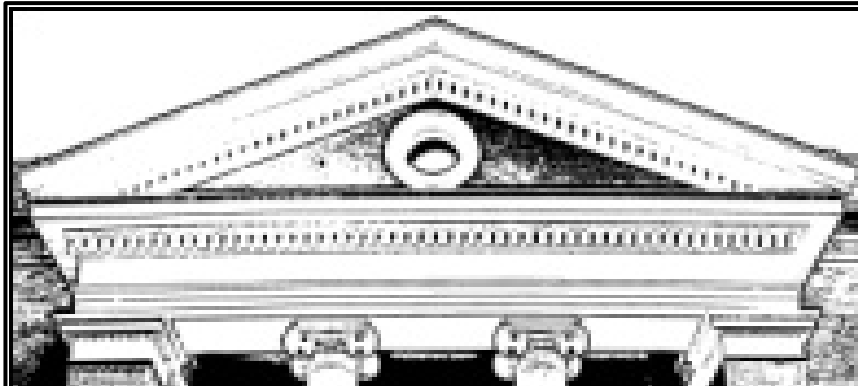


February 15, 2012  
Final Draft



MSA  
PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES, INC.

# GREEN LAKE COUNTY COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT STUDY



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Funded by the City and County of Green Lake, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation



## Chapter 1 – Introduction and Process Summary

This study was initiated by the *City and County Ad Hoc Committee Regarding the Downtown Courthouse*, a joint effort of the City and County to identify a preferred, viable future use for the former Green Lake County Courthouse, vacated spring 2011.

The Committee, with assistance from the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation (TREDC), secured a planning grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, issued a request for proposals, and selected MSA Professional Services, Inc. to prepare a study.

### Committee Members:

Mary Jo Johnson (Chair)  
Daniel Priske  
Martha Janz  
Joanne Guden  
Donald Carpenter

### Other Support Staff:

Barbara Dugenske (Clerk, City of Green Lake)  
Margaret Bostelmann (Clerk, Green Lake County)  
Bill Wheeler (Executive Director, TREDC)

### MSA Professionals:

Jason Valerius, AICP  
Chuck Sulik, AICP  
Steve Tremlett, AICP  
Carter Arndt, AIA  
Adam Leonhard

### The planning process included the following components:

- Regular meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee, including MSA attendance in May, August, October 2011 and February 2012.
- Interviews in June and July 2011 with a range of Green County residents with varying perspectives on City and County interests and market conditions (see Appendix A)
- A public meeting on January 18, 2012 to share the draft study and seek feedback on the preliminary findings and redevelopment/reuse alternatives. The presentation was available through the City and County websites and comments were accepted through January 31, 2012 (see Appendix B).
- Results and Recommendations presentations to City Council and County Board by the Ad Hoc Committee

## Chapter 2 - Market Analysis

Market analysis to determine the financial viability of a project in a small town setting is challenging. First, there is less hard data to evaluate than in larger communities, and what data is available is often based on a small sample size and is therefore less reliable. Second, intangible or difficult-to-measure variables can have a much more significant influence on the success or failure of uses, despite whatever the data may suggest. For example, downtown retail success in a small-town setting is affected as much by the local retail culture, business owner skill, and community reputation as by measurable market demand forces.

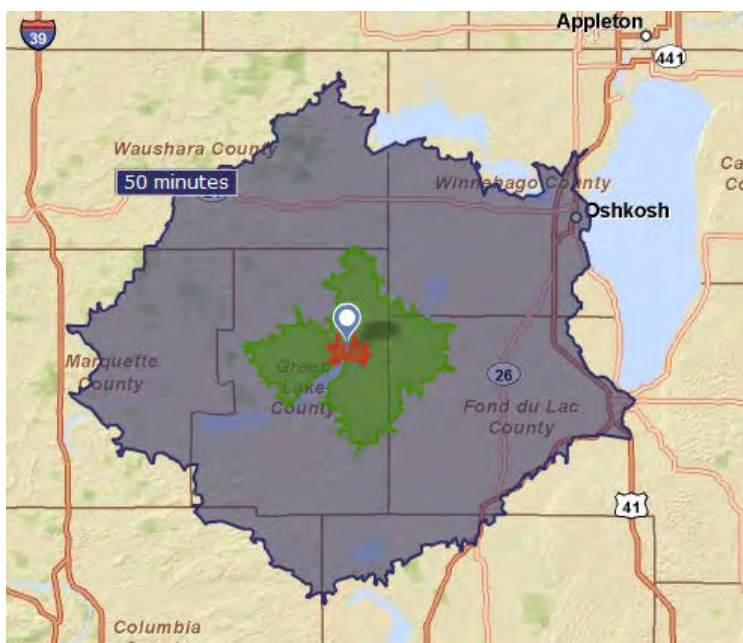
This section therefore considers both the hard data, to the extent that it is available, and the observations and opinions of local residents as collected through the stakeholder interviews (see Appendix A). Our conclusions are based on both sources.

### Retail and Service Markets

#### *What we know from the DATA...*

Data on the local and regional retail and service markets is available through ESRI Business Analyst, a web-based provider of demographic and economic data. Using Business Analyst tools it is possible to select retail trade areas based on drive times from a selected point, in this case the Courthouse site. To understand the performance of the local retail market, and also the wider retail market, we evaluated 5-minute, 20-minute, and 50-minute drive times. The 5-minute area roughly corresponds to the City of Green Lake, the 20-minute area captures Princeton, Ripon, and Berlin, and the 50-minute area incorporates Oshkosh and Fond du Lac.

Figure 1.1 – 5-, 20-, and 50-minute drive time market areas from Downtown Green Lake



In each of these areas we know the approximate population and the approximate income of that population, and models of consumer spending patterns are used to estimate demand for various types of retail and service sales. ESRI then also provides data on supply of those retail and service businesses in the same areas. Table 2.1 shows the gap (in green) or surplus (in red) when supply and demand are compared in specific retail categories.

**Table 1.1 – Retail Gap Analysis**

Summary Demographics	5-minute Trade Area		20-minute Trade Area		50-minute Trade Area	
2010 Population	1,535		19,153		173,085	
2010 Households	729		7,853		68,197	
2010 Median Disposable Income	\$35,574		\$36,465		\$38,293	
2010 Per Capita Income	\$26,299		\$22,804		\$23,759	
	Surplus / Gap	Surplus / Leakage	Surplus / Gap	Surplus / Leakage	Surplus / Gap	Surplus / Leakage
Industry Group	Retail Sales	Factor	Retail Sales	Factor	Retail Sales	Factor
Automobile Dealers	\$2,832,228	98.7	-\$1,805,836	-3.1	-\$3,328,803	-0.7
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	-\$6,125,936	-86.8	-\$7,411,642	-51.6	-\$35,248,759	-39.3
Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Stores	\$186,558	100.0	-\$575,809	-11.8	-\$10,571,329	-17.4
Furniture Stores	\$300,403	100.0	\$321,848	5.4	\$4,803,581	9.5
Home Furnishings Stores	\$54,541	100.0	\$668,207	53.4	\$3,807,047	20.6
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$29,277	3.7	\$56,956	0.6	\$7,015,014	8.0
Building Material and Supplies Dealers	\$369,433	59.8	\$2,063,310	28.9	-\$28,328,455	-25.0
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores	\$124,314	45.3	-\$935,853	-24.9	\$180,559	1.1
Grocery Stores	\$1,469,494	30.1	-\$11,382,578	-15.7	-\$28,201,563	-5.0
Specialty Food Stores	-\$200,977	-57.2	\$990,972	47.3	-\$5,461,165	-21.7
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	-\$386,864	-73.2	-\$486,516	-27.5	-\$9,339,417	-27.7
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$500,277	100.0	\$146,508	1.4	-\$76,021	-0.1
Gasoline Stations	-\$345,997	-5.4	-\$22,655,792	-27.4	-\$110,999,375	-17.6
Clothing Stores	\$188,508	100.0	\$1,862,902	55.1	\$6,559,945	13.1
Shoe Stores	\$34,796	100.0	\$349,160	66.2	-\$755,163	-8.0
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Stores	\$28,297	20.5	\$130,528	8.4	\$2,758,544	24.0
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores	\$59,963	93.5	\$464,797	39.9	\$1,835,022	9.0
Book, Periodical, and Music Stores	\$506	100.0	\$78,604	14.2	\$867,384	7.6
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$1,087,781	100.0	\$3,918,445	21.5	-\$32,203,090	-14.9
Other General Merchandise Stores	\$417,742	100.0	-\$24,918,204	-72.4	-\$31,739,022	-30.7
Florists	\$12,183	100.0	-\$19,107	-5.6	\$1,277,865	32.3
Office Supplies, Stationery, and Gift Stores	-\$126,641	-41.7	\$105,066	5.6	\$2,008,705	12.6
Used Merchandise Stores	\$18,068	31.2	\$161,718	19.8	\$3,280,301	32.3
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$269,185	79.5	-\$1,021,868	-18.4	-\$3,108,360	-11.2
Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	\$18,116	100.0	-\$93,629	-12.5	\$6,112,758	19.6
Direct Selling Establishments	-\$515,793	-78.4	\$239,010	16.7	\$4,217,110	28.3
Full-Service Restaurants	-\$1,080,297	-34.1	\$2,876,925	17.3	\$2,641,986	1.7
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$379,486	100.0	-\$9,355,232	-37.2	-\$4,864,173	-2.3
Special Food Services	-\$481,214	-39.5	-\$1,542,882	-21.5	\$5,423,812	14.1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$117,389	100.0	-\$64,237	-2.4	-\$5,655,787	-18.1

We know anecdotally that local residents currently drive to Berlin, Princeton, and Ripon for groceries, and this is consistent with the above finding of a local gap for that type of retail but a surplus in the nearby region (20-minute trade area). We also know that people drive to Berlin to shop at Walmart, and this is consistent with the local gap but regional surplus in the Other General Merchandise category. We know that people drive to Green Lake to eat in the

restaurants, and the data supports this – there is a regional gap but a local surplus of full-service restaurants.

Of greatest interest in the above analysis are those categories highlighted in yellow. In each category there is leakage to other markets at all three geographic scales. The market gap in these categories, even when the Oshkosh and Fond du Lac markets are included, suggests the potential for a viable market niche in Green Lake. The highlighted categories are also consistent with a downtown setting and a tourist and second-home oriented market. Not highlighted are categories with a gap in supply that don't make as much sense in a downtown setting (e.g. furniture stores), don't fit neatly with the tourist market (e.g. electronics and appliances), or are not generally as viable today as the data implies (e.g. book and music stores).

Another aspect of retail viability is the price and inventory of retail space. We have a small snapshot of the value of commercial property based on Multiple Listing Service data for Green Lake County. This data indicates two commercial sales in the County during the past 12 months, including an 18,000 SF, 3-story brick building in Berlin (retail plus 11 apartments) that sold for \$152,500 (\$8.50/SF) and the Kingston House, a 6,300 SF, 3-story wood frame building in Kingston (restaurant plus living space) that sold for \$351,000 (\$55.70/SF). The 21 active commercial listings in Green Lake County include a church in Berlin (\$69,000), a five-room bed and breakfast in Green Lake (\$570,000), the County's "office" building at 515 Gold Street (\$119,500), six downtown properties in downtown Berlin (\$75,000 to \$230,000) and two downtown properties in downtown Princeton (\$130,000 and \$170,000). This limited sample tells us two things:

- The downtown commercial real estate market in Princeton and Berlin is more active and volatile than in Green Lake (and conversely, Green Lake is more stable)
- There is a reasonable supply of retail space available in the regional marketplace, leading us to question the need for more.

### ***What we know from the COMMUNITY...***

The local leaders that we interviewed come from a variety of background and areas of expertise, but all are familiar with the local and regional retail environment, at least as consumers. We heard general consensus on several points in these discussions:

- Downtown Green Lake is doing ok right now. Things could be better, but they could be worse too. Buildings are in good condition and mostly full.
- Residents meet most of their weekly shopping needs in Ripon and Berlin. Some believe this will make it challenging to get more retail in Green Lake because it will be in competition with those communities
- Second-home owners are a lesser retail force than in past decades, especially compared to 50+ years ago, because most women now work outside the home and children have more programmed summer activities, so seasonal residents are mostly just weekend visitors rather than true seasonal residents.
- The loss of the courthouse has hurt downtown Green Lake, especially restaurants.

**Retail/Service Market Conclusions...**

Based on what we know from the interviews and secondary data sources, we have reached these conclusions about market support for a retail or service use on the Courthouse site:

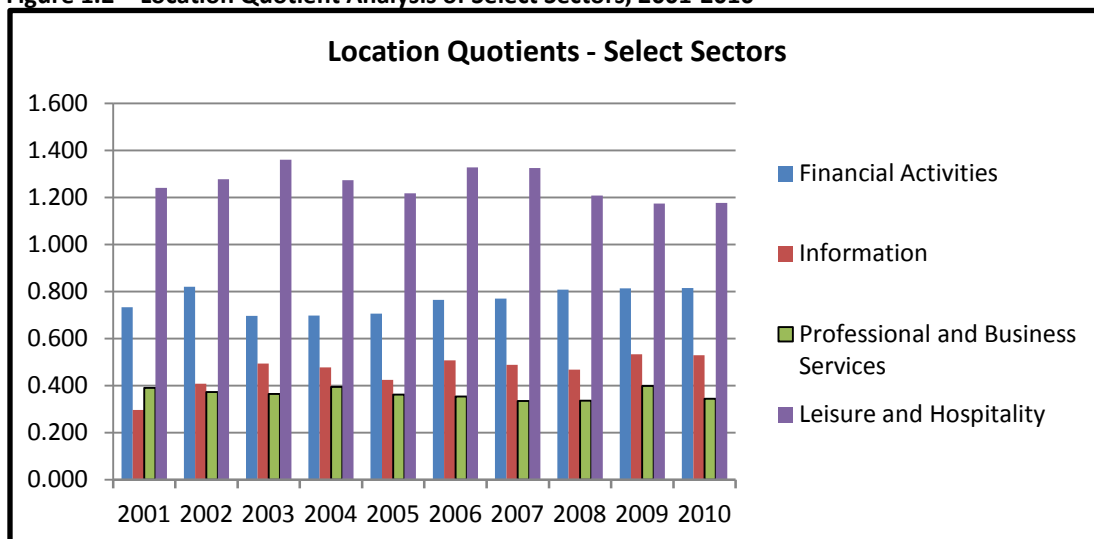
- There is market support for clothing, jewelry, home furnishings, and sporting goods sales. If offered in a small-scale “boutique” format, these are all consistent with a downtown setting and consistent with the second-home/tourist portion of the market, which is not counted in the retail gap analysis. Any such business could work here, but is dependent on effective management and marketing.
- Green Lake, Princeton, Ripon, and Berlin function as part of a single rural market; the best opportunities for success will be with offerings that are complementary to other *successful* businesses in the market.

