

Business Development Commission (BDC)

MEETING MINUTES

APPROVED

MEETING DATE: Thursday, May 24, 2018
LOCATION: City Hall
CALLED TO ORDER: 8:04 AM
MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:15 AM
NEXT MEETING: Thursday, June 28, 2018

Name	Present	Absent
Jon Spiesman (Citizen at Large), Chair	X	
Mike Pincus (Citizen at Large)		X
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Robin McNabb (Yorkshire Business)	X	
Jennifer Starkey (Business Owner Rep.)	X	
Rebecca Now (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Tim Delanty (Old Webster)		X
Mary Jane Armstrong (Old Orchard)		X
Vacancy		
Frank Janoski, Council Liaison		X
Joan Jadali, City Manager Designee	X	
Mara Perry, Staff Liaison	X	

Also in Attendance

Ellie Wharton – Webster/et al. Chamber of Commerce
Laura Arnold – Council Member, City of Webster Groves
Mayor Gerry Welch – Mayor, City of Webster Groves
Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the May minutes was made by Rebecca Now, seconded by Jennifer Starke and unanimously approved.

VISITOR COMMENTS

- Gerry Welch shared with Commission Members an anniversary celebration event “Sculptures at Sunset” on June 6th from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Sculpture at Gore and Kirkham. There will be music and food trucks.
- Ellie Wharton shared with Commission Members the 63119Radio Station snippets projects will be moving forward in June. In addition, Ms. Wharton will be Acting President of the Webster Groves et al. Chamber for the months of June and July while Rebecca Now (current Chamber President) goes on a sabbatical in Thailand to study abroad thru Webster University.

BDC STRATEGIC PLAN

City Staff worked on “Clarifying [the] Scope of Work” outlined in BDC’s Strategic Plan and shared their work with Commission members via a PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix A for the text of the presentation). Due to the number of items to cover, half of the plan initiatives were put forth at this May meeting and the other half will be put forth at the June meeting.

MAY

- ▶ **Objective A:** Market the City of Webster Groves; Initiatives and Actions #1) Create a year-round City marketing and communications plan and a calendar of community/business events
- ▶ **Objective B:** Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses; Initiatives and Actions #1.) Maintain healthy vacancy rates, identify and solve stubborn commercial vacancies

JUNE

- ▶ **Objective B:** Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses; Initiatives and Actions #2. Integrate current and future development planning
- ▶ **Objective B:** Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses; Initiatives and Actions #3. Seek and Listen to the Voice of Businesses and the Community

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE A, INITIATIVE #1 discussion included the following (See Appendix A for detail):**

Reviewed current “activities to create a plan and evergreen calendar”:

- City’s Website Calendar of Community Events
- Explore Webster Groves Facebook Page Events and Postings.

Action items:

- Look into option of how to submit events through Facebook
- Present to all the business districts information on calendar and how to submit
- E-mail to all-city business mailing list how to submit and access calendar

For the June Meeting:

- Have additional information on how we communicate to discuss what has worked or not worked in the past
- Further discussion on the “plans” to clarify scope of work to undertake

Reviewed current “communication/promotion plan, social media and marketing plan”:

- CVC Neighborhood Membership
- Social Media
- Communications

Action Items:

- We need to flush out more information on what is taking place now and by who and get it down on paper to get a baseline of where we are starting to help guide us to where we want to go.

For the June Meeting:

- For next meeting – have additional information on how we communicate to discuss what has worked or not worked in the past
- Further discussion on the “plans” to clarify scope of work to undertake

- **OBJECTIVE B, INITIATIVE #1** discussion included the following (See Appendix A for detail):

Reviewed current “processes for starting a business”:

- New business folder packet
- City website online new business information sheet and check list

Action Items:

- Contact recent businesses to get feedback on the process
- Create a regular means of getting feedback after new businesses open

Reviewed current “vacancy rate”:

- Staff looked at first-floor retail in Old Webster and Old Orchard business districts.
- Reviewed regional vacancy rates for comparison.

