

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	5
Background	
History	
Prior Studies & Reports	
Study Goals & Objectives	
Community Input	9
Town Meeting	
Stakeholder Interviews	
Real Estate Round Table	
Market Analysis	17
Issues and Analysis	55
Analysis Summary / Photo Inventory	
<i>Zoning District Map</i>	
<i>Land Use Map</i>	
Opportunities & Recommendations	61
Planning and Design Workshop	
Revitalization Plan	
Implementation Strategy	69

Appendix

Best Practices

Analysis Map

Traffic Analysis Map

Acknowledgements

Our planning team would like to take a moment to recognize those individuals who gave their time, knowledge, creativity, and support for this planning initiative.

The City of Powell Development Department should be commended for providing proactive leadership in authorizing this strategic plan and for the commitment they have made to redevelopment in the City of Powell.

Brian Kinzelman, ASLA

Craig Gossman, AIA

Kinzelman Kline

Aaron Whittaker

The Whittaker Group

Introduction



Target Area Map

The Target Area is organized by quadrant based upon the 1995 Powell Comprehensive Plan.



The old Powell church was relocated to W. Olentangy Street where it currently is an antique shop.

Background

In July of 2003, The City of Powell retained the consulting firm of Kinzelman Kline to prepare a strategic action plan for a targeted area located in downtown Powell. The Target Area is defined as the area located adjacent to the crossroads of Olentangy Street and Liberty Street. The Target Area includes the Powell Historic District Overlay Zone and large areas of vacant or under-utilized land located throughout the downtown.

Kinzelman Kline assembled a planning team with The Whittaker Group. The Whittaker Group's primary responsibility was to address current market potential, trends, and opportunities of the planning area. Together, Kinzelman Kline and The Whittaker Group have provided redevelopment recommendations and an implementation strategy for revitalization in Powell.

History

The following denotes the historic timeline for Powell.

The City of Powell was first settled circa 1801 and was named Middlebury because the first settlers came from the Middlebury, Connecticut area.

Powell cemetery was laid out in the early 1800's before the establishment of the Village.

In 1857, Judge Thomas Powell was influential in establishing the first Post Office, therefore, the townspeople decided to rename the Village after him.

The first school and churches were established very early in Powell. In 1859, the Emery Chapel was built along S. Liberty Street, and was later relocated to its current location at 50 W. Olentangy Street. Mills, blacksmith shops, and a tanyard were industries prevalent in Powell.

In 1876, A.G. Hall, who owned most of the land in Powell, had Powell surveyed. On March 29, 1876 the Village plat was recorded.

Powell was incorporated as a municipality in February 1947. The population remained stable at approximately 400 until the early 1980's when residential development in the northern parts of the Columbus metropolitan area reached Powell.

The City of Powell, encompassing approximately 4.8 square miles, is located on rolling highlands between the Scioto and Olentangy River valleys, approximately fourteen miles north of downtown Columbus. The city is located near the intersection of scenic State Route 315 and State Route 750, with State Route 750 bisecting the city. The city's strategic location in southern Delaware County has promoted its development as a semi-rural, suburban, greenbelt town. Residential developments, combined with open space preservation and minimized commercial and industrial development, has made Powell one of the premier residential communities within central Ohio.

Note: History is taken from the 1995 Powell Comprehensive Plan and the City of Powell website: www.ci.powell.oh.us.

Prior Studies & Reports

In 1995, City Council adopted the '**Powell Comprehensive Plan**'. The primary focus of this plan, centered on preserving and enhancing the unique character of Powell.

The Powell Comprehensive Plan identified six fundamental goals for development strategy:

- Goal 1** Establish Powell's identity as a rural greenbelt town.
- Goal 2** Redevelopment of the Village Green Town Center.
- Goal 3** Establish an access management program.
- Goal 4** Achieve a balanced land use mix.
- Goal 5** Create a small town economic development program.
- Goal 6** Provide City services.

In July of 2000, The City of Powell produced a report titled '**Powell's Roadway Roadmap to the Future**'. This report summarizes the action the city has taken regarding traffic management and discusses future roadway management. The purpose of this report was to inform residents of how the proposed roadmap of Powell would protect the distinct rural character of Powell while addressing the current modern lifestyle of the residents.

