Historic Preservation Plan

City of Middlesborough, Kentucky
2014 - 2018



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Approved by Historic District Commission
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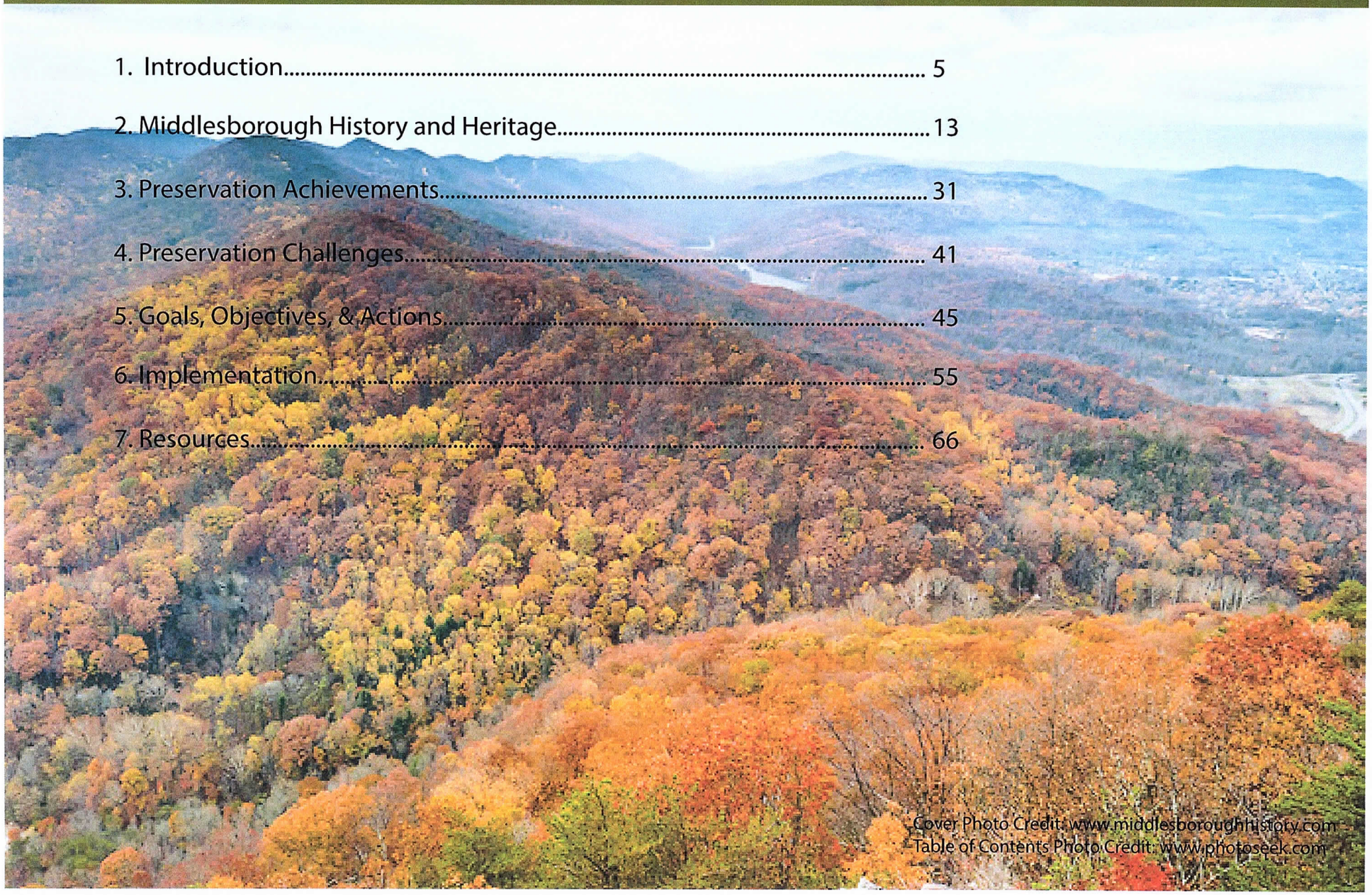
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The City of Middlesborough Historic Preservation Plan was prepared by Marie Oehlerking, a preservation intern at Discover Downtown Middlesboro during the summer of 2013. Marie is currently pursuing a Masters of Science in Historic Preservation at the University of Texas at Austin.

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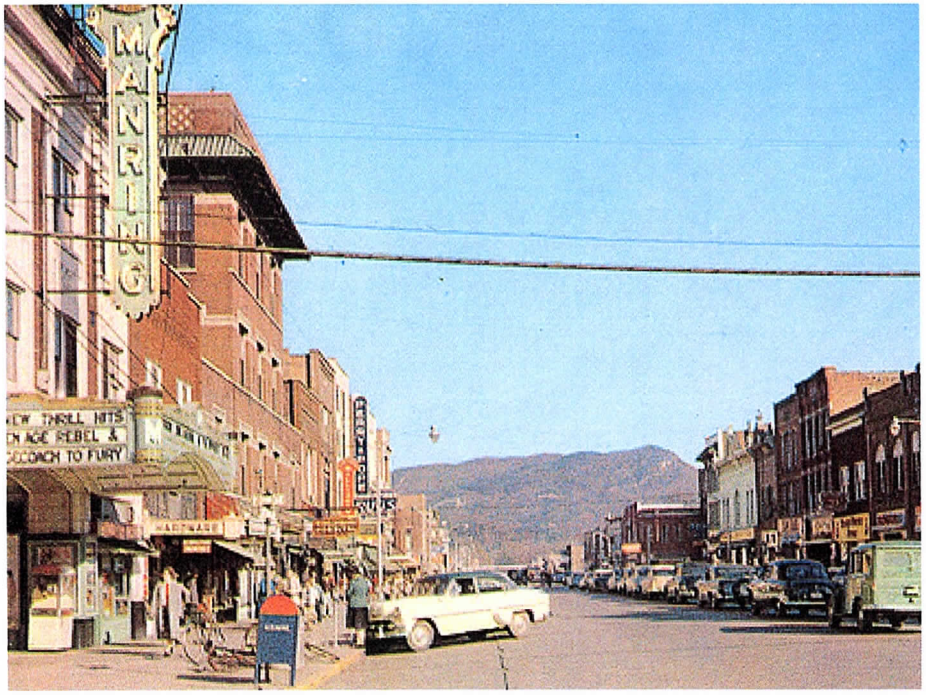
MIDDLESBORO, KENTUCKY
The City Built Inside A Meteorite Crater

LWV
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

1. Introduction



Top: City of Middlesborough Logo
Bottom: Cumberland Avenue looking east .
www.middlesboroughhistory.com



A VISION FOR OUR CITY

Middlesborough is the economic and cultural anchor of southeast Kentucky. With a colorful history, central location with Tennessee and Virginia just over the border, diverse businesses, and many recreational opportunities most notably with the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, the city attracts residents from three states and tourists from throughout the nation.

Middlesborough maintains much of its historic fabric. From commercial buildings to private residences, a large number of Middlesborough's historic structures are still intact and being used today. These historic buildings and sites are tangible reflections of the community's rich history, but they are also important assets for the community's future. Historic buildings visually differentiate Middlesborough from other communities, giving the city a distinctive identity. In most cases, they are easily adaptable to new uses. They are located in walkable districts and enhance the walkability of those districts by creating visual interest and a sense of enclosure on the street. Reuse of historic buildings yields sustainability benefits by diverting waste from landfills and providing a more environmentally friendly development option than new construction. For all these reasons and others, historic buildings are important economic development tools for Middlesborough's future.

Unfortunately, Middlesborough's historic buildings are often overlooked and underappreciated as the valuable resource that they are. There is a direct correlation between commercial sprawl and downtown blight. Since the early 1980s, Middlesborough has seen increased commercial development along US-25E. Although this has been beneficial to the community from a tax basis and by providing services and amenities, downtown Middlesborough has taken a hard hit. When commercial activity takes places outside of downtown, there is less demand for downtown buildings. This in turn lowers the rent and diminishes the funds that owners of historic downtown building owners have to maintain and rehabilitate their buildings. This challenge along with several others has inhibited preservation in Middlesborough. This preservation plan is intended to help unlock the intrinsic economic value of historic buildings, and to create civic and social benefits through their restoration. Historic preservation, in final analysis, has the power to connect our past and present with a bright future we desire and want for our community.

A PATH FORWARD TO 2016

Preservation is a team effort. Multiple organizations and individuals must be involved in order to achieve the purpose of the City of Middlesborough Historic Preservation Plan. In early 2013, the Historic District Commission (HDC) was reinstated by the City of Middlesborough. In tandem with Discover Downtown Middlesboro (DDM), the HDC will lead preservation efforts in the city and will help to cultivate a community that understands and cherishes their valuable historic assets. Currently, DDM is developing a Strategic Plan for their organization. DDM realizes that historic buildings are Middlesborough's biggest asset and many of their strategic goals incorporate historic resources in order to achieve reinvestment in the community. DDM's strategic goals will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

The goal of this plan is to guide Middlesborough's preservation efforts for the next four years. Chapter 1 will explain the benefits that historic preservation brings to a city with supporting facts from several prior plans. Middlesborough has a detailed and unique history that is directly tied to physical places, many of which still exist today. Chapter 2 narrates the history of Middlesborough and points out specific locations where resources from different eras in the city's history still exist. Chapter 3 discusses preservation achievements that have already been accomplished in the town, while Chapter 4 gives an overview of challenges that Middlesborough still faces. Chapter 5 outlines broad goals supported by specific objectives and actions that will lead Middlesborough into the future. Last but not least, Chapter 6 compares past city plans with the current preservation goals to show an appreciation for past plans in shaping a positive future for Middlesborough.

Cumberland Avenue Railroad Trestle



Cumberland Avenue and 20th Street looking east.



COMMON THEMES

Several common themes are woven throughout the preservation plan that highlight areas in which Middlesborough needs to focus attention on. Local residents brought these themes to the surface through extensive opportunities to provide input in public meetings and surveys conducted. The common themes have subsequently shaped the goals that will lead Middlesborough in to the future.

1. Middlesborough needs to capitalize upon its historic and cultural resources. From its buildings, to the canal, to its physical location in a crater, Middlesborough needs to exploit the advantages that are already playing in the city's favor. Historic buildings and sites have more to offer than symbolizing history. The city's economic development, walkability, sustainability and other aspects can all be greatly influenced by reusing historic structures.

2. Historic preservation is often misunderstood and it requires the cooperation of multiple participants for the city to be successful. Residents, building owners, and public officials need to be educated on the benefits of preservation and financial incentives and technical assistance that is available to them.

3. Beyond the downtown, Middlesborough is a city with distinct neighborhoods very deserving of being preserved. These neighborhoods and residences cannot be forgotten.

4. Middlesborough has managed to maintain a significant portion of its historic fabric for over 100 years. However, momentum in the local preservation movement needs to be reinvigorated in order for the city to continue supporting these resources. Emphasizing benefits of historic PRESERVATION SUCH AS FINANCIAL INCENTIVES WILL SPARK PEOPLE'S ATTENTION AND ENLIST THEIR SUPPORT.

5. An active downtown needs a variety of businesses that can be attracted and supported through preservation. It was once said that new ideas need old buildings. Part of the reason why is they are more affordable and adaptable than new construction. Following the Four-Point Approach® to commercial district revitalization is one of the surest ways to improve the business mix.

THE BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The goal of historic preservation is to protect, maintain, and enhance the unique cultural heritage, beauty, and identity of the community. By recognizing the importance of historic structures, and protecting cultural resources, Middlesborough will prolong the physical manifestations of the rich history of the community. Multiple studies have shown the many benefits of preservation.

PROMOTES QUALITY OF LIFE

Historic buildings are the remnants of a town's history. They tie the stories and events to a specific place. Historic buildings differentiate one town from another and give a town its own identity. The state of these buildings is evidence of a community's self-image and contributes to a community's quality of life. Healthy historic places equal a healthy, prosperous town.

CREATES JOBS

Over 50% of a rehabilitation budget for historic buildings is spent on labor because of these special skills that are required. Less money needs to be spent on building materials in older buildings when compared with new construction. When property owners and local governments invest in historic properties, others are inspired to do the same. Nice historic buildings attract more business owners who in turn create more jobs for the community.

Supported by: The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide by Donovan D. Rypkema - pg. 11 - 12

ATTRACTS VISITORS

Preservation enhances the daily lives of local residents, but it also draws visitors from other parts of the state and the nation. Tourists are attracted to areas with unique character, vivid history, and recreational opportunities. Middlesborough has all of these components. Revitalizing the community's historic sites and structures will attract visitors.

Supported by: The National Trust for Historic Preservation - Heritage Tourism

PROMOTES QUALITY HOUSING

"There is one fact-of-life in real estate that must be reckoned with - you can't building new and rent (or sell) cheap - it can't be done."
- Donovan Rypkema,

In the United States, most affordable housing units can be found in older and historic neighborhoods with buildings constructed prior to 1950. These neighborhoods are home to more than just low-income families. Residents from every financial stratum invest in these types of neighborhoods because historic buildings provide quality housing for less money when compared with new construction.

A large percentage of Middlesborough's historic commercial buildings were designed with a mixed-use function in mind. With retail on the street level and office or residential space above, the city is already positioned to be a dense, walkable, pedestrian friendly city with an active downtown. However, many of these opportunities are being missed when upper floors of numerous buildings are left vacant. From affordable housing for low income families to quality market rate lofts, downtown Middlesborough is the prime location for quality housing that will not only benefit its residents, but will help to revive the historic core itself.

Supported by: "Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing: The Missed Connection" by Donovan D. Rypkema http://www.franklin-gov.com/historicpreservation/pdf/H.P.%20and%20Affordable%20Housing.pdf

INSPIRES LOCAL BUSINESS

Small businesses account for more than 75% of all net new jobs created in the United States each year. Historic buildings provide ideal locations for those small businesses to locate. The average space requirements for one worker are 250 square feet. The average size of a historic building is 2,000 to 3,000 square feet. Local businesses typical employ six to twelve people. When the numbers are compared, historic buildings are the perfect location for new small businesses.

