



Site Positioning vs. Site Certification - Which yields better results?

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Many economic developers will be familiar with site certification programs. Through such efforts, a designated authority evaluates and confirms that a specified piece of property meets specific pre-established criteria for industrial development. Communities and property owners often join together to invest in the certification process as they see it as an opportunity to attract end-users to a site in a way that streamlines the decision-making process by providing assurances about the suitability and readiness of said property for development. These comprehensive programs can cover components ranging from low-hanging zoning and land use approvals to more abstract community and workforce considerations. While these programs can positively impact some aspects of development, one common omission is marketing or positioning guidance.

Hickey Global has addressed this disconnect with an Industrial and Business Park (Site) Positioning service offering housed in our Strategy & Business Development services bucket. Site positioning effectively takes the focus off of simply “moving a site.” It allows for considering a large set of objectives tied to how a property fits into a larger development strategy.

In development, sites and industrial parks play a pivotal role in shaping the economic development landscape of the community. Beyond the concrete and steel, these industry hubs have a unique “personality.” Through a well-thought strategy, the governing authority can control site characteristics and personality quirks having far-reaching impacts on the tenants it attracts and the terms of occupancy set forth by the owner’s association.

Hickey Global’s Site Positioning service empowers communities to position industrial assets for maximum returns. We work with communities to understand their intentions for a site. Then, we develop a strategy that tailors

recruitment efforts toward industries that align with their economic vision and contribute to future growth. This approach transcends the mere functionality of a site addressed through certification and instead creates an environment that resonates with the community's identity and ambitions. Our approach includes in-person site evaluation, a matrix of visuals to communicate our findings, a competitive analysis to highlight key indicators of success, and site positioning recommendations to propel attraction and development efforts forward.

In conclusion, the marriage of strategic site positioning and intentional industrial development is a recipe for success that any community can embrace, certified sites or not. In doing so, practitioners can lay the groundwork for a thriving economic landscape and establish their communities as beacons of thoughtful and prosperous community development. To learn more about this and other Hickey Global Services, contact our team today for an overview.