

TREMONTON, UTAH
Summary Report on the
Downtown Business District

Prepared By
The National Development Council
October, 1988

A. INTRODUCTION

On August 30 and September 1, 1988, The National Development Council (NDC) visited Tremonton to perform an analysis of the major strengths and weaknesses of the downtown businesses district. During the two day process, NDC met with a cross section of retailers, property owners, public officials, institutional leaders, and business owners with direct interest in or involvement with the downtown. NDC conducted a series of interviews with these persons to identify actual and/or perceived conditions in the downtown shopping district and to begin to formulate a strategy for revitalization.

On the second day of NDC's visit, we conducted a workshop session for the downtown community to talk about the ingredients for a successful commercial revitalization program in general, and to summarize our recommendations for the revitalization of downtown Tremonton. Mary Jo Ruccio and Sally Loveland of NDC also met in "executive session" with the economic development committee to present our strategy recommendations in more detail. This document is a written summary of the observations and recommendations we shared with the economic development committee.

B. ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Downtown Tremonton is a mixed bag. Merchants know that business is good. Yet citizens think that their downtown is dying. Some landlords let vacant storefronts sit for years, but other retail space turns over and fills up quickly. Major new investment has occurred within the downtown core, still buildings slip in disrepair around them. Downtown anchors are alive and well, but the small stores in between are disappearing from sight. Customer oriented merchants are enthusiastic about the future of downtown (albeit given a little push), but no one will run the merchant association.

Each of these observations, (and many more could be cited) point to an important fact about downtown Tremonton that is borne out over and over. That is, downtown Tremonton is strong. It is built on a solid commercial base. The potential for revitalization is excellent if an organized program for marketing and managing the downtown district is carried out. As an economic unit, Tremonton has the location, the customer base and the physical assets to operate successfully. However, the downtown, left on its own, has not operated as an efficient economic "unit". In a changing shopping environment, deterioration and decline have begun to occur. Little by little, the downtown has run out of steam. Unless its underlying strengths, which are still quite obvious, are exploited quickly as part of an organized, comprehensive effort, downtown Tremonton could suffer a much more serious decline. Or, at least, it could miss an opportunity to create a reinvigorated, exciting shopping area. The potential is there.

C. Basic Strengths

This section will summarize the pluses and minuses to shopping and/or locating a business in downtown Tremonton. These strengths and weaknesses are presented without the benefit of detailed statistical data or survey results, and are instead observations gathered and analyzed from interviews, the workshop session, and "walking the area".

Among the major strengths are :

1. Regional Anchors

Downtown Tremonton has not lost its regional anchors . And these anchor stores appear to be thriving; that is, business is brisk and stores are making money. In most declining neighborhoods or downtown commercial centers, these anchors are the first to go, and only the smaller "mom and pop" specialty and service retailers hang on. In Tremonton, almost the reverse has happened. While the anchors remain (Kings, Christenson's, the banks,) along with a core of larger, strong businesses, the number of smaller specialty shops that draw the customer down the street, has dwindled.

2. Core of Strong Businesses

Tremonton has a surprising number of strong, stable core businesses in the downtown district. These include:

- Clothing (anchor)
- Variety (anchor)
- Drug store
- Furniture/Floor covering
- Hardware
- Services - financial , professional, shoe repair
- Specialty fabric
- Restaurant
- Grocery (albeit off center)

An important range of goods and services are provided here. This is a base that can be built upon. The potential for shared customers - the lifeblood of a successful shopping district - exists in downtown Tremonton. In marketing your district, this core of strong businesses can be an effective selling point for attracting new retailers to the area.

Obviously, there used to be more of these core businesses, and the range of goods and services was better, at least in the eyes of the community. The challenge now, made easier since the underlying strength survives , is to restock the inventory of empty buildings that has emerged in the last few years.

3. A Compact Area

The first criteria for success of a commercial revitalization effort is basic economic viability, with a core of profitable businesses and a flow of customer traffic. This is the base upon which a successful commercial revitalization effort can be built.

