

IDEAS WORKSHOP SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of the Turn On 28th Street Ideas Workshop was to enable participants and stakeholders to provide input and have a voice in the creation of a master plan for the redevelopment of the 28th Street corridor. The Ideas Workshop consisted of two identical public meetings, one conducted in the late morning and one in the evening on October 7, 2010. A list of all individuals who signed in is included in this summary and informal headcounts during the sessions placed the total number of participants at nearly 120.

Each session started with a short presentation by the consultant team that provided participants with a project overview, precedent examples of similar national projects and a review of market analysis and recommendations.

The overview provided review of the project boundaries, objectives and timeline which helped participants to better understand the parameters of the project. The overview also reviewed the community input that has occurred to date and shared some of the results – specifically in regards to the opportunities and challenges of the corridor.

The precedent review provided the participants with examples of various suburban retrofit projects that have occurred nationally. These precedents were intended to inform participants of various solutions that have been implemented to address similar opportunities and challenges and to show them the results of these implementations.

The market analysis and recommendations portion of the presentations provided participants with marketplace trends for retail, office, economic catalysts, and housing for the corridor. These trends and recommendations were based on extensive economic and demographic research conducted during the earlier phases of the project.

These presentations provided the participants with a basis and starting point to begin an informed dialogue during the subsequent work session event, which consisted of table exercises that allowed them to articulate their ideas for the corridor. At these table exercises, participants vetted and expanded on the previously gathered opportunities and challenges, brainstormed on future uses and began crafting a collective future vision for 28th Street.

This input ranged from very detailed (in regards to specific building improvements) to very large in regards to greenway connections. One participant even realigned 28th Street and inserted a golf course within the study area. As this input was synthesized by the consultant team, common themes, priorities and opportunities began to surface. This information will help to create the foundation for the redevelopment strategy.

PARTICIPANTS:

Fifty-five individuals signed-in as participants in the morning session, but an informal headcount placed total participation at nearly 70 persons:

Eric Hartfield	Sarah Schantz	William VerHulst
Mark Gorsky	Trisha Baker	Dorothy Semon-Tibbe
Kathy DenHollander	Tessa Westcott	Ken Horneck
Marsha Harrison	Bob Lomonco	Jodi West
Rachel Connell	Dave Dishaw	Dani Lane
Charlie Steen	M. J. Gibrfried	Joy Treece
Lee Ann Platschorre	Matthew Hofstee	Barb Minier
Ken Malik	Dan Beal	Uzoma (Zoom) Iwuagwa
Lillian VanderVeen	Dolores Trimble	Dan Burrill
Frank Vitale	Harriet Sturim	Matt Howell
Matt Kaluske	Ben Shue	Sherrie Spencer
Carolyn Brown	Rod Beduhn	Frank Wash
Mike Rose	Scott Mullarky	Nick Monoyios
Curt Male	Mary Luchtman	Rob Arnoys
Mike Martz	Joanne Voorhees	Landon Bartley
Tony Lowe	Debb Krenz	Eric Jorgensen
Karla VerHage	Amy Payne	Russ Lewis
Ed Kettle	Carol Sheets	
Marilyn Free	Alan Sheets	

Thirty-six individuals signed in as participants in the evening session but an informal headcount placed total participation at nearly 50 persons:

Jeanette Vandermyde	Megan Sall	Sherry Mix
Russ Lewis	Priscilla English	Jan DeGennaro
Mark Ruedy	Jason Wilkins	Cyndee Cook
Leslie Morrissey	Pat Dean	Steve Loomis
Laurie Kowalczyk	Pastor JR Pittman	Bryan D. Belanger
Donald VanderVeen	Daniel Bouwkamp	Bill Hirsch
Khan Hollis	Tom Tilma	Mary Cowles
Bob Dolsen	Connie Potterman	Nancy Dermody
Art Takkinen	Doug Kochneff	Patrick C. Kelly
Patel Mikl	Eric DeHaan	Curt Hicky
Richard Wenger	Curtis Holt	
Michael Wright	Vicki Briggs	
Chris Weller	Lorraine Lysoon	

COMMON THEMES AND PRIORITIES:

The list below contains ideas that were generated at each of the workshop tables. The ideas are organized into subcategories and prioritized by how many of the tables had them as common themes. There were a total of 6 table sessions in the morning and 7 table sessions in the evening.

