



the DOWNTOWN LIVINGSTON ASSOCIATION

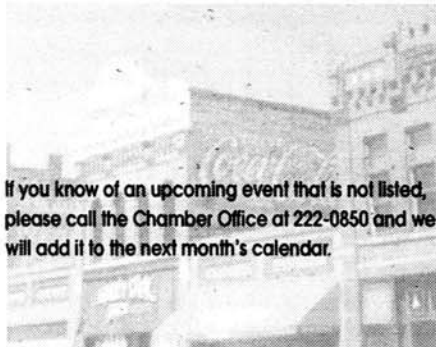
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST

- 16,17 Vets Run - 222-1052
- 18 City Pool Closes
- 23 Art Walk - 222-5122
- 23 Park High Cross Country Invite
- 24 Buffalo Days - Gardiner - 848-7971
- 24 Park High Girls Soccer - Home
- 24 Park High Boys Soccer - Home
- 24 Park High Girls Volleyball - Home
- 29 Park High Girls Volleyball - Home
- 30 Park High Boys Football - Home

SEPTEMBER

- 5 Park High Girls Soccer Vs Belgrade-Home
- 5-9 Chico Golf Tournament
- 8-12 Montana Tavern Assoc. State Convention
- 10 Park High Girls volleyball Vs Big Timber-Home
- 13 Park High Boys Soccer Vs Laurel-Home
- 13 Park High Girls Soccer Vs Laurel-Home
- 13-15 Old Settler's Days-Clyde Park
- 20-22 Mountain Heritage Artist's Rendezvous
Art Show and Sale at Chico
333-4704/333-4933 for information
- 20 Park High Boys Soccer vs. Bozeman-Home
- 27 Artwalk - 222-5122
- 27-29 Septemberfest - Gallatin County
Fairgrounds
- 28 3rd Annual Brew Festival in Gardiner - 848-7971
- 28 Park High Boys Soccer vs. Billings - Home



If you know of an upcoming event that is not listed, please call the Chamber Office at 222-0850 and we will add it to the next month's calendar.

newsletter

SHOP PARK COUNTY, IT'LL GROW ON YOU

Getting Started - The Nuts & Bolts

The kick-off meeting of the Downtown Livingston Association in May was well attended. Over 75 merchants, landowners and interested people listened to an informational presentation from two Bozeman merchants and the Downtown Bozeman Association Development Director. They described their experiences over a 25 year period and the model they are currently using for economic development in Bozeman. Following that presentation the group divided into committees which represented different areas of interest.

Subsequently work has begun on the Downtown Livingston Association structure. Colette Stewart has initiated the process for a 501C3 tax ID number and done 80% of the work to complete that process. It is expected that the papers should be submitted within the next thirty days and temporary approval shortly thereafter.

We also have met with the new Alliance Economic Development Corporation (formerly Park County Economic Development Corporation) and their new director, Cindi Fargo. She has many years of experience with the national Main Street Revitalization Program and well as promotion and marketing of communities the size of ours. We discussed and have agreed in principle to contract with the Alliance for her services as a consultant to help us form our long range planning and marketing goals. The Alliance is also soliciting community members and businesses for their participation through a membership plan which includes a yearly membership of \$100 or a 5 year commitment of funds for those who wish to make a continuing investment in future economic growth of our community.

The relationship with the Alliance will be of mutual economic benefit. One of the long term commitments of the Alliance Development Council is to support the goals of the Downtown Livingston Association. In turn, our goal is a strong economic environment for not only our downtown businesses, but those which serve as gateway businesses into town. Using the expertise and resources of the Alliance we can create a strong and growing downtown environment.

We will be asking you, as a downtown business, for a dues contribution of \$100 if you have 5 or less employees, \$150 for 5-10 employees, and \$200 for more than 10. With payment of your dues will come voting rights for the officers of the Association. Bylaws are in process to address this and for other internal matters. Initially—to get this going—the following are the officers and directors of the organization: **Doug Truex, President; Joel Reinholz, Vice President; Karla Petit, Secretary; Colette Stewart, Treasurer; Dan Kaul, Director; Bobby Parks, Director; Dave Petit, Director.**

We are also asking your participation and support of the Alliance Economic Development Corporation in their current fundraising efforts. At present their goal is to raise the funds necessary to insure a full time Directors position. We hope to help them in that goal by including their informational brochure with this newsletter and encouraging you to contribute to the Alliance. We feel that with their expertise and guidance, our organization will be able to meet the our long term goals – we are looking forward to this relationship.

Thanks in advance for your help and participation.