The second key ingredient is compactness of the shopping area. Areas which are too large and spread out are difficult to revitalize. A manageable area with a beginning and an end is needed. Downtown Tremonton is such a manageable compact area. Residents and shoppers share a sense of where the downtown begins and ends, with one significant exception. Merchants know each other . For someone carrying out an organized revitalization strategy, communication to property owners and merchants would be

manageable . Resources would not be spread too thin. For an aggressive advertizing and promotion campaign, the downtown is clear in the shopper's mind.

As defined by the economic development committee, downtown Tremonton includes both the new Sprouse Reitz/Kents center south of the river and the more traditional older core, to the railroad tracks. In practical terms the two areas are separate and distinct. The new Sprouse Reitz center is a convenience shopping area. People arrive in their cars at the center's parking lot, buy groceries and other convenience goods, and, most likely, return home . It is unlikely that shoppers will proceed "up the hill" to the downtown core. The potential for shared customers and traffic is limited. Of course there will be some overlap, but its limited nature is important to recognize as promotional and organizational issues are discussed and decided. The new center is indeed an asset to the downtown, as it helps to keep commerce close to the traditional Main Street core also brings people downtown instead of sending them out to the fringe. It demonstrates major investment in near center of town and this provides a psychological boost to the downtown area. But, in our opinion, the new center simply complements the downtown district. It is not a functional part of it.

4. Location

Tremonton is a good 20 - 30 minutes drive from other commercial areas in northern Utah. Logan can claim larger downtown shopping area and a regional mall, but it is still 20 - 30 minutes away. Ogden and Salt Lake City are available for the major shopping excursions, but for day to day family needs, basic clothing, jewelry, convenience, furniture, and specialty items, downtown Tremonton remains the natural destination for residents of Tremonton, Garland, Snowville, and other area residents. This locational attribute should be emphasized to prospective new retailers for branch stores. It should be emphasized in area marketing efforts. A local customer base is available to patronize stores in Tremonton. It hasn't been yet stolen away by a mall on the edge of town or in the next town over.

5. Recent New Investment

Several of the core businesses in downtown Tremonton have made significant recent capital investment into their businesses and/or buildings. Kings Variety, Hamilton Drug, Sprouse Reitz/Kents, and Sandy's salon and spa have invested heavily. This is a sign of confidence in the future. It also helps to preserve an attractive shopping environment to lure shoppers downtown. Clearly, there is also disinvestment occurring as property owners neglect certain buildings. However, the presence of significant recent capital improvements from the private sector reveals the basic overall economic strength in the downtown.

6. Appearance

Downtown Tremonton is a pleasant place to shop. It is in generally good repair. There are no really bad or tumble down structures threatening public safety and confidence. While there are definitely a few unattractive buildings, their number is not yet overwhelming. Downtown definitely needs to be spruced up and some visual sparkle added; fortunately, this can

be accomplished in most cases without huge investments by merchants and property owners. Since buildings are in generally good repair, a modest program of minimum design standards and mandatory maintenance could be put in place without large price tag.

7. Space Available

While too much vacant space cannot be called a strength, some vacant space is a good thing. Tremonton has more vacant and/or marginal space than it should and this space has been increasing lately. This trend will continue unless the downtown sells itself to new merchants. On the other hand, there is now a variety of nicely located retail space to market to prospective tenants. This availability, which at first looks like a liability, can be turned to Tremonton's advantage in a merchant recruitment campaign.

8. Loan Programs

Tremonton has a small facade loan program in place. While limited, this is a start and a necessary ingredient in any downtown revitalization program. Also, through the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) Tremonton can access other state and federal programs (SBA 7(a), 504, CDBG, etc.) that can help with future downtown redevelopment. For a comprehensive revitalization effort, the need for financing must be examined in much greater detail.

9. Opportunity for Change and Growth

A critical element for successful revitalization is an active core of merchant leaders. The group may be small, but it must be enthusiastic and dedicated. They must be agreeable to working together. Major property owners and local bankers, and institutions together with merchants and business owners are ripe for leadership roles. In Tremonton, this core group has already emerged through the various chamber, redevelopment, and merchant committees. While there are some signs of burn out in the merchant community, it is not severe. The downtown enjoys support from the chamber, the city, the banks, the hospital. The redevelopment of the downtown is considered a priority by a large majority of citizens. There appear to be no underlying divisions or polarization of opinions that would paralyze the revitalization process.

