



# About Me

- ◊ Master of Urban Planning Candidate, Economic Development
- ◊ Bachelor of Business Administration, Economics & Finance
- ◊ Began working with the City of Monmouth last May

# Agenda

- o Opportunity Analysis
  - o Findings
- o Potential Implementation Strategies

# Opportunity Analysis

- o Downtown Monmouth business survey
- o Best Practices Research

# Business Survey

- ◊ Sent to 91 business owners via hardcopy and SurveyMonkey
- ◊ 31 business owners participated (34%)

# Business Survey Findings

- o Monmouth has a 'core' of finance/real estate/legal businesses that are well-established
  - o Sole proprietors
  - o 10+ years in Monmouth
  - o Own their own building
  - o Employing ~2 people other than themselves
  - o Traditional 9-to-5 operating hours

# 9-to-5 business culture

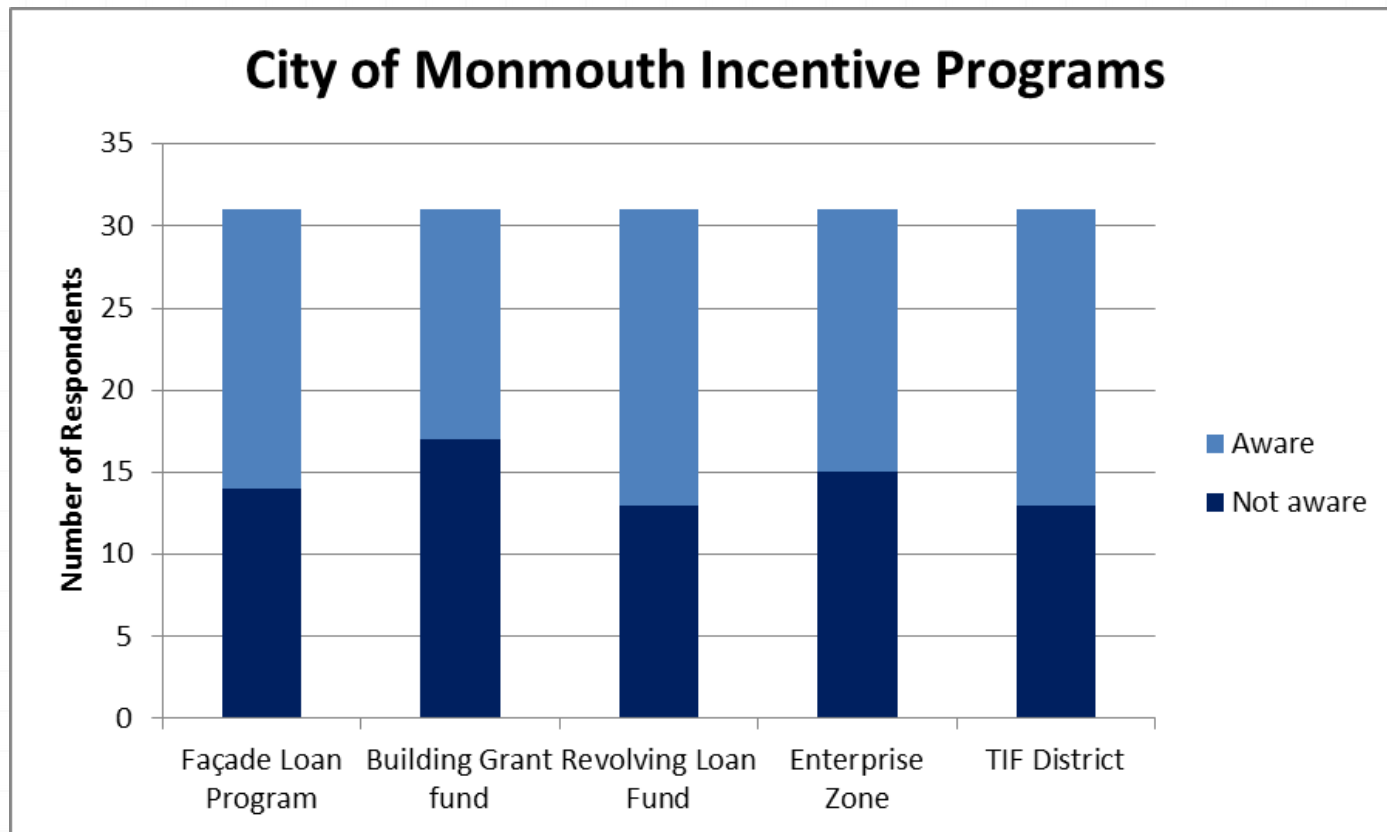
	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1
Monday	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	18	20	20	16	20	20	20	16	8	6	6	3	3	2	2	1
Tuesday	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	20	22	23	19	23	23	23	19	10	8	7	3	3	2	2	1
Wednesday	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	20	22	23	19	23	23	23	19	10	8	7	3	3	2	2	1
Thursday	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	19	22	23	19	23	23	23	20	10	8	7	3	3	2	2	1
Friday	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	20	22	23	19	23	23	23	19	9	6	5	3	3	2	2	1
Saturday	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	13	15	15	11	11	10	8	9	5	5	4	3	3	2	2	1
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	0
	Early Morning					Morning							Afternoon				Evening				Night			

