



Figure 4-29



Figure 4-30



Figure 4-31



Figure 4-32

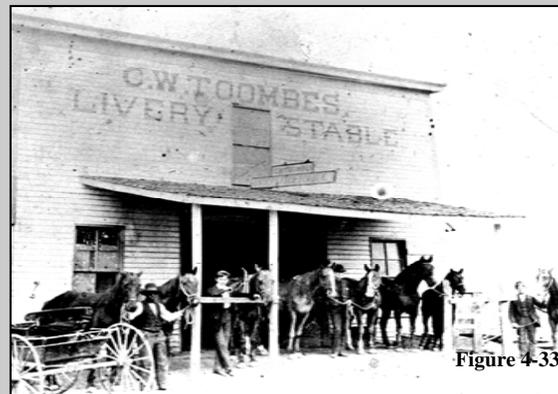


Figure 4-33



Figure 4-34



Figure 4-35

fectively stop the citizens from leaving so there were also outbreaks in towns along the Memphis and Charleston Rail Road. Collierville had 135 cases with 57 deaths that included the death of the Town mayor, Town marshal, and a doctor.

By 1880 the census indicates the population had grown to 1,113 (see Figures 4-33, 4-34, & 4-35). Business continued to grow through the 1900's with many new industries; the cotton industry was increasing with only Memphis shipping more cotton in Shelby County than Collierville. By that time, the Town had a steam powered gin, flour mill, corn mill, seven churches (Figure 4-28), and a bank.

In 1889 a racetrack was constructed along Highway 72. People came from miles around to see the races. The grounds were used to display farm products and handiwork with awards given for the best entries. At the end of the day's races there was a "Stretcher Dance" held with local musicians providing the music.

West Tennessee was known for its hardwood production. Collierville was also a large producer of lumber. A photo of the south side of the square in the late 1900's illustrates the extent of lumber production and impact on the Town (Figure 4-32). There was a lumber mill located at Moore Street now South Main.

By 1929 the boll weevil changed Collierville from a "king cotton" image to a "Dairy Town". There were several hundred dairies in and around Collierville. Three milk pick-up stations opened; Sunlight Produce Company Station, Morning Glory Creamery, and Clover Farm Dairy. Milk was picked-up in Collierville and distributed all over Shelby county and the surrounding communities. This led to the establishment of a cheese plant by Swift and Co. In a