Weaknesses

Downtown Tremonton is experiencing an erosion of community confidence. Despite the pluses described above, retail spaces are vacant, the variety and quantity of quality merchandise has dwindled, and the buzz of perceived activity downtown has definitely slowed. The shopping environment is changing, and Tremonton must learn to compete. It must think of itself like a shopping center and do something about the problems it is facing. It's clear that an organized, comprehensive redevelopment strategy is called for to reverse the disturbing trends emerging within the downtown core.

Among the major weaknesses are:

1. Negative Perception

There is a general feeling that downtown Tremonton can no longer compete for shoppers and new businesses. While some merchants know that business is good, citizens think their downtown is dying. Merchants who "put their customers first" are making money, but too many merchants are providing lackluster retailing. Many store windows are unattractive and merchandising is sparse. Downtown lacks the sparkle and "pizzazz" that would contribute to a positive perception among area residents about what is happening downtown. Also, uncooperative landlords with dingy buildings add to the general malaise.

2. Lack of Variety

While the commercial core of downtown Tremonton is relatively strong, there is no longer a good mix of quality retail and service goods to keep the downtown healthy and growing. An interesting and balanced blend of basic retail and specialty products plus some service outlets is necessary to attract new shoppers and keep the existing ones. There is a dangerous trend in Tremonton as service business begin to gobble up first floor retail space downtown. As these service stores proliferate, the potential for shared customers and downtown vitality diminishes.

Tremonton does not need a formal market study. Do a simple shopper survey and poll the merchants to find out what is missing. Go to other successful retail centers in the region and pick out the the successful stores that you would like to locate in Tremonton. Talk to them.

3. Key Vacant Properties

As has been noted above, there are a growing number of vacant properties downtown. There are a number of reasons for this, not all related to the marketability of the space. In many cases, building neglect and unrealistic property owner expectations are responsible for vacancies. Vacant structures erode community confidence quickly. An inventory of available space should be compiled and a marketing campaign to attract new tenants should be undertaken. Informal negotiations with area property owners are called for. More recommendations about empty spaces and a marketing strategy will be outlined in the strategy section, below.

4. Parking

Parking is not a major issue for the greater part of downtown, and significant new city investment has been made to provide parking for downtown shoppers. However, the street sign to direct drivers to the parking, which is generally located behind the buildings and somewhat out of sight, are inadequate. Also the parking is located at the rear of the stores. This is acceptable, except that these rear store entrances generally are not well maintained. In fact, the back door has become the front door for many shops, and these rear facades are usually shabby and uninviting.

Any renovation program that is undertaken needs to pay particular attention to both the front and rear facades.

5. Location

As a small regional center, the downtown is well located. However, it is difficult to see downtown Tremonton from the traditional entrance to the city. The completion of the I-15 interchange can help improve this visibility problem. However, special efforts should be undertaken with highway signage, advertizing and the like to direct the potential shopper downtown.

6. Marketing

Downtown does not market itself to the shopper as an interesting place to shop. It should advertise itself like a mall, and downtown merchants need to coordinate their advertising schedules. Joint advertising, common hours, and shared promotions are critical to the success of the typical mall. Downtown needs to identify and promote itself by adopting some of the common feature of mall advertizing - logo, theme, scheduled common sales, joint advertizing, and so on.

7. Recreation

Many downtowns have downtown movie theaters, "fun" restaurants, cultural institutions or the like to lure potential shoppers downtown and to provide some entertainment for the family. Tremonton lacks this feature. It will be difficult to import or create.

ORGANIZATION

Structure

In Tremonton there exists an informal downtown merchants association and a standing downtown committee of the Chamber of Commerce. The merchants association runs the annual promotion calendar, collects contributions and dues, provides a forum for downtown issues, sponsors events, and so forth. At the time of NDC's survey of the downtown, the association was without a president and no one was volunteering for the job.

The challenge in Downtown Tremonton is to formalize the informal merchants association and develop a budget with which it can carry out the effective management and revitalization of the downtown. The organization would undertake a retail business recruitment effort, carry out joint advertising program, develop a physical plan with the city, set priorities, and be responsible for "managing" the revitalization of downtown Tremonton.

