



# **VALUE TERMINAL**





Michael J. Rohm, MAI, CCIM is a commercial appraiser and sales agent working throughout Central PA. He is Owner and President of Commonwealth Commercial Appraisal Group and is Director of Valuation Advisory for Landmark Commercial Realty.

Professional Board Involvement:

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You can reach him at 717-215-9760 mrohm@commonwealthappraiser.com Unique Sales Closed in

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# WHAT DOES LAND VALUE MEAN TO YOU? Why language matters in real estate

BY MICHAEL J. ROHM, MAI, CCIM, R/W-AC contributions by Brendan Wewer





In discussions with colleagues, industry professionals and developers, I'm continuously reminded that "land value" can represent different things to different parties. When tasked with determining land value, we must recognize that land has phases of entitlement and improvement which influence value.

It is important to identify which condition of land you are appraising for your assignment: raw land, approved land or approved and improved land. In many cases, there are multiple physically possible and legally permissible development options for a given parcel of land. Are the approvals and site improvements for your subject property, if any, consistent with your highest and best use conclusion? Although difficult to uncover in many circumstances, we must be especially diligent to consider the physical and non-physical contributors (or detractors) of value when appraising this incredibly complex property type — a property type valued in every right of way appraisal.

It should be noted that land is just one component of the overall development flowchart. Although there are many subphases within each broader phase, the general real estate development flowchart is as follows:



It should be understood that there are varying levels of "land value" depending on entitlements [1], site improvements, and site infrastructure. Land entitlement, site infrastructure, and site improvements are development "hurdles" of their own; it is important to recognize that risk decreases as each phase of development is cleared. As risk decreases, value typically increases.



Many real estate professionals generically and incorrectly utilize the phrase "vacant land" to describe land in any of its three differing conditions:

- **1. Raw Land** not approved for development or improved with utilities or other infrastructure necessary for vertical development. This is the least valuable condition of land in the development process.
  - a. The value of raw land varies widely from developer to developer based on experience and risk tolerance.
  - b. Likelihood of rezoning or increasing development density is factored into a developer's preferred acquisition price of raw land — each of which can be difficult to credibly support.
- **2. Approved (Entitled) Land** approved land is otherwise known as entitled land. Approvals are for a specific use. "Approvals" refer to the governing municipality's interpretation of compliance for proposed development's use, density, conformance and safety and access from public roadways, among other considerations. If a project meets the standards of the zoning code, it is often approved. This condition of land is approved for development but not improved with site infrastructure/site improvements necessary for vertical development.
  - a. Municipalities (zoning hearing board, planning commission, board of supervisors) determine whether to approve a given project based on the prospective development's conformance to the zoning code and potential benefit to the community.
  - b. Soft costs to entitle include: township zoning approval fees, legal fees, engineering fees (site plans), architect fees (building plans) and interim real estate taxes and insurance.
  - c. Approvals/entitlements are often granted for a specific use which is not always consistent with the highest and best use. For example, if a piece of land is entitled for a single-family home, but the highest and best use is for development of a retail building, the entitlements for single-family residence may not actually enhance the site value whatsoever. In other words, an entitlement not consistent with highest and best use may not be desirable (valuable) to the market.
  - d. For raw land to become approved land, a property owner must undertake risk and incur soft costs during the entitlement process. For example, there is risk that a large residentially zoned piece of raw land with a concept plan will have significantly less lot yield [2] than what will ultimately be approved by the municipality. Therefore, all else being equal, the value of a parcel that is approved for a subdivision (with known lot yield) is often times significantly more valuable than the same parcel that is not yet approved. Theoretically, the difference in value between raw and entitled land is comprised of some combination of entrepreneurial incentive and the anticipated soft costs incurred for entitlement, which can vary based on the proposed development and developer.

#### 3. Approved and Improved Land

— otherwise known as pad ready in commercial real estate. This condition is approved for development and improved with all necessary site improvements to break ground on vertical development.

For entitled land to become "pad ready," a property owner must undertake risk and incur site infrastructure and site improvement costs to prepare the site for vertical development.

"Pad ready" may mean different things to different people; however, the components listed below are typically the physical characteristics of interest for an entitled and improved site.

- a. Site Infrastructure typically comes first. Hard costs include site grading, retaining walls, extending utility lines, stormwater management
- b. Site Improvements typically comes next. Costs include entry/access roads, landscaping, sidewalks, curbing, parking lot, lighting, fencing
- c. Given the number of line-item costs in this phase of development, it is important to know what site infrastructure and site improvements were in place at the time of sale, if utilizing the site as a comparable sale.
- d. Probably the most important reason as to why entitled and improved land is the most valuable of the three conditions is that timing is a more predictable variable. A developer or future owner occupant knows that they can break ground immediately, and they can make alternative investment decisions accordingly. Most investment decisions and associated risk are determined based on opportunity cost which is much more of a known variable when land is entitled and improved for vertical construction.



