THE RESURGENCE OF DOWNTOWNS
GETTING PEOPLE DOWNTOWN
250 DAYS A YEAR
Presented by Roger Brooks

Why & what
THE RESURGENCE OF DOWNTOWNS – PRIORITY #1
THE RESURGENCE OF DOWNTOWNS – THE STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS
THE RESURGENCE OF DOWNTOWNS: GETTING PEOPLE DOWNTOWN 250 DAYS A YEAR

How they did it
THE RESURGENCE OF DOWNTOWNS: WHAT THEY DID AND HOW THEY DID IT
To get people downtown at least 250 days a year
Doing this will:
- Bring retailers back
- Keep them open later in the evening when the spending takes place
- Make your downtown the heart and soul of your community
- Build a true sense of community
- Attract young families back to town
- Increase retail spending
- Drive tourism & subsequent spending
- Provide new business opportunities locally
The top two revitalization tactics

- Year round public market that changes monthly, includes event space, and is open into the evening hours
- Year-round programmed public plaza
How to Design and Develop a Low-Cost Amazing Plaza

Communities spend a fortune on:

- Streetscapes
- Facade improvements
- Downtown events
- Marketing
- Beautification
- Parking issues
- Retail & business recruitment
But they are still missing the primary ingredient:

Programming
The average plaza costs between $5 and $8 million with many of them well over $20 and $30 million.

You can build one for less than $200,000 INCLUDING the programming.

What comes first?
People downtown on a consistent basis: 250+ days a year
“People downtown on a consistent basis”
- One percent of your population downtown on any given night.

- Concentrate on Friday & Saturday nights for one year.
  - Then add Thursday
  - Then add Sunday afternoon (noon to about 6:00)
  - Then add Wednesday
  - Then Tuesday

Population to people downtown between 4:00 and 9:00 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (people)</th>
<th>Residents</th>
<th>Goal</th>
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<td>1,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Districts in urban areas: 1% of the residents in the district

Downtown for two hours or more
Building the community living room: ingredients

1. A location that can best be monetized
2. A people-friendly surface
3. Insurance
4. Power and water for various activities
5. Trash receptacles
6. Safety barriers (planters are best)
7. Access to public restrooms/washrooms
8. A stage or performance platform
9. Lighting (primary hours: evenings)
10. Storage space
11. Stuff to do!
12. Change it up every two weeks
13. Volunteers!

Let’s design and build a plaza on the cheap!
STEP 1
Location, location, location

Within 100 ft (30m) of the front doors to retail and/or dining
Two months from start to finish
Almost any space will work
Programming is the key: Activating the space
**Approximate cost:** $1 per month rent or lease

**Consider:**
- An empty lot (publicly owned or private)
- A side street (one block or half a block)
- 90 day cancellable (if developed down the road)
- If city-owned, start with “temporary” then test it

**As flat as possible**
Notice that every step is a seating surface
If you want the plaza to grow:
A site plan or rendering

Optional
TopekaSplash PadIce Rink in the WinterStage / Green RoomPlazaOutdoor EatingExisting Parking StructureOutdoor EatingSplash PadFuture Plaza

Topeka, Kansas

Kansas Ave.

7th Street

8-19-2014

Scale: 1" - 30'
Plain and simple:
- No architecture
- No landscape architecture (at this point)
- This is about programming & people
- Urban planners: Great!
Catalina umbrellas 9' w/ 48" table, 4 chairs

Vendor booths 10'x10'

Climbing walls 2 with fence | vendor

Bocce ball courts 3 courts

Giant chess sets 9'x9' base, 25" tall pieces
Once the skate ribbon is set up, half a dozen “Zorb balls” would be used to race around the ring. Groups of up to six (each with their own ball) would get three rotations around the ribbon, before letting the next group give it a try.

Zorb ball cost: $700 each and the plaza would purchase eight of them for a total cost of $5,600. Only six would be used at one time.

