

Scottville Main Street Market Study

Focus Group Discuss Results Main Street Economic Restructuring Committee 10/6/08 – 12:00 pm

What do you consider the biggest strength(s) of Downtown Scottville?

- Government presence
- High School nearby, with open campus
- Accessible
 - Nearby
 - Easy to get to
- Community pride
- Walkable
- Riverside Park
- Optimists' Club & the Bandshell
- Opportunities for new businesses
- Rail line
- Independent businesses and their service oriented approach

The biggest weakness(es)?

- Lack of a grocery store
 - Gift shop
 - Hardware store
 - Clothing store
 - Evening restaurant
- Older / dated streetscape, landscaping
- Economy
- Vacancies
- Lack of variety in shopping
- Lack of housing
 - Seniors
 - Quality apartments or choices
- Deterioration in quality in all aspects
- Perception of parking and availability and distance
- Poor pedestrian connection to Riverside Park

Where do you do most of your shopping for day-to-day necessities?

- Nichol's Pharmacy
- Dollar General
- Bonzer's (Custer)
- Walmart / Meijer's
- Home Depot – hardware and building supplies
- Variety Store
- Cox's
- Losing Napa was a loss

If you had an unlimited budget, what would you do to help improve downtown Scottville?

- New Restaurant
- Re-landscape the parking lot
- Grocery store
- Redevelop old schoolhouse
- Develop senior housing
- Create business incubator
- Establish Recreation Store – outfitter or bait and tackle
- Coffee Shop / bookstore
- Apartment for Main Street Manager (quality housing options)

Scottville Main Street Market Study

Focus Group Discuss Results Families from the Community 10/6/08 – 10:00 am

What do you like about Downtown Scottville?

- Convenient, close by
- Small town atmosphere
- Business owners know everyone
- Sense of community
- DDA / Chamber / Optimist Club
- Activities / festivals
- Band Shell / entertainment
- Wednesday night bingo
- Sense of safety
- Churches and schools centrally located
- McPhail Field Park
- Athletic facilities
- Campground
- Library in town
- Wesco processes WIC coupons
- Good, clean gas stations
- Great schools
 - Better technology and special ed programs than most

What do you dislike about Downtown Scottville?

- Physical deterioration
- Open, vacant storefronts
- Businesses closing
- Business hours
 - Close before we get off work
- No reason for children to come to Scottville other than few special events
 - No shopping / businesses catering to family
- Safe, but don't see patrols much
- Lots of houses for sale
- High taxes and water bill
- Stores are messy / inventory not well maintained
 - Not fresh and clean

- Younger generation deterred
- Don't have the stuff the younger generation wants
 - Brands, sports, electronics, tech
- No fast / convenient dining options
 - Doesn't have to be chain fast food, but options for quick dinners
- No grocery, produce
- Property maintenance, residential
 - Particularly rental units
- Roads flood and puddle up downtown after rains
- Sidewalks are uneven and unsafe
 - Challenge for some to walk downtown
 - Safety / access
- Signage for parking / markings on street
 - Need update
- Lack of snow plowing on weekends
- No skateboarding, biking, etc on sidewalk ordinance is not enforced
- No convenient way to get to campground
- No jobs being created

What do you consider the biggest strength(s) of Downtown Scottville?

- Close by, proximity

The biggest weakness(es)?

- Businesses leaving, no where to shop
- Why?
 - Economy
 - The market has left
 - Location – (grocery store on north side of city)
 - Big box stores

Where do you do most of your shopping for day-to-day necessities?

- Walmart (Ludington)
- Meijer's (Ludington)
- Ludington: clothes, shoes
- Pharmacy – Walgreen's (Ludington)
 - Maybe Nichol's, but hours are a limitation
 - Dollar Store has been competition for Nichol's for accessory, gift, convenience items
- Dollar General for odd's and end's

For what purpose do you most often come to Downtown Scottville?

