



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 & Jeff



- 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.

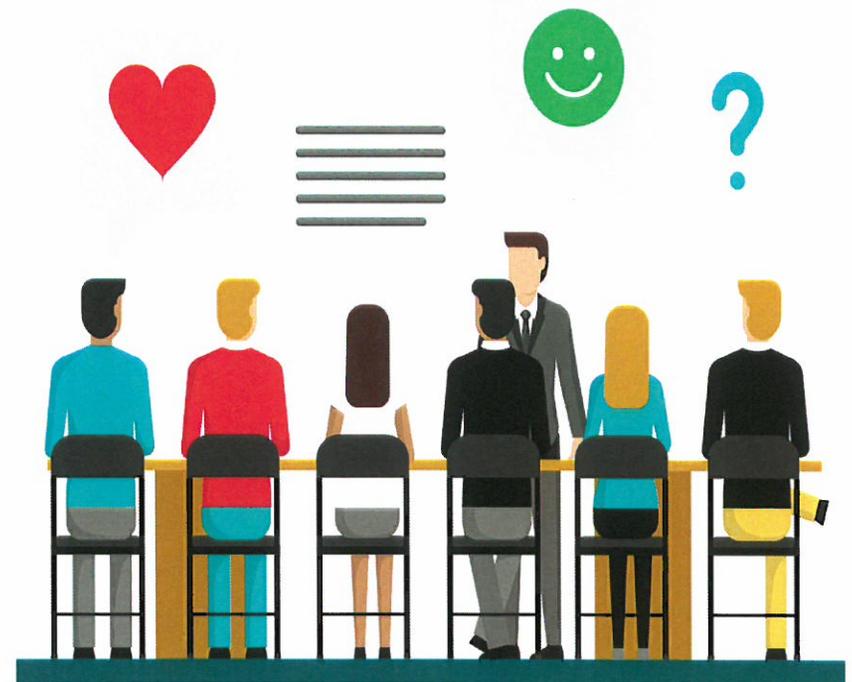
- Senior Housing (Rental/Ownership)
- 55+ community (Mix of mid-tier or high end)
- Senior Condos only (No more rental)
- Incorporate a senior center





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





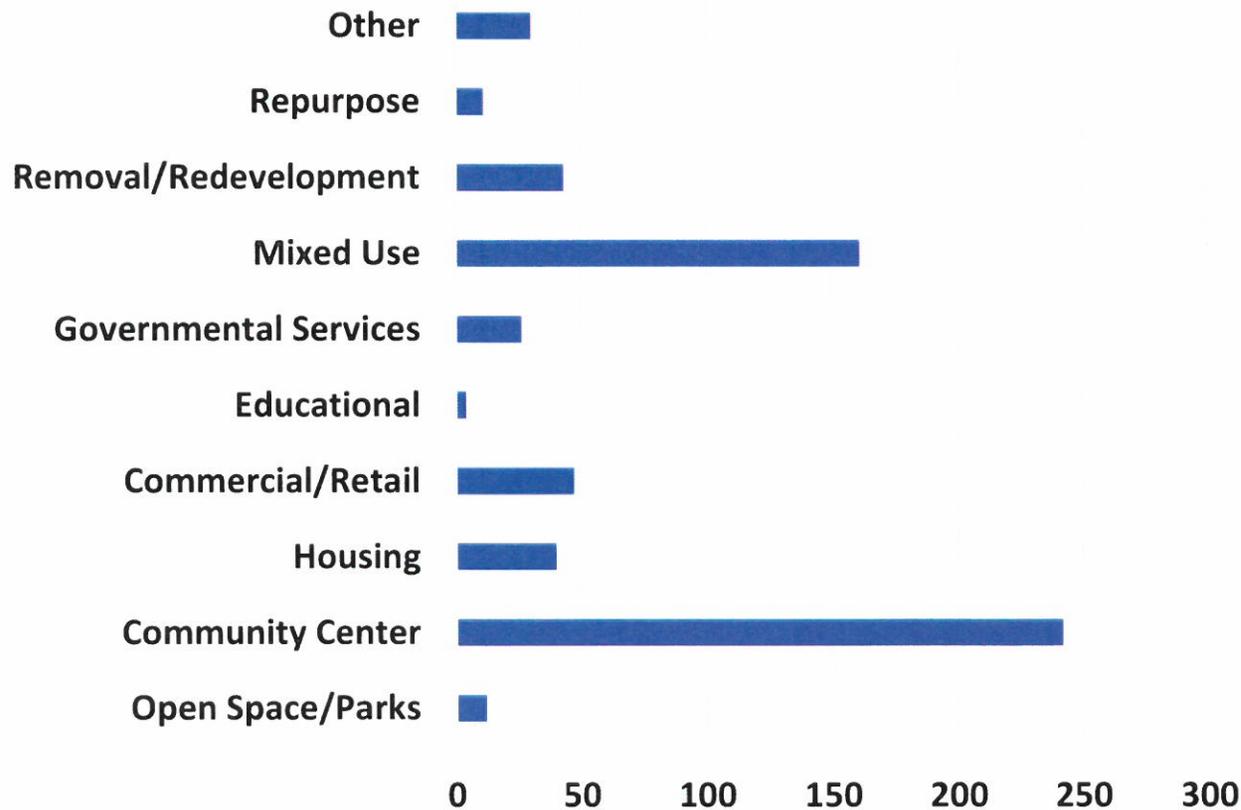
- The survey consisted of 13 questions and had over 650 responses.
- The questions were a combination of set answers and open ended to allow for the respondents to provide additional information.
- The following slides reflect the information that was collected by the survey respondents.



