

## Success of Local Businesses

- 2.1** Provide Intense promotional coverage for Launch, events, promotions wins, etc. This is a Chamber/Main Street initiative (largely) involving an aggressive marketing and communications program for local businesses. Contact with TV, radio, print, internet, and other media would be included—as well as flyers, local advertisement in the local shops, etc. It is calculated to increase the probability of success for all ventures/initiatives.
- 2.2** Provide Workshops for managers. This is intended to provide on-going training (and monitoring) of local ventures. These workshops would provide venues for instruction and interactions with experts/mentors and the larger community.
- 2.3** Provide on-going promotional opportunities for marketing outside of Leland events (area and extra-area). This would include co-cop advertising, web-initiatives, trade show coverage, and perhaps webcam support.
- 2.4** Create ad hoc events to drive traffic. This involves creating ad hoc downtown events (e.g. parades, demonstrations, events) to attract traffic to downtown (or perimeter) merchants. Simple ‘holiday’ to ‘honoring X’ to ‘features on Main street’ type events would fit the bill.
- 2.5** Engage volunteer labor for paint, clean-up, debris removal, etc under a ‘Shine up Leland’ campaign. This would involve volunteer labor with materials (e.g. paint, trash removal) donations from local firms. Some material costs might be covered by grants (in the Historic district).
- 2.6** Assist in finding funding sources for major cost elements (e.g., repairs, remodel). This will largely be a resource information management function to learn and catalog information about grants, econ development funding, tax credits, etc. A clearing house for financial information of use to Leland merchants.
- 2.7** Create some kind of ‘investment tax credit’ or distress tax referral programs. This will be a initiative combing the knowledge of existing programs (e.g. Historic District, Preserve America) and creation of new structures (e.g. Leland tax deferment programs?).
- 2.8** Improve downtown environment through ‘Best Improvement’ contest. This type of program is already done by downtown Greenville successfully. This involves a Rewards & Recognition process which awards a local business some monetary and recognition award for facilities/appearance improvement. Hopefully, we can find funding sources (e.g., Façade grants) to help fund the material costs of improvement initiatives.
- 2.9** Improve downtown environment through public/common area improvements. This is (largely) a Main Street initiative—on streetscape level improvements—but

can extend beyond that to non-structural improvements. This will require funding through various MMSA sources, but the design is essentially already done (by the 2001 study). Priority will be on public area improvements which do NOT require approval of local property owners. [Hopefully we can build consensus and involvement around such designs with early wins..]

- 2.10** Increase traffic to/from downtown/periphery via signage, cross-promotion, shuttle.
- 2.11** Create a Leland “Directory” of offerings by store. MMSA pointed out that many retailers offer accessory products which might not be expected by shoppers. This initiative does a simple inspection and/or survey of local venues and publishes a list on the website, and periodic flyers/mailers—with emphasis on any new items added by the merchants.

## Grow the Number of Businesses

- 3.1** Present compelling vision for their business and employees. For a specific company, this might involve developing a hypothetical business plan. For the ‘unknown lookers’, we should prepare a series of “Why an X type of business should locate in Leland” plans. These ‘sample plans’ would portray the values for their employees, of course.
- 3.2** Present attractive financial options. This would include all of the renovation credits/programs associated with the historic district, but also include any tax abatements, moving assistance, and special pools of lower-cost loans [maybe even in conjunction with the Incubation programs]. We could perhaps ‘require’ some time of training/mentoring programs from them to others in our community(?).
- 3.3** Facilitate easy access to required labor. This might be as simple as a localized Service fair for them, allowing them to assess the pre-interview skills of local residents. [If this was kept in database form, this could also be used to facilitate and expedite the interviewing programs.]
- 3.4** Provide location options and scenarios. We should develop a portfolio of un-used or under-used buildings, which sample scenarios for their rent/purchase/share and their refurbishment possibilities. These could be marketed ‘blindly’ as well as when specific opportunities came up.
- 3.5** Offer free Seminars to possible entrants. This might include simple Seminars on ‘how to open a business in Leland’ to ‘building a Leland-centric marketing plan’. These are half/all-day workshops in which the emphasis is on concrete, quantitative detail and plans.
- 3.6** Provide pre-build Launch programs (“Launch in a Box”). This would involve the Chamber/MS membership crafting a comprehensive launch plan, complete with regulatory requirements, marketing and logistics timetable, location of important sources, and even scheduled meetings with the government officials.
- 3.7** Develop and market a “Why Leland?” presentation/pitch to trade groups and feeder systems. This would include local colleges, unions, associations in other towns (especially Jackson and Monroe). Might be a combination of flyer, booth, phone call, web campaign, etc. Something to define clear Leland’s value proposition for each constituency.
- 3.8** Implement first year “Buddy system”. Get a successful businessman to ‘adopt’ the newcomer for the first year, and meet regularly with them to discuss business progress and information needs. A “Business Big Brother” kind of program to help the newcomer have a smooth ramp to success.

- 3.9** Demonstrate investments in future (e.g., youth, City infrastructure). Descriptions of investments in youth education, physical infrastructure, quality of life, etc should be detailed. Results are less important than proof of investment and involvement by key players in developing Leland's capabilities.
- 3.10** Provide grant-funded 'office support' for incubation or expansion into Leland. Establish some pool of resources for an outsider to use while in town, preparing for expanding into the area. A simple desk, phone, PC, etc—like the Business Centers in hotels and airports—would be perfect for this.
- 3.11** Demonstrate improvement in problem areas. We can have problems (e.g. in our common areas of town) as long as we can demonstrate progress in resolving them. This will require documentation of before/after and incremental improvements, and evidence of on-going investment in resolving these.