



Smart Growth America  
Improving lives by improving communities



# Small-Scale Manufacturing and Place-Based Economic Development: Columbia, Missouri

Next Steps Report  
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## Introduction

Smart Growth America's Small-Scale Manufacturing and Place-Based Economic Development program, a project in partnership with Recast City, is designed to help communities make strategic land use decisions that will enhance small-scale manufacturing and improve economic revitalization. This technical assistance, funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, guides communities to create policies and programs that will support local producers to grow their businesses in target neighborhoods.

Communities requested technical assistance and were selected through a competitive process by Smart Growth America (SGA). Selected communities participated in a four-month project and received a three-day community assessment, during which the project team conducted fieldwork in the local subject area, in-depth interviews with small-scale manufacturers, and hosted presentations and brainstorming sessions with local stakeholder focus groups.

Following a series of extended virtual meetings in the weeks and months prior, the SGA technical assistance team made a site visit to Columbia, Missouri from March 12 to March 14, 2019. The intent of the site visit was to meet with local business and community leaders, share information about local opportunities and challenges, and to provide Columbia with a set of steps to bring more small-scale manufacturing businesses to the focus area—The Loop—a commercial corridor adjacent to downtown that connects the City to major highway routes. The Loop Community Improvement District (CID) leads projects to attract infrastructure investment, support redevelopment, bring the community to the table, and attract businesses to the corridor.



Town Hall Meeting at Parkade Plaza on March 12, 2019

Photo by Chris Zimmerman

In addition to city staff, elected officials, and local producers, the technical assistance team met with property owners, business leaders, entrepreneurs, developers, and financial institutions. The site visit began with a driving tour of the focus area, meeting with The Loop CID Board, roundtable discussions with city staff, food producers, and other makers, and a Town Hall event that drew a crowd of over 160 people. The team visited several small-scale manufacturers, presented to the

Regional Economic Development Inc. (REDI) Board, and met with the Mayor on the second day. The second day also included interviews with business owners, community leaders, and bank representatives. The final day included interviews with key property owners, an in-depth discussion with the CID Board, and review of priorities and next steps.

The technical assistance was designed to build local capacity, support economic development and planning efforts, examine development challenges, assist in potential policy changes, and help coordinate among city agencies and partners.

This memo is a summary of the community workshop and on-site interviews. It includes an assessment of existing conditions in Columbia, along with recommendations for strengthening local small production businesses and supporting investment on The Loop as well as other parts of the city.

Recommendations are focused on actions to:

1. Establish a clear vision for The Loop;
2. Identify, and build upon, catalytic partnerships and locations along The Loop;
3. Build upon the success of the UDC and make permitting, stormwater requirements, other city review processes predictable and transparent;
4. Activate The Loop with branding, programming, and short-term structures to establish its vision; and
5. Provide business development support for small-scale manufacturing businesses to launch and scale on The Loop.

These recommendations will help stakeholders prioritize actions to engage the wider community and carry the effort forward.

## Setting the national context

Our understanding of what makes an ideal environment for manufacturing is changing. Traditional assumptions of large, sometimes polluted and isolated spaces are giving way to manufacturing infrastructure that is small, clean, sometimes shared amongst multiple firms, and integrated with other land uses. Communities benefit in a number of ways when they bring manufacturing and small production businesses into neighborhoods.

Small-scale producers and manufacturers attract people to downtown and neighborhood centers who want to be a part of that community and support locally made products.

These businesses can occupy vacant industrial properties or storefronts and they bring vitality to neighborhood centers. Similarly, some manufacturers have found creative ways to be actively place conscious by

Small-scale producers are defined as all types of small businesses producing tangible goods. This includes businesses producing goods in textile, hardware, wood, metal, 3D printing, hardware prototyping, consumer product design and prototyping, breweries and distilleries, and local food production and packaging.

Source: Recast City

rehabilitating properties, creating shared workspaces, and locating facilities in places that are accessible by public transportation. This strengthens the community of producers and promotes the area as an employment avenue. Some businesses provide programming to engage residents; often by making use of public spaces to create a vibrant street life and attract people to the target areas on a more regular basis.

Additionally, small-scale manufacturing businesses are key assets for the local job base. These jobs, as well as business ownership, provide options to residents without college or advanced degrees. They also give opportunities to minority populations who might otherwise face language or cultural barriers.

Communities with a diverse set of small businesses can weather market changes more successfully and are less likely to lose their growing businesses to other cities or countries. Many cities are working on a concept known as economic gardening—growing the size and scale of existing local businesses—because these owners are most likely to stay in town. Additionally, small-scale manufacturing jobs pay salaries 50-100 percent higher than service and retail jobs.

As such, providing space for these local producers to grow their business in neighborhoods can help to connect more people to well-paying jobs, strengthen small business and startup sectors, and keep jobs for a variety of education and skill levels in the community. These businesses and their owners can help bring vitality to main streets and neighborhood centers and bring economic opportunity to all. Furthermore, manufacturing employers benefit from being part of a close-knit community with opportunities to make meaningful connections with nearby firms. Small businesses located within the community are able to respond quickly to market demands.

Communities that recognize demand for these trends and harness their power will take a key step towards diversifying their local economies, the local real estate markets, and the employment base. While some communities have shown promise on this front, many more struggle to effectively coordinate the ongoing public and private investments required. At the municipal level, staff, local business leaders, and community groups must understand what needs to be in place to spur a paradigm shift from the conventional economic development approach to the specifics of growing small manufacturing. Anchor institutions, such as universities and hospitals, can enhance workforce education, create demand for products, and spin off ideas that can be brought to market. State and federal governments can provide funding for training and infrastructure. And finally, the case needs to be made to the private sector that small-scale manufacturing businesses can thrive and be a real estate benefit in both a light industrial land use environment and in a commercial area; in turn, the private sector can offer partnership opportunities in neighborhood development.

SGA's initiative aims to position communities to reap the benefits of a small-scale manufacturing sector to strengthen their business base, reinforce goals for cities and neighborhoods, fill vacant properties, create vibrant places, and build a strong pipeline of businesses to grow locally.

## Columbia's assets and successes

The technical assistance team interviewed business owners, property owners, and city leaders to collect information about the assets and successes that support small-scale manufacturing and strong placemaking, and the challenges still facing these efforts.

There are a number of existing assets in Columbia that support small-scale manufacturing and strong placemaking throughout the city and on The Loop.

