

NEWS & *views*

Economic Development Division

FALL 2005

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News & Views, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Economic Development Division of the American Planning Association. We welcome articles, letters, suggestions and information regarding workshops and other educational opportunities for economic development professionals. Please forward your submissions by email to our Editor, Dr. Ned Murray, AICP (address below).

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Live/Work and Work/Live Spaces: Potential Economic Development Applications

by Jennie Geisner

Eager to attract a “creative class” whose talent and innovation will stimulate economic growth, communities are actively exploring “live/work” and “work/live” spaces as affordable and favorable alternatives for artists and entrepreneurs.

With 25 percent of its population in “super creative” occupations (e.g., scientists, artists, designers, architects, engineers, writers, etc.)¹, Arlington County, Virginia is the type of “creative class” community that economist, researcher and author Richard Florida highlights in his popular book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*.² Boasting one of the youngest, most diverse and highly educated populations in the Washington, D.C. region, Arlington has been successful in attracting the type of individuals whose skills and creative energy

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The visionary project, Live/Work 2001, located in Castleberry Hill (an inner-city Atlanta neighborhood), aimed to design, build and showcase building types which could blend very different functioning businesses into livable, contemporary homes. From Left: Loft, Livabove, Lifespan. See sidebar on p. 5 for more...

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR



The results are in from the Economic Development Division member survey, and they provide some good feedback. First of all, it appears that 96 percent of you actually read the newsletter! Some 80 percent of the respondents rate the newsletter as “good,” but only 9 percent rate it “excellent.” Although these are positive ratings, *News & Views* is generally considered one of APA’s best newsletters, so we need to do a little more digging to find out why more of the membership does not rate it higher. Most readers are drawn to articles on case studies and best practices, the real heart of our focus. We were asked for articles on tourism and live/work spaces, so at least one reader should be happy to see Jennie Geisner’s piece on live/work spaces in this issue. There was little interest (7 percent) in student research, but our student membership is growing (10 percent) and we have made a concerted effort to appeal to students this year — hence our increased focus on student projects. Two-thirds of the respondents prefer receiving the newsletter in pdf form while one-third like the html version, so we will continue to provide both.

We also asked a number of questions related to our website. Half of the readers indicate that they visit the site “hardly ever.” Admittedly the site is rather static, except for the newsletter and the events sections, which

garnered the most usage. More than 75 percent of the respondents did express an interest in links to economic development news articles and a research section on economic development topics. Two good projects for future volunteers!

One-fourth of the respondents indicated an interest to become more involved in the Division and another 40 percent said “maybe.” Well, it is *your* Division, so we will be sending out a list of jobs that need doing so that you can select your personal avenue for involvement. It just so happens that we have an election coming up, so those of you interested in running for a position in the EDD leadership can contact Mike Delk, chair of our Nominating Committee.

Do get involved. The rewards are a substantive contribution to your profession.

- To seek office or nominate a colleague, contact Michael Delk: michael.delk@myclearwater.com.
- To mentor a student, contact Shana Johnson: shana.johnson@gmail.com.
- To submit an article, contact Ned Murray: murrayn@fiu.edu.
- To add to our website, contact me at tholzheimer@arlingtonva.us.

The detailed survey results can be found on the website at www.planning.org/economic/member/survey.htm.

Many thanks to Jennie Geisner, a graduate student at Virginia Tech, for conducting the survey on behalf of the EDD. ■

— Terry Holzheimer, AICP, Chair

IN THIS ISSUE OF *NEWS & VIEWS*



In the Fall Issue of *New & Views* we are pleased to present four informative articles that address economic development practice and decision-making. In our lead article, Jennie Geisner relates the challenges of creating and sustaining creative communities in “Live/Work and Work/Live Spaces.” The next two articles (“Economic Gardening” and “The Virginia Economic Development Partnership”), submitted by ESRI’s Milton Ospina, provide two examples of how GIS can be effectively utilized to promote economic development initiatives. In our final article, Michael

Formosi offers a useful framework for economic development decision-making in “Applying Current Research Findings to Interpret Software Training for Economic Development Professionals.”

I urge our members to contribute articles to *News & Views*. It’s an effective way to promote the economic development plans and programs in your community and informs our membership about successful approaches to important economic development issues across the country. Please call me at (305) 349-1444 or email murrayn@fiu.edu if you have ideas for future articles you’d like to discuss. ■

— Ned Murray, AICP, Editor

LIVE/WORK AND WORK/LIVE SPACES, CONT. FROM P. 1

directly contribute to economic growth. The County's hot real estate market reflects this achievement; real estate assessments for 2005 show that overall values are up 18 percent.³

But Arlington is beginning to face a problem encountered by similarly successful cities and counties across the country; that is, as real estate prices goes up, affordability goes down. This trend of decreasing affordability is magnified for members of the creative class who want to live *and* work in the County, but cannot afford separate living and working spaces. It also hits small businesses especially hard, particularly those with low profit margins and volatile sales histories. The challenge becomes how to provide for this growth-inducing population even as the successful conditions they have produced financially whiplash them out of the market.

About Live/Work and Work/Live

Live/work and work/live spaces are rooted in the notion that a single facility can accommodate both residential and commercial uses. While the terms themselves are relatively new to planning, the concepts behind them are classic — think of the turn-of-the-century shopkeeper who lived above his store. More recently, live/work and work/live spaces have appeared

in older industrial areas, where artists have re-pioneered the concept of joint uses by converting abandoned or underutilized warehouses into working lofts. The results have been significant — not only do the live/work and work/live spaces provide artists with affordable space, but their presence stimulates new economic activity in the form of refurbished galleries, theaters, restaurants and other art-themed attractions.