In conclusion, it is my opinion that we as real estate professionals need to change the way we discuss "land value":

- As appraisers, we need to get more specific when asking brokers or buyers questions about a land transfer to utilize as a comparable sale. Almost no land comparable sale will be in the same phase of development as the subject property related to required site infrastructure, required site improvements or entitlement risk. This must be quantified or qualified to produce a reliable comparison to any given subject property.
- As brokers, we need to get more specific when asking buyers, sellers and municipalities what their criteria are for development. This will better inform how to quantify projected risk and cost prior to acquisition or breaking ground.
- As owners, we need to get more specific when comparing our sites to "comparable" sites that sold. As the article relays, there are seemingly infinite steps in land development and no two sites are ever identical with regard to stage of entitlement or necessary site work (on- or off-site). Ultimately, it is difficult to utilize comparable sales when underwriting land value due to elements specific to any given subject site.  $\heartsuit$

[1] Entitlements are legal rights conveyed by approvals from government entities to develop a property for a certain use, intensity, building type, and orientation on a site. Entitlements can be a major factor in the ultimate use, viability, and value of land.

[2] "Yield" in this context refers to the number of lots that the development will be approved for. Although some developers are extremely accurate with their predictions of what a raw piece of land can yield, it's impossible to know the lot yield until final land development plans are approved and recorded. Among many other examples of development density, yield can also refer to the amount of square feet that is able to be developed on a proposed commercial or industrial site as well.



Michael J. Rohm, MAI, CCIM, R/W-AC, is a fee appraiser and real estate agent working throughout Pennsylvania. He is president and owner of Commonwealth Commercial Appraisal Group and is director of valuation advisory and senior associate with Landmark Commercial Realty.



Brendan Wewer is a certified general appraiser at JSR Appraisal Group, a commercial appraisal firm based in Harrisburg, Pa., Brendan is a Candidate for MAI Designation through the Appraisal Institute.



Classification: Mixed Use - Mixed Price Per Square Foot \$156.05

Address	808 East Main Street	Sale Date	8/31/2022
County	Lancaster	Sale Price	\$1,445,000
Municipality	Earl Township	<b>Deed Reference</b>	6700874
Grantor	Giuseppe & Anna Conigliaro	Parcel Number	190-19468-0-0000
Grantee	Jemar Enterprises		
Site Size	1.10	Parking	12
Site Frontage	100'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	1.30
Topography	Generally Level	LTB Ratio	5.17
Site Utilities	Public Water/Septic		
Site Comments	The site is a 1.1 acre, L-shaped parcel along East Main Street. Main Street. The site contains one (1) continual point of acces along an alleyway in the rear of the property. The site contain level and served by public water and a septic system.	ss along East Main S	Street and two (2) points of access
Building Size	9,260	Condition	Below Average
Above Grade	9,260	<b># of Floors</b>	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Wood Frame		
Age	1973 and 1984		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with three one-story buildings. The restar constructed in 1973. The storage warehouse is a 5,560 square in doors. The storage warehouse was constructed in 1973. The frame shed constructed in 1984. The buildings sold in below a	wood frame, metal e third building is a	sided building with three (3) drive- 1,440 square foot enclosed metal
Zoning Code	C, Commercial District		
Description	To provide reasonable standards for the orderly development nature of their activities, are primarily located along major roa		
Other Comments	Listing Broker: Wayne Eichfeld, 717-738-9986, weichfeld@h	nomesale.com	
	Broker Notes: Sale price confirmed Purchaser was a tenant F	Price was low - equit	ty used to nurchase another property

Broker Notes: Sale price confirmed. Purchaser was a tenant. Price was low - equity used to purchase another property.



