An architectural sketch of a city street scene, showing various buildings of different heights and styles, trees lining the streets, and a perspective view from an elevated position. The drawing is in a light, sketchy style with fine lines and some shading to indicate depth and texture.

Allen Street Civic District Redevelopment Area Plan

Joint Meeting & update on Stakeholder Input

State College Planning Commission

State College Redevelopment Authority

July 30, 2015

Redevelopment Planning Steps

- ✓ Decision by Council on actions to pursue
- ✓ Introduction to CRA & RFP processes for ABC's
- ✓ Determine CRA boundary
- ✓ Inventory current conditions of the CRA
- ✓ Introduction to P3 models & RFP elements
- ✓ Stakeholder engagement activities

Evaluate Stakeholder feedback in context of project goals

Use information to draft a redevelopment area plan

Use information to draft an RFP for redevelopment

Planning Commission recommendation on the Plan and RFP

Council approval of the Plan and RFP

Planning Commission Steps

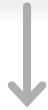
STEP 1: Identify properties to certify as a Redevelopment Area



Planning Commission has identified the Allen Street Civic District as the proposed Certified Redevelopment Area (CRA)

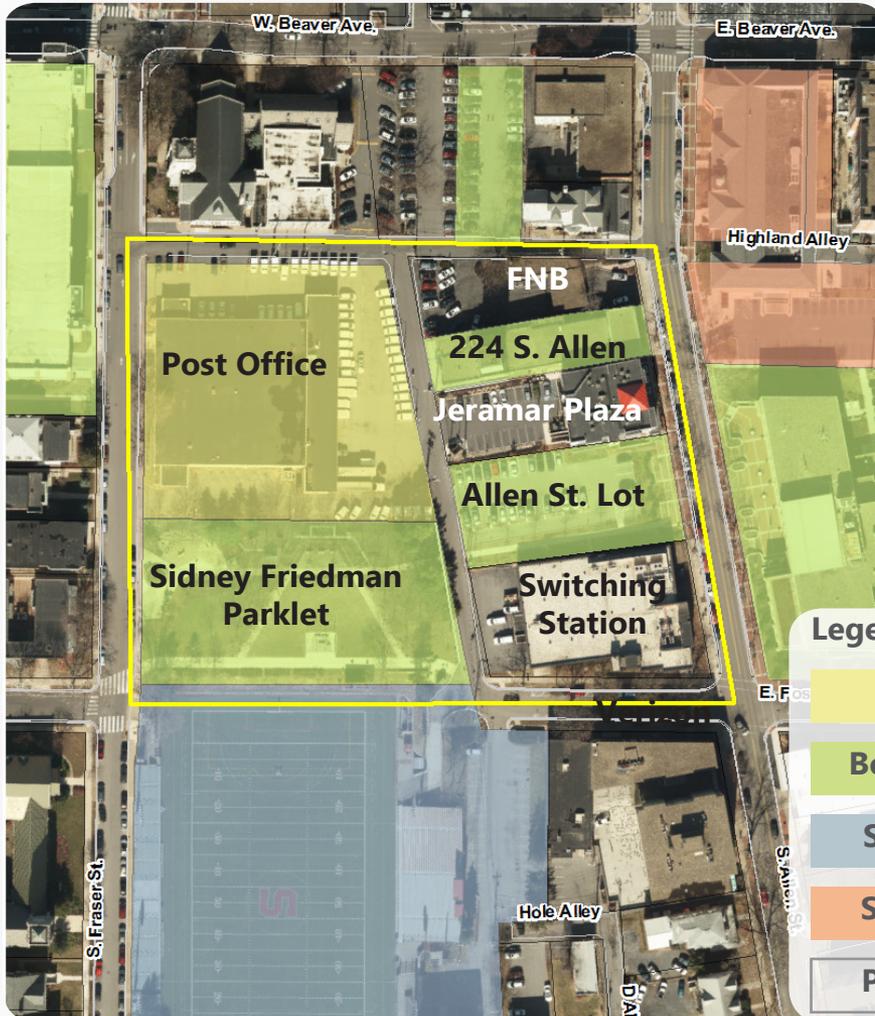


STEP 2: Prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the Area



STEP 3: Prepare proposal for all or part of the area

Allen Street Civic District



The Planning Commission considered this area as an appropriate redevelopment area due to the following factors:

- Current interest in the 200 block of Allen Street- advance partnerships
- Former “Fairmount Civic District” (south of Foster Ave) requires further discussion with Highlands and SCASD
- Transitional areas should be considered in the context of broad zoning update
- Downtown plan includes recommendations for the properties in the proposed Allen Street Civic District



Allen Street Civic District

The Planning Commission's redevelopment plan will address the following certification criteria:

PRIMARY CRITERIA:

INADEQUATE PLANNING
OF THE AREA

ECONOMICALLY & SOCIALLY
UNDESIRABLE LAND USES

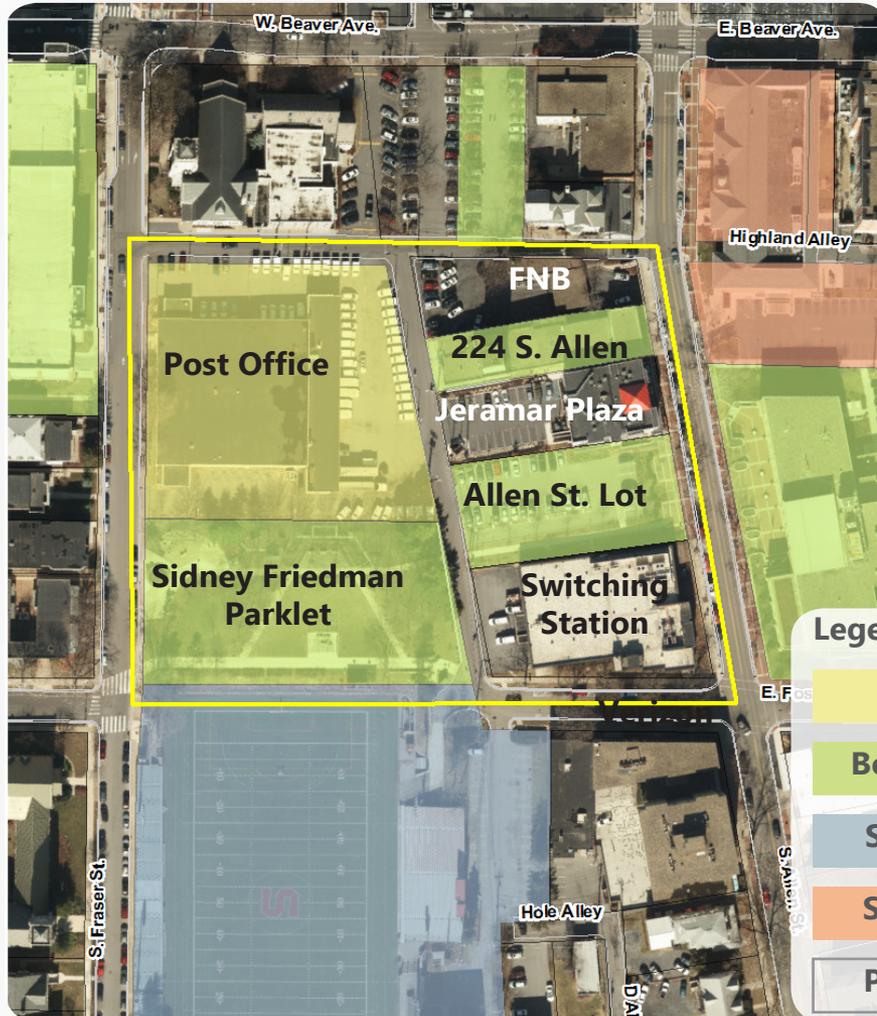
ADDITIONAL CRITERIA:

lack of proper
open space

faulty street or
lot layout

defective
arrangement of
buildings

Allen Street Civic District

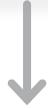


Redevelopment plan will provide suggestions to address the following conditions in the proposed area:

- underutilization of properties in a downtown setting
- prominence of and connectivity to Sidney Friedman Parklet and/or another public open space
- limitations of outdated ordinances and codes in facilitating redevelopment of block
- expansion of tax-revenue generating properties and uses
- advantages of existing/improved public infrastructure for redevelopment capacity

Planning Commission Steps

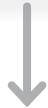
STEP 1: Identify properties to certify as a Redevelopment Area



STEP 2: Prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the Area



Planning Commission has reviewed conditions of the area and criteria. Next steps will be to prepare a plan for its redevelopment.



STEP 3: Prepare proposal for all or part of the area

Planning Commission Steps

This meeting will help inform the Planning Commission's next decision-making steps:

WHERE

Which properties should the Planning Commission recommend be redeveloped?

Short term
vs
long term

WHAT

What land uses, population density, building height, and other features are ideal for the redeveloped area?

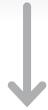
(Downtown Plan)

HOW

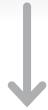
Prepare a conceptual site plan, propose mechanisms for implementation, and estimate costs for redevelopment

Redevelopment Authority Steps

STEP 1: Identify properties to certify as a Redevelopment Area



STEP 2: Prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the Area



STEP 3: Prepare proposal for all or part of the area



RDA has considered a number of partnership models and discussed background info for potential partners



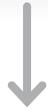
Request for Proposals

The Authority's Request for Proposals (RFP) will be consistent with the policies and goals for the CRA that are established by the Planning Commission. Some feedback provided by the RDA thus far includes:

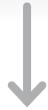
- Need to balance the considerations for the community-wide goals with realistic assessment of economics and market demand for project
- All of the potential goals that have been identified have value; however, must be careful not to overload the RFP with too many requirements that will impact the feasibility of redevelopment
- RDA advises against partnership models that will put the Borough in a position of owning and/or managing real estate; renting portions of a new building may be OK if necessary to achieve goals
- Partnership model should allow Borough to recoup the value of the land and buildings it owns today-- can be short or long term depending on structure of deal

