The Experiment of American Pedestrian Malls:

Trends Analysis, Necessary Indicators for Success and Recommendations for Fresno's Fulton Mall

FRESNO FUTURE

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This research paper is a unique contribution for the Fresno Future Conference put on by Dr. Kharbawy at Fresno State University and has not been published elsewhere.

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Abstract

This report is intended for the Downtown Fresno Partnership and its stakeholders to analyze the trends of American pedestrian malls over the last 50+ years to help inform the future of Downtown Fresno's Fulton Mall corridor. The report distinguishes between pedestrian malls and transit/pedestrian malls, taking specific interest in the purely pedestrian malls that were installed in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the key findings from our research analysis include:

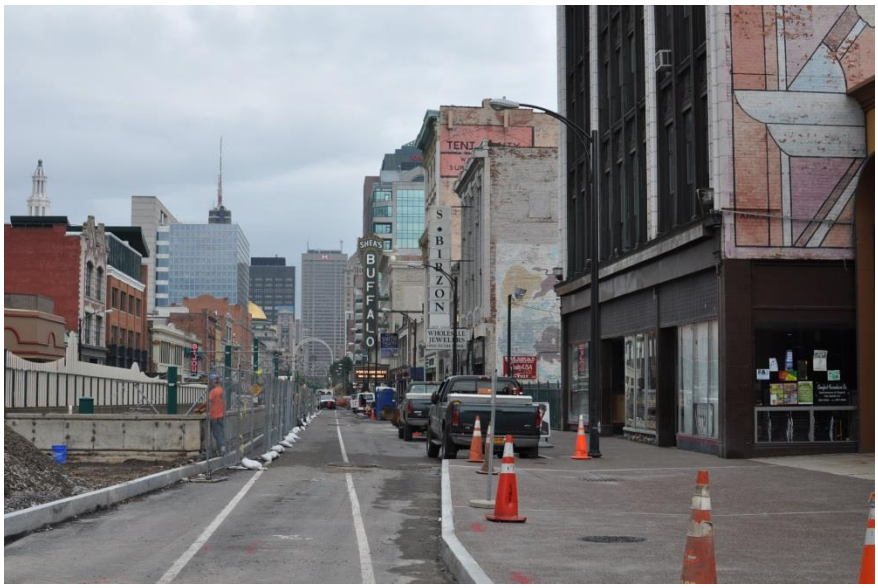
- Pedestrian malls in the United States have an 89% rate of failure. Most have been removed or repurposed. Only 11% have been successful.

- Of the 11% successful pedestrian malls, 80% are in areas with populations under 100,000.

- Certain indicators need to be present for a pedestrian mall to be successful in the United States: near or attached to a major anchor such as a university, situated in close proximity to a beach, designed to be a short length in terms of blocks, in a town/city with a population under 100,000, and/or located in a major tourist location such as Las Vegas or New Orleans.

- Cities that have embraced the Main Street and Complete Streets models have experienced turn-arounds in their downtowns with more investment, higher occupancy rates and more pedestrian traffic.

Recommendations moving forward include adapting a main street approach to revitalization given that Fresno lacks the necessary indicators of success for an American pedestrian mall. The economic importance of the downtown area can greatly be enhanced by incorporating "complete streets" and "main street" design elements. The American pedestrian mall, including Fresno's Fulton Mall, is by most accounts a failed experiment that, left alone, will continue to deteriorate.



Like the approximate 170 other U.S. cities that have changed or removed their pedestrian malls, Downtown Buffalo is currently in the process of removing its failed pedestrian mall.

Photo by Elliott Balch.

I. Introduction and Methodology

This report covers the history of American pedestrian mall, analyzes the research of existing and removed pedestrian malls and posits how the City of Fresno can learn from the experience of other cities and the trends-analysis that emerges from the best practices research.

Urban designer, Jessica Schmidt, defines pedestrian malls as being "characterized as a number of blocks of public downtown streets designated for pedestrian-only use and closed to vehicular traffic." [i] In this report, pedestrian malls are defined as "successful" when they represent a thriving retail corridor with low vacancy rates, high pedestrian traffic levels and a utilized mix of businesses and uses. Successful pedestrian malls are considered to be economically viable. In this report, "struggling" pedestrian malls are defined as pedestrian malls that are in the process of being removed or are being considered to be removed; where there are low vacancy rates, low pedestrian traffic levels and/or a low business mix; and that are not significant economic generators. "Removed" pedestrian malls are the malls that have been taken out and returned to a street and thus were not successful. "Transit Malls" are those corridors that may commonly be referred to as pedestrian malls, but are actually multi-modal, allowing buses, trolleys, or taxis along with pedestrians. Examples of transit malls include Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, State Street in Madison and 16th Street Mall in Denver. Excluded in this analysis are the few pedestrian malls that are small pedestrian plazas that exist off of a main street, those that are embedded in college campuses, those that are enclosed shopping malls, those that are actually parks and those that are non-retail alleyways.

