



UPTOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.

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DATE: September 15, 1989  
TO: Doc Pawlicki, Chairman  
Business Development & Retention Committee  
FROM: Ronald L. Roberts, Executive Director  
RE: "Manufacturing/Distributing" Sub-Study Component

An informal survey, in the form of one on one personal interviews, was conducted with seven (7) firms of a "Manufacturing/Distributing" type located in the downtown or near downtown area. The survey attempted to gain insight as to the essential elements of the success and satisfaction of the respondents with their central city location. Inquiry was also made as to what incentives or disincentives impact their decision to locate, remain and expand in the area.

The companies interviewed were:

Binkelman Corporation - Dan Kazmierczak, President  
Buckeye News Co. - Richard Stoll Jr., President  
Clarklift of Northwest Ohio - Jim Shueller, Vice-President/Treasurer  
McGranahan Distributing Co. - Jim Vogel, Vice-President  
Thermal Engineering Co. - John and Victoria Kamm, Owners  
Toledo Belting Supply Co. - Neil Van Wallbeck, President  
Waltz Casket Co. - Paul Waltz, President

In each interview the specific questions asked were:

What are the advantages of your location?

What are the disadvantages?

What are the incentives that encourage the expansion, retention or attraction of your type of business activity?

The following pages are the summary notes of each interview and reflect the sentiments of these seven (7) respondents, who in my estimation constitute a representative sample of the manufacturing/distributing component in the downtown or near downtown area.



- Binkelman Corporation -

Dan Kazmierczak, President  
12 Employees

Advantages:

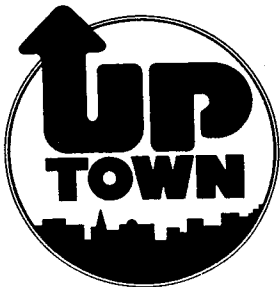
- Central location
- Nearness to expressway

Disadvantages:

- Crime and perception of crime due to constant presence of prostitutes and street people
- Visibility of slum and blight nearby.
- Employee morale suffers due to inability to feel comfortable coming and going at lunch.
- Productivity affected when employees are unwilling to stay late to complete a job.

Comments

Economics dictate that company must stay in present location but given right deal would leave immediately. Has feeling of uncooperative spirit when dealing with city. Cited example of bitter experience with Sign Inspection Dept. a few years back. Suggested that change in attitude by regulatory beaureaucrats would be an incentive. Has done expansion/renovation in recent years past but presently sitting tight to see if further investment is appropriate.



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- Buckeye News Company -

Richard Stoll Jr., President  
32 Employees

Advantages:

- Property ownership of building and adjacent properties on entire block.
- Centrally located for distribution throughout Northwest Ohio.
- Cost efficient and has room for expansion.

Disadvantages:

- Crime (i.e. break-ins and car thefts).
- Added cost for extensive security measures for building and employee cars.
- Prostitutes and loiterers cause constant annoyance.

Comments:

Recently (1986) built 12,000 sq. ft. addition to building and has done much interior renovation. Committed to remain in area despite disadvantages. Feels that city should be providing stricter law enforcement on prostitution.



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- Clarklift of Northwest Ohio -

Jim Shueller, Vice President/Treasurer  
42 Employees

Advantages:

- Larger space than available/affordable in industrial park.
- Accessibility due to expressways nearby.
- Association with heart of downtown Toledo.

Disadvantages:

- Crime and preception of crime due to nearby slum and blight.

Comments

Company moved to downtown location from Bennett Road in 1980 because of need for more affordable space. In 1984, he was promised tax abatement by the city but was denied that key incentive for relocation in 1985 by City Council vote. He had done major renovation to the building at that time on that promise. Hesitant about doing further needed exterior renovation due to thoughts about leaving. However, he has as recently as 1986, bought adjacent building which added 25,000 sq. ft. of additional storage space. Listed as possible incentives are; tax abatement, removal of nearby slum and blight, increased lighting, and more police patrols to relieve crime problems.



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- McGranahan Distributing Company -

Jim Vogel, Vice President  
48 Employees

Advantages:

- Proximity to expressway systems (north, south and west).
- Building suits needs perfectly and could not be duplicated elsewhere for less than \$900,000.00.
- Access to banks and attorneys.

Disadvantages:

- Crime and the perception of crime.  
Inability to work late without concerns for safety.  
Productivity and employee morale affected.
- Abandoned and blight buildings nearby.
- Prostitutes and other street activity run rampant.

Comments:

Company is committed to area and not interested in moving and has made considerable investment in building improvements and is planning further expansion. Has recently bought an adjacent 12,000 sq. ft. building and has opened a floor covering installation school in it. Key incentive is thought to be increased law enforcement to remove criminal element and thus improve safety. Concerned about zoning restrictions that may hamper future expansion.



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- Thermal Engineering Company -

John and Victoria Kamm, Owners  
35 Employees

Advantages:

- Access to expressways.
- Trucking routes work out well.
- Reasonable cost of facilities.

Disadvantages:

- Crime and perception of crime.
- Drugs and prostitution rampant.

Comments:

Crime not as bad as it was five (5) years ago and not as bad as publicly perceived. Would like to see a more cooperative spirit from city regulatory departments (i.e. sign inspectors) on facade signage improvements. Reference to an incident that occurred in past years. Also, would like to see an incentive package of some sort for businesses in this area. Also believes that networking with other companies in area would be beneficial.



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- Toledo Belting Company -

Neil Van Wallbeck, President  
8 Employees

Advantages:

- Proximity of expressways.
- Centrally located for salesmen who call on customers in 60 mile radius.
- Free street parking in front of building.

Disadvantages:

- Prostitution in area.

Comments:

Company committed to remain in the area. Has been in downtown area ninety (90) years and in present location nine (9) years. Has done much facade renovation for beautification and protection. Planning expansion within five (5) years for additional storage space and a truck dock. Concerned about zoning restrictions that may hamper this expansion.



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- Waltz Casket Company -

Paul Waltz, President  
4 Employees

Advantages:

- Central location results in savings on delivery time.
- Low cost of building.

Disadvantages:

- Blighted building and junk cars next door.
- Street people and prostitutes harassing customers.

Comments:

Has owned building fifteen (15) years and company there four (4) years. Building underwent major rehabilitation in 1985. Considering relocation because of feeling of no cooperation from the city in: removing junk cars and blighted structure next door; repairing street curbs; and abating the criminal activities.