

**Appendix A:
Downtown Bentonville
Visioning Session Summary
February 20, 2004**

Visions for the Eye and Heart

- ▶ Red brick
- ▶ Little stucco
- ▶ Inviting
- ▶ Historical
- ▶ Victorian- little frill
- ▶ Classic timeless
- ▶ Alexandria VA
- ▶ No metal
- ▶ 3-story max.
- ▶ Wood fixtures
- ▶ Highly polished/warm
- ▶ Distinct starting point- key identifiable, may not need sign to get feeling
- ▶ Paving (distinct-different), possibly brick sidewalks
- ▶ Multi-seasonal
- ▶ Distinct landscaping, i.e. tulip, Cherry tree, Red Bud, Maples
- ▶ Landscaped parking lots
- ▶ Fountains elsewhere- possibly theme
- ▶ Sculpture/sculpture garden
- ▶ Possible other era
- ▶ Drinking fountains
- ▶ Screening of service activities, tied into look and feel
- ▶ 5-story max, density
- ▶ On street parking/slows traffic
- ▶ Distinct consistent light/possibly gas looking lamps/white lights-shine down, not pollute
- ▶ Art, rotating exhibit
- ▶ Murals
- ▶ Informational material on landscaping for district
- ▶ Infrastructure to maintain
- ▶ Flower schedule for districts
- ▶ Rules for each distinct district
- ▶ Downtown is encouraged to be consistent
- ▶ Approved- committee- commission
- ▶ Walking/pedestrian oriented- after hours
- ▶ Speed? Does it encourage pedestrians, tied in with landscaping?
- ▶ Underground lighting
- ▶ Overlay district- zoning, design board (for district)
- ▶ Designate district, area/name, signage ties into district
- ▶ Curb, gutter, landscaping, wide sidewalk
- ▶ Plant theme- longevity, all summer
- ▶ Enforce litter control- trashcans/recycle centers
- ▶ Quality in everything, manages perceptions
- ▶ Change attitudes and behaviors with environment
- ▶ Variety in architecture
- ▶ Managing brand
- ▶ Block of the month, yard of the month, residential/ business recognition
- ▶ Consistent signage, classy/quality
- ▶ Code enforcement

- ▶ Trees, 50-year lifespan, city participation
- ▶ Flower planters/pots of flowers
- ▶ Multi use oriented
- ▶ Diversity
- ▶ Municipal parking space
- ▶ Progressive, but classy
- ▶ Walk of fame (B-Ville)
- ▶ Higher density, rather than spreading out
- ▶ Green space, refuge, integrated
- ▶ Progressive look
- ▶ Pedestrian oriented- lighting
- ▶ Window stores
- ▶ Benches, tables and chairs
- ▶ Copper awnings, offer protection for pedestrians
- ▶ Basements and balconies, residential/office
- ▶ Outside eating areas
- ▶ Hanging flower baskets, consistent
- ▶ Seasonal themes
- ▶ Banners, classy, subtle
- ▶ Known for something other than Wal-Mart
- ▶ Trail/walking path, tied to home office and downtown
- ▶ Trolley
- ▶ Incentive to preserve older homes/ buildings
- ▶ Historical marker on building- tour, brass with “date built”

