



## Community Workshop Public Comments – November 10, 2016

**The following text documents raw, unedited comments and has not been checked for grammar, accuracy, or feasibility. Neither the consultant nor the City of Jonesboro makes any endorsement of a specific idea. Comments will be considered as the plan is developed.**

### Comment Cards:

- I like to see a small inn/ hotel w/ fine dining on Main Street. Or maybe a Bed & Breakfast
- Transportation seems to be a big issue, how could it improve or hurt our downtown area

### Gateway North Station:

- This area is a huge eye sore right now with not much available for visitors/residents outside of a DQ and city services (bank, post office, fire station). The majority of the buildings along North Main Street are dilapidated, old and in disrepair. We would rather see more new development here than redevelopment.
- Would like North Main Street to be more pedestrian friendly (i.e. tree plantings, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian scaled development)
- Would like triangle parcel north of the BB&T bank to be redeveloped into a cool pizza joint
- Get rid of gas station and redevelop/develop parcels around it as mixed-use. (bars, restaurants, condos above retail)
- Large crumbling parking lot across the street from Station 13 on North Main should turn into a park

### Gateway South Station:

- Creating an implementation plan or "to-do" list will be important to its success
  - First, focus on beautification
    - Leave wooded areas as-is, add additional street plantings, improve pedestrian connections, sidewalks along South Main and Lake Jodeco Road that are large enough for both pedestrians and bicyclists, improve welcome to Jonesboro signage/street signage, general clean up, etc.
    - Redevelop triangle-shaped lot between Lake Jodeco Road and South Main Street into a pocket park
  - Next, improve current housing stock in this area by redeveloping parcels that are eye-sores (like the idea of cottage home development)

- Lastly, bring in services/neighborhood uses, specifically ones that are not available further up Main Street in downtown.
  - Portion of large wooded parcel could be developed at this point for services and new residential properties such as senior housing and/or housing that is appealing to millennials (i.e. cottages)
  - Areas within this parcel could be redeveloped into mixed-use with specialty shops, live/work/play.
  - Preserve the wooded areas along the outer edge of large parcel along Lake Jodeco Road. Maybe build a low lying stone wall along the edge, add street lights and keep heavily landscaped.

#### Historic Main Street Station:

- Should develop a facade grant program to help owners of historic structures
- Develop an ordinance to discourage new ground floor office space from coming into the historic downtown buildings on Main Street
- Still interested in activating the area along Broad Street
  - This area should be pedestrian oriented and find ways to activate the rear of the historic buildings that now face Main Street
- The old Clayton Daily building at Church and Riley Way would make a great flex office space for startup businesses.
- Look into extending a pedestrian connection from Broad street north to Smith Street
- The lot at the corner of Smith Street and Main Street is ideal for new construction... possibly a restaurant build out
- Look into developing a parking structure on Smith Street behind Heritage Bank
- Develop a plan that incorporates small scale/ affordable senior housing at the location of the failed development off McDonough Street
- The area has private residences with very large lots... can some of these lots be consolidated in order to provide better housing options that are architecturally appropriate for the area?
- We need to find out what the draw will be to get people downtown? What should we focus on? Music venues? Restaurants? Art galleries? Shops?
- The two gas stations within the area are useful however they do need to be cleaned up
- We should find better uses for our historic structures... Old County Courthouse, Historic Jail House, cotton warehouse.
- Implement a historic trail and wayfinding
- We need lunch and dinner options within downtown
- A public arts program should be put in place... maybe a collaboration with Arts Clayton?
- Think of ways to implement smaller pocket parks in the new concept
- We do not want to see a grocery or market within the main street area- it will end up looking like one of the two area gas stations

## Lee Street Station:

### West of Park

- New City Hall building should be a civic symbol, sited in an appropriately "civic" location
- Lee St. Park offers an ideal setting – best location would be at west end of park – prominent high point overlooking park
- Needs to include other civic functions, including public safety/police HQ, with some on-site parking (similar to Duluth)
- Western end of block bounded by Fayetteville Rd) offers additional redevelopment opportunities – maybe senior housing?
- Crosswalk and stair needed to access Park & Ride lot as overflow/event parking to support Park and downtown activities

### East of Park

- Existing elementary school to remain
- Existing library: widely used - may be opportunity for renovation to create a more "civic" appearance with expanded services
- Farmers Market currently takes place on Saturdays in plaza area along Lee St. – discussed possibility of temporarily closing Lee St. and including as part of market stall area.

### North of Park

- Learning Center campus to remain

### South of Park

- Excellent redevelopment site for higher-density residential use
- Discussion regarding housing options concluded that "urban format" multifamily, with sidewalk-oriented retail facing Smith St. on the ground floor, would be appropriate use. In order to provide a site large enough to make development feasible (a minimum of 180 units was discussed), consider using the entire block from Lee St to Souder Way E-W and Smith St to Mill St N-S.
- There is demand in Jonesboro for small "start-up" office – maybe include as part of block?
- Consider keeping existing 2-story building corner of Smith and Lee, and possibly entire frontage of Lee St., as retail.
- One historic building should be protected (Clayton Community Services? Confirm), but area west of Souder Way may also be suitable for redevelopment.