PHYSICAL DESIGN

The table exercises provided stakeholders the opportunity to convey various ideas and visions regarding the physical design of the future 28th Street corridor. The ideas have been organized into building and urban form, transportation and streets, public open space and appearance and have been prioritized by the number of tables that had them as common themes.

Building and Urban Form / Location

- Combine properties on south side of 28th street between Burlingame and Michael into mixed-use town center with new streets and small blocks. Parking lots should be hidden behind buildings. Blocks should be small to promote walkability and connection (10)
- Demolish Rogers Plaza and build mixed-use development (4)
- Mixed-use buildings that are 2 to 3 stories high (4)
- Shrink, re-scale or reconfigure Rogers Plaza (4)
- Remove parking lots along 28th Street and replace with buildings or greenspace (3)
- International gateway: International businesses should be concentrated in one place to create synergy (3)
- Create a mainstreet that is vibrant and diverse (2)
- More sustainable buildings and design – get rid of all the pavement and new buildings need to be sustainable (2)
- First phase of the redevelopment should start with tearing down Studio 28. This area needs realistic phasing for redevelopment (2).
- Relocate all the businesses that are in Wyoming Village Mall to Rogers Plaza then tear down Wyoming Village Mall and redevelop the property to something new (2)
- Business incubator spaces throughout the district (2)
- Housing near Rogers High – behind Wyoming Village Mall (2)
- Restaurants near Rogers High – behind Wyoming Village Mall (2)
- Move all the north side businesses to the south to create more absorption and then redevelop the north side as residential (2)
- Create a “planned community” that has greenspace and is walkable
- Buildings should be between 3 and 6 stories high

Transportation, Streets and Connectivity

- Provide more pedestrian and bike amenities (6)
- Provide better public transportation access and shelters. Provide more mass transit options (6)
- Tunnel under 28th Street or bridge over 28th Street for pedestrian access (4)
- All large blocks should be made smaller and more walkable and the street grid should be more connected (3)
- Slow down traffic on side streets and on 28th Street (3)
- Physically connect Rogers Plaza to the surrounding neighborhoods (3)
- Embrace complete streets here and throughout the community (3)
- Physically connect surrounding neighborhood streets into 28th Street (3)
- Close Michael and DeHoop and divert traffic
- Monorail connection to other malls
- Change 28th Street into multi-lane boulevard
- Better US131 access
- Convert 4 lane side streets to 3 lane streets with bike lanes
- Provide improved “smart” traffic signals
- Frontage street or service drive so that businesses can “front” on 28th Street
- Convert surface lots to parking decks

- Gateway features at major intersections of Michael-DeHoop, Burlingame and Clyde Park. An example of big brick columns with a globe on top was provided
- Reduce parking requirements

Public Open Space / Green space and Parks

- Green space that connects to existing park system and provides either active or passive uses. Band of green from Pinery Park to 28th Street with trails and natural drainage way (4)
- More green space along the corridor (2)
- More gathering spaces for festivals or events. Could be hardscaped. (2)
- Green space at Michael and DeHoop intersection

Appearance

- More trees (2)
- Lower signs so they do not clutter the street and get rid of large signs (2)
- Provide more opportunities for outside dining that will make the area seem more vibrant
- Move auto dealers out of core area
- Bury utility poles along 28th Street

USE

The table exercises provided participants the opportunity to convey various uses that they felt were appropriate to include in the redevelopment of the corridor. These uses have been organized into retail, office, entertainment, educational, institutional and residential categories and have been prioritized by the number of tables that had them as common themes.

