Gahanna
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TO: Gahanna City Council Members
Mayor Laurie Jadwin
Priya Tamilarasan, City Attorney
Kevin Schultz, Senior Director of Operations
Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administration
Jeremy VanMeter, Clerk of Council

FROM: Jeff Gottke, Economic Development Director

DATE: October 27, 2025

RE: Creekside Private Development Committee of the Whole Follow Up Items

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This memo answers questions and demonstrates substantial progress on five critical issues that Council has raised since the proposal for a private mixed-use development was first presented on September 22, 2025. These critical issues represent the items that Council said it needs to make a final decision on this important project.

1. **More time to review the Development Agreement**

   The development agreement was submitted to council on October 17, 2025 for its review. This will give it 30 more days for consideration before the scheduled vote on November 17, 2025.

   While reviewing the Development Agreement, Councilman Schnetzer requested some feedback from the City Attorney and Economic Development Director regarding any continuing liabilities the City or CIC might have under the agreement. Those questions and answers are included as **EXHIBIT A**.

   City Attorney Tamilarasan also submitted a memo to Council summarizing the major revisions to the Development Agreement. For convenience, that memo is attached as **EXHIBIT B**.

2. **City-Owned Parking Lot**

   At the October 13 Committee of the Whole meeting, the following details were presented regarding results during the study period:

- Average District-Wide Usage: 28%
    - 667 Total Spots (Does not include parking garage, or lots south of Granville Street)
- Average High Street Lot Usage: 27%
    - 50 Total Spots – 7.5% of total surface parking spaces north of Granville Street.
    - AM – 20% Usage
    - Noon – 28% Usage
    - Evening – 43% Usage
- Weekday Average – 18% Usage
- Weekend Average – 40% Usage

Since then, further analysis of the parking study data has been conducted and will be sent in a subsequent email.

This is presented to show substantial progress toward fully understanding the parking demand for the City-owned High Street parking lot. At this point, it is premature to have any solutions identified. However, the Administration will continue to process the study data and identify solutions at a future date. It is not necessary to have them all identified before a final vote on November 17.

3. Public Engagement Strategy

To socialize this project to the public the City administration has done the following:

- Set up a dedicated email – creekside@gahanna.gov -that goes to multiple people and is monitored daily.

- Created a separate webpage for both the public and private that will be the primary repository for project-related information and updates. It will be updated as needed and will continue throughout the life of both projects. It also contains an FAQ page so the public and stakeholders can educate themselves on the details.

- Prior to the creation of the website, the Administration utilized existing City media channels (social media, city website, relationships with local media outlets) to communicate project details. It will continue to use its social media channels throughout the construction process.

- Hosted 4 public engagement sessions to present project details and gather feedback. Two sessions were for the public, and 2 were for Creekside District stakeholders. To spread the word about the stakeholder sessions, City staff hand-delivered invitations to every residence and business in the Creekside District. A summary of the process and results is attached as **Exhibit C**. The results memo from PlanningNext is attached as **Exhibit D**.

- City has also held by-request meetings with individual groups. These meetings will continue on-demand.

- Councilmember Bowers, also held 2 information sessions of her own and compiled feedback.

- Council has received public comment at legislative meetings on September 29 and October 13. The public comment was largely positive.

- Local media also covered the projects extensively. Outlets like The Columbus Dispatch, Columbus Business First, WBNS & WMCH have all covered the proposal.

- At the most recent legislative meeting, Council announced a public hearing will be held on November 3, 2025, in conjunction with its regularly scheduled meeting.

4. **Fiscal Impact to the City**

Councilmember Bowers asked Director Gottke to prepare a fiscal impact analysis for this project. This important economic development tool compares the direct revenues generated to the costs to a jurisdiction for a particular project. This is different from an abatement ROI analysis or economic impact analysis, because it analyzes direct revenues and costs only. The other measurements look at the rate of return for an abatement, or the direct, indirect and induced impact a project would have across a broader area. The analysis is attached as **EXHIBIT E**. There are several to conduct an analysis of this type. Exhibit E use two:

- **Marginal Costs of Growth by Unit Type**: The first is based on the expected marginal costs for the proposed development by unit type. In other words, how much will each new unit (apartment, townhouse, restaurant, hotel) produce and consume in services over the next 30 years. The costs are determined using the 2025 budgeted amount for the City general and enterprise funds.