Data was collected by researching news articles, calling city representatives, conducting in-person interviews, reading literature available on the area and/or pedestrian mall, reading professional studies and even visiting some of the cities. This report is particularly interested in pedestrian malls that were constructed around the 1960s and 1970s on corridors that were formerly streets as those are most applicable to the challenge facing Fresno. The report makes an effort to be objective, even though the definitions of "successful" and "struggling" are confined to the ones laid out in this report. We hope to have explained the reasoning behind the labels and hope that this report can assist the City of Fresno and other cities that have struggling pedestrian malls.

II. History

As a response to the suburban, white flight that occurred in many inner cities in the 1960s and 1970s, cities were open to try various urban renewal strategies to bring economic development back into the core of the city. Suburban shopping malls were becoming popular and drawing shoppers out of the downtown. In an effort to draw them back, planners embarked on the experiment of the American pedestrian mall.

Approximately 200 pedestrian malls were installed during this time period. The first one to go in was in Kalamazoo, Michigan and designed by planner and architect, Victor Gruen. Gruen, hailed as inventor of the modern shopping mall, designed many of the nation's indoor malls and outdoor pedestrian malls.[ii]

The pedestrian mall took several architectural and landscape elements from the suburban shopping center such as fountains, lighting, etc. It also aimed to provide the shopper with an "enclosed" experience, cut off from the area around it with design elements included to provide a pleasant environment where the shopper would want to stay, meander and shop more. Scott Doyon of Placemakers.com describes the problem with providing this type of enclosed in an American downtown that had been designed for automobile traffic:

> "The problem was that we had relinquished our streets to the automobile, relegating all other users to second or third class status. We had taken the complexity of the public realm and dumbed it down into a single-use car sewer. Cars good, walking bad. So how did we try to fix that? By doing the exact same thing, except in reverse. This time it was cars bad, walking good, which presents a similar set of problems because community doesn't thrive in all-or-nothing extremes of complexity reduction." [iii]

Planners tried competing with suburban shopping malls by recreating those suburban elements in urban areas and while the first few years of novelty may have been a success in some areas, the verdict has been overwhelming in terms of how the experiment of the pedestrian mall fared.

A representative of the City of Lake Charles' Downtown Development Authority acknowledges that installing pedestrian malls may have actually had the opposite effect and encouraged the flight to suburbia: "What the pedestrian mall effort did was to speed up the flight as the concept totally disrupted access to and from downtown."[iv]

III. Struggling and Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls

Installing an isolated suburban shopping center in the middle of an urban area ultimately proved to be unsuccessful in the United States and most of the malls have been removed or repurposed. The Community Land Use and Economics Group, LLC (CLUE Group) a downtown economic development and historic preservation consulting firm, acknowledges that "most communities found, however, that their new pedestrian malls hurt downtown business, rather than boosting it." [v] The CLUE Group reported that by 2005, fewer than two dozen downtown pedestrian malls remained in the United States.[vi] In 2008, the Downtown Memphis Commission reported that 85% of the original 200 U.S. pedestrian malls had been reopened to traffic, including malls in cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Pasadena, Burbank, Kalamazoo, Raleigh, Portland Oregon, Little Rock and Tampa.[vii] By the mid-1980s, most communities that installed pedestrian malls have now removed them completely or partially.[viii]

Our research validates these statistics, finding that of the approximately 200 pedestrian malls to go in, 89% are removed, struggling or combined with transit, giving American pedestrian malls an 11% success rate.

