



**Urban Land
Institute**

Idaho

Short Term Steps in The Creation Of A Sustainable Downtown Meridian

ULI Technical Assistance Panel

March 2012

MDC Assignment to ULI

Look at one block or district for development

1. What uses to focus on today?
2. What are the real market vs. desired market?
3. How to attract development?
4. What activities should happen?
5. How to improve the farmers' market?
6. How to enhance place-making?
7. Does the rail corridor have any relevancy?
8. How to improve participation of current and business owners?
9. How do you build capacity?
10. What is the value of a DBA?

Anchor Block

(between Main, Meridian, Broadway, and Idaho)

Opportunities

- Public owned properties now available
- Meridian Road and Main Street improvements
- Main Street access
- Needs a development agreement with private property owner
- Needs quick answers for interested parties

Question #1:

What uses to focus on today?

Clustering small scale retail

Local incubator businesses

- Tenants who cannot afford the rent in the new centers
- Market is there; access is the challenge
- The niche for downtown

Question #2:

What is the real market vs. desired market?

Today, now... it is local, local, local

- Downtown cannot compete with new centers
- Longer term housing market is possible
- Anchor tenant or anchor block development may attract broader market

Question #3: How to attract development?

Marketing

- To locals

Place-making

- Create an identity **First**
- Way-finding **Second**

Question #4: What activities should happen?

Build on what happens now

- Expand Farmers' market
- Community events
- Community assets (gallery at City Hall)

Goal is activities all the time

Question #5:

How to improve the farmers' market?

ULI Farmers' Market Survey

- 12,800 people attended the market's 2011 season
- The majority spent \$11 – \$20
- The majority attend for the food products

Question #6:

How to enhance place-making?

Main Street Meridian

- Focus improvements on Main Street
- Enhance Generations Plaza

Improve local access

- Pine Street link is key
- Strengthen pedestrian/bicycle access

Question #7:

Does the rail corridor have any relevancy?

Current UP property is a detriment

- Blighted condition is a big negative
- **First step** is to get it cleaned up

Question #8:

How to improve participation of current business owners?

Organize, organize, organize

- Informal and formal interactions
- Build upon those who care – ignore the naysayers
- Act “as if it is going to happen”, and it will

Build upon the strengths

- Look to the future not to the past

Question #9:

How do you build capacity and organize the various groups?

Create an umbrella organization

- Identify and involve existing leaders and champions
- Create a specific mission
- Go outside the city for resources and examples

A DBA should be the goal

Question #10: What is the value of a DBA?

Downtown becomes
someone's job

- #1 priority
- No success without it



Thanks for the opportunity

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