier for people to commute to the downtowns and other populated areas for work or pleasure. Essentially the invention of the automobile helped persuade people to move away from the dense population. In the years to come, overcrowding of the downtown would also play a role in push away for the downtowns (Cook, 1908). Many people felt that living in an open and less crowded area would be healthier, not only for them but for raising a child.

Even though many people were moving out of the downtown regions, they still had ties to the downtown, typically for work or shopping. A primary concern for downtown planning and design was the need to accommodate the automobile (Cook, 1980). It was virtually impossible to generate a public transportation system that would reach these areas and also be prompt due to the distances people were willing to travel from the cities. Some attempts to provide public transportation have been made to service these areas. For example, bus lines and light rail systems were implemented. Still the biggest problem faced was traffic congestion and pollution. As we can see public
transportation entities, planners and designers must find ways to work with each other, to make life in the city better and more beneficial to citizens that normally would not see themselves in an urban environment.

In downtown planning and design, it is normal for planners and designers to use pedestrian space for automobiles. This was a sure-fire way to speed up the decay of the downtown as we know it. “The pedestrian environment has been caught in the squeeze between the automobile and the skyscraper, with the automobile robbing the pedestrian of space and the skyscraper robbing him or her of natural light and of a human scale, while putting more people on the ever decreasing sidewalk space” (Cook, 1980, p. 81). This was the beginning of the decline of the downtown. It is important for the pedestrian to feel safe and comfortable in the downtown area; otherwise, it will cause people to stay away from these areas. With no sense of place for the pedestrian, it is now the city planners and urban designers job to help give the pedestrian their right of way back in the downtown, which can be achieved by creating policies and changing the urban layout to benefit the people.

At the end of World War II, we began to see more of a large movement of people out of the city centers and downtowns. “The centrifugal forces of sprawl, made possible by the automobile and abetted by government policies, drew residents particularly those with the greatest buying power away for the city centers” (Cook, 1980, p. 84). During this time the economy was somewhat robust, people now had the funds to move out of the city and buy land in the outlying areas. Many of the people that moved out of the downtowns and city centers had the greatest buying power that caused a loss of wealth in the downtown areas. Now we no longer have people living in the downtowns that help
fuel the economic composition of the downtowns and city centers. With the movement of people out of the downtowns, it causes many of the retail shops to follow and move as well. “Some merchants merely opened suburban branches, while others closed their downtown stores altogether” (Cook, 1980, p. 89). The downtown retail stores suffered the greatest negative effects in this situation. Also, the higher land value in the city centers gave people the only option of relocating to the suburban areas. In downtowns today we see some, but tiny retail areas. Downtowns are still centers for different types of activities, but they will most likely never be assuming a preeminent role in the retail industry (Cook, 1980).

Downtowns of today look very different from what they were in the past. In many downtowns that are no longer vibrant, we can still see reminisce of what it was once like. The question is, what happened to these areas and why did downtowns lose their appeal? The answer to this question lies in part in the creation of the automobile and how it has changed life in the United States. Many downtowns are characterized by a thinning out of the building coverage, with vacated spaces devoted to rights of way and parking. In some cities, public transportation is limited due to funding and ridership. As much as 75 percent of the surface area may be devoted to streets and parking lots or even parking garages in downtown areas (Cook, 1980). These are some of the by-products of the automobile and Americas love for them. Another characteristic of downtowns in American cities are the rings of limited-access highways that give these downtowns a clearly defined boundary but cuts them off from the surroundings (Cook, 1980). Downtowns also have a tendency of similar activities, such as commercial, financial, and retail activities and supporting services, to cluster around different centers of
concentration (Cook, 1980). In many cases, this is not undesirable for downtowns as long as the street-level quality is preserved.

As time progresses, many of the trends from the past and present that have helped shape what communities look like today, have also allowed downtowns to become competitive with suburban regions. They also have a general rising demand in the improvement of the quality of the urban environment. Two of the major improvements are mass transportation and new multiuse structures. Mass transportation is facilitating greater land coverage and density (Cook, 1980). Buses and light rail systems make downtowns more appealing, and they also generate substantial capital and operating subsidies. These factors can help generate money for the city and increase the spending that can be done by the city in improving infrastructure. With better infrastructure, easier transportation, and appeal to potential consumers, it will in turn cause businesses to relocate to the downtowns, which is important in creating the economic life, as well as the bustle and variety that downtowns can offer. The rising cost of gasoline will undoubtedly encourage even more use of the downtown-focused public-transportation systems (Cook, 1980).

**Mega Structures**

Very often we see developers and cities create large, free-standing, multi-use structures, which are used in mix-use zoning for a variety of reasons, such as stores and retail plazas, hotel space, offices, and housing. These mega structures are frequently a focal point of activity and are located in the downtowns (Cook, 1980). Three major mega structure examples are the Chicago’s Water Tower Place, Atlanta’s Omni International
and Detroit’s Renaissance Center (Cook, 1980). These mega structures can be viewed as either advantages or disadvantages for the downtowns and urban fabric. Due to the size and type of structure, you will notice in some areas that it chops the urban fabric and isolates the other parts of the downtown. These mega structures are typically efficient and economically homogeneous environments, and sometimes do not allow for the integration into the surrounding urban region (Cook, 1980). On the other hand, some see it as a way to get people into the downtowns. By doing this, it can help create a sense of destination within the downtown, therefore effectively helping increase ridership of public transportation and stimulate other economic entities (Cook, 1980).

The task that planners and designers must undertake in this type of development is the integration of these economic epicenters. Unfortunately, these mega structures can create pockets of dead zones in the downtown region. The structures can pull all the surrounding economical value out and make it tough for smaller businesses to stay afloat (Cook, 1980). This is why it is important for planners and designers to monitor the area and create ways that integration can occur. Due to their fortress-like nature, these mega structures are seldom well integrated into a city’s pedestrian network (Cook, 1980). In some cases, the mega structures have had a positive effect on the rest of the downtown by bringing people and stimulating other investment (Cook, 1980).

Many cities look in the direction of building a large exhibition and sports facilities. Cities thought that building those facilities would be a good way to bring people to the downtown by creating a sense of reason for people to have a common gathering place. The downside to building these types of facilities is that they can cripple a downtown. These types of developments generate intermittent but strong demands for
the vehicles movement and parking, which preclude other land uses that are better suited for reinforcing desirable urban qualities (Cook, 1980). Along with large commercial structures, the exhibition, and sports facilities, if poorly integrated into the surrounding areas can form gaps of inactivity and sterility that ultimately produce disruption in the pedestrian environment. In cities, we can now see a slow trickle of residents back toward the city centers. Many cities have found renewed interest in downtown marketplaces (Cook, 1980). Not only do markets provide a great place to buy goods and help fuel the economy, but they also help people have an improved social experience that is not offered by shopping malls, supermarkets, and other auto-dependent activities (Cook, 1980). Planners and designers can help to cultivate this demand for residential and commerce by providing mixed use zoning for developments.

Visual Quality

The main concern of the urban designer is the visual quality of a city. The major determining factor of the visual quality is the form (Cook, 1980). The form is the incorporation of all parts in a city or region; it deals with the shape, visual appearance, and the configuration of objects. Urban form can help create a sense of place and identity in the city while also attracting people to an area. A poor urban form can lead to the underutilization of a downtown or city, which will result in the decay of a downtown area. In urban design, there are many variables involved in the urban form. These variables must be managed and arranged in ways that help create or persevere the character and identity of the area. Some key elements can be addressed in the streetscape, such as colors, textures, landscapes, objects, and line of site just to name a few. The
design of streets, walkways and paths also play a role in the streetscape. Key concepts that we can create in the streetscape are visibly organized and sharply identified, in which citizens can interpret it with his or hers own meanings and connections (Lynch, 1960). Once you create a strong connection and meaning of an area, it will then become a true place (Lynch, 1960). A true place can be obtained by creating a good streetscape that people can understand, enjoy and feel safe.

“To heighten the imaging ability of the urban environment is to facilitate its visual identification and structuring” (Lynch, 1960, p. 95). Paths are important elements in the city form that sometimes go overlooked. Paths can vary from pedestrian walkways, to bike paths, to roads. These paths in an urban setting help create a visual identification for people using them. “The paths and network of habitual or potential lines of movement through the urban complex are the most effective means in which the whole region can be ordered” (Lynch, 1960, p. 96). Lynch feels it is important to have a unified element that is continuous. The examples he uses include Boston, Massachusetts’s Washington Street with its intensive commerce along with its slot-like spaces and Commonwealth Ave with its tree-lined center. “These are just two examples of characteristics that can be used. If one or more of these qualities are employed consistently along the line, then the path may be imaged as a continuous, unified element” (Lynch, 1960, p. 96). On pathways, Kevin Lynch believes that it is imperative to have a concentration of special uses along the margins, a characteristic spatial quality, a special texture of floor or façade, and particular lighting pattern, a unique set of smells or sounds, a typical detail or mode of planning (Lynch, 1960). In having this continuous element in the city, it will act as a familiarity that is needed in cities to give it a sense of place. It would lead to what
might be called a visual hierarchy of the streets and ways, analogous to the familiar recommendation of a functional hierarchy, and most importantly this can be considered the skeleton of the city image (Lynch, 1960).

In city form, edges are also vital just as much as paths in a city; edges can be important in creating a sense of place to dwellers and people that utilize what the city has to offer whether it is on a daily basis or occasional use. Many concepts can be used to illustrate the edges in a district or area. Typically, in cities, we can see a change in the architecture, lighting, streetscape, height of buildings, transportation lines, and economical development (Lynch, 1960). These factors can all be indicators of a region’s or areas edge in the community. In some cases, water and other physical landforms can create a natural edge in a city (Lynch 1960). Cities can use these natural edges for their benefit by creating a sense of place and destination in the city (Lynch, 1960). Edges are an element in a city that can vary due to an individual’s perception of a city, especially in city settings that are comprised of many different demographical factors. Cities tend to change over time, and they may change many times due several factors such as age, economy, ethnic composition, and migration. For example, an older person that has lived in a city their entire life may have a different understanding of the city, in comparison to a younger person that moved to the city or spent their childhood years in the city. Here is where individual interpretation of the city should correlate to the built environment (Lynch, 1960).

