

DOWNTOWN TEAM SERIES

Facilitator Guide



This guide is designed to assist you in facilitating a conversation about cultivating a team of downtown revitalization stakeholders. While this document is tailored specifically for those addressing downtown revitalization efforts it could be adapted to a number of other circumstances. This guide follows the Downtown Team Series. **This series is for individuals or communities considering creating a team to support a downtown revitalization process.**

SUMMARY OF THE PUBLICATIONS IN THE SERIES:

Publication #1: Downtown Teams in the Kentucky Promise Zone

This document summarizes the composition of nine downtown revitalization teams, briefly describes the roles of member types, and presents an archetypal team informed by the experiences of the Downtown Teams in the Promise Zone. Accompanying this publication is a handout developed to summarize the typical team structure found in the Kentucky Promise Zone.

Purpose: This document is for individuals or communities considering creating a team to support a downtown revitalization process or those interested in;

- A summary of various downtown team members.
- An archetypal downtown team structure.

Publication #2: Downtown Team Member Roles and Interests

This document follows up on “Downtown Teams in the Promise Zone” and provides further details about the interests and roles associated with each member type and how their involvement supported the efforts of their team. Accompanying this document is a worksheet developed to assist in strategically inventorying the roles and interests of your community’s team.

Purpose: This publication and worksheet are for individuals or communities considering creating a team to support a downtown revitalization process or those interested in;

- Knowing more about the roles and interests of different downtown team members.
- Working to strategically document and cultivate a downtown team.

Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios

This document offers three scenarios of various team compositions and explores how their involvement impacts their projects. The accompanying exercise explores how the skills, interests and roles of team members impacts outcomes and directs the participant to think about what downtown projects their team may be well suited for.

Purpose: This publication is for individuals or communities considering creating a team to support a downtown revitalization process or those interested in;

- Exploring how different downtown team members can impact the success of a project.
- Working to strategically document and cultivate a downtown revitalization team. Working to strategically document and cultivate a downtown revitalization team.

Facilitator Guide for Publication #1: Downtown Teams in the Promise Zone

BEGIN by reading the Andrew Carnegie quote out loud.

ASK the participants what sticks out to them from this quote and what themes are most important to them.

ASK if this resonates with how they understand teamwork. Themes that may arise:

- Working together
- Common goals
- Common vision
- Directing individuals
- Objectives
- Motivation for individuals

ASK what the strongest assets in the community are. [Keep probing until someone shares – people or something similar]

READ the first three paragraphs.

DISCUSS the quote “A team is similar to an ecosystem or investment portfolio – the more diverse the better.”

ASK participants why this may be case. Themes that may arise:

- Shared risk
- Collective ownership
- Shared responsibilities
- Two brains are better than one
- Extra capacity

FRAME the content of the analysis as a summary of existing downtown teams that were active in the Kentucky Promise Zone as part of a POWER grant funded effort.

ASK participants who they would anticipate being on downtown teams. DOCUMENT on flip chart, whiteboard, or laptop (w/projector). List may be extensive depending on participants. Continue probing for additional examples until at least 8 to 10 are listed.

START going through each category of team member listed by participants.

ASK why it's important to consider all the options that were shared. ANTICIPATE responses related to the previous ecosystem/investment portfolio question.

REFER to the list of potential team members and point out the following (if listed), INTRODUCE the member type (i.e. Local Government, Chamber, Tourism, Main St. Manager, Nonprofits, Extension, Historical Society, Foundations, Library, Local Banking, seniors, Banking, Housing, Education, Public Safety, etc.)

Continue to ADD to list created by participants if new member types are shared.

DISCUSS reasons and challenges to each team member's participation. [This starts to bridge the conversation into Publication #3]

SUMMARIZE the list created by the participants as master list of potential team members.

SHARE every type of member may not be present in a community but it is important to cast a wide net to include strategic partners who are committed to the process and willing and able to invest time, ideas or other resources to the effort. Support is important but commitment is more important.