## Economic Development Station:

- Question for consultant team: is there a way to tell if the apartment dwellers in Jonesboro are younger than the homeowners?
- Creating a brand and an identity for Jonesboro will be important
- There is lots of affordable office space that accommodates small businesses, attorneys, etc.
- Losing the courthouse was very bad for downtown

- Food will bring people downtown—need a restaurant—maybe one chef-inspired restaurant that would draw people from the larger region—something like Serafina's
- Want a coffee shop—maybe in the old Clayton Daily News building, would need adequate parking, could draw Clayton State students
- Need a "hook" to bring in people—perhaps a live music club (jazz, etc.) perhaps near the park
- Gone With the Wind Museum is a draw and should be built on, Civil War history as well, and Smoky and the Bandit
- There is a proposal for an African American history museum—some artifacts have already been assembled
- Need higher end housing to support businesses
- Events could be hosted on the courthouse lawn to draw visitors
- Microbrewery or bar
- Need jobs for any revitalization to happen—perhaps in nearby industrial areas, or adding quality office space downtown—perhaps in the building at the northeast corner of Courthouse Way and McDonough Street
- Local attorneys are aging and won't be in their spaces forever
- The depot museum draws a lot of people, as does Arts Clayton
- We need more parking for the depot museum, the new park, and arts events
- Need a draw—something that will come first that then other businesses/activities/people will follow
- Pipe farm area should be developed at a density compatible with adjacent historic neighborhoods
- City should offer incentives and tax breaks
- Would like a small market or grocery, but would it be supported?
- Civil War history could be part of our local identity—Warren House, etc.
- Need businesses to locate here
- City should have events every weekend, like McDonough does on their town square
- Potential retail/restaurant node at southwest corner of Lee Street and Smith Street
- Monroe, Wisconsin has a real brewery (not microbrewery) and a cheese factory downtown—could there be a possibility for compatible industry in or near downtown Jonesboro?

## Transportation Station:

### Railroad Crossings

- College St and Mill St are especially dangerous
- Accidents that occur are car to car, not train/car
- Closing one rail crossing would just increase congestion at the others
- Wait times at crossings are too long
- "Having a 3-way stop at a crossing is like a game of chicken. Nobody knows what to do."
- People pile up on the tracks
- Would like to see a bridge over the tracks
- "The only problem as far as traffic is concerned is the crossings"

- Lights are crossing need retiming

#### Other Vehicular

- Traffic along Main St. is commuter traffic. People come from 138 to Lake Jodeco Rd or from Jonesboro to Fayetteville Road or Tara Boulevard
- People who live in Jonesboro aren't causing the congestion
- There needs to be a way to get to Tara Boulevard without going through Jonesboro, a route from Lake Jodeco Road to Tara Boulevard
- People need to get from Lake Jodeco Road to north of town without going through town
- Not a fan of one-way streets
- "The good thing about Jonesboro is you can get from A to B in 15 different ways"
- Congestion is bad in the evening
- Synchronize the lights so that they're all green at the same time along one road
- "The lights are the same regardless of the flow of traffic. If nobody is there, the light shouldn't change"

#### Parking

- Get rid of the parking on Main St. It blocks the businesses and it is difficult and unsafe to get out of the parking when there's congestion
- Lack of good parking stops people from coming into Downtown
- Having to park further away is okay if it's walkable to your destination, and if there were destinations in downtown
- Parking during events (at the park) can be sufficient, but it could be improved. People park far away and walk.
- Parking along Main St. seems fairly full during the day
- If you do get restaurants onto Main St., there will not be sufficient parking
- Parking is not an issue for Lee Street Park. It was a concern at first, but people seem to find a place to park.
- There are only a couple of businesses along McDonough Street, but parking is not great

#### Sidewalks/Paths

- Put sidewalks as many places as we can
- Create an easy path from Main St to Lee Street Park, maybe a golf cart path or a large sidewalk
- Lighting along sidewalks has gotten better
- There are good sidewalks and lighting throughout the study area

#### Bikes

- Would like to see bike lanes
- Nobody is biking currently

- With how small the roads are and how many cars there are, it would be scary to bike in the road without improvements being made

#### Transit

- Have a "trolley" that goes up and down Main St., where you could park elsewhere and then be taken to shops/restaurants on Main St. Not on actual trolley lines, but designed to look like a trolley
- The Park & Ride is utilized some
- May be better if there was a bus route through downtown
- MARTA should use a smaller bus during off-peak hours. "You never see more than 3 people on the bus"
- Utilize the current rail for passengers
- "I would love a MARTA rail closer. Why should I drive to College Park to take MARTA? I might as well drive all the way."

#### Other/Non-transportation

- Would like to see a healthy/specialty restaurant
- Need a bed and breakfast in downtown.
- There's a tourist economy, but nowhere downtown for them to eat
- Nothing to draw you into the city, "You're not going to Jonesboro to hang out"
- Hapeville and McDonough Square are good examples of what they'd like to see

To learn more about the planning process, visit [www.blueprintjonesboro.com](http://www.blueprintjonesboro.com).