



DATE: February 3, 2016

TO: Gahanna City Council
Tom Kneeland, Mayor

FROM: Economic Development Community Engagement Committee

SUBJECT: Final Recommendations

The Economic Development Community Engagement Committee (EDCEC) was established as a Special Committee of Council. The purpose of the EDCEC was to review the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and provide feedback and recommendations for additions and/or changes to the document and submit those recommendations to Gahanna City Council for consideration as amendments to the EDS.

The EDCEC was comprised of two members of Gahanna City Council, the City Administrator, the Director of Planning and Development, the City Engineer and eight members of the community that were selected by Gahanna City Council. Please see Exhibit A for a complete roster.

The EDCEC held 6 public meetings at Gahanna City Hall in order to accomplish its stated goals of completing a comprehensive review of the entire EDS document. Minutes for those meetings are attached as Exhibit B. The presentations provided during these public meetings are on file with the Clerk of Council Office.

Based upon the thoughtful and comprehensive review of the EDS document, the EDCEC has the following recommendations:

1) Introduction:

- a. The goal and intention of the EDS is to spur economic development, capital investment and job creation opportunities.
- b. The EDS was prepared by a team of experts in the economic development, market research and urban planning fields.
- c. The EDCEC does not recommend any changes to this section of the EDS.

2) Existing Conditions:

- a. The demographic and industry data provided in this section is valid and is relevant in achieving the goals of the EDS.
- b. The EDCEC does not recommend any changes to this section of the EDS.

3) Market Analysis:

- a. The market research provided in this section is valid and is relevant in achieving the goals of the EDS.
- b. The EDCEC recommends that the geographical areas of analysis, referred to as the Effective Market Area and Competitive Market Area, should be clarified for each type of real estate product identified within the report. More specifically, the following questions should be clarified for each real estate product:
 - i. How the geographical area was identified?
 - ii. Why was a specific geographical area chosen?
 - iii. What are the cost / benefit of using this specific geographical area?

4) Community Insight:

- a. This section was intended to capture insight from businesses within and external to the City of Gahanna in an effort to identify their perception of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the City of Gahanna. This was accomplished through face to face interviews with various businesses.
- b. The results of the survey of business stakeholders were qualitative and not quantitative in nature. Therefore, additional effort should be taken when considering the recommendations outlined by the survey results.
- c. The results of the survey were directly taken from businesses owners and accurately represent the perceptions of those specific businesses.

5) Economic Development Strategies:

- a. The EDCEC recognizes that the strategies identified are valid and are relevant in achieving the goals of the EDS.
- b. The EDCEC does not recommend any changes to this section of the EDS.

6) Development Opportunities:

West Gahanna PDA

- a. The EDCEC had extensive discussion regarding the merits and illustrated changes to the intersection of Stygler and Agler Road in West Gahanna PDA.
- b. The infrastructure improvements and redevelopment scenarios presented in this PDA require two further actions:
 - i. Additional public engagement in order to ensure sufficient understanding of the goals and objectives of any redevelopment scenario.
 - ii. Additional public discussion in order to build consensus on any proposed redevelopment scenario and project funding.
- c. Traffic is a problem at the intersection of Stygler and Agler Road for local residents. It is important for the City to address this problem in order to provide a safe and efficient roadway system for its residents and businesses.
- d. Any new private and public infrastructure development in the West Gahanna PDA will be in the best interest of the entire Gahanna community including those neighborhoods fronting North Stygler and Agler Road.

- e. The EDCEC recommends that the City explore whether the traffic and roadway concepts shown for Target Site 1A can be done in phases and explore other solutions that may be beneficial to the neighborhood, businesses and residents.
- f. An agreement is required between the property owner of Royal Plaza and the City of Gahanna prior to the implementation of any public roadway improvements.
- g. The ultimate impact on businesses within the area is unknown at this point in the process. However, the EDCEC did agree that these potential infrastructure improvements would greatly improve access to the existing businesses.
- h. Multiple transportation modes and infrastructure amenities should be included as part of any redevelopment concept.
- i. Any future redevelopment should encourage businesses that service the surrounding residential areas.
- j. The addition of a few multi-family residential units or a small park should be added to West Gahanna PDA Site 1A in order to soften the transition from single family resident to commercial use. Specifically having Downtown PDA Site 2F replace the office buildings located in West Gahanna PDA Site 1A.
- k. Public improvements would include pedestrian access to the existing City bike path network.

Downtown PDA

- a. The EDCEC had extensive discussion regarding the development concepts identified for five of the target sites.
- b. The City should work to encourage residential development in downtown and ensure there is aesthetic transitions between the residential and commercial areas.
- c. It is important for the City to understand what type of demographic is being attracted to live in the downtown and other new residential developments.
- d. Target Site 2F should be redeveloped as commercial in order to add to the commercial and pedestrian activity along Granville Street.
- e. Target Site 2G should encourage multi-level commercial development and include the additional publicly owned acreage south of the target site as part of any redevelopment plan. In addition, any development plan for Target Site 2G should encourage a natural buffer for areas adjacent to single family residential.
- f. Target Site 2H greatly impacts the downtown area and should be targeted improvements that support pedestrian connectivity and façade beautification.

North Triangle PDA

- a. The EDCEC had extensive discussion regarding the development concepts identified for five of the target sites.
- b. Recreational paths should be created within this priority development area in order to provide connectivity between the commercial and residential corridors and to link with the existing paths within New Albany. An interconnected path between New Albany and the North Triangle PDA would greatly add to the quality of place.

Southwest PDA

- a. The EDCEC had extensive discussion regarding the development concepts identified for three of the target sites.
- b. The EDCEC recognized that this priority development area represented the largest opportunity for financial return to the City due to its primary focus on office, medical and hotel land uses.

Southeast PDA

- a. EDCEC had extensive discussion regarding the development concepts identified for the one target site.
- b. The EDCEC recognized that this the Eastgate Industrial Park is will be developed primarily with manufacturing, logistics and warehousing businesses.

7) Implementation:

- a. The EDCEC discussed the components of the Implementation Strategy and supported including multiple stakeholders in completing this effort. Additional stakeholders include: City, Schools, Community Improvement Corporation, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce and Local Businesses.
- b. The Department of Planning & Development has been provided an Implementation Matrix as part of the EDS. This working document will be utilized to successfully implement the recommendations of the EDS.
- c. Sufficient resources, both staff and monetary resources, are required in order for the City of Gahanna to effectively implement actions identified within the EDS.

The EDCEC requests that Gahanna City Council accept these Final Recommendations and include them as an exhibit to the Gahanna's Economic Development Strategy.