In a small community like Tremonton, the same person wears a lot of hats. The chamber, the redevelopment committee, the merchants association, and the economic development committee have many of the same members. Still, Tremonton needs this formal downtown organization with articles, by laws, and a work program to direct the revitalization process. and keep downtown working.

Funding the Organization

The downtown organization should be financed and controlled by merchants. The focus of the association is on bringing more customers downtown through advertizing, promotions, filling empty retail space, sprucing up the area, and so on. Merchants are not the only members, though. The downtown organization should allow property owners, institutions, the city, business owners, and interested individuals to become members. Usually, classes of membership in the organization are set up which reflect full and associate memberships based on assessments and due structures.

In Tremonton, then the existing informal association needs to incorporate itself. Second, the organization needs a reliable funding source and a budget to carry out its activities. This can be accomplished through a combination of mandatory assessments (as in a Parking and Business Improvement District) coupled with associate member dues and contributions.

Creating a Budget

Long ago, shopping center manager learned that funding advertising and leasing programs and other management activities through voluntary contributions was impractical. Money was difficult to collect, and some people (free riders) did not pay at all. It is difficult to plan, let alone carry out a work program given the constant uncertainty regarding the budget. Shopping center managers switched to mandatory assessments prescribed in leases to raise funds in a fair, efficient, and reliable manner. Older commercial areas also need a simple vehicle to funding as effective organization, and one that requires merchants to spend minimal time on collecting dues and raising funds. That funding source is available under Utah law through the Parking and Business Improvement District (PBID). Many commercial areas around the country have similar laws and have used them. Tremonton should investigate teh PBID. Neighboring Logan is currently in the process of establishing a PBID to fund its downtown organization.

The downtown organization also needs a work plan to be effetive. Each of the tasks described below can be assigned to a subcommittee, even in a small downtown like Tremonton, to get them going. There must be close coordination with the city in some of the areas.

STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive downtown redevelopment strategy requires more than a few days of a consultant's time to formulate. A good strategy emerges after a process of participation, consensus building, and decision making among area merchants, property owners, businesspeople, and residents. A public/private partnership must be forged that can secure financcial and nonfinancial commitments from all key players in the revitalization process. However, NDC is prepared to recommend a range of strategies, which will be described below, to begin the revitalizaion process in downtown Tremonton.

Downtown revitalization cannot be accomplished with partial solutions like landscaping, new parking lots, or a promotional campaign. It requires a comprehensive approach which includes four major points:

1. Public improvements
2. Storefront (facade) rehabilitation
3. Financing for new investment
4. Downtown management

None of these points taken alone are capable of getting the job done. Many cities have worked on public improvements and facade programs and expected the the rebirth their downtown, only to be disappointed. A comprehensive approach includes all the four points.

From NDC's observation, the following strategies should be undertaken to begin the commercial revitalization process in Tremonton.

1. Downtown Image Campaign

Downtown Tremonton should run an image campaign to promote itself. It needs a theme. It needs sparkle. It needs to reacquaint area shoppers with the stores that are doing business there. Downtown Tremonton needs a theme and a logo to use on advertizing, promotions, events, banners, shopping bags and so on. Some early visible event, like a project unveiling, or program announcement should be built into the campaign to let people know that something is happening in the downtown.

2. Sales Package for Business Recruitment

The vital statistics about downtown Tremonton should be assembled into a sales package and marketed to merchants in the region. The sales package should include such information as space available, typical rent ranges, area demographics, stores doing business in the downtown area, local incentives, and so on.

3. Call Program

A call program to successful merchants in the region should be initiated to recruit successful shops to open branch store to Tremonton. A simple brochure or a packet should be provided to business owners as part of the regional call program. A committee of the Chamber or the merchants association would develop and carry out the program coordinated and assisted by a part time downtown manager.

4. Property Owners Campaign

A strong effort should be made, to support a business recruitment campaign, to secure the cooperation of downtown property owners to make empty space available, on reasonable terms, to potential tenants. Property owners should be encouraged to recruit "quality" tenants and

they should be persuaded to improve the appearance of their buildings. This task requires local peer pressure and persuasion, but an effective way to move this process along is to incorporate minimum mandatory design standards into the downtown program.