Supported by: The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide by Donovan D. Rypkema - pg. 21

A.D. Campbell Building



INCREASES PROPERTY VALUES

Not a single study has shown that inclusion in a historic district has decreased property values. In fact, in every case, historic districts have helped to stabilize and increase property values when compared to surrounding areas. National Register Districts place no restrictions on what may or may not be done with a building. Therefore, property owners are not limited by the district, but have the reputational benefit and the ability to qualify for tax credits to defray costs of rehabilitation. Local historic districts are more stringent with the restrictions that they place on historic buildings. However, properties in local districts have a better chance to appreciate in value through active management by the Local Historic District Commission. Owners can be also be reassured that the buildings surrounding their property are held to the same standards, which means alterations that could lower property values cannot be made.

Supported by: The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide by Donovan D. Rypkema - pg. 43

ATTRACTS PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Contrary to popular belief, historic preservation and historic districts do not discourage private investment. Often times preservation stimulates private investment. Combining preservation tools like tax credits, historic district designations, and design assistance will offer building and business owners outside support to make their investments flourish. Preservation benefits private investors in ways that new construction cannot.

Supported by: The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide by Donovan D. Rypkema - pg. 41

SUSTAINABILITY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

"The greenest building is the one already built." – Carl Elefante, AIA

Most old buildings are sustainable without trying to be green. Before the 1950s, buildings were built to ventilate and maintain comfortable interior conditions without the help of HVAC systems. Materials used to construct these buildings were made to last longer than ten or even twenty years, and often times those materials were available locally. Today, rehabilitating a historic building can save a property owner money and result in a structure that will stand the test of time far longer than new construction. Preservation also helps the greater community by reducing green house gas emissions, depletion of natural resources, and the amount of refuse in landfills.



Top: Vacant Lot on Cumberland Ave
Bottom: Jim & Mary's Flower Shop

DURABILITY / REPAIRABILITY

If you double the life of a building, you can cut in half the environmental impacts of its construction. Durable materials such as exterior masonry, stone or ceramic tile floors, wood framing (if properly protected from moisture), and even three-coat plaster on wood lath can last hundreds of years, spreading the original environmental impacts over time. Repairability is also at the heart of many existing buildings and building components. For example, when a portion of a wooden window fails, new wood can be spliced in, broken glass can be replaced, and weights and pulleys can be repaired. Repair rather than replacement creates an economy that values and employs local craftspeople, extends the life of products, and can save money in a project budget while reducing its impacts on the environment.

Source: Sustainable Preservation: Greening Existing Buildings
by Jean Carroon - pg. 8



REDUCES WASTE IN LANDFILLS

Razing existing buildings accounts for 25% of waste in municipal landfills. Demolishing existing structures is a wasteful act that results in the loss of valuable materials such as old-growth wood, stone, and hand-made details that are not found in new buildings. Historic buildings were built to last and if properly maintained, could survive for centuries to come.

Supported by: The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide by Donovan D. Rypkema - pg. 33

CONSERVES ENERGY

Historic buildings were built without the luxury of modern technology aiding them in the heating and cooling process and consequently many were designed to efficiently circulate air. Despite popular belief, historic buildings are often as energy efficient as new ones. The U.S. Energy Information Administration data suggests that many buildings built before 1920 are more energy efficient than those built between 1920 and 2000 in general, and significantly more efficient than those built after 1970. Making repairs to historic architectural elements instead of replacing them often increases a building's efficiency.

Supported by: U.S. Energy Information Administration - Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey - http://www.eia.gov/consumption/commercial/

CONCLUSION

Historic Preservation has many benefits for a town like Middlesborough. With the historic buildings and sites that still exist, preservation will only enhance the community even further. The Historic Preservation Plan will lay out a path for the city to achieve its full potential.

Top: Vacant Middlesboro Intermediate School
Bottom: Arthur Building on Fountain Square





2. Middlesborough History & Heritage



Photo Credit: Cumberland Avenue - ca. 1930s
www.middlesboroughhistory.com

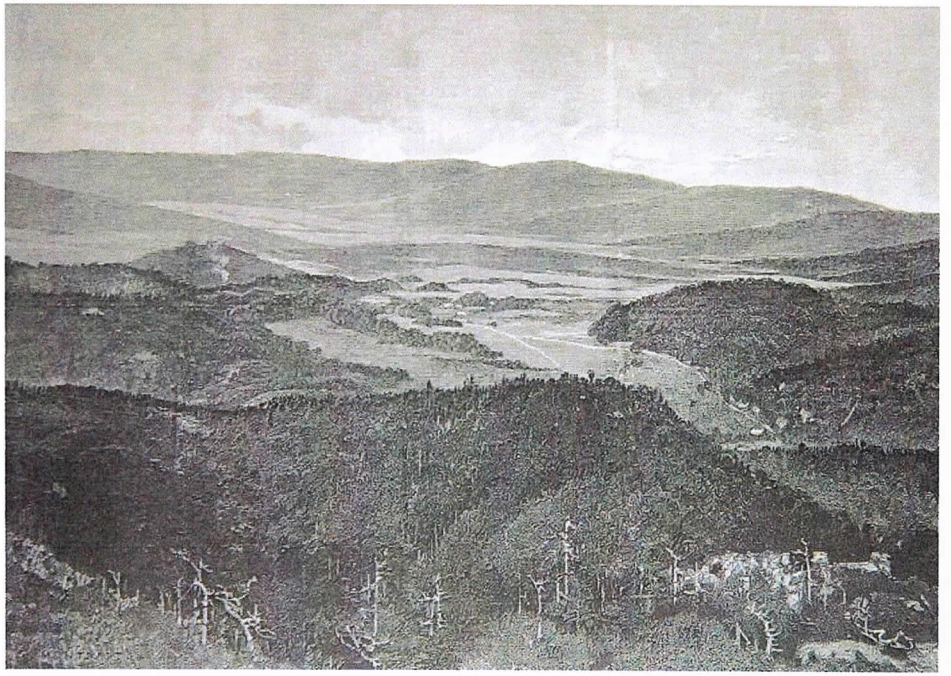
SETTING THE SCENE

Surrounded by the Cumberland Mountains, the natural landscape has shaped the evolution of Middlesborough, Kentucky since its inception. The town is situated at the southeastern corner of the state, near the intersection of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. This prime geographical location is further enhanced by the Cumberland Gap, a natural low point through the Cumberland Mountains and noted in American history as being the main access point to the western frontier at the turn of the 19th century.

Long before the town sprung up from the Yellow Creek Valley, a much larger force molded the landscape you see today. Approximately 250 million years ago, a meteorite hit the very site on which the town now sits. The physical size of the meteorite is estimated to have been 350 feet in diameter and a third of a mile across.[1] The meteorite itself would have disintegrated on impact; however, geologists have found evidence of its existence in the earth formations that still exist today although they are difficult to recognize for the untrained observer due to deterioration over millions of years. Original crater walls would have been taller than even the highest local peaks of today.[2] The explosion would have caused shock waves that penetrated deep into the underlying rock producing shatter cones or rigid, cone-shaped rock fragments.[3] An edge of the impact site can be seen along the western rim of the valley along Highway 441, while the eastern rim would have been near Highway 25E.[4] The center of the impact site would have near the present day intersection of Cumberland Avenue and 30th Street.[5] Because of this extraterrestrial event, Middlesborough is one of the only cities in the world to be built completely within a meteorite crater.



Top: Meteorite Sign on I-25E
Bottom: Woodcut of Yellow Creek Valley
middlesboroughhistory.com



1 Matheny, The Magic City, 2.
2 Henson, "Cumberland Gap."
3 Bell County Historical Society Museum Exhibit
4 Matheny, The Magic City, 3.
5 Matheny, The Magic City, 3.



Native Americans of Kentucky
statesofenlightenment.com

PRE-CONTACT

Fast-forward a few million years to the time of native tribes of the Yellow Creek Valley, before European explorers claimed the land as their own. Wyandotte, Shawnee, Mingo, Tuscarora, and Delaware territories were to the north of the Gap, while Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Creek Indians were prevalent to the south.[6] Tribes followed trails laid down by herds of migrating bison through the valley, which functioned as a prime hunting ground. However, no tribe called this land its home. Early explorers named the trail that crossed over the Cumberland Gap the Warriors' Path, due to its use by warring tribes.

Gabriel Arthur became the first white man to record his exploration through the valley. Indentured to Abraham Wood, he was sent west in 1674 to assist the explorer and Indian trader, James Needham.[7] Their purpose was to contact the Cherokees for trade. After one failed mission, Needham and Arthur set out toward the Blue Ridge Mountains. They came into contact with a tribe who was willing to let the newcomers accompany them to their village. The explorers made a peaceful friendship with their hosts. However, one of their guides, who had been suspicious of Needham's intentions from the beginning, betrayed his trust and shot him to death. The guide turned on Arthur next, but the Cherokee chief fortunately saved him. Arthur remained with the tribe, learning their ways and their language for over a year. He eventually returned to his master with the goods and information desired. Wood wrote of Arthur's adventures, but his discoveries did not gain much attention in the colonies. It would be up to another man to proclaim the Gateway to the West.

6 Matheny, The Magic City, 7.
7 Matheny, The Magic City, 10.

1750s – 1790s

"We started just as the sun began to gild the tops of the high mountains. We ascended Cumberland Mountain, from the top of which the bright luminary of day appeared to our view in all his rising glory: the mists dispersed and the floating clouds hasted away at his appearing. This is the famous Cumberland Gap." - James Smith, 1792

Dr. Thomas Walker led the next band of explorers through the Cumberland Gap on behalf of the Loyal Land Company. Walker and his men explored the area in 1750 to survey the lands.[8] He is responsible for naming many of the natural features in the area, including the Cumberland Gap, after the Duke of Cumberland. Walker and his team returned to the colonies and publicized the Gap as the gateway to the west. Soon more people would follow.

Perhaps the man most identified with the Cumberland Gap is Daniel Boone, who was born in 1734 in Pennsylvania but moved with his family to the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina when he was 17.[9] A born explorer, Boone became an accomplished woodsman and hunter and served with the North Carolina militia in the French and Indian War in 1755. His marriage to Rebecca and subsequent family didn't stop his yearnings for the long hunt. In 1769 Boone and five companions traversed the Cumberland Gap on an extended hunting trip and search for the fabled Bluegrass Region. In 1773 another venture west by Boone was cut short when his son, James, was murdered in an Indian attack.

Despite this personal tragedy, Boone accepted Judge David Henderson's commission to cut a road that led through Martin's Station in Rose Hill, Virginia, through the Cumberland Gap and Cumberland Ford, to the mouth of Otter Creek on the Kentucky River. There they settled and built the village of Boonesboro. Between 1779 and 1800, more than 200,000 settlers poured through the Cumberland Gap. Many did not stop in the Yellow Creek Valley, but continued westward following the road that Boone had cut. During that time, in 1792, Kentucky became the fifteenth state in the union.

Daniel Boone and pioneers, www.cnr.berkeley.edu



8 Matheny, The Magic City, 10.
9 Wiley, "Daniel Boone."

www.middlesboroughhistory.com



1800s

Before the arrival of Alexander Arthur, life was simple in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky. The land was untouched by industry and few people called this area their home. The ones brave enough to live in the wilderness were isolated from society, working the land and producing the necessities that they needed to survive. Lou DeRossett, a local historian explains:

"Game and domestic animals, largely wild-running hogs with notched ear indicating individual ownership, provided meat. Their corn patches in the 'bottomlands' furnished corn from which they made their bread and in many cases a potent distillation soon to become famous as White Lightning, moonshine, and other nicknames." [10]

Homes and farm buildings were made from the ample timber that covered the land. Clothing and shoes were made from whatever materials could be found. Religious services were the only recreational and social activities that these mountaineers took part in. Around 1800, the Tuner, Marsee, and Rains families moved into the valley.[11] At that time, Clark Hunter built a brick house along the Wilderness Road that is still standing today.

John C. Colson Sr., known as the patriarch of the valley, was a self-made entrepreneur that helped to shape Middlesborough into the town that it is today.[12] Colson was born and raised along side the Wilderness Road. His early life and education are unknown, but he proved to be a creative businessman. In a log cabin on Cannon Creek, Colson and his wife, Mary, started out with nothing. Farming yielded little income and Colson, determined to make a better life for his family, began his own business by selling whiskey by the drink.[13] The success of this endeavor led Colson to stock up a corner of his small house with other goods that locals could not make for themselves.

10 DeRossett, Middlesborough: The First Century, 8.
11 Matheny, The Magic City, 28.
12 Matheny, The Magic City, 36.
13 Matheny, The Magic City, 36.

Gradually his business grew and by the 1850s, Colson purchased the two-story brick home originally built by Hunter in 1800. Located on north 19th Street, this home is the oldest building in Middlesborough. Soon thereafter, Colson started a small store across from his home. Colson's role in the small community began to escalate. He became the first regular preacher in the community church and was also the first teacher at the rural school. Colson also opened a mill and his store continued to grow. He was often called on to serve as the doctor for the local population. Although he was not formally trained, Colson gained a reputation for being able to diagnose and cure ailments. At his death, Colson and his family owned the most property in Yellow Creek Valley and his children would eventually play a large part in Alexander Arthur's ambitious plans.

The year 1836 brought the first reports of coal by geological explorers; however, no one took advantage of the natural wealth until well after the 1870s, because of the lack of reliable transportation.[14] Lumbering was the only commercial enterprise. Logs were cut from the surrounding forests and floated downstream during the spring tides.[15] By the late 1880s, mining was taking place in the area. Early mining was not regulated like the industry of today. Time and again miners were buried or crushed by roof falls and cave ins. Deadly gases that were excreted from the depths of the earth's core also took many lives.

Top: Colson House today on north 19th Street
Bottom: Oldest House in Middlesboro
www.middlesboroughhistory.com





14 DeRossett, Middlesborough: The First Century, 34.
15 Matheny, The Magic City, 25.



Left: Civil War scars in the mountains near the Cumberland Gap.