Due to many of these characteristics tend to repeat themselves when looking at the different elements that must be taken into consideration in the design of the city form, Kevin Lynch breaks these characteristics into ten categories of direct interest in design.
These ten categories are qualities that a designer may operate upon (Lynch, 1960). Singularity or figure-background clarity is a means to identify an element making it remarkable, noticeable, vivid, and recognizable (Lynch, 1960). Clarity and simplicity of visible form in the geometrical sense, forms of this type are easier to incorporate in the image of the city (Lynch, 1960). Continuity, which refers to the continuance of edges or surfaces, this is a quality that facilitates the perception of a complex physical reality as one of interrelated (Lynch, 1960). Dominance, elements in the urban form can have dominance over another, and this will help to create the perception of a whole as a principle feature with an associated cluster (Lynch, 1960). This quality, like continuity, allows the necessary simplification of the image by omission and subsumption (Lynch, 1960). Clarity of joints, this concept, provides high visibility of joints and seams (Lynch, 1960). This will help show a clear relation and interconnection in the built environment.

Directional differentiation can be asymmetrical, gradient, or radical references, which differentiate one end from another, which can be used in the built environment for structuring on the large scale. (Lynch, 1960). Visual scope is important notions that can help pedestrians feel more comfortable in the urban setting. Quality helps to increase the range and penetration of the vision, this plays a large role in the safety and the sense of place for the pedestrians (Lynch, 1960). Motion awareness is the quality that is both the visual and the kinesthetic senses, which plays a role in the actual or potential motion through the built environment (Lynch, 1960). This quality reinforces, and helps to develop what an observer can do to interpret direction or distance, and create a sense in motion itself (Lynch, 1960). Time series is a quality that can be employed in the design of cities to help develop patterns of the elements, rather them the elements themselves
(Lynch, 1960). According to Kevin Lynch, names and meanings are the last quality that a
designer can use to help improve the urban form. These non-physical characteristics may
enhance the image of an element (Lynch, 1960). Names and meanings can give
pedestrians direction in the city and can aid in giving them a sense of location within the
city. These are some crucial qualities that planners must keep in mind according to Kevin
Lynch. Once we can understand these qualities and create city forms that incorporate
many of these, we will, in turn, create a city that is more appealing, livable, and
memorable for the visitors and residents.

Legibility & Aesthetics

In urban design, legibility and aesthetics are two key concepts that must be paid
close attention to. Many authors have debated for and against these two concepts in urban
design and planning theory. Some researchers feel that legibility is the most important
concept, and others believe aesthetics are important in keeping a good perception of
townscape in peoples mind. In a paper by Nigel Taylor that was published on in May
2009, titled, Legibility and Aesthetics in Urban Design, he explains why aesthetics
should be considered over legibility in urban design. On the other hand, in Kevin Lynch’s
work titled The Image of the City, he focuses on how legibility is the key component for
creating “good urban design”. According to Nigel Taylor’s work, Lynch thinks that
aesthetics must and will always take a back seat to legibility (Taylor, 2009, p.189). To the
contrary, Taylor would beg to differ. He believes that aesthetics is important as well and
is overlooked far too often.
The concept of legibility is a principle of “good urban design”, but is overrated (Taylor, 2009, p. 189). Aesthetics, on the other hand, is important in creating a lasting impression of the townscape. It can be argued that there can be townsapes that are legible in all aspects identified by Lynch and yet, for urban design, it would be deemed poor in quality (Taylor, 2009). This is because legibility to some fails to interest us or please us sensually, emotionally or affectively (Taylor, 2009). On the opposite side, we see some townsapes are relatively illegible, and yet we enjoy and find them interesting to be in and hence judged to be of high quality (Taylor, 2009). Unlike legibility, we primarily find our experience of these townsapes sensually, emotionally, or affectively pleasing and interesting (Taylor, 2009). It can be seen that many people can relate to an area in which they feel these three senses. In logic, it is an important way to create a sensible connection to the townscape, once this has been achieved it will make for a more utilized townscape. Having a utilized townscape can help create a venue or reason for destination to a city, in addition to the emotional connection to the area.

What is the difference between the two terms legibility and aesthetic, when referring to the urban form? In these two central concepts, legibility is considered more straightforward then aesthetics. A legible city would be defined as relatively easy to read and comprehend by virtue of its clear spatial structure and physical form, and its clarity of the urban form would, in turn, enable us to visualize a clear mental map or image of the city (Taylor, 2009). In Kevin Lynch’s research, he outlines five components to the legibility or imageability of townsapes: pathways, nodes, edges, districts and landmarks (Taylor, 2009). Many designers and planners use his work, as guidelines in helping them understand what is needed to create the proper legibility and image for an urban form.
Taylor goes on to agree with the notion that legibility is essentially cognitive rather than affective (Taylor, 2009).

In some cases, planners and designers do not take into consideration the aesthetic qualities that must be kept in the urban form. We see in some areas that the legibility factor has cast a shadow on aesthetics make virtually nonexistent. Aesthetics is a key concept that Taylor, feels need to be paid more attention to in urban design and planning. The aesthetics of an urban form generates the sensual and affective quality, so that the paradigm case of aesthetic perception concerns how we feel when we perceive something (Taylor, 2009). Incorporating a greater deal of aesthetics Taylor believes, will lead to a better sense of place for people in the urban areas. He also contemplates that people who have a more emotional connection to an area will enjoy and utilize it better (Taylor, 2009). According to Taylor, it seems that aesthetics in some cases are not entirely understood, and this causes for poor design.

To prove his argument that aesthetics is a more important concept than legibility, Taylor describes two different townscapes- one with more of moderate detail and is highly legible, and the other that is highly aesthetic in its design. The first townscape that Taylor takes us to is a place that is considered a Lynchian district in an old English city that remains nameless, this townscape employs all of the traditional hallmarks of Lynch’s theory on legibility. He describes the townscapes layout and gives great visual representation of what is in this region. The townscape does correlates with all the concepts described by Lynch in his work and is an easy area to navigate. On the downside, this townscape lacks a quality that you can connect to. Due to its legibility and layout, it is hard for a pedestrian or visitor to engage with the environment (Taylor,
In the description of the townscape, you get the feeling that the streetscape is designed to direct you to your destination, blinding you from the other entities and detecting you from interaction in which you could take part.

The other example of a city which is more aesthetically oriented is Venice, Italy. The city is described as teeming with life and interactions. When you look at a map of Venice, you get the sense that it is a city that a newcomer may get lost in very quickly (Taylor, 2009). With its complicated network of narrow, twisting alleyways and canals it looks overwhelming until you walk and experience these alleyways and paths. Due to its built environment houses, shops, and other activities are located right at the walkway level. This means that there is no detachment from the paths and the built environment, Taylor maintains this gives a visitor or residents the sense of belonging and the emotional connection that aesthetics can bring in the urban form (Taylor, 2009). Not only will the paths and allies take you to your destination, but it will also prompt the engagement needed to help draw people back. With the increase in interaction with the environment, this makes the experience more sensual, emotional or affective.

**Authenticity**

Urban conservation is the implementation of keeping the authenticity of an urban area. The question is asked, why must we destroy the existing urban fabric, and create a new one (Salah Ouf, 2001)? The destruction of the urban fabric can cause fragmentation in the community (Salah Ouf, 2001). Fragmentation in a community can affect a multitude of things in the urban area. A few examples are transportation, sense of community, infrastructure, economy, and safety just to name a few. Keeping the
community or urban region together is a fundamental task; in creating new urban
designing models and concept, we must to an extent incorporate the historical feel and
characteristics (Salah Ouf, 2001). This will help safeguard from disrupting what is
currently there. In addition, it will make the community adapted to the new changes in
the area.

Over the past few years, urban designers have gained a new understanding of
urban heritage that covers the entire city or urban region (Salah Ouf, 2001). It has also
created new professional and theoretical approaches to urban conservation (Salah Ouf,
2001). It is evident that many people tend to relate to a city or urban environment from
key landmarks, design, and structures. Urban design and planning must achieve these
attributes that will help give the sense of place to the users of the area. One of the most
recent approaches to urban design is aimed at the creation of enjoyable urban experiences
and not at the mere retention of authentic urban history for succeeding generations (Salah
Ouf, 2001). Road blocks that urban designers and planners face in many new
developments that they create are conflicting interests by the community, government
and other parties that are involved in the urban environment. A way that we as planners
and designers can help lessen the conflict during the design process are to understand all
the viewpoints of the people involved (Salah Ouf, 2001). We must also look at what is
currently there and build upon what we have available when necessary (Salah Ouf, 2001).

There are two parts in understanding the concept of an authentic place in urban
conservation the conservation concepts and the conservation methodology. The
methodology is the practical process followed for the conservation, and the concept in
urban conservation is the bonding idea behind the choice of the conserved geographical
location (Salah Ouf, 2001). It is essential to have both of these parts to help create a complete plan in the urban conservation process. In regards to the methodology, an urban designer or urban planner can only influence the urban conservation methodologies. An example of this is deciding the management style and the final activities allowed in the conserved area (Salah Ouf, 2001). It is not the case in the conservation concept, which acts as the bonding idea. The urban designer and planner have an array of possibilities, one includes making sure the authenticity is respected in all aspects of the conservation project (Salah Ouf, 2001).

**Methodology**

In this thesis, I conducted interviews with key members of the community in the downtown area. When selecting the individuals to interview, it was important to understand how they represented the downtown and their expertise on the topic. Many of them are decision makers involved with various committees tasked with creating and carrying out the downtown master plan. I identified and interviewed stakeholders in the downtown community, planning and development professionals. A few of these individuals are also residents and visitors of downtown Toledo. I selected a group of individuals that represented all four of the categories listed above who ranged from professionals in their respective fields to retired individuals. They are listed in Appendix A.

I selected this interview method to gain a better understanding of their viewpoints on creating and promoting the direction of Downtown Toledo; essentially these are individuals that represent the voice of the citizens. After researching their backgrounds
and the history they have with and working for the City of Toledo, it was easy to see why many of them represent the various boards and steering committees trusted to contribute to the future of downtown Toledo. All of the interviewees are also affiliated with the Toledo Design Center. Interviewing them with specific questions would be the best way to get their opinion, understanding, and philosophy of planning concepts and development.

