



Wright County Government Center Assessment Survey and Focus Groups

August 10, 2021



The WSB/IAG Commercial Team conducted 9 focus groups that included the following members:

- Elected and appointed government officials
- Business Leaders
- Real Estate Brokers and Developers
- Local residents



In addition, the team conducted an on-line survey that was posted on the following websites:

- Wright County
- Wright County Economic Development Partnership
- City of Buffalo

Jim Zeff

- 8 focus group meetings were completed on July 7th and 8th.
- The meetings were limited to 1 hour.
- Over 50 people participated in the focus group program.
- The questions that were posed to the participants were similar to the questions for the on-line survey.



Re-Use of the Existing Site: Focused on the current buildings and potential repositioning.

- Development of a community center
- Rerouting of streets and additional properties to allow for direct lake access
- Incorporating the Library and Library Property into redevelopment plans
- Protect neighborhood/residential



Re-Use of the Existing Site: Focused on the current buildings and potential repositioning.



- Create mixed use (Housing/Retail/Restaurants)
- Public Parking/Public Transportation (Keep Parking Lot)
- Limited interest in Non-Profit/Charter School
- Secondary educational facility e.g., Tech School, Community College or 4-year satellite campus
- Park/Marina



Market Rate Housing: Assuming the market demand would be sufficient for the development, but specific demand would need to be identified.



- Condo's (ownership structure)
- Higher end housing possible
- Apartments (higher end rental)
- Market rate rental (mid-level) also possible
- No affordable housing on this site
- Others that believe that rental should be limited





Senior Housing: Assuming that the market demand exists and would need to be verified prior to the approval of any project.

- Senior Housing (Rental/Ownership)
- 55+ community (Mix of mid-tier or high end)
- Senior Condos only (No more rental)
- Incorporate a senior center



Affordable Housing: Assuming that the market demand exists and would need to be verified prior to the approval of any project.

- Could be a possible component, but not all affordable, probably more “workforce” housing to support service employees downtown
- Majority think that affordable housing is not a good fit for this site



Retail/Commercial Use: Ideas for potential commercial/retail uses are listed however, there has not been a review on the market demand for these uses.



- Mixed use with housing, commercial and/or retail
- Demand for restaurants/lack of dining opportunities
- Hospitality (hotel/restaurant)
- Grocery/Market
- Possibly a multi-product store



Retail/Commercial Use: Ideas for potential commercial/retail uses are listed however, there has not been a review on the market demand for these uses.

- Performance/Entertainment space
- Need to bring more vibrancy to downtown
- Some push back that retail is not a fit
- No want for office space/use
- Marina could be in conjunction with restaurant



Government's Role in Project: Ideas on potential government involvement in a project, however no determination of assistance has been reviewed.

- City owned library needs to be relocated
- No support for non-property tax paying
- Rezoning to highest and best use should be smooth and tax base should not be key driver
- County should acquire adjacent sites



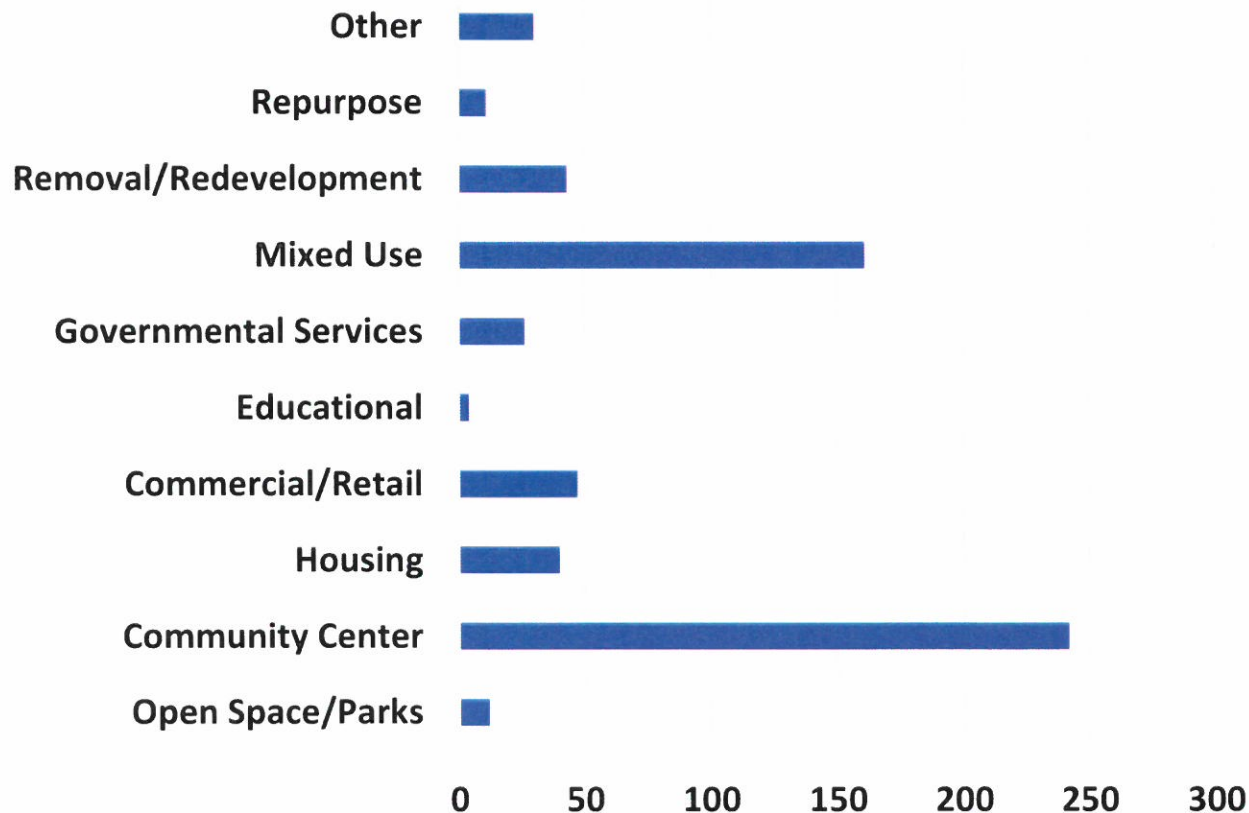
- The survey consisted of 13 questions and had over 650 responses.
- The questions were a combination of set answers and open ended to allow for the respondents to provide additional information.
- The following slides reflect the information that was collected by the survey respondents.