Action Items:

- Continue to data gather to match past efforts in the two retail-oriented business districts.
- Option to expand to other areas in the future
- Reporting done every six months (January and August)

Reviewed current “resolving stubborn vacancies”:

- Absent or unresponsive property owners, managers, and/or leasing agents
- Responsive property owners, managers, and/or leasing agents

Action Items:

- Get additional data on how long our stubborn vacancies are to help track them

Reviewed “Revenue collection”:

- Year-by-year history of revenue by district

Action Items:

- Provide data yearly from the business districts
- Continue to look at other data sources for tracking metrics

NEXT MEETING

June 28th at 8:00 AM at City Hall.

APPENDIX A

(Text from PowerPoint presentation)

Webster Groves Business Development Commission May 24, 2018

BDC Strategic Plan

Clarifying Scope of Work

Objective A: Market the City of Webster Groves

Initiatives and Actions:

1. Create a year-round City marketing and communications plan and a calendar of community/business events

Objective B: Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses

Initiatives and Actions:

1. Maintain healthy vacancy rates, identify and solve stubborn commercial vacancies
2. Integrate current and future development planning
3. Seek and Listen to the Voice of Businesses and the Community

Objective A: Market the City of Webster Groves

Initiatives and Actions: #1

1. Create a year-round City marketing and communications plan and a calendar of community/business events

Responsible: City Manager/Staff

How: Leverage existing Business District, Chamber of Commerce, and new or other activities to create a plan and event calendar. Define communication/promotion plan, social media and marketing plan, gain budget approval/agreement from City and Business Districts, and inform BDC and Business Districts.

Why: Magnify efforts of individual businesses and business districts and make Webster a more attractive business community. Create an image of Webster's business community consistent with its community character.

When: October 2018 for first plan with new plans annually according to budget cycle.

Metrics/Success Measures: Approved Plan, publication of calendar

How: Leverage existing Business District, Chamber of Commerce, and new or other activities to create a plan and event calendar. Define communication/promotion plan, social media and marketing plan, gain budget approval/agreement from City and Business Districts, and inform BDC and Business Districts.

When: October 2018 for first plan with new plans annually according to budget cycle.

How: Leverage existing Business District, Chamber of Commerce, and new or other activities to **create a plan and event calendar**. Define communication/promotion plan, social media and marketing plan, gain budget approval/agreement from City and Business Districts, and inform BDC and Business Districts.

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/ExploreWebsterGroves/event>

The screenshot shows the Facebook page for 'Explore Webster Groves'. The page features a navigation menu on the left with options like Home, About, Events, Posts, Photos, Videos, Reviews, Community, and Join My List. The main content area is titled 'Upcoming Events' and lists several events:

- MAY 20: The Love Run, 5K and Fun Run** - Sun 7:30 AM CDT - 453 guests - Kirkwood Park 111 S. Geyer... [Get Tickets]
- JUN 8: Kim Massie at Old Orchard Gazebo** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - 409 guests - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves
- JUN 15: Auset Music Project at Old Orchard Gazebo** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - 200 guests - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves
- JUN 17: All-American 5K & Fun Run** - Sun 7:30 AM CDT - 942 guests - GO! St. Louis® St. Louis [Get Tickets]
- JUN 22: Rosewood at Old Orchard Gazebo** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves
- JUN 29: Jake's Leg at Old Orchard Gazebo** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - 310 guests - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves
- JUL 6: Dizzy Atmosphere at Old Orchard Gazebo** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves
- JUL 13: Cree Rider Family Band at Old Orchard Gaz...** - Fri 7:00 PM CDT - Hosted by Cree Rider Family Band - Old Orchard Gazebo Music... Webster Groves

Below the upcoming events is a 'Past Events' section, which includes:

- MAY 12: Paint Webster 2018** - Sat 8:00 AM CDT - 217 guests - Webster Arts Webster Groves

<http://www.webstergroves.org/500/Explore-Webster-Groves>

The screenshot shows the website for 'Explore Webster Groves'. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Our Government', 'Our Community', 'Doing Business', 'Contact & Connect', and 'How Do I...'. The main content area is titled 'Explore Webster Groves' and includes a welcome message and a list of 'Community Events':

- Fri, Jun 1 - Sun, Jun 3: Webster Arts Fair** [Read On]
- Fri, Jun 1 - Sat, Jun 2: 8th Annual Cigar Box Guitar Festival** [Read On]
- Fri, Jun 8: Old Orchard Gazebo Music and Movie Series** [Read On]
- Fri, Jun 15: Old Orchard Gazebo Music and Movie Series** [Read On]
- Sun, Jun 17: GO! St. Louis All American 5K & Fun Run** [Read On]

Below the event listings is a grid of category links: Business Directory, Events, Public Art, Schools, Churches, and St. Louis CVC. A sidebar on the left contains links for 'Businesses', 'Business District Maps', 'Gift Certificates', 'Restaurants', and 'Submit an Event'.

