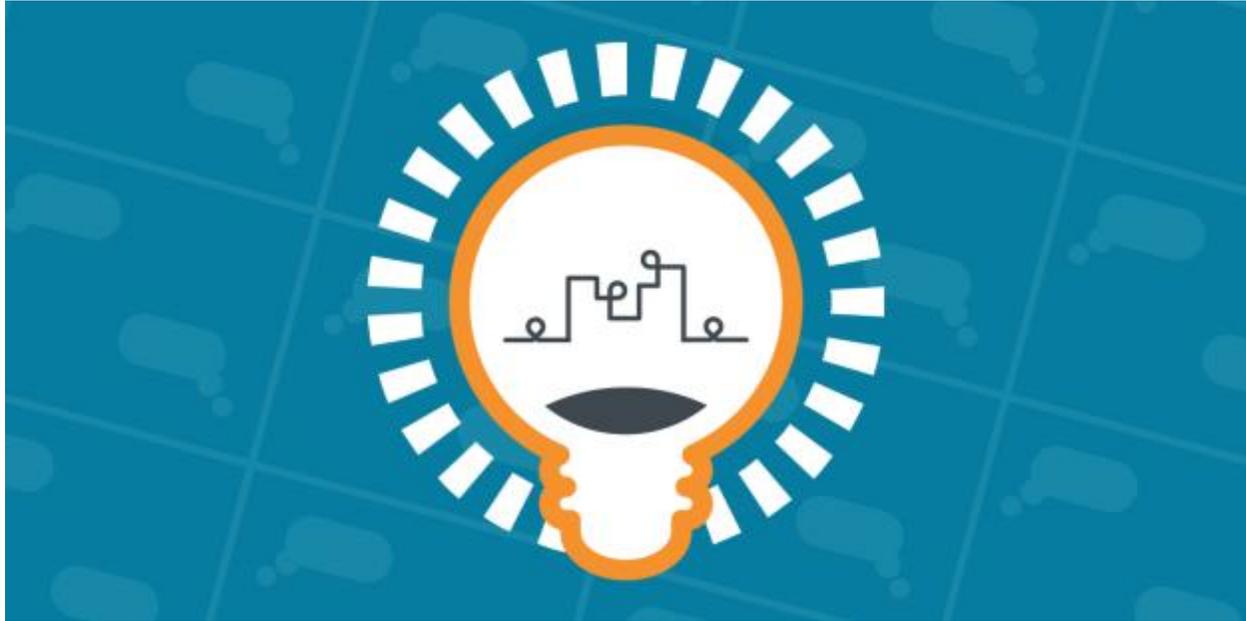


Preparing for City Building 2.0

The Principles at the Core of a Cultural Shift



On September 13th, OppSites will launch an enhanced user experience that instantly connects real estate, city, and economic development leaders so you can share ideas, collaborate and focus on the projects that matter. We are building these new features to break down silos and remove inefficiencies between public and private sector real estate professionals - to inspire a cultural shift necessary to reveal new opportunities and energize new projects.

We built OppSites in 2014 with a single goal in mind: unlock the potential of every community. We wanted to energize development, to *make it fly*, and to accelerate the way we make great places. Every city can become more prosperous. That idea is one of our guiding principles at OppSites.

At the center of every successful business culture are four principles that are directly applicable to the culture and the practice of creating great places: *transparency, engagement, cooperation* and *leadership*. These also happen to be 4 of the 12 principles that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) embraces as part of their best practices in development on a global scale.

In the segment below, we briefly explore how these 4 principles inspire us to do *what* we do at OppSites, and inform us as to *why* we do it as a part of the global development conversation.

Transparency: Knowledge without Borders.

Transparency is why we built OppSites in the first place.

Before launching OppSites, our team worked for over 16 years at the intersection of city government, economic development, and the real estate sectors. We witnessed first-hand how great ideas and supportive policies often did not result in *actual real estate projects* that helped communities succeed. We saw how difficult it could be for city and economic development leaders to share what was quintessentially *local knowledge* with a wide enough audience of real estate professionals who could help realize a community's potential.

