



City of Tigard Memorandum

To: Alice Ellis Gaut, Chair, CCAC

From: Phil Nachbar, Redevelopment Manager

Re: Downtown Business Association Research

Date: April 2, 2008

Background

In October 2007, Leland Consulting completed a Development Strategy for Downtown Tigard with recommendations for the successful implementation of its Urban Renewal Plan. Successful downtowns are the result of strong leadership at both the public and private levels. Development of a strong downtown association as a way to expand the involvement of local businesses and enhance communication between the City and the private sector is prerequisite to successful redevelopment. A strong private non-profit organization can provide needed services such as marketing, organizing events, educating merchants, recruiting tenants and developers, and directing a broad range of outreach activities.

The Leland Group's recommendation "Establish a strong downtown organization," is ranked as "high priority." As way to initiate the discussion as to how to best achieve this objective, staff has organized a roundtable discussion between the City Center Advisory Commission (CCAC) and the Tigard Downtown Central Business District Association (TCBDA) with Vicki Dugger, Executive Director of the Oregon Downtown Development Association (ODDA) serving as facilitator. In support of the discussion, staff conducted research on downtown associations through conversations with representatives of five (5) downtown associations and Vicki Dugger of ODDA (see attached *Summary of Research on Downtown Associations: Structure, Funding, Effectiveness*). Selection of the associations was based on the recommendations of Vicki Dugger with the goal of interviewing organizations thought to be the most effective ones, of comparable city size, and located primarily in Oregon. Associations interviewed included McMinnville, Baker City, Gresham, Corvallis and Ellensburg, Washington.

The informational topics researched include organizational structure, purview, and effectiveness. The attached summary reviews these five associations and summarizes it by topic. Organizational structure describes the associations' composition and operating structure. Effectiveness describes the methods, practices and operations which make them effective. Purview describes the realm of the association's work, and is provided in the appendix. All of the summarized information is provided in more detail in the accompanying appendix.

The following are the recommendations of the Leland Development Strategy (Oct. 2007) with regard to objective of establishing a strong downtown organization:

1. Successful downtowns have strong private nonprofit organizations in place to provide needed services.
2. Successful downtown organizations have a paid executive who can lead initiatives and outreach, actively engaging business and property owners in the process.
3. While the TCBDA addresses some of the needs of Downtown Tigard, its membership is limited and it does not have adequate resources to staff a manager position. Similarly, the Chamber of Commerce is supportive of Downtown Tigard revitalization, but its mission is broader than just the Downtown. An organization whose sole focus is Downtown is needed.
4. The downtown organization would operate in parallel with the CCAC and would likely have a representative to serve on the CCAC, but it would not replace it.
5. Formation of a downtown organization should be led by the private sector – with a champion that is either a downtown business or property owner and run day-to-day by a professional manager.
6. While the formation of the downtown organization should be led by the private sector, the City can serve in a supporting role by providing seed money to hire an executive director. Eventually, the organization should be completely privately funded, possibly through a business improvement district or membership dues.