Now planners are jumping on the bandwagon, looking at live/work and work/live spaces from two angles: One is modeled after the traditional warehouse-loft conversion, i.e., offering artists and entrepreneurs affordable space in targeted areas in the hopes of spawning urban renewal. Cleveland, Ohio, for example, has embraced live/work as a strategy for continuing redevelopment of its Historic Warehouse District. The other angle (well-suited to communities like Arlington) addresses a different challenge — how to prevent a “brain drain” to other jurisdictions by providing affordable “creative class” space alternatives in hot real estate markets.

Good Public Policy

Planners have good reason to be excited about the economic development application prospects of

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live/work and work/live spaces. On the micro level, live/work and work/live spaces can provide affordable options for artists and entrepreneurs financially strapped to maintain two separate work and residential spaces. They alleviate the hardship endured by small business owners who must repeatedly go back-and-forth from home-to-business to accommodate demanding and often unpredictable work schedules.

On the macro level, the benefits of live/work and work/live spaces become even more significant. If Richard Florida's "creative class" theory holds true, then having a stock of affordable live/work and work/live spaces is an important step for communities intent on attracting this economic engine. With cities and counties increasingly jockeying to attract new residents and businesses, having policies in place to support "creative class" lifestyles may mean the eventual difference between stagnation and growth.

And that's not all. In recent years, the planning profession has embraced the *Smart Growth* movement, which advocates restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. New *Smart Growth* development is more town-centered, is transit- and pedestrian-oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also preserves open space and other environmental amenities.⁴ Live/work and

work/live spaces adhere to the guidelines of *Smart Growth* in more ways than one. First, live/work and work/live spaces provide increased housing opportunities for different household types and those with varying income levels. For example, a small loft may provide just enough space for a young artist, while a townhouse with commercial frontage may better suit a small business owner with a family. Second, occupants of live/work and work/live space have no commute, thereby encouraging the development of pedestrian-friendly communities while simultaneously easing traffic congestion and reducing overall automotive pollution. Third, integrating live/work and work/live spaces into single-use zoned districts generates the kind of "round-the-clock" activity that planners advocate as being vital to the creation of healthy and vibrant communities.

Distinguishing Between Live/Work and Work/Live

The residence is the primary focus of live/work space. Work activities in a live/work unit are those that would be compatible in a residential environment (i.e., activities that are devoid of significant manufacturing-related noise and offensive industrial odors). Typically

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businesses that use hazardous materials or employ heavy machinery and equipment would not be suitable in live/work space. Because of the emphasis on the residential character of the space, employees are likely to be limited; in fact, many localities do not permit employees at all in this environment. Not only can their constant comings-and-goings impinge on the quiet residential character of a neighborhood, but employees also introduce additional challenges to developers and neighborhood planners (e.g., how much parking to provide). Along the same lines, walk-in trade is not encouraged in live/work environments. There may be exceptions (e.g., the tailor whose customer comes for a

fitting), but generally walk-in trade is disruptive to the residence.

In contrast, work/live space is primarily a business premise rather than a residence. Work/live space can incorporate limited research and development and industrial activities (activities that may use industrial materials and bothersome noise) into its daily operations. It generally permits the use of higher levels of hazardous materials, and typically provides a more suitable environment for businesses that use/store heavy objects and equipment (by requiring higher floor loading requirements). By and large located in commercial and/or industrial areas that expect a certain level of pedestrian and automobile traffic, work/live space is more amenable to employees and walk-in trade. A classic example is a loft for an artist doing metal sculpture.

Live/Work 2001

Live/Work 2001, a joint live/work demonstration project undertaken by *Builder Magazine*, Beazer Homes, and architectural firm Duany Plater-Zybeck, debuted in February 2001 at the International Builders' Show in Atlanta, Georgia. The visionary project, located in Castleberry Hill (an inner-city Atlanta neighborhood), aimed to design, build, and showcase building types which could blend very different functioning businesses into livable, contemporary homes.

The demonstration project resulted in development of three different live/work building types (see illustration on page 1). The **Loft** was designed with "just starting out" young professionals in mind; the most affordable of the three building types, it features a vaulted workspace open to an upstairs bedroom loft (curtains separate the work space from the living area). The **Livabove** features a large workspace with a 12-foot ceiling on the first floor and living space above; outside and rear stairs provide access to the upper-floor living areas. Lastly, the **Lifespan** features a door system that converts the unit into a two-bedroom rental with office space. Close the doors to the kitchen, and the front workspace combines with the two bedrooms and bath upstairs to create a rental unit. The owners can still work from home by converting the living room into a home office, since the home features two separate front entries.

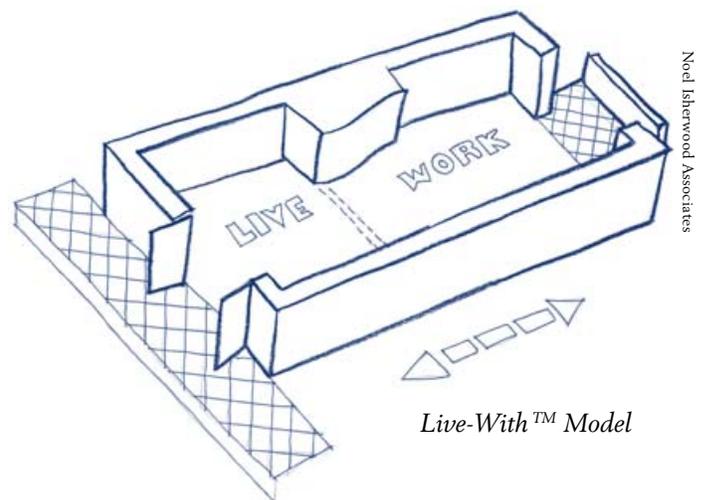
From Live/Work 2001; *Builder Magazine*, <http://www.builderonline.com>.