Unlike the buying and selling of property - *real estate development* relies on local knowledge to reveal opportunities, and assess risk. Development projects can have enormous impacts on communities, and almost without exception require the approval of a local governing or development authority. For this reason, the shape of the real estate sector has historically been hyper-local, as the practice of making communities has been limited to people who have access to vital local knowledge, be that knowledge about land, regulations, incentives, policies, or even less quantifiable factors such as community preferences, and political will.

That is where having a transparent and clear conversation comes into play. Based on our experience in economic development, the best projects (those that fly through the development process and have the most beneficial impacts on communities) are achieved when information and *knowledge* is shared broadly, openly, and honestly.

We founded OppSites to empower *everyone* who envisions, designs, reviews, develops, finances, or approves development projects to share their ideas and expertise with a global audience, and to connect these people with others who have aligned interests.

If you want to attract development to your city or community, we empower you to share your ideas and showcase opportunities in the OppSites marketplace, which *is free and publicly accessible*. If you're a real estate professional and want to build the projects that strengthen communities, we invite you to search for opportunities that already have the support of local leaders - or share your interests, and connect with city and economic development leaders who want to bring your projects to their communities.

Everybody in. No silos. One transparent conversation about what is possible in every city.



Engagement: Meaningful Conversations

How does engagement relate to what we do at OppSites and what you can do to affect change?

When we first launched OppSites, some people saw the marketplace of opportunity sites and assumed we were some sort of online brokerage or listings service, while others mistook us for a property data company. In short - we are neither. We are focused on connecting *people* and *ideas* to energize *projects* that improve every community.

Accompanying the OppSites Marketplace is the OppSites Messenger, where *each member of OppSites can state their interests*, and describe the types of projects they're interested in making happen. If you're a real estate professional, we assume you're interested in developing projects, and if you're a city or economic development professional, we assume you're interested in bringing new projects to your community.

OppSites is able to *deliver connections* when there's a good match - and introduce people so that they can achieve their goals together. Here's a quick example: In July of 2017, a developer on our platform stated the following interest:

"We are seeking publicly owned buildings for adaptive reuse projects."

Our technology mapped that request to hundreds of city and economic development professionals, and within 48 hours, over **over 100 city leaders responded**, jump-starting new conversations about possible opportunities in cities across the country. To the cities who responded, this conversation created opportunities to connect with a new developer, and discuss ideas for major projects that could bring benefit to their communities. To the developer who posted this interest, the huge number of conversations meant that they had “over a year’s worth of pipeline to sift through” and were “speaking with cities where they hadn’t had a single contact”.

And of course, it works both ways. A member of a downtown development authority in Southern California recently stated a goal:

“We wish to attract developers to high-rise opportunity sites in downtown”.

This goal was matched with **240 developers, 66 of whom reached out to begin a meaningful conversation**. These powerful engagements are part of what excite us. We make it simple to *state your interests*, and *join the conversation* on OppSites.



Cooperation: Broadening Connections, Aligning Interests, Simplifying Conversations.

Cooperation is how projects take shape and become a reality.

The practice of building and rebuilding our cities and towns requires a wide range of public and private sector professionals to come together in order to make projects happen.

There are just 40,000 general purpose governments, 19,000 municipal governments, and thousands of regional, state, and local economic development organizations in the United States. There are also an estimated 500,000 dedicated real estate professionals in the development and redevelopment sector including investors, developers, and brokers. Each of these entities or individuals has some role in the private sector development or redevelopment of publicly and privately owned properties - actions that increase tax revenue, and stimulate jobs and economic growth, and fulfill social and environmental placemaking goals.