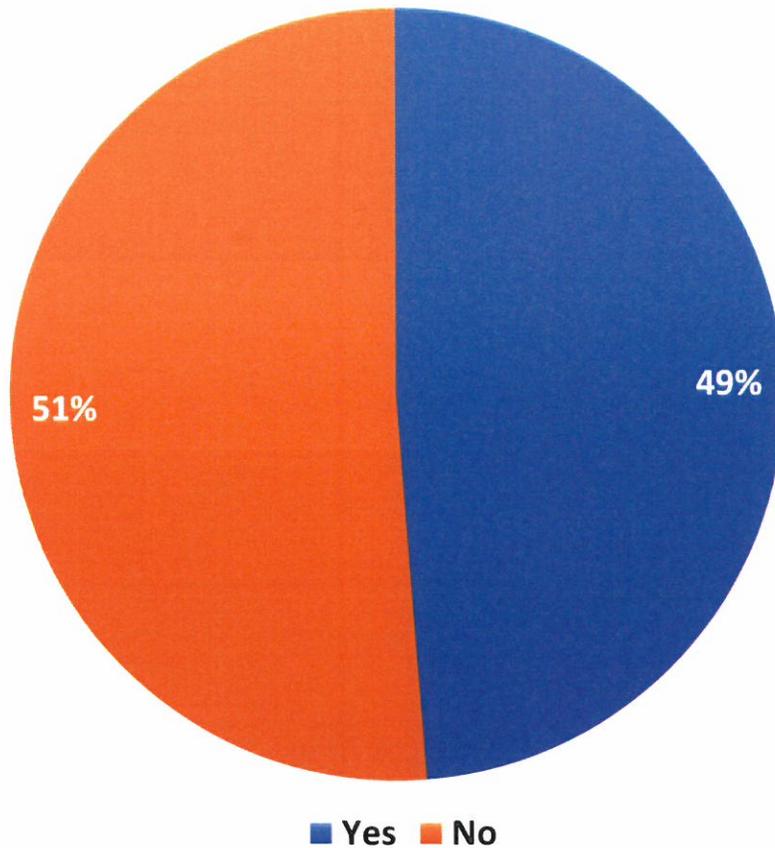
Question 1: What do you feel is the best use of the existing government services building?



Total Responses – 616

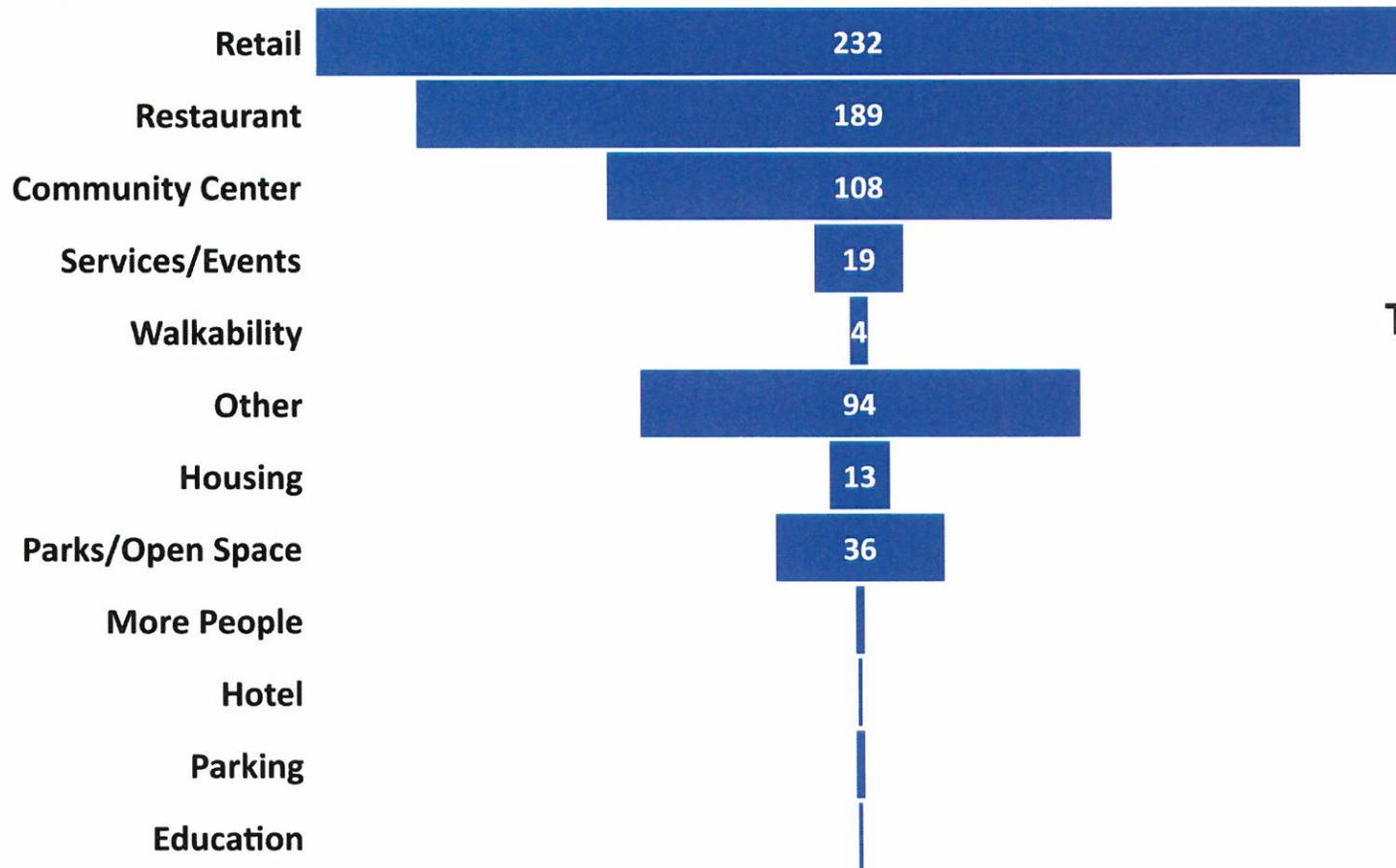


Question 2: Do you think the downtown is vibrant?



