

AGENDA
Economic Development Commission Meeting
March 3, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.
ELECTRONIC MEETING

Due to COVID-19 and pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.021, this meeting is taking place electronically via Zoom.

- **Watch the meeting electronically:** To observe the meeting electronically, visit www.newbrightonmn.gov or tune into CTV Channel 8023 (CenturyLink) or Channel 16 (Comcast).
- **Join the meeting electronically:** Due to the limitations of our meeting software, we kindly ask that you join the meeting electronically only if you need to interact with our elected officials or staff. To join the meeting electronically, visit: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82196592215?pwd=VGVZZE9DU2xiMUtVQlViRGNKVTA1dz09> (no app needed) or use your Zoom app to join by entering: Meeting ID: 821 9659 2215 and Passcode: 672150.

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call*

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ▪ Chair Harry Carter | ▪ Commissioner Max Nundahl |
| ▪ Commissioner Bob Benke | ▪ Commissioner Anthony Pledger |
| ▪ Commissioner Bret Fynewever | ▪ Commissioner Jacqui Sauter |
| ▪ Commissioner Clint Kuipers | ▪ Commissioner Paul Zisla |
| ▪ Commissioner Mike Murlowski | |

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes

1. February 3, 2021 EDC Minutes

V. Report from City Council Liaison & Mayor

* A quorum of the City Council may be present.

VI. Business Items

1. Year in Review / Remaining To Do Items / General Updates
2. 2021/2022 Work Plan Visioning
3. Recommendations for Chair & Vice Chair for 2021 - 2022

VII. Adjournment



MINUTES
New Brighton Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting – February 3, 2021
7:30 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Chair Carter called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually.

II. Roll Call

Members Present.....Chair Harry Carter, Commissioners Bob Benke, Bret Fynewever, Clint Kuipers, Max Nundahl, Anthony Pledger, Jacqui Sauter, and Paul Zisla

Members Absent.....Commissioner Mike Murlowski

Also PresentBen Gozola-Assistant Director of Community Assets & Development, Jill Cady- DCAD Technician, Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas, and Councilmember Pam Axberg

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Fynewever, seconded by Commissioner Zisla to approve the agenda as amended adding Item IVA to allow for introductory comments from Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas.

A roll call vote was taken. Approved 8-0

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Zisla, seconded by Commissioner Pledger to approve the minutes from the January 6, 2021 meeting.

A roll call vote was taken. Approved 8-0

V. Introductory Comments from Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas thanked the Commissioners for their dedicated service to the City over the past year. She explained the Council was discussing some growth opportunities and how to better support existing New Brighton businesses. She encouraged the EDC members to reach out to her with any ideas they may have. She described how strategic scorecards would be brought to the Commission in the future. She indicated the City would be creating an Inclusive Community Commission later this summer or fall after hiring a staff member that would head up inclusivity initiatives for the City of New Brighton. She commented the City was seeking student commissioners and encouraged those interested to contact City Hall for further information.

VI. Report from Council Liaison

Councilmember Axberg introduced herself to the EDC and stated she looked forward to serving as the Council liaison for the coming year.

VII. Business Items

A. Business Outreach Program Relaunch

Gozola stated in late 2020, DCAD hired an intern (Jillian “Jill” Cady) to assist with all manner of department issues, and her presence on our team has allowed us to once again restart the business outreach program originally conceived last year. Leading up to this meeting, Jill has taken on the task of creating a now up-to-date listing of all businesses in the community which will be shared with the EDC. The assembled list of businesses will be sent a letter from the City. The letter is an updated and revised version of the letter reviewed and approved by the EDC approximately one year ago. A final draft of this letter will be created following this meeting, and will be presented to the Mayor for final approval and use. Per direction of the Commission in 2020, the letter outlines the new “opt-in” program and explains how to participate.

Cady introduced herself to the EDC noting she had a degree in Environmental Science and has a minor in Urban Studies. She explained she would be working in the next couple of months to gather data on the businesses in New Brighton. She presented the EDC with a draft outline of the webpage that businesses will use to sign up so the City can get feedback on both information to gather and questions to ask.

Gozola explained as businesses sign up, staff will be cataloging their feedback and sharing this information with the EDC in the coming months. Feedback on what our businesses would like to get from this program should steer the direction of these efforts thereafter. Solutions and plans to address longer-term issues will become topics of discussion for the EDC and/or Council as may be appropriate. Once the list of participating businesses is populated, our intent is still to assign each individual business to an EDC or staff member for periodic interactions throughout the year. Each business will likely want a slightly different frequency of communication, so we’ll leave it to you and your assigned business(es) to determine the best fit. It will be

essential that you live up to promises made (if we say we'll call or stop by once per quarter, follow through). As part of this presentation, we will also update the EDC on the currently available COVID relief programs out there. Should question come your way, you'll hopefully be equipped to point businesses in the right direction. Staff requested feedback from the Commission prior to launching the program.

Discussion included:

- The Commission supported the proposed letter that would be sent to local businesses. One Commissioner suggested the letter be condensed and another Commission suggested there be a strong call out to the link in order to direct business owners to the "opt-in" information.
- The Commission recommended staff conduct a follow up phone call with each business owner after the letters are sent.
- The Commission appreciated the work on the City's website, the design and layout.
- Discussion ensued regarding the emails that would be generated from the website to the Commission members.
- Staff encouraged the Commission to forward any additional comments on the letter and website to staff this week.

B. TUV SUD Expansion Study

Gozola reported last week, the City Council approved a resolution in support of TÜV SÜD's pursuit of Job Creation Fund (JCF) dollars from the State of Minnesota which was the first necessary step to ensure a new multi-million dollar expansion of their facility which can or will occur later this year. Staff highlighted the anticipated timeline of this exciting new project.

Discussion included:

- The Commission thanked staff for the update.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Benke, seconded by Commissioner Zisla to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was taken. 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 am

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Gozola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ben" and last name "Gozola" clearly distinguishable.

Ben Gozola

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development

Agenda Section:	VI
Item:	1
Report Date:	02/24/21
Commission Meeting Date:	03/03/21

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Year in Review / Remaining To-Do's / General Updates
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:
CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:
No comments to supplement this report ____ Comments attached ____

- Recommendations:**
- Listen to staff set the stage for the day's discussion
 - Enjoy a donut and some coffee (donuts and coffee not provided)

- History:**
- On a yearly basis, staff will work with the Commission to prepare a generalized work plan for the coming service year (April through March). Prior to that discussion, we will give a brief overview of the previous year's accomplishments, identify any to-do items still on the table due to the pandemic, and provide general updates on Council initiatives and recently approved projects.

- Financial Impact:**
- Miniscule personal impact if you elect to buy coffee and donuts for the meeting

- Summary:**
- The final EDC meeting of the year is really a meeting for commission members to examine what was accomplished over the previous year, acknowledge what remains to be done, and plan for the year ahead. Staff will begin the day's discussion with an overview presentation of where we've been over the past year which will allow us to transition into a commission-led discussion on the 2021/22 Work Plan.

- Attachments:**
- None



Ben Gozola, AICP

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development



Agenda Section:	VI
Item:	2
Report Date:	02/25/21
Commission Meeting Date:	03/03/21

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: 2021/2022 Work Plan Discussion
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:
CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:
No comments to supplement this report ____ Comments attached ____

- Recommendations:**
- Fill in the proposed work plan for the 2021/2022 EDC year
 - Staff will bring a finalized work plan forward in April for review and approval following new Commissioner training.

- History:**
- On a yearly basis, staff will work with the Commission to prepare a generalized work plan for the coming service year (April through March).

- Financial Impact:**
- None. While the eventual actions of the Commission on individual items are sure to have financial impact on the community, adoption of a generalized yearly work plan does not alone drive specific impacts.

- Summary:**
- The attached draft work plan (largely blank given this is the 1st draft) identifies potential topics of discussion for each meeting between April 2021 and March 2022. Proposed actions or outcomes will also be identified for each meeting.
 - Current entries follow the traditional schedule for tasks at various points in the year (training/orientation in April, year-end reports in January, and work plan setting in March).
 - Both staff and the commission will always reserve the right to deviate from the generalized work plan as circumstances dictate (e.g. when the pandemic hit in 2020, focuses shifted).
 - **Unlike other meetings during the year where staff leads the discussion, this meeting should largely be led by you.** As a starting point, information is provided herein on each of the four economic development focal points reaffirmed by the Commission on 8/7/19. Commissioners are encouraged to bring their own information to the meeting on 3/3/21 to share with your colleagues in support of areas you'd like to focus on in the coming year.

- Council may ultimately add to or amend the draft work plan, but this is your opportunity to set the stage on what you would like to focus in the coming year. Looking forward to your thoughts!

Attachments: 1) 2021/2022 WORK PLAN WORKSHEET

2) **NEW BRAINSTORMING MATERIALS ON COMMISSION FOCAL POINTS:**

a. Business Retention & Expansion Information

- i. (Article) *Economic Gardening Takes Root: Redesigning the Bricks & Clicks Business Retention Program During the Pandemic*
- ii. (Article) *COVID Makes Economic Development More Important than Ever*
- iii. *Example Business Retention & Expansion Plan written during COVID – Murrieta, CA (pop 113K)*

b. Housing Program Information

- i. *Itasca Project Housing Affordability Recommendations & Next Steps Presentation Slides*
- ii. *Out of Reach Minnesota 2019 – overview & fast facts regarding housing in MN*
- iii. *State of the State's Housing 2019 Top 5 Takeaways*

c. Placemaking Initiatives Information

- i. (Article) *Creative Placemaking in times of protest and pandemic*
- ii. (Article) *Transformative Placemaking amid COVID-19*
- iii. (Article) *Winter Placemaking During a Pandemic*

d. Physical Redevelopment Opportunities Information

- i. *HKGi Work Program – Silver Lake Road Visioning for Mixed Use Areas*
- ii. *Comp Plan Figure 3.3: Potential Areas of Improvement*

3) **LAST-YEAR'S BRAINSTORMING MATERIALS are still relevant and can be found in the March 4, 2020 packet via Granicus.** Those materials include:

a. Business Retention & Expansion Information

- i. *International Economic Development Council (IEDC) summary of BR&E program components*
- ii. *IEDC BR&E Reference Guide with links to BR&E information*

b. Housing Program Information

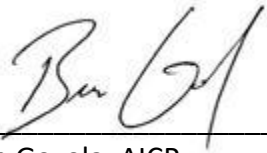
- i. July 31, 2017 staff report and minutes on last housing program discussion*
- ii. Comp Plan Housing Chapter*

c. Place Making Initiatives Information

- i. Event Tourism Background Information (focus item suggested by Commissioner Pledger at the 10-2-19 meeting)*
- ii. IEDC BR&E Reference Guide on Tourism with links to relevant information*

d. Physical Redevelopment Opportunities Information

- i. Comp Plan pages on Potential Redevelopment Areas & Strategies*



Ben Gozola, AICP

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development

COMMISSION'S OVERARCHING FOCAL POINTS (as identified with Council on 3/18/15, and as last reaffirmed on 8/7/19)

- A. Business Retention & Expansion (*primarily use & advertisement of Open to Business*)
- B. Housing Programs
- C. Place-making Initiatives (*i.e., Establishing a sense of place within the community*)
- D. Physical Redevelopment Opportunities (*New Brighton Exchange, New Brighton Elementary, etc.*)

IDENTIFIED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION DURING 2020-2021

Items to examine any time:

- 1. Ramsey county economic development partnership – provide information on their ED and COVID-19 recovery programs
- 2. TIF educational session
- 3. Event/Identity Tourism (i.e. Pickle Ball Capital of MN)
- 4. City's business outreach program and efforts
- 5. Zoning code update/feedback
- 6. New Housing initiatives
- 7. Continued work on entry monuments/sense of place

PROPOSED CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Meeting Date	Task/Project	Proposed Action/Outcome
April 7, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDC Member Orientation / Yearly Training Adopt Final 2021/2022 work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission meets all new members Commission understands their role in City Government Commission finalizes and adopts 2020/2021 work plan

Meeting Date	Task/Project	Proposed Action/Outcome
May 5, 2021		
June 2, 2021		
July 7, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested Summer break in July or Aug 	
August 4, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested Summer break in July or Aug 	
September 1, 2021		
October 6, 2021		
November 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Code and Zoning Code Updates ? ? ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Commission updated on status of City Code and Zoning Code updates

Meeting Date	Task/Project	Proposed Action/Outcome
December 1, 2021	Holiday Break – <i>no meeting unless deemed necessary (TBD)</i>	
January 5, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open To Business 2021 Year-End Report • Baker Tilly 2021 TIF Management Plan/Report • ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Commission learns how successful Open to Business was in 2020</i> • <i>Commission understands current status of all active TIF districts</i>
February 2, 2022		
March 2, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Year's Accomplishments & Outstanding To-do Items • 2022/2023 work plan visioning • Nominations for Chair/Vice Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Commission and staff review accomplishments, and identify ways to improve moving forward</i> • <i>Commission provides direction on the coming year's tasks</i> • <i>Commission nominates its leadership for the coming year</i>

2022/2023 WORK PLAN BEGINS		
April 6, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDC Member Orientation / Yearly Training • Review final 2022/2023 work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Commission meets all new members</i> • <i>Commission understands their role in City Government</i> • <i>Commission agrees upon target items for the coming year</i>

a. Business Retention & Expansion Information

- i. (Article) Economic Gardening Takes Root: Redesigning the Bricks & Clicks Business Retention Program During the Pandemic*
- ii. (Article) COVID Makes Economic Development More Important than Ever*
- iii. Example Business Retention & Expansion Plan written during COVID – Murrieta, CA (pop 113K)*

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Economic Gardening Takes Root: Redesigning the Bricks & Clicks Business Retention Program During the Pandemic

[Mark as Inappropriate](#)

December 16, 2020 | Economic Gardening Takes Root: Redesigning the "Bricks & Clicks" Business Retention Program During the Pandemic | By: Erin Smith, Director of Special Projects, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance |



Outdoor dining in downtown Harrisonburg. Note: This photo was taken prior to the pandemic. Credit: Sarah Featherstone Photography

In May of 2020, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance in Harrisonburg, Virginia, was selected as one of eight accredited Main Street America programs to receive a \$10,000 grant through the Grills Fund for Main Street Revitalization. This funding came at a pivotal time for businesses downtown; university students (who make up 42 percent of our population) had transitioned to online-only learning and didn't return to town after their spring break. Graduation ceremonies, business promotions, and community festivals were dropping off the calendar. Following the City's first spike in COVID-19 cases, residents were keeping their distance as state-mandated restrictions shuttered businesses.

