Please Take Your Seats! The Presentation Will Begin Momentarily.
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Welcome!
The Downtown/Waterfront Initiative

The Fall River Office of Economic Development

AND

The Fall River Chamber of Commerce

Welcome You!
“Be it weekdays, weekends, daytime, or nighttime, Downtown Fall River will be a vibrant community that provides an attractive, safe, and welcoming environment for people to work, shop, dine, visit and live”

Downtown/Waterfront Initiative
The Fall River Office of Economic Development
And
The Fall River Chamber of Commerce
HISTORY AND PURPOSE
The Mount Auburn Study:

Focus: Economic Development Strategies for Fall River:

1. Distribution Centers
2. Food Processing – Commissary
3. Bio-Science production
4. Office “IT” enabled industries
5. Advanced Manufacturing Technology
What We Need to Help Achieve Economic Development Objectives:

1. **Education system that will support the needs of Business and Industry.**

2. **Amenities and Quality of Life Issues:**
   a. The Downtown
   b. The Waterfront
   c. Arts & Cultural Presence
   d. Business Development Strategies for Downtown
Downtown Node #1

• The Sector of Downtown extending from Sullivan Drive and Government Center southerly along South Main Street to Morgan Street.
Downtown Node #2

• The Sector of Downtown extending from Sullivan Drive and Government Center northerly along North Main St. to Pine Street.
DOWNTOWN: WHAT HAPPENED?

Once a thriving center of commercial activity, Downtown has been severely impacted by numerous factors including:
Downtown: What Happened?

1. Outward migration of manufacturing jobs resulting in unemployment;
2. “Sprawl to the Mall” – providing parking and greater retail choices;
3. Lack of cohesion and theme;
4. Neglect and failure to adjust to needs and wants of business patrons and visitors.
Fixing Downtown:

WE ARE NOT ALONE!!
MODELS FOR SUCCESS:
LOWELL
AND
PITTSFIELD
MODELS FOR SUCCESS:
LOWELL AND PITTSFIELD

1. Both are mill cities similarly affected by loss of manufacturing jobs;
2. Both experienced a decay in their respective Downtowns;
3. Both had different challenges and different resources;
4. Both have successfully revitalized their respective Downtowns.
THE LOWELL MODEL: A SUCCESS FORMULA

- Zoning change to “mixed-use” - street level remained commercial; upper floors allowed residential use in many previously unoccupied buildings;
- Housing improved by adding “market rate” apartments;
- Created an Arts District to attract and encourage artists and cultural activity;
- Established a Downtown Historic District
- Constructed 4 City-owned parking garages;
- Created a Downtown Venture Fund for low-interest loans.
THE PITTSFIELD MODEL: 
ANOTHER FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

- Enacted Artist Overlay Zoning District providing for Mixed-Use commercial and residential use;
- Promoted an Artists Storefront Program;
- Restored vacant Colonial Theater;
- Unified Directional Signage;
- Organized Downtown Association;
- Obtained additional liquor licenses to encourage additional restaurants and wine bars.
A New Zoning Ordinance For Fall River

• Arts Overlay District;
• Promotes Arts and Culture within the Community;
• Promote Vitality in the CBD and Waterfront areas;
• Prohibits Adult Entertainment
What Does Revitalization Mean?

Look At Some Of These Examples
Cherry & Webb Building
The Conference Center
Storefront Improvement Projects
Storefront Improvement Projects
Directional Signage In Italy
Directional Signage For Fall River

- Public Parking
- Downtown Center
- Police
Examples of Signage From Pittsfield
Examples of Signage From Pittsfield
PARKING STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS:

Understand the difference between:

“Parking Needs”
and
“Parking Wants”
SERPEDD Parking Study

- 200 – 300 more employees in downtown area looking for parking;
- Recommends additional garages and surface parking; (City, Court & SRTA Contribution)
- Recommends Directional signage to guide Court and Law Library users to the Downtown and Bus Station from Regional Highways (City Contribution)
HOW MUCH PARKING DOES DOWNTOWN REALLY NEED?

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Workshop Series

- “Too much parking is worse than too little”
- “In most locations considering new parking, the existing supply is not managed efficiently”
City-Wide Meters Yield

$124,000 for parking at the rate of 50¢ per hour

Of this sum, $65,000 is yielded from the South End
City-Wide Meters Yield

Low meter parking rate allows meters to be fed continually and effectively allows parking all day (7.5 hours) for $3.75 – the effective tagging times.

