

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Department of Urban Studies and Planning**

11.422 Business Improvement Districts

Lecture Seven

Guest Speaker, Jerry Mitchell

Professor of Public Administration, Baruch College, City University of New York

“Business Improvement Districts, Friend or Foe?”

-What is downtown?

-What is main street?

-Are there instances when they are the same?

-What do you like about downtown?

-What do you dislike about downtown?

-What is your downtown (Boston, Manhattan, etc.)?

-Is the BID movement successful?

-Through the promotion of clean and safe, do BIDs create dull and predictable environments? Through the promotion of entertainment, do they seek to make downtowns more like Disney Land?

-What if BIDs focused more attention on civic activities? What if they partnered with faith-based congregations and set the stage for protests against the war on Iraq?

-BIDs will exacerbate national economic trends. BIDs haven't yet experienced a major economic down turn.