Case studies were used to provide an understanding of the real world application of the concepts and trends used in other parts of the world in cites that were similar to Toledo, or when the ideas were relevant even if used in cities very dissimilar to Toledo. The analysis of case studies and the interviews with the variety of people involved in the planning process enabled me to gain knowledge and formulate development recommendations that can be applied to the current plan. It added to my goal of addressing many of the key concepts and reoccurring themes in the planning, which need to be implemented to help revitalize the downtown.

**Interview Questions**

The questions were designed to provoke insight to the current state of downtown Toledo, and what future solutions may be implemented and lead to revitalization. The questions also addressed how trends from the past have worked or have not. Each question I asked also had a follow-up question to help elaborate some views. These questions were geared towards planning professionals, stakeholders, and residents in Toledo. All participants in the interview process were asked the same questions (see Appendix B). In addition, the follow-up questions were also the same for everyone. This
interview approach was decided upon because the interviewees’ backgrounds showed
great similarities, many also worked together and or served on the same committees and
boards, which allowed me a better opportunity to analyze the similarity or differences in
their approach and outlook to planning and development in downtown Toledo.
Chapter 5
Research Findings

Introduction

The research findings are presented in sections that will articulate many of the ideas and concepts established for the creation and implementation of the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, and the updated 2011 Downtown Master Plan. The goal for the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan states:

“Our goal is to achieve the desired framework that provides a development plan for the Downtown and affirms its role as a community gathering place on the Maumee River; a dynamic center of government and business; a cultural leisure, and entertainment destination; a collection of mixed-use neighborhoods; and a showcase of urban design and historic architecture” (2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, 2011, p.15).

The findings in this thesis will show how the direction of planning and design in Downtown Toledo has altered over the years to adapt to the ever-changing demand of the urban environment.

Districts

A district is an area of homogeneous character recognized by clues, which are continuous throughout the district and discontinuous elsewhere (Lynch, 1960). In the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, the Downtown is divided into nine different sub-districts in the downtown area (see Figure 5-1).
Each sub-district plays a role in the desired framework for the community, and each has its unique focal points. These foci ranged from community public gathering places, transition areas between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, affordable housing near downtown, and mixed-use development (2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, 2011). In the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, this framework was proposed...
due to the needs and the current conditions of the downtown, the city felt that the
downtown was losing visitors and businesses in the downtown (R. Boezi, personal
communication, July 25, 2011). My interviews show that this previous view of the
downtown is no longer applicable to the current view of the downtown. Many have stated
that the downtown is always evolving, what may have seemed to work in the past may
not be the case today.

The 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan Update proposes a change to the
districts that the previous plan has implemented. The downtown should now be
comprised of six districts (see Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2. Downtown Toledo’s updated six sub-districts. Adapted from 2011 Toledo
These six districts are Central Business District, Warehouse District, Government District, Uptown District, and East Side District. The intersection of Huron Street and Madison Avenue would be located in the center of the Central Business District, which is also the center of the six districts. My findings show that this is the consensus of planning professionals regarding the growth and direction the downtown is moving toward. It was stated in one interview “with the consolidation into six districts, the connectivity in wayfinding and the built environment between the districts can be stronger” (S. Day, personal communication, July 22, 2011).

From a visual quality and urban design standpoint, it would be easier to create a sense of place and identity for downtown Toledo. “In creating the six districts, it would be easier to apply unique visual characteristics” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011). Interviewees expressed that the streetscape characteristics within a particular district should change very to a degree, regarding lighting, sidewalk pattern, planters, colors, and signage. This would allow each district to have an identity that people can relate to and feel comfortable in. Districts can be recognized internally, and occasionally be used as external references as a person goes by or toward them (Lynch, 1960).

**The CBD**

Downtowns can be defined in many different ways depending on an individual’s perception. The basic definition of a downtown is “relating to, or located in the lower part or business center of a city” (Merriam-Webster, 2011). When I think of a downtown, I typically think of a vibrant, dense and diverse area that serves not only the people in the downtown but also the surrounding areas. A downtown should also be a central location
that people can identify with, feel comfortable in and utilize for their daily activities. In my interviews, many people referred to the downtown as a “central business district” (CBD) for the greater Toledo region. In this CBD, interviewees felt that it is important to have a mixed-use type environment. Achieving a mixed-use environment will serve as a place that is appealing to people and businesses. Other districts that have a less mixed-use environment and unique identity should surround the CBD.

Planning professionals believe the downtown should not only be a CBD, but also a focus on other aspects of the city life. For example, the downtown should be the home of civic leadership that serves not only the City of Toledo but also the region. It is vital for the downtown to be understood as a destination for those who live in the surrounding areas of the downtown in addition, to a center for work, play, and entertainment as well as housing. In the opinion of planning professionals, Toledo has failed to provide these top components that give the downtown its sense of desire and purpose. Some quickly shift blame on the fact that no one is investing in the downtown, because years, the City of Toledo has struggled to attract investment and development in the downtown. “Developers and investors feel that the downtown is not as busy and vibrate as it should be to sustain successful business and development ventures” (B. Seyfang, personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). “The City of Toledo needs to make a stronger push in getting investments and marketing the potential that our downtowns have, I feel that we are starting to see this with Mayor Mike Bell's administration” (B. Seyfang, personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). My research shows that this is partly the case; the other reasons could be attributed to the lack of planning and design that would make the downtown function better for the people and lift the negative
attitude that has been cast on the downtown in the past. “Many people feel that a downtown is a place that no longer has activities for them and their families; this is what we are trying to overcome and change, years ago people used to frequent the downtown to conduct everyday errands. The downtown used to be the destination for shopping, doctors offices, and other services” (E. Naujock, personal communication, August 1, 2011). Today we do not have these characteristics in downtown Toledo; many people rely on using their cars and driving to these services in their areas.

In past years, downtown Toledo planning professionals and developers have viewed the Greyhound bus terminal located at 811 Jefferson Avenue as an impediment to the area's development potential. The bus terminal is positioned one block over from the Pythian Castle in downtown Toledo. Developers believe that the bus terminal prohibits the historic Pythian Castle to be restored and utilized for mixed-used development (Troy, 2015). In efforts to help promote mixed-used development in the downtown, plans have been approved and are underway to move the Greyhound bus terminal to the existing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza, which is home to the Toledo Amtrak station. This move will enable downtown Toledo to redevelop the current bus terminal and the area adjacent to the terminal, as well as create an intermodal transportation center at the Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza (Prendergast, 2015).

A bonus to the relocation of the Greyhound bus terminal is the proximity to the new Middleground Metro Park of Toledo. This new metro park will run along the Maumee River, starting at the Anthony Wayne Trail Bridge and ending at the Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza (McCray, 2014). It is agreed that the opening of the new park and the relocation of the bus terminal will help spark interest in the neighborhood around the
Martin Luther King J.R Plaza. The previous plaza renovations in 1996 failed to provide that stimulus to the surrounding area. To help increase accessibility to the park, the intermodal terminal, and the surrounding area a roundabout located at Williams and Summit Street is being proposed, which will provide an inviting gateway to the area. The proposed gateway will help to give this area a unique identity that people can associate with, which is crucial in creating a district or area that will thrive and grow into a desirable destination point.

A city where districts have been successful is Jersey City in New Jersey. Jersey City in the 1960’s had only two districts; West Side Park and Bergen Section, which were primarily created due to class differences (Lynch, 1960). Presently, Jersey City has an estimated total population of 262,146 people in 2014, which makes it very comparable to the City of Toledo (U.S Census Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015). Over time as the city has grown in area and population, so has the number of districts. We can see that class no longer dictates the current districts that we see today, they are now comprised of neighborhoods and historic areas of the city and downtown. Jersey City has seen great success in using districts in their city and downtown, with each having unique characteristics. This success comes from creating an urban region that is diverse and thriving due to its proximity to New York City. The districts also engage with the Hackensack River that runs 32 miles south from Rockland County, New York to the Newark Bay, and the Hudson River that separates Jersey City and Manhattan.
Public Spaces

Green spaces and open spaces are fundamental in creating a downtown that is appealing to visitors. “The more diversity we have in the cities urban fabric, the more interesting the built environment will be” (S. Day, personal communication, July 22, 2011). Open spaces play an important role in keeping the authenticity of an urban region as they allow people to have an enjoyable experience in the downtown (Salah Ouf, 2001). “The City of Toledo needs things in the built environment to soften the downtown in good ways that appeal to the people in the downtown” (E. Naujock, personal communication, August 1, 2011).

With the newly approved ProMedica development, the biggest controversy is the parking garage comprised of six levels above ground and one level below ground, which is proposed for the southwest corner of the Promenade Park. The garage will hold 750 spaces and will span roughly 14 percent of the parkland. At the Toledo Plan Commission public hearing on July 9, 2015, it was expressed that the garage will take away vital public open space from the community and blocks the view of the Maumee River from North Summit Street (wtol.com). Many have challenged the claim that it has to be a six-level parking garage and question why it cannot be an entirely underground parking structure. Robin Whitney, ProMedica’s current vice president of property acquisition and development, stated that alternatives to the above ground portion of the parking garage were explored. ProMedica claims that after analyzing the cost feasibility of different parking options, the six-level above ground and one level below ground facility is the most cost-effective as it was determined a below ground structure would be cost prohibitive for this project (Reiter, 2015). Opponents to the parking garage being located
on the park property believe that ProMedica is forcing the city to accept their terms, or they will reconsider the relocation to the downtown area in general. ProMedica argues that the plans are focused on the prospective benefits for the rest of the downtown. Robin Whitney did protest to the commission that there were not an adequate number of spaces in other garages downtown, which results in their proposal to construct an additional 750 spaces. For the proposal, ProMedica is asking for the parkland at zero cost, and once they own the land, they will then grant a permanent public easement to the city. Randy Oostra, the ProMedica CEO, refers to it as the company’s plan to “adopt Promenade Park” with the hopes to restore CitiFest, the association that in the past has planned events in the downtown. For the approval, ProMedica has also committed to spending $2 million dollars to “restore and improve the parkland” with $1.5 million allocated to fix the parkland that will be disturbed by the construction of the underground portion, and the remaining 500,000 dollars being consumed by improving the additional parts of the park area.

Due to the importance and popularity of green spaces and open spaces to the public, Philadelphia has allowed residents to create “pocket parks” in certain areas where vacant lots sit (Newsworks.org). Community members think this is a great way for the public to utilize spaces that are abandoned and allow the community to have a common area for gathering. My research shows that there is a need for places like this in the urban environment, which is also a consensus among planners and designers of the downtown. In the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, as we can see in (Figure 5-3) open space was not an influential concept in the master plan.
Figure 5-3. Downtown Toledo Existing Framework. Adapted from 2002 Downtown Toledo Mater Plan, p. 16.