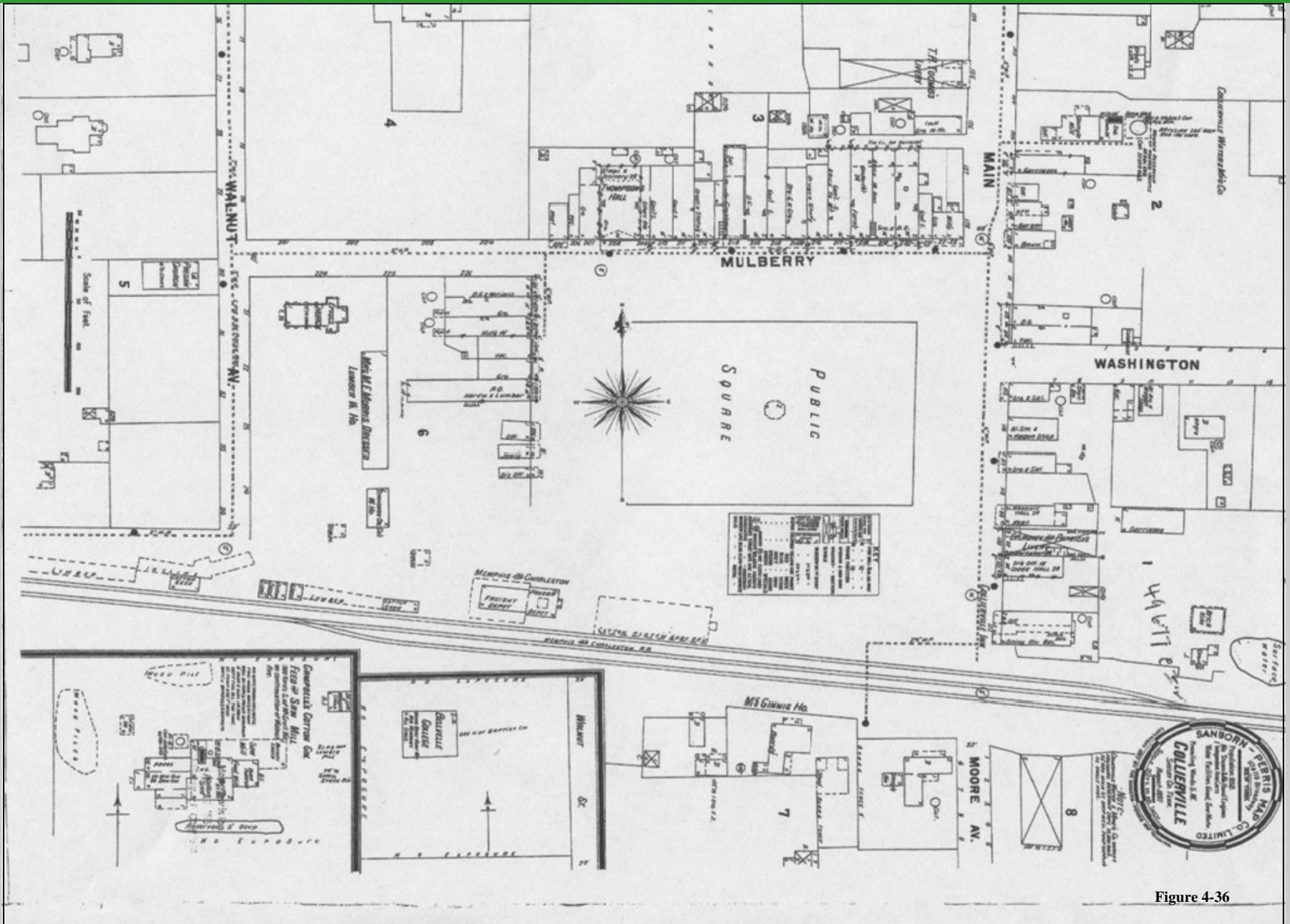
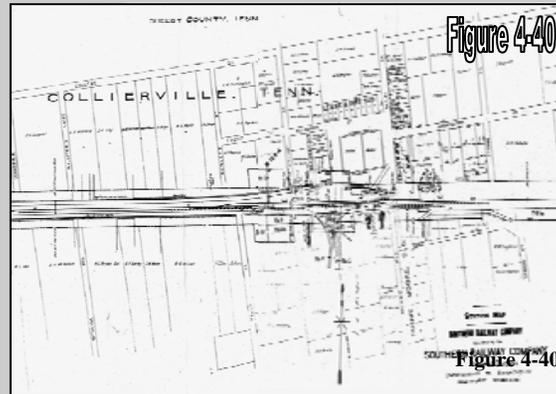


Figure 4-36



very short time Collierville became the cheese making capital in West TN. Many long-time residents look back and remember the annual festival known as the Cheese Carnival, began in 1935. It included fireworks, midways, banquets, dances, parades, concerts, agricultural competitions (see Figure 4-38). It was discontinued in 1940 due to World War II.

After the end of World War II, the soldiers came home. A new building boom started because there were not enough homes for the soldiers when they came back to Collierville and wanted to start their own families. Collierville continued to draw people from the surrounding farming and agricultural communities. Collierville served as a commercial center outside of the region's biggest city, Memphis. The Square has remained the symbolic "Heart" of the community ever since (Figures 4-37, 4-40, 4-41, 4-42 & 4-49).



The current railroad depot was built in 1902 in LaGrange, Tennessee, and moved to the Town Square in Collierville in 1944 (Figure 4-60). The original Collierville depot was built 1854. It was burned in 1863 by General Sherman during the Civil War. An early photo of the depot used after the war was taken by a resident of Collierville is shown as (Figure 4-34). A two story depot was removed in 1944 (Figure 4-39) to allow Center Street to be constructed over the railroad tracts north to access the Square.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY OF DOWNTOWN

### Residential Structures

The residential structures near the Square were developed over time and represent a significant cross-section of the types and styles of housing historically developed in rural West Tennessee (National Register of Historic Places Nomination





Figure 4-43



Figure 4-44



Figure 4-45



Figure 4-46



Figure 4-47



Figure 4-48

Form #3), which include Queen Anne and Colonial Revival influences. Many homes near the Town Square were developed by those who owned or worked in businesses on the Town Square. For example, W.W. McGinnis built numerous residential structures throughout the town's historic core (National Register of Collierville, Tennessee: Her People and Her Neighbors). In 1898, W. W. McGinnis started the McGinnis Hardware and Lumber business on the Square. The business eventually expanded into general contracting, and McGinnis soon become known as a skilled builder. The quality of his work was excellent, as evidenced by structures such as the Collierville United Methodist Church.