*In Columbia, generally:*

1. **Community of small-scale manufacturers:** There is an established community of small manufacturers in both the City of Columbia and in the region that vary in size and experience. Some have already scaled up, while others have established partnerships including subleasing and informally sharing space. The small-scale manufacturers in Columbia want to be found, be supported, and grow their community.
2. **Educated population with enthusiasm for local:** Columbia's many post-secondary institutions and an educated population in the region create high potential for new business owners, as well as customers for higher end products. Columbians want to support local business and the tourism brought in by the area colleges also creates demand for local goods. Columbia is proud to buy locally made goods.
3. **Business support programs are growing:** Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA) already offers an eight-week training on entrepreneurship through the Missouri Women's Business Center, and REDI provides mentorship to businesses in its Innovation Hub. Additionally, the city launched a Supplier Diversity Program to help more businesses owned by women and people of color compete successfully for municipal contracts.
4. **Support from financial institutions:** Columbia is home to many local banks with representatives dedicated to a strong Columbia and region. Several banks already created micro-loan programs to support small businesses, although with limited success. Over a dozen local banks participated in the meetings and expressed commitment to finding more ways to support local businesses and being involved in the small business community.
5. **Affordable cost of living:** Columbia benefits from a lower cost of housing and affordable commercial rents outside of downtown. These qualities allow residents to stay in Columbia to grow their businesses while still accessing national markets.
6. **Partnerships already thriving:** Leadership in Columbia is organized and ready to get to work. The Loop CID Board, the Chamber of Commerce, and REDI are at the table and are ready to do more to support local businesses. Progress includes laying the groundwork for a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, conversations with non-profits like Central Missouri Community Action, and strong relationships with city staff.



Boone County Lumber and in4 Solutions, which is colocated at the lumber yard.  
Photos by Jeri Mintzer / Chris Zimmerman

*On The Loop, specifically:*

1. **Location and affordability:** The Loop is adjacent to downtown and is well connected to the interstate. The corridor is accessible to both locals and all shipping and transportation needs. In addition, there is a high concentration of affordable commercial space on The Loop.
2. **Buildable space, anchor buildings, and enthusiastic property owners:** The Loop benefits from having a significant amount of space to build on, including large parking lots and space between existing structures. It also has several anchors, including Parkade Plaza, Hickman High School, Mizzou North, and others on which to focus activity and grow centers of new activity. Additionally, numerous property owners on The Loop are enthusiastic about future development opportunities that include space for more local businesses, small-scale manufacturing, and the community.
3. **Significant work has already been done:** Established with strong leadership and great participation from the board, The Loop CID is a significant asset that brings people together and that will implement plans. The Loop plan for public space, community engagement, and supportive political leadership are all working towards the goal of a strong and diverse economy in Columbia. Important work to bury electric lines, rebuild sidewalks, and create a safer space for pedestrians is already underway.
4. **The Unified Development Code:** Though new, the Unified Development Code (UDC) is being implemented and is a simplified and flexible way to determine what can and cannot be done with property on The Loop. The UDC permits many complementary uses along the corridor.
5. **Small-scale manufacturers are already on The Loop:** Entrepreneurs and business owners see value in The Loop. Small-scale manufacturing businesses are leasing and buying property because they want to locate there. Experienced business owners want to mentor and help grow small businesses on The Loop.
6. **Boone Electric Cooperative:** The company is a long-term property owner and controls a number of key properties on The Loop. The Cooperative serves as both an anchor employer and a property owner that is committed to the future of the corridor. Leadership wants to be good neighbors and help create a vibrant and safe place on The Loop.

## Challenges moving forward

Feedback from the interviews and site visits suggested that there are a number of obstacles facing small-scale manufacturing businesses and redevelopment in Columbia. These challenges limit the ability to attract and grow businesses on The Loop and may limit future development opportunities.

*In Columbia, generally:*

1. **Platting and permitting processes lack predictability:** Participants in the interviews noted that there is limited transparency from staff on zoning and permitting decisions and often inconsistent responses. While this is clearly not the intention of city services and staff, there is a gap between the city's intention to create a simple process that promotes business development and the lack of predictability seen by local business owners that deters their projects. Many steps in the approval processes, such as platting and change of

use permits, seem discretionary to each staff member reviewing an application. This lack of clarity creates ill-will with local small business owners and deters some from leasing space. In many cases, business owners noted extreme delays and high costs due to the discretion of city staff.

2. **Unified Development Ordinance limits development with a unified vision:** The new UDC provides a strong basis for new mixed-use development in the corridor. Yet the details of the ordinance create three potential barriers for The Loop: (1) the current definition of artisan industry limits businesses to hand tools and will therefore exclude most small-scale production businesses that could be an asset to the corridor; (2) the designation of an area as a “transit corridor” seems to be assigned on a per-parcel basis, versus an entire corridor, allowing neighboring parcel development to occur at 25 foot or 15 foot setbacks thereby destroying a unified frontage on a block; and, (3) parking requirements remain very high even on the mixed-use corridor and may deter most development because of the amount of land that must be set aside for this use.

3. **Food product approval process is unclear:** Food producers are growing nationwide and in Columbia, and there are layers of bureaucracy involved in regulating food production. Unfortunately, the process for small-scale food producers to go through local, state, county, and federal inspection is not clear in Columbia. Specifically, business owners are not clear how to access the state food process authority. This lack of clarity and state approval process is likely depressing the number of food producers and their scalability.



Camacho Coffee, who shares space with B&B Bagels  
Photo by Jeri Mintzer

4. **Access to community assets is not uniform:** While there is a strong, well-functioning civic infrastructure in Columbia, it functions best for those connected and long-standing in the community. Significant parts of the community are left out and do not know how to access resources. This is particularly true for the Latino immigrant community, African-American community, and others facing language, culture or income barriers.
5. **Business infrastructure is in demand and not very accessible to small-scale manufacturing entrepreneurs:** Business owners interviewed noted that there are few regular convenings of product entrepreneurs in Columbia, and that the region does not have any programs to help established producers scale up. At the same time, existing programming to help launch small businesses is oversubscribed. Small product business owners interviewed noted that these existing programs do not feel accessible to them. These business owners also noted that the programs specific to business development for people of color, women, and those with lower incomes, do not feel accessible either. Those interviewed also noted that many of the businesses that launch at the Missouri Innovation Center often leave town when they are ready to scale because there is no space and structure for them as they grow.
6. **Lack of commercial shared kitchen and access to tools:** The city has limited locations

for product entrepreneurs to work if they require commercial kitchen space or higher-end fabrication tools. These capital-intensive spaces and tools are a barrier to business launches and growth. Moberly Area Community College students, engineering graduates, and food product business do not have access to low-cost shared space to accelerate their growth.

7. **Lack of public transportation:** Local residents cannot get to and from existing manufacturing jobs without a car. The city does not connect the residential neighborhoods with employment centers and downtown with frequent and reliable bus service. This puts lower income populations at a disadvantage and reinforces a limited supply of skilled labor in Columbia.