Moving forward to the 2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, open space, and green space has been a key component, which was address with relation to pedestrian movement and connectivity (Figure 5-4).
With the newly approved ProMedica development, the biggest concern is the new six-level above ground parking garage proposed for the southwest corner of the Promenade Park. Individuals from the public feel this will take away public open space
from the community and block the view of the Maumee River from North Summit Street (wtol.com). People have challenged the claim that it has to be a six-level parking garage and question why it cannot be an underground structure. ProMedica claims that after analyzing the cost feasibility of different parking options. A six-level above ground and one level below ground facility is the most cost-effective (Reiter, 2015).

In Johnson, A. J., Glover, T. D., & Stewart, W. P. 2014 study titled “Attracting Locals Downtown” they set out to analyze how urban forms and leisure areas can help to strengthen place-making and urban revitalization (Johnson, A. J et al., 2014). Their study was set in Kitchener, Ontario a mid-sized Canadian city. This study employed 21 people to visually document downtown areas that are conducive to social interactions that support recreation and leisure spaces. The findings of the study indicate that participants preferred vibrant and animated places, and they also felt that highlighted local character was very essential. Vibrant and animated places helped to contribute to place-making and also gave people a sense of urban liveliness. This type of places also helped to promote positive meanings, feelings and experiences in the urban realm. Local character is also necessary for establishing something special that people can experience in an urban area and have an urge to revisit time and time again.

Another relevant example that strengthens the importance of public spaces is an example from San Francisco, which is proposing a change in the North Beach area. The plan suggests that on-street parking will be converted to public space that will serve the pedestrian and restaurants along the North Beach area. This practice, in theory, will not only create needed open space for people but also help discourage the use of private automobiles, by eliminating on-street parking and slowing down traffic. Policy makers
feel that this will be an important element in helping to promote and grow their transit-first policy (Bair, 2010).

**Transportation**

In creating a downtown that can function well and provide a favorable environment for outsiders, it is imperative to address all transportation issues that can hurt the connectivity of a city. Transportation in a downtown includes but is not limited to the following components - public transportation, parking, and vehicular traffic. In the City of Toledo, it is understood that the typical characteristics of the residents are to rely on their personal car for transportation (M. Young, personal communication, July 11, 2011).

**Public Transportation**

During a meeting on the 2011 Toledo Downtown Plan update, an unnamed TARTA representative suggested that due to urban sprawl in the Greater Toledo area, it would be difficult to provide fast and efficient service to the greater Toledo region and downtown. Ridership in Toledo is low, causing TARTA to cut the frequency of buses.

During the interviews, I gained an understanding of how people perceive the public transportation system that serves downtown. Currently, there are seven bus stops in the downtown area, with two main terminals at Jackson Boulevard and North Erie Street. Five of these bus stops are located on what is known as the bus loop (see Figure 5-5).
The bus loop runs southwest along Summit Street from (Jackson Boulevard to Monroe Street), northwest on Monroe Street from (Summit Street to North Erie Street), northeast on North Erie Street from (Monroe Street to Jackson Boulevard), and southeast on Jackson Boulevard from (North Erie Street to Summit Street).

The consensus from interviews is that people want the bus loop out of the downtown. Rey Boezi clarifies that “the downtown bus loop is not safe or convenient for
pedestrians in the downtown” (personal communication, July 25, 2011). It is believed that the bus loop is creating a noose around the downtown and putting a stop to economic growth moving toward the riverfront, warehouse district, government district and uptown district. In its creation, the vision of the designers was to provide an easy and fast way to shuttle people in and out of the town. It was pointed out that the largest concentration of amenities and businesses are located within this loop (see Figure 5-6).


In dissolving the bus loop and creating an alternative, interviewees agreed that it would create better movement within the downtown. Participants in the interviews
recommended the alternative for the current bus loop to be a rubber tire circulator for the
downtown, with multiple stops just within the downtown, and be based out of the Jackson
Boulevard terminal, which is also known as the SeaGate Station. The terminal would
potentially serve as a point for inbound buses from other parts of Toledo to drop off
riders in the downtown. Once dropped off, riders will have the ability to join smaller
buses and use that for destinations in the downtown.

After contacting TARTA to explore their views and the potential changes in
routes, I learned that there were two major planning documents that are being used to
lead TARTA’s planning efforts. The Regional Core Circulator Study (RCCS) and “On
the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan – Updated 2011.” Both plans were developed
and are maintained by Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG).

The RCCS originated in July 2002, and the purpose of this document was to
tackle transportation questions and concerns brought up during the creation of the 2025
Regional Transportation Plan and the Downtown Toledo Master Plan. The RCCS was
originally meant to be a 16-month study, but quickly became a three yearlong study with
three stages finally ending in 2004. The RCCS’s three different stages focus on how the
City of Toledo and TARTA can achieve their end goal of implementation and execution
of projects that would help create a stronger more connected and updated transportation
system for the city and region. The first stage of this study focused on a downtown area
analysis. Seven subject areas were created and presented at this stage. An Overview;
Overall modes; Connection to the Toledo Museum of Art and Toledo Zoo; Connection
Across the River; Bus Loop Operation; Downtown Street Operations; and Fundamentals.
These are all key issues cited in the Downtown Toledo Plan and the 2025 Regional
Transportation Plan. The second stage of this study provides an Economic Benefits Assessment for a Downtown Streetcar system proposed in previous planning studies for the region and city. The third and final stage completed in 2004 for the RCCS, is an evaluation of transit options between the University of Toledo and Downtown.

The “On the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan-Update 2011” was first developed in 2007 and by law is required to be updated every four years. The most recent implemented update of this document is 2011, and a draft update is underway for 2015 but has not yet been adopted. This transportation plan document provides a guide for projects that must be implemented and completed for the City of Toledo and the region. These projects are designed to enhance the regional transportation system, this is important for connectivity and fueling the economic success of the regional and the downtown.

“On the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan-Update 2011” has a total of 105 projects. The projects are divided into five different classifications: committed, priority, reserved, “parking lot”, and initiatives. Each classification explains the importance and how the projects are viewed by TMACOG and other agencies that follow this planning document.

The five different classifications are designed to rank all 105 projects. These rankings tell us the urgency, time-sensitivity and need of support for the specific project. Committed projects have either full or partial funding. These projects are imperative for the region, with committed funding they can move into the construction phase. Projects that are assigned a ranking of priority do not have full funding but are understood to be highly important. Reserved projects are projects that have been evaluated as needed
improvements. These projects will not see funding before 2035 unless additional funding can be acquired. Projects classified as "parking lot" and initiative projects are projects that have been added to the TMACOG long-range plan for consideration and further studies. Many of these projects have a high potential for future addition during the next five-year update. Projects in this category must also have buy-in from other agencies to be considered for the allocation of funds.

Currently, there are only ten transit projects in the “On the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan-Update 2011”, the majority of the plans projects are centered on roadway improvements. In the committed and priority project rankings, transit improvements only have four projects, which is a highly low number compared to the 51 projects that have funding and/or understood to be greatly important in achieving the goals of this plan.

In this context, New York provides some useful lessons. For years, on the east side of New York City, bus and traffic speeds have been very slow causing congestion and delays in the bus service. In this setting, buses would have to interrupt traffic patterns for drop-off and pick-up at bus stops, creating unsafe conditions for riders and traffic. In 2010, the city granted buses an exclusive lane on First Avenue and Second Avenue, between Houston Street and 125th Street. At peak traffic time, it typically takes about an hour and a half just to travel this distance (Grynbaum, 2010). The new proposal not only addressed the traffic issues it also makes it easy for people to get on and off the bus, cutting passenger pick up times in half. New York City was able to create a way for buses and vehicles to both share the road, and decrease the impact they had on each other.
The cities of Oakland, Berkeley, and San Leandro in California provide lessons as well. These three cities are in the planning stages to create a 17-mile Bus Rapid Transit system which will consist of bus-only lanes and bicycle lanes linking all three cities. Planners hope to accomplish livability improvements for the three cities. Each city is within proximity to one another, which will help strengthen the region as a whole (Bair, 2010).

These two case studies can partly be related to the situation that Toledo is facing. New York City and the California region vary in size and population compared to Toledo, Ohio and it’s region, but the concepts that these case studies are addressing can be related to public transportation in and around downtown Toledo. Both studies focus on creating better public transportation for the people that uses it. In New York City, dedicated bus lane their goal is to create less uninterrupted service for the people using the line, thus allowing more individuals to use that particular line. In comparison, Toledo is trying to create a bus transit hub that will make it easier for people to use TARTA. By giving TARTA its own lane and deletion of the bus loop, it will provide easier bus travel, less wait time, and a better ability to reach parts of the downtown that are currently within the bus loop.

The California region case study links the entire region, which will make it easier for people’s commute and utilization of the public transportation. Connection throughout the Toledo region to the downtown has always been a goal for TARTA and the City of Toledo. This example shows how a region can create bus-only and bicycle-only lanes to create efficient commuting for the three cities that are clustered within a fifteen-mile area. This main goal of connectivity can be related to TARTA and the City of Toledo.
Parking and Traffic

Downtown Toledo has approximately 18,000 parking spots. Many believe this contributes to the “Midwestern mindset of relying on cars as the only form of transportation” (M. Young, personal communication, July 11, 2011). For decades, the Toledo has tried different types of parking within the downtown area, which vary from open surface lot parking, parking structures, and on-site parking (see Figure 5-7).

Figure 5-7. Downtown Toledo parking options. Adapted from 2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, produced by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions 2011, p. II: 11.

Responses to the interview questions indicated mixed feelings toward these different types of parking. Many individuals thought it is necessary to provide all three types of parking as people have their own type of parking they are most comfortable with.
It is clear that many interview subjects felt that the open surface parking hurts the downtown. A few key drawbacks to surface parking mentioned are: “it creates a void in the urban fabric” (S. Day, personal communication, July 22, 2011), “it is unsafe for pedestrians walking around the downtown” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011), and “it isolates people away from commerce” (B. Thomas, personal communication, July 25, 2011). Open surface parking lots create large open areas that isolate one from activities and other people causing less density and overall foot traffic. Ultimately, this plays a significant role in giving a person the perception that they are alone and vulnerable. It is also pivotal in creating fragmentation in the built environment and commerce. On the other hand, some feel that parking lots with design guidelines can be worked into the urban environment to lessen their negative effect.