Residential structures in the historic core vary widely in architectural style and building materials. Styles range from an early example of Greek Revival, through Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival. While diverse in style, the building forms are largely based on vernacular forms, such as the L- and T-plans, as well as one unusual Y-shaped building. Among the most significant residences are the Green Revival A.S. Stratton House (circa 1865-60) at 373 South Rowlett Street, the Craftsman bungalow (circa 1920) at 126 Walnut Street, and the Prairie School-influenced Isbell House (circa 1920) at 169 East Poplar Avenue. Individually-listed National Register properties located within the local district include the following:

- 90 West Poplar Avenue (Dudney House)
- 259 South Center Street (Houston House)
- 156 West Poplar Avenue (McFerrin House)
- 245 West Poplar Avenue (Thomas House)
- 215 South Center Street (Campbell House)

Figures 43-50 are typical of homes found in the historic district neighborhoods surrounding the Town Square area. Common features include



Figure 4-49



Figure 4-50

the clapboard cladding, steeply-pitched roof with multiple gables, raised foundation, vertically oriented openings, and prominent or wrap-around front porches. Even the district's later residences (see the circa 1940 building pictured in Figure 4-49) share many of the same fundamental design characteristics as earlier homes, like the 19<sup>th</sup> century home on Natchez Street pictured in Figure 4-50. This rather straight forward building form is accentuated by a porch that provides a unique scale, character and detail to the house.

### Commercial and Institutional Buildings

Commercial structures in the National Register district are generally one story in height and constructed of load-bearing brick masonry. There are also several two-story structures and some that are of frame construction. Notable commercial structures include the two-story brick commercial building at 107 North Center Street, and the adjoining one-story structure at 105 North Center Street. An unusual commercial building was the circa 1889 two-story frame railroad hotel known as the McGinnis Hotel, that was located immediately south of the railroad line on South Rowlett Street. The hotel was demolished in 1997. Over the generations, some of the most common characteristics among the Town Square's historic commercial buildings have been (see also Figures 4-58 and 4-59):

- One story in height, with some buildings being two stories (see Figures 4-52 through 4-55);
- Brick facades;
- Parapet facades screening a flat or gently sloped roof;
- Corbelling or other detailing along the top of the parapet wall;
- Canopies (typically non-historic); and
- Storefront with over 50% glazing (often with non-historic alterations).



Figure 4-51



Figure 4-52



Figure 4-53



Figure 4-54

Most of the buildings existing today on the Town Square were constructed between 1895 and 1915, although much of the east side of the Square south of Washington Street was rebuilt after a fire in 1926 (Figure 4-54). The buildings constructed after 1926 indicate a change in commercial architecture away from Victorian designs towards more restrained trends (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form # 6).

The construction of the McGinnis Service Station in 1927 on the east side of the Town Square represented the arrival of the automobile age to Collierville (see Figure 4-55). It was the first service facility in town developed solely for automotive use. The structure, once owned by long-time Mayor Cox, is highly significant to the history and the character of the Square, and its preservation as an iconic structure is an important goal (see Figure 4-55).

With respect to individual buildings, the district's churches, as well as the Collierville Middle School, vary widely in architectural style, scale and building materials. Notable are the stick-style St. Patrick's Presbyterian Church (1886) at 111 Walnut Street, now adaptively reused as restaurant and catering uses, and the Gothic Revival St. Andrews Episcopal Church (1890) at 106 Walnut Street.

Influenced by the Gothic Revival style, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, constructed in 1890, possesses a steep gable roof with wide projecting eaves and a small, cupola-like steeple (see Figure 4-56).