CIVIL WAR

At the onset of the Civil War, both the Union and Confederate forces believed that the Cumberland Gap would be of great strategic importance.[16] Kentucky remained neutral at the beginning of the hostilities; however, both forces threw up fortifications on both sides of the Gap. They stockpiled weapons, stripped the mountains of their timber, and prepared for a battle that never came. The opponents alternated occupation of the Gap several times through fierce fighting, but a significant battle never ensued. The war left its mark on the area by making enemies amongst neighbors. During the September 1862 retreat of Union General George W. Morgan, vast stores of ammunition were exploded, leaving scars on the landscape that still haven't healed. These, along with other traces of the war including earthwork fortifications, rifle pits, and roads, can still be seen at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. In 1867, Bell County was formed.[17]

16 Matheny, The Magic City, 30.
17 DeRossett, Middlesborough: The First Century, 36.

ALEXANDER ARTHUR AND THE FOUNDING OF MIDDLESBOROUGH

The names of Middlesborough in its early founding years and Alexander A. Arthur are inseparable. Arthur was a Scottish-born engineer and entrepreneur who first visited the area in 1886 on assignment from Knoxville. His task was to report on the feasibility of building a railroad through the Cumberland Gap to connect with Kentucky. Arthur was immediately impressed by what appeared to be abundant iron ore, coal, and timber that were present in the Yellow Creek Valley. These first impressions inspired Arthur to start a city that he aspired to be the "Pittsburgh of the South."

In August of 1886, Arthur formed the Gap Associates, which took options on the land. He also purchased 20,000 acres in Bell County, Kentucky.[18] To create his metropolis, Arthur sought out investors in England and by January of 1887 had reorganized as the American Association, Ltd. To house the offices of the association, a masonry building was built on the west side of town fronting Cumberland Avenue.[19] Today, it still stands and is the home to the Bell County Tourism Commission office and a small museum dedicated to Arthur. Arthur was named the general manager and American representative for the new company. He then acquired upwards of 100,000 acres to erect his city.

A town plan was developed in 1888 that incorporated a gridded street layout with avenues named after places in England and numbered streets intersecting. English planning traditions were incorporated into the plan, including squares at the intersection of major roads like Cumberland Avenue and 20th Street. Kensington Oval was also developed near present-day 15th Street between Lothbury and Amesbury Avenue, anticipating a residential community to rise there. Regrettably, this feature is only visible on old maps.

Top: American Association Building - date unknown
Bell County Historical Society
Bottom: Bell County Tourism Office as it stands today.





18 Matheny, The Magic City, 102.
19 Bell County Tourism American Association Building Brochure.

The creation of the Middlesborough Town Company (MTC) was the next step in the development of the present day town. MTC managed and sold property to buyers from all across the globe. Deeds for the buildings that stand today can be traced back to the original land ledger that MTC maintained. A tent city sprang up almost immediately along what is now known as Cumberland Avenue.[20]

Arthur continued to develop his plan by establishing other companies that provided housing, basic services, and transportation. Middlesborough was the first city in Kentucky to have complete electrical service and possessed a reservoir that could supply water to a population of 150,000 persons.[21] Arthur was also key in bringing a spur line of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad to Middlesborough. This railroad opened up the valley to new markets across the country.

By the late 1880s, the town became known as the "Magic City" because it seemed to have materialized from nothing. At the time, Middlesborough had a population near 4,000 people. Businessmen, laborers, speculators, hustlers, and adventurers inundated the area from not only other states, but other countries and created a melting pot of ethnicities not found in any other place in the state.

Middlesborough was incorporated in 1890, and named after the great English manufacturing city of Middlesbrough. The tents that initially sprang up were quickly replaced with wood framed structures along the planned streets. Arthur built the Middlesborough Hotel whose magnificence was exceeded only by those in New York and established the second golf course in the United States.[22] Even as the new city continued to flourish, the storm clouds of the bust were on the horizon.[23]

Middlesborough's luck took a turn for the worse. The iron ore proved to be a lower grade than originally expected and consequently not as valuable. Two major fires engulfed the town in early 1890; however, damage from these flames was minimal. Another major fire struck later that same year ravaging half of the town. The Middlesborough Hotel survived but most of the wooden structures including stores, offices, and homes were lost.[24]

Middlesborough quickly sprang out of the ashes, "phoenix like" as some said, with more durable and safer brick and mortar structures.[25] The American Association again poured money into making Arthur's dream city. Then the Baring Brothers Bank in England failed and with it most of the American Association's funding was lost. Arthur scrambled to gain funds from other sources to no avail. In a matter of weeks, Alexander Arthur's dream of a new industrial center at Middlesborough came to a precipitous end.

Although Arthur original dreams never came to fruition, he left his mark on the city. Several buildings from Arthur's time still stand today and reflect his dreams of a meticulously planned, elegantly designed, manufacturing metropolis.

In early 1891, E.F. Powers traveled from London to step in as general manager for the American Association.[26] Assessing the shambles of a dream around him, Powers determined that Middlesborough had boomed too quickly and set out working toward a more gradual, methodical growth for the town, with emphasis on the development of natural resources.[27] The iron ore had proved to be a disappointment, however, coal was still abundant and of a valuable grade.

Powers put Middlesborough on track once again and might have succeeded if it would not have been for greater forces at work. The Panic of 1893 struck soon after Powers arrival throwing the town and the entire country into a frenzy. Business was badly depressed and many of the boomers who had come to the Magic City to seek their fortune left for other places. In March of 1902, Middlesborough suffered a large flood that added to the already declining town's suffering.

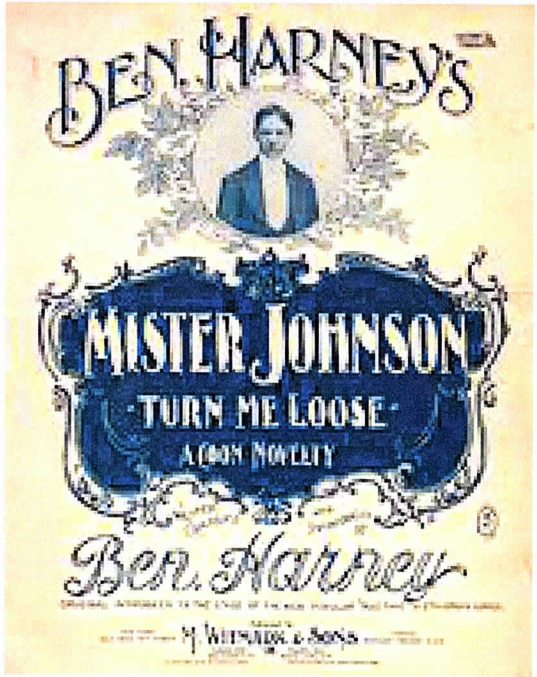
20 MHDC, The Downtown Middlesborough Historic District Designation Report, 1989.
21 Morgan, David. Middlesboro Downtown Commercial District National Register Nomination.
22 MHDC, The Downtown Middlesborough Historic District Designation Report, 1989.
23 Matheny, The Magic City, 199.
24 MHDC, The Downtown Middlesborough Historic District Designation Report, 1989.
25 Matheny, The Magic City, 155.
26 Matheny, The Magic City, xxiii.
27 Matheny, The Magic City, xxiii.

RAGTIME

Amidst all the turmoil, another storm of the music variety was brewing in the mind of Benjamin Harney. Harney arrived in Middlesborough in 1890. He joined a local infantry unit and worked in the area for several years all along embracing his love of music in his spare time. People started to take notice of Harney's original sounds towards the middle of the decade. By 1897, Harney published his first sheet music volume entitled, "The Ragtime Instructor."[28] This publication forever immortalized Harney as the "father of Ragtime." He would continue to be active in Middlesborough for many years before his talents took him elsewhere.

ARTS & CULTURE

Middlesborough was given another nickname around that time. It was considered the "Athens of the Mountains," because of the numerous cultural and social events that attracted visitors from around the region. The Middlesborough Town and Land Company hired a prominent actor and singer, James Barton Key, to plan activities and events.[29] The company also donated instruments for a local brass band. An opera house was one of the first buildings constructed in town. It was situated on the north side of Cumberland Avenue between 21st and 22nd Streets. The first library and exhibition hall were also built along 20th Street around this time.[30] The library contained over a thousand volumes. Today, the building still stands and is home to the local Masonic Lodge. Middlesborough also had a lot to offer in the ways of shopping. The A.D. Campbell building was originally constructed in 1891 and is still home to its original women's clothing store. The dawn of the new century brought another building frenzy. A new City Hall was built at 20th Street and Lothbury Avenue. It included a police department, fire department, courtroom, and jail. In 1911, the Manring Theater opened on the corner of Cumberland Avenue and 21st Street.[31] The demand for coal increased with the onset of World War I in 1914 and Middlesborough once again saw a boom reminiscent of the Arthur days.

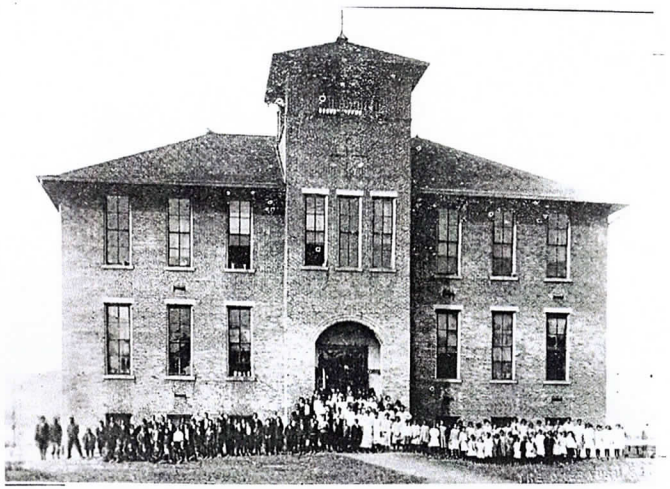


Top: Sheet Music Cover - Bell County Historical Society
Bottom: Carnegie Library - Bell County Historical Society



28 Matheny, The Magic City, 188.
29 Matheny, The Magic City, 197.
30 Matheny, The Magic City, 198.
31 DeRossett, Middlesborough: The First Century, 122.

Top: Lincoln School, date unknown - Bell County Historical Society
Bottom: Mt. Moriah Baptist Church





At this point, the entire nation knew of the area and the fortunes that were created by the coal-mining tycoons. Middlesborough's Carnegie library opened in 1918 next door to the Presbyterian Church. It was funded by a Carnegie Foundation grant of $15,000, which did not include funding for books. The library would live without its key collections until 1920 when the Women's Club raised enough money to purchase books. Meanwhile, the building served as a Red Cross headquarters during the last year of World War I.[32]

African Americans made up 15% of Middlesborough's population in 1890. Many were young males who found jobs in the coal industry like many of Middlesborough's early settlers. The population continued to grow reaching 1,441 in 1910. In 1891, George W. Bell, a graduate of Berea College, opened the first African American school in Middlesborough in a building that was formerly occupied by a grocery store. Several years later, in 1908, a new two-story building was constructed and was considered one of the finest of its kind in the state.[33] In later years, it was known as the Lincoln School. While the school was demolished, the Lincoln School Memorial Park helps memories persist near 15th and Ashbury Avenue.

Mt. Moriah Baptist Church is one of the few buildings still standing that can be tied back to the African American population before segregation. Constructed in 1906, the church is located on North 19th Street. In 1985, it was listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places.

32 DeRossett, Middlesborough: The First Century, 123.
33 Crippens, Lincoln School and Its Community, 45.

Middlesborough once had a sizeable Jewish population. After the initial boom passed, many members of the Jewish community decided to stay put. Members of families by the names of Horr, Ginsberg, Euster, Goodfriend, and many others lived, worked, and were eventually buried in Middlesborough in the Jewish Cemetery on Hebrew Cemetery Road near the Smithfield plant.

Famous among these was Jack Zuta who emigrated from Russia between 1903 and 1905.[34] Zuta was involved with several saloons in Middlesborough. In 1915, he moved to Chicago. As he gained influence there, he became known as Al Capone's archrival. He was gunned down gangland style at the Lake View Resort Hotel near Delafield, Wisconsin. His body was brought back to Middlesborough and buried in the Jewish Cemetery.

The Volstead Act of 1919 marked the start of Prohibition in the United States. Although alcohol could not be sold out right, local "soda fountains" managed to sell drinks harder than your typical Coca-Cola. From the 1920s to the mid-1950s, the prevalence of gambling, illegal booze, and other illicit activities earned the community a third nickname, "Little Las Vegas."

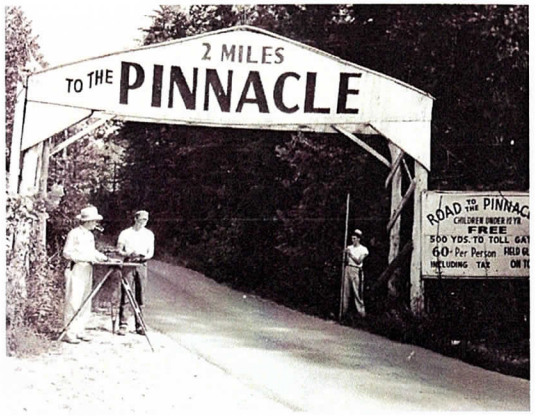
The Ball family reigned over Middlesborough, controlling many businesses both of the legal and questionable sorts. At one time, Alvey and Floyd Ball owned the most property out of any local resident in the community.[35] The Ball family was not only notorious for their business ventures. A multi-generational feud with the Colson family resulted in deaths on both sides in a war that continued through the 1920s. However, the Ball family continued to make a name for itself until Alvey and Floyd died in the mid-1950s.