Retail / Commercial

- Small locally owned businesses and avoid big box chains (5)
- Up-scale / sit-down restaurants (3)
- Authentic ethnic restaurants (3)
- Trader Joes (one participant provided company information) (3)
- Night clubs (2)
- Kohls or Target
- Bring Moosejaw (Michigan based outdoor store)
- Hobby store
- Sporting goods store
- Reasonably priced stores that cater to Wyoming residents
- Micro-brewery
- Retail incubator spaces in Rogers Plaza
- Klingmans to multi-tenant commercial vertical mall with gardens and unique shops
- Art galleries
- Greenhouses/restaurant/store celebrating eating local

Office

- Medical and dental offices that are accessible to diverse incomes (4)
- Office uses that can still have access to downtown Grand Rapids while not paying the premium rent
- Medical offices – retrofit Klingmans into medical office

Entertainment

- Live theater or other thespian opportunities (like civic theater) (6)
- Small scale (under 200 seat) concert venue (6)
- Small scale movie theater that shows old movies (like Wealthy Theater) (5)
- Need new entertainment uses that are affordable for families (5)
- Ice-skating rink and/or roller-skating rink (3)
- Water Park at Studio 28 (2)
- Bring back drive-in
- Movie theater with sit down dinner service like “AMC Fork and Screen” in Atlanta (participant provided information on this use)
- Golf course or miniature golf
- Late night activities
- Auditorium with WIFI

Educational

- Small junior college or community college (8)
- Educational use at Studio 28 site to tie into Rogers High School (4)
- Medical training facility / medical expo center (3)
- Training and re-training facility / adult education (3)
- Educational use at Klingmans building (2)

Institutional / Recreational

- Banquet facility / wedding receptions / conference center (6)
- Convention center (6)
- Farmers market or open air market area (5)
- Arts center or collective. Lots of ArtPrize artists are from Wyoming, why not become an artists colony (4)
- Recreation center (4)
- Community center (4)
- Literacy centers for kids (3)
- Amphitheater or bandshell (3)
- Aquarium (2)
- Fountains (2)
- Eco-tourism / Geo-tourism with Geocaching (2)
- Car museum – can tie into Metro Cruise
- Sports complex
- Develop old Rogers farmhouse into a museum

Residential

- More housing opportunities and variety of housing - lofts, live-works, townhouses with parking in rear (7)
- Student housing and one-bedroom apartment units (3)
- Senior housing (3)
- Senior housing – Klingmans site or Rogers Plaza sites (2)
- High density, loft style housing

MISCELLANEOUS

The following items pertain to the perception of the corridor and implementation suggestions to aid in making the corridor better. These implementation suggestions are categorized as either policy or economic development and have been prioritized by the number of tables that had them as common themes.

Perception

- Existing buildings (both occupied and vacant) are tired looking and outdated (5)
- Some existing retail is not usable because it has not been updated in decades (3)
- Flea market is a problem – creates lots of trash and creates almost no spin-off business. Remove flea market from this area (3)
- Too many dollar stores and check cashing places– these make the area look desperate (2)
- The flea market brings people here and makes the area more vibrant
- Lots of free parking – advantage over downtown
- How can this place be livable with 40,000 cars going down the middle of it?
- Urban feel in a suburban setting

Policy suggestions

- The city needs to stop turning down business (like second hand stores) (2)
- City should create WIFI hot spots (2)
- The Grand Rapids Inn use is NOT desirable and this should not be allowed here (2)
- Upgrade / combine schools to attract more people to Wyoming
- City should be flexible in zoning to promote development.
- City needs to provide evaluation, monitoring and specific accountability / responsibility for implementing the goals of this plan
- Name this the “City Center”
- Flexible zoning to encourage new redevelopment
- We need to do things to get our kids to stay here
- Re-use original Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck icons as new symbols
- Promote the good things about Wyoming
- Need a 28th Street promotional agency

Economic Development Suggestions

- City should offer tax incentives to developers for both new and existing rehabilitation and for retaining existing businesses (5)
- City should have an expedited approval process for any redevelopment that comes into this area (3)
- City should assist in providing government backed loans or small business loans to help redevelopment (2)
- Explore MSHDA backed housing
- City should actively recruit developers
- City should assist in capital formation and tap into resources
- City should develop access to capital
- City should assist in providing programs for education of developers and business owners
- City should approach legislators to expand incentives and bring these incentives here