The original high school building (circa 1939) is a creative combination of brick and elaborate cast stone detailing (see Figure 4-57). Unfortunately, its original handsome design has been compromised by later, insensitively designed



Figure 4-55



Figure 4-56



Figure 4-57



Figure 4-58



Figure 4-59

additions.

In summary, the commercial buildings encompassing the Town Square provide a strong identity not enjoyed by other communities in the region. While most of the buildings have been well-maintained and have an attractive appearance, many have undergone inappropriate alterations, such as canopies that are not historically correct.

#### Other Historic Resources Near the Square

The railroad depot building is an extremely significant transportation-related building. This structure was originally built in LaGrange, Tennessee, in 1902. It was moved to Collierville in 1944, and it is typical of depots constructed in small West Tennessee communities during this period. It was relocated to a point 100 feet off of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad in 1976, but it still retains a strong feeling of association with the railroad and surrounding Town Square. Associated with the depot are a number of nearby railroad cars, part of the Memphis Train Museum. The original Collierville train depot was built in the Center Street area in 1886 and remained in that location until the mid-1940s when it was torn down.

Not listed on the National Register nor located within the boundaries of either historic district are several other historic resources within the study area for the Downtown Collierville Small Area Plan. These resources include a group of small wood frame “shotgun” residences along South Street, the Magnolia Cemetery, and the remains of possible Civil War-era earthworks located to the southeast of Town Square. The shotgun houses are all under a single ownership and would represent an interesting and challenging rehabilitation opportunity for low-income housing if determined structurally and financially feasible. With respect to the possi-

ble earthworks, some local historians believe the subject site to be earthworks built to protect the railroad line. However, the Tennessee Wars Commission, which maintains an inventory of the state’s Civil War sites, has questioned the accuracy of the site’s Civil War association.

#### SUMMARY OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS

The National Register historic district (see Figure 4-68) and the locally-designated historic district contain a variety of historic resources, including commercial/institutional buildings, residential buildings, and other resources unique to Collierville’s past. Components within these districts include the historic commercial Town Square, residences, and civic/institutional buildings. An overview of the historic districts, as well as a description of the Town’s historic resources follows.

*National Register District:* The National Register district was nominated under the Secretary of the Interior’s criteria “A” and “C” for the associations many properties have with the development of the Town of Collierville as a significant small trade center for its surrounding plantation agricultural region, as well as for its significance in the area of community planning and the development of its Town Square plan. As such, the district represents a microcosm of small town life in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in West Tennessee. In addition, there are a number of structures individually listed on the National Register, several of which are within the boundaries of the local district.

In 2000, when the Preservation Plan was completed, there were a total of 127 buildings, sites, structures, and objects within the National Register district. A total of 94 of the buildings, sites and structures are considered to



Figure 4-60

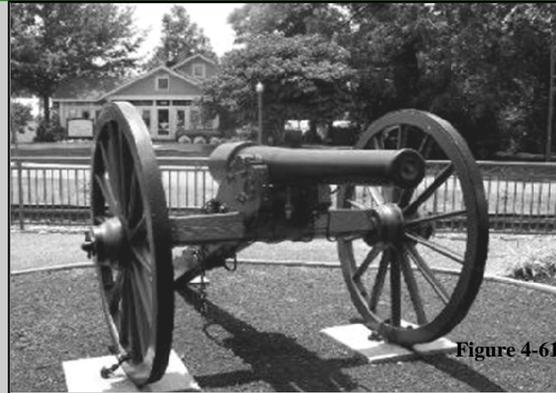


Figure 4-61



Figure 4-62

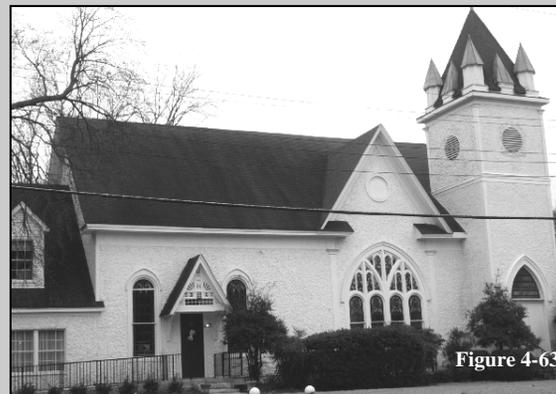


Figure 4-63



Figure 4-64



Figure 4-65

be contributing structures, while 33 are considered non-contributing. Contributing structures are considered historic buildings or sites that are 50 years or older, and that have not been substantially altered in a negative manner. The breakdown of these 127 resources is as follows.

