

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.

**(Re)Development-Ready Guide**

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by City  
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**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)



**Market Place Lofts, Hopkins**

- 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).

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### 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).



Excelsior and Grand, St. Louis Park

### 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).

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### 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).



Historic Crane Ordway, St. Paul

### 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).

### 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



Heart of the City, Burnsville

## Resources:

**ULI Minnesota Regional Council of Mayors: *Reinvesting in the Region.*** An action plan to make it easier to do better. <http://minnesota.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Reinvesting-in-the-Region.ashx.pdf>.

**Minnesota Housing Policy Tool Box.** A resource of local and national principles and best practices related to supporting connective livable communities. [www.minnesota.housingpolicy.org](http://www.minnesota.housingpolicy.org).

***Redevelopment in the Twin Cities: A Developer's View.*** A report compiled from interviews with ten developers who routinely do development projects in the Twin Cities metro area. The report outlines what developers look for in determining which projects to pursue and the incentives or disincentives that are important to them. [http://minnesota.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Redevelopment\\_In\\_TC.pdf](http://minnesota.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Redevelopment_In_TC.pdf).

**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>.

**Redevelopment Ready Communities.** A program developed by the Michigan Suburbs Alliance evaluating cities that integrate transparency, predictability, and efficiency into their daily development practices. [http://www.michigansuburbsalliance.org/redevelopment\\_ready\\_communities](http://www.michigansuburbsalliance.org/redevelopment_ready_communities).

**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/>.

**Minnesota Brownfields Resource Guide.** A comprehensive funding guide for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment information critical for anyone considering buying, selling or redeveloping a brownfield site in Minnesota. <http://www.mnbrownfields.org/brownfield-resource-guide>.



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