



ULI – the Urban Land Institute

**Allentown, Pennsylvania
Advisory Services Panel
March 21-26, 2004**



About ULI

- Mission: to provide responsible leadership in the use of land to enhance the environment.
- 23,000 members worldwide including real estate-related professionals such as developers, financiers, urban designers, architects, public officials and the like.



The Process

- Briefing materials prepared by sponsor for review before arrival on-site.
- Panel divided into teams: market potential, development strategies, implementation, and planning/design.
- Sponsor conducted on-site briefing and tour.
- Interviews with key Allentown stakeholders.
- Preparation of draft report.



The Panel

Chair

Anne Warhover, President/CEO,
Downtown Denver Partnership,
Denver, CO

Panelists

Hermann Kircher, President, Kircher
Research Associates, Toronto,
Canada

Tony Orbe, Managing Member, Equinox
Consulting, New York, NY

Guillermo Aguilar, Vice President,
TELACU, Santa Ana, CA

Elinor Bacon, ER Bacon Development,
Washington, DC

Rick Reinhard, Principal, Niagara
Consulting Group, Atlanta

Tom Curley, Director of Urban Planning,
HOK, New York, NY

Cales Givens, Principal/Vice President,
EDAW, Denver, CO

ULI Project Staff

Jason Bell

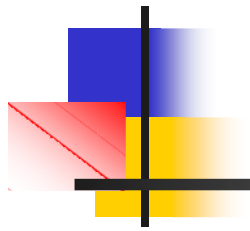
Anita Kramer

Nancy Zivitz Sussman



Acknowledgements

- Mayor Roy Afflerbach
- Allentown Economic Development Corporation -- Rob Osborn
- Allentown Department of Planning and Community Development – Ed Pawlowski
- Allentown Ahead – Bob Wood
- Sponsors and community members interviewed.



Introduction

Anne Warhover, Chair



Introduction

- Downtown's Role in the Region – Hamilton Street as Lehigh Valley's Main Street
- Anchoring Downtown – Putting people on the street
- Priority Projects – Focus
- Implementation Structure – Get Things Done



Market Potential

Hermann Kircher

Tony Orbe



Market

- Population
- Employment
- Socio-Economic Structure
- Area of Influence
- Competition



Downtown Definition

- Center of a City and Region
- Jobs
- Hospitality – hotels/restaurants/meeting facilities
- Arts & Entertainment
- Civic/Government Function
- Housing
- Transportation Hub



Employment

- Growth in downtown office and service employment is key to downtown vitality
- New office space should locate near similar existing space
- Employers need to be committed to downtown revitalization to gain new jobs
- Businesses need to do business locally



Residential

- Historic residential in downtown
- Current residential
- Demand for lofts
- Lifestyle focus
- In-fill
- Price advantage of downtown Allentown housing



Hospitality

- Crowne Plaza is key feature
- New meeting space requirements
- Support for other downtown activities



Arts & Entertainment

- Downtown Allentown has greatest concentration and diversity of arts in Lehigh Valley.
- Adding Children's attraction to art district
- Locate current Festivals in art district
- Improve programming and cross selling of art functions
- Investigate new entertainment venue
- Demand for arts or Hispanic movie function



Retail

- Size of households is rising
- Historic Retail Dominance of Downtown Allentown
- Dramatic change in retail structure
- Traditional Retailing is not coming back to the downtown
- Niche market specialty stores are successful
- Destination restaurants – two successful, two more coming, revisit
- “Restaurant Row” Option once new facilities are established.
- Retail follows jobs and resident; it is NOT the leader.



Development Strategies

Anne Warhover
Guillermo Aguilar



Development Principles

- Downtown First!
- Priority development strengthens and is connected to the key downtown centers.
- Clean.
- Perception of Safety.
- Ethnic Divide.



Development Strategies

- Development strategies build upon early concepts.
- Provide specific guidelines for development (physical and economic)
- Define downtown primarily as Hamilton Street, between 5th and 12th streets.
- Provide physical linkages to other developments.
- Provide a **fresh and bold** approach to new development strategies for the public and private sector.