Parking structures are also a great concern for the city, although R. Whitney suggests that these are the “best type of parking that can be intergraded into the urban environment” (personal communication, July 29, 2011). Unfortunately, many people do not understand the high cost of parking structures; it was brought to my attention that “parking structures in the City of Toledo cost on average $14,000 to $16,000 a parking spot” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011). Although it is understood among professionals that parking structures can be the best option for parking in the downtown, it is too costly for Toledo without buy-in from developers and building owners.

Earlier this year, ProMedica received approval to relocate their headquarters along with approximately 1,000 of their employees to the downtown. What does this mean for the downtown with regards to traffic and available parking for these added
employees? As we know, ProMedica has proposed a seven-level parking structure, with six levels above ground and one below grade this will account for roughly 750 parking spots. This will help to serve the added employees, but will also provide public parking for events and visitors to the downtown (Messina, 2015). The agreement that ProMedica has reached with the City of Toledo includes additional on-street parking. This will benefit to workers and also visitors to the downtown.

Although the relocation of ProMedica is expected to be a huge boost for the future of downtown Toledo, recent reports from ProMedica now estimate the total number of employees in the downtown locations can inflate to as many as 2,500 jobs. This is a huge concern for Toledo; the added number of people will result in an even higher demand on the roadways and parking. It can be certain that there will be an influx of cars traveling in and out of the downtown. This will increase congestion during peak morning rush hours and evening rush hours, also adding additional stress on the road infrastructure, resulting in a faster deterioration of the roads. Traffic jams could be more common in areas that recently were not affected. Toledo has begun to address traffic patterns and flow within the city. Many roads have been changed to two-way traffic patterns. This will help to reduce speeds, move traffic throughout the downtown, promote accessibility and encourage the development of buildings that are not being utilized (2011 Toledo Downtown Plan, 2015). I do not trust this will be enough to combat the added stresses on the road network and the road infrastructure.

ProMedica had requested and was granted approval to construct a 750 spot parking structure. This parking facility will have one level underground and six levels above, which will make the total number of levels to seven. Applicants for the proposed
garage claim that the spots will serve the new employees and visitors to the downtown. They did acknowledge that the second phase of ProMedica’s relocation would bring approximately 1,500 jobs creating a total of 2,500 jobs once the second phase has been completed. ProMedica realizes that for the second phase of their downtown relocation plans they will have to seek the usage of other parking in the downtown. Parking accommodations phase two will have to be a healthy mix of garaged and on-street parking.

From the business and building owner’s point of view, on-site street parking is the best type of parking the city can provide in the downtown. It is proven that with on-street parking, “businesses can conduct a higher volume of sales” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011). This is key in having good economic activity in the downtown. It was cited that “on street parking may cause traffic congestion, but on the bright side it forces traffic to slow down in the downtown” (D. Reamer-Evans, personal communication, August 5, 2011). Because on-street parking forces traffic to slow down, the concept aids in creating a safe downtown that is utilized more by pedestrians. Essentially, this causes people to “stay in the downtown for a longer time and possible contributing more to the urban environment” (B. Seyfang, personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011).

Smarter parking management practices have been cited in other cities as being an important factor in helping to promote the economy and availability of parking spots in the downtown. Redwood City, California has implemented a successful three price tiers system. The primary goal for Redwood City is to manage the occupancy rate of their parking spots. This system helps to promote a better percentage of empty parking spots in
higher demand areas. It also helps to generate income for the city and keep a healthy flow of vehicles in and out of the city. In the past, people would be able to park their cars for an extended period in spots typically in front of businesses. This resulted in the loss of business for many store owners. They also eliminated time limits on parking spots and relays on the pricing to dictate the parking usage. The new program has been a success for the city and the business owners. They are now getting a better flow of customers in their establishments (Nelson & Schrieber, 2012).

Ever since the 1970’s, Winnipeg, Manitoba has been fighting the rush to the suburbs (Agrell, 2011). The population as of 2006 was 633,451 people, and only an estimated 13,470 people lived in the downtown (Agrell, 2011). These statistics can be closely related to Toledo. Due to this flight to the suburbs in the 1970’s Winnipeg’s downtown retail has been crippled, and the city is now overwhelmed by a number of parking lots causing voids in the urban landscape (Agrell, 2011). Just like Toledo, it is trying to draw life back to its downtown as a way to sustain the cities economic core.

The City of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba decided to create a 20 million dollar offer in development grants and tax incentives to help promote residential units in the downtown (Agrell, 2011). Winnipeg also plans to develop around 154 surface parking lots into valuable real estate for businesses or residential use (Agrell, 2011). Ken Greenberg, a Toronto-based urban planner, predicts over time that the cost of energy will drive the change from suburb to the city (Agrell, 2011). In observing Toledo, one can make the same prediction, that the idea of movement from the suburbs to the city is the general consensus for the future, which was evident while conducting my thesis
interviews. Given the similarities in population trends, Toledo may be able to benefit from the experience of Winnipeg.

**Pedestrian Movement and Safety**

When designing a downtown, it is important to analyze the built environment through the eyes of the pedestrians that use the downtown. It seems easy to design a beautiful layout for the downtown, but it may not be effective in enticing people and businesses into the downtown area. In my interviews, I uncovered three central concepts based on my literature review that is closely applicable to downtown Toledo. These three concepts are pedestrian movement, safety in the downtown and skyways along with underground networks.

**Pedestrian Movement**

With available space and willingness to expand a region’s urban area, it causes for a greater distance between you and your desired destination. “In the City of Toledo many people feel more comfortable getting into a car and driving to a destination, rather than walking a few blocks” (B. Seyfang, personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). Planners imagine that this trend of driving everywhere versus walking will soon die off. “With the rising gas prices and congestion people will look toward the downtown once again” (E. Naujock, personal communication, August 1, 2011).

When asked if downtown Toledo was easy for people to walk around in, the answer was yes. In my interviews it was cited by multiple participants that downtown Toledo was relative in size to Westfield Shopping Center (see Figure 5-8).
Many consider this proves that size-wise, that downtown Toledo is very feasible for individuals to walk around in. The street patterns in Toledo play a huge role in the walkability of the downtown. Toledo utilizes a grid pattern, a simple system of two series of parallel streets crossing at right angles, which provides more points of access to the street network and most importantly creates short trip lengths in addition to a larger number of route choices (Rifaat, Tay & de Barros, 2012).

On the other hand, my findings show that signage is a key piece that downtown Toledo must address to create a more appealing environment for users. “It is important for us to create a downtown that makes you want to keep walking and propels you to...
keep moving around” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011). “Connectivity between the six proposed districts is a concept this is being heavily addressed, and signage is agreed to be one of the key problems” (S. Day, personal communication, July 22, 2011).

Signage is imperative whether it is storefront signage or wayfinding signage. When moving around a district within the downtown, you sometimes do not know that you have entered or exited a district. The only district that has a strong visual characteristic in Toledo is the Historic Warehouse District, which allows people to see visually that they are in a different district (S. Day, personal communication, July 22, 2011). When traveling in the downtown, at times it's hard to determine your sense of direction and where you are heading. “Just recently a few friends of mine traveled to Toledo from out of town, they came to the downtown to go to an event at the Huntington Center and parked at the Vistula parking garage, after the event they told me that they had the toughest time making their way back to the garage in the dark, due to the lack of signage to direct you” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011).

In the past, the City of Takoma Park felt it was challenging for visitors and new residents to find their way around the city. They also claimed that users, at times were unsure of the city’s boundaries (City of Takoma Park, 2009). This issue prompted them to create and implement a gateway and wayfinding signage system, which was approved in their FY05 budget for Takoma Park. They believed that not only would this will help improve navigation in the city, it would also play a large role in, enhancing the image of Takoma Park and attracting additional customers to the city’s business district (City of Takoma Park, 2009).
“The City of Takoma Park in Maryland has implemented a signage and wayfinding system, which is designed to better navigate around the City of Takoma Park. The signage system will let people know when they have entered Takoma Park and guide them to various destinations around the community including commercial areas, educational and medical institutions, and municipal facilities” (City of Takoma Park, webpage, 2009).

The adopted signage system includes multiple types of gateway and wayfinding signs classified as primary, secondary and tertiary. Each of these different types play a special role; primary gateways are used to show major gateway connections, secondary gateway signs are used for the minor gateway connections including trails, and tertiary gateway signs are primarily used for entrances into residential neighborhoods within Takoma Park (City of Takoma Park, 2009). Other forms of signs include makers to indicate gardens and identify historic sites, pageantry banners which are seen in the CBD to draw attention, and pedestrian kiosks that will help with wayfinding in commercial districts (City of Takoma Park, 2009).

In spite of Takoma Park being extremely small in comparison with Toledo, my opinion is that these signage improvements can be an applicable model to downtown Toledo and the districts that make up the downtown. Districts in downtown Toledo can benefit from a system such as the one currently being used in Takoma Park, Maryland. This type of signage system would help direct people into and around the downtown. The downtown and its districts all have places that events can be held, and many of the people that travel to the downtown are there for a certain event or activity. These individuals may not be familiar with the downtown and its districts, which is where the signage
system could help create an inviting and comfortable to use downtown for its visitors. On the other hand, the public that frequents the downtown can use this signage system to make their travel throughout the downtown faster and safer.

**Skyways and Underground Walkways**

Toledo in the past has tried to create a network of skyways and underground walkways for people to use, including five skyways and two underground tunnels in the downtown, which are all part of what is known as the “CitiWalk System” indicated in purple (see Figure 5-9)
These underground tunnels and skyways all link to the three Park Smart parking garages in the downtown: Port Lawrence, Superior Street, and Vistula garages. When the skyways and underground walkways were built in Toledo, they were designed to link the major areas of businesses and entertainment to these parking garages and the Jackson Boulevard TARTA Station. In the years following, when companies in the downtown relocated to the outer areas, the necessity for these walkways diminished considerably.
A common theme discovered through the interviews was that skyways and the underground network have hurt rather than benefitted the downtown. A key point stated by P. Hollenbeck is that “the skyways and underground walkways pull pedestrians off the street, and isolates them either above or below the street” (personal communication, July 18, 2011). As a result, this causes businesses to have a lack of customer traffic. It came apparent to me that the developers of these skyways and underground tunnels took this concept from bigger cities that had a solid economic foundation, such as the cities of Minneapolis and Toronto.

