

Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Technical Assistance Program

Downtown Revitalization: Actions and Strategies for Uhrichsville, Ohio

March 21, 2013



[Inside Cover]

About This Document

This report is the result of technical assistance provided to Uhrichsville, Ohio, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The EPA contracted with Renaissance Planning Group to provide support for the efforts. For more information contact:

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1. Community Story

Uhrichsville is located in east-central Ohio, on the western edge of the Appalachian region. The Village of Dennison borders Uhrichsville to the east. Uhrichsville was established in the mid-19th century near Michael Uhrich's mill along Stillwater Creek. Water also played an important role in the city's early economy, which was driven by access to the Ohio and Erie Canal. Uhrichsville flourished as a hub for commerce, especially trading agricultural products.

But the Canal quickly became obsolete and the railroad industry became an important part of the region's economy. About 3,000 people were employed locally by the Pennsylvania Railroad at the turn of the 20th century.¹ The railroad also brought fame to Uhrichsville and Dennison during World War II when volunteers from Uhrichsville and Dennison worked at a canteen serving coffee and meals to more than one million soldiers passing through. Their hospitality earned the region the nickname "Dreamsville," which today is still celebrated at the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum and on banners that fly from light posts in both communities.



Figure 1 – Gateway Sign

The 19th century also saw the rise of the clay industry in eastern Ohio. At its peak, 32 plants in the area turned out bricks, tiles, sewer pipes, and more. These plants thrived because of their access to high-quality "Pennsylvania-age" soils found in eastern Ohio.²

The rail and clay industries fueled a strong economy in Uhrichsville for many decades. The downtown area was home to many local businesses including a department store. But as employment in these industries waned, so did the local economy and downtown area. The city has slowly lost population since 1950 and today is nearly at the same level as it was 100 years ago.³ The last several decades also saw the growth of retail and restaurants outside of the downtown core at locations near the route



Figure 2 - Downtown Uhrichsville

¹ Dennison Railroad Depot Museum. How We Came to Be. http://dennisondepot.org/new_website/about-2/. Accessed March 4, 2013.

² Wolfe, Mark E. and Steven D. Blankenbeker. "Clay and Shale in Ohio." Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey. 2005.

³ Ohio Development Services Agency. Census Archive. http://development.ohio.gov/reports/reports_censusarchive_map.htm. Accessed March 7, 2013.

250/36 interchange. More recently, Claymont High School also relocated to a new campus site north of the interchange. All of these factors combined have contributed to a decrease in activity in downtown as evidenced by the vacant and underutilized buildings.

A major industry has yet to replace the lost jobs, so the city is turning to its rich cultural heritage and potential tourist related activity generators as one way to revitalize its economy and improve quality of life for its residents. A 2007 study, the “Twin Cities Tourism Economic Development Corridor,” identified the region’s clay and railroad history as assets around which the community could build a stronger tourism-based economy. In addition to tourism, a recent report by the Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) in 2012 entitled Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, cites the strong potential for economic development in energy related industries including natural gas drilling, production and exports. Currently activity in this industry is already driving demand for rental housing and lodging in both Uhrichsville and Dennison. Over the long term, growth in this industry may also lead to new permanent jobs and residents in the region, thereby increasing demand for quality housing, local retail and community amenities. Both the tourism potential and the larger regional economic forces at play can have a positive impact on revitalization efforts for downtown.

The opening of the Uhrichsville Clay Museum in 2009 marked a significant step forward in the creation of a tourist destination downtown. The Clay museum celebrates the industry’s contributions to the region and communicates the history of clay and its many uses. The museum has since outgrown its small storefront location in downtown Uhrichsville, and will be moving to the city purchased H.L. Green Building at the corner of 3rd and Main streets. This prominent building once held a department store, but has since fallen into a state of disrepair.