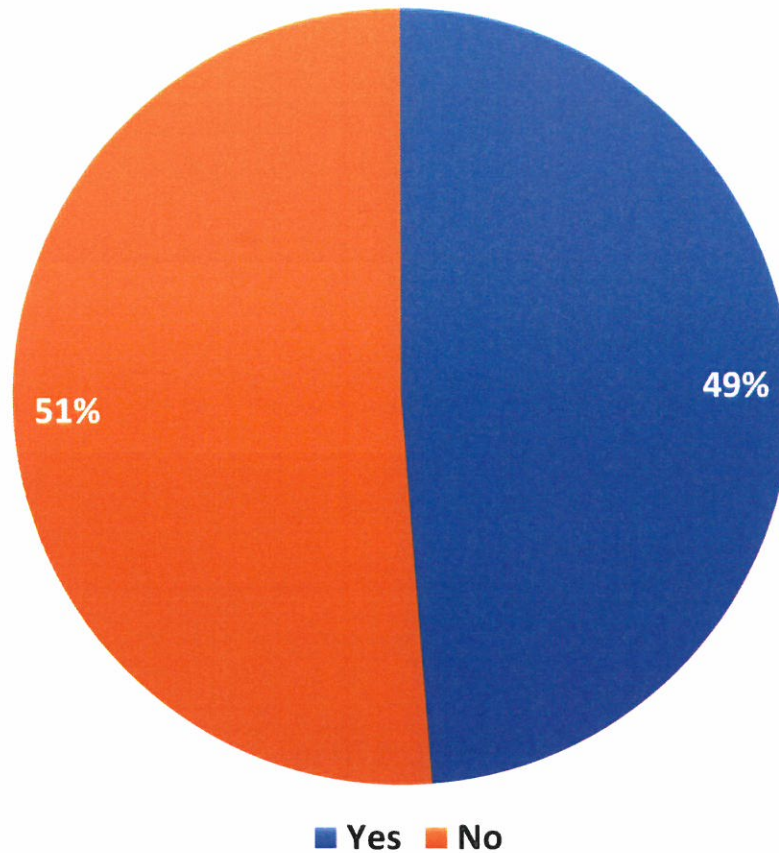
Question 1: What do you feel is the best use of the existing government services building?



Total Responses – 616

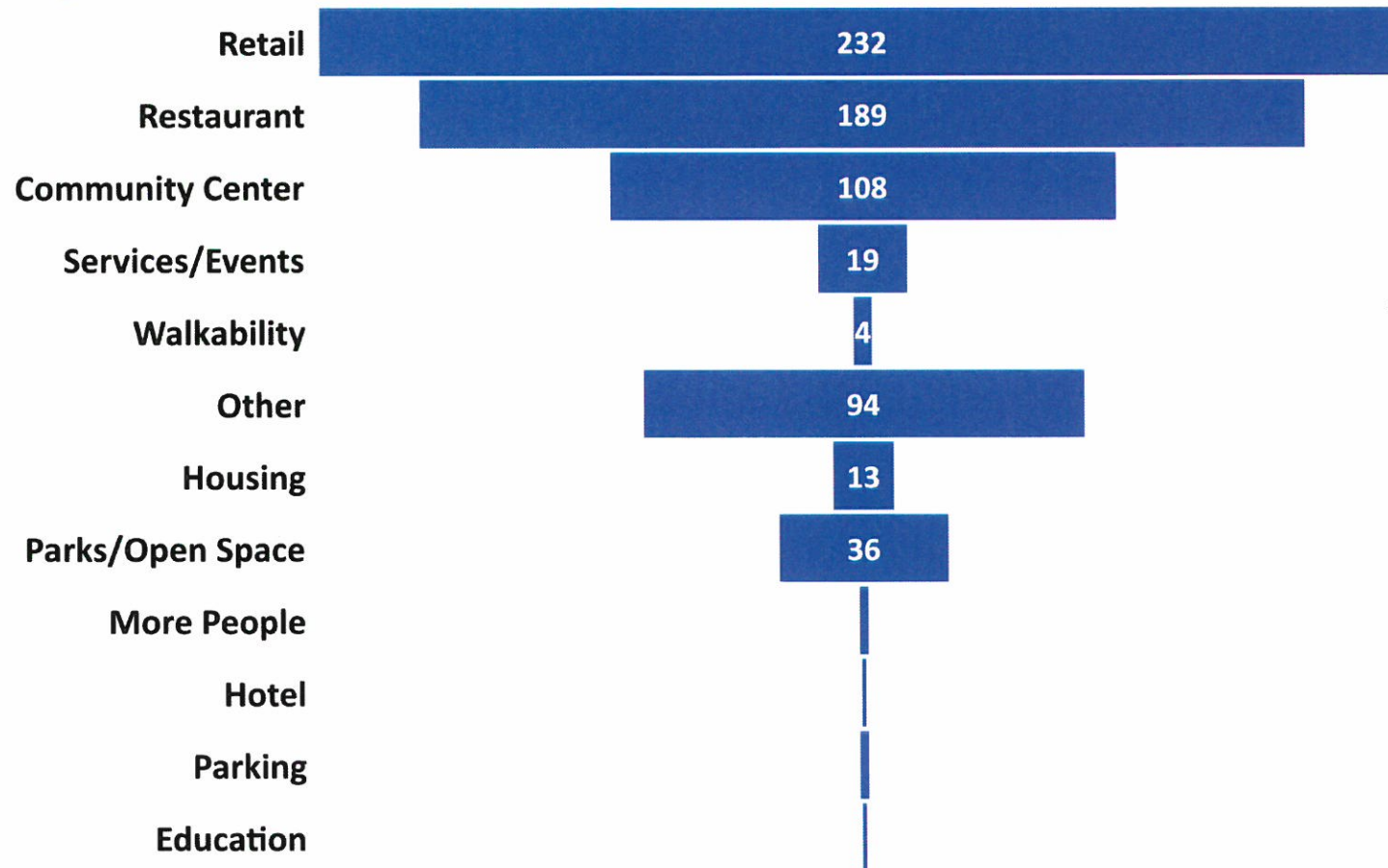


**Question 2: Do you think the
downtown is vibrant?**



Total Responses – 660

Question 3: What would make the downtown area more vibrant?

