

How Can Your Community Be Better if It's Not Different?

Ways to Community Success

Virtually all their residents, workers, businesspeople, public officials, property owners, and investors want our communities—cities, towns, business areas, and neighborhoods—to be as successful as they can be in generating jobs, sales, population and property value growth, and tax revenues

And what determines this success is how well they *sell* in a competitive marketplace.

Some places achieve success effortlessly from a great location. For the rest of us, of course, location is impossible to change. But a second-rate location can be overcome by smart, management-based marketing.

Communities win in the marketplace by offering a competitive advantage; a *difference* that makes them *better* than other places. But many places have neither figured out what that difference is nor sold it to people who could make them even more successful

So places are not achieving the success they could, finds John L. Gann, Jr., President of Gann Associates, because of deficits of knowledge, experience, ambition, or thinking differently. These are deficits John's worked since 1967 as a staffer, consultant, trainer, and writer to reduce.

Finding the Hidden Economic Value

With the low-hanging fruit gone, an entrepreneur of ideas like John looks for places' *Hidden Economic Value* to help clients develop. Because he's done it for oft-ignored special places like college towns, bypassed rural hamlets, and older urban neighborhoods, he may be able to help do it for you.

An Approach That's Different

But uncovering Hidden Economic Value, he's found, itself calls for a *difference*. It requires *improving* upon instead of just mindlessly following what others do or promulgate. "If you can't do it *better*," he asks, "why do it at *all*?" So John has moved far beyond his training in orthodox city planning with a different approach that can do more.

1. Economic Health Is Number One

John understands that a place's economic health—local sales, jobs, and tax revenues—is most important since that's what makes everything else in the community possible. And he believes that what makes successful businesses can also make successful cities.

2. Practical Help Is of Highest Value

In his work with Cornell University, as Local Services Director at the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, and in consulting, he's emphasized high-value, practical, action-oriented help over planners' concern with broad-brush generalities, speculative futures, colored maps, and glitzy renderings.

3. Local Works Best

In contrast to the central planning model planners favor, John finds that local action works best, as exemplified by the NIPC Area Offices Program he headed. He's never worked for a state or federal agency.

4. Marketing Solves Problems Better

John favors persuasion and marketing over legal compulsion by cities. When regulation is called for, he prefers win-win approaches.

If you can't do it better, why do it at all?

But John's is not the "marketing" of designer logos, cute slogans, big media buys, or "creativity." Since it *defines* the community, John's marketing is instead a high-level function of *management* involving *thought*.

5. Cost-Effectiveness Pays Off

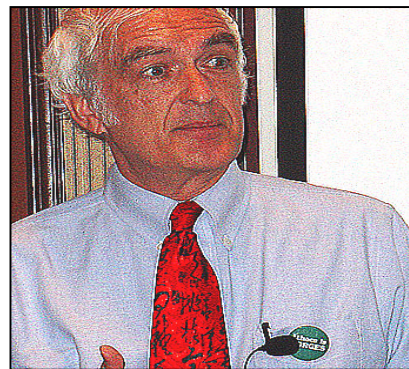
With a "run lean," low-overhead small business himself, John can steer places away from spending on measures that don't work and help them save money on those that do.

6. Small Is Beautiful

His small independent practice, John believes, can focus less on its internal administration and more on delivering a high level of personal service to the client.

7. People Need a Servant, Not a Master

John favors a "servant" role distinct from the "master" role planners adopt for themselves.



8. Bringing People Together Works

John's won praise for bringing government planners together with billboard companies, car dealers, fast food chains, and other businesses to *prevent* common conflicts.

A Background That's Different

John is aided by his background in acting on his different approach to community success.

1. Big City Origins

A big-city kid, John's spent most of his life benefitting from the opportunities available in and around what have been the nation's two great cities. He was born and raised in New York. In Chicago, he graduated from the renowned University of Chicago and

worked for decades at the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission and in consulting.

2. Small Town Experience

His consulting, an Extension appointment at Cornell University, and being regional director of Max Anderson Associates in Des Moines and planning director of a city of 30,000 allowed him to serve smaller places.

3. Training in Cities

After a master's in city planning (University of Wisconsin), he became a full member by examination of the American Institute of Certified Planners. He served on AICP's Board of Examiners and as a correspondence course instructor in city planning for the International City/County Management Assn.

4. Geographic Diversity

Having lived and worked in 8 states, he offers diverse experience that adds to instead of duplicating clients' local knowledge.

5. New Challenges Over and Over

And with multiple high-level jobs in consulting, city and metropolitan government, and academia over the years, John has had to face new challenges, grow, and repeatedly prove himself to new people.

6. Knowledge of the Product

John is also one of the few offering community marketing services who have in-depth knowledge of the product to be marketed.

7. Standards

Whatever he has achieved has been competitive and on the merits, unaided by family, friendship, or political ties. Neither he nor his company has ever made political contributions to clients or prospective clients. He has never submitted for awards, believing the job is to serve clients, not awards juries.

Services That Are Different

John delivers help in forms for any budget.

1. Practical Consulting

He has done work for clients on the practical sides of city planning, land use control, and marketing for growth and grant funding.

He's done community ads, brochures, direct mail, and publicity as well as detailed downtown and neighborhood marketing plans.

2. Specialized Training

At Cornell he developed and led local leader decision-making workshops. He's since developed full-day public and contract seminars in multiple cities on grants, community marketing, sign control, and zoning.

3. Conference Presentations All Over

He's done conference presentations for such organizations as the New York State Conference of Mayors, National Association of Home Builders, Wisconsin City/County Management Association, National Sporting Goods Association, and Economic Development Association of North Dakota.