Proximity Types⁵

The Live-Work Institute in Oakland, California, has coined proximity types to define the relationship between work space and the living area in a live/work unit. These types include live-with™, live-near™ and live-nearby™.⁶

■ Live-With™

This type of space is what most people imagine when they picture a typical "artist's loft." A live-with™ unit is typically a single space, including a kitchen, located below a mezzanine/sleeping space, which looks



out over a large contiguous working space. This arrangement offers the greatest flexibility and the fewest interior partitions, allowing the user to adapt it to many different configurations. The amount of space devoted to the "live" area and the "work" area depends on the

(continued next page)

occupant's needs at the moment, and will likely vary over time as a result.

■ **Live-Near™**

Live-Near™ meets the needs of those who feel that the proximity afforded by live/work is important, but who would nevertheless would like some separation between living and working spaces. This can be to minimize exposure to hazardous materials or high-

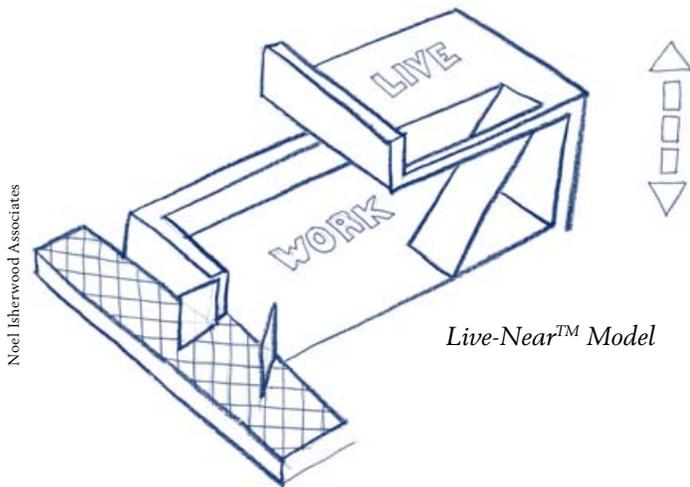
courtyard, to a converted garage or other accessory structure, or up or down an exterior staircase. While this type may initially appear to be simply mixed use, classification as live/work may permit its existence in places where a residential or a commercial space alone might not be permitted.

Challenges of Live/Work and Work/Live

Live/work and work/live spaces can both help and harm a community. On a positive note, combining workplace and residence can be an affordable option to a creative class (e.g., artists, etc.) that is being forced out of warehouse/industrial districts by real estate booms and resulting gentrification. Live/work and work/live spaces can also inject economic energy into distressed commercial areas by converting vacant and under-utilized properties into higher uses. For example, the 1917 Mather Building in downtown Washington, D.C. (last occupied by the University of the District of Columbia arts program) sat abandoned for over a decade before the 10-story building was renovated into Mather Studios Loft Condominiums. The new space was configured with 50 condominiums, including twelve residences designated as affordable housing / work spaces for community artists earning 50-80% of area median income. An arts incubator run by DC's Cultural Development Corporation, called *Flashpoint*, is located on the ground level, and includes a contemporary art gallery, 75-seat theater lab, dance studio, office space and workstations, shared office equipment and meeting space and a wide range of specialized management services.

But creative class space can have a downside. If not carefully implemented, live/work and work/live space can be in conflict with its surroundings. In San

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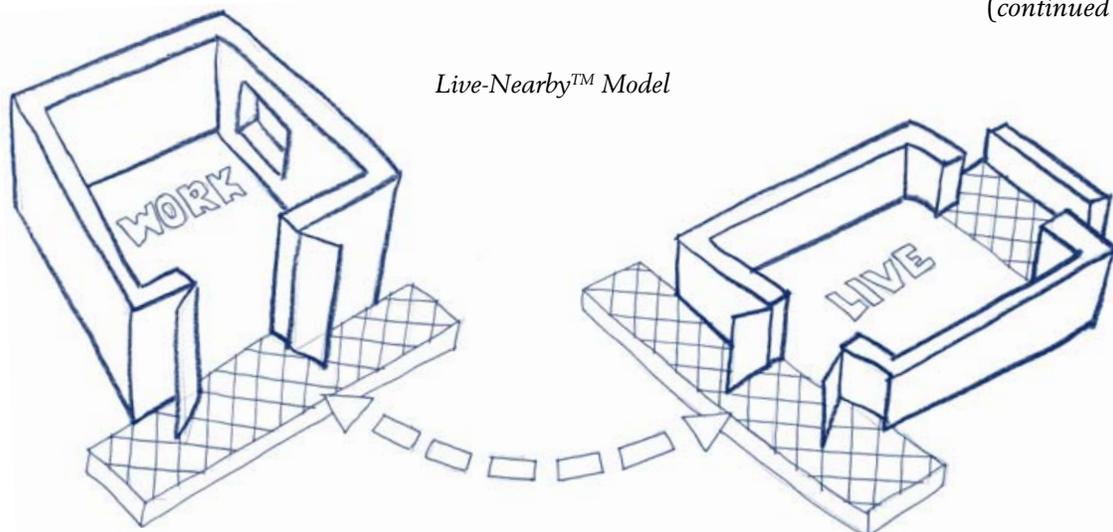


Live-Near™ Model

impact work activity, out of consideration for family or roommate, or simply to fill the need for the bit of distance created by a wall or floor. In a live-near™ unit, the living portion may more closely resemble an apartment or townhouse. The work space is separated by a wall or floor.

■ **Live-Nearby™**

In this configuration, a short walk separates the living portion and the work space — e.g., across a



Live-Nearby™ Model

LIVE/WORK AND WORK/LIVE SPACES, CONT. FROM P. 6

Francisco, live/work developments were initially permitted in industrial districts to accommodate artists' needs. Industrial buildings were especially ideal for conversion into live/work lofts and offered low rents affordable to struggling artists. But with the dot-com boom of the mid-1990s, live/work lofts became a highly profitable residential development type and were soon priced out of most artists' means. Most of these expensive live/work lofts were converted in industrial districts where essential urban amenities such as transit, retail stores, community services and open space were neither readily available nor forthcoming. Furthermore, most of the units were constructed amidst functioning industrial activities, inevitably leading to conflicts between neighbors over noise, fumes and truck loading. When the high-tech bubble burst, the City's industrial districts were left with many vacant live/work lofts and irrevocably splintered industrial business clusters.⁷

Best Practices in Other Communities

■ Oakland, CA

The City of Oakland first formulated its Joint Working Living Quarter (JWLQ) regulations in 1991, hoping both to provide affordable space for artists

escaping San Francisco's sky-high real estate market while simultaneously creating higher and better uses of obsolete and vacant warehouse and industrial facilities. Since then, the City has continually reexamined its code to ensure appropriate application in the marketplace.

