Memorandum

TO: Dennis Madsen, Chad Emerson
DATE: 14 March 2017

COMPANY: City of Huntsville, Downtown Huntsville Inc.

FROM: Urban Design Associates

PROJECT: 2280 Huntsville Downtown

PURPOSE: Public Meeting Input – March 8, 2017

REMARKS

CLINTON CORRIDOR:

- Hotel over development at Pinhook Creek by Coca Cola site
- Consider redeveloping public housing into mixed-income (with 30% “affordable”) and higher density, (maintaining or increasing number low-income units)
- Remove “high-speed” turn lanes at intersections
- How does the Constellation Area and City Centre play into these Downtown cores
- Heated/cooled/shaded outdoor rooftop development/restaurants
- Outline the contour of the Big Spring lagoon with a LED color changing theme
- Bring back on-street parking where it’s been removed. One-side only.
- Any stadium plans need to include restaurants and bars that can utilize year round for all VBC events
- Extend Clinton Row colorwalk to connect Clinton Ave W and Holmes Ave NW and Washington Park
- Hotel over parking for VBC facing creek with outdoor creek front café
- Narrow streets with on-street parking and bike lanes
- Narrow street/alley with “hidden” café and “surprise” attractions that people feel they have discovered
- Downtown storefront police department. Have a happy/friendly police presence
- Foot patrol downtown for police
- Baseball stadium
- Mixed-use/residential/commercial
- Active uses in parking garage to create a great people space
- More active uses in the park—kayaks, etc.
- Micro brew house—glass/see production
- More hotel space, walking distance VBC
- Redevelop existing housing adjacent to Memorial Park
- More “entertainment” uses theater, dance, etc.
- More “bike friendly” parking, riding
- “Slow down” roads
- Light rail
• Should be large event area
• “Green” the garage across from VBC
• “Space needle” restaurant
• Townhouses “Brownstones” cottages
• Pedestrian connectivity at Big Spring Park
• “Signature Tower”
• European square with international shops/residential. 4 different countries

HOLMES AVE NORTH:
• More work on getting retail stores downtown. 301 Holmes has been sitting vacant for years as an example
• Where are the displaced going, ex. Russel Erskine, Searcy Homes
• Holmes two-way. Bicycle. Ice cream shop.
• Is there opportunity for a hotel in the Holmes Ave North? Holmes Ave North: 1. Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church 2. Cumberland Presbyterian Denominational Center
• Bike lane connecting UAH to Downtown via Holmes
• Church Street CPCA partner with Huntsville City Parking Garage for the Church and City
• Make Railroad Crossing silent (see Anchorage, Alaska). Federal Funds available. Will help attract more hotel/living
• Ensure historic buildings remain. Ensure new building represent Huntsville, not “just anywhere”
• One-way streets concern→two-way?
• Bike paths/lanes
• Resident parking
• Parking lot at 301
• Lighting behind Avenues/Church
• Better sidewalks
• Slow traffic
• Maintain religious presence (1&2)
• Make it more self-sustaining—grocery
• Fill in vacant stores
• Good residential
• Better use ground floor
• Make it historical and look like the neighborhoods
• Metered parking/2-hours?
• Retired and assisted living
• Multi-generational
• Upscale shopping
• Mix in some national retailers (pharmacy, diner)
• Accessible, for family
• Lincoln and Greene—two-way, fix intersections at Clinton and Holmes
• Don’t put same restaurants next to each other
• Gateway signage, wayfinding historical
• Bicycle and pedestrian friendly
• Reuse vacant spaces—incentives
• Consolidate parking with shops
• Church parking demand
• Something unexpected (volleyball, playground)
• Music venues—indoor
• Movie theater—screening room
• Exercise stations
• Events on Big Spring pond
• Outdoor dining
• Rooftop dining
• Pinhook Creek—kayaking?
• Make use of train track
• Reuse storefront for retail (Urban Outfitters)
• Help minority businesses to get established
• Diversity
• Equitable process to decide how to use the resources
• A.M. Booth’s Lumberyard—varied entertainment
• Micro mall, mini movie theater
• LED-themed lighting of Big Spring Park
• Entertainment/recreation coordinator
• City’s relationship w/Grelier is too intimate. Be more transparent please
• Disc golf park! Even a mini version (9 holes) would be an easy affordable and family friendly downtown activity

