Rural Downtown Investment Strategies

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Planning for Rural Communities

Research fields:
- Rural Development
- Rural Tourism
- Rural Economic Development and Impact
- Development of Downtown Centers

“Without a full grasp of planning in a rural context, no planning effort in a culturally rural community will be successful.”
- Guidebook
Planning for Rural Communities

Key Components:
- Cultural and social connections
- Apprehensive of government
- Empowering activity

Must be rooted in:
- Community-based planning approach
- Community resiliency

Rural Planning Methodology

- Community-Based
- Resiliency
- Global Trends
- Strategies
- Action Steps
- Waypoints
Community Based Planning

The attitudes of “rural leaders, especially those with deep family roots in the place, often hold negative views of planning...due to past experiences with the approaches, differences in rural vs urban applicability, cultural and ideological mistrust, communication gaps, perceptions of whose interests are served, and limited staff and funding.”

- Frank & Reiss, 2014

- Gain community trust & buy-in
- Community engagement & communication
- Economic development vs environmental quality
- Resiliency is a large motivator
Community Resiliency

- When not if
- Mitigation & prevention
- Natural & human caused

“The ability of communities to rebound, positively adapt to, or thrive amidst changing conditions or challenges – including disasters and climate change – and maintain quality of life, healthy growth, durable systems, and conservation of resources for present and future generations.”

- Colorado Resiliency Working Group, 2016

Community Resiliency

Types of hazards:
- Water systems
- Power outage
- Wild fire
- Landslide
- Avalanche
- Bridge failure

- Roadway closure
- Telecommunication network
- Flooding
- Severe snow storms
- Drought

Reduce risk and exposure:
- Lower levels of risk
- Reduce levels of vulnerabilities
- On-going planning efforts
- Incorporation of partnerships and cooperation

“to be truly sustainable, communities must develop comprehensive on-going planning strategies that encompass all aspects of the hazard problem, including socio-economic and political elements.”

- Tobin, 1999
Rural Planning Methodology

- Community-Based
- Resiliency
- Global Trends

Strategies
Waypoints
Action Steps

P.U.M.A.’s Global Trends Report

- Initially created in 2006 to inform the Downtown Denver Area Plan
- Updated in 2011 to respond to recession
- 2014 trends in context of recovery
- 2017 update in economic boom
- Developed in partnership with the University of Colorado Denver
Demographics
Changing American Demographics
Immigration Trends
Changes with the “Creative Class”

Lifestyles
Traffic Congestion & Value of Time
Trends in Health Care/Wellness/Recreation
Growth of Tourism
America’s Growing Debt Burden

Competition
The Emergence of a Planetary Middle Class
Continued Advances in Technology
Environmentalism, Sustainability, Climate Change

Demographics
Changing American Demographics
Education, Talent & Jobs
Emergence of Young Professional Women

Lifestyles
Changing Consumer Behaviors
Shifts in Transportation & Mobility
Health, Wellness & Urban Form
The Age of Austerity

Competition
The Emergence of a Planetary Middle Class
Continued Advances in Technology
Sustainability Mainstreamed

Demographics
Changing American Demographics
Education, Talent & Jobs
Influence of Women

Lifestyles
Changing Consumer Behaviors
Shifts in Transportation & Mobility
Health & Wellness
Rise of Regionalism

Competition
Shift in Global Wealth
Continued Advances in Technology
Social Equity – The Neglected Pillar of Sustainability

Demographics
Changing American Demographics
Education, Talent & Jobs
Rise of the Mid-Tier City

Lifestyles
Changing Consumer Behaviors
Shifts in Transportation & Mobility
Housing & Livability
Regionalism

Competition
Shift in Global Wealth
Continued Advances in Technology
Social Equity
Changing American Demographics

Baby Boomers - 76 Million Born 1946 to 1964

- Sheer numbers supported labor markets, entitlements & consumption
- College education rates increase 5x
- Living longer & healthier, but creating increasing demands on health care system
- Recession caused more to “age in place”
- Empty nesters looking to downsize, urbanize