Total Responses – 660

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

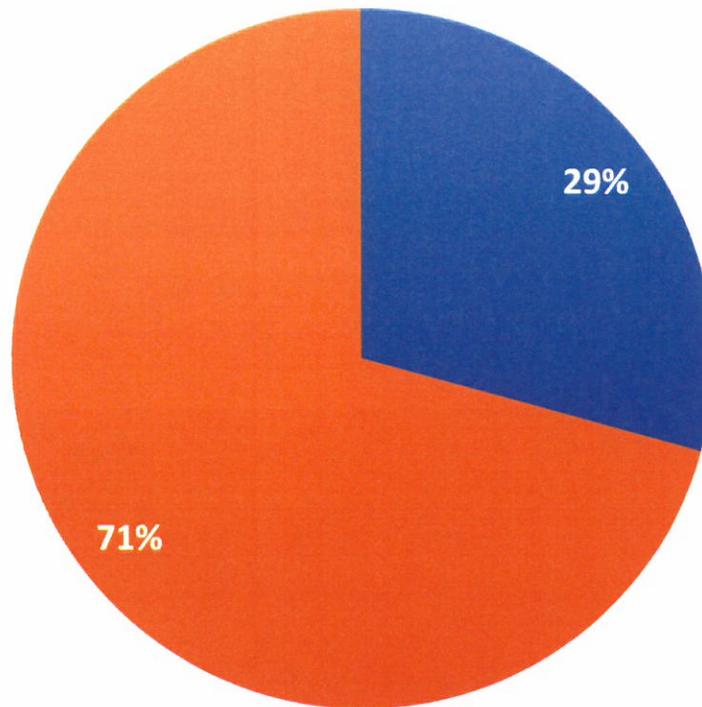


Total Responses – 701

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



Total Responses – 652

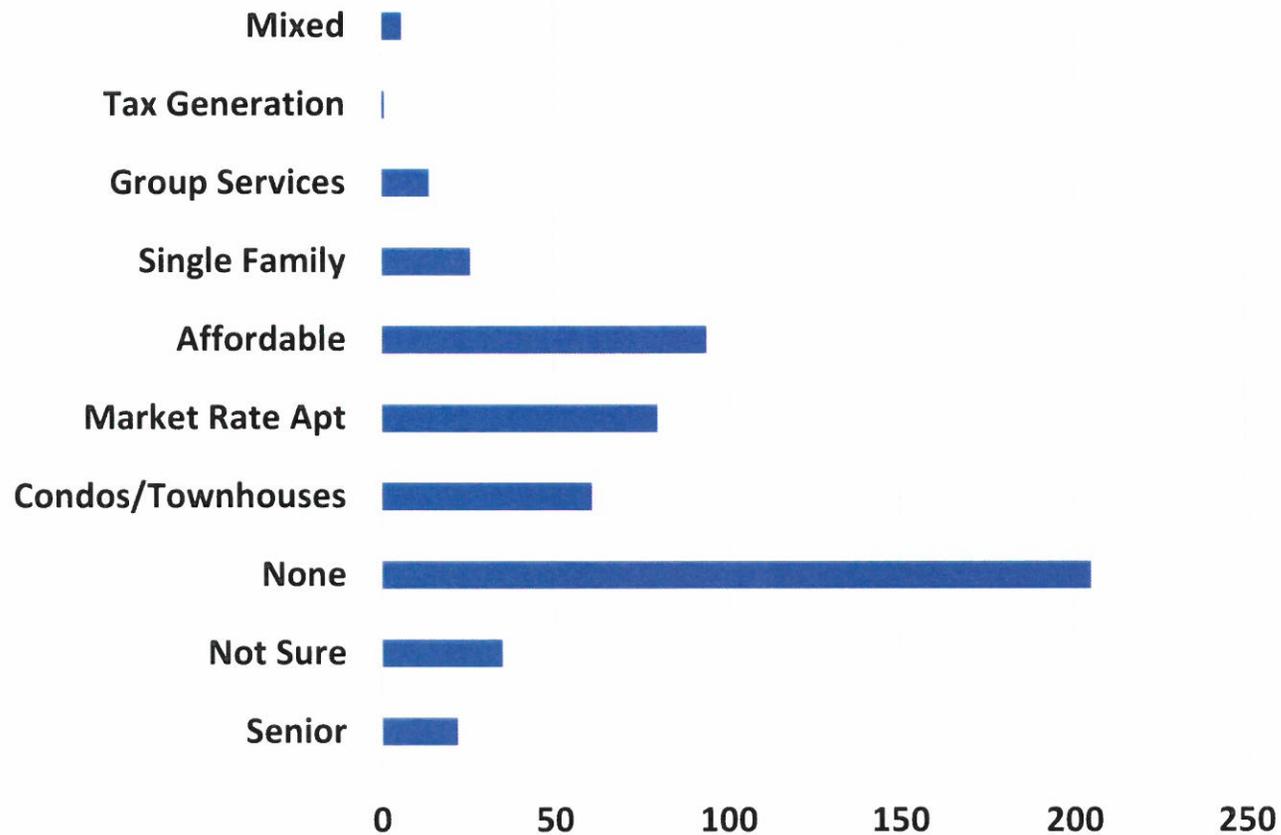


■ Yes ■ No

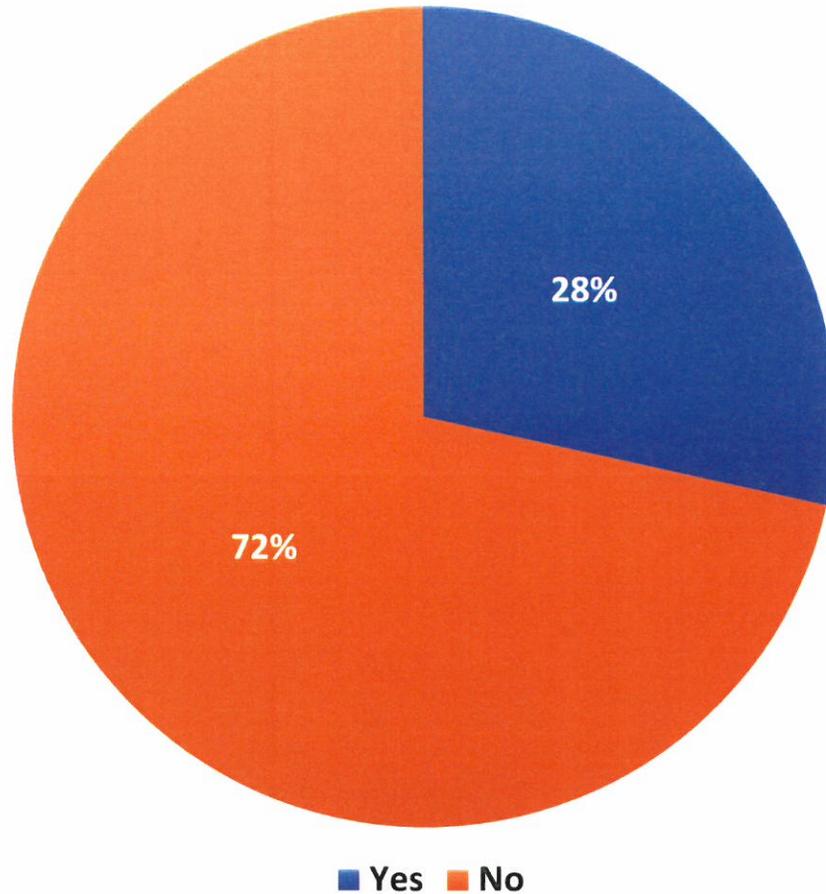
Question 5: What type of housing do you feel is most needed?