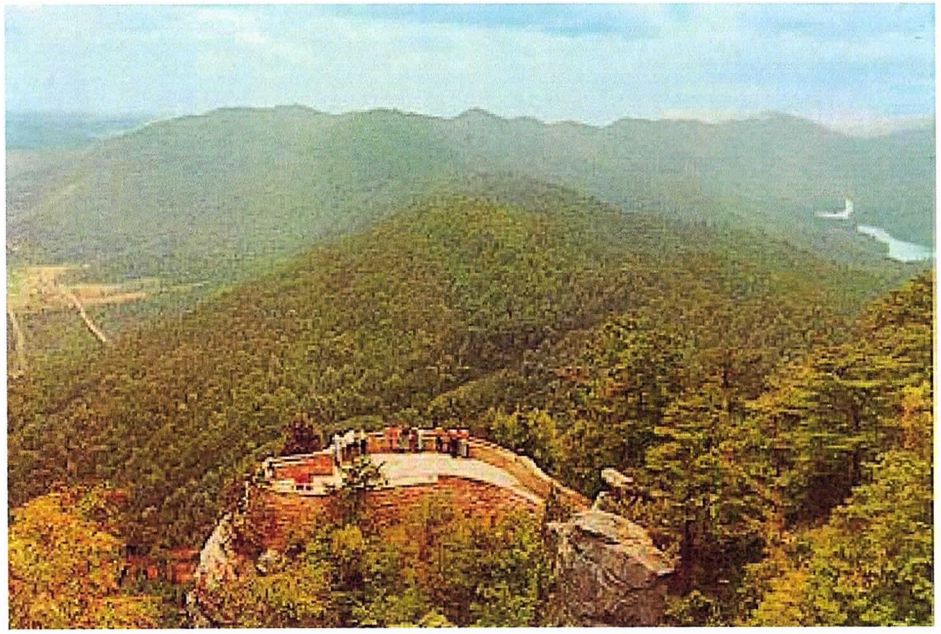
Top: Jack Zuta
Bottom: Zuta's headstone in Middlesborough's Jewish Cemetary



34 Matheny, The Magic City, 319.
35 Matheny, The Magic City, 141.



Top: Entrance to Pinnacle Overlook
Bell County Historical Society
Bottom: Aerial of Pinnacle Overlook
Bell County Historical Society



1930s - 1940s

Amidst the violence, several key events shaped the surrounding mountain range. In 1929, the road leading up to the Pinnacle overlook, known as Skyline Drive, was officially dedicated.[36] This local attraction has drawn tourists to the area for decades and still offers panoramic views of three states from one location. That same year, a commission was formed to develop a National Park at the Cumberland Gap. By 1930, Middlesborough's population was 10,309 and continued to climb, reaching 11,777 people in 1940. That same year, Congress passed a bill to create the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, forever memorializing the historical significance of the area. Under the shadows of World War II, Middlesborough continued to thrive. Coal production was at its peak due to the demand created by the war. By 1950, Middlesborough reached its highest population count yet at 14,419. In 1955, Bell County voted to once again go dry and maintains that status to this day.

MID-1950s - 1960s

Delayed by World War II, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park finally opened in 1955, but was not formally dedicated until the weekend of July 4th, 1959. The dedication ceremony brought a multitude of people, including then vice president, Richard Nixon, the governors of the three contiguous states, and multiple state and local officials.[37] Citizens of Middlesborough still remember the parade of July 3rd as the biggest day in the city's history, with thousands of people lining Cumberland Avenue to see Nixon and local dignitaries and civic groups wind their way to the new park, at that time the largest national historical park in the country.

The end of the 1950s brought another steep decline in the coal industry. Middlesborough was again facing the effects of another bust. However, local residents pulled together in a grassroots effort to relieve the ailments of the city. In the 1960s, the Middlesborough Industrial Commission brought two notable industries to town including a sewing factory and wood products processing plant.[38]

1970s - 1980s

The OPEC oil embargo of 1973 actually proved to be beneficial for the city of Middlesborough. It created a boom in the local coal markets as industries rediscovered this local source of energy.[39] During this same period of time Middlesborough saw the only rise in population between 1950 and present. A brief increase in the 1970s otherwise gave way to multiple decades of population decline through the present.

In 1980, Owensboro-based developer, David Hocker & Associates, announced plans to build a large regional mall one mile north of the downtown area. To finance his plan, the developer asked the city to apply for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and also to approve issuance of industrial revenue bonds to assist with the mall's financing.

Several downtown property owners objected to these plans stating that government subsidies should not be used to finance the existing businesses' competition. It was later determined that once the funds loaned to the developer were repaid, they would then be used by a new, non-profit local development corporation responsible for downtown revitalization. Whether this ever transpired as promised is still a subject of considerable discussion.

Top: Topigraphical map of Yellow Valley Creek
Bottom: Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Visitors Center





36 Matheny, The Magic City, xxvii.
37 Matheny, The Magic City, xxvii.
38 Matheny, The Magic City, xxvii.
39 Matheny, The Magic City, xxvii.

Top: North side of Lothbury Avenue 18th to 19th streets - 1989 Downtown Survey - Middlesboro Public Library
Bottom: North side of Cumbreland Avenue at 19th Street - 1989 Downtown Survey - Middlesboro Public Library





PRESERVATION MOVEMENT IN MIDDLESBOROUGH

A Downtown Revitalization Plan was developed in 1981. The work of this project consisted of: assessing the needs of the downtown area; collecting and analyzing the base data and information about Middlesborough and establishing the mechanism for downtown revitalization planning and implementation.[40] The Kentucky Design Assistance Team (KyDAT) Program assisted with this project and produced a separate plan that incorporated suggestions on how to revive the downtown area.

Historic preservation came into focus as a strategy to help with the downtown and the city as a whole around this time. Planning for the mall was the genesis for some of the earliest cultural resource survey work to be done. In 1982, David Morgan with the Kentucky Heritage Council prepared a National Register of Historic Places nomination. This identified a nearly twelve-block area with over a hundred buildings that were recognized as one of the finest concentrations of brick buildings in the Eastern Coalfields region of Kentucky.

Despite this effort, opening of the Middlesboro Mall in 1983 was an undeniable setback for the downtown. To be fair, the downtown had already been struggling before the Mall was opened. Following the opening of the mall, however, major "anchor" department stores in the downtown were lost - Montgomery Ward's, Penny's and others. Some businesses relocated to the mall and other businesses closed altogether.

Adding insult to injury, in 1986 a terrible fire destroyed the Old City Hall. This was followed by a tornado in 1988. The F3 twister, a rare occurrence in Middlesborough, roared down Cumberland Avenue tearing down the massive trees that shaded the main street. Building damage was extensive, but fortunately only one life was lost and few were injured. However, rebuilding began immediately after the debris was cleared, much as it had after the great fire of 1890.

40 QRC Research Corp. Middlesborough Downtown Revitalization Plan, 1981.

After these many setbacks the 1980s ended on a high point with establishment of a Local Historic District in 1989. Whereas the earlier National Register nomination in 1982 recognized the important buildings that Middlesborough had, it provided no protection. The only protection for historic buildings is at the local level. A Local Historic District Ordinance was presented and approved by the City Council. This helped to facilitate the creation of a Historic District Commission to oversee changes made to buildings downtown.

1990s - PRESENT

After many challenges, Middlesborough survived to see its centennial in 1990, memorialized by the creation of Centennial Park in front of City Hall and development of the Canal Walk. Trends started in the 1980's continued through the 1990s, as the downtown lost progressively more of its market share. Increased competition from new businesses on US-25E, including a Super Wal-Mart built in 1995, spelled the demise of some of the last surviving and active businesses downtown. The one-time Downtown Merchant Association, while once very active, eventually closed shop altogether.



Engraving on Cumberland Avenue Railroad Trestle

CUMBERLAND GAP TUNNEL

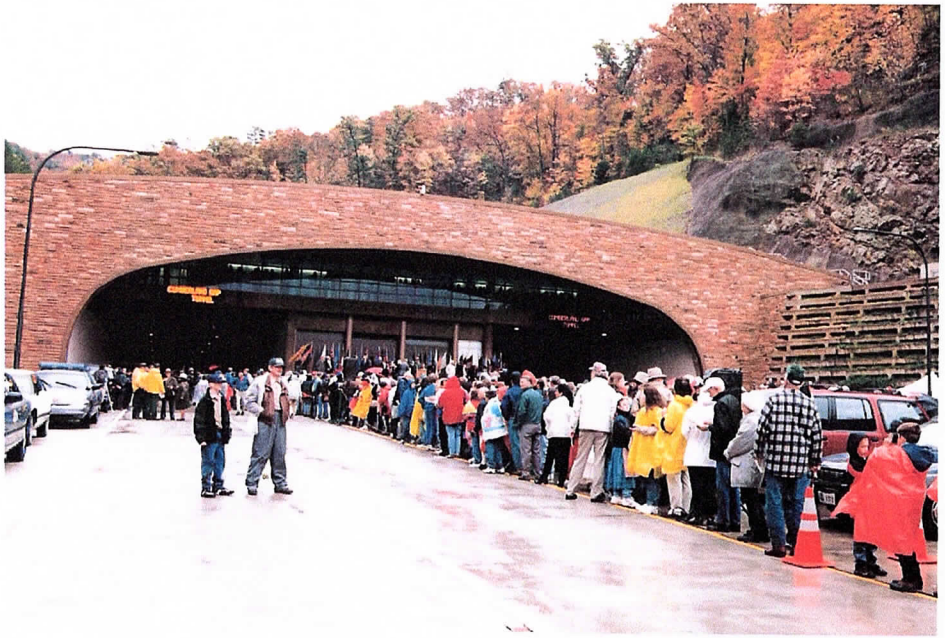
The ability of the tri-state area to undertake major projects was tested and proven by efforts to complete the Cumberland Gap Tunnel. As early as August 13, 1973, Public Law 93-87 authorized funding to finance the cost of reconstruction and relocation of Route 25E through Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.[41]

This achieved multiple objectives simultaneously:
1) Route 25E was incredibly dangerous at the time and multiple fatalities occurred as people passed through,
2) Lack of good connections between Middlesborough and nearby Harrogate and Cumberland Gap limited the opportunity of these geographically proximate communities to work together, and
3) The historical Wilderness Road and Boone Trace were all but obliterated by the highway that passed through, and one of the visions when the park was authorized in 1940 was that one day these historic trails be restored.

Public officials, the National Park Service, and concerned residents rallied together to push through construction of the tunnel. Work started June 21, 1985, when the first rock was blasted. Excavation continued from either side. In March 1995 construction began on portal buildings and approaches. Finally the Cumberland Gap Tunnels opened on October 18, 1996.

Top: Tunnel under construction - Bell County Historical Society
Bottom: Opening of the tunnel - Bell County Historical Society





41 City of Middlesboro Public Law 93-87

Many people at this time felt that Middlesborough was primed for resurgence. In 1995, Middlesborough applied for designation as a Kentucky Main Street community. This effort was undertaken by Wes Blondell, the director of the Middlesborough Historic District Commission. The application form referenced a $2,000,000 UDAG "Middlesboro Mall payback" to be used for streetscape work downtown. Other grants were being sought that time to restore the historic Canal and to establish a Centennial Park beside the new City Hall.

The Historic District Commission and Middlesborough Downtown Merchants Association worked very closely together at this time on establishment of a Main Street program. However, efforts to get a Main Street program started in Middlesborough came to a halt. In 2004 there was another attempt. The Bell County Chamber of Commerce led the initiative to get a Main Street program started through Leadership Bell County. Not until the establishment of Discover Downtown Middlesboro, Inc. in 2006 was a Main Street program officially established. In 2012 DDM was named a "Designated Kentucky Main Street Program" by the Kentucky Heritage Council along with more than two-dozen other downtown areas statewide.

CONCLUSION

Like the mountains surrounding Middlesborough, the town has seen its fair share of peaks and valleys. Through all the trials and tribulations, Middlesborough has managed to come out on top time and time again. Today, we are fortunate for the number of buildings and historic sites that still exist in our city that serve as daily reminders to our unique history. By preserving these sites and buildings we will not only honor our past, we will create a more successful future.

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Middlesborough from the Pinnacle Overlook



3. Preservation Achievements





Top: Historical Marker
Bottom: Coal House



1. PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE

The 19th century founders of Middlesborough were consciously aware of the earlier heritage, and even referenced this directly in the many places they built. The Boonesboro Inn, for instance, provided an obvious reference and connection to Daniel Boone. When the Dixie Highway was extended through the area and crossed through the Cumberland Gap, this became a major tourist attraction bringing millions of people through the area.

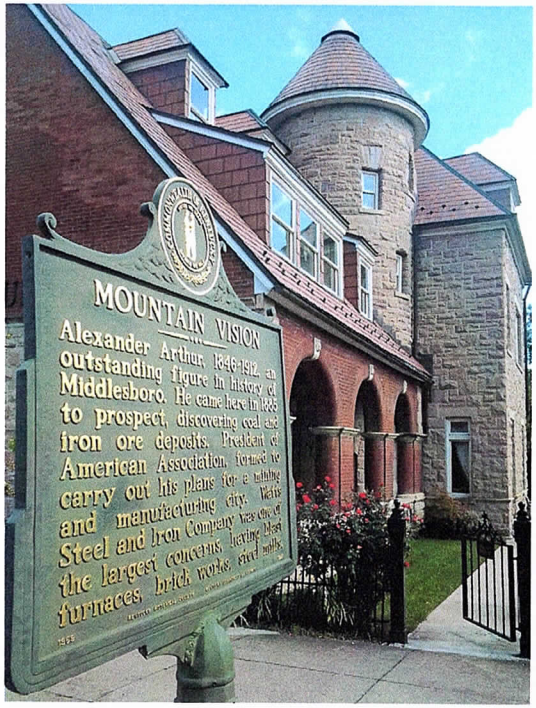
The pride in our heritage continues today because of the efforts of several organizations. The Bell County Historical Society was formed with the purpose of collecting and preserving historical documents, photographs, and artifacts that are specifically tied to Bell County, Kentucky. The Historical Society currently resides in the old Carnegie Library located on North 20th Street, where they have created exhibits that display a wide range of these collections. The building itself is an artifact and was spared from demolition when the Police Department moved to their new headquarters. The Bell County Public Library in Middlesborough also has an impressive Local History Room. Their collections encompass everything from the Middlesborough Town Company land ledger, to newspaper clippings, to 2011 flood pictures. The Bell County Courthouse located in Pineville, Kentucky maintains every deed since Middlesborough's inception and before. The Deed Room is neatly organized and visitors can access the original deed books during their research.