- Post Office
- Dollar General
- Nichol's (some people)
- Wesco (convenience goods)
- Walk, exercise
- The Duck Blind
 - Wish it was open later / good food

What is the Biggest Issue facing Downtown Scottville?

- Filling up empty stores

If you had an unlimited budget, what would you do to help improve downtown Scottville?

- Common theme
 - Aesthetic/appearance improvement
- Create a destination / a place to see and visit
 - Unique and well maintained
 - Thematic
 - Not necessarily alpine, but that type of thing
 - Streetscape and facades
- Convenient access to Riverside Park
 - Paved path
- Create endowment fund to subsidize high taxes
- Attract correct businesses to area to fill stores
- Something to draw people from the bypass – signage, gateway
- Wireless internet throughout the city
 - Plus places to sit and use it in the downtown
- Take advantage of the utility infrastructure in the city
- Community Center / rehab home for youth and seniors
 - Utilize animals in treatment

Scottville Main Street Market Study

Focus Group Discuss Results Seniors 10/6/08 – 8:00 am

What do you like about Downtown Scottville?

- Hometown atmosphere
- Easy access
 - Not congested
- Personalized service
 - They all know you
- Friendly community
- Appearance, clean
- People care
 - Put out their flags
- Little park with fountain
- Benches to sit on
- Riverside Park that brings in people
- Connection to clown band
- Close access to Community College
- Good School System
- McPhail Park = busy park
- Recreational opportunities
 - Hunting, fishing, hiking, camping
- Senior Center
 - Services, particularly close to outlying areas
 - Fun activities through the Senior Center: 2000 people/year
- Weekly activities at the band shell
- Festivals
- Space available
- Saturday morning farmer's market
- Parking available
- Close to Lake Michigan
- Good utilities

What do you dislike about Downtown Scottville?

- Store selection, variety
 - Really only furniture, drug, and variety
- Overall appearance needs improvement
 - Thematic upgrade
- Empty storefronts
- Property maintenance
 - Residential as well as commercial
- Hours of operation
 - After work hours missing
- Not a lot of civic participation by residents
 - Attendance at community events and activities
- Loss of identity
 - Ex. Merging of Chamber of Commerce with Ludington
- Taxes are high, water bills
- Businesses not open during festivals, activities

What do you consider the biggest strength(s) of Downtown Scottville?

- People are the biggest strength
 - Neighborhood picnics
 - People are still neighborly
 - Maybe some change over time
 - Could become more neighborly with an active downtown where people saw each other
 - Example of change: Harvest Festival
 - People don't come as much any more
 - Costs to participate have risen
 - Charging to participate in parade

The biggest weakness(es)?

- Store selection and empty storefronts
 - Used to get everything here
 - Need grocery, drug, and hardware store to be complete
 - Only have drug
 - The overhead kills everyone
 - Why?
 - Big box stores
 - Market is the County
 - Move closer to the population, highway, visibility
 - Downtown: do we serve tourist or resident needs?
 - Different markets and uses

- Not many opportunities to try out a business, hard for an entrepreneur
- Scottville does not provide one-stop convenience shopping we have been trained to expect

Where do you do most of your shopping for day-to-day necessities?

- Ludington
 - Meijer's
 - Walmart
 - Shop & Save
 - Bonzer's
- Using Advertisement (savings)
- Combining trips much more
 - For goods in Ludington
 - Carpool with friends
 - Gas prices

For what purpose do you most often come to Downtown Scottville?

- Dollar Store
- Lundquist Furniture Store
 - Draws from large area
 - Sales
 - High quality
- Senior Center
- Drug Store
- Variety store
- R&R Furniture store
 - Both used and new
- Grannie's Attic (treasures)
- Antique store (Frick's)
- Thistle Creek florist
- Gas stations
- Exercise – safe place to walk
- Coffee shop
- Cox's
- 2 barber shops
- Bar
- Events / activities

What is the Biggest Issue facing Downtown Scottville?

- Empty stores
- Stores leaving
- Loss of participation

If you had an unlimited budget, what would you do to help improve downtown Scottville?

