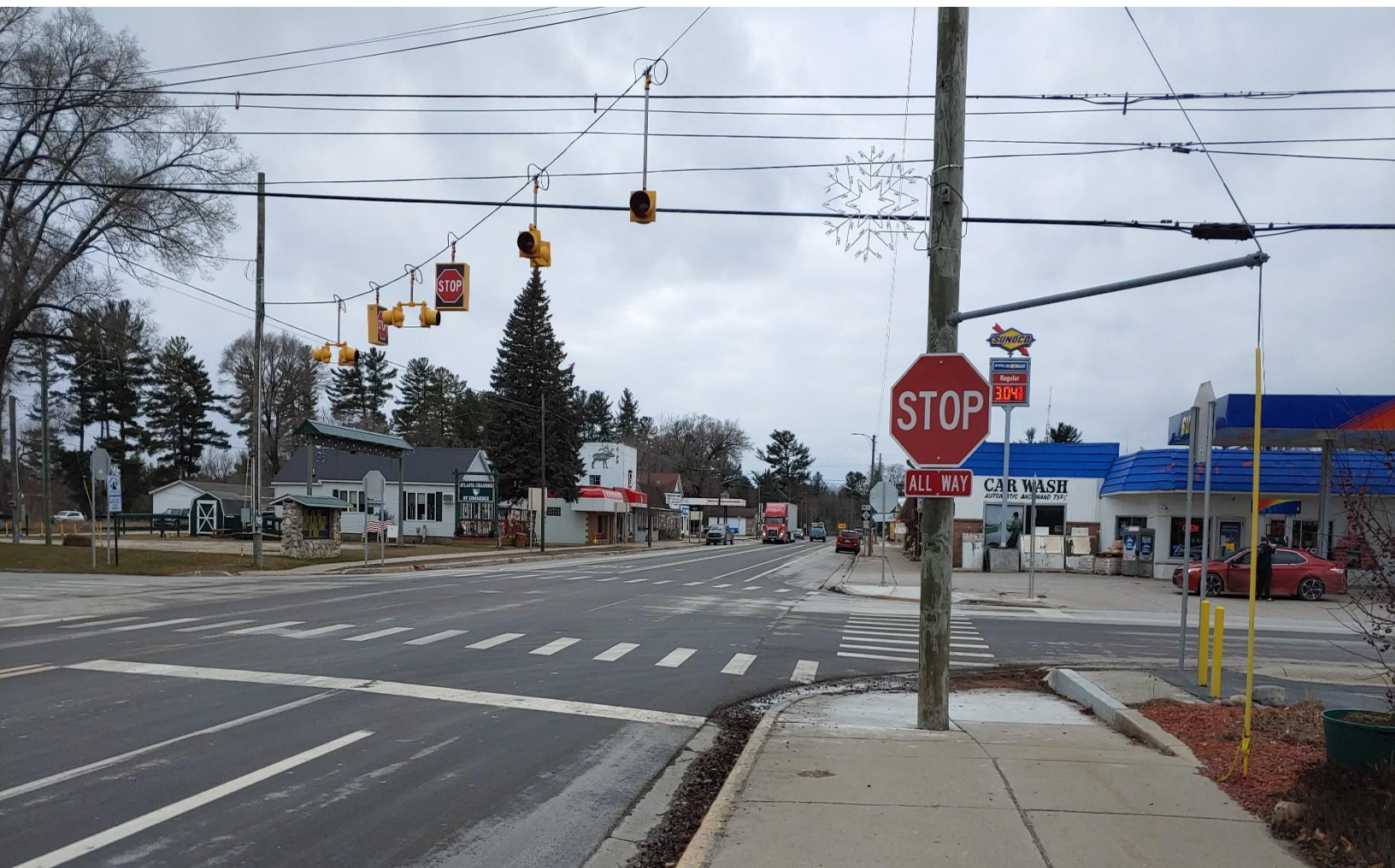


Downtown Plan Briley Township, Michigan



2024

Plan Intent

Briley Township's downtown, Atlanta, is the core of the Township's social and economic trends. The Downtown Plan was developed in conjunction with the master plan and is based on the existing socio-economic characteristics of the township. The plan was designed to complement Atlanta's *Trail Town Master Plan*. Public input was gathered through an online survey with over 92.0% of respondents providing support for the Township's continuing efforts to improve the downtown. Respondents indicated the following items were important:

- Attracting and retaining businesses
- Attractive building facades
- More places to shop
- More outdoor events/festivals

Successful downtown revitalizations depend on the support and actions from the public and a variety of stakeholders, such as businesses, community groups, religious institutions, local officials, etc. The shared vision for Atlanta is to be a universally accessible, walkable, safe, clean, and convenient commercial area with a variety of businesses, housing types, and places of interest. As the township works toward this vision, consideration will be given to public amenities that complement the downtown, such as ample parking, lighting, benches, public open spaces, landscaping, and sidewalks.

The Downtown Plan is intended to serve as a benchmark for the future development and investment decisions in the downtown area. It will guide the township in evaluating proposed projects, capital improvements, and economic incentives, inform current and prospective property owners and developers about desirable growth patterns,

and inform public and private development/redevelopment decisions. Plans, policies, and programs should reflect, support, and be consistent with the vision and recommendations within the downtown plan. Implementation of projects will depend on available funding and current market conditions. Cost estimates will be determined during the design phase of each project, and will be adjusted, as necessary, during the implementation phase.

The Briley Township Downtown Plan analyzes and provides recommendations to the challenges for land use, building facades, signage, streetscape, and pedestrian features in the downtown. The plan seeks to:

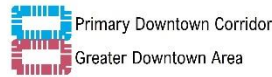
- Encourage universally accessible, innovative developments and redevelopments that reflect the downtown's rural village identity and have similar setbacks, pedestrian-oriented designs, and placemaking components.
- Encourage expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses to provide an environment where people can work, eat, and shop.
- Enhance the streetscape and develop open spaces to serve as a catalyst for development and redevelopment, and to assist with socialization, the enjoyment of art and green space, and the development of complete streets.
- Guide public and private partnerships with developing interest and buy-in for the development of downtown, and to enhance the downtown's economic development and growth projects.

Downtown Atlanta

Located in the center of Montmorency County, Downtown Atlanta is part of a plat in Briley Township, Michigan. Downtown Atlanta is comprised of commercial and institutional establishments, and single-family residences. For

the purpose of this plan, 'downtown' refers to the primary downtown corridor, and 'downtown area' or 'surrounding area' refers to the greater downtown area.

Downtown Atlanta Briley Township

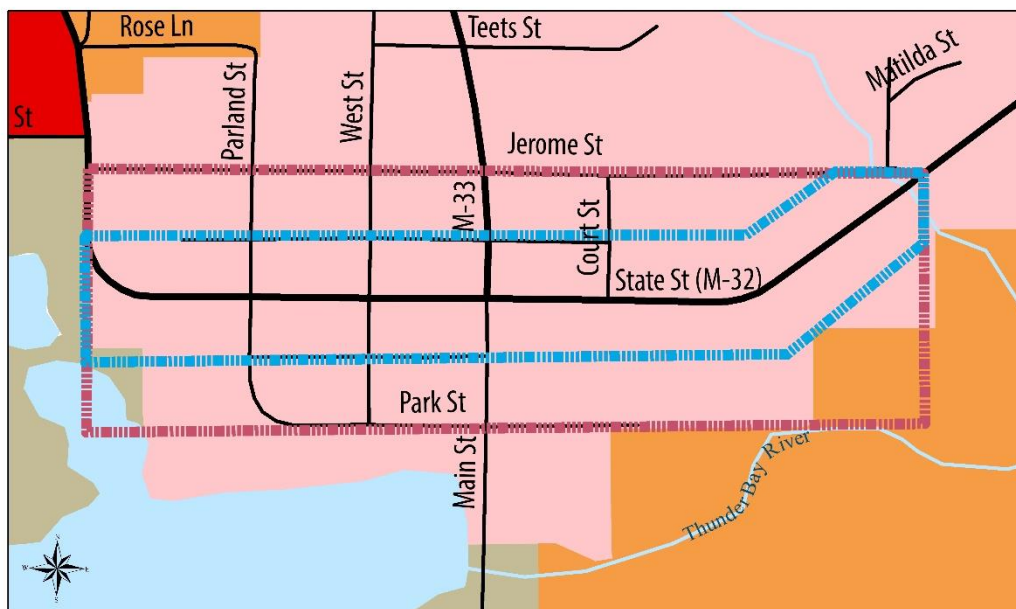


Zoning Districts

- R1: Restricted Residential District
- R-2: General Residential District
- OT: Old Town District
- C-2: Heavy Commercial District



Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the ©IS User Community



Land Use

Land use planning and zoning regulations influence the downtown's civic, social, and cultural activities as well as promotes its businesses and housing developments. Connecting the entire downtown area through motorized and non-motorized transportation options will increase the number of people in

downtown to assist in the creation of a vibrant atmosphere. Additionally, the preservation of open spaces and natural features will provide the downtown area with authenticity, enhance its identity, and create a foundation for the downtown's form. The following land use issues include recommendations for improvements.

Land Use Issue 1

Downtown Atlanta does not have a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to champion the revitalization of downtown.

Recommendation

A Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is an economic development tool used by local governments to eliminate the causes of deteriorating property, promote economic growth and development, and increase property tax valuation. The DDA spurs downtown development through a variety of funding options,

such as tax increment financing, millage, revenue bonds, special assessments, grants, donations, and revenues from property owned or leased by the DDA. The development of a DDA will ensure there is an entity that can work with public and private entities to guarantee the revitalization, growth, and prosperity of Downtown Atlanta.

Land Use Issue 2

A significant amount of land within Downtown Atlanta is underdeveloped or has vacant, unmaintained buildings and structures.

Recommendation

Development and redevelopment in and around the downtown should be complimentary to the downtown's sense of place, provide motorized and non-motorized connections, and consider the capacity of existing infrastructure. The revitalization of unused spaces in existing buildings has the potential to increase the building's usability and attractiveness. Local officials should develop promotional materials for downtown development sites to encourage developers, residents, and visitors to redevelop and revitalize properties. Local officials should also continually evaluate and prioritize an inventory of potential redevelopment or infill development sites within the downtown.

businesses can attract various age groups, interests, and income levels to the downtown as well as diversify the local economy. The expansion of existing businesses may attract new businesses. Mixed use developments and high-density housing have the potential to increase the number of people who continually support the existing downtown businesses as well as encourage new businesses, and can also cause a reduction in parking needs. Higher densities can increase the downtown's vibrancy and quality of life. Furthermore, locating larger employers, offices, and residential developments on secondary streets with connections to downtown can provide people with an opportunity to go downtown during lunch or after work.

Currently, Downtown Atlanta primarily consists of offices and service businesses with very few restaurants and retail shops. A broad range of



Examples of vacant, unmaintained buildings

Land Use Issue 3

Downtown Atlanta does not have adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to support downtown businesses.

Recommendation

Downtown Atlanta has water infrastructure, but no wastewater infrastructure. Water comes from two water wells that were installed to address contaminated drinking water long ago. These wells should be replaced since they do not have the ability to serve the capacity that is required in a revitalized downtown area. Currently, the township is working on a downtown wastewater plan.



Potential small public gathering spaces in downtown

Land Use Issue 4

Downtown Atlanta does not have a traditional downtown layout. The commercial buildings are interrupted by sections of single-family residential dwellings. These interruptions contribute to an inability to determine whether an area is public or private, and reduces the desire to visit downtown in its entirety.

Recommendation

Downtown residential areas should be properly screened to prevent trespassing and loitering issues, and businesses should have clear, visible signage in both the front and rear of the building. Infill and/or redevelopment of areas in downtown should encourage commercial and mixed uses in an effort to create a cohesive business district and an interesting pedestrian atmosphere with public open spaces. New developments and existing buildings should be disaster-resistant, and compliant with district development guidelines, building management system guidelines, and safety regulations. Development and redevelopment efforts should consider the development of passageways to connect downtown with surrounding land uses and parking lots.



Briley Township Park: Potential large public gathering space south of downtown

Land Use Issue 5

The downtown lacks public gathering spaces.