Technical Report #2 Community Survey was a survey used as an update to the 1995 Powell Comprehensive Plan. In October 2002, the survey was sent out to business owners and residents of Powell to gain public insight into the needs and values of Powell residents. The report, in general terms, lists issues and concerns that are prevalent to the community as a whole. The report was "intended to gain input and people's perceptions of the city as it relates to development, the services the city provides to its community, and how the people of the community perceive their satisfaction with the city in which they live, work, and play."

Note: Information taken from the Powell Comprehensive Plan - Technical Report #2.

Study Goals & Objectives

Our planning team met with the City of Powell and Powell stakeholders to identify specific goals and planning objectives that would designate the strategic direction for the Downtown Powell Revitalization Plan. The following highlights these goals and objectives.

Goal 1: Identify redevelopment opportunities that respond to a comprehensive market analysis.

Articulate the appropriate future market position for downtown Powell.

Goal 2: Determine the physical issues and opportunities affecting long term development and viability.

Identify potential redevelopment opportunities including key tenants.

Goal 3: Prepare a long term vision for downtown Powell.

Forecast land assemblages for development implementation.

Goal 4: Identify short and long term action steps toward the strategic vision of downtown Powell.

Develop a strategic development plan.

Goal 5: Prepare a realistic implementation strategy.

Create a realistic time and responsibility matrix for ease of implementation through community buy-in.

Goal 6 Enhance the overall quality of life for the community.

Community Input

Town Meeting

On July 17, 2003, Kinzelman Kline led a public input session on the Downtown Revitalization Plan at the Powell Village Green Municipal Building. Participants included downtown residents, business owners, property owners, and city staff representatives contributing to the planning study and review process.

The public meeting began with an overview of the Powell Downtown Revitalization project and process. The design team of Kinzelman Kline and the Whittaker Group discussed the purpose of the project and gave a brief analysis of the project target area.

The meeting continued with Kinzelman Kline leading participants through an examination/survey of the target area. The purpose of the survey was to identify what the participants perceive to be the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the downtown area. The survey was then utilized to inform and direct the planning team and public officials regarding the most appropriate planning concepts, strategies, and recommendations for downtown Powell. Observations and conclusions drawn from this meeting include the following:

Strengths:

- The architecture in Powell is of a unique character.

- The implementation of streetscape improvements has created a 'sense of place' for the downtown area.
- The school system (public and private) is a strong, positive influence in the community.
- The retail component mainly consists of niche - antique and gift shops.
- The police department has a strong presence in the community.
- Existing city organizations create a positive impact. (Business Assoc., Chamber of Commerce)
- Downtown events are well promoted.
- The downtown area consists of a comfortable walkable distance.
- Location.
- The community has a large youth population.
- Land is readily available for development.
- The community has a high median household income.
- The downtown area is clean.
- Good parking is available east of Liberty Street.
- There is heavy visitor traffic from outside of Powell for shopping.
- Infrastructure is present.

Weaknesses:

- Retail services lack variety.
- There is a lack of property and building maintenance in the historic downtown Powell area.
- Lack of Powell resident support for local stores and retail.
- The streetscape improvements (bike trail and

sidewalk amenities) are incomplete creating a fractured downtown area.

- Traffic congestion is high in the downtown area.
- Residential land use is lacking in the target area.
- Wayfinding and informational signage is not prevalent in the downtown area.
- The park gazebo is under-utilized.
- Lack of parking perception.
- Vacant / derelict properties.
- No informal contact with city officials.
- Lack of attention to aesthetic architecture and landscaping.

Opportunities:

- Development of a Village Green Park.
- Create a stage for youth focused events and promote youth oriented businesses.
- City Development Involvement (e.g. Economic Development Council, and the Community Development Council)
- Provide property improvement incentives.
- Create new retail services and office land use in Powell.
- Provide paved parking lots.
- Land is available downtown for development.
- Create an organization for business recruitment.
- New design development guidelines that balances historic integrity and private interests.
- Mass transit (COTA and DATA).
- Expand traditional grid street pattern.
- Traffic by-pass around downtown for thru-traffic.