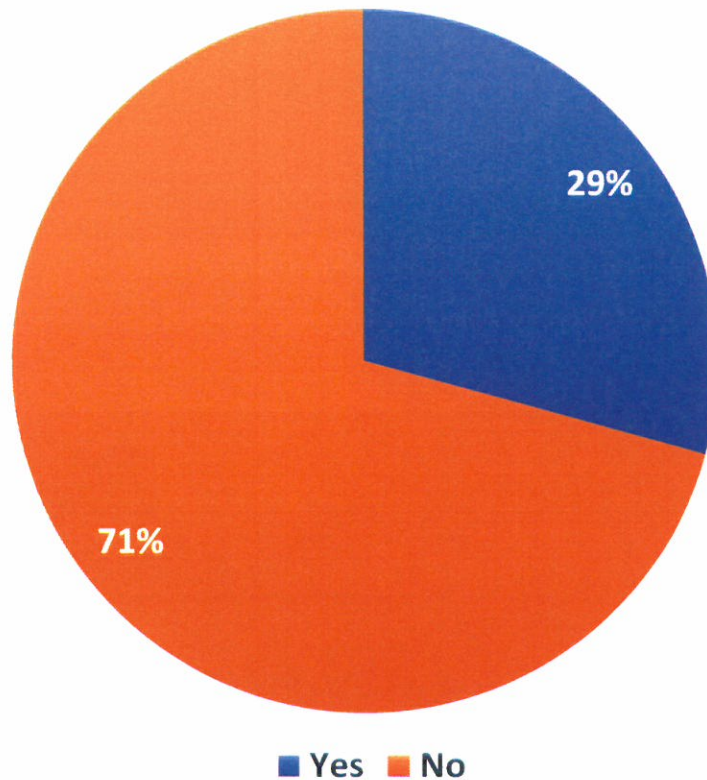


Total Responses – 701

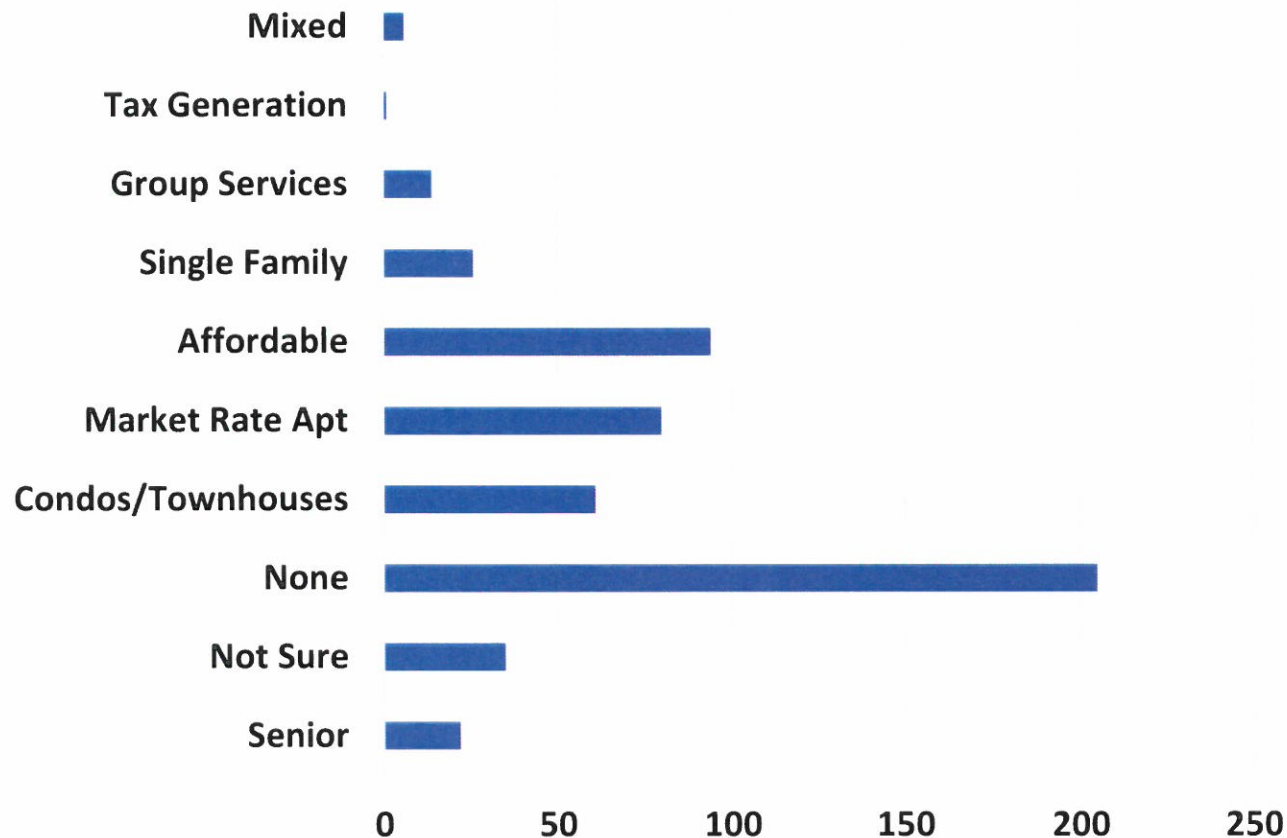
Question 4: Is there a need for additional housing opportunities in the downtown area?



Total Responses – 652



Question 5: What type of housing do you feel is most needed?