Recommendation

There are benches scattered throughout Downtown Atlanta, but the downtown does not have any designated public open spaces. These open spaces promote healthy lifestyles, relaxation, socialization, and keep people in the area. As public spaces are developed, they should include movable street furniture, art, landscaping, interesting patio and sidewalk patterns, and lighting. Possible areas for development include the southeast corner of Parland and State Streets, the southeast corner of West and State Streets, the southwest corner of Main and State Streets, the area between the Atlanta Motel and District Health Department #4,

and the area south of the post office.

Briley Township Park is located south of downtown and can be improved to be a more inviting gathering place. The park provides a pavilion for outdoor recreation and community programming as well as personal parties. It also has picnic tables, a grill, a playground, a gazebo, a bench, an ADA accessible launch, and a trailhead with public restrooms. Dependent on the size and features installed, cost estimates for the development and enhancement of attractive open spaces and parks ranges between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

Building Facades & Signage

Downtown building facades reflect the attitudes and values of the citizens. Well-maintained business districts suggest a higher degree of community pride. Unfortunately, some of the facades detract from Downtown Atlanta's overall

character and pedestrian atmosphere. The following downtown building facades and signage issues include recommendations for improvements.

Building Façade Issue 1

Some buildings have façades that detract from the appearance of the building and overall character of the downtown.

Recommendation

New developments and renovations of existing buildings should be ADA compliant, and compatible and complimentary with the downtown's architectural style to avoid a cluttered, disjointed appearance. The district's development regulations provide guidance to ensure consistency in building design and form, and the continued enhancement of the pedestrian environment. The bulk of the building should be one main material that is enhanced with complimentary colors and quality materials, such as brick, stone, and wood, which suggests permanence and should be preserved or restored. Rear building facades should be attractive and maintained to provide secondary customer entrances. Trash receptacles should be

appropriately screened since dumpsters create a cluttered, negative appearance.

Building owners should be encouraged to maintain their buildings and have their buildings inspected by one or more professionals to determine if the buildings need to be retrofitted to meet current codes. If the buildings are unable to be retrofitted, highly visible warning signage should be posted, access restricted, or the buildings should be demolished. Officials and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) should provide information to business owners about the available building façade revitalization programs.

Building Façade Issue 2

Some buildings in the downtown lack the key features of well-designed, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly storefronts.

Recommendation

Redevelopment and development efforts should be consistent with the district's development regulations and complimentary to downtown's architectural elements and character. When redeveloping existing structures, interesting architectural detailing (e.g. stone foundations, unique doors and hardware, lighting, windows, and window trim) should be highlighted or added. Storefronts and entrances should face the streets and sidewalks to invite pedestrians inside and should be enhanced with planters, pedestrian wayfinding signage, lighting, and outdoor eating areas. To prevent Downtown Atlanta from looking cluttered, street level infrastructure, overhead lines, and utility poles should be minimized or eliminated from the front of businesses. Dining tables should be placed near windows to create opportunities for diners to watch passerbys and other patrons.



Examples of interesting features in downtown

Many of the windows on the downtown buildings are covered or boarded up, which creates a sense of abandonment and high crime. Redevelopment efforts should consider the style, size, and placement of windows. The replacement windows should be compatible and complementary to the building's original character. Large display windows with simple displays and/or art and recessed or covered entryways will encourage pedestrians to window shop and potentially enter the business.

Signage Issue 1

The signage in downtown is either missing or lacks quality in both design and materials.

Recommendation

Signage should be of high-quality materials and design to enhance the character of the building and downtown. The signage should complement and be integrated into the architectural design of the building to enhance the building's significant features. Signage should use appropriate design, material, color, and texture, and should not cover, obscure, and/or overshadow the building's features and design. Front and rear entrances should have appropriate signage to identify customer entrances and loading areas. Cost estimates will be determined on an individual storefront basis.



Example of high-quality signage

Signage Issue 2

The downtown lacks pedestrian-oriented signage to direct visitors around the downtown and surrounding areas.

Recommendation

In conjunction with non-motorized and motorized routes, high-quality pedestrian-oriented signage should be installed to direct pedestrians to public parking lots, local businesses, and places of interest. Projecting, window, and menu signage has the potential to attract and keep pedestrians in downtown longer, which will support local businesses. Informational signs at the nearby trailhead can provide information about the

available facilities in downtown. Estimated costs to purchase and install pedestrian-oriented signs range between \$15,000-\$20,000.



