



Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) is a national leader in providing consulting services to advance downtown and community development. We provide management, marketing, financial and implementation tactics to help communities and organizations compete in a changing economy.

The Great Recession is having an overdue and sobering effect on community economic development strategies. The old approaches of recruiting large companies, chasing allegedly hot target industries or incenting jobs that export production are dying in an economy that is shedding jobs. More than a recession, the American economy is undergoing a major realignment.

Advancing Downtown and Neighborhood Business Districts In Challenging Times Economic Development Strategies You Can Use

Changing demographics, lifestyles and growing global competition are pushing us beyond the past era of excess. New consumption patterns are emerging that place a premium on experience, value and sustainability. To advance economic development in the exciting era to come, we welcome the return of “back to basics” approaches that build upon a community’s strengths, grow existing businesses and incubate new local innovative concepts.

At P.U.M.A., our economic development philosophy has been rooted in locally-grown, incremental and organic approaches for more than two decades. Based upon our experience in advancing economic development in downtowns and neighborhood business districts, we offer the following key ingredients for success:

Understanding the local market

is the place to start for crafting economic development strategies that work. Demographics, consumer preferences and real estate dynamics are the critical elements to establishing a usable market analysis. Sources of market information include secondary data such as the census or demographic information services, primary data from

1. MARKET FUNDAMENTALS

resident and stakeholder surveys, and one-on-one interviews with real estate professionals and business and property owners that experience the market on a daily basis.

Capturing locals first is the bedrock of our approach. If a downtown or business district can first and foremost be relevant to local residents, visitors will follow. Defining a market or trade area is essential to capturing the local market. While economists often purchase data in concentric circles, people don’t behave in these patterns. We define primary market areas by walking and biking distances, vehicular corridors that feed into a business center, or school districts that require rural populations to visit Main Streets.

Defining the business district’s unique niche is the outcome, or “market-based vision,” resulting from a comprehensive understanding of the local market. How is the business district different and/or better than competing areas in reaching its markets? Niche strategies must push beyond the physical appearance of a place to the heart and soul of a community. Unique assets could be as simple as a destination restaurant, a unique festival or a community tradition. Embrace the quirky.

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Economic Development Strategies You Can Use

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CASE STUDY

Defining Downtown Timnath. Timnath is a hamlet of 500 persons located in the midst of the burgeoning Front Range of Colorado. Town officials expect that Timnath will reach a population of more than 25,000 within the next 20 to 30 years. The town's Old Town commercial district, all two blocks of it, has been the focus of heated discussions for years, with prior plans suggesting that it be scraped and replaced with a two-story mixed-use lifestyle center. Our charge in Timnath was to set market expectations and a framework for an achievable vision.

After completing a market profile, retail demand projection and community survey, we found that Old Town Timnath should pretty much stay as it is. It has existing regional draws to build upon, including a post office, school, church, a handful of unique shops and a wonderful community garden that features "The Great Zuchinni Race" as part of its harvest festival. Our counsel, which was well received by the Town Council, was to make these two blocks work, and move toward an authentic, compact Main Street using the collection of assets that they already have.

For more information, contact Linda Martin, Town of Timnath at 970-224-3211.

Colorado Workshop to Focus on Economic Development

The entire P.U.M.A. team will be featured at a two-day "Downtown Institute" workshop focusing on economic development produced by Downtown Colorado Inc., November 12 and 13 in Loveland. The workshop will include tutorial and case study sessions in the topic areas of:

- Understanding Your Market
- Using Market Information to Create Marketing & Business Development Strategies
- Organization and Financing Strategies for Downtowns

For more information visit the Downtown Colorado Inc. website at www.downtowncoloradoinc.org.

The distinctive character of a business district should be enhanced to

2. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

reinforce the market niche. Oftentimes, communities approach urban design backwards, developing an attractive or expensive streetscape scheme in advance of understanding the market. Our philosophy is that the market drives all of the traditional components of business district revitalization – design, parking, promotions and other initiatives are most successful when they reinforce the opportunities afforded by the marketplace.

Walkable, intimate scale is increasingly viewed as the essential characteristic in making downtowns and business districts work. Walkability is the glue of a mixed-use environment,

encouraging the diverse human interaction that is increasingly valued in our changing society. For a neighborhood business district, a walkable environment ties it to its adjacent neighborhoods, creates a stronger sense of community and improves public health with a population that is more physically active.

Inviting public and private realms include usable, active space in downtowns and business districts. Whether ideal for staging events or simply comfortable for people-watching, community gathering places are a critical component of a successful business district. Keeping business districts clean and safe is a prerequisite for making both public and private spaces viable.

CASE STUDY

The Economics of Denver's Living Streets. "Living Streets" is Denver's adaptation of a global movement to design transportation corridors and streets that balance a variety of mobility options, including walking, biking, driving and transit. Living Streets are intended to promote healthy communities by encouraging viable alternatives to vehicles and converting auto-oriented roadways from thoroughfares into inviting multi-modal activity centers for all users regardless of age or ability.