- 79 contributing buildings
- 29 non-contributing buildings
- 1 contributing site
- 14 contributing structures
- 3 non-contributing structures
- 1 non-contributing object

*Local District:* Established in 1989, the locally-designated historic district incorporates the entire National Register historic district and five individually listed National Register properties within its boundaries, resulting in a district of approximately 300 properties. The local district is approximately twice the geographic size of the National Register district by including, in particular, many properties to the north and south of the National Register district. The most important aspect of the local district is the regulations that offer preservation protections to historic resources.

#### COORDINATION/ACTION STEPS

With such a rich and vibrant history, Collierville's historic preservation efforts of the past several years should not end. In fact, much work is yet to be done in the areas of Battlefield Preservation and Interpretation, capitalizing upon Heritage Tourism, creating and implementing a comprehensive wayfinding system to draw residents and tourists to Downtown, and insuring that the street and sidewalk network (see also Chapter 3) is adequate to accommodate cars and pedestrian traffic needed to keep Downtown both a destination and the heart of a living and vibrant neighborhood.

**Battlefield Preservation/Interpretation:**

Over the past few decades, efforts have been made to document Collierville's role in the Civil War (see Figure 4-61). In 2010, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen formed the Heritage Commission, which is charged with discovering, promoting, and protecting Collierville's history. The Town staff should engage the Heritage Commission to:

- report previous and ongoing discovery of historic records of Collierville;
- develop a 5-year cultural resources action plan; and
- create a Battlefield Preservation Plan for the Battle of Collierville.

**Wayfinding:** With the green street lamps and furniture stemming from the Traditions Plan and the improvements to the Square during the 1990s (see Figure 4-65), the Town has already developed a strong brand image for Downtown. In 2009, the Town entered the Civil War Trails program and installed two markers at Tom Brooks Park. During 2011, funded through a Tennessee Wars Commission grant, additional wayfinding signs, a walking tour, and interpretive signs will be created in Downtown Collierville (see Figure 4-66). With the development of the Downtown Collierville Small Area Plan, and to prepare sign design templates for the War Commission Grant, a focus group of local

officials, community, business leaders, preservationist, and historians was assembled to discuss wayfinding issues and to address the desire for increased awareness of Downtown Collierville. The focus group recommended that the Town develop a Wayfinding and Streetscape Master Plan for Downtown Collierville as part of the Visual Cues Initiative described in Chapter 6. Such a plan would include coordinated signage, street furnishings, pedestrian lighting, street plantings, and potentially a new and distinct logo for identifying Downtown Collierville (see Figure 4-67).

