



Best Practices Report *January 23, 2020*

Part of *The Next 10* process is to consider potential best practices and planning innovations from other communities based on College Station's issues, assets, challenges, and future opportunities. Lessons learned from this research will inform recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan evaluation.

This report is intended as a resource to be used as the City considers updates to its Comprehensive Plan. It provides a set of twelve case studies of communities that have pursued a strategy or set of strategies that address one or more topics of interest to College Station. The case studies have been selected to offer potentially valuable thinking about similar challenges and opportunities. However, they should not be viewed as recommended solutions. While these issues exist in other communities, College Station is somewhat unique in its scale, its location, physical character, its culture, and the size and impact of Texas A&M University. Also, some topics that College Station is most interested in addressing, are those where there is not a clear "best practice" solution. For other topics, the complexity of issues requires multiple related strategies to be successful. In both of those cases, this report will highlight actions that communities are undertaking, while emphasizing the latest thinking about these emerging issues. The City should use this information to consider how it might apply similar concepts or approaches within its unique context.

Topics

1. **City-University cost sharing.** How have other college towns engaged and convinced their large public, State-run University to contribute to paying for the services they are using/needing?
2. **City-University coordination.** How could we continue to improve the University-City relationship to better manage growth?
3. **City-Student community building.** How can we build a stronger sense among University students that they are part of a larger community?
4. **City identity.** How could we create a stronger sense of place and community identity (internally and externally) to distinguish our City?
5. **Neighborhood character and student housing.** How do we better maintain the character of established neighborhoods with redevelopment pressure for student housing?

6. **Housing affordability.** How could we create more opportunities for new housing that is affordable to moderate income households, including families and young professionals?
7. **Redevelopment and infill development.** How do we encourage redevelopment or infill development?

Report Organization

This report is organized by the topics above. Twelve case studies organized by these topics provide examples of relevant strategies. Each case study describes the community challenge, the approach that was undertaken to address the challenge, and the impacts of that approach. Resources that provide further details and information of the case study are included in this report.

The first three topics and first four case studies address interrelated issues and are grouped together. Topics four through seven are each followed by two case studies.

Case Studies	Topics						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strategic Development Plan Implementation, University of Florida Gainesville, FL	✓	✓		✓			✓
Creative Campus, Columbus State Community College Columbus, OH	✓	✓					
Collaboration Corvallis Oregon State University and The City of Corvallis, OR	✓	✓	✓				
University of Alabama Master Plan Committee & Neighborhood Partnership Committee, University of Alabama Tuscaloosa, AL		✓	✓				
Nickel Plate District Fishers, IN				✓			
Branding Campaign Albuquerque, NM				✓			
Student Home Licensing and Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative State College, PA					✓		
College and University Neighborhoods District Waco, TX (Baylor University)					✓		
Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Athens-Clarke County, GA						✓	
My Chatt House, online pattern book and building plans Chattanooga, TN						✓	
Economic Development Partnership and Land Swap Lexington, KY							✓
Infill Incentive Program Yuma, AZ							✓

Topic 1: City-University cost sharing.

How have other college towns engaged and convinced their large public, State-run University to pay for the services they are using/needing? For example: Streets, Drainage, PD, Fire.

Context

Large, prestigious universities provide significant economic benefits to their surrounding communities. However, a rapidly growing institution, which is exempt from city taxes and most fees, can make it difficult for a city to establish and fund timely improvements to infrastructure and services. Texas A&M has been one of the fastest growing large public universities in the country over the past decade, so the challenge for College Station is unique in its magnitude.

The examples of public universities contributing financially to their host cities is relatively uncommon, but there are several different examples for College Station to consider. One method is financial partnership involving a payment by the university to reimburse a city for a specific expense (gameday policing for example) or to fund a specific project or program. Another method is a “payment-in-lieu-of-taxes” (PILOT) program. PILOT programs mostly apply to private institutions, however there are a handful of examples involving public universities (including Pennsylvania State University, The University of Iowa, and The University of Minnesota). The case studies that relate to this topic are examples of university’s contributing financial, intellectual, and programmatic resources to benefit the community and institution.

Most examples of university-city cost sharing appear to be initiated by the university, rather than the city. Financial partnerships arise out of a collaborative relationship (Topic 2) and or a university identified need to address community issues that directly impact the university’s ability to recruit or retain students, faculty, or research dollars.