Through this process, proposed changes to the regulations include two classifications of joint working living quarters: *Category I Live/Work* and *Category II Work/Live*.

Category I Live/Work permits mixed-use units (with no residential floor area restrictions) in any high-density, commercial and mixed-use zones; because they are allowed only where residential uses are permitted by right, they may revert to an entirely residential use without conflict with neighboring uses. In contrast, the residential component is strictly restricted in Category II Work/Live. The work component must occupy no less than two-thirds of the floor area and must be the predominant activity of the space. Residential reversion is prohibited. Category II Work/Live units are allowed in commercial, mixed-use *and* light industrial zones (with a conditional use permit). Both categories are prohibited from City's general industrial zones to prevent conflict of uses.

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Category I Live/Work serves as a form of expanded home occupation, allowing light commercial, small-scale retail and custom manufacturing, while Category II Work/Live can also support light industrial activities in specific zones. Certain uses, including adult uses and auto-related uses, are prohibited across the board. Both categories allow employees and customers provided that the buildings meet ADA requirements and adhere to building code regulations (e.g., acceptable floor loads).

■ Cleveland, OH

Hoping to revitalize underutilized and deteriorated buildings, the City of Cleveland amended its zoning code in 2001 to establish “Live/Work⁸ Overlay (LWO) Districts.” The LWO Districts may be mapped only in certain commercial, mixed-use, or industrial zones; furthermore, a conditional use permit and an applicant-signed “acknowledgment of industrial use” are required in specified industrial zones to ensure that residents will not be subjected to excessive levels of noise, smoke, etc. and that the nature of existing industrial activities will not be impaired by the presence of live/work units. Each live/work units is required to dedicate at least 50 percent of its floor area to “work space.” With the exception of firearm sales, pet shops, certain adult entertainment, automotive and recreational uses, all activities permitted in the underlying zoning district are allowed. Employees and customers are both allowed; parking must meet the requirements of the underlying zoning district.

■ Sonoma, CA

Both live/work and work/live spaces in Sonoma County require a use permit as well as notification of property owners within 300 feet of the site. Live/work expands on allowable “Home Occupations” and permits small-scale business activities, including arts/crafts, small group services (e.g., counseling) and office-only uses generating more than four visits per day. These uses are permitted in agricultural, residential and commercial zones which allow residential uses. Contrary to Oakland and Cleveland, live/work units are not permitted in mixed-use projects.

The business component of a live/work space in Sonoma can occupy 25% of the home or 500 square feet of a garage/accessory structure. It may only operate from 8 am to 6 pm, with strict onsite regulations, including restrictions on deliveries, signage limitations (maximum two square feet) and storage (not permitted). Up to two non-resident employees are allowed, but each must have a designated parking spot on top of

Hyacinth Lofts, a dilapidated and abandoned warehouse-turned-51-live/work-loft-apartment-building, demonstrates Cleveland’s commitment to becoming a “creative class” community. Designed to appeal to artists, the units are equipped with amenities such as high whitewashed ceilings, polished concrete floors, rehearsal and performance space, sound rooms and editing suites. Eager to advance the project, the City awarded the development \$500,000 and a 12-year, 100 percent tax abatement package. Coupled with a \$75,000 contribution from the Neighborhood Trust Fund, the project became a reality in December 2004.

Hyacinth Lofts follows Cleveland’s first legally zoned live/work loft space: **TowerPress**, an early 20th-century clothing manufacturing factory converted into 80 one-to-three bedroom live/work lofts and featuring 8000 square feet of street level gallery and restaurant space. At its onset, TowerPress reserved 16 units for artists earning less than \$25K per year; entry was determined by a juried competition overseen by community leaders.

From “Art and Life Unite at Official GRAND Opening of Hyacinth Lofts,” City of Cleveland Press Release, December 22, 2004; www.thehyacinthlofts.com, and www.towerpress.com.

an additional required space. One commercial vehicle is allowed onsite.

Work/live allows some limited residential use in underutilized urban industrial areas. At least 50 percent of the floor area in a work/live unit must be designated as work space; no more than 50 percent of the combined floor area of all buildings constructed on a project site may be used for work/live units. Only the business operator (and household) may occupy a live/work unit, and up to two non-resident employees are allowed. Work/live units require two spaces per unit, plus demonstration of adequate customer parking. Onsite sales are restricted to those goods produced within the work/live unit.

The Need for Further Clarity

Well-planned placement of live/work and work/live spaces can help revitalize communities, provide afford-

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able spaces for artists and entrepreneurs, and create a healthy balance of commercial and residential uses. However, live/work and work/live spaces that are simply “thrown into the mix” without proper examinations of the surrounding uses are destined for trouble. Besides the obvious potential nuisances of noise and odor, even occupations that may seem innocuous in residential neighborhoods may cause conflict (e.g., the artist who holds gallery open houses). Conflict can be minimized if careful consideration is given to the following questions:

- Where are the appropriate locations? (e.g., live/work serving as buffer between metro high density areas and neighborhoods? Work/live in more commercial areas where there isn't as much residential...)
- What does the zoning look like? (e.g., overlay district, allowed only in mixed-use districts, etc.)
- What are the allowable uses? Prohibited uses?
- Are employees allowed? Is there a restriction on the number?
- Is walk-in trade allowed? If so, are there restrictions on operating hours? Are there restrictions on the number of customers that can be in the space at one time?
- Are there delivery restrictions? (e.g., hours, number of deliveries per week, etc.)
- Are commercial vehicles allowed at the dwelling site (particularly live/work)? How many?
- Is the owner of the business required to be an occupant of the unit?
- Should there be a set percentage of floor area dedicated to work vs. live space?
- Should there be *project* restrictions? (e.g., at no time can more than 50% of combined floor area of all buildings on the project site be used for live/work or work/live)
- To what construction standard should live/work and work/live spaces be built?
- Should there be a minimum unit size to ensure adequate space for both uses?
- Should live/work & work/live units require a conditional use permit?
- Is residential reversion allowed? Under what circumstances (e.g., require modification of use permit, etc.)?
- What type of signage/identification is permitted?
- Are certain design elements required to maintain the character of the surrounding neighborhood? (e.g., window proportions, glazing, roof forms, etc.)

