



# JOE URBAN

---

## SAM NEWBERG

### URBANIST

[Home](#)

[About Joe-Urban.com](#)

[Market Research](#)

[Presentations](#)

[Sam Newberg's Bio](#)

[Sam Newberg's Published Articles and Case Studies and Presentations](#)

[The Urban Marketplace](#)

[Urban Baby Photos](#)

[Search Joe Urban](#)

**Subscribe to Joe Urban**

via [RSS 2](#)

**Categories**

[General \(227\)](#)

[The Joe Urban Show \(1\)](#)

**Joe Urban Latest**

[Economic Value of Form-Based Codes \(Dispatch from CNU 20 – Pt. 4\)](#)

[The Value of Urban Grocery Stores \(Dispatch from CNU 20 – Pt. 3\)](#)

[Peter Calthorpe and the New Urbanism in China \(Dispatch from CNU 20 – Pt. 2\)](#)

[CNU – Elitist or Grassroots Urbanism? \(Dispatch from CNU 20 – Pt. 1\)](#)

[Alexander Garvin and Downtown Minneapolis](#)

## Economic Value of Form-Based Codes (Dispatch from CNU 20 – Pt. 4)

Dateline: 10:07 am 5/14/2012 Filed under: [General](#)

A common misconception is form-based codes are used primarily to improve the look and aesthetic feel of places. The Friday session at CNU 20 entitled “Form-Based Economic Development on Main Street” was eye-opening as to just how compelling the argument is that form-based codes are also a tool to create economic value.

Scott Pollikov, president of Gateway Planning, and Monte Anderson, a broker and developer in the Dallas area, presented a case study on a project they are working together on to revitalize an aging commercial corridor in Duncanville, Texas, a southern suburb of Dallas.

Over a decade ago, Monte Anderson began buying and repurposing buildings near the intersection of Center and Main, an aging strip in Duncanville. He started with two buildings, bringing in a pet groomer and a community outreach center. In 2004, Main Station was developed, a 22,000 square foot mixed-use building with 14 loft units above retail space that includes two restaurants and a spa. Additional projects include two lots no more than a quarter acre in size that will add nine more apartments and 4,000 square feet of retail space.

A key to these incremental urban infill projects is a form-based code that rebuilds the busy suburban arterial road in to a more urban street, with a Parisian-style slip lane, on-street parking and sidewalk. The form-based code also unites the appearance of future buildings in to a more cohesive whole.

The primary reason for using a form-based code is that it provides incremental value back and forth from property to property. Pollikov explained that, whereas, conventional zoning is about buffers, the predictability between parcels is valuable, which provides potential investors and developers a measure of certainty conventional zoning cannot.

The proof is in the development that has already occurred. For example, the two most recent projects, albeit small, increased in value from \$130,000 to \$1.8 million. Retail rents have risen from \$6 per square foot to \$16, and market rate rents are \$1.20 per square foot where no market rate units existed previously. This is value is leveraged by the form-based code, as the developer and lenders are assured of the form future projects around his/her buildings will take. It is important to note that the regional planning authority, NCTCOG, granted \$1.5 million to the project, partially matched by the city of Duncanville. So whereas there are a lot of moving parts, the public sector is willing to be a partner as they see the additional value created by the process as well. A little up-front investment ought to leverage long-term added value.

[TOD is Coming to the Lake Street Station](#)

[Would You Rather Save \\$8,000 Per Year or \\$8,000 Over 10 Years?](#)

[Affordable Housing/Jobs Imbalance in Milwaukee, the Twin Cities and Everywhere](#)

[Closing a Street \(and Businesses?\) in Little India in Queens](#)

[Sam Schwartz, The M.T.A. and Penn Station](#)

[Water Works on the Minneapolis Riverfront](#)

[Veterans Manor in Milwaukee](#)

[Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development – Robert Gibbs](#)

[In Praise of Street Trees](#)

[Could Form-Based Codes Help Minneapolis?](#)

[NIMBYism in Austin](#)

[The Minneapolis Planning Director – Lessons from Vancouver](#)

[The Boondoggle that is Light Rail](#)

[Surely You Can't Be Serious](#)

[Those Skyways Won't Go Down Without a Fight](#)

## Links

[Center for Transit-Oriented Development](#)

[Congress for the New Urbanism](#)

[Planetizen](#)

[Smart City Radio](#)

[T4America](#)

[The Citistates Group](#)

[The Ground Floor \(ULI\)](#)

[The Streetsblog Network](#)

[Urban Land Institute](#)

[Sign-in](#)

This is as incremental as urbanism gets, but because it is united by a form-based code, it delivers both good urbanism and economic development. That is something cities ought to take note of.

#cnu20