

NOHO BOARD RETREAT
January 15, 2008
Summary

Submitted by:
Urban Place Consulting Group

January 15, 2008

To: Board of Directors
North Hollywood Business Improvement District

From: Urban Place Consulting Group, Inc.

Re: Summary of Board Retreat

Background

Steve Gibson, Urban Place Consulting Group, was asked to facilitate a Board Retreat that would focus the Board on the role of the North Hollywood Business Improvement District (NoHo BID). As part of this process the Board was asked to think about the purpose of the organization and develop a core purpose statement to guide their management of the organization.

Board Retreat

I. Envisioning a Purpose for the Organization

A power point presentation was given to guide the Board members through a process of determining their vision and purpose for the organization. Once the Board has a clear vision for the organization and the future of the district, it can decide the direction of the organization and outline a work plan to help set priorities.

Core Purpose: Core purpose is defined as the organization's fundamental reason for being.

"It is more important to know who you are than where you are going, for where you are going will change as the world around you changes."

David Packard, Hewlett-Packard

The Board was asked to generate ideas for a strong Core Purpose statement. The Board listed the following of reasons for the BID to exist:

- Increase property values
- Increase foot/pedestrian traffic
- Increased security
- Improve and enhance the arts
- A one stop shop destination; day and night
- Cultural-entertainment
- Bohemian, unique, eclectic (i.e. Abbott-Kinney)

- Boutiques
- Residents-quality of life experience
- Transit connection, red and orange line, 'a **hub** in the valley'
 - **Hub:**
 - § Cultural Hub
 - § Transit Hub
 - § Arts Hub
 - § Trendsetting Hub

Based on the above ideas and thoughts, the Board developed the following Core Purpose statement for the NoHo Business Improvement District:

“To Lead the Continual Enhancement of North Hollywood as a Flourishing and Trendsetting Center for Arts, Culture and Commerce.”

Which Battles to Fight?

It is important for leaders to understand when to lead and when to allow others to lead. They should ask, “does the battle further our Core Purpose?” The process to determine when to lead and when to say “no” is called the **Leadership Pause**.

The Leadership Pause is designed to allow an organization to make timely decisions in a rational, logical manner. The steps to the Leadership Pause are:

1. **Receive Information, request for action.** These usually come in the form of a solution.
2. **Get Understanding.** What are the core issues behind the request? Separate the issues from all possible solutions.
3. **Align with Core Ideology.** Ask the questions: “Is what is being requested in conflict with the organization’s core values?” “Is this an issue that furthers the core purpose of the organization?”
4. **Make A Decision.** Based on steps 2 and 3, a decision can be made on whether this is an issue that qualifies for the organization to take a leadership position. If the decision is to take a leadership position, then the question becomes one of the uses of the organization’s available resources to focus on the issue. Will leading on this issue require new resources or possibly eliminating or delaying another project?
5. **Initiate Action.** Begin taking the steps to lead change.

The **Leadership Pause** should take the minimum time necessary to work through the steps. Management organizations will study issues often to the

point of analysis to paralysis, where in the study becomes a major undertaking without a decision having ever been made. Leadership organizations pause only long enough to “Get Understanding” and then they lead.

Board and Staff Roles

The Board’s role in a leadership organization is to provide leadership through policies.

“Policy leadership clarifies, inspires and sets a tone of discourse that stimulates leadership in followers.” John Carver...Boards That Make A Difference

Carver also goes on to say, “The most important work of any Board is to create and re-create the reason for the organization’s existence.” In creating a core purpose statement, the NoHo BID Board has clarified and restated the reason for BID’s existence.

The Board’s role in leadership has two elements. First, is to create the vision, to clearly define where the organization is going. Secondly, the Board is charged with creating ends policies.

“The Board’s job in long range planning is not long range planning itself, but exploration of Vision. The Board’s job is to maintain and behaviorally demonstrate a long range mentality.” -Carver

“Creating ends policies with a long range perspective is the most board contribution to long range planning. Boards should not do the actual long range planning.” - Carver

The role of the Staff is to create the implementation plan to fulfill the vision of the Board. The Board sets the policies within which they may operate and the Staff must then create the work plan within those policies. It is clear that organizations are much more effective as leaders when their Boards remain focused on the vision and the bigger picture and do not try to manage the organizations day to day activities.

II. 2008 Priorities; What Is Success?

The NoHo BID Board outlined its five priorities for 2008:

- Maintenance Program
- Safety/Ambassador Program
- Marketing/Communications
- Advocacy
- BID Renewal

The Board was then asked to identify what would “success” mean for each of these priorities:

Maintenance:

- A noticeable difference in total cleanliness, “something has changed/a difference/improved here”
- Change mindset of property owners
- Lead by example

Safety/Ambassador Program:

- Feeling of safety
- Nighttime safety
- “NoHo is safe”

Marketing:

- There will be a higher awareness of the NoHo BID
- Website

Advocacy:

- That the BID is the property/business advocate
- A Leader

BID Renewal:

- Successful renewal of the NoHo BID for 5 more years

III. Consultant Observations

The decisions that were made at the board retreat are very important for the future of the NoHo BID. The adoption of a Core Purpose will give the NoHo BID the foundation upon which to reinforce and enhance its position as an even better leadership organization.

As in all things words are easy, actions to match the much more difficult. It is much harder work with more risk to be a leadership organization, but the rewards match the increased work and risk.

As a leadership organization, the NoHo BID must think like a leader, like an entrepreneur when addressing priority issue areas. It must ask the question:

“What is the role of a leader on this issue?”

The Core Purpose of the NoHo BID: “To Lead the continual enhancement of NoHo as a flourishing and trendsetting center for arts, culture and commerce.” Decisions on programs, budgets and setting priorities should all be made with the goal of achieving this Core Purpose.