Middlesborough also has abundant signs and historical markers throughout the town. The meteorite crater sign welcomes visitors with its strategic location along US-25E. On North 20th Street, an outdoor pavilion displays the town's history of coal mining with the help of real-life equipment and artifacts in display cases. A project was initiated around 1991 to create a Centennial Park in front of City Hall. This coincided with an elaborate community celebration to mark the 100 years since the original founding of Middlesborough. In subsequent years the celebration continued on as the Cumberland Mountain Fall Festival. A brick retaining wall dividing Centennial Park and City Hall was lined by several stone plaques describing significant periods in the history of Middlesborough.

2. RESPONSIBLE CIVIC STEWARDSHIP

Strong support has been expressed for protecting and preserving the heritage of Middlesborough and Bell County. Both Bell County and the City of Middlesborough have been early and consistent supporters of downtown revitalization in Middlesborough. Bell County has also lent their support to the Main Street program in Pineville. The City of Middlesborough Mayor and Bell County Judge Executive have provided reliable and consistent funding for revitalization efforts from one administration to the next.

The City of Middlesborough has made a direct contribution to preservation through restoration of the American Association Headquarters building on Cumberland Avenue. This building was home to the American Association Offices for much of its life. Transporation enhancement funding was utilized to restore this building in 1991. Today it houses offices for Bell County Tourism and an Alexander Arthur Museum.



Top: American Association Building
Bottom: Middlesborough City Hall







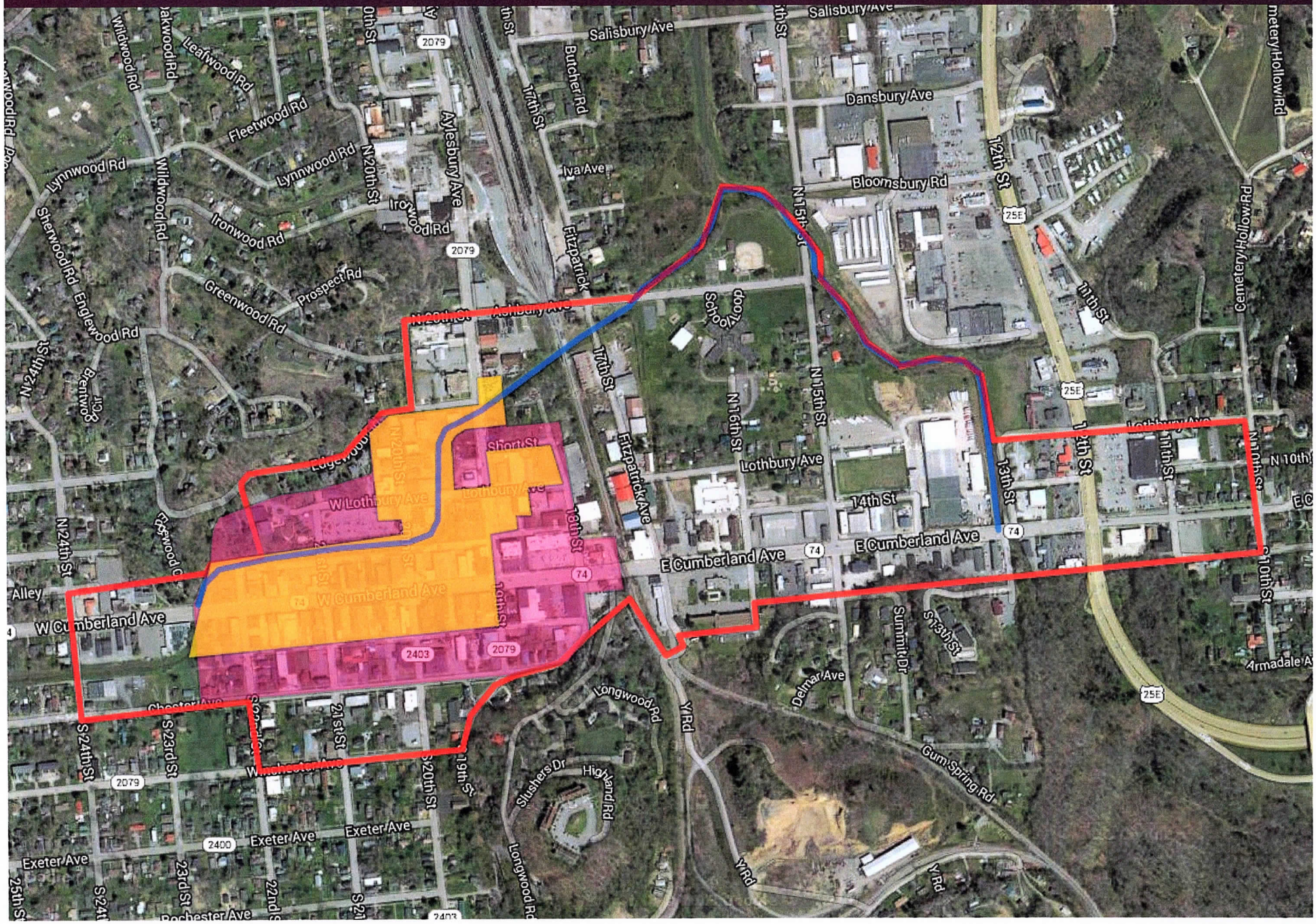
3. HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS

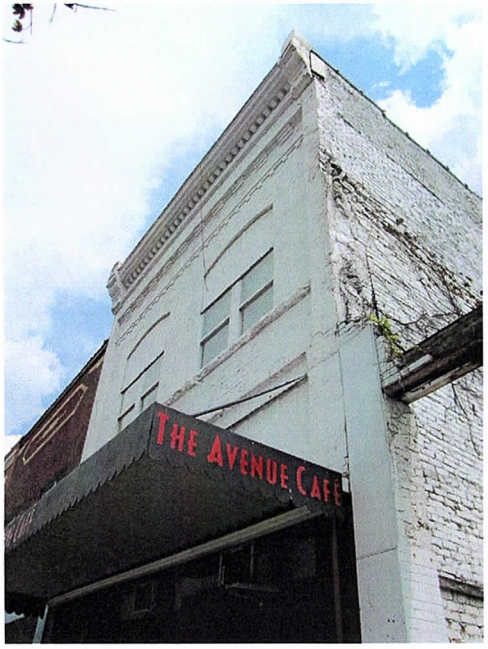
In 1982, the "Middlesboro Downtown Commercial District" was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The boundary roughly encompassed all of Cumberland Avenue from 19th Street to 22nd Street and north to Amesbury Avenue. The purpose of this district was to recognize the area with the greatest concentration of predominantly brick commercial buildings. Within the district boundaries, the original street layout and most of the structures that were built during the 19th and early 20th century remain intact.

The Downtown Middlesborough Historic District is a local historic district that was established in 1989. The physical boundary encompassed the National Register district and extended east to 18th Street and south to Chester Avenue. It also captured a few buildings on the north side of Cumberland Avenue that the National Register district did not. The district was created by the Middlesborough Historic District Commission with the purpose of protecting the historic structures within its limits. Whereas the National Register district was purely honorary, the Local Historic District provides protections for structures within the district.

The City of Middlesborough has made a direct contribution to preservation through restoration of the American Association Headquarters building on Cumberland Avenue. This was converted to offices of Bell County Tourism and an Alexander Arthur Museum around 1991, under the direction of Jim Adams, an Architect from Middlesborough.

Top: Detail on Arthur Building
Bottom: Arthur Building on Fountain Square


Salisbury Ave
Dansbury Ave
Bloomsbury Rd
Lothbury Ave
E Cumberland Ave
W Cumberland Ave
W Lothbury Ave
Short St
Fitzpatrick
Fitzpatrick Ave
Aylesbury Ave
Butcher Rd
Iva Ave
Lynnwood Rd
Fleetwood Rd
Leafwood Rd
Wildwood Rd
Ironwood Rd
Prospect Rd
Greenwood Rd
Sherwood Rd
Englewood Rd
Brentwood
Alley
Longwood Rd
Slushers Dr
Highland Rd
Summit Dr
Delmar Ave
Gum Spring Rd
Exeter Ave
Rochester Ave
Cemetery Hollow Rd
Armadale
N 24th St
S 24th St
S 23rd St
N 20th St
S 20th St
N 16th St
N 15th St
S 13th St
N 11th St
N 10th St
12th St
13th St
14th St
17th St
18th St
19th St
21st St
22nd St
23rd St
25th St
Y Rd
25E
74
2079
2403
2400





4. STRONG PRESERVATION LAWS

A Middlesborough Historic District Ordinance was adopted by the City Council. This established a Middlesborough Historic District Commission and provided powers for authorizing the designation of landmarks and historic districts. While this ordinance was adequate at the time, like all laws and statutes, it needs to be updated from time-to-time to reflect changing approaches, tastes, and procedures.

The Historic District Commission remained active for a period of time, however, it fell dormant for several years. In May 2013 a new Commission was appointed. Among their first and earliest of tasks was preparation of this Preservation Plan. This will be followed by a review of the Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines to make sure these are updated, and serve the residents of Middlesborough well.

5. EFFECTIVE PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

Preservation in Middlesborough has been undertaken largely by the City and supported by State and Federal grant programs. Local people and organizations have made their own private investments in preservation, often without using available incentives to assist with that process. As for an effective preservation program locally, though the Historic District Commission has been inactive in recent years, there is an opening for a new preservation push here today. That is where organizations like Discover Downtown Middlesboro, working in cooperation with the Bell County Historical Society, Preservation Kentucky, the Kentucky Heritage Council, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and other regional, state, and federal partners have the potential to create a model preservation program, right here in the heart of Appalachian Kentucky.

As early as 1981, leaders understood the need for downtown revitalization rooted in historic preservation. The Kentucky Design Assistance Team recommended a combination of improving gateway entrances, streetscape improvements, and facade and sign improvements. Many of these were subsequently implemented. Major projects undertaken included a streetscape project, Canal Walk and dredging, and installation of fountains in Fountain Square.

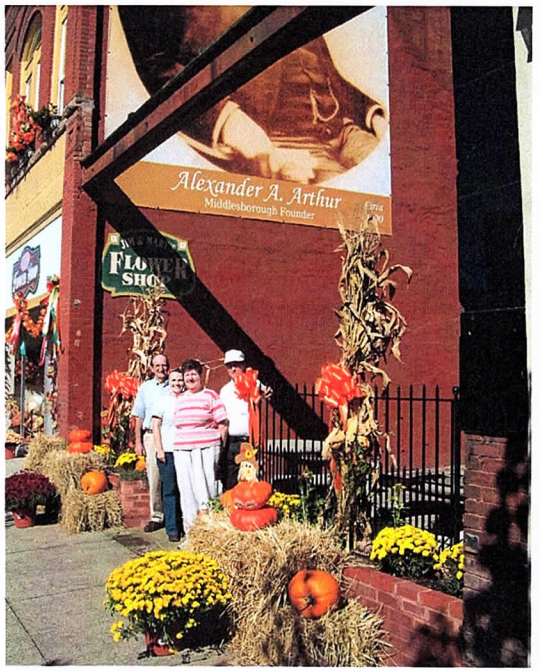




Top: Construction of fountains
Bottom: Completed fountain

6. COMMITTED VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

Were it possible for public officials or private building and business owners to achieve all the preservation results they need by working independently, then the work that needs to be done probably would have already been done. Instead, it is volunteers and volunteer organizations that have made the difference. Whether it be the board members and volunteers of Discover Downtown Middlesboro, Bell County Historical Society, the Middlesborough Country Club, the Middlesborough Cemetery, the League of Women Voters and others, preservation in Middlesborough would not be possible without the dedication of local volunteers.





Left: Local Business and Property Owners
Right: Discover Downtown Middlesboro Volunteers

7. SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Keith Nagle's work to renovate the Nagle Law Office building on Cumberland Avenue in the mid-1980s set the standard for other projects in Middlesborough to follow. Subsequent projects included the restoration of the National Bank Building at Cumberland Ave and 20th Street. Larry Grandey adaptively reused the building for his business office, private residence, and several other quality apartment spaces. Jay Shoffner's JRS Restaurant Corp opened in a restored building on Cumberland Ave between 19th and 20th Street. Office building renovation also raised the bar for residential conversion.

Adaptive reuse of downtown buildings for medical purposes has also been quite common. The Apex Building on the northwest corner of Cumberland Ave and 20th Street was converted into the Women's Health Center. The Pinnacle Building, also known as Dr. Stallworth's office, just reopened after a five-year renovation of the ground floor. The upper two floors and front facade are still awaiting preservation. However, the new function gave the building a second chance after it had sat vacant for several years.

Several new projects are underway. East End Pawn Shop recently replaced its leaky wood windows with new windows that resemble the originals in size and shape. The façade was then painted with a three-color paint scheme provided by DDM. JJ Tax and Bookkeeping applied for free design assistance through the Kentucky Heritage Council in early 2013.

Surprisingly, while much preservation work has been done, few building owners have utilized the financial incentives available for historic preservation. The Nagle project was an exception over 25 years ago, having successfully applied for and received tax credits. The hope is for the Pinnacle Building to be one of the newest projects to take advantage of these incentives. Moving forward, the more that tax credits and other incentives are demonstrated to be successful, more building owners are likely to jump on the preservation bandwagon.

Top: Dr. Stallworth's Office ribbon cutting - www.middlesborodailynews.com
Bottom: Dr. Stallworth's Office / Pinnacle Building





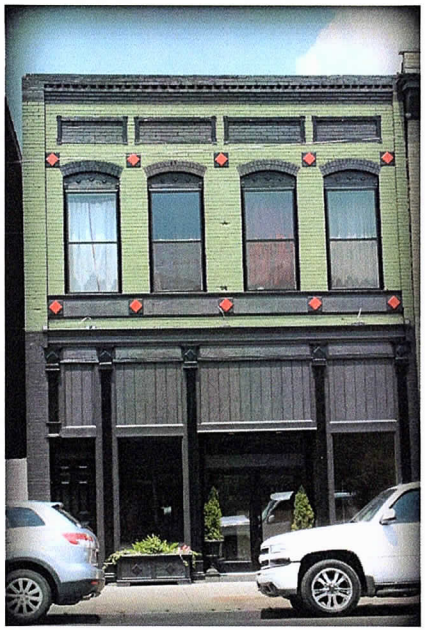
8. EXEMPLARY PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION

In 2013, Keith Nagle won the Ida Lee Willis Service to Preservation Award. The Ida Lee Willis Awards are named after a former Kentucky first lady who was appointed first executive director of the Kentucky Heritage Commission (now the Kentucky Heritage Council) in 1966. Under her direction, the agency began in earnest to survey the state, nominate sites to the National Register of Historic Places, award grants and promote preservation statewide.