- Remodel downtown Scottville
 - Attractive
 - User-friendly
 - More walkability
- Add a grocery store and hardware store
- Bait shop
 - A lot of big money in recreation in Mason County – capture that
- Sporting goods store with appropriate hours
- Trail to park
- Traditional façade improvements
- Decent apartment building
- Assist business owners
 - Training
 - Marketing
 - Money for tough times
- More visibility for businesses
 - Signage for 10 and 31 (bypass)
- Better marketing of positives
 - Especially to Ludington

Scottville Main Street Market Study

Focus Group Discuss Results School District Employees 10/6/08 – 3:30 pm

What do you like about Downtown Scottville?

- Good drug store
 - Better than convenience store
- Good access to everything
- Mini-mall (park) inviting to the eye
 - Enjoyed for festival
- Old facades, history of the structures
- Close to home and work
- Scottville Variety
- Small town feel
- Friendly people / helpful
 - Helpful business owners
- Few absentee owners
- Lots of civic involvement
 - Good turnout
 - Active people in community
- West Shore Bank
- Optimist's Club
- R&R Furniture draws people into community
- Thistle Creek
- Cox's
- Dollar General is busy
- Library is excellent in town
- Convenient gas stations
- Lundquist's
- Excellent funeral home
- Health care – dr.'s, dentists, chiropractor
- MSUE
- Senior center

What do you dislike about Downtown Scottville?

- Parking
 - Not enough (front)
 - Angled is not good
 - Rear parking (east buildings) not used much
- Empty businesses
- Having to go to Ludington
- No grocery store
- Affordable quality housing absent
- Don't like bypass
 - Took away location
 - May need better signage
- Main bank of West Shore Bank moved to Ludington
 - Others quickly followed
- Things looking rundown, not fresh
 - Open space by Laundromat
- Storefronts need facelift
- Jobs and housing on decline
- Taxes and utilities are high
- Not enough opportunities and jobs for youth

What do you consider the biggest strength(s) of Downtown Scottville?

- People
- Pride
- Schools
 - Coordination between schools and city can help downtown
 - Create internships and co-op opportunities for students in downtown
 - Get them excited about Scottville so they will not want to leave or will want to return
 - Schools are a major strength of community and a reason why people move to community – build on it

The biggest weakness(es)?

- Businesses leaving
 - Box stores
 - Cheaper prices
 - Market area
 - Main drive
 - Visibility, bypass
 - Stores closed, and then roads were improved creating a domino effect

Where do you do most of your shopping for day-to-day necessities?

- Meijer
- Walmart
- Shop and Save (Ludington)
- Nichol's (as much as possible)

For what purpose do you most often come to Downtown Scottville?

- Nichol's
- Post Office
- Bank
- Events
 - Farmer's Market
- Florist
- Wesco (convenience)
- North Country Café
- Lundquist

What is the Biggest Issue facing Downtown Scottville?

- Need more advertising
- Signage too late to capture attention
- Not enough income
- People don't know what's in downtown
- Longevity not present
- Scottville not a part of people's habits
- We need a niche, something different to stand out
 - Draw people to community
 - Create jobs and traffic
- We are the center of the county
 - Need to believe it and act like it
- Merging the Chamber was a big mistake
 - Lost identity
 - Was due to inability to fund staff position
 - Chamber doing better job recently
- Events should be better marketed

If you had an unlimited budget, what would you do to help improve downtown Scottville?

- School internships / co-op
- Grocery store
- Create an identity for downtown
 - Historical reference to community's past and origins
- Connection to river and recreation
 - County dump is great for sledding and skiing
 - McPhail Field improvements
- Old Schoolhouse
 - Museum
 - Youth center
 - Art center
 - YWCA / YMCA
- Public Transportation
 - Beyond just dial-a-ride
- Niche businesses to draw people here
- Train to Scottville from Ludington – connecting communities
- Attract younger families
- Family park
 - Pavilion
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