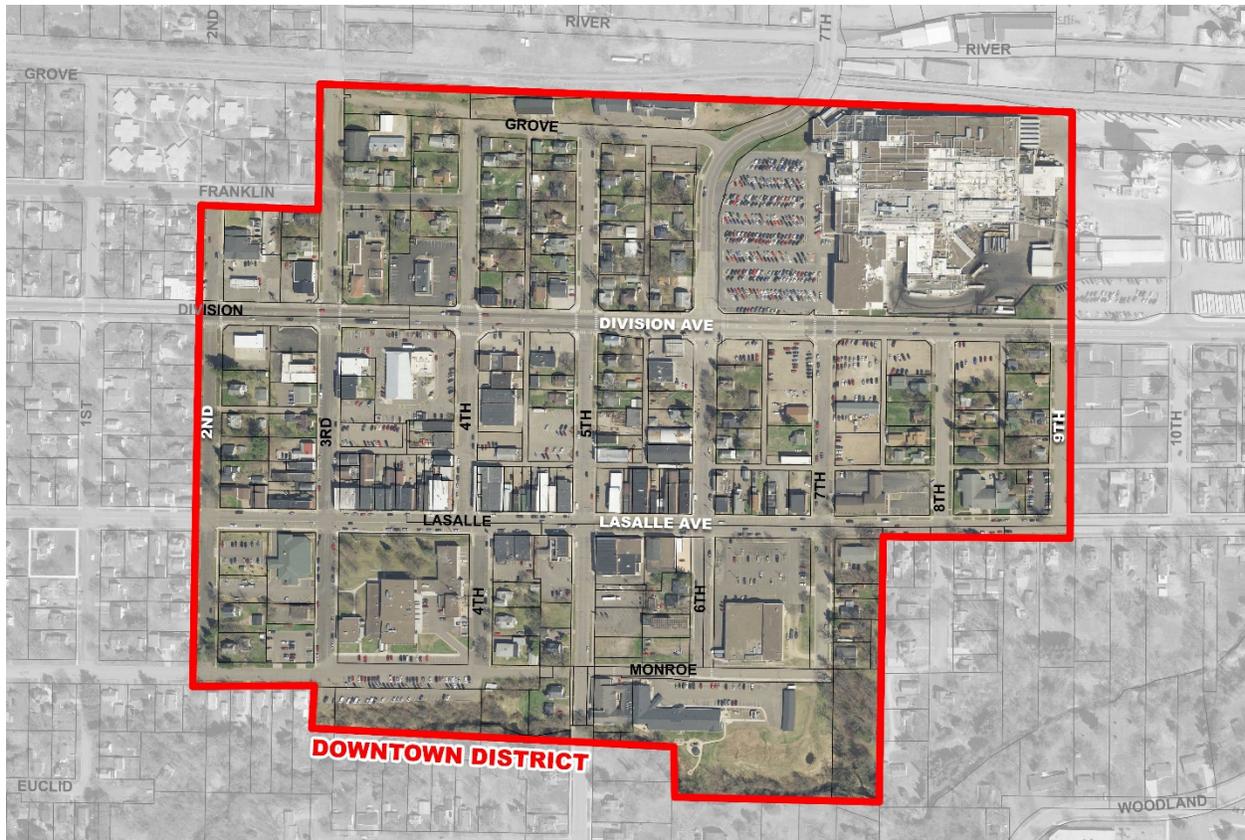


WHAT IS CONSIDERED “DOWNTOWN”?

As the central business district, Downtown Barron covers nearly 66 acres and has roughly 200 parcels. This district includes historic LaSalle Avenue, Division Street (USH 8) commercial district, and properties along the cross streets between from 2nd Street to 9th Street. See the map below.



HOW IS THIS GOING TO DIFFERENT THAN THE 2015 BARRON PLACEMAKING REPORT?

We understand that this planning process comes on the heels of a broader “placemaking” report that provides great insights and overarching recommendations for the community, including the downtown, vetted through an array of stakeholders. This visioning process and market analysis will create a foundation to define a business-like strategic plan for downtown Barron with a more detailed focus on La Salle Avenue and Division Street. The strategic plan shall address the following issues:

- 1) Strengthening and retaining existing downtown and LaSalle Ave businesses;
- 2) Attracting appropriate businesses to downtown and LaSalle Ave;
- 3) Stimulating the development of downtown and LaSalle Ave’s underutilized real estate;
- 4) Improving the physical appearance of both public spaces and private property;
- 5) Making downtown and LaSalle Ave parking and traffic patterns customer friendly; and,
- 6) Marketing downtown and LaSalle Ave to current and potential spenders.

ARE WE PLANNING TO USE THE IDEAS RECOMMENDED IN THE PLACEMAKING REPORT?

The LaSalle Avenue Revitalization Plan will look to mitigate the concerns outlined in the Placemaking Barron Report, including:

- Need to make downtown more welcoming by increasing downtown revitalization and vibrancy.
- Need for an outdoor community gathering place downtown with four-season amenities and activities.
- Consideration for outdoor shopping and eating is desired, including use of parklet design if it's not feasible to expand the sidewalks.
- There is lack of community identity in the public landscape. Placemaking Barron report discusses the potential to incorporate the "Barron Bear" into the streetscape from direction signage to pavement treatments to (climbable) statues. This concept will be evaluated and vetted through this planning process.

Outside of the general concerns identified above, there are also more specific concerns and recommendations for the study area, as summarized below.

- In the downtown's west end of LaSalle Avenue there is a need for streetscaping and other elements that help enhance the community identity and pride. Building facades and uses need to be improved to further encourage activity and vitality in the core of the downtown. There is potential to re-imagine the County Courthouse green to provide for events and general leisure activities.
- Similar to the west end, the east end of LaSalle Avenue needs streetscape enhancements. Uniquely identified in this portion of LaSalle Avenue are many blank building walls that provide an opportunity for adding visual interest such as murals. Other concerns needing improvement include the lack of greenery and social interaction nodes in this portion of LaSalle Avenue.

WHY ARE WE WORKING ON ANOTHER PLAN FOR THE DOWNTOWN?

The City is budgeting for reconstruction of LaSalle Avenue from Mill Street to 14th Street. The utilities – water and sanitary sewer – are nearly 100 years old and require replacement. This road project will begin as early as 2020, but could potential start in 2021 dependent on funding allocation. With the impending reconstruction project, this planning process comes at a good time to make cost-efficient downtown streetscape improvements. Before implementing any improvements, the City wants to build community consensus to ensure that any improvements are consistent with a long-term vision for the downtown. The final deliverable will be LaSalle Avenue Conceptual Streetscape Plan to guide the final design for the LaSalle Avenue reconstruction project.

In addition to the streetscape plan, this planning process will develop a downtown vision, identify redevelopment opportunities, review the current market conditions, and establishment of a downtown strategic plan. The strategic plan will provide the community with blueprint necessary to attain the LaSalle Ave vision, capture the identified market opportunities, resolve key issues facing LaSalle Ave, and generate participation in the overall LaSalle Ave revitalization effort. The Plan will include overall objectives, policies, goals and City programs to guide the downtown revitalization over the next 10-20 years.