- **Meta-Study Ratio of Revenue/Costs by Land Use Type:** The second uses a meta-study of 90 communities across the country that American Farmland Trust preformed a Cost of Community Services Study. These studies create a ratio of dollars generated to dollars consumed for three different land use types. So it can be read as "for every dollar of revenue generated, it (land use type) consumes X amount in services". The analysis for the proposed projects uses that ratio to determine the marginal cost by unit type and compares it to projected revenues.

Note, just like ROI analyses, or TIF projects, a fiscal impact analysis is a projection and should not be considered a guarantee. Many assumptions are used for data that can't be known until the project is built, and Regional or reliable national data was also used, because of the lack of available citywide data. It assumes that the project is fully leased and operational. It does not include capital costs that might be borne by the City. It also doesn't include the direct, indirect or induced impact of construction, or the induced effect of new residents and jobs in the City.

5. **Traffic Impact**

Recently more than one council member has asked about the traffic impact and mitigation strategies. Completion and review of a Traffic Impact Analysis is required by City Code. This is a regular part of the development process, all submissions must meet certain requirements and are reviewed and approved by the City before permits are issued, and construction can begin.

EXHIBIT A

TO: Gahanna City Council
Jeremy VanMeter, Clerk of Council

FROM: Jeff Gottke, Economic Development Director

CC: Mayor Laurie Jadwin
Priya Tamilarasan, City Attorney

DATE: 10.26.2025

RE: Answers to questions from Councilman Schnetzer regarding ORD 0042-2025

Below are questions submitted by Councilman Schnetzer regarding ORD 0042-2025. The answers are in red below. The answers represent a combination of development advice and legal perspective provided by the City Attorney.

*Preamble: Several of these questions reference "contingent liabilities". I interpret this to mean any existing guarantees or obligations contained in the Development Agreement that the City **MUST** perform as a contractual matter. The short answer is "no".*

*It is possible, however, that during the Inspection Period or permitting processes, there are additional public infrastructure costs identified by the Developer or required by the City (e.g. - A larger water line may be necessary than is currently on site.) that weren't previously anticipated. In this case, the Developer could always **ASK** the City to participate in those costs, but nothing in the Development Agreement **REQUIRES** the City to participate provide any specific funding.*

1. What contingent liabilities would the City be responsible for under the contract?
    a. For example, if upon breaking ground, infrastructure is found that needs moved/remediated, or an environment concern is discovered, etc., who pays?

The Developer would. It would be grounds for terminating the agreement during the Inspection Period, but there is no remedy period and no obligation on the part of the City to commit to any further work or spending.

b. Are the costs of relocation/remediation capped?
The same answer is the same as above. During the Inspection Period, the Developer would investigate any anticipated costs and make a decision to continue with the project or not.

2. Is the CIC exposed to any potential contingent liabilities similar to number 1 above?
    a. Since the CIC has limited revenue streams this could effectively involve the City. Are the contingent liabilities, if they exist, capped?
    There will be no lingering liabilities for the CIC, since the properties are being sold "as is". The Developer is assuming the risk and cost. Again, this will be investigated further during the Inspection Period.

3. What explicit costs are to be borne by the City?
    a. This would be a good topic to share in summary form to allow all decision makers the ability to see, in total, what is the City's expected cost, as well as any potential costs by extension of the City-CIC relationship.
    The only cost being committed to by the City is the value of the parcels being conveyed as described in the Development Agreement.