In the wake of these challenges, the Grills Fund provided us the opportunity to expand our existing business retention program, Bricks & Clicks, and recast it with a pandemic-response focus. Launched in 2018, Bricks & Clicks was inspired by "economic gardening," a business retention strategy that focuses on growing existing businesses rather than attracting new ones. Economic gardening's business growth strategies usually involve connecting entrepreneurs to advanced tools that typically aren't available to under-resourced companies, like market research and social media marketing. Previous rounds of Bricks & Clicks offered workshops with inspiring speakers, one-on-one technical assistance from local

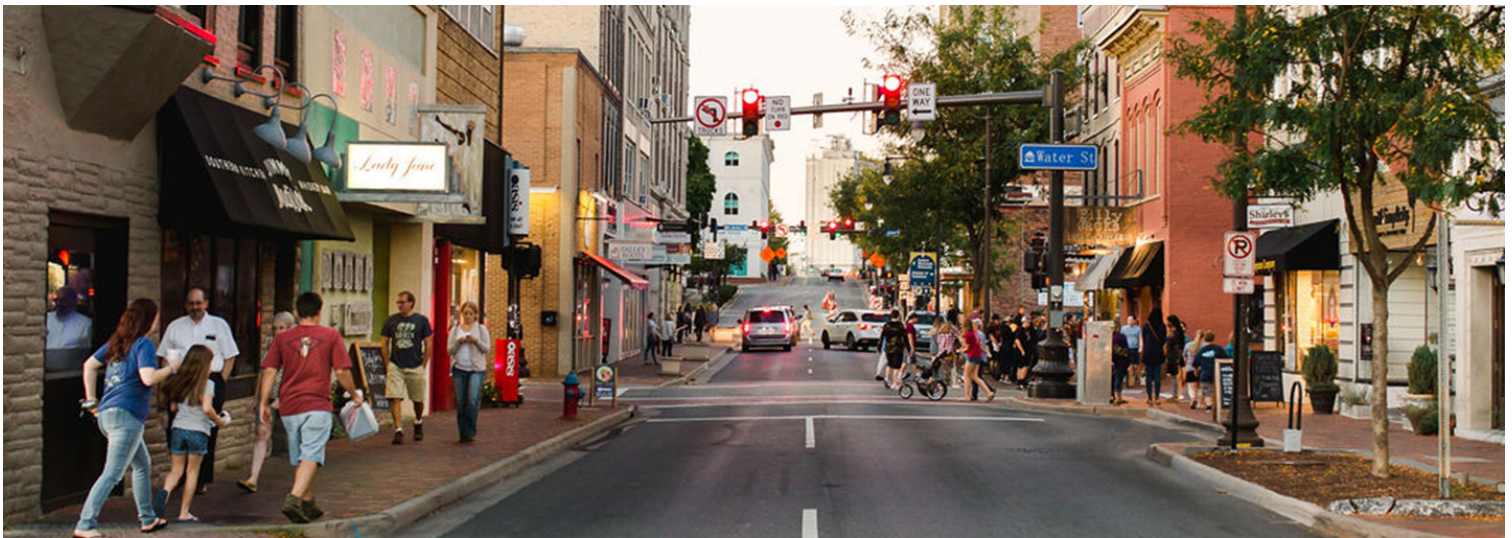
experts, and mini-grants to boost business owners' marketing savvy, ramp up online sales, and create more buzz around brick and mortar stores.

For the 2020 round of Bricks & Clicks, we worked with multiple community partners (the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center, City of Harrisonburg Economic Development, the Shenandoah Valley Technology Council, James Madison University's Professional and Continuing Education Department, and a team of local marketing consultants, web design firms, and architects – many also located downtown) to offer a three-part program that included:

1. Self-guided online trainings, initial consultations with the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center and access to customer feedback compiled from a survey of nearly 1,700 regional respondents. These resources were available to all businesses and helped them plan pandemic response strategies.
2. Free, customized, one-on-one technical assistance with digital marketing, e-commerce, customer experience testing, and interior and architectural design experts for businesses accepted into the program after completing a short application process.
3. After completing their consultations, businesses applied for grants to fund their projects.

Businesses identified problem areas that were e-commerce, digital marketing and/or branding-related (“clicks”) and/or physical or sanitary modifications specific to COVID-19 response (“bricks”). Qualified applicants were eligible to receive funding up to \$5,000, without a match.

Bricks & Clicks became a \$45,000 program funded by \$10,000 from the Grills Fund, \$25,000 from HDR's Friendly City Fortune mega-raffle proceeds, and an additional \$10,000 grant from the Truist Foundation. Twenty businesses applied to the program, all were accepted, and all businesses received a grant. Grants ranged between \$1,000-\$4,000, with most participants receiving checks in the \$2,000-3,000 range.



Pedestrians line the streets of downtown Harrisonburg. Note: This photo was taken prior to the pandemic. Credit: Sarah Featherstone Photography

Example Projects and Testimonials

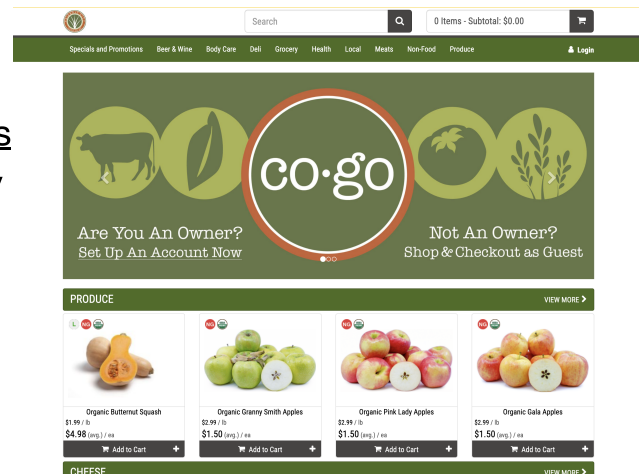
While project completion data will not be collected until January and into 2021, all Bricks & Clicks projects will be completed by December 31st. [Explore More Discovery Museum](#), a non-profit children's museum that remains a lynchpin attraction in our district, used their grant to partially fund the construction of a new, custom-built handwashing station at their museum entrance, with the ultimate goal of building out a “How Well Do You Wash?” educational exhibit.



The [Friendly City Food-Coop](#), a member-owned grocery store, used their grant funding to launch [Co-go](#), an e-commerce site that enables customers to shop for their groceries online and arrange for either in-store or curbside pick-up. While the majority of The Friendly City Food Co-ops sales remain from in-person shopping, Bricks & Clicks funding allowed them to move forward with Co-go in tandem with their pre-planned store expansion.

“Our decision to move forward with the expansion in the midst of a pandemic was a bit scary, but we believe it was the right choice for us. The financial support from this grant has helped to ease some of the financial worry that comes with uncertain times,” said Lindsay, Marketing and Brand Manager for the Friendly City Food Co-op.

withSimplicity, a natural and organic skincare and makeup company, leveraged their grant funding to work with two students at James Madison University's X-Labs to create custom Instagram augmented reality filters that allow customers to “try-on” makeup products using their phone cameras. Not only does this allow customers to sample makeup products in different shades from the comfort of their homes, but it eliminates the need for tester products, which withSimplicity couldn't use in-store due to state regulations.



Timeline & Readjustments

The 2020 program was designed so that project grants could be distributed by early July. In practice, however, it became apparent that many businesses were unable to make strategic projects decisions as they adjusted to the pandemic and evolving governor's orders. In response to this, we loosened our timeline and began accepting applications for grant funding on a rolling basis until December 1. While this allowed for more flexibility for businesses to make unhurried and adaptive decisions (a definite plus), it also meant that funding was invested in the district without the immediacy that we had aimed for. In retrospect, this worked out for the best since the pandemic is drawing on for much longer than any of us had anticipated.

We also learned that while some businesses had a grasp on the challenges the pandemic created for their customer base and business model, as well as the basic skill set and baseline knowledge to identify specific areas that needed improvement, others were starting from square one. This became especially clear for the businesses primarily focused on “clicks” improvements. In the future iterations of this program, we hope to identify and support businesses with varying skill levels in marketing during the initial intake period, in addition to more strategically matching businesses with experts so that both digital marketing novices and veterans can get the most out of the program.

Outcomes

Of the 20 program participants, 16 used their grant money to make e-commerce and digital marketing improvements, while only four program participants focused solely on “bricks” improvements. By the end of this year, HDR, with the support of the Grills Fund and a Truist

Foundation grant, will have distributed \$41,430 in grants to small businesses in our historic district and compensated technical assistance providers at \$2,860. Almost all technical assistance providers provided services at a discounted rate or in-kind.

All 20 program participants are still operational and have retained all their full-time staff members. None of the businesses in Bricks & Clicks have permanently closed.

As with many Main Street projects, collaboration was key. A 2020 Bricks and Clicks program would not have been possible without the support of initial grants and funders, the flexibility and generosity of technical assistance providers, the program partners that built the 2018 Bricks and Clicks program alongside us and worked with us again this year, and most importantly, the boundless determination and creativity found in our downtown businesses – even in the midst of a global pandemic!

About the Author:

Erin Smith, Director of Special Projects, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR), has been working and volunteering with HDR in various capacities since 2016. She holds a B.A. from Virginia Tech and a Masters of Public Administration from James Madison University. As Director of Special Projects, Erin is responsible for planning and executing HDR's community events, as well as consulting with organizers hoping to plan their own events downtown. She also manages grant programs, special projects and initiatives central to HDR's mission.

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About Us

Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for 40 years. Today it is a network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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The Programs
Success Stories
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Main Street Impact
State of Main: 2020

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Project Spotlight
Partners & Supporters

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COVID-19 Pandemic Makes Economic Development More Important Than Ever

November 19, 2020 by [Steve Butler](#)

Category: [Strategies and Programs](#), [COVID-19](#)



Private business is a major source of jobs and tax revenues for many communities, so helping local businesses to remain viable and grow is something on which most local governments place a high priority. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had many devastating effects, including business closures and job losses. As a result, numerous organizations, including many local governments, have taken steps to help improve the economic environment for their local businesses and

residents.

Addressing these types of issues usually falls within the purview of organizations and staff people involved with economic development. But what is meant by the term “economic development” and what can local governments really do to assist local businesses? It is the aim of this blog post to answer those questions.

How is Economic Development Defined?

The term economic development is not defined in state law, but the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) lists 13 planning goals in [RCW 36.70A.020\(5\)](#), one of which addresses economic development:

Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans; promote economic opportunity for all citizens of the state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons; and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources and local public facilities.

Generally speaking, the primary goal of economic development is to improve the economic well-being of a community through efforts that address job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements, and quality of life. Most economic development activities fit into one of the following two categories: (1) business retention and expansion,

and (2) business recruitment.

1. Business retention and expansion

Most experts and practitioners would agree that business retention and expansion (BRE) is the single most important economic development area of emphasis. This is based on the long-proven tenet that existing businesses are already located in your community and, in most cases, would prefer to remain and grow in their current location (rather than go through the hassle and expense of pulling up stakes and relocating elsewhere).

As the long-term nature of the pandemic became clear, many jurisdictions asked their local businesses what they needed to stay open and survive. Feedback from local eating/drink and retail establishments resulted in several communities creating programs to allow use of public rights-of-way for outdoor seating, food trucks, and the display of retail goods. Local governments also tapped many economic development entities to assist with distributing and monitoring Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding.

In both pandemic and non-pandemic times, local governments often administer grant funds to local businesses. Other BRE activities include providing information about tax credits, assisting with zoning and permitting, organizing workforce training and assistance, developing industry cluster strategies, conducting periodic surveys, and building relationships with key economic development participants. The City of Burien and City of Renton have strong BRE programs.

2. New business recruitment

Even though top priority is usually given to business retention and expansion, the recruiting of new businesses is another important economic development focus. Business recruitment activities can include:

- Marketing your community and/or region (online and otherwise),
- Creating a welcoming environment for new businesses,
- Responding thoroughly and rapidly to inquiries from prospective businesses wanting to locate within your community,
- Attending industry trades shows, and
- Leveraging utility infrastructure.

The City of Richland and Choose Whatcom are good examples of government-led business attraction programs, city and county, respectively.

Local Government's Role in Economic Development

The State of Washington is one of the most restrictive in the nation with regard to how public funds may be utilized to attract private investment. The Washington State Constitution states that a city, town, or county may not directly give or loan money to private businesses for economic development. Specifically, Article 8, Section 7 of the state constitution provides:

No county, city, town or other municipal corporation shall hereafter give any money, property, or loan its money, or credit to or in aid of any individual, association, company or corporation, except for the necessary support of the poor and infirm.

While Washington's constitution provides very few avenues for cities, towns, and counties to directly participate in private economic development projects, there are other methods that can be used to achieve your economic development objectives. Here are some options for local governments to consider.

A. Build and maintain good working relationships with local, regional and state economic development organizations

It is important to establish relationships with the many organizations that could assist you with your local economic development goals. Once those relationships are in place be sure to communicate and collaborate with those partners on a regular basis. The [Thurston County Economic Development Council](#) is a good example of a partnership involving a large number of economic development entities.