Visions for Community

- ▶ Community, purchases homes
- ▶ Nostalgic movie theaters
- ▶ Entertainment- bowling leagues
- ▶ Major exercise facility
- ▶ Walking tour/connectivity/possibly historic
- ▶ Place for outdoor weddings, gazebo
- ▶ Relocate library to S. Main
- ▶ Maintain diversity with library setting
- ▶ Relocate county fair grounds, redevelopment of land/ specific plan
- ▶ Loft apartments above businesses, higher density
- ▶ Younger demographics
- ▶ Smaller civic arena for plays
- ▶ Tavern, liquor sales
- ▶ Library- Starbucks, exhibit area for artists
- ▶ Public spaces- park other than square, pocket parks, park benches, picnic area
- ▶ Livable area, family activities, skywalks, bicycle lane
- ▶ Living spaces, code enforcement, requirements for housing
- ▶ Need for residents around downtown/residential areas restored
- ▶ Safety, lighting for walking areas, bicycle police presence, throughout green space
- ▶ Adequate parking, parking garage, think beyond square, above or belowground, vertical
- ▶ Multi family housing
- ▶ Stakeholder commitments and common goal
- ▶ Streets, flow of traffic
- ▶ Encourage churches to open doors, invite outsiders
- ▶ Downtown becomes more than just the square
- ▶ Mix of affordability
- ▶ Enhance access to Compton gardens/advertise, both ends
- ▶ Longer hours for stores
- ▶ Grant program for housing around the Square, appeal to local foundations
- ▶ Keep city admin. Hall a part of Downtown County

Visions for Culture

- ▶ Nightlife/ sports bar, restaurants, coffee shops, music
- ▶ Children's art and workshops
- ▶ Mall
- ▶ Swap meet
- ▶ Farmers market expanded (time and days)
- ▶ Warehouse district, first floor community, above living space
- ▶ History, civil war brought out/square designated as historic district
- ▶ Courthouse, expand outside city
- ▶ Benton county museum
- ▶ Convenient toward elderly
- ▶ Specialty shops
- ▶ Ice-skating rink
- ▶ Wal-Mart- focus 1950 culture, malt shop
- ▶ Themed festivals- Apple festival, Harvest festival, folk art and culture festival, jazz festival, Sugar Creek Days (every two years), Art walk-successful
- ▶ Bandstand (street in front of courthouse)
- ▶ Amphitheater
- ▶ Gathering place
- ▶ Merry-go-round
- ▶ Arts (galleries and themed exhibits)/arts community
- ▶ Parades (Christmas, Halloween)
- ▶ County Fair
- ▶ Fourth of July
- ▶ Cultural festivals (diversity)/legacy of all cultures
- ▶ Civic/convention center, something like Walton Arts Center
- ▶ Dance lessons/ swimming lessons/genealogy, places in downtown
- ▶ Embracing yesterday's values
- ▶ Partner with Wal-Mart for a festival like Feather Fest in Springdale with Tyson
- ▶ Science center
- ▶ Aquarium
- ▶ Outdoor fireplace
- ▶ Swimming pool/ tennis courts (downtown residential)
- ▶ Celebrate "wins" for the community
- ▶ Cash drawing on the Square
- ▶ Ferris wheel on Square
- ▶ Ballroom
- ▶ Culinary institute
- ▶ Activity center in library
- ▶ Vendors (20% off at retail shops)
- ▶ Multi-use facility (outdoor amphitheatre/ice rink)
- ▶ Update holiday theme and host business competition for best holiday decorations
- ▶ Vendor fair, familiarity
- ▶ Theatre with stage for movies and plays
- ▶ Children's puppet show
- ▶ Community- all cities in Northwest Arkansas cooperate on calendar for events
- ▶ Spin-off of other festivals in Fayetteville
- ▶ First Saturday of month- Wal-Mart Saturday morning meetings, special guests perform
- ▶ Children's museum
- ▶ Professional teams/ skate/ bikes etc. brought in

Visions for Business

- ▶ 14,000 work in downtown area
- ▶ "Creative people" (graphics, coffee shops)
- ▶ Destination specialty shops and restaurants