4. Are there any explicit or implicit guarantees related to the TIF and/or NCA, or any other revenue sharing agreements?
    a. For example, if one of these entities (TIF, NCA) underperforms any pro forma estimates, should they exist, is the City or City affiliated entity, on the hook to fill the gap to the developer or any other parties privy to the TIF or NCA payments?
    No. The City is not pledging to guarantee any revenue sources, in the sense that if they don't produce a certain amount, the City will cover the shortfall. The amounts collected from these sources represent estimations. The City is not pledging to commit to any shortfall, nor is it guaranteed to collect a certain amount itself either.

Gahanna

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gahanna City Council

CC: Laurie Jadwin, Mayor

Jeff Gottke, Director of Economic Development

Jeremy VanMeter, Clerk of Council

FROM: Priya D. Tamilarasan, City Attorney

DATE: October 24, 2025

RE: ORD-0042-2025

Due to the multiple versions of the Development Agreement that were exchanged between counsel, the latest draft is in a "clean" format for ease of reading. There were many minor revisions made to improve clarity and accuracy. The purpose of this Memorandum is to highlight the main, substantive changes.

- All acreage and parcel numbers have been verified and confirmed.
- The Exhibits have been modified to remove unnecessary items and reordered to address new inclusions.
- The new Exhibit A contains an overview of the Development Area.
- The new Exhibit B contains details of the expected development for Phase I, subject to all City approval processes.
- Recital B: The City lots (Parcel Numbers 02500010400 and 02500005000) are specified as intended parcels to this deal, which will require separate legislation to convey to CIC.
- Recital C: There will be a singular Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA) with a staggered closing for each Phase. The original draft contained two PSAs that were almost identical and with the intent to execute simultaneously. It was more efficient to execute as a single document.
- Section 5.2: The Re-Conveyance Period is now completely separate for each parcel, ending with the receipt of building permits. The prior draft had the period ending for all parcels once occupancy permits were obtained for Phase I.

- Section 12.1: The language was modified to be in compliance with SR-16-2009 to require an abatement agreement, with authority granted for the Mayor to execute if in the best interest of the City.
- Section 12.4.6: Developer commitments for arts and community engagement are no longer tied to Compensation for Vacating the Right of Way and is a separate, enforceable provision.
- Section 12.4.9: Specificity added to staging areas during Development to include Phase II parcels and a portion of the CIC lot (Parcel 02500006400).

EXHIBIT C

Gahanna

TO: Gahanna City Council
Jeremy VanMeter, Clerk of Council

FROM: Miranda Vollmer, Sr. Director of Administrative Services
Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin
Kevin Schultz, Sr. Director of Operations
Jeff Gottke, Director of Economic Development

DATE: October 23, 2025

SUBJECT: Creekside Reimagined Public Engagement

The following is a summary of the public engagement events that were held related to Creekside Reimagined. PlanningNEXT assisted with the Creekside public engagement by processing feedback received. This included any completed feedback card that were available at a variety of events. Included with this memo is an attachment from Sarah Bongiorno, PlanningNEXT. This memo contains the results of the public engagement.

The following engagement events were held to support public engagement for Creekside Reimagined.

September 24, 2025 – Community Conversation: Reimagine Creekside event held at Creekside Conference and Event Center

- Estimated Attendance – 75
- This event began with a presentation by Mayor Jadwin, Sr. Director Schultz, and Director Gottke.
- Sr. Director Schultz presented images and information on the public plaza portion of Creekside reimaged
- Director Gottke presented images and information on the private mixed-use development project were presented
- Throughout both presentations, PlanningNEXT assisted with engagement by using live polling. Participants used their cell phones to scan a QR code and participant in live polling.
- After the presentation, participants were divided in small groups. These groups had robust discussion about the projects and answered questions as a group.

September 29, 2025 –Two Stakeholder Meetings with Creekside District Businesses and Residents held at the Sanctuary.

- Estimated Attendance for 2 sessions – 40
- This event began with a presentation by Mayor Jadwin, Sr. Director Schultz, and Director Gottke.
- Sr. Director Schultz presented images and information on the public plaza portion of Creekside reimaged
- Director Gottke presented images and information on the private mixed-use development project were presented
- After the presentation, a question and answer was held. Participants asked questions about the projects.
- Representatives from Connect Realty and Benson Capital were in attendance. Representatives answered resident and business owner questions, directly.
- Participants left comments via comment cards.

