



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

MICHIGAN MAIN STREET



INSIDE



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit contains information, examples and tools to help guide your Main Street organization’s overarching economic vitality approach and related business development efforts.

Best practices, proposed actions, tools and the potential roles played by Main Street organization staff, board members and committee volunteers are offered for guidance, to help jumpstart or refocus the scope of local Main Street economic vitality efforts, and to promote action.

The directions and actions offered are not exhaustive, exclusive or prescriptive. Ultimately, local leaders must assess how the contents apply to local priorities, conditions and opportunities and adapt the framework and tools, accordingly. Moreover, it is our hope that this toolkit’s contents will inspire even better or different ideas, practices, and tools that will lead to results and business development success.

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We are especially grateful to steering committee members who contributed time, talent and insights to guide the toolkit’s design and content.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- James Alt** | Executive Director, Lapeer Main Street DDA
- Katie Duczowski** | Executive Director, Cheboygan Main Street DDA
- Joe Frost** | Main Street Specialist, MEDC Michigan Main Street
- Andrew George** | Chair, Three Rivers Main Street DDA Economic Vitality Committee
- Heather Marks** | Executive Director, Blissfield Main Street DDA
- Suzanne Perreault** | Small Business Program Manager, MEDC
- Jeremy Swiftney** | Executive Director, Grand Haven Main Street DDA
- Leigh Young** | Senior Main Street Specialist, MEDC Michigan Main Street

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CORE PRINCIPLES

Make it Personal

Invest time to build strong relationships—and trust—with district property owners, business community members and economic development partners. Make a commitment to listen, and employ high-touch communications that advance meaningful discussions and demonstrate you care.

Do the Groundwork

Creating and maintaining a current building and business inventory, market information, and statistics tracking changes and progress in the district requires time and attention to detail. Yet, it's this same information that will provide a solid foundation for successful business development initiatives and programs.

Build on Assets

Identify businesses, anchors, attractions and special features that help drive the district's economy and that distinguish the district as a special place. Build on those assets in a way that offers opportunities for existing businesses to grow, and for new businesses and uses to join the mix.

Work Together

Engage stakeholders and economic development partners at the ground level to help build ownership and to mobilize the community's collective talent, experience, expertise and resources to advance local business development initiatives.

Reimagine Spaces

Promote opportunities for the historic rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment of properties and spaces to accommodate entrepreneurs, micro-retail and co-working spaces, and other uses to complement and fill gaps in the district's business mix.

Create a Vibe

Highlight accomplishments, showcase progress and successes, and use testimonials and positive messages to create an air of excitement surrounding the district, its future, and the chance for others to climb on board.



Mobilize Resources

The design and execution of a holistic business development strategy and program is a big job. Simply put, a Main Street organization operating in isolation can't do it alone. It should come as no surprise, then, that the most successful business development initiatives demonstrate high levels of collaboration and leverage the resources, experience and expertise of community economic development partners.

Strong partnerships that engage the full roster of community and economic development players are, in many ways, the underpinning to success and fuel the ability to unleash a downtown's or historic business district's full potential. The list of potential partners can be extensive and often includes the usual suspects along with others who share an interest in the district's livelihood such as:

- Local Government
- Chambers of Commerce
- Area Economic Development Organizations
- Local Arts and Culture Organizations
- Foundations
- Universities and Extension Offices
- Small Business Development Centers
- Utility Providers
- Financial Institutions
- Brokers and Real Estate Firms
- Marketing and Media Organizations
- Others...

Activities revolving around entrepreneurial support systems, business start-up programs, and property development projects offer some of the best examples and illustrate the importance, and impacts, of strong partnerships at work.

BUILDING BLOCKS

INFORMATION, TOOLS AND COLLATERALS



Some of the most important business development program groundwork involves activities to:

- Inventory and map assets and opportunities
- Collect and track information and statistics
- Identify and coordinate efforts with partners and business resource providers
- Design templates and format collateral materials

The work behind these and other related activities, while largely unnoticed by the public, is foundational to the design and execution of business development strategies.