*On The Loop, specifically:*

1. **No unifying vision:** The Loop is currently a place to pass through. It is a busy arterial road that lacks interesting places to see or stop. The corridor does not have any coherent identity in the city. Even property owners interesting in contributing the future of The Loop are not sure about what to build or what kind of businesses to attract.
2. **Deteriorating built environment:** Business Loop 70 is in poor condition, with missing sidewalks where it has not been rebuilt, and numerous driveway cuts on every block. There are gaps between buildings and an excess of parking lots and asphalt. These conditions make The Loop uninviting and unsafe for pedestrians. With recent demolitions and changes to the platting process, there is limited space available for new tenants. Significant deterioration along The Loop suggests that there is no longer an identity that draws people there like there was 50 years ago.
3. **Lack of proper transition and connection with residential neighborhoods:** There is little focus on the north/south connections to The Loop, and the low- to moderate-income neighborhoods next door do not seem to be engaged in use of the corridor. It is unclear how the neighborhood residents want to be connected to The Loop and how they may benefit from investment along the corridor.
4. **Lack of gathering places:** Though The Loop CID is starting to address this, there are no event spaces or places for the surrounding community to gather along the corridor. There are a limited number of food establishments along the corridor that are locally owned, no public spaces in which to bring the residents together, no hub through which to promote local product businesses, and no civic space for gathering.
5. **Low priced market:** Lease rates along the corridor are low, which will benefit small-scale manufacturers, but may deter most new development because of the relatively high cost of construction. While mixed-use buildings are permitted under the UDC, these projects may not pencil out in the near-term.



The Loop's 2018 Annual Report  
Photo by The Loop via Instagram



6. **Business engagement is centered on downtown:** Downtown Columbia has been the focus of activity and growth in recent years—to great success. This resulted in a support network focused on and supportive of downtown's businesses and business types. Yet, interviews suggested that this focus is often alienating to those who are not based in or connected to downtown, possibly deterring business owners from engaging in community activities and support programs.

## Recommendations

The recommendations below include both short-term projects to quickly mobilize the community and its business owners, and long-term projects around which to build consensus. A number of specific tactics for each major recommendation are provided to help the city find the activities most appropriate to the community. The recommendations fall into five major categories.

### 1. Establish a clear vision for The Loop.

The Loop CID, its leadership, community partners, anchor institutions, and city leaders should come together to create a clear vision for the future development of the corridor. The community successfully came together to establish a vision for the public spaces in the corridor—an essential first step to begin identifying the priorities for transportation and public access in the area. Yet this plan stops short of developing an identity for the built environment of The Loop. The Loop CID should continue to work with existing partners and expand to include representatives from the residential neighborhood to the south and the industrial area to the north to create a visual set of goals. At one and a half miles long, the corridor is most likely made up of shorter segments (a half-mile long each) that will each have distinct characteristics and building types.

Participants in the interviews, town hall meeting, and small group discussions overwhelmingly see the corridor as a place of business, job growth, and industry. People see the area as a place for local businesses to expand and have a physical presence in the community. Additionally, dominant feedback sees the corridor as an inclusive place where business owners who create all different types of products, from all different backgrounds, can come together in affordable space. This is in direct contrast to their perception of downtown, where they are priced out.

To achieve this vision of The Loop, consider activities such as:

- **Divide the length of The Loop into focus areas** with key intersections that help determine the unique character of that segment. Consider connecting the segments to their surrounding uses north and south of the corridor. For instance, the western edge of the corridor near the residential area could focus more on mixed-use residential development and a Loop “town center,” while the eastern end of the corridor could focus on light industrial uses to connect with neighboring businesses and preserve affordable workspace for local producers.
- **Create a visual guide** to engage the community and set priorities and characteristics for each segment. This is a preferred method of engagement that can build on the new zoning so that the development outcomes are more easily understood by property owners and residential neighbors.
- **Create a preferred development guide** for new construction that helps property

owners and city officials understand types of development on different segments of the corridor. The Loop CID can work with the city to analyze existing small-scale manufacturing buildings (from other communities) through the local review and approval process to understand how to permit this type of new development under the UDC. This package of reviewed uses and buildings can help to expedite the approval process for new construction and offer property owners a fast way to achieve the vision of The Loop.

## 2. Identify, and build upon, catalytic partnerships and locations along The Loop.

Development along The Loop will benefit from partnerships with major institutions on the corridor and in the region. Mizzou North, the quickly expanding training at Moberly Area Community College (MACC), the regional role of Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA), and the Missouri Innovation Center (MIC) can all come together to serve as partners, catalytic investors, developers, and tenants.

Partnerships with these institutions, and others in the region, may help The Loop:

- Purchase target properties to **develop catalytic real estate projects** that help to achieve the vision of the corridor and create a market for additional development. The partners may come together to provide a public good—affordable workspace for scaling businesses—as an investment to create an inclusive and vibrant Columbia business community.
- **Identify tenants** for underutilized properties—especially for businesses growing out of MACC, REDI, and MIC. The Loop CID can serve as the key matchmaker between businesses and property owners.
- Partner on programming that **connects neighborhood residents to training and job opportunities** in these growing fields. The Loop CID can serve as a connector to neighbors who may not currently have access to jobs and training within the community.
- Work with property owners at target intersections to **find investors and tenants for new development** that fulfills the vision of the corridor. Property owners may not know how to finance new construction that works in the current market or know how to find product-based tenants. The Loop CID can build connections with the local banking community and small business owners to support this development.

## 3. Build upon the success of the UDC and make permitting, stormwater requirements, other city review processes predictable and transparent.

Participants in the interviews and discussions repeatedly noted that the city process for platting, review of new construction, and occupancy permits is so discretionary that it discourages construction and deters businesses from moving into existing buildings. The city should work with a committee of local small business owners to improve the building permitting process and ensure it is predictable for business owners who cannot afford to hire an architect or interior designer. The city should streamline all steps in these review processes so that the preferred development or use has a clear path to approval.

Some actions that will help achieve this outcome include:

- Create a **one-stop shop for small-scale manufacturing businesses** to get all of their building occupancy and permitting questions answered before they sign a lease. This

may be a monthly pop-up office at The Loop CID where city representatives will review plans and answer questions, it could be one office at the city that specializes in product businesses and building reuse, or this may be an online guide that identifies all the major permitting questions a small business owner should ask about a space before signing a lease or considering renovations.

- Establish an ombudsman role who will help small businesses navigate the entire approval process. This position should operate within the city government and report directly to the city manager. This role should be filled by a senior official to send a message to regional business owners that the city is “open for business.” The [Fairfax County, Virginia BizEx](#) program is one example of this capacity.
- Refine the land use definition for Artisan Industry to include machine tools. Most small-scale manufacturers are quiet and great neighbors—and they use machine tools in nearly every business as they grow. These businesses are central to Columbia’s economy and will be an asset to all types of real estate. This refinement will also allow small production businesses to be included in new mixed-use development along the corridor to help achieve The Loop’s vision.

