Ryan Frey Presentation Notes- Author of *The Book on Residential Real Estate Development* - Get it on Amazon

Notes taken by Keith Miller, any mistakes or omissions are his fault alone.

- Writing a book was really challenging.
    - Real estate development has the stereotype of smoking cigars and bulldozing forests
- But it is a crucial step in building every house and business.

Background / Early Career

- His story started in the late 90s, when he joined the Peace Corps. Went to Bolivia, worked on building rural water systems.
- Was told there was no funding for projects, and he only made **$280 per month**.
    - Became a civil engineer, and focused on building teams to design, fundraise, and build water systems.
- Eventually moved to Missoula and partnered with a real estate agent to start doing his own projects.

First Development Deal

- Bought a log cabin on a **9,000 sq. ft. lot**.
- Divided lot into **4 lots**:
    - Kept the old house.
    - Built 2 units.
    - Built a duplex.
- Was hooked on development after that.

Land Lessons

- **Land is key**, it is the crucial ingredient.
- Teardowns are really hard to pull off, in his experience.
- Example:
    - **$400K house**
    - Land worth **$100K**
    - House worth **$300K**
- By tearing down the house, you destroy value and put yourself in a deep hole, and can only break even by earning $300K of profit.

Zoning Example

- **Zoning is crucial.** Land cost per unit is a huge factor in development, which is determined by zoning.
- For example, he found a house where the property line bisected the house, so it could not be financed. Ryan and his partner bought it, moved the boundary line, and fixed the issue in **8 months**. The 5X'd their investment in 8 months.

Why Knowing Zoning Is So Important

Making Offers / Risk Reduction

    - Making offers with contingencies is a great way to reduce risk, so that you only have to buy the land if you can get your lot line relocation, rezoning, or approval from the city.
- Make sure you are paying for what is currently possible, not what could be possible after a rezone, which is uncertain.

Additional Notes

- Moving boundary lines is time-consuming and uncertain.

Market Studies

- Most cities have already hired third parties to do market studies.
- Use those studies as a starting point to learn the market.
- Hire the same firm if the bank wants a third-party market study.

Partnering With Landowners

- Partnering with landowners is a great strategy.
- Make sure the agreement is well written.
- Ownership can transfer in stages.

Off-Market Deals

- Off-market deals can be great.
- They are not automatically good deals.
- Some are overpriced.
- They should be part of your strategy.
- Keep looking on-market too.

Ryan's Focus right now is Meadowview Village

Brief Summary

- Meadowview Village is a 163-home, deeded-lot ownership community in Great Falls, Montana.
- It is designed to deliver attainable homeownership for buyers priced out of traditional new homes.
- Homes use factory-built construction on permanent foundations, helping reduce cost and build time.
- Buyers own both the home and land, allowing them to build equity.

Where We Are

- Land control and planning are complete.
- Infrastructure and site development are moving forward.
- Financing and capital raising have advanced the project into execution.
- Buyer interest and marketing efforts are active.

Why It Is Repeatable

- Many markets face the same problem: not enough attainable for-sale housing.
- The model is straightforward:
    1. Find undersupplied markets

2. Secure well-located land
3. Use efficient site plans
4. Pair lots with factory-built homes
5. Sell homes to end buyers
6. Recycle capital into the next project

Plans to Scale

- Use Meadowview Village as the first proof of concept.
- Replicate in other Montana cities, then nearby states.
- Standardize design, financing, and marketing systems.
- Build multiple communities over time.

Manufactured Housing Note

- 60% of Swedish homes are manufactured.

Build-to-Rent (BTR)

- Huge appetite for BTR projects from family offices.
- But they must be big projects.

What It Takes to Be a Developer

- Has been working on Meadowview Village for **2 years** with no pay.
- Takes grit, perseverance, and uncertainty.
- If you keep battling, success is possible.

Market Awareness

- Look at what is selling.
- What does the market want?
- Where is the demand?

Financing

- Every bank has a portfolio and target ratios they are trying to lend for.
- Do not hesitate to shop around for a bank hungry for what you are trying to build.
- Just call them up.

Lessons Learned

- He would find a mentor earlier in the process.
- Learn from them.
- Try to provide value in return.
- It will help your mindset.

Partnerships

- Everyone is looking to offload tasks.
- Find partners sooner.
- Make all partnerships project-based so you can part ways more easily.
- Think of project #1 as a tester project.

Systems

- Ryan recommended the **Traction** system.

- It has **E.O.S.**, the Entrepreneurial Operating System

Check out his just-released book, *The Book on Residential Real Estate Development* - [Get it on Amazon]