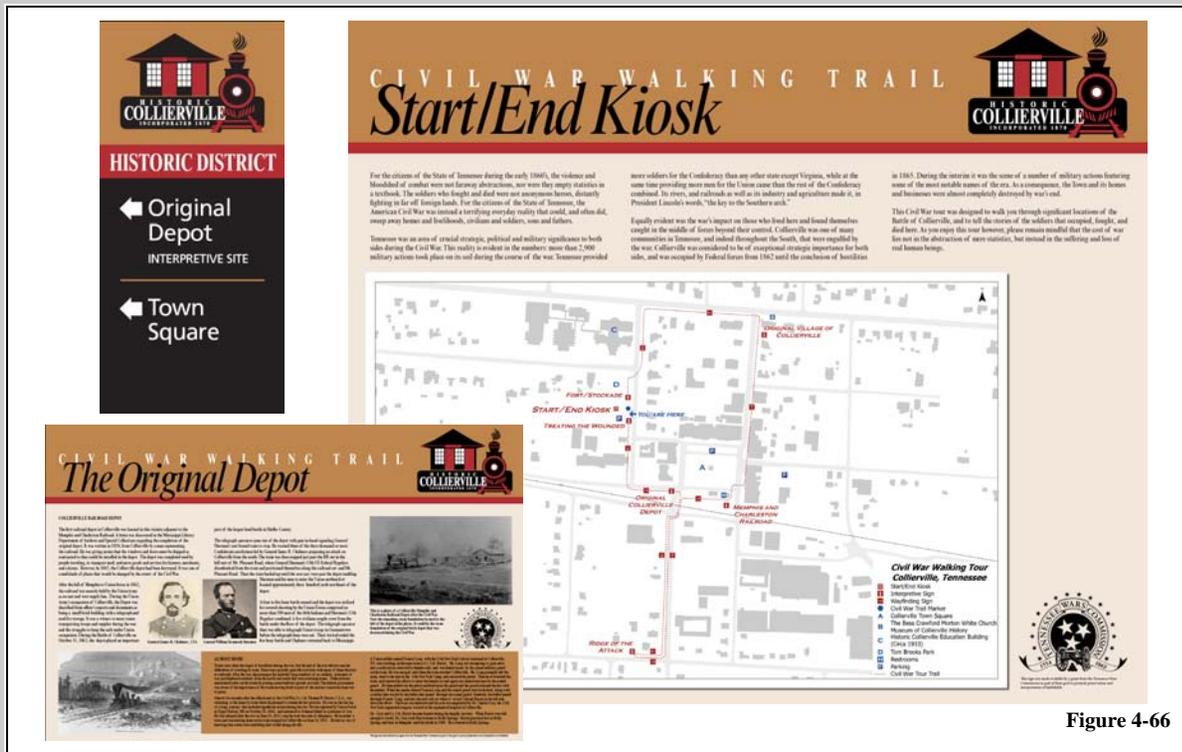


Figure 4-66

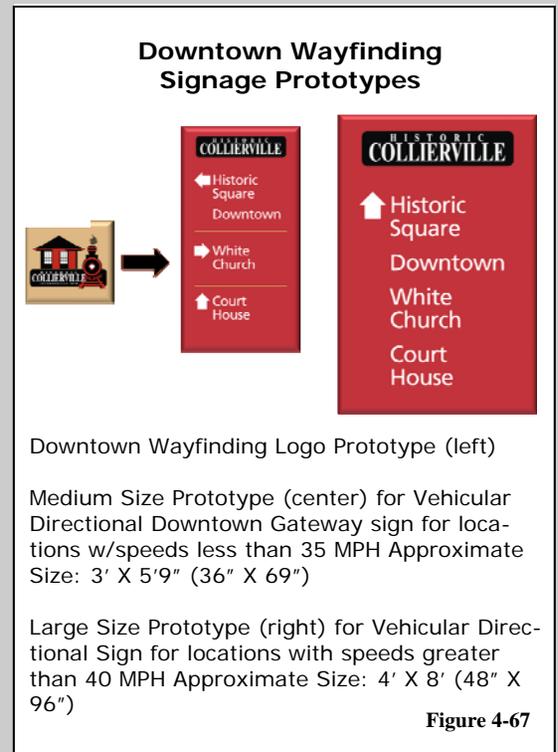


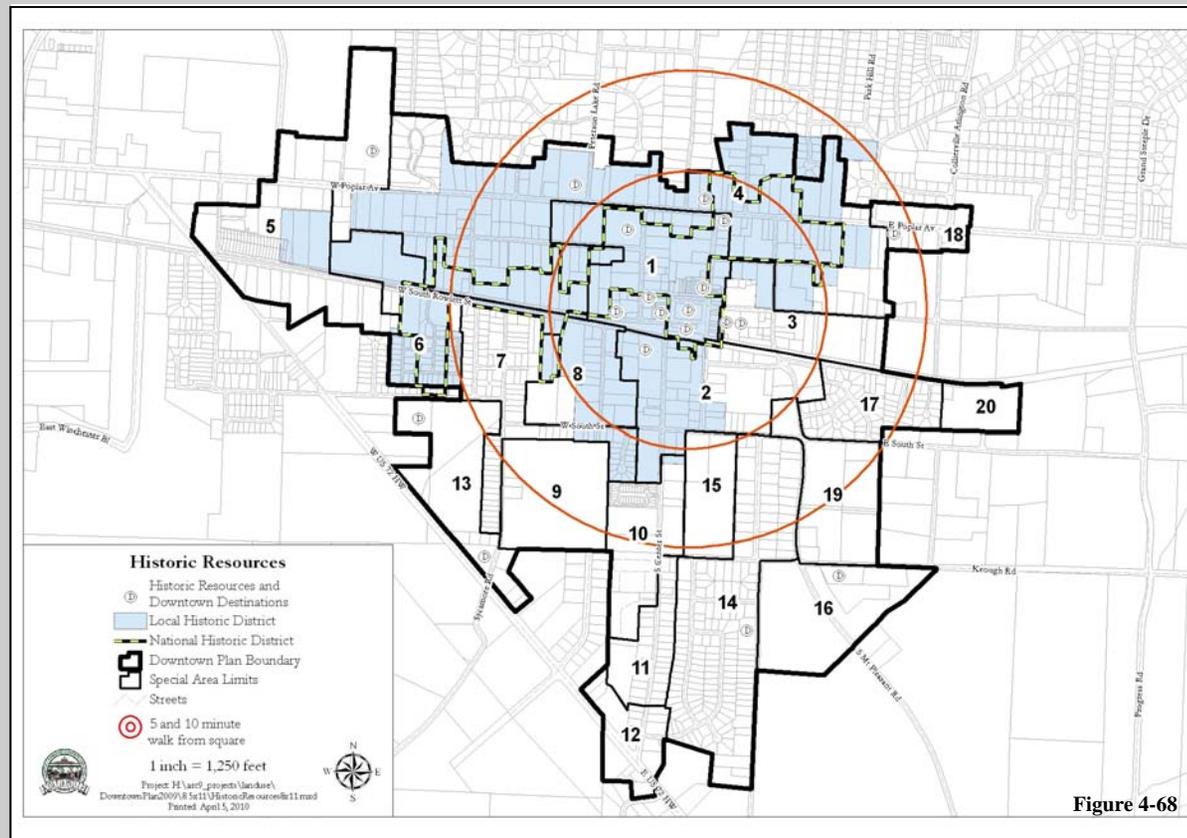
Figure 4-67

**Heritage Tourism:** In 2010, at the corner of Main Street and Poplar Avenue, the Town opened the Bess Morton Crawford White Church Museum of Collierville History (see Figure 4-63). The Museum is an exciting addition to the discovery, promotion, and protection of Collierville's history. This location is mentioned in Chapter 6 as part of the Town's Destination Initiative. Through varied uses and programming, it is anticipated to increase heritage tourism and have a positive economic impact on the Heart of Downtown. The Town, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce should collabo-

rate on ways to expand tourism efforts for Downtown.

**Interconnected street and sidewalk network:** Development in the historic district evolved by informal means, rather than by an original plan. Such development occurred gradually along side streets, such as Walnut Street and North and South Rowlett Streets, as larger tracts were subdivided and economic conditions prompted the development of smaller individual parcels. This informal approach to growth is largely responsible for the

irregular grid pattern of the town's streets, as they were established primarily along property lines rather than planned by