Alexandria Focused Plan

Licking County Planning Commission
20 South Second Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

Prepared in Conjunction with Central Ohio Technical College

Adopted the Licking County Planning Commission on July 23, 2012
Central Ohio Technical College – Capstone Class

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**What is a Focused Plan?**

The focused plan for Alexandria was developed as a mechanism for implementing the Village’s comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan outlined goals and strategies for future development. The comprehensive plan has mainly been used as a tool to guide the village’s zoning practices. This focused plan will outline projects, both large and small, which can enhance the village for the residents, visitors, business owners, and future investors. The projects developed in this plan will be outlined and presented in more detail than the ideas presented in the comprehensive plan. The overall goal of this document is to thoroughly explore the measures and actions that could take place to make Alexandria a great place.

**Planning Process**

The project was created through the collaborative efforts of the Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) and the Licking County Planning Commission (LCPC). Staff from LCPC partnered with students from the Architectural and Civil Design Technology program at COTC. This project was in partial completion of the COTC student’s drafting and design capstone class, the purpose of which is to give the students experience in real world drafting, designing and engineering problems. The students applied skills and theories learned in previous course work to this project. Planning staff worked with the student group to develop “pilot projects” for Alexandria. This plan is built around the concepts designed through this collaborative effort.

The team benefited through the inclusion of a project sponsor, Richard David Dicks. Mr. Dicks is a long time resident of the Alexandria area, and has served as a community leader in various roles throughout his career. Currently he serves as a member of the Licking County Planning Commission and the president of the Alexandria Buckeyes senior association. As the project sponsor, Mr. Dicks provided insight into many aspects of the community through his personal knowledge and introduction to members of the community.

**Project Timeline**

The focused plan was conducted between April 2012 and June 2012. The timetable for implementation of the designs in this plan is difficult to predict, however the purpose of this plan was to generate ideas and set the stage for future implementation. It is recognized that many of these projects may develop in phases due to funding availability. This plan serves as a vision for Alexandria, and as a platform for positive development throughout the community.
Steps Toward Completion
The plan began with initial meetings between the COTC capstone students and the LCPC staff. The class underwent a series of lectures to understand the planning process and the general ideas behind this project. The team conducted a walking inventory of Alexandria, documenting assets and weaknesses they observed. Next, the team met with members of the Alexandria Buckeyes organization, which is a non-profit association of senior citizens from the Alexandria area. This organization meets once a month, and the team attended their April monthly meeting. At this meeting, the team posed a number of questions to the senior to obtain the following information:

- Positive memories of the community
- Changes that need to be made in the community.
- Events, social or physical characteristic that might be missing.
- Aspects of the area which have led them to move into and continue to live in the Alexandria area
- Safety, services, general livability of the community

Based on these observations, the team developed two pilot projects. These projects focused on opportunities for the downtown core of Alexandria, and opportunities for the Alexandria area as a whole. These projects will be presented in detail later in this document. The projects were presented to a group of stakeholders, interested leaders of civic and public organizations, as well as citizens of the area. In addition the document was presented and adopted through a resolution by the Licking County Planning Commission.

Assets and Enhancement Opportunities
Through the walking inventory/tour and the meeting with the Alexandria Buckeye group the project team developed lists of community assets and potential enhancement opportunities. These items will be the basis for the creation of pilot projects developed for the Village. The team wanted to focus on the community’s assets and opportunities to further develop these assets. The opportunities for enhancement include opportunities to fix problems, however really focused on taking advantage of underutilized assets. The following table lists these assets and opportunities the project team developed:
## Vision Statement

The Village of Alexandria is an established area within Licking County that hold genuine promise to become a local destination with a unique and authentic sense of character. The Village is a pleasant place to live and visit and offers a variety of housing types and open space. The aim of this plan is to build on those existing assets to create an even safer, more comfortable, community-minded Village. To achieve this vision, this plan will seek to create a richer sense of community with a distinct character through providing observations and opinions:

- Pedestrian and bike friendly infrastructure improvements
- Additions and enhancements to the core commercial area
- Improvements to open and recreation spaces, designed for a mix of uses for all ages.
- Aesthetic streetscape improvements