Metrics/Success Measures: Approved Plan, publication of calendar

- *Some events are not placed on calendar until organizer of the event puts it on their page (Facebook)*
- *Limitations on website look for events calendar (WG site)*
- *Not for individual business promotion (i.e. regular dance classes; weekly sale etc.)*
- *What events qualify? Event with at least two businesses working together, district sponsored event, city sponsored event, annual event, runs, nationally recognized “days”*

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- *Look into option of how to submit events through Facebook*
- *Present to all the business districts information on calendar and how to submit*
- *E-mail to all city business mailing list how to submit and access calendar*

How: Leverage existing Business District, Chamber of Commerce, and new or other activities to create a plan and event calendar. Define communication/promotion plan, social media and marketing plan, gain budget approval/agreement from City and Business Districts, and inform BDC and Business Districts.

- *Social Media Contract (Creative Entourage)*
 - *Monthly postings (\$500 max per month)*
 - *Promotions & giveaways*
 - *Calendar of events (one-time fee)*
 - *Photographs and Videos (one-time fee)*
- *Convention and Visitors Center*
 - *Yearly Membership*
- *Communications*
 - *Between Districts*
 - *Between all Businesses*
 - *To residents*
 - *To the region*

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- *For next meeting – have additional information on how we communicate to discuss what has worked or not worked in the past*
- *Further discussion on the “plans” to clarify scope of work to undertake*

Objective B: Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses

Initiatives and Actions: #1

1. Maintain healthy vacancy rates, identify and solve stubborn commercial vacancies

Responsible: City Planner, City Staff

How: Simple and transparent processes for starting a business, connect landlords and business prospects, coordinate planning/zoning with business development.

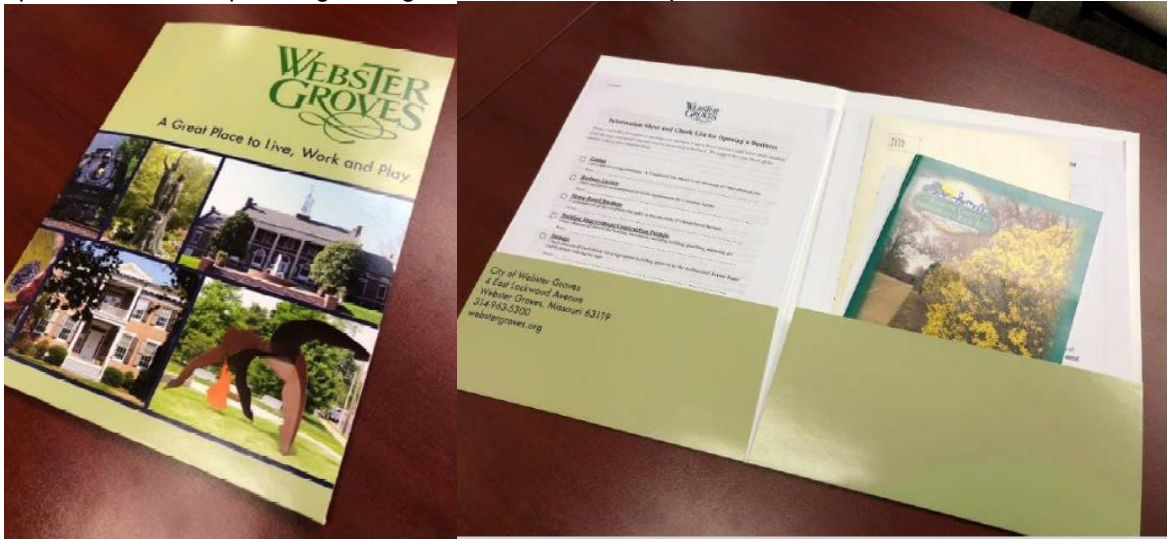
Why: Make Webster attractive to new businesses, maintain thriving business community, increase attractiveness to new investment/development.