Potential Strategies

1. **Partnerships and cost-sharing agreements for a specific initiative** – Collaborative programs or funding to address specific city and community issues or to facilitate development in a specific geography.
2. **Development entity supported by the institution** – A third party entity that receives funding from the institution to support development in a specific area.
3. **Payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) program** – Voluntary payments made by tax-exempt nonprofits as a substitute for property taxes.

Topic 2: City-University coordination

How could we continue to improve the University-City relationship to better manage growth?

Topic 3: City-Student community building

How can we build a stronger sense among University students that they are part of a larger community?

Context

University-community partnerships offer institutions and the communities in which they are located, enormous potential for mutual benefit. Historically, many university-community relationships have been fraught with tension, are sporadic or redundant in nature, or have been limited by the whims of changing leadership. But that characterization may be changing. A 2019 study conducted by The University of Virginia's Thriving Cities Lab found that 95% of universities surveyed included a statement of support for city-university partnerships in their strategic plans. Examples of these partnerships have grown in the past two decades, but implementation success remains a challenge.

The City of College Station is interested in ways that it can build enduring, on-going relationships with Texas A&M University at multiple levels that endure even with respective organizational turnover. At another level is a desire to promote good relationships between students and residents. Such student-level community building has been shown to improve the likelihood that graduates will choose to stay in the area after graduation. It has also been shown to benefit the educational institution by improving student academic outcomes.

Potential Strategies

- 1. Partnership and cost sharing agreements** (as identified under topic 1)
- 2. Town / gown advisory boards or committees** – Organizations of city and university stakeholders that advise on issues of mutual concern.
- 3. Agreements to utilize university facilities** – Sharing policies that allow community groups access to university facilities.
- 4. “Good Neighbor” programs** – Initiatives designed to engage students living off-campus and other residents to improve relationships.
- 5. Signature events for students** – Events that provide opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with the community beyond the campus.
- 6. Community service opportunities or requirements** – Programs for students to apply learning and research within the community.

Case Study

Strategic Development Plan Implementation | University of Florida and the City of Gainesville

The Challenge

The University of Florida in Gainesville is a large land grant institution with many characteristics comparable to Texas A&M and College Station. In the summer of 2015, the University Board of Trustees re-examined the over 100-year-old, 2,000-acre campus and environs with the goal of establishing the institution as a top 10 public university in the nation. To achieve that goal, the University's leadership recognized that it must examine the important relationships between the University, City of Gainesville and Alachua County, and create what it described as the framework for the "New American City".

City	College Station	Gainesville, FL
Population	116,218	133,857
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	8%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	288,212
Median Age	22.7	26.0
City Land Area	51 sq mi	61.31 sq. mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	70-115 miles (Jacksonville, Orlando)
University	Texas A&M University	University of Florida
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	56,079
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	12%

*since 2010

The Approach

To kickstart the Strategic Development Plan process, a 26-member Steering Committee was established in February 2016. The Committee is made up of members from the University, the City and County, and professional consultants were retained to undertake the nine-month study. The planning process led to the development of four initiatives that emphasized City and University collaboration:

1. **New American City.** To help align the City and University, the plan calls for a joint planning group and a "Smart City Lab" to gather and analyze data to inform future decisions. The plan also recommends ways to establish a presence in downtown Gainesville for some of the university's programs, especially its cultural amenities.
2. **Proximity.** The University will concentrate future development in a portion of the eastern campus and coordinate with the City to encourage development between downtown and campus.
3. **Strong Neighborhoods.** The plan recommends that the University and City collaborate to preserve historic neighborhoods, creating a diverse housing stock and improving amenities while defending them from gentrification, examining major corridor connections and improving identity of specified areas.
4. **Stewardship.** Outdoor spaces emerged as one of the greatest attractions in the city. The plan recommends studying elements that relate or impact outdoor spaces (i.e. open space, landscaping, utilities, stormwater, etc.), and partnering with the City on related projects that advance the region's ecological health and outdoor amenities.