Table 1: Pedestrian Mall Success Rates in the United States

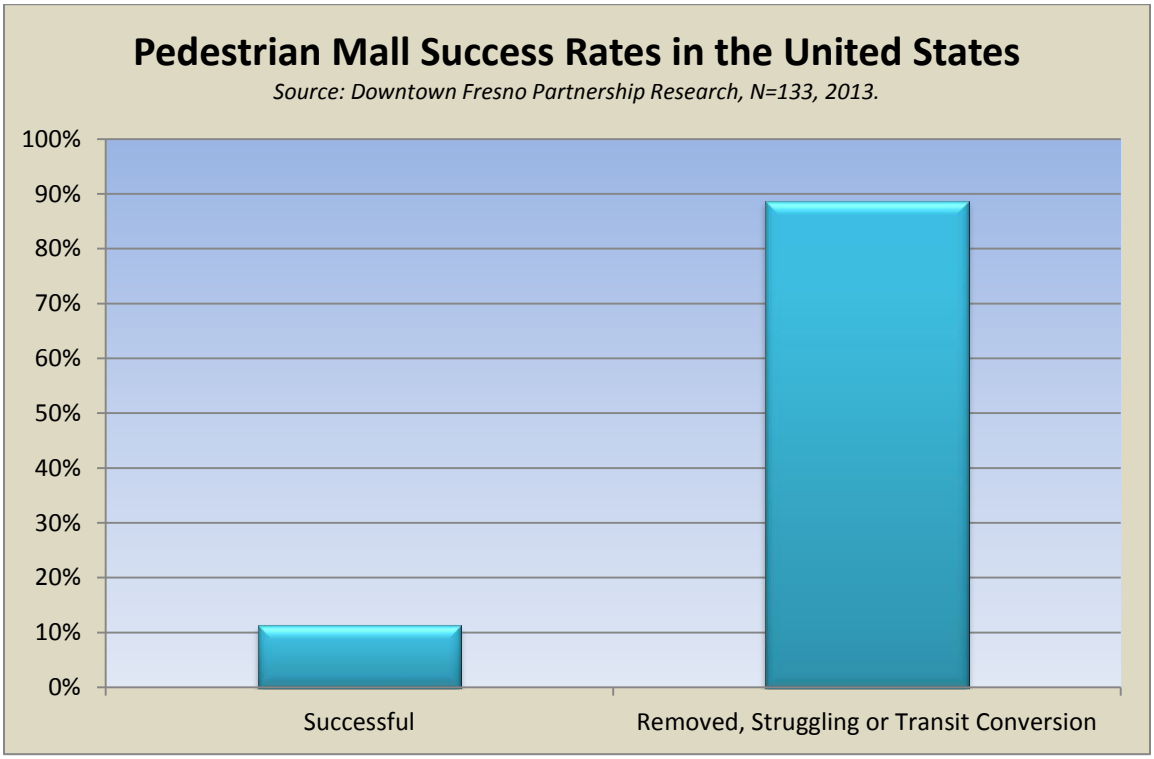
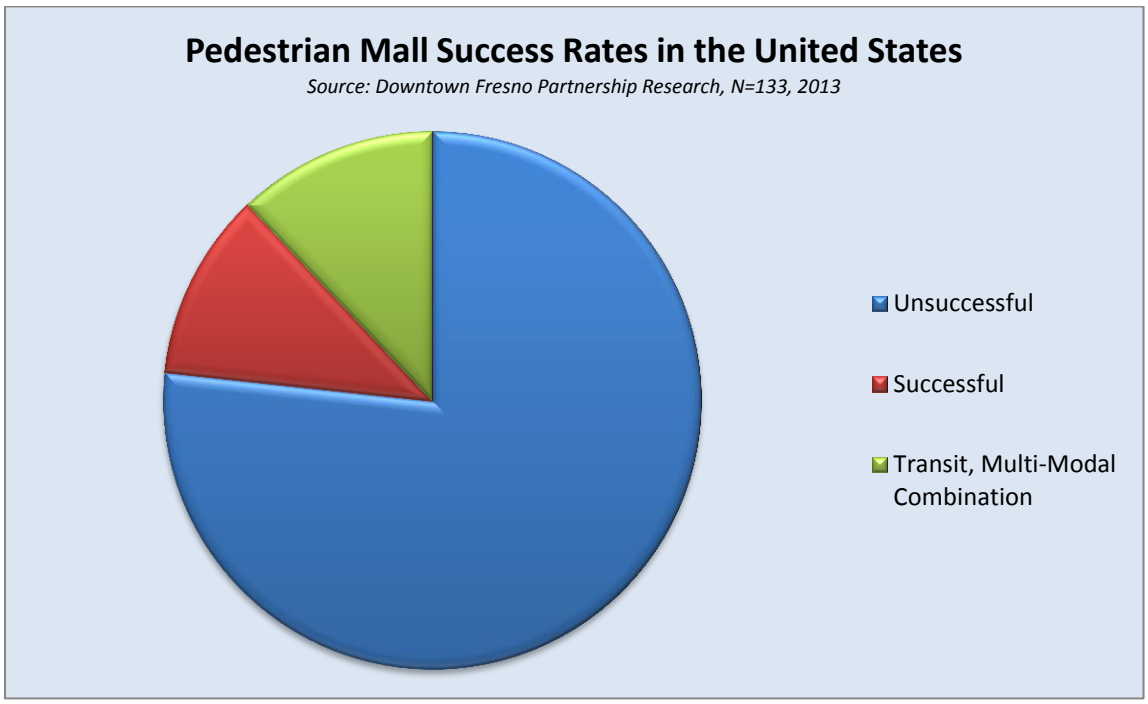


Table 2: Pedestrian Mall Success Rates in the United States, Separating out Transit



In 2008, The Memphis Center City Commission found that when a downtown street gets closed to traffic:

- Vacancy rates along the mall increase and retail mix deteriorates.
- The retail focus shifts from "comparison and destination goods/services," such as department stores and high-end retail, to convenience stores.
- The mall becomes an "uncomfortable and threatening environment" attracting "loiterers and transients." [ix]