When: Ongoing

Metrics/Success Measures: Vacancy rate, Revenue collection, resolving stubborn vacancies

How: Simple and transparent processes for starting a business, connect landlords and business prospects, coordinate planning/zoning with business development.

How: Simple and transparent **processes for starting a business**, connect landlords and business prospects, coordinate planning/zoning with business development.



<http://webstergroves.org/238/BusinessMerchants-Licenses>

Create an Account - Increase your productivity, customize your experience, and engage in information you care about.

Est. 1896
WEBSTER GROVES Missouri

Share Site Tools Search...

Our Government Our Community Doing Business Contact & Connect How Do I...

Home » Our Government » Departments » Customer Service » Business/Merchants Licenses

Business/Merchants Licenses

Welcome to Webster Groves! We are pleased that you have chosen Webster Groves as your business location. To help you get started there are a few things to keep in mind:

A business license must be issued prior to opening a business, but there are a few things to consider before you choose a location. We have made an informational checklist (included in the application packet) that will give you a better understanding of all the steps and details that are involved in opening a business.

Forms & Documents

- [Business License Checklist](#)
- [Commercial Business License Packet](#)
- [Home Based Business License Packet](#)
- [Business Emergency Contacts](#)

Applying

Submit your completed application packet to Customer Service with the license fee(s). To calculate your license fee use the declaration statement of gross receipts found in the application packet. Established businesses will want to use gross receipts from the previous year, and new businesses will want to use the estimated gross receipts expected for the year. Proof of income is not required when renewing, but it can be requested at any time throughout the year in a random audit of license fees.

At the time of application a \$14.00 record check fee and copy of the current drivers license for each business owner is required. This is a one time fee that is not required each year with the renewal fees.

Online Permitting
Business/Merchants Licenses
Parking Permits
Contractor Registration



Information Sheet and Check List for Opening a Business

Please review this form prior to opening your business to get a broad overview and better understanding of all the steps and details that are involved in opening a business. We suggest that you check off the various tasks as you complete them.

- Zoning**
I have met all zoning conditions. A Conditional Use Permit is not necessary or I have obtained one.
Notes: _____
- Business License**
I have applied for and completed all of the requirements for a business license.
Notes: _____
- Home-Based Business**
I understand all of the conditions that apply to the operation of a home-based business.
Notes: _____
- Building Improvement/Construction Permits**
I have obtained all permits for building renovations including building, plumbing, electrical, etc.
Notes: _____
- Signage**
I have obtained all permissions for a sign permit including approval by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) before ordering my sign.
Notes: _____
- Occupancy Inspection**
I have scheduled my occupancy inspection.
Notes: _____
- Food-Related Business**
I am in a food-related business and have contacted the St. Louis County Health Department to receive their approval.
Notes: _____
- Alcoholic Beverages**
I am serving alcoholic beverages and have obtained a liquor license.
Notes: _____
- Other Requirements**
I have obtained a sales tax number and am registered with the state of Missouri.
Notes: _____

- Packet was updated with BDC feedback.
- Tri-fold pamphlet doesn't work as a PDF format for online options made into format to match hard copy

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- Contact recent businesses to get feedback on the process
- Create a regular means of getting feedback after new businesses open

Metrics/Success Measures: Vacancy rate, Revenue collection, resolving stubborn vacancies

Business Districts

The City has three business/taxing districts

- Old Webster
 - Old Orchard
 - Crossroads
-
- Watson Road
 - Yorkshire Plaza
 - Other outlying commercial (Marshall Ave., Selma Ave. etc.)
-

Staff walked and drove through the two business districts which have first level retail and services