## Background Information

The founder of Alexandria came in a covered wagon from Frederick County, Maryland with his family in 1815. Alexander Devilbiss purchased 300 acres of land in St. Albans Township and built a mill in 1817. In 1830 he platted the village and created a business center where the community's needs could be better served. Devilbiss platted the cemetery in Alexandria (Maple Grove), where two of his nephews are buried. The town continued to grow with churches, including one that gave shelter to the anti-slavery movement (the Congregational Church and several local farms are known to be stops on the underground railroad); a hotel called the “Old Tavern,” whose Bar Room provided a meeting place for arbitration and the occasional lawsuit; a post office that collected 25 cents from the recipient of a letter; a dry goods store selling flour for four dollars a barrel;
a bank that survived while thirty-nine others in the state failed; and even a tobacco factory. Known for its fast running creeks (especially Lobdell and Raccoon), St. Albans Township had as many as 50 mills (grist and saw mills) running at one time or another.

Over the years Alexandria and St. Albans Township have been home to a clock factory, rope factory, concrete block factory, livery stable, harness factory, and a creamery to serve the many prosperous dairy farms in the area. In the last century there were three gas stations, a hardware store, grocery stores, hotels, three barber shops, a veterinarian, and several doctors. The village has survived three bank robberies, numerous fires, and maintained its rural character. Currently the village and surrounding township are home to many vital businesses, including a veterinary hospital, doctor and dental practices, three gravel quarries, golf courses, automobile repair shops, many farms (including three Century Farms), beauty shops, woodworking shops, and many other small and home businesses.

According to the history of the area, as recorded in the book *Alexandria and St. Albans Township, Licking County, Ohio*, “the Alexandria Centennial celebration of 1930 inspired a maturity of cooperative effort and a degree of community pride that made it the outstanding achievement in the history of the village and township.” Alexandria is known as the home of the first Community Council. As a result of the community interest in the planning and executing of the village's centennial celebration, the Community Council was formed to promote community welfare. It was the brainchild of William E. Huffman, then superintendent of Alexandria schools.

The establishment of the Alexandria Library and the Alexandria Museum are just two of the many accomplishments of this group. In 2007 and 2008, the Community Council was responsible for saving and moving the Captain Scott House, a historic home in the path of the route 161/16-highway expansion. The Community Council was active in running the Alexandria Fun Days celebrations, a four-day community fair held in the schoolyard each summer (the fire department now runs this celebration). The Council gave out scholarships and later founded the Alexandria Museum during the 1960s. Historic displays were housed in the Alexandria Library and in the small building next to the current museum until it was purchased in 1985.
There are many historic and pre-historic sites throughout the township and village, including Indian mounds, an Indian trail known as Buffalo Trail, houses, churches, and stores. The mission of the Alexandria Museum is to preserve the history of the area for future generations. Most recently the Museum was instrumental in setting up an Ohio historic marker to Willoughby Dayton Miller, the father of modern dentistry, who was born in Alexandria. The marker is located in front of the library on State Route 37. The museum is located on West Main Street in Alexandria, and is open every Sunday from 2-4 p.m. and by appointment.

This rich history develops a platform by which community strength is developed. Opportunities to highlight key people, events, and places will serve as basis to the projects outlined in this plan. Focusing on tying back to the things that made and make Alexandria significant will serve to enhance and preserve the strength and significance of the Village. For instance, the historic Old Pioneer Cemetery, which is said to be haunted, should be preserved for its historic value. Restoring and promoting the significance of this site could serve as a rallying event for the community, which has a history of drawing support for historic preservation.