The problems of pedestrian malls include a deteriorated retail mix, lack of visibility and access for retail, an uncomfortable and threatening environment, an area that attracts loiterers, disrupted neighborhood traffic flows and a fear of crime.[x] In Kalamazoo, a library researcher wrote of other problems including "the lack of convenient parking, the exposure of shoppers to bad weather, public perceptions on crime and less shopping diversity."[xi] In Governing, senior editor Tod Newcombe wrote, "Many of the pedestrian malls were ill-planned and had little purpose. Because so few people lived downtown, the malls became lifeless after work, attracting crime and loiterers, rather than large crowds."[xii] Pedestrian malls experience a general isolation, including a lack of eyes on the street for perceived safety and comfort, lack of visibility amongst landscaping and difficulties of parking and access. In summation, the Memphis report concluded that "in most cases pedestrian malls in North America have experienced negative economic results from the original conversion."[xiii]

Memphis is a city with a pedestrian-transit mall and has done extensive research on pedestrian malls in other cities. Jeff Sanford of the Memphis Center City Commission stated, "We still have a seven-block-long pedestrian and transportation mall… No question in my mind: if we had it to do over again, we wouldn't have done it… The lesson in my opinion is: don't create pedestrian only streets!"[xiv] Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown concurs with his statement in the Buffalo News in July 2013 that prohibiting cars from the street "essentially killed retail in downtown Buffalo."[xv]

Table 3: Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls in the United States

Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls: Struggling or Removed (Reopened to Traffic)			
State	**Mall Name**	**City**	**Type of Mall**
Arkansas	Main Street Mall	Little Rock	Removed
Arizona	Pedestrian Mall	Yuma	Removed
California	Downtown Mall	Riverside	Removed
California	Fulton Mall	Fresno	Struggling
California	Golden Mall	Burbank	Removed
California	Plaza Park Mall	Oxnard	Removed
California	Pomona Mall	Pomona	Partially Removed
California	Redding Mall	Redding	Struggling
California	Redlands Mall	Redlands	Removed
California	Santa Cruz Pacific Garden Mall	Santa Cruz	Partially Removed
Connecticut	Captain's Walk	New London	Removed

Connecticut	Pratt Street	Hartford	Removed
Delaware	Market Street Mall	Wilmington	Removed
District of Columbia	Liberty Place/Gallery Place	Washington	Removed
Florida	Franklin Mall	Tampa	Partially Removed
Florida	Las Olas Boulevard	Fort Lauderdale	Removed
Georgia	Downtown Mall	Toccoa	Removed
Hawaii	Fort Street Mall	Honolulu	Struggling
Illinois	Downtown Mall	Centralia	Removed
Illinois	Downtown Plaza	Freeport	Removed
Illinois	Landmark Mall	Decatur	Removed
Illinois	Neil street	Champaign	Removed
Illinois	Oak Park Village Mall	Oak Park	Partially Removed
Illinois	Old Capitol Plaza	Springfield	Pedestrian
Illinois	State Street Mall	Chicago	Removed
Illinois	State Street Mall	Rockford	Removed
Illinois	Vermilion Park Mall	Danville	Removed
Indiana	Franklin Square Mall	Michigan City	Repurposed
Indiana	Main Street Walkway	Evansville	Removed
Indiana	The Promenade	Richmond	Removed
Indiana	Michigan Street	South Bend	Removed
Indiana	Walnut Plaza	Muncie	Removed
Iowa	Pedestrian Mall	Ottumwa	Removed
Iowa	Jefferson Street Mall	Burlington	Removed
Iowa	Town Clock Plaza	Dubuque	Removed
Kansas	Atchison Mall	Atchison	Struggling
Kansas	Maple Street	Kansas City	Removed
Kansas	Parsons Plaza	Parsons	Removed
Kentucky	River City Mall	Louisville	Removed
Kentucky	St. Clair Mall	Frankfort	Removed
Kentucky	Old Town Plaza	Covington	Removed
Louisiana	Downtown Mall	Lake Charles	Removed
Maryland	Downtown Place	Salisbury	Removed
Maryland	Lexington Mall	Baltimore	Removed
Maryland	Old Town Mall	Baltimore	Removed
Massachusetts	Downtown Crossing	Boston	Struggling
Michigan	Macomb Place	Mount Clemens	Removed
Michigan	Market Street Mall	Kalamazoo	Pedestrian
Michigan	Michigan Mall	Battle Creek	Removed
Michigan	Monroe Mall	Grand Rapids	Removed
Michigan	Pearl Street	Grand Rapids	Unsuccessful
Michigan	Progress Place	Jackson	Unsuccessful
Michigan	Washington Square	Lansing	Removed
Minnesota	Levee Plaza	Winona	Removed

