



# Heritage Ohio

May 23, 2013



**Strong Region**



**Strong  
Downtown**



# greater downtown dayton plan

## Greater Downtown Dayton:

- \$5 billion annual economic impact
- 42,000 employees
- 20,000 residents
- 40,000 students
- 7 million annual visitors to major attractions



# greater downtown dayton plan

Focus areas:

- Sustainable Economy
- Creative Placemaking
- Housing
- Arts/Culture/Amenities
- Active Lifestyles
- Green & Sustainable



**Activated Spaces: economy, placemaking and amenities**



# activated spaces' goals

Activated Spaces is a volunteer-led initiative spearheaded by young professional organizations **Generation Dayton** and **UpDayton**.

Main goals:

- reactivate and beautify vacant storefronts
- encourage entrepreneurs, artists and community groups to occupy space for short- and long-term uses
- showcase downtown properties and increase interest and investment in available space

Activated Spaces is part of the **Greater Downtown Dayton Plan**, a strategic blueprint for the future of downtown.

updayton.   
talent on the rise



A Program of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce



# why groups got involved

**UpDayton Survey:**  
64% said a vibrant  
downtown is very  
important, but only 10%  
scored our downtown  
vibrancy good to excellent

A bustling downtown is extremely important to young people. Making downtown more beautiful and vibrant is a critical effort to attract and retain talented young people in the Dayton region.



"I will Stay If" Photos by [Joel Spitsnaugle](#) and [Val Smith](#)





# vacancy as opportunity



# research on programs in other cities

Troy, NY



Seattle



Chicago



Cleveland



# activated spaces launch

January 12, 2011

## Two Activated Spaces Teams

- Street Level Art
- Pop-up Project





# first phase: street-level art project



- Open call for artwork around themes
- 21 windows filled in 2012
- More than 1,000 People's Choice votes



## Installing Local Art in Downtown Storefronts

- 10 artists / storefronts for each Urban Nights
- People's Choice competition online; winner has work installed downtown for long-term exhibit

## second phase: pop-up project



**Fill move-in ready spaces with new tenants:** local entrepreneurs try their business concepts at minimal risk while activating vacant first-floor space



**Activated Spaces acts as broker between:**

- Business owners & entrepreneurs who are interested in downtown location
- Property owners who have available first-floor space and are willing to lease it below market value for a short-term basis (three to six months)



# pop-up project elements



- Shops launched in groups
- Small stipend to offset lease costs for first three months
- Tenants offered professional services support
- Approximately 3 ½ months from initial applicant solicitation to shop launch



# project timeline



- RFP solicitation: 30 days
- Applicant selection and initial property pairing: 2-3 weeks
- Property / tenant meetings and lease negotiations: one month

# pilot phase



- Objective: launch at least one new shop for the 2011 holiday season
- One- to three-month leases
- Two of the three shops launched in pilot phase are still open

# tenant solicitation



- Document similar to business plan that includes:
  - marketing plans
  - status of needed inventory
  - space requirements / size
  - applicant experience
- More than 50 applications have been received since the project's launch

# tenant selection



- Applicants scored on:
  - fit for downtown
  - experience
  - marketing plan
  - likelihood of being ready by opening date
- Community survey informs selection
- Interview top candidates



# professional service support



- marketing
- graphic design
- retail design
- business / financial planning
- connections to community resources

# lessons learned

- Marketing is key
- Brokering is time intensive
- Success for any given shop is hard to predict
- Give people an excuse to start something new
- More time to start a store is not necessarily better



# successes to date



- Nine new shops started since fall 2011
- Seven still are in business
- One has expanded and another now expanding
- More than 10,000 square feet of previously vacant space filled



# creating a retail culture

- Brim
- Status
- Hangar 18
- Clash Consignment Co.
- Serendipity Bistro
- Salar Restaurant and Lounge



# **lisa scott: owner of beaute box**



- Fresh ideas can change a city
- Small businesses create a buzz and interest in a previously unoccupied space



## beaute box



“Walking Into Beaute Box is like walking into a girlfriend’s apartment.”  
— Shanon Potts, Activated Spaces volunteer



**Beaute Box**  
*Before*

# Beaute Box *After*



# Thank You to Our Project Partners!



Small Business  
Development Centers