Threats:

- There is a 'perception' that development is difficult in Powell.
- The sewer capacity for the downtown area may be insufficient.
- Stormwater detention requirements that must be made for new development.
- Loss of quality of life experience and character of the rural environment.
- The continuation of commercial 'edge' development.
- Traffic by-pass.
- Recruiting employees for businesses.
- Land is readily available for development.

Stakeholder Interviews

Throughout the process the Kinzelman Kline team has met with numerous groups and individuals to gain insight into their perspective on current conditions and future directions of downtown Powell.

Group meetings have included:

City of Powell City Council
City of Powell Planning and Zoning Commission
City of Powell Historic District Commission
Powell Business Association
Area Real Estate Developers

Individuals have included property owners, government officials and area residents too numerous to mention.

In many of the interviews proprietary information was shared with our team which was not to be included in this document but was offered to provide our team with an accurate understanding of the economic conditions within downtown.

Below are a few comments made during our stakeholder interview process that were significant to our planning team as we crafted the vision and recommendations for the revitalization strategy. They are listed in no particular order or priority but rather to offer the reader a representative list of some of the issues of importance from downtown stakeholders.

- Business downtown has declined over the years
- No left turn at RR and Depot Street is not good for business
- Attitude of Powell and Liberty Township is anti- business
- Signs for parking are needed to direct customers
- Long standing position that “residents rule Powell; not merchants”
- Historic Board has too much power – forces developers to look elsewhere
- East of cross roads / Grace Drive seems detached and not a part of downtown
- Lack of \$ commitment to East of Liberty streetscape
- Formal meetings from the city, no informal working sessions to educate/communicate
- Crosswalks are not noticeable
- Wayfinding issue: signing, welcoming, gateways, vehicular / pedestrian directional
- Majority of customers come from out of town; Powell residents less likely to shop downtown.
- Customers come from a variety of areas:
 - Texas
 - Michigan
 - Northern Ohio
 - Upper Arlington
 - Worthington & Dublin
- The downtown traffic has improved over the past few years
- Downtown is NOT pedestrian friendly
- Promotions are needed to take advantage of the demographics
- Downtown needs restaurants
 - 10-5 issue, 5:00 its dead

- Business Recruitment? Who is responsible?
 - Business focus change discussion. Who is responsible for downtown management?
- Need diversity of business
- Beads, collectables, antiques
 - Specialty Shops
 - Kids related stores
- Organizational Issues; A variety of groups should/could play a role in downtown
- Powell Business Association
 - City of Powell
 - School District
 - Clergy
 - Residents

Real Estate Round Table

In the interest of gaining critical insight and in order to assist in the development of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy, the planning team conducted a round-table focus group discussion with representatives of the area real estate development community on November 21, 2003. The meeting began with a review of the Downtown Powell Revitalization Plan followed by a discussion of the planning team's proposed concept sketches.

The primary objectives of the Real Estate Round Table were to:

- Receive candid and confidential feedback on development opportunities in Downtown Powell from the developer community.
- Solicit comment on issues and opportunities surrounding economic development and investment in the community.
- Identify roadblocks and disincentives to development within Powell.
- Identify potential development incentives, partnerships, initiatives, project opportunities, tenants, and funding mechanisms.

Comments from developers and downtown property owners that were brought to light are as follows in paraphrased fashion.

- The demographics of the Powell area are recognized as being strong and having potential financial benefit to developers and property owners, but they must have assistance to make “deals” work.
- In the present condition, there is not sufficient enticement either in readily available / assembled parcels or significant economic benefit to attract development.
- The review / approval process of the City is difficult and time consuming, further dis-incentivizing development.
- The city and only the city has the necessary time, resources, and incentive to foster development through purchase, assemblage, property takes (if necessary) infrastructure improvements, and process streamlining. The economics associated with this ‘up-front’ effort render it infeasible for the private development community to become involved.
- The opportunities for increased and broadened offering of residential product downtown are recognized and thought to be of interest but limited in its appeal to the broader developer community due to the lack of scale of their developments (largely infill).
- The city must take a leadership role in brokering joint development arrangements among neighboring property owners in aggressive and timely fashion.
- The completion of the downtown streetscape and the addressing of the traffic congestion issue at the intersection of Liberty and Olentangy is critical to downtown development moving forward.