The Clay Museum builds on other community assets that make up the Twin Cities Tourism Corridor. Among the other attractions are the Uhrichsville Water Park and the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum. These investments attract visitors to the community, and offer special events and recreational activities for existing residents. Last year the Uhrichsville Water Park hosted 43,000 visitors over 102 days⁴ and the Polar Express event at the Depot attracted more than 10,000 people over two weekends.⁵ These visitors brought outside dollars into the region’s shops, hotels, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants. Spending from tourists combined with local residents has the potential to spur more economic activity in the downtown. Recent private investments from local businesses such as the renovation of Mako’s Market and Pharmacy, the new Dollar General, a new pet store, and the Taste of Heaven restaurant, among others is helping to create a more positive image of downtown. Other public investments are still in the planning



Figure 3 - Uhrichsville Water Park

⁴ Personal communication with Terry Culbertson, Mayor, City of Uhrichsville, on February 19, 2013.

⁵ Personal communication with Wendy Zucal, Executive Director, Dennison Depot Rail Museum, on February 19, 2013.

and development stage, such as the Panhandle Passage Trail and the new Clay Museum, both of which will add to the area’s attractiveness.

Despite these successes, there is still a lot of work to be done to realize the full potential of revitalization. In 2012 the city requested technical assistance through the federal Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program to develop an action plan for better leveraging the area’s regional attractions to further promote downtown revitalization. This technical assistance work builds on the previous “Twin Cities Tourism Economic Development Corridor” study, which identified several action steps and strategies aimed at increasing tourism.

The technical assistance centered on a two day workshop where Uhrichsville residents and officials came together to identify community assets, obstacles to downtown revitalization, and strategies to help the community achieve its goal of creating a vibrant and attractive downtown. This report includes a summary of key actions and priorities identified during the workshop activities. The framework laid out in this document can serve as a playbook that newly organized stakeholders and officials can use to guide downtown improvement activities moving forward.

2. The Workshop

On February 19 and 20, 2013, the City of Uhrichsville hosted a small team of federal agency staff and contractors to deliver technical assistance focused on the how principles of livability and sustainability might help support revitalization of the city’s downtown. Sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), these activities came about from the city’s successful application to the joint ARC/EPA 2012 Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program.

The technical assistance effort included pre-workshop conference calls and interviews to identify issues and goals with local stakeholders, a walking tour of the downtown area, a public workshop and small group exercises aimed at identifying ideas and solutions for revitalizing downtown and a follow-up meeting with project’s steering committee. The workshop events garnered strong participation from the general public, local business owners, elected officials, and other stakeholders. Participants worked through facilitated exercises to confirm key community values, identify community assets and opportunities, develop goals and priorities, and map out a plan of action for leveraging the city’s investment in the Clay Museum and other initiatives to catalyze downtown revitalization and spur economic development. Figure 1 illustrates the sequence of activities that led to the development of this action plan.