Examples: Building Blocks

- Building and Business Inventory
- Available Properties List and Map
- Property Cut Sheet Template
- Market Snapshot
- Community/District Profile
- Business Resources and Incentives Guide
- Small Business Journey Map
- Starting a Business Guide
- Website Landing Page/Resources Section
- Community Driving Tour Map and Script
- Community/District Virtual Tour
- Virtual Property Tours
- District Map

BE THE LOCAL MARKET EXPERT

Arm yourself with information to help tell a story and promote business development opportunities.

Secondary Data

Basic information that helps describe the marketplace is typically derived from secondary data sources and includes:

- Demographic data and projections
- Psychographic profile
- Retail sales gap analysis

Secondary data sources include:

- MEDC: [siteselection.michiganbusiness.org](https://www.siteselection.michiganbusiness.org)
- U.S. Census Bureau: data.census.gov
- Data USA: datausa.io
- Esri: esri.com
- Claritas: claritas.com

Primary Data

Locally-collected and tracked data, statistics and insights help existing businesses assess marketing opportunities and opportunities for expansion. The information is also valuable to prospects and their understanding of what's happening on the ground. It's your chance to infuse data, to help tell a story, and to promote opportunities for retention and expansion, new business ventures, and development.

Sources and examples include:

- Consumer and business surveys
- Property and business inventories
- Locally-tracked statistics—examples include:
 - Number of businesses
 - Number of employees
 - Occupancy rates
 - Occupancy by industry/business types
 - Net new businesses
 - Net new jobs
 - Private and public investment
 - Number of residential units
 - Estimated annual events attendance

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

-  [Business Survey Questionnaire Template](#)
-  [Consumer Survey Questionnaire Template](#)
-  [MMS Data Resource Guide](#)

BUILDING BLOCKS

EXAMPLES: BUILDING BLOCKS AND ADAPTATIONS

OSKALOOSA MAIN STREET DISTRICT

UPDATED JUNE, 2018

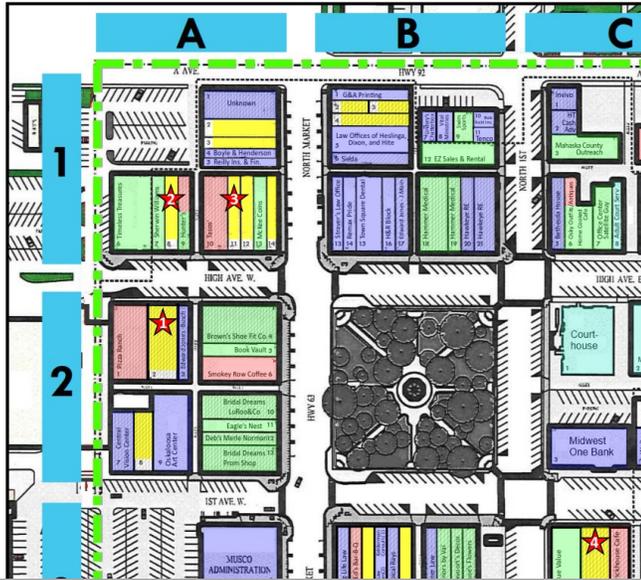
Building Vacancies

Business Types

- Service
- Retail
- Restaurant/Bar
- Nonprofit/Gov
(Categorized as Service in Accreditation Report)

Upper Story Housing

- Apartments
- Construction In-Progress
- Undeveloped/Unavailable

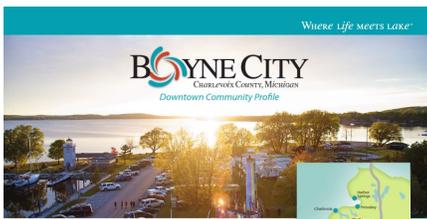


CREATE AND MAINTAIN A BUILDING AND BUSINESS INVENTORY

Your inventory is a key building block for analyzing the business mix, tracking changes, and promoting opportunities.