B. Undertake infrastructure development

Local governments and other partner entities, such as utility districts and port authorities, are in the business of providing and maintaining infrastructure. Examples include roads, sewer service, water lines, electrical service, and even development of "industrial parks." Some communities will provide such facilities and services in advance of an economic development project (e.g., Build it and they will come) while others will wait for a specific project before doing so.

C. Review local plans and codes

It is important to periodically review your comprehensive plan and development codes to ensure these policies and standards are consistent with your economic development objectives. If they don't align with each other, consider updating those documents. For example, if you want to promote local entrepreneurship by encouraging small-scale manufacturing in more locations, make sure your zoning code allows for it (see my blog post titled [Encouraging Small-Scale Manufacturing During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)).

D. Make your permitting process efficient and customer-friendly

While it is important to have strong land use regulations that reflect local priorities, it is equally important that your development review processes doesn't unnecessarily slow down the review and approval of desired development projects. The old adage — time is money — definitely rings true for most businesses, including when applying for a permit. Both applicants and staff will appreciate a streamlined and user-friendly process that clarifies procedures and removes unnecessary steps. This type of permit streamlining will still require applicants to meet all of your community's rules and regulations.

E. Focus on workforce development and support

Since most businesses rely on their employees to make them successful, the importance of providing workforce development and support is increasingly recognized as being good for both "business retention/expansion" and "business attraction" reasons. This focus is wide in scope with many subjects falling under it, including:

- Training/education,
- Childcare for working parents,
- Healthcare, and
- Affordable housing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only served to exacerbate the need for programs to address these quality of life issues. Workforce development/support issues are challenging ones and successful solutions are usually best addressed by a coalition of local, regional, and state participants. The Whatcom Business Alliance's [Yes Whatcom](#) program is one example of a regional approach.

F. Other economic development activities

'Downtown revitalization' and 'tourism promotion' are two other examples of actions that can be taken by local governments.

Potential Partners and Collaborators

There are many organizations that deal with economic development issues. For cities, towns, and counties, here is a partial list of some key economic development partners:

- State and federal agencies (such as the Washington State Department of Commerce and the U.S. Small Business Administration)
- Economic development councils
- Port authorities
- Utility districts
- Banks and other financial institutions
- Local chambers of commerce

Other potential partners include workforce development organizations; economic development districts; universities and community colleges; trade associations; convention & visitors bureaus; tribes; and private businesses.

Conclusion

It is important for a local government to determine what is its primary economic development goal. For example, a community that is looking to increase family-wage jobs will be focusing on a different set of businesses (e.g., technology and manufacturing) than one that wants to maximize businesses that generate a high rate of local tax revenues (e.g., retail/sales tax).

Economic development action is needed, now more than ever. Local governments should be examining the need and available options and then taking positive steps to successfully help local businesses, employees, and other needy community members during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

MRSC will be presenting [Assisting Local Businesses and Retaining Jobs During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) on Wednesday, December 9, 12 - 1:30 p.m., which will feature case studies of economic development initiatives from several Washington organizations. A companion webinar, *An Introduction to Economic Development*, was hosted on November 10. If you missed this webinar but would like to access the recorded version, please visit our [On-Demand Webinars](#) webpage.

Other Resources

- [U.S. Small Business Administration](#)

- [Washington Small Business Development Centers](#)
- [Washington State Department of Commerce](#)
 - [County-Based Associate Development Organizations](#)
 - [Washington Business Hub](#)
 - [StartUp Washington](#)
- [Washington Economic Development Alliance \(WEDA\)](#)
- International Economic Development Council: [Economic Development Reference Guide](#)

The author would like to thank Gary Ballew, Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Spokane, Inc.; Suzanne Dale Estey, Executive Director, Washington Economic Development Association; and Chris Green, Assistant Director for Economic Development and Competitiveness, Washington Department of Commerce, for their assistance with this blog post.

MRSC is a private nonprofit organization serving local governments in Washington State. Eligible government agencies in Washington State may use our free, one-on-one [Ask MRSC service](#) to get answers to legal, policy, or financial questions.



About Steve Butler

Steve joined MRSC in February 2015. He has been involved in most aspects of community planning for over 30 years, both in the public and private sectors. He received a B.A. from St. Lawrence University (Canton, New York) and a M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Steve has served as president of statewide planning associations in both Washington and Maine, and was elected to the American Institute of Certified Planner's College of Fellows in 2008.

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2020

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



CONNECTED BY BUSINESS

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Since its incorporation 30 years ago, the City of Murrieta has been filled with opportunities and advantages that many other places cannot claim, such as a having a top performing school district, nationally ranked public safety, a central location in Southern California, access to wine country and major regional recreational activities, and having two major freeways converging at its center. As a City that grew rapidly in the last decade, there were many challenges to overcome, such as the pains of an accelerated population expansion, a national recession that led to high unemployment rates, a second recession due to a worldwide pandemic and the general struggles associated with being a relatively new city that is trying to find its identity. The ability of the City of Murrieta to respond to such challenges has come from the strength of the relationships that it has with our business community and the knowledge that their growth and success is truly shared by all of us. Small businesses account for 61.8% of net new jobs according to the U.S. Small Business Administration and account for 99.7% of total business. For this reason, any local economy that seeks to flourish must make retaining and expanding their businesses a top priority.

One of the crucial assets of Murrieta has been its ability to maintain a small-town feel, even when our population surged to over 116,000 residents. This familiarity that we have with not only one another, but also from business to business, has led us to our new city tag line, "Connected by Community." Whether dining in our downtown, playing at one of our parks or shopping in any of our retail centers, Murrieta's personality has always been warm and welcoming. This communal feel and the friendliness that exists here is the foundation of our City and creates an atmosphere that makes this a great place to live, work and play.

If COVID-19 has had any effect, it has reminded us how connected we truly are, even when physically separated. Our businesses adapted to changes that they never could have anticipated or planned for and did so with creativity and alacrity. The City became a hub for resources, creating a "Murrieta Business Newsletter" each day to keep our companies informed about changes and resources available. We delivered PPE to businesses and medical institutions, created reopening kits for small business, we funded "Back to Business" grants to help owners keep their staff employed during the pandemic, told the stories of how businesses adapted to the changing landscape in the "Murrieta Pivots" series, maintained a video series called the "Murrieta Microscope" to showcase new companies, and when indoor services were closed, we promptly created outdoor programs to allow owners to shift their operations outside without time delays or additional permitting.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Murrieta came out of these difficult times as a stronger and more resilient community. Regional sales numbers and unemployment numbers are already beginning to rebound and hope is in sight that we can maintain both a safe and successful local economy. Our concentration on becoming the healthcare hub of the region has led us to many valuable resources during this time and the value of our health service providers has never been more evident. In spite of the challenges associated with COVID-19 and its effect on business, new developments are continuing to come to Murrieta, with retail, office, industrial, and hospitality projects still filling our pipeline. While there is still much work to do to raise our economy and provide competitive jobs for our highly skilled workforce, the foundation in Murrieta is very strong and continuing to grow.

While we responded to the pandemic and offered much needed services to our business community, the City of Murrieta's Economic Development Strategic Plan never contemplated this type of challenge. It has become clear that there is a need for a codified plan for Business Retention and Expansion that focuses on needs for small business sustainability, disaster preparedness, access to capital and business resources. The Economic Development Department is focused on the expansion of employment, entrepreneurship, fiscal resources, community amenities, and overall quality of life for all of the residents and businesses of Murrieta. The efforts put forth by the department should extend to home-based businesses, startups and small business, as well as to our largest employers. It is the goal of this department to facilitate connections with business, investors, developers, and community partners that share the goal of positively impacting the growth of Murrieta.

AMBITION & MISSION STATEMENT

Ambition Statement

To enhance the quality of life and well-being of all Murrieta residents through the growth of our local economy.

Mission Statement

To cultivate new and existing industries in order to provide opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Demographics

Murrieta is the largest city in Southwest Riverside County with a population of 116,781 and is estimated to grow by 11.8% over the next 5 years. Average household income in the City of Murrieta has grown to \$113,084 and continues to be much higher than the county average. In addition, there are 496,701 people within a 20-minute drive of the city. These factors result in a larger than average consumer base, with considerable expendable income to support the local economy. When looking for employees, businesses do not have to look far as the labor force is 52,394 strong within the city and 67.1% of our residents have some college or more.

Given the city's strong focus on public safety and access to top quality primary education, it is no surprise that Murrieta is a family community with high-skill workers. The top consumer behavior represented in the City is "Kids & Cul-de-Sacs," followed by "Winner's Circle" and "Middleburg Managers." These lifestyle segments are indicative of families with heads of households that have degrees and white-collar jobs. In fact, 65% of Murrieta works in white-collar jobs, which is higher than both the County and State averages and the median age in Murrieta is 34.2, which coincides with the younger, family demographic.

City Highlights

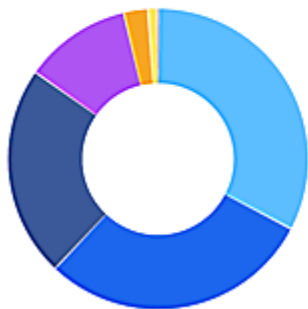
The residents of Murrieta prioritize safety, education, and quality of life, and the results have been magnificent. The City of Murrieta consistently ranks in the top ten as one of the safest cities with a population over 100,000 in the country in terms of lowest violent crime rates. Murrieta is the first city in Southwest Riverside County to have its own Police and Fire Department, not relying on services provided by the county. The strength of our Police and Fire Departments come from a high percentage of our team living in the community, making the protection and welfare of our residents personal to them. Murrieta Fire and Rescue recently became one of only twenty-two fire departments in the entire State of California to receive accreditation from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. Murrieta Valley Unified School District is one of the best in the state, proven by being named a 2018 Exemplary School District over all other 23 school districts in Riverside County along with only 22 others in the State of California. The City is centrally located between two major universities that help provide a well-educated workforce, The University of California Riverside and California State University San Marcos, each within an approximately 45-minute drive of Murrieta.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Outdoor recreation is a main focus for our residents, with 52 parks in the City and quick access to the 7,500-acre Santa Rosa Plateau ecological reserve providing valuable amenities to those that enjoy the outdoors. The City has been named the #1 Place to Live in Southwest Riverside County by the Press-Enterprise for three years in a row. Murrieta continues to be a great place to live, work and play.

The City of Murrieta strives to create a business friendly environment through programs and services intended to assist business, facilitate connections, offer educational programming and provide access to capital services. The City has a heavy concentration of small businesses and sees their retention and growth as a key to the success of the City as a whole. The graph of Murrieta business size below shows that nearly 1/3 of our companies fall into the lowest staff count of 1 to 4 employees and over 60% have 1-9 employees. This exemplifies how important small business and its growth is to our community. Many of the larger size businesses in the city were not recruited here, but grew from within. This is why it is vital that we continue to execute startup programs that assist innovators and entrepreneurs in commercializing their businesses and we focus on biotech startups through our small business incubator, the Murrieta Innovation Center.

Business Size



	Percentage	Business Count
1 to 4 employees	32.6%	1,109
5 to 9 employees	29.3%	997
10 to 19 employees	22.7%	773
20 to 49 employees	11.5%	392
50 to 99 employees	2.6%	88
100 to 249 employees	1.0%	33
250 to 499 employees	0.1%	4
500+ employees	0.1%	3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Challenges

The City of Murrieta has some exceptional qualities, which help make it a favorable destination for business, but that does not come without some challenges. For instance, Murrieta is 45 minutes to the north or south of a major higher educational institution. This means that innovation has to be recruited into the City from outside regions and proper resources have to be procured. This can further be illustrated by the difficulty that Southwest Riverside County has had in our work to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem. The creation of a startup ecosystem is a long and difficult process that the City and our partners have been working on for years and there are still needs for greater intellectual property investment in our region along with more mentorship and educational opportunities. It is not enough that we work together to build partnerships, we have to have available resources that are attainable and valuable for our new companies. Further challenges fall on the development side, as high scale development is more likely to gravitate towards the well-known and vetted coastal communities and far less likely to come inland. We are just beginning to see some interest in larger developments that are unique and show greater risk for the builder, but also potentially greater reward.

Economic Impact on Murrieta

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major economic impact on all regions throughout the U.S. and Murrieta is no different. When the last major economic downturn occurred, Murrieta was deleteriously impacted with major business closures and unemployment rates that rivaled some of the highest in the country. With the growth and diversification of our economic base in the decade since then, Murrieta has shown itself to be more resilient to recession than it was in the past. While the effect of the pandemic has been harmful to many businesses, the breadth of the challenge in an economic sense has not been as severe.

While shopping trends initially dropped by 22% during the first month of closures, they were less intense than in other markets, which saw 40 – 50% decreases. Dining experienced a 41% decrease, which was offset by an increase in grocery, which was up 30%. Since that time, many industries have regained their original positions. Unemployment was at 2.9% before the pandemic in the City of Murrieta, which was historically low. Once the first round of layoffs occurred, it shot to 14.9% within two reporting periods. In the 3 months since then, it has dropped back down below 7% and looks to continue its decline as businesses reopen and re-staff.

City revenues were impacted across the board, with General Fund revenues decreasing by \$2.2M in FY 2020 and projected to decrease by \$2.5M in FY 2021. While the loss of revenue is challenging, the City was fortunate to have appropriate reserves in place for such exigent financial situations. Businesses have not shown a significant volume of closures since the pandemic began. Since March 2020, there have only been seven reported business closeouts to business licensing in the City of Murrieta and a total of 45 net fewer business licenses for businesses based in Murrieta overall. Even with very difficult challenges presented to the City, to our residents, and particularly to local businesses, the region has responded with determination and perseverance. In mitigating the challenges of a widespread pandemic and its financial effects, the region has shown itself to be economically strong and resistant to recession.

