



MANCHESTER, KY

## ***A Place For People***

The Downtown Plan for Manchester

### **Prepared by:**

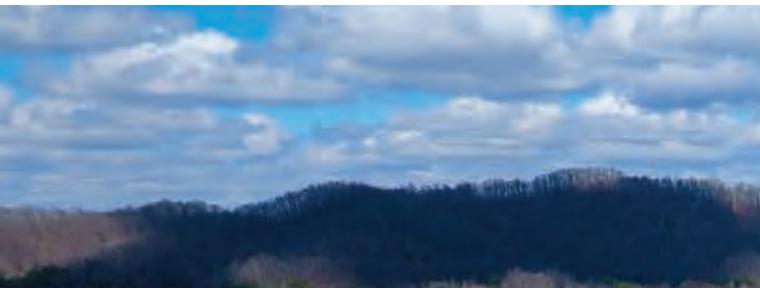
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"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."

- *Jane Jacobs*, American author and activist for healthy and vibrant communities



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[Cover Image]

Main St. in downtown  
Manchester

Source: The Makery

[Previous Page]

Downtown Manchester  
Source: Clay County  
Historical Society

[Right]

2018 Manchester  
Intern Cohort



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[Right]  
2018 Manchester Intern  
Cohort conducting an  
inventory of downtown



## Executive Summary

Manchester, Kentucky, is a unique city. The demographic data or national press present the impression the city is beyond repair. However, after arriving in Manchester and experiencing the city another story appears - one of opportunity, passion and hope. The city is not without challenges, and one does not have to look far to see the physical embodiment of the 2014 *New York Times* article declaring Clay County, where Manchester is the county seat, as the hardest county in the country to live in (New York Times, 2014). These physical embodiments are hardly the majority - they are just the loudest visually. The buildings that represent the future, such as the retail shops along Main Street, are the antidote to dereliction. These historic buildings with their vibrant window displays and exquisitely laid limestone walls are the essence of Manchester's spirit. They represent property and business

owners risking everything for their community; showing the pride and passion they have for Manchester by investing in it. The investments made by these downtown champions are large on an individual scale, but in the bigger picture of downtown revitalization they highlight how a relatively small investment can have a significant overall impact.

Many revitalization efforts in Kentucky's Appalachia have focused on large initiatives from state or federal governments. These projects, such as industrial facilities, are often underutilized and disconnected from the local economy. The impact of existing, local investments in downtown Manchester highlight the opportunity of bite-sized projects. These smaller projects employ a holistic and incremental approach to downtown revitalization.

The Downtown Plan for Manchester isn't a long range planning or visioning document, but rather identifies the existing character of downtown Manchester as a foundation for future revitalization efforts. This plan identifies what is great and already working in downtown Manchester, and what can be done to enhance and amplify that greatness. Undertaken during the summer of 2018 by four multi-disciplinary student interns, this academic effort was designed to create a living document that shares participation in downtown revitalization efforts between local governments, nonprofits, property owners and local leaders alike. This process provides a shared ownership and can relieve financial and capacity bottlenecks that often exists in rural communities allowing efforts to move forward.