Retail Vacancies – August 2016

Old Webster

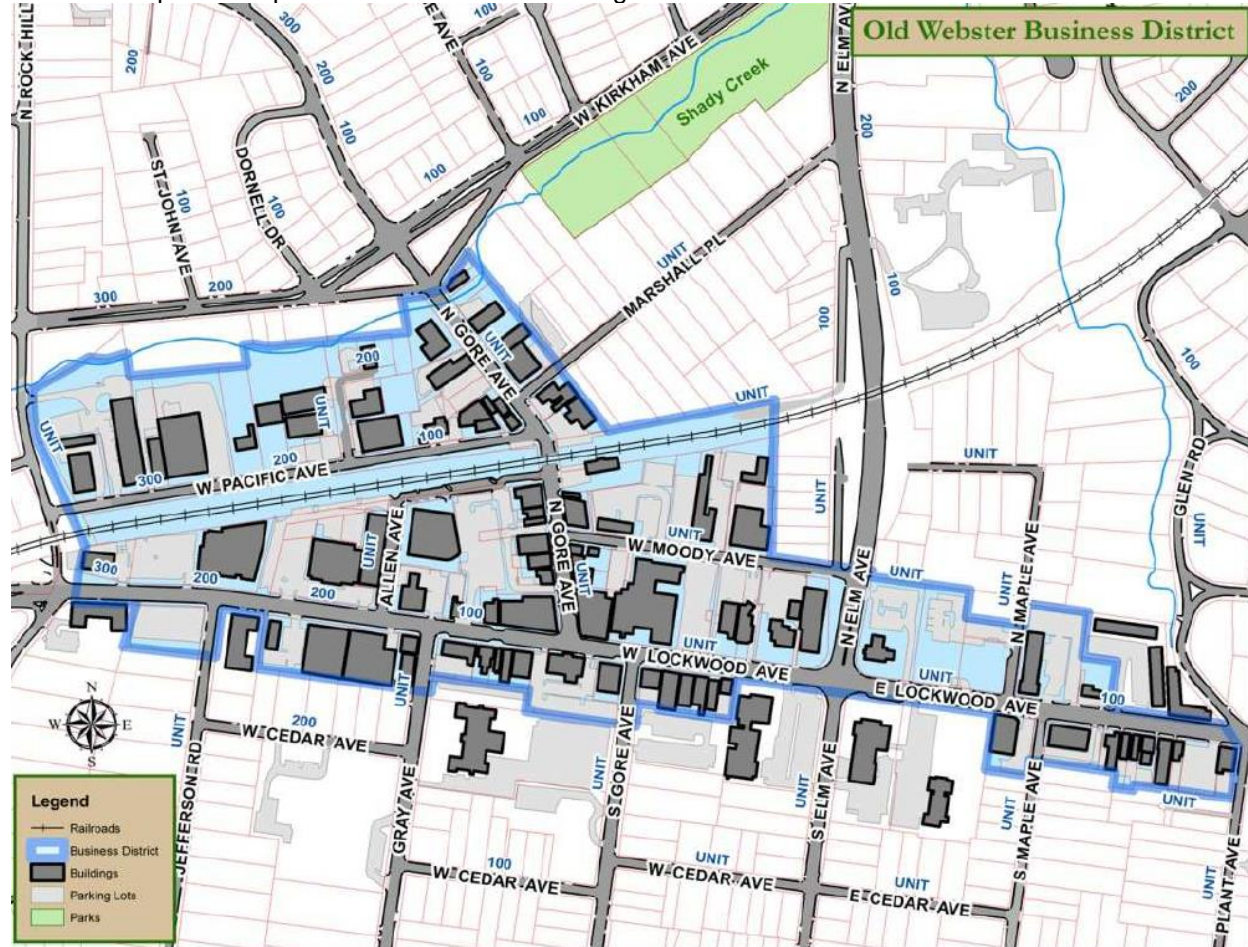
District was walked/driven along Lockwood Ave, Gore Ave and Moody Ave

There are 104 visible business storefronts in the Old Webster District-- 64 on E/W Lockwood, 26 on N Gore and 14 on Allen Ave