A tie to the clock factory, perhaps a landmark of some kind, could become another item of significance which draws people into the village; an item that sparks the interest of people passing through on Main Street drawing new users to businesses in the Village. Perhaps a park or sitting area dedicated to the Father of Modern Dentistry, Willoughby Miller, would have the same drawing affect. Continued local and regional support of the Fun Days event could pull new residents and user groups together for an annual celebration, which could be developed further and tied into these people and places of historic significance. Alexandria has a rich history, many people, places, and events of local and regional significance, all of which could be pulled together or drawn upon as opportunities to highlight the pride and significance of the community.
State of the Village Summary

Existing Regulations/Regulatory Boards
Alexandria is supervised by a Mayor, who serves a four-year term. A six member Village Council serves as the legislative body for the village, each member serving a four-year term. The Zoning and Planning Commission makes recommendation to the Village Council regarding changes to the village zoning. Members of the Zoning and Planning Commission serve five-year terms. A Park Board was created to maintain Parker Park and serves at the discretion of the Mayor and Council. A five member Museum Board maintains the Alexandria Museum building and collections for the public, and provides history and education opportunities for the community.

Alexandria adopted a zoning resolution in 1965, and has since updated and revised the original text. A paid, part-time zoning inspector is employed through the Village to enforce the zoning resolution. The zoning inspector reviews applications for zoning permits, conducts on-site inspections to ensure construction conforms to approved applications, investigates complaints and violations, maintains a record on non-conforming uses, and maintains the zoning text and map. The Zoning and Planning Commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Village Council concerning the interpretation and application of the village zoning resolution and comprehensive plan, as well as conducting hearing on requested zoning changes and initiating amendments to the zoning resolution.

Population Profile
Though the community was not counted in the 2000 census (due to political and logistic issues), village records indicate a population nearing 600 that has been relatively steady since the Civil War, when the population was over 500. The 2010 census figures show a population of 517. Another population to note is the 362 students at the Northridge Primary School. This school, located in the center of the Village of Alexandria, serves as the kindergarten through third grade school for the entire Northridge School District. Considering the size of the Village, these population figures are significant. The Village’s population has remained roughly the same for a long period of time. This shows there is a relative amount of stability in the community. Also, the student population serves as an opportunity. The school draws people and services into the community through the creation of jobs, students, and parents. The Northridge Primary School serves the entire Northridge School District K-3rd grade. This means that families from all over the area come into Alexandria every day school is in session. These families are an excellent user group to utilize facilities and services as well as to patronize local businesses.
**Housing Profile/Style Inventory**

Many different styles and conditions of housing are found in Alexandria. The majority of the housing stock is single-family residences. Both historic and new construction homes can be found within the Village limits. This variety along with the general good condition of the homes in the Village indicates the health of the Village. The homes are generally well kept, and a variety of styles, sizes, ages, and landscapes are offered in the general housing stock. The following photographs are examples of the houses found in Alexandria.
Businesses/Services

Businesses in the Village of Alexandria are very limited. The downtown core of the Village is home to a beauty salon, an art gallery/gift shop, Village Hall, the local post office, a wood working shop, and the local museum. A pizza restaurant is located one block east of Main Street. A gas station/bar is located on the north side of town on Main Street as well as a dentist office and veterinarian. An aggregate quarry is located on the north side of the Village, however it is not within the Village limits. Additional home occupation businesses may be located within the Village as well. Although businesses are limited in the Village, the presence of some long standing and operating businesses is a positive asset to the community. Business and service opportunities such as the following are present in the community today.

- Buildings in good condition to support businesses
- High traffic main thoroughfare.
- Limited competition

Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Alexandria is accessible via State Route 37, and is located approximately one mile north of State Route 161. Route 161 is the main east/west connector in Licking County. This location provides Alexandria with quick and easy access to Columbus, Newark, and Johnstown. This convenient location serves as an opportunity for the community as it brings different user groups though the heart of the community.

Completed in 2007, the village built a self-contained sewage treatment plant and all homes were connected to it. In the last five years a new subdivision has been constructed and several homes were annexed in conjunction with the sewer plant project. The Village is connected to central water from the Village of Granville, and in 1997 constructed a water storage tower partially through Ohio Public Works Commission funding. In 2012 the Village was awarded a grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission to build new storm water sewers. The grant was funded for $105,910, 89% of the total estimated price. The presence of these utilities is important
because it shows that the community is able to provide utilities for existing users as well as for potential future development. Capacity could also be sold should other jurisdiction or users in the area need access to these services. Centralized water, sewer, and storm water systems additionally protect the environment, and are attractive amenities for new residential, commercial, or institutional users.

