

## REVIVING DOWNTOWN

### *Economic Revival and Planning for Future Development*

The core of most cities lies in its downtown district: a reflection of history, commerce, pride, prosperity, and community investment. For decades, the City of Shakopee struggled to garner attention to its historic downtown district, despite drawing millions of visitors every year to its iconic attractions such as Valleyfair, Minnesota's largest outdoor amusement park; Canterbury Park, one of two horseracing tracks in the state; the Renaissance Festival; and much more.

In order to revive its downtown, Shakopee realized it had to make a number of changes and figure out how to attract investment into the area. In 2014, the City adopted a [County Road 101 Marketing Plan](#) to help the district get back on track. Through partnerships, studies, and programs, the city went from 40% vacancy to nearly zero, adding 27 new businesses in its downtown since 2014. Downtown Shakopee now offers more variety in services and businesses from local coffee shops and biker-chick stores, to much larger businesses like [Amazon](#), [Shutterfly](#) and [MyPillow](#) settling minutes away from the downtown area. Despite downtown being primarily a commercial district, the City's [Comprehensive Plan](#) also plans to bring in more residential development to enhance the activity of Downtown.

It is vital to have people who truly care about Downtown Shakopee to invest in its revival. The City saw all these opportunities and realized the underutilized potential to transform downtown into a destination—one that will open doors to more employment, economic vitality, and residents.

## WHAT MAY HELP OTHER COMMUNITIES?

### *Area Studies and Identifying Needs*

Shakopee began digging into its past work and found studies on downtown that dated back to 1974. Despite all those years of studies, there was never any follow up or investment committed to downtown. In 2013, the City proposed to evaluate its current land use and future market potential for the CR 101 corridor to identify issues, existing assets, and strategize ideas that could improve the economic climate. One result was the [County Road 101 Marketing Plan](#). The plan contains a detailed study on existing conditions, visions, goals, and implementation actions for land use around transportation, infrastructure, leveraging the riverfront, marketing, and residential development.

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

**COUNTY:** Scott  
**POPULATION:** 39,981

### Shakopee:

- is home to several entertainment destinations including Valleyfair and Canterbury Park.
- houses big businesses such as Amazon, Shutterfly, and MyPillow.
- used partnerships and collaborations to bring stakeholders together and create a sense of community.
- took proactive measures in prioritizing goals and objectives at the City level.
- is working towards creating a destination Downtown to bring residents and visitors alike to the area.

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### OTHER RESOURCES:

- Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD)
- Mainstreet Program
- Façade Program



Downtown Shakopee is primarily commercial, but it is planning for high-density residential development to be incorporated in its efforts in revitalizing the area.



When a developer is interested in developing in downtown Shakopee, the City will have lots ready for development.



Huber Park was built in 2007 and serves as a gathering space for families, concerts, and other community events in downtown.

## Resources and Programs

Shakopee took advantage of all possible resources available including the county's [First Stop Shop](#) program, which provides businesses with building and site selection services, comprehensive data collection, and business assistance with permitting and development processes for all Scott County communities.

Another key program was [Main Street Shakopee](#), a collaborative community-wide effort to revitalize, build, and sustain their historic downtown and Highway 101 business district. The Main Street Shakopee Design Team preserves local heritage, history, and culture through revitalization of public spaces. Other efforts of the program included fundraising for physical improvements in Downtown.

The City also used a [Façade Program](#) that allows businesses to apply for a forgivable loan for exterior building improvements. This helped push for historic renovation on some downtown buildings. Shakopee has various programs and [resources](#) to support economic development for both existing and new businesses.



The Holmes Street Tunnel Mural is the first mural initiative and project launched by Main Street Shakopee as a community-wide effort to revitalize downtown. The tunnel is a bike/ped friendly path that lies in Downtown Shakopee, along the Minnesota River.

## Partnerships and Collaboration

Led by [Mainstreet Shakopee](#), members of a local church and many community residents volunteered their time to help create a mural for the [Holmes St. Bike Tunnel](#). Home Depot donated paint while local church members volunteered to help prime the tunnel.

Through nonprofit organizations such as the [Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers](#) (MCCD) and other key stakeholders, Shakopee could access funding, support, assistance, resources, and programs for its downtown community. When it came to local businesses and the community, it was essential to listen to one another. These connections, networks, and collaborative efforts were key in ensuring that the stakeholders remained up to date and the City stayed on track with its plan to revive Downtown.

## Little Steps Make Big Changes

For Downtown Shakopee, it was the little steps that counted. Making small changes such as updating street signs and adding bike racks to modifying ordinances that would allow outdoor dining, all made a difference in the development, character, and feel of its downtown. In June 2016, Downtown Shakopee held its first [“Open Streets”](#) event, where local businesses, families, and the community came together for a day-long street festival, by closing off vehicle traffic. To further encourage growth and development, the City also bought used car lots throughout its downtown to work directly with developers interested in investing in the area.

As times are changing, the City found it important to have a “reality check.” Downtown Shakopee is an example of a community in change, and it is aware of the reality of needing to modify its expectations to meet the needs, demands, and changing trends of not just its residents, but the region and the world changing around them. Shakopee's Comprehensive Plan serves as a road map to help further guide and implement development in Downtown as they continue to grow, transform, and prosper.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- 2016 EDAM Business Retention and Expansion Award - Rahr Corporation
- 2014 EDAM Business Recruitment Award - Shutterfly

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