FOUNTAIN CIRCLE:
• Move courthouse and use space for businesses and apartments
• Any extension of the space program would be exciting and unique to Huntsville. Space specific museum area in City Hall?
• Renovate courthouse and add mixed-use rental spaces on bottom floor with exterior facing store fronts. City makes money renting out the mixed-use space
• Rebuild parking deck with street facing shops under and hotel over
• Local artist hand drawn maps, art maps
• Park facing cafes and restaurants with shaded outdoor seating for summer use
• Keep City Hall downtown, but elevate over street level retail/restaurant/services
• If you move the Courthouse, last person to leave downtown turn off the lights. It will die.
• Preserve and improve parking opportunities. Do NOT reduce it! The Courthouse is ugly as sin. Expedite its replacement FIRST
• Move courthouse city/county to N HSV
• Move courthouse to free up space and get lawyer out to free up more space. Won’t close at 5pm.
• Make City Hall fun/artistic and a community destination. Keep downtown
• Make it easy to walk between Early Works and Big Spring Park and library with a stroller! (Continuous sidewalk coverage and ramps, not circuitous!)
• Keep City Hall downtown and encourage mixed-use so people visit other things
• Stop gentrification. Preserve character of older neighborhoods
• Green space. MORE!
• Parking. We need it close to VBC
• Coke site. Hotel?
• Move City Hall. Where? Constellation?
• Open up access to park
• Preserve historic resources
• Move courthouse out of downtown square
• Don’t make it sterile
• Less concrete, more trees
• More natural looks
• More historic architecture
• Watch for caves! (geo. Tech)
• Moderate traffic in residential neighborhoods
• Neighborhood “branding” and gateways
• Alternate transportation. Transit, bike, pedestrians…
• Big Spring Park.
  o Playing fields (bocce, soccer, croquet, etc.)
  o Have “Artists’ Colony” (like Jackson Square in New Orleans)
• Move City Hall
  o Replace with hotel
  o Could be gorgeous site
  o Near VBC, downtown restaurants
  o Historic districts
• With Fountain Circle so close to Constitution Village it would be great to capture the animated quality of other cities with historic areas to invite people in/through the village to experience history, art, culture
• Key to businesses moving downtown:
  o Low-friction rapid without parking, with automated payment/access control.
  o Dick Reeves 2563377931
• Tourist attractions around park…pedal trolleys? Brewery tours
• Could existing caves/caverns be used/occupied?
• Welcome to HSV signage, even beyond downtown
• Outdoor rock climbing wall
• Turn canals into a quality of life resource
• Leave City Hall where it is and expand it
  o Jackie Reed and Ryan Sellers