Figure 4 - Public Workshop

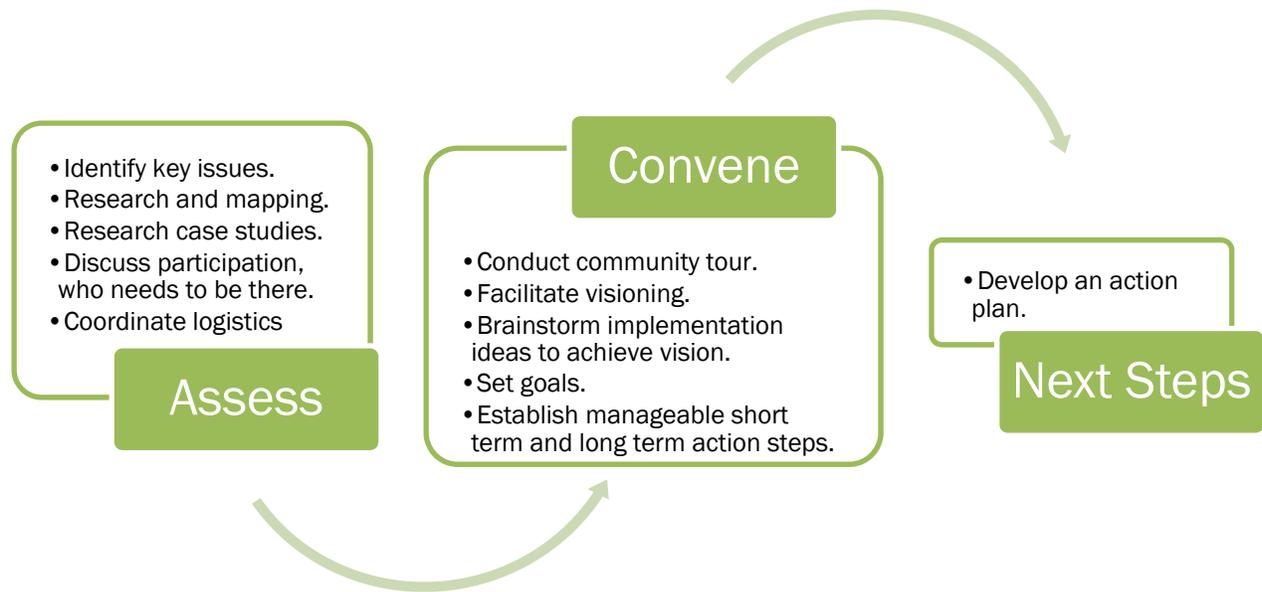


Figure 5 – Technical Assistance Process Diagram

3. Community Strengths and Opportunities

Uhrichsville has been through tough times as a community. Tuscarawas County, which includes Uhrichsville, had a higher unemployment rate than Ohio as a whole at the end of 2012.⁶ Dwindling employment in the city’s historic industries has left a smaller tax base to support municipal services and investments. There are many people who care about Uhrichsville, and there are also many different ideas about how to improve the community in terms of enhancing the quality of life and economic opportunities for existing businesses and residents, and also how to make it more attractive to new visitors, residents, and industries. As with many small Appalachian towns, this has created some tension that can overshadow and even create barriers to the community moving forward. Given these dynamics, one of the first steps in the workshop focused on identifying common values and prompted participants to describe the top reasons why Uhrichsville is a great place to live. This exercise revealed several unifying themes about the positive elements of the community as highlighted in Figure 6 on the next page.⁷

⁶ U.S. Department of Labor. Local Area Unemployment Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/lau/tables.htm>. Accessed March 13, 2013.

⁷ “922” listed in Figure 6 refers to the prefix of telephone numbers in the Uhrichsville area.

What makes Uhrichsville great? Uhrichsville is...

- ***Convenient***
- ***Safe***
- Clay Week
- ***Historic***
- Affordable
- Great churches
- Giving people
- Tradition
- Quiet
- Beautiful homes
- “922” and proud
- Small town atmosphere
- Community
- Quaint
- Can do attitude
- True grit
- ***Friendly***
- ***Personal touch***
- Good schools
- Family friendly
- ***Scenic beauty***
- ***Caring and loving***
- Hometown pride
- Integrity

The above key words summarize the main attributes cited by the evening public workshop participants during a facilitated storytelling exercise. Those words italicized and bolded above were identified by multiple participants.

Figure 6 – What Makes Uhrichsville Great?

In addition to the storytelling exercise, participants also identified specific places within the community that they were proud of or saw as a key community asset, as well as those areas that needed improvement. This resulted in the creation of a consolidated gold stars (assets) and green lights (needs improvement) map as shown as Figure 7. The gold star locations are areas where there is an existing business, building, destination or future project that contributes positively to the community and may help leverage revitalization of downtown, while the green light locations point to properties that need improvement or may be detracting from downtown efforts. Table 1 provides the specific names of the top locations that received multiple dots during the workshop activities.

This exercise revealed some important themes. First, the community is very concerned about blighted commercial and residential buildings. There are several areas with a high concentration of vacant or poorly maintained structures. Attendees were especially concerned with concentrations of blighted buildings at key gateways to the downtown Uhrichsville area, including Water Street just south of the railroad bridge and 3rd Street near the city’s border with Dennison. The conditions at these important gateways are not inviting, such as the streetscape entering Uhrichsville on Water Street from the north (Routes 250/36).