(tagging is supposed to take place from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM).
City-Wide Meters Yield

In addition to the meter revenues, approximately $600,000 is realized from overtime and other parking offenses.
City-Wide Meters Yield

All meter & fine revenues go to the General Fund – only a portion of these are spent on Downtown for street sweeping, a police officer on walking beat and perhaps other services.
FALL RIVER’S TWO PARKING GARAGES
The Pearl Street Garage:

410 spaces with an additional 78 spaces needed to accommodate Travelers Insurance employees, UMASS students, and day parkers.
The Pearl Street Garage:

Spaces during evening hours are utilized by restaurant parkers.
The Third Street Garage:
394 Spaces with 339 spaces used. Of These:

1. 34 spaces used by 7-day parkers;
2. 40 spaces used for 5-day parkers;
3. 265 spaces used for group parkers;
4. 55 spaces available to public
REVENUES AND RATES AT PEARL STREET GARAGE:

- Heavy discounts for group parkers
- Annual Revenues and Expenses approx. $150,000 per year
REVENUES AND RATES AT THIRD STREET GARAGE:

- Daily Rate $1.50 per hour
- Heavy discounts for group parkers
- Annual Revenues and Expenses approx. $150,000 per year
SUGGESTED PARKING SOLUTIONS AND COMMON MISTAKES IN SETTING PARKING POLICIES
Focus on the Customer
Manage What You Have First
  a. Constructing new parking is expensive and wrought with design and construction issues.
  b. Large, low cost opportunities can be utilized inexpensively with policies and programs
  c. Share: In mixed-use Downtowns, the opportunity to share parking throughout the course of a day represents an opportunity to encourage development and optimize efficiency without incurring the cost of a single new parking space.
d. Don’t Compete with the Suburbs:
e. Examples of extreme parking conditions demonstrated by this principle are the Moscone Center in San Francisco with 700,000 sq. ft. of building and no parking and the Los Angeles Convention Center, with 770,000 sq. ft. of building and 5,600 parking spaces.
COMMON MISTAKES IN SETTING PARKING POLICIES

1) To require “lots” of off street parking
2) To keep curb parking free of charge.
IMMEDIATE REFORMS
IMMEDIATE REFORMS

1. Charge fair market prices for curb parking:
   - Invest in modern parking systems at curbside to become “user-friendly”;
   - Maximize revenues: eliminate quarters
IMMEDIATE REFORMS

2. Spend the resulting revenue to pay for neighborhood public improvement: *The Parking Benefit District (PBD)*
The Parking Benefit District: The Pasadena Model
Immediate Reforms

Pasadena Model

- “Old Pasadena” District perceived as having “been going downhill for years…a bunch of dirty buildings…filthy…(and) unsafe.”
- Parking problems included employees and shop owners parking at the curb;
- Merchants opposed meters because they feared customers would stay away
- Lack of funds to pay for public infrastructure – similar problems to those experienced in Fall River.
Immediate Reforms

Problems Addressed By Instituting a Parking Benefit District (PBD):

• The city offered to return all parking meter revenue to Old Pasadena;
• Merchants and property owners; immediately agreed to install meters;
• 660 meters operate until midnight and on Sunday.
Immediate Reforms

- Revenues derived from Parking Benefit District were used for street and alleyway improvements, lighting, repaving, trash receptacles, signs and benches, directory maps, trees and grates, brochure racks, maintenance (including steam cleaning of sidewalks twice each month) and safety measures.
Immediate Reforms

- These measures created turnover and vacancies for customers. The City borrowed $5 million to pay for street furniture, historic lighting fixtures, and other improvements. After debt service, Old Pasadena has $700,000 each year to pay for added public services.
IMMEDIATE REFORMS
DISTRICT INCREMENTAL FINANCING (DIF)

• Public financing alternative
• Enables cities to fund public works projects by allocating future tax revenues.
• City required to define a District and document a program describing how the DIF will encourage increased residential, commercial, and industrial, activity within the District.
IMMEDIATE REFORMS
DISTRICT INCREMENTAL
FINANCING (DIF)

• After public hearing process, application is submitted. Approval process is under the jurisdiction of Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC).
THE CHAMBER FOUNDATION

• 501 (C)(3) Corporation acts as a conduit for grant application;

• Staffed by volunteers from the business community in the short term;

• Employs the Downtown Manager in the long term;
• Bachelor’s Degree minimum and demonstrated experience in interaction with public-governmental agencies;
• Superior language skills, writing and research ability;
• Thorough knowledge of state and federal agencies and programs;
• Ability to competently coordinate and execute a wide scope of services.
Appointed, employed and fully reviewed by the Chamber Foundation
RESPONSIBILITIES:

• Collaboration with DT business and building owners, and residential tenants;
• Preparation & maintenance of inventory of available space;
• Grant writing: research and writing;
• Development and administration of facade, signage improvement and “Streetscape” programs
• Hosting of DT and business development workshops.
IMMEDIATE REFORMS
Emphasize Business Clusters

• Outreach to businesses that compliment each other
  1. courthouse – law offices
     copy center - conference center
  2. Residential – Delicatessen
     Restaurants
IMMEDIATE REFORMS
Emphasize Business Clusters

• Form Downtown Association
  • Building Owners
  • Business Owners
  • Tenants/Residents represented
SUMMARY OF IMMEDIATE REFORMS

- Chamber Foundation acts as DT Manager and ultimately employs Downtown Manager
- Begin process for District Improvement Financing certification “DIF”;
- Enact multi-use zoning ordinance with Arts Overlay District (AOD)
SUMMARY

• Develop consistent directional and themed signage
• Enact Parking Benefit District
• Develop Artist Storefront Program
  Emphasize & Support Arts & Cultural Activities
• Emphasize “Business Clusters”
• Implement Storefront/Facade Improvement Program.
“There are those who look at things the way they are, and ask why... I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?”

Robert Kennedy
We Can Do This!
Thank You!