


Boots^{on the} Ground

The Hidden Levers of
Downtown Revitalization





The Five Pillars of Revitalization

Unlocking Downtown's Potential

Discover how **five key strategies** can work together to transform your downtown.

Learn how to attract people and businesses with a few smart moves.

Jenn Gregory

President, Downtown Strategies
jgregory@retailstrategies.com
662.617.1711
Starkville, MS

Jenn Gregory is the President of Downtown Strategies at Retail Strategies, a community development consulting firm. With over 15 years of experience in community development and downtown revitalization, Jenn joined Retail Strategies in 2019.



1 Strategic Business Mix

Curate a diverse blend of businesses

Focus on complementary establishments

Fill gaps in local market demand

Example:

Mix of restaurants, boutiques, and service providers



2 Enhanced Walkability and Streetscape

Improve pedestrian infrastructure

Implement traffic calming measures

Add green spaces and seating areas

Create an inviting atmosphere for foot traffic



3 Community Engagement and Events

Organize regular downtown events

Encourage local participation and volunteering

Showcase local talent and businesses

Foster a sense of community ownership



4 Adaptive Reuse and Façade Improvement

Repurpose historic buildings for modern use

Implement façade improvement programs

Preserve local character while updating aesthetics

Create visually appealing streetscapes



5 Policy and Administration

Enact policies that serve as both incentives and regulations

Implement façade improvement grants and low-interest loans

Establish vacant property registry ordinances

Create streamlined permitting processes for new businesses

Develop historic preservation ordinances and design standards



Exponential Growth

The Downtown Revitalization Engine

How the 5 ideas work together:

- Strategic mix and policies attract diverse businesses
- Walkability and aesthetics encourage exploration
- Events and engagement create community buzz
- Adaptive reuse preserves character while modernizing
- Policies guide growth and provide support



Exponential Growth

The Downtown Revitalization Engine

The multiplier effect:

- Increased foot traffic leads to more business
- Supportive policies encourage investment
- Improved aesthetics and events create destination appeal
- Positive cycle of growth and revitalization



Your downtown deserves it

Why you can't do this on your own

1. Limited Resources and Expertise

Communities often lack the specialized knowledge, methodologies, and diverse skill sets required for comprehensive downtown revitalization. Without access to experienced professionals, they may miss crucial opportunities or make costly mistakes in planning and execution.

2. Risk of Advocate Burnout

Revitalization efforts often rely heavily on local volunteers and advocates. The trial-and-error approach can quickly exhaust their energy and enthusiasm. Professional guidance can help employ the right tactics from the start, maintaining momentum and preventing burnout among key supporters.

3. Lack of Objective Accountability

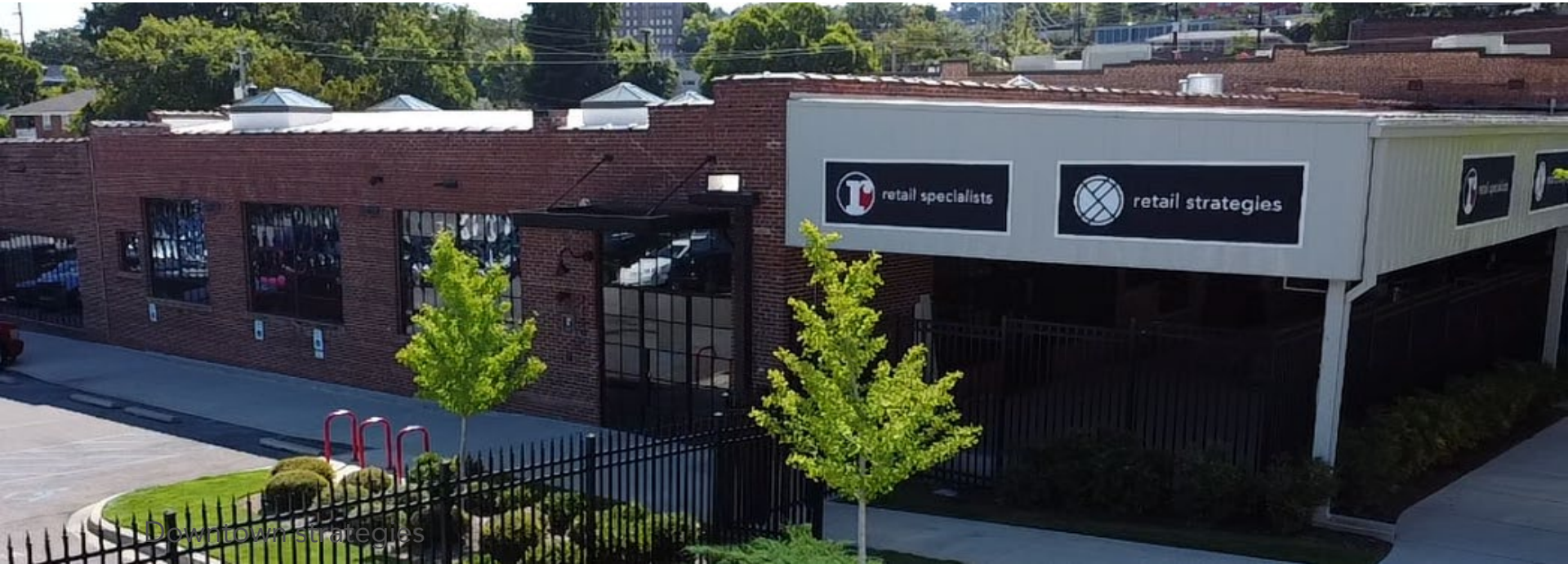
In small communities, personal relationships can complicate decision-making processes. An outside party can provide objective assessments and recommendations without fear of damaging local friendships or business relationships. This impartial perspective is crucial for addressing sensitive issues and making tough decisions.

4. Difficulty in Seeing the Bigger Picture

Communities deeply embedded in their local context may struggle to see their downtown objectively or envision its full potential. External consultants bring fresh perspectives, drawing from experiences with similar communities and current industry trends, to help local leaders think beyond their immediate circumstances and develop more ambitious, effective strategies.



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retailstrategies.com | (205) 314-0386 | info@retailstrategies.com

2200 Magnolia Ave South, Suite 100, Birmingham, AL