This is a guide for local government in establishing (re)development policies and practices that use scarce public dollars to attract private investment, grow jobs, and build tax base for the well-being of our region. Based on national trends, these best practices support a proactive approach that provides clarity, transparency, collaboration, and efficiency to support thriving, sustainable communities essential to remaining competitive in a new economy.

1. Establish a vision and clearly articulate development expectations. Embrace collaborative approaches to solve problems, identify and pursue partnerships, manage development risks, improve decision-making skills, and develop clear expectations.

- Increase community and policy leaders’ understanding of the benefits of (re)development and private sector investment.
- Understand market realities.
- Develop a clear vision and reach consensus on the goals for community-wide and site-specific (re)development goals.
- Identify the level of financial and regulatory participation your city is willing to provide that supports future opportunity sites in the city. Strive for proactive response.
  - Proactive—aggressive: purchase property, conduct site cleanup
  - Proactive—act using regulatory authority: rezoning to achieve vision, complete environmental review
  - Supportive—site/area identified, no formal regulatory action adopted
  - Reactive—respond as proposals are submitted
- Approve (re)development master plan for specific opportunity sites. Prioritize!
- Update comprehensive plan to be consistent with vision.
- Rezone property to be consistent with comprehensive plan and vision.
- Determine level of risk tolerance and a policy for using public financial tools.
  - Land assembly
  - Tax increment financing—upfront bonds/pay-as-you-go
  - Tax abatement
  - Special assessment bonding
  - Infrastructure investment
  - Joint venture investment
  - Brownfield remediation
  - Other (specify)
- Prepare a strategy for collaboration with partners—Metropolitan Council, county, state, schools, watershed districts, key employers, nonprofit community organizations, foundations.
- Determine policies for land use mix, e.g., affordable housing, ownership/rental mix, mix of uses.
- Complete design standards and requirements.
- Make redevelopment opportunity areas and redevelopment-ready site lists available.
- Other (specify).
### 2. Foster collaborative and integrated strategies.

- Provide ongoing education for local government leadership, city council, and planning commission on current market realities, redevelopment goals, and plans.
- Create an education plan when turnover of elected and appointed policy leaders occurs.
- Conduct site visits and tours of other successful projects for policy leaders.
- Conduct stakeholder engagement sessions/neighborhood meetings; engage underrepresented communities.
- Achieve and document stakeholder support for the redevelopment plan or plans.
- Develop working relationships with developers to foster mutually beneficial trust and collaboration.
- Other (specify).

### 3. Analyze and modify land use regulations to allow a compact mix of uses and increased flexibility reflecting changing market demands and national trends.

- Rezone property to achieve (re)development goals without special approvals.
- Adopt Complete Streets Ordinances.
- As an alternative to rezoning, adopt overlay zoning districts in redevelopment areas provided that the language provides clarity, consistency, and flexibility when market demand and community vision align.
- Consider adopting reduced parking requirements for areas with access to transit (within a quarter mile of bus or rail).
- Examine innovative tools to meet new market preferences, e.g., allow residential uses within commercial (re)development areas; allow small commercial uses in multifamily residential zones; allow accessory dwelling units in fully developed neighborhoods; allow home-based entrepreneurial businesses as an incubator for new ideas that create jobs.
- Other (specify).

### 4. Shift project review and approvals from reactive to proactive.

- Fast-track approvals when the project meets certain requirements.
- Support flexibility to achieve project goals.
- Improve predictability of the development review process.
- Other (specify).

### 5. Provide transparency that clearly defines the development process.

- Hold informational introductory meeting with the private sector to review the public process when a project is proposed.
- Say "no" early when a proposed project does not meet community goals and vision.
- Create a clear, achievable development review process check list.
- Conduct "sketch or concept plan" review when appropriate.
- Other (specify).
6. **Provide existing due diligence information to developers upfront to increase efficiency and reduce development time and cost.**

- Identify brownfields.
- Provide information on the following:
  - Environmental studies—AUAR, EAW, EIS, Phase I, Phase II
  - GIS layers for mapping
  - Traffic studies
  - Soil and compaction reports
  - Utilities
  - Property details—tax value, property owner of record, liens, assessments, title, etc.
  - Master or neighborhood plans
  - Previous plans for site area
  - Current area demographics and market studies
  - Other (specify).

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7. **Work as a team to coordinate approval process across all agencies and departments (planning, public works, parks, etc.), elected offices, and investment partners (Metropolitan Council, county, state, watershed districts, schools).**

- Conduct joint review of the same project at the same time with planning, public works, parks, and tax assessment departments.
- Conduct sketch/concept plan review with elected and appointed officials before formal public hearing process.
- Establish a memorandum of understanding between governmental entities related to future redevelopment sites.
- Other (specify).

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8. **Determine how redevelopment of opportunity areas or sites supports job growth, increases tax revenues, enhances local services, creates key amenities, supports a full range of housing options, and contributes to the creation of markets not currently available.**

- Examine the cost of doing nothing such as:
  - increased deterioration in property value
  - loss of tax revenues
  - impact on reinvestment related to the perception of decline
  - community instability

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Resources:


Navigating the New Normal. A ULI Minnesota workshop that offers a practical approach to the new challenges of development and redevelopment. It is designed to foster a dialogue about the opportunities and challenges inherent in a new economy experiencing shifts in the market and changing demographics. [http://uli.org/2012/03/NNN-Flyer.pdf](http://uli.org/2012/03/NNN-Flyer.pdf).


Rethinking Housing. A forum to develop innovative financing, design and delivery systems for a full range of housing choices and place making. [http://www.rethinkinghousingmn.org/](http://www.rethinkinghousingmn.org/).


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