In December 2016 the Board of Trustees endorsed the Strategic Development Plan. Since the endorsement, the University has provided seed funding for each initiative. To support the new American city initiative, the University has provided \$250,000 for community research that will help connect the University's talent to community issues; to enrich strong neighborhoods, \$50,000 has been provided to the College of the Arts/City Arts Initiative and \$250,000 distributed towards community research that explores further monetary and talent resources to help preserve and strengthen neighborhoods; and \$50,000 has been provided to support the stewardship initiative, in which the funding will be used to identify solutions that will address the University/City/County environmental issues.

The Impact

Since the Development Strategic Plan was developed, the following specific actions that involve both the University and the City have occurred:

- In April 2017 the university awarded over \$300,000 of research awards to researchers whose submitted proposals that utilize the campus and community as a living laboratory to address real-world problems. A second call for proposals (March 2017) was announced with a total award value of \$250,000.
- To reinforce the University and City relationship, the University sponsored a grant to the College of Arts to identify impactful ways to share arts with the city. In November 2017, the artwork was revealed at Innovation Square and now stands as a permanent display.
- The Plazas of America was renovated to better serve both the campus and neighboring communities.
- The University, the Florida Department of Transportation, and City partnered to launch the advanced transportation technologies testbed I-STREET (Implementing Solutions from Transportation Research and Evaluation of Emerging Technologies). The goal of the project was to improve travel time reliability, throughput, and traveler information, as well as deploy pedestrian and bicyclist safety applications.
- The University and City joined MetroLab Network, a network of regional city-university partnerships focused on bringing data, analytics, and innovation to local government. The City of Gainesville mayor noted that joining the network is a testament to the strength of their partnership with the University of Florida, as they strive to realize their mutual goal of becoming a New American City.
- The University released the June 2019 Framework Plan that guides the University's physical development. This plan aligns with the Strategic Development Plan.
- The City created a new department, the Strategic Initiatives Department, to expand community engagement efforts and coordinate with the UF's Strategic Development Plan Initiatives

Resources:

- <https://strategicdevelopment.ufl.edu/strategic-master-plan/>
- <https://www.cityofgainesville.org/Newsroom/tabid/805/PostID/1055/New-City-Department-Combines-Efforts-to-Focus-on-Strategic-Initiatives.aspx>

Case Study

Creative Campus | Columbus State Community College and the City of Columbus, Ohio

The Challenge

The northeast side of downtown Columbus is home to a concentration of major cultural and higher educational institutions such as Columbus State Community College, Columbus College of Art and Design, the Columbus Museum of Art, major employers such as State Auto Insurance, as well as students and residents. The 2010 Downtown Master Plan identified this area as the Creative Campus, but the area lacked a cohesive planning direction and did not reflect the potential that the City and institutional leaders recognized. Each institution has its own master plan and initiatives underway within the area, but they have never coordinated on a large scale.

City	College Station	Columbus, OH
Population	116,218	892,533
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	13%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	2,106,541
Median Age	22.7	31.8
City Land Area	51 sq mi	217.17 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	N/A
University	Texas A&M University	Columbus State Community College,
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	27,204
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	-11%

*since 2010

Columbus State adopted its most recent strategic plan in 2013. They recognized that implementation of its vision would require collaboration. Working with The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), Columbus State initiated a process to convene area stakeholders to discuss the various plans in the area. What came out of this process was a collaborative planning effort, focused on making “The Creative Campus” into a more cohesive and unique downtown neighborhood.

The Approach

In early 2015, Columbus State convened neighborhood and local government stakeholders in a charette to discuss how to make the Creative Campus neighborhood a more vibrant and attractive place. The participants included representatives from Columbus Museum of Art, State Auto Insurance, Columbus College of Art and Design, and Edwards Companies (a major developer), the City, the Columbus Downtown Development Commission, the Central Ohio Transportation Authority, and MORPC. From this discussion, a 14-point action agenda that centered around topics such as collaboration, infrastructure, safety and improving community character was created. In order to realize the action agenda, the City asked Columbus State to lead this work.

In November of 2016 Columbus State entered into a formal three-year agreement with the City to serve as the “quarterback” for the 14-point action agenda. The purpose of this collaboration was to

implement the action agenda to make this area of downtown a more vibrant neighborhood. The agreement outlined a scope of work based upon the action agenda.