**Office Market**

**What we know from the DATA...**

Green Lake is not a strong market for office uses. Employment data available at the county level shows that office employment is a relatively low portion of total private-sector employment in Green Lake County. Table 1.2 shows location quotient figures over the past 10 years for the three primary office-uses employment sectors – Financial Activities, Information, and Professional and Business Services. Also included, as a point of reference, is the Leisure and Hospitality sector. A location quotient of 1.0 indicates that employment in that sector, as a percentage of all private-sector employment, is the same in the County as in the whole state. The table shows that employment in all three office-use sectors is low in Green Lake County. Together, the 600 people employed in these three categories account for about 11% of all private sector employment in the County, compared to 21% of statewide employment. In contrast, the 700-800 people employed in the Leisure and Hospitality sector account for 13% of Green Lake County employment, compared to 11% of statewide employment.

**Figure 1.2 – Location Quotient Analysis of Select Sectors, 2001-2010**



### ***What we know from the COMMUNITY...***

Several interviewees discussed the prospect of office uses on the site, and opinions were split. On the one hand, this could be an attractive location for a business that does not need proximity to its clients or customers, such as software design or a call center, and this would bring more people to the downtown each day. On the other hand, an office use with little customer traffic will be a quiet use with limited benefit to retail and hospitality uses, and it could pull businesses out of other local spaces, meaning little or no net gain for the community.

### ***Office Market Conclusions...***

The City and County want to attract more well-paying jobs, including both manufacturing and office uses. But while office uses are generally appropriate, even desirable in the downtown setting, this is not a strong office market. Businesses that can operate from anywhere, such as software design or call centers, go to where the employees are, where hiring and retention are the easiest, generally in or near urban centers. The most likely prospect for attracting an office use to rural downtown Green Lake is through the growth and/or relocation of a business already in the area, or the recruitment of a business owned by someone with local roots. Because market forces alone do not favor Green Lake for office use, we conclude that, at best, only a small portion of the available space could be filled with such use.

## **Housing Market**

### ***What we know from the DATA...***

The Wisconsin Realtors Association collects and reports housing sales data at the state and county levels. Based on data through the first two quarters of 2011, statewide home sales are holding somewhat steady at a rate that is about 25% below 2007 levels, and the median price of these sales continues to fall, from a high of \$163,000 in 2007 to a current low of \$132,000. For Green Lake County, home sales rebounded after a drop in 2008 and have remained steady at about 110-120 per year, and median prices have fluctuated between \$83,000 and \$93,000 since 2007.

A search of the Multiple Listing Service database<sup>1</sup> for sales in the City of Green Lake in the past year indicates a total of just six MLS single-family residential listings in the Green Lake school district that sold during the past 12 months. These ranged between \$63,000 and \$280,000 in sale price. Countywide, over the same period, there were 40 single-family sales ranging from \$25,000 to \$340,000. Looking at condominium sales, there were just three sales in the Green Lake school district over the past 12 months, ranging from \$80,000 to \$120,000.

Current housing market data is also available from Trulia.com, a web-based real estate data resource. Over the month of July 2011, the Green Lake area averaged between 40 and 46 listings at a time, with prices that averaged between \$495,000 and \$525,000. This high average price reflects the inclusion of multiple properties over \$1,000,000. Ripon, by comparison, had 60-75 listings averaging between \$175,000 and \$220,000. Princeton had about 60 listings

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<sup>1</sup> As available through First Weber Realtors

averaging between \$230,000 and \$250,000, and Berlin had about 80 listings averaging between \$135,000 and \$145,000.

In terms of new construction, the City has issued permits for just five new residential units since January 2008 (down from a total of five permitted in 2007), including three single family homes and one two-unit condominium (Hunter's Glen). This low level of construction activity is partly due to the recession and continued trouble with housing and lending markets, but it does indicate a lack of demand for new housing units.

***What we know from the COMMUNITY...***

Interviewees were consistent in their observations of the current housing market ("difficult", "slow and sluggish", "flat", "not good"). The perception is that lower-priced homes are selling, especially those under \$100,000, while higher-priced homes are not, especially second homes, except in "fire sale" circumstances. There is also concern that there are not enough homes available under \$100,000, and this is pushing people to the surrounding communities, all of which do have decent homes in that price range. Condominiums are seen as overbuilt and hard to sell, particularly those not on the water.

On the topic of rental units, most feel that the supply of available units is adequate, but not excessive, and prices reasonable at about \$500 per month for most units.

Almost all interviewees were opposed to new residential units at the Courthouse site, pointing to the poor real estate market and/or indicating that more residential will do little to revitalize the downtown business district.

***Housing Market Conclusions...***

Based on the limited apparent market demand for residential units, there is not support for the construction of more units at this time.

**Tourism/Hospitality Market**

***What we know from the DATA...***

As indicated in Figure 1.2 (page 6), Green Lake County has relatively heavy employment in the Leisure and Hospitality sector. Based on data published by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism in 2011, Green Lake County had 2010 tourism expenditures of \$75.8 million, up 1.16% from 2009. The ranks the County 40<sup>th</sup> of 72 counties, well behind Walworth County, home of Lake Geneva (\$414M), and the more urbanized neighbor counties such as Winnebago (\$199M) and Fond du Lac (\$129M), while ahead of rural neighbor counties Marquette (\$50M) and Waushara (\$63M).

***What we know from the COMMUNITY...***

Our interviews revealed a consistent interest in bringing more people to downtown Green Lake, especially visitors. Everyone in hospitality, service, or retail would like to see more options for visitors, to give visitors more to do and help lengthen visits. And everyone would like to see

more off-season tourist traffic. No one suggested the need for more lodging options, but many suggested the need for “more to do.”

A clear visitor profile did not emerge from the interviews. The Heidel House draws customers from Madison, Milwaukee, and the Chicago area, in that order. The Goose Blind has a baseline, year round clientele from Green Lake, Princeton, Ripon and Berlin, and business triples in peak season with visitor traffic of all kinds. Boutique retailers see traffic from all over, including Madison, Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, and the Fox Valley. Some of these visitors/customers are day-trippers, some are overnight visitors paying for the lodging, some are second home owners and their guests.

A minority viewpoint expressed by community members offered support for a casino in Green Lake. In response to this interest we offer the following information:

*Wisconsin does now allow commercial gaming. Class III gaming (casinos) in Wisconsin may only be owned and operated by Indian tribes. The Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Gaming, Office of Indian Gaming and Regulatory Compliance oversees the regulatory responsibility, based on gaming compacts agreed to by the State of Wisconsin and the Tribes of Wisconsin.*

*Casinos must be established in reservation lands, unless otherwise approved. Off-reservation casinos must be approved by the Secretary of Interior, based on certain conditions explicitly specified in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) 25 U.S.C Section 2719. Generally, casinos may not be established on trust lands acquired after the enactment of the IGRA (October 17, 1988). This rule does not apply to land acquired after 1988 that is contiguous with reservation boundaries, although approval still must be sought from the Department of the Interior.*

*The normal rule under IGRA is that a two-part determination is applied to all tribal requests for off-reservation casinos. The test includes (1) a determination by the Secretary of Interior that the gaming establishment is in the best interest of the tribe and would not be a detriment to the surrounding community and (2) the concurrence of the state’s Governor. As of June 2010, five “off-reservation” requests have been approved since the enactment of IGRA in 1988.*

*There are 16 casinos in the State of Wisconsin (2000 data). Casinos closest to Green Lake County include Ho-Chunk Casino (Sauk County) and Rainbow Casino (Wood County). There are currently 11 federally-recognized Native American Tribes in the State of Wisconsin that have entered into Class III gaming compacts, authorizing the scope and conduct of gaming to be offered by the Tribes within the State, including:*

- *Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*
- *Forest County Potawatomi Community of Wisconsin*
- *Ho-Chunk Nation*
- *Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*
- *Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*
- *Menominee Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin*

- *Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin*
- *Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*
- *Sokaogon Chippewa Community (Mole Lake)*
- *St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin*
- *Stockbridge-Munsee Band- Mohican Nation*

*On January 30, 2012, Governor Walker responded to the current applications by the Menominee and Ho-Chunk tribes for off-reservation casinos (still under review by the Department of Interior) that his “criteria for new casinos includes community approval, consensus among Wisconsin’s tribal governments and whether it would lead to a significant net expansion of gaming in Wisconsin.”*

### **Tourism/Hospitality Market Conclusions...**

Tourism/hospitality “demand” is difficult to measure or predict – it is hard to know how much more people will spend or do in the area, in a general sense, as it depends wholly on the quality and promotion of whatever the supply is. The current dependence of the downtown business district on good weather to attract people to the City leads us to the conclusion that indoor tourism amenities not dependent on the weather would be most advantageous to downtown success.

We do not recommend a casino on this site as we do not think it is compatible with the “quiet”, “quaint”, “small-town”, “family-friendly” character so many identified as the City’s identity. We also do not think this would be a preferred site for a casino, due to its small size, and we do not advise postponing other efforts at redevelopment/reuse while seeking a casino, a process that would take years.

## Chapter 3 – Site and Building Analysis

### BUILDING ANALYSIS - INTRODUCTION

This is a review of the existing Courthouse facilities, based on facility tours and meetings starting in July 2011. The purpose is to look at the condition of the existing facilities and identify their potential for adaptive reuse to serve the County's & City's best interests. The review is broad in consideration and general in nature. It identifies ideas and strategies that may be considered as the most logical and feasible.

Comments offered here are based on observations and on professional opinion. The conclusions identified are broad, with the exact detailed physical needs not necessarily defined. Specific reuse concepts are only generally developed in order to consider the most viable alternatives.

### EXISTING FACILITY OVERVIEW

The former Green Lake County Facility occupies the majority of a block with a building, parking area and green space. The buildings front onto Hill Street, have secondary frontage on Mill Street and Gold Street, and the "rear yard" parking faces Water Street. In the spring of 2011, the county completed their new facilities and the final departments moved to those facilities, leaving this facility completely vacant.

The 71,400 square foot building formally housed County Administration, Judicial and the Sheriff's department. The building is composed of three major areas as follows:

1. Easterly Portion – The original historic County Courthouse/Administration building, with two small northerly additions on the northeast and northwest building corners.
  - a. Constructed in: 1898 with two small north additions in 1945
  - b. Approximate Size
    - i. First Floor 6,500 sf
    - ii. Second Floor 6,500 sf
    - iii. Third Floor 6,500 sf
    - iv. Total 19,500 sf
  - c. Facility notes:
    - i. This building is on the National Historic Register.
    - ii. Large court room on upper floor.
    - iii. Northwest addition includes central boiler room.



- iv. Masonry exterior walls.
- v. Basement vaults with heavy steel/cast-iron doors.

2. Center Portion - Annex/connecting link, located to the west.

- a. Constructed in: 1965
- b. Approximate Size
  - i. First Floor 3,800 sf
  - ii. Second Floor 3,800 sf
  - iii. Third Floor 3,800 sf
  - iv. Total 11,400 sf
- c. The building's only handicap-accessible entry is the entrance from north parking lot.
- d. Facility notes:
  - i. Three floors of meeting rooms including a demonstration room with stage (first floor), County Board Room (second floor) and small court room (third floor).
  - ii. Masonry exterior walls.



South entrance to Annex

3. Westerly Portion – Former Safety Building

- a. Constructed in: 1985
- b. Approximate Size
  - i. First Floor 13,500 sf
  - ii. Second Floor 13,500 sf
  - iii. Third Floor 13,500 sf
  - iv. Total 40,500 sf
- c. Three Floors, lowest floor includes partial walk-out basement
- d. Facility notes:
  - i. Passenger Elevator
  - ii. 4- bay garage space that exits to the North
  - iii. Jail areas on the second floor. Steel constructed cells.
  - iv. An undeveloped wide-open third floor.
  - v. Fire Sprinkler System.
  - vi. Masonry exterior walls.



Safety building after move-out

4. Site Notes

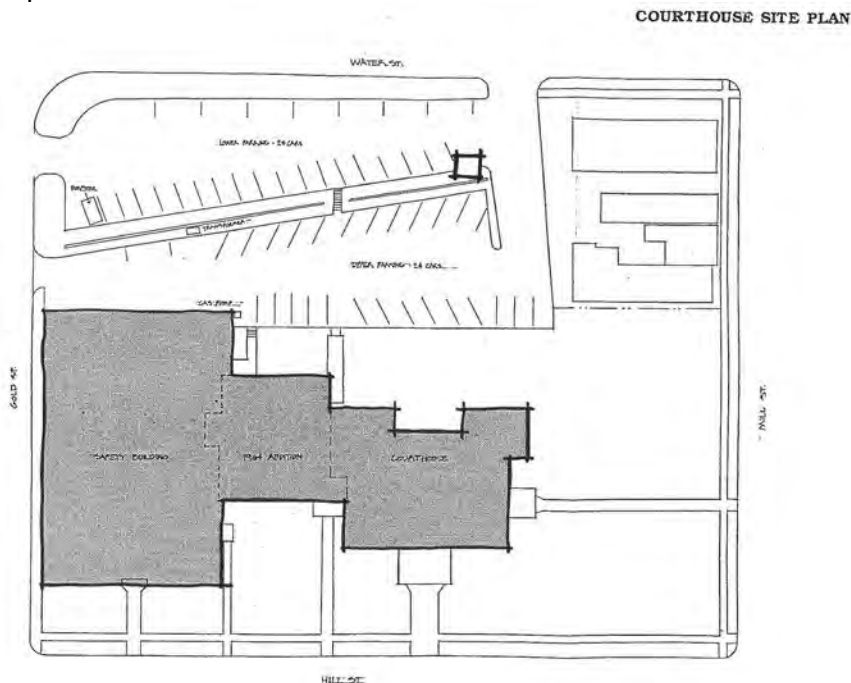
- a. There are civic green spaces on the south and east side of the facility. These spaces are relatively modest in scale but contribute to the civic presence of the historic building.
- b. Tiered parking lots are present on the north side of the property and overlook Dartford Mill Pond and a small park with fishing pier. There is direct boat access to Green Lake from the Mill Pond, but access is limited to small and/or low boats due to a low roadway bridge.
- c. There is a small, 17-stall parking lot parcel on the corner lot across Gold Street to the west of the primary property, considered part of the County facility.
- d. There are four parcels at the northeast corner of the block that are not part of property. These parcels have downtown storefront buildings that are important to the downtown character of the area and are expected to remain. The southerly most property owner is in the process of acquiring 17 feet of the adjacent county land green space, and county approval is expected.
- e. It is understood that the City has expressed interest in the use of the onsite well/well building as a municipal well. The City is exploring this opportunity and it is expected that careful consideration and multiple DNR variances would be required for the DNR to allow this. Further, since the well building is not on



View to north from roof



Onsite well/well building



parate parcel it is expected that the parcels would have to be separated. The standard DNR requirements would dictate a 100'x100 parcel for the well, but a much smaller parcel would be advisable to maintain the redevelopment viability of the remaining lands. Possibly a no-build easement could be added to the adjacent parking lot property (south of the County Building) to allow this smaller well site and still allow the use of the open area for green space or parking in conjunction with the County buildings. Therefore, a DNR variance on the small parcel size would also be expected if the well is placed into municipal service.

