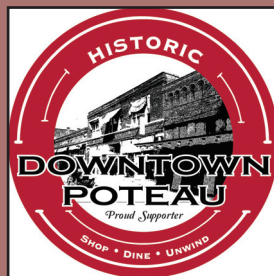


Historic  
Downtown  
Poteau, inc.

Poteau  
Main Street  
Matters, inc.

# Paving the way to a Better Future for All of Poteau



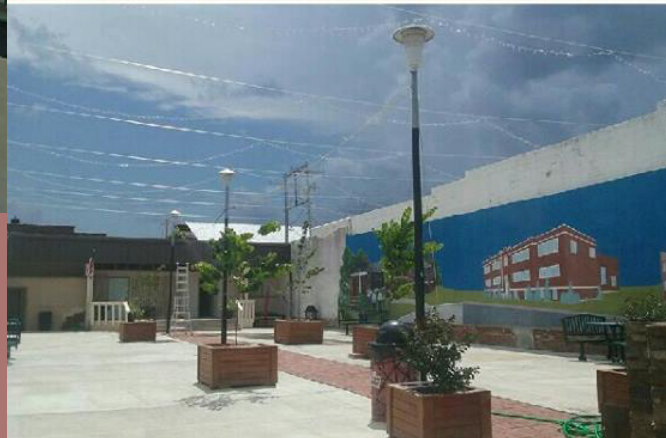
Shop | Dine | Unwind



Before



After



Together, We make the Difference!

# Who We Are

Formed in October, 2005, Poteau Main Street Matters dba Historic Downtown Poteau, inc. is a 501c3 charitable corporation.

Our focus is on the preservation and revitalization of the downtown area, while at the same time having a positive impact on both the city and the region. This is done through economic development, historic preservation, beautification, promoting business and cultural events, and business recruiting and retention.

In 2013, in an effort to rebrand the downtown area to a wider audience, we renamed our organization “Historic Downtown Poteau, inc”, since that better defines who we are.

At the same time, under the direction of Eric Standridge, a series of exciting new programs was developed to rebuild and promote the downtown district.

The new director has over 20 years experience in the field. After an in-depth study of the downtown area and of Poteau overall, the Downtown Poteau Revitalization Project and the Poteau Economic Development Plan were created. The downtown area was first modelled in 3D to help determine the best course of action. Meanwhile, an in-depth asset

and business inventory was taken. These led to major infrastructure improvements and an increased occupancy rate.

The Downtown Poteau Revitalization Project consists of several phases. The first phase was research and planning, followed by phase II which was a general clean-up of downtown. Phase III consisted of infrastructure improvements. Today, we are currently in the fourth phase, which focuses on business retention and recruiting, which overlaps the Poteau Economic Development Plan and consists of several business “beautification” projects.

The Poteau Economic Development Plan is ongoing and consists of research, branding, and marketing (including promotions and events). The core aspects of the plan fall near the final phases of the Revitalization Project.

Concurrently, a plan was developed to upgrade the downtown park, also known as the “Town Square”. This project is nearing completion, with only the stage area being left to complete.

The end result is to have a positive socio-economic impact throughout the region, as well as to serve as a model for other small towns within the trade area.

**“It’s really kind of hard to be a suburb of nothing. If you don’t have a downtown, you really don’t have anything. It’s hard to build a community around parking lots and subdivisions.”** - Ed McMahon

# Economic Impact

89%

## Occupancy

Rate

Up from -20%  
in 2013

## Number

of Jobs

Up from less  
than 150  
in 2013

+500

4000

## Vehicles

Visit downtown each day  
Based on 2013 traffic counts

**JOBS:** As a district, Downtown Poteau employs more people than anywhere else in the area. We create jobs by recruiting new businesses to fill old buildings. More business creates more opportunity, which leads to a better quality of life.

**IMAGE:** A clean, inviting downtown provides a positive image of Poteau. This not only generates tourism dollars, but also sets the tone for perspective businesses coming to the area. Typically, when someone visits a new town for the first time, they begin by visiting the city's center.

