

Downtown Strategic Plan

Neosho, Missouri

The City of Neosho was designated a DREAM Initiative community in 2006, the first year of the program. Neosho, located in the southwestern corner of Missouri, is the most populated city, and the county seat of Newton County. The city lies at the western edge of the Missouri Ozarks, and is known for its natural, freshwater springs. Downtown Neosho is laid out around a traditional downtown square with historic commercial buildings surrounding the Newton County Courthouse. A majority of the buildings were constructed between 1870 and 1900, and create a unique and historic Downtown area. At the time that the city was designated a DREAM community, the Downtown area was the subject of new interest, but limited investment.

The DREAM Initiative recognizes that a downtown reflects the heritage of a community, and in most instances, it is the “heart and soul” that provides a city or town with its sense of identity. In economic terms, there is also a lot to gain from a revitalized downtown. There is a proven economic tie between its health and the economic well-being of the rest of the community. Moreover, the overall viability of a community is greatly influenced by the vitality of its downtown.

Each DREAM Initiative community undergoes an initial assessment that consists of a wide-ranging examination of Downtown and the surrounding area. This assessment identifies the areas and topics for further study through the program. PGAV provides assistance in the form of comprehensive information gathering, analyses, and recommendations that culminate into a strategic plan guiding future actions over the next five to ten years.

PGAV found Downtown Neosho to be well positioned for revitalization, possessing many of the attributes necessary for a vibrant city center. The DREAM Initiative focused on increasing local capacity and capabilities to take advantage of these existing assets. PGAVs’ assistance focused in a number of areas including: destination and tourism development, financing for Downtown improvements, addressing land use conflicts, historic preservation and Downtown beautification. Upon completion of the strategic plan, Neosho began implementation of many of PGAVs’ recommendations including taking steps to create a sustainable revitalization effort by organizing a Community Improvement District, an Arts Council, and Downtown Organization.

Downtown Neosho is well on its way to becoming the leading community, business and government center in Newton County and the southwestern portion of the State of Missouri.



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