Example of pedestrian wayfinding signage in Alpena, Michigan

Signage Issue 3

The village lacks significant features that announce the entrance into and exit out of Downtown Atlanta.

Recommendation

The streetscape should be enhanced at the curve on M-32 on the west side of downtown and at the intersection of Jerome Street and M-32 on the east side of downtown. Improvements should include lighting, special signage, landscaping, and public art using the 'elk capital' theme to distinguish downtown from other areas and

create a sense of excitement and intrigue. Additionally, the redevelopment and revitalization of properties at these intersections should be strongly encouraged. The estimated cost to purchase and install entrance/exit signs is \$10,000.

Streetscape and Pedestrian Features

The design of the street plays a role in defining the downtown's identity. The more attractive and inviting a streetscape is, the more people will see it as a desirable place to live and visit. The downtown area is accessible by foot, bike and vehicle with the majority of patrons driving.

The downtown should have interesting features that generate pedestrian interest in the businesses' products and services. The

downtown has benches, trash receptacles, flower pots and boxes, and seasonal decorations to create a vibrant pedestrian environment. Unfortunately, there are significant gaps in the sidewalk system. Businesses should be open at varying times to support all day activity. The following downtown streetscape and pedestrian features issues include recommendations for improvements.

Parking Issue 1

Parking in Downtown Atlanta is inefficient.

Recommendation

On- and off-street parking should be clearly marked with parking striping and have appropriate signage for vehicles, ORVs and trailed ORVs. Currently, the downtown area does not have public parking signage or clearly marked on- and off-street parking, which leads to people parking

in the streets, in community open spaces, in the unmarked lanes along M-32, and on driveways and sidewalks. Off-street parking should be separated from the streets and sidewalks with interesting landscaping and/or decorative screening. Shared parking for multiple

businesses should be encouraged to meet parking demands by day, season, and business hours. Shared parking reduces the parking demand, provides the opportunity for people to stay downtown longer by parking once, and reduces the cost to maintain and construct parking lots and stormwater sewer systems. Parking areas between buildings should be appropriately screened. Additionally, parking behind buildings should be clearly marked whether it is public or employee only parking. The estimated cost to develop a parking study, develop a walkability study, clearly mark parking areas with stripes and signage, and to include landscaping/decorative screening is \$45,000.



Examples of unmarked on-street and off-street parking areas

Pedestrian Features Issue 1

There is a lack of connectivity between the sidewalks in downtown and the surrounding area.

Recommendation

The sidewalk study should be implemented to attract people to the downtown from the surrounding area for shopping and dining. Mid-block crossings and passageways can create linkages between the downtown and surrounding areas. Additionally, pedestrian signals should be installed at crosswalks to increase visibility, driver awareness, and pedestrian safety. The estimated cost to connect the gaps in the sidewalk system is dependent on the sidewalk study. A Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon is less expensive than a full traffic signal installation and has a cost estimate between \$21,000 to \$128,000.



Examples of gaps in the sidewalk system

Pedestrian Features Issue 2

The downtown lacks inviting outdoor dining spaces.

Recommendation

The downtown has three restaurants with outdoor dining spaces: Chatters Bull Pen, Lucky Ds, and Dano's Diner & Drive Thru. Visible outdoor dining spaces should be improved to attract people into the restaurants and allow diners to watch passerbys and other patrons. Outdoor dining spaces should have patios, tables, chairs, umbrellas, and access to side entrances into the

restaurants. In an effort to create a sense that the diner is part of the pedestrian environment, these dining areas should have transparent walls and/or low, transparent fences. Cost estimates range between \$2,000 to \$10,000 for simple outdoor dining spaces. However, costs may be higher for spaces with an outdoor bar, entertainment stages, cooking areas, etc.

Pedestrian Features Issue 3

The downtown lacks art to attract residents and visitors.

