



Carson City Downtown Consortium
Business Opportunities Action Group – Chris MacKenzie, Chair

Meeting Summary and Post Mortem Feedback
402 N. Division
May 27, 2008
7:00 p.m.

Attendance

Chris MacKenzie, Victor Honein, Chris Bayer, John Reiser, Tammy Westergard

Meeting was called to order by Chris MacKenzie at 7:10 p.m.

Chris welcomed all in attendance and ask each person to convey their short and long term goals for the action group. General commentary focused around the following:

- Affirmation for the Convention and Visitor's Bureau branding consultancy recommendations from Destination Development, Inc.
- Conveyed the need to make sure the small businesses in downtown understand the recommendations
- Need to work from center (Curry Street) and work outward – to avoid patchwork and maximize opportunities created from concentrated success
- The need for a demonstration project (like the summer events plans for 2008 from the office of business development) in order to show the community economic results that can be gleaned in the downtown. Note:

The "Get Down_ 2008" summer events for Carson City represent a refinement based on years of study and planning. Action is needed and is apparently going to happen. There are two ways of looking at the plan.

- One is that Carson City's government throws a weekly party and this leads to lots of visitors.
- The other is the Carson City's government creates an event that leverages vision into inclusion, energy and private investment.

This second scenario is more viable. It may seem to be implicit all through the existing plans, but it needs to be more boldly articulated in

some areas.

For example, the implication is that the City wants to focus on a very specific area for improvement. What are the economic incentives? What are the aesthetic incentives—the historical building codes?

The implication is that the City understands the importance of packaging the classic three elements of visitor success--food, entertainment, retail. But what are the opportunities for entrepreneurship short of owning a building? Why no arts and crafts booths? Is there investment in local entertainment or is this another occasion for importing talent without building it locally? Coincide heritage or other theme type events with other events going on in Reno/Tahoe area.

The plan is so complete in the triangle--Farmers Market, Telegraph Square and BAC and the City is capable of doing so much on its own that, instead of building an infrastructure that is self-sustaining, it may create an event that leaves little in its wake.

Reno built infrastructure that opened doors across the community in an inclusive manner. Reno marketed Artown and created an umbrella event--leaving inclusion to smaller, private entities. How is CC going to reach out broadly to include the community?

There is great potential in the plan...but I have seen great plans go amiss in CC because they bypass leveraging vision into inclusion, energy and private investment.

- The need for the first focus of downtown development to be on Curry Street – because it is what we have now – without waiting on Carson Street
- The need for foot and bike modes of transport around the Curry Street triangle (the triangle boundaries are from 3rd to Plaza and up King to the BAC)
- The need for the 3rd street parking lot to be the connection between downtown and the arts district.
- The need for bike parking and bike routes, and a shuttle to communities museums
- The need for artists housing to bring the vibrancy of the arts community to the

commercial community by bringing the streets to life

- The need for many more trees because they directly impact retail because people hang out under and around them

- Does City Hall need to be where it is now? Could it be relocated from main street as its current location, some say, is the 100% corner for commercial downtown redevelopment
- The Biz action group requests a list of downtown property owners and would like to determine an appropriate way to reach out to them in an effort to engage their support, help them maximize their potential and seek their input – rather than telling them how it is going to be.

- We would like to help develop a collateral packet to offer to out-of-town and local entrepreneurs to promote location and re-location into the downtown

- We would like to further vet what kind of business focus and what kind of businesses are desired in the downtown.

- We would like to then develop, with the City, the kinds of incentive packages for businesses to include, for example:
 - Streamlined permitting process
 - Possibly wave certain fees
 - Foster investment via: redevelopment tools like tax increment financing, bonding, loan to grant programs, façade improvement programs, etc..

Meeting concluded at 8:40 p.m. next meeting scheduled: June 10.