Downtown Development

Focus

- The Commercial Core: concentrated on Hamilton Street between 7th and 12th streets.
- The Arts District: Limited to the area between 4th and 7th streets, and between Linden and Walnut streets.
- The Library Residential District: between 10th and 12th streets.



Commercial Core

Office Projects

- Complete leasing of Liberty space (+/- 100 new employees downtown).
- Promote quick start of new A class office project at 9th and Hamilton streets.



The Commercial Core

MULTI PURPOSE VENUES:

- East of PPL building along Hamilton Street.
- Multi-functional theater with latest technology.
- Numerous configurations to appeal to different size audiences.
- Use of existing Hess's parking garage.
- Brew Pub / new restaurant in PPL building to extend activity



Commercial Core

NEW CONFERENCE /EXHIBITION SPACE (Hamilton Mall)

- Flexible space.
- Reduced parking rates for guests and employees.
- Assistance with available grant and/or tax relief.
- Signage directing traffic to downtown from major thoroughfares.
- Relocate Chamber of Commerce and include Visitor Center.



Arts District

- College Annex (Penn State?).
- Studio lofts, combination artists housing/gallery space.
- Galleries/ Cafes.
- Complete Arts Park.



Library Residential District

- Develop new infill market-rate housing.
- New developments not to exceed 20 units per project.
- Maintain the historical character of the District.
- Restore historically significant buildings.
- Provide tax credits.
- Convert other uses to housing.



Community Outreach

- Involve neighborhood groups and non-profit organizations.
- Form neighborhood improvement associations.
- Support life style community and ethnic groups.
- Involve colleges and significant employers.
- Promote mixed-use housing.
- Provide live/work space.
- Enforce maintenance of renter-occupied and vacant properties.
- Stiff penalties if not properly maintained.



Implementation

Rick Reinhard
Elinor Bacon

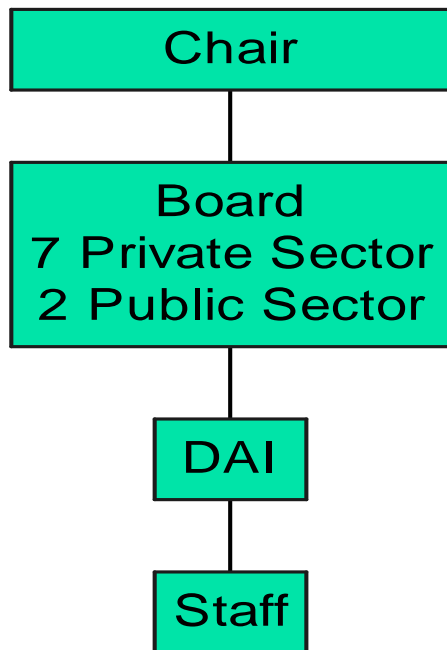


Implementation

1. Private sector must lead.
2. Public sector must focus.
3. Coordinate city and regional agencies.
4. Clear, concise agenda.
5. Marshal finances; use new tools.
6. Downtown Summit.
7. Promote Downtown.
8. Work with colleges and universities.
9. Think about the long term.

