

Hot Springs, Arkansas: Downtown Development & Redevelopment Action Plan, 2015

Opportunity: Hot Springs, Arkansas, located one hour away from Little Rock, is home to over 35,000 residents. Hot Springs National Park is a destination for over one million visitors each year. In February 2014, the historic Majestic Hotel located in downtown Hot Springs burned down, after having been abandoned for years. Realizing that the downtown needed a strategy for revitalization, the City, in collaboration with the West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, applied for a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant.

Process: TPMA worked with the community of Hot Springs, Arkansas to create a unified Downtown Development and Redevelopment Action Plan. The goal of the planning process was to move the City's downtown forward with a plan that incorporated development and redevelopment site planning with strategies to promote downtown as both a thriving destination for visitors and a center of job creation, innovation, and entrepreneurship. To guide development of the plan, TPMA gathered input from over 450 community stakeholders during several facilitated community engagement sessions.

Solution: Participants' collective vision and passion for downtown contributed to an asset-based plan and implementation strategy, now being used to build quality of life and sense of place in downtown Hot Springs.

Results: The City of Hot Springs recently approved an application for federal funds to make significant improvements suggested from our planning work, including widening sidewalks in several areas for restaurants that have asked for outdoor dining and adding another level and 80 parking spaces to an existing downtown parking garage.