6 were considered vacant in February

5 were considered vacant in July with one having an open permit

Half of this space has permits for a business moving from across the street



visible vacancies

--6 are vacant

--1 of those has a permit to open a new business

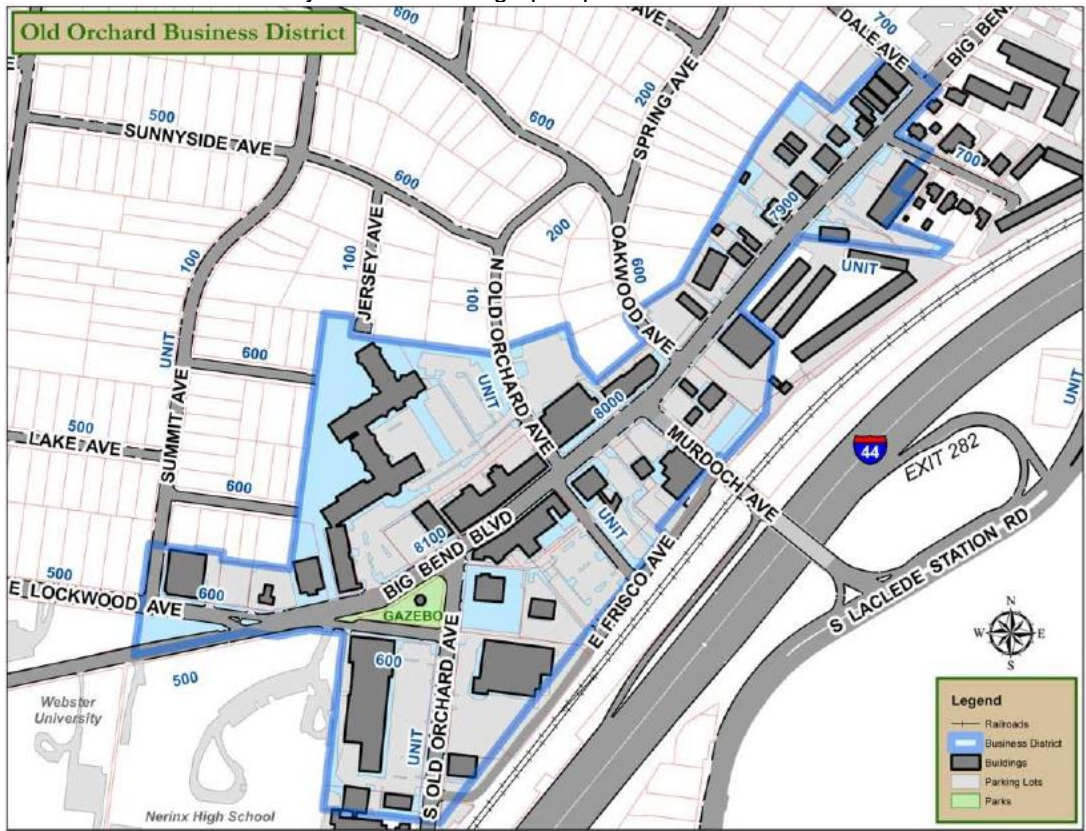
--Another that is vacant has a permit to split it into 2 lease-able spaces (Massage Envy)

--Note the Ozark Theater was counted as vacant, even though it is not

--So, 5.7% are vacant if you count all currently empty, less if you include ones with active permits.

Old Orchard

Survey was conducted beyond the district boundaries and continued to Laclede Station Road
 There are 88 businesses--74 on Big Bend and South Old Orchard and 14 in the Old Orchard Center
 9 were considered vacant in February
 7 were considered vacant in July with two having open permits



visible vacancies

--9 are vacant
 --2 of those have permits approved for new businesses (one of those is the Quonset hut)
 --1 of the 9 is the upstairs of a building that has a "for lease" sign on the sidewalk outside the storefront
 --So, 10.2% are vacant if you count them all, less if you include those with permits.
 If you put them all together -192 businesses and 15 vacancies--we would be running 7.8% total in these particular areas. Depending on how you view storefronts with permits, the Quonset hut, an upstairs space, the Ozark, the rate is something a little lower.