The City of Denver commissioned a market opportunity study to determine the quantifiable economic benefits of Living Streets in Denver and to seek suggestions for advancing Living Streets' principles through planning policies and public/private partnerships. To craft ideas that could be implemented throughout the city, we looked at two types of corridors; one that developed as and functions primarily as a vehicular corridor and another that developed as a traditional streetcar corridor. For each corridor, we prepared a market profile, distributed online surveys to residents and businesses and researched best practices from around the globe.

The results from the research found overwhelming evidence that economic vitality is enhanced through investment in pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure and related amenities. For Denver, the study suggests new ways of looking at how neighborhoods connect to commercial corridors by identifying pedestrian and bicycle-pedestrian priority routes on side streets that lead into major corridors. At the intersection of pedestrian priority routes and corridors, development opportunities are maximized for property and business owners. In addition, we found an appetite from residents to help join commercial property owners in financing Living Streets improvements along corridors.

For more information, contact Gideon Berger, City of Denver at 720-865-2932.



PUMAblog

Passionate champions are the essential in-

3. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

redient for carrying out successful economic development strategies. In every community and every assignment, we always look for the group of tireless champions — stakeholders who value the importance of community revitalization, aspire to be change agents and understand that the process is a marathon, not a sprint.

Organized and unified constituencies create the influence necessary to impact policies and perceptions. The unified voice of several hundred stakeholders is always more powerful than the individual or small interest group. Local governments

prefer to work with one organized group representing collective benefits, as opposed to sorting through the competing parochial interests of a few.

Public/private partnerships provide the institutional framework for channeling the energy of passionate champions in an organized and unified fashion. Our greatest accomplishment at P.U.M.A. over the past 16 years is helping to create scores of business improvement districts, downtown development authorities, community development corporations and other similar organizations that are leading, financing, marketing, managing and sustaining local economic development efforts.

CASE STUDY

Renewing the BID in Downtown Cleveland. Five years ago, we worked with the Downtown Cleveland Alliance to create a business improvement district (BID) that today raises more than \$3.4 million annually to finance a variety of public safety, maintenance and marketing services. Since the BID is due to expire at the end of 2010, we're back to help develop a new plan of action that will guide the BID for an additional five years.

Despite particularly brutal recessionary economics in Cleveland, we've found strong support and commitment for the renewal of the BID. Key themes in support include:

- "Clean and Safe" has worked – Cleveland can't go backwards.
- The BID helps to unify downtown and makes property owners, businesses and residents more influential.
- City services have become more responsive with the BID.
- The BID is more important than ever in challenging economic times.

In addition to allocating more than two-thirds of BID funds to continue the downtown safety and maintenance program, the new Cleveland BID plan creates a proactive business development program that will provide a variety of support services aimed at filling storefronts and commercial buildings.

For more information, contact Joe Marinucci, Downtown Cleveland Alliance at 216-736-7799.

CASE STUDY

Putting All The Pieces Together - Revitalizing Neighborhood Business Districts in Oklahoma City.

Since the fall of 2008, we have been working with the City of Oklahoma City to evaluate the City's efforts to advance commercial business district revitalization. Our process included:

- An assessment of existing programs and procedures
- Outreach with a variety of constituencies, including business district leaders, affected property and business owners, representatives from chambers of commerce, city staff and elected officials
- Research from "best practices" in other similarly sized Midwest cities

From this process, a new approach to commercial district revitalization is proposed for Oklahoma City, founded upon the following basic principles:

- Efforts will be "place-based," concentrating resources on geographically defined business districts that serve distinct neighborhoods within the city. This approach promotes visible, tangible economic improvements.
- Resources will be concentrated in areas that have the best potential for success as demonstrated by local organizational capacity (i.e. engaged stakeholders, champions, neighborhood support) and market fundamentals (i.e. sustainable economics, districts that are best positioned to serve their adjacent neighborhoods).
- Measurable benchmarks and established goals will be developed to move districts towards becoming self-sustaining, rewarding partners that can create visible change in their community.

To access financial and technical support from the City, a phased process is outlined for all commercial districts beginning with capacity building, advancing to supporting a variety of ongoing district development programs and then rewarding districts that create self-sustaining revitalization initiatives. The Oklahoma City City Council is expected to endorse the new approach this fall.

For more information, contact Kim Cooper-Hart at the City of Oklahoma City at 405-297-2900.

Be sure to check out pumablog at www.pumaworldhq.com, where each week we feature the latest in downtown and community development trends and best practices that we find in our research, reading and travels. Here is a post by Jamie from this past summer...

Competing for Retail in Downtown Tempe: We've previously blogged about the retail environment during this challenging economic time. Most of our comments have centered on the reality that while times certainly are a'changin', out of economic downturns often come some of the most creative and entrepreneurial business concepts. In Tempe, the Downtown Tempe Community, Inc. (DTC) organization led by Nancy Hormann has found a unique way to truly tap into those creative ideas and help make them a reality via a contest to put great retail concepts in empty downtown storefronts.