Nagle was recognized for his "ongoing dedication and service to historic preservation" in Middlesborough. His work includes the renovation of the building in which his law office occupies. He was a founding member of Discover Downtown Middlesboro and served for many years as President. Nagle's work has inspired others to rehabilitate their own structures and contribute to the revitalization of downtown Middlesborough with their time and money.

Right: Nagle Law Office
Left: JRS Restaurant Corp Before and After







4. Preservation Challenges



In order to understand public perception of preservation in Middlesborough, Discover Downtown Middlesboro conducted a survey of community residents. The "Restoring Middlesborough Survey" was created in SurveyMonkey and sent to hundreds of people. Over 150 responded representing an exceptionally high response rate. When asked what historic preservation meant to them, people provided some excellent responses, a few of which follow:

Historic preservation describes the act of locating and restoring sites that are of historic significance. The site may be important because something noteworthy happened or because it represents a time period architecturally.

Historic preservation is prolonging the life of existing and historic structures for ourselves and future generations.

Keeping what makes this community unique and special from the others.

Not forgetting where you came from.

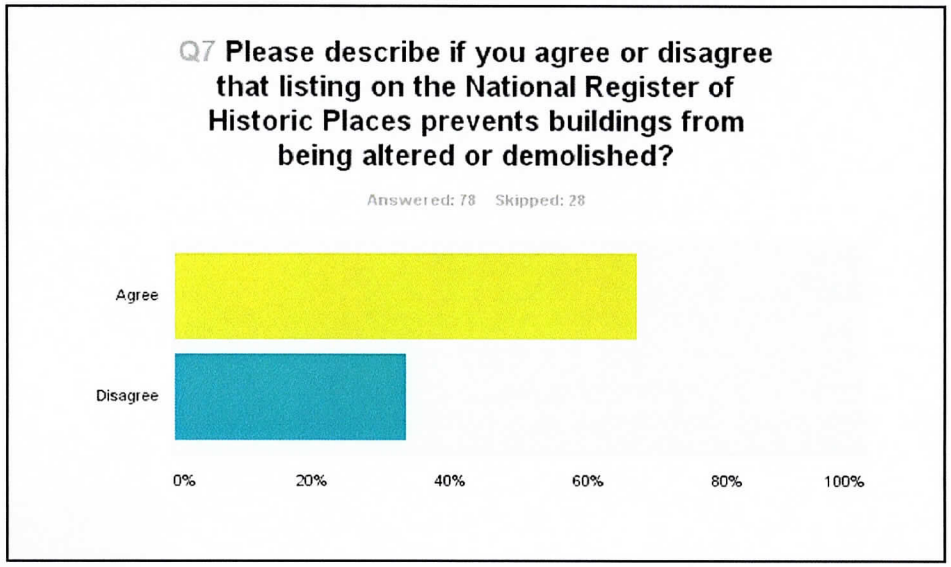
The value of our identity in history. A means of preserving and teaching others the why, who and how our city and people came about.

Of the survey participants sampled, there was an overwhelming consensus about the need and importance for preservation contributing to historic character. When participants were asked, "How important do you think it is for a community to preserve its historic character," 92% said it was "Strongly Important," or "Very Important." This shows an overwhelming majority in support of preservation.

Top: Recent Flood - Cumberland Avenue looking west - The Middlesboro Daily News
Bottom: Recent Flood - Cumberland Avenue looking east - The Middlesboro Daily News

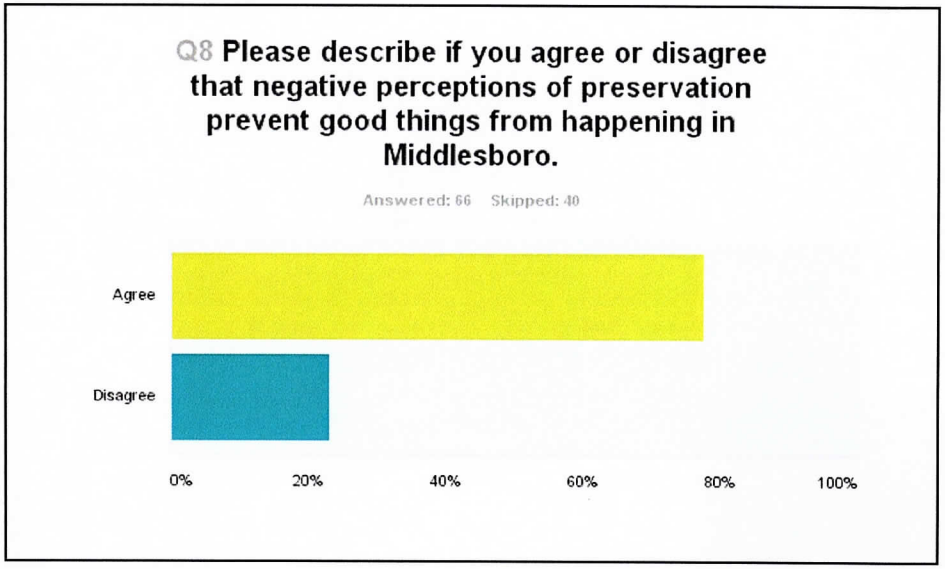






When asked what is getting in the way of preservation being more broadly adopted as a strategy one of the most common responses was the need for education. This was evidenced in response to the question whether people agreed or disagreed that "Listing on the National Register of Historic Places prevents buildings from being altered or demolished." Over 67% of people said they agreed with that statement. While a nice sentiment, the reality is that National Register listing is purely honorary and provides no protection for historic buildings whatsoever, except in certain circumstances where Federal funds are being spent. This speaks to the need for greater education.

The survey revealed that the greatest impediment to preservation being embraced as a strategy are negative perceptions of preservation itself. When asked if respondents agreed or disagreed "That negative perceptions of preservation prevent good things from happening in Middlesborough," a whopping 77% of respondents agreed with that statement. That response speaks to the need to build public trust and confidence in preservation as a strategy to help Middlesborough move forward.



OTHER REFLECTIONS ON CHALLENGES FACING PRESERVATION IN MIDDLESBOROUGH

In our public outreach survey, responders identified specific challenges that preservation faces in Middlesborough. The following issues are ranked in order starting with the most to least important based on the responses received.

1. "Apathy and people unwilling to take initiative to bring improvements about" was identified as the number one challenge in Middlesborough today. A total of 57% of respondents agreed that this issue was Strongly Important while 29% answered that it was Very Important. Only 14% answered that this issue was Somewhat Important.

2. The lack of alcohol was identified by 56% of respondents as an issue that kept out business and visitors in Middlesborough. Only 4% of participants were unsure in their response while 16% stated that it was not an important topic.

3. "Limited variety of businesses downtown" was identified as an important challenge by 53% of respondents. The lack of businesses oriented towards visitors and personal shopping was a factor limiting the success of the downtown commercial district in the views of many.

4. "Quick fixes" may be inexpensive now, but in the long run they reduce the value of the building and district as a whole. A total of 50% of participants believed that quick fixes "undermine the overall appearance of downtown."

5. Half of respondents believed that "people are not aware of the incentives that are available."

6. "Limited coordination between local organizations" was identified by 37% of people as Strongly Important. While 23% believed it was only Somewhat Important.

While not ranked as highly as the other challenges identified above, some other issues to consider are:

- Cumberland Avenue is not walkable or pedestrian friendly
- Not enough brick and mortar improvements are being done
- Many historic resources go undocumented
- Failure at implementation has occurred on past projects
- Limited cooperation has occurred with regional, state, and federal government entities
- There have been few opportunities for community engagement and participation

Park Theatre on South 20th Street



5. Goals, Objectives & Actions



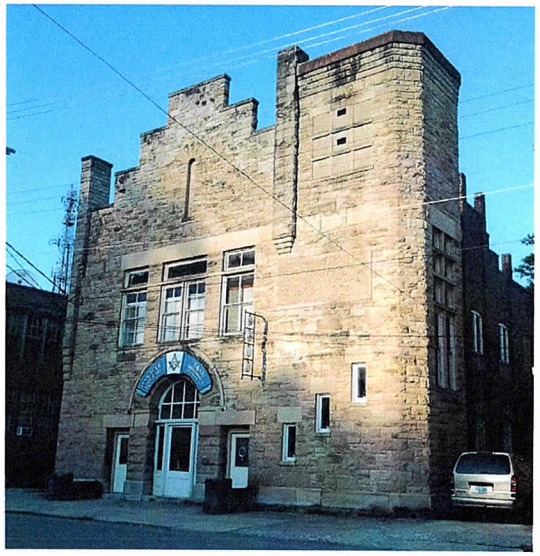
Photo Credit: Cumberland Gap National Historical Park

GOALS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The following goals, objectives, and actions were developed based on the community survey and other resident feedback. This outline will help lead preservation in Middlesborough for the next four years. The Historic District Commission will head the effort with support from the City of Middlesborough, Discover Downtown Middlesboro, other organizations, local businesses, and individual volunteers.

Five broad strategies were created in order to group objectives and actions that relied upon or complimented others. Under each goal is an objective, which explains the goal in greater detail. Each goal and objective cluster is further supported by a list of actions that are concrete tasks that can be carried out in order to accomplish the goal.

In order to initiate momentum for preservation in Middlesborough, historic buildings, sites, and other cultural resources must first be identified within the community. The goals under strategy "A. Documenting Historic Resources" give directions for that first important task. Preservation is a team effort. Local businesses and residents will need guidance in order to help preservation efforts. The second category, "B. Promoting Appreciation of our Historic Buildings," includes goals that will help to educate and support local residents in Middlesborough. "Category C. Encouraging Preservation Action at the Grassroots Level" identifies specific engagement strategies.



Top: Masonic Lodge
Bottom: St. Mary's Episcopal Church



A. DOCUMENTING HISTORIC RESOURCES

A1 - COMPLETE THE CITY SURVEY

Objective -

Complete a comprehensive survey of basic historical information on all of Middlesborough's buildings within the set downtown boundary.

Actions -

- Complete downtown survey using the RuskinArc tool.
- Connect with Bell County Public Library, Middlesboro High School, and Southeast Kentucky Community College, and others to assist with survey.
- Expand downtown survey to encompass residential neighborhoods.
- Create an accessible outlet for survey information so that the public can access all resources.

A2 - FOLLOW UP RESEARCH OF HISTORY WITH PRESERVATION PROJECTS

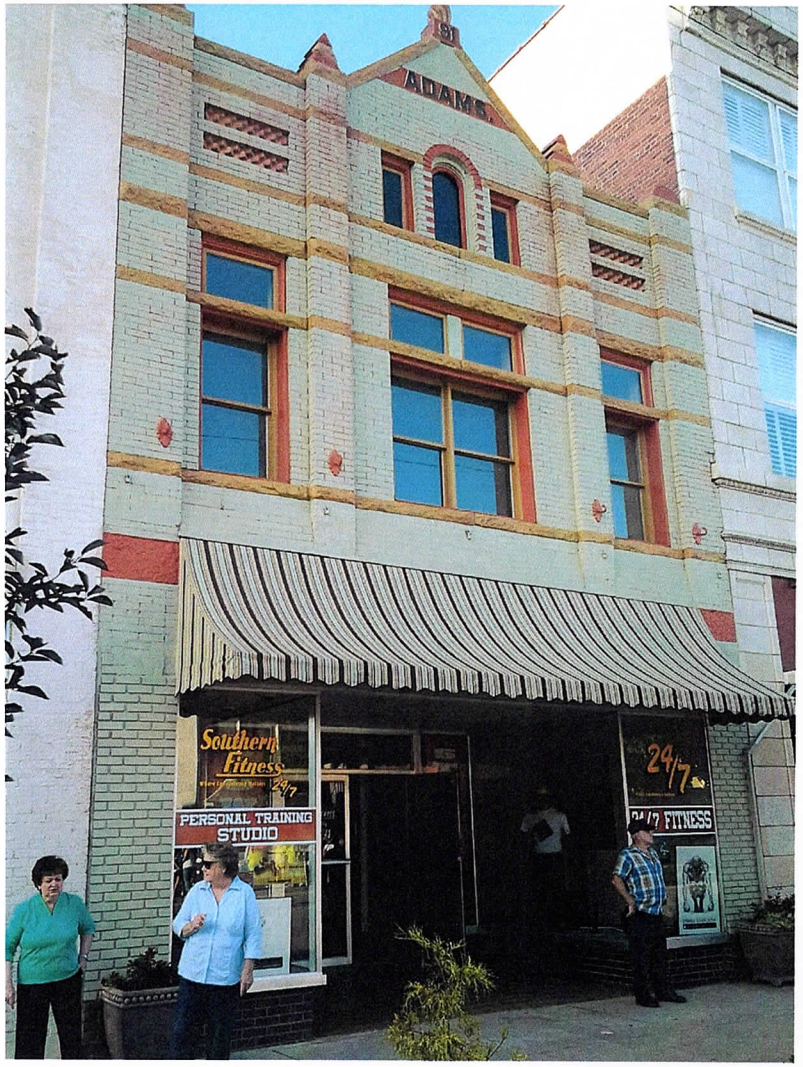
Objective -

Middlesborough values its history. Strong efforts have been made to study that history. Much of this is in vain without follow-through actions to preserve bricks and mortar evidence of that history.

Actions -

- Document sites tied to major events, sites, and people including:
  - The Boone Trace
  - Meteorite Crater Evidence
  - Locations of Significant Hotels and Buildings
  - Jack Zuta's Saloons
- Place signs on/near site that educate the public about important sites and events.
- Interact with the public by holding walking tours of historic sites.
- Publish brochure that maps out historic walking and driving trails.
- Develop smartphone application of historic sites and structures.

