



DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WORKBOOK



Next Move Group
We Are Jobs

Recognize the Difference in Event Planning vs. Economic Development (00:02:16)

Many cities/organizations will have downtown events that many will show up to but not spend any money on merchants.

Mayors, look at your staff and see if you have an event planner or an economic developer.

Why do People Most Often Come Downtown on a Daily Basis? (00:03:30)

- Retail
- Restaurants
- Residential
- Services
- Government
- Entertainment
- Healthcare
- Jobs

What Will the Amazon Effect do to Downtowns? (00:04:50)

Huge opportunity for downtowns as shopping malls close

How Can Cities or Economic Development Organizations Help? (00:06:00)

Step 1) Get Foot Traffic into Your Existing Businesses (00:06:00)

Concept 1: Geofence Marketing and Online Marketing

- Send people adds in real time
- Or pull their information from their last visit

Concept 2: Events – Plan them to get people walking through town & train your businesses how to have their own specials to capitalize on your event.

- Your job is to get people in the city.
- It is the businesses job to then get people in their business.
- Plan to have various features in different parts of downtown so people walk to them.
- Where will you place the Easter Bunny? Santa? Hot chocolate at the Christmas Parade?
- Then work with businesses to get them to plan promotions to get people in their store.

Concept 3: Advertising/PR

- Really consider where you want to do your advertising.

Concept 4: Way Finding

- Make sure that you can get people downtown. If your downtown is difficult to find, ensure that directions are easy to follow and takes people past business they may want to stop into along the way.

Concept 5: Other things to consider

- Can you look for ways to have classes downtown?
 - Ex: Community college classes that will make people congregate.
- Are your businesses open the proper hours?
 - You may need to do a study to help provide data to businesses so they can see how beneficial it would be to update their hours.

Step 2) Focus on Safety and Cleanliness (00:16:22)

The clean and safe team, sometimes called the "clean and green" team for their neon green uniforms, is a group of workers who roam downtown in search of trash, graffiti, panhandlers, trouble-makers and visitors in need of directions or other assistance. During the summer and fall this team is composed of 11 workers, but staffing is reduced to as few as six people between November and April.

If the district is renewed, it is expected to annually cost the owner of a \$300,000 property about \$425 in 2010. Meanwhile, the owner of a \$2 million building could expect to pay \$2,900 next year. The maximum fee anyone would pay for a downtown property is \$8,000. All told, these property owner charges are expected to bring in about \$300,000 annually. In years past, the city of Duluth has chipped in another \$200,000 per year, and the City Council has passed a resolution of intent to do the same next year.

Transportation Enhancements

- Roads
- Walkways
- Crosswalks
- Lighting
- Safe for bikers

Step 3) Provide Common Services to Help Your Existing Businesses Prosper Which Will Also Help You Recruit New Businesses (00:18:15)

Can you provide the following in bulk to make it low cost for downtown businesses?

- High speed internet
- Back-office services
- Online training services about ecommerce
- Accounting services
- Legal services
- Design/architecture/construction services

Step 4) Inventory Your Vacant Buildings (00:20:06)

What should your building inventory contain?

- Downtown map
- Condition of buildings
- Roof condition
- Type of development it could support
- Current land use zoning
- Adjacent businesses
- Images of buildings and area
- Online database - Where people can find the property?

Step 5) Build a Plan to Spur Investment into the Vacant Buildings by use of Incentives (00:21:23)

- **Concept 1:** Matching façade grants
- Encourages business owners to dress up their store front and make it more appealing from street view
- **Concept 2:** Roof stabilization grants

Sample:

Each grant will not exceed 50% of a projects total roof stabilization costs or 50% of total funds allocated. Applications will be ranked by the following criteria:

- Urgency of roof stabilization – 25%
- Contributing structure on the Nation Register of Historic Places – 25%
- Historic relationship to adjacent structures – 25%
- Capital commitment of owner to rehabilitate remaining structure – 25%
- **Concept 3:** 0% Interest loans for renovations
- **Concept 4:** Purchase distressed properties & be the master developer to stabilize corridor
- **Concept 5:** Tax incentives

Sample Tax Incentive Structure:

- Downtown TIF, BID, Commercial Corridor Districts
- City rebates all new net tax revenue it obtains from redeveloped property at the following rate:
 - 100% for first 5 years
 - 80% year 6
 - 60% year 7
 - 40% year 8
 - 20% year 9

Step 6) Make Starting a Business Easy (00:26:26)

- **Concept 1:** Proactive meetings with garbage, police, fire, permitting, city engineering with existing business owners plus people interested in opening a downtown business

Step 7) Partner with Local Institutions to Spur Investment Downtown (00:27:19)

Concept 1:

What are the most common options?