Minnesota	Mall Germain	St. Cloud	Removed
Mississippi	Main Street Mall	Vicksburg	Removed
Missouri	Pedestrian Mall	Springfield	Removed
Missouri	Pedestrian Mall	St. Joseph	Unsuccessful
Missouri	Main Street	Saint Charles	Removed
Missouri	North 14th Street Pedestrian Mall	Saint Louis	Unsuccessful
Montana	Last Chance Mall	Helena	Removed
New Hampshire	Vaughn Street Mall	Portsmith	Unsuccessful
New Jersey	Trenton Commons	Trenton	Removed
New Mexico	4th Street Mall	Albuquerque	Struggling
New Mexico	Downtown Mall	Las Cruces	Removed
New York	Ithaca Commons	Ithaca	Struggling
New York	Pedestrian Mall	Freeport	Removed
New York	Buffalo Place Main Street Mall	Buffalo	Struggling
New York	Main Street Mall	Poughkeepsie	Removed
New York	State Street Mall	Auburn	Removed
North Carolina	Downtown Greenville Mall	Greenville	Unsuccessful
North Carolina	Downtown Walkway	Winston-Salem	Removed
North Carolina	Fayetteville St	Raleigh	Removed
North Carolina	Franklin Commons	Fayetteville	Removed
North Dakota	Pedestrian Mall	Fargo	Removed
Ohio	Pedestrian Mall	Ashtabula	Removed
Ohio	Middletown Mall	Middletown	Unsuccessful
Ohio	Youngstown Federal Plaza	Youngstown	Unsuccessful
Oklahoma	Main Street Mall	Tulsa	Unsuccessful
Oregon	City Center Mall	Coos Bay	Removed
Oregon	Eugene Mall	Eugene	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Center City Mall	Williamsport	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Centre Street Mall	Pottsville	Repurposed
Pennsylvania	Downtown Mall	Erie	Removed
Pennsylvania	Maplewood Mall	Philadelphia	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Penn Square	Reading	Removed
Pennsylvania	Carnegie Ped Mall	Carnegie	Removed
Pennsylvania	West Allegheny Ped Mall	West Allegheny	Removed
Pennsylvania	Wyoming Avenue Mini-Mall	Scranton	Removed
Rhode Island	Westminster Mall	Providence	Removed
South Carolina	Main Street	Rock Hill	Removed
South Carolina	Coffee Street Mall	Greenville	Removed
South Carolina	Main Street Mall	Spartanburg	Removed
South Dakota	Pedestrian Mall	Sioux Falls	Removed
Texas	Akard Street Mall	Dallas	Partially Removed
Texas	Austin Avenue Mall	Waco	Removed
Washington	Broadway Plaza	Tacoma	Removed

Washington	Occidental Mall	Seattle	Removed
West Virginia	Pedestrian Mall	Huntington	Removed
Wisconsin	Forest Home Avenue Mall	Milwaukee	Removed
Wisconsin	Plaza 8/Harbor Center	Sheboygan	Removed

IV. The Main Street Approach

Once cities and downtowns removed their pedestrian mall and restored it to a main street, there is almost always immediate success. Even the very first pedestrian mall to be installed in the United States realized it needed to be removed to restore vibrancy to the community (Kalamazoo in 1998). The City of Buffalo and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority report that, "90% of cities see significant improvements in occupancy rates, retail sales, property values, and private sector investment in the downtown area when streets are restored."[xvi]

Photo of Burbank's Successful Main Street after Pedestrian Mall Removal.
Photo by Elliott Balch.

Examples of successful mall removals:

- South Bend, Indiana's downtown experienced a 20% increase in retail sales when Michigan Street was reopened to vehicular traffic.[xvii]

- Burlington, Iowa's Jefferson Street's ground-floor vacancies dropped from 80% to 20% once the two blocks were reopened to cars in 1990 and continued to drop to 0% within 2 years of opening.[xviii]

- Louisville, Kentucky's mall reopened and vacancy rates decreased from 80% to 50% and property values increased within one year of reopening.[xix]

- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's mall reopened in 2000 and rents that were $25 per square foot became $65 per square foot and they experienced higher end national chains moving in such as Sephora, H&M and West Elm.[xx]

- Raleigh, North Carolina reopened Fayetteville Street and experienced $1 billion in public and private investments within the first 6 months of opening the mall to traffic and $3.5 billion in the first three years.[xxi]

- Covington, Kentucky's Old Town Plaza reopened and retailers immediately reported year-over-year sales gains of 30%.[xxii]

- Eugene, Oregon's City Center Mall's vacancy rate went from 25% to 6% in four years.[xxiii]

- Oak Park, Illinois' Lake Street's sales went up 15-20% and vacancy rates dropped from 25% to 5%.[xxiv]