Adams Building on north Cumberland Avenue



B. PROMOTING APPRECIATION OF OUR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

B1 - CONNECT WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Objective - Connect Middlesborough to other organizations at the city, county, state, and federal level to increase communication and support for preservation initiatives.

Actions -

- Collaborate with other cities in the surrounding area, such as: Cumberland Gap, Harrogate, Pineville, and Barbourville to coordinate and promote events for the greatest mutual benefit.
- Communicate with state and federal preservation organizations to gain technical assistance and financial support for local projects.

B2 - ACCESSIBLE FUNDING

Objective - Educate local businesses and property owners on funding that is available to them and assist in the application process.

Actions -

- Identify tax credits, grants, and other forms of funding available to the community.
- Visit local businesses and share information on financial incentives.
- Hold public workshops on applying for tax credits.
- Create updated website that links property and business owners to accessible funding and organizations with resources to help.

B3 - PRESERVATION EDUCATION

Objective - Educate the community on preservation and how it can assist Middlesborough as a whole.

Actions -

- Identify existing sources of technical assistance such as Preservation Briefs from the National Park Service.
- Link people to this information.
- Set up workshops on various types of preservation techniques such as window restoration.
- Connect with Preservation Kentucky and gain their assistance and support.

WPA Bridge off 17th Street



C. ENCOURAGING PRESERVATION ACTION AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

C1- ENCOURAGE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Objective -

Efforts have been made to establish an active Main Street organization responsible for downtown revitalization. Work is needed to expand this program, and their ability to get results.

Actions -

- Support Discover Downtown Middlesboro's projects.
- Partner on events in the historic downtown area.

C2 - NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

Objective -

Organize neighborhood groups that champion preservation causes within each.

Actions -

- Initiate neighborhood organizations that can lead preservation in their area.
- Develop individual preservation plans for neighborhoods.
- Create neighborhood historic districts.
- Add specialized street signs in historic neighborhoods for easier navigation.

Fountain Square looking north



C. ENCOURAGING PRESERVATION ACTION AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

C3 - STREETS

Objective -
Reinvigorate the streetscapes within the designated historic district.

Actions -
- Research reinstating angled parking on Cumberland Avenue.
- Add signage directing traffic towards historical sites, especially along US-25E and Cumberland Avenue.
- Implement strategies to make Cumberland Avenue more pedestrian and bike friendly.
- Enhance walkability in the downtown district.
- Reactivate outdoor public spaces including vacant lots.

C4 - BOONE TRACE / TRAILS

Objective -
Make connections between existing assets and teach the public about local history in an interactive way.

Actions -
- Physically connect the Canal Walk with the Cumberland Gap National Park.
- Create a walking path along the Boone Trace. Include signage and interactive tools to teach visitors about Boone's presence in the area.
- Develop a smartphone application that can celebrate Boone's contribution to the area and recreate his footsteps in a virtual way.
- Involve organizations such as the University of Kentucky Department of Landscape Architecture to help design these projects.
- Extend Middlesborough trails to the north to connect with Pineville.
- Develop maps that direct people on the locations of local trails and local businesses.

Canal Walk near City Hall



D. PROTECTING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

D1 - INCREASE THE DESIGNATION OF PROPERTIES AT ALL LEVELS

Objective -

Nominate significant properties for local and national recognition.

Actions -

- Nominate significant buildings to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places both individually and as a district.
- Expand existing Local Historic District to encompass more of the historic building stock.
- Create new neighborhood historic districts.
- Explore National Historic Landmark designation for American Association related buildings.

D2 - COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Objective -

Create detailed design guidelines that stay true to the authentic history of Middlesborough's cultural resources while simultaneously activating them for future use.

Actions -

- Update and complete existing design guidelines for local historic districts.
- Educate building owners on the intentions of the guidelines and also how they can help their businesses.
- Enforce design guidelines to make historic district a united entity.
- Expand design guidelines to encompass residential buildings.

D3 - FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES

Objective -

Create financial incentives and provide technical assistance to inspire reinvestment into cultural resources.

Actions -

- Establish a revolving loan fund.
- Explore local financial incentives including grants for facade improvements.
- Utilize free design assistance from the Kentucky Heritage Council.
- Accept that not all historic buildings can be saved and devise a sustainable plan for deconstruction and architectural salvage in Middlesborough.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church National Register Marker



D. PROTECTING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

D4 - CATALYST PROJECT

Objective -

Undertake and successfully complete a high-visibility catalyst project that will build confidence on the part of building owners, business owners, and investors. This project will then have a spillover effect helping to create a positive environment in which projects of all sizes are easier to undertake and complete.

Actions -

- Pinpoint a building with the potential to become a catalyst and obtain permission to perform a project.
- Complete a Historic Structures Report to fully understand the building's history, design, and to devise appropriate means for rehabilitation.
- Retain architects, engineers, contractors, etc. to develop and carry out design plan that meets Middlesborough Design Guidelines.

D5 - SHARE BENEFITS OF PRESERVATION AND SHOW RESULTS

Objective -

Publicize how preservation can help Middlesborough to negate bad connotations tied to the field.

Actions -

- Advertise success of other preservation projects with statistical information drawn from the catalyst project.
- Give tours of successful projects.
- Assist property owners with projects of their own.



Top: Mosiac floor inside the Elks Home
Bottom: Elks Home



E. TAKING ACTION TOGETHER

Preservation involves a multitude of people. Each individual in the city of Middlesborough can contribute in his or her own unique way. The following list suggests how they can get started.

Political Leaders

- Create incentives for rehabilitating historic commercial buildings in downtown.

Historical Society

- Create brochure on historic resources in Middlesborough.
- Develop interpretive signs throughout town. Include QR code that links to website with more information.

Residential Property Owners

- Take advantage of 30% Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit for residential properties.

Commercial Property Owners

- Take advantage of the 20% Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit.
- Take advantage of the 20% Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit for non-residential properties.

Residents

- Renovate historic homes and buildings with a residential component in a historically sensitive way.
- Think beyond personal interests and support what we share as a historical community.

Small Businesses

- Apply for storefront and signage renovation grants, go about making improvements.
- Join forces with Discover Downtown Middlesboro as members and volunteers.

School Teachers

- Schedule programs with preservationists and archaeologists to give students first-hand experience.
- Be creative with getting funding to support educational programs.

Neighborhood Activists

- Photograph neighborhood treasures.
- Establish strong neighborhood organization and an Historic District Council that brings neighborhood advocates together.

Kentucky Heritage Council

- Have frequent staff participation in Middlesborough revitalization efforts.
- Connect with Discover Downtown Middlesboro, historic neighborhoods, and other organizations that need help with preservation and assist with projects on a regular basis.
- Help connect Middlesborough with other communities and organizations that can assist with the preservation efforts.
- Provide technical assistance and design work for downtown Middlesborough.
- Advertise tax credits and other financial incentives to Middlesborough business / property owners.
- Assess potential archaeological sites in Middleborough.

Kentucky Archaeological Survey

- Document path of Boone Trace through Middlesborough.

Lincoln Memorial University

- Encourage students to get involved through service learning opportunities.
- Work with History faculty, Lincoln Museum, and others on research projects.
- Collaborate with business school on assisting with business start-ups and economic development.

University of Kentucky / Eastern Kentucky University
- Get faculty and students to participate in community planning and restoration.

College Students
- Provide opportunities for internships.
- Prepare a Historic Structures Report, Landmark Nominations, Business Plan, Market Analysis, etc.

High School Students
- Engage students in a community-planning project.

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
- Assist in development of a trail connecting the downtown with the National Historical Park.
- Assist with the further study and research on the Boone Trace and the path it took through Middlesborough.
- Link Middlesborough and the National Park through interpretation, and programmatically through special events.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
- Explore the possibility of angled parking downtown.
- Work on streetscape to make it more welcoming for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Assist in development of trail system connecting Middlesborough and Bell County.

Boone Society of America
- Work with local leaders on establishing Boone Trace trailhead in Middlesborough.
- Organize a major event in June 2014 to reenact crossing the Gap, involve Boone descendants. Have an encampment in Middlesborough.
- Raise money to assist with archaeological investigation.
- Connect Middlesborough with Fort Boonesboro via the Boone Trace.

Tourism Commission
- Develop a brochure highlighting the heritage and historic buildings in the area.
- Upgrade exhibits in Arthur Museum to make these consistent with recommendations in the 2009 Appalachian Gateways Communities Initiative.
- Pursue and maintain active Trail Town status and other designations to help with promoting visitation to Middlesborough.

The National Bank Building



6. Implementation



FOUR YEARS PAST

A review of past efforts at implementation show a mixed bag of results. Extensive attention has been paid on the historic downtown area surrounding Fountain Square. Results are starting to show from those efforts with more and more buildings being fixed up, storefronts filled, and the attractive fountains flanking the four corners of Cumberland Ave and 20th Street. As encouraging as this is, much work remains to be done.

Acquisition of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Home occurred in December 2012. While this is a significant step forward and advocates are working hard to repurpose this landmark quality structure, an immense amount of work will need to be done in the years ahead.

One of the most encouraging trends in the past four years are private owners unselfishly taking on responsibility for renovating their own buildings. The results are there on display for all to see. Whether it be the Nagle Law Office on Cumberland Ave, the National Bank Building that has been renovated for professional and residential use, or the JRS Restaurant Corp office - all exemplify the sort of high-quality well-maintained buildings we hope to see downtown. For every one of these that has been successfully rehabilitated, there are many others desperately waiting for attention.

Perhaps the greatest boost for preservation efforts now and moving forward was the re-establishment of the Historic District Commission by Mayor Bill Kelley with unanimous support from the City Council in May 2013. These five commissioners will be tasked with charting a new path forward that makes preservation a more welcome and accepted tool to address the multiple overlapping challenges we face in Middlesborough.

East End Pawn Shop / Union Hall
Top: Before
Bottom: After





FOUR YEARS AHEAD

DOWNTOWN MIDDLESBOROUGH STRATEGIC PLAN

By the end of 2013, Middlesborough will not only have this Preservation Plan, it will also have The Downtown Middlesborough Strategic Plan (DMSP) that will be a key development tool for the city. Developed by Discover Downtown Middlesboro, the DMSP outlines its own set of strategic goals over the next five years with clear connections to the Preservation Plan. The DMSP goals are:

1. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT – In order to help the community, DDM understands that it must first strengthen its organization. DDM will achieve this goal by improving its financial stability, expanding the staff and establishing an organizational and policy framework.

2. JOB CREATION / ENTREPRENEURSHIP - Opportunities for dining and retail are limited in downtown Middlesborough at present. The vacancy rate in this area is hovering around 15%. There is a natural connection between entrepreneurs looking for space to start their business and vacant buildings downtown. In order to attract new business physical improvements to the exterior and interior of downtown buildings will help. Efforts to improve the streets and sidewalks surrounding these buildings will further aid in creating an environment in which businesses may be successful.

3. TRAIL SYSTEM – Given the distinctive topography and close proximity to major nationally renowned amenities, such as the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Middlesborough is well positioned to have a world-class trail system. Our vision starts with upgrading and improving the Canal Walk. A linkage will then be made between the Canal Walk and the National Park along the former path of the Boone Trace. The series of trails created (walking, bicycling, and driving) will thematically link activities and sites. Additionally, the streetscape and many public areas will receive an upgrade making the downtown and areas approaching the downtown more welcoming to visitors.

4. CANAL / RIVER RESTORATION - The Canal Walk started in the early 1990s with a good intention - control flooding while creating a scenic walking trail. However, over the years lack of upkeep has caused deterioration along the pathway, which prevents people from using it. Through performing appropriate study of existing conditions and relying on the expertise of people involved in waterway and river restoration, DDM will transform the Canal and Yellow Creek from a liability into an asset through restoring these waterways and creating habitat, while also expanding the peak capacity to limit the effect of flooding.

5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION - The Preservation Plan is key to this goal. The Downtown Middlesborough Strategic Plan will support historic preservation by completing a catalyst project to demonstrate the power and possibility of preservation, while also establishing financial support so finer grained projects can be done. DDM will also collaborate with the newly re-established Historic District Commission to encourage preservation in Middlesborough.

6. TOURISM AND EVENTS - DDM will strive to increase number of high-quality and well-publicized events both for the community and for tourists. They will encourage consistent spelling of the name of the City with preference on use of Middlesborough over Middlesboro. In doing so, we hope to instill a positive, improving, "yes we can" mentality needed to make improvements moving forward. DDM will also perform unbiased research to educate the public on opportunities and consequences associated with the wet-dry issue. With respect to the later, as Storm Cunningham so presciently said during his visit in April: "No alcohol, no tourism."

7. REGIONAL COOPERATION – DDM sees enormous opportunities for regional cooperation. By collaborating with other organization to promote tourism, conservation of natural resources, preservation of historic resources and economic development across the Tri-State area of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, Middlesborough can reposition itself as an important regional center and innovator in community revitalization.

BUILD A BETTER BLOCK

In October 2013, Discover Downtown Middlesboro held their very first Build a Better Block event on Cumberland Avenue. The goal of this event was to make low-cost interventions to plant the seed for long-term change. The pop-up park, pop-up stores and other improvements made over two days showed the full potential of the downtown. Mike Lydon with Street Plans Collaborative facilitated the event. Middlesborough is one of the first communities in the country to explore the possibility of connecting Tactical Urbanism and the Better Block event with preservation planning. Assisting in this goal is Fernanda Sotelo. Her Columbia University graduate thesis Beyond Temporary: Preserving the Existing Built Environment with Temporary Urban Interventions explored this very subject matter and suggested best practices from the in-depth exploration of several case studies.

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ORDINANCE

The first Historic District Commission created Design Guidelines and a Historic Preservation Ordinance in the 1980s. However, these important documents have not been updated since that time. Within the next year, the guidelines and ordinance will evolve so that they are easier to use for property owners. The commission should strive for guidelines that help the property owners instead of infringing upon their decisions.