At the same time, cooperation between these groups is not the norm, and many local networks do not extend beyond municipal or disciplinary boundaries. To build awareness around development ideas and opportunities, many local officials and organizations still rely heavily on existing relationships with known parties, word-of-mouth, personal car tours, etc. While the web has increased access to city zoning and policy data, these tools offer little help in the identification of legitimate development opportunities or assessment of entitlement risk. Given that much of this information is ad-hoc and varied from region-to-region, this information comes from relationships and personal connections and is largely hidden from view to all but the most well-connected and interested of parties.

While a global audience of developers is expanding and seeking opportunities in new markets, the current lack of access to information about local development priorities has the development community relying on these personal relationships with economic development leaders to uncover information on the kind of projects that can implement. **This local knowledge cannot be scraped;** instead, it must be collected conversation-by-conversation, site-by-site, and region-by-region... a timely and expensive proposition that leaves substantive gaps in knowledge and awareness. This difficulty and inability to connect, collaborate and converse is a problem and one we aim to solve.

How do we find each other? How do we collaborate?

In mid-September, we will release two features specifically tailored to provide connections among people with aligned interests, and make it easy for you to collaborate.

1. **Matchmaker:** We are developing machine-learning to *notify you* about activity on OppSites that we think you will find meaningful. If you work with a city or economic development organization, we might notify you about real estate professionals who are a good fit for your community. If you're a real estate professional, we may notify you about new opportunities, or introduce you to city leaders who want to bring your type of projects to their community.
2. **Messenger:** (You probably saw this coming - especially after all this discussion about "delivering connections"). Along with our updated user-experience, OppSites will release messenger - a simple collaboration tool you can use to communicate with one or more OppSites professionals who can help you achieve your goals. Similar in style to Facebook or LinkedIn Messenger, OppSites Messenger offers features customized for you in your role as a city builder.

We all know that cooperation is key to success. There is nothing so valuable as an open exchange of ideas to originate future projects, and an efficient sharing of specific details to push those ideas to reality. Our goal is to both strengthen and broaden cooperation, and to streamline communication among public and private sector real estate professionals who at times feel siloed, but rely on each other for success.



Leadership: A process of social influence, which maximizes the achievement of others, towards a common goal.

If you're a city builder, you've no doubt come across a myriad of definitions of leadership related to your industry's best practices. And if you've ever been through a public planning process, a development process, or any aspect of politics, you've probably seen a wide range of successful, and not so successful leadership styles. Our favorite leaders are those who bring to bear all the wisdom and energy necessary to achieve projects that maximize value for the widest possible range of constituents. Whether you're someone who initiates new ideas, advances ongoing ideas, or does what is necessary to bring good ideas to fruition - strong leaders find a way to consider the social, environmental, and economic impacts of the decisions we make, and the communities we affect.

Civic leaders can now commit to a more dynamic and assertive way to engage the global real estate audience in order to improve their local communities. They can share ideas, incentives, and political goals in full transparency, while simultaneously maximizing value in accordance with their community's stated goals. Similarly, OppSites provides real estate professionals the ability to invest and develop projects in communities where in the past they didn't have connections, bringing their unique brand of leadership and expertise to far ranging communities for whom they are a good fit.



Summary

OppSites launched in 2014 with a single goal in mind - to transform the culture of making great cities and towns by breaking down silos and connecting real estate, city, and economic development leaders in a single, open, and transparent conversation. Before launching OppSites, our team worked for 16 years at the intersection of city planning, economic development, and real estate development, and we became convinced of two simple truths: First, every community has unmet potential and can become more prosperous, and second, sharing of knowledge is key to making projects happen.

As we are setting out to facilitate a global conversation about real estate development and economic development, we recognize that our efforts align with many organizations who are similarly connected to a broader conversation about the future of cities. We believe that making this local conversation global is what is necessary. We are working to *shift the culture of real estate and economic development*. We want it to become more inclusive, more transparent, more vibrant, and more reflective of the very communities we all aspire to create. We want to make these places happen. So, as we say in our office frequently: let's "make it happen."