

Strategic Planning for the Reuse of Blighted Properties

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Every Blighted Property Is a Development Project in Stasis



Four Key Criteria for Successful Planning in Public Projects

1. Keeping implementation in mind from the beginning.
2. Keeping it simple.
3. Creating early leadership buy-in.
4. Reviewing the plan's status throughout the process.



Planning Obstacles in Blighted Site Projects

- Previous bad experiences.
- Action-oriented small business approach.
- Need for “consensus.”
- Lack of a vision.
- Confusing “vision” with “strategy.”
- Misunderstanding of redevelopment.
- Confusing “study” and “strategy.”

The First Task: Stirring Leadership Interest

- Every community and region faces numerous problems.
 - Unemployment.
 - Inability to meet the needs of:
 - Education.
 - The disadvantaged.
 - Maintaining existing infrastructure.
 - Lack of:
 - Resources.
 - Vision & Consensus.
- Your first task is to convince leadership that your idea is worth their attention and time.



Concept: Start Small



- Identify a few people who will understand the need to tackle this issue.
- The LEDO or chamber of commerce is a good place to look.

Meet with an Initial, Small Group



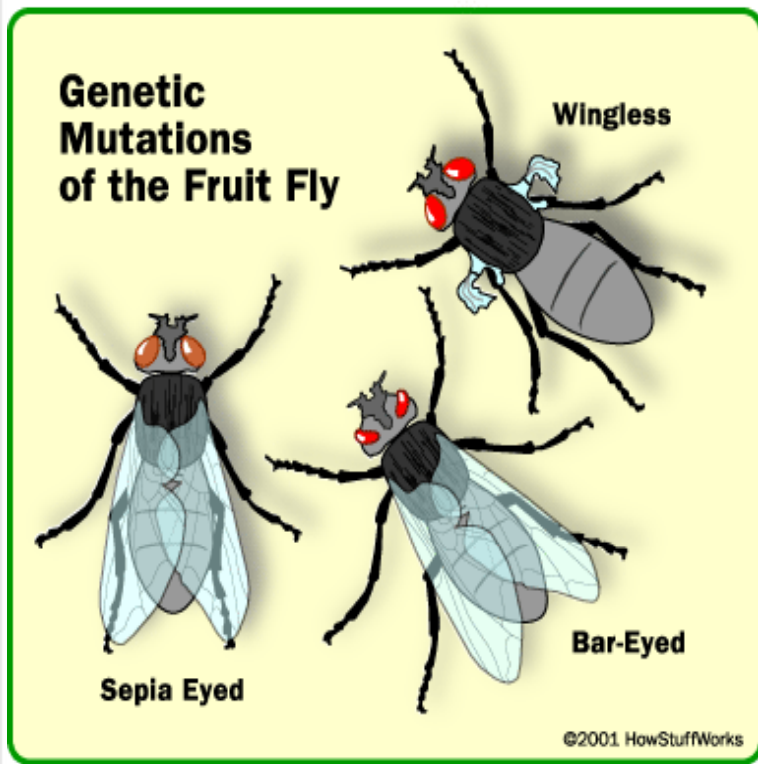
- In a quiet place to talk (having food or drink is a good idea).
- Be prepared to present a brief argument that outlines the opportunities and the needs.
- Goals of the meeting:
 - Get those present willing to support a redevelopment project;
 - ID additional leaders.

The Next Move: Engage LEOs

- You can never have enough leaders interested in your project.
- However, at an early stage, you need to begin talking with LEOs.
 - Informally at first.
 - Then formally.



Planning Tip # 1



- As you broaden the number of participants, you will have to allow your original concept to be changed by new-comers.
- This might entail a change in geographic scope or moving from a greater focus on preservation than economic development (or vice versa).

The Second Task: Creating the Steering Committee and Moving Forward

- Approved by the appropriate governing body.
- Ideally a public-private partnership.
- This group will drive the planning process and “own” the resulting strategy.



Planning Tip # 2

The planning process should move as quickly as possible. The longer the planning takes, the more volunteers you will lose.

