

Real Estate Journal

THE LARGEST WEEKLY COMMERCIAL/INVESTMENT NEWSPAPER IN THE WORLD

These are the times for planning

Throughout the region, we find that projects are being placed on hold as institutions, companies and individuals retrench and the world seems to be taking a "Wait and See" stance; however, the "see" component of that position demands looking at core values as well as watching the market. This is the perfect time for reassessment of mission, project priorities, and current holdings.

This long term vision, disengaged from the potential of immediate capital outlay, will of necessity be 'conservative' in the most positive, self-affirming (and a-political) meaning of the word, but it need not and should not be timid. Without promise of instant fulfillment, the planning constituency may prove more thoughtful, less partisan and more creatively engaged.

From a landscape architect's perspective, one might also advocate that an analysis of one's current assets would demonstrate the inherent worth of land holdings (the landscape, the campus, the property) as a significant element of an investment portfolio. This, in turn, should lead to the realization that its stewardship, through maintenance and enhancement, may be one of the most cost effective strategies for bolstering both image and value.

Planning is cheap (compared to building), but its rewards can be enormous, both in terms of long term fiscal gain and current organizational morale and integrity. More importantly, it allows preparedness and flexibility in response to the dynamic economic conditions ahead. The moral of the story: Don't wait for change, plan for it now.

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