It’s Not Just for Students

Transformation in and around the University of Akron campus
University of Akron

- Current enrollment - 23,000
- Historical trend
  - Began as Buchtel College in 1870
  - Became State University in 1967, enrollment of 10,000
- 218 acres, 81 buildings
- 350 undergraduate and graduate programs
University Economic Engine

- It can’t help it:
  - Operating Budget
  - Capital Budget
  - Research institutes and labs
  - Technology transfer
  - Commercialization Center
  - Small Business Development Center

- Consider using wealth to influence/support the local economy
Development Potential

- Proximity to downtown
- Nearby medical, arts, entertainment, restaurants, recreation, financial, legal
- Amenities on campus
- Familiarity with the college experience
- Changing demographics of students
- Student housing upgrade
How to develop community

- Leadership and bureaucracy agree
- Work at the edges
- Break through – not abandon - campus perspective
- Land assembly with patient money
- Internal advocate
- Financial investments
City-University Dynamic

- Two levels of relationships
  - Upper level of Mayor/President, Board of Trustees and Cabinet; more political, transitory
  - Mid-level bureaucrats; work, detail-oriented, institutionalized
    - University: Facilities, security, planning
    - City: Engineering, traffic, services, police, fire, planning
- Both the leadership and the bureaucracy have to get it
University and Community Development?

- Not intrinsic to mission
- Where is the University located within the community?
- Place-making
Landscape for Learning

- Since 1999, $300+ million invested
- 2 Classroom buildings
- Student Union
- Student Affairs & Services
- Recreation and Wellness Center
- Field House
- Honors Dorm
Landscape for Learning

- 14 major building renovations
- 2 Parking decks – 2,200 spaces
- Closed two streets through campus
- Created 30 acres of green space
- Planted thousands of trees and bushes
Community development

- Look at the edge, where the University and Community meet
- What activities fit there?
- Bookstore, student services, registration, recreation, performance/culture venues
Residence Hall – Exchange St.
Residence Hall Project

- 8,000 s.f. of retail space
- 460 bed capacity
- Large quad area
- Urban profile with building set at the sidewalk
Recreation Areas
Break through campus mind-set

- City looking for partners
- City wishes University and SUMMA Medical Center would do more
- Both institutions share a campus mind-set
- Both institutions understand owning real estate
- Control what’s inside
Span the Tracks
Business School
Polsky Building
A Greek Village?
Land assembly

- Do they understand developing/partnering on real estate?
- Use patient money for investing in long-term land assembly
  - Overcome high price/small land parcel dynamic in surrounding real estate.
- What is reasonable rate of return?
You can’t always get what you want
Place-making

- Naming it/ Branding it
- When did it become University Park?
What is University Park?

- 700 Acres
- 11,500 Residents in 4,200 households
- Culturally rich
- 700+ businesses with 24,000 employees
- 24,000 university students
- Strategically located high investment area
The Advocate - University Park Alliance

Revitalizing Neighborhoods Together

University Park Alliance Partners

The University of Akron
AKRON METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY
AMHA
Akon Public Schools
SUMMA Health System
Greater Akron Chamber

Major Funding Provided by:
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

We invite you to learn more about how you can benefit through involvement.
Ken Stapleton, Director • 330-972-8859 • ks32@uakron.com
University Park Alliance

- Awarded $2.5 million grant from Knight foundation in late 2001
- University President Proenanza recognized need to establish initiatives with the surrounding neighborhoods
- In the Office of the President
UPA – Partner’s meeting

• Established regular twice a year meetings for the first time among City, University, SUMMA Medical Center and others
• Leaders attend
• Review major initiatives in area by partners
• Polite but helpful
What can the City do?

- Street vacation
- Land assembly – urban renewal
- Commercial artery improvements – gateway
- Support non-profit development corporations
- Assist development
University – Buchtel Avenue
Buchtel Common
Buchtel Commons - central
University - Carroll Street
Carroll Commons
Goody, Clancy Associates
Revitalization Strategy

- Focus on major commercial streets
  - East Market and East Exchange Streets
- Transform streets into neighborhood-serving Main Streets
- Create commercial development that enhances livability for students, faculty and staff, and residents
- Create housing opportunities that serve the same
Farmer’s Market
Drumm Gallery
Neighborhood cafes
Spicer Village

- Create owner occupied housing in a student housing neighborhood
- Walking distance to campus
- Near Drumm gallery, coffee houses, restaurants
- Across from University recreation area
- Consolidated property ownership
- Good boundaries
Drawbacks

- Image as student housing area; low owner-occupancy
- May Day activities
- Poor quality of housing
- High cost of housing as student rentals
- Small, irregular-shaped lots
Spicer Village

- Local Developers held focus groups
  - Young professionals
  - Medical community
  - Downtown workers
  - Arts & crafts community
- Interest, price, environment, features affirmed
Spicer Village

WEST ELEVATION

Spicer Village
Akron, Ohio
Spicer Village
University Involvement

- UPA, President catalyst for internal change
- Will provide $10,000 grants to University employees for equity
- Consider joint City-University proposal for development of Exchange St.
- Stadium development
- Limited Foundation investment – return on investment
- Recreation Center memberships
City Involvement

- Provided pre-development matching grant
- Created urban renewal area for land assembly and development guidelines
- Program CDBG for public improvements
- Program Tax Increment Financing for property acquisition and development subsidy
Development around Campus

- Careful site selection
- Engage in land assembly; development subsidy
- Provide development guidelines
- Upgrade retail services
- Create well-designed environment
- University support with complementary investment at the edge