- ▶ Capture market after 5:00
- ▶ Owner/operator businesses
- ▶ Not a vendor community (zoning)
- ▶ Service to community vs. service to Wal-Mart
- ▶ Educate consumers
- ▶ Dance club
- ▶ Target businesses to come in (recruit)
- ▶ Barnes and Noble type businesses downtown
- ▶ Use theatre to bring people in
- ▶ Profit driven anchor tenant
- ▶ Move parole office
- ▶ Radio station/TV
- ▶ Business events
- ▶ Alcohol based businesses
- ▶ Old-fashioned ice cream shop
- ▶ Grocery stores
- ▶ Professional district
- ▶ Convention center
- ▶ High-tech
- ▶ Child care
- ▶ Additional financial institutions
- ▶ Private mass transit
- ▶ Attract customers from Wal-Mart home office
- ▶ Convenience
- ▶ Mailing and shipping business
- ▶ 25-30 room hotel and day spa, luxury
- ▶ Focus on entertainment (theatre, restaurants)
- ▶ 200-300 people working downtown
- ▶ Parking (garage/lot) paid
- ▶ Mixed-use businesses
- ▶ Tax breaks and incentives for coming downtown
- ▶ Service businesses
- ▶ Upstairs office buildings
- ▶ Strategy to retain current businesses
- ▶ Pedestrian access
- ▶ Mixed types of businesses
- ▶ Attorneys
- ▶ Business limited by traffic
- ▶ Something for the vendors/exhibits from vendors
- ▶ Private dining club for vendors
- ▶ City hall on the Square (bring in business)
- ▶ Starbucks
- ▶ Kodak picture spot
- ▶ Bed and breakfast
- ▶ Laundromat/ dry cleaner
- ▶ Ask for real estate development help from Wal-Mart
- ▶ Supper club (dining, dancing, drinking)
- ▶ Educate businesses about the good in doing business downtown
- ▶ Keep focus on infrastructure, crucial to business
- ▶ Connect businesses with employees
- ▶ Campaign to bring in workers

Visions for getting the word out:

- ▶ Co-branding with Rogers/Bentonville hotels, beaver lake, golfing
- ▶ Insert in "great vacations" to continue (effective)
- ▶ Cable television commercials

- ▶ Co-brand with Branson to attract traffic
- ▶ Get more bus stops on tours
- ▶ Create Sturgis-like annual event
- ▶ Chamber letter to all members
- ▶ Add notice to utility bills, stand out from normal letterhead
- ▶ Special interest article in paper
- ▶ Wrapper ad around paper
- ▶ Cityscapes article
- ▶ Branson style pamphlets to other areas
- ▶ Community info fair (booth at job fair and Benton County fair)
- ▶ Activities tied into schools, i.e. drafting /art class competition
- ▶ Welcome wagon, info packet includes vision info
- ▶ Share it with media people
- ▶ Advertising, TV/ magazines
- ▶ City newsletter
- ▶ Convention for developers, subsidizing growth
- ▶ High-rises, change policy, then share
- ▶ Talk to NWA home builders association
- ▶ Chamber note to developers that the land is available
- ▶ Answer-by-phone session
- ▶ July 4 publicity, craft fairs
- ▶ Promoting through Wal-Mart vendor supply to get them to invest into infrastructure, earns points with Wal-Mart, provides services for their kids
- ▶ Fazzoli's Tuesday nights, coloring and crafts
- ▶ Create toy fair to attract wide range of visitors (crafts, coloring, toys)
- ▶ Create a character that represents town (historic figure does all ads, signs)
- ▶ Signs like black apple house, printable tour booklet
- ▶ Big spotlight into sky
- ▶ Bring existing events to downtown for negligible cost (ride the coattails)
- ▶ Be a part of a cooperative region- coordinate, don't compete, "always an event within 20 miles" (like Branson does, every weekend)
- ▶ Connect with other communities learn best practices, i.e. Little Rock and San Antonio River walk, Tasting Fair- Greek/Mexican/South food tasting)
- ▶ Food fund raiser (Local restaurants and individuals, booths set up)
- ▶ Stamping in sidewalks
- ▶ Connect Bentonville with Ozarks
- ▶ Replicate some Dixon Street characteristics- capitalize on Wal-Mart employees, vendors to frequent it, small signature, trade magazines, local ads
- ▶ Get Oprah to come to Bentonville
- ▶ Where in the world is Matt Lauer stop
- ▶ Draw visitors to square from hotels
- ▶ NWA business expo
- ▶ Get a semi-pro team, NASCAR stop
- ▶ Target affluent females, 30-50 (they plan travel)
- ▶ Vision under Plexiglas posted up
- ▶ Banks- include info when opening accounts
- ▶ Find list of businesses on periphery (Rogers, Springdale too, like Frisco days)
- ▶ Centerton (other county locations)
- ▶ Community college- get classes involved
- ▶ Radio spots- Bentonville talk radio, weekly 10-minute focus on Bentonville vision, and interview award winners on air
- ▶ Ark. Econ. Dev. Commission quilting
- ▶ AETN special/networks, publicity outside NWA
- ▶ Churches in circle
- ▶ ½ hour program introducing city like in Savannah, GA
- ▶ Brochures at retail stores