Figure 7 - Consolidated "Gold Stars-Green Lights" Maps

Another important theme is that the community is proud of the investments it has already made in infrastructure and community amenities. The Uhrichsville Water Park, Panhandle Passage Trail, Buckeye House (senior housing), and several other public places such as community parks, churches, schools, and the golf course were identified by multiple groups. Some of these assets are new, while others were built several generations ago. These older assets include many community features that newer neighborhoods and cities are attempting to replicate. Uhrichsville is a walkable community, one with sidewalks, alley ways, front porches, and a mix of destinations that make it attractive and convenient for people to get around and meet their daily needs without having to get in their cars and drive everywhere. While many of Uhrichsville's traditional neighborhoods have these features, many areas have also fallen into a state of disrepair leaving the community with a lot of work to restore these assets.

Table 1 shows the top "gold star" places that the community is proud of and can build upon, and top "green light" locations that the community would like to improve. The top locations represent those areas that received more than one dot from each group. Of note, there were also some locations off of the map that participants felt were important to note during the exercise as well.

Table 1 – Top Gold Stars and Green Lights

Location	Number of Dots	
	Gold Stars	Green Lights
Mako’s Market Building	5	
Buckeye House	4	
Southern District Courthouse	4	
Uhrichsville Water Park	3	
Union Cemetery	3	
Panhandle Passage Trail	3	
New Dollar Store	3	
Renovated building at 5 th and Main St.	3	
Trenton Avenue School	2	
Rite Aid on Water St.	2	
Hostettler Funeral Home	2	
Big Bend Golf Course	2	
Water Street improvement project	2	
New condominiums on Thompson south of 3 rd	2	
Rod’s Donuts at 2 nd and Main St.	2	
Blighted area near 3 rd St. and Thompson St.		5
Greens building area (fire damage)		3
Blighted area entering downtown on Water St.		3
Vacant commercial building at Creek and 6 th St.		2
Blighted area on the eastern end of 2 nd St.		2
Twin City Hardware building		2
L&H Clothing at 3 rd & Water		2

In addition to the top locations noted above, several other locations were identified for improvement by at least one group. These include the Spring Building (fire damage), Deersville Avenue (lacks sidewalks), the former root beer stand on 4th near Creek Street, downtown lighting, blighted buildings at 1st and Main Street, blighted buildings on Main Street just south of 3rd, Gorley Bottoms Park, and the old Dollar General store. Additional gold star locations identified by a single group included the stadium, church at 3rd and Dawson, Robin’s Nest Antique Shop on Water St., Deputy Registrar, the Claymont Public Library, City Hall, Nicola Building, food pantry, Elks Lodge, Moose Lodge, Fraternal Order of Eagles, all of the city’s churches, Sav-A-Lot, Family Dollar, Fab Ohio, the railroad, Barbour Publishing, Ember Care, the high school, community parks, and the Methodist Church.

4. Action Plan for Implementation

With a solid understanding of the community's values, strengths, and weaknesses community members and invited stakeholders brainstormed ideas about how to move forward on specific actions to help revitalize downtown. Many of these ideas build on the city's existing assets (the "gold stars") and address areas for improvement ("green lights"). Others address the need to better organize and coordinate activities among volunteers, youth, civic, and business leaders to focus energy on revitalizing downtown and generally promote community events and pride. Additionally, there is a need to better communicate the success stories of past efforts and the positive returns on community investments over the last several years.

Many of the actions identified by the community do not require additional money. For example, two issues that came up repeatedly during the workshop were leadership and coordination. There are several steps the community can take, some of which are listed below, to bring together groups such as the Historic Dreamsville Association, the Uhrichsville Merchants Association, and the Twin City Chamber of Commerce. Promoting coordination among these groups and others, as well as developing the next generation of community leaders that can ensure the long process of downtown revitalization is fully carried out, are among the most important steps the community can take to achieve its vision.

The actions identified during the workshop are organized below by five major goal themes. For each action, stakeholders identified details such as who will take the lead role carrying out the action, anticipated cost, overall schedule for action, funding sources, and early steps to take in the first 100 days following the workshop. Workshop attendees defined all of these details during the final session of the workshop. Their work is included as Appendix A. A summary of the goals along with specific actions is included below.



