

DOWNTOWN

Downtown is the heart of Hartsville with all corridors leading to its center. Hartsville is blessed to have an intact downtown commercial district with historic buildings that are well-maintained. Several local retailers are located in downtown and are a draw for residents of Hartsville and out-of-town shoppers who visit. The City's commitment to remain in the center of downtown is a testament to the value of downtown. As with any city, sustaining and improving downtown is perpetual work.

Residents want more to do downtown, want to be able to stay longer and want to be able to purchase what they need downtown, rather than driving to Florence. Many residents want the opportunity to live downtown with the opportunity to walk to the grocery store, the library, the movie, to parks or to cultural events. Downtown has the potential to meet all of these needs and more.

Why Downtown?

When downtown is vibrant with business, commerce and cultural activities, the rest of the city is stronger. The core of a city must be healthy and strong in order for the rest of the city to be strong.

The blue area illustrates the true center of downtown, which should be the priority development area for retail, restaurants, and entrepreneurial opportunities. By focusing on this core area, development outside of the center has greater potential to thrive and to continue to attract new businesses and visitors.



For a small city to have a vibrant and prosperous downtown, the city must value and promote its authenticity, its history, and its natural and built resources. Research from the National Main Street Center (NMSC) in Washington, D.C., validates the power of authenticity and history to create a vibrant economy.

According to the NMSC,

"Our Main Streets tell us who we are and who we were, and how the past has shaped us. We do not go to bland suburbs or enclosed shopping malls to learn about our past, explore our culture, or discover our identity. Our Main Streets are the places of shared memory where people still come together to live, work, and play."

With Main Street Hartsville reorganized and focused on implementation of Main Street's Four Point Approach (Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring), downtown is set for welcomed revitalization such as facade improvements, promotions and recruitment of new businesses. This master plan recommends the following ideas to complement and support the work of Main Street Hartsville.

Walkability

Residents of Hartsville want to walk safely around downtown. Pedestrian connectivity... walkability is a key component of thriving downtowns and college towns. Every effort should be made to increase the accessibility, safety and promotion of walking. Increased pedestrian activity increases bike activity, is good for business, is good for community spirit and wellness and good for the environment.

People need places to walk, however. By concentrating business recruitment in downtown, downtown will have an expanding critical mass of places to shop, dine, and visit. This gives people reasons to go downtown, to park their cars and to stroll around. Numerous residents yearn to be able to go to dinner, walk to a movie, then walk to a coffee shop afterwards to meet friends and talk about the movie. After a concert in Burry Park, residents would like to walk for ice cream or frozen yogurt.

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The following images illustrate a 3/4 mile *Ped Shed* from four areas: 1) Coker College; 2) GSSM; 3) Butler Heritage campus; and 4) the center of downtown. Ped Sheds are maps showing the actual area within a five- to fifteen-minute walking distance from any activity center or transportation stop. Average walking distances are typically five minutes per 1/4 mile. The composite Ped Shed map suggests where priority development activity should occur in order to increase walkability in downtown.



Downtown Park



Existing Downtown



Downtown Park