What We've Done So Far

The federal, state, and local government have all taken steps to mitigate damages experienced by businesses due to Covid-19. The federal government's main form of assistance has been through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act stimulus package, which was signed into law on March 27, 2020. This authorized the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan program which will provide 2.5 times a business's average monthly payroll costs up to \$10 million to cover payroll, mortgage, and utilities for 8 weeks. This loan program included sole proprietors and independent contractors, and 100% of the loan can be forgiven if 75% is used for payroll. The Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) was introduced to provide economic relief to businesses that experienced a loss of revenue and issued up to \$2 million to cover health care costs, rent, utilities, and fixed debt payments. The Small Business Association also provided debt relief to pay 6 months of principal, interest, and other fees for businesses' 7(a), 504, and Microloans. The IRS also extended the tax filing date in 2020 to July 15.

The California State Department also took its own measures to help businesses. It provided \$50 million to the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank to secure loans for small businesses that don't qualify for federal funds, including low wealth communities. The California Capital Access Program (CALCap), which is a loan loss reserve program, was designed to cover 100% on losses as a result of certain loan defaults limited to a maximum of \$2.5 million over a 3-year period. Multiple other grants were implemented such as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, grants available through the Small Business Administration and Governor's Office of Business Services (GOBiz), the CA Jump Start Loan Program, and the State Compensation Insurance Fund. Along with grants, the state has also assisted through the Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) to help businesses figure out which loans are best, develop resiliency strategies, and find other resources to utilize. There was also a 60-day extension to file and deposit state payroll taxes without penalties or interest. A Work Sharing program was implemented to minimize/eliminate the need for layoffs, keep trained employees, avoid the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training employees while allowing employees to keep their job while receiving unemployment benefits. The 60-day requirement under the WARN act was also suspended for certain conditions to help businesses keep their employees and businesses safe.

Riverside County has also acted at the local level to mitigate financial damages for businesses. The county has provided \$46.5 million in small business grants, \$5 million in non-profit grants, 2 million masks to businesses, and 12 business ambassadors to help identify ways for business to operate safely at no cost to the business. The Local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free assistance with business planning, marketing, funding, and management. The UC Riverside Epic Small Business Development Center provides individualized support, specialized consulting, training programs, workshops, access to capital, and SBIR/SBTR assistance to early stage tech entrepreneurs and companies in the Inland Empire for free. The Riverside County Business Services provides resources, programs, and services to help expand, relocate, and grow businesses in Riverside County. The Riverside County Workforce Development Center specializes in helping businesses fill their workforce need to run more effectively and efficiently. Businesses are encouraged to utilize these sources to gain an advantage during and after these difficult times.

The City of Murrieta was particularly responsive to COVID-19 and our business's needs. We deferred the collection of all business-licensing fees as well as deferring our Transient Occupancy Tax payment for hotels for the initial three months of business closures, and then created a Back to Business Grant Program that offers \$10,000 grants to small businesses in peril due to the pandemic. In addition, the City began offering daily Economic Development Newsletters that featured available resources for small business and participated in regional podcasts and business briefings to keep the community informed about programs that can assist them. We even created Covid-19 specific web pages to highlight programs and resources for our local businesses.

The City collaborated with the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce in dispersing Back to Business Supply Kits when closures were first lifted. These featured free products that were designed to get businesses opened safely and quickly, such as face shields, face masks, hand sanitizer, floor markers for spacing, window decals and much more. Later, the City and Chamber provided Safety Kits for businesses that were also free of charge. Another partnership for distribution included the City, Chamber of Commerce and the County Medical Association where we provided State of California PPE to all of our regional hospitals and medical centers.

When indoor closures began, the City created programs to assist business in reopening outdoors. We began with a Temporary Outdoor Dining Program that allowed our restaurants the ability to move their indoor seating that was lost due to closure to an outside space.

We then followed up with programs for Hair and Barbershops, Nail Salons and an Outdoor Gym and Fitness Center Program. All of these allowed our businesses to move their operations outside immediately, with no additional city permitting required as long as they followed a specific set of guidelines.

The City acted quickly and decisively during these times, but the lack of a codified plan was a hindrance to organization and execution. The next step in our course is to be better prepared to deal with future crisis by creating this document, a Business Retention and Expansion Plan.

Planning for Future Crises

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have learned many things, and we should use this knowledge in preparation of future challenges. Information in these types of situations is crucial to understand what is happening in order to make proper decisions in a timely manner for both government officials and businesses. We will work to reduce the number of intermediaries between the primary source of information and businesses to decrease the chance of confusion. This will be assisted by the City's Public Information Officer, a position that has been critical in sharing information and resources during the current pandemic. We will include business owners when making decisions, clarify inbound information, and explain rationale for any decision made to ensure a clear understanding between all parties involved. The City will continue to offer a newsletter, website, social media, and site selector website to disperse information in as many channels as possible.

We typically work with the assumption that business will always proceed as usual, but we cannot do this anymore. We need to assist businesses with creating business plans that reflect the post-COVID-19 economy and include strategies for irregular operating procedures. These will include a better use of technology with industry specific details that will take advantage of the resources in and around Murrieta. Partners available to our business community include the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce, the UC Riverside EPIC Small Business Development Center, Riverside County Business Services, Workforce Development Board, SCORE and The Small Business Administration.

The demand of business resources was unnerving for many people during this pandemic, and we will do our best to mitigate this in the future. We will create action plans and post resource lists to the City website that include things like sources of funding and equipment for businesses. During these past 6 months it has been inspiring to see the private and public sector work together to keep our local economy healthy, and we will do all that we can to maintain these positive relationships.

Business Retention

Business Retention will be built on nine core actions:

- Site visits
- Surveys
- Data Analysis
- Bi-Annual SWOT Analysis
- 1 on 1 counseling sessions
- Education, mentoring & workshops
- Facilitation of connections
- Small business promotion
- Access to workforce

The City of Murrieta is committed to helping maintain and expanding the local businesses that provide the backbone of our economy. One of the first steps in doing this is the collection of information about the companies that are already located here, the industries they serve, their success in our market and their challenges. This will be done by using site visits and surveys to gather data that helps to understand our firms. When available, site visits will be an important tool to connect with business, learn basic information about their needs, and to offer city services and facilitate connections with economic development partners. When unavailable, digital surveys may instead be utilized as a means of data collection. By using financial reports and asking questions such as if they have kept pace with initial sales projections, if there have been changes in full-time employment, if they have had any problems overall, etc., the city can determine the firm's satisfaction with us and learn to predict future actions (expansion, closure, relocation). Data can then be kept on record as a benchmark to determine long-term trends. The city will use this information to highlight early warning signs that a firm will potentially close or relocate such as declining sales or employment, ownership changes, mergers/buyouts, a struggle with recruitment, plans to expand in other communities, concerns regarding regulation, etc. We will also keep track of how the most prevalent industries are doing when compared to the national average to predict any challenges or opportunities that our local firms might face in the future. This influx of information will require us to create databases and other internal systems for data management and analysis. With this additional information, we will also be able to determine root causes of any company issues that they might not be aware of if they do not have a similar data management system. Bringing value like this is one of the ways that the City of Murrieta will help to ensure that businesses stay here and expand here.

GOING FORWARD

A key component is to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). A Strategic Planning session is scheduled for every two years with stakeholders from business, non-profits, investment, development, and startups to stay connected to the community and its understanding of the value of our resources and tools. In a response to the immediate need for business retention, this document is being created in lieu of this year's strategic planning session in order to focus solely on Business Retention and Expansion. The program should resume next year as data is anticipated to return to levels that are more predictable. The City has long been a proponent of business mentorship, education and training, through the Small Business Administration and programs like SCORE and the Small Business Development Center and through small business workshops. The City has recently brought in an experienced former SCORE mentor as an in house business counselor and offers free service to Murrieta small businesses. The City will utilize free business education, mentoring opportunities and a series of workshops in order to provide valuable business information to our local companies. This service assists the businesses in learning core competencies and new resources that they may be unaware of. By providing these opportunities free of charge, it helps the City to connect with our businesses, learn their needs, and develop valuable relationships that help the business to thrive and the City to become more valuable a partner to the business.

Economic Development is primarily focused on the facilitation of key connections and the linking of resources to businesses in need. This will always be a component of business retention as providing access to resources and partners to help our small businesses in their planning, execution, funding and operations. Another principal duty will be the marketing, promotion and announcements of small businesses to the community. Utilizing tools like the Murrieta Business Newsletter, More Murrieta, City social media sites, the Murrieta Microscope video series, articles like Murrieta Pivots, and press releases, Murrieta will continue to promote and assist our small businesses to help introduce them to the community and establish a presence in our City. Utilizing the strong partnership that the City of Murrieta has with the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce, the City will continue the successful Work Local/Hire Local Job Fair series. These events have brought in thousands of local workers and connected them to hundreds of local businesses. This allows our companies to fill the vacancies they have with local workers in a fast and simple format. The City will also partner with organizations like the Riverside County Workforce Development Board for access to Employee Training Programs and hiring opportunities to help new businesses ramp up and to help existing businesses to maintain necessary staffing levels.

Business Expansion

Business Expansion will be built on seven core actions:

- Communication
- Engagement
- Industry Groups
- Site Visits
- Site Selection
- Workforce Development
- Educational Pipelines

The growth of existing business is the key to expanding our economy and our job base. In spite of national and regional economic challenges, Murrieta is witnessing the expansion of multiple companies in a variety of verticals right now. In healthcare, Kaiser Permanente, Rancho Springs Medical Center, Loma Linda University Healthcare, the Heart and Vascular Wellness Center, and New Smile Prosthodontics are all working on expansion projects right now. Restaurants are expanding with 8Bit Brewing enlarging their manufacturing and bottling process, The Chef's Grille is doubling their existing space by adding a new suite; new outdoor patios are in discussion for Sidelines, Denny's, 8Bit, Garage Brewing and more. West Coast Exotic Cars is undergoing a major development by purchasing an eighty thousand square foot building in our auto mall and redeveloping it to house two new car dealerships and an exotic car line. This type of progress is the foundational element of building a balanced economy.

Economic Development should focus on Educational Resources, along with Communication and Engagement as principal activities of business expansion. Partnering with local educational institutions, connecting them to the business community and making sure that timely information is shared to assist in creating pipeline programs that meet existing local needs, are necessary elements to a foundation of meaningful workforce assistance. It is economic development through educational promotion and is a key to creating a workforce that fills local voids and is self-sustaining. In order to accomplish this, it is indispensable to understand our existing businesses, their needs of scaling operations, along with hiring and site expansion requirements, and this cannot be without staying in constant communication. This can be executed in a variety of ways:

- Direct site visits, that engage the business leadership and appreciate the challenges that they have in growth.

GOING FORWARD

- Follow up and dialogue with business owners to ensure that we are offering all services available to assist them.
- Networking through all local channels such as the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce, the Murrieta Rotary, the Economic Development Coalition and other local groups and non-profits that allow Economic Development the means to connect with our business community and learn about their needs.
- Maintaining Valuable Business Resources through the City Website and the Murrieta Business Newsletter.
- For certain core industries, group meetings that bring major business leaders together can be hosted by the City. This has been done successfully with the Medical Leaders Luncheon series, the annual Physician's Social and the Manufacturers Group Meetings along with the annual Manufacturers Day.

Site selection is an important aspect of business expansion as many businesses either begin planning for more space too late or are not sure of their upcoming needs. Providing site selection services on a one-on-one basis is made available through the Economic Development Division at no cost. In addition, the City will maintain a data driven Site Selector Website to encourage both outside attraction efforts and interior expansion efforts that is available at any time for the convenience of our business partners.

Without a properly skilled workforce, business growth becomes stunted. Regional partners in workforce training are the Riverside County Workforce Development Board, Murrieta Valley Unified School District, Mt. San Jacinto College, California State University San Marcos, University of California Riverside, along with a network of trade and skills certification groups. Connections and communications with these partners ensure that we are representing our local business staffing needs to the education community. In addition, the City can assist with individual business hiring events, promotions, staffing announcements and by hosting larger scale job fairs to encourage local hiring by multiple businesses at once.

City Partnerships

- California Business Portal
- SCORE
- InSoCal Connect
- California Manufacturing Technology Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce Southern California District Export Council
- Export Import Bank
- Riverside County Economic Development Agency
- Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce
- Riverside County Workforce Development
- Economic Development Coalition
- Entrepreneurial Proof of Concept and Innovation Center
- Murrieta Valley Unified School District
- Mt. San Jacinto College
- University of California Riverside



Teamwork

Knowing that we cannot do all of this alone, we are looking forward to working with both internal and external partners to help support Murrieta businesses in achieving their goals. We are proud to have a strong relationship with the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce and will work even closer with them to connect our businesses with the necessary resources to succeed. The City of Murrieta wants businesses to know that they are an important part of the city and that they are appreciated. With Murrieta Valley Unified School District recognized as a top district in Riverside County and many expanding employers, we will continue to facilitate a relationship between the education and employment in order to establish a strong local workforce base that no longer needs to rely on commuting to employment outside of Murrieta. We will also be working on creating symbiotic partnerships with organizations outside of the city. For example the Small Business Development Center, a product of the combined efforts of UC Riverside and Riverside County, is producing a strong small business environment with access to top notch consulting, resources, and networking that we can use to help our companies here in Murrieta.

Concluding Statement


In recognition of the fact that new challenges will present themselves in the future and the prediction of what they will look like and when they will occur is not likely, the City of Murrieta must keep its focus on Economic Development, the need to support local small business, the necessity of retaining local companies and assisting them when they are ready to expand. Keeping in contact with our entrepreneurs, analyzing and understanding regional data points, maintaining a steady supply of resource partners that can help businesses through challenging times, communicating business resources and opportunities in a timely fashion, and being ready to assist companies on a one-on-one basis when needed are all components of keeping a connected business community. This initial platform of ideas is intended to serve as a guide for retaining businesses in our community and for assisting those that need to expand.