Also hearing John have been the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Cedar Rapids Downtown District, Eight-Sheet Outdoor Advertising Association, Michigan Boating Industries Association, Ohio Planning Conference, and West Virginia Municipal League.

4. Widely Published

He has "given back" by publishing numerous unpaid informational and idea articles in diverse national, state, and city publications nationwide, making him likely one of the most widely-read experts in his specialty.

He's appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Urban Land*, *Real Estate Today*, *Economic Development Journal*, *Public Management*, *Zoning News*, *Syracuse Post-Standard*, *Journal of Extension*, *Sign Business*, *Downtown Idea Exchange*, *Nation's Building News*, *CarlsonReport*, *Outdoor Advertising*, *Michigan Realtor*, and *University Business*. He's been interviewed or quoted in *Reason*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Planning*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, and National Public Radio.

5. Books, Minibooks, and Manuals

Starting with manuals published by Cornell University, he has written and gotten national attention for his first-of-their-kind manuals, mini-books, and full-length books:

The Third Lifetime Place: A New Economic Opportunity for College Towns

Marketing UNterstate Highways: Bringing Out-of-Town Dollars to Non-Destination Small Towns

How to Evaluate (and Improve) Your Community's Marketing

Hybrid Neighborhoods: Where to Live Now to Spend Less at the Pump

The Small Investor's Guide to Tripling Real Estate Value by Marketing Zoning Changes

How to Prevent Junk Car Laws from Shutting Down Your Home Car Hobby.

6. Recorded Training

He makes available DVDs and CDs of his training sessions.

Results that Are Different

John's motto could be, "Wanna start something?" He's become an entrepreneur of ideas and program initiatives rather than being a caretaker of what already exists.

1. New Ideas

Community leaders across the country have heard or read about John's ideas.

Hybrid Neighborhoods

Living in older urban neighborhoods can combat high gas prices, tight budgets, and global warming.

The Third Lifetime Place

College towns can diversify economically by better developing and marketing their advantages for non-academic activity.

UNterstate Highways

Bypassed rural towns can create jobs by marketing unappreciated advantages of their highways for long-distance travel.

Class Acts

Universities can mitigate funding shortfalls

and strengthen ties to alumni by offering sponsorships of individual courses.

Close-Knit Community Planning

A new kind of subdivision can better achieve both social goals and market success than "New Urbanist" planning.

Win-Win Regulation

Controversy and conflict in land use laws can be reduced with a win-win approach.

Market Street Program

Business-generating *Activities* rather than aesthetics are the key to downtown revival.

Learning from Wal-Mart

Downtown can *learn* from and find ways to compete with the world's most successful retailer instead of trashing and fighting the company "Main Street" style.

Flexible Zoning

John's Redevelopment Overlay Districts can help deal with preservation versus growth. Reverse Zoning turns conventional zoning rules on their head for better planning. Density Transfer preserves open space without the complexity of TDR.

2. New Programs

From the beginning, John's also been the guy who put something *new* into operation.

1. John created and headed a new city-county agency. He ran a consultant's first branch office. He prepared one of the first computerized zoning ordinances.

2. John prepared one of the first manuals in the country on the CDBG grant program and started and wrote a metropolitan agency's first grants newsletter.

3. For the International City/County Management Association John wrote the first manual on *evaluating* community marketing programs to make them more productive.

4. He developed CarpeHoram, a user-friendly, and time-saving alternative to books.

5. He opened and staffed a metropolitan agency's first local liaison offices in long-neglected inner-ring suburbs.

6. John developed a new four-code zoning system for one of the nation's largest cities through staffing an "office" in city hall for three years to allow maximum interaction.

7. John prepared the first and only manual for collector car hobbyists to deal with harmful regulations by marketing local officials rather than adversarial legal action.

8. He published in the *The Wall Street Journal* perhaps the most widely-read analysis of the Wal-Mart/Main Street controversy, advising learning from rather than demonizing the successful retailer. He's also written and spoken widely on the subject.

9. He restaffed a slumping city planning department, got them a grant, and initiated production of staff-prepared planning reports.

10. He got multiple clients their first government or foundation grants.

11. He initiated and wrote regular columns for two national business publications.

12. His full-day community marketing seminar was the first ever offered publicly.

Evaluations That Are Different

Many who have known John's work also find something different.

The smartest decision on hiring a consultant that this City has ever made.

Philip S. Phillips, Law Director,
Zanesville, OH

He doesn't talk like a planner, nor does he think like one. He makes sense: he proposes stuff that might just work.

Dave Richardson, Editor
Barberton (OH) Herald

...the most competent and responsive consultant with whom I have associated.

William Taylor, Esq.,
Kincaid, Culltice & Geyer

A Cadillac in marketing expertise.

Dale Adams, Village President,
Rockton, IL

I can't remember ever thinking, 'Hey, this guy really knows what he's talking about' until this.

Ron Simoncini, President,
Axiom Communications

I don't believe that I have ever read a more thorough, comprehensive and understandable dissertation on how to plan and put together an effective marketing campaign for an economic development organization.

Ronald J. Starner,
General Manager, Conway Data

The best analysis of the economic prospects for college towns that I've seen.

Gerard Badler, Managing Director
Campus Continuum

As a result of our meeting with you last week, the first real signs of optimism are being heard on our board.

Frank LeRoy
American Management Association

Hybrid Neighborhoods presents strong arguments for urban living.

Environment & Climate News

A super book on the subject. Highly recommended.

John T. Reed, nationally-known
real estate author and investor

Really ground-breaking subject matter... no one else is writing this sort of material.

The Buick Bugle

If You Want to Do It Different

Reach John at citykid@uwalumni.com or toll-free (800)762-GANN (voice or fax) or 435 Pennsylvania Avenue No. 149 Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.