October 9, 2025 –Creekside Reimagined: Open Plaza Event at Creekside Plaza

- Estimated Attendance – 75. Attendance was steady during the 3-hour window.
- This event was held from 4-7 p.m. at the Creekside Plaza.
- Image boards for public and private project were available for residents to review. City staff were available to dialogue and answer questions.
- Participants were asked to provide feedback via comment cards and by participating in an engagement board. This engagement board featured the same questions as the September 24 event.
- Representatives from Connect Realty and Benson Capital were in attendance. Representatives answered resident and business owner questions, directly.

In addition to the intentionally scheduled public engagement events by the Administration, City staff was available at a variety of public events. Those events include:

- August 26 Our Gahanna: Sweet Celebration
- August and September Farmer's Markets at Creekside Plaza
- Touch – A – Truck
- Mill Street Market (2024 and 2025)

EXHIBIT D

planning NEXT moving communities forward

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MEMO

10/20/25
To: Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services
From: Sarah Bongiorno
Re: Summary of Creekside Reimagined Engagement

The following is a summary of the feedback received during the Community Conversation: Creekside Reimagined event on 9/24/25, the Creekside Reimagined: Open Plaza event on 10/9/25, and from Creekside feedback cards collected between 9/24/25 and 10/16/25. Feedback was received from 150+ people.

Summary

Participants felt positively toward the proposed mixed-use development and reimagined plaza. For both the mixed-use development and the plaza, participants responded overwhelmingly with **excitement**. Participants rated the mixed-use development a 4.1 out of 5 and the reimagined plaza a 4.6 out of 5. Overall, participants said that the Creekside District has strong potential and wanted to see more amenities, activities, businesses, and people to create a livelier, more accessible District. Participants were eager to see continued involvement in the planning process.

1. Mixed-Use Development Feedback

The following questions were asked via live polling, small group discussion, and engagement boards at two public events.

Question: What do you think about the new proposed mixed-use development? Please rank your feelings toward the images from cold (I don't like it) to warm (I love it). *Note: 1 is cold, 5 is warm.*

102 participants rated the mixed-use development an average of **4.1**.

Question: In ONE word, please describe your overall reaction to the new proposed mixed-use development.

1. Exciting
2. Stunning or Impressive
3. Visually Appealing
4. Fresh or Modern
5. Unsure or Apprehensive

Question: What aspects of the proposed mixed-use development stand out to you? Would this have a positive impact overall?

1. **Draws People In.** Participants said it draws residents and visitors in, bringing attention and investment, and helping Gahanna "catch up" with other areas in the region.
2. **Mixed-Use.** Participants said the project brings a mix of uses that the community wants.
3. **Questions.** Participants felt optimistic overall but inquired about its impact on public services, such as roads and schools, as well as its affordability.

2. Reimagined Plaza Feedback

The following questions were asked via live polling, small group discussion, and engagement boards at two public events.

Question: What do you think about the reimagined plaza? Please rank your feelings toward the images from cold (I don't like it) to warm (I love it). *Note: 1 is cold, 5 is warm.*

98 participants rated the reimagined plaza an average of **4.6**.

Question: In ONE word, please describe your overall reaction to the reimagined plaza.

1. Exciting
2. Overdue
3. Optimistic or Hopeful
4. New or Modern
5. Apprehensive or Skeptical

Question: What aspects of the proposed plaza design stand out to you? Would this have a positive impact overall?

1. **Stage, Splash Pad, and Open Area.** Participants said that opening up the plaza and the proposed stage and splash pad made the plaza more inviting. Some suggested enlarging the stage and expressed concerns that the splash pad would see limited use.
2. **Accessibility.** Participants liked the increased accessibility through ramps and the open area.
3. **Connection to Nature.** Participants emphasized that greenery and connection to nature are crucial to improving the plaza.