- Pittsburg, Pennsylvania's East Liberty Mall's vacancy rates dropped from 60% to having 200 new businesses on that stretch with $80 million in investment in the first 10 years of opening.[xxv]

- Poughkeepsie, New York's pedestrian mall's vacancy rate decreased from 31% to 10% once the mall was opened.[xxvi]

- Waco, Texas' Austin Avenue's ground floor vacancy dropped from 80% to 40% after reopening to a street.[xxvii]

- Burbank, California's Golden Mall went from having very high vacancies to 0-1% vacancy with a mix of local and national restaurants and shops.[xxviii]

- Oxnard, California's Plaza Park Mall gained 14 new businesses, 6 business expansions and 4 major business renovations within the first year of reopening.[xxix]

- Chicago, Illinois' State Street Mall's retail vacancy rate dropped to 1.8% in the first 8 months of opening, whereas in the 1970s, all but 2 department stores had closed along the Mall. From 1997 to 1998, rents have risen to $32.02 per square foot, an 18% increase over a year, 1,000 apartments were created and traffic has returned to the roadway, knitting State Street back into the thriving downtown loop district, which has an estimated 500,000 daytime workers.[xxx]

- Richmond, Indiana's Promenade has experienced 22 new businesses, 4 business expansions, 71 new downtown jobs, 17 façade rehabs, and 4 downtown second-story rehabs. The vacancy rate dropped from 28% to less than 3% within 18 months of opening.[xxxi]

- Louisville, Kentucky's River City Mall's vacancy rate dropped from 80% to 50% within one year, and experience increased property values.[xxxii]

- Kalamazoo, Michigan's Market Street Mall had three major projects under development within the first 2 years of opening and in 2011 had a 0% vacancy rate.[xxxiii]

- Grand Rapids, Michigan's Monroe Mall had 76 vacant storefronts in 1991 and after the mall reopened in 1997, they were all occupied.[xxxiv]

- Providence, Rhode Island's Westminster Mall experienced over $1.5 billion in public and private funding into downtown after reopening.[xxxv]

Fayetteville Street in Raleigh North Carolina set forth several objectives to restore their main street and make a positive transition from pedestrian mall to a quality, accessible place by:

- Creating a level of beauty, ambiance, and uniqueness appropriate to the importance of the street.
- Establishing a comfortable and safe environment.
- Providing continuous visual interest at street level.
- Blurring the line between public and private realms.
- Making the street feel populated.
- Catalyzing activity for at least 18 hours of every day.
- Allowing for the natural diversity of the private realm.
- Creating an environment in which high quality shops and restaurants can succeed.
- Using the public realm to unify the overall composition of the street.
- Highlighting public/civic buildings to punctuate the street and provide a sense of permanence.
- Accommodating diversity and create a street for all citizens by incorporating universal design.
- Stimulating economic development and revitalization of the parcels fronting Fayetteville Street."[xxxvi]

In somewhat of an ironic role reversal, the Main Street approach has become so successful in terms of placemaking and economic development that even suburban shopping malls are modeling themselves after urban main streets to attract customers. The data show that the main street approach restores vibrancy to an urban area and can be utilized as a successful tool in reshaping struggling or unsuccessful urban pedestrian malls.

V. Transit-Combination Pedestrian Malls

Several pedestrian malls have evolved into or started out as corridors that allow for both pedestrians and some type of transit, such as light rail, bus, trolley, or even taxi. The multi-modal component in these spaces have allowed for greater economic viability of the area, greater access and connections, less confusion and actually, more pedestrian traffic. By combining various modes of transportation, these spaces allow for greater access, connections, eyes on the street, and choice for the user. Some of the popular transit-pedestrian malls include Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, State Street Mall in Madison and Denver's 16th Street Mall.

This hybrid approach allows for a pedestrian-dominated space, while incorporating the vital elements of access and connectivity with the rest of the urban grid. This approach requires partnership with local transit organizations, taxi companies, downtown organizations, and other stakeholders. Management of the district can often include a budget to cover maintenance, operations and repairs for the transit-pedestrian mall. Often, these are expensive endeavors. For example, the Downtown Denver Partnership estimated that repairing one street of granite pavers would cost about $16 million.[xxxvii]

Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota Transit-Pedestrian Mall
Photo by Elliott Balch