- ▶ Consistent brand/logo for project
- ▶ Specific info channel in local hotels
- ▶ Awards program for contributing organizations (boy scouts, business, etc.)
- ▶ Gateway signage- telling, "You are now entering..."
- ▶ Wal-Mart visitor center give directions to downtown Bentonville
- ▶ Chamber ambassadors
- ▶ Gigantic electronic board on I-540
- ▶ Signing to catch attention, like tiger paws by stadium (dollar signs?)
- ▶ Themed signage
- ▶ Advertise more than Five & Dime
- ▶ Share fun village atmosphere good for kids
- ▶ Attract day-trippers (like Eureka Springs)
- ▶ Advertise Peel House
- ▶ National advertising (cost?- Targeted) Southern Living Magazine
- ▶ Wonderful city websites
- ▶ Neighborhood associations, meet justice of peace, councilmen, know on doors, personal touch
- ▶ Word of mouth, sharing excitement of "Craft Fair," etc.
- ▶ Festivals- advertising successes
- ▶ National Civil War re-enactment crowd to Pea Ridge
- ▶ Connect at retail conventions
- ▶ Advertise road count data, keep helping site consultants
- ▶ Internal marketing to visitors to Wal-Mart, airport manned desk
- ▶ Develop partnerships with companies
- ▶ Advertise in vendor publications
- ▶ Connect retail hub to Square Hub (trolley? Sidewalk, signing)
- ▶ Clear gateways signifying specific city areas
- ▶ Who comes to Bentonville? What do vendors/tourists look at? (Joplin, Fort Smith, Springfield)
- ▶ Tell about shopping and restaurants
- ▶ Busy vendors are not in touring mode
- ▶ Have collectible souvenir from Bentonville (i.e. Hard Rock Café)
- ▶ Create reasons to be here Friday to Sunday
- ▶ A & P committed to promoting weekend activities
- ▶ Stick with traditional ad methods
- ▶ Define target clientele depending on time of day
- ▶ Emphasizing church bells, ice rink
- ▶ Saturday morning meeting, ask WMT to expand on idea of restoration of downtown, get feedback from the audience
- ▶ Railway for kids
- ▶ More signing for directing the interested tourist to WMT visitor center
- ▶ Info packets like city of Norman, OK (very successful) direct mail
- ▶ Communicate to school children in area
- ▶ Showcase at Bentonville expo
- ▶ Oklahoma municipal league as example- showcase there too
- ▶ Signage in every Wal-Mart about Bentonville (or brochure)
- ▶ Let new arrivals know what is available, WMT, local realty offices
- ▶ Connect with headhunters
- ▶ Small tour bus/trolley
- ▶ Share what's here with current residents
- ▶ Co-brand with other local cities/attractions
- ▶ Use local motels as communication point for visitors (plant seeds)
- ▶ Capitalize on what's happening- consistent message on websites/newsletters, digital material that can't be instantly updated
- ▶ Buy tagline words for web search engines
- ▶ Beautified downtown will speak for itself
- ▶ Make sure all "spoke streets" off Square Hub are beautiful
- ▶ Airport signage and pamphlets at baggage claim (XNA, Springfield, Joplin)