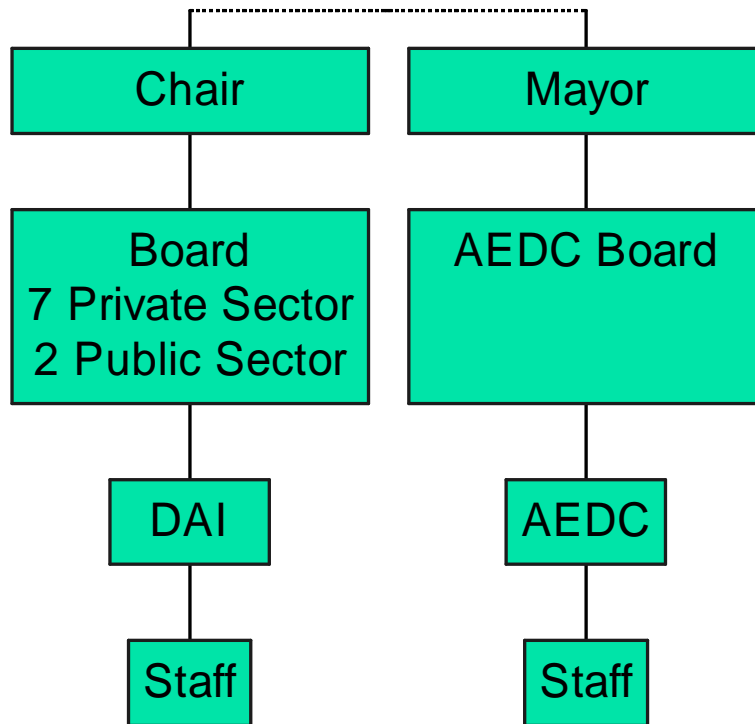


Private sector must lead— Downtown Allentown, Inc.



Role: Vision
Advocacy
Maintenance
Security
Consumer Marketing
Business Marketing
Festivals & Events
Coordinate regional agencies

Public sector must focus—Allentown Economic Development Corp (AEDC)



Role: Development Projects
Public Finance
Coordinate other city agencies



Coordinate city and regional agencies

- City Dept. of Community and Economic Development
- City Dept. of Finance
- City Dept. of Public Works
- City Dept. of Police
- Allentown Commercial and Industrial Development Authority
- Allentown Arts Commission
- Center City Hamilton Mall Review Board
- Historical Architecture Review Board
- Allentown Housing Authority
- Allentown Parking Authority
- Allentown Redevelopment Authority
- Shade Tree Commission
- Vacant Property Review Board
- Blighted Property Review Committee
- City Planning Commission
- Lehigh County Dept. of Community and Economic Development
- Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp.
- LANTA



Clear, concise agenda—1,2,3

Example:

A Develop X housing units Downtown by Year Y; N/X per year

B Improve/add arts/entertainment facilities A, B and C by Year Y

C Make Downtown clean, safe and friendly by doing 1, 2 and 3

Make sure these are top of mind with:

- Mayor
- Private-sector leaders
- Regional leaders
- Governor
- Community activists



Marshal agency finances; use some new financial tools

Marshal

- AEDC
- Redevelopment Authority
- Housing Authority
- Parking Authority

New

- Tax-increment financing
- Business improvement district assessments
- Historic and low-income housing tax credits
- Continue bold current aggressive strategy



Hold a Downtown Summit

- Come one; come all.
- Educates constituents.
- Gains input and buy-in.
- “Smokes out” potential investors.



Promote Downtown

Business-to-Consumer

- Weekly afternoon “party”
- Weekly Farmers’ Market
- Outdoor cafes and vendors
- Consider relocating festivals
- Develop cross-promotions
- Monthly “Arts Stroll”
- Restaurant/retail directories/promotions

Business-to-Business

- Make sure Downtown is “top-of-mind”



Work with colleges & universities

- Lehigh-Carbon Community College
- Muhlenburg
- Cedarcrest
- Lehigh
- Lafayette
- Penn (Urban and Regional Planning)
- Penn State (Landscape Architecture)

Work on:

- Inventories
- Surveys
- Arts
- Design studios
- Further exploration of ULI report ideas



Think about the long term

- Brownfields redevelopment
- Regional cooperation and resource allocation
- Economic development
- Business retention and attraction strategy



