
REDEVELOPMENT EXPLAINED

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1. **What is Redevelopment:** Redevelopment, like development, entails a process that encompasses planning, development, re-planning, redesign, clearance of the land, construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation of all or a part of a Project Area. It is this process whereby a developer and City and / or County work together in eliminating blight from within a designated area. The focus of redevelopment is to achieve the desired development through construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of retail, commercial, residential and industrial activities.
 2. **What is Blight:** Blight refers to areas within the City, County or State that constitute the health, safety and well-being of the people or the community. These areas can consist of deteriorating structures, vacant or deteriorating land and / or structures that constitute social or economic or physical liabilities.
 3. **What is a Redevelopment Agency:** Within most cities, the Redevelopment Commission is group of elected members. NOTE: In 2009, the State of California eliminated each of its City's Redevelopment Agencies, which were previously empowered through their legal authorities to "take" / condemn certain structures and land that were designated as Development Project Areas. Typically, the City Council members, who are elected by the public, are also selected to be the governing board for the City's Redevelopment Agency ("RDA"). In some cities, the RDA Director reports directly to the City Manager; in others, they may be a sub-set organization that reports to the Community Development Agency ("CDA"). Likewise the sister agency, the Economic Development Agency ("EDA") can either report to the City Manager or Community Development Agency; it is sometimes combined into one department, i.e., RDA + EDA with one manager. The RDA focuses its attention towards the areas within the City that are blighted and / or require redevelopment to achieve the planning, development, re-planning, re-development, re-design, clearance, reconstruction or rehabilitation of all or part of a project that falls within a "Project Area". The RDA hires its own staff to carry out the day-to-day functions of implementing the redevelopment plans of the City. In most Counties across the U.S., the County Board of Supervisors will actually be the Governing Board for the RDA and, of course, for the City Council's activities.

4. **What is a Redevelopment Project Area:** The Project Area is an area within the City that typically contains the most blight and requires the most focused approach that needs to be redefined for the betterment of the City. The Project Area is a sub-set of a land area within a designated set of boundaries of the City. It is a part of the overall redevelopment plan (see below) for the City. This area typically requires the most resources for revitalization and redevelopment within the City. The designation of the Project Area occurs as a part of a process. Which includes public hearings and public out-reach between the Council Members and the general public within the City. Quite often, the City's overall Redevelopment Plan and specifically its designated Project Area(s) within the plan are the results of outside consultants working with the City's Staff to define the details for these plans. Redevelopment through the RDA is one of the most effective vehicles to bring new life into a deteriorating area. The specific Project Areas is quite often blighted by social, environmental or economic conditions. These conditions become barriers to new private enterprise for development and investment within the City's designated (blighted) Project Areas. Thus a Project Area becomes a focus for new financial investments that will reverse the deteriorating trends. Redevelopment creates jobs, sales and other tax increment and fees to the City and to RDA itself. The developer may add housing stock, as well. In fact, through the process of Redevelopment, many existing renters could move into ownership roles throughout other parts of the City. It basically allows for new development that most likely would not be undertaken without the focus, strengths and authorities of the RDA.
5. **What is a Redevelopment Plan:** This is a plan for the revitalization and redevelopment of a designated land area that lies within a Project Area (see below), which is a part of an overall City's plan. The Project Area and Redevelopment Plan are focused towards the elimination of blight and are presented by the developer to demonstrate and provide a concept that defines how the developer would implement a part of redevelopment plan. This includes a specific set of concepts that will remedy the conditions that have or are causing the conditions of blight. The Project Plan represents the results of a process wherein the Developer and the RDA staff work together, with public input, to create a basic framework for a project. It identifies the tasks that will be undertaken to implement the proposed project. This requires purchase and sale agreements between the City / RDA / Developer / Lender and other agencies to implement such a proposed project. This plan identifies the mix of uses, the tax increments, economic benefits, and jobs created (full, part time, ancillary and construction oriented). The Buy-Sell Agreements are negotiated for the area covered by the project plan that is a portion of the Project Area. Again, the Project Area lies within the RDA's approved Project Plan area.

6. **What is a Project Area:** Simply stated, the Project Area is a designated area within the redevelopment plan (area). This may be a small part of the downtown area or may include the entire downtown and in some situations, may even cover the majority of a City's boundaries. Specifically, it is the area within the City that is designated for actual redevelopment to take place. To approve this Project Area, it must be initially approved by the City's public, Redevelopment Agency, City Council members and RDA members via a series of Public Hearings. This is the venue during which the developers and the Public are invited to make presentations to the Council. This expression of their views become part of public record and provides a venue for those interested parties to express their questions, opposition and / or support for this planned area. After the requisite public hearings, the RDA will act upon the adoption of the Project Area. The RDA then becomes primarily responsible for the prospective future projects that get approved or rejected within the Project Area.
7. **What are the Primary Steps Needed For the Developer to Begin a New Project:** Development and redevelopment encompasses a process that begins with communication between the developer and the City. Quite often this begins with a phone call or meeting between the developer and the City Manager or Planning Director or Redevelopment Agency Director. In this case, the developer may foresee an opportunity to create a new project. The developer may or may not represent a specific tenant at that time or he may be just exploring various development opportunities within the City. Quite often, the City takes charge of this beginning situation and, either through their own offices or with outside consultants. The RDA can either "notice" the public for ideas to redevelop a specific area or, through the use of Requests for Proposals, ask for developers to present ideas as a part of a formal process. This process defines the developers concepts for the creations of one or more projects that they would like to have implemented with the City's Project Area. To do this, the developer must think thru the processes that are needed to implement a project within Project Area. Some of the Steps are identical to any private development planning, while some are very specific to working within the rules and regulations of a RDA / Project Area. The following presents an overview of the process:
 - a. Review Trade Are: This is needed to fully understand the demographics and economics of what is there (tenants / uses, etc) and what is missing. This becomes the basis for all future actions with the City and your tenants.

- b. If this is a downtown / urban development which consists of both raw land, existing buildings (vacant or in use), by definition these would need to be identified as blight or a blighted area. Then one must assume one owns all of the land in order to prepare a comprehensive plan. This will then lead to a method of controlling / owning the requisite parcels. This process of obtaining control (escrow) for the land parcels focuses one's attention to the details of what one must do to control and acquire each of the parcels, buildings, businesses, etc. This further requires meetings with the RDA as well as requiring contact with the Owners. Redevelopment law provides many advantages for eminent domain; however, this is not a process that the "feint-at-heart". The Developer and RDA / City needs to begin this process (yes it's a process) with full knowledge of the details and relevant laws.
- c. Bring in your Land Use Attorney at this stage and begin an open discussion with the City's RDA about your plans. Review the ownership records for all of the legal parcels that fall within your proposed Project's area.
- d. Review the City's overall City Plan that exists. This provides you with insights as to what the City and the Community would like to see within the Project Area.
- e. Continue meeting with each of the City's department heads to begin an open communication of your plans.
- f. Numerous meetings will be required between your (project) consultants and the City's staff to identify all of the issues in terms of uses, zoning, condemnation, relocation, and other determining factors.
- g. Remember, this is an iterative process that will take several years to obtain your entitlements.