When a strong revitalization effort is underway, it will be easier to persuade these property owners that something good is happening in the downtown and they should be part of it.

5. Shopper Survey

A simple shopper survey should be conducted to identify what shoppers want to buy in downtown, where they shop now, how they view the downtown, where they are from, and so on. A simple postcard survey of customers could be conducted from the point of sale or a more elaborate questionnaire could be used if there is available any manpower to distribute it and tabulate the results. University marketing departments often do these surveys as a semester project. The purpose of the survey is to provide information on what stores and amenities are needed downtown, and how you can attract more customers.

6. Merchandising

Downtown retailers need strong individual merchandising to compete or shoppers. Downtown needs catchy window displays, inventories that are fresh and up to date, and modern merchandising techniques. While no one can force a merchant to be fresh and catchy, the merchants association can try to assemble resources to provide merchandising assistance to downtown retailers. A university design student, for example, could provide window display assistance downtown. A retail marketing major could help with merchandising of goods and inventory control, and so on.

Also, as successful new store fill empty space and replace tired shops, during the redevelopment process goes on the overall retailing appearance of the area is bound to improve. New blood is crucial to the redevelopment process.

7. Calendar of Events

The association should evaluate its annual calendar of events and look for new ideas. The association runs a good events program, but to keep it popular with shoppers it needs constant variety and change.

8. Joint Advertizing

Flyers are a popular advertising medium among successful downtown merchants in Tremonton. Merchants should band together to produce advertising flyers that are sponsored by as many downtown merchants as can be recruited. The flyers should incorporate a shop downtown Tremonton logo and theme. Sale events should be coordinated among retailers and prompted in the flyers.

9. Basic Design Standards

It is important to make the buildings attractive so that they are an asset for the downtown. In Tremonton a set of minimum design guidelines should be established to improve and preserve the overall appearance of the commercial district. The standards should have the power of law so that all property owners are required to maintain at least a minimum standard of appearance for their buildings, even if they stand empty. The guidelines should emphasize two areas: first, basic exterior building maintenance and second, preserving the integrity of the original building design. Both front and back facades should be treated in the guidelines.

10. Parking Signs

Make the available downtown parking easy to find. Put signs on the street to make it easy to locate. Put the downtown Tremonton logo on the signs.

11. Early Visible Results

Take some quick action which demonstrates that something is happening in the downtown. Paint a building (the side of Kings); put up parking signs; clean up a particular trouble spot. Do not do this first, but do it soon, as the image campaign is geared up, or the advertising begins to hit the streets, or a new storefront is rented.

12. Part Time Manager

A half time person should be hired as staff to the merchants association to coordinate and carry out advertising, promotion, and leasing activities. Funding for this person can come from a combination of institutional contributions, Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG), assessments through a Parking and Business Improvement District (PBID), and/or city funds. There are many approaches to funding this position that should be explored. The person could be hired for six months to get the program underway. A clear work program would be provided for the downtown manager. If the position is a success, a longer term commitment funded by the merchants would be appropriate.

The key to downtown revitalization is organization and management. To implement a successful program, someone must be in charge everyday. The downtown manager makes the process happen and gets results. The manager provides staff support to an active volunteer effort of the downtown association. Normally, the manager works for the downtown association or some similar group presented over by merchants.

SUMMARY

The ingredients for a successful turnaround of downtown Tremonton are available: a strong commercial core, a good "physical plant," good demographics, lots of citizen support, and a core leadership to make something happen. In Tremonton the leadership needs to concentrate on four major areas taken from the twelve recommendations above: a leasing campaign (retailer recruitment), an

image campaign, joint advertising, and getting organized with a budget. The downtown organization should form one committee to handle advertizing, image, and promotions and another committee to handle getting the space inventory together and marketing it. The organization should find a partime manager. Keep in mind that these are only suggestions, of course. Before anything will happen, the merchants and property owners need to review the information , set their own priorities, and develop a work plan that is supported by the majority of the downtown community. This step by step process is outlined in appendix A.

APPENDIX A

A STEP BY STEP IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The following is a basic outline of how the revitalization process flows. It differs some from city to city, but overall the process is universal.