### IMPROVED LIVING CONDITIONS:

Cultural events and activities not only bring people to Poteau, but they also help improve the quality of life in the area by focusing on entertainment, education, and historical awareness. These help improve pride in the region and foster an attitude of growth and sustainability.

**MARKETING:** As Downtown Poteau continues to see a massive rebirth, new resources will become available to market, the downtown area, the city, and the region. A positive new branding campaign is underway that will help establish the downtown area as a destination point. As more people visit the downtown area, that will also increase traffic to the city and will filter in to nearby areas, as has been evidenced in recent years.



We are focused on Revitalization, which includes Economic Development, Beautification, Preservation, Tourism, cultural events, and an Increased Quality of Life.

5

# Revitalization

An effective revitalization project encompass three distinct segments. These segments include beautification and preservation, economic restructuring and development, and innovative events and promotions.

For the first several years, HDP has focused on beautification and preservation, with an emphasis on infrastructure. This lays the groundwork for future projects. For example, it would not be wise to have large scale events that draw in hundreds of people if we have a run-down downtown district. With a clean district, that ensures that those people that come to the events will return time and time again.

The same can be said for business recruiting and retention. By providing a clean and comfortable downtown area, we promote business growth. No

business wants to relocate into an area that looks as if though it has been abandoned.

Now that the downtown area is presentable, we have been working on bringing out new marketing tools while at the same time recruiting new businesses to the downtown area.

These efforts have increased the occupancy rate downtown to close to 90% of the available buildings. We are working on opening avenues for even more retail and services. These revitalization efforts have created several hundred new jobs. Moving forward, new projects will continue to reinforce the revitalization efforts, which should lead to new jobs and will attract more people in to the region. Our goal is to serve as an example for surrounding towns and to assist in regional growth through revitalization.



# Future Goals

We have come a long way in just a few short years, but there’s still a long way to go. Right now, people are just starting to realize the change that has been happening in downtown, but it’s going to take a lot of promotion and marketing to bring in people from outside of the area. As we move to complete the core beautification projects, the next step is to market the downtown area.

Our goal is to create a historic downtown district that draws in people from all over the country. To do this, we must continue pushing the revitalization project in conjunction with facilitating a new, massive branding campaign for the downtown area.

Major upcoming goals include:

- Rebuild Store Facades
- Finish Town Square Project
- Create/Sign additional parking
- Expand into Residential Revitalization
- Increased quality events
- Recruit new business downtown
- Rehabilitate “abandoned” buildings
- Expand revitalization efforts in the secondary downtown district areas
- Increase advertising/promotion of the downtown area through local and regional outlets
- Increase awareness of historical assets both locally and regionally to further brand the downtown district as a destination point