Downtown Revitalization and How To Pay For It

Many ideas and projects will come from the Urban Design study now underway. While this may not be an all inclusive list of projects for the improvement of downtown the study will provide the basic blueprint for improvements by which all proposed projects will be evaluated. The basic project types are capital improvement projects, comprehensive streetscape improvement projects, and infrastructure improvement projects.

In focusing on streetscape improvement projects they should represent a partnership between property owners, government, and other stakeholders. Property owner contributions funded through special improvement districts may account for 25 to 50% of a project cost. Other matching funds would come from a variety of agencies including the City of Livingston capital improvement program, State and Federal transportation funds, Community Development Block Grants, historic and cultural preservation funds, etc.

There are several types of tax mechanisms that can be set up to assist in funding projects. The first is the establish-

ment of a tax increment finance district (TIFD). Property owners within a well defined district would incorporate to form the TIFD. Based on needs defined in an Urban Renewal Plan (which could be based on the Urban Design Study currently underway) the district would then request from the city council that any increase in taxes within the district for a specified time period go into a special fund for use only within the district. The funds are restricted for use as set forth in an agreement between the city, county, school board, and the board designated to oversee the TIFD. Adherence to the Urban Renewal Law is also required. A TIFD is used for public improvement projects only or public portions of private projects.

A Business Improvement District is a self-assessment district and is a percentage added to the property taxes for the district based on the assessed value of the property. 60% or more of owners must petition the City to form the district. In Bozeman the district was formed to preserve the cultural, historic, and economic vitality of Downtown for its businesses, residents, customers, and visitors. More specifically it was to

improve the retail marketing of the district, promote private investment, and business expansion. The City appoints the Board to oversee the district. Board members must be property owners within the district.

A second self assessment mechanism is the Special Improvement District (SID). This is a self imposed tax on properties again located in a well defined incorporated district. To establish a SID 60% of the owners within the district based on linear footage must agree to form the district. The SID can then tax itself and/or issue bonds for improvements made within the district. A SID is best be used for streetscape and other more specific improvements.

The major point in all of the above is that improvements to the downtown district that benefit downtown must be a public private partnership in many ways, including financial. There are significant public funds to assist in making many of the improvements to a downtown district but local property owners need to participate in the process as well.

Promotions, Projects, and Dues

An Open Letter to All Downtown Business And Property Owners

Dear Downtowner,

As the newsletter indicates the process is well underway to have the legal structure in place for the Downtown Livingston Association. With that we will be asking you to help out with the expenses of the Association.

Immediate expenses include a fee to file for tax exempt status with the IRS. In addition there will be more promotions and projects coming in the future for the benefit of downtown that will have costs associated with them.

We need your support

The task force has suggested the following dues structure:

Employees	Annual Dues
1-5	\$100
5-10	\$150
10+	\$200

Please mail your dues to:
Bobby Parks, Edward Jones
Investments
105 1/2 S. 2nd Street
Livingston, MT 59047

Thanks for your support!
The Task Force

Dan Kaul, The Murray Hotel
Joel Reinholz, Crazy Mountain Cabinetry
Doug Truex, Truex Furniture & Appliance
Bobby Parks, Edward Jones Investments
Colette Stewart, Ewe and Me Boutique

Ten Myths About Downtown Revitalization And What They Really Mean

Over the years, a number of myths have sprung up about downtown revitalization. And, through experience, those involved in downtown programs have learned that these myths must be dispelled for downtown revitalization programs to succeed.

The booklet *How to Revitalize Your Downtown*, written by consulting firm HyettPalma, Inc., and published by the National League of Cities (NLC), lists the ten most commonly held downtown revitalization myths. Understanding these and moving beyond them are crucial to downtown revitalization.

Myth #1: Downtown revitalization only benefits downtown.

This myth holds that downtown revitalization is nothing more than an attempt to save a few declining businesses and that revitalization efforts will only benefit those businesses which are located in downtown. This myth must be dispelled by getting the word out that downtown revitalization is not just a cause which benefits a few - it is an investment in the future health of the entire community.

Communities all across the country have learned the hard way that an economically depressed downtown drags the rest of the city down as well. This is because the condition of downtown has come to be viewed as a barometer of two factors that are critical to investors: a community's overall economic health, and the capacity of its private and public sector leaders. Investors, prospects - and potential residents - tend to look at a community's downtown as an indication of the quality of life offered by that community.

Myth #2: If we build it, they will come.

This has become known as the "Field of Dreams Approach" to downtown enhancement. It centers on the belief that a community only needs to undertake physical improvements for customers and investors to flock to the area. Unfortunately, many communities have learned that physical improvements, made in isolation, do not result in renewed vitality. Instead, the lesson is that physical improvements must be undertaken in

conjunction with economic improvements for revitalization efforts to succeed. In fact, the entire enhancement effort must be market-driven, rather than physically driven.