#### 4. Activate The Loop with branding, programming, and short-term structures to establish its vision.

Many large real estate developers pursue a strategy of branding and programming before new construction in order to clearly promote and brand an area to grow the market for new development and brand the location as “the place to be.” The Loop CID is a key asset through which to activate target locations along the corridor and re-establish the area as a destination. Additionally, the vast square footage of parking lots and the green at Mizzou North are phenomenal assets on which to build programming—both short- and long-term.

The Loop and its partners should consider actions to:

- Brand The Loop as a destination for small-scale manufacturing businesses, multi-cultural events, and a place to showcase all that is amazing about the CoMo brand for local residents. This branding will help reposition the area in the minds of the community and help attract more target businesses to the corridor as more space becomes available. This kind of promotion can also target events toward local residents—a demand heard loud and clear throughout interviews.
- Create a series of events in one or two locations on The Loop focused around music, food trucks, and artisan markets. This programming can help to attract people to the area, but also [establish the future vision](#) of the area to business owners and residents. The programming should partner with individuals from the surrounding neighborhoods, and other civic leaders in the city, to ensure that the music, food, and artisan vendor opportunities showcase the diversity of Columbia’s demographics and establishes The Loop as a place for everyone.
- Work with existing property owners on The Loop to add both temporary and prefab



CoMo branding at work  
Photo by Ilana Preuss

construction to existing parcels to accommodate more small production businesses in the short-term. Seasonal kiosks, like [those built in Muskegon, MI](#), can serve a great setting for pop-up events in an empty lot.

- Partner with MACC, REDI, and the Columbia Public Schools (CPS) to host a maker faire on The Loop to showcase product innovation taking place in the community with city residents and youth. This event could be held at the new Community Lot pop-up park or on the lawn at Mizzou North.

5. Provide business development support for small-scale manufacturing businesses to launch and scale on The Loop.

Most small-scale manufacturing businesses in Columbia are working alone and are not connected to any mentors, product business owners, or other resources in the city. Many business owners interviewed noted that they did not know where to go in the city to receive business development help, capital investment, or access to mentors specific to their business type. Many also noted that they did not know how to navigate the occupancy permitting process when they built out space themselves. Programs and clear points of contact for these small business owners will be key to promote business launches and growth in Columbia.



Classroom at Moberly Area Community College  
Photo by Chris Zimmerman

A number of vital steps to consider include:

- **Facilitate meet-ups** or host 1 Million Cups events on The Loop that highlights small-scale manufacturing business owners and their products. These entrepreneurs are more likely to thrive when they are directly connected to each other. Consider hosting these events at businesses on The Loop.
- **Offer matchmaking services** to small-scale manufacturing businesses interested in locating on The Loop. Many business owners looking for small space (under 3,000 square feet) noted that they would be open to sharing space with another business but did not know how to find the other businesses or spaces on The Loop.
- **Launch a startup program specific to product businesses.** Consider adapting existing programs as such [CO.STARTERS](#) used by the Knoxville Urban League and Knoxville Entrepreneur Center, [We are MORTAR](#) in Cincinnati, or [EforAll](#) in Lawrence, MA to ensure that the program purposefully builds inclusive cohorts of new business owners across racial and language diversity. Consider partnering with MACC, REDI, CPS, MU, Columbia College, and Stephens College on programming, mentors, and facilities.
- Work with the REDI, other city leaders, and the Missouri Departments of Economic Development and Agriculture to **identify barriers to food product businesses launching and scaling.** Consider hosting a monthly meet-up for food product business owners that includes representatives from all key city and state departments

needed to approve new products.

- Create a guide or checklist for small business owners about the occupancy permitting process so that they have a clear understanding of the steps necessary to move into a space. Ensure that the tool is created with existing local business owners to make sure it answers questions from a business' perspective, not only from the city's view.
- Consider a technical assistance program and/or micro-loan program for small businesses that commit to staying in Columbia for a set number of years. This should be built on past experiences with micro-loan programs, the new initiative from Justine Peterson, and partnerships with the community banks and CMCA. The Latino Economic Development Center is one successful example of this pairing of resources.

## Conclusion

Columbia is poised to create a strong destination on The Loop where residents, business owners, and innovation intersect. The corridor can be the place where locals come together to celebrate all that is amazing about the city. Small-scale manufacturing, new programming, and targeted real estate development have the potential to kickstart a vibrant identity for the area. Now is the time for the partners to unite and take key steps to create a shared vision for The Loop's development, the role small-scale manufacturers will serve in that vision, and how it will be achieved.



## RECAST BOOST

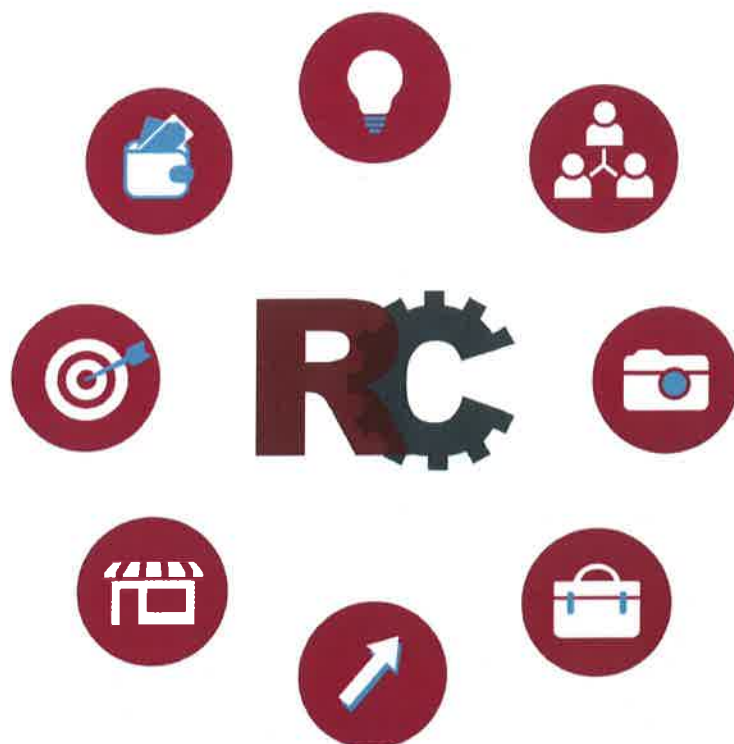
The Business Loop Community Improvement District in Columbia, MO is an area with strong momentum to reinvest in the neighborhood, great leadership, a clear identity as the part of city for small, local businesses and new ideas. The Loop CID leadership sees the potential for small-scale manufacturing to be a core use of the area, with diverse businesses and jobs a part of the solution to create a place where people want to gather, spend time and money, and be proud of their town.

