



**Myerstown Vitalization Partnership:  
A Model Town Revitalization Organization**

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Charles J Blankenship

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By creating the Myerstown Vitality Partnership in 2019 the Myerstown Borough Council in Pennsylvania achieved a remarkable accomplishment. Unlike most towns, with dispersed and often conflicting and competing development and marketing organizations, the MVP was given a mission that includes all economic development, residential development and community development as areas of responsibility. Additionally, the borough authorized MVP to take the required actions to accomplish its mission. The Myerstown Vitalization Partnership is a model revitalization organization.

The partnership was created, with assistance of volunteer mentoring from the Lancaster-Lebanon SCORE Chapter, as a non-profit public-private corporation that now has a committed board of directors, a full time professional president and a passionate community of funding contributors.

Its strategic goal is to return Myerstown to its former glory. That is the period up to the 1970's before the closing of the steel industry plants in the nearby City of Lebanon caused economic and population decline in the borough.

Its strategic mission includes:

- Economic Development for the attraction, expansion and retention of business or other employers for the purpose of creating jobs and tax revenue.
- Residential Development to expand the number of owner occupied residential units by construction, renovation or repurposing.
- Community Development for the development of community owned facilities that benefit employers by maintaining the community's attractiveness for hiring and retention of employees, benefit residential property owners by maintaining or increasing property values and enhance livability for its residents.

MVP has been given a wide range of tools to reach its strategic objective including:

- Real Estate development is an important component of the strategy. The partnership has the power to acquire, sell, lease, construct, renovate, repair, improve, or demolish real property. It can also assist private businesses, investors and developers undertake building projects.
- Financing provides the essential means to accomplish development and revitalization. MVP has the ability to receive grants, donations, contributions or loans from any source, and to make grants, loans or loan guarantees. The corporation is also able to facilitate financing for businesses from private or government sources, including tax incentives.
- Advocacy is the act of affecting government decision making, usually on regulatory issues, short of lobbying. If needed the partnership can recommend changes in such issues as zoning or construction permitting ordinances, county or state government

policies or government incentive programs, to allow beneficial revitalization and development projects to proceed.

- Marketing is a form of communication MVP can use to attract private investment and businesses or possibly home owners in to the borough through advertising, public relations or other means. Its marketing strategy is based on a data driven market analysis which identifies the type of business that could be profitable in Myerstown.
- Event Management is an activity the partnership may use to bring potential customers into the town center to generate retail and restaurant sales and to support local business. Parades, fairs and festivals are examples of event management projects.

The borough created an organization designed to succeed with an appropriate organizational structure with a clear purpose to manage and encourage coordinated economic development, residential development and community development by managing or facilitating real estate, financing, advocacy, marketing and event projects. It is a partnership other towns can use as a model when creating revitalization organizations.

*The author can be contacted through the Applied Government Studies Center at [charles@agscenter.org](mailto:charles@agscenter.org). Comments are welcomed.*