"Connected by Community,"

Scott Agajanian

Economic Development Department of Murrieta

b. Housing Program Information

- i. Itasca Project Housing Affordability Recommendations & Next Steps Presentation Slides*
 - ii. Out of Reach Minnesota 2019 – overview & fast facts regarding housing in MN*
 - iii. State of the State's Housing 2019 Top 5 Takeaways*
- 

ITASCA*project*

Housing affordability recommendations and next steps

Presentation to ULI Regional Housing Policy Work Group

January 25, 2021



About the Itasca Project's purpose and how we work

WHY

Vibrant communities require **cross-sector collaboration** to create new opportunities and solve persistent problems.

WHAT

The Itasca Project seeks to increase regional economic competitiveness, improve quality of life and expand prosperity for all.

HOW

We are **employer-led** and **fact-driven leaders** who identify near-term actions our participants can take to address long-term challenges. Timely CEO engagement and impact is critical to our effectiveness. Our core functions include

- **Convening:** Bringing influential people together across sectors to create consensus on key challenges and solution paths
- **Thought leadership:** Identifying and framing the most important long-term challenges along with bold ideas to address them
- **Catalytic action:** Building early-stage partnerships to scope and operationalize the best ideas



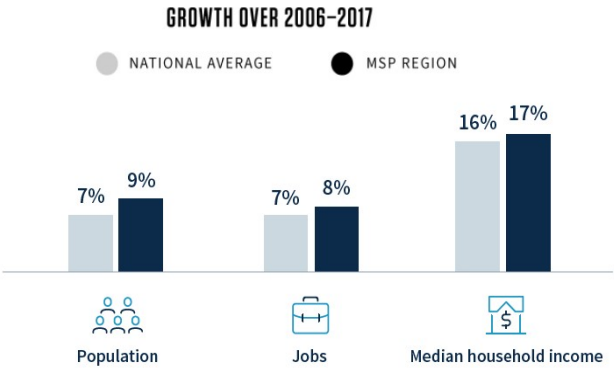
Itasca's housing affordability task force grew out of the 2018 Minnesota housing task force and its report "More Places to Call Home"

COMMIT TO HOMES AS A PRIORITY	PRESERVE THE HOMES WE HAVE	BUILD MORE HOMES	INCREASE HOME STABILITY	LINK HOMES AND SERVICES	SUPPORT & STRENGTHEN HOME-OWNERSHIP
1.1 Forecast demand, set goals	2.1 Expand rental rehab (multifamily)	3.1 Lead in housing innovation	4.1 Expand rental assistance	5.1 Make funding dependable	6.1 Focus on closing disparities
1.2 Dedicated funding sources	2.2 Incentivize private owners	3.2 Grow build trades workforce	4.2 Stop predatory landlord practices	5.2 Full range of transit. services	6.2 Promote alternative models
1.3 Public ed campaign	2.3 Expand rental rehab tools	3.3 Local gov't capability building	4.3 Strengthen tenant protections	5.3 Improve health partnerships	6.3 Encourage employer help
	2.4 Support rehab for public housing	3.4 Expand range of housing types	4.4 Improve emergency aid	5.4 Gap ID for Housing Supports	6.4 Increase financial ed
		3.5 Regulatory review panel	4.5 Expand navigation	5.5 Expand match programs	6.5 Expand alt mortgage products
			4.6 Incentivize voucher accepts.		6.6 Expand down-payment assist.
			4.7 Heading Home Together		

- Clear leader, current action
- Natural owner, some momentum
- No current leader, strong fit for Itasca
- No current leader

While the Minneapolis-St Paul (MSP) region is home to many assets, **housing affordability is a key driver to our growth**

The MSP region fortunate to be **home to many assets**



Housing has been a key driver of that strong performance: housing affordability and availability are two of the top three considerations for relocating professionals

- 3 million residents
- World-class universities and colleges
- Renowned parks systems
- Vibrant art and music scene
- 16 Fortune 500 businesses

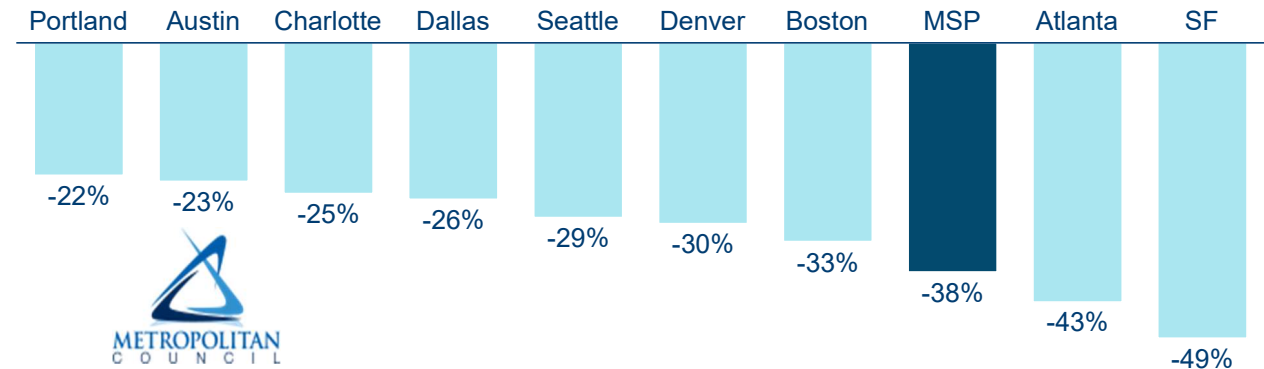
Over the past decades, partly due to these amenities, **the MSP region has grown faster than the national average**



However, housing affordability is at risk due to a lack of supply

Relative to population growth, **most peer regions are building more home than MSP**

Percentage difference between population and housing unit growth 2010-18



Lack of housing has impacted affordability across all incomes – however, **households making less than \$75,000 are particularly challenged with both a high and rapidly increasing cost burden.**

Examples of jobs earning salaries in this range include **office clerks, truck drivers, surgical technicians and licensed practical nurses.**

To meet projected future growth and make up for a decade of underbuilding, the MSP region needs to produce 18,000 units annually – a 30% increase over our recent average

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau population estimates. Population growth rate includes only people in households. Pittsburgh and Chicago were excluded; they lost population; housing growth exceeds population growth.

ITASCAproject



Itasca will lead on housing affordability in 3 areas

Three priority efforts for Itasca



Develop a housing affordability dashboard.

Provide clarity through data on regional housing affordability and how it impacts residents, identify gaps needing action and measure progress against goals



Design and pilot an innovative, housing-forward benefits package.

Encourage employers to act directly to support workforce via housing-forward benefits package



Test and learn.

Identify new, innovative actions that private and public entities can take to spur housing production

Where we want to be by end of 2021

- Regional housing affordability dashboard launched • *Focus today*
- At least **three** employers commit to **pilot** emergency savings accounts
- At **least two** other employers have conducted **analysis** of employees' housing cost burden
- Innovation working group launched, identified innovations to stack; has plan to move forward

Input will be gathered and shared back in three focus phases.



Insights

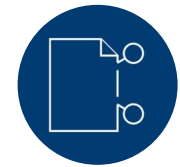
What insights are most valuable to our intended audience?

Focus today



Metrics

Based on desired insights, what metrics are most useful?
(may be asked via survey)



Review draft

What improvements would you make to a near-final draft of dashboard?
(may be asked via survey)



Primary audiences for the dashboard are internal to the region; secondary audience is broader

	Audience	Details	Dashboard purpose for given audience
Primary	Policy makers	Elected officials and administrators – state and local levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To better inform policy and funding decisions made by public leaders to improve housing access for all and increase economic competitiveness of the region
	Industry leaders	Leaders who are part of the housing production pipeline – e.g. builders, architects, financial institutions, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To better inform the business and resource allocation decisions that increases production in locations and at price-points that is needed most
	Major employers	Non-housing-industry employers in the Twin Cities region from the private, public, and non-profit sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To enable a better understanding of the link between housing production and cost with regional economic competitiveness▪ To provide data and insight that motivates advocacy around housing that improves the economic competitiveness of the region
Secondary	Community members	Residents from across the region; general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Raises the level of understanding of the region's current housing situation and housing's importance for the region▪ To enable residents to hold leaders accountable for their decision making
	Industry participants	Investors who may wish to invest in our region's housing market or in other areas of the region's economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Helps increase understanding of opportunity of the region's current housing situation



For discussion: What insights will be most useful to the intended dashboard audience?

Sample insights

The region is/not meeting **its housing production goals**.

The region is / not **building enough housing to support its job growth**.

Many households in the region **are struggling to afford their housing, with households of color more likely to be burdened by housing cost**.

The housing we are building is/is **not matched to household income distribution [and/or household size]**.

Housing development is geographically concentrated/distributed.

Housing affordability is something **many of my employees** may be worried about.

My employees of color may be struggling with housing affordability.

Discussion

1. **Are there insights here that resonate with you?**
2. **Are there insights or data sources you rely on that you would want to see elevated?**
3. We are planning on providing some interpretation and context along with the metrics. What advice would you give about the relative balance between providing context and selecting stand-alone metrics?

APPENDIX



We propose organizing the data into three broad areas

	Example data points	Disaggregation
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of units built* • Type of units built • Acres of land developed* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown units by price point, location (options include center city/suburb; regions of affluence/poverty; transit station areas)
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median rent, home price* • Rate of increase in median rent, home price • Percent households that are cost burdened* • Evictions and foreclosures* • Homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost burden by race, own/rent • Homeownership by race • Cost-burden by census tract • Foreclosures and evictions by race
Contextual data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total population • Household size • Median income, rate of increase in median income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median income (and wealth?) by race • Household size by race (?)

Interactive maps could be created for the metrics with *asterisks

Discussion questions

- What is your **reaction to these broad categories?**
- What types of **information are missing?** Which seem **less needed?**
- **What other kinds of disaggregation should we consider?**
- Which categories are most helpful to have **benchmarked against peer regions?**



The innovation working group will focus on combining multiple innovations into a single development

Central question: By combining 3-5 innovations that have already been used in the region into a single development, could an affordability target be reached with [little/no] public subsidy?

Hypothesis: Reviewing the MGI levers (categories below), we identified those most impactful and feasible in our region. We will work with partners to combine most or all of these into a single development and document the affordability benefits.

Approaches to consider

Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with a public or private land owner to release land at lower price and/or ready land for development• Build within the MUSA to reduce land prep
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use modular construction• Build in city that allows smaller units, more flexibility with exteriors and/or minimal parking requirements• Seek partnership with a city to guarantee timing of permits
O&M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build energy efficient units• Invest in features that lower long-term cost of ownership
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TBD which approaches are most promising in our region given changed economic landscape

Key questions for the working group

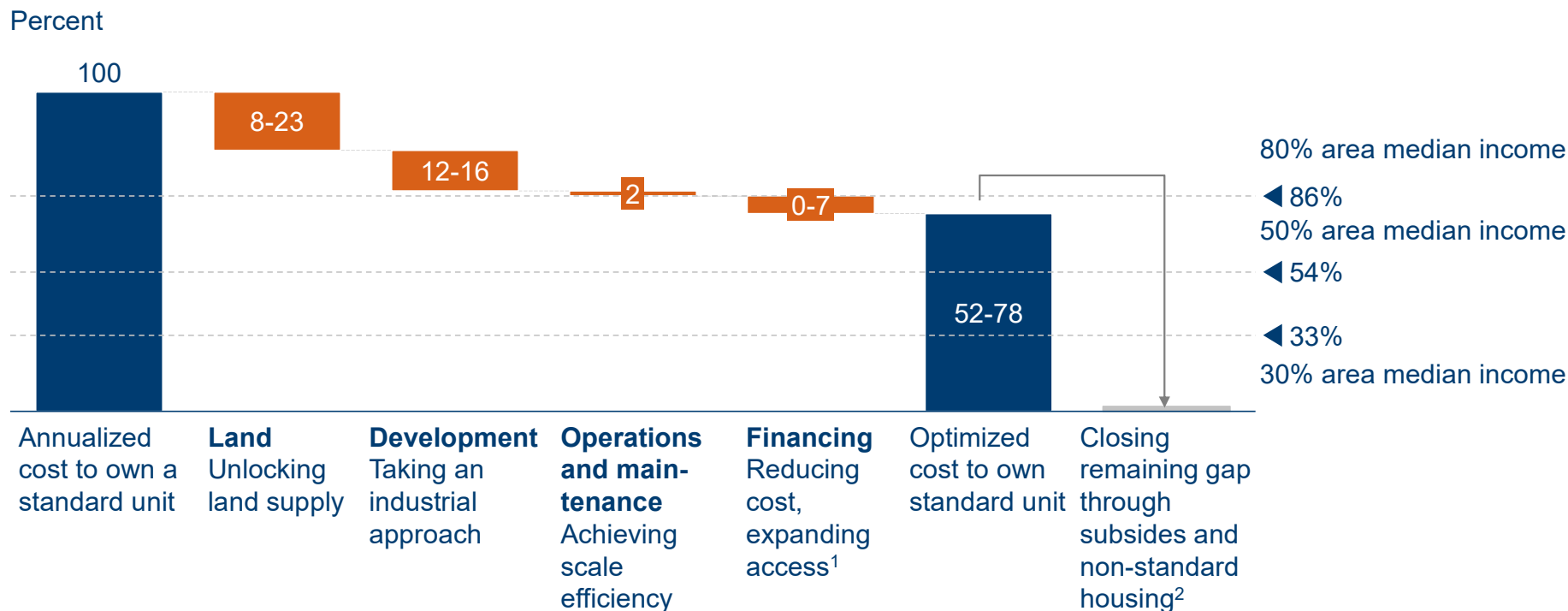
- What projects in the region have successfully used some of these approaches?
- What affordability target should we seek?
- Who would live in these homes? What is the market that we are targeting?
- Who are the partners we would need to make this development a reality?