Planning & Design

Cales Givens

Tom Curley



THE ALLENTOWN VISION PLAN

VLI 02/24/04

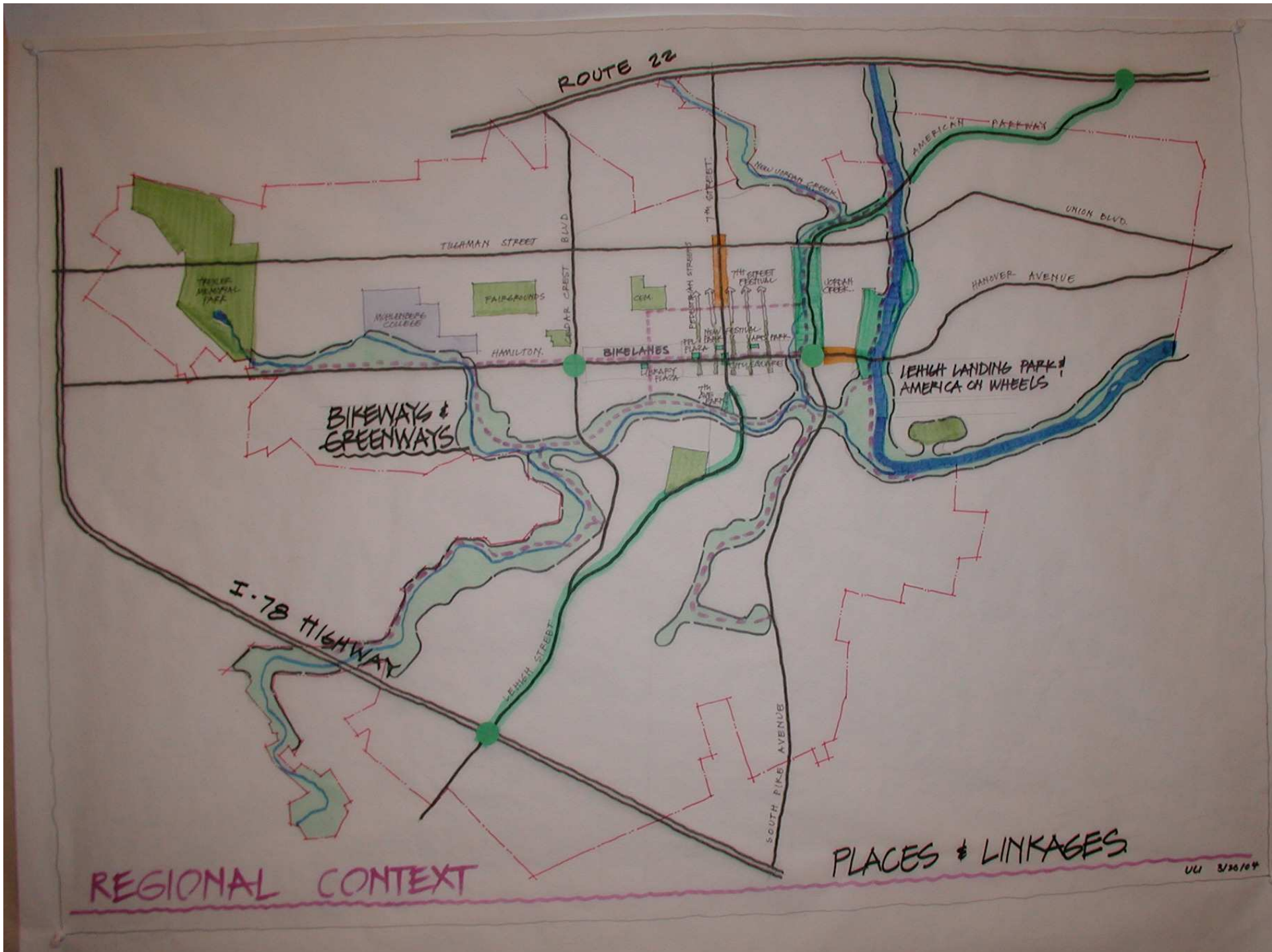




REGIONAL CONTEXT

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS

04 5/26/04



REGIONAL CONTEXT

PLACES & LINKAGES

ULI 2/26/04



Conclusion

- Focus: Jobs
Housing
Visitor
- Implementation: Form Downtown
Allentown, Inc.



ULI- the Urban Land Institute

Advisory Services Program