

A Kinder World in which to ‘Live, Work and Play’



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Following a painful and acrimonious presidential election cycle in 2016, my wife and I decided to host a traditional Christmas party for friends and neighbors to bring a sense of calm into our home and to remember the true meaning of the holiday. Afterward, we received thoughtful comments and notes from those who attended telling us how badly they needed – and appreciated – a peaceful and joyful time at the end of this year.

So, as the dust settles on 2016, here are some of my thoughts for what’s ahead in 2017...

The **first**, in my view, is **acceptance** of a new political reality and changes to come in Washington, D.C. Apparently, some changes may benefit the economy in 2017.

The **second**, is to **embrace** badly needed **healing and restoration** for our country and fellow man.

And thirdly, is an **opportunity for a kinder world** in which to live, work and play.

As a developer of commercial and multi-family mixed-use projects, the phrase '*live, work and play*' is more than just a list of "catchy" words strung together. It describes a **real trend** in **urban living** marked by a steady migration from the suburbs back to the center of town. It is a trend that affords people the opportunity to **live, work, dine, learn, grow, find entertainment, make social connections** and **shop** without spending long hours commuting in the isolation of cars with the resulting carbon emissions of gridlock traffic.

The benefits of this growing cultural shift to downtowns are many:

1. We have the opportunity to **create sustainable and walkable downtowns** where cars are either not necessary, or used less infrequently.
2. We use the **huge existing investment** that communities have made **in the infrastructures** of their downtown, including water and sewer, electric, governmental services, mass transit systems, libraries, universities, are all a short walk away
3. When people live close to where they work, shop and dine, they will leave their cars in the garage, if they choose to own one at all, and walk or ride a bicycle to their destinations, **reducing carbon emissions**, giving us **cleaner air**.
4. As people use cars less, many will choose never to buy one and take advantage of Uber, mass transit, Zip cars, and other shared ride opportunities. That **reduces** the need for the **construction** and maintenance of large, parking garages, which detract from the life of a city. [Many urban parking garages are now being converted to other higher uses such as student housing, apartments and office space.](#)
5. When we walk to work or to other destinations instead of sitting in our cars, **we get the healthy exercise** our bodies crave...and **achieve that New Year's resolution** to lose those five pounds!
6. In the process of walking across town **we connect** with our neighbors and friends, and renew the human touch, which is the intimacy that makes us more emotionally and spiritually healthy. When we choose to walk, we also meet the restauranteurs, merchants and people who work in the city, bringing us closer together as one community.

2017 can mark the beginning of a move from polar animosity and isolation to one of **building healthier community** with more personal connections. We can choose to cultivate a kinder way in which to live, work and play, and make it more than a trend in real estate – Instead making it a trend for **living at peace with one another** in close proximity, both in terms of a physical location and how **we hold each other in tolerance and grace** in our hearts.