The **Recast Boost** memo is a summary of an eight-week project with The Loop CID to quickly act on potential short-term wins and to build buy-in and capacity for longer-term and bigger projects.

The **Boost** focuses on three areas of local action, selected by The Loop CID and its Board, for the focus of implementation this year. These actions will set the area up for successful engagement of local product business owners, reinvestment in Loop properties, and achievement of its vision to be a central place for jobs, local businesses, and a place for the community to come together and celebrate the city.

- 1) Amendments to the Columbia Unified Development Ordinance definition for artisan industry,
- 2) Models for a commercial shared kitchen on The Loop
- 3) Prototype layouts for artisan industry uses in existing and new buildings to refine permitting approval for this use

*By bringing small-scale production businesses into the economic and real estate strategy, communities can create a cool factor to attract new business and entrepreneurs, fill vacant buildings, build an inclusive and diverse community of business owners, increase strong middle-income jobs, and increase property values. This, in turn, will increase the resiliency of the local business community, showcase the hidden gems of the community, and make places people love.*



## 1. AMEND THE UDC



**Outcomes Defined:** The Loop CID requested alternate language for the definition to artisan industry in the Columbia UDC to ensure that small-scale manufacturing uses are included as allowable uses in the district.

**Columbia Outcomes:** Recast City worked The Loop team to refine two alternatives for the UDC. The Loop leadership will work with the city manager and other local leaders to select which option to best for adoption and work through local advocacy as needed.

Alternative #1: Amend the existing text of the adopted use to expand the definition, applied only to the CID boundaries. All recommended changes are included in GREEN CAPS or as strikethrough.



**Artisan industry:** Small-scale fabrication, preparation, or production of arts, crafts, foods, and beverages by an artist, artisan, craftsperson, or cook, on the premises **FOR WHOLESALE OR ONLINE RETAIL, ~~by hand or with minimal automation.~~** Examples include but are not limited to small-scale welding and sculpting or arts and crafts, firing of pottery or sculpture in kilns, and local, small-batch bakeries, candy shops, cheese shops, craft breweries, ~~and~~ micro-distilleries, **AND OTHER FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRODUCERS; TEXTILES, JEWELRY, AND OTHER ARTISAN CONSUMER GOODS; SMALL BATCH HARDWARE AND PROTOTYPING.**

**Accessory uses include** **ONSITE retail, teaching of these skills to others in the course of fabrication, preparation, or production, and outdoor seating areas, AND SMALL INTERIOR SEATING AREAS. SPACES AND TOOLS MAY BE SHARED AMONG USERS OR FOR INDIVIDUAL USE.**





Alternative #2: Adopt alternative land use definition for artisan industry for only The Loop. *Note: This might require giving the use a different name because land use definitions generally must be applied consistently across a jurisdiction. Use could be referred to as: Artisan Production.*

**Artisan industry:** Means the shared or individual use of hand-tools, tools and equipment for the manufacture of finished products or parts including design, processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, and packaging of products; as well as the incidental storage, sales and distribution of such products. Typical artisan manufacturing uses include, but are not limited to: electronic goods, food and bakery products; beverages; printmaking; household appliances; leather products; jewelry and clothing/apparel; metal work; furniture; glass or ceramic production; paper manufacturing.

Use conditions:



1. *Outdoor storage.* Any activity storing materials outdoors shall construct an opaque fence to screen the ground-level view from any public right of way or of any residential use. Materials shall not be piled or staked higher than the opaque fence. Outdoor storage of any kind will not be permitted facing The Business Loop.
2. *Loading docks.* Where the site abuts a residential zone district or a district permitting residential use, the building wall facing such lot shall not have any service door openings or loading docks oriented toward the residential zone district or district permitting residential use.
3. *Size.* Use is limited to 20,000 square feet per business, maximum. A mixture of uses is supported by the UDC, as determined by the Planning Department.
4. *Buffer.* No landscaping buffer required between properties, at the front of properties, or the rear on The Loop. Landscaping buffer will only be required between commercial properties in The Business Loop CID and residential-only properties neighboring The Business Loop CID MC zone.
5. *Setback line:* City will clarify a consistent line along all properties facing Route 70 deemed the "setback line" from which all property calculations will be set. Request a maximum front line setback of 25' on all new construction. Request a minimum sideyard setback of 0' for buildings along Route 70.

## 2. MODELS FOR COMMERCIAL SHARED KITCHEN



**Outcomes Defined:** The Loop leadership identified a commercial shared kitchen as a priority gap to be addressed in the city and for The Loop. The team requested examples of a diversity of commercial shared kitchens in order to understand options for the community.

**Columbia Outcomes:** Recast City advised the team to approach Mizzou for a lease on the existing large kitchen in Mizzou North on The Loop, and to work with REDI and other local partners to define a clear mission for the space.

The Loop team successfully achieved both of these outcomes.

### Commercial Shared Kitchens – Non-Profit Models:

#### [Common Wealth Kitchen](#), Youngstown, OH

The non-profit community development corporation, Common Wealth Inc., originally launched this kitchen in 2009 to create a space for people to launch or expand food-based businesses. The mission of the space is to lower the cost for these businesses, address food security issues, and create economic development opportunities for northeast Ohio. The space includes a shared kitchen and a café.



#### [La Cocina](#), San Francisco

This non-profit shared kitchen is focused on creating opportunity for women, immigrants, and people of color to improve equity outcomes in business ownership. This space offers mentors, classes and connections to vendors in the area. They focus on supporting business ownership growth for low-income individuals.

#### [The Hatchery](#), Chicago, IL

This space is a food and beverage incubator offering classes, financing, and other services to help entrepreneurs launch and scale their businesses. The facility offers private production kitchens and a shared kitchen. Its mission is focused on job creation for the community and scaling businesses.

#### [Taste Lab](#), Washington, DC

This small space is for-profit and straight forward in its approach to identify food businesses that want direct mentoring and support. Taste Lab is smaller than many other kitchens and may serve as a good starting example, even without a comparable mission.

### 3. PROTOTYPE LAYOUTS



**Outcome Defined:** City zoning and permitting staff are not experienced with review of buildings that include artisan industry. Because of this, property and business owners may face long delays in approvals or conflicting (and somewhat arbitrary) direction from city staff. The Loop CID requested a set of prototype layouts on an existing building and a layout example for a new building on an existing property on The Loop.

These examples may be used with city staff to understand all hurdles owners may face as they seek approval for new projects. Additionally, a “test run” of permitting these spaces may allow the city staff to create more predictable answers and guidance for future building owners and potential tenants.