- What kind of space separation requirement (if any) should there be? (e.g., a wall, entrance, floor, etc.)
- What type of products can be sold? (e.g., only products produced on site?)
- Are nuisance easements/disclosures required?
- How will parking be handled?
- How is access to private spaces restricted from customers/employees?
- Is storage allowed?

As illustrated by the examples of Oakland, Cleveland and Sonoma, communities across the country are carefully deliberating over the above issues and carving out appropriate development and use policies. Given traditional planning's aversion to and incompatibility with non-Euclidian mixed-use projects, it will likely take significant time and more than one attempt for most localities to achieve the type of live/work and work/live development they initially envision. Still, when live/work and work/live spaces are well-planned and well-placed, they can create tremendous avenues of economic opportunity at the local and regional levels, and therefore should be explored for their viability as potential economic development strategies. ■

Jennie Geisner is a graduate student in the Urban Affairs and Planning Department of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Alexandria, Virginia. She is also an intern with Arlington Economic Development in Arlington, Virginia

Footnotes

¹ Holzheimer, Terry and Lauren Hodgin, *Benchmarking the Creative Class in Arlington, Virginia*, Arlington Economic Development, Jan. 2005.

² Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Basic Books. New York, NY. 2002.

³ Arlington's 2005 Real Estate Assessments up 18 Percent Overall (Feb. 18, 2005 Arlington County press release).

⁴ Smart Growth Online (www.smartgrowth.org).

⁵ Proximity type illustrations courtesy of Noel Isherwood Associates — Architects and Urban Designers, 128 Milligan Street London E14 8AS (www.niaarchitects.co.uk).

⁶ Live-Work Institute (www.live-work.com).

⁷ Community Planning in the Eastern Neighborhoods, San Francisco Planning Department, June 2003.

⁸ If we adhere to the criteria that work is the predominant component in a work/live unit, then by definition Cleveland's “live/work” units are actually what this paper would call “work/live.”

Economic Gardening

by Christine Gibbons, Director of the Business/Industry Affairs Department of the City of Littleton, CO

In Littleton, Colorado, a new approach to economic development has sprouted. Economic gardening focuses on growing local businesses by providing an enriched environment for entrepreneurs including the use of GIS business data and maps.

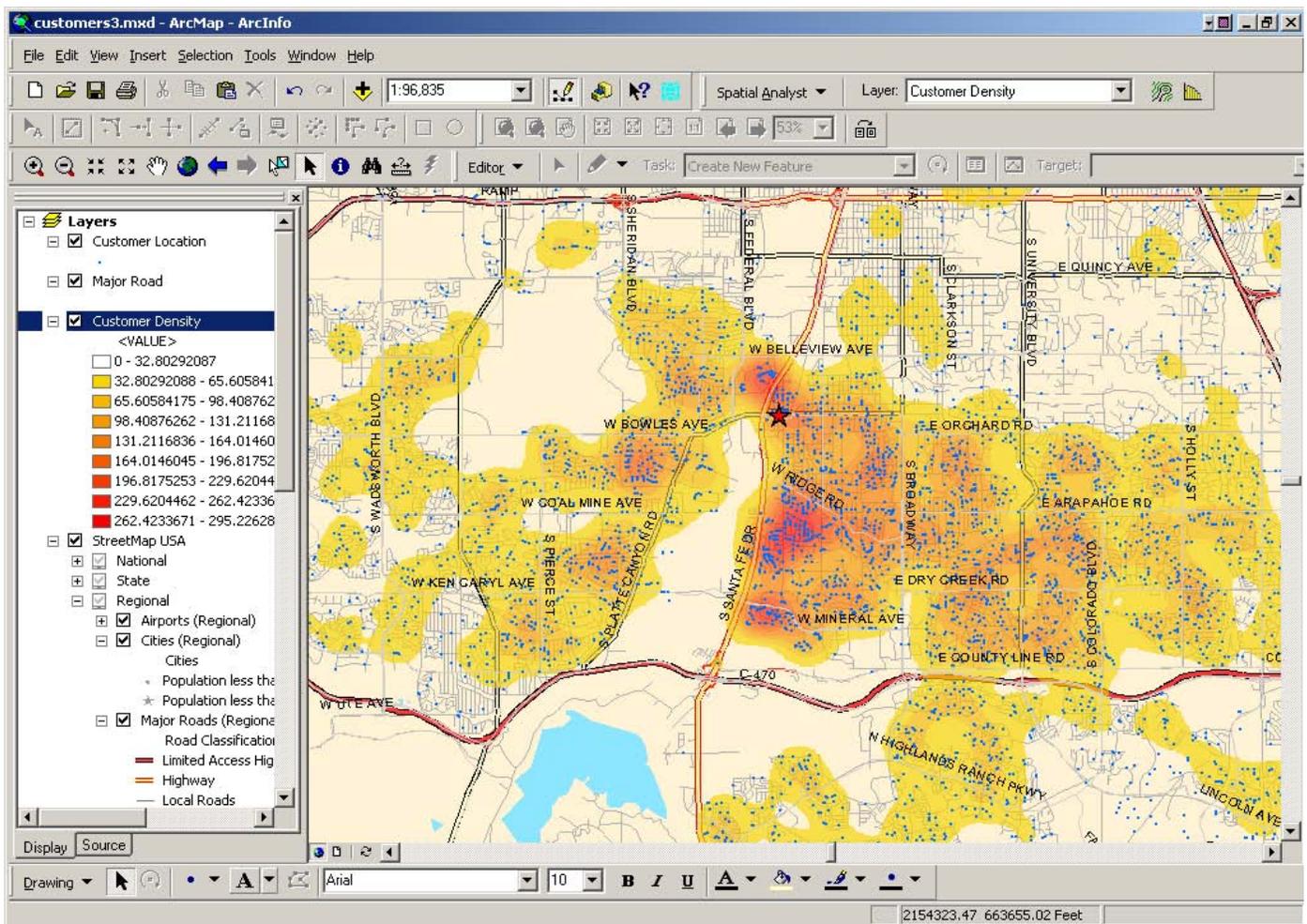
In 1987 a severe recession in the area, triggered by massive layoffs by corporations with out-of-state headquarters, drove Littleton officials to respond with this new economic development concept. Faced with empty offices, overbuilt retail buildings and high unemployment, the city council directed staff to work with local businesses to create good jobs. The Business/Industry Affairs (B/IA) department developed a number of sophisticated tools to help local businesses be