- Collect and maintain basic information on ownership, occupancy, use, property value, etc.
- Create a map to show the location and mix of different business types and uses in the district.
- Map available properties and spaces.
- Track investments, changes in occupancy and values, etc.

- [MMS Data Resource Guide](#)
- [MMS Building & Business Inventory Tool](#)
- [Google Maps \(MyMaps Creation Tool\)](#)
- [Visme \(Custom Map Maker Tool\)](#)



Boyer City is a lively and inviting city located at the south end of beautiful Lake Charlevoix in northern Michigan. Whether a destination for our guests or the tranquil home town of our residents, Boyer City offers a wealth of opportunity for all manner of activity and shopping – with fine food establishments along the way – or for simply relaxing along the beautiful shores at one of the many public spaces.



Key Facts	
Population	2,997
Employment Population	5,536
Daily Residents	1,579
Median Age	43
Median Income	\$43,717

Downtown Business Mix	
Retail	42
Bank/Finance	8
Public Service/Governmental	15
Professional or Services	54
Hotels/Inns	2

Major Employers	
Boyer USA	565
Lexemar Corp	345
SummaCare Residential Centers	170
Honeywell	160
Recreational Resort	
Manufacturing	
Mental Health Facility	



Historic Lapeer is a community of friendly faces, delectable foods, delicious drinks, and more. We are a unique oasis located in the heart of Lapeer County, in Michigan's beautiful thumb region. Lapeer Main Street works with local public and private partners to ensure growth, health, and prosperity of our vibrant downtown.

Downtown's Goals

- Create and capitalize on a physical environment that is engaging and inviting to families.
- Improve the downtown business environment and available resource to support investment.
- Build a family-friendly brand that is Historic Lapeer.

Community Profile

City of Lapeer 2019	Population	8,740
	Household	3,625
	Median HH Income	\$39,064
	Median Age	36.4 years
	Working Days	3,775
	96% Housing is occupied	
	95% Owner-occupied	
	90% Renter-occupied	

Main Street is Helping Businesses Thrive

- Building improvement loan
- Sign assistance grant
- Match on Main program
- Market data
- Small Business Saturday Champion
- "Meet our Business" Monday campaign
- Business owner meet and greets

"It's exciting seeing all of the local businesses growing and thriving! I just signed a second lease and will be expanding. If it wasn't for Main Street, I'm not sure I would have taken that leap. Knowing I have the support of a blossoming downtown who has the support of a program like Main Street made me feel a lot better about signing that second lease."

—Elizabeth Muffitt, Owner, ELM Beauty Bar

BUILD A CASE FOR INVESTMENT

Synthesize information, infuse data, and use visuals to introduce prospects to the community, to highlight progress, and to paint a picture of potential and opportunity.

- Market Snapshot [\[Example\]](#)
- Community/District Profiles [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)
- IMPACT Report [\[Examples\]](#)
- Driving Tour Map [\[Example\]](#)
- Virtual Tour [\[Example\]](#)
- Website Landing Page [\[Example\]](#)

- [IMPACT Content Collection Guide](#)
- [MMS IMPACT Pulse Poll Template](#)
- [MMS IMPACT Pulse Poll Demo](#)

BUILDING BLOCKS

EXAMPLES: BUILDING BLOCKS AND ADAPTATIONS

CHARLEVOIX

2200 SQFEET

EXCELLENT LOCATION

205 BRIDGE STREET
Charlevoix, MI 49720

- Historic Property
- Ample Parking
- Central Business District

606 N. Saginaw St.
Zoned Office

Rental Rate \$4.80 - \$10.44 /SF/YR

PROPERTY FEATURES

- 5,950 SF of Office Space Available
- Gross Leasable Area 7,500 SF
- Built 1916, renovated 1980
- Updated common area
- New restrooms
- Hallway with hardwood floors

