

The Community Planner

February 22, 2012

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Planning, Financing, and Administration News for Minnesota Communities

Downtown Buildings Rehabilitation and Reuse

Often communities struggle what to do with vacant or underutilized downtown buildings. The decision to rehabilitate or tear down is often a difficult one, and aside from the often personal connections to these buildings, there are a number of practical items that need to be taken into consideration.

BUILDING OWNERSHIP Confirm the ownership of the building, as buildings may be owned by an individual or corporation. This can be difficult if the property is going through foreclosure.

BUILDING CONDITION Is the building structurally sound and safe for the public and adjacent properties? Is the roof in good condition and able to protect the structure from the elements? If improvements are needed, be sure to get an estimate from an architectural and engineering firm before proceeding.

BUILDING FUTURE There are many questions that should be considered with the building's future that impact not only



the use of the building, but financing options as well. Who will own the building? Will it be the City, or a private owner?

CODE RELATED QUESTIONS Are all the issues and costs of rehabilitation such as handicap accessibility, fire protection, egress, and environmental cleanup considered?

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Is there a significant historical aspect to the property?

There are many resources out there and the following is a link to one of the articles from the National Park Service.

<http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief31.htm#DOCUMENTATION>

If you would like to view a recent downtown building remodel that I&S designed you can view Tandem Bagels in Mankato, Minnesota (pictured above).

<http://tandembagels.com/index.html>

At Your Service

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Brad Potter, AICP
brad.potter@is-grp.com
507.387.6651

Bill Goldy
bill.goldy@is-grp.com
507.381.0329

Upcoming Program Deadlines

April-June 2012—Public Facilities Authority Project Priority List Deadlines (Water, Wastewater, and Storm)

March 30, 2012—Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Trail Grant Applications Due



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