Classification: Mixed Use - Office / Apartments Price Per Square Foot \$164.91

Address	44 North Lime Street	Sale Date	8/31/2022
County	Lancaster	Sale Price	\$800,000
Municipality	City of Lancaster	<b>Deed Reference</b>	6700676
Grantor	King Capital Investments LLC	Parcel Number	332-93189-0-0000
Grantee	Samuel Beiler		
Site Size	0.15	Parking	9
Site Frontage	170'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	1.86
Topography	Generally Level	LTB Ratio	1.35
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a 0.15 acre, rectangular shaped parcel along North intersection of North Lime Street and East Orange Street. The and 40' of frontage along North Lime Street. The site contains parking spaces. The site is generally level and served by public	site contains 130' of one (1) point of ac	f frontage along East Orange Street
<b>Building Size</b>	4,851	Condition	Above Average
Above Grade	4,851	<b># of Floors</b>	Three
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1858		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a three story, 4,851 square foot mult apartment units. One (1) commercial unit, two (2) two-bedroo Each unit contains one (1) bathroom. The units contain hardw masonry constructed in 1858 and sold in good overall condition	m apartments and th ood flooring throug	nree (3) one-bedroom apartments.
Zoning Code	CBD, Central Business District		
Description	The CB District is the commercial hub of the City and serves the metropolitan area as a regional center for gover culture, entertainment, and support businesses. A wide range of cultural, high-density residential, and institutional uses are per by special exception. In order to promote high-density develop district permits 100% building and lot coverage and waives al requirements.	of commercial, retai mitted by right and pment, this zoning	

Broker Notes: Sale price confirmed. Property was on the market for 20 days and received one additional offer. At the time of sale, it was 100% occupied. Property was in very good condition as it was renovated within the last 5 years. On-site parking is a value add. 5% cap rate. Buyer was a 1031.



Classification: Office - Professional Price Per Square Foot \$123.18

Address	3899 North Front Street	Sale Date	8/30/2022
County	Dauphin	Sale Price	\$2,235,000
Municipality	Susquehanna Township	<b>Deed Reference</b>	20220026313
Grantor	Pennsylvania Newspaper Association	Parcel Number	62-015-297
Grantee	Youth Advocate Programs Inc.	Multi Parcel Sale	See Other Parcel #'s Below
Site Size	1.12	Parking	90
Site Frontage	130'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	4.96
Topography	Generally Level	LTB Ratio	2.69
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a two parcel, contiguous assemblage containing 1.1 along North Front Street. The site has one (1) point of access a site is 0.1 miles north of the North Front Street Exit of Intersta	along North Front St	reet and 90 parking spaces. The
<b>Building Size</b>	18,144	Condition	Good
Above Grade	18,144	<b># of Floors</b>	Three
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1998		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a three-story, 18,144 professional of elevator, basement storage, offices throughout, a conference re each floor, and a kitchen area. The building was masonry cons	oom, a breakroom, n	nen's and women's restrooms on
Zoning Code	COL, Commercial Office Limited District		
Description	Are intended to recognize the existing range of uses which are located on the Front Street corridor south of the Rockville Bridge. The commercial uses serve the needs of the corridor traveler, tourists, and office users. These districts are expected to offer a limited range of shopping.		
Other Comments	Listing Broker: Chuck Heller, 717-731-1990 ext. 3018, cheller	r@landmarkcr.com	
	Agent Notes: Previous owner was occupant, willing to vacate	at settlement or dow	nsize/leaseback. Sale price

confirmed.



Classification: Mixed Use - Mixed Price Per Square Foot \$61.27

			0/06/0000
Address	210 North Third Street	Sale Date	8/26/2022
County	Dauphin	Sale Price	\$550,000
Municipality	City of Harrisburg	Deed Reference	2022026022
Grantor	Dusan M. Bratic	Parcel Number	04-010-002
Grantee	CDA 210 LLC		
Site Size	0.05	Parking	
Site Frontage	20'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	0.00
Topography	Generally Level	LTB Ratio	0.24
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a 0.05 acre, rectangular shaped parcel along North along North Third Street. The site is adjacent to the Pennsylv and served by public utilities.		
	and served by public dufines.		
Building Size	8,976	Condition	Average
Building Size Above Grade	v 1	Condition # of Floors	Average Four
8	8,976		e
Above Grade	8,976 8,976		e
Above Grade Below Grade	8,976 8,976 0		e
Above Grade Below Grade Construction	8,976 8,976 0 Masonry	# of Floors ed use building with	Four restaurant space on the first floor
Above Grade Below Grade Construction Age	8,976 8,976 0 Masonry 1930 The site is improved with a four-story, 8,976 square foot mix and professional office space on the top three floors. The built	# of Floors ed use building with	Four restaurant space on the first floor



Classification: Special Purpose - Religious Facility Price Per Square Foot \$90.28