LOCATED WITHIN CHARLEVOIX MAIN STREET & DDA DISTRICTS

SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAPPING CHECKLIST

KEEP A PULSE ON AVAILABLE PROPERTIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Showcase available properties and redevelopment opportunities, and promote business types and uses targeted for

- Maintain a current inventory of properties and spaces available for sale or lease.
- Create a template and generate cut sheets with images, basic property specs and contact information.
- Post available properties and spaces on your website with viewable and downloadable cut sheets.

Property Cut Sheet Examples [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

[Canva Real Estate Flyer Templates](#)

SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAPPING

WHAT

Journey mapping documents the path a small business follows as they open or make changes to a business in your downtown. This project creates a resource for the Main Street Program as it outlines the business owners experience as they navigate the building and zoning permitting processes in your community.

WHO

Journey mapping is often used as a foundational tool for the Main Street program, typically driven by the Economic Vitality committee, Main Street Board, and municipal staff. Business and property owners who have experienced the process are great volunteers to participate in mapping the process as they often have constructive feedback on ways the process can be improved.

THE VALUE OF JOURNEY MAPPING

Creates clear understanding for the processes and establishes accountability.

Provides an easy to read framework identifying fees, permitting timeline, & contact information.

Positions the Main Street Program as a small business resource hub.

Streamlines the permitting process by identifying repetitive steps.

Provides an overall understanding of the small business owners experience.

Helps market your community as Small Business 'friendly'.

SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAPPING | Page 1

SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAPPING CHECKLIST

Identify the various permitting tracks required in your municipality.

- PERMITTED USE
- SPECIAL LAND USE
- REZONING PROCESS
- ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (Variance Process)
- RENTAL REGISTRATION
- BUSINESS LICENSES
- BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS
- CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS

Document each step in the process.

Reference the Grand Haven Journey Map example as a guide.

- MAP OUT THE JOURNEY BY IDENTIFYING EVERY STEP IN THE PROCESS
- LIST THE FEE SCHEDULES
- IDENTIFY THE TIMELINE
- ESTABLISH THE CONTACT PERSON
- PROVIDE CLARIFICATION IN THE NOTES SECTION

Review. Refine. Share.

- ONCE THE PROCESS IS OUTLINED, MEET WITH MUNICIPAL STAFF TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT CAN BE STREAMLINED.
- REFINE AND FINALIZE SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAP.
- PROVIDE DIGITAL COPY TO MUNICIPALITY TO POST ON WEBSITE. POST ON MAIN STREET WEBSITE AND HAVE HARD COPIES AVAILABLE AT THE MAIN STREET OFFICE.

SMALL BUSINESS JOURNEY MAPPING | Page 2

HELP PROSPECTS AND DEVELOPERS NAVIGATE THE PROCESS

Work with local economic development partners to map business start-up and property development processes, to promote resources, and to promote a business-friendly environment.

- Inventory and summarize available technical assistance and incentives in a resources guide or fact sheets. [\[Example\]](#)
- Outline and map local business start-up and property development processes. [\[Example\]](#)
- Create a website landing page for business prospects and developers. [\[Example\]](#)

[MMS Small Business Journey Mapping Guide and Checklist](#)

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

BEST PRACTICES

- ▶ Invest time to build strong, personal relationships with, and among, business community members.
- ▶ Work actively with partners to facilitate and promote access to business support programs and resources.
- ▶ Use interactions and business survey findings to identify needs and to target assistance.
- ▶ Advocate for business-friendly policies and ordinances.