## 5. Historic Significance

- a. The eastern original portion of the facility is on the National and State Historic Register of Historic places<sup>2</sup>. This facility was placed on the register due to its architectural design. The building is a fine example of the Classical Revival style. The building's monumental entry stair and portico, and its bright red brick, white trim, stone accents and ornate detailing has a strong presence in the downtown area.
- b. Beyond the architectural importance of the structure, it also has sentimental and cultural significance. The building has been in active use for over 110 year as a community focal point and center for local government, and it is expected to be valued by many as a contributing factor to the "Sense of Place" for the community.



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<sup>2</sup> The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior

## PROPERTY CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Overall the existing facility is seemingly in good condition, a reflection of the County's strong tradition of maintenance.

This review identifies the general condition of the existing properties in order to best consider any adaptive reuse options for the facility. A detailed, item-by-item inventory of deficiencies, with detailed solutions and costs was not part of the scope of this study.

Asbestos was not reviewed as part of this study, but material that has the potential to be asbestos-bearing was observed. It is recommended that the County commission an asbestos survey with material testing to identify all asbestos in county buildings. This sort of study is relatively inexpensive, but will allow the County to manage this material. This information is needed whether the buildings are maintained as-is, renovated, or demolished.

### Site

1. The parking lot is in need of maintenance and some repairs. There is a hole in the pavement at the northwest corner of the lot that is taking in water and creating a void beneath the pavement. Crack filling and seal coating is needed to control grass/weeds growing through some cracks.
2. Adjacent storm inlet and portions of the curb and street require repair along Gold Street.
3. Large tree at the northwest courthouse corner is overgrown and touching building.
4. In general trees are overgrown and require trimming if views of the courthouse are desired.

### Roofing

1. Newer shingles on the Courthouse.
2. At the Annex and Safety Building the membrane roofing was intact with no apparent signs of leaking. Roofing systems seem to be an adhered black EPDM membrane and a white Duralast roof. The roofs of the courthouse's 1940's additions (NW & NE corners) are Duralast membranes and had apparent roof drain obstructions at the time of the inspection resulting in nearly 12" of standing water in some areas. Immediate repair was recommended and completed.
3. Some of the original Courthouse's main metal overhang and dentil detailing has failing paint.
4. The original Courthouse's east entry has rotting wood fascia and cornice trim.
5. Emergency siren is mounted on roof. City and/or County need to confirm continued need for this siren.



Parking lot needs repair



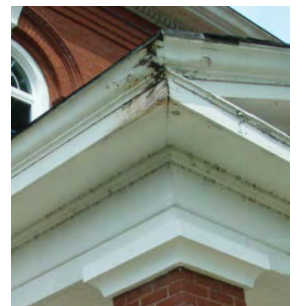
Roof in good condition



Standing water on roof due to obstructed drains



Failing paint on dentil detail



Rotting fascia, east entry

### Exterior Walls

1. Brick
  - a. In general the brick joints are in sound condition. The brick on the oldest areas of the building requires some tuck pointing. It is apparent this has been previously done at some areas.
  - b. At the Safety Building there are some openings that have failed mortar joints at the bearing points for the steel lintels.
  - c. Sealant (caulk) joints require removal and replacement.
2. Wall insulation was not easily discernable and is expected to vary for the different phases of construction.



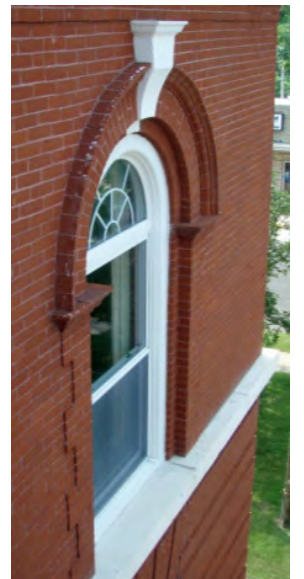
Some tuck pointing needed



Failed mortar joints

### Windows/Doors

1. Courthouse & Annex have newer aluminum replacement windows with insulated glass that appear to be in good condition,
2. The Safety building windows appear to be the original (1985) aluminum windows with insulated glass. No signs of leaks or glass unit failure where observed.



Windows in good condition

### Finishes

1. The finishes throughout vary, with some signs of failure. Most are aged and dated.

### Asbestos

2. An asbestos survey with material testing is needed. Asbestos remediation may be necessary before either demolition or remodeling, and a cost for remediation must be based on an understanding of where asbestos exists.

### Mechanical System

1. Mechanical system was in full working order with recent use. No apparent code issues were observed. Any new use will need specific review to deem feasibility of the mechanical system for adaptive reuse.
2. There is a fire sprinkler system in the Safety Building.



Mechanical room

### Electrical System

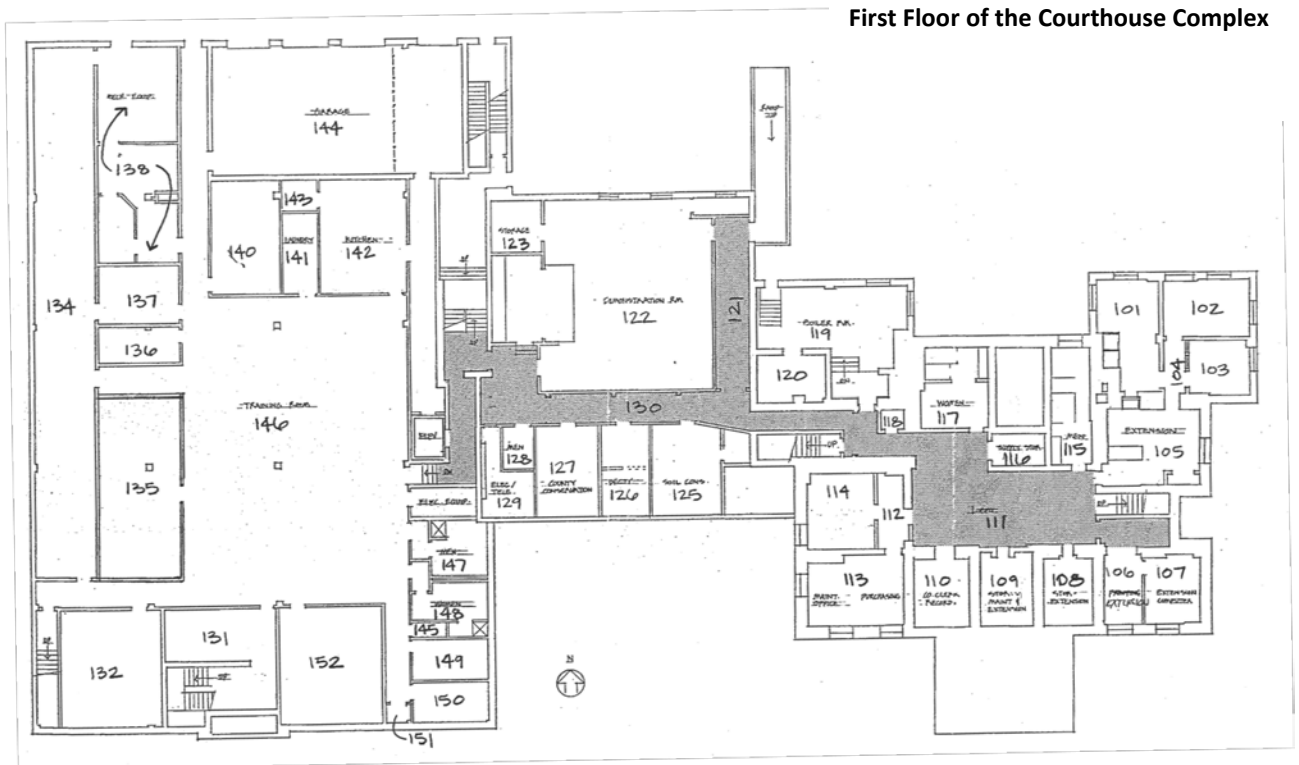
1. Electrical system was in full working order with recent use. No apparent code issues were observed. Any new use will need specific review to deem feasibility of the electrical system for adaptive reuse.
2. There are signs that some equipment was removed from the roof of the Safety Building, the impact of which is unclear.
3. There are some emergency electrical generators.

### Observed Code Deficiencies

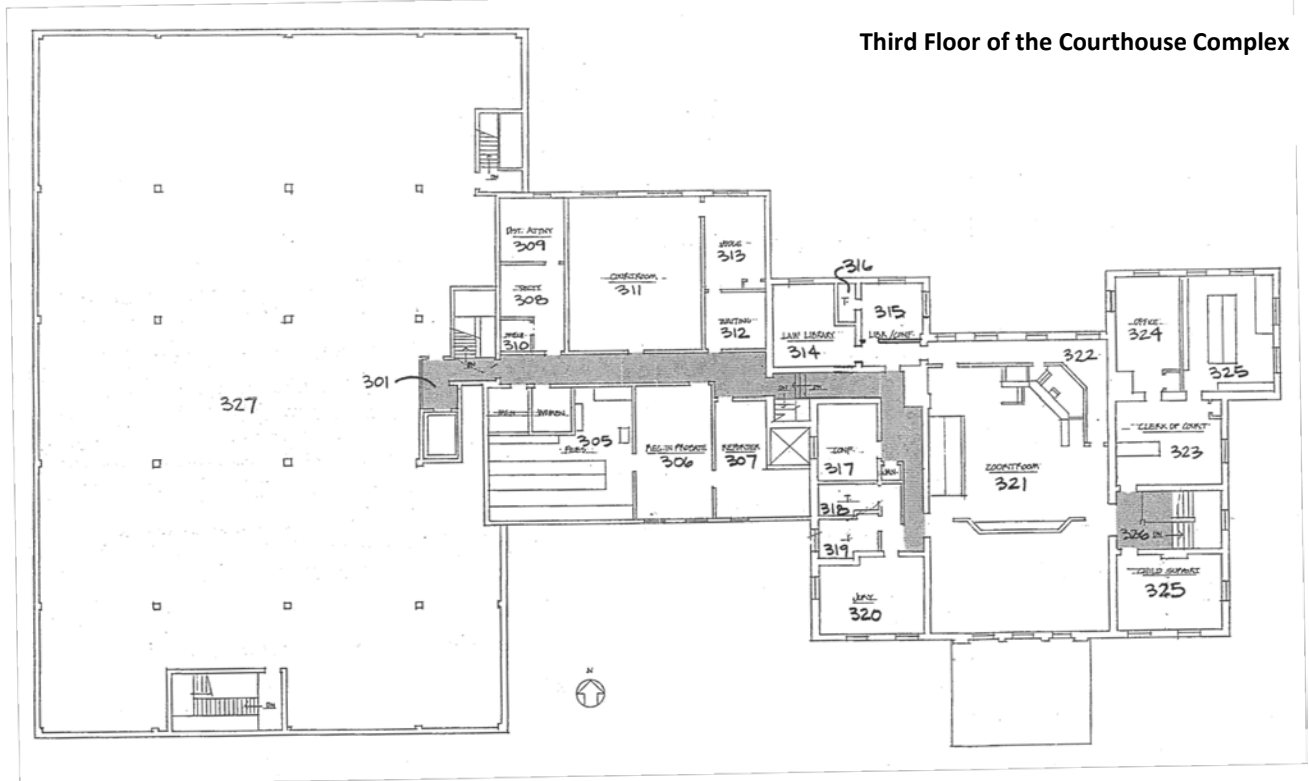
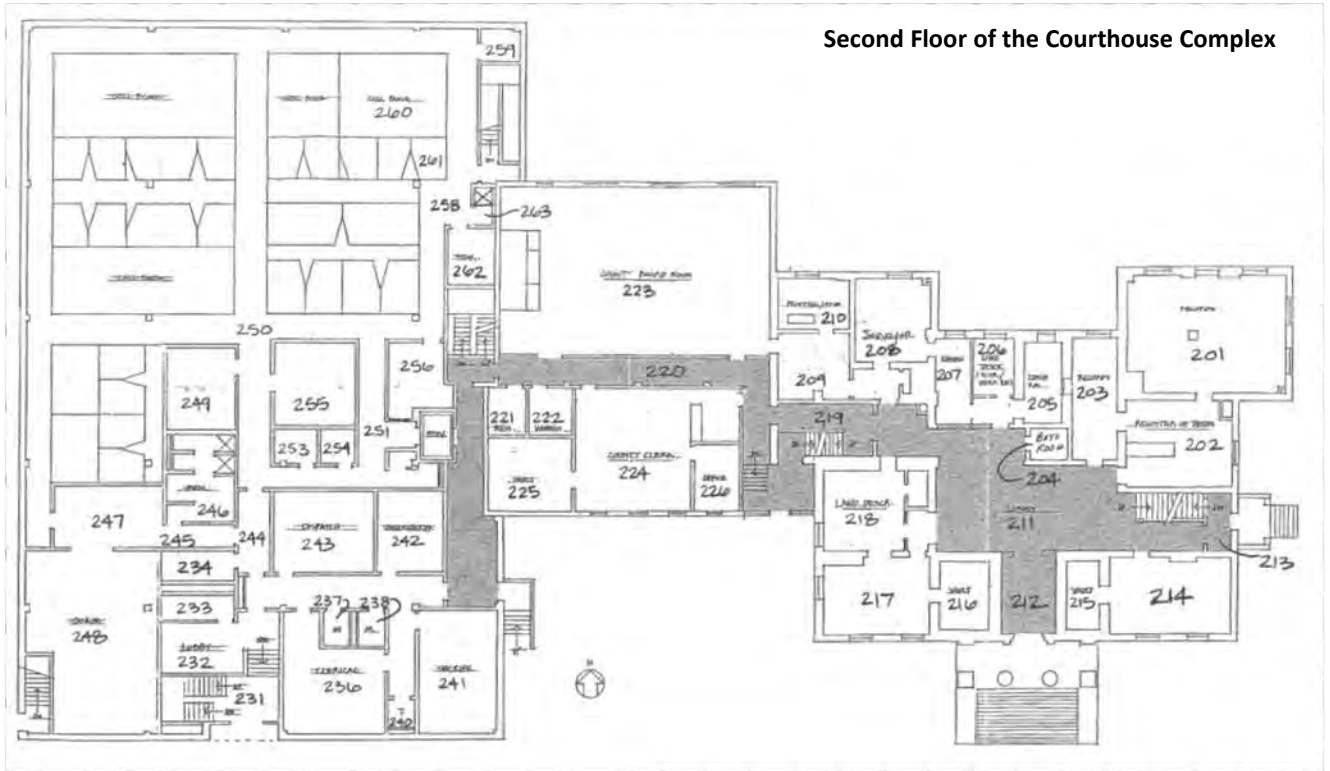
1. Accessibility:
  - a. The facility has only one accessible entry and that is from the rear (north) parking lot area through a tacked on covered ramp structure. The primary downtown/public facades facing Hill Street and Mill Street are not accessible for pedestrians. An accessible public entry at the front of the building will be desirable for most new uses.
  - b. There is an elevator in the Safety Building and interior accessible routes to the rest of the facility.
2. Building Code
  - a. No apparent building code issues were observed.
  - b. The northwest safety building egress stair is very narrow and may not be adequate to serve a new use without improvement.