more competitive including GIS, database searching, focus groups and brochure design.

Information, Infrastructure, Connections

The three pillars of economic gardening are information, infrastructure and connections. Sophisticated information tools including GIS and database research, normally available only to large corporations, are provided to small, growing businesses to improve their decision making and competitiveness. This high-quality information, combined with the development of supportive infrastructure (basic, quality of life and intellectual) and the creation of connections to universities, trade

(continued on page 12)



An ArcView screen capture of the density of customer locations for a combined list of Downtown Littleton retail merchants. The darker red colors indicate where there are higher densities of customers.

Promote Economic Development With GIS

"We anticipate the [online economic development] service will enable us to serve the community more effectively and provide the city of Westerville with a competitive edge in the highly competitive Central Ohio Economic Development market."

Todd Jackson, GIS Manager, City of Westerville, Ohio



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Online reports and mapping allow Westerville to respond to businesses' information requests efficiently.



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The Virginia Economic Development Partnership: GIS Profile

by Sarah B. Lovejoy, Communications Specialist, Virginia Economic Development Partnership and Mary Davis, Chief Cartographer/GIS Specialist, Virginia Economic Development Partnership

The commonwealth of Virginia offers a unique and diverse combination of resources in which businesses have prospered for nearly 400 years. To communicate the state's assets to corporate decision-makers worldwide, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) relies on an assortment of GIS tools.

With its internal GIS system powered by ArcGIS and ArcSDE software, VEDP streamlines the site selection process. Where is the closest highway? What are the building requirements? Who provides local utilities? Virginia's business development managers can efficiently answer questions such as these with up-to-date information on regions, localities, sites and buildings. VEDP also uses GIS technology to produce maps for proposals and marketing brochures. With select criteria, VEDP can produce statistics, typography and aerial photography to conduct virtual site tours from anywhere with less time spent on the road and more time for getting down to business.

Detailed information is available for each property, including the ability to search workforce characteristics, existing businesses and other quality of life information within the community and specified distances.

Headlining the commonwealth's GIS resources is VirginiaScan™, the state's innovative site and building database search system that puts Virginia at the fingertips of corporate decision makers. Users can access VirginiaScan anytime on VEDP's website, www.YesVirginia.org. From anywhere in the world, they can

The screenshot shows the VirginiaScan website interface. At the top, it says "VIRGINIA Is For Business" and includes navigation links like "Governor's Page", "News Center", "Library", "Links", and "Contact Us". Below that is a search bar and a "My Briefcase" button. The main content area is titled "Property Details" and shows information for "Air Commerce Park Phase II" located at "900 Bland Boulevard, Newport News City". A contact person, Suzanne Chvala, is listed with the phone number (804) 545-5700. The page is divided into several sections: "Property", "Map", "Reports/Photos", "Workforce", "Businesses", and "Quality of Life". Under "Site Specifications", it lists: Largest Contiguous Parcel (Acres) 319.00, Total Acreage Available 319.00, Topography ground cover is wooded with a gently rolling slope, Zoning M-1, and Subdividable Yes. The "Utilities" section lists providers for Electric (Dominion Virginia Power), Natural Gas (Virginia Natural Gas), Water (Newport News Waterworks), Sewer (Hampton Roads Sanitation District), and Telecommunications (Cavalier Telephone Company, Cox Communications, Verizon-Virginia). The "Transportation" section lists: Miles to nearest interstate 2 (Interstate Name I-64), Miles to Nearest 4-lane arterial highway 1 (Highway Name Jefferson Avenue, VA 143), Miles to nearest commercial airport 0 (Commercial airport name Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport), Miles to general aviation airport 0 (General aviation airport name Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport). A "Comments" section contains the URL www.AirCommercePark.com. At the bottom, there is a disclaimer: "This information has been secured from sources we believe to be reliable, but we make no representation or warranties, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy of the information." and a "Save Property to Briefcase" button. The footer includes links for "Locate a Business to Virginia", "Start A Business In Virginia", "Virginia Tourism", "Virginia's Home Page", and "Freedom of Information Act Policy", along with flags for France, Japan, Germany, South Korea, Italy, and Spain.