Myth #3: If we demolish it, they will come.

This is the flip side of Myth #2 and is known as the "Urban Renewal Approach" to downtown revitalization. This myth holds that, if old buildings are torn down and land is cleared, developers will flock to downtown.

However, communities have learned that clearance alone will not attract developers to a downtown whose market is weak. They have also learned that structurally sound old buildings—no matter how run-down they might look at the time - can become a tremendous draw if they are renovated and their architectural character is preserved.

Myth #4: If we just complete one major project, they will come.

This is the "Silver Bullet Approach" to downtown revitalization. It holds that, if a community identifies and implements one key, major project, then "everything else will take care of itself." Examples of communities that pursued the Silver Bullet Approach are those that built downtown convention centers, festival marketplaces, parking structures, or pedestrian malls - in isolation. These communities learned the hard way that there is no silver bullet. Instead, successful downtown revitalization requires a multifaceted effort that addresses all of a downtown's key issues.

Myth #5: For downtown to be successful, its retail businesses must keep uniform business hours.

During the last several years, many downtowns across the country have included, as part of their revitalization efforts, attempts to standardize the hours of operation kept by downtown retailers. This is known as the "Let's Pretend We're a Mall Approach" to downtown revitalization.

Given the independent nature of downtown business owners, and the large number of business owners in any downtown, this approach has failed in an

overwhelming majority of cases. The most successful downtown enhancement efforts are promoting "market-driven business hours."

With this approach, retail businesses keep hours that best meet the needs of their targeted customers. By doing this, and by coordinating their hours of operation with each other, these businesses are able to accommodate and share customers.

Myth #6: Competition is bad for businesses.

This is the "Head-in-the-Sand Approach" to revitalization. The commercial districts - both old and new—that are the most successful are those in which similar and compatible businesses are located side by side in convenient groupings. Example after example has proven that the clustering of compatible businesses in commercial districts is actually very good for business.

Myth #7: We have to be as lenient as possible with developers or they won't do business in our community, and

Myth #8: We have to be as tough as possible with developers or they'll take advantage of us.

These are the twin "Play Dead or Play Hard Ball" revitalization myths. Over the last fifteen years, both of these myths have been proven false by communities all across the country. In fact, developers prefer to do business in communities that demand quality projects and that take steps to ensure they obtain such projects, because they know their investments will be protected.

It has also been proven that communities that are unreasonably stringent and demanding of developers will cause them to locate their projects elsewhere. In that sense, these communities are successful in making

sure that the development community does not take advantage of them. However, this attitude also makes them successful in not attracting quality developers and quality projects to their communities.

The communities that have been

Myth #9: If we had more parking, they would come!

This is the "Let's Find a Scapegoat Approach" to downtown revitalization. This myth holds that all of downtown's ills stem from lack of parking. Unfortunately, communities that have gone to great expense in creating downtown parking. Furthermore, in the vast majority of downtowns where there is a parking problem, it is one of parking management, rather than parking supply. This means that the number of parking spaces available is adequate. However, customers are having difficulty finding a parking spot because downtown employees and business owners are parking in spaces that are nearest to businesses and that should be reserved for customers and clients.

This problem can be resolved through better management of the existing parking supply and does not typically warrant creating additional parking spaces. Successful downtown business owners have found that if they offer what customers and clients want (a specialized product, an exceptional service, a unique atmo-

sphere, etc.), and make sure customers know that it is being offered, then the issue of parking often becomes irrelevant.

Myth #10: We can wing it and still revive downtown.

Downtown's enhancement is economic development. And its economy cannot be strengthened without the necessary tools described below.

a) **VISION** - A clear, shared community vision of downtown's preferred future must be articulated by bringing together the business community, the civic sector, interested residents and local government. This vision should be used to guide all decisions and actions affecting downtown's future.

b) **MARKET ANALYSIS** - A clear understanding of existing market opportunities is an essential economic development tool. The downtown effort must be built on solid market information concerning downtown's realistic retail, office and housing potentials.

c) **ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY** - Based on the market analysis, a definite, manageable and action-oriented enhancement strategy must be defined for capturing downtown's market opportunities and attaining the community's vision. The enhancement strategy must conclude with an implementation schedule that specifies what will be done, by whom, and the timeline for implementation.

d) **PRIVATE - PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP** - A partnership of business sector, civic sector, residential and public sector leaders must be formed. This partnership must be driven by the private sector and committed to implementing the downtown business plan.

e) **FUNDING**—The partnership must raise a level of funds which allows the business plan to be implemented in a timely and quality fashion. Funds must come from a variety of public and private-sector sources.

Bobby Parks
Edward Jones Investments
105 1/2 S. 2nd Street
Livingston, MT 59047



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