3. General Feedback

The following questions were asked via live polling, small group discussion, and engagement boards at two public events. Additional feedback was collected through comment cards submitted to city staff.

Question: How do you feel about the character of the Creekside District now?

1. **Generic.** Participants overwhelmingly agreed that the District lacked character.
2. **Potential.** Participants thought the District could be charming at times but lacked a key "draw."

3. **Confusing.** Participants stressed that the roads, streetscape, buildings, and layout made the District confusing.
4. **Charming.** Participants emphasized that the District has charm in specific areas or during specific times of the year.

Question: Would these projects move the District in a different direction, or the same? Explain.

Participants said these projects moved the District in a new direction. Participants said the projects **helped to realize the District's potential**, adding amenities, character, and density that would attract residents and visitors.

Question: What is most important to enhancing the streetscape in the Creekside District?

100 participants said the following improvements were most important *(participants selected multiple options)*:

1. Trail connectivity (46)
2. Safe and accessible sidewalks (43)
3. More street trees/plantings (41)
4. Better/wider sidewalks (34)
5. More on-street parking (30)
6. Bike lanes (25)
7. It's fine as is (2)

The following input was collected from 47 comment cards and organized into themes.

1. **Support for Mixed-Use.** Comments shared widespread approval for a mix of uses in the Creekside District, and suggested that a mix of residential, retail, restaurants, and activities would draw residents and visitors to the area and benefit the community.
2. **Support for Reimagined Plaza.** Comments voiced excitement about the plaza, with most supportive of the layout, splash pad, and stage. Some comments asked for a bigger stage, native plants, and a plan for winter. A few said the current fountain was preferable to the splash pad.
3. **Support for Process.** Comments stressed the importance of including people in the process and were pleased with the opportunity thus far and asked that it be continued throughout the planning and approval process.
4. **Support and Concern for Density.** Comments said that the Creekside District should serve as the heart of the community and could be a fuller place for people, patrons, and visitors. A few were concerned about the height of the apartments and the strain of additional residents on public services.
5. **Support and Concern for Architecture.** Comments said that the proposed mixed-use development looked exciting and modern, but some suggested it should be smaller-scale and look more similar to the architecture in the area.
6. **Concern about Traffic.** Comments said that traffic was a concern in the area in regards to traveling through the District, visiting, and walking around in terms of safety and accessibility.

EXHIBIT E

Gahanna ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Author:	Jeff Gottke
Updated:	10/25/2025

Financial Impact Analysis - Connect Real Estate/ Benson Capital Project When Fully Occupied

The chart below estimates the financial impact of the proposed project to the entities most effected by it: the City, Gahanna Jefferson Schools & Mifflin Twp Fire Department. Given the lack of local information some impacts are estimated using reliable data.

Revenue Sources	
Tax District	0.25
Property Effective Millage Rate	82.945419
Sales Tax Rate	8%
City Income Tax Rate	2.5%
Bed Tax Rate	6%
NCA Fee Hotel & Restaurant	2%
Project Basics	
Total Investment	$105,750,000
Apartment Units	263
Est. HH Rent Affordability Salary	$76,240
Townhouse Units	24
Est. Townhouse HH Affordability Salary	$85,000
Hotel Rooms	63
Hotel Avg Daily Rate	$160
Hotel Avg Annual Occupancy	68%
Est Restaurant Revenue	$1,500,000
Jobs Created	70
Avg Hospitality Salary	$38,259
Community Basics	
Multi-Family Avg HH Size	2.09
Estmated Total New Students	30
Estimated Townhouse Residents	51
Estimated Apt Residents	550
GJPS Cost Per Student	$8,047
Incentive Basics	
TIF Term	30
TIF Annual Value Years 1-15	$39,730
TIF Annual Value Years 16-30	$627,124