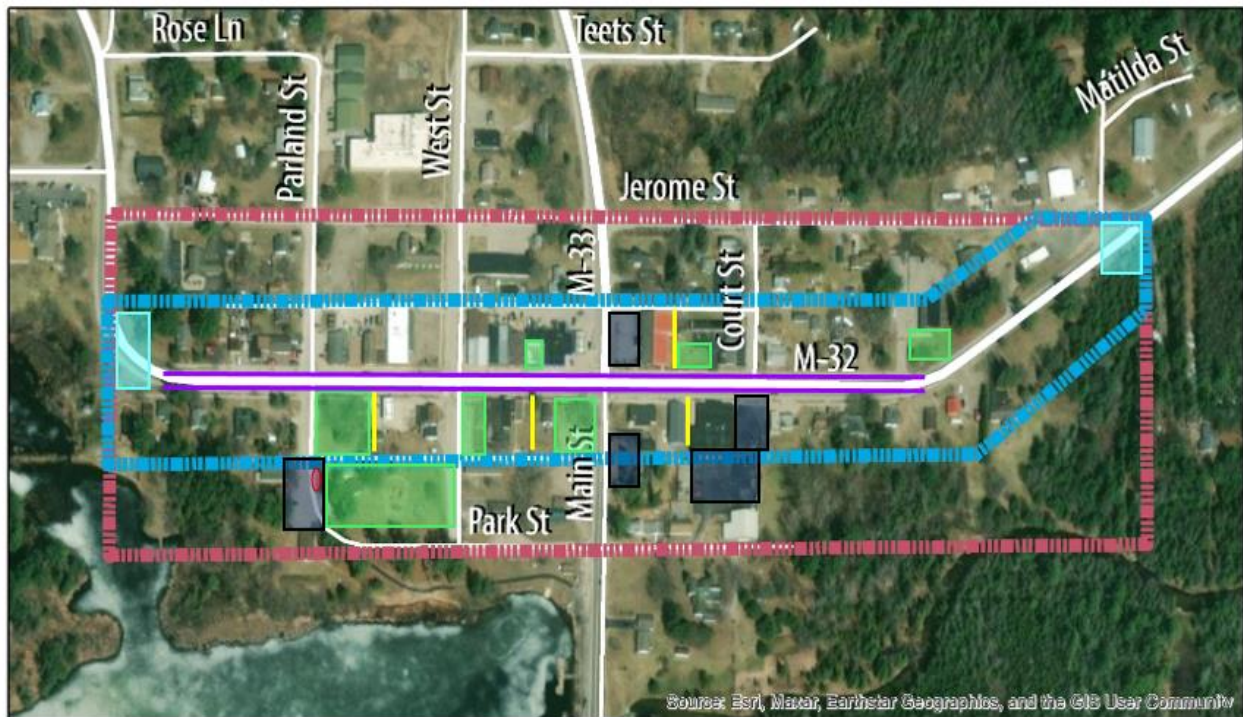
Recommendation

Public art helps develop local pride and create a strong sense of place. Local officials should work with local artists to develop and install unique art

pieces throughout downtown and the surrounding area. Painted murals on designated spaces will influence people to stay in downtown longer.

Downtown Atlanta Development Concept Briley Township

- Multi-Use Pathway
- Potential Mid-Block Passages
- Open Space/Outdoor Dining Areas
- Shared Parking Areas to Serve Downtown Businesses
- Gateway Signage
- EV Charging Stations



Priority Redevelopment Sites

Briley Township intends to participate in the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities Program. As part of this program, the township identified and prioritized redevelopment sites. The sites will be reviewed annually and may change throughout the year as circumstances in

the community change and new information becomes available. This section is not meant to preclude alternate areas of redevelopment in the township if the opportunity for redevelopment becomes available.

1. Former Briley Township Elementary School

Owner: Stacey Krone

Address: Unknown

Parcel ID: 003-405-000-001-00

Size 1.371556 acres

Zoning: Old Town District (Commercial)

Description: Former school with existing sidewalks and limited parking. Property borders parcels containing garages, which are currently being used by Tri-Township Ambulance.



2. Gas Station (vacant)

Owner: Joseph English

Address: 12365 State St. & 12383 State St.

Parcel ID: 003-407-000-005-00 & 003-407-000-008-00

Size: 0.211571, 0.286447 (Total: 0.498018 acres)

Zoning: Old Town District (Commercial)

Description: Former gas station with existing sidewalk along M-32. A Part 213 (open) site, which may be eligible for Brownfield Redevelopment assistance.