Table 4: Transit-Pedestrian Mall Combinations in the United States

Transit-Pedestrian Mall Combinations			
State	**Mall Name**	**City**	**Combination**
California	Downtown Mall	Sacramento	Light Rail
California	Parkway Mall	Napa	Transit
Colorado	16th Street Mall	Denver	Transit
Iowa	Walnut Street	Des Moines	Transit
Massachusetts	Essex Mall	Salem	Trolley
Minnesota	Nicollet Mall	Minneapolis	Transit, Bicycle
New Jersey	Washington Street Mall	Cape May	Trolley
New York	Fulton Street Mall	New York City (Brooklyn)	Transit
Oregon	Portland Transit Mall	Portland	Transit
Pennsylvania	Chestnut Street Transitway	Philadelphia	Transit
Pennsylvania	Downtown Canopy and Mall	Wilkes-Barre	Transit
Pennsylvania	East Liberty Mall	Pittsburgh	Transit
Pennsylvania	Gay Street Mall	West Chester	Transit
Pennsylvania	Hamilton Mall	Allentown	Transit
Tennessee	Main Street Mall/Mid-America Mall	Memphis	Trolley
Wisconsin	State Street Mall	Madison	Taxi, Transit

VI. Successful Pedestrian-Only Malls

Successful pedestrian malls are not the norm. Doyon states that, "The ones that work are the exception, not the rule, and they require some particular characteristics to flourish: high levels of tourist traffic occurring for reasons other than the mall is one; large populations of pedestrians (such as universities or dense downtown housing) in close, walkable proximity is another." [xxxviii] Dave Feehan of the International Downtown Association continues this point by stating, "Most have failed and been removed. Reasons include lack of maintenance, management, and marketing; fear of crime; the movement of retail to the suburbs; poor design; and Americans' desire to "park in front of the store." However, some well managed and well maintained examples continue to survive and in some cases thrive…. One factor seems to help significantly: the presence of a major university in close proximity." [xxxix]

Successful pedestrian malls appear to have a formula for success. Analysis of the 11% of pedestrian malls that are considered to be successful reveals that certain indicators need to be present for a pedestrian mall to be successful in the United States. These indicators are: located near or attached to a major anchor such as a university, situated in close proximity to a beach, designed to be a short length in terms of blocks, in a town/city with a population under 100,000, and/or located in a major tourist location such as Las Vegas or New Orleans.

- **Universities:** The CLUE Group notes that in almost all instances, these successful malls are in downtowns housing or abutting universities, hospitals or other large institutional

users – places like Boulder, Colorado (University of Colorado) or Burlington, Vermont (University of Vermont) – whose students, employees and visitors provide a significant concentration of daily customers for these districts' businesses.[xl]

- **Beaches**: Miami Beach, Santa Monica, Newport Beach, New Bedford and Newburyport's pedestrian malls are all located directly adjacent to the beach or coast.

- **Short Lengths**: With the exception of Miami Beach's Lincoln Road Mall, most successful pedestrian malls range from 1-4 blocks in length.

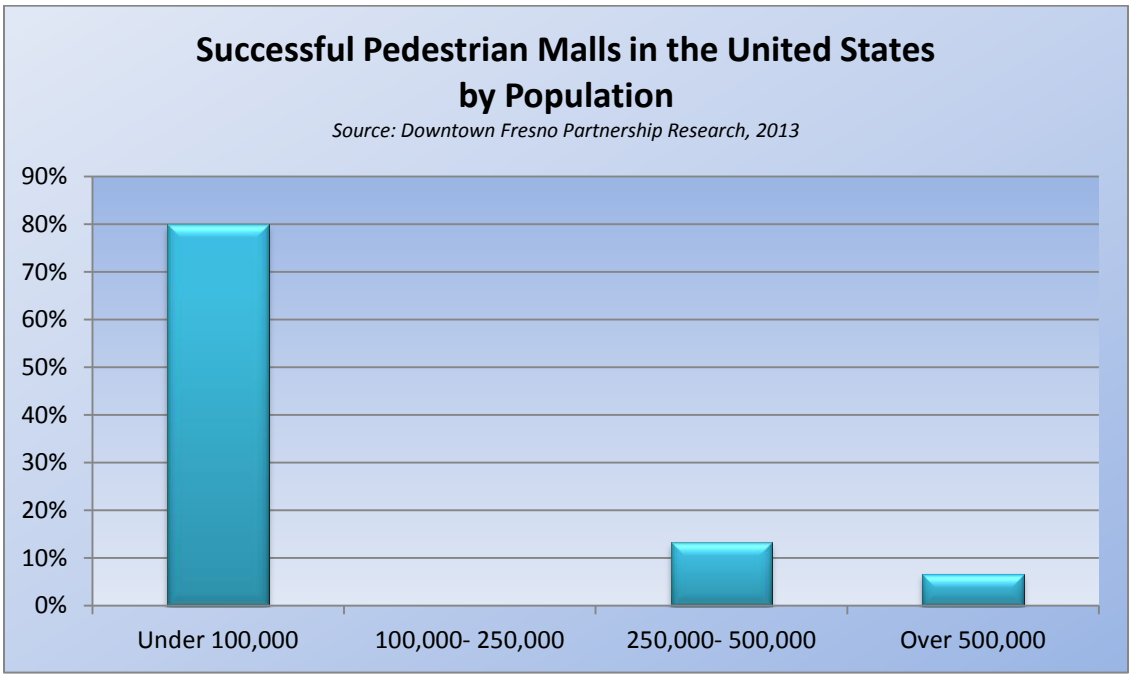
- **High Tourism:** Cities such as New Orleans, Las Vegas and even Cumberland (home to the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad which attracts up to 49,000 passengers a year; and home to the Great Allegheny Passage attracting 100,000 visitors a year) have a dedicated tourist base to frequent their pedestrian malls. It should also be noted that New Orleans' most famous street, Bourbon Street, is not a pedestrian mall.