Total Responses – 544



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

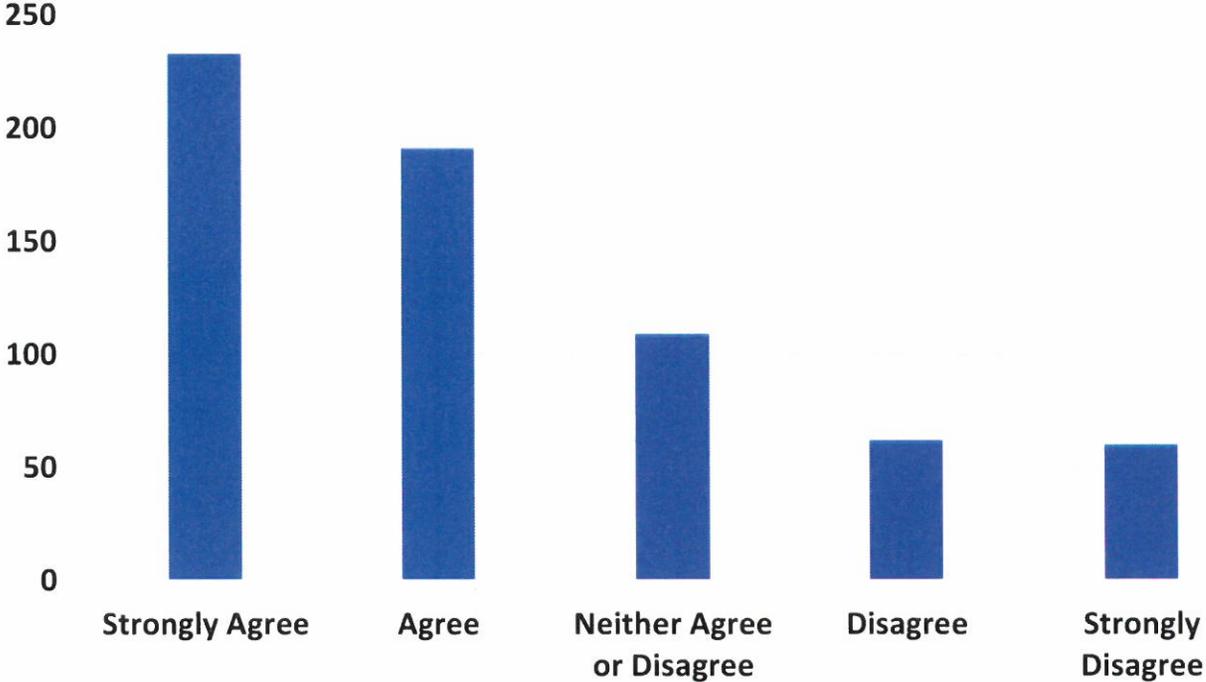


Total Responses – 643

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



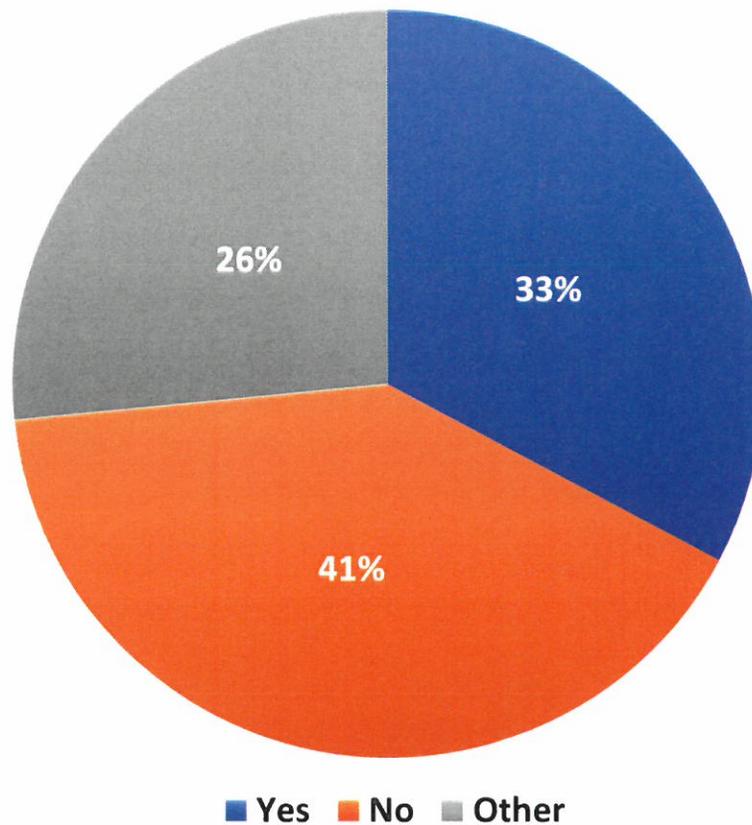
Total Responses – 655



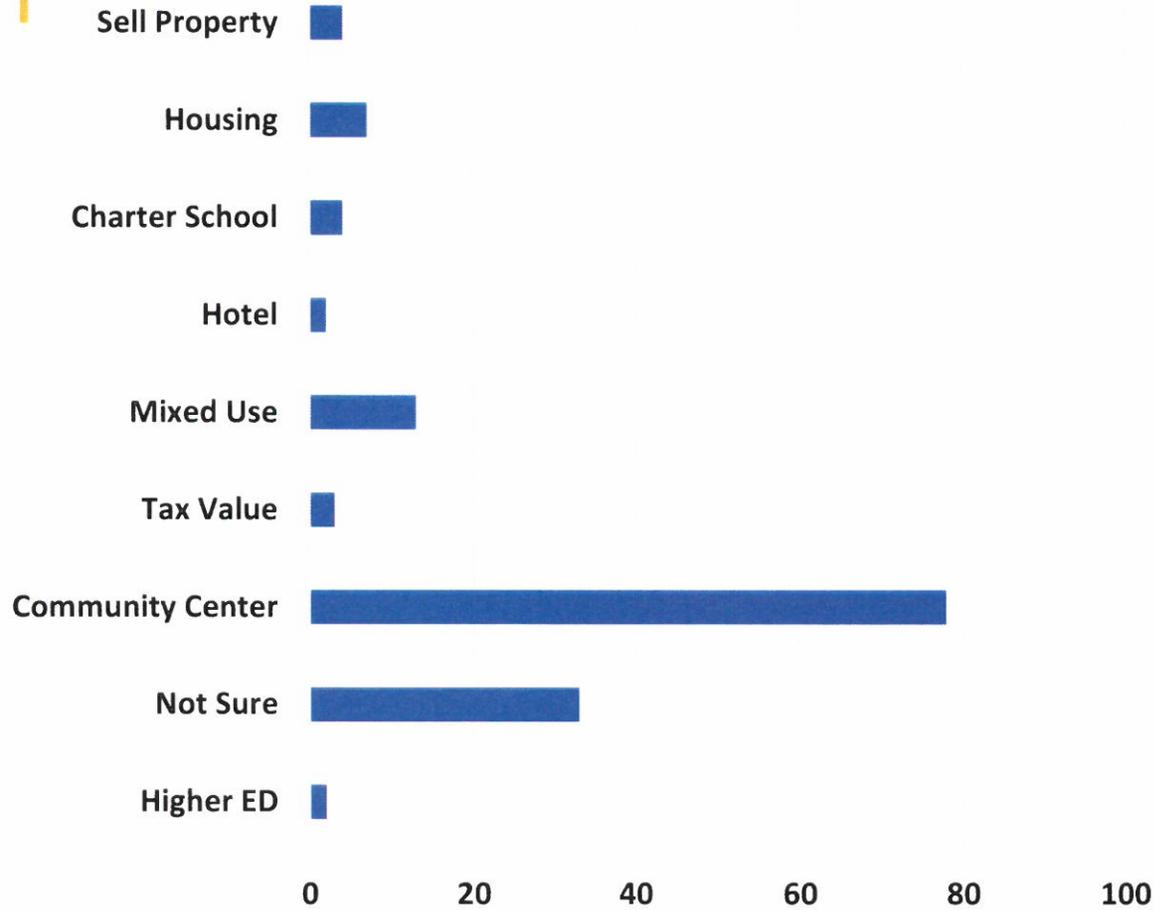
Question 8: Should the current facility be repurposed for another user? e.g. Charter School, Church, Office, other