Covered rear entrance ramp



First Floor of the Courthouse Complex



## **FACILITY OPTIONS**

### **General Options**

1. Adaptive Reuse
  - a. Maintain and renovate the existing buildings (Courthouse, Connecting link, Safety Building).
  - b. Consider all three portions of the building separately. While leaving the Courthouse building, possibly tear down and remove the connecting link and redevelop the Courthouse building and Safety Building separately. Or remove everything but the Courthouse building.
2. Tear down all the buildings and redevelop the site from scratch.
  - a. In order to allow the removal of a building on the Historical Register coordination with the State Historical, County and City historical departments/agents will be needed. There is generally a mandated 3-part process to consider demolition of an historic structure:
    - i. Consider viability of reuse
    - ii. Sell building (may include a mandatory option for relocation)
    - iii. Give building away for relocation
    - iv. If no other options are viable to avoid demolishing the existing building, it can be inventoried and documented and then torn down.
    - v. Other local historical consideration may apply.
  - b. A key for any “from-scratch” development should be to reinforce the character and function of the downtown area.

### **Specific Adaptive Reuse Options**

The adaptive reuse possibilities for the existing facility are varied. Some uses may not be conducive in the confines of the existing building and some may not be feasible due to market conditions. The following listing “brainstorms” a range of ideas, with commentary on their viability in each part of the building. Due to the large scale of the facility, a mix of uses may be necessary and most viable. A private use will be most beneficial to the tax base.

POSSIBLE FACILITY USES					
Possible Use	Portion of the Facility				General Comments
	Safety Building (west)	Annex (connecting link)	Courthouse (east)	Outdoor Areas	
<b>Retail</b> -Shops -Marketplace -Bookstore -Furniture/Home decor	-Poor aesthetics -Open plan after gutting an advantage	-Corridor necessary as connecting link from Courthouse to Safety Building to provide accessibility	-Great presence and curb appeal -Segmented interior w/ major walls will be difficult to work with -Need other two portions of facility for accessibility, or other means of handicap accessibility	-Farmers markets -Outdoor display -Parking Important	-None of the entrances, except from the rear parking lot, are level with the interior floor levels – this is not conducive to storefront retail. -Could be developed as an Emporium with internal circulation shops. -Building may be too large for this one specific use.
<b>Food &amp; Entertainment</b> -Restaurants -Bar -Performances such as music or comedy -Billiard Hall -Arcade -Other Attractions	-Poor aesthetics -Lack of exterior windows -Open plan after gutting an advantage	-Corridor necessary as connecting link from Courthouse to Safety Building to provide accessibility	-Great presence and curb appeal -Segmented interior w/ major walls -Need other two portions of facility for accessibility, or other means of handicap accessibility	-Outdoor dining; could face downtown or Overlook mill pond -Outdoor performances -Parking Important	-Building may be too large for this one specific use.
<b>Services</b> -Health club -Beauty Parlors -Dance studio -Office	-Poor aesthetics -Lack of exterior windows -Open plan after gutting an advantage	-Corridor necessary as connecting link from Courthouse to Safety Building to provide accessibility	-Great presence and curb appeal -Segmented interior w/ major walls will be difficult to work with	-Parking Important	-Building may be too large for this one specific use.
<b>Cultural</b> -Center for Art -Gallery -Museum -Community Center -Theater -Educational	-Poor aesthetics -Lack of exterior windows -Open plan after gutting an advantage	-Corridor necessary as connecting link from Courthouse to Safety Building to provide accessibility	-Great presence and curb appeal -Segmented interior w/ major walls might accommodate small museum/gallery uses	-Outdoor Theater -Outdoor Display -Outdoor gardens -Outdoor terraces -Parking Important	-A Cultural use such as this may more than likely be a non-profit or public entity and therefore not contribute to the local tax base.
<b>Multi-Family Housing</b> -Condominiums -Apartments	-Poor Exterior Aesthetics -Exterior decks not possible to west. -Open plan after gutting an advantage	-Corridor necessary as connecting link from Courthouse to Safety Building to provide accessibility	-Exterior Decks not possible -Does not look like traditional housing. -Segmented interior w/ major walls will make reuse for this purpose possible	-Views to Mill Pond -Dedicated Parking is very important. May require garages.	-Building may be too large for this one specific use. -Weak condo market at this time

### **“Mothballing” Issues and Recommendations**

It can be challenging to maintain an unoccupied building. When the mechanical systems are shut down and observation is limited, damage and degradation can accelerate. The winter months are most detrimental. If the heat is turned off the building will experience temperatures below freezing, which can cause a multitude of differential movement issues and finish failures such as popped floor tile and peeling paint. Lack of ventilation can also cause moisture accumulation and associated problems. A proper “mothballing protocol” is advised. For example, one part of the strategy for cold weather is to maintain a minimum level of heat in order to keep the building’s interior at a temperature above freezing. If this approach is utilized, winterization of the plumbing system would still be advised. The fire sprinkler system will pose another challenge and may require shut-down and winterization. This may only be allowed with special consideration and approval of the local Building Code Official.

In light of the potential for rapid deterioration, swift consideration of the anticipated future use of the facility is strongly encouraged.

### **The Cornerstone Project at Town Square Proposal**

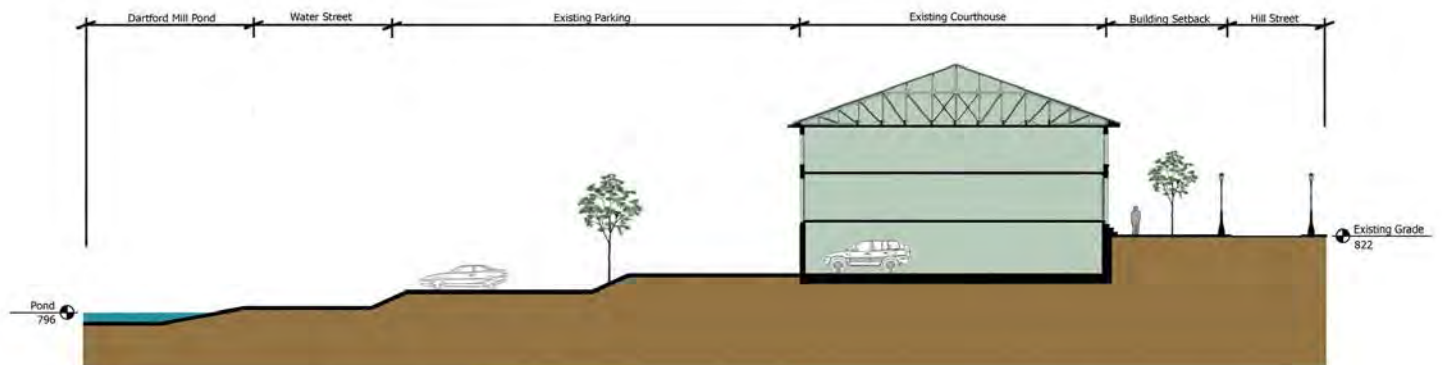
One current proposal would develop the existing buildings and grounds into a multi-purpose facility hosting a mix of uses, potentially including a Wellness Center, a Cultural Center, and a Learning Center, more specifically art studios and gallery, a fitness center, a commercial kitchen, small business development, mentoring services, etc. An offer to purchase the site for these purposes is anticipated in the first or second quarter of 2012.

Comments relevant to this proposal

1. Use of the onsite well for local municipal use remains a possibility, but this should not inhibit the Cornerstone Project as it is proposed.
2. Parking. If the existing onsite lot is maintained, this and the on-street parking will likely be adequate for a mix of uses with varying peak traffic demands. We do not anticipate a parking problem associated with this use.
3. Building Access. A remodeled “Annex” to incorporate a handicap-accessible entrance from Hill Street, as illustrated in the former “Arts and Innovation Center” proposal below, is desirable but not a necessity for the Cornerstone Project to be successful.



SITE ANALYSIS MAPS AND DIAGRAMS



COURTHOUSE SITE CROSS SECTION  
NTS



## Chapter 4 – Developer Feedback

Adaptive reuse of historic structures is not easy. It takes patience, creativity, and experience to work through the unpredictable nature of historic building renovation and the complicated funding arrangements typically necessary. To better understand the prospects for the successful adaptation of Green Lake’s historic courthouse we contacted three Wisconsin development companies that specialize in adaptive reuse: The Alexander Company, Stone House Development, and Gorman and Company.

We shared the market and building analysis findings with each and invited their observations and suggestions. We also discussed their criteria when considering an adaptive reuse project. Their feedback should be taken for what it is – a very small sample from a small field of development professionals who specialize in putting historic buildings to profitable use.

**The Alexander Company**, based in Madison, has undertaken more than 250 projects in the past 25 years, specializing in urban infill, new construction, brownfield revitalization, and historic preservation. Notable adaptive reuse projects include the Fox River Mills in Appleton (residential), Central Station in Memphis, TN (residential, retail, office), and the Federal Courthouse in Kansas City, MO (residential, retail). We met with Matt Meier, Vice President of Real Estate Development.

### Observations:

- Adaptive reuse is challenging in the best of circumstances. These are not the best of circumstances (weak general economy and residential market, small/low-value local market).
- A retail or office *developer* is unlikely to take on the risk and challenge of keeping these buildings full (so to get those uses you would need the business user to own and occupy the buildings).
- It is very difficult to get loans, anywhere, for retail or office development.
- Affordable housing tax credits are often necessary to put these buildings on the tax rolls. Eliminating affordable housing as an option likely eliminates any taxable use for the existing buildings.
- The historic portion of the facility is not very large (19,500 SF, 27% of total), but it is the only portion likely eligible for historic preservation tax credits.
- The cash flow for apartments would be challenging, especially in the historic building – the income won’t support the cost of renovation.

### Alexander Company project criteria:

- Start with the states that have historic preservation tax credits. Wisconsin does, but only 5%, while some have 25% credits available.
- Look for what the market will support in rent – go where rents support more debt.

Example of the funding necessary to complete a \$40 million adaptive reuse of the historic Federal Courthouse in Kansas City, MO:

- 20% federal historic preservation tax credit
- 25% state historic preservation tax credit
- Affordable housing tax credits
- State match of affordable housing tax credits
- 25-year real estate abatement
- HUD-guaranteed bonds
- \$8.5 million stimulus grant
- Strong demand for downtown apartments

Suggestions:

- Be open-minded about use if you want to save the building
- Throw everything you can at the project right away to make it as attractive as possible. Offer the property for free, plus the anticipated cost of demolition, and use TIF to help with renovation costs. Don't offer half measures while also spending money to maintain an empty building, only to end up tearing down the building years later – you will wish you'd spent that money to get a user in.
- The community may ultimately just need a benefactor – a business or individual willing to help pay for adaptation to a new use – to save the historic building.

**Stone House Development, Inc.** is a real estate development and consulting firm based in Madison, specializing in Section 42 affordable housing and Historic Tax Credit multi-family projects in Wisconsin. Since 1996 they have completed many multifamily residential development projects, including adaptive reuse conversions of historic schoolhouses in New Glarus, Jefferson, and Mineral Point, and of historic factories in West Bend and Beaver Dam. We met with Rich Arneson, Vice President and development project manager.

Observations:

- This does not look like a building or market that would support rental office space
- A restaurant or a museum might be viable in the space, assuming the building is provided for free

Stone House Development project criteria:

- It would have to be a residential project – it's what they do and there is more funding assistance available for housing
- It has to be a suitable, adaptable building. Schools generally work well as residential, courthouses generally do not.