- **Populations under 100,000:** Only 11% of all American pedestrian malls are considered successful. Of these 11% successful pedestrian malls, 80% are in areas with populations under 100,000. Besides Las Vegas (which we would consider an outlier), there are no successful pedestrian malls in cities over 500,000.

Other research notes that pedestrian malls are successful when it "does not impact high levels of vehicular traffic." [xli]

Miami's Successful Pedestrian Mall by the Beach
Photo by Elliott Balch.

Table 5: Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States by Population



The Memphis Center City Commission found that successful malls like the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder include:

- Varied mix of active uses and activities
- A large population of "captive" users (downtown residents and workers)
    - The journal, Governing, posited that Cities without downtown residential population can hold pedestrian-only events, but cannot sustain a pedestrian mall.[xlii]
- Efficient public transit
- Heavily programmed activities
- Incorporation of efficient public transit
- Strong anchors that draw pedestrians
- Centralized, coordinated retail management
    - Management of the space is crucial. The Downcity Partnership in Providence, Rhode Island stated that "Pedestrian malls only succeed as part of a comprehensive retail strategy that includes a well-planned parking and mass transit system that reinforces the pedestrian mall. Also, centralized or coordinated retail management (CRM) is essential for most communities to

stabilize downtown shopping. This approach employs development strategies, management strategies, and promotions strategies and must have a sound organization strategy as its underpinning" (IDA, 2002).

- Located in a college town or near a college neighborhood
- Well-planned and extensive parking adjacent to the mall
- Located in an area of high tourism
- Frequent and thorough upgrades of the pedestrian mall.[xliii]

Table 4: Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States

Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States					
State	**Pedestrian Mall**	**City**	**Population**	**Mall Length**	**Indicator**
California	Third Street Promenade	Santa Monica	90,377	3 blocks	Beach
Colorado	Pearl Street Mall	Boulder	98,889	4 blocks	University
Florida	Lincoln Road Mall	Miami Beach	90,588	8 blocks	Beach
Iowa	Pedestrian Mall	Iowa City	68,947	4 blocks	University
Louisiana	Exchange Place	New Orleans	360,740	1 block	High Tourism
Louisiana	Fulton Street	New Orleans	360,740	1 block	High Tourism
Maryland	Downtown Cumberland Mall	Cumberland	20,739	3 blocks	High Tourism
Massachusetts	Front Street	New Bedford	95,183	3 blocks	Beach
Massachusetts	Inn Street Mall	Newburyport	17,552	1 block	Beach
Nevada	Fremont Street Experience	Las Vegas	589,317	5 blocks	High Tourism
New Hampshire	Downtown Mall	Lebanon	13,120	1 block	University
New York	Jay Street Pedestrian Walkway	Schenectady	66,273	1 block	University
Rhode Island	Long Wharf Mall	Newport	24,034	1 block	Beach
Vermont	Church Street Marketplace	Burlington	39,522	4 blocks	University
Virginia	Main Street Downtown Mall	Charlottesville	40,482	8 blocks	University

VII. Recommendations

The Fulton Mall is currently operating at 6% of its economic potential, historic buildings are decaying, and it is no longer a space of economic or civic viability.[xliv] The region of Fresno has lost the downtown economic engine. With just an 11% success rate of pedestrian malls that require certain indicators (none of which Fresno has), a pedestrian mall in the middle of a downtown urban area does not meet the criteria to be successful or economically viable.

Based on the findings in this report, we recommend the main street and complete street approaches, reopening the mall to vehicular traffic, restoring a multi-modal space that is welcoming to pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and automobiles. Multi-modal, complete streets organized under a main street model have proven to boost the economic viability of the former pedestrian mall space. Doyon makes the case for complete streets, noting that "when any one class of user dominates the public realm, we all suffer."[xlv] We recommend creating partnerships between stakeholders, engaging downtown property owners and business and communicating with the entire public community of Fresno as downtown's success affects the entire region.

Successful removal of Kalamazoo's Pedestrian Mall into a Main Street
Photo by Elliott Balch

Reference List

Appendix A. Experience of Other Communities with Pedestrian Malls. Retrieved 2 July 2013. Web: http://www.nfta.com/pdfs/Appendix%20A.pdf.

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