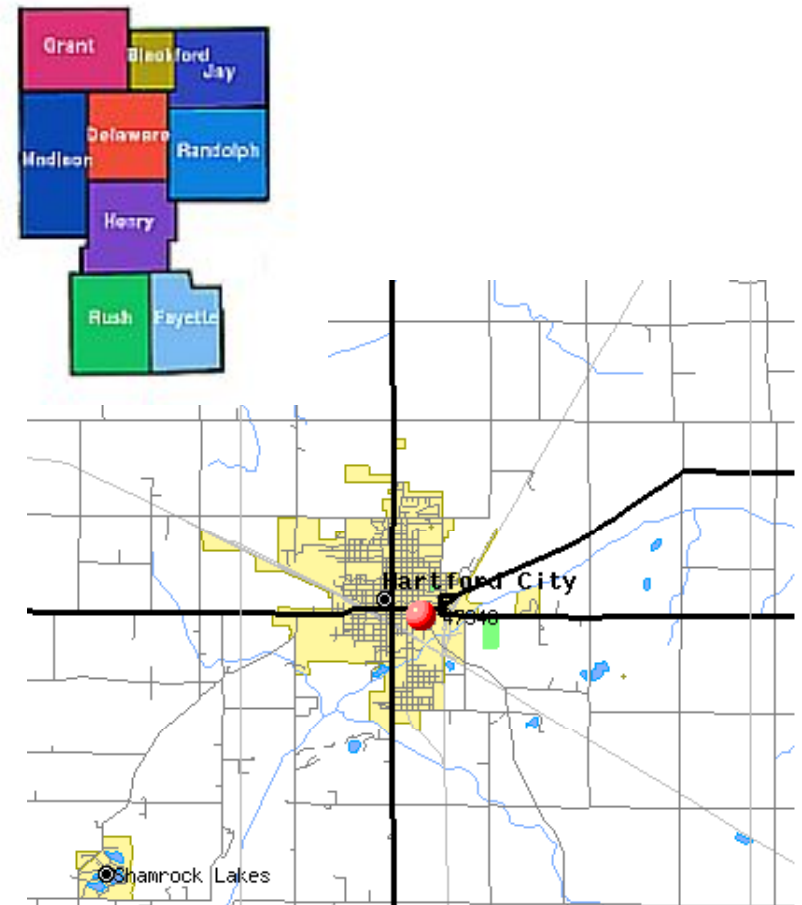
The Overall Scope of Work for the Steering Committee

1. Choose the geographic area.
2. Examine area's:
 - Assets.
 - Challenges.
 - Threats.
 - Opportunities.
3. Inventory sites.
4. Prioritize sites.
5. Recommend a strategy.
6. Actively support implementing the plan.



The Third Task: Pick Your Geographical Borders

- This task might be completed by the time the steering committee is formed.
- If not, choose a geographic area for the plan:
 - Neighborhood.
 - Section of city.
 - Whole city.
 - County.
 - Multi-county region.



The Fourth Task: Talk with Experts & Resource Providers



- Environmental engineers.
- Redevelopment consultants.
- State agencies:
 - Indiana brownfields program.
 - OCRA.
 - IDEM.
- Federal agencies:
 - EPA.
 - USDA-RD.

Planning Tip # 3

A Strategy Usually Requires Studies, and Studies Usually Require Hiring Professionals

The Fifth Task:

Accessing Resources to Do Things

- Your steering committee will need to have financial resources to hire professionals to:
 - Inventory sites.
 - Accurate descriptions.
 - Preliminary analysis.
 - Help the SC create a vision for the community that is driven by new sites for development.
 - Help the SC explore potential outcomes for the community.
 - Help the SC prioritize sites for further investigation, clean-up, and reuse.
 - Examine selected sites in greater detail.
 - Clean-up sites.
- This requires money.

Finding Money

- Over the long-term, financing for community/regional improvement must come from within.
- However, some initial funding might come from state and federal “team mates” to complement local funding.



Grant Funding

- Local government.
- Local/regional not-for-profits.
- Utilize your regional plan commission or other grants writing service.



The Sixth Task: Hiring Professionals

- Local government will probably do the hiring.
- SC members should sit on interview panel.
- Consultants should report to the Chair of the SC.



Use Professionals as Part of Your Team to Construct Redevelopment Concepts Early in the Process

1. Look at site and its context, and consider the best uses.
2. Look at analogous community best practices.
3. Use what-if scenarios to look at alternatives.
4. Determine what public investments will drive what types of private investment.
5. Consider what changes to the area's land use planning and zoning will support sustained reuse.

Sample Brownfields Inventory Community X

TOTAL NUMBER OF LOCATIONS: 7

Site Name	Address	Acreage	Past Use	Current Zoning	Contact Name	Tel No/ Email	Org.
Brass Plant	550 Broad St	8.3	Brass Mfg.	I-3	Thayr Richey	800-000-0000 trichey@sdg.us	City Gov.
Richey Ball Bearings	2901 N. Walnut St.	10	Mfg.	I-2	Brian O'Neill	800-000-0000 info@sdg.us	LEDO

Few Sites Stand Alone.

The redevelopment of a site must be seen in the context of its larger geographic area.



The Seventh Task: Creating the Strategy



- The SC's responsibility.
- The need for public outreach.
- Listening to the consultants.
- Choosing a vision for the future.
- Developing the implementation plan.

The Eighth Task: Supporting the Implementation Plan

- Champion the plan.
 - Encourage local government to continue support for redevelopment activities.
 - Continue to implement the strategy and periodically review the plan.
- Find early project successes.



Discussion

