

# Towns & Trails Toolkit

## *Business Attraction Strategy*

**Program Overview** A community development business recruitment program designed to market vacant and available properties in the central business district.

### **Program Objectives**

- Support the community, municipality and current property owners by marketing all businesses for sale or lease in the central business district.
- Provide opportunities for new businesses and merchants looking for additional locations to readily find available space in the community.
- Reduce the number of vacant and underutilized buildings.
- Expand the opportunity to bring in businesses to better serve the community, enhance the business mix, and revitalize the business district
- Engage real estate community in the leasing, sales and promotion of central business district properties.
- Facilitate expansions (in services, products, or real estate) among existing businesses.

### **Tactics**

- Inventory businesses, building and property existing uses.
- Determine service gaps in the community and target business clusters to address those service gaps.
- Offer marketing assistance to existing businesses; consider focused workshops on updating websites and using social media, trip packaging if applicable, evaluating present advertising and tracking return on advertising investment.
- Develop an inventory (including photos, addresses, property details) placed on a community website listing (Chamber? Borough?) and including all vacant and available commercial properties within defined focus area. Keep this inventory up to date.
- Market the available properties through well designed posters to create visual interest on the streets and attract the attention of potential investors.
- Demonstrate to the community that attention is being paid to vacant properties through public meetings, newsletter announcements, press releases when a building leases or sells. Announce all successes.
- Host a Business Opportunities Event(s) in one of the vacant properties for real estate agents, brokers, related business owners, entrepreneurs, and developers.
- Host scheduled tours of vacant properties with incentives of food, drink, bike rides and complimentary overnights.
- Launch a public relations campaign to raise the visibility of the community as a river or trail town and the opportunities represented by the growing outdoor recreational market.