Changing American Demographics

Gen X – 53 Million Born 1965 to 1980

- Slackers to slacks!
- Ability to multi-task & transfer skills
- Have the most post-recession disposable income, largest group of homebuyers, most have kids
- Moving into leadership positions
- Job prospects are good
Changing American Demographics

Millennials – 77 Million Born 1981 to 2001

- Growing up with technology
- More optimistic, tolerant, open-minded
- Multi-cultural – majority minority rises from 43 to 58 of 100 largest cities since 2000
- Spirit of volunteerism, passion to foster change
- Voted 2:1 for Obama, outvoted seniors

Changing American Demographics

Gen Z – Born After 2001

- Gen Z are more realistic & cautious, yet inspired to change the world
- Ushering in the most dramatic demographic shift in American history
- Next year children under 18 will be majority-minority
- 2042 there will be no racial minority in the U.S.
Education, Talent & Jobs

The Premium of a Highly Skilled Workforce

- Worker shortages loom due to skill gaps
- Since 2000, young college educated population grew twice as fast within 3 miles of major city centers
- Millennials today comprise 38% of workforce, 50% by 2020
- Educational institutions are economic anchors, stabilizers
- Immigrants are increasingly skilled

Rise of the Mid-Tier City

Less flashy, more affordable urban areas – “Opportunity Cities”

- Millennials migrating to more affordable urban areas – driving growth – “big fish in a little pond”
- Businesses are following
- i.e. Buffalo, Cleveland, New Orleans, Pittsburgh
- College educated 25 – 34 yr. olds 2x more likely to live within 3 miles of downtown core
Lifestyles

Changing Consumer Behaviors

New Patterns in Consumption

- Impulse replaced by deliberate spending
- Ecommerce increasing and influences majority of purchases
- Gen X and Millennials driving sales
- Sharing economy flourishing
- Downtown residential influencing new retail formats
Shifts in Transportation & Mobility

Behaviors Shifting Away From Cars

- Congestion has stabilized at 39 hours per year (vs. 14 hours in 1982)
- Driving miles have decreased since 2006
- Millennials don’t love cars – 21% of all miles driven in 1995; 14% today
- Bike share programs growing faster than any mode of transport in history of planet
- Walkable real estate = value premium

Housing & Livability

High demand for multi-family in center cities

- Predominantly Millennial and Baby Boomers
- Desire to “age in place”
- New senior living options – more active
- More culturally sensitive housing – larger family sizes/multigenerational families
- Affordability
Rise of Regionalism

Cities Propel Growth & Innovation

- Per capita US debt: 2007: $29,000
  2016: $59,300+
- In 1950, 16 workers for each SSI recipient, by 2030, 2 workers for each recipient
- Feds broke and dysfunctional
- Investment in infrastructure, education & innovation to come from regions

Global Competition
Shift in Global Wealth

America’s Grip On Its Destiny Diminishes

- Recession accelerated relative growth of emerging economies
- China’s global share of car sales: 2000 < 1%; 2015 > 27.5%
- Global middle class: 1.8B in 2009, 3.2B by 2020, 4.9B by 2030; 66% in Asia
- Emerging economies feature low debt, strong central governments – will invest in infrastructure and innovation

Continued Advances in Technology

Key Advances Shaping Cities

- Mobile connections: 7.7B+
- Agricultural software is ‘best new industry for starting a business’
- Influencing office & living design to blend work/social space, less sq. ft. per person
- 3D printing changes manufacturing process – opportunities for cities
- Clusters of innovation key to growth
Sustainability & Social Equity

Majority Of Planet Now Lives In Cities

- At current growth rates, global consumption exceeds 200% of Earth’s biocapacity by 2050
- Economic & environmental pillars of sustainability widely understood
- U.S. income inequality most extreme since 1928 – 1% earn 22.5% of wealth, 90% earn less than 50% for first time ever.
- Rising tide of civic activism expected to promote equity in schools, wages, housing

