

Charting Our Own Course

Why We Plan For Our Communities

Truman Burbank lived his entire life in Sea Haven, an idyllic community where the weather is always perfect, the environment is clean, everyone is happy and has a job, and virtually nothing ever goes wrong.



The Truman Show's Sea Haven

There is only one problem: Truman's life isn't real. Unwittingly, he is an actor in a reality show. And the reality show isn't real either; it is simply a concept in a 1998 movie.

If only we could live in Sea Haven. If only our unemployment rates would never exceed 3%. If only our communities were the place of our dreams without any personal effort.

If Truman's world were ours, we would never need economic development strategic planning.

But compared to Truman's world, our world is out of control.

Effective economic development strategic planning is about controlling our community's controllable factors. It is not just about the private sector and the public sector, it is about the *community sector*—the people who call our Sea Haven's *home*, and care enough to do something about it.

At Building Communities, our heroes are these people who care about the future. Without them, communities would simply take the course of least resistance, which often leads to an undesirable quality of life.

We see our job as providing the tools and practices necessary to empower these modern-day heroes with what is needed to *envision and enact their communities' future*—a future filled with promise for their current and future generations.

And while we are reminiscing about our favorite movies of the 1990s, here is a quote from President Shepherd in The American President: *"America isn't easy. America is advanced citizenship. You gotta want it bad, 'cause it's gonna put up a fight."*

While it may seem ideal to wish for Truman Burbank's life to be our own, even Truman wanted to get off his island. There is something about this struggle in the real world that is worth it. It is a fight that can and must be won.

"In case I don't see you ... good afternoon, good evening, and good night."

The Truman Show!*

1.7 billion were there for his birth.

220 countries tuned in for his first step.

The world stood still for that stolen kiss—and as he grew so did the technology, an entire human life recorded on an intricate network of hidden cameras and broadcast live and unedited 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to an audience around the globe.

Coming to you now from Sea Haven Island, enclosed in the largest studio ever constructed and along with the Great Wall of China one of only two man-made structures visible from space.

Now, in its 30th great year, it's the Truman Show!

*From the movie soundtrack