

A Management Framework for Downtowns and Commercial Districts:
Organizing Development Tools and the Toolbox for Each Phase of a Business District's Growth Cycle

District Lifecycle Stage	Stagnant	Growing	Mature
General Conditions	A challenged business district, with high vacancies, underutilized properties, uninviting public realm and poor regional image.	An up and coming business district, with a sprinkling of new businesses, pioneering new investments and an image of a district in transition.	An established business district with a strong mix of retail, restaurants and jobs, inviting public realm and strong regional image.
Private Sector Champions?	Several local leaders motivated to change the fortunes of the district. High levels of apathy and cynicism among property and business owners create barriers to public/private partnerships.	A core group of vested property and business owners, with energy from new entrepreneurs entering the district. Motivated to explore public/private approaches to improve the district.	An experienced core group of vested property and business owners with a history of being organized and participating in public/private partnerships to improve and manage the district.
Program Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract new investment • Stabilize the environment • Create confidence among local stakeholders • Combat regional stigma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract new businesses • Market the area to consumers • Beautify and improve the public realm • Provide meaningful participation for new owners and businesses • Convey a new emerging image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and grow businesses • Manage new investment • Market the area to consumers • Parking management • Keep organization fresh to keep stakeholders engaged • Strengthen a positive image
Organizational Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed commission • Community development corporation • Redevelopment agency • Main Street program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership organization • Business improvement district • Downtown development authority • Foundation or 501(c)3 subsidiary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurial holding company • Parking districts • Events production company • Transportation management organization
Tools & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax increment financing • Local government support, both money and services • Charitable grants • Earned income from development 	<p>All of the preceding plus...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property or business assessments • Revenue generating promotions and special events • Membership dues 	<p>All of the preceding plus...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking revenue • Local improvement bonds • Philanthropic grants • Merchandising the district