Conclusions

Trends favorable for vibrant downtowns – urban and rural

- America’s population growing more diverse, younger & older
- Increasingly connected & competitive world
- Small and mid-size downtowns can anchor the emergence of new opportunity cities
- Global growth will continue to make investment in cities more attractive
- Innovation & investment more reliant on regional initiative
- Planning for economic diversity emerging as a priority
Rural Planning Methodology

Community-Based

Resiliency

Global Trends

Strategies

Action Steps

Waypoints

Waypoints

Market Analysis

- Evaluates market size and value
- Regional Context
- Carrying Capacity
- Potential Niche Industries
- Gap Analysis

Market Analysis

- Market Size
- Market Segments
- Customer Mix
- Comprehension Influence
- Competitors
- Spending Group
Waypoints
Market Analysis
Land Uses
Accessibility
Walkability
Streetscape Design
Building Form
Wayfinding
Economic Development
Promotion & Management

“unique cultural identity...which is inviting and interesting.”

- Mixed Use
- Density
- Align regulations and codes
- Provide flexibility and encourage a mix of compatible uses

Waypoints
Market Analysis
Land Uses
Accessibility
Walkability
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Economic Development
Promotion & Management

- Transportation network – Regional, local, and neighborhood
- Offer something for everyone
- Social, demographic, and economic accessibility
- Go through scenarios to identify various needs
Waypoints

Market Analysis
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Promotion & Management

- Physically capable of getting around
- Interesting and safe streets
- Mix of sights and sounds

Waypoints

Market Analysis
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Economic Development
Promotion & Management

- Seamless transition between public/private space
- Public spaces for relaxing, connecting, enjoying
- Unique street furniture & utilities
**CHANGE**

**Waypoints**

- Market Analysis
- Land Uses
- Accessibility
- Walkability
- Streetscape Design

**Building Form**

- Wayfinding
- Economic Development
- Promotion & Management

- Materials & architectural features
- Entrances
- Seamless transition between public / private space

**Waypoints**

- Consistent design and placement
- Attractions, destinations and amenities
- Niche identity
**Waypoints**

Market Analysis
Land Uses
Accessibility
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Wayfinding

**Economic Development**

Promotion & Management

- Achieve an “Upward Spiral”
- Catalytic developer
- Educated workforce
- Incentive programs
- Funding programs

- Non-Profit Status
- Marketing efforts
- On-Going management
  - Special districts
Rural Planning Methodology

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Implications for Downtowns

**Demographics**

- Capture the young skilled workforce
  - Be welcoming with information on jobs, housing & services
  - Embrace tolerance & be multi-cultural
  - Creative incentives – student debt?
- Create an environment that appeals to diverse populations
  - Mixed-use & relevant services
  - Support leadership in policy & design
Implications for Downtowns

Demographics

- Foster education
  - Partner with college institutions
  - K-12 options to keep/attract families
- Housing with diverse price points
  - Explore non-traditional options
  - Zone, regulate for flexibility
- Don’t forget the Boomers!
  - Amenities that cross generations

Implications for Downtowns

Lifestyles

- Mobility options, “living streets”
  - Walkable, bikeable, transit-rich
  - Age-friendly universal design standards
- Promote the “sharing economy”
- Keep it fun, entertaining & interesting
- Partner with health care providers
  - Economic anchors, stabilizers
  - Allies for healthy lifestyles
Implications for Downtowns

*Global Competition*

- Foster/promote entrepreneurship
  - Flex space, creative incentives, innovation zones
- Public/private financing tools
  - From community capital to regional infrastructure banks
- Be technologically relevant
  - Support ubiquitous computing
  - Apps to keep tech-savvy engaged

Implications for Downtowns

*Global Competition*

- Capitalize on adaptive reuse
- Sustainability as part of the downtown brand
  - Relevant to emerging generations
  - Cities will lead
- Stay on top of social equity issues
  - Downtowns can bring private sector perspective, balance
Bottom Line:

Never in our lifetimes have converging trends favored downtowns – urban and rural – like they do today.

Discussion

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