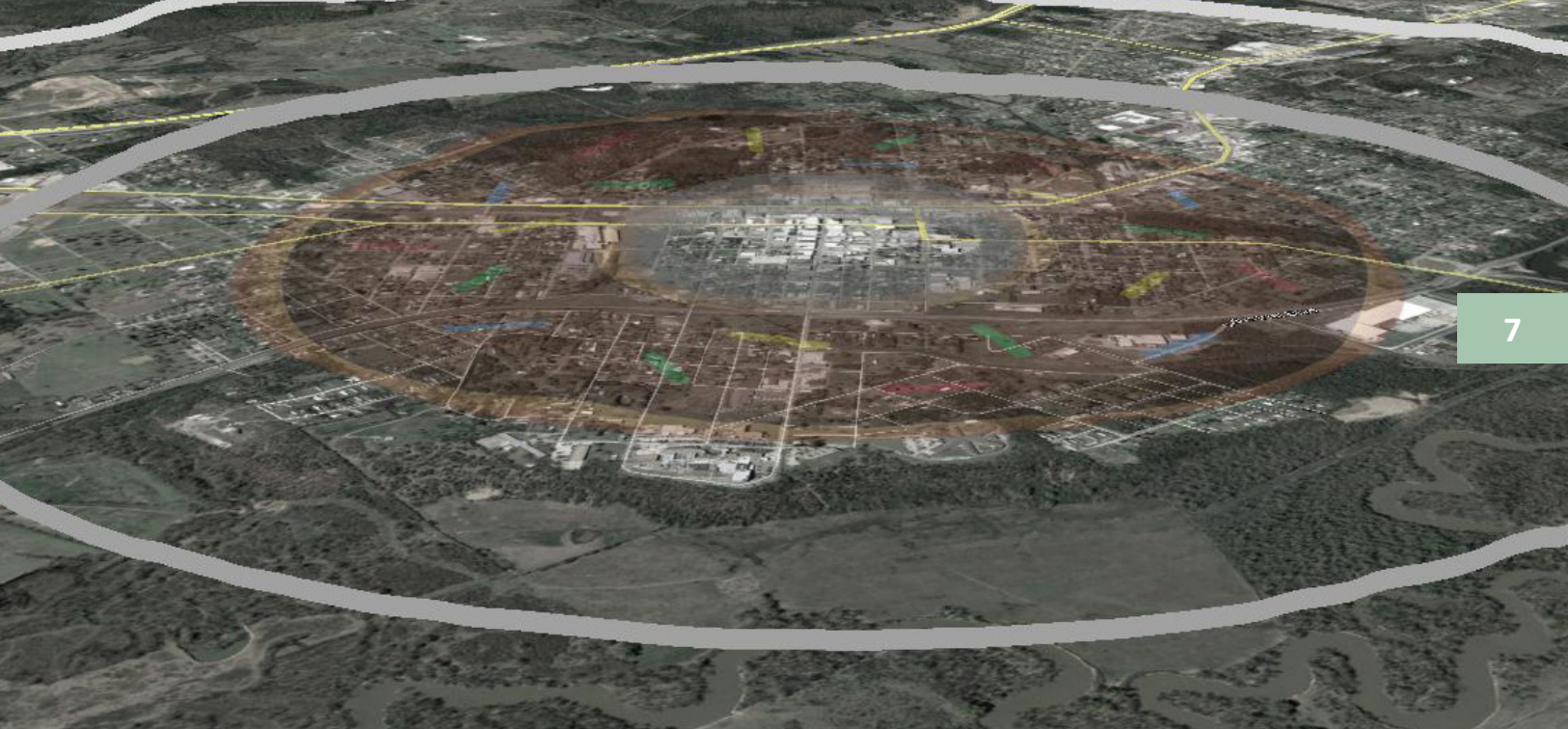
Table 1.1: Reinvestment table

Total Projects	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Private Reinvestment Downtown	56,000	1.2m	1.5m	2.8m
Park Project	-	2,000	12,000	4,000
Paint Downtown Beautiful	-	2,000	4,000	1,000
Facade Improvements	400	1,300	2,700	3,200
Downtown Market	0	0	200	1,500

# Reinvestments

The table above shows the amounts that HDP and downtown businesses have reinvested in to Poteau through the Revitalization Project. The table represents major projects, however, over the course of three years, several million has been spent on

various projects throughout the downtown area. These reinvestments have a positive impact on all of Poteau as they not only funnel money back into the local economy, but they also help create an attractive and vibrant city core.



# Area Impact

In the 1960's, urban planners coined the term "Doughnut Effect". This is when the downtown of a city becomes abandoned as people and activities shift out to the suburbs, leaving a hole in the middle; like that of a doughnut.

As the city core becomes less important, buildings are abandoned and begin to decay. With time, this blight expands further outwards, until only the outlying areas are productive. In effect, this causes a segmentation of the city which results in job loss, stagnation, and a loss of identity, especially where historic buildings are located.

With time, the effects of this radiate outwards, impacting area businesses and residential property values.

By stopping the doughnut effect, downtown planners not only create a more beautiful downtown district, but also have a positive effect on surrounding businesses as progress and revitalization expands outwards.

In time, the vitality of the core district reaches an ever-expanding sphere of influence, encouraging more growth, increased tourism, stronger communities, and establishing a solid community identity.

In real-world terms, these factors help increase business revenues, provides increased city funding, fosters community involvement, and increases quality of life.

**HISTORIC DOWNTOWN POTEAU, inc.**  
222 1/2 Dewey Avenue | Poteau, Ok | 74953  
[PoteauMainStreet@Windstream.net](mailto:PoteauMainStreet@Windstream.net)