Total Responses – 652



Question 8: Other Responses

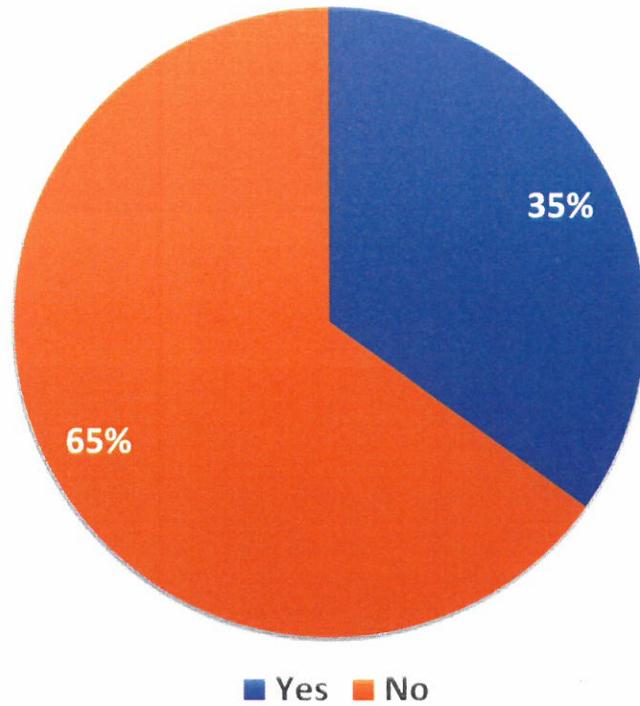


Total Responses – 146



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

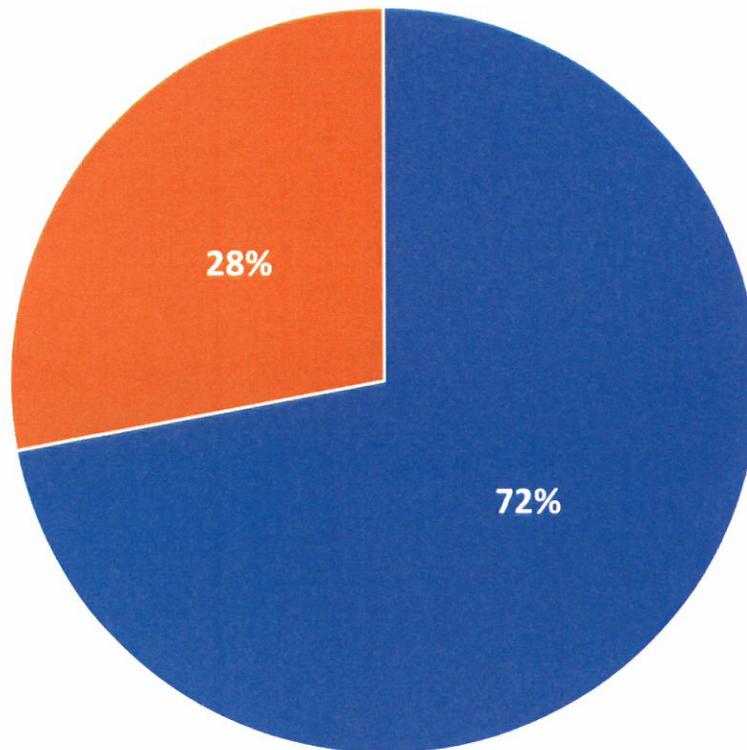
Total Responses – 634