With regards to the art displayed on the inner ribbon area, it can feature whimsical art (top two center photos), kinetic wind art (top right, immediate right, below), and even water-based art, some of which could even be placed in the splash pad, and others in with the other art installations.
dance floor
65' x 55'
yoga mats
40 shown here 24" x 68"
ribbon ice can be fenced off during inclement weather

ribbon interior trees | lighted MC logo

holiday displays

Sell the feeling
**Approximate cost:** $2,500

**Consider:**
- University architecture | landscape architecture | urban planning students or faculty
- A local artist
- Donated service from a local architect/planner

**A people-friendly surface:**
- pavers or decking
Plan on $15 per square foot installed
Engraved brick pricing

Polar Engraving Prices - https://polarengraving.com

- 4” x 8” Brick is $17.50
- 8” x 8” Brick is $25.50
- 12” x 12” Brick is $46.50

Brick Markers - https://www.brickmarkers.com/

Engravestone - https://engravestone.com/

4 x 8 Brick with 1-2 lines engraving - $13 per brick
4 x 8 Brick with 3 lines engraving - $17 per brick
8 x 8 Brick with 1-5 lines engraving - $25 per brick

BRICK & TILE PRICING

No Minimum Order Required

PRICE INCLUDES:

- SHIPPING (within the 48 contiguous U.S.)
- A COMBINATION OF ALL SIZES (EXCLUDING MINIS) TO CREATE A TOTAL OF 100 OR MORE
- VARIETY OF BRICK/PAVER/TILE COLORS
- CHOICE OF TRUE TYPE FONTS FROM OUR EXCLUSIVE SELECTIONS
- FREE CLIPART (view clipart for our full clipart library)
- LIFETIME GUARANTEE

CLAY BRICK/PAVER (2¼” THICK)

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<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Lines &amp; Characters Available</th>
<th>Price per Unit</th>
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<td>4x8 Brick*</td>
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<td>$17.50/$18.00**</td>
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<td>8x8 Brick*</td>
<td>6 lines / 20 characters per line</td>
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*Volume pricing available - call for additional information (1-800-634-9948) or fill out our contact form
This scenario adds up to a net of $53,375

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<th>Size</th>
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**Approximate cost:** 3,000 square feet: $45,000
- 13,500 total bricks (4” x 8” x 2.5”)
- Selling 500 bricks: $41,000 net
- Donations | Grants | Foundations: $4,000

**Consider:**
- Asphalt or concrete will work just fine
- Paint it! Decorate it.
- Activities are more important than the surface
Approximate cost: 3,000 square feet @ $20 p/sf
- Trex brand “composite” decking: no slivers, no maintenance costs, made from recyclables
  Includes sub-structure, railing, steps, etc.
- Total approximate cost $60,000

Notes:
- This is for non-level sites that need to be terraced: two or three levels.
- Steps are seating spaces
PARK[D] PLAZA
Long Beach, CA
2014
30' x 75'
2,250 sq. ft.
Approximate cost: $6,000

Notes:
- 30 gallons of yellow paint
- 24 Adirondack chairs
- 5 10’ umbrellas
- Then food trucks, tetherball, games, speakers…

STEP 3

Insurance: City umbrella policy
Leased to local non-profit: $1 per year
Approximate cost: $850 a year

Notes:
- General liability
- Additional cost for beer gardens
- Check with your city or town regarding their umbrella insurance endorsements

Vendors should also have “proof of insurance”
Make sure you have power & water to the site

- 250 to 400 amp three-phase power:

- Equivalent to seven to fifteen 20 outdoor outlets (20 amps each)

- This will allow for most bands, sound systems, theater systems, stage productions, portable lighting
**Approximate cost:** $5,000

**Notes:**
- This is done by your local power company
- They usually charge by amp
- Seattle City Light: $6.13 to $12.26/amp
- Remember: There is a monthly usage charge!
- Perhaps the city will pay the power bill!

