

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

**11.422 Business Improvement Districts**

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**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.