Redevelopment Authority Steps

STEP 1: Identify properties to certify as a Redevelopment Area



STEP 2: Prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the Area

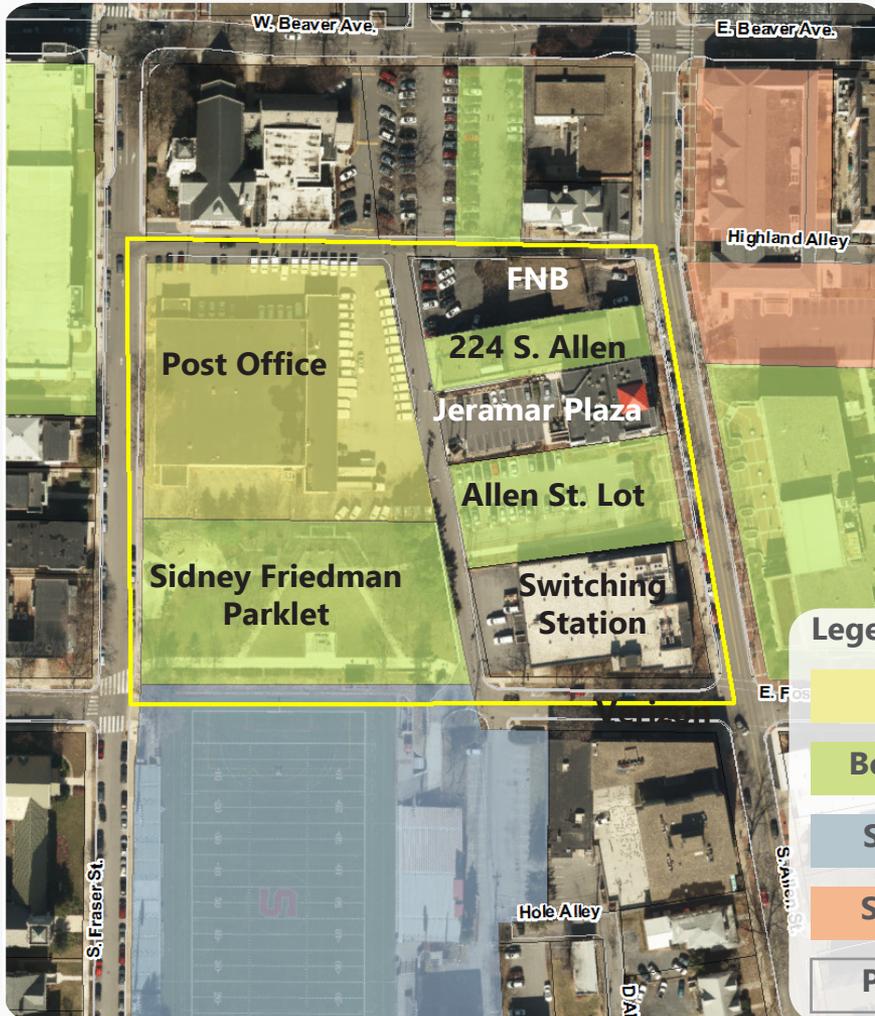


STEP 3: Prepare proposal for all or part of the area



Next steps will include a decision on how to include Borough property in the RFP and which are required vs. desired elements for a proposal

Request for Proposals



RDA will consider options for listing the available properties for redevelopment:

- All Borough-owned properties are “available” for proposals
- Verizon and FNB properties available and other Borough-owned properties “may be considered”
- Suggested phasing of available sites
- Note that a redeveloper may wish to acquire additional properties in the CRA to enhance proposals



Request for Proposals

This meeting will help inform the Redevelopment Authority's next decision-making steps:

REQUIRED

What elements are required to be a part of a redevelopment proposal?

Discovery Space
Public parking
Other?

DESIRED

What elements may be encouraged to be part of a redevelopment proposal based on PC's identified land uses?

WHO

Based on the required and desired elements for the redevelopment proposals, what are the necessary skills of a partner?

Stakeholder Input

Staff solicited the input of several major stakeholders to help inform the Redevelopment Area Planning process:

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Current land owners and entities in the proposed CRA that may be partners to a project:

Discovery Space
First National Bank
Penn State
Other land owners

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Used Downtown Master Plan to ID groups to discuss feasibility of ideas:

Entrepreneurs
Arts & Cultural Orgs
Housing Staff
Young Professionals

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Provided multiple opportunities to engage the community at large in the ranking of potential project goals and other big ideas for the block

Potential Partners

Staff continued discussions with the partners that had been tentatively identified at the outset of this process:



- Desire to own space
- 10,000 to 20,000 sq.ft.
- Allen Street presence
- Loading zone for buses and exhibits
- Other building features shared regarding utilities, elevators/ ramps, etc.
- Concerns continue to be space & timing



- Options open for owning vs renting
- Less than 1,000 sq.ft.
- Maintain Drive Thru either in same location or nearby; 2 lanes required, 3 preferred
- Need to retain existing parking, ability to add more is desired if call center on Allen St. grows



- Current interest in the former Verizon Building only
- Negotiated 2 year initial lease, with 3 one-year renewal options that must be approved by the borough
- Assist Borough with short-term needs for Discovery Space

Potential Partners



recent acquisition by USPS signals long-term use as post office

interested in planning process; property could be part of a “transformative” project

no response to letter

Legend:

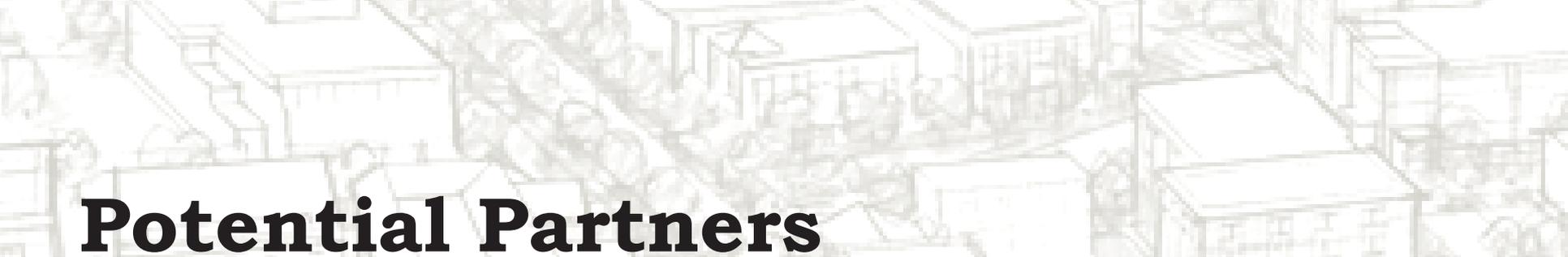
USPS

Borough

SCASD

Schlow

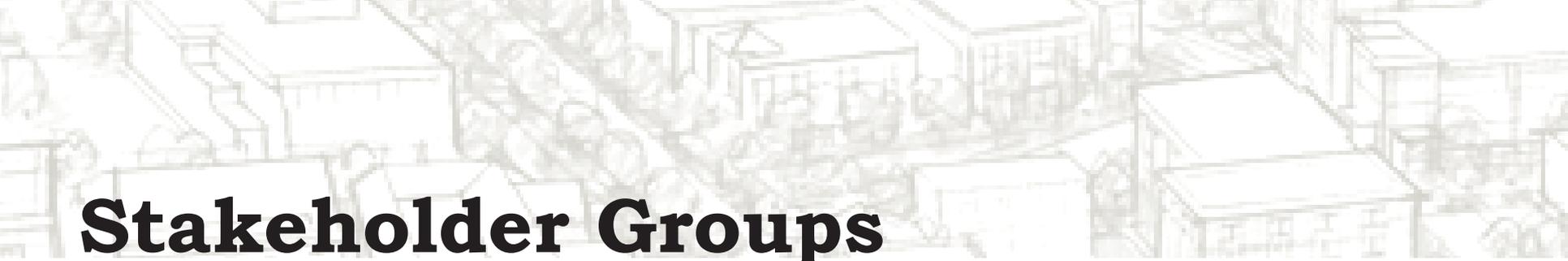
Private



Potential Partners

Staff recommends that these considerations impact the Redevelopment Area Plan and RFP in the following ways:

- PC consider all properties in the CRA as potential sites for redevelopment in the Plan
 - properties along Allen Street SHORT TERM
 - properties along Fraser Street LONG TERM
- RDA indicate in the RFP that Borough-owned properties along Allen Street are available for redevelopment, and ask for a phased development proposal
 - indicate that a private developer may want to pursue acquisition of non-Borough owned properties to be included in the project
- RDA include the specific needs of the Discovery Space and First National Bank in the RFP and indicate that public parking is a required element of proposals



Stakeholder Groups

Staff worked with community organizations to set up various meetings, focus groups and open houses to connect with stakeholders related to the potential project goals:

- to obtain insights from stakeholder groups on potential for achieving community goals
- learn about how redevelopment activities will either aid or hinder current initiatives/goals of these stakeholders
- learn about specific space, resource and design needs that should be considered in the RFP if these goals were to be achieved
- identify opportunities for additional partners- determine if willing/interested

Arts & Cultural Organizations

WHO:

- Arts Alliance Members
- Centre Foundation
- Discovery Space
- Schlow Library
- PSU & State Theaters
- Artists

WHAT:

In what ways could a redevelopment project compliment your organizations?

What elements are needed to strengthen arts & culture downtown?