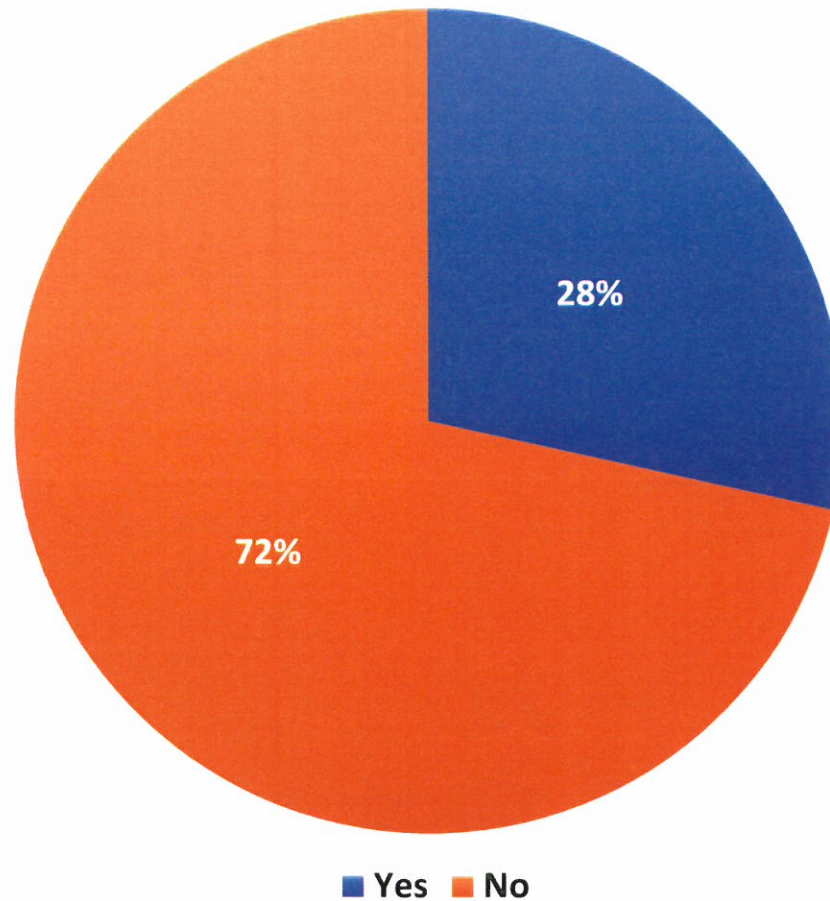


Total Responses – 544

**Question 6: Would residential housing
on the site be a positive use?**



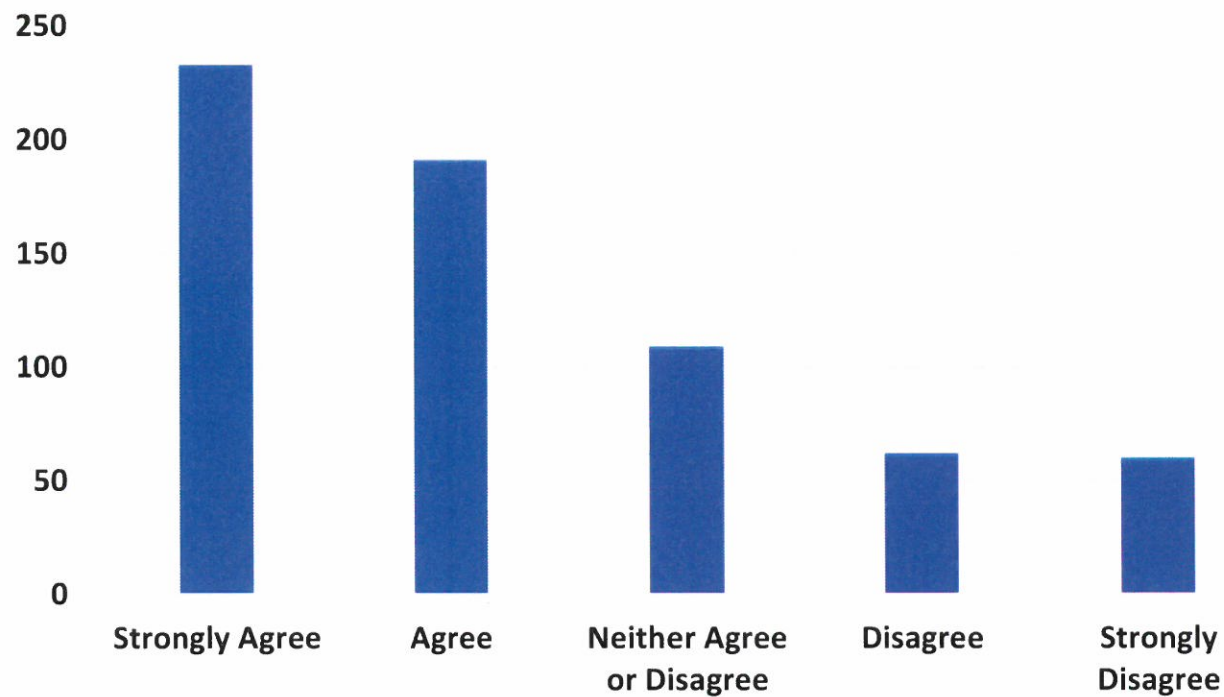
Total Responses – 643



Question 7: Do you feel repurposing the building is the best use of the site to maintain and increase the vibrancy of downtown?