- Creative financing with local banks
- Partnership with contractors, engineers, architects

Sample: Paducah LowerTown Arts District

The program has also been fortunate enough to receive recognition by winning a City of Paducah Beautification Award, a Kentucky Arts Council grant, the 2001 James C. Howland Award for Urban Enrichment; 2002 Kentucky Governor's Government Award in the Arts; 2002 Kentucky Chapter of the American Planning Association (KAPA) Special Merit Award for Outstanding Planning; 2004 American Planning Association Award for a Special Community Initiative; 2004 Dorothy Mullins Arts & Humanities Award; 2004 Kentucky League of Cities Enterprise Cities Award; 2004 Kentucky Banker's Association Award; 2005 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence; and the 2005 International City Manager's Association Award. Attitudes of the residents have changed, many structures have been completely renovated or brought up to code, new infill construction has taken place, and the Artist Relocation Program has been successful in recruiting over 75 new artists/residents/businesses to Lowertown and over \$30 million in private investments and growing with only \$2 million of City General Fund monies spent.

Step 8) Create Downtown Housing Options

What are the options? (00:29:58)

BILOXI, Miss. (WLOX) - Biloxi is hoping to get entrepreneurs, business owners and developers on board with the revitalization of the city's downtown.

Margaret Wilcox, owner of The Grind Coffee and Nosh on Cedar Lake Road in Biloxi, is looking to expand, and she has her sights set downtown.

"We love downtown Biloxi. We live downtown. We want downtown to work, and we want to be a part of that," said Wilcox.

Biloxi city leaders want her to be a part of it as well.

The city's downtown development incentive forum on Tuesday gave developers, entrepreneurs and business owners like Wilcox a chance to learn about available tax incentives, grants and programs that could help them in opening a downtown business.

City leaders say with the redesign of Howard Avenue complete, the focus is on luring in those who can make downtown a place to not only work and play, but also to live.

"We really want businesses and retail, restaurants, that kind of thing. But we also did a housing grant because we understand that we need that 24-hour people downtown, so really having the incentive downtown housing," said Biloxi's historical administrator, Bill Raymond.

Seaside looks to ease parking rules to spur housing

Standard is two spaces per unit

By R.J. Marx The Astorian Dec 6, 2019

The current standard specifies two parking spots per dwelling unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms. Commissioners considered language to bring those numbers down, possibly to one parking spot for studios and one-bedroom apartments and 1 1/2 spaces for two-bedroom units.

▲ The city of Blaine is considering a new property tax exemption to help spur multi-family residential development in the target area highlighted in pink.

Photo courtesy of the City of Blaine

The city is considering a new property tax exemption to help spur multi-family residential development in the downtown core.

"The multi-family tax exemption is something that's newly available to us here in Whatcom County due to some changes in state law," said city manager Michael Jones in a presentation to the Port of Bellingham board of commissioners on November 20. The Port of Bellingham retains a portion of the property taxes collected by the city. "It allows cities to designate target areas where they wish to incentivize multi-family residential development."

Per Washington state law (RCW 84.14), certain cities can lift the requirement for property owners to pay property taxes on the added value of a multi-family residential development for up to 12 years within a targeted area.

Jones said the city of Blaine intends to target an area within the Central Business District (CBD), which encompasses downtown, residential areas and the harbor. There are several undeveloped and underdeveloped properties in that area, particularly on the west side of Peace Portal Drive.

"We're interested in stimulating multi-family housing [development] because having people living in downtown is integral to having a dynamic and active downtown which supports the businesses and services," Jones said.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has given Battle Creek Unlimited \$2 million to assist developers looking to redevelop property downtown.

The Downtown Battle Creek Real Estate Improvement Fund will go live July 1 and will be used during the next two years to restore blighted buildings.

"The overall goal is to increase downtown vibrancy by eliminating blight," Battle Creek Unlimited President and CEO Joe Sobieralski said.

That could include the empty upstairs of commercial buildings being turned into housing.

Step 9) Spur Downtown Food/Restaurant Options (00:33:48)

Concept 1:

Potential Options

- Shared kitchen to help startups
- Battle Creek, Michigan
 - 200k for restaurants/breweries

Step 10) Create Spots for Recreation (00:34:54)

Concept 1:

Potential recreation options:

- Downtown green spaces
 - Parks
 - Trails ending downtown
 - Pocket parks
- Dog parks
- Outdoor gyms
- Sitting areas
- All abilities park (parks where people with disabilities can participate)

Step 11) Recruit Jobs Downtown to Create Daytime Traffic Return on Investment: How You Make Money Back (00:35:57)

What kind of funding is available?

- EDA
- USDA
- Revolving Loan Funding
- DOT
- Planning and Development Districts
- State Funding
- Federal Appropriations
- CDBG
- EPA
- Foundations

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