A. Month 1: Support of Concepts

Step 1: General Political Support

- Explain the public/private partnership and the negotiating process to elected officials and key administrators
- Obtain their commitment to support:
 - public improvement fund allocations
 - ordinances establishing design standards
 - facade loan funds, loan packaging assistance and a downtown manager
 - ordinances to provide a reliable source of funding for shopping center type management (advertising, promotions, etc.)

if, and only if, the merchants, property owners and community endorse and support it

Step 2: Community Support

- Explain the program to key individuals such as merchant and neighborhood leaders, bankers, and major property owners
- Obtain their commitment to actively support the program

Step 3: Legal Support

- Work with local attorneys to identify legal basis for:
 - design standards (i.e. redevelopment law, general powers, etc.)
 - funding mechanism for shopping center type management (i.e. special assessment, special license fee, etc.)
 - Outline all steps required to obtain legal authority (i.e. state laws, local ordinances)

Step 4: Assemble a Team of Professionals

- Designate a downtown manager with authority and capability to take charge
- Provide the downtown manager with access to planners, architects, inspectors, loan packagers and others on a less than full time basis

B. Month 2; Initial Meetings

Step 5: Initial Public Meeting

- Emphasize public/private partnership
- Outline public improvements, contributions and financing which the city is prepared to contribute if private investment is forthcoming

C. Month 3-9: Negotiation and Consensus

Step 6: Early Visible Results

- Take some quick action which demonstrates that someone is focusing on the area (i.e. paint a public building, make a minipark out of a garbage-strewn lot or finance a rehab project)

Step 7: Series of Committee Meetings and Public Meetings

- **Public Improvements**

- Determine the elements of an overall revitalization plan
- Propose solutions to neighborhood problems which can be delivered quickly
- If needed Prepare a plan for public improvements like parking, special lighting, landscaping, etc.

- **Rehabilitation**

- Review facade treatment in successful projects
- Discuss possible standards for facades and signs
- Determine costs of rehabilitation on a few typical buildings
- Propose mechanisms for obtaining 100% merchant/owner participation

- **Financing**

- Describe available assistance through public programs such as long-term financing, low interest loans, interest subsidies and loan packaging assistance, etc.
- Involve local banker and obtain their commitment to participate in public/private financing and long-term financing

- **Management**

- Discuss the need for advertising, promotions, business recruitment, increased security, sanitation and maintenance
- Obtain a consensus that voluntary contributions will not work
- Introduce idea of an ordinance which requires contribution by all businesses or owners to a management fund
- Explain how decisions on the program activities would be made by a board or commission of local merchants and/or property owners

- Consider a "Sunset" provision which terminates the ordinance after five (5) years unless it is renewed
- Discuss funding formula options i.e. flat fee, front footage, square footage, gross sales, assessed value, etc.
- Develop a general program, budget, funding formula and ordinance with broad support of active merchants and property owners

D. Month 9: Program Commitment

Step 8: Commitment of Support to Total Package

- Obtain commitment of support for the entire public/private partnership as a package
- Overall development plan and public improvements
- Overall design standards and 100% merchant participation

E. Months 10-12: Official Adoption

Step 9: Official Adoption of the Comprehensive Program

- Ordinances, agreements and funding commitments must be officially adopted with the full support of the neighborhood, the city and the appropriate federal officials

A COMPREHENSIVE FOUR POINT PROGRAM

To review, a comprehensive approach is necessary for successful downtown revitalization. The formula is a four point program which can be implemented in Tremonton:

A. Public Improvements

The purpose of public improvements is to make the downtown more attractive (i.e., to attract more people) and more effective. Typically, this includes more parking, landscaping, better lighting, etc. In many cities there has been over-emphasis on pedestrian malls, new sidewalks, new streets, etc. Which is too much of a piecemeal approach. Public improvements are important, but are not the solution by themselves.

B. Facade Rehabilitation

It is important to make the buildings attractive so that they are an asset for the downtown. There are several approaches: pure preservation - usually favored by preservation groups, the instant cover up sometimes preferred by merchants' groups, and a variety of compromises which are generally preferred by no one. The goal is facade rehabilitation using simple, reasonable standards - make it as inexpensive as possible, and insure 100% participation.