Another substantial undertaking, this time by the township trustees, was the enlargement and modernization of the St. Albans Township Fire Department. Completed in 2008, this state-of-the-art facility offers EMT and fire department services to the entire village and surrounding townships. As is the case for the utilities already mentioned, the updated fire services serve as an additional amenity to the community. New residents as well as commercial development investors may find this amenity attractive when choosing locations. Additionally, presence of a fire department provides an added sense of security and safety.

Alexandria is fortunate to have a progressive and active public library. With 200 books borrowed from the Columbus Library, Robert Price and others founded the Alexandria Public Library in 1935. The current building was erected in 1962 and has been expanded four times, most recently in the 1990s. The Alexandria Public Library is a school district library and functions as the library for the Northridge Primary School, and prior to that the Northridge Alexandria Elementary School. It has a full schedule of programming for all ages. The presence of the library serves as an opportunity and an asset to the community. It is an opportunity in so much as it provides meeting space, it serves as a draw for residents to congregate for educational opportunities, and it provides learning materials for all residents regardless of age or education level.

Four active churches give evidence to the spiritual life of the community. In addition to a full range of Sunday services, Vacation Bible School, Bible studies, Sunday school, and men's and women's groups, church buildings are open for civic and club activities. These include after school clubs, 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, quilt groups, and the Alexandria Buckeyes senior association. Religious life is at the heart of the community, and pastors take an active role in helping with many village and township events and activities. These organizations provide opportunities for area residents to come together for a positive purpose and to participate in activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Alexandria had a two-story brick secondary school from 1894 until 1955. It was a well-respected academy, and students from the surrounding one-room schoolhouses fed into it, many boarding during the week with village residents due to transportation issues. Teachers also boarded with village residents. The current school building was erected in 1923 and expanded in 1954. Consolidation is changing the organization of local schools, but currently each weekday 365 primary-age students attend the Northridge Primary School. As previously outlined, this population presents opportunities for the community in terms of a specified user group with a predetermined schedule. For a village the size of Alexandria, having a functioning school is an asset.
Environmental Characteristics

Incorporated Alexandria is characterized by a predominately built environment. Several areas in the southern and western portions of the village are in the FEMA designated 100-year floodplain. A floodplain is any land area susceptible to inundation by floodwaters from any source. A 100-year floodplain is the land area having a 1 in 100 chance of flooding in any given year. Floodplains tend to be habitat areas for a wide variety of plants and animals. Floodplains also have important scenic and aesthetic value, providing a natural area for passive recreation activities. Aside from the floodplain, there are two wetland areas in the Village of Alexandria as identified by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. As is the case for the floodplain, building in the wetland requires various types of permits from several agencies.

Parker Community Park, located on the west side of the Village, provides recreation opportunities as well as open space areas for the community. The Village, primarily through volunteer maintenance efforts, maintains Parker Community Park. Recreational opportunities exist outside of Alexandria in the nearby community, adding to the availability of sports leagues, active, and passive recreational options. The recreational options, along with the previously outlined educational, social, religious, and public facility opportunities provide for a well-rounded community. Although seemingly there are many opportunities and attractions in Alexandria, there are also opportunities for expansion and improvement.

Alexandria Opportunities:

- A steady population, a population of students and their families, as well as a steady stream of through traffic frequent the facilities and amenities in the community.
- Although a solid housing stock is present, additional community amenities could draw new residents, which may bring a wider variety of housing options. Multifamily and senior style living facilities are limited if present.
- Although businesses and services are limited, those that are in Alexandria appear to be thriving and there is space for new businesses.
- Alexandria has well maintained water, sewer, and storm water systems.
- Many organizations operate within the village.
- Variety of recreational opportunities which can be further expanded.
Action Plan (Pilot Projects)

The Central Ohio Technical College students developed two pilot projects expanding upon the opportunities present in Alexandria as well as the community feedback received.

Project 1: Project Goal
The first project the team explored was a redevelopment of the downtown core of the community. Many of the buildings could benefit from updated façades. Another opportunity identified was the vacant lot on the southwest corner of Main Street and Liberty Street. The goal of this project is to refresh the look of the existing downtown and develop opportunity sites that have the potential to add amenities to the community.