Insights:

- Interest & support for a space that can be shared by multiple organizations
- Desire for space to be flexible to be used for a variety of classes, small performances, working space and gallery/display needs could be most successful; outdoor component is desirable
- Multiple goals could be achieved by incorporating a live-work model with units dedicated to artists (local or traveling) with studio and display space in the lower levels of the building
- Missions of these organizations align with “maker spaces”- space provides resource for artists as well as entrepreneurs
- Management entity and decision about ownership structure will be necessary consideration for success of space
- Potential exists for grant funding sources for planning or management

Arts & Cultural Organizations

WHO:

- Arts Alliance Members
- Centre Foundation
- Discovery Space
- Schlow Library
- PSU & State Theaters
- Artists

WHAT:

In what ways could a redevelopment project compliment your organizations?

What elements are needed to strengthen arts & culture downtown?

Impacts on Redevelopment Planning:

- Need to continue discussions to identify management structure and ownership of such a space; no single entity ready to partner until this element is determined
- Best opportunity to meet this goal in redevelopment plan:
 - Approx. 5,000 sq.ft. to compliment children's science museum that could be used part time by Discovery Space, part time by other organizations
 - Purposes for space could range from arts camps & workshops to exhibit & display space
 - Outdoor gathering space could increase demand/ attractiveness of these amenities

Entrepreneurial Groups

WHO:

- Centre Region Entrepreneurs Network (CREN)
- New Leaf Initiative (NL)
- Women's Network Group (WiNG's)

WHAT:

If downtown is to become a place where entrepreneurship and small businesses can thrive, then...?

Insights:

- New Leaf should be on the ground floor to create more community presence and synergy
- Addressing barriers to startups-- not about lack of space per say, but about cost of outfitting, length of leases, and other zoning/code restrictions on use of properties
- Larger, Class A office spaces are hard to come by in downtown
- Large, architecturally unique buildings for adaptive reuse also hard to come by in downtown
- Supporting entrepreneurship and wage-sustaining jobs is dependent on excellent quality of life, including professional housing, retail and dining diversity, and "third places"
- Need spaces with more social component to create "sticky" community

Entrepreneurial Groups

WHO:

- Centre Region Entrepreneurs Network (CREN)
- New Leaf Initiative (NL)
- Women's Network Group (WiNG's)

WHAT:

If downtown is to become a place where entrepreneurship and small businesses can thrive, then...?

Impacts on Redevelopment Planning:

- Implementation of downtown plan goals for housing, retail diversity, and public realm improvements will support desirability of downtown for employees of new/existing companies
- One new building won't be the solution; reinvestment and reuse of existing building stock in and near downtown presents opportunities
- Best opportunity to meet this goal in redevelopment plan:
 - space in a new building should be designed for utmost flexibility rather than "purpose build," which renders space too expensive to adapt to new uses; i.e. "vanilla box" to promote maximum flexibility for attraction of initial and future tenants
 - Outdoor gathering space could increase demand/attractiveness of these amenities

County-wide Housing Staff

WHO:

- Centre County Planning & Adult Services staff
- Borough Housing Staff
- CRPA Housing Staff
- Temporary Housing Foundation Director (THF)

WHAT:

What housing types could be successful in this part of downtown and are there resources available that can be used as a tool to close gaps?

Insights:

- Not necessarily a location for family units; could be open to graduate students, professionals and empty-nesters
- If target market is specific, need to focus on the supporting services/uses that would make the housing attractive- consider what is available in downtown currently (i.e. family housing- daycare, graduate students- 24 hour coffee shop, etc)
- Addison Court (age-restricted housing) difficult to fill; loss of Senior Center impacts downtown's attractiveness for senior housing
- Single occupancy and/or transitional housing not appropriate due to critical need for co-located support services
- Any addition of non-undergraduate student housing helps add "rungs to the ladder" of housing choices, inventory which can have a positive impact the entire county

County-wide Housing Staff

WHO:

- Centre County Planning & Adult Services staff
- Borough Housing Staff
- CRPA Housing Staff
- Temporary Housing Foundation Director (THF)

WHAT:

What housing types could be successful in this part of downtown and are there resources available that can be used as a tool to close gaps?