Every individual that was interviewed agreed that this was not the right thing for Toledo. “It is very hard to comprehend why the developers of the CitiWalk System, looked to cities that hold no characteristics to Toledo” (E. Naujock, personal communication, August 1, 2011). Researchers agree that skyways and underground tunnels are ideal for cities that have extreme weather condition and vast populations, which is the case for Minneapolis and Toronto.

In the years following the end of the Second World War, many cities across the United States battled with the suburbanization of the housing, retail, and employment sectors, which detached people from the downtown areas of cities all over, allowing the central business districts (CBDs) to lose its importance to the community. In the case of Minneapolis, developer Les Park grew concerned by this trend and realized that the CBD would now have to compete with the rapid growth of the suburbs (Corbett, et al., 2009). The first proposal was to create a covered plaza spanning 14 feet above street level to house shops and restaurants. The plan was dismissed as this would pull people and activity away from the street level (Corbett et al, 2009). In 1962, Les Park with the help
of Ed Baker developed the first skyway bridge linking the newly built Northstar Center, which was the first mixed-use building in the city to the Northwestern National Bank Building located across Marquette Avenue (Corbett et al, 2009).

The purpose of the skyway is to create an enhanced pedestrian movement in the financial district and to make it “more convenient for business people and clients to traverse” (Jacob, 1984, p. 5). By 1975, the skyways linked the financial district and the retail core of the city, helping propel even more growth to the Hennekin County Medical Center located ten blocks away from the CBD. Currently, the skyway system in downtown Minneapolis spans eight miles total and links close to 80 blocks in the downtown (http://www.moveminneapolis.org). (see Figure 5-10).
However, there are negative effects of skyways. The biggest problem with skyways is the reality that they tend to pull people and activity away from the street level, which can be an issue for cities that are relatively smaller in size. For example, Toledo cannot be fairly compared to Minneapolis due to its size and economic activity. It is my opinion that skyways, which have been successful in a thriving city such as Minneapolis, with an estimated metro area population of 3,495,176 people supporting its central city districts, cannot logically be compared to Toledo, Ohio with an estimated metro area population of 607,456 serving its central city districts (U.S Census Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015).

Minneapolis proves to have the population and economy to sustain the movement of pedestrians in the skyways and street levels. As for Toledo, it is currently at a point at which it is important to create activity on the street level to help generate interest for the public. Toledo does not have the luxury of drawing people away from the street level as it plays a crucial role in the theory of creating activity in the first floor of buildings within the downtown, which would help spark development and desirability throughout the downtown.

**Safety**

Safety is one of the biggest concerns for planners in the downtown. One issue stated during the interviews was the lack of people on the street in the downtown. When asked how they tackled the issues of safety for the people in the downtown, S. Day replied “in keeping people safe in the downtown we have to provide a clean, well illuminated and busy downtown” (personal communication, July 22, 2011). Toledo currently has an organization called Downtown Toledo Improvement District Inc., which
is an organization formed to keep downtown Toledo clean and safe. They are said to be, “the most important organization in the city to help maintain the urban experience” (B. Thomas, personal communication, July 25, 2011).

When interviewees were asked if they felt safe in the downtown, the consensus reply was positively. It was mentioned that one of the major contributors of feeling unsafe is the concept of being “alone on the sidewalk with another questionable person, rather than being accompanied by other people on the sidewalk in that type of situation” (R. Whitney, personal communication, July 29, 2011).

Lighting was also an important topic that was explored in the interviews. It was suggested that the Toledo is in need of addressing the lighting issues of the downtown. Many areas of the downtown are poorly lite due to the lack of people using that particular area, B. Seyfang explains this is not acceptable, “it creates a region in the downtown that is dead to pedestrian movement” (personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). Some planners propose that businesses in the downtown that are on the street level should be encouraged to leave their lights on, which would generate more illumination on the sidewalks and create a more inviting environment for the people.

Pedestrian lighting in the downtown is important in aiding reassurance and confidence when walking during nighttime. (Fotios, et al., 2015). With the added developments that will be taking place downtown with ProMedica, it is important to provide an area that is appealing not only in the day but also at night. Lighting in the downtown should be implemented in ways to help retain people after the typical working hours. Smaller businesses that rely on activities that typically take place after work hours
such as restaurants and retail will benefit from well-lighted areas that provide safe and reassuring travel to and from other establishments and modes of transportation.

The Public and Private Needs

For a downtown to be healthy and vibrant, it must have the key entities and environment, which both the public and businesses can benefit from. This section of findings will target key components that the interviewees consider to be important for the downtown. And many fear these elements are not currently present in the downtown or addressed in the 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan Update.

Public Forum

Allowing for public involvement, while drafting a master plan for an area is required in allowing someone fully to understand the needs and desires of the people. The two groups that are targeted for input during the master plan process are the stakeholders and the community that live or visit the downtown. The questions that arise in this section address what type of means were used to gain the public input for the master plan? In addition, what types of methods have worked the best in the past, and is there room for improvement?

The 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan primarily utilized open public forums to gather input from the public (2002 Downtown Toledo Master plan, 2011). Planners and designers were pleased with the turnout of participates and insight provided in the open forums; however, others thought that more could have been done to involve stakeholders during the master planning process. According to S. Day, “It is important in my opinion to spend more time with the stakeholders of the downtown because they are the ones that
have a vested interest in the downtown and the economic growth” (personal communication, July 22, 2011).

The notion was proposed that public and stakeholder participation should be an ongoing process. Vice Chairman of the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commission, K. Fallows, says, “You have to keep doing it, it is important to keep that public and stakeholders involved. It is a process that must be kept rolling” (personal communication, August 4, 2011). E. Naujock claims, “I feel that the updated plan is going in a good direction for public participation. The key part is to get the neighborhood residents that you are working with involved, they have to identify with the plan and take ownership of it, this can only be done by involving the public and stakeholders, not just a few time but as much as possible” (personal communication, August 1, 2011).

**Entities and Businesses**

Answers were considerably mixed during the interview process when individuals were asked, “What type of entity is needed in the downtown?” These mixed responses were due to the different perspectives represented among the interviewees. Some respondents expressed that residential living was an essential aspect that the downtown was in need of. By having more opportunities for people to live in the downtown it will be a great way to keep people in the area and help spark growth. In regards to residential residing in the downtown, it is agreed upon that section 8 housing would not be ideal for the downtown. In order to create an environment that is economically robust and provide good services for the people that live there, E. Naujock claims “we need to target the demographics that bring a positive vibe and capital to the downtown” (personal communication, August 1, 2011).
Another important aspect to consider is private sector investments. Findings from my research indicate that a handful believe that private sector investment is the driving force in revitalizing the downtown Toledo. It was stated by B. Seyfang that, “Private sector investment should be one of the main focuses of our 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plan” (personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). Many agreed that this was not addressed thoroughly in the 2002 plan. They refer to the lack of investment currently in the downtown and they cite the fact that many businesses that once called downtown home have relocated to the outer suburbs. These businesses range from services provided for the people that live or work in the downtown to large corporations that once headquartered in the downtown. A tool that Toledo can use and has used in the past to help attract businesses is tax credits. For example, the tax credits granted to ProMedica were in return for redeveloping the historic steam plant and adjacent riverfront. In the past historic preservation played a small role in revitalization of declining cities, many urban renewal programs usually promoted demolition (Ryberg-Webster, S., 2013). Preservation if possible, has now become a front-runner in revitalization strategies. Programs and incentives are being widely created and used at both the local and federal levels to help promote preservation and usage of historical sites. By creating tax incentives, and infrastructure improvements to the downtown, should in theory be the pieces that will help lead the investment and development in the downtown (T. Gibbons, personal communication, August 12, 2011).

Although the downtown currently has entertainment venues that are doing well, many interviewed said that it is important to keep those existing entertainment venues that are in the downtown and cultivate more. The goal behind this push is to create a
downtown that serves as a destination for a wider variety of people in the Toledo area as some reason the downtown caters to certain groups of people. Interviewees say that this limits not only the amount of people that utilize the downtown but also the types of venues that call it home.

**Identity of the Downtown**

Many of those interviewed pointed out that to achieve positive revitalization in downtown Toledo, we have to create an identity for the City of Toledo. S. Day said that “if downtown Toledo has an identity we will have the able to relate to the general public” (personal communication, July 22, 2011). In my opinion, the identity of the downtown is important, but should not be decided by planners or designers. The people should, in fact, create the identity of a city, as this will allow people to connect to the city. If decision makers are the only ones to create an identity, it will be difficult for the community to connect and identify with the city. New York City for example was given the nickname of “The Big Apple”, in the 1920’s by a reporter referring to the quality of life and entertainment (Cohen, 1991). The identity for a city should be derived from the community.

Efforts have also been made to not only create an identity for the City of Toledo but the entire region. D. Reamer-Evans explains, “We want our region to be known and understood, and the City of Toledo so happens to be in that region” (personal communication, 2011). Creating the identity for the whole region is crucial for the economic growth of the entire region. When a region can identify itself with the city center, it leads to a stronger region and city. Heath explains in his paper, for the public to have a positive attitude towards the city, the surrounding regions must be associated with
the identity of the city (Heath, 2001). This idea is also true for communities that are just outside of the city center. We must understand that creating an identity for the downtown cannot be achieved just by labeling it and hoping the public will associate with it.

Key elements are needed to be in place for a city or urban area to create its own identity. These key elements include but are not limited to design, infrastructure, essential services, and attractions (Hubbard & Hall, 1998). In order to create an identity for an area, city-marketing techniques have been shown to work in many cases. Some methods include advertising and promotion, large-scale physical redevelopment, public art and civic statuary, mega-events, cultural regeneration, and public-private partnerships (Kavaratzis, 2004). Both the size of a city or urban area and the entities that it has to offer are deciding factors that can make it difficult or easy to succeed in creating an identity.