PRESERVATION EDUCATION AND FUNDING

The biggest obstacle for preservation in Middlesborough is the lack of knowledge and education on the subject. Over the next four years, workshops and demonstrations will be held on a regular basis in order to educate the public on how preservation can help them and their city.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

One of Middlesborough's biggest assets is the historic neighborhoods and residences. Preserving the character of individual neighborhoods is crucial to Middlesborough's future. Local residents will organize neighborhood associations that will champion preservation in their piece of Middlesborough.

Industrial Buildings near 17th Street and Cumberland Avenue





ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANT PRIOR PLANS - MIDDLESBOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In 1990, a comprehensive plan titled "Middlesboro 21, A Comprehensive Plan for Future Development of Middlesboro, Kentucky" was authored by the Geographical Studies & Research Center at Eastern Kentucky University. The plan outlined the city's strengths and weakness and answered these issues with a series of goals. The goals were supported by objectives that provided general direction on how to implement the plan. Historic Preservation was one aspect in which Middlesborough was assessed for the Comprehensive Plan, and specific goals were attached to this category. The following chart compares the 1990 Comprehensive Plan with the present Preservation Plan goals and outlines how preservation can affect the larger city.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORIENTED GOALS

Comprehensive Plan Goal	Comprehensive Plan Objective	Accomplishments between 1990 - 2013	Preservation Plan Goals for 2018
To protect and enhance the valuable, irreplaceable, and significant historic sites, structures, and events of Middlesborough	To insure that all historic sites and structures are identified	All resources within the defined downtown historic district have been uploaded to RuskinARC	C2) add neighborhoods to the survey D5) share data with community
	To implement a program of historic restoration in the CBD	Discover Downtown Middlesboro and property owners have actively worked towards the restoration of several buildings on Cumberland Ave	B2) Accessible Funding B3) Preservation Education D3) Financial Incentives D4) Catalyst Project
	To assess all development plans in terms of historic values	Ongoing	D2) Comprehensive Design Guidelines

How can preservation affect other aspects of the city?

Comprehensive Plan Goal	Comprehensive Plan Objective	Accomplishments between 1990 - 2013	Preservation Plan Goals for 2018
To encourage the overall growth and improvement in the quality of Middlesborough	To stimulate economic development and net in-migration of people	Incomplete	C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization D3 - Financial Incentives and Technical Assistance for Historic Resources
	To provide facilities and services that will improve the health, education and employment characteristics of the population	Ongoing	C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization C4 – Boone Trace / Trails
To improve the local economy through policies and programs that will promote quality development and encourage retention, attraction, and diversification of all sectors of the economy	To establish an entrepreneurship program	Ongoing	C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization Downtown Strategic Plan
	To develop the industrial park	Incomplete	N/A
	To support the continuing use of coal resources	Ongoing	A1) Complete the City Survey - Celebrate the history of mining and tie to physical place D1) Increase the Designation of Properties at all Levels - nominate coal mining sites for the National Register
	To develop a plan for strengthening tourism activities	At least two plans for tourism were developed. The Middlesborough Tourism Market Analysis was completed in August 1991. Another study, the	A2) Follow Up Research of History with Preservation Action B1) Connect with Other Organizations C1) Encourage Downtown Revitalization C4) Boone Trace / Trails

		Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative: An Assessment and Recommendations Report for Natural and Cultural Heritage Tourism Development in the Cumberland Gap Region, was completed July 2009	
	To encourage cooperation and coordination in economic development	Ongoing	All aspects of Preservation Plan support this goal
To develop and maintain a diversified system that will move people, goods, and information effectively	To provide adequate off street parking	Complete - Free city parking in front of City Hall	C3) Streets
	To make needed operational and systems improvements	N/A	C3) Streets
	To develop a plan for improving the airport	N/A	N/A
To provide the people of Middlesborough with a level of governmental facilities and services that will improve their quality of life	To establish an effective community planning process	Further research required	Preservation Plan can be incorporated
	To improve recreational facilities and services	Ongoing	C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization
	To upgrade the level of educational attainment	Ongoing	B3) Preservation Education - get students of all ages to interact with local history sites
	To provide for adequate waste management	Ongoing	C3) Streets
	To improve health / protective services	Ongoing	C4) Boone Trace / Trails

To make standard housing units available for all residents of Middlesborough	Insure quality construction through codes enforcement	Ongoing	D2) Comprehensive Design Guidelines
	Provide a wide range of choices in housing opportunities	Ongoing	B2) Accessible Funding D3) Financial Incentives D4) Catalyst Project
	Improve the quality of residential neighborhoods	Ongoing	C2) Neighborhood Preservation
	Encourage development in and immediately adjacent to the city	Ongoing	B1) Connect with other organizations C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization
To provide for a natural environment that will improve the quality of life	To improve facilities for the disposal of waste	Complete	N/A
	To establish a recycling program	Complete	C3) Streets
	To minimize the potential for flooding	Ongoing	C4) Trails - rehabilitate the Canal Walk
	To establish an effective program for maintaining a clean environment	Ongoing	D2) Comprehensive Design Guidelines
	To effectively assess the impact of development on the environment	Incomplete	N/A
To insure that development takes place on land whose site characteristics and general locational considerations are best suited to the type of use intended	To provide adequate sites for residential, commercial, industrial and public/semi-public uses	Ongoing	C1 - Encourage Downtown Revitalization
	To insure that land use activities are managed in such a way as to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of all citizens	Ongoing	All aspects of Preservation Plan can support this goal.

ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANT PRIOR PLANS - APPALACHIAN GATEWAY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

In 2007, the Appalachian Regional Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts started a new initiative to provide assistance in natural and cultural tourism development for gateway communities of Appalachia. Gateway communities are defined as towns that border national and state parks, wildlife refuges, forests, historic sites, wilderness areas and other public lands. The initiative's intent is to assist communities in enhancing natural and historic assets and to emphasize the role of the arts in the development of a comprehensive strategy.

Lincoln Memorial University in partnership with representatives from Claiborne County, Bell County, and Lee County applied for an assessment and recommendations through the new Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative in 2008. The goal of the assessment was:

"To identify the assets of each constituent group, determine how each asset complements the competencies of other organizations and develop a planning strategy that will effectively bring each stakeholder group together in a comprehensive natural and cultural tourism promotion effort."

By 2009, a report was prepared by the organization that started the initiative. The report outlined the recommendations below for all organizations involved.

St. Julian's Catholic Church.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORIENTED GOALS

Recommendations	Actions Items	Status	Preservation Plan Goals for 2018
III. Make preservation and conservation a continuous priority	1. Build a network of preservation and conservation partners	Complete: Working with a variety of organizations including Kentucky Heritage Council, Boone Society, LMU, University of Kentucky, etc.	B1) Connection with Other Organizations B3) Preservation Education D3) Financial Incentives and Technical Assistance for Historic Resources
	2. Prepare and submit a proposal to host a "Your Town" workshop	Complete: Using different approach	B1) Connection with Other Organizations B3) Preservation Education
	3. Organize a team to attend the Balancing Nature and Commerce workshop	Incomplete: Further research needed	B1) Connection with Other Organizations B3) Preservation Education
	4. Engage residents and elected officials	Ongoing	B1) Connection with Other Organizations B3) Preservation Education
	5. Develop design guidelines	Underway	D2) Comprehensive Design Guidelines

How can preservation affect other aspects of the city?

Recommendations	Status	Preservation Plan Goals for 2018
I. Complete an inventory of cultural, historic and natural resources	Ongoing; Building inventory and business survey underway in Middlesborough. Expected to be completed by end of July 2013. Additional work needed across the region	A1) Complete the City Survey
II. Develop an organizational structure between all groups	Ongoing	B1) Connect with Other Organizations
IV. Brand "The Cumberland Gap"	Ongoing	A2) Follow Up Research of History with Preservation Action C4) Boone Trace / Trails
V. Develop themes that can become marketing messages	Incomplete	C1) Encourage Downtown Revitalization
VI. Tell the Story of the Cumberland Gap	Ongoing	A2) Follow Up Research of History with Preservation Action C4) Boone Trace / Trails
VII. Guide visitor planning and the visitor experience with a Cumberland Gap Region website	Incomplete	C4) Boone Trace / Trails D5) Share Benefits of Preservation and Show Results
VIII. Develop additional marketing tools	Ongoing	A2 - Follow Up Research of History with Preservation Action C1- Encourage Downtown Revitalization D5 - Share Benefits of Preservation and Show Results
IX. Develop increased bicycle transportation around the area	Incomplete	C3) Streets
X. Investigate opportunities for new lodging accommodations	Ongoing	C1) Encourage Downtown Revitalization

7. Resources



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

DISCOVER DOWNTOWN MIDDLESBORO

Discover Downtown Middlesboro is always looking for volunteers. There is a special need for people with a background in small business development, architecture and design, and fundraising. If interested, please contact DDM. We're happy to include you in our efforts to revitalize the downtown! For more information call (606) 248 - 6155 or email downtownmiddlesboro@gmail.com

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America's historic places. The Trust is the cause that inspires Americans to save the places where history happened. The cause that connects us to our diverse pasts, weaving a multi-cultural nation together. The cause that transforms communities from places where we live into places that we love. As the leading voice for preservation, we are the cause for people saving places. Through their numerous programs, outreach, research, and advocacy, the National Trust leads the American Preservation Movement. For more Information visit: http://www.preservationnation.org/

PRESERVATION ACTION

Preservation Action is a 501(c)4 nonprofit organization created in 1974 to serve as the national grassroots lobby for historic preservation. Preservation Action seeks to make historic preservation a national priority by advocating to all branches of the federal government for sound preservation policy and programs through a grassroots constituency empowered with information and training and through direct contact with elected representatives. Their annual Lobby Day, held in late February or early March each year, is an excellent way to connect with other colleagues nationally, and to bring the message about the benefits of preservation to our legislators on Capitol Hill. For more information see: http://www.preservationaction.org/

PRESERVATION KENTUCKY

Preservation Kentucky is the Commonwealth's statewide nonprofit historic preservation organization. We are a membership-based organization devoted to preserving buildings, structures, and sites in every region and every town in the state. Preservation Kentucky is committed to preserving vestiges of all Kentuckians' past - from shotgun houses in Louisville to African American rural communities across the state to roadside architecture, such as the Parkette Drive-In in Lexington, to important prehistoric archeological sites. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate. For more information visit: http://www.preservationkentucky.org/

KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL

As set forth by federal and state legislation, the Kentucky Heritage Council is charged with identifying, preserving and protecting the historic resources of Kentucky. The Heritage Council has successfully encouraged the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in all contexts and advocated that historic preservation should be a key public policy initiative to:

- Encourage economic development
- Provide affordable housing
- Revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods
- Provide life-long learning opportunities
- Enhance Kentucky's quality of life

Additionally, as an agency of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, the Heritage Council has consistently and successfully partnered with other agencies, local governments, preservation and community organizations and individuals to achieve this mission. See their website for available state funding and technical assistance: http://heritage.ky.gov/

TAX CREDITS AND INCENTIVES

FEDERAL PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

The Federal government promotes the preservation of historic structures through its Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program, which supports the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings. The tax incentives program is one of the Federal government's most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs. This program attracts private investment, generates jobs, and enhances property values.

Current tax incentives for preservation, established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 include:

- a 20% tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures.
- a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic, non-residential buildings built before 1936.

A tax credit differs from an income tax deduction. An income tax deduction lowers the amount of income subject to taxation. A tax credit, however, lowers the amount of tax owed. In general, a dollar of tax credit reduces the amount of income tax owed by one dollar.

- The 20% rehabilitation tax credit equals 20% of the amount spent in a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure.
- The 10% rehabilitation tax credit equals 10% of the amount spent to rehabilitate a non-historic building built before 1936.

In order to qualify for these tax credits, projects must meet several requirements. The 20% income tax credit requires that a building must be a "certified historic structure" meaning it must be listed on the National Register or located within a National Register District and contribute to the historic district's architectural, historic, or cultural character. The 20% tax credit is available for properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental residential purposes.

The State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service also has to review the project to ensure that it complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Internal Revenue Service defines qualified rehabilitation expenses on which the credit may be taken.

The 10% tax credit is available for the rehabilitation of non-historic buildings placed in service before 1936. The credit only applies to buildings with non-residential uses. The structure must also meet the following criteria:

- At least 50% of the existing external walls must remain in place as external walls
- At least 75% of the existing external walls must remain in place as either external or internal walls
- At least 75% of the internal structural framework must remain in place

Information on the application process is available at: http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm

STATE PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

The Kentucky Heritage Council also offers preservation tax incentives that can be used in combination with the Federal incentives program. A tax credit of 20% of qualified rehabilitation expenses is available for non-residential properties.

The credit requires a minimum investment of $20,000 or the adjusted basis, whichever is greater. The total credit for a project must not exceed $400,000. Like the Federal incentives, buildings must be listed on the National Register or located within a National Register District in order to be eligible for the state tax credit. The project must also comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and certified by the Kentucky Heritage Council.

A 30% tax credit is also offered to qualified residential rehabilitation projects. The property must be owner-occupied and a minimum investment of $20,000 is required, with the total credit not to exceed $60,000.

Information on the application process is available at: http://heritage.ky.gov/incentives/

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Kentucky Heritage Council offers free design assistance for all of their Main Street communities. Being a Certified Local Government, an Middlesborough business or property owner can for this process. Several local businesses including Dr. Stallworth's office / Pinnacle Building and JJ Tax and Bookkeeping have taken advantage of this program and facade updates are currently underway. Discover Downtown Middlesboro has a continuous working relationship with the KHC and will gladly help facilitate design assistance for any local business.

For more information on the free design assistance program please visit: http://heritage.ky.gov/mainstreet/newdesignasstsvc.htm

HOW TO COMMENT ON THIS PLAN

The Historic Preservation Plan would not be possible without community input and feedback. The plan document is not set in stone. A constant evolution and re-evaluation of goals, objectives, and actions will be key to the preservation plan's success. Following Historic District Commission's approval of the plan, it will be posted on the City of Middlesboro and Discover Downtown Middlesboro's website. A survey will be linked to both websites for people to post their praise and criticism. The public can also attend the monthly Historic District Commission meeting to provide feedback and learn about updates to the plan.



Hole in the Wall.