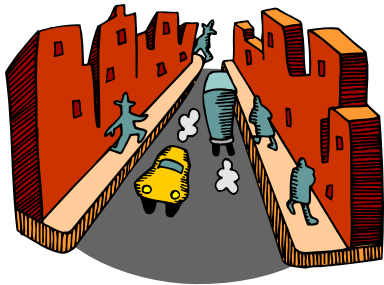


THE VALUE of a Strong Downtown

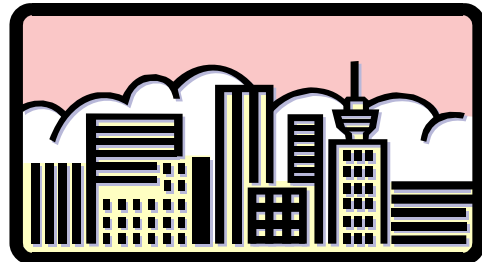
“**Strong and healthy downtowns** are the centerpieces of any region. Generally, a downtown has recreational centers, arts, and cultural centers, as well as retail, [residential], and business activities. They become hubs for business, [residential], cultural, social, and recreational activities, making a downtown the most attractive center in a city. Downtowns are generally the focus for economic development.”⁽¹⁾



“**Downtown development** has been a catalyst for the enhancement of civic pride and economic development in communities from coast to coast. The entire community, not just the downtown, benefits from a healthy downtown.”⁽²⁾

“The benefits of a vital downtown or business district include:

- Downtown is a symbol of the community’s economic health, local quality of life, pride, and community history.
- Downtowns retain and create jobs, which support a community’s tax base.
- Downtowns reduce sprawl by concentrating retail in one area.
- The downtown core protects property values in surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- The traditional commercial district is an ideal location for independent businesses and is a good incubator for new small business
- Downtowns provide an important civic forum, where members of the community can congregate.
- Many downtown districts become tourist attractions by virtue of the character of buildings, location, selection of unique businesses, and events held there.” ⁽³⁾



Source:

- (1) OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.74
- (2) <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/CCED/downtowns/ltb/lets/0202ltb.html>
- (3) OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.83