THE REST OF DOWNTOWN:
• Complete expansion of the Indian Creek Greenway
• Turn the concrete creeks/canals into greenspaces
• Planned locations for bus/transit/Uber pick-up within downtown
• Plan for outside park and ride to downtown with dedicated transportation for work day and special events
• Segway rental stations
• Change zoning to protect existing homes and character. No more overbuilds and McMansions. Care about people and not just developers
• Connections to local residential areas, walk and bike
• I’d like to see the walkway bridge to Lowe Mill built. I think it will help tie downtown to the out complex
• Smooth out jumbly sidewalks and other falling hazards for older people and strollers
• Keep in mind the emergence of self-driving cars, may need less parking
• Develop more public transportation
• Please build a movie theater/small concert hall for dancing/etc.
• Would like to see a distinct “circle” around downtown—within more pedestrian—outside more open/car friendly. Outside ring complete the greenbelt from Governors to the Northeast
• Encourage more vendors around Big Spring Park
• Encourage buildings around Square to have street retail with lawyers upstairs
• Make Railroad Crossings silent. FRA grants available. Will help with attracting hotel/apartments/condos
• Add walking path along Lowe, slightly lower by creek
• Please keep all new construction historical-looking to match neighborhood
• Occasional daytime police presence in BSP—security
• More public art—a la Tucson, AZ! Check it out!
• Make Holmes Ave two-way
• Provide shaded seating/gathering areas
• (Not downtown) University near public housing NEEDS human activated crosswalks x 1½ mile
• City’s relationship with Grelier is too intimate
• Connect entertainment districts along Meridian
• Public transportation from Five Points
• Outdoor amphitheater
• In front of art museum, do climbable sculptures for kids, and/or other play area (ex. temporary artistic mini golf exhibit)
• Two-way street w/o a turn lane creates bottleneck
• Make Holmes two-way NOW! This month!
• No more parking decks in these valuable core areas
• Greenways—check out Boise, ID Greenway. Emulate this! (Greater HSV area)
• Disc golf! Fast growing in Europe! Park in Downtown Huntsville—its family friendly and one of the most affordable sports for the public. All you need is one disc golf Frisbee
• Return Clinton to One-way at Jefferson-Washington. Entering and exiting the parking deck is a mess with two-way traffic on Clinton
• “Hide” parking behind storefronts, access to lots via small entrance or alley. Build up over them.
• “European style” playground
• Small movie theater downtown
• Try to draw more large government contractions downtown to have their main offices there requires easy access to Arsenal
• Add “You are here” maps/locations with walking time to close by attractions/locations
• Redevelop area around downtown library. More parking at library. Add more businesses to Constellation site
• Affordable housing in/near downtown that doesn’t require millionaire status or destitution
• Greenway through the city connecting businesses. Perhaps, connection the mountain to downtown
• Please maintain and protect the outdoor sense and feel of Big Spring Park and for the “stage” for the local arts community
• Add an outdoor amphitheater
• Consider design guidelines throughout downtown
• Make downtown look less like a parking lot or a small town with a highway cutting through it
• Greenways connecting downtown to major neighborhood areas (NE HSV, South HSV, NW HSV, etc). Greenway = walk and bike and electric rail car
• Movie theater and theater for local plays
• Coffee cart with tables and chairs seating at head of Big Spring Park just below courthouse under gazebo
• We’ll take a Trader Joe’s anywhere we can get it, except for in a mall
• Contract local artist to create more murals and art throughout
• New Public Library closer to the Square
• Can we incorporate public art pieces through the downtown improvements? Examples—the fish mural, the lighting fixtures at the Avenue—Great!
• Bike and walk is key
• Concerned about removing parking before bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is in place
• Protected! Bike lanes, not just green paint for arrows
• Outdoor eating areas that are not on a street (like Pane E Vino at Art Museum)
• Add greenways
• Bike lanes
• How has gentrification played into the redevelopment of downtown Huntsville?
• Add a gateway to Big Spring Park
• Create greenway along old L&N Railway
• Add outdoor fountains
• Add outdoor sculptures
• Add outdoor art
• Condo versus apartment—focus has been on apartments versus longer term residents. Would like to see more condos and city permits that supports this
• The creeks, use them to connect all the parks and development with greenways, etc.
• Long-term purchase multi-family residences—“missing middle housing”
• Preserve/repurpose historic buildings
• Have more retail: pharmacy, dry cleaning, grocery, clothing
• Bike paths
• Don’t over develop—keep and build more green space
• Encourage local businesses to come downtown
• Have trolleys run more often
• Must have additional police to support the growth
• Extend the canal between embassy suites and civic center through city to Brahan Spring and develop on both sides along parkway like where the rock is and office depot
• Make sure there is good bike-friendly infrastructure in place before removing lots of parking lots
• Trader Joe’s
• Scale property around historic sites (like Visitation) so as not to overwhelm them
• Cover the substation creatively
• Greenways that are wildlife (birds, pollinators) friendly, please!
• Alternate entry and exit routes for drivers for large events downtown; wayfinding signage=alt. route
• Small greenspace amphitheater—with mixed use stores, etc. close stagger events with VBC to even out traffic flow
• Dog-friendly and pedestrian friendly and stroller friendly
• Exit routes; ex: Meridian St to exit downtown
• Permanent public restrooms city maintained
• “Welcome to Huntsville” sign on N+S Pkwy and E+W Governors and/or on 565 prior to USSRC
• Continue Public Art Master Plan and encourage Art on publicly owned property
• Connect VBC area to Downtown Center; connectivity between nodes