



PROPERTY ACTIVATION COURSE

WORKBOOK





DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Property Activation Course

INTRODUCTION

History of the Property Activation Process

The property activation process was crafted after working with communities across the country, witnessing each struggle with parts (or all) of the process to activate underutilized or vacant properties. Through this boots on the ground experience, a series of strategies and best practices were crafted and fine-tuned. These strategic elements and exercises were then compiled together to craft an actionable training known as the **Property Activation process**.

Highlighted historical elements of the process are:

- Information and strategies crafted based on real-world experience from across the country
- The process was tested for applicability in communities with populations ranging from 50 to over 500,000
- Builds on industry best practices and creates more actionable goals for local community developers to implement

Reason to Take the Training

- To improve the success of local adaptive reuse and redevelopment strategies
- Preparing and training a local professional to be the community leader for grass-roots property activation
- Gaining necessary knowledge to guide business owners through catalyst redevelopment that will maximize properties, both in terms of value and community impact
- Documenting a baseline and framework for improving the utilization of building stock in the community








Key Takeaways from The Training

- Deepened understanding and knowledge about an actionable Property Activation processes
- An inclusive toolkit that will help navigate Property Activation and overcome roadblocks that may be encountered
- Strategies for improving public/private partnerships (PPP) within your own community
- Increased technical knowledge of the Property Activation processes, from ideation to implementation
- Coaching and guidance principles, offering strategies on how to engage and guide your community through the property activation process

Additional Benefits of The Training

- Strategies for identifying community wants and needs
- Tools to implement redevelopment and revitalization projects
- Suggestions to bring an engaged community to an economically thriving downtown

Course Themes

-  Eight weeks of content
-  30-45 minutes of learning per week
-  Activities and exercises to help put the training to work for a targeted property in your own community
-  Assignment feedback from experts
-  Video calls with instructors

Q & A Community

- You can post your questions to the [Q&A Community](#) and get answers from the Downtown Redevelopment Services Property Activation Specialists.
- You can also reach out to the instructors at office@DTRedevelopment.com



MODULES

MODULE #1

Causes of vacant and underutilized properties

MODULE #2

Engaging the public in the development process

MODULE #3

Building relationships with potential partners

MODULE #4

Gathering baseline community data

MODULE #5

Performing a community assessment

MODULE #6

Assessing individual property conditions

MODULE #7

Collecting additional details about an individual property

MODULE #8

Building a database

MODULE #9

Conclusion and submission of documents to Property Activation specialists





REFLECTION EXERCISE

Use the following questions to set your intention for the course.

1. Why did you decide to take this course?

2. What specific problems in your community do you hope to solve through Property Activation and local economic development?

Notes



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MODULE #1

THE LOCAL
**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
PROCESS**



THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

MODULE #1

The “Normal” Process

- One-size-fits-all economic development plan
- Doesn't adapt to meet community desires
- Restricts and refocuses architectural standards
- Primarily promotes vehicular travel
- Consumes more capital & resources

04

The “Community Centered” Process

- Understand unique needs and desires of the community
- Responsible use of local tax dollars
- Focus on a sustainable local economy
- Empowering locals to serve locals

Unrealistic Expectations in the Normal Process

- ✓ Only ROI focused, not resident centered
- ✓ It's Optimistic but not realistic
- ✓ Sets unattainable metrics

Pitfalls and Problems

- ✓ Prioritizes suburban development
- ✓ Exports funding and revenue outside the community
- ✓ Promotes unsustainable growth and spending

The Property Activation Process

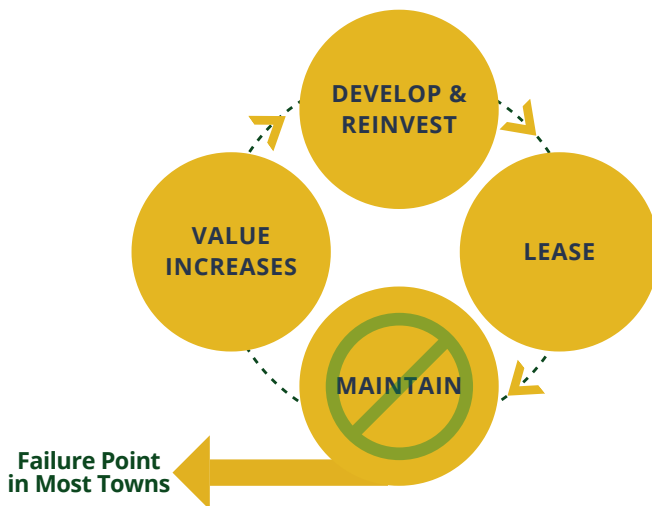




Vacant vs. Underutilized

- Vacant property is not being used and might be derelict.
- Underutilized property is not meeting its highest potential.
- Total vacancy cost of one average sized downtown mixed-use building is \$214,640.
- Other problems with vacancy include reduced property values, dampened civic pride, discouraged business development, and deterring tourism.

Real Estate Investment Cycle



How does this apply in my community?



The real estate development life cycle flourishes when properties are developed, leased or occupied, and maintained. Through this process, a building will increase in value over the long-term and provide a positive attribute to the community. Without this effort, the cycle is broken.



When buildings aren't maintained, communities end up with buildings demonstrating deferred maintenance. If the community allows this to continue, it will eventually have vacant or underutilized buildings as a direct result.



Hesitation for property maintenance and repair has increased in the last 25 years, prioritizing building demolition and reconstruction for community redevelopment work.



Repairing this exit from the real estate development cycle is what led to creation of the Property Activation Process.



Write down any thoughts you have while reading the case study. Does anything in this story sound like something you are experiencing?

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APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Every community has some information gathered or has developed a community vision for some areas. To get ready for the rest of the course, gather any economic development planning or documentation that has already been done. You will use these documents as a jumping-off point for completing the Property Activation Process.

Some examples of what might already have been completed include:

- ☐ Any community engagement information, such as survey results or notes from community engagement meetings
- ☐ A GAP analysis or SWOT analysis
- ☐ Legislative and regulatory information about your community that is relevant to economic development
- ☐ Property owner contact information
- ☐ Information about individual properties, like building history and condition
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Notes





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