

# GREEN URBANISM:

## A COMPARISON OF MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS

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Naomi Cole

ENVS 635

Berman

10.21.04

# Problem and Solution

- Problem: suburbs compartmentalize services and districts
  - Leads to low density land consumption, automobile dependency, community isolation
- Solution: mix functions/uses
  - Develop housing and commerce in existing urban areas
  - Create a sense of place
  - Foster community interaction
  - Encourage pedestrian transit
  - Minimize ecological disturbance

# Expert Advice

- Peter Calthorpe says that “Our communities must be designed to reestablish and reinforce the public domain, that our districts must be human-scaled, and that our neighborhoods must be diverse in use and in population.”
- Recommendations from the Smart Growth Network:
  - mixed land uses; compact neighborhood design; multiple housing opportunities; walkable communities; preservation of open spaces; access to transportation options; and fair, cost-effective development options
  - Creates a diverse community of residents who play an integral role to the life of the city

# Two Models

- Denver Dry Goods:
  - Historical renovation that reinvigorated downtown Denver with mixed use, mixed income project
- Museum Place South:
  - New construction project that integrates traditional big box grocery store with multiple mixed income apartments and town houses

# Denver Dry Goods: 1900s

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# Denver Dry Goods: 1950s

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# Denver Dry Goods: Context

- Denver Dry Goods department store
  - 350,000 square feet
  - Seven story, two blocks
  - Built in 1888
- 1980s sees worst recession and urban exodus since the Great Depression in Denver
  - 30% vacancy downtown in 1988
  - Fate of Denver Dry Goods is uncertain
- Building sold to May Department Stores
  - Bought by Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA)
  - Effort to preserve the historic landmark and revitalize the failing urban core

# Denver Dry Goods: Financing

- Four failed attempts with insufficient financing
  - Lenders see downtown area as unfit for investment
- 1992 development begins
  - 23 funding sources including historic building tax credits, tax increment financing, assistance from the mayor
- Compartmentalize functions to manage funds
  - Mix of shops, offices, affordable and market rate homes, and luxury condominiums so that donors fund specific purposes

# Denver Dry Goods: Partnerships

- Partnership with Affordable Housing Development Corporation (AHDC)
  - New vision for the project as a model for change in the failing Denver urban center
- Metro Convention and Visitors' Bureau
  - Local organization leases 20,000 square feet of office and retail space and invests in project
- 1994 upper floors sold to BCORP Holdings for luxury condominiums

# Denver Dry Goods: Results

- Diversity of functions below one roof
  - Lower level retail:
    - camera shop, computer software retailers, and T.J. Max
  - Middle levels:
    - Visitors' Bureau and DURA offices
  - Upper levels:
    - 51 rental apartments (39 affordable)
    - 66 lofts
    - Renovated tea room
- Testament to success of building in appealing to truly mixed community

# Denver Dry Goods: Mixed Use

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# Denver Dry Goods: Green

- Green building features:
  - Renovated building uses 60% less energy than the original structure
    - major energy savings by avoiding new construction
    - insulated-glass windows and a heating and cooling system of natural systems
  - Proximity to transportation options,
    - Light rail and bus system
    - Average of less than one car per residence

# Denver Dry Goods: Entrance

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# Denver Dry Goods: Effects

- Catalyst for reinvigoration in downtown
- Late 1990s sees active center city
  - improved economy
  - new residential and retail entertainment district
- More than 20 similar mixed-use projects have been inspired by Denver Dry Goods which have contributed to the increase in development, economy, and excitement in the downtown.

# Museum Place: Rendering

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# Museum Place: Context

- Demonstrates Portland's continued commitment to green urbanism in 2002
- Six story complex covers block between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson and Columbia Streets
- 140 loft-style rental apartments
- 47,000 square feet of a supermarket
- 1,100 square feet of neighborhood retail
- 220 underground parking spaces.

# Museum Place

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# Museum Place: Factors

- Transit oriented, mixed-use development is located in Portland's Cultural District
- Part of a three-block revitalization to serve as a neighborhood landmark and encourage future growth in the district
- Developed by Shiels Obletz Johnson
- Funding from Fannie Mae, the US Bank, the City of Portland, Portland Development Commission, Green Park Financial, and the Bernard I. Obletz Grantor Trust.

# Museum Place: Retail

- Major tenant is Safeway
  - traditional big box retailer
- More sustainable business practices
  - Typically use standard program in minimal time
  - Size of site meant reduced standard floor plan
- Engaging views of shoppers, flowers, and deli preparation integrated with the community
  - Active corridors pushed to exterior
  - City of Portland's design review guidelines
- Residents hardly aware of presence of bustling supermarket below them

# Museum Place: Entrance

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# Museum Place: Residential

- Six-stories of 128 residential apartments
  - 28 for residents low income
  - Apartments range from 560 to 1330 square feet
  - Two penthouses
- Community living with shared big-screen television and kitchen
- Shared access to landscaped courtyard with lawn, outdoor seating, and barbeque pit

# Museum Place: Kitchen

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# Museum Place: Living Room

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# Museum Place: Green

- LEED certified
- Safeway shower for employees who bike
- Energy Star reflective roof to reduce heat island effect
- Plans for green roof to serve as a community park for the residents of the building
- 40% more efficient water consumption
- Safeway has refrigeration heat recovery system
- Walking distance of mass transit
- FlexCar

# Museum Place: LEED

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# Museum Place: Effect

- Model for mixed use, mixed income living
  - Governor lectures at site
- Unique commitment to community living
- Meets city's 2040 Metro Growth Concepts
  - strengthens activity at city's core
- Creates housing and employment opportunities and enhances vibrancy of area
- Catalyst for further neighborhood revitalization and three block plan
- [www.museum-place.com](http://www.museum-place.com)

# Reinvigorating Effects

- Denver: magnitude of project revitalizes a downtown on the verge of vacancy
- Portland: already vibrant core expanded to create a new niche for downtown residents
- Both meet principles of Smart Growth Network and Calthorpe's recommendations
- Prove advantages of mixed use development for sustainable green urbanism

# Feasible Model

- Straight forward and effective
- Mixed use revitalizes neighborhoods and guarantee a 24 hour/day vibrancy
- Consistent European planning strategy
- US is catching on

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