**STEP 5**

Trash receptacles
and a trash pickup agreement
Approximate cost: $400 x 6 trash cans = $2,000

Notes:
- Perhaps parks, public works has some stored
- Or perhaps they can get a discounted price
- These could even be sponsored
- Or they can be “borrowed” from other sites
- Look for used ones & have volunteers fix them up

STEP 6

Safety barriers: planters
39” long x 22” deep x 24” high
$1,095

38” long x 15” deep x 28” high
$636
Approximate cost: $400 \times 10 = $4,000
- Trees and shrubs, soil, etc: $4,000

Notes:
- These could be locally made
- Make sure they are raised so they can be moved with a fork lift (no casters please)
- Make sure you can run water to them
- Leave room for wheelchairs & strollers between them
- Idea: no vehicles can get through
- Local garden club can maintain them
- These can also be sponsored

Make sure there’s access to public restrooms
**Approximate cost:** $65,000 new | $30,000 used

**Notes:**
- One restroom for ADA access
- Two standard restrooms
- Needs access to power
- Should be cleaned twice each day and monitored

Watch this video for options and ideas
Green Show Stage
Ashland, Oregon
Located on the Oregon Shakespeare Festival grounds
**Approximate cost:** $12,000 using a permanently-built Trex raised deck

**Notes:**
- 30' wide x 20' deep x 3' above ground @ $20 sq. ft.
- With power to the stage
- Includes railings on three sides
- Tenting with sides and back could be rented
- Trusses could be rented for lights, sound
Lighting

Plaza: 50’ x 60’ = 3,000 sq. ft.
- One row every 6’ x 50’ across*
- A total of ten rows $56 each plus mounting hardware
**Total cost:** $800

Honeywell 24’ commercial-grade LED outdoor string lights

* If mounted between two buildings. If not, you may need corner posts to support the lights.

- You want “warm light” - 2,400k
A storage place

It doesn’t have to be fancy
But it does need to be secure and needs to have power
**Approximate cost:** Hopefully nothing

**Consider:**
- Public works or parks department building space?
- Local college or school storage space?
- An empty retail space or shop? (Low rent)
- You need about 3,000 square feet (or larger)

**11**

Stuff to do!
Sponsored activities to put on the plaza
Always include signage promoting “Next week's showcase”
And your sponsors

Plaza sponsor menu

Six ECR4Kids 4-to-score giant game set @ $200 each.
Six Giant Jenga sets @ $70 each.
Total investment: $1,250

Four MegaChess w/25” tall King @ $750 each.
Total investment: $1,800
Option: 37” tall King $1,100 each.
Total investment: $3,500

Four Playcraft Extera Outdoor Foosball tables @ $1,200 each
And four Joola Nova Outdoor table tennis tables, paddles, and covers, bag of balls @ $700 each.
Total investment: $7,600
Plaza sponsor menu

48 qty. US Games standard hula hoops, 36": $164
48 qty. Hoop bundle pack 32": $200
Three racks @ $190 each: $570
Total investment: $950

Six Magis Spun Armchairs @ $400 each
Total investment: $2,400

1 harp, 1 Pagoda bells, 1 Melody
From Freenotes Harmony Park
or Ensemble Collection (5 instruments)
Total investment: $7,000 to $20,000

Introducing Our NEW Inclusive Mallets
Now available for any instrument by request only
(for a small upcharge)

Outdoor Musical Instruments For All Ages And Abilities
8 qty. 10’x10’ Ez Pop-up Canopy Tent with removable end side walls, roller bag, four sand bags with each: $290 each
Total investment: $2,500

Park In A Cart Portable Skatepark w/cart
Total investment: $4,500 or $9,000 for two

4 quantity Driveway Games all-weather corn hole set: $120 each
Total investment: $500

8 qty. Tacklife Gas Fire Table, 28”, 50,000 BTU Auto-ignition, propane tank, one fill: $220 each
Total investment: $1,800

3 qty. (1 for parts) Zume Games portable badminton set w/freestanding base: $40
Extra rackets, shuttlecocks
Total investment: $150