Greater Richmond

Map Legend Visible:
 Workforce
 Properties
 Businesses
 Education
 Highlight Map: Yes No

Region Name	Region	Labor Force *Labor Market	Unemployment Rate	Prevailing Wage Hour	Annual	Properties	Include
Greater Richmond		382,243 / 933,444	2.75 %	\$18.91	\$39,330	35 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hampton Roads		802,553 / 964,578	3.95 %	\$15.72	\$32,688	13 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Northern Virginia		1,130,275 / 3,358,477	1.67 %	\$25.84	\$53,757	8 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Region 2000		108,991 / 417,656	3.44 %	\$14.56	\$30,290	4 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shenandoah Valley		133,729 / 403,812	2.23 %	\$13.82	\$28,742	4 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virginia's Gateway		77,648 / 945,073	5.10 %	\$15.97	\$33,216	3 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Greater Charlottesville		96,010 / 588,249	2.11 %	\$16.81	\$34,971	2 - view	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*Labor Market consists of the region plus all counties/cities that fall within 25 miles of the region's border.

Workforce data source and methodology [click here](#).

Save Search Results to Briefcase

Locate a Business to Virginia • Start A Business In Virginia • Virginia Tourism
 Virginia's Home Page • Freedom of Information Act Policy

VirginiaScan's Comprehensive Search tool enables a client to search for the ideal location using Virginia workforce statistics, existing business locations and institutions of higher education.

About the VEDP:
 In 1995, the Virginia General Assembly created the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, a marketing organization to encourage, stimulate and support the development and expansion of the economy of the commonwealth. The partnership is a state authority, which is governed by a 15-member board of directors appointed by the governor. To accomplish its objectives of promoting economic expansion, the partnership focuses its efforts on business recruitment, expansion and international trade development.

GIS technology on their own websites at no cost. Although VanillaScan pulls information directly from VEDP's server, the online database can be tailored to fit the individual look of each community's own website.

With these three valuable resources — Virginia's internal GIS system, VirginiaScan and VanillaScan — VEDP can minimize turnaround times and provide unparalleled service and information to corporate decision-makers. ■

Welcome to Our New Members...

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Mason H. Ailstock | Greenville, SC | Jennie Elise Geisner | Alexandria, VA | Zachary P. Montgomery | Roswell, NM |
| Munish Arora | Newark, CA | Thomas Hix | Los Altos, CA | James A. Neville | New York, NY |
| Jennafer R. Badillo | Los Angeles, CA | Anjali H. Kaul | Austin, TX | Brian K. Rose | Buckeye, AZ |
| Bonnie Bernardo | Orlando, FL | Dwane J. Kennedy | San Francisco, CA | Ronald H. Satterfield, AICP | Wilmington, NC |
| Terry H. Brooks | Silver Spring, MD | Natalie S. Koeplinger | Greensboro, NC | Martha Sickles, AICP | Hackettstown, NJ |
| Roland Chi | Garden Grove, CA | Kevin Limestall | Highland, IL | Steve Sizemore | La Verne, CA |
| Giovanna G. Codato | Ivrea, Italy | Lawrence J. Mango | Rutherford, NJ | Veljko Skarich | Berkeley, CA |
| Bernadette M. Fisher | Lake Wales, FL | Sheila Martin | Portland, OR | Mark R. Stallings | Independence, MO |
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Applying Current Research Findings to Improve Software Training for Economic Development Professionals

by Michael Formosi

As economic development professionals, we have become increasingly reliant on computer software programs to assist us in our work. On a daily basis, we routinely utilize a variety of software programs to complete a multitude of tasks. By utilizing these programs, we are able to collect, organize, analyze, present, and disseminate information in ways that were not possible in the past. Computer software plays such a central role in our work that it is difficult to imagine how the modern economic development agency could function without these programs.

The expenditures required to purchase the host of computer software programs economic development agencies utilize is substantial. Purchasing standard software programs such as Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and ArcGIS is just the beginning in a series of software acquisitions that economic development agencies are likely to make. In addition to these basic programs, agencies often purchase specialized software designed to conduct detailed economic analysis. In some cases, the cost of purchasing or licensing specialized computer software programs can exceed the purchase price of the computer upon which it will be installed.

Given the substantial costs associated with computer software, economic development agencies should take steps to ensure that their employees are utilizing these programs as effectively as possible. This article will examine how the application of current research findings on software utilization can assist employees in achieving this goal. By way of example, the article begins with an examination of how research focusing on presentation software has identified a number of guiding principles that can be applied to develop more effective multi-media presentations. Following this example, the article will discuss the need for training programs that emphasize principles of effective software use, as opposed to training that focuses primarily on software operation.

Guiding Principles for Presentation Software

Studies focusing on the growing use of presentation software such as PowerPoint, Keynote, and OpenOffice

Impress demonstrate that applying research finding can assist in using software more effectively. For over a decade, researchers have studied the impacts, both positive and negative, that these types of programs have on communication and learning. Based on a growing number of studies, researchers have identified guiding principles that can be applied to the development of more effective multi-media presentations. Examples of these guiding principles are presented below:

■ **Capturing an Audience's Attention:** According to Cliff Atkinson, author of *Beyond Bullet Points*, effective multi-media presentations are developed with the audience's perspective in mind. Atkinson notes that presentations can capture an audience's attention by answering the basic question, "What's in it for me?" Audience members pay closer attention if they believe the information being presented will impact them directly.

■ **Slide Composition:** Richard E. Mayer, professor of psychology at the University of California, states that the most effective presentation slides combine both images and text. This guiding principle is based on studies that indicate audience members retain more information when slides combine these two elements. In terms of the retention of information, the least effective presentation slides are those that contain dense text and no images.

■ **Background Selection:** Andrew Goodman, a communications consultant and author of the forthcoming book *Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes*, recommends avoiding the use of built-in templates and brightly colored backgrounds. These types of backgrounds can have the effect of drawing the viewer's attention away from text and images on a slide. Goodman suggests a black or dark-colored background to ensure that attention is drawn to the intended focal point — the informational content of the slide.

(continued next page)

■ **Formatting Text:** The formatting of text can influence the pace of a presentation. Studies indicate that capitalizing text slows reading by 12% and therefore should be used sparingly, primarily for capitalizing slide headings.