NDC's experience is that voluntary facade rehabilitation programs do not work - and sometimes backfire as early enthusiasts become disappointed and bitter when too many fence sitters and nay-sayers hinder their own progress. Utah has excellent community development and redevelopment legislation

that can protect the majority of downtown merchants or property owners who want to rehabilitate their buildings as part of a commercial revitalization program by requiring minimal rehabilitation by all the property owners involved.

C. Financing

Historically, merchants and store owners in downtowns and neighborhood commercial areas have not had access to the same attractive financing which is available to their counterparts in malls. In many cities, banks are reluctant to invest in downtown and are unwilling to make the small facade-type loans that are so important to the redevelopment process. City governments, however, can counter the imbalance by establishing local lending systems which couple conventional bank lending with long-term, low downpayment, attractively priced financing. The financing can be utilized to acquire and rehab or construct buildings, meet facade standards, and improve the interior, the furniture and fixtures.

D. Management

The last and most important point is management. Shopping centers are large, professionally managed corporations with money to invest and professional staff to do market studies, advertising, promotions, leases, public relations, property management, etc. Moreover, they structure their shopping center leases with tenants to require monthly payments for promotions, common area maintenance, snow removal, etc. Downtown merchants associations have traditionally attempted to work together on a voluntary basis to develop joint advertising and promotional campaigns and to provide other management services. Empirically, however, voluntary assessments do not work. Typically, less than half the merchants contribute financially and even fewer do the work required to conduct an advertising and promotional campaign. Because so few merchants contribute dollars, the association's budget does not allow for hiring professional management services. The few participating leader-merchants spend an inordinate amount of time performing the distasteful and thankless task of collecting pledges from their colleagues. By sheer force of energy, these dynamic merchants carry out the promotional activities, only to "burn out" in several years, often leaving no system or individuals behind to pick up the piece after them.

Many cities and towns are replacing the ineffective voluntary merchant contribution system with a special assessment on the merchant or property owner. If sufficient merchant/owner support is evident, the city may establish the assessment by ordinance. Once adopted, the city collects the assessment and turns the proceeds over to a commission or board of businessmen/women who concentrate, not on collection of fees, but rather on planning an effective management program, hiring professional management services and conducting promotions in an orderly fashion. While the assessment can be levied on the property owner, the preferable assessment will levy the assessment on the merchants through a licensing fee, since the merchant receives the direct benefit of the management budget.

A Public/Private Partnership with Teeth

Successful implementation of the four-point program requires an effective public/private partnership. The city agrees to provide funds for public improvements, incentive financing, and so on. In return, the merchants and property owners are expected to invest in rehabilitation of their buildings in accordance with minimum design standards and provide financial support for a permanent, shopping center-type management program. In order for the program to be successful, mechanisms which put teeth into the partnership are needed.

A comprehensive commercial revitalization program cannot be imposed on businessmen and property owners. The partnership agreement must be negotiated in the community. A broad consensus of support must be developed for the comprehensive program. No Mayor or City Council will enact ordinances for revitalization without the support of a large majority of the businessmen/women in the area.



December 13, 1988

Mr. Don Kerr
Key Bank
57 East Main
Tremonton, Utah 84337

Dear Don,

I have attached for you a job description for a part time downtown Manager and an overall budget for the management of the downtown. I have also included the job description and budget for a full time manager from the Logan report, so that you can see the areas where the duties are scaled back.

The difference between a full time and part time manager is one of degree. For Tremonton, I believe the job focus needs to be kept on coordinating the revitalization process, organizing the association, planning advertizing campaigns, and filling up empty space. Major duties should include:

- Business District Coordinator
- Business Association Manager
- Annual Work Program for Association
- Downtown Advertizing and promotion
- Budget
- Lease and market space
- Liason with private and public sector

It is good hearing from you. Please feel free to call if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Sally
Sally Loveland
Director

SL/dg
Enc.

