

2014 ULI CHARLES H. SHAW FORUM ON URBAN COMMUNITY ISSUES

Revitalizing Urban Corridors June 2014 | Charlotte, NC

Description:

This annual forum concentrates on issues in urban neighborhoods wherein professionals from the private, nonprofit, and public sectors to debate important issues and recommend steps that ULI and key policy makers and practitioners should take.

Purpose:

Across the U.S., communities have aspirations to become more economically vibrant, equitable, and sustainable places. Regional plans and metropolitan visions lay out these priorities, with goals for transportation investments and land use patterns that will help them get there. Almost everywhere, fixed rail transit systems are being built or expanded, and a suite of other infrastructure investments are being made.

While there is little debate that vibrant mixed-use communities with viable alternatives to driving are desirable assets for revitalizing downtown environments, few communities have found the package of investments or policy interventions that can turn outdated retail and auto-dominated strips into corridors that truly serve their communities. How can they be transformed to become safe, vibrant, mixed-use places with next-generation infrastructure, including transit and street trees?

The 2014 Shaw Forum will gather together a panel of local developers, lenders, real estate professionals, investors, and public officials to identify effective and emerging approaches that will support further efforts at ULI to develop case studies and disseminate information about models for creating true “community corridors.”

Program Goals (Outcomes):

The 2014 Shaw Forum aims to analyze strategies to corridor redevelopment and identify common policies and approaches that can help advance future projects.

The conclusions generated by this discussion will provide a framework and inform future programming for the ULI Rose Center to continue work how city and private sector leaders can pair investment strategies with regulatory frameworks in effort to encourage equitable development for all in the community.

Attendance:

Participation was drawn nationally, with consideration of representatives from following ULI membership pools:

- Rose Fellowship alumni
- Public Officials: city managers; transportation management & administration; non-profit organizations; academic & research organizations; philanthropic
- Product Councils: Public Development and Infrastructure Council; Transit Oriented Development Council; Urban Development/Mixed-Use Council; Urban Revitalization Council
- Other experts as identified.

Michael Banner	President and CEO	Los Angeles LDC, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Michael Berne	President	MJB Consulting	New York, NY
Debra Campbell	Director	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department	Charlotte, NC
Patti Clare	Deputy Director, Economic Growth & Innovation	Louisville Metro Government	Louisville, KY
Tracy Dodson	Vice President, Brokerage & Development	Lincoln Harris	Charlotte, NC
Timothy A. Eachus	Managing Director, Mid-Atlantic/Southeast Region	Jones Lang LaSalle	Washington, DC
David Howard	Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Fund Development	The Housing Partnership	Charlotte, NC
Alison Johnson	Program Manager, Rose Center for Public Leadership	Urban Land Institute	Washington, DC
Maureen McAvey	Senior Resident Fellow, Retail	Urban Land Institute	Washington, DC
Brandon McGee	State Representative, 5th Assembly District; Director	Urban Alliance	Hartford, CT
Margaret Moertl	Senior Vice President, Community Development Banking	PNC Bank	Cincinnati, OH
Bonnie Nickerson	Director, Long-Range Strategic Planning	City of Providence	Providence, RI
Ricardo Noguera	Director, Community & Economic Development	City of Tacoma	Tacoma, WA
Kathleen Norris	Principal	Urban Fast Forward	Cincinnati, OH
Alysia Osborn	Planning Coordinator, Long Range Planning Services	Charlotte Department of Transportation	Charlotte, NC
Julie Paul	Executive Director	ULI Triangle	Raleigh, NC
Karina Ricks	Principal	Nelson Nygaard	Washington, DC
Alan Stephenson	Acting Planning & Development Department Director	City of Phoenix	Phoenix, AZ
Jess Zimbabwe	Executive Director, Rose Center for Public Leadership	Urban Land Institute	Washington, DC

Event Summary:

Twenty members from multiple disciplines of real estate development and city planning attended the ULI Charles H. Shaw Forum. Gathering in Charlotte, NC, participants shared experiences and discussed how communities can drive redevelopment strategies at the corridor scale.

While there is little debate that vibrant mixed-use communities with viable alternatives to driving are desirable assets for revitalizing downtown environments, few communities have found the package of investments or policy interventions that can turn outdated retail and auto-dominated strips into corridors that truly serve their communities.

By focusing primarily on how communities are working toward creating safe, vibrant, mixed-use places with next-generation infrastructure, the goal of this year's Shaw Forum was to create a space where practitioners could discuss openly the policies and approaches currently employed across the nation for corridor revitalization and consider if there are general lessons of scalable impact on operations and strategies for future projects.

