

FINAL DELIVERABLE

Title	Alleyway Revitalization
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City of Clinton



Date: December 9, 2022

To: Karen Rowell, Director of Clinton Downtown Alliance

From: Mason DeLange, Ben DeTaeye, Aidan King, Karin Ulery

Re: Clinton Alleyway Revitalization

SUMMARY

Across the country, cities large and small have begun to reclaim their alleyways. Chicago, Detroit, Seattle, Austin, Dubuque, and Iowa City are just some of the municipalities that have forged ahead with amazing results. For only about \$160 per sq yard, alleys can be repaved for storm water mitigation and walkability even in the winter. For almost no cost, the community can become engaged in the project by helping name the space, and even bring local artists to decorate the space. For Clinton, these often-forgotten spaces can be used to build community and create a more resilient infrastructure,.

BACKGROUND

Alleyways have long been used as a place to hide urban blemishes, including things like trash collection and electrical wiring. Because of this, they often become neglected and avoided—an unpleasant place for the average citizen. Today, cities have begun to reclaim their alleyways through a practice called alleyway revitalization in which these passages are turned into safe, enjoyable, and attractive spaces. Because cities' land is finite, it is paramount to make efficient use of available space. The revitalization of alleyways leads to a myriad of positive impacts including safe navigation, access to businesses, improved environmental qualities, and possible public art.

Alleyways in Clinton have been neglected for 50 years. Now is the time to begin the process of revitalization in order to increase community engagement and economic benefits. The alleyways connected to the Wilson Building are the logical starting point.

CURRENT EFFORTS

Clinton is currently undertaking a variety of efforts to modernize the downtown area and address issues like flooding and lack of pedestrian areas, while also strengthening the community's ties to the downtown area and larger area.

1) Flood Mitigation

To mitigate flooding the city has begun to pave the parking lots on and around 5th Avenue and has repaved several residential alleyways on the northern side of the city. These repaving efforts have been conducted alongside the Iowa Green Streets Project and have consisted of the removal of asphalt in alleyways to be replaced with paver stones that allow for a much more aesthetically pleasing alleyway while also mitigating flooding almost completely.

2) Community Engagement

The city already has a proven strategy: When the city worked with elementary students to name and decorate the city's snowplows, the response was tremendous. Similar approaches can be used to name and artistically embellish revitalized alleys.

3) **Wilson Building Renovation**

Another effort relevant to alleyway revitalization is the renovation and renewal of the Wilson Building on 5th Avenue. This project will transform the building into a large mixed-use area with 33 residential units and two business incubation sites on the ground floor that will give small businesses an opportunity to start out and eventually settle in their own spaces around downtown Clinton. Efforts like this will drive pedestrian traffic to the center of downtown Clinton. A revitalized alleyway system would provide a means for these pedestrians to safely access new and revitalized sites like the Wilson Building and further engage with existing businesses.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Incorporate Permeable Pavement in Alleys** – This will improve flood mitigation efforts and enhance aesthetic value. We recommend beginning with the area around the historic Wilson Building. Cost projections vary, but as a gage, Dubuque recently repaved its alleyways for \$64,000 each.
2. **Improve the Look and Functionality of Alleyways** – Enhance safety and overall look by enhancing lighting, providing benches and other seating options, and hiding trash receptacles. (See Appendix for a mockup.)
3. **Conduct Community Engagement Efforts** – Increase community involvement and enthusiasm by:
 - Involving the community in naming alleyways, like recent efforts to name street plows. This could involve a contest with local students.
 - Adding murals and other public art to alleyways, giving priority to designs by local artists, which will draw more foot traffic and increase the aesthetic value of the space.

CONCLUSION

Clinton has already experienced how small, community-based changes can have a large impact. By continuing to take more low-risk, high-impact steps, Clinton will continue to transform its downtown and beyond. The benefits of these impactful, iterative changes will ultimately benefit the city, local businesses, and the people of Clinton.

APPENDIX

Alleyway Mockup – 200th Block of 5th and 6th Avenues

Top left: Permeable paver

Bottom left: Lighting and alleyway facade

Right: Full view of the alley





Alleyway Revitalization

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Background

- What is alleyway revitalization?
- How will revitalization benefit Clinton?
- Alleyways in Clinton have been neglected for 50 years.



Best Practices

- ① Usage of permeable pavers for aesthetic benefit and drainage
- ② Naming alleyways
- ③ Well-lit alleyways
- ④ Community engagement in art and other installments
- ⑤ Connections to local businesses



Dubuque's Renovations



- Goal of **240** alleyway transformations



BEFORE



AFTER

Dubuque's Renovations

- Goal of **240** alleyway transformations
- Estimated cost of **\$57.4 million**

Dubuque's Renovations



- **\$160.29** per square yard in 2018



Dubuque's Renovations

- **\$160.29** per square yard in 2018
- Average of around **\$64,000** per alley

Vision For Clinton's Alleys

- The Wilson Building as the heart of the City
- Alleys used to connect parking to businesses
- Engage the community in the downtown area





Policy Recommendations

- Creation of more functional alleys with Permeable Pavers
- Added lighting and artwork
- Community engagement programs

Clinton Alleyway Mock-up





Community Engagement Initiatives

Engage Elementary Youth

Host a contest to name
the revitalized alleyway





Bluff
Elementary

Eagle Heights
Elementary

Our New Alleyway!

Jefferson
Elementary

Whittier
Elementary



LOCAL ARTISTS
SUBMISSIONS, TO BE
VOTED ON BY THE
COMMUNITY, WITH
SUPPLIES DONATED BY
LOCAL BUSINESSES



Community

Local Artists



Local Businesses

Community Art

A group of people are seated at a long table in a restaurant or bar, engaged in conversation and eating. The table is set with plates of food, glasses of beer, and water. The background shows a blurred interior space with other patrons and a red rectangular sign on the wall. The text is overlaid in white on a semi-transparent dark background.

Streamline Public Event Permits To Support Community Events In The Reclaimed Space



Community

Thank you!