Impacts on Redevelopment Planning:

- May not be the best location for more “traditional” affordable housing tax credit projects or investment of CDBG/HOME funds
- Opportunity to provide a housing product that currently exists in limited supply in the area; start small and see how market accepts
- Best opportunity to meet this goal in redevelopment plan:
 - Stay away from too narrow a “target market” by focusing on mixed-income and mixed-tenant housing in downtown
 - Rents should range from just above rates considered to be affordable through housing assistance programs up to market rate
 - Encourage provision of developer’s required inclusionary housing on-site to promote this diversity

Young Professionals

WHO:

- State College Young Professionals (SCYP)
- CBICC Gateway Group
- New Leaf Initiative
- Community Members at large
- ~90 survey participants

WHAT:

Do you have an interest in housing in downtown?
If so, what amenities are most important?

Insights:

- 85% of survey participants don't live downtown today
 - 35% tried to find housing, but couldn't find something suitable
 - 38% didn't look because they didn't believe they would find something suitable
- 27% want to live downtown; another 52% are interested if they can find the right housing stock
- Searching for living arrangements to accommodate:
 - Most likely arrangements-- a single individual or a couple (possibly with a pet)
 - Least likely arrangement-- with roommates (slightly less likely than a partner and/or kids)

Young Professionals

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- State College Young Professionals (SCYP)
- CBICC Gateway Group
- New Leaf Initiative
- Community Members at large
- ~90 survey participants

WHAT:

Do you have an interest in housing in downtown?
If so, what amenities are most important?

Insights:

- Desired amenities in downtown housing:
 - Respondents had a split preference for renting versus owning a unit
 - 50% of respondents ranked 2+ bedrooms as one of the top 5 needs for suitable housing (versus only 23% for studio/1 bed)
 - Car parking is most highly ranked amenity (above fitness/laundry centers, bike parking and walkability)
- 60% consider \$500-800/bedroom an affordable rent, but do not want prices to be based on a per bedroom rate, since this could be cost prohibitive for the desired living arrangements
- Many comments regarding living in buildings that do not allow undergraduate tenants

Young Professionals

WHO:

- State College Young Professionals (SCYP)
- CBICC Gateway Group
- New Leaf Initiative
- Community Members at large
- ~90 survey participants

WHAT:

Do you have an interest in housing in downtown?
If so, what amenities are most important?

Impacts on Redevelopment Planning:

- support Downtown Plan policy for non-student housing in core area of downtown
- start with a small supply of units to test absorption rates and unit prices
- parking either on-site or off-site will be needed to be attractive for target market; may be able to provided at a lower ratio than current zoning requires and may be priced separate from residential units
- Best opportunity to meet this goal in redevelopment plan:
 - see recommendations from housing staff insights

Community Input

WHO:

Community at large through:

- Engage State College Website (38 rankings submitted)
- Community Events (35 rankings submitted)

WHAT:

Rank these goals in order from most important to least important:

- civic, arts hub
- entrepreneurial hub
- retail diversity
- professional housing
- other ideas

Insights:

- Community preference for goals based on number of times ranked as #1 or #2 most important:
 - Civic, Arts & Family Center
 - Entrepreneurial & Business Hub
 - Professional Housing
 - Retail Diversity
- “Other idea” posts supported a range of potential uses
 - Nearly half supported a community maker space idea
 - Frequent comments about a “town square” or pedestrian mall concept
 - Desire to see more and different dining/retail options, such as food trucks and fewer bars; but mixed responses to creating more retail space given current challenges with existing stock
 - Some ideas for professional, affordable, and senior housing

Community Input

WHO:

Community at large through:

- Engage State College Website (38 rankings submitted)
- Community Events (35 rankings submitted)