Current Condition
Currently, the downtown core of Alexandria includes a mix of vacant land, older buildings needing to be updated, and buildings in fairly good condition. The downtown core consists mainly of a one-block area surrounding the intersection of Main Street and Liberty Street. Several community churches, the local elementary school, the public library, a museum, and the firehouse are also located in downtown Alexandria.

Vision
The vision of this project is to revitalize the downtown core of Alexandria to a local destination. There are many strengths of the downtown area and many opportunities for improvement. Although the population of Alexandria as a whole is small, under 600 people, Main Street does experience high volumes of through traffic headed toward Johnstown and Highway 161. The revitalization of the downtown core is proposed as to capture some of the through traffic, as well as residents, and to provide destinations, services, and attractions to meet their needs. The project will require the cooperation of elected officials, property owners, and community members to generate the necessary interest. Building on the foundation of the existing downtown, this project will help further develop Alexandria as a destination place.

Proposed Actions
- Update streetscape to include additional decorative lighting, banners, and fixtures
- Refresh existing building façades
- Redevelop vacant parcels
Conceptual Views

Conceptual Deli on the Corner of Main and Liberty (front view)

Conceptual Deli on the Corner of Main and Liberty (rear view)
Park alternative for the vacant corner of Main and Liberty Street showing potential streetscape improvements.

Location of new sidewalk/streetscape improvements (in brown)
Potential redevelopment/community center highlighting enhanced streetscape options

Conceptual façade and streetscape improvements
Implementation Strategies

To implement this vision and the conceptual designs, the cooperation of many individuals and organizations will be necessary. First and foremost, the current and future property owners will need to be willing participants in the revitalization or any one property in particular and of the streetscape and community as a whole. Without cooperative property owners, change will be very limited. Recent investments have been made in the community through private investment. This momentum should be built upon to continue investment and revitalization of Alexandria.

The elected officials of Alexandria will play several key roles in implementing this vision. First, they are the front line advocates for any changes, enhancements, and investments in the community. Although economic development often takes place as a collaborative regional effort, the elected officials have a more intimate role in the community and can often contribute more to local development than any other entity. Second, they have the power to remove any regulatory roadblocks that might impede revitalization efforts. Additionally, they have the ability to seek funding as well as use local funding sources to aid in implementing projects.

Implementation will also happen through the participation of civic organizations. Many of the projects outlined in this report will require sponsors, financial support, or manpower. Although the community is small, there are many strong civic and social organizations that have and will continue to support community efforts.
Because this project includes both small and large-scale steps, the timeframe for implementing could be immediate to ongoing. For instance, redeveloping the vacant lot on the corner of Main and Liberty Street could happen quickly should the property owner wish to develop or sell, or it could take some time to find a developer. Either way, a dialog should be started between the Village and the property owner to understand the community’s vision for the site and the owners desire to develop. Other projects such as streetscape improvements could start immediately.

Milestones to evaluate completion of this project include:
1. Reduction in building vacancy
2. Adding/retaining businesses
3. Completion of streetscape improvements

**Project 2: Project Goal**
The second project team explored opportunities to tie the community together beyond the downtown core. They tapped into key existing assets to the Village and developed ways to upgrade, promote, enhance and further utilize several of the largest community assets. The goal of this project was to build upon the assets to provide additional amenities to residents and a potential draw for visitors. Connecting several assets and user groups was a main priority.

**Current Condition**
The assets the group focused on included the historic Captain Scott House, the bike path, Parker Community Park, Fritz Drumm Memorial Park, and the entry points into the Village. Currently all of these locations serve as assets to the community, however some stand to be further developed, maintained, or connected. Each has a distinct user group; this team attempted to use these assets as opportunities to draw the user groups together. For instance, the bike path provides regional as well as local recreation opportunities. Although the bike path is in close proximity to the downtown, it is not connected into the business area, the school, the local parks, or any other amenities in the Village. Furthermore, parking is not provided in or near the Village for the bike path. This means that users of the bike path either have to work their way through town to the bike path, or park in a neighboring community.