**Columbia Outcomes:** Recast City created a simple set of layout alternatives for a Boone Electric site. The prototype layouts include artisan industry uses, shared space, and food users in order to clearly understand any permitting barriers or major costs to this type of tenant use.

The layouts are provided in the Appendix.

### YOUR NEXT STEPS:

The Loop Community Improvement District is poised to create a vibrant neighborhood for residents to build businesses, create good paying jobs, and make a thriving place people are proud to spend time and bring their families. But The Loop will only achieve this vision with targeted action to implement these projects, and work with property owners to create more space and opportunities for local businesses.

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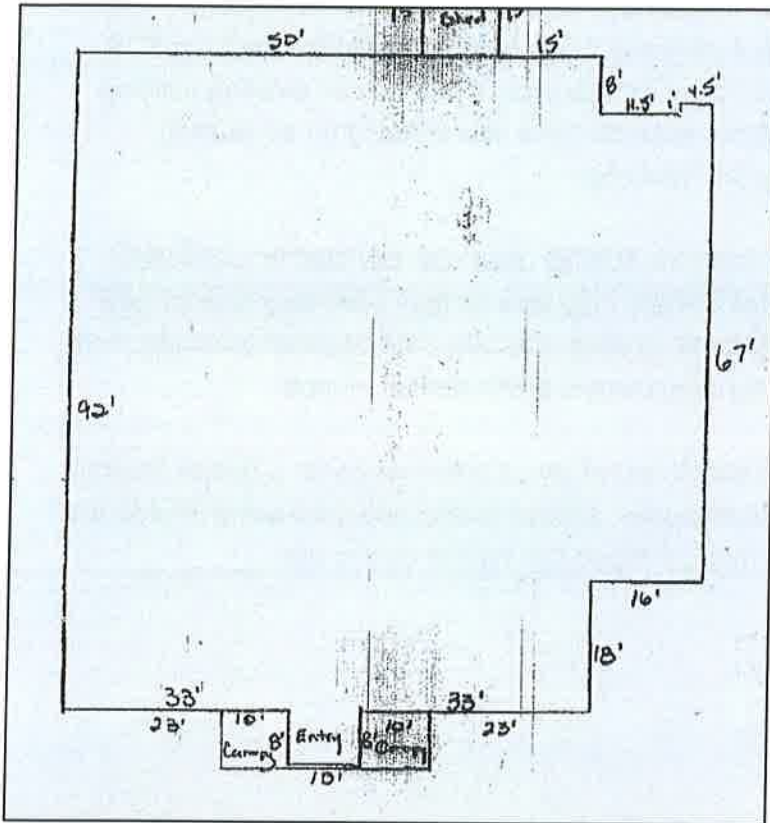
# Appendix

## 909 Bus Loop 70 – Boone Electric Property

### Sample Layouts with small-scale manufacturing



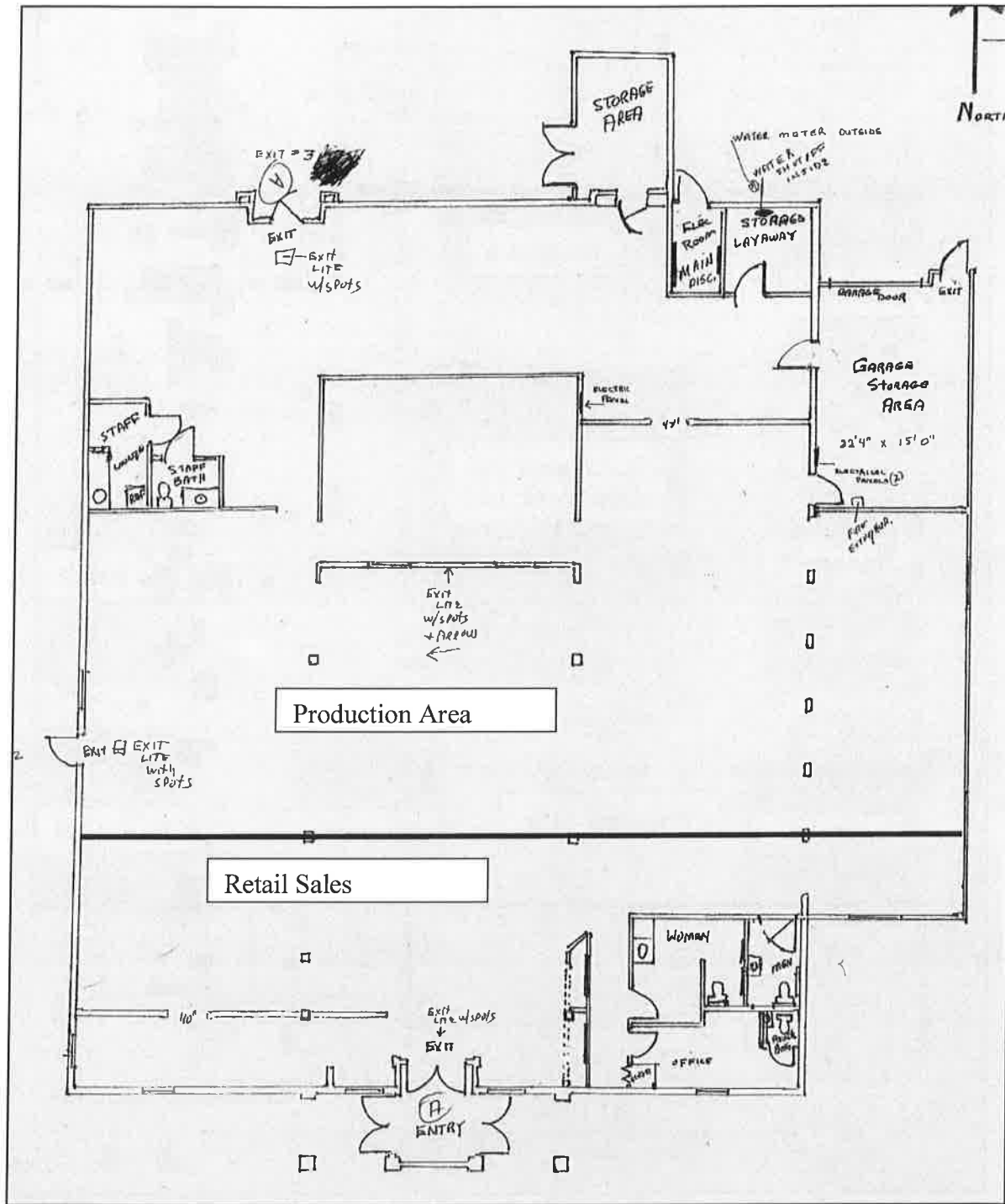
Building Dimensions:



Alternatives for review by planning and zoning staff:

1. Chocolate production and retail sales – majority of space is for chocolate production and distribution, with small retail frontage and seating area for customers. Using existing building.
2. Shared jewelry and accessory production space – 10 small product jewelry and accessory businesses share the space. Some equipment is shared among business tenants. Entrance area is for display and sales. Using existing building.
3. Food hall and artisan production in tall quonset hut – small food and artisan production and sales for 4-10 businesses with shared seating area. Single point of sales for central bar. New construction of pre-fab structure in place of existing building. Model building product and tenants: [Barnone](#) in Arizona, with one Quonset hut and two metal out buildings total 12,500 square feet. Design details [here](#).