DOWNTOWN MANAGER

JOB DESCRIPTION

TREMONTON, UTAH

SALARY: \$12,000

EMPLOYER: DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION

I. Business District Coordinator

- A. Coordinate Interests of All Segments of Community:
Government, Business, Professional, Property Owners, Developers,
Residents Shoppers
- B. Spokesperson for Downtown
- C. Write and Distribute Quarterly Newsletter
- D. Coordinate Publicity
- E. Raise Money for Associations and Promotions
- F. Watch Dog and Heart Beat of Downtown

II. Business Association Director

- A. Organize Association; Build Membership
- B. Execute Promotions, Events
- C. Coordinate Publicity, Advertising
- D. Organize Core Common Hours

III. Private Property Developer and Coordinator

- A. Inventory All Space
- B. Assist Property Owners to Lease/Sell/Negotiate Space
- C. Recruit New Business and Expand Existing Businesses

DOWNTOWN MANAGER

QUALIFICATION

1. Quality - dedication and good people skills are essential
2. Retail orientation - experience in specialty shops
3. Advertising experience - not "agency" experience but rather knowledge of media buying, advertising formats, etc.
4. Public Relations experience - for press releases, free publicity, promotions, events, etc.
5. Basic understanding of real estate and commercial leasing
6. Detail orientation - to coordinate a complex, multi-faceted process

Qualification #1 - the quality factor - is essential. The person must have good people skills, be a problem solver, and love the sidewalk. Some retail, promotion, or advertising experience is needed, although it can be general.

RECRUITING STRATEGY

Look around locally. Also, a good hunting ground is the mid-sized mall, where assistant mall managers and junior advertising directors may be lured away. Advertise in local and state newspapers. To advertise nationally, use the International Shopping Center Association trade publication, the Council on Urban Economic Development newsletter, etc. A newspaper ad could include the following description:

Market Position: The Downtowners Association of Tremonton, Utah, is seeking a part time person to manage the downtown business district. This person should have a high motivation, ability as a self starter, and be results oriented. The ability to work with volunteers, merchants, property owners, and government; knowledge and experience in retailing, promotions, advertising, and marketing as needed in shopping centers and/or other retail areas; knowledge of property leasing and maintenances. Submit resume to....

COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION PROJECT

BUDGET: 1 YEAR

PERSONNEL:

Executive Director	\$12,000	
Part Time Clerical (1)	\$2,000	
FICA, Insurance	<u>\$2,000</u>	\$16,000

OFFICE: (1)

Overhead, stationery, supplies, etc.		\$5,000
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PROMOTIONS, EVENTS:

1 major events @ \$2,000	\$2,000	
2 image builder @\$1,000	<u>\$2,000</u>	\$4,000

ADVERTISING:

3 major campaigns @ \$1,000	\$3,000	
3 minor campaigns @ \$ 500	<u>\$1,500</u>	\$4,500

LEASING AND RECRUITMENT

Marketing material and information		\$4,000
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<u>GENERAL PROMOTION AND MISCELLANEOUS</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	
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<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>\$34,500</u>
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(1) Favorable opportunities for inkind contributions

JOB DESCRIPTION

DOWNTOWN MANAGER, LOGAN, UTAH

SALARY: \$20,000

EMPLOYER: DOWNTOWNERS ASSOCIATION

I. Business District Coordinator

- A. Coordinate Interests of All Segments of Community: Government, Business, Professional, Property Owners, Developers, Residents Shoppers
- B. Spokesperson for All Aspects of Downtown
- C. Write and Distribute Newsletter
- D. Coordinate Publicity
- E. Raise Money for associations and promotions
- F. Watch Dog and Heart Beat of Downtown

II. Business Association Director

- A. Organize Association; Build Membership
- B. Execute Promotions, Events
- C. Coordinate Publicity, Advertising
- D. Coordinate Service Delivery i.e. Sidewalk Sweeping, Snow Removal, Security
- E. Write and Distribute Newsletter
- F. Organize a Core Common Hours

III. Private Property Developer and Coordinator

- A. Administer Design Standards or Guidelines
- B. Inventory All Space
- C. Assist Property Owners to Lease/Sell/Negotiate Space
- D. Recruit New Business and Expand Existing Businesses
- E. Administer Parking Agreements

IV. Business Development

- A. Coordinate, Interpret and Implement Market Analysis
- B. Coordinate, Interpret and Implement Traffic and Parking Plans
- C. Design and Construction of Public Amenities

V. Financial Consultant

- A. Develop, Coordinate, and Publicize Financing Programs
- B. Package Loans