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES

— Examples

- Organize a volunteer-led business visitation program or block captains program.
- Host business roundtable discussions on timely topics of specific interest to district members.
- Host business networking events to build camaraderie, share ideas, and build awareness.
- Create a private invitation-only Facebook Group page for business community members to share information.
- Conduct an annual or biennial business survey to, in part, identify business needs and to target technical assistance and resources, accordingly.
- Work with economic development partners to inventory and promote business assistance resources.
- Create a district owner's manual with a "Who to Call" directory for information and assistance.
- Host and promote continuing education and training opportunities for business owners and managers.
- Share market information with existing businesses, especially those who might have opportunities to fill product and service gaps, to expand, or to reposition themselves in the market to tap into new opportunities.
- Orchestrate a social media campaign to highlight and promote local businesses and business owners and their involvement in community causes.
- Offer ideas for business to plug-in to events and for cooperative marketing opportunities to capitalize on traffic and gain exposure.
- Work closely with local government to communicate and address business community concerns, and advocate for business-friendly policies and ordinances.

Efforts to retain businesses and programs that help businesses expand, create jobs and encourage reinvestment can effectively help to build confidence on the part of other investors and heighten the appeal of the district as a place to relocate, expand, start a business, or invest.



Communicating is not enough. It's about building relationships!

Build a strong foundation for business development activities and success by building strong relationships with—and earning the trust of—business and property owners. Challenge your organization to develop and deploy a mix of high-touch and high-tech methods to engage the players in meaningful ways.

High-touch methods emphasize personal visits, face-to-face conversations and ongoing relationship-building efforts to nurture a personal rapport—and trust—with business owners. Examples include one-on-one business visits conducted by Main Street staff; volunteer-led block captains or business check-in programs; and business roundtable discussions and networking events.

High-tech methods utilize electronic tools and channels to communicate with business community members, as well as other important audiences. Examples include websites, social media posts and features, e-mail blasts and updates, and texting or messaging apps.

High-touch techniques offer chances for local Main Street organizations to communicate in ways that stand out from the sea of messages flooding inboxes, texting apps and social media feeds—and to show you really care.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

HOW'S BUSINESS? BUILDING A RAPPORT



Examples: Questions to Get the Conversation Going

- How long have you been in business?
- Did you always want to be a [business type] owner?
- How did you get started?
- Why did you choose this location?
- What's your best selling product?
- How is your industry changing?
- Do you have plans to expand?
- How can we help?

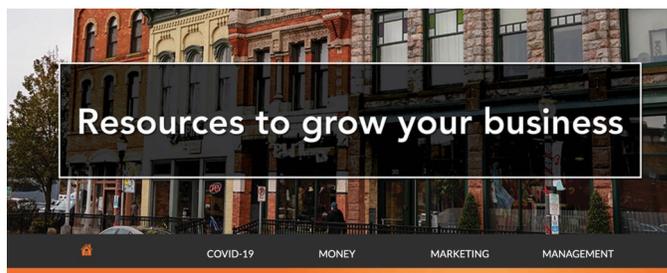
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ROLE

- Maintain current business contact information
- Be accessible, and be visible on the street
- Use pop-in visits—quick and simple business visits—to enhance visibility and nurture a strong rapport
- Become familiar with the full range of tools and resources available to help businesses
- Take time and tap resources to further develop your own business acumen and to better understand the needs of small businesses

BOARD AND COMMITTEE ROLES

- Prioritize business support and retention efforts
- Help organize and facilitate business owner meetings or roundtable discussions
- Participate in, and help enlist additional volunteers for, a volunteer-led business visitation program
- Help develop a block captains program
- Become familiar with local market data, expansion opportunities, and local business resources

ENLIST INITIATE AS YOUR SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT PARTNER



Initiate | Support for Your Small Businesses

What is it?

Initiate is an online learning portal with over 100 resources to help small businesses grow and thrive in today's economy as they explore the topics of money, marketing, and management.

How can I use it?

Initiate can be used as part of your organization's business retention strategy. Access additional tools such as a Business Performance Plan and identify resources on Initiate that you can recommend to small businesses.