Figure 8 - Future Site of the Clay Museum

Goals and Actions

GOAL 1: *Change the negative perception of downtown through improved communications and increased awareness of downtown plans, successes, attractions and activities.*

- **Action 1.1** – Hire a downtown development director supported by the Twin City Chamber of Commerce and the two communities.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Uhrichsville and Dennison Councils, the Uhrichsville Merchants Association, and the Historic Dreamsville Association.
 - **Time Frame** – 6 months.
 - **Cost/Funding** - \$50,000. Private and business donations, the Tuscarawas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Twin City Chamber of Commerce, Uhrichsville, and Dennison.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Finish the chamber of commerce strategic plan.

- **Action 1.2** – Improve and add to the social media tools used to promote the community.
 - **Lead Role** – High school technology program.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Uhrichsville and Dennison Councils, the Uhrichsville Merchants Association, and the Historic Dreamsville Association.
 - **Time Frame** – 1 year.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low cost. Would include expenses for photography and web hosting for any new website.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Launch a new website for the community.
- **Action 1.3** – Develop a toolkit that local businesses can use to promote the community and provide training for local business staff. The toolkit and training will help local business staff direct patrons to other things to do in the community.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Representatives of tourist attractions (for example, the Uhrichsville Water Park and Clay Museum) and local merchants.
 - **Time Frame** – 1 year (update the toolkit annually).
 - **Cost/Funding** - \$500; Funding source to be determined.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Develop materials and training packets.
- **Action 1.4** – Create a Connect Downtown Committee representative of both communities that brings together the leadership of organizations and business interests working towards similar objectives for downtown revitalization and economic development.
 - **Lead Role** – Dreamsville Downtown Development Director.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Members of community organizations.
 - **Time Frame** – To be determined.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low cost.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Develop an inventory of potential members and their roles.
- **Action 1.5** – Launch a community campaign to improve attitudes and perceptions of the Twin Cities for both residents and people outside of the community.
 - **Lead Role** – Dreamsville Downtown Development Director.
 - **Supporting Cast** – All community residents.
 - **Time Frame** – 3 to 5 years.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low cost.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Establish a campaign theme.

GOAL 2: Engage our youth to build commitment, pride, and interest in the community.

- **Action 2.1** – Reinvigorate the mentorship program with local businesses.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce and Claymont High School officials.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Local business owners.
 - **Time Frame** – By spring of 2014. This would be an annual program that students would participate in during the spring of their senior year.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low cost; largely staff time.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Obtain commitment to participate from the chamber of commerce and some local businesses.
- **Action 2.2** – Establish a youth corps that will conduct local community service projects (for example, a downtown beautification project).

- **Lead Role** – Downtown development director and other city officials/staff.
- **Supporting Cast** – School officials, local businesses, and local community service groups (for example, Kiwanis and Rotary).
- **Time Frame** – 1 year.
- **Cost/Funding** – Low to medium; sources to be determined.
- **Next 100 Days** – Identify potential projects and contact potential sponsors.
- **Action 2.3** – Establish a school program to educate and celebrate the community’s history with students.
 - **Lead Role** – School officials and city administration.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Long-time residents, the Uhrichsville Clay Museum, Dennison Railroad Depot Museum, and the Claymont Library.
 - **Time Frame** – Yearly event to coincide with “9/22 Pride Day” on September 22 of each year.
 - **Cost/Funding** – None.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Study local history and identify events to celebrate.
- **Action 2.4** – Organize more youth activities.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce and city officials.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Students.
 - **Time Frame** – To be determined.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low to medium; sources to be determined.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Identify annual activities to host, such as a road race, wiffle ball tournament or a theme day at the water park.

GOAL 3: *Improve property appearance and values throughout the Twin Cities*

- **Action 3.1** – Enforce codes and standards related to maintenance of commercial properties.
 - **Lead Role** – Zoning inspector, city law director, and business owners.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Police and fire departments, local court, health department, and realtors.
 - **Time Frame** – Long-term project.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Medium; One potential source is grant funds.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Develop codes that address vacant properties and create an inventory of vacant commercial sites.
- **Action 3.2** – Enforce codes and standards related to maintenance of residential properties.
 - **Lead Role** – Zoning inspector, city law director, and property owners.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Police and fire departments, local court, and health department.
 - **Time Frame** – Mid-term.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Medium; One potential source is the state’s “Moving Ohio Forward” program.
 - **Next 100 Days** - Develop codes that address vacant properties and create an inventory of vacant residential lots.
- **Action 3.3** – Establish a façade improvement program.
 - **Lead Role** – To be determined by community.