The City of Charlotte was selected as venue for this conversation because of ULI's previous experience working with city officials during the **2010-2011 Daniel Rose Fellowship** (<http://uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/daniel-rose-center-for-public-leadership-in-land-use/fellowship/meet-the-fellows/2010-2011-rose->

[fellows/](#)) to identify the initial implementation steps to re-energize, reposition and ensure long-term viability of development along Independence Boulevard (<http://uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/daniel-rose-center-for-public-leadership-in-land-use/fellowship/fellowship-cities/charlotte-nc/>), historically one of Charlotte's major commercial corridors. Over the course of a day and a half, Daniel Rose Fellow alumni and participants toured three major corridors in East Charlotte, including Independence Boulevard, convened for presentations, and deliberated over the common policies and approaches for corridor redevelopment. Additionally, Maureen McAvey, ULI/Bucksbaum Family Chair for Retail, presented observations from a cooperative forum held with the Office of Policy Development and Research, US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the International Council of Shopping Centers earlier this year that explored the issues of retail in underserved communities. Maureen's presentation outlined conclusions that appear in a forum report, titled *Retail in Underserved Communities* (<http://uli.org/report/retail-underserved-communities/>).

Once tours and presentations were made, attendees had a group dialogue reviewing the policy and investment commonalities of the various projects and corridors represented. The group identified more than a dozen challenges or perceived obstacles to transforming urban and suburban corridors. Through a consensus vote, the group selected four specific challenges and case study strategy solutions to discuss in detail and which should be considered in future research and technical assistance processes:

1. Getting retail right –
 - a. Plans for retail need to be specific and forward looking; set the goal and the floor.
 - b. Retail will help bring rooftops, but incrementally.
 - c. The retail mix and facility designs should reflect the community as well as the retailer's target market.
 - d. Center city examples:
 - a. Seattle, WA
 - b. Minneapolis, MN
2. What's between the nodes? –
 - a. Small and local business
 - b. Need real planning
 - c. Some form/type of transit (e.g.: bikes in Amsterdam)
 - d. Don't overzone for retail, it changes the experience of the place.
 - a. Add density (e.g.: multifamily or mixed-use) and public spaces.
 - e. Case study examples:
 - a. Discovery Triangle (Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Tempe, Arizona)
<http://www.discoverytriangle.org/>
 - b. Rosslyn/Ballston (Virginia) Corridor <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/planning/smart-growth/rosslyn-ballston-corridor/>
 - c. U Street and Upper Connecticut Avenue (Washington, DC)
<http://greatstreets.dc.gov/page/about-great-streets>
3. Attracting investment –
 - a. Market the corridor (locally, regionally, and nationally)
 - b. Have some projects "shovel ready"
 - c. Identify ready and willing property owners
 - d. Provide technical assistance to property owners to show feasibility
 - e. Identify sources for gap funding
 - f. Be ready to say 'No' if the gap is too great.
 - g. Local government needs to help with entitlement and architect and contractor selection (e.g.: scoping)
 - h. Matchmaking
 - i. Case study examples:
 - a. Over the Rhine (Cincinnati, OH)
 - b. NuLu (Louisville, KY)
 - c. USC Figueroa & Jefferson Street (Los Angeles, CA)
 - d. Union City and Ashby BART (Union City and Berkeley, CA)

- e. Statesville (Charlotte, NC)
- f. Decatur TOD (Decatur, GA)

4. Working with states –

- a. Stronger communication/advocacy between local officials and state officials
 - a. Local official needs to know what it wants, not what it doesn't want.
 - b. Be able to articulate community benefit
- b. Better opportunities for dialogue between interests
 - a. Public (government reps and community residents) and Private (property owners and financiers) need to create and agree on a definition of economic vision and investment.
- c. State agencies need to 'get out of the way'
 - a. At the state level, agencies need to communicate across missions (e.g.: transportation, housing, economic development and environment) to identify overlap and prevent doubling legislation or administrative regulations that inhibit innovation at the local level.
- d. A criteria for prioritization of projects (e.g.: pre-clearance), especially smaller projects.
 - a. Standardization of funding priorities (scaled for type)
- e. Comprehensive strategy for who is involved
 - a. There should be an office/agency responsible for stewardship of deals between and through administrative protocols; a 'concierge' for projects.
- f. Case study examples:
 - a. Octavia Boulevard (San Francisco, CA)
 - b. Hull Street (Richmond, VA)
 - c. Clairborne Avenue (Interstate-10; New Orleans, LA)
 - d. H Street, NE (Washington, DC)
 - e. Washington Boulevard (Culver City, CA)

Other topics that received consideration for future review/analysis but lacked majority interest as priority challenges were (listed in descending order):

1. Working with key landowners/institutions
2. Land assembly and creating critical mass
3. Corridors that are beyond help (triage)
4. Commercial displacement/cultural diversity
5. Community engagement
6. Improving pedestrian facilities
7. Incorporating transit