# Alternative 1: Chocolate production and retail sales shop



Size estimates:

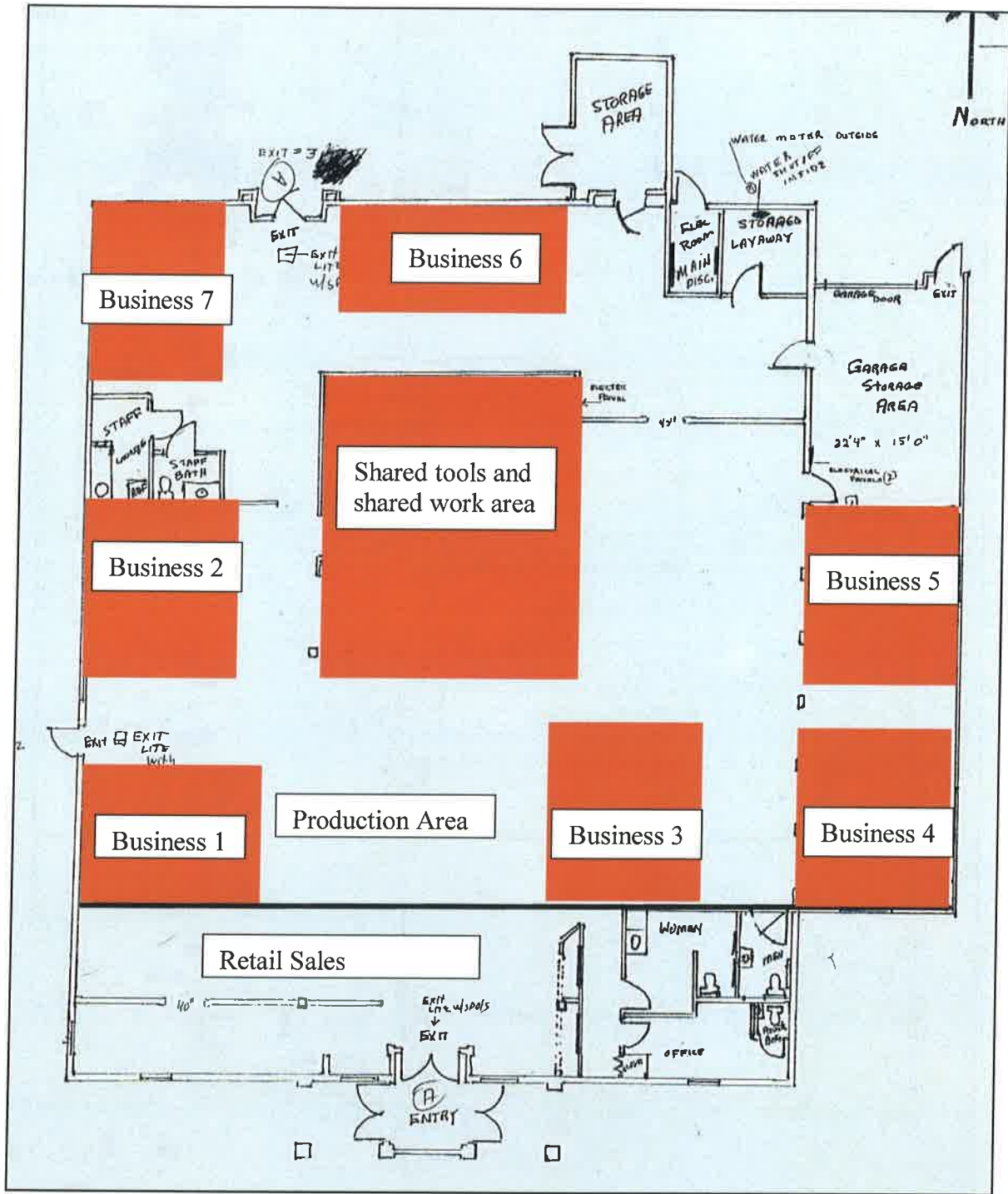
Retail area: 76' x 34' (includes front bathroom area)

Production area: 92' x 58' (includes staff bathroom and garage storage area)

Production: Chocolate heating and cooling equipment, refrigeration, packaging and distribution space for wholesale

Retail: Sales and display counter, small tables with 12 seats, glass divider between sales and production

## Alternative 2: Jewelry and accessory production



Size estimates:

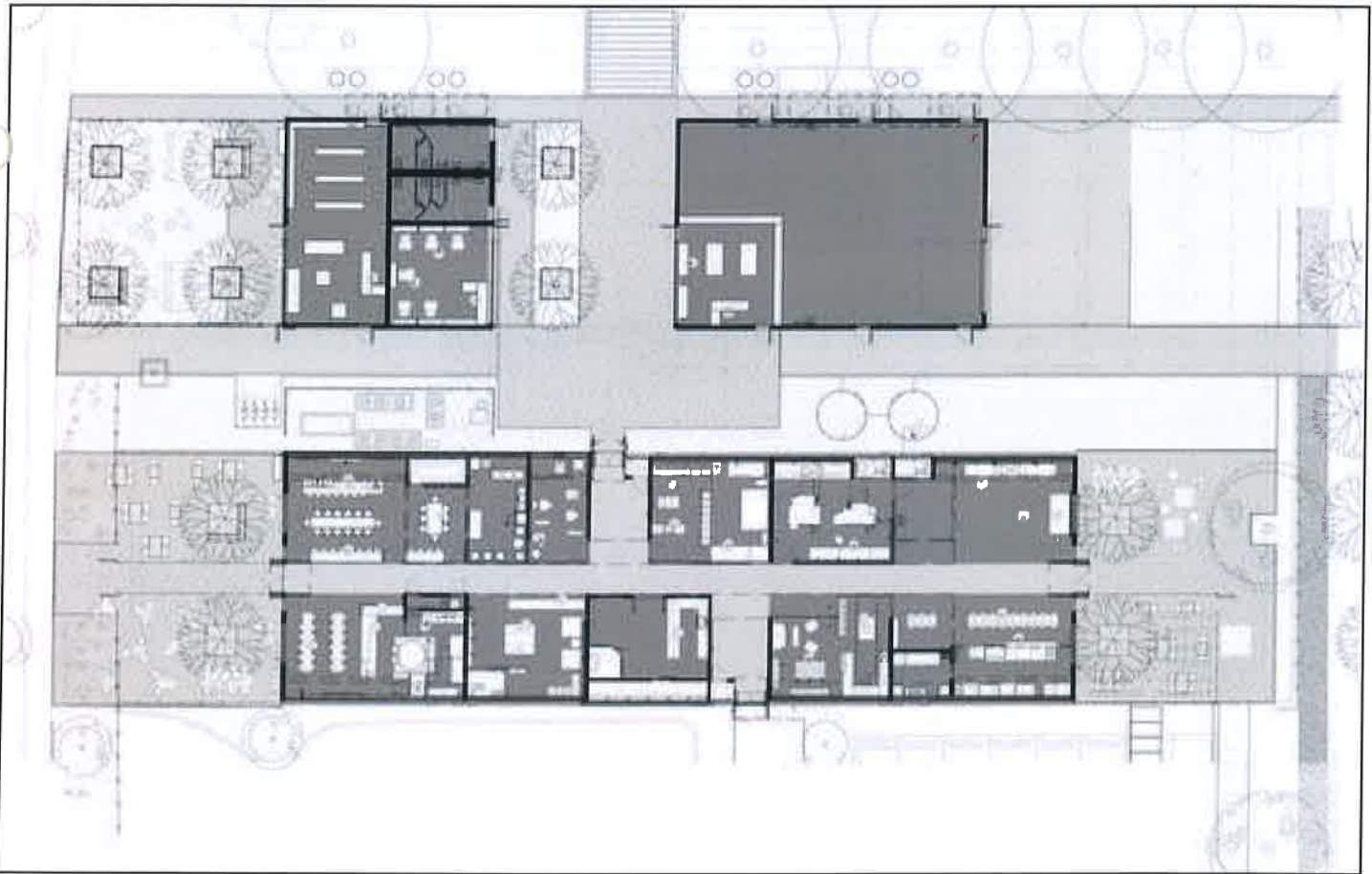
Retail area: 66' x 18' (includes front bathroom area)

Production area: 92' x 68' (includes staff bathroom and garage storage area)

Production: Jewelry production, textiles, sewing, soldering, packaging and distribution for wholesale

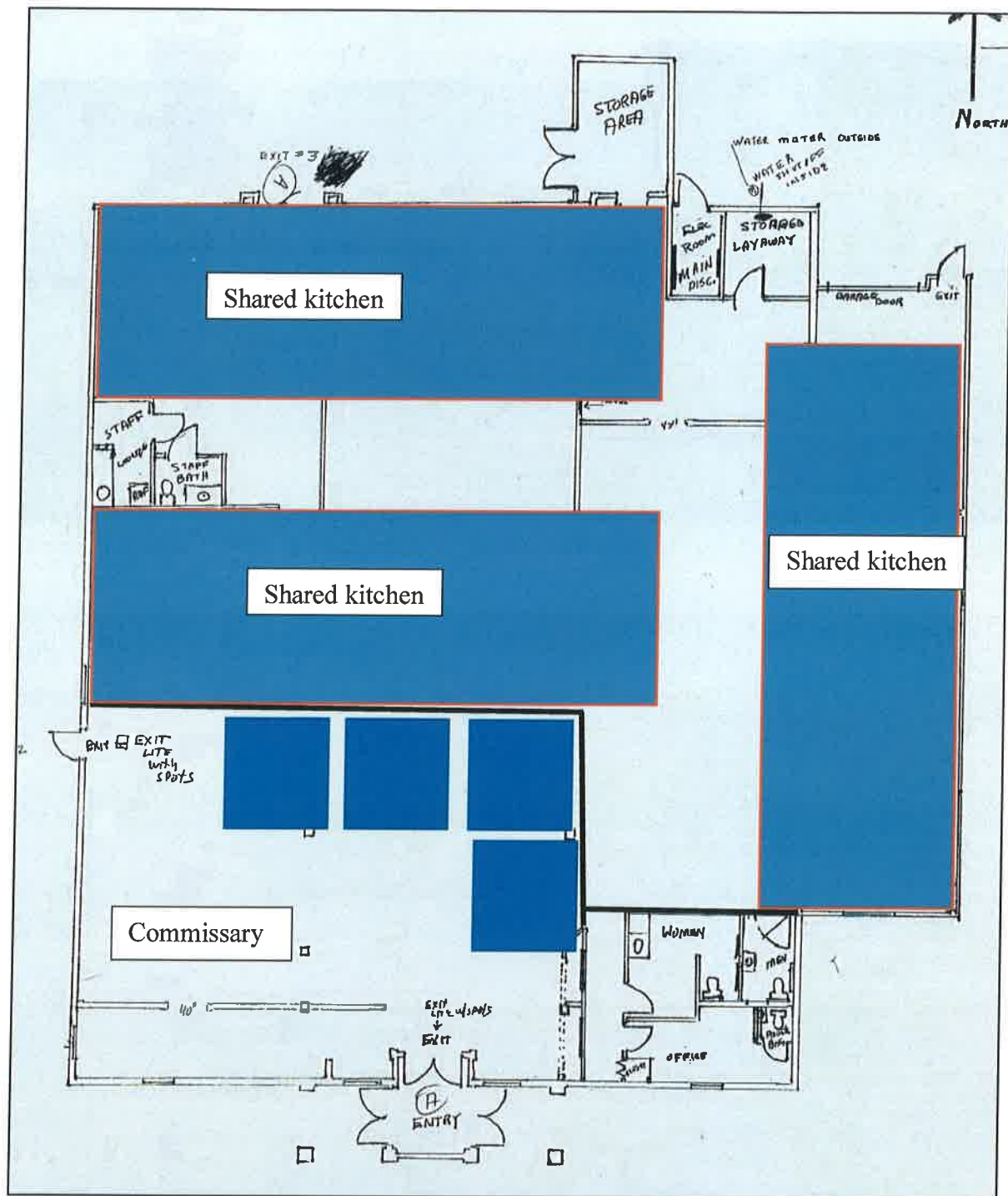
Retail: Sales and display shelving and counter, open view to production area

**Alternative 3: Food and artisan production hall in pre-fab quonset hut**



<https://www.caddownloadweb.com/barnone-debartolo-architects/>

## Alternative 4: Shared Commercial Kitchen with small commissary for sales



Size estimates:

Commissary area: 53' x 30' (includes front bathroom area)

Production area: About 6,800 sqft (includes staff bathroom and garage storage area)

Production: Food production for sale on and off site

Retail: Food sales from production onsite only, includes seating for 20