■ **Reading Text:** James McKenzie, editor of *From Now On-The Educational Technology Journal*, states that presenters should avoid reading text slides aloud to their audience. Reading slides aloud “trains” an audience to ignore text since they assume it will eventually be read aloud to them by the presenter. McKenzie recommends that text slides be used as talking points that presenters expand upon by providing additional information.

■ **Making a Key Point:** Goodman suggests that one of the most effective methods for capturing an audience’s attention during a multi-media presentation is to blank the screen. Pressing the B key during a presentation will make the screen go black and audience members will instinctively turn their attention to the presenter. After a key point is made, pressing the B key a second time will return the presentation to the current slide.

Most of us have had the experience of sitting through ineffective multi-media presentations consisting of slide after slide of dense text and few images. Many of these presentations would have benefited substantially by the application of the guiding principles identified above. Research focusing on presentation software provides one example of the benefits of applying current research findings. The application of research findings to other types of software programs, including publication, mapping, and web design software, could be of equal value to economic development professionals.

Procedures Versus Principles

How can economic development agencies promote the application of research findings to encourage the more effective use of software within their organizations? I believe the first step involves reassessing current approaches to software training. When organizations acquire new software, training tends to focus primarily on teaching the set of procedures required to operate specific software programs. Examples of procedures include the series of steps required to input data, select from menus, or create new files and documents. Every

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THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

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The Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning anticipates an opening for a tenure-track faculty position at the assistant or associate professor level beginning in August, 2006. The successful candidate must, at a minimum, have a Ph.D. in planning or a related discipline, demonstrate substantial potential for scholarly research and publication, and be able to teach courses in urban economics, economic development, government finance, community development or development finance. We welcome candidates with complementary interests in equity planning and minority issues, GIS, or transportation.

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Initial review of applications will begin on January 2 for the August 2006 appointment. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The applicant should reply with a vita, a letter of application, three letters of reference, and at least one publication or other sample of writing. The letter of application should describe the kinds of courses the candidate would be prepared to teach, as well as the candidate's research interests. We especially encourage applications from minorities and women. Applications should be directed to:

James A. Throgmorton, Chair
Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning
347 Jessup Hall
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242

Phone: 319-335-0032
Fax: 319-335-3330
Email: james-throgmorton@uiowa.edu
Homepage: <http://www.urban.uiowa.edu/>

The University of Iowa is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

software program has its own unique set of procedures that is seldom transferable to other programs. For example, the series of procedures required to create a map using MapPoint are not transferable to Arc GIS software since each program was designed with its own unique interface for operation.

Obviously, teaching the procedures associated with specific software programs is an essential component of any software training program. However, once employees have mastered a software program's procedures, training should shift its focus to teaching the guiding principles that lead to the most effective use of the software. This type of training is based upon using research to identify guiding principles and teaching how these principles can be applied. One of the major advantages of this approach is that guiding principles for effective use are transferable within general software groups. For instance, principles of effective map design are applicable whether using ArcGIS, MapPoint, or any other mapping program. The goal of software training programs should be to provide employees with both the *procedures* and *principles* associated with effective software use. By providing instruction in both of these areas, economic development organizations can ensure that employees have both the skills and the knowledge to utilize software as effectively as possible.

Software programs will continue to play an integral role in the work processes of economic development professionals. Research into the ways in which software programs can be utilized more effectively will also continue. From this research, new guiding principles for the effective use of software will emerge. Economic development agencies should consider providing training opportunities that includes the teaching of these guiding principles. This training will benefit both the agency and the employee; the agency will benefit from the more effective use of its investment in software and employees benefit by acquiring the knowledge and skills that will enable them to use software in ways that add real value to their work. ■

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Suggested Readings

The following readings focus on guiding principles for the effective use of general software types.

Presentation Software:

Multimedia Learning, by Richard E. Mayer (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Beyond Bullet Points, by Cliff Atkinson (Microsoft Press, 2005).

Publication Software:

The Non-Designer's Design Book, 2nd Edition, by Robin Williams and John Tollet (PeachPit Press, 2005).

"Is There Such a Thing as the Perfect Page Layout?" by Jacqui Howard Bear (About Computing and Technology, 2005). Available: http://desktoppub.about.com/cs/pagelayout/f/layout_rules.htm

Website Design Software:

"Web Page Design Inspired by Edward Tufte," by Larry Gales (University of Washington Computing and Communications, 2000). Available: <http://staff.washington.edu/larryg/Classes/Rinflux/zz-influx.html>

"Art and the Zen of Websites," by Tony Karp (TLC Systems Corp, 2002). Available: <http://www.tlc-systems.com/webtips.shtml>

Mapping Software:

Designing Better Maps: A Guide for GIS Users, by Cynthia Brewster (ESRI Press, 2005).

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Economic Development Division Graduate Scholarship

Master's level students from PAB-accredited planning departments across the U.S. may apply. For a list of eligible departments, please see the Economic Development Division's website (<http://www.planning.org/economic/scholarship.htm>). The \$1,000 scholarship is awarded on the basis of a letter of recommendation from a full-time faculty member and an original paper or work having to do with a substantive and relevant topic related to economic development. Application details for the 2006 award are provided below.

The application deadline is February 24, 2006. Applications comprised of a cover letter, a letter of recommendation, and an original paper should be submitted to:

Dr. Heike Mayer
Urban Affairs and Planning
Virginia Tech – Alexandria Campus
1021 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
heikem@vt.edu

Previous awardees are listed below:

2005 Recipient

Jessica Zenk of the University of California at Berkeley was selected for her work titled "The Arts as Economic Development: Three Successful Applications." Jessica received a check from the division in the amount of \$1,000 at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Her paper appeared in the spring issue of *News & Views*.

2004 Recipient

Alisa Kane of Portland State University was selected for her work titled "Reclaimed Opportunities: Planning for Recycling-Based Economic Development." She received a check from the division in the amount of \$1,000 and her paper was featured in the summer issue of *News & Views*.