- ▶ Volunteers at airport to answer questions
- ▶ Good signage coming from airport
- ▶ Design around Promenade Mall
- ▶ Advertising as group of businesses
- ▶ Better street signage, i.e. clarity of “A” street
- ▶ Signage on I-540 advertising downtown historic Bentonville –restaurants, WMT visitors center
- ▶ “Small-town” atmosphere with large-town convenience
- ▶ Avoid controversial signage, but catches attention
- ▶ Sign (like mall store finder) on Square, listing businesses
- ▶ Sell image as brand “Dixon Street”
- ▶ Pull together what downtown Bentonville means

Visions that Engage and Excite

History:

- ▶ City Museum
- ▶ Stage coach
- ▶ Trail of Tears
- ▶ Heritage Trail plan
- ▶ Civil War
- ▶ Buildings historical/ register
- ▶ Map of them
- ▶ Visitors center

Special events to bring people in:

- ▶ Parades (Christmas, homecoming, 4th of July),
- ▶ fairgrounds/school/buildings
- ▶ Saturday market
- ▶ Ice rink
- ▶ Special events for children
- ▶ Other events
- ▶ Color/pageantry
- ▶ Art fair
- ▶ Singer’s downtown

Everyday:

- ▶ Eateries
- ▶ No traffic
- ▶ Specialty shops because we can’t get the shopping
- ▶ Courthouse and Wal-Mart/leverage on uniqueness
- ▶ State: how many work within a mile?, age groups- interest, world’s largest company
- ▶ Ozark beauty
- ▶ Beaver Lake
- ▶ Change everything to feel that now you are in a different and unique place: roads, signs, median with trees, lighting
- ▶ Street entrances into downtown are different
- ▶ Flags of different countries, states
- ▶ Trail from Wal-Mart to downtown international walkway/Avenue of the Nations
- ▶ Raising families
- ▶ More signs in every main entrance: “Welcome to Bentonville, USA”
- ▶ quality schools, safe place, 4 great seasons
- ▶ The impression of Bentonville is different in good way
- ▶ Each city area has different identity, name each section (flag, street lights and signs)
- ▶ Old kind of town- walk home for lunch
- ▶ County seat, City Hall
- ▶ ERA’s- timeline
- ▶ Wheel (hub is square, spokes are different eras)
- ▶ 8-8-08 anniversary

- ▶ Senator/Governor Berry
- ▶ Statue on the Square
- ▶ Hill country Ozarks, Folk culture, music, Vance Randolph
- ▶ Albert E. Brumley
- ▶ Home of Wal-Mart (Retail capital of the World)
- ▶ Vacation- capitol
- ▶ Apples- capitol
- ▶ Norman Rockwell feel
- ▶ ERA's, arts and crafts, balloon fest
- ▶ Tie Square with G.O.
- ▶ Wal-Mart tours/museum type experience, retail research
- ▶ 8th Street tree planting corridors
- ▶ Flags from Wal-Mart countries
- ▶ International hometown/11 countries live in Bentonville
- ▶ Bulletin board with company logo
- ▶ Travel suitcase
- ▶ Wal-Mart historical period that has really made Bentonville (1950's, 1970's and 1980's)
- ▶ Don't rely too much on Wal-Mart

Phrases:

- ▶ Come and stay
- ▶ Attractive and appealing
- ▶ Wal-Mart attracts the first time, Bentonville makes people stay
- ▶ Bentonville is the name brand town
- ▶ Opportunities/diversity/growth
- ▶ Bentonville: The American Dream
- ▶ The biggest small town (future)
- ▶ Where ideas become reality
- ▶ Historical look, contemporary feel
- ▶ It's a place for everybody
- ▶ Promoting excellence
- ▶ Sophisticated yet simple
- ▶ Preserve the past, reach for the future
- ▶ Heart of Americana vs. Global Community
- ▶ Cross section of the world, the world comes here
- ▶ Across the centuries, across the decades
- ▶ International yet neighborly
- ▶ Where we are and where we've been
- ▶ Hometown for the world
- ▶ Ethical, energetic, unique

Values:

- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Professionalism
- ▶ Involvement
- ▶ Community Integrity
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Community
- ▶ Heritage
- ▶ Diversity