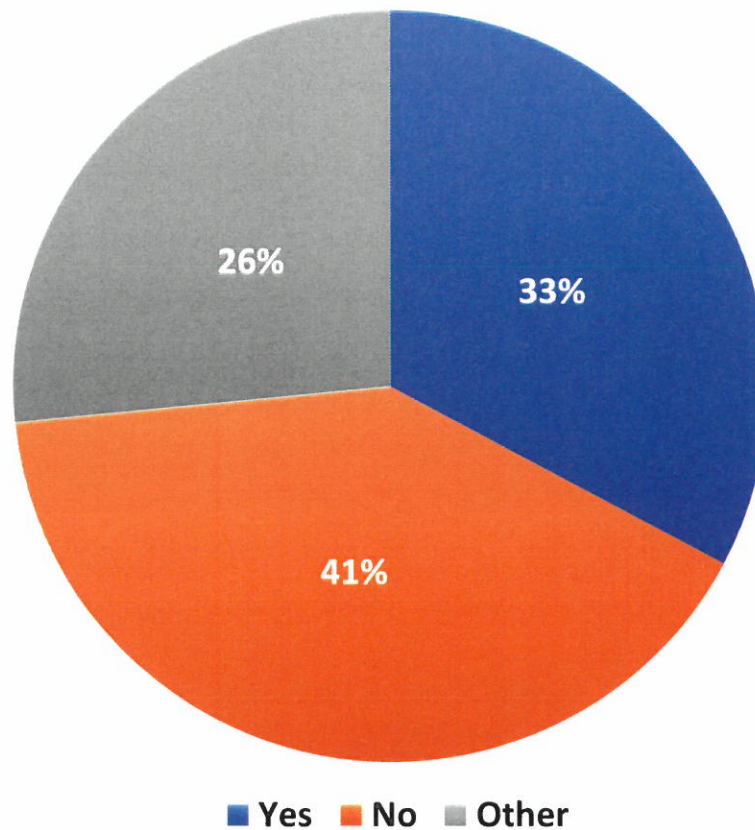
Total Responses – 655



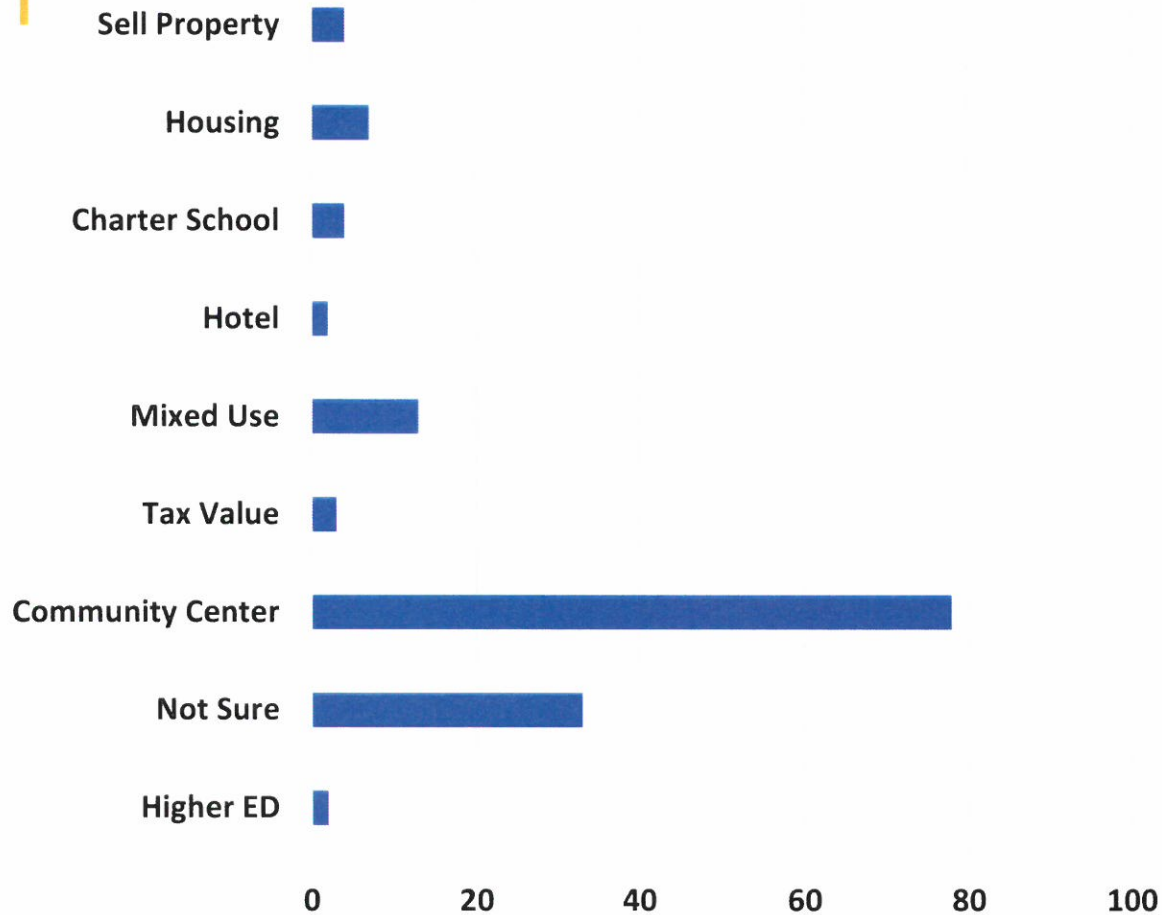
**Question 8: Should the current facility
be repurposed for another user? e.g.
Charter School, Church, Office, other**



Total Responses – 652



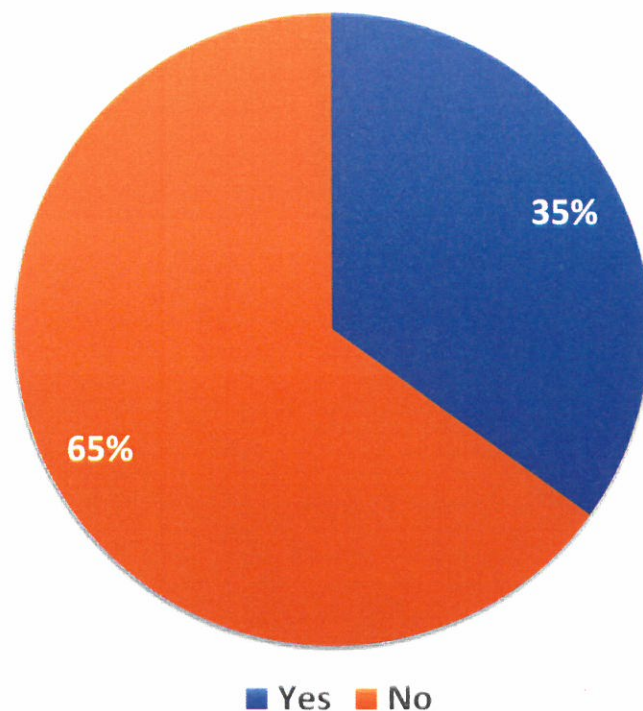
Question 8: Other Responses



Total Responses – 146

Question 9: Should the current facility be removed to allow for a new development?