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



Total Responses – 653

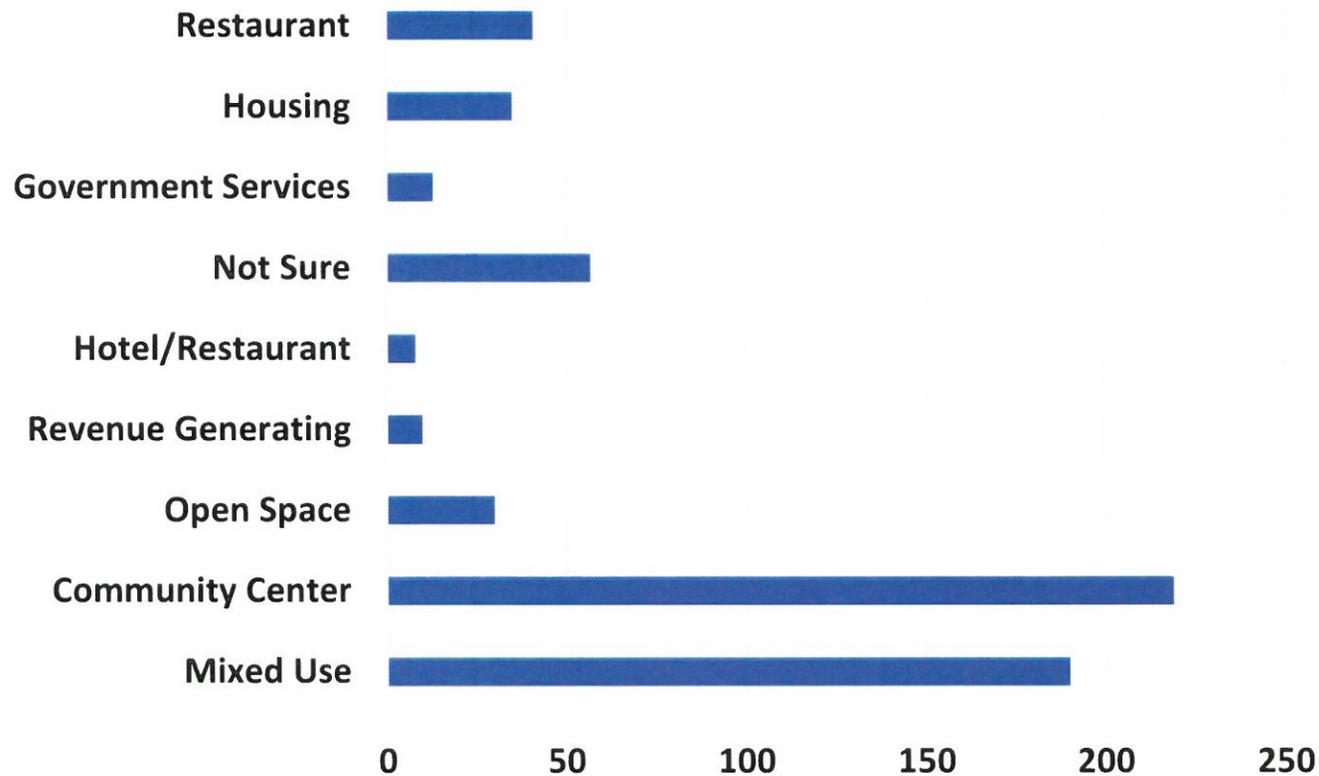


■ Yes ■ No

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



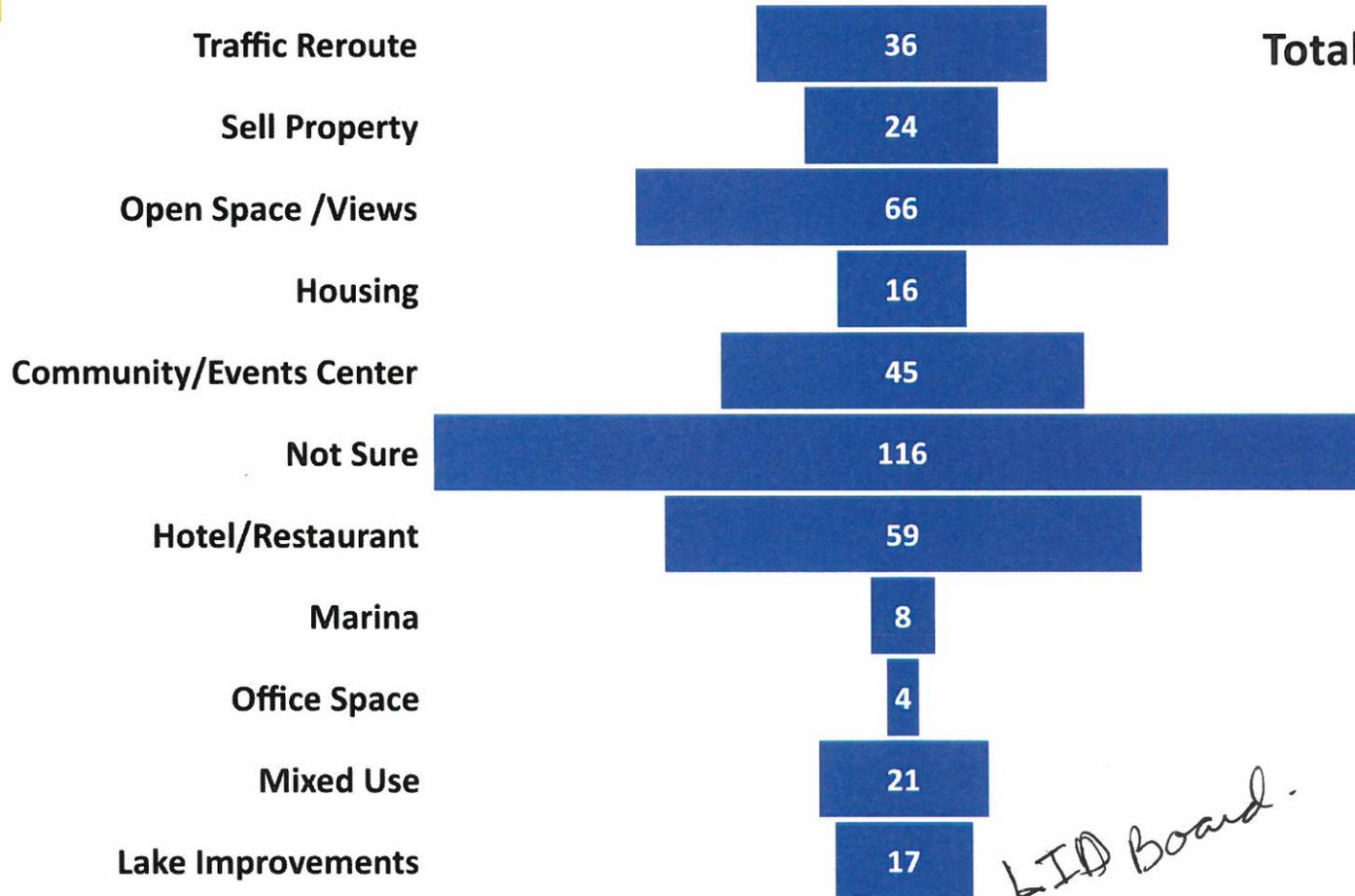
Total Responses – 603



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