design. The existing interconnected street and sidewalk network should remain, with infill of new sidewalks where sidewalks are absent. New sidewalk and road connections should be made where necessary to break up long blocks and provide additional relief to the vehicular and pedestrian network outside of the immediate Town Square area (see Figure 3-18 in Chapter 3 for specific recommendations and also the Priority Projects identified in Chapter 6).



**Collierville Historic District**  
**(added 1990 - Shelby County - #9000305)**  
 Roughly N. and S. Rowlett, Poplar, and Walnut Sts., Collierville  
 (700 acres, 79 buildings, 14 structures)

**Historic Significance:** Event, Architecture/Engineering

**Architect,** et al., McGinnis, W.W.  
**Builder, or Engineer:**

**Architectural Style:** Queen Anne, Greek Revival, Colonial Revival

**Area of Significance:** Architecture, Community Planning And Development, Commerce

**Period of Significance:** 1850-1874, 1875-1899, 1900-1924, 1925-1949

**Owner:** Private, Local Gov't

**Historic Function:** Commerce/Trade, Domestic, Religion

**Historic Sub-function:** Religious Structure, Secondary Structure, Single Dwelling, Specialty Store

**Current Function:** Commerce/Trade, Domestic, Religion

**Current Sub-function:** Religious Structure, Secondary Structure, Single Dwelling, Specialty Store

Figure 4-68