McKinsey Global Institute identified four levers that can narrow the affordability gap globally

Four levers can narrow the affordability gap

Impact of levers on cost of standard unit; Indexed to annualized cost of a standard unit



¹ Impact of reduced origination and funding costs is quantified; impact of increased access to financing is not

² Transitional use of basic housing (with communal toilets and kitchens, for example) to serve very low-income households

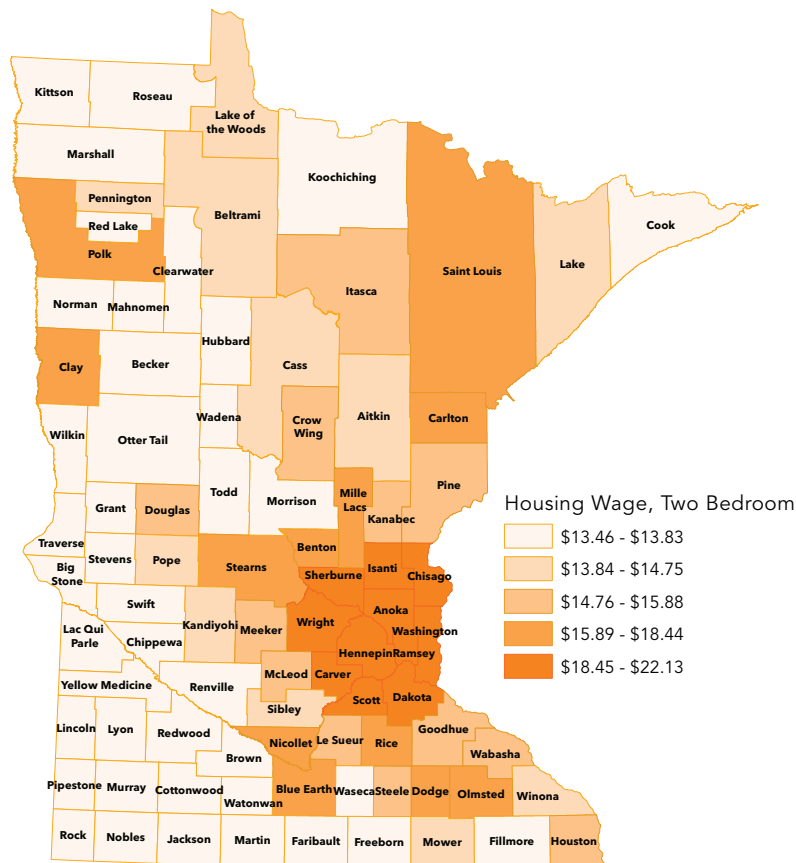
NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding

OUT OF REACH MINNESOTA 2019



OVERVIEW AND FAST FACTS

Wage necessary to afford a two-bedroom apartment



- The highest housing wage in the state is located in the counties within the greater Minneapolis / St. Paul metro area, at **\$22.13 per hour** – or **\$46,040 annually** – to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment.
- Nicollet County has experienced the steepest increase in two-bedroom housing wage in the last 10 years, rising from **\$12.48 to \$17.77**, a 20 percent jump.
- Chisago and Ramsey Counties currently have the largest gap in the state between renter median income and rent for a two-bedroom apartment, adding up an annual shortage of **\$2,916 to \$3,552**.

Download the full Out of Reach Minnesota 2019 report at <http://www.mhponline.org/publications/out-of-reach>. Questions about the report? Contact MHP's Director of Communications and Research at andy.birkey@mhponline.org or 651-925-5544.

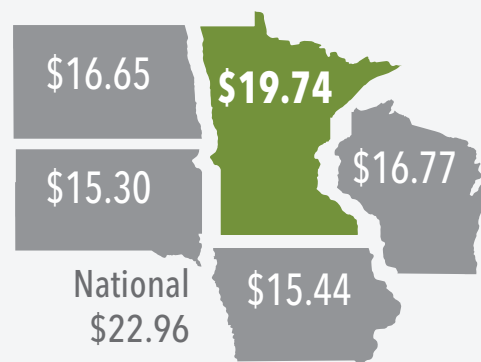
Out of Reach Minnesota 2019 is based on the annual report produced by the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

In 2019, the 2-bedroom Minnesota housing wage is

\$19.74

Full-time workers need to earn **\$19.74** an hour in order to afford rent on a modest 2-bedroom apartment without spending more than **30 percent of their income**.

Minnesota has the highest housing wage in the region.



When families pay too much for rent, they're forced to sacrifice to make ends meet – **cutting back at the grocery store or delaying a trip to the doctor**. Households in every corner of Minnesota are spending **thousands of dollars more than they can afford** each year just to pay the rent for a modest apartment.

Minimum wage earners must work close to two full time jobs in order to afford rent



63 hrs for 1-bedroom

80 hrs for 2-bedroom

State of the State's Housing 2019

a biennial report of the Minnesota Housing Partnership

When everyone has a path to prosperity – regardless of income, race, or age – Minnesota will be stronger. But more and more families are struggling due to our growing lack of affordable homes. *State of the State's Housing* shows that from cost burden to racial disparities, many trends are going in the wrong direction.

TOP 5 TAKEAWAYS



More than 1 in 4 – or 572,133 – households in Minnesota pay more than they can afford for housing, making it likely that they cut back on necessities like food, education and medicine simply to pay their rent or mortgage. That number grew by nearly 26,000 households from 2015 to 2017.



The gap between housing costs and incomes is growing. From 2000 to 2017, median rent has risen 13 percent, while median renter income has fallen 5 percent. There are more than 179,400 extremely low-income renter households in Minnesota; yet, there are only 68,104 affordable and available units at this income level across the state.



Racial disparities persist. Cost burden disparately impacts households of color in Minnesota: 40 percent experience cost burden compared to 23 percent of white households. Minnesota continues to be ranked among the states with the worst racial disparities in homeownership in the country. Nationally, the homeownership gap is 25 percent. In Minnesota, it is far wider at 36 percent.



Minnesota's top in-demand jobs don't pay enough to afford housing. Only one of the seven top in-demand jobs in Minnesota pays enough to afford a median-value home. Only two of these jobs pay enough to afford a two-bedroom apartment.



High housing costs continue to put Minnesota seniors at risk. Fifty-seven percent of all senior renters and more than a quarter of all senior homeowners pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing. By 2035, more than 1 in 5 Minnesotans will be 65 or older, a 64 percent increase from 2017.

Download the full report at mhponline.org.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE CHANGE.

Minnesotans are already stepping up to address housing needs in their communities. But more resources are needed, and we need your voice.

Minnesota Affordable #HousingTaxCredit

HF 1156 | SF 404

Leverages private donations by providing a tax credit to community members and businesses who contribute to affordable housing development. A similar program in North Dakota helped create more than 2,500 homes.

Local Housing Trust Fund State Match

HF 1402 | SF 1961

Helps cities, counties, or regions attract investments and community support as they set aside a fund to address local housing needs.

Homes for All MN 2019/20 Legislative Agenda

Bold investments and policy changes to prevent homelessness, create and preserve affordable rental homes, and support homeownership. Learn more at homesforallmn.org.

With three steps, you can make a difference.

1. Find your state legislators at bit.ly/MyRepsMN19
2. Call or email them using the script below
3. Stay in-the-loop at mhponline.org/mhp-sign-up

Legislator contact script:

Hello <Representative/Senator NAME>, my name is <NAME>, and I live at <ADDRESS>.

More than a quarter of all Minnesotans pay more than they can afford for a home; yet, only 2 percent of our state budget supports housing needs for Minnesotans. I'm asking you to make affordable homes a priority this legislative session. Please support the #HousingTaxCredit, Local Housing Trust Funds, and the Homes for All agenda. We need the state to be a reliable partner for affordable homes in Minnesota! Thank you!

Questions? Contact Andy Birkey, Director of Communications & Research at andy.birkey@mhponline.org or 651.925.5544.



Minnesotans are already stepping up. From top: PRG, Inc. is tackling the homeownership gap in the Twin Cities. The Koochiching County Housing Collaborative is developing affordable homes in the Northland. Leaders in the Northwest and Southwest are building housing with services such as Conifer Estates (Bemidji) and Solace Apartments (St. Peter) (bottom) to prevent homelessness.



c. Placemaking Initiatives Information

- i. (Article) Creative Placemaking in times of protest and pandemic*
- ii. (Article) Transformative Placemaking amid COVID-19*
- iii. (Article) Winter Placemaking During a Pandemic*

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Confronting COVID-19: Creative Placemaking in the Time of Protests and the Pandemic

By [Trish Riggs](#)

September 10, 2020

Text Size: **A A A**

The importance of creative placemaking—the process of intentionally integrating arts, culture, and community-engaged design into comprehensive community development—and the role that artists play in that process have been elevated by both the COVID-19 pandemic and social justice protests in the United States, as people seek places to socialize and connect with others outside their homes, according to participants in a recent webinar hosted by ULI's [Building Healthy Places Initiative](#).

The webinar, “[Creative Placemaking in the Time of COVID-19](#),” explored how creative placemaking has evolved over the past months as a strategy to create new opportunities for socially distanced community gathering and engagement as well as to draw attention to injustice and amplify diverse voices. The presentation was part of a series of webinars offered by the Building Healthy Places Initiative to explore how various aspects of the real estate industry are being affected by the virus and the industry's response. [A recording of this webinar is available on demand in Knowledge Finder](#).

Moderated by Ben Stone, director of arts and culture for Smart Growth America in Washington, D.C., the presentation featured Jamie Bennett, executive director of ArtPlace America, a New York City-based organization that invests in artist participation in community development; Theresa Sweetland, publisher of *Public Art Review* and executive director of Forecast, a public art and artist advocacy organization in St. Paul, Minnesota; Juanita Hardy, managing principal, Tiger Management Consulting Group LLC, a real estate and community development consulting firm in Silver Spring, Maryland; and Andrea Jenkins, a Minneapolis City Council member.

Creative Placemaking in Transportation and Community Development

Stone began the webinar with an overview of Smart Growth America's efforts to connect artists with the creation of public spaces—specifically, transportation projects—pointing out that artists can enliven the projects, catalyze community engagement, help overcome design obstacles, and make streets safer by providing a creative perspective that might not otherwise be considered.

“Many transportation problems are entrenched. We need new solutions, and artists have helped with that,” he said. The impact of COVID-19 on transit systems—creating a situation in which transit officials had to scramble for quick solutions to keep workers and users safe—has amplified the contribution that artists make in improving spaces used for transportation, he said.

“In thinking about spaces and streets, one challenge is how to keep people safe in a system designed to hold larger groups in small spaces. There is a role for artists to play in thinking about behaviors and culture change and how we relate to one another in public spaces,” Stone said.

According to Bennett of ArtPlace America, 10 interlocking systems make up community development: agriculture and food, economic development, education and youth, the environment, health, housing, immigration, public safety, transportation, and workforce development. Of these, creative placemaking is likely most directly related to health and public safety, he said, noting that exposure to art through placemaking can help mitigate collective trauma, racism, social exclusion, mental health issues, and chronic disease—all issues elevated in recent months. Bennett cited several examples of this, including the following:

- Broadway Housing Communities in upper Manhattan, which has built supportive housing for families that have experienced homelessness. At the center of the development is Sugar Hill Museum, a museum of art and story telling that helps children overcome the trauma of homelessness through story telling.
- Efforts by artist Hanna Drake in Louisville, Kentucky, to “reclaim the narratives” of billboards in an underserved neighborhood by replacing negative messages with positive, inspirational images and messages.
- The Juxtaposition Arts organization in Minneapolis, which quelled gun violence on a troubled street corner by installing a bubble machine on the roof of a building to distribute bubbles throughout the area. The tactic stopped the violence without militarizing the neighborhood.
- And, the People's Paper Co-op, a project of the Villages of Arts and Humanities in Philadelphia, which helps women who have completed prison terms reenter society. The project assists them with criminal record expungement and by creating “reverse mug shots” that show them expressing their hope for the future, rather than despair over the past.

Each of these is an example of how the arts community can help transform liabilities into assets and revitalize high-crime places, redefine policing around community building, support justice-involved community members, and foster opportunities for young people in high-crime neighborhoods, Bennett noted. “The knowledge, skills, and abilities of artists can and should be used to foster equitable community development,” he said.

Impact on Artists and Work in Minneapolis

Sweetland discussed how Forecast partners with artists who work in public spaces and how the nonprofit group supports their creative innovation. “These are artists working with public and private partners, urban planners, architects, and neighborhood groups—they have a unique skill set, and we are committed to supporting them,” she said, noting that while Forecast has focused primarily on artists in the Midwest, it is expanding its reach nationally and globally.

The organization, which places particular emphasis on artists of color, connects artists to opportunities by commissioning artists and curating projects that could benefit from art; and by assisting artists with program planning and community engagement activities, she said. In addition, Forecast seeks to have the artists involved early in the placemaking process, rather than later.

“Too often, artists are brought in at the end of a project only to create a product, rather than being included as an integral part of the project. We believe the sooner they can be brought in, the more successful, creative, and inclusive the project will be,” Sweetland said.

Even though COVID-19 and the protests have highlighted the need for art-inspired places, she noted that many artists—particularly Black artists and others of color—have lost work during the pandemic and are struggling to make ends meet. In addition to being economically devastated, many have experienced emotional and physical devastation resulting from systemic racism as well as the virus, she said, noting that artists in Minneapolis protested the killing of George Floyd by creating murals and other works of arts in public spaces. “Artists of color want justice, they want to have their histories and culture represented, and they want greater equity in future development,” she said. “Despite all these challenges, artists are creating, innovating, and leading in our country. They are our partners as we heal and rebuild. They want to spread messages of hope.”