Vacancy Rates from the previous year

ST. LOUIS, MO		Current Qtr		Historical Vacancy	
Shopping Centers	Total GLA	Total SF Vac	Vac %	Vac %	Prior Yr
Community/Neighborhood	47,406,051	4,406,532	9.3%	9.2%	9.7%
Power/Regional Centers	14,402,099	334,435	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%
Specialty Centers	4,367,802	1,476,782	33.8%	33.7%	36.9%
Strip	9,421,120	1,113,086	11.8%	11.9%	12.4%
Malls	9,088,268	521,943	5.7%	5.7%	5.9%
All Shopping Centers	84,685,340	7,852,778	9.3%	9.2%	9.8%

Retail Vacancies – 2018

Old Webster

Six vacant with one having permits turned in for two new businesses
New vacancy coming on Gore – new tenant lined up

Old Orchard

Six vacant with one having a Letter of Intent (LOI) to lease a space
Two of these are not readily visible from Big Bend and weren't counted in the 88 storefronts

How: Simple and transparent processes for starting a business, connect landlords and business prospects, **coordinate planning/zoning with business development.**

- *Many landlords use managers and don't have direct contact with potential tenants*
- *Properties where landlords just "won't" rent the property*

Metrics/Success Measures: **Vacancy rate**, Revenue collection, resolving stubborn vacancies

- *Vacancy Rates for metrics*
- *All businesses in the city*
- *All business or commercial districts/corridors*
- *All first floor*

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- *Continue to data gather to match past efforts in the two retail-oriented business districts.*
- *Option to expand to other areas in the future*
- *Reporting done every six months (January and August)*

How: Simple and transparent processes for starting a business, **connect landlords and business prospects**, coordinate planning/zoning with business development.

- *Many landlords use managers and don't have direct contact with potential tenants*
- *Properties where landlords just "won't" rent the property*
- *Focus first on landlords that are responsive*

Metrics/Success Measures: Vacancy rate, Revenue collection, **resolving stubborn vacancies**

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- *Get additional data on how long our stubborn vacancies are to help track them*

Metrics/Success Measures: Vacancy rate, **Revenue collection**, resolving stubborn vacancies

- *Generation of taxes in business districts*
- *Available lump sum of business license*

REVENUE HISTORY

Old Webster

2018	
2017	\$83,333.15
2016	\$77,182.87
2015	\$79,840.81
2014	\$72,696.56
2013	\$66,695.59
2012	\$68,964.29
2011	\$63,678.29
2010	\$61,049.44
2009	\$65,377.87
2008	\$69,997.81
2007	\$58,710.66
2006	\$56,129.99
2005	\$50,734.82

Old Orchard

2018	
2017	\$56,323.75
2016	\$51,216.34
2015	\$51,127.38
2014	\$49,244.21
2013	\$48,619.15
2012	\$48,282.81
2011	\$51,158.80
2010	\$48,428.20
2009	\$51,438.80
2008	\$49,693.48
2007	\$43,126.86
2006	\$37,833.09

Crossroads

2018	
2017	\$24,794.58
2016	\$25,221.96
2015	\$25,409.10
2014	\$26,072.83
2013	\$26,237.33
2012	\$24,321.49
2011	\$24,660.14
2010	\$22,841.09
2009	\$24,750.85
2008	\$25,288.50

DECISIONS AT BDC MEETING:

- *Provide data yearly from the business districts*
- *Continue to look at other data sources for tracking metrics*



Objective B: Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses

Initiatives and Actions: #2

2. Integrate current and future development planning

Responsible: City Planner

How: Review and update the appropriate plans. Coordinate planning and zoning plans with DFP and incorporate the aims of the DFP into business development activities. Identify options to address major business barriers or issues such as parking and other infrastructure through creating a long-range plan.

Why: Ensure consistency of business planning and development with overall community development planning to maintain Webster community character. Increase attractiveness to development and new business by creating an infrastructure plan (sidewalks, parking, lighting, etc.)

When: 2019

Metrics/Success Measures: Refreshed DFP, long range investment/infrastructure plan

DISCUSS AT NEXT BDC MEETING



Objective B: Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses

Initiatives and Actions: #3

3. Seek and Listen to the Voice of Businesses and the Community

Responsible: BDC, City Staff, City Council

How: Effective communication and collaboration among Businesses, the Business Districts, BDC, and City Council. BDC activities and oversight aligned with City Council Goals and Strategic objectives. BDC is well connected to and represents the Business Districts and the community at-large.

Why: Maintain the unique character of each business district while collaborating and communicating to elevate all efforts.

When: Ongoing

Metrics/Success Measures: BDC report minimum three times per year to City Council on key measures, successes, opportunities, and barriers.

DISCUSS AT NEXT BDC MEETING