Address	876 Armstrong Valley Road	Sale Date	8/24/2022
County	Dauphin	Sale Price	\$325,000
Municipality	Halifax Township	<b>Deed Reference</b>	20220025695
Grantor	Hillside Sports LTD	Parcel Number	29-010-027
Grantee	JLMM Gospel LLC		
Site Size	5.95	Parking	20
Site Frontage	800'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	5.56
Topography	Rolling	LTB Ratio	71.99
Site Utilities	Private		
Site Comments	The site is a 5.95 acre, nearly rectangular parcel along Armstr with 800' of frontage along Armstrong Valley Road/PA Route Armstrong Valley Road/PA Route 225 and the potential for a site contains approximately 20 gravel parking spaces. It is rol	e 225. The site conta dditional points of a	ins two (2) points of access along ccess along this same roadway. The
<b>Building Size</b>	3,600	Condition	Average
Above Grade	3,600	# of Floors	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1973		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a 3,600 square foot free standing fo a sports training facility. The building was brick masonry con		
Zoning Code	No Zoning		
Description	This municipality is absent of zoning.		
Other Comments	s Listing Broker: Bo Mangam, 717-731-1990 ext. 3010, bmang	gam@landmarkcr.co	m
	Broker Notes: Sale price confirmed. Three other offers were recreational business. Previous owner selling because he did r change use to automotive.		



Classification: Retail - Neighborhood Shopping Center Price Per Square Foot \$300.37

Address	404 East High Street	Sale Date	8/23/2022
County	Cumberland	Sale Price	\$1,610,000
Municipality	Carlisle Borough	<b>Deed Reference</b>	202223718
Grantor	Double J. Partners LLC	Parcel Number	03-21-0318-144
Grantee	L&T Investors 3 LLC		
Site Size	0.84	Parking	42
Site Frontage	280'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	7.84
Topography	Generally Level	<b>LTB Ratio</b>	6.83
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a 0.84 acre, irregular shaped parcel along East Hig signalized intersection of York Road and East High Street. Th 90' of frontage along Ashland Avenue. The site contains one point of access along Ashland Avenue but through an adjacer generally level, and served by public utilities.	he site has 190' of fro (1) point of access al	ontage along East High Street and long East High Street and one (1)
Building Size	5,360	Condition	Above Average
Above Grade	5,360	<b># of Floors</b>	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Wood Frame		
Age	1992		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a one-story, 5,360 square foot neight (5) retail units. At the time of sale, tenants included T-Mobile was wood frame constructed in 1992 and sold in above average	e, Pet Valu, and CBE	American Sherman. The building
Zoning Code	C3 General Commercial District		
Description	The purpose of the C3 District is to provide for limited comm traffic and certain commercial activities not suited for locatio		
Other Comments	s Listing Broker: Blake Shaffer, 717-843-5555, bshaffer@benr	nettwilliams.com	
	Broker Notes: This was an off-market sale. Sale price confirm years, 4 years, and 3 years. Average rental rate was \$18 NNN		

fairly straight forward.



Classification: Retail - Auto Dealership Price Per Square Foot \$97.85

Address	1537 Bridge Street	Sale Date	8/22/2022
County	Cumberland	Sale Price	\$1,000,000
Municipality	New Cumberland Borough	<b>Deed Reference</b>	202223567
Grantor	Golf & Fish Realty LLC	Parcel Number	26-23-0541-102B
Grantee	Globix Holdings LLC	Multi Parcel Sale	See Other Parcel #'s Below
Site Size	0.86	Parking	50
Site Frontage	250'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	4.89
Topography	Generally Level	LTB Ratio	3.67
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a four parcel, contiguous assemblage containing 0.8 along Bridge Street. The site is located one (1) mile southeast contains one (1) point of continual access along Bridge Street. Alley. The site is generally level and served by public utilities.	of the Interstate 81/1 and one (1) point of	PA 581 Interchange. The site
<b>Building Size</b>	10,220	Condition	Average
Above Grade	10,220	<b># of Floors</b>	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1970		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a one-story, 10,220 square foot auto three (3) drive-in doors. The building was constructed of maso condition.		
Zoning Code	C2, Commercial General		
Description	To permit professional, personal, and technical facilities and so necessarily directly related to the C-1 Downtown Commercial		narily the business needs not
Other Comments	There was no broker involved in this sale. The seller reported opportunity to purchase.	that the buyer was a	long term tenant that had the
<b>Other Parcels</b> 26-23-0541-213B	26-23-0541-102A 26-23-0541-102		