- It has to be eligible for historic tax credits, but this also limits what you can do with the building, so it can't require dramatic changes to make it work.
- It has to be big enough to make it worth their effort. They did a schoolhouse conversion in Mineral Point to create 11 units, and they would not take on a project of that small size again. The courthouse by itself looks like it might support 12 units, based on the square footage, or maybe only 8 or 9 units due to space configuration.

Suggestions:

- Figure out the cost of demolition, then offer the buildings for free plus the cost of demolition, plus additional TIF assistance if the use is taxable, plus historic preservation tax credits, plus affordable housing tax credits. Put all that together and you may get something to work.
- Tear down the annex and the safety building, and turn the courthouse into a museum.

**Gorman & Company**, based in Stoughton, WI, is a recognized leader in urban infill housing. They've built a solid reputation as a trusted partner for local governments and community leaders seeking to revitalize city centers and urban neighborhoods. Gorman principals declined several requests for a meeting.

## Case Studies

The developer conversations led to discussion of case study examples. As a point of reference, consider the following county courthouses no longer in use by county government, but preserved and in use.

### *Washington County Historic Courthouse*

Location: West Bend, WI  
Community Population: 30,162  
Use: Washington County Historical Society

### *Iron County Historic Courthouse*

Location: Hurley, WI  
Community Population: 1,500  
Use: Iron County Historical Society

### *McHenry County Historic Courthouse*

Location: Woodstock, IL  
Community Population: 24,770  
Current Use: two buildings house two restaurants, one in each building, and art gallery (in the courthouse), a pottery shop (in the jail building) and the Chester Gould-Dick Tracy Museum.

### *Washington County Historic Courthouse*

Location: Stillwater, MN  
Community Population: 18,225  
Use: Historic displays, public and private special events (e.g. Victorian Christmas, weddings)

## Chapter 5 – Redevelopment Scenarios

### Redevelopment/Reuse Options & Decision Tree

The County may be able to find a user for some or all of this facility, and has several options to pursue reuse. It may also become necessary or preferable at some point to tear down buildings, either to enable redevelopment or simply to eliminate unused buildings. The intent of the redevelopment scenarios and decision tree on the following pages is to help identify preferred outcomes and acceptable contingency plans, and to establish a timeline to guide decisions about when to implement contingency plans.

The suggested alternatives are based on the following assumptions about what the City and County want and don't want:

- Taxable use is preferred to tax-exempt use, but not a requirement. (Note that a non-profit is not necessarily tax-exempt)
- Historic Courthouse - demolition is not an acceptable alternative and any use will be considered except affordable housing
- Safety Building - demolition is acceptable, but any sustainable use of the existing building is preferred to simply clearing the site, except affordable housing
- Annex - demolition is acceptable, and the decision to maintain or remove this part of the facility is tied to the needs of Courthouse and Safety Building user(s)
- The City is open to vacating parts of Water Street and Gold Street for use as part of a redevelopment site, as long as proper access to other uses is maintained, and the City park space along the lake is maintained. (Note that none of the alternatives shows such use, but it could be incorporated into any, especially D2)

### Current Site

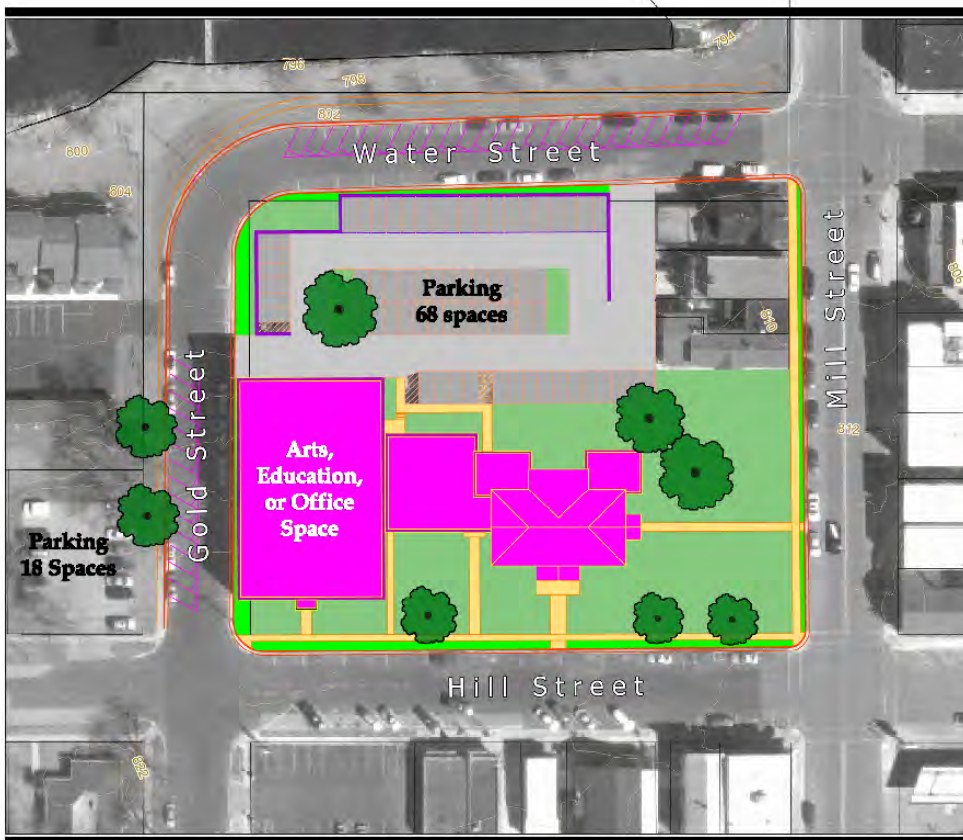


### Option A/B – Find a user for the entire site

Ideally, the County will find a user for the entire site, in its current form. This could be either a for-profit or not-for profit entity, and it may be either a single user or a group of users, with one organization taking primary ownership of and responsibility for the site. The size of the facility likely exceeds the needs of any one user that may be interested in the site.

The proposed Cornerstone Project at Town Square is one such use/user, and this is identified as Option A. Should that proposal not be realized, the County and City should issue a combined request for proposals (Option B) that clearly identifies not only the characteristics of the building, site, and city, but also the various incentives that the City and County are offering. Any restrictions on use should also be clear.

Note in the illustration below the proposed reconfiguration of the parking area. If all of the available building space were to find active use (which the County never did – the third floor of the Safety Building remained empty), the onsite parking will *not* be adequate. Reconfiguration, use of retaining walls, and elimination of the sidewalk on that side of the street adds more stalls and gets closer to meeting typical parking standards. This would eliminate the on-site well.



**OPTION A/B**

### Option C – Remove the Annex and Subdivide

If finding a user for the entire site proves infeasible, we recommend separating the Historic Courthouse from the Safety Building by removing the Annex and the subdividing the property. This would allow the courthouse to be used for any use, including a possible restaurant, but we suggest relocating the Dartford Historic Society to this site (allowing the sale of their current building, at the corner of Mill St. and South St., for taxable retail/service use).

Note that the Historic Courthouse will no longer have access to an elevator or other means of handicapped access, and such an addition would eventually be needed.

The Safety Building could be used either for residential use (Option C1) or office use (Option C2, next page). Residential use requires less parking, and much of it could be accommodated in the lowest level of the building with only modest structural changes, assuming a total of 15 units on the upper floors. The lack of a setback from Gold Street would put any new balconies over the street, so we recommend the narrowing of the street to add a strip of green space between the street and the building.



**OPTION C1**

Option C2 assumes about 40,000 SF of office space. This alternative is understood to be more desirable among residents but less feasible due to the relative greater difficulty of financing office space and the lack of demand for office space in Green Lake. The greater parking demand of office space requires that most of the north end of the lot would stay with the Safety Building when subdivided.



**OPTION C2**

### Option D – Remove the Safety Building also and Subdivide

If there is interest in reusing the Safety Building in some way, but no buyer or user is initially found, we recommend giving the economy some time to recover, possibly until 2016, before making the decision to demolish this building. As a younger building in good condition, this building is more likely than the Historic Courthouse to survive freezing with limited damage, should the County choose to stop heating it while it is empty. This would reduce the holding cost for the site.

If and when the County decides to demolish the Safety Building, leaving only the Historic Courthouse on the site, the site could be subdivided in two different ways to accommodate infill development. Option D1 shows the west end of the parcel subdivided for sale and development, and Option D2 (next page) shows the north half of the parcel subdivided. We recommend Option D2, as the north end should have more value due to its proximity to the water, and this configuration maintains more open space around the Historic Courthouse.



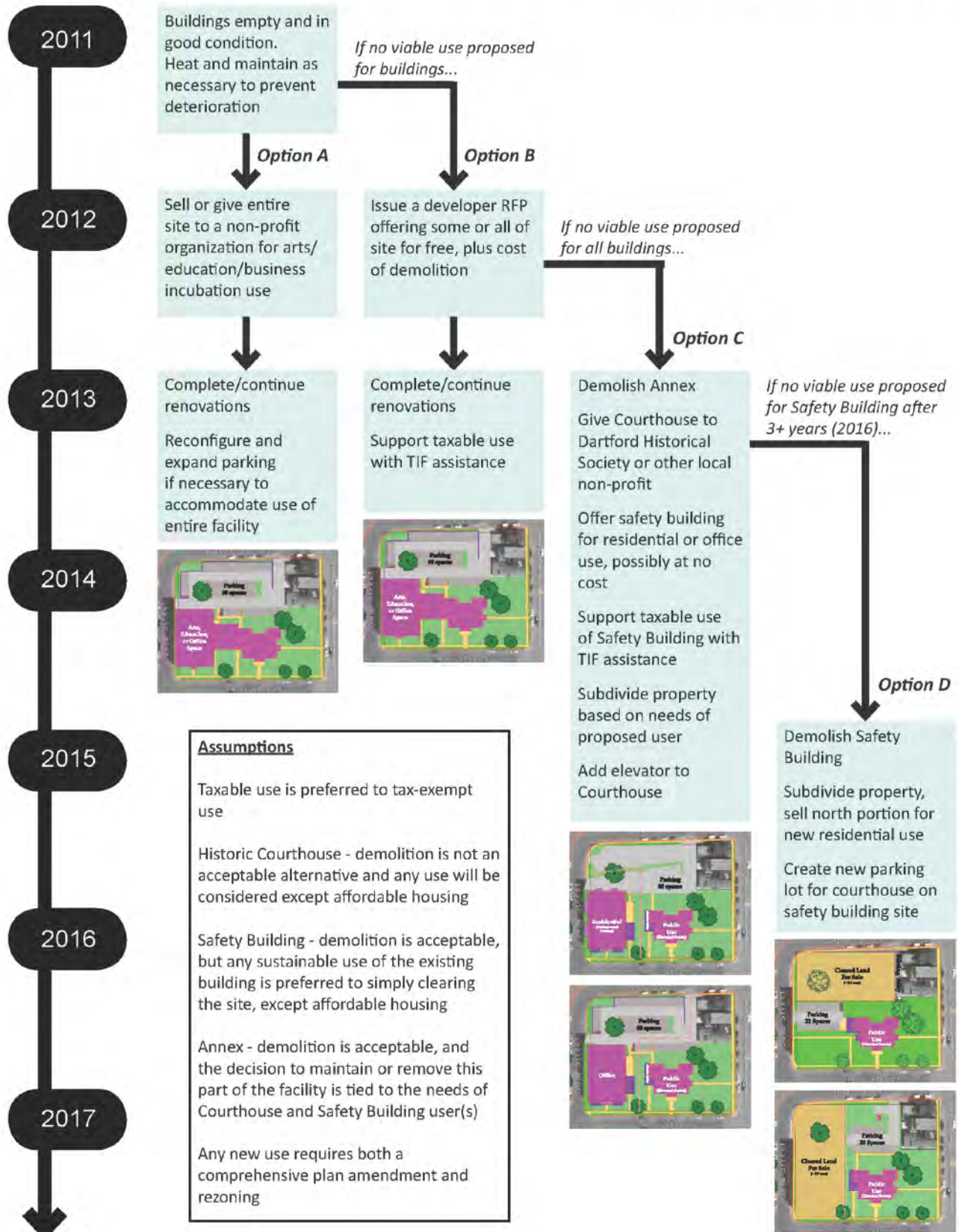
**OPTION D1**



**OPTION D2**

# Green Lake County Courthouse Redevelopment Decision Tree

October 3, 2011 DRAFT



## Projected Property Values

The table below offers taxable value estimates for the various site options.

Site Options	BUILDING	USE	LAND VALUE			IMPROVEMENT VALUE			TOTAL VALUE	
		Type	SqFt	\$/SF	Assessed Value	SqFt (res units)	Market Value (low)*	Market Value (high)**	Low	High
B	Entire Facility	Commercial	78,710	\$10	\$787,100	71,400	\$4,284,000	\$5,712,000	\$5,071,100	\$6,499,100
C1	Safety Building	Residential	23,560	\$5	\$117,800	15 U	\$375,000	\$600,000	\$492,800	\$717,800
	Historic Courthouse	Public	55,150	\$0	\$0	20,100	\$0	\$0		
C2	Safety Building	Commercial	41,000	\$10	\$410,000	40,500	\$2,430,000	\$3,240,000	\$2,840,000	\$3,650,000
	Historic Courthouse	Public	37,710	\$0	\$0	20,100	\$0	\$0		
D1	New Parcel	Commercial	30,500	\$10	\$305,000	0	\$0	\$0	\$305,000	\$305,000
	Historic Courthouse	Public	48,210	\$0	\$0	20,100	\$0	\$0		
D2	New Parcel	Commercial	26,125	\$10	\$261,250	0	\$0	\$0	\$261,250	\$261,250
	Historic Courthouse	Public	52,585	\$0	\$0	20,100	\$0	\$0		

\* Low Market Value (com / res): \$60 per sqft / \$25,000 per unit

\*\* High Market Value (com / res): \$80 per sqft / \$40,000 per unit

## Chapter 6 – Funding Strategies and Options

The City and County wish to see productive use of this land, preferably taxable use. The sluggish general economy, limited local development pressure, and renovation/demolition costs are hurdles to successful redevelopment/reuse that will need to be met with financial assistance tools. Redevelopment of the site will likely require several of the following funding tools.