Memories of a vital downtown can also be a great tool used to create a sense of place and identity in a downtown (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch 2013). A study in Middleton, Ohio that was conducted by Leah R. Depriest-Hricko and David L. Prytherch explains how a negative perception of a city can be changed to help re-establish interest. A sense of place is many times associated with physical assets such as building stock, architectural character, proximity and the opportunities for existing businesses (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch 2013). People can also associate downtowns with social events and spaces. Residents and visitors can use efforts by individuals and organization to increase downtown interest and expressing hopes for downtown’s future as a destination (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch 2013). Festivals and special events are great ways to achieve this awareness of downtowns to help create a sense of place. Many cities use
special festivals and events to create an identity not just for the overall city but also for a specific district.

Another example, to create an identity for the City of Bilbao, Spain, and its region, the decision was made to use the rich built heritage of the area. By doing this, it helps to create an identity as well as preserve the heritage of Bilbao, while allowing the city to benefit from globalization, and not allowing it to suffer the negative effects on the communities (Gospodini, 2004). Bilbao used this technique to create place identity by both evoking the city’s history and tradition, which would help to create a distinct or unique environmental image to visitors and the residents (Gospodini, 2004).

Bilbao used built form as a tool to develop the identity. The city utilized its well-preserved historical center, which has monuments from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, and world-famous innovative design schemes developed along with the Guggenheim Museum (Gospodini, 2004). Bilbao is also the capital of the Basque country, a region that has a relatively high degree of administrative and financial autonomy within Spain. The administrative and financial autonomy in this region allowed people of that area to identify with it. In comparison, Toledo is considered the focal point of the northwest Ohio region, and also home to basic features for attracting growth and visitors.

**Downtown Housing**

Numbers show that the most common type of housing in the downtown of Toledo is the rental unit. In Lucas County Census Tract 28, there are approximately 645 occupied housing units; only four of those are owner-occupied housing units (U.S Census, 2010).
Census Interactive Population Search, 2015). The high number of people that rent translates to a higher turnover rate in residents in the downtown; strengthening the argument that the Toledo needs to focus on luring young professionals to the downtown. The 2011 Toledo Downtown Master Plan predicts that the major household group to relocate to the downtown would be younger singles and childless couples, and estimates that approximately 53% of the total potential market likely to move from within Lucas County and the City of Toledo (2011 Toledo Downtown Master Plan, 2011).

Battling the effects of urban sprawl

Over the past few years, the Toledo has battled with the effects of urban sprawl, which can be seen by rapid growth in the suburban regions of Toledo. The City of Toledo has lost an estimated 10.4% of its total population from the year 2000 to 2014 (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015). Three of the largest suburbs of Toledo: Sylvania, Perrysburg, and Oregon have all seen growth over the past fourteen years. The highest growth occurring in Perrysburg, Ohio with 26.1% population growth, followed by Oregon, Ohio with 4.3% and Sylvania, Ohio with 1.5% (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015).

Many interviewees claim that the reason for this is the lack of good schools and residential housing in and around the downtown. “Planners and designers must understand that downtowns typically do not have the caliber of schooling that parents want for their kids or the space they feel is needed for raising a child. We need to address that issue and provide a way to appeal to the young professionals in the community, I feel that’s key in getting the right economic growth in downtown we need. For those who feel that suburbs is the best for them, we have to offer attraction in the downtown for them as
well, in doing this, we have to make it easy for the residents in the suburbs to interact with the downtown” (K. Fallows, personal communication, August 4, 2011).

In researching this claim, it is true that the downtown does not have any formal schools and other amenities that residents look for in a community. The closest formal school and other community amenities are located in the Old West End neighborhood just outside the Uptown District.

Also, the access to schooling is not the only factor in generating the appeal for people to live in the downtown. Three other key components were identified in the interviews I conducted; jobs, retail stores and points of destinations for recreation, which must also be available in the downtown to help attach residents (B. Seyfang, personal communication, July 20, 2011; July 26, 2011). Many of the interviewees conveyed that it is important to appeal to all types of people, whether they are young professionals, commuters or visitors from the suburban areas. Having a right mix to offer the community and surrounding areas will help create a diverse downtown and keep growth and investment in the downtown moving on a forward path. “A pleasant and useful mix of uses and activities must also be achieved and maintained” (Arendt, 2015, p. 49). This will, in turn, create a need for mix use development and promote residential developments in the downtown (K. Fallows, personal communication, August 4, 2011).

Arthur C. Nelson, Director of Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech, and Kathy T. Young, an Atlanta, GA consultant in city and region planning, conducted an in-depth study on nineteen cities across the U.S. that ranged in size and demographics. Their analysis looked at downtown area populations between 1980 and 1999 to compare and show trends in housing in each downtown. In the study, the cities that were closely
comparable to Toledo are Cincinnati, Ohio; Lexington, Kentucky; and Des Moines, Iowa. These three cities have very similar population totals, and have also faced population decline over the years.

Of these, the city I want to focus on for the comparison to Toledo, Ohio would be Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati’s downtown area was labeled as being stagnating or slowly growing (Nelson and Young, 2008). With a total city population of 298,165, Cincinnati, Ohio is a similar location to compare with Toledo, Ohio, which has a total city population of 281,031 (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015). Between the years 1990 and 1999, the City of Cincinnati has seen a population decrease of 6.8% in the downtown area (Nelson and Young, 2008). In comparison, the City of Toledo had a 2% population loss in the downtown area between the years 1990 and 2000 (U.S Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2015). Even though the downtown of Toledo had a lower percentage of population loss, we can still see a comparable trend linking the two communities.

Nelson and Young’s study, notes that particular policies can help to improve the ability of downtowns of this size and dynamic to absorb a higher share of regional growth (Nelson & Young, 2008). There appears to be some evidence suggesting that regional urban containment can help shift development patterns toward the central cities and their downtowns (Nelson & Young, 2008). Regional urban containment would contribute to reducing the financial burden and reduce the adverse effects of redevelopment; by organizing infrastructure investment and creating development regulations (Nelson & Young, 2008). Nelson and Young do note that it is unlikely for downtowns to regain their prominence as regional population centers, which they once had. In addition, compact
and concentrated mixed development would also, generate more economic activity in
downtowns and central cities, because retail and service thresholds are more easily
achieved (Nelson & Young, 2008). In my view, these are elements that can be utilized by
Toledo. The dynamics of Toledo can be conducive for regional urban containment; the
density, walkability, and infrastructure are all things that are appealing for concentrations
of mixed development. Toledo also has a robust stock of vacant buildings that could be
converted into mixed used developments. An added benefit would be the low cost in
purchasing or renting of space within the downtown making profit easier to obtain for
businesses and lower rent cost for new residents to the downtown from the suburban
areas.
Chapter 6

Recommendations and Conclusion

The recommendations proposed in this thesis will address all the sections presented in the research findings chapter: districts, transportation, safety and pedestrian movement, public and private needs, and downtown housing. Addressing these topics will allow us to link key elements that could be incorporated into a downtown master plan update as guidelines for the future of Toledo.

Districts

To construct a robust and vibrant downtown, a fundamental element to consider is to create districts that are strong and can support businesses, residents, and entertainment. When examining the urban environment, it seems as though having nine districts in the downtown is too many for a city of Toledo’s size. Having so many districts makes it difficult to identify and transition from district to district, which could lead to disconnect within the city. I believe the concept of many different districts would work best in larger cities with greater population numbers and a larger urban area that can be identified easier, due to the size of the districts and the dynamics of the district. Over time districts take on an identity that is important for the community, which helps in allowing people to identify with the area better and create a stronger interest in the district. In my opinion, the identity for a district should not be forced. Using features and characteristics from the district should be the developing factors of its identity. A lower number of districts are not only great for the community, but also for the health of the city. By having fewer districts, it allows for better management of capital improvement projects. Cities would
also be able to keep up with the maintenance of infrastructure and the built environment, which will help save on time and money spent on a project.

My recommendation is that the central business district (CBD) of a city be the most important district. The CBD is the epicenter of a city that will help to feed the surrounding districts and region. A strong CBD will provide a purpose for other types of districts such as residential, historical, and industrial districts that can benefit from being located within proximity to the CBD. It is sometimes misunderstood that the CBD of a city should only have commercial zoning and be limited to just that, this is an incorrect approach to the land use of a CBD, it is my suggestion that policy makers allow a mixed-use zoning with an appropriate floor area ratios to accommodate denser development. Developing mixed-use zoning allows residents the opportunity to live in the CBD, and fuel the economy. By practicing mixed land use in the CBD, it will help create a district that is teeming with activities outside the typically 9-to-5 business hours. Once policy makers create a CBD that is vibrant, it will have a trickle-down effect on surrounding areas by generating a desire to live and conduct business adjacent to the CBD. With the relocation of ProMedica’s headquarters to the CBD, it could help to create interest in mixed-use developments in and around the CBD. I recommend the City of Toledo promote and encourage mixed-use development around the newly relocated ProMedica. The estimated 2,500 jobs will provide a demand for mixed-use development. Providing commercial and residential opportunities close to ProMedica will allow for a robust downtown that will not only provide services to the new workers in the downtown but also visitors from other parts City of Toledo and it’s suburbs.
As recommended with the relocation of ProMedica, I anticipate that the relocation of the Greyhound bus terminal from Jefferson Avenue and N. Ontario to the Martin Luther King J.R Plaza will help to usher in new developments and investment to both areas. The Pythian Castle and its redevelopment efforts, which have been affected by the location of the bus terminal should now be looked at as a site for historical restoration and revitalization. The Martin Luther King J.R Plaza will also benefit from the added bus terminal and the Middlegrounds Metro Park. I suggest for the Martin Luther King J.R Plaza, transit-oriented development to be explored and encouraged. With the combined volume of Greyhound riders, Amtrak travelers and visitors to the Middlegrounds Park, commercial and residential usages will be able to thrive and help create the spark that was envisioned years ago for the area.

Types of land use that cities must consider are public spaces and open spaces, which are significant in creating comfort areas for visitors and residents. Comfort areas can be places people use to relax, stop to eat, use as a meeting point in addition to softening the urban environment. Public and open spaces should not be concentrated in an area, but rather spread out throughout all the districts in the urban area, helping to drive people movement in and out of the districts.