Jenkins, the Minneapolis City Council member, noted that the intersection of 38th and Chicago streets in Minneapolis—the place where George Floyd was murdered—is the center of the ward she represents, which includes four neighborhoods that converge where the streets cross. The city is engaging artists and community residents to envision an appropriate memorial at the intersection that reflects the tragedy and the ensuing racial equity movement that it sparked, she said.

For the past 20 years, creative placemaking principles promoting social equity have been applied at the intersection and throughout the surrounding neighborhoods, including projects that showcase local artwork on every block and special events on a bridge that had historically divided the neighborhoods to instead reconnect them, Jenkins said. "We are doing all this creative placemaking work, and yet [the killing of] George Floyd still happened right at that intersection where all this work has been going on. We have to dig deeper than creative placemaking. The role of arts is important, and artists can help us get to the soul of a community. But we need transformational social change, and all of us can play a role in that—in creating a society with equity at center," she said.

The City Council is reimagining how public safety is provided in the city, she noted. "Rather than defunding the police, I like to think of it as re-funding our communities. And a lot of that will be about what our built environment will look like. We need creative solutions for designing buildings with healing and equity in mind. That is going to be the future of creative placemaking," Jenkins said.

Arts and Real Estate Development

Creative placemaking is "more relevant than ever," said Hardy of Tiger Management Consulting. "The pandemic has brought about a lot of change very fast. People want togetherness in this time of social distancing, but they want to be safe. People will go out and move about if they can be assured of safety and wellness. All of this suggests a new set of products in the built environment to address these needs."

According to Hardy, open spaces that reflect the tenets of creative placemaking will continue to be in high demand, as people seek places to gather where they can interact while keeping a safe distance from each other. In addition, places that are enlivened by public art can help promote healing from the racial unrest and serve as a response to calls for social equity and inclusivity throughout the nation, she said, noting that art and culture serve both as components of a healthy, thriving place and as a strategy to achieve it.

"Creative placemaking is a tool for building equitable communities," Hardy said. She pointed to several best practices for creative placemaking, including the following: Begin with the end in mind; bring in artists and the community upfront; mine local art and cultural assets; understand and articulate stakeholder benefits; form cross-sector partnerships; look for early wins; and maintain a long view.

According to Hardy, one example of a development that is illustrative of these practices is Downtown South in Raleigh, North Carolina, a \$2 billion mixed-use development that is envisioned to be a major gateway to the city's downtown. The developer, aided by advice from a ULI Advisory Services panel, is addressing concerns over displacement of existing residents by engaging residents in creating an inclusive, equitable development plan and making sure that local art and culture are central to the plan. She also cited the \$250 million Brickline Greenway in St. Louis, a pedestrian and bicycle trail system that will wind through and connect nearly 20 neighborhoods in the city, with a special emphasis on reaching underserved areas. Local artists were recruited to work with other community stakeholders on incorporating art throughout the greenway, which will include a memorial to a neighborhood razed decades ago by urban renewal.

"This is the kind of placemaking that helps healing, that recognizes the past and brings people together," Hardy said. Other examples, she added, are in ULI's publication *Creative Placemaking: Sparking Development with Arts and Culture*.

For more information related to COVID-19 and real estate, visit [Public Health and Real Estate: Resources on COVID-19](#) at [uli.org](#).

TRISH RIGGS, former senior vice president of communications at ULI, is a freelance writer based in Falls Church, Virginia.

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The Avenue

BROOKINGS

Transformative placemaking amid COVID-19: Early stories from the field

Hanna Love Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Editor's Note:

This article is part of the Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking's "Placemaking Postcards" blog series, which invites practitioners and placemakers to highlight promising placemaking practices across the U.S. and abroad, with a particular focus on practices that foster inclusive economic growth and development.



As COVID-19 leaves no place immune – threatening to destabilize urban communities, as well as rural and suburban areas with limited resources and infrastructure to weather the outbreak— the connectivity of people and places matters more than ever. Local responses to the pandemic are revealing that even amid unprecedented distancing, the economic, physical, social, and civic structures of connected communities are laying the groundwork for resilience and recovery.

In this moment of uncertainty, communities are increasingly seeking solutions from the community-based organizations, networks, and coalitions they know and trust in ordinary times. We at the Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking decided to look to there too, revisiting past entries from our Placemaking Postcards series to uncover how these organizations are responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

Every placemaking practitioner we spoke to—from those managing public spaces in large cities to those supporting small businesses in rural communities—had swiftly adapted their work to meet residents’ immediate needs, while staying aligned with their mission of place-based inclusion and long-term well-being.

Supporting local economies

Across the country, hyperlocal governance organizations are being called upon to play an expanded role in supporting small businesses. This rang true for each organization we spoke with, as place governance entities in urban and rural areas alike modified their work to include compiling COVID-19 resources for small businesses, redirecting existing funding streams, creating new resources for relief, and offering promotions for customers to purchase local goods and services. Some are even stepping in to manufacture health materials for first responders.

For instance, Philadelphia’s University City District—which we highlighted last year for their efforts to measure inclusion in public spaces—is partnering with the University of Pennsylvania to launch a relief fund for local, independently owned retailers and restaurants. Simultaneously, they are working to bring revenue to local businesses through a matching gift cards program, and are sponsoring local restaurants to prepare meals for families with ill children at the Ronald McDonald House.

Rural place-based organizations are engaging in similar efforts. Appalshop, a Kentucky nonprofit we covered last month for their solar energy project, has raised more than \$10,000 for local businesses, nonprofits, and first responders. The community development organization Downtown Wytheville in Virginia (whose rural entrepreneurship competition we wrote about this summer), is helping businesses apply for SBA disaster relief funding and running a “Support Local Safely” campaign to publicize

open businesses. In Wyoming, Rawlins DDA/Main Street (whose entrepreneurship center we wrote about last fall), is engaging the public about business needs and offering similar promotions. While seemingly small in scale, all of these efforts are critical supports needed to keep businesses open and will lay the groundwork for recovery in the months to come.

Other place-based organizations are adapting their business models to respond to the crisis. In ordinary times, makerspaces and other innovation spaces provide places to collaborate, support entrepreneurship, and challenge economic and social divides. In the midst of COVID-19, makerspaces are abandoning those routines to support frontline responders. Open Works—a Baltimore makerspace we covered for their efforts to build trust between residents, businesses, and institutions—has partnered with Innovation Works and We the Builders to launch a collaborative emergency response effort to manufacture face shields for health care workers.

Advancing community health and well-being

In addition to supporting economic recovery, locally serving organizations are also providing residents with access to critical infrastructure and resources to remain fed, active, and digitally connected during the pandemic.

As people increasingly rely on internet access to remain in school, employed, and in touch with loved ones, Chattanooga, Tenn. nonprofit the Enterprise Center (which we highlighted for their innovation district's digital inclusion programming) is working to expand Wi-Fi and technology access for residents. They partnered with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to build an interactive, mobile-accessible public Wi-Fi map and resource site. The nonprofit also coordinated with the city's public utility company, EBP, to create 27 "drive-up" Wi-Fi sites in areas that need more consistent internet access (e.g., schools, housing authority sites, community centers). Lastly, the Enterprise Center is working with the city to keep internet functioning even at closed locations such as libraries and is helping Chattanooga State Community College students, families at domestic violence shelters, clinics, homeless services, and other nonprofits access low-cost internet options.

Access to another basic necessity—fresh food—has become a priority in this time of heightened food insecurity. Local organizations we reached out to were at the forefront of this regardless of their organizational mission. Building Bridges Across the River—a Washington, D.C. nonprofit whose equitable development plan we highlighted last year—is pivoting in the short term to meet their community’s immediate food needs. Partnering with local social service organizations DC Central Kitchen and Martha’s Table, they converted their recreation center, THEARC, to serve as a food distribution site with free daily lunches for children and free groceries once a week.

Other place-based organizations are expanding the food access services they already provided. BakerRipley, a Houston nonprofit whose Appreciative Community Building process we wrote about last fall, is hosting drive-through food distribution fairs, delivering food to elderly clients, and conducting at-home wellness checks for elderly clients who live alone or have limited social engagement. And in San Francisco’s Civic Center Plaza (whose inclusive place-management strategies we covered in February), the Heart of the City Farmers’ Market is remaining open, in recognition of its vital role in a low-income food desert.

Finally, while public spaces are somewhat controversial at the moment, they are the only way for many in urban areas (particularly low-income urban areas) to access fresh air and green space. The Memphis River Parks Partnership (whose equity model we covered last summer) is fulfilling this service by keeping the Memphis, Tenn. riverfront open as an essential businesses. This requires transitioning their staff (including those who usually work in the office) to work onsite keeping the parks welcoming, clean, calm, and safe (including intervening when people are not following social distancing guidelines). As Carol Coletta, president and CEO of the Partnership put it, “The evolving nature of the crisis is requiring us to adapt our practices daily, sometimes even hourly, to make safe space for those who need it.”

The critical role of place governance

All of these actions reinforce the importance of place governance, now and in the long term. The civic organizations that advance transformative placemaking during ordinary times are now stepping in as first responders, strengthening existing collaborations and forging new relationships to see their communities through the pandemic. These structures will serve as the backbones of recovery once the immediate crisis has subsided, and as we look toward long-term community health and well-being, we must invest in the transformative placemaking strategies supporting us now.

For the past 20 years, creative placemaking principles promoting social equity have been applied at the intersection and throughout the surrounding neighborhoods, including projects that showcase local artwork on every block and special events on a bridge that had historically divided the neighborhoods to instead reconnect them, Jenkins said. "We are doing all this creative placemaking work, and yet [the killing of] George Floyd still happened right at that intersection where all this work has been going on. We have to dig deeper than creative placemaking. The role of arts is important, and artists can help us get to the soul of a community. But we need transformational social change, and all of us can play a role in that—in creating a society with equity at center," she said.

The City Council is reimagining how public safety is provided in the city, she noted. "Rather than defunding the police, I like to think of it as re-funding our communities. And a lot of that will be about what our built environment will look like. We need creative solutions for designing buildings with healing and equity in mind. That is going to be the future of creative placemaking," Jenkins said.

Arts and Real Estate Development

Creative placemaking is "more relevant than ever," said Hardy of Tiger Management Consulting. "The pandemic has brought about a lot of change very fast. People want togetherness in this time of social distancing, but they want to be safe. People will go out and move about if they can be assured of safety and wellness. All of this suggests a new set of products in the built environment to address these needs."

According to Hardy, open spaces that reflect the tenets of creative placemaking will continue to be in high demand, as people seek places to gather where they can interact while keeping a safe distance from each other. In addition, places that are enlivened by public art can help promote healing from the racial unrest and serve as a response to calls for social equity and inclusivity throughout the nation, she said, noting that art and culture serve both as components of a healthy, thriving place and as a strategy to achieve it.

"Creative placemaking is a tool for building equitable communities," Hardy said. She pointed to several best practices for creative placemaking, including the following: Begin with the end in mind; bring in artists and the community upfront; mine local art and cultural assets; understand and articulate stakeholder benefits; form cross-sector partnerships; look for early wins; and maintain a long view.

According to Hardy, one example of a development that is illustrative of these practices is Downtown South in Raleigh, North Carolina, a \$2 billion mixed-use development that is envisioned to be a major gateway to the city's downtown. The developer, aided by advice from a ULI Advisory Services panel, is addressing concerns over displacement of existing residents by engaging residents in creating an inclusive, equitable development plan and making sure that local art and culture are central to the plan. She also cited the \$250 million Brickline Greenway in St. Louis, a pedestrian and bicycle trail system that will wind through and connect nearly 20 neighborhoods in the city, with a special emphasis on reaching underserved areas. Local artists were recruited to work with other community stakeholders on incorporating art throughout the greenway, which will include a memorial to a neighborhood razed decades ago by urban renewal.

"This is the kind of placemaking that helps healing, that recognizes the past and brings people together," Hardy said. Other examples, she added, are in ULI's publication *Creative Placemaking: Sparking Development with Arts and Culture*.

For more information related to COVID-19 and real estate, visit [Public Health and Real Estate: Resources on COVID-19](#) at [uli.org](#).

TRISH RIGGS, former senior vice president of communications at ULI, is a freelance writer based in Falls Church, Virginia.

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Winter Placemaking During a Pandemic: Six Ideas from Around Canada

ALYSON DOBROTA & GAIL ARMOUR, PBJ DESIGN DEC 11, 2020

 [HEALTH & WELLBEING](#), [PUBLIC MARKETS](#), [CREATIVE PLACEMAKING](#)

Editor's Note: *PBJ Design is a nonprofit in Nova Scotia, Canada, that creates placemaking projects that build healthy and connected communities. Their projects use interventions with art, movement, and nature to shift the way that people engage with their neighbors. The authors of this article, Alyson Dobrota and Gail Armour, lead PBJ's projects, designing ideas that will create vibrant public spaces across Nova Scotia.*

Every year, the change of seasons brings a shift to our communities as the weather turns crisp, the sun sets earlier, and people begin to move inside. Indoor markets and events are set up to encourage gatherings around the holiday season. This shift feels normal; we go through it each year without too much thought.

As we continue to adapt to the coronavirus pandemic, this winter will be different. The summer months have allowed many communities to reopen due to the ability to sit on patios, gather outdoors, and spend time outside in the warm weather. However, winter weather will be a barrier that will bring another adjustment to our 'new normal'.

As this new normal evolves, new methods of building connected and vibrant communities are needed. Small interventions can allow people to continue to get outdoors, support local businesses, and reduce social isolation. Placemaking can be a powerful year-round tool, and perhaps this winter our communities will need these interventions more than ever before.

Here are a few of our ideas to make public spaces more vibrant and accessible this winter:



An entry from [Winnipeg's annual Warming Huts competition](#).