### **Give it away, and give some more**

One of the easiest and most effective options to encourage more investment and activity on this site is to offer the land and building at no cost. The County or City should also consider offering an amount equal to the anticipated cost of demolition for any building portions that may ultimately need to be torn down if no user is identified. Before incurring that expense, it may be worth offering the money for renovation instead. This approach should be coupled with a developer's agreement, to ensure some control over how the site develops and how the money is used, and to clarify how the site is reclaimed by the County or City in case of any future project failure.

### **Tax Incremental District #4**

This District was created in 2009 specifically to facilitate redevelopment of this county site. Development incentives, site preparation, real estate transaction costs and infrastructure improvements are all specified project costs, eligible for TIF funding. The project plan assumes \$8.5 million in new taxable value (increment), including \$500,000 when the property hits the tax rolls, and \$8 million when new development is added. The market analyses for the current planning process have revealed these projections to be optimistic and unlikely, for now. The City has until 2031 to do projects with funding from TID 4, though the capacity for funding will gradually decline as the payback period shrinks (the deadline to close TID 4 is 2036).

The City should use TIF funding to move development projects forward, though only if there is an expectation that new *taxable* value will result, either directly or indirectly. If the success of a proposed, taxable project is uncertain, the City can use the TID conservatively by offering development incentives in the form of guaranteed payments back to the developer based on the new tax revenue generated, as that revenue is collected. This approach reduces risk to the City compared to the more common up-front payments because the developer takes on the debt to be financed by TIF revenue, rather than the City. The disadvantage is that developers typically have higher borrowing costs than the City's bonding costs, so the City and developer get "less bang for the buck".

### **Historic Preservation Tax Credits**

Should a for-profit entity express interest in using the historic courthouse building, either with or without the Annex or Safety Building, renovations should be pursued with funding assistance from

historic preservation tax credits. The Wisconsin Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation and Public History administers two programs in conjunction with the National Park Service (NPS)<sup>3</sup>.

- *Federal Historic Preservation Credit:* Returns 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating historic buildings to owners as a direct reduction in their federal income taxes.
- *Wisconsin Supplemental Historic Preservation Credit* Returns an additional 5 percent of the cost of rehabilitation to owners as a discount on their Wisconsin state income taxes. Owners that qualify for the Federal Historic Preservation Credit automatically qualify for the Wisconsin supplement if they get NPS approval before they begin any work.

To qualify for the Federal Historic Preservation Credit, a property owner must:

- *Own a historic building.* A building is considered "historic" if it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or if the NPS determines that it contributes to the character of a National Register historic district. A building can also receive a preliminary determination of eligibility for the Register from the NPS through the tax credit application process. The owner must later formally list the property on the National Register.
- *Use the building for income-producing purposes.* Income-producing buildings are those used in a trade or business or for the production of rental income.
- *Formally apply to the Wisconsin Historical Society.* Application materials can be obtained through the Society or through the NPS Web site. Completed applications are submitted to the Society.
- *Rehabilitate the building following program standards.* Program standards are the Secretary of Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation." The NPS, in conjunction with the Society, determines if a project meets the standards.
- *Spend a minimum amount on the rehabilitation.*  
An owner must spend at least an amount equal to the building's depreciated value or \$5,000, whichever is greater. This amount of money must be spent in a two year period. Phased projects are allowed a five-year period.
- *Claim the credit for only eligible expenses.* The cost of all work on the historic buildings, inside and out, is eligible for the credit. The cost of site work, such as landscaping or paving, and the cost of work on non-historic additions are not eligible expenses.
- *Maintain ownership of the building and maintain the building's historic character for five years.* The tax credit must be repaid to the IRS and to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) if the building is sold or altered in a way that diminishes its historic character. Repayment is pro-rated over the five year period after the building is placed in service.

## Section 42 Low Income Housing Tax Credits

Created by the federal government and administered by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), this program enables owners/investors to reduce their federal tax income liability by investing in qualified projects for tenants whose incomes are below 60% of the County Median Income (currently \$63,400). At least 40% of the units need to be offered to tenants who meet income requirements. Most adaptive reuse projects incorporate affordable housing because this program makes the project feasible.

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<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/architecture/iptax\\_credit.asp](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/architecture/iptax_credit.asp) for more information

### **Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) Community Facility Grants**

Eligible projects include capital expenditures for physical facilities necessary to add or prevent the loss of basic services or (critical) public amenities that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons and are perceived to enhance a community's quality of life. These can include acquisition, new construction, expansion, rehabilitation, renovation, and conversion costs. Examples include libraries, community and senior centers, fire stations, health clinics, sheltered workshops, and day care facilities. Costs to remove architectural barriers in structures, including structures used for general government function which limit access or mobility for elderly or handicapped persons are eligible.

This program might be used to improve handicapped access to the buildings, if some sort of community center function were proposed.

### **USDA Rural Development Business Loans**

USDA offer guaranteed loans to for-profit or non-profit corporations engaged in or proposing to engage in a business that will:

- Provide employment;
- Improve the economic or environmental climate;
- Promote the conservation, development, and use of water for aquaculture; or
- Reduce reliance on nonrenewable energy resources by encouraging the development and construction of solar energy systems and other renewable energy systems.

## Chapter 7 – Public Feedback to Draft Study

On January 18, 2012 the preliminary results of the study were shared at a public meeting at Green Lake School. MSA project manager Jason Valerius presented a summary of the study. Attendees were invited to ask questions and offer comments throughout the presentation, and were also asked to complete a worksheet with questions about the draft study and preferences for the site. The presentation and worksheet were also posted online ([GreenLakeCourthouse.wordpress.com](http://GreenLakeCourthouse.wordpress.com)), and additional comments and worksheets requested by January 31. The City and County posted links to these materials on their websites, and this opportunity was noted in local newspaper articles.

The meeting also included a separate presentation by Fran Hill of The Cornerstone Project, providing an update on that group's effort to assemble a viable collection of uses for the existing buildings. A flyer about the project was distributed, and also posted to the website with the other materials.

The meeting was attended by about 50 people. A total of 15 people submitted worksheets and comments. A brief summary of the feedback received is offered here, and a full summary of submitted comments is provided in Appendix B.

### Summary of Comments

In general, comments indicate support for/acceptance of the site and building evaluation, the market analysis conclusions, and the developer feedback.

There was greatest interest in and discussion of the reuse options. There is general support for The Cornerstone Project initiative, and fewer questions and concerns about viability than had been expressed about the former iteration of that project, known as the Center for Arts and Innovation.

Minority viewpoints expressed in the meeting and written comments included:

- 1) support for affordable housing on the site (due to the relatively high cost of homes in Green Lake)
- 2) support for a casino

Project funding was a concern, and grant opportunities were discussed. There was general support for the ideas that the County should give the buildings away if an attractive proposal is presented, and also offer an amount equal to the cost of demolition to be used toward productive adaptation and use of the site.

Attendees were asked to rate the importance (on a scale of 1 to 5) of various issues related to site reuse/redevelopment. Based on the responses of 11 residents, tourism amenities are the top priority (average score 4.4) followed by historic preservation and job creation (both 3.5), and finally cost savings (3.0).

## Chapter 8 – Final Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee

The following questions were discussed at the February 13, 2012 meeting of the *City and County Ad Hoc Committee Regarding the Downtown Courthouse*. The answers were prepared by the consultant on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee, based on discussion at that meeting. The Committee will select final recommendations following discussions with the County Board and City Council.

**Question:** *Should the future use of the site be restricted in any way? Do you wish to specifically rule out anything, such as housing?*

**Answer:** *The Ad Hoc Committee recommends no specific restriction on use of this site, but notes that there is very little demand for residential uses and this use should not be pursued.*

**Question:** *What incentives should be offered to facilitate near-term reuse of this site? What should be expected in exchange for those incentives?*

**Answers:** *Based on the redevelopment study results, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends that the County should offer the property for free. If offering this or any other incentive, the County should ensure that either the County or City have right of first refusal in case of any future sale.*

*The County should also seek a new estimate for demolition (for three scenarios; annex only, annex and safety building, or all buildings), and should consider offering some or all of that cost as a development incentive. This incentive should include a clawback provision that ensures future demolition funding in case of project failure.*

*The City of Green Lake should offer the possibility of vacating existing street ROW around the site to expand and enhance the site (Gold Street and Water Street, only beyond the point of existing private driveways). This action should be contingent on the project offering economic development gains for the City, and it assumes that the City will retain the adjacent lake frontage, currently a City park.*

**Question:** *Should the County issue another Request for Redevelopment/Reuse Proposals incorporating any approved incentives?*

**Answer:** *There are two possible proposals in the works right now. If there are no active negotiations for the property as of April 30, 2012, the County should proceed with a Request for Proposals with the objective of property sale and transfer prior to the next winter season.*

**Question:** *What is your stance on the preservation of the historic courthouse structure?*

**Answer:** *The Ad Hoc Committee recommends preservation of the historic portions of the courthouse, but recommends that any new use should be sustainable without City or County subsidy.*

## Appendix A – Interviews Summary

In June and July 2011 the MSA team sought interviews with 19 individuals identified by the Ad-Hoc Committee.

Interviews were completed with:

- Mary Avery (Professor, Ripon College)
- Larry Behlen (past mayor, historical society president)
- Dan Bierman (realtor)
- Roger Field (retired business owner & Green Lake County EDC board member)
- Dave Gary (seasonal home owner)
- Fran Hill (Arts and Innovation Center Committee)
- Ernie Hunter (local developer)
- Roby Irwin (Thrasher Opera House)
- Scott Krause (Heidel House)
- Chuck Mirr (mayor, downtown business owner)
- Mary Rowley (Goose Blind)
- Scott Sommers (National Exchange Bank & Trust)
- Dr Thomas Willett (family practitioner)

The following people were contacted but declined interviews:

- Lee Katherine Baird (Endurance business manager)
- Jen Beier (First National Bank)
- Sue Ellen Bloch (Bloch's Farm)
- Mary Jane Bumby (resident)
- Lynn Grout (realtor)
- Sean Madden (second home owner)

Through these interviews we sought responses to the following questions:

- In what ways is Green Lake a good place to operate a business? In what ways is it a challenging place to operate a business?
- How has the local economy and/or your business changed over the past five years? How do you think the local economy and/or your business will change over the next five years?
- How is the residential real estate market performing right now? What's selling or not selling? Primary homes? Second homes? Condominiums? At what price points?
- How is the residential rental market performing right now? What is the vacancy rate? Are there known gaps in the supply of rental housing (by type or price point?)
- How is the commercial real estate market performing? How much space is available right now? What is the typical downtown rate for retail space?
- What population(s) does Green Lake's retail and service sectors serve? To what extent are these businesses dependent on people who live more than 15 miles from downtown Green Lake? How seasonal is your business?

- What role do owners of second homes in the area play in the local economy? How would you characterize or generalize the second-home owners in terms of primary home location, frequency and duration of visits to Green Lake, and local purchasing habits?
- In your opinion, what viable retail or service businesses are missing in Green Lake?
- How is Green Lake unique? How can unique local characteristics be further leveraged for economy opportunity?
- What would people like to see happen with this site? What would people not want to see happen with the site?
- Would there be opposition to closing and developing portions of Water Street or Gold Street adjacent to the site?

In the interest of candor, all interviewees were promised confidentiality. The following compilation includes no source attribution, and the responses to each question are not presented in a consistent order.

**1. In what ways is Green Lake a good place to operate a business? In what ways is it a challenging place to operate a business?**

- *Hospital in Berlin is attracting business to Berlin. Ripon other shopping choice. Had pharmacy and gift shop, people think Hwy 23, Ripon is the place to go to shop.*
- *Beauty of Green Lake, quiet, great local community. People are good, genuine small city, the marina does well in the summer, Green Lake has Theater/music in the park, lifestyle. Small consumer traffic volume, can't run business for 3 months out of the year, traditional business is a no-go, hard to compete with the computer. Future is not in traditional retail; need special reason for destination, to get known for something. Arts are unique. Two-fold tourism with hook (no WI Dells) and industry; call center, consulting firm, software, draw skilled labor. The County has done little to attract industry people (tax payer). Components needed = Socialize, productivity, self-sustain. Arts Innovation Center is a good idea team with UW extension, needs to be self-sustaining, bring people here. There is no traditional retail. Innovation Center will bring people, business trade and benefit to county-wide. Need to change way of thinking, give generous incentives in exchange for... Create sense of place/destination. What businesses = Draws customers; Book package tourism with amenities (offer wife-day fishing; tour of lake with history (marina)). Destination, known for something (i.e. Arts, technology/software, phone center).*
- *Availability, small business park, decent source of labor, lake resources, higher income seasonal tourist. Geographically room to expand access to medical, Ripon College, natural resources vacation destination. Transportation, access to highways/rail/air, seasonal residents (Chicago).*
- *Green Lake is a quaint community, with natural beauty, is a cool place to be at, people know everyone, including out-of-towners. It is a small town, hard to maintain business longevity, people go to Ripon or elsewhere, but small schools, everyone can participate, complacency to become active.*
- *Princeton has a better retail environment – more retailers and a very supportive culture among retailers there. But Princeton doesn't have many places to eat. Customer base for retail is from all over – daytrippers from Madison, Barabo, Hwy 39 corridor, Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, rest of Fox Valley.*
- *Green Lake and Ripon don't cooperate or collaborate or compete, but they should work together more. There needs to be 2 days of things to do to draw people here for a weekend, Ripon can be part of making this possible. Ripon has jobs to support a larger community, but can't attract executives to live in area instead of in Fox Valley. Would an art center make the area "cooler"? Need to promote more off-season tourism, maybe in collaboration with Ripon College.*