Where do I find it?

Get direct access at: medc.initiateprosperity.org.

To learn more about how to use Initiate as part of a more comprehensive business retention strategy and how to coach businesses and refer them to available resources, join the MEDC's Business Retention Series training cohort. See upcoming training dates at miplace.org/small-business.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- [MEDC Initiate Website](#)
- [Business Survey Questionnaire Template](#)
- [Example: Block Captains Program Overview](#)
- [Example: Block Captain Position Description](#)
- [Example: Business Owners Meeting Agenda](#)

BUSINESSES DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

A strong commitment to business retention can breed confidence among new business prospects and investors, especially as they weigh prospects for long-term success. The rippling effects enhance the ability for local Main Street organizations to:

- Identify and promote opportunities for existing businesses to expand or reposition to fill gaps
- Promote opportunities for entrepreneurs and new business prospects to join the mix
- Heighten interest in district properties and spaces
- Advance appropriate property development and redevelopment efforts to accommodate growth and the many different uses that make for a vibrant district

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

A host of factors influence business development program outcomes, and there is no guarantee of results. Still, communities and organizations can enhance their chances for success by:

- Demonstrating a strong commitment to business retention and business support initiatives.
- Demonstrating a solid understanding of the market and market trends.
- Demonstrating progress and positive trends through tracking data, visuals and testimonials.
- Demonstrating strong partnerships involving local government, the local Main Street organization, and other community economic development partners are in place.
- Promoting a business-friendly and development-ready environment by providing an outrageous level of personal attention to prospects, helping prospects navigate the development process or the steps for opening a business, and exuding a “can-do” attitude.
- Targeting prospects, investors and developers who have:
 - Prior industry experience or who are already operating within the region;
 - A connection to the community; and/or
 - Concepts or business models that are consistent with identified gaps in the business mix or that are complementary to existing businesses, uses and development patterns.



Some of the best and most immediate opportunities for business growth often revolve around expansion and business repositioning opportunities. Survey findings that showed strong demand for a brewpub helped inspire the repositioning—or metamorphosis— of a Wayland, MI coffeeshouse to reemerge as The OpenRoad Brewery.



Rethinking spaces to accommodate different uses and opportunities for entrepreneurs can breathe new life into old buildings, and bolster the business mix. An attractive retail showroom occupies the storefront at Darker Manufacturing in downtown Owosso, MI while the rear of the building houses manufacturing facilities for the company’s handmade small batch leather and canvas products.

BUSINESSES OPPORTUNITIES

ACTIONS TO PROMOTE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

— Examples

- Perform research to profile and target business expansion and recruitment opportunities.
- Work with economic development partners to assess and enhance the local entrepreneurial support system with consideration given to training and mentoring, access to capital, availability of appropriate space, etc.
- Explore opportunities for the staging of a business start-up, business plan or “pitch” competition that offers entrepreneurs a chance to enter the market at a low entry cost, or to test market business concepts.
- Work in unison with economic development partners to help entrepreneurs and prospects navigate the local business start-up process, and to promote a business-friendly environment.
 - Create a business start-up guide.
 - Work with local code officials to map permitting processes in user-friendly terms.
 - Develop and maintain online how-to business start-up content and a directory to resources.
 - Promote and direct prospects to technical assistance providers and resources (i.e. SBDC).

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ROLE

- Responding to inquiries
- Identifying and making contact with prospects in the surrounding region
- Packaging and providing information about the local market and identified opportunities in a quality format
- Serving as a matchmaker to direct prospects to appropriate properties and resources

BOARD AND COMMITTEE ROLES

- Gauge interest, research examples, and enlist partners to develop and stage a pitch competition
- Work with promotion partners, where needed, to:
 - Showcase businesses and business activity via social media, e-letters, short videos, etc.
 - Develop and gain support for small business promotional programs (i.e. downtown scrip or gift cards, shop local initiatives, etc.).
- Develop a new business welcome program (i.e. welcome kit, opening event support, etc.)