Classification: Retail - Restaurant Price Per Square Foot \$116.74

Address	715 Fairview Avenue	Sale Date	8/11/2022
County	Lancaster	Sale Price	\$1,950,000
Municipality	City of Lancaster	<b>Deed Reference</b>	6697579
Grantor	American Patriot Realty LLC	Parcel Number	338-60910-0-0000
Grantee	Lancaster Emergency Medical Services Association		
Site Size	4.06	Parking	180
Site Frontage	740'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	10.78
Topography	Slightly Sloped	<b>LTB Ratio</b>	10.59
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a 4.06 acre, irregular shaped parcel along Fairview along Fairview Avenue. The site contains two (2) points of ac to the east and served by public utilities.		
Building Size	16,704	Condition	Average
Above Grade	16,704	<b># of Floors</b>	Two
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1979		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with a two-story, 12,800 square foot forr enclosed pavilion. The buildings contain multiple bars and a c masonry materials in 1979 and sold in average overall conditi	commercial kitchen.	
Zoning Code	C2 District (Urban Commercial)		
Description	The C2 District is a retail/commercial area located adjacent to area, with retail/service uses oriented more to vehicle traffic twenty-four-hour convenience stores, are permitted by right as	A variety of higher i	mpact retail/commercial uses, e.g.,
Other Comments	Listing Broker: Christine T. Sable, 717-399-9361, SableCCIN	A@gmail.com	
	Broker Notes: Property was highly sought after and didn't spe because of good zoning and 4 acres in the City. This type of p time of sale it was partially vacant.		

CCAG performed an appraisal of this property in June of 2022.



Classification: Industrial - Warehouse Price Per Square Foot \$92.97

Address	2500 Cattuchura Baad	Sale Date	8/5/2022
	2500 Gettysburg Road		
County	Cumberland	Sale Price	\$4,475,000
Municipality	Lower Allen Township	Deed Reference	202222122
Grantor	Presbyterian Development LLC	Parcel Number	13-23-0549-003A
Grantee	2500 Gettysburg Associates LLC		
Site Size	8.39	Parking	100
Site Frontage	310'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	2.08
Topography	Slightly Sloped	LTB Ratio	7.59
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a 8.39 acre irregular shaped parcel along Gettysbur along Gettysburg Road. The site abuts a rail line and contains sloped to the north, away from Gettysburg Road and toward th	approximately 100	parking spaces. The site is slightly
<b>Building Size</b>	48,132	Condition	Average
Above Grade	48,132	<b># of Floors</b>	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
Age	1985		
Bldg Comments	The site is improved with 48,132 square feet of industrial flex doors and one (1) drive-in door. The building was constructed overall condition.		
Zoning Code	I-3, Industrial/Commercial District		
Description	Is to provide for the orderly and integrated development of ex offices and a mix of commercial uses, including wholesale and industries and high traffic-generating uses.		
Other Comments	Listing Broker: Bill Sturges, 717-731-1990, bsturges@landma	arker.com	



**Classification: Office - Medical** Price Per Square Foot \$127.49

Address	120 Prospect Street	Sale Date	8/1/2022
County	Berks	Sale Price	\$1,675,000
Municipality	St. Lawrence Borough	<b>Deed Reference</b>	2022030917
Grantor	Fortis Housing Services LLC	Parcel Number	81532610277217
Grantee	Exeter Commercial Properties LLC	Multi Parcel Sale	See Other Parcel #'s Below
Site Size	1.79	Parking	86
Site Frontage	270'	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	6.55
Topography	Level	LTB Ratio	5.93
Site Utilities	Public		
Site Comments	The site is a two parcel, contiguous assemblage containing all irregular in shape. It is an interior parcel with 150' of frontage Road. The site contains two (2) points of access and 86 parkin	e along Prospect Stree	et and 120' along Oley Turnpike
Building Size	13,138	Condition	Good
Above Grade	13,138	<b># of Floors</b>	One
<b>Below Grade</b>	0		
Construction	Masonry		
	•		
Age	1994		
Age Bldg Comments	1994 The site is improved with a one-story, 13,138 square foot med 13,138 square foot office building. 81532610277217 contains perimeter examination rooms, a reception area, waiting area, building was brick masonry constructed in 1994 and sold in a	s a paved parking lot. break room, conferen	The building contains office areas, ce room, and a records room. The
-	The site is improved with a one-story, 13,138 square foot med 13,138 square foot office building. 81532610277217 contains perimeter examination rooms, a reception area, waiting area,	s a paved parking lot. break room, conferen	The building contains office areas, ce room, and a records room. The

it: Joe Leone - Jfleone l@gmail.com her Comments ١g

> Agent Notes: Sales price confirmed. Vacant at the time of purchase. Next door neighbor bought it. Property was on the market for one month. Condition of building was good.