Total Responses – 412

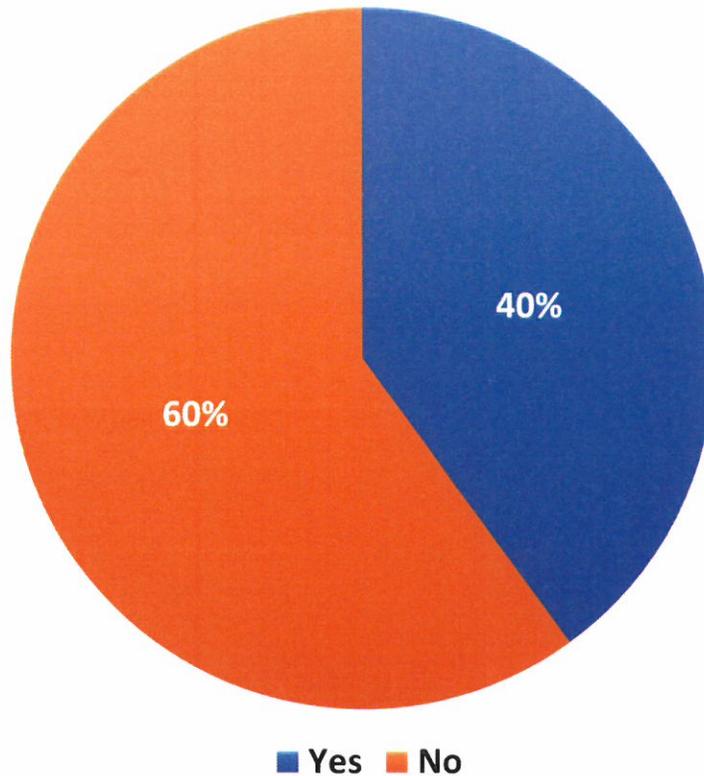


LID Board.

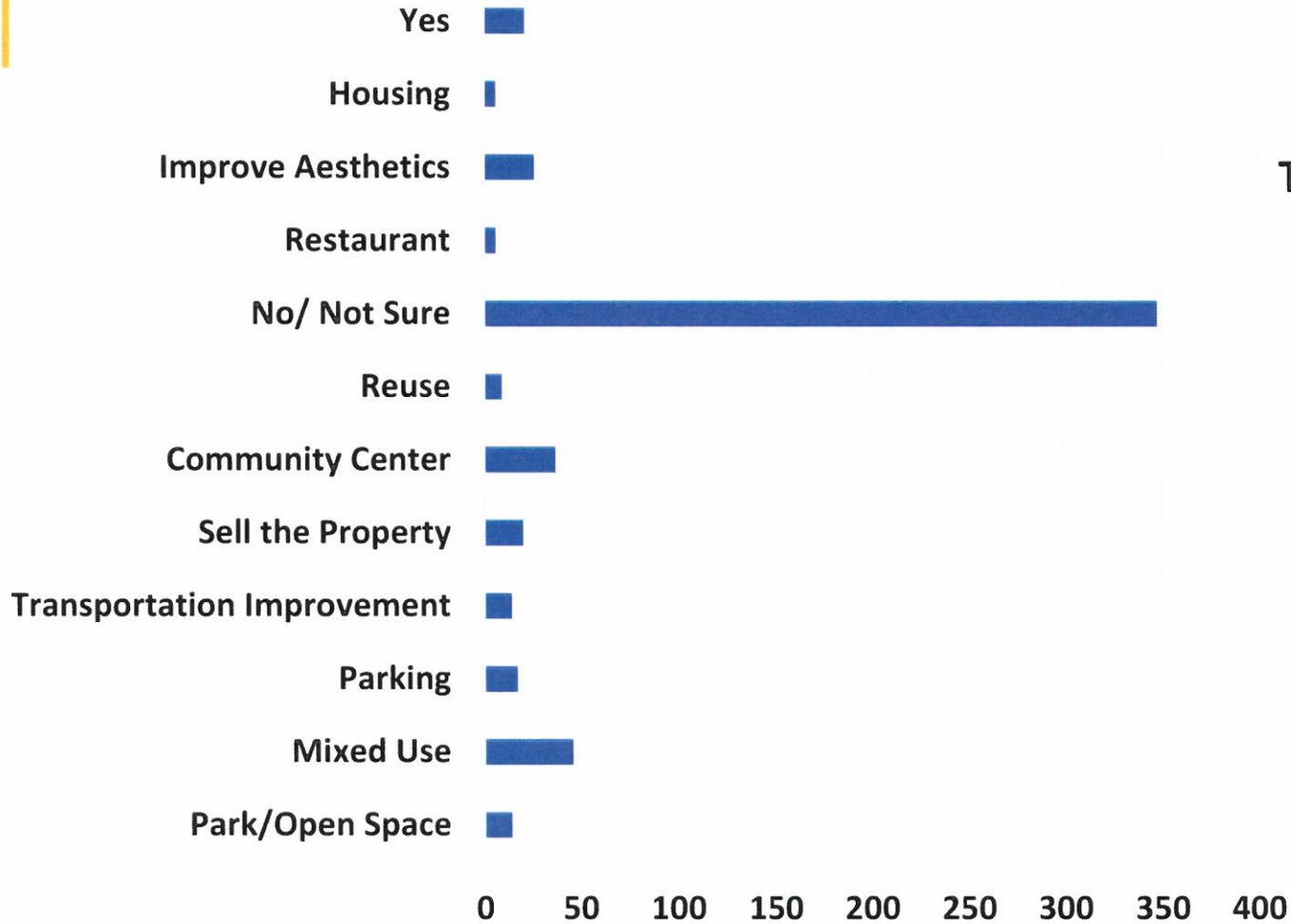
Question 13: Should the county/city acquire adjacent properties in an effort to enlarge the site for redevelopment/re-use?