The Impact

Columbus State Community College, an essential institutional anchor for Central Ohio recognized that forming partnerships with the City and other institutional partners was critical to achieving the goals and initiatives of the master plan. This partnership resulted in all parties leveraging their collective powers to undertake the actions in the agenda. Once the City and Columbus State formed this partnership, committing \$300,000 funding across three years encouraged stakeholders to get involved in the process. This process convened all partners around the table to not only engage in discussion about shaping the future of the neighborhood, but also allocating time and resources towards the planning effort.

The three-year partnership realized several accomplishments:

- Over the three years, the city and college contributed \$300,000 to the coordination and implementation of the neighborhood initiatives. The stakeholders collectively contributed an additional \$250,000 across the three years.
- Partner institutions have proactively engaged developers and generated significant interest from the development community.
- The City and College collaborated on various neighborhood improvements to help define Cleveland Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood as the opportunity corridor.
- Neighborhood stakeholders convened at least twice a year for updates and coordination of initiatives.
- A market analysis on the Creative Campus neighborhood downtown confirmed that there was a demand for workforce and some market rate housing and modest amount of office and retail.
- A parking strategy included 33 specific actions to manage parking assets in the neighborhood.
- Upon a request from the Creative Campus partners, \$7.5 million was granted by the City was spent towards a streetscape improvement project that included on-street parking, a more generous sidewalk and street trees.
- A branding initiative that told the story of the neighborhood was developed.

Resources

- **Robb Coventry**, Director, Facilities Planning, Design & Construction, Columbus State Community College | rcoventry@csc.edu (614) 287-3662
- **Rory McGuinness**, Deputy Director, Department of Development, City of Columbus
ROMcGuinness@columbus.gov (614) 645-6253

Case Study:

Collaboration Corvallis | Oregon State University and The City of Corvallis

The Challenge

Oregon State University is in the Town of Corvallis. Like many universities, Oregon State's enrollment began a period of growth in the early 2000s. By 2015, the University had a total enrollment of over 30,000 students, an increase of nearly 30% since 2010. The annual Corvallis Citizen Attitude Survey of 2011 revealed negative impacts experienced by residents including parking issues, new student-oriented housing sprouting up in formerly quiet neighborhoods, and frequent late-night partying.

City	College Station	Corvallis, OR
Population	116,218	57,961
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	7%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	86,591
Median Age	22.7	27
City Land Area	51 sq mi	14.3 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	35-45 miles (Eugene, Salem)
University	Texas A&M University	Oregon State University
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment	68,603	30,986
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	30%

*since 2010

The Approach

To address the negative impacts residents revealed in the 2011 Corvallis Citizen Attitude Survey, the University and City came together to first form a campus-community collaboration, which subsequently led to the formation of a partnership agreement, advisory board and several "town-gown" initiatives.

In September 2011, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed by the University President, Corvallis Mayor, and campus and community leaders, pledging to address negative effects associated with the University's growing enrollment. The MOU led to the formation of Collaboration Corvallis, a three-year agreement between the signing parties.

The first act of Collaboration Corvallis was a public meeting to launch the initiative. Over 140 residents attended and offered suggestions on how the collaboration could address issues. Approximately a month later, Collaboration Corvallis officially got under way when the City Council approved an intergovernmental agreement that mapped out a timeline and an equally split shared cost of \$300,000 to go towards the collaboration project. The agreement described how the university and city would address three tracks: neighborhood parking and traffic mitigation, neighborhood planning, and neighborhood livability.

The Impact

Since the formation of Corvallis Collaboration, changes at the City and University levels were made, such as property managers meeting monthly to share information and strategize about improving the quality of life in the Town. After the three-year agreement ended, joint efforts and initiatives continued to solve issues such as parking and traffic and neighborhood livability challenges. These initiatives and successes include:

- The formation of Community Relations Advisory Group in May 2015. Members include individuals from: University faculty, staff and students; Corvallis Police Department; neighborhood and businesses representatives; Benton Community College; and the Corvallis Rental Property Management Group. This group meets monthly to monitor progress of livability improvement projects and share policy recommendations with the Corvallis City Council and University.
- The City adopted the Corvallis Livability Code in September 2016 “to address livability concerns in neighborhoods throughout” the City.
- An education program for students about the community and how to be a good neighbor.
- The Preferred Renters Program which provides students the tools to be informed tenants and responsible neighbors. Students who attend a workshop and pass a quick exam receive a \$50 rental deposit credit as a Preferred Renter. This program is hosted by the university. The \$50 credit is applied by a participating housing provider.
- In the area of community livability, calls for police and fire services have reduced. Programs and coalitions have contributed to the reduction of student high-risk drinking. Finally, students are held accountable for their behavior off campus, as a conduct-code system is now in place.
- The university has hired staff to deal with student conduct and off-campus behavior.
- A group of property managers and landlords have organized training sessions, monthly meetings and outside speakers to discuss rental housing issues.
- The university adopted a three-tiered pricing system for parking, paid for transit and bike improvements and applied for approval on a parking expansion.

Resources

- <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/resources/case-study-strengthening-campus-community-collaboration-oregon-state-university-and-city>

Additional resources on town-gown partnerships

- *Town-Gown: From Conflict to Cooperation*, Michael Fox
- *Field Guide for Urban-Community Partnerships*, Joshua J. Yates & Michaela Accardi, Thriving Cities Lab, University of Virginia <https://iasc.typeform.com/to/toK2D5>

Case Study

Neighborhood Partnership Committee and UA Master Plan Committee | University of Alabama and the City of Tuscaloosa

The Challenge

The University of Alabama (UA) is a major driver of the City of Tuscaloosa's growth. In the early 2000s, UA began a significant expansion initiative. From 2000 to 2016, the University grew its enrollment from 18,347 to 37,665, an increase of 19,318 students. UA was considered the fastest growing flagship University in the nation during that period. The pressure from UA's growth created a strong need for both coordination between the City and University and programs to address tensions between students and neighborhoods near the campus.

City	College Station	Tuscaloosa, AL
Population	116,218	100,287
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	11%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	243,575
Median Age	22.7	28.6
City Land Area	51 sq mi	60.23 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	58 miles (Birmingham)
University	Texas A&M University	University of Alabama
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	38,986
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	30%

*since 2010

The Approach

The City of Tuscaloosa and the University of Alabama have not always had a collaborative relationship, but a few past and current leaders from both ends have recognized the value and worked hard to nurture a positive relationship. The collaborative initiatives are showcased through two programs, the Neighborhood Partnership Committee and the UA Master Plan Committee.

The Neighborhood Partnership Committee (NPC) was formed in 2003 as a result of a unique degree of cooperation between the City and University. The NPC's mission is to improve communication between neighbors, business owners, students and law enforcement officials to proactively address issues that are a mutual concern of the groups represented on the committee. Today the NPC is led by staff in the University's Division of Community Affairs and includes wider group of community stakeholders comprised of students, off-campus neighbors, business owners, community leaders, City officials, University police officers, City police, and University administrators.

The NPC meets twice a year with an invited group of 50-60 stakeholders. The meetings are casual, informational, and involve presentations from the City staff, City Council representatives, University police, and student government representatives. Meeting agendas are developed through a small working group of stakeholders. When conflicts or questions cannot be adequately addressed during the large meeting, separate smaller working meetings are convened to follow-up.

The UA Master Plan Committee is a group intended to coordinate on topics related to implementation of the University's Campus Master Plan. It includes University administrators,

facilities planners, and leaders from the City's Office of Urban Development. The group has met on an as-needed basis, approximately twice a year. The focus of the group is to coordinate and share information among the various University entities concerned with campus facilities and infrastructure planning. The City's role on the group is largely for the benefit of information sharing and encouraging an ongoing spirit of collaboration. The meetings have allowed coordination on areas such as City policy in its comprehensive plan update and the University's parking study.

The Impact

The impact of these groups is difficult to quantify, but longtime stakeholders report that the collaborative spirit between the City and University has improved significantly since the early 2000s. Examples of the impacts include:

- Stakeholders report that they obtain pertinent information that they can use in their own work, including insight about their own organizations.
- The NPC provides a unique forum for community leaders to hear directly from City and University officials. Specific business owners are often invited to attend NPC meetings.
- The committees proactively seek to address conflicts. In the case of the NPC, a resident concern about student behavior led to a separate working group that provided detailed recommendations for a "good neighbor program" that was included in the City's comprehensive plan update. The working group further developed potential steps for creating the new program. In another example, a presentation of crime statistics led to a group of students engaging with City, University and County police to