Handout #1 visually represents the experience of Downtown Teams in the Promise Zone. If we were to create a team using the handout or the list we created, who would be the actual person or representative to fill this role?



Facilitator Guide for Publication #2: Downtown Team Member Roles and Interests

READ the quote from Vince Lombardi and ask what resonates with participants.

ANTICIPATE responses related to commitment.

REMIND participants that commitments are more important than best intentions. [While these processes may start with a single person investing their time addressing an issue, it cannot be emphasized enough that cultivating shared ownership and positive results requires a deeper commitment by individuals on your team.] In order to strategically build a team we must first think about the connections between potential members and the roles they can play and why they may be interested in various efforts.

REVIEW the list created by participants in previous session and offer that as the starting point for the next piece of the conversation or use Handout #1.

SHARE that now we will start to think about why each member type may be inclined to support downtown revitalization efforts and what role they may play.

USING the list created, START with Local Government. ASK why local government would want to be involved. You may have to ask why should Local Government be involved – this speaks to motivations and interests.

DOCUMENT why member type should be involved (what interests them). If roles, or actions they should take are shared, note them as a role for the member as opposed to motivations and DOCUMENT them in a different color on flip chart sheet. LIST should start to resemble the lists provided in Publication #2.

CAUTIONARY TALE – DISCUSS why a local government may not be the best partner to start with. Local government as ‘the starting place’ – many, if not most local governments are more likely to support a new project or idea after its demonstrated either broad based, undeniable public support, can showcase tangible results and impacts, or is required for a specific philanthropic funder. Local governments are facing steady budget declines and increased responsibilities to adequately serve their communities and may not prioritize your vision or even acknowledge your efforts until it’s in their best interests to do so. While local government may not be an early adopter of your vision they will come around in time if your project starts to get attention and create impacts.

REPEAT with each member type until you have exhausted the list or feel the exercise has exhausted the participants. DISCUSS at least 5 member types before moving on.

SUMMARIZE exercise as providing insights on the roles and interests underpinning a variety of members on Downtown Teams. While this list is expansive, it is not exhaustive and you may find that your specific issue requires an additional team member who fills a void.

ASK for a specific example of where an unlisted potential team member may be required.

INTRODUCE Handout #2 [Downtown Team Member Inventory Model] to help articulate the specific skills, interests and roles of downtown team members. The section “What we do?” provides space to document the potential members mission, who they reach and how they accomplish their mission. The following section provides space to document what contributions this member has to offer that are directly connected to the last section to document short and long term commitments to the effort.

USE discretion in breaking the group into teams to work on this exercise together. Groups should have at least two members and no more than five.

START by asking for an example project type from the group. Use this scenario to direct the worksheet exercise.

WRITE project type on flip chart for reference as the group works through the worksheet.



Facilitator Guide for Publication #2: Downtown Team Member Roles and Interests, continued

ASSIGN a member type [from the list created by participants] to each group.

START by asking why the representative from this member type would want to be a part of this project. What about their mission suggests they should be involved? This goes in the “Why?” section.

ASK who they reach by virtue of their mission. REMIND participants to connect to project type scenario chosen for exercise. This goes in to the “Who we reach?” section.

ASK how they reach them? What do they do to connect with others? This goes into the “How?” section.

ASK what they have to contribute. If you don’t know, make an educated guess referencing the roles and interests we created. The things they have to contribute should be connected to the scenario project type.

ASK participants to draft commitments for the short and long term. REMIND participants to consider the type of change desired in each phase of the project [see team member inventory model]. Longer term commitments are often tougher to conceptualize.

ASK each group to share back their efforts with the larger group.

ASK each participant to think about a project they are currently working on and fill out the team member inventory model for themselves or their organization.

REMIND the participants - now that individuals have completed an inventory, what is most important is the next step; all of the inventories could be looked at to curate a broader team strategy.



Facilitator Guide for Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios

READ quote by Henry Ford. ASK participants what resonates with them if anything.

ANTICIPATE responses related to working together and collective successes.

REMIND participants: Relationships are one of the most important elements in successful downtown revitalization efforts. Building a team is an excellent place to start once you have identified the issue you want to address. It is important to remember team members impact the project's viability and should have an interest in the issue and ability to commit supportive resources to it. There is often a temptation to only engage members with strong voices or those in charge but it is also critical not to forget vulnerable populations or those directly impacted by the project idea. Relate this back to diversity quote in publication #1.

INTRODUCE the downtown scenario exercise. We will develop a strategy utilizing known members and suggest additional team members to engage because we now have a bit more insight about how interests and roles are connected to the effort.

The following scenarios are adapted from real world examples and draw from situations where team members amplified the outcomes of projects or programs. Specific details may have been altered to help illustrate specific points. Each scenario represents a theme commonly associated with downtown revitalization – vacant buildings, community festivals, and parking.

BREAK participants into three groups. One for each of the scenarios presented. (Vacant buildings, community festival, and parking).

PROVIDE a copy of publication #3.

ASK each team to read the scenario their group is assigned out loud. Read all four parts [background, downtown team, goals, and context/challenges].

START by brainstorming an inventory of existing team members. ASK each team to simply start a list. Some partners are easy to identify while others may be more difficult but continue thinking creatively. Be inclusive and don't worry about too many but rather prioritize not leaving people out. Ask yourself the following questions as you cast a wide net:

USE the following prompts as examples of questions to ask yourself as you brainstorm the list.

- Who will be negatively affected by project?
- Who will benefit from the project?
- Who is already working on something related?
- Who could be responsible for implementing the project?
- Whose influence is helpful to the success of the project?
- Who supports or opposes the changes the project may bring?
- Who might have resources to contribute?

NOW that each group has a list of potential team members, ASK each team to draft two lists for each team member type. One list for what interests they may have in the project. A second list for what role they may play in the effort.

GIVE enough time for each team to create this set of attributes for at least 4 to 6 member types before moving along.

SHARE, Now each group has a list of potential team members and list for each noting their anticipated roles and/or interests. It's now time to start connecting the pieces to articulate a strategy.



Facilitator Guide for Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios, continued

ASK each team to draft a strategy utilizing the potential teams they identified. Remind the groups to utilize the roles and interests of potential members to accomplish the stated goal in their assigned scenario.

ASK each team to write their strategy in one paragraph and provide time for each group to accomplish task.

ASK the team to underline each verb in the paragraph. These represent action. You must have someone assigned to accomplish each action.

ASK each team to draft a list for each team member noting their specific contributions. Think about how their specific roles or interests connect with their scenario's goal.

ASK participants to consider if there are any pieces missing. This could be team members or specific tasks/ roles needed to accomplish the goal or execute their strategy.

ASK each team to draft a list of potential missing team members and what gap they may fill.

HAVE each team present their responses to the scenario exercise. Ensure teams provide information on the four prompts so that each team has the time to share their work. Presenting in the same prompt order makes it easier for participants to follow and for the facilitator to capture.

AFTER each ask the audience if they have any additional thoughts about potential members or roles that may have been overlooked.

SUMMARIZE exercise as providing insights about how individual team members bring skills, knowledge and a topical interest but it's their commitment to share those attributes that matter more than them simply possessing them.

SHARE what we have just worked through should help you think about what team members could be invited to your efforts. We've discussed what roles or interests they may bring to the effort and lastly how each member's attributes provides insights on how to strategically accomplish your goal.

EXAMPLE RESPONSES FOR SCENARIO #1

[1] Brainstorm to create an inventory of existing team members.

1. Regional Economic Development Authority
2. Tourism and Convention Center
3. Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses
4. Local College's Historical Archives

[2] Considering the team members you identified – what interests may attract them to this effort and what roles may they play? [Reference Publication #2 Downtown Team Member Roles and Interests]

Regional Economic Development Authority

- Data collection, evaluation, grant writing and is a primary liaison with the county and city government.
- Provide local coordination of departments. (Public works, streets, waste management, tourism, etc.)
- Acknowledge that successful and attractive downtowns are a draw for industry recruitment and county-wide area businesses.
- Provide opportunity to improve relations between city hall and the private sector.
- Increased tax base and revenue by increasing property values, increasing the numbers of jobs and hotel/restaurant taxes.
- Share ownership of community goals and visions allowing the municipality to focus on additional priorities.
- Identify additional resources often required to address wicked community problems.
- Maintain or consistently improve the quality of life of residents.



Facilitator Guide for Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios, continued

- Participation in downtown revitalization in the Promise Zone also meant there were grant dollars available for strategic investments. [This may not always be the case but efforts involving diverse team members and an engaged public are often favored by funders.]
- In-kind contributions to help meet grant requirements involved labor or staff time associated with specific projects or departments.
- Fiscal agent for grant funding providing administrative support and accounting.
- Municipal departments are sometimes at heart of team member complaints or solutions. For example, code enforcement and waste management & litter prevention.
- Often track a variety of community indicators and collect data.

Tourism and Convention Center

- Visitor experience of downtown and provide expertise in promotion and event coordination.
- Tourism directors and staff often have grant writing experience.
- Tasks include regional promotion providing the opportunity and interest to create a great first impression.
- Engage in efforts to promote creative placemaking often thinking how to create destinations and experiences for visitors.
- Create and cultivate positive visitor experiences that provide opportunities for visitors to spend money locally.
- Are very interested in data collection and are often very versed in both collection and analysis of available data.
- Trail development and maintenance as a way to promote natural assets and increase tourism opportunities.
- Experience working with musicians and coordinating public festivals/events.
- Often have technical skills associated with mapping software.
- Financial skills to act as fiscal agent to administer and account for grant funds.
- Tasks include curating and executing an interconnected tourism vision.
- Broad reaching partnerships and connections.

Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses

- Insights on rent stability, retail trends, and leverage broad community support for efforts aimed at improving local business development.
- Efforts to improve the image of downtown are critical in impacting a visitors' or potential investors' first impression [Associated with this are efforts to increase community pride].
- Increase traffic and ease of flow of both automotive and pedestrian traffic increases the volume of potential customers.
- Attract or cultivate high value, authentic local businesses.
- District-wide marketing strategies rely on the community's assets and unique features.
- Increase occupancy rates and rent stability allows for more diverse businesses to operate and helps buildings stay in optimal condition. Addressing economic leakage of local retail was often a priority.
- Increased sales, jobs, and ultimately quality of life for members and residents.
- A great ally in leveraging business support for innovate ideas.
- Often required to track a variety of data related to downtown businesses and overall marketplace performance.

Local College's Historical Archives

- Extensive repository of historic photos and oral histories is interested in showcasing the historic narrative of existing buildings.
- Repositories for accurate historic data on buildings and industry.
- Often curate local genealogy data which remains a consistent asset attracting visitors from out of town with local connections.
- Keen interest in historic preservation and often engaged in efforts to protect historic and cultural assets.
- Have an interest in cultivating and promoting the community's historic narrative.



Facilitator Guide for Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios, continued

[3] Draft a strategy utilizing the existing team members and their roles & interests to accomplish their stated goal. Summarize the strategy in one paragraph and note the roles of each member below.

Strategy: The team utilizing their individual skill sets and relationships create a plan involving inventorying and mapping the vacant buildings, identifying building owners, composing a letter and survey to learn more about the future intentions of building owners, offering assistance to market the building and celebrating the historical significance and availability of properties. Collectively the group decided enforcement actions would be the last option if all else failed.

1. Regional Economic Development Authority
 - a. Staff member acts as coordinator and maintains relationships with county and city governments to keep both informed about progress and emerging opportunities.
 - b. Participates with other team members to conduct a walking inventory to identify vacant properties.
 - c. Uses technical skills to create a map of existing vacant properties to use as a communication and evaluation tool.
 - d. Coordinates with property valuation office to identify building owners and obtain their mailing addresses.
 - e. Coordinates with team to draft short survey and letter to send to vacant property owners.
 - f. Supports public relations campaign emphasizing the connections between downtown and industrial recruitment as well as the positive benefits of transitioning properties from vacant to active.
2. Tourism and Convention Center
 - a. Staff participate in walking tour to inventory and identify vacant properties.
 - b. Coordinate promotional event focusing on the available buildings to offer their story and market potential. Creates an available building 'trail' through downtown to highlight the community's interest in reviving the vacant buildings and the commitment to the future.
 - c. Draws upon connections with musicians who have a keen interest in the community's history to provide entertainment for special promotional event.
 - d. Coordinates pop community engagement events to help prioritize the community's occupant preferences (i.e. business or service types needed).
 - e. Creates final promotional flyer for each building noting the building's history, attached or available infrastructure and potential new uses desired by residents.
3. Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses
 - a. Analyzes and summaries data collected from building owners.
 - b. Coordinates survey or current businesses to learn more about rent rates and retail trends to include in follow up conversations with building owners interested in occupancy but ill-informed about the reality of reasonable rents.
 - c. Follows up with building owners as liaison to potential futures users (if building owners suggest they want assistance in selling or renting the space)
 - d. Coordinates with local college to aggregate historic narratives of each building available for marketing.
 - e. Supports promotional event focusing on the available buildings to offer their story and market potential.
 - f. Coordinates with potential new businesses to occupy available spaces.
4. Local College's Historical Archives
 - a. Supports efforts to include historical photos, oral histories or identify existing material culture or artifacts connected to the available vacant buildings.



Facilitator Agenda for Publication #3: Downtown Team Scenarios, continued

[4] What pieces are missing? Are there any additional members this team could seek out? If so what role can they play or interests may attract them to join?

Real estate agent – to assist in marketing the buildings to interested buyers.

Local artists – to support or provide visually appealing installations for first floor store displays showcasing a potential future use.

Code enforcement officer – while code enforcement may be an effort of last resort it could be valuable to share with current building owners the specific codes they may be breaking while offering the new program as a way to show a commitment to address them and forgo corrective action.

Developers or contractors with experience in renovating historic buildings – can provide assistance and direction in regards to the construction required to stabilize, retrofit, or redevelop historic buildings.

Local foundation – Knowing these projects could get expensive and that cost is often an impediment to building redevelopment a philanthropic fund aimed to support the renovation of the buildings for economic development could be established as an additional incentive program for redevelopment.

Example Strategy #2. The team plans to find a small grant to provide a budget for the event. Once funding is secured they will approach the city to secure permits and permission to use the space. The group plans to have a strong social media presence and invest time in a branded marketing strategy. To counter the narrative of out migration the group intends to make the event attractive to young people and plan to include live music, food, retail vendors and perhaps alcohol. Savvy members of the team understand the need for data collection and want to collect information about the event's impacts. If results are positive there is a desire to invest in more permanent features to make the space more accommodating and user friendly for future users.

Example Strategy #3. The downtown manager plans to create a team who can help communicate the results of the parking study and assist in creating innovative ways to shift public perceptions about parking availability. This staff member wants to partner with existing walking programs offered by health centric organizations to promote more active living thinking if more people are willing to walk that less people will be looking for parking spots.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER TEAM MEMBER TYPES TO CONSIDER:

Neighbors	Logistics and procurement	Community-based organizations
Vulnerable people or groups (Women, elderly, ill, incarcerated, disabled, indigenous peoples, racial minorities, oppressed groups.)	Employees	Cultural and historical organizations
Children/schools	Retirees	Environmental groups
Religious organizations	Industry or individual companies	Recreational groups
Educational organizations	Competitors	Sporting groups
Charitable organizations	Suppliers	Individual activists
Labor/Unions	Customers	Artists
Legal	Industry or business associations	Emergency response
Health, safety and medical services	Regulators	News media
	Local, regional, state, federal or international agencies	Investors
	Non-Profits	Marketing agency