- **Supporting Cast** –The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) is a potential resource for local planning assistance and helping match projects with funding sources.
- **Time Frame** – To be determined by community.
- **Cost/Funding** – To be determined by the community. Some potential resources are cited in the appendix.
- **Next 100 Days** – Identify potential elements of the program.
- **Action 3.4** – Develop priorities for improving the downtown streetscape.
 - **Lead Role** – To be determined by community.
 - **Supporting Cast** – The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) is a potential resource for local planning assistance and helping match projects with funding sources.
 - **Time Frame** – To be determined by community.
 - **Cost/Funding** – To be determined by community. Some potential resources are cited in the appendix.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Begin discussions.

GOAL 4: *Engage and encourage local businesses to actively participate in the revitalization efforts of downtown.*

- **Action 4.1** – Monitor and carry out actions identified in this document.
 - **Lead Role** – Connect Downtown Committee.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Community leaders and business organizations.
 - **Time Frame** – Now through completion of action items.
 - **Cost/Funding** – None or low.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Invite workshop attendees to participate in the Committee.
- **Action 4.2** – Hold a Connect Downtown Committee meeting with local business owners to identify any additional ideas, needs, and concerns related to downtown revitalization.
 - **Lead Role** – Connect Downtown Committee.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Community leaders and business organizations.
 - **Time Frame** – Near-term and continuing for 3 to 5 years during implementation.
 - **Cost/Funding** – None or low.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Organize the meeting (establish a date and agenda).
- **Action 4.3** – Invite businesses to become involved in the campaign described in Action 1.5, which aims to improve public perception of the Twin Cities.
 - **Lead Role** – Connect Downtown Committee.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Community leaders and business organizations.
 - **Time Frame** – Near-term and continuing for 3 to 5 years during implementation.
 - **Cost/Funding** – To be determined by community.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Introduce the concept and seek ideas at the meeting referenced in Action 4.2.
- **Action 4.4** – Launch a “Buy Local” campaign.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Connect Downtown Committee, Uhrichsville Merchants Association, and Historic Dreamsville Association.

- **Time Frame** – 1 year.
- **Cost/Funding** – To be determined; potential sources include chamber businesses.
- **Next 100 Days** – Develop a calendar of planned promotions, such as “cash mobs” where people are encouraged to shop at a particular locally-owned business on a particular day.
- **Action 4.5** – Help local cottage businesses move into vacant storefronts.
 - **Lead Role** – Twin City Chamber of Commerce and Dreamsville Downtown Development Director.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Connect Downtown Committee and other successful cottage businesses operating in the area.
 - **Time Frame** – Long-term; 3 to 5 years.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Cost to be determined; potential funding sources include a revolving loan fund or downtown retail incubator.
 - **Next 100 Days** - Develop a list of small businesses currently operated from homes that could potentially move into a vacant downtown storefront.

GOAL 5: *Physically connect the Uhrichsville and Dennison communities through wayfinding and infrastructure improvements.*

- **Action 5.1** – Develop a plan for installing wayfinding signs with a common theme to connect the main destinations in Uhrichsville and Dennison.
 - **Lead Role** – Uhrichsville and Dennison mayors and city councils.
 - **Supporting Cast** – High school administration (student workshop and volunteer labor can support the project), Uhrichsville Merchants Association, Historic Dreamsville Association, Dreamsville Downtown Development Director, and OMEGA.
 - **Time Frame** – Before construction is finished on the Panhandle Passage Trail.
 - **Cost/Funding** – Low to medium (largely materials); various state and federal funding sources such as Ohio Department of Transportation (DOT), Ohio Public Works, Appalachian Regional Commission, etc.
 - **Next 100 Days** – Develop a design theme, identify potential locations (see Action 5.4), and identify potential funding sources.
- **Action 5.2** – Design and construct new sidewalks from the new Panhandle Park (near the trail head for the Panhandle Passage Trail) to downtown Uhrichsville and downtown Dennison.
 - **Lead Role** – Uhrichsville and Dennison mayors and city councils.
 - **Supporting Cast** – OMEGA and the Ohio DOT.
 - **Time Frame** – Mid-term (as funding becomes available).
 - **Cost/Funding** – Medium cost; potential funding sources include federal programs such as Safe Routes to School.
- **Action 5.3** – Develop wayfinding maps and pamphlets.
 - **Lead Role** – Connect Downtown Committee.
 - **Supporting Cast** – Local businesses, Bloom’s Printing and high school students.
 - **Time Frame** – Mid-term (once infrastructure improvements, such as downtown sidewalks, are made).