Transportation

Public transportation is vital in any urban area. Providing connectivity for people to the downtown and the surrounding areas can help reduce the effects of urban sprawl. An issue with cities that have areas located far from the downtown is the overall distance of bus routes and wait times for buses. These factors can place a burden on public
transportation systems to provide services to far away areas, which will damage the quality of public transportation, causing low ridership. The City of Toledo has a great and very comprehensive bus system called Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA), some of the main issues I see with the current bus system in downtown Toledo is the number of buses that come into the downtown, the movements of these buses and their sizes. The City of Toledo should address this issue by implementing a smaller shuttle bus circulator within just the boundaries of downtown and its districts. Creating a central location for buses that service the surrounding areas to stop and unload people will allow TARTA to develop a smaller shuttle service to serve just the downtown. Implementing a smaller shuttle like system in the downtown will help increase safety and reduce traffic. Many of the buses that service the surrounding areas are larger buses designed to hold more riders that need to travel a longer distance, and these buses can cause an unsafe condition for people in the downtown.

As mentioned in this thesis, people in the City of Toledo rely on their cars as primary means of transportation in and out of the downtown. We have learned in previous sections that open lot parking has a negative effect on the downtown, parking structures are very costly and on site street parking is limited and uses pedestrian space in the downtown. The question becomes, which of these options will be best for the City of Toledo in the future. In my opinion, parking structures are the best option, due to the fact that they have a smaller effect on the growth and development of the downtown.

ProMedica earlier this year was approved to build a 750-space parking garage on what is currently the Promenade Park property. The new parking garage does pose both positive and negative effects for the City of Toledo. Negatively, the loss of 14 percent of
the parkland in the downtown will be a huge loss for the city. I do believe with the new funding for the Promenade Park and the goal of restoring events to this area will benefit the downtown in the long run. I would propose that the City of Toledo negotiate to allow the parking garage to be used as a public parking facility during non-work hours. This will help to fuel the interest of developers for the area, by providing parking that potential customers or residents can utilize. I also imagine that during the non-work hours the parking garage will help attract visitors to the downtown, by allowing for safe and convenient parking close to the river, city events and potential commercial usages.

I recommend the City of Toledo to develop design guidelines for these parking structures to help them blend into the built environment, which will hopefully decrease the visual impact. Parking facilities cost more to build, but bids can be agreed upon at the development approval process, which will help decrease the cost on the city and developers. For existing businesses and businesses that are moving into existing buildings, there should be a public share-parking program developed and offered to these businesses. These public share-parking programs will help with cost and provide dedicated spots for their patrons.

**Pedestrian Movement and Safety**

It is important to provide good walkability for the public in the downtown. Walkability can be a deciding factor on how people interact with the downtown. Having a positive and safe experience in the downtown will help fuel the economy of the downtown and prove that it is a desirable place. The key elements that need to be addressed in a master plan update are way finding and streetscape standards, whether it is
a supplementary document that is part of the master plan or actually in the master plan. If way finding and streetscape is not referenced, it could very well be over looked, causing a harmful effect to the downtown experience.

Skyways and underground paths were used in the past to provide connectivity and safety for movement in the downtown, and we have learned that they did not have that result in the downtown. To provide safety in the downtown, the City of Toledo needs to implement suitable lighting standards for the downtown. Lighting can transform the urban realm to an inviting and safe area. The standards need to require certain types of lighting for adequate illumination and generate standards on light covers depending on the district they are proposed in. The notion of encouraging businesses on the street level to leave their lights on to provide more illumination on the sideways should be explored; but may prove difficult to get public buy in to this solution. Assisting with utility costs for street level businesses can be a tool used to strengthen their case on leaving storefronts and businesses lights on.

The Public and Private Needs

The master planning process can be a demanding and extensive process as it can be overwhelming to the public and stakeholders that want to be involved, and have an opinion in the planning of their community. The City of Toledo needs to be engaged with the public for an extended period during the process. In essence, the job of a planner is to provide a service to the public, who are the customers that we serve. Providing more opportunities for the public to have input, whether it is in open public forums, questionnaires or focus groups will help formulate a plan that will result in successful
outcomes. It is important to be transparent in the master planning process, to help planners create the proper guide to the future growth of the downtown.

The public needs a way to associate themselves with the downtown and the different districts that make up the downtown, which could essentially be achieved by implementing key elements in the design and make-up of the downtown. It is indispensable for planners and designers to remember we cannot create the identity; it has to be an organically growing concept that develops over time. I advocate that planners and designers use what the downtown has to offer, whether it is historical or physical to spark the identity of the downtown. It is the only way for this to be successful. Planners and designers must use their knowledge and expertise of planning to plant the seeds that will help create the identity of the downtown and region.

**Downtown Housing**

The fundamental way we have to soften the effects of urban sprawl and promote downtown housing is by using zoning to our advantage. It is first necessary to understand the land use makeup of the downtown and implement zoning regulations that will help to preserve housing in the downtown. Providing mixed-use zoning is the best way to create new opportunities for housing in the downtown and the adjacent areas. Zoning in some areas must be relaxed to help stimulate interest in developers to invest, to support this type of direction the city can create zoning districts that will make it easier for developers to use the create mixed-use areas. For example, planned development zoning or overlay districts can have proffers or requirements that the city may use as leverage to accomplish a desired urban environment for a revitalized downtown.
Being able to retain the residential element in the downtown can be an uphill battle. Planners and designers must allow for the essential amenities that draw people away for the downtown to the suburbs. A few vital usages that must be planned for are schools, safety facilities, grocery stores and other service sector amenities. Once we provide these services, we will be able to draw residents back into the downtown and provide a healthy sustainable downtown.
References


Appendix A

Provided below is a list of all the partakers that were interviewed, and a short description of their positions and expertise of planning and development in the City of Toledo.

1. Reynold Boezi currently is a retired planning consultant who specialized in real-estate development and financing of community-driven projects, he in addition sits on the Toledo Design Center Downtown Plan Steering Committee.

2. Steve Day has over 20 years of experience as a landscape architecture. Currently Mr. Day works for the City of Toledo and is in charge of the City’s Open Space Planning Section, he works on design and construction of many of the city’s capital improvement projects, waterfront areas and streetscapes.

3. Ken Fallows served as mayor of Haskins Village, Ohio for 14 years, and also as the finance chair on the village council. Mr. Fallows has also served as Chair for the Toledo City Board of Zoning Appeals, he is currently the Vice Chairman to the Toledo-Lucas Plan Commissions.

4. Thomas Gibbons was a Principle Planner for the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commission during the creation of the 2011 Downtown Toledo Plan he was tasked with working on the production of this document. Currently, Mr. Gibbons is now the Director for the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commission.
5. Paul Hollenbeck is a retired architect, with 25 years of experience as a Principle for The Collaborative Inc. in the City of Toledo. He is also a key contributor in the planning and design of the City of Toledo. Mr. Hollenback serves on the Greater Downtown Business Partnership Board, which gives him great knowledge in the path downtown Toledo has been and wants to develop in. At the Toledo Design Center he was the driving force behind the 2011 Downtown Plan and the 2013 Uptown Plan.

6. Eugene Naujock an AICP certified planner, in 2004 retired as planning manager of the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, after 35 years of service. He holds professional experience in current planning and long range planning, Eugene also serves on the Toledo Design Center Downtown Plan Steering Committee.

7. Diane Reamer-Evens has worked over 20 years for the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), as a Transportation Project Manager. Ms. Reamer-Evens is also a key contributor to the creation of the 2011 Downtown Toledo Plan.

8. Bob Seyfang is the retired President/CEO of Seyfang Blanchard Duket Porter architect, he is also the founder of the Toledo Design Center. He was chosen because of his long history in development, planning and architect in the City of Toledo. Mr. Seyfang as well owns, lives and manages the residential Bakery Building in Toledo’s Warehouse District.
9. Bill Thomas is the Executive Director for the Downtown Toledo Improvement District (DTID), a 501(c) (3) special assessment entity. The (DTID) was created to help provide enhanced safety, marketing and economic development services to current and future business owners in the downtown. Mr. Thomas was a member to the Toledo Design Center Downtown Plan Steering Committee and the Downtown Business Partnership Board.

10. Robin Whitney was previously the Commissioner of Engineering then became Director for the Department of Public Works for the City of Toledo. Most recently she has become the Senior Vice President of Real Estate and Construction for the ProMedica Health System. Ms. Whitney as well has worked closely with the Toledo Design Center, and has been a contributor of the 2011 Downtown Toledo Plan.

11. Mike Young retired from the City of Toledo Department of Natural Resources as a project manager. He also managed the University of Toledo Grounds and Fleet Operations for ten years. He is as well part of the Toledo Design Center team and the Downtown Plan Steering Committee.
Appendix B

Thesis Interview Questions

After completing an analysis of the 2002 and 2011 Downtown Toledo Master Plans, I developed the questions listed below which were asked during interviews conducted with professionals associated with The Toledo Design Center and other relevant stakeholders.

1. In the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, do you feel that more focus could have been put on urban design techniques for the downtown? Why or why not? Was urban design considered in the 2002 DTMP? If so, in what ways?

2. Do you feel that public participation in the 2002 Downtown Toledo Master Plan should be increased for the 2011 Downtown Toledo Plan? Was it a benefit in having the public open house for the plan update? Explain? How was public participation part of the 2002 DTMP? How do you think it worked? Any changes for the 2011 DTP?

3. In the city of Toledo, the 2002 master plan states, “the downtown and riverfront should be understood as a destination for community-wide gatherings”. From the late 1990’s to the early 2000’s, in your opinion has this perception of the riverfront changed? How? Why? Has the riverfront lost this perception? Why or why not?

4. Do you think the City of Toledo is utilizing its stock of historical building to its greatest potentials? What are some of the incentives that the City of Toledo is doing to help promote the usage of these buildings? Does the city utilize its stock
of historic buildings in any way? Are there any incentives to help promote the use of these buildings?

5. In your opinion, is it important for urban design in the City of Toledo to incorporate the rich history the city has to offer? Do you feel that development can be done without affecting its historical quality?

6. What can be done to help soften the affect of urban sprawl? Is the answer in a change of policies or the built environment? Why or why not? What can be done to soften the effect of urban sprawl in this metro region?

7. How important is the “identity of the City of Toledo” in the revitalization of its downtown? What identity if any, do you feel the City of Toledo has currently?

8. In your opinion are TIF’s a good way to fund projects in the City of Toledo? Why or why not? If no, what are other ways the city has helped to generate funding to redevelopment projects?

9. Do you know of any other cities similar to Toledo, or neighborhoods in larger cities, whose planning approach, particularly with respect to the use of urban design and/or planning, might have some lessons for us?