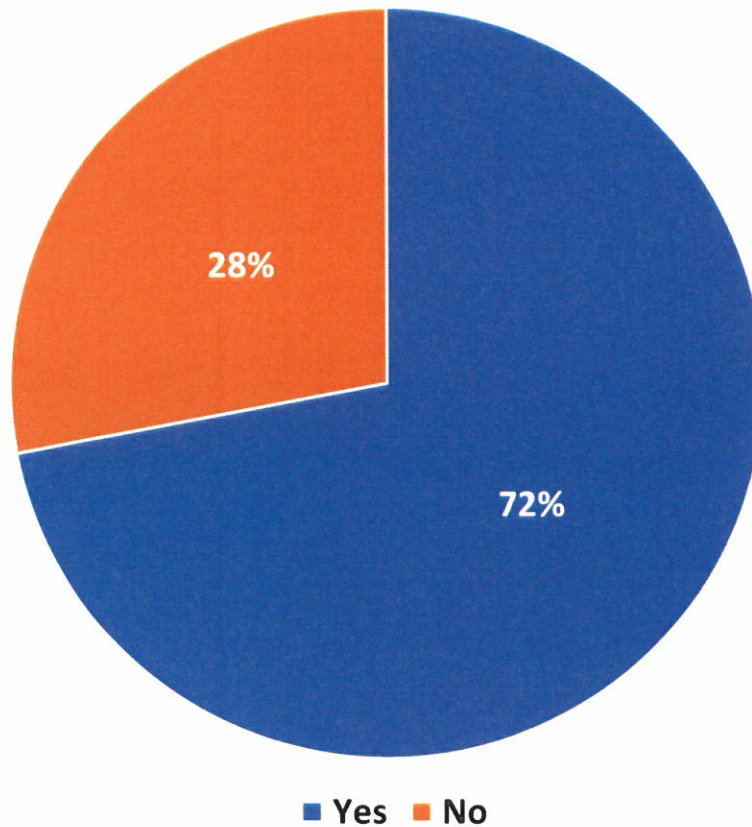
Total Responses – 634



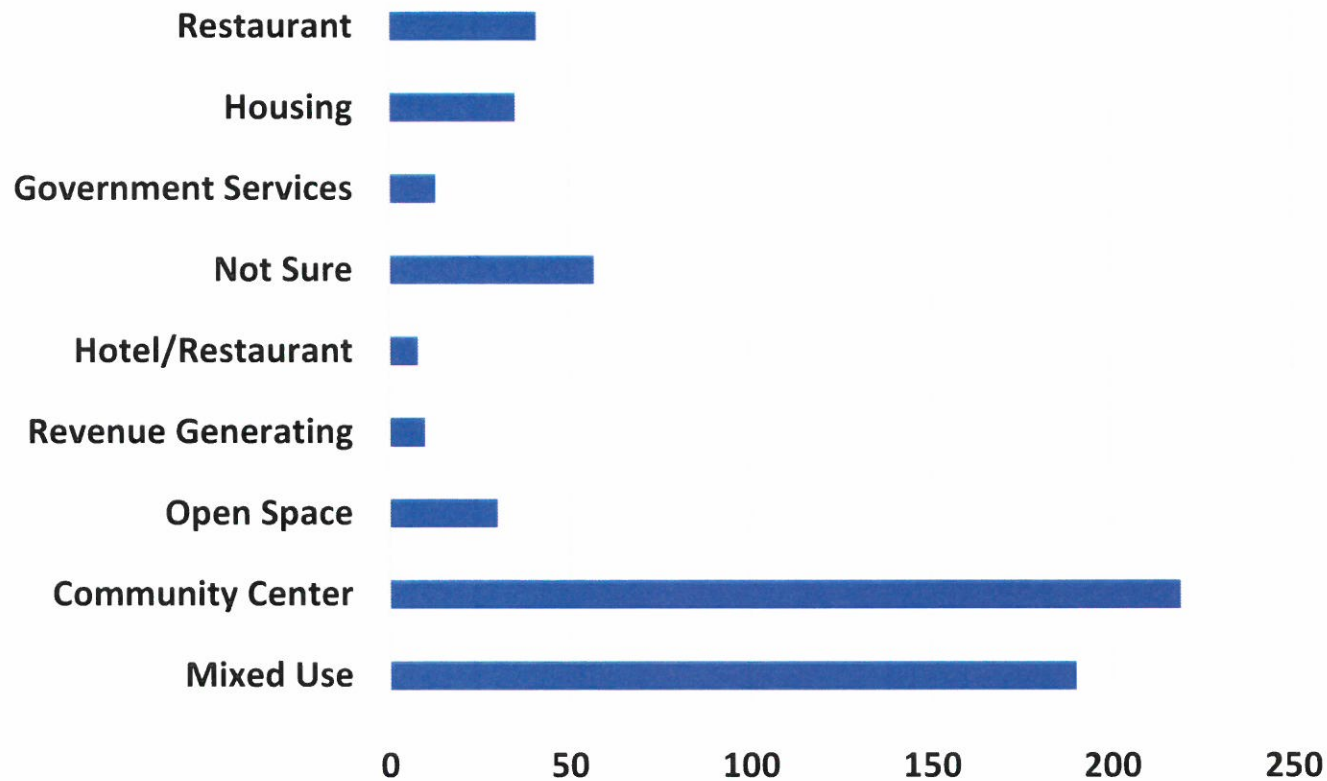
Question 10: Would a mixed-use development on the site be a positive addition to the **downtown** area?



Total Responses – 653

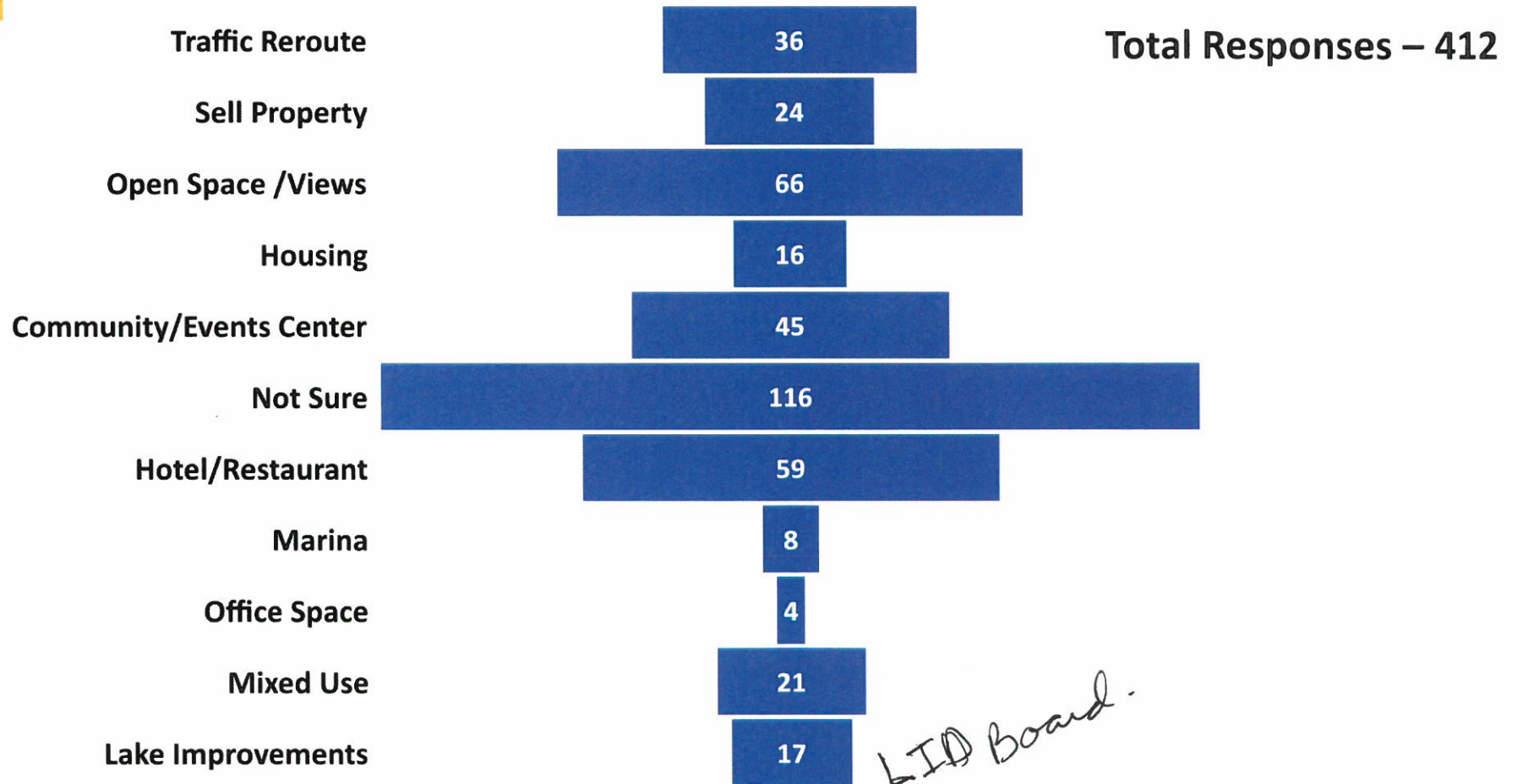


Question 11: If you could create your ideal vision for the site, what would it look like for you?