- **Cost/Funding** – Low to medium cost; potential sources include the OMEGA and the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- **Action 5.4** – Design and construct community gateway improvements (such as welcome signs, improved lighting, reconstructed sidewalks, street trees, benches, etc.) at the following gateways: Trenton Avenue, Water Street, 3rd Street from west and east, 2nd Street, Route 800, and Dennison Route 250.
 - **Lead Role** – Uhrichsville and Dennison mayors and city councils.
 - **Supporting Cast** – OMEGA, Ohio DOT, the Uhrichsville Merchants Association, and the Historic Dreamsville Association.
 - **Time Frame** – Long-term
 - **Cost/Funding** – High cost; potential funding sources include the Ohio DOT’s Gateway Program and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Program.

5. Linking Uhrichsville’s Action Plan with Sustainability

Many of the actions identified by the community, and listed in the previous section, support reinvestment in existing infrastructure, reclaiming historic buildings and strengthening existing neighborhoods. All of these strategies can help make the community more sustainable and promote economic development, which is a common goal for many communities throughout the Appalachian region. These strategies are also consistent with the mission and goals of the Appalachian Regional Commission as well as the federal interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Three federal agencies – the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – formed the Partnership in 2009 to coordinate their policies and investments in order to “make neighborhoods more prosperous, allow people to live closer to jobs, save households time and money, and reduce pollution.”⁸ More information about the interagency Partnership is available in Appendix D of this report.

In support of sustainable communities, the three Partnership agencies are working to incorporate six livability principles into their policies and programs. These principles are:

- Provide transportation choices.
- Promote equitable, affordable housing.
- Enhance economic competitiveness.
- Support existing communities.
- Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.
- Value communities and neighborhoods.

Table 2 below describes how Uhrichsville’s action plan advances these livability principles.

⁸ Partnership for Sustainable Communities. About Us. <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/aboutUs.html>. Accessed March 7, 2013.

Table 2 - Linking the Livability Principles and the Action Plan

Livability Goal	The Uhrichsville Action Plan will help achieve...
<i>Provide more transportation choices</i>	⇒ Better walking conditions between neighborhoods and downtown Uhrichsville, between Uhrichsville and Dennison, and between neighborhoods and the new Panhandle Passage Trail.
<i>Promote equitable, affordable housing</i>	⇒ Better maintained commercial and residential properties and less vacant properties.
<i>Enhance economic competitiveness</i>	⇒ More use of downtown storefronts and supporting another downtown attraction (the Clay Museum).
<i>Support existing communities</i>	⇒ Optimal use of large sunk investments in infrastructure, such as streets, water/sewer, parks, homes, stores, etc.
<i>Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment</i>	⇒ Better coordination and communication among the city and agencies that can assist in the city’s downtown revitalization efforts, such as OMEGA, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the federal interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities, the state department of transportation, the Ohio Development Services Agency, and more.
<i>Value communities and neighborhoods</i>	⇒ Better physical connections between neighborhoods and downtown, and better social connections among residents and with the city’s youth.

The alignment of Uhrichsville’s local community goals with larger regional, state and federal agency initiatives can help position the city for additional funding and resources that may be available to further the planning and implementation of projects over time.

6. Appendix

Appendix A: Implementation Action Plan Tables

Appendix B: Workshop Participants

Appendix C: Power Point Presentation Slides

Appendix D: Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies

Appendix E: Potential Funding Sources