Heated Public Spaces

Going for long walks without getting cold in the winter is challenging. While summer weather allows us to go on a stroll, sit on a bench in a park, and grab a coffee at a local cafe and relax, walking in the winter usually consists of getting from point A to point B as fast as possible. Warming huts are an exciting and beautiful way to encourage people to stop, rest, and warm up so that they can spend more time outdoors, connect with their community, and support local businesses. Warming hut competitions occur across Canada and are successful at getting more people outdoors. In Nova Scotia, we're working on building warming huts on trail systems that function as rest stations to encourage trail use year-round.

While extending the patio season will help support local businesses, the cold weather may still remain a stubborn barrier for businesses making up lost revenue from the pandemic. Warming huts can also be situated on patios, to allow people to comfortably support local businesses in a safe way. Giving people a space to relax, warm up, and sip on a hot drink can help change perceptions of patios and public spaces in the winter months.



[The Halifax Lights Holiday Market](#) in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Outdoor Markets

Holiday craft shows are a great way to support local makers each year. This year will look different, but these markets are still possible while allowing for physical distancing. Tents, heaters, and other materials can build comfort in the winter for people to visit outdoor markets, build vibrant public spaces, and support local independent makers.

With a few shifts, many other events can follow public health protocols, too. Outdoor lighting can increase comfort and safety in public spaces, especially at night, encouraging people to linger. Other elements such as public outdoor fire pits are great ways to encourage community connection in a safe and physically-distanced way.



Cookies and hot chocolate are part of these [tips for a picnic in the snow](#).

Winter Picnic Sites

Many activities that people do in the summer don't have to end just because winter has come. Picnics are an activity that can still be enjoyed in the winter months, with proper preparation. In Edmonton, Alberta, the city has created picnic sites that you can book all year round. Bring thermoses of hot tea, lots of blankets, and eat a meal outside! Adding fire pits to public spaces also makes winter picnics all the more comfortable and exciting.



A winning winter art display in Edmonton's [Winterscapes photo competition](#).

Winter Porch Placemaking

While we spend more time at home these days, our neighborhood walks tend to be the most frequent outing. Porch placemaking encourages people to put engaging art in their windows, or on their doorstep, porch, or yard as a placemaking project for their community. Projects that make neighbors smile and spark a sense of connection will help people feel less isolated during these difficult times. Encouraging neighbors to put up snow sculptures, keep holiday lights up all winter, or even landscape [their yard like these great examples from Winter City Edmonton](#) are great ways to turn front yards into engaging displays.



Prismatica by Raw Design at Place des Festivals in Montreal, Quebec. Photo by [art_inthecity](#).

Lighting Public Art Structures

Lighting projects that glow up public spaces can help counter the darkness of winter. With the sun setting earlier, people spend more time outside in the dark. Lighting already makes spaces safer and more inviting at night, but using lighting to create engaging public art can help fight the winter blues even further.

Shifting Our Perspective on Winter

Perhaps the biggest barrier to winter is our perception of it. While winter can be a challenging time of year, it is also a time for play. Many people have fond childhood memories of playing in snow banks after a big storm or building snow forts in their neighborhood. Providing opportunities for communities to re-spark this sense of play through placemaking is a great way to encourage a shift in perspective. If people view winter as an exciting time of the year, and are willing to adapt, the season could begin to look a lot more bright.

Winter weather doesn't have to be a barrier to getting outside, connecting with neighbors, or supporting local businesses. What is needed this winter as we live with COVID is a perspective shift. With the right interventions, we can still adapt and participate in our communities.

Comments

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d. Physical Redevelopment Opportunities Information

- i. HKGi Work Program – Silver Lake Road Visioning for Mixed Use Areas*
- ii. Comp Plan Figure 3.3: Potential Areas of Improvement*

Attachment A

New Brighton Silver Lake Road Planning – Work Program

Project Purpose:

The purpose of the Silver Lake Road Corridor Planning project will be to implement the changes in land use and new approach to redevelopment brought forward in New Brighton 2040: The City's Comprehensive Plan. The emphasis of the process will be on informing stakeholders in the area about the potential for change at three key intersections along Silver Lake Road, and to provide them the opportunity to establish the vision and shape the standards that will guide the corridor as it redevelops. The goal of the project is to identify a community-based vision for these intersections and to establish a set of preferred standards for each area that will be a blueprint for City Staff to use when updating zoning standards for these nodes.

Task 1: Inform (1 month)

- The first step of the process will be to adequately inform residents and area stakeholders of the project. The emphasis of this task will be on:
 - Where we are: description of this project, what we're trying to achieve, and the possible impacts on the community
 - What we've already done: summarize what lead to this project, how community involvement with the Comp Plan guided us to the project
 - Where we're going: what are the goals of the project, and what are the desired outcomes of the project
- To ensure we reach as many people as possible as well as considerations of COVID constraints, the vast majority of engagement will be online. Information will be prepared to also facilitate in person engagement where appropriate safety precautions allow. The center of the online engagement will be the project website/landing page, where all educational materials for task 1 will be organized and easy to navigate.
 - All future engagement tasks will be hosted on the website, with possibility for public to sign up for notifications when new elements appear
- In addition to traditional methods of notifying the public about this project (sharing links on City website, social media, newsletters, etc.) we will also want to do some targeted engagement for this project. In particular, we want to identify the stakeholders most familiar with these areas, the business owners, employees, and residents who live and work in these three nodes along Silver Lake Road. We also want to emphasize outreach and engagement voices often left out of the engagement process; this includes communities of color, and vulnerable road users such as youth, seniors, and differently-abled individuals.
 - We will need the assistance of City Staff to identify these stakeholders and how we should engage them in the process. This may include collecting information of Open for Business participants in the area, or identifying non-profits, organizations, and other entities that are active in the area.
 - The approach to outreach will vary based on individual stakeholder group needs.
 - Methods to engage underrepresented populations may include:

- Translated engagement materials
- Targeted engagement of employees of businesses in the area
- Teaming up with school district(s), libraries, and other local institutions to distribute engagement materials to low-income families
- Distributing engagement materials/surveys at local and cultural events (COVID permitting)

Task 1 Deliverables

- ☐ Project web site
- ☐ Informational print materials and web site content
- ☐ Informational print materials for email blasts, newsletter content, and social media posting

Task 2: Visioning (2 months)

- To facilitate stakeholder visioning, we will establish vision guidance questions.
 - These may be themed around different topics (transportation, open space, land use and development, urban design character, etc) or possibly around the Comp Plan vision goals.
 - These visioning questions will then be put into a survey format online where stakeholders and residents can participate in an interactive engagement process.
- The depending on the stakeholders identified in Task 1, the same visioning survey/activity may also be translated to stakeholder-specific sessions.
 - These could possibly be “live” sessions online, guided materials for group leaders to facilitate, or self-guided paper materials that will allow for in person engagement with safe social distancing.
 - The key to this engagement will be to make sure we provide enough time and flexibility to engage stakeholders as they need, while also keeping the project moving and at the front of mind for participants.
- Once community members have gone through visioning, we will summarize this input and establish a vision for the corridor, and possibly different objectives for each key node.

Task 2 Deliverables

- ☐ Updates to project web site
- ☐ Set of visioning questions, print materials, and self-guided tour directions to facilitate vision process
- ☐ Summary of engagement results
- ☐ Draft of vision and objectives

Task 3: Scenarios (1 month)

- We will take the vision established in Task 2 and use it to create 3D graphic build-out scenarios for each key intersection along Silver Lake Road
 - These visualizations will be focused on massing, scale, and site orientation, rather than architectural details
 - We will supplement the scenarios with precedent imagery to depict a desired character or appearance using the input from task 2 as guidance
- The scenarios will be available for stakeholders and the general public to explore and provide their feedback and preferences on various components via the project web page
- Community feedback will be summarized and analyzed.
- The consultant team will prepare presentation materials and will facilitate discussion and dialogue with the project steering committee and City Council over Zoom.

Task 3 Deliverables

- ☐ Build out scenarios for three nodes – 3D renderings illustrating massing, scale, and site orientation. 1 or 2 scenarios envisioned for each node.
- ☐ Precedent imagery associated with various node components
- ☐ Updated project web page with interactive survey to allow engagement
- ☐ Summary presentations of engagement findings at two meetings

Task 4: Prepare Plan Direction (1 month)

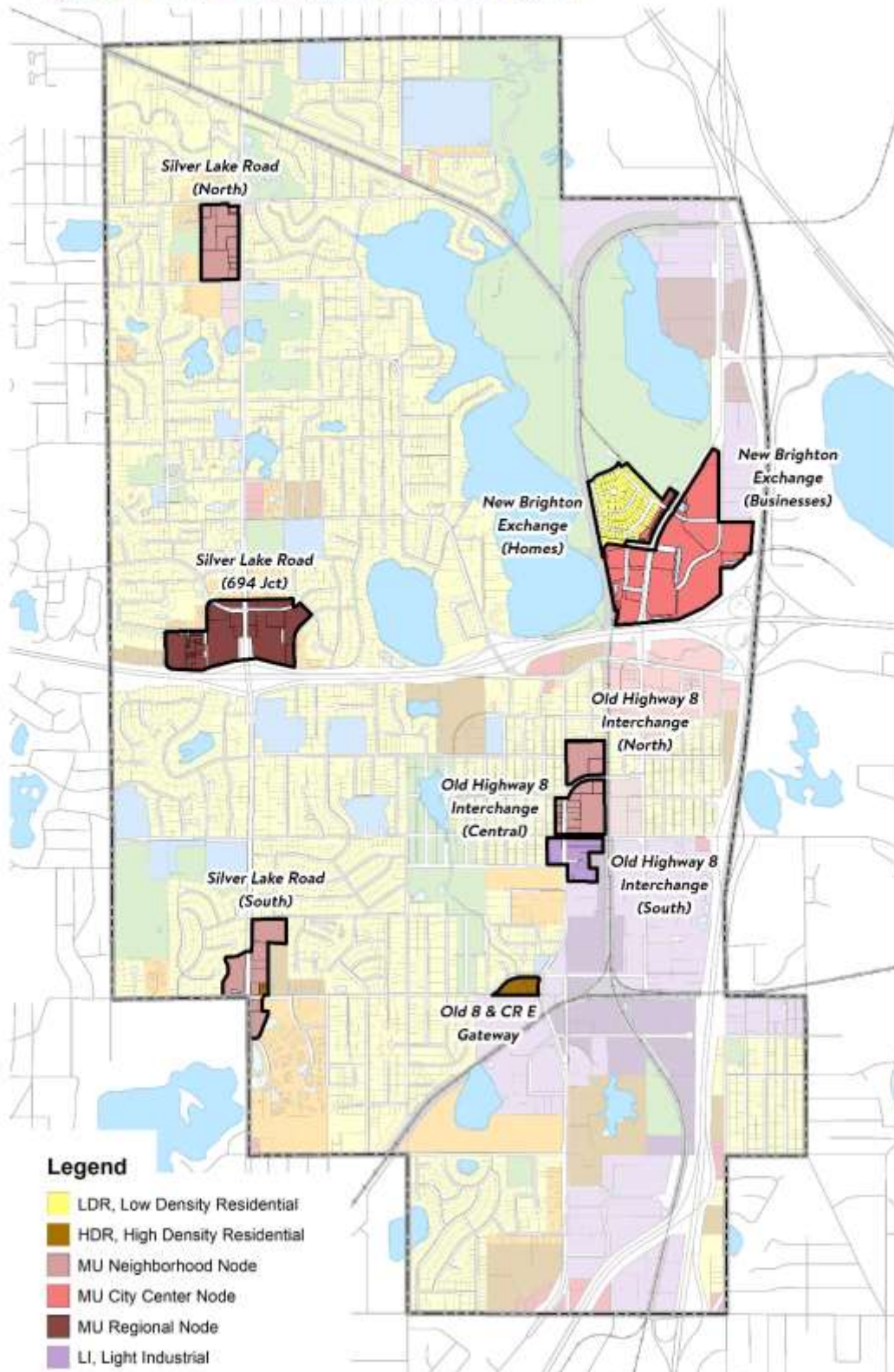
- Based on the outcome of Task 3 a preferred plan will be prepared for each key node:
 - From this “preferred plan” we will establish specific standards (or guidance when appropriate) for City Staff to utilize when preparing the zoning update for the areas
- The final deliverable will be the Preferred Plan for the Silver Lake Road Corridor Key Intersections, presented in the form of a website
 - The Preferred Plan will provide City Staff with standards and guidance to writing the zoning updates for the area

Task 4 Deliverables

- ☐ Preferred plan for each node annotated with identified precedent imagery and design directions
- ☐ Summary presentation of final plan
- ☐ Summary sheet of all public input for each node going back to 2017.

Exhibit B

Figure 3-3. Potential Areas of Improvement in New Brighton





Agenda Section: VI
Item: 3
Report Date: 02/24/21
Commission Meeting Date: 03/03/21

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Nomination of 2021/22 Chair & Vice Chair
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:
CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:
No comments to supplement this report ____ Comments attached ____

- Recommendations:**
- Nominate yourself or a fellow commission member for the role of Chair or Vice Chair
 - Vote on a commission recommendation for each position.

History: On a yearly basis, all City commissions are asked to recommend which of its members should fill the role of Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year. The Commission's recommendation will be presented to the City Council in late March, and Council may elect to follow the recommendation or go with their own selections. Commission members selected by Council will then head up our meetings from April 2021 through March 2022.

Financial Impact: none

Summary: Heading into the meeting, each member should consider whom they'd like to nominate for leadership roles with the Commission. We recognize that we have a highly skilled and educated commission, so no member should feel slighted if they are not nominated. Maintaining the same leadership each year is not required, but is also not prohibited. Ultimately, the purpose of this exercise is to identify the individuals you would like to lead meetings over the course of the next year.

Attachments: none

Ben Gozola, AICP

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development