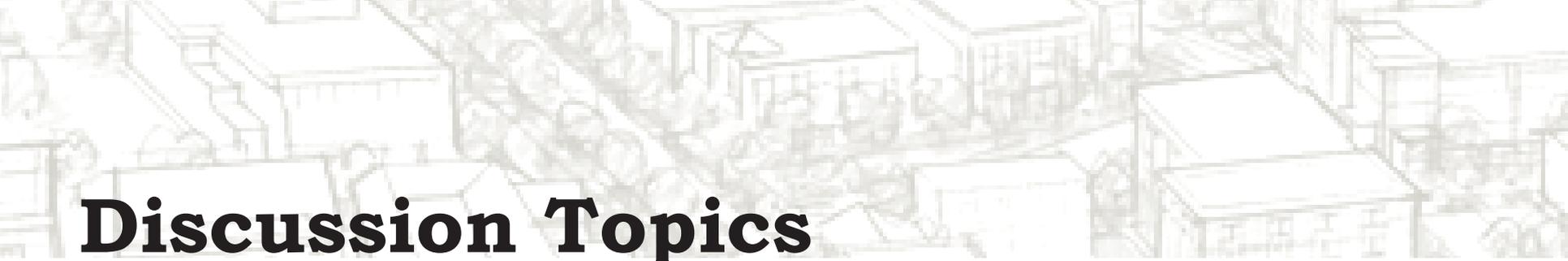
WHAT:

Rank these goals in order from most important to least important:

- civic, arts hub
- entrepreneurial hub
- retail diversity
- professional housing
- other ideas

Impacts on Redevelopment Planning:

- General community support for most goals; least support for incorporating retail into project
- All focus groups generally support the idea that this part of downtown should feel like the “center” and should have a more easily accessible and usable “town square”
-
- Redevelopment Area Plan (PC Role) should articulate that any of these uses are acceptable for core of downtown, but greatest emphasis on “civic” uses
- Redevelopment Proposal (RDA Role) should articulate minimum required elements (Discovery Space & FNB needs, minimum replacement parking required) and allow proposals to address additional uses that will financially & strategically support focus on civic center

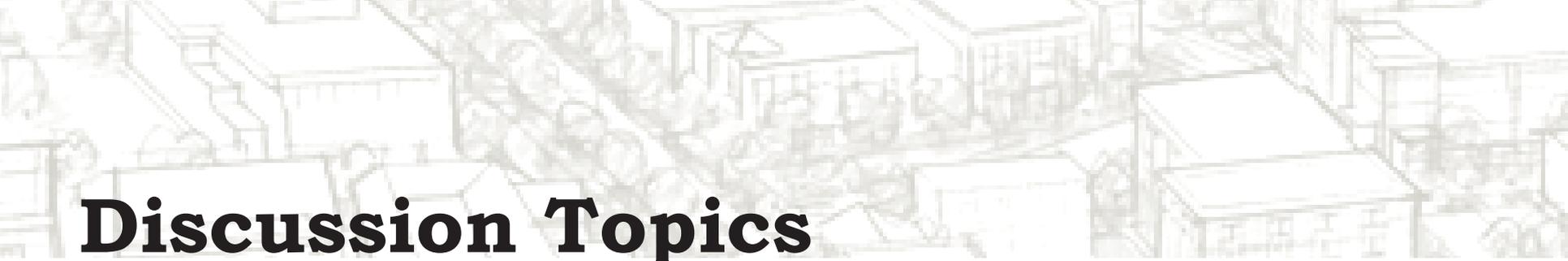


Discussion Topics

The Planning Commission and Redevelopment Authority should provide feedback on the following discussion topics to assist staff in the drafting of the Redevelopment Plan and Proposal:

Is there support for the staff recommendation regarding short term and long term redevelopment sites?

Is there support to articulate the minimum required elements in the RFP (DS, FNB & public parking) to allow for flexibility for proposals to meet other project goals?



Discussion Topics

The Planning Commission and Redevelopment Authority should provide feedback on the following discussion topics to assist staff in the drafting of the Redevelopment Plan and Proposal:

Should the highest priority goal be the enhancement of this area as a civic center for the community?
(rather than expanding business or retail uses)

Should proposals be required to limit housing components to non-undergraduate student housing, or be permitted to make recommendations based on market?