RESOURCES TO BUILD YOUR ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM



Building a Community Entrepreneurship Ecosystem— A Self-Guided Training for Communities

To further the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem building movement, Main Street America developed a self-guided training for communities that walks local leaders through a series of inputs designed to build a greater understanding of the current entrepreneurship support system.

[Download the guide here](#) and view the following downloadable supplemental forms referenced in the guide:

- [Questions for Entrepreneurs Focus Group](#)
- [Questions for Stakeholders Focus Group](#)
- [Organizational Matrix](#)
- [Small Business Survey](#)

MORE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- [Example: At a Glance Top Prospects Survey Results](#)
- [Example: Business Start-up Guide](#)
- [Exercise: Identify complementary business opportunities in four steps](#)
- [Exercise: Create a business clustering map and strategy](#)
- MEDC/MMS Hands-on Exercises: Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Audits [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [Main Street America article: Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and the Role of Commercial Districts](#)

PROPERTIES AND SPACES

ACTIONS TO PROMOTE AND SHOWCASE AVAILABLE PROPERTIES AND SPACES

— Examples

- Use temporary storefront and window treatments (e.g. “This space is not empty, it’s full of opportunity!” posters) to highlight opportunities on the street.
- Organize and host periodic open house-style property tours for prospective businesses, entrepreneurs and investors to tour available properties and spaces.
- Host a workshop to share hints and tips for building owners to prepare and fill spaces, including examples of funding sources, technical assistance, and commercial leasing practices and options.
- Host small-scale events, entertainment and networking mixers at opportunity sites.
- Work with property owners and agents to rethink and adapt or retrofit appropriate sites for pop-up shops, kiosks or other shared space or co-working arrangements; and, possibly, to offer limited-term or rent-reduced spaces as an incentive for new entrepreneurs or pitch contest winners.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ROLE

- Maintaining a current list of available properties made available online and in a print-on-demand format
- Serving as a matchmaker to direct prospects to appropriate properties and resources
- Sharing information on targeted uses and business types showing potential for expansion and recruitment with property owners and real estate professionals.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE ROLES

- Serving as eyes and ears on the street to monitor changes and to help maintain a current inventory of properties available
- Facilitating connections and helping to enlist partners (i.e. property owners, real estate brokers, local government, financial institutions, small business technical assistance providers, etc.) in efforts to promote opportunities and attract quality tenants.
- Discuss location and space needs with existing businesses to identify possible expansion, shared space, and relocation or trading spaces opportunities.
- Host regularly scheduled property owner meetings to discuss available space and collaborate on strategies for attracting new tenants to promote a wide and diverse variety of business offerings.

THE COST OF AN EMPTY STOREFRONT



A circa 2012 Georgia Main Street-commissioned study conducted by Donovan Rypkema with Place Economics estimated the cost of an empty storefront—or lost economic activity—at more than \$386,000.

Estimates and variables have undoubtedly changed in the time since the study was conducted, and could differ widely based on other factors (i.e. geographic location, building size, etc.). Still, the study and resulting estimate of lost economic activity demonstrates how it’s in everyone’s best interest to fill spaces with active uses, and to maximize real estate—our districts’ most valuable commodity.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

-  [Presentation: Cost of an Empty Building](#)
-  [Worksheet: Cost of an Empty Building Calculator](#)
-  [Example: Vacant storefront treatment signage](#)
-  [Example: Coming Soon signage](#)
-  [Example: Property tour window cling](#)
-  [Example: Property tour event program](#)
-  [Wallplay Ground Floor Pop-Up Toolkit](#)

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ACTIONS TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT

— Examples

- Work with partners to identify and pursue appropriate tools and resources (i.e. grants, tax credits, etc.) to promote development opportunities and to address problem properties.
- Using typical historic storefront footprints, create examples of potential building modification ideas to illustrate ways to maximize leasable space.
- Package information for development sites in a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) format to solicit interest.
- Explore possibilities for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to acquire, hold and develop property, as allowed by state enabling legislation.
- Review existing land use plans, ordinances, and codes to ensure compatibility with uses targeted for expansion and recruitment, including non-retail uses (i.e. housing, processing and light manufacturing, etc.).
- Work with local government officials and partners (i.e. historic preservation commission, planning and zoning commissions, and others) to ensure review processes are streamlined to the extent practicable, and to map development processes and corresponding protocols.
- Create a list of possible development group members who might invest in an “at risk” or historic building on short notice if one becomes available. Ensure potential members support rehabilitation that is sensitive to the historic nature of the property and its surroundings.

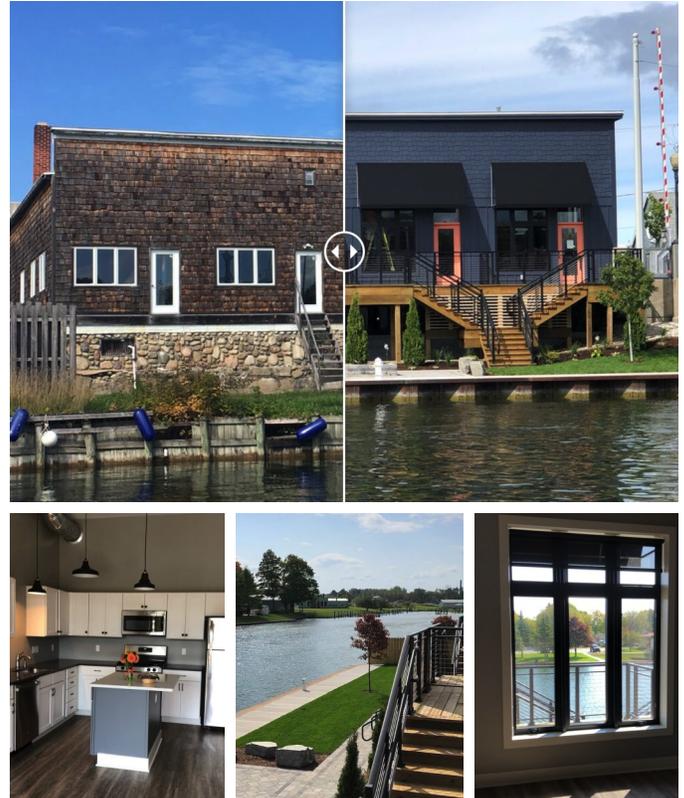
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ROLE

- Build relationships with local and regional developers and commercial real estate brokers
- Understand your market (i.e. rental rates, opportunities for infill and rehabilitation, etc.)
- Develop an elevator speech on why development should take place in your downtown

BOARD AND COMMITTEE ROLES

- Host an investors and developers meet & greet event
- Assess and understand the organization's structure, authority and capacity for leading and participating in development projects; and draft the organization's policies for actively engaging in real estate development projects

OLD BUILDINGS | CONTEMPORARY USES



Promoting opportunities goes beyond tactics to simply market properties, buildings and spaces. While those efforts are important, strategies to adapt and maximize space, like the Drawbridge Lofts & Shops redevelopment project in Cheboygan, MI should also consider business trends and related adaptive reuse techniques, including designs to maximize space; strategies for creating micro-retail, pop-up spaces and shared spaces; and development opportunities that could help to accommodate housing and other non-retail uses that, collectively, make for a vibrant district.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- [State of Michigan Downtown Development Authority \(DDA\) enabling legislation \(Act 57 of 2018, Part 2\)](#)
- [DDA Fact Sheet from MEDC](#)
- [MEDC Community Capital Resources](#)
- [Example: Request for Qualifications \(RFQ\) for redevelopment site](#)