1 Stamina outdoor fitness multi-station: $240
3 qty. Stamina outdoor fitness striders: $440
Total investment: $1,600
Plaza sponsor menu

200 qty. Value Series gray rattan indoor-outdoor stack chairs @ $26 each: $5,200
50 qty. Round Coral steel patio table 32.5" @ $60 ea: $3,000
50 qty. Jordan Mfg. 9' Market umbrella @ $52 ea: $2,600
Total investment: $10,800

4 qty. MegaChess Giant Checkers Set - 10" @ $200
This uses the same mats as the chess sets.
Four separate mats @ $65 each.
Total investment: $1,060

4 full Imagination Playground 105-piece sets $4,975 ea.
4 storage carts @ $1,200 ea.
Total investment: $24,700

Look at getting sets. Always round tables: 28" to 36" (no larger)
Budget to replace 10% each year.
9' umbrellas are just fine. Always go with red and yellow - mix them up. Make it colorful.
Promote your sponsors with plaques on the activities they supplied, or signage like this acknowledging them.

**Approximate cost:**
6 4-to-score, 6 giant Jenga sets, 4 MegaChess sets, 4 MegaCheckers sets, 4 foosball tables, 4 ping pong tables, 96 hula hoops, 6 Spun Chairs, 5 musical instruments, 8 vendor tents, 2 portable skatepark kits, 4 corn hole sets, 8 fire pits, 3 badminton sets, 4 exercise machines, 4 105-piece Imagination Playground sets, 4 storage bins, 50 tables, 50 umbrellas, 200 stackable chairs.

**Consider:**
For **everything** shown here: $76,110
Sponsor sandwich boards or plaques: $2,000
Adding it all up

Adding it all up: the hard one-time costs

- Cleaning up the location - $3,000
- The plaza surface - $10,000 (largely self-funded)
- Power and water - $7,000 (added $2,000 for water)
- Trash receptacles - $2,000
- Barrier planters - $8,000
- Public restrooms - $65,000* (portable trailer purchase)
- Stage or performance platform - $12,000
- Lighting - $800
- Security cameras - $3,500
- Activities - $76,110

- $187,410
### Comparison

**One varsity softball field:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Mobilization &amp; mgmt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Layout</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earthwork &amp; drainage</td>
<td>$82,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water, subgrade, final grade, turf</td>
<td>$190,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dougouts</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bleachers (600 seats)</td>
<td>$84,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-fab press box</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage bldg., batting cages</td>
<td>$87,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Does not include:
- Scoreboard
- Field lighting
- Parking ($243,000)
- Restrooms
- Concessions
- Sidewalks
- Contingency (8%).

**Total Cost:** $414,500

**Bring in vendors**
- School events & productions
- Portable ice rink
- Portable zip lines
- Climbing walls
- Then add your farmers market events
- Art shows
- Car clubs and other hobby organizations
- Vendors from throughout the county (keep them local)
Make sure you get a percentage of sales:

Typical - 10% of gross sales
Or it can be a “space rental” or “booth rental” charge.

Adding it all up: the ongoing costs (annual)

- Insurance                      - $850 a year
- Power and water               - $12,000 (City pick up the tab?)
- Garbage pickup                - $600
- Landscape maintenance         - Volunteers
- Restroom maintenance          - $36,500 ($50 per cleaning x 2 p/day)
- Security monitoring           - $2,400
- Management | staff person      - $40,000 (contracted - Retiree?)

$92,350 ($7,700 a month)
Change the activities every two weeks
Volunteers!

- Have one or two people on-site from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
- Create an army of volunteers who give one two-hour shift, twice a month
- That’s 5 volunteers (or staff) each day
- That’s a total of 75 volunteers plus 10 “alternates”
- Provide them with logo t-shirts or polo shirts, baseball caps
- Take them to dinner once or twice a year
- Award them after two years of service
Approximate cost: $2,500

Notes:
- For shirts and caps
- Dinner once or twice a year
- Recognition award after two years

Keep it simple.
Make it fun! It’s your “Community living room”
Here’s to your plaza!

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