Total Responses – 603

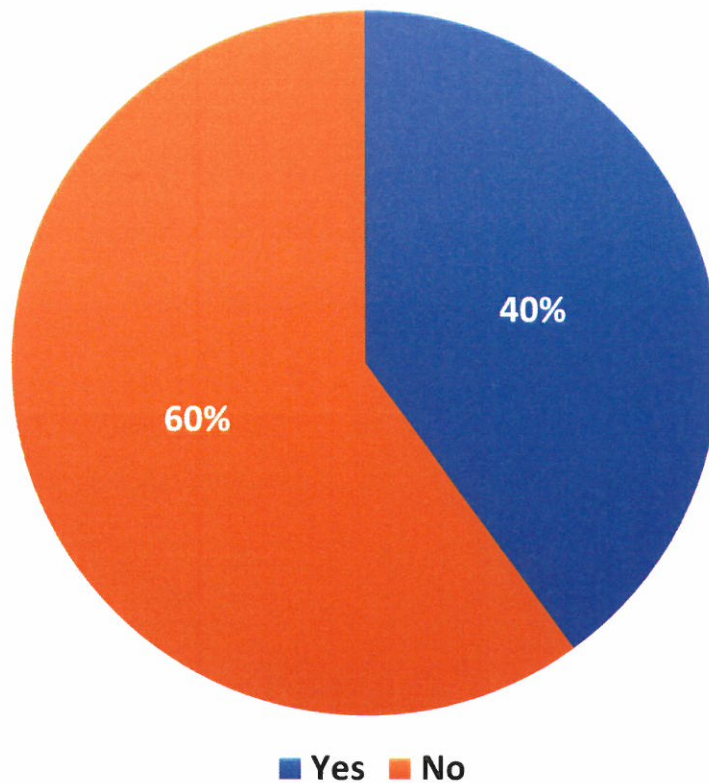
Question 12: How can the county best leverage the proximity to the lake?



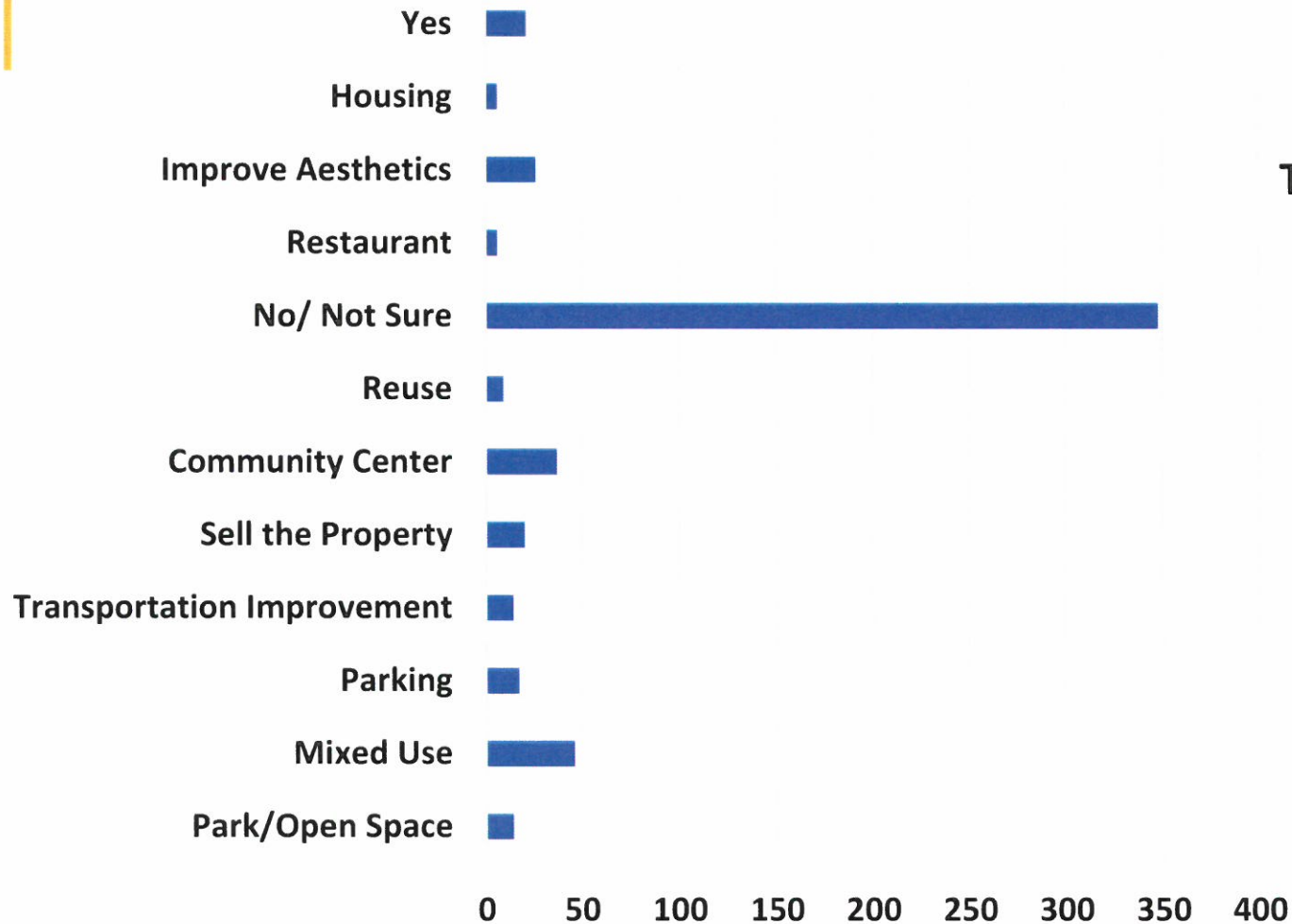
**Question 13: Should the county/city
acquire adjacent properties in an effort
to enlarge the site for
redevelopment/re-use?**



Total Responses – 567



Question 13: Why or Why not



Total Responses – 564

Key Takeaways: The following are the areas for consideration from the focus groups and survey results