The Captain Scott house is a historic amenity that the community worked diligently to save. People passing through the Village may not recognize the house as an asset as it is unmarked and formal parking is not available. Parker Community Park is similar in that it is completely unmarked, and unless users know exactly where to turn to enter the park, it is difficult to locate. Fritz Drumm Memorial park does have decent signage, but not only once inside. From the Village, preferably Main Street that is heavily traveled, there are no directional signs to the park.

**Vision**
The vision of this project is to build upon the community’s assets and provide essential linkages between key points in the community. Through the enhancement of several of
these local landmarks, as well as signage and information linking them together, a more cohesive community feel will be accomplished. In addition, creating linkages will further develop the user groups for each of these attractions. For instance, users of the bike path may travel into the community to go to the park or to shop one of the local businesses. Users of the existing museum may consider visiting the Captain Scott House once it is renovated and parking is installed. Park goers may also visit the bike path once a connection is made between the two where pedestrians can safely access both.

**Proposed Actions**
The focal point for this project will be to develop an in depth signage concept for the Village. Focusing on the entry point to the Village, key attractions, and connective linkages will be the center of this project. Enhancements to the parks, including road stabilization, upgrades to the shelters, and general maintenance will keep current users as well as attract new users. Finishing the development of Fritz Drumm Memorial Park will be a regional draw that serves to bring many new user groups to the Village area. This asset should be a priority to the Village and township both, as it will be a regional asset. Connecting the bike path to the Village will also play a key role in bringing new user groups into the Village to patronize the parks and businesses. Taking advantage of vacant land and the opportunity to create a destination out of the Captain Scott House will wrap into the focal points of this project.
Conceptual View

Potential redevelopment of the Captain Scott House utilizing vacant land for parking and signage

Design option for signage. All signage throughout the Village should be similar in design.
Conceptual View of Fritz Drum Memorial Park

Conceptual Entrance to Fritz Drum Memorial Park
Implementation Strategies
This project can be implemented in several ways. Because there are a significant number of features to this project that are not solely up to private property owners to implement, the feasibility of accomplishing this project is high if broken down into implementable tasks. A comprehensive signage plan would be simply accomplished and the Village could solicit sponsorships to fund the installation of the signs. Fritz Drumm Memorial Park is being developed on funds from a golf tournament and from donations. As money comes in the park will continue to develop. Service organizations could be solicited to enhance the Parker Community Park, and grant funds applied for to upgrade park access. Many different entities can be involved in seeing this project come to fruition including the Village, the Township, the County, the Park District, civic groups, and private donors.

Implementation will be an ongoing process as some projects are larger in scale than others. Finishing the Fritz Drumm Park could take some time depending on the funding stream. Renovations to the Captain Scott house will be ongoing as the structure is older and will require ongoing maintenance. Updates to Parker Community Park will also be ongoing as maintenance will always be required. Signage and parking for the bike path will take an upfront funding mechanism but will not require a substantial investment in time or resources once completed.

Project milestones will include:
1. Increase of user groups to Village attractions
2. Renovation of the Captain Scott House
3. Comprehensive signage throughout the area

Comprehensive Plan
The overall goal of this project was to implement aspects of the Village of Alexandria’s Comprehensive Plan. The student projects were designed with this goal in mind, as well as focusing on the future vision of the community as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan was adopted in 2006, and is mostly relevant to date. Below is a list of the Goals and Objectives from the plan that are addressed through this focused plan.

Work with the development community to encourage development in areas that will allow for downtown services to be within walking distance.

This goal gets to the matter of keeping the community connected and to develop in a manner, which is in keeping with the development patterns existing in the Village.

Encourage developers to set aside a portion of subdivisions for recreational activities, or provide funds for the acquisition and development of such facilities.

Should new developments come into the Village, they should set aside additional recreation space, or connect into existing recreation amenities such as the parks and bike path.

Continue to coordinate improvements to existing infrastructure

Ensure compliance with streetlight and signage requirements

Add amenities – parks, playgrounds, pedestrian trails, etc. – where feasible to provide recreational opportunities to residents.