# Business Survey Findings

- Few businesses actively reach out to the City, Business Council, or Chamber of Commerce
- Low awareness of existing City incentive programs (façade loan, building grant fund, revolving loan fund, etc.)



# Awareness of Programs



# Business Survey Findings

- o Opportunity to educate business owners about improving their business model
  - o Social media
  - o Available incentive programs/technical assistance
  - o Determining who their customer/market is

# Best Practices in the Midwest

- ◊ Champaign, Illinois (pop. 81,000)
- ◊ Racine, Wisconsin (pop. 78,000)
- ◊ Urbana, Illinois (pop. 41,000)
- ◊ Danville, Illinois (pop. 32,000)
- ◊ Galesburg, Illinois (pop. 30,000)
- ◊ Paducah, Kentucky (pop. 25,000)
- ◊ Jacksonville, Illinois (pop. 18,000)
- ◊ Ripon, Wisconsin (pop. 8,000)
- ◊ Mount Vernon, Iowa (pop. 4,500)

# Implementation Strategies

- o Zoning & Design Guidelines
- o Sustainability & Walkable Urbanism
- o Financial Incentives (and Disincentives)
- o Business Stewardship

# Implementation – Zoning

- o Historic Preservation
  - o Establishing a Commission
  - o Adopting Standards of Rehabilitation or other design manual
- o Downtown residential use
  - o Rezoning to accommodate residences
  - o Parking requirement reductions
- o Addressing vacant properties
  - o Vacant property ordinance
  - o Registration of vacant properties & vacant property plans
  - o Fines and/or bonding

# Implementation – Sustainability & Walkable Urbanism

- Creating a pedestrian friendly environment
  - Wider sidewalks
  - Street furniture
  - Glass storefronts
- Teaming up with other agencies to provide the sustainable alternative
  - Ameren's Act on Energy Program
  - Farmer's Market

## Glass storefronts





Paved pedestrian crosswalks, bike racks, pavers, landscaping





## Streetlamps, outdoor seating



# Implementation – Financial Incentives

- o Programs for building or business owners
  - o Grants
  - o Loans
  - o Sweat equity
- o Mechanisms for raising the City's equity
  - o Tax Increment Finance (TIF)
  - o Business Improvement District (BID)
  - o Special Service Area (SSA)

# Business Improvement District (BID)

- o Mechanism for business owners to pool financial resources and improve their neighborhood
  - o Additional property tax levied on top of existing taxes
  - o BID members choose how to spend the money
    - o Street banners, awnings, marketing, etc.
- o Ripon, WI established a BID at \$3.35 per \$1,000 EAV
  - o Funds are used to support [riponmainst.com](http://riponmainst.com), the tourist portal for Ripon



# Special Service Areas (SSA)

- o Enacted by a municipality in order to increase service provision to a specific area
  - o New infrastructure, streetscaping, beautification efforts, etc.
- o Tax levied on top of existing property taxes
- o Galesburg, IL employs an SSA covering its downtown area
  - o 20% additional property tax
  - o \$80,000 in annual revenues; \$400,000 in reserves