- *OK for summer, seasonal business. Not enough market demographics to support year round business. People do their shopping in Ripon. Need basic manufacturing to provide year round employment-new industry job opportunities will provide base employment income necessary to support Green Lake retail.*
- *Such a hodgepodge of uses right now, but not enough shopping.*
- *Great small community, lake resources/natural resources, proximity to regional shopping, small town atmosphere, dependable tourism. Challenging because of small population, neighboring competition, dependent on second home trade.*
- *Good that it is the geographic center relative to Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay, and also Chicago and Minneapolis. The lake and the resorts and B&Bs support downtown business. Downtown character is neither positive nor negative. Local residents don't appreciate or utilize some of the downtown amenities.*
- *Objectives: 1. Get back on tax roll, 2. Housing must be affordable (\$60,000 per year). Summer population is 6,300 and winter population is 2,800. Green Lake business vacancy rate is 29.4%, 15/51 are vacant businesses. The conclusion is that traditional retail does not work. Condo proposal at \$1800 a month, 8 - 16 units marketable at \$222,000 a unit. Demolition of additions to historic courthouse cost = \$401,000. Historical buildings should not be demolished. Teardown 1941 additions; restore historical significance, TIF needs to contribute approximately \$500,000. Other uses: local historical society, chamber of commerce, community center, tear off annex. Property tax is \$90,000 per year. Office space is not realistic to compete with existing commercial space.*
- *Not enough local residents shopping downtown, especially due to recession. Tendency for slightly inflated retail prices contributes to this. The Downtown Green Lake Renewal Project is working to get everyone working in same direction – cohesive business mix, new sidewalks, buildings painted, wharf project*
- *Good that it is the geographic center relative to Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay, and also Chicago and Minneapolis. The lake and the resorts and B&Bs support downtown business. Downtown character is neither positive nor negative. Local residents don't appreciate or utilize some of the downtown amenities.*

**2. How has the local economy and/or your business changed over the past five years? How do you think the local economy and/or your business will change over the next five years?**

- *General business decline across the board, all businesses have suffered. Not too much change, natural environment economy - stabilizes living in Green Lake, people aren't spending money, market is worse than in 40 years (i.e. prices drop).*
- *The courthouse leaving has hurt business, and weather affects business (this year's cool spring was bad for business, people didn't come to town)*
- *Really need to focus on collaboration among Princeton, Green Lake, Ripon to be successful in economic development – not enough to do in any one community. Need an optimistic attitude to be successful*
- *Recession of 2008, affected properties available for sale, small business owners are stressed, negative effect on labor pool. Slowly crawl out of economic doldrums, not had severe effects (Green Lake insulated from general economy), have seen down property values/foreclosures, slow demand for housing, employer's market, agriculture markets are good in 2010, and agriculture supports the local economy.*
- *Opera House audiences have been shrinking since last fall.*
- *The economy in general has gone down. Personal tree business is good. Paint business is up and down, less remodel. Optimist, economy will get better. Green Lake is Teflon coated, insulated from general economy. Illinois people will replace Illinois people, good to serve (IL owners will sell to IL owners). Without the lake, we have nothing.*
- *A branch bank has grown from nothing 10 years ago, Green Lake growing area, stable area, lots of tourism, tourists bring most of their own goods, regular promotions have helped tourist trade,*

*Visitor trade too, Green Lake not slumped heavily due to down economy, home values creeping. Steadily improving economy (steady but slow), good case for continued ED growth, need to work hard for business, conservative area.*

- *The collapse of the real estate market really hurt the local economy. Revenue has actually been quite strong past few years, but donations very low. Arts funding really hurting, especially grant programs due to budget cuts.*
- *Traditional retail is lost - not enough market customers/too much competition with Ripon/Berlin.*
- *Economic downtown has affected most businesses in Green Lake. Housing market is flat. Second homeowners still attracted by the Lake. Second homeowners actually spend less time in Green Lake today in comparison to past decades-trend not related to economic downturn as much as changing lifestyles.*
- *No change - summer population is 1,100 people/winter is 500. Green Lake residents have relative low incomes. Visitors come from Rockford, Chicago, Milwaukee*

**3. How is the residential real estate market performing right now? What's selling or not selling? Primary homes? Second homes? Condominiums? At what price points?**

- *Residential is flat, foreclosure & underselling, in Green Lake over \$100,000 is selling, Markesan under \$100,000.*
- *Generally very poor real estate market performance now. What sells is less than \$150,000 or high-end residential (fire sales). Some distressed property sales.*
- *Residential markets are flat. No need for condos or probably apartments?*
- *Not good, many for sale, realtors flat and pricing has gone down. Big homes on the lake great to sell (high), houses in town are very high, hard to get families here. IL people in Town buying houses in-town (cheaper houses for less wealthy), no schools, can't trend, in-town houses upwards of \$100,000.*
- *Off-lake is what's selling. Many are selling as second homes – this hurts the schools. We need more full-time residents.*
- *Mixed performance, low value homes continue to sell (\$65 - \$100,000), homes from \$100 - \$200,000 not selling, wealthy can build their own, residential property available. Buyers sensitive to pricing, primary are selling, secondary are slow (school, no state aid), Condos are overbuilt and don't see much selling.*
- *Houses on market longer, but are selling. Still a glut of condos.*
- *Lousy, especially for second home market*
- *Second homes are hit hard; real estate is crashing; lake is an asset.*
- *Market varies by location. For condos, on-water or off-water matters – off-water hard to sell.*
- *There are too many condos on the market right now. Housing is too expensive here for some families, especially compared to surrounding communities. Elsewhere you can find homes for \$70-100K, but not here. There has been significant residential inflation*
- *Opinion – need more middle-of-the-road housing between high-end and low end.*
- *Very slow and sluggish; difficult market to be in. Medium range single family home selling for \$100,000 - \$200,000. More primary than secondary homes are selling; lower than \$100,000 is a principal seller.*

**4. How is the residential rental market performing right now? What is the vacancy rate? Are there known gaps in the supply of rental housing (by type or price point?)**

- *Vacancy rate is higher than normal, especially recreational properties. 4 - 4.5 years of supply. Not over-built, but more supply than demand. Rental is \$250 - \$350/apartment, houses \$400 - \$800 a month, selling to second and first time land owner.*
- *Full time, not much, probably demand, how vacancy rate for houses \$700+, apartments for about \$500.*
- *Rental market at \$500 a month. Low-mid-priced condos may sell (\$220,000 a unit).*

- *A lot of rental turnover, not much vacancy. Real estate prices here are higher than in neighboring towns, which drives people to those communities. Supportive of affordable housing ideas, options in line with market in surrounding communities.*
- *Rentals, County weak, City is strong, note many vacant homes. Pricing \$600 - \$650 (single family), \$300 - \$500 Apartments.*
- *Rental demand is strong, vacancy rate - what is around rents out around 75% occupied.*
- *No rental ID*
- *Restaurant staff occasionally say they can't find a place to rent in Green Lake, but there seems to be vacancies, ads for 1 month free rent. Respondent doesn't feel the rental housing market is that expensive. There are not many houses available for rent.*

**5. How is the commercial real estate market performing? How much space is available right now? What is the typical downtown rate for retail space?**

- *Commercial market, added 3 last several years, dependent on family operators, Subway, Sugar Lips Coffee, Endeavor Flowers, Gardens & Boutique; servers are seasonal, but also locals (not just T-shirts). Yes, space available, say less than 2,000 square feet. Rate is cheap to reasonable. Last grocery and pharmacy was 10 years ago.*
- *Commercial market not taking advantage of the lake. Space/property no issue, could find real estate property.*
- *Commercial location either strong or weak; Downtown Berlin with parking is strong, parking is crucial. Lots of space is available now, including around the courthouse. Owners think the property isn't worth much money without the courthouse, more business potential. Rate for retail space in County is \$700 - \$1,000 a month, \$12,000 is reasonably priced rates.*
- *Downtown has vacancies (others have said about 30%). Price for current, for sale property is high.*
- *New stores opened by Sue Ellen Bloch (Sugar Lips, Endurance) This has been good.*
- *Only very basic retail survives given seasonal population. 30% business vacancy. Commercial lease rate = \$400 - \$800 a month.*
- *Downtown district has its peaks and valleys, not really in either right now. Level of investment in buildings right now is strong*
- *Would like to fill the Mill St. Junction building. The Water Street warehouses could be retail space. The sub shop on Main is only open 3 months per year. Concerned that the post office may be closed. Need civic uses to bring residents downtown.*
- *Commercial market is dead; for sale too high-priced, vacant commercial space is limited to downtown south of courthouse. Lease rates equal \$500 - \$800 a month.*
- *Commercial minimum space available, maybe retail, \$500 - \$600 a month and lower.*

**6. What population(s) does Green Lake's retail and service sectors serve? To what extent are these businesses dependent on people who live more than 15 miles from downtown Green Lake? How seasonal is your business?**

- *Good location for state association meetings – close to center of state population. Feeder markets are Madison (1), Milwaukee (2), Chicago area (3). Peak seasons are May-June, Sept-Oct for meetings, May-Sept for weddings. Off season starts in Nov.*
- *Serves the seasonal recreational population, café, knick-knacks marina, not serving beyond 15 miles.*
- *Serves all population, but population is leaving because of no jobs. Local/tourist.*
- *Believes market area is 35-37,000 people summertime, 17-18,000 in winter*
- *Think regionally with Ripon*
- *Locals shop in Ripon or elsewhere. Green Lake business does not serve population out of town. Basic medical care is stable business.*

- *Retail/service sectors serve only local, seasonal population. Locals and regionals travel to Ripon & Berlin for goods and services.*
- *True tourism peak is July 4 to August 15 – after early-summer summer camps and before the “back-to-school” period begins. Shoulder months – April, May, September, Oct. are more small groups, couples, golfers, etc.*
- *Population served is a mix, not totally dependent on second owners. Market area is less than 15 miles.*
- *Population is 80% 55+ years old (pharmacy). Economy disadvantage. Young families go where jobs/retail are. Green Lake serves 4-5 mile radius, no shopping variety in Green Lake, Green Lake not large market (not like Berlin). Seasonal business is predominate; shoreline boats only manufacturer.*
- *Retail/Service sectors serve not many, middle aged to elderly, tourism. 15+ miles limited to tourism seasonal, contractors. Business is year-round offering basic goods and services.*

**7. What role do owners of second homes in the area play in the local economy? How would you characterize or generalize the second-home owners in terms of primary home location, frequency and duration of visits to Green Lake, and local purchasing habits?**

- *Big-time role. Dependent on weather, they don't come if the weather is bad. Need snow for snowmobiling. “Downtown Renewal” - buy local promo organization, construct wharf in town.*
- *We no longer can be self-sustaining. We need to adapt to a different economy.*
- *Seasonal owners pay significant taxes. Nice to have them and their taxes, but shows reality of situation; pressure building on schools!*
- *Seasonal homeowners very important – vital for shopping, dining, golfing business. Some come for whole summer, others just for weekends.*
- *City has room tax data, but this won't tell us anything about second home owners.*
- *Second home owners role is significant for tourism trade, i.e. restaurants, building trades, services, marina. Primarily short term weekenders, may not come to town. West side, Princeton, Ripon, Berlin. Downtown Renewal efforts: new-ness may have worn a little.*
- *Second home owners are typically in Green Lake on weekends and typically do not stay over the summer months. Most second owners either bring their own supplies or shop in Ripon or elsewhere. Green Lake has an abundance of second home owners. Included in this group are 3 billionaires and 100 millionaires. This group might be “mined” for economic development opportunity-some of these would relish the attachment of their name on local community or economic development.*
- *Owners of second homes come for the Lake - not the Green Lake downtown or local economy. They come weekends and generally bring their own supplies or go to Ripon.*
- *Summer residents are less beneficial than in past because there are many more weekend-only residents, as compared to decades ago when fewer women worked and more families stayed all summer, not just on weekends. Tough to balance retail product needs to serve both seasonal and year-round residents.*
- *People complain they don't shop here, but there's really not much available to buy.*
- *Huge taxation significance and local schools, if property values decline it will affect government service, important main source of revenue.*

**8. In your opinion, what viable retail or service businesses are missing in Green Lake?**

- *Focus on businesses that could operate anywhere [e.g. a call center]*
- *Princeton has more stores – lodging customers are more likely to go there to shop.*
- *No other community use for Green Lake has been envisioned, too much competition from Ripon/Berlin. Specialty shops - but struggle to survive.*
- *What is missing is basic manufacturing job opportunities in Green Lake. If manufacturing jobs were available, people would shop in Green Lake. In the past there has been an attempt to bring*

*in a YMCA facility but idea was rejected by the YMCA organization (too proximate to Oshkosh YMCA market area). Currently pursuing the "Cornerstone Project" which would be a YMCA-type of facility. Have formed a 501C3 organization to raise funds for this project. The Cornerstone is not envisioned to be located at the courthouse property.*

- *The Innovation Center is a good idea and may very well be successful. Innovation concept would draw the needed 30,000 users (per Business Plan group supporters). The second owner wealthy will make substantial fund contributions. Project will compete well with cultural attractions found in the large metro areas like Chicago, Milwaukee—These people are attracted to Green Lake.*
- *Probably not in general durable goods, too much completion in Ripon, Walmart.*
- *Missing anchor type business such as Fleet Farm, Berlin has Walmart (local businesses have benefitted), they bring people to town. Green Lake does not have anchor to draw customers.*
- *Commercial needs, more of everything but realty is most business cannot survive Green Lake economy.*
- *Could we have a casino? Anything that brings more people to downtown is a plus.*
- *Anything that's going to survive needs a strong web presence. Want a grocery store.*
- *Economic viability must be tied to lake as THE feature; Business/attractions that establish Green Lake as destination point; Software company; Call center*
- *Pharmacy and cluster of business at highway, but will hurt downtown. Bike shop.*

**9. How is Green Lake unique? How can unique local characteristics be further leveraged for economy opportunity?**

- *Lake is the key, link out-of-towners to economic development (re-orient economic development planning around visitors, 2nd owners).*
- *The lake is the most unique element. It is a great place for families – good schools, down to earth.*
- *Lake and golf are key pieces. Fishing investments (stocking?) are paying off – the fishing has been fantastic.*
- *The three L's = Lake, Lake & Lake. Lake as the leverage point.*
- *It's a tourist community that people visit because they like the small-town atmosphere. No glitz, no rushing. Quiet and comfortable.*
- *Green Lake is...  
Small, but with a big mindset  
Deepest lake in WI  
Tourist town  
Interesting mix of people from different incomes – broad minds, a lot of intelligent people  
Good school system, like a private school  
Good for families (except prices –[real estate?])*
- *One issue is rising age of residents (Boomtown USA reference) – need young people, and need jobs for them*
- *Keep things the same, room for growth residential/condo/commerce, preserve heritage, nice parks.*
- *Develop something that would draw people to town. Attract business from neighboring communities without competition.*
- *The Lake resource is the major attraction and has established the second home community. Give out-of-towners more reason to visit and experience Green Lake.*
- *The lake is the special feature that attracts people - do what Lake Geneva does to capitalize on lake as resource.*
- *Help attract entrepreneurs through support programs. Henr Conti - advanced RLF money, arts.*