These three goals emphasize the importance of infrastructure and amenities in the Village. Both pilot projects work towards meeting these goals through the enhancement of streetlights and signage, the maintenance and expansion of parks and the coordination of such improvements among different governmental entities and user groups.

Approach new businesses that would complement the shopping/services already existing in the Village.

Attract new restaurants within the major commercial corridors

Attract new businesses to the Village, maintaining the character of the area while enhancing the viability.

These goals are and will be of ongoing importance to the Village. Through the pilot projects, developers or potential business owners can visually see what the community has envisioned for new development. Keeping vacancy low, and a variety of businesses...
in the Village will be important in maintaining the viability of the community. A common theme throughout the community has been a need for a restaurant. There are a few potentially viable locations for this business, property owners should be approached, and their willingness to sell or develop should be assessed. With the completion of Route 161, Main Street in Alexandria experiences a high level of through traffic daily. It is important to capture a portion of this traffic into the community, which could be done through a restaurant.

*Work with business owners to encourage remodeling of older retail locations,*

*Work together to enhance the community appearance and infrastructure.*

Renovation and remodeling efforts can be both inexpensive and very costly, however if several inexpensive renovations were to take place, they may have a more substantial effect than a large-scale renovation. Most of the buildings in the village are in relatively good shape. Very few are boarded up, are missing windows, or are even vacant. This is not to say that there is not a wide range of enhancements, which could be made. These pilot projects serve to show some small renovations can collectively contribute to the overall enhancement of an area.

*Link the community through a system of linear parks and trails designed to connect major facilities with residential areas.*

*Link the Village system to the regional trail system*

*Promote local fitness and recreation within the community.*

The community has emphasized the importance of interconnecting assets such as parks, trails, and recreation areas. The presence of the regional bike trail is significant in the fact that it offers opportunities to connect people region wide to the Village. The pilot projects attempt to build these connections through connecting the community more directly to the bike path, as well as by providing parking in the Village for users of the bike path. Through enhancements to the parks, the community will be supporting and promoting local fitness and recreation.

*Encourage development of athletic fields and diamonds to allow for sports plan and for a senior/community center within the Village.*

*Ensure development of Parker Community Park accommodates the needs of resident of all ages including toddlers, seniors, and is handicap accessible.*

*Examine new and expanded bike and/or pedestrian trail potential to reduce those hazards on roadways.*

*Encourage and promote pedestrian activity throughout the Village.*
The Village, through the comprehensive plan, has taken a strong position on recreation in the community. It is truly important to provide activities for all user groups. It will also be important to find ways to develop spaces that can be utilized by multiple user groups. The pilot projects achieve this through the development of Fritz Drumm Memorial Park and the enhancements to Parker Community Park. Connecting these spaces to the community will open up opportunities to service a wide variety of users.

*Improve and maintain the appearance of Village streets, rights-of-way and other highly visible areas of the Village with enhancement modifications and continual maintenance to enhance the Village’s positive image.*

This goal is the essence of the pilot projects. The overall goal was to enhance the appearance and experience of the Village to create and maintain a positive image. This will generate activity, use of space, positive development, and an overall feeling of a local destination place. The pilot project strove to create connectivity of the diverse and extensive assets of the Village.

**Other Contributing Factors:**
Beyond physical places and areas, other things contribute to the success of a community. Alexandria, home to the first community council, has been known for their strong civic, social, and religious organization. Many of these groups exist and are active in the community today. The community council was responsible for moving, and in a sense saving, the Captain Scott House. This ability for a small community to organize and accomplish large tasks is unprecedented and quite remarkable. Other civic groups including a historical society, the previously mentioned Alexandria Buckeyes, and the local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops also contribute to the community as a whole. Without organization, activities, and a dedication to the Village, Alexandria would not be what it is today. Currently, Parker Community Park is maintained by a voluntary effort, and Fritz Drumm Community Park would not exist without the donations and hard work of volunteers and donors.