The idea is called the **Mill Avenue Retail Competition**. The DTC has teamed up with a downtown property owner willing to provide one-year of free rent in a retail store front to the individual(s) who submit the most creative retail concept and a solid business plan to back it. There will be one winner in the contest, but Nancy tells me up to three other concepts may be selected to receive \$25,000 towards opening their retail concept in Downtown Tempe as well. All the details, as well as the rules and regulations for the contest, can be found at www.downtowntempe.com.

As downtowns look for ways to incentivize those entrepreneurs out there, I think this is an innovative approach to encouraging them to locate in our business districts! Thanks for sharing, Nancy!

Updates on projects and conferences during the upcoming fall season. . .



Anna Jones

Anna is managing our projects throughout Colorado, including the completion of a downtown master plan in Windsor and the beginning of a 3-block development plan for a new library and civic complex in Grand Junction. For Windsor, the P.U.M.A. team was selected number one out of 24 firms that responded to the project RFP, and in Grand Junction we were number one out of 33. Anna will be presenting the findings from our Denver Living Streets project at the Colorado American Planning Association Annual Conference to be held in Estes Park, October 7 to 10.

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Jamie Licko

Jamie spent the summer closer to home, putting together a marketing plan for the Town of Lyons and helping a design team seek community input for a city park in Estes Park. Also this summer, Jamie celebrated completing more than half of her studies toward an M.P.A. degree from the University of Colorado at Denver. Look for Jamie at the International Downtown Association conference in Milwaukee, September 12 to 15, where she will be co-presenting a pre-conference workshop on organizational funding strategies with Brad, plus she will moderate a spirited "Big Idea" session on the future of downtown retail.

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Pamela Phox

Pamela has been busy this summer managing market research efforts for several of our projects, including the Timnath Market-Based Downtown Plan and the Denver Living Streets Market Opportunity Analysis. Pamela is also working with the Downtown Denver Partnership to craft a consumer survey that will reveal behavioral preferences related to downtown parking habits.

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Brad Segal

Much to everyone's relief at P.U.M.A., Brad has been getting out of the office to help advance the renewal of the business improvement district in Downtown Cleveland, Ohio, and developing a blueprint for a new downtown improvement authority in Nassau, Bahamas. Look for Brad at the IDA conference in Milwaukee, September 12 to 15, where he will be co-presenting a pre-conference workshop on organizational funding strategies with Jamie. Brad will also be the keynote speaker for the International Cities Town Centres and Communities Society annual conference to be held in Geelong, Australia, October 27 to 30.

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Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) is a consulting firm providing management, marketing and financial services to advance downtown and community development. The firm has provided services to more than 200 clients in 31 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Jamaica and the Bahamas. Clients include downtown management organizations, local governments, community development corporations and private firms.

Specialties include:

Economic Development Strategies

P.U.M.A.'s economic development strategies merge an understanding of the marketplace with organizational development to create realistic action plans and the tools to implement them.

Strategic Planning

P.U.M.A. helps create, grow and refocus organizations that advance downtown and commercial corridor revitalization, community development and other civic agendas.

Community Engagement

P.U.M.A. designs and facilitates a variety of community engagement techniques that are tailored to fit the unique dynamics of our projects and client communities.

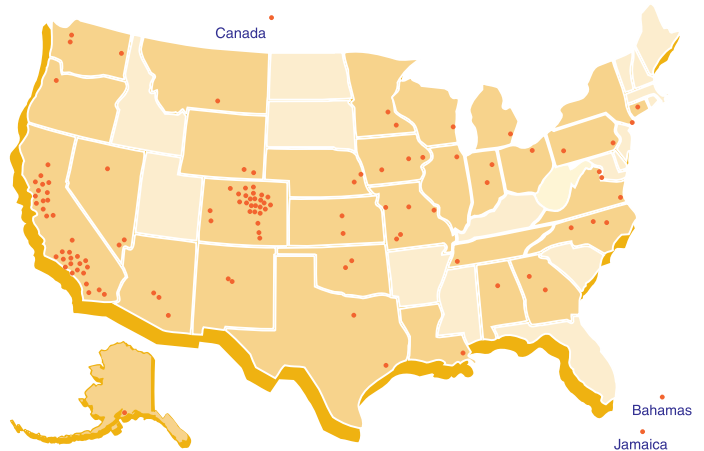
Business Improvement Districts

P.U.M.A. is acknowledged as an international leader in business improvement districts, bringing experience from throughout North America and a track record of success to BID development, start-up and operations.

Community Development Tools

In addition to BIDs, we have worked with a variety of community development financing tools, special districts and grassroots approaches.

Communities include:



Strategic problem solving for downtowns and communities

PROGRESSIVE URBAN
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES



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