- *Should focus on what we are, not what we aren't. People are here for the lake, and biking. Green Lake greenways has a trail around the lake now, and working on a Green Lake to Ripon route. Ideal lake and setting – quiet and relaxing.*

**10. What would people like to see happen with this site? What would people not want to see happen with the site?**

- *No low-income housing – per City council last year. TID won't work if it's a non-profit*
- *Hoping for an effective blend of for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises*
- *Attract an economic activity that does not compete with area businesses (i.e. Walmart); Arts Innovation Center makes sense as new activity; Ripon College can support; needs money to start, don't ask locals to supply, tap into wealthy investors. Probably lacks people in 30-mile radius - need to attract from broad region.*
- *Arts Innovation Center is a good idea. EAR took 5 - 7 years, will take. Must draw people, give people a destination. Second owners come less now than in the 1940s, now there are two wage earners, more things for kids to do. Innovation center will benefit entire community, people will spend money. No more housing.*
- *City needs a new heart, now that County functions gone. Want something that attracts tourists. Don't need housing, plenty of that around.*
- *Structure is too big for one entity to use, and architecturally disjointed – would like to see it separated into 2 pieces, remove middle building. The community lacks public gathering places. Public meetings are held in the upper level of City Hall, the school gym, or the school multi-purpose room.*
- *Want things that will put more heads in (lodging) beds, e.g. tourist attractions. Overnight guests want options in the City. Events are good – they drive bookings. Would like things that drive off-season traffic. Ideas for site – mostly focused on streetscaping. Office or assisted living doesn't really help here.*
- *Perfect world: filled with retail, or maybe a historic and unique microbrewery. Could County give it away for \$1 and then the owner can pass along that savings to create economic development over a reasonable start-up period? Need foot-traffic in town; jobs and foot-traffic.*
- *Low-mid-priced condos (less than \$220,000 a unit). Safety Building - top floors for apartments or condos.*
- *No more condos. Probably no more apartments.*
- *County should not move out of downtown, traditional retail will not work, condo market has tanked. May come back at a certain price level (elderly?). Arts Innovation Center: how will it generate revenue, how will it cash flow, need a business plan. No LMI housing, no industry, don't tear down historical building. Park setting?*
- *People not vocal. Hear knock down the building, develop unique park. No adaptive reuse - too expensive to maintain, if tear down - not lose everything, no low-income housing.*

**11. Would there be opposition to closing and developing portions of Water Street or Gold Street adjacent to the site?**

- *Close street only if can maintain viable traffic patterns. Must get from point A to B.*
- *Okay to eliminate streets.*
- *Eliminate the street to the north.*
- *Not enthusiastic – utilities would need to be relocated. If closed, limits flexibility during City festivals.*
- *Close the road if there is a benefit to all residents (i.e., Park), not just a developer.*
- *Sure, whatever.*
- *Seems like a benefit, providing access to the water.*
- *Yes and no; lean toward no vacation of streets. If give land away - no more tax money, limited assistance.*

- *If close street, could make it a neat location for weddings, conventions, etc.*
- *Is it right for the city as a whole! Not just for a developer to make more money?*

**Other Comments:**

- *Development of commercial center of some sort; bring people to town; Antique/Craft Center. Development must make money and be self-sustaining.*
- *Regarding non-profits – it tends to be relatively easy to get start-up money in Green Lake, to find the capital dollars, but ongoing O&M funding is tough to raise. Really need to start with an endowment. Opera house attendance is 50% visitors coming to see specific artists, 25% full-time local, 25% seasonal local. Attendance has been dropping since last fall.*
- *Condos for the elderly? Arts cannot compete with Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago. Never will raise \$3 million or sustain operational costs.*
- *Arts Innovation, good luck, skeptical, \$6 million, have money is easy part?*
- *Concern about proposals dependent on charitable gifting – not many full-time residents with deep pockets, and second homeowners tend to give 90% at home and 10% here.*
- *Arts support in Wisconsin is weak – Minnesota spends \$5.72 per capita, Illinois \$2.72, Wisconsin \$0.14 (48<sup>th</sup> in country).*

## Appendix B – Complete Public Feedback to Draft Study

This appendix features an unedited compilation of all comments received on the draft study at and after the January 18 public meeting. A total of 12 people submitted response worksheets, and three others submitted open-ended comments via website or email.

### 1. Market Analysis

#### 1.1 - Do you disagree with any of the findings or conclusions?

- A. No
- B. No. I think they are fairly on target.
- C. Yes- absolutely no low-income housing or additional residential development. Would not be beneficial to the town.
- D. Market analysis is too broad- need to focus on closer market 15miles/ 15 minutes. "Unmet demand"- just because the retailers aren't here does not mean there is demand. Second home on "a force" in vacation season. Retail loss by close by loss of shoppers/employees.
- E. No- good job.
- F. City needs affordable (work force) housing. Population is now 960, down from 1100 in 2000. School enrollment is plummeting.
- G. Not really
- H. No answer
- I. No
- J. Good information
- K. No answer
- L. No

#### 1.2 - What do you think is viable on this site?

- A. Most likely an argument can be made to give it to a developer to clear the site for a mix of commercial and residential units to be sold for a profit to the developer. This would put it on the tax roll. I do not believe this would do the city any good. I think a project such as has been suggested by the "Town Square" group would be better for the city and area.
- B. I support the concept of the four prong program. This makes sense conceptually and financially at this time. Introduce programming as funding and preparedness allows. I like the idea of using the "Safety" building portion as a hostel with recreation and relaxed gathering area on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and state approved kitchen and food pantry type operation on ground level. This could work well to bring income.
- C. Breakfast restaurant/bakery. Fitness center open to the public with daily, weekly, monthly and yearly dues for community tourists and 2<sup>nd</sup> home owners. Sporting goods store. Micro brewery/restaurant.
- D. Green lake market as one with Princeton & Berlin. Leisure and hospitality market analysis. Reaffirmed Green lake identity.
- E. The center as described.
- F. Cornerstone. Casino.

- G. Like the Cornerstone Project ideas.
- H. Cornerstone
- I. Urge tourism draw that would be viable year-round.
- J. Low-income housing or affordable housing. Cornerstone sounds best.
- K. No answer
- L. A range of things if there is backing

**2. Site and Building Analysis- What is your opinion about the current facility- Do you want it to be saved? How much of it?**

- A. It would be nice to save the original court house and 1945 additions. It is somewhat of a center piece of the city.
- B. Yes. Take out the annex. Create an atrium area that could be used to construct an elevator for the historic portion. Use the historic portion as proposed-classrooms, some offices, some shopping/retail and areas to display community art.
- C. Yes to the courthouse, not necessarily the safety building.
- D. Courthouse, annex, safety building- 3 parts, only courthouse is historic. Reuse, redevelopment costs, maintenance costs. What resources does it qualify for as a "historic landmark"?
- E. If we could use it to create traffic and visitors to the area year round- save it!
- F. Save historic building
- G. Yes it must be saved. We are losing too many of the historical treasures. With peoples (?) interest in the past, having a William Waters building will bring history tourists to the area.
- H. Save it.
- I. Yes should be saved- at least historic section, but possibly all if needed.
- J. No answer
- K. No answer
- L. Historical part

**3. Developer Feedback- Thoughts or comments relative to the developer feedback:**

- A. I am not surprised at the lack of interest by large developers. This is not a fast growing community, the county hasn't grown in population in 20 years. There is no "demand" for housing, office space, general commercial use. This is a rough time for development everywhere for the private sector.
- B. DO NOT want to see more condos or a casino. This does not seem viable and we have way too many empty condos in town now. Approach this from a tourism angle. Bring lots of people into town.
- C. Agree with everything with the exception of affordable housing.
- D. Would any development take place w/o public funds? Would a development require taxpayer funds to maintain? What would be the potential cost of failure of a completed project?
- E. No answer.
- F. Good

- G. Alexander Co. did 3 projects in the City of Berlin that worked well and appreciate his/their comments.
- H. No answer
- I. No answer
- J. No answer
- K. No answer
- L. No answer

**4. Redevelopment Scenarios- Which scenarios do you prefer? Why?**

- A. The community does not need more housing. It needs more business or activity that will bring people to the city and give them something to do when they are here. The "Town Square" group appears to be the best thing going, or the best thing proposed. This would bring dollars into the area which means more business for everyone and more jobs. I think more business to the area means more than real estate tax dollars.
- B. Do not want to see this all torn down because the county thinks it should be sold to the group for \$100,000. This is the most viable community-county wide plan to move ahead.
- C. A/B or D
- D. Demolition? Would like to see this option explored more fully. Any examples from other small communities? What value would the open space have to the community (especially considering the current tourist events- art fair, harvest fair, chili cook-off, etc.)? Many community development studies have noted the lack of parking downtown. Could this help relieve this issue as well?
- E. Town Square
- F. Cornerstone- only possibly viable alternative presented
- G. Cornerstone Project
- H. Cornerstone
- I. Demolition is not an option at this time; last resort all questions I agree.
- J. No answer
- K. No answer
- L. Small casino. Need something bigger to bring people here

**5. Funding Strategies and Options- Thoughts or comments relative to the funding options presented:**

- A. The county is not going to "sell" the property, it is going to have to "give it away" for anyone to develop the property. Look at what is being done all over with "white elephants". Cities are "giving" real estate away and paying for demolition besides so a developer make a dollar while benefiting the community as a whole. Obviously, developer agreements need to have strings attached so development is done right.
- B. Need to see more info on this.
- C. The Section 42 option would not be in the best interest of Green Lake (downtown area). It would not add to the looks and value of the town and would not attract tourism (as well as a corporation).

- D. Fran Hill from Conservation Project?- proposed to develop a parcel (orig “Arts & Innovation Group”). Initially funding sources? Any taxpayer funding? Feasibility sounds plausible but what supports this? Who owns property/responsibility for maintenance?
- E. No answer.
- F. Developer needs to raise funds.
- G. No answer.
- H. No answer.
- I. County spent many tens of millions of dollars on building new without any foresight into what to do with old. I agree with suggestion to give property to entity (Cornerstone) and put additional dollars towards their budget in the amount it would cost to demolish all buildings.
- J. County should donate building and demolition costs.
- K. No answer
- L. Not sure

**6. Community Preferences**

**6.1 – Please indicate your priorities for this site by indicating the importance of each of the following issues.**

Priorities	Number of Responses in Each Category (1=Not at all Important, 5=Very Important)					Average Score
	1	2	3	4	5	
Tourism Amenities	0	0	3	1	7	4.4
Historic Preservation	0	2	4	2	3	3.5
Job Creation	1	2	2	2	4	3.5
Cost Savings	0	4	5	0	2	3.0
Other	0	0	0	0	3	5.0

“Other” included: Don’t waste additional tax dollars to support development  
Strengthening downtown  
Future of the area

**6.2 - What would you like the City and County to know as they consider the future of this site?**

- A. Worry less about the short term and more about the long term benefits of developing this property. Yes, they both may need to spend some precious money to get this done right, and times are tough. They cannot nickel and dime this project. They should listen to all alternatives and ideas. There is no one on the council or Board that appears to be an expert with development so they should not let their personal agenda dictate their decisions. There is risk involved with every development. They may have to accept some risk with whatever is proposed.

- B. The County needs to let this building go to the group for between \$1 to \$1,000. Take some responsibility to help make this the city center. It will benefit all of the county. The city needs to be more cooperative in helping this along. Do not be so greedy about getting the property and the well. Don't cheap out on getting professional designers to plan and complete a long term timeline and plan which could help immensely in making this project a success. Be efficient but do a good job on quality materials. The well on site could be used to create a geothermal heating/cooling system. Upgrade all the lights and windows! Make it energy efficient.
- C. No answer
- D. Demolition is not worst-case scenario. Having an open space has value- aesthetically and for potential future use. Utilizing a TIF is not necessarily a wise use of deferred tax dollars. If demolished, it is commercial zoning. With the size of the safety building, it is assumed that a similar type commercial/mixed use building could be built in the future. Would this taxable entity's taxes more than make up for the time the land was vacant/use as a public park?
- E. Please support the Town Square idea anyway you can.
- F. Preserving the site dramatically increases the vitality of downtown.
- G. Don't let money hamper or determine your decisions. You can't go back once you make a destructive decision.
- H. No answer
- I. No answer.
- J. Abandon Water Street and create lake access.
- K. No answer
- L. Try to keep the old courthouse.

## 7. Other Comments Received through email and website

- A. Green Lake has always been a resort town and is the oldest resort west of Niagara Falls. A Casino on Dartford Bay or the Heidel House property would greatly benefit the City and County of Green Lake.
- B. My priorities for this location are two-fold- the economic viability of a proposed use and preservation of the original, historic courthouse.

I don't believe there is any private entity that can sustain 70,000 square feet of space in a town of less than 1,000 people, in a rural county, in a muted economy (and one that may remain so for a long time). Thus, I feel it is important that the county tear down the jail and annex, or at the very least escrow the money to do so.

It is also extremely important that the county board not make a decision in haste just because they want to be done with the issue. I hope they use the information provided in the feasibility study to set terms for Requests for Proposals and allow adequate time for interested parties to step forward. Then, vet those proposals carefully.

Also, it must be determined what happens if the selected proposal goes forward and then fails. Who has the final responsibility? What are the legal ramifications? It is murky. In all of this, the situation with Boca Grande in Ripon should be instructive.

It was mentioned in the study that the (historic) courthouse might be a suitable location for the historical society. It is possible that it could also be mixed use on the upper floors with the historical society utilizing the first floor and basement, with green space where the jail and annex are now. Perhaps a suitable use for the green space area might arise in the future. This outline seems very appropriate for a community that depends heavily on tourism, and much more economically feasible than holding up multiple buildings with multiple uses, all dependent on donations or small-dollar use.

- C. The only salvation for this town is a casino: It is a resort town and a casino would work on Dartford Bay or the Heidel House property.