The efforts of these organizations, both past and present, have defined the community. People from the area long remember the “Fun Days” summer celebrations, the relocating of the Captain Scott House, and events at the local school. Supporting, and in some cases reviving, these activities will enhance the overall community. These events, defining a place, can also contribute to the development and investment in a community. The project team recognizes the significance of these events and the efforts of these organizations. These groups and events are one of the largest assets to the community as well as one of the biggest opportunities for implementation of this plan.

Other opportunities contributing to the success of Alexandria include other physical destinations including the McClain/Lobdell covered bridge, located on the south side of the Village in Fireman’s Park. This park, although located in St. Alban’s Township, is situated in a way that it appears to be in the Village. The bridge is located at the main...
entry point to the Village and potentially draws traffic to the park. Although the bridge is in a notable location, it is not preserved. Pedestrians cannot access the bridge and the structural viability is unknown.

Another notable destination is the Old Pioneer Cemetery. Dating back to 1838, this cemetery is located in the Maple Grove Cemetery in the center of Alexandria. Although it seems odd that a cemetery would be considered a destination, given the age of this cemetery, there is a high chance of significant individuals such as war veterans being buried in this location. Additionally, the cemetery serves as an example of early 1800’s headstones and burying practices. It was given its name due to the fact that it is the burial site of Alexander Devilbiss, founder of the Village, and his family members. Lore has it that the Devilbiss family members were buried in the opposite direction of the others buried in the cemetery, and thus, their restless spirits wander the cemetery at night haunting the area.

Alexandria is also home to several notable individuals including Willoughby Dayton Miller (1853-1907) a notable scientist/dentist, and Edythe Hughes a world-renowned fashion model. Willoughby Miller was known for advancements in modern dentistry. He received training at the Pennsylvania Dental College and worked in Germany as a professor of Operative Dentistry at the University of Berlin. While in Germany, he worked in the microbiological laboratory researching bacterium and microbes that were commonplace in the mouth. He was known for bringing the science of bacteriology into dentistry. He was credited as the first to accurately describe the process of tooth decay.

Edyth Hughes was a teenager when she was discovered by the Elite Model Agency during a trip to Easton Towne Center in November 2006. She was 17 years old, from Alexandria, and was quickly swept into the fast paced world of fashion. She has modeled for designers such as Calvin Klein, Versace and Etro, and has appeared in many fashion magazines including Teen Vogue. She is a graduate of Northridge High School.

Building upon these notable people, organizations and events, along with the pilot projects developed by the team, a breadth of opportunity awaits in Alexandria. New investment, redevelopment, and organization of social events could change the face of Alexandria. The future of the Village does not necessarily mean large developments or big changes. Small, planned efforts could yield big results by way of new businesses, revived social activism and organization, and aesthetic improvements. Alexandria is a great place, teaming with opportunity, destinations, activities, and well-organized people. Through implementation of the existing comprehensive plan, a document adopted and created by the Village, the vision of this focused plan will come to fruition.

First Step Projects:
Although the pilot projects directly implement the comprehensive plan and strive to create the overall vision of the focused plan, some smaller scale projects represent good, inexpensive methods for beginning the process of implementation. They include:
- **Bike path signage**: The bike path is a clearly identifiable asset to the Village of Alexandria. The path serves both local and regional users, and brings these users into close proximity with the Village. Installing directional signage on the bike path identifying the location of the downtown area is a relatively inexpensive way to bring new user groups into the Village.

- **Entry Signage**: As part of the idea of creating an overall signage plan for the Village, entry signage should be designed and installed along Main Street at the northern and southern entry points to the Village. If local funding cannot be obtained, it may be possible to fund these signs through a private sponsorship.

- **Parker Park Enhancements**: Parker Park is a nice amenity found in Alexandria and is heavily utilized by local residents and sports groups. Many of the facilities are in needs of maintenance. Opportunities for local organizations to provide manpower and potentially funding from park improvements should be sought if local funds are not available. Signage from Main Street to the park is strongly encouraged.

- **Organizational Linkages**: With a rich history or strong civic organizations and community events, opportunities exist to connect these groups with one another to help participate in existing event or to organize community events such as a clean-up day for Parker Park, participation in the Fun Days celebration, and other like events. The Village website could provide a platform for organizing and promoting these opportunities.