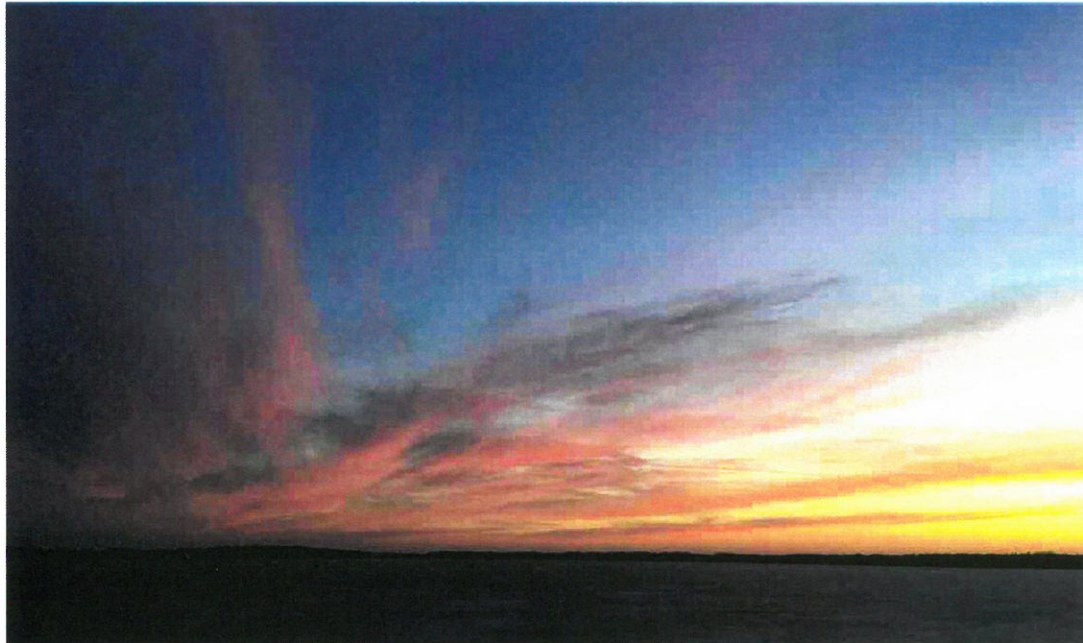
- Market demand for housing types
- Downtown vibrancy
- Amount of rental housing
- Support for a community center/open space
- How to incorporate the library and adjacent sites



Key Takeaways: The following are the areas for consideration from the focus groups and survey results

- Design of the buildings to match the area
- Market viability of mixed use (retail, restaurant, services, and housing)
- Lake quality
- Concern about amount of housing










2040 Vision Statement

April, 2021



Our downtown is a connected, active and unique place; as it grows it will become a more active neighborhood and charming destination that will support residents of all ages, businesses of all types and visitors in all seasons.



Land Use Legend	
	Neighborhood scale residential
	Multi-family residential
	Public/community use
	Open space
	Commercial/retail

Option A

Multi-family & Mixed-use focus. This option could support a higher density and unit count of multi-family residential as well as retail/office/commercial uses. The Wright County study showed yields of 394 to 489 units and up to 18,000 SF of commercial/retail.



Option **B** +

Residential with Community Center. Residential is the emphasis in this option but some of the land is focused on supporting a multi-use community center with views of the lake and ample parking.



Land Use Legend

- Neighborhood scale residential
- Multi-family residential
- Public/community use
- Open space
- Commercial/retail

*Mixed
Feelings*



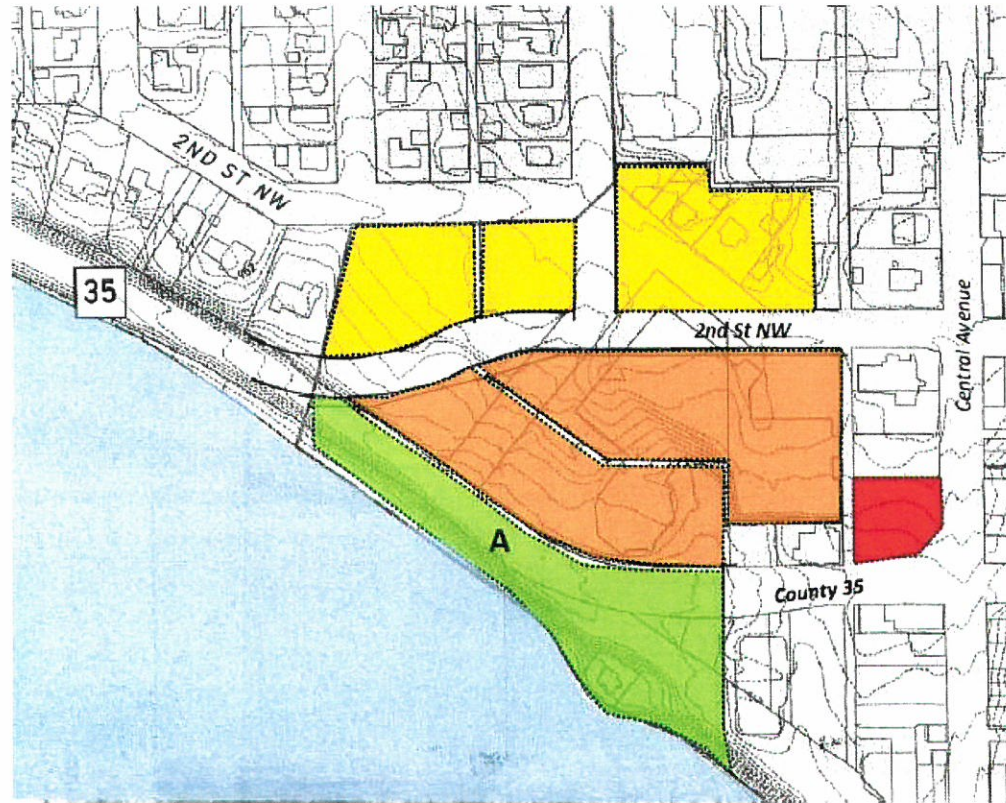
Land Use Legend

- Neighborhood scale residential
- Multi-family residential
- Public/community use
- Open space
- Commercial/retail

Option C

Neighborhood scale development.

This option includes a variety of residential development with a focus on neighborhood scale development facing the existing neighborhood. Neighborhood scale development can include attached units such as cluster housing, townhouse and row house buildings.



Land Use Legend	
	Neighborhood scale residential
	Multi-family residential
	Public/community use
	Open space
	Commercial/retail

Combine B+D.

Option D

possible use.



This option, proposed from the 2040 stakeholder group, shifts County Road 35 to the north aligning with 2nd Street NW and intersecting with Central Avenue. This re-alignment creates opportunity to leverage the access to the lake.



- Which option(s) should the EDA pursue
- Does that option “fit” with the information from the Focus Groups and Survey
- Potential costs associated with the option(s)



THANK YOU