Annual Revenue	
Apartment Residents	
Income Tax	$220,011
Utilities	$120,000
Total Per Unit	**$1,293**
Townhouse Residents	
Income Tax	$22,759
Utilities	$57,600
Total Per Unit	**$3,348**
Hotel	
Bed Tax	$150,111
NCA	$50,037
Utilities	$60,000
Total Hotel	**$260,148**
Restaurants	
NCA	$60,000
Utilities	$24,000
Total Restaurant	**$84,000**
Jobs	
Income Tax	$66,953
Total Jobs	**$66,953**
Property Tax	
Base	$165,602
Schools TIF Avg (Years 1-15)	$17,900
Schools TIF Avg (Years 16-30)	$2,553,489
TIF AVG (Years 1-15)	$9,093
TIF AVG (Years 16-30)	$1,297,193
Total Revenues	
Years 1-15	**$1,024,066**
Years 16-30	**$4,847,755**

Annual Costs	
METHOD 1 - Proportional Cost by Unit Type	
Cost for Mifflin Fire	
Housing & Hotel Cost for Services	$822,756
Restaurant Cost for City Services	$4,621
Cost for Schools	$173,212
Total Annual Costs	**$1,000,588**

NET ANNUAL FISCAL IMPACT	
Year 1-15	**$23,478**
Year 16-30	**$3,847,167**

METHOD 2 - American Farmland Trust - COCS Model	
Cost Per Land Use Type of $1 Collected	
Residential - $1.15	$483,425
Restaurant - .30	$104,086
Hotel - .40	$148,074
Total Annual Costs	**$735,585**

NET ANNUAL FISCAL IMPACT	
Year 1-15	**$288,481**
Year 16-30	**$4,112,170**

NOT INCLUDED IMPACTS	
Annual Induced Income Tax	
Residential	$162,113
Restaurant & Hotel Jobs	$45,787
Total	**$207,900**

Label	**Explanation**
Est. HH Rent Affordability Salary	Comparable rents & 30% of net monthly income
Est. Townhouse HH Affordability Salary	Comparable sales & 20% down payment @ market interest & 30 year mortgage
Hotel Rooms	55-70 estimated = 63 average
Hotel Average Daily Rate	Columbus Region average
Hotel Average Annual Occupancy	Columbus Region average
Est Restaurant Revenue	Columbus Region average
Jobs Created	Columbus Region average
Multi-Family Avg HH Size	Regional Average
Estimated Total Students	National Multi-family housing council estimates
Avg Hospitality Salary	Columbus Region average
Multi-Family Avg HH Size	Gahanna average
Estimated Total New Students	National Multi-family housing council estimates
Estimated Townhouse Residents	Gahanna average HH size * Unit number
Estimated Apt Residents	Gahanna average HH size * Unit number
GJPS Cost Per Student	GJPS Annual Report
TIF Values	Montrose Group Calculations

Income Tax	60% of city population is working age, 35% (est) work in City
Utilities	City billing office estimate
Bed Tax	Room rate* occupancy rate * tax rate
NCA	Shared 50% with developer but spent on public facilities
TIF Collections	Montrose Group Estimates - Shared 50/50 with developer but spent on public infrastructure.

METHOD 1 - Proportional Cost by Unit Type	This method takes the City budgeted general funds expenditures and the enterprise funds / the number of housing units for each unit type. This creates a per unit cost of new
Cost for Mifflin Fire	Reported by Mifflin Fire
Housing & Hotel Cost for Services	Marginal rate for services (60%) of cost of services for each unit type
Restaurant Cost for City Services	Marginal rate for services (60%) of cost of services for each unit type
Cost for schools	Marginal rate for services (50%) of cost of services for each new student
Net Fiscal Impact	Total Revenues - Total Costs
METHOD 2 - American Farmland Trust - COCS Model	This model uses average data across 90 communities nationwide. It is expressed in a return on investment ratio. For every $1 of revenue it consumes $X in city services.
Induced Income Tax	Not included in the totals is the induced effect of the developments residents. Induced effects is the additonal spending in the City generated from the new jobs and residents. It is not traditionally used to calculate fiscal impact, but helps to provide more context.

Construction income tax & induced effects not included

Residential NCA millage charge not included