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

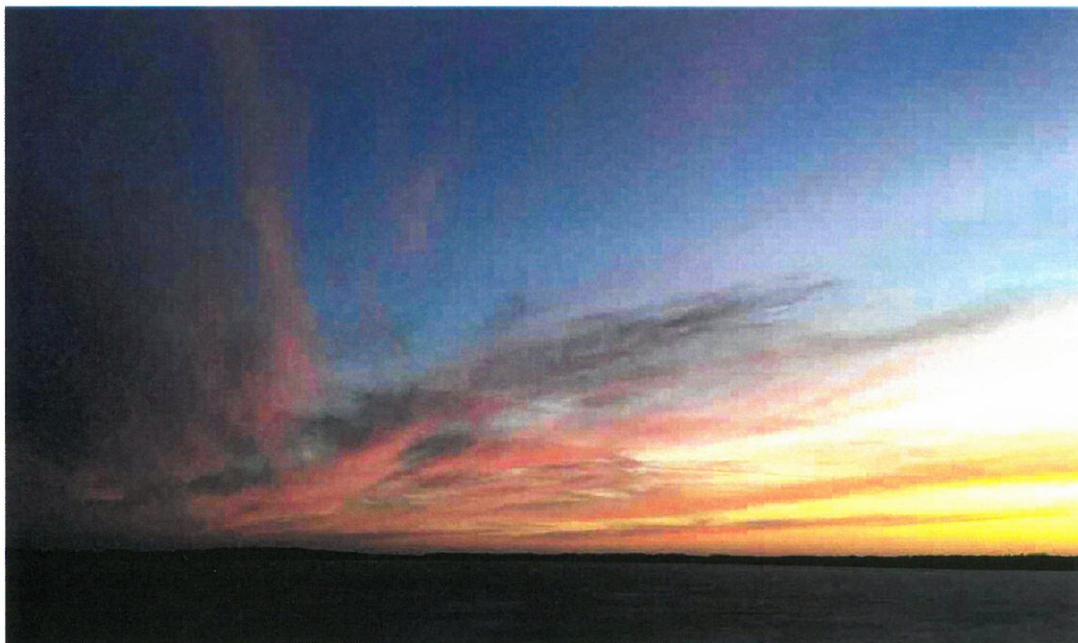
- Market demand for housing types
- Downtown vibrancy
- Amount of rental housing
- Support for a community center/open space
- How to incorporate the library and adjacent sites



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.



~~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.

Land Use Legend

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

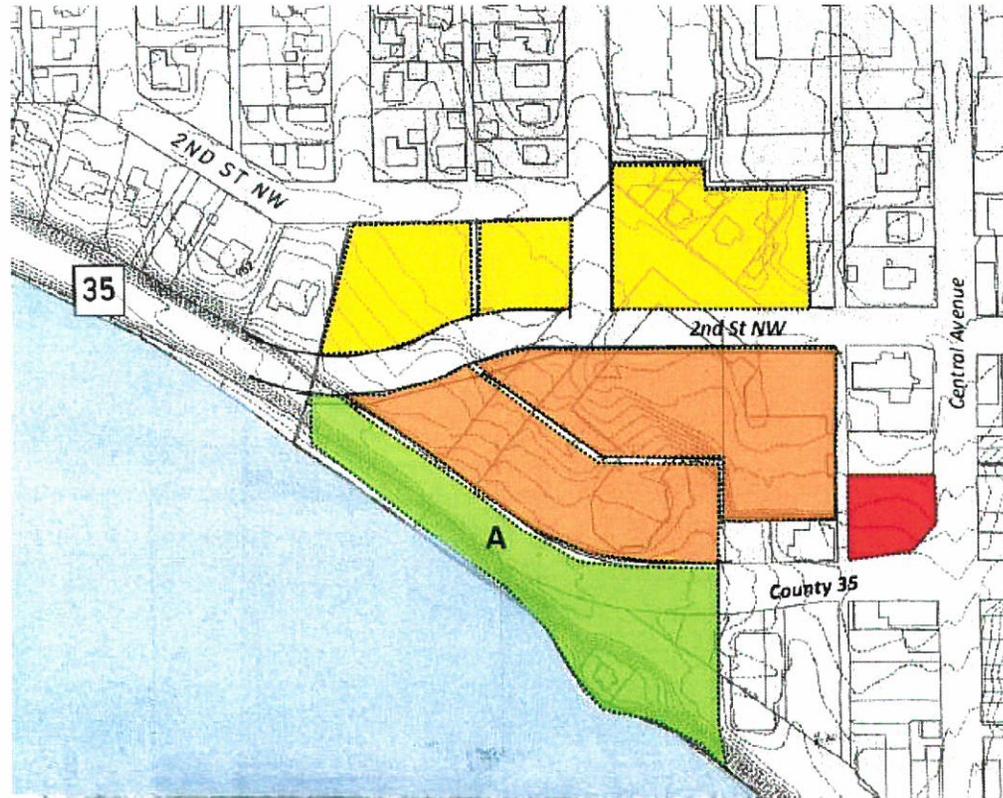


Land Use Legend	
	Neighborhood scale residential
	Multi-family residential
	Public/community use
	Open space
	Commercial/retail

Mixed Feelings



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.

Possible use.



Option D

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