REVITALIZE 2022

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



MAYFIELD, KY DOWNTOWN

Aerial image by Nearmap

AIA Central Kentucky | CSI LOUISVILLE CHAPTER

The downtown district, in the northeast corner of Mayfield, is lined with late Victorian and Classical Revival buildings, which earned the area a spot on the National Register of Historic Places.

The courthouse at the center of downtown housed a county court, a county jail, and a probation and parole office. Its iconic clock tower was toppled in the storm. The grass around the structure is covered in bricks, metal and downed power lines.





Graves County Courthouse
100 block of East Broadway

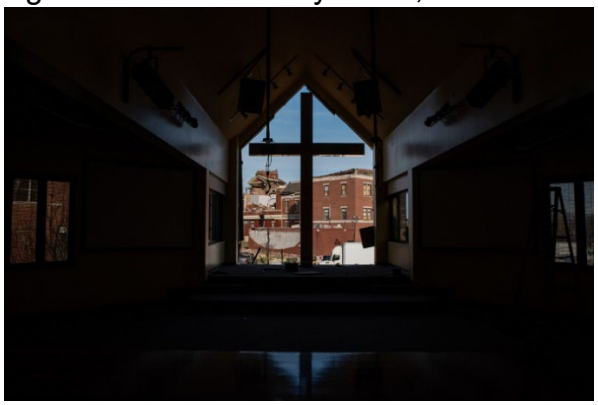
Joey Morrow, a maintenance supervisor at the courthouse, said teams were still assessing the damage, and the county had not yet decided whether the 133-year-old building would be repaired or torn down.

Nearby, on the corner of Eighth and Water Streets, the First United Methodist Church was missing its roof, and large parts of its walls had collapsed. The church's sanctuary had been built in 1919, said the music director Buckley Walker, who recalled that the congregation had just celebrated the church's first 100 years in 2019.





First United Methodist Church
200 block of South Eighth Street
“We’re waiting on adjusters to tell us if it’s salvageable,” Mr. Walker said. “We’re at the mercy of the insurance agents now.”
Around the corner, on Seventh Street, the First Baptist Ministry Center sustained damage to its facade and large front window, revealing a large cross inside. That part of the building was added about 15 years ago, according to Wes Fowler, the church’s pastor. The church’s sanctuary, on the other side of the road, was built in 1929. It appears that both buildings remain structurally intact, Mr. Fowler said.



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First Baptist Ministry Center
100 block of West South Street
Top image: Josh Williams/The New York Times
During the storm, Mr. Fowler brought his wife and three children to the church, believing it would be safer than their home. They huddled in a basement hallway, which connects the church's two buildings. As the tornado struck, the tiles in the drop ceiling rattled violently, and the room filled with dust and debris, Mr. Fowler said.
“The kids were crying and screaming, and I’m telling them, ‘We’re going to be OK, we’re going to be OK,’” Mr. Fowler said. “And I’m thinking, you know, we’re not going to be OK.”
The next building on Seventh Street had been a clothing store. Travis Brown, whose son owns the building, said it was built in the late 1800s.
“It’s been through many, many owners over a hundred-some years,” Mr. Brown said. “When I was a kid, it was a woman’s dress shop.”





Outfitter Connection
100 block of South Seventh Street
The Browns expect the building will be torn down.
“It stood through the storm better than a lot around here,” Mr. Brown said. “But it’s pretty well gone now.”
Farther up Seventh Street, among a strip of shops that were largely destroyed, the building that housed The Mayfield Messenger, a local newspaper, is heavily damaged but still recognizable.
“We lost everything above the first floor,” said Carol Howe, who owns the building with her husband, Clayton. “It was a beautiful building.”





Mayfield Messenger
100 block of South Seventh Street
Ms. Howe hopes the first floor of the building can be saved, but said the structure's fate had not yet been determined.
A few doors to the north, on the corner of Seventh Street and Broadway, is another building that sustained heavy damage. It housed a law office and bears a sign on its brick facade that welcomes visitors to Mayfield's historic downtown: "More than a memory," the sign reads.

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Law office
100 block of South Seventh Street
Just north of the historic downtown, entire blocks of homes have been leveled. Some retain a semblance of their former appearance, but most in this area will probably be torn down.
This home sits just two blocks north of the historic downtown welcome sign.





200 block of North Seventh Street
Farther up Seventh Street, Dorothy Youngblood's house remains standing, but it will probably be torn down, said Holly Looper, Ms. Youngblood's granddaughter.







Home of Dorothy Youngblood
300 block of North Seventh Street

Ms. Looper, who grew up visiting the house, was able to salvage many of her grandmother's prized possessions, including antique furniture, photos and chandeliers. Most of the structures to the east of here were crushed by the tornado, like this law office just across the street.

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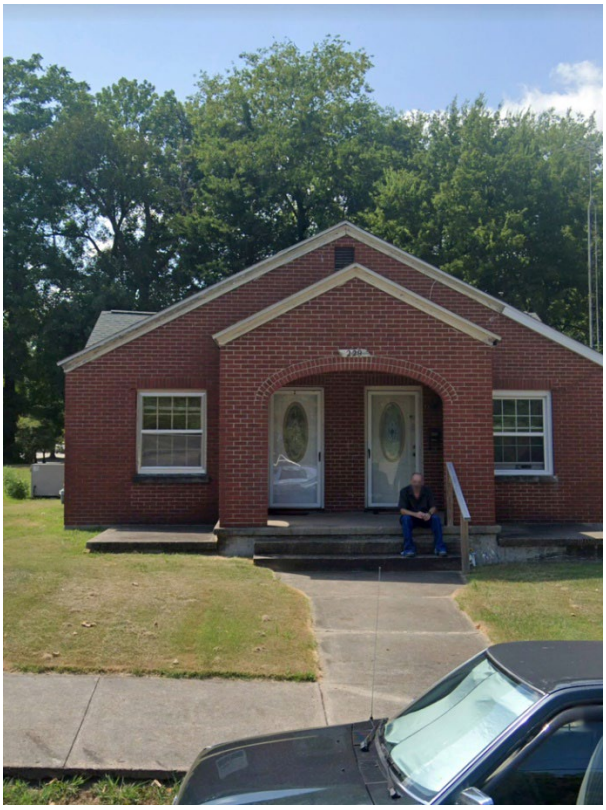
Law office
200 block of North Seventh Street
One block to the east, on Sixth Street, a house was reduced to its foundation.

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200 block of North Sixth Street
And the house next door also sustained heavy damage.





200 block of North Sixth Street
Several residents noted that the tornado was only the latest challenge for a downtown that has seen a decline for the last 20 years, with local mom-and-pop shops steadily disappearing.
“It’s going to be a different place to live,” said Mr. Morrow, the maintenance supervisor at the courthouse.

PHOTOS online
https://abcnews.go.com/US/photos/deadly-tornados-devastate-south-midwest-81693438/image-mayfield-ky-81775639