



Business and Marketing Consultants Inc.

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## North Battleford Downtown Strategic Planning

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## **Introduction**

This session was created to gather input on development ideas and priorities for downtown North Battleford with input from City Councilors and administration. The session lasted approximately 3 hours and used SWOT Analysis and Community Goal Setting (Prioritization) to identify the future direction of downtown North Battleford. Participants were provided with preliminary findings from merchant interviews and community surveys to assist in the planning process. Recommendations were developed by Nuguru Business and Marketing Consultants Inc. based on all information gathered during interviews, surveys, and during the strategy session.

A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation is attached in electronic form.

## **SWOT**

### **Strengths**

Heritage

Cross roads access

Culture – Allan Sapp Gallery

Banks

Parking

Professional and Government Services

Potential for uniqueness/local ownership/destination

Park and library

101<sup>st</sup> street has a pedestrian orientation

Views of river valley unobstructed from taller buildings

Liquor store is aesthetically pleasing

### **Weaknesses**

Safety – Loitering

Empty buildings/run-down

Disjointed/no flow – gap in retail mix, not complimentary

Atmosphere not friendly or inviting – smoking and spitting

Administrative buildings create retail gaps

Not clean

No colour – drab

Existing businesses – pawnshops, bingos, and bars

### **Opportunities**

Redefine image and boundaries of downtown

Vacant available space (including City owned properties)

Tourism based on heritage and culture

Create a place for artists

Enhanced public parking

Almost a blank page (no competition) – create unique destination shops

King Street Station theme

Develop enhanced policing through relationship between City and police – community policing

Implementation of bylaw officers

Summer initiative to keep downtown clean

Pride in community

Close 12<sup>th</sup> Ave and 101<sup>st</sup> to 102<sup>nd</sup> for pedestrians

### **Threats**

Loss of banks and other prime retail

Doing Nothing – status quo – lack of mobilization/negative attitudes and perceptions

Economy – downturn

Lack of information and communication

## **Community Goal Setting (Working Backwards)**

Based on the SWOT analysis earlier in the session, this exercise focused the participants on creating a long-term vision of North Battleford's downtown. By decreasing timelines, the actions required to create the long term vision are developed. Year one focuses on the creation of an initial action plan that outlines the tasks required to set the stage for downtown redevelopment.

### **Year One – Initial Action Plan**

1. The City needs to develop, approve, and market a comprehensive downtown (King Street Station) plan that includes the following:
  - Focus on re-launch and communication of King Street Theme including the long term plans incorporating capital improvements, infrastructure changes, and community identity.
  - Vacant land development (King Street Station) requiring strong investment attraction marketing.
  - Communication that this will not occur overnight, but will be a 10 to 20 year concept and that revitalization will move beyond 101st street.
  - Encouragement of buy-in from downtown merchants with redevelopment programming.
  - Establish incentive program so that new merchants and developers are attracted to the King Street Development and downtown core.
  - Further development of opportunities identified in strategic plan and survey through preliminary feasibility studies.
2. Develop permitting and licensing strategy, and land use strategies that is clearly communicated (including vacancy fees) that provide for enforcement, land development, relocation of target business (pawn shop, second hand stores, and bingo), retention of target business (banks, financial and government services, and entertainment), and enhanced regulatory environment for establishments serving alcohol to:
  - a. Provide strong defensible platform for enforcement
  - b. Encourage development of stagnant property
  - c. Improve desirable pedestrian traffic in downtown
  - d. Sustain and retain traditional core business

- e. Extend hours of customer service for downtown business through evening entertainment offerings with a family focus

Strategies used in other jurisdictions should be examined to develop best practices that could be used in North Battleford.

3. Coordinate with Tribal Councils to better understand their developments in the short-term
  - a. Engages increasing population base
  - b. Potential for partnerships
  - c. Potential for anchor opportunities
4. Engage user groups and develop an ambassador program to market downtown
  - a. Programming needed to sell downtown – locally, Provincially, and even Nationally
  - b. User groups need to take ownership of downtown
  - c. Establish a Business Improvement District (BID) to provide improvement governance structure
  - d. Communicate and enforce cleanliness and maintenance municipal policies and establish potential program in partnership with the BID to address appearance and untidiness commented upon by 53% of survey respondents
5. Establish buy-in from downtown for redevelopment
  - a. Merchants need to share long-term vision and provide investment into own properties
  - b. Merchants need to encourage other entrepreneurs to develop new retail and services outlets
6. Identify trends in downtown redevelopment through secondary research
  - a. Identify potential partners in funding
  - b. Identify potential anchors
7. Develop downtown events to establish downtown as a venue

- a. Identify potential events - according to survey events need to be musical, cultural, and marketing (sales) with an emphasis on involving families and children
  - b. Additional City support for a lead individual or agency for tourism and convention attraction to coordinate community involvement
  - c. Identify a lead, partners, locations, infrastructure, and participants
  - d. Develop marketing and implementation plans for each proposed event
8. Periodic review of progress by council in public is required to promote transparency and clearly communicate victories and challenges:
- a. quarterly year one
  - b. bi-annual year two
  - c. at least annually after year three
9. City needs to identify all departments involved in the roll out of this program and establish a working group with City administration and key downtown and community leaders from all sectors that reports to City Council.

### **By Year Five**

Signature developments in place – anchors, live-work complex, theatre

Signature tourism events in place

Transition responsibility from City to leadership in downtown agency – provide own mobilization and funding

Streetscape firmly initiated – fixtures with themes

### **By Year Fifteen**

Pedestrian friendly

Interesting and unique community within a community

Identity of North Battleford in positive way

Rebuild or learn from what was there – keep heritage with the new

First Nations – Active involvement and people in downtown