# Implementation – Business Stewardship

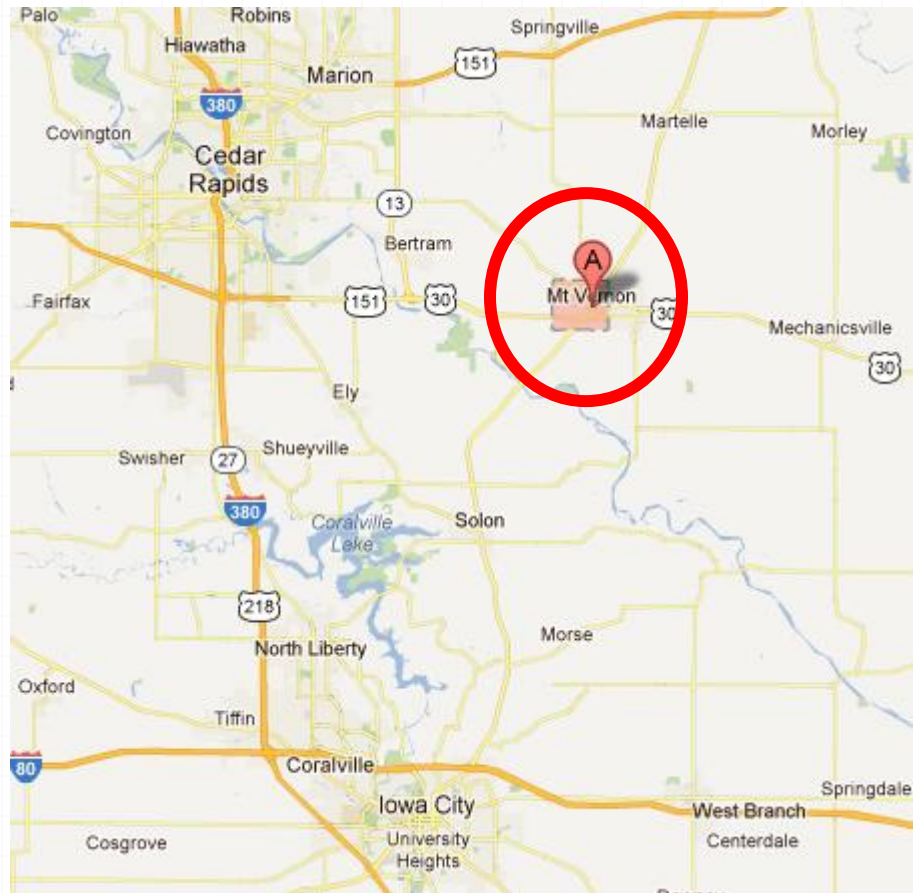
- o Create a brand that emphasizes the arts & culture niche
- o Develop a social media presence for the downtown and for businesses
- o Provide technical assistance to businesses
- o Pursue live-work spaces
- o Improve informal and formal networking opportunities for business owners and entrepreneurs

# Creating a Social Media Presence for the Downtown



# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o 4,500 people
- o Located between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City
- o Home of Cornell College
- o Voted one of the Coolest Small Towns in America by Budget Travel Magazine



# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o Created an umbrella organization – **Community Development Group (CDG)**- out of the previous tourism center, Chamber of Commerce and economic development organization
- o Driven almost entirely by volunteer labor (350 volunteers – community members, students, business leaders)



# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o CDG is paid for by the City of Mount Vernon
- o CDG handles advertising for businesses of Mount Vernon
- o CDG volunteers plan and fundraise events throughout the year which draw people to Mount Vernon
  - o Chalk the Walk
  - o Antiques Festival
  - o Heritage Days

# Chalk the Walk, Mount Vernon



# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o Established a Historic Preservation Commission
- o Established Design Guidelines for the downtown which specify how building exteriors must look and be maintained
- o Offer annual Building Improvement Grants with 50/50 matching
  - o 2010: Awnings, signage, outdoor lighting
  - o 2009: Awnings, siding
  - o 2008: Awnings









# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o The CDG is currently unable to purchase buildings in order to renovate them
  - o Instead, CDG helps businesses apply for grants as part of their Main Street Program
- o Despite this limitation, building owners have brought their buildings up to code
  - o 26 residential units downtown; 8 renovated since 2008
    - o Cater to students
  - o Waitlist to get in to these units

# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o CDG has networking events for all businesses 6 times per year for business owners to mingle informally
- o CDG, through the Main Street Program, holds small workshops (20 people) on different topics throughout the year
  - o Customer service
  - o Building a website
  - o Statistics and data analysis on what customers want and what they're buying

# Mount Vernon, Iowa

- o Active Facebook, website & blog with monthly newsletter digest
- o Creation of a Design Standards Manual so that any business or individual can use the Mount Vernon logo in conjunction with their other marketing materials





# Active Social Media



Search...

## NAVIGATION

- Home
- Events
- Latest News
- Arts & Entertainment
- Shopping
- Dining
- Lodging
- Service Businesses
- Parks & Recreation
- Community Information
- Churches
- About Us

## DONATE TO CDG

Donate



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### CDG March Newsletter

Cabin Fever Comedy Festival to take place in Mount Vernon and Lisbon March 20 through 24 The Promotions Committee of the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development...

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Mount Vernon and Lisbon, Iowa, where the past, present, and future meet to bring the discerning shopper an eclectic mix of **vintage treasures**, **fine cuisine** and **exceptional art**. Welcome!

[→ Read more...](#)

### Mount Vernon was recently selected by Budget Travel Magazine as one of the 10 coolest small towns in the country!

The magazine based its decisions on the good coffee, great food, and creative art in Mount Vernon.

"In Mount Vernon, about a 20-minute drive east of Cedar Rapids, art isn't confined to gallery walls. As you're driving in on Highway 30, a local artist's rendition of Grant Wood's American Gothic, splashed on the side of a barn, immediately sets the town's tone. And at an annual sidewalk-chalk festival, which takes place in May, hundreds of people put their stamp on more than 4,000 square feet of the main drag.

[→ Read more...](#)



**CDG's 2010-2011 Annual Report is Now Available...** It's all here - check out our business investors, community leaders, accomplishments and future goals from a very successful fiscal year thanks to our wonderful volunteers and Main Street organization...

## LATEST EVENTS

### Bijou presents "The Lorax"

Sun Mar 04 @07:15PM -

### Adventures in Organic Chemistry

Tue Mar 06 @04:00PM -

### Bijou presents "The Lorax"

Tue Mar 06 @07:15PM -

### Bijou presents "The Lorax"

Wed Mar 07 @07:15PM -

### Children's Story Time

Thu Mar 08 @09:30AM -

### Heart Consort Music

Thu Mar 08 @06:30PM -

### Bijou presents "The Lorax"

Thu Mar 08 @07:15PM -

### The Purity Myth

Thu Mar 08 @07:30PM -

### Blue Midnight Trio

Fri Mar 09 @06:30PM -

### Feminist Symposium

Sat Mar 10 @10:00AM -

[Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

## EVENTS CALENDAR

March 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## MOST POPULAR ARTICLES

### Event Information

### Main Street News

### Maps and Directions

## MOUNT VERNON AREA NEWS

The latest news from the Mt. Vernon-Lisbon Sun.

# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o 8,000 people
- o Home of Ripon College
- o Also named one of the Coolest Small Towns in America by Budget Travel Magazine

# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o Ripon is too small to attract most franchises, so it focuses on becoming a niche market in women's clothing, home furnishings and entertainment
- o Have become a destination for the 8,000 city residents plus about 7,000 County residents who live in more remote, rural areas

# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o **Ripon Main Street** works very closely with businesses to achieve economic development goals
- o Creates pro formas for businesses interested in renovations
- o Offers free architectural design drawings to business owners looking to make an exterior improvement





## Ripon is the birthplace of the Republican Party

- Street lights
- Street trees
- Awnings
- Wide sidewalks facing glass storefronts



# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o Ripon currently offers 2-3 grants per year
  - o Ripon is switching to a system of low-interest loans instead of grants
  - o Ripon does not offer any kind of rent subsidies
  - o Businesses must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation manual



# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o Ripon Main Street is able to purchase at-risk buildings
  - o Acts as a project manager to bring these buildings up to code and return them to the private market
    - o Have flipped 2-3 buildings in the downtown area, usually by working with interested buyers
- o Ripon Main Street maintains an online directory of properties for sale or lease with posted prices and square footage



# Ripon, Wisconsin

- o Ripon Main Street also hosts Requests for Proposals (RFPs) on their website
- o Silver Creek RFP
  - o Lists desired outcome (mixed use development)
  - o Buildings proposed & asking prices
  - o Rezoning requirements or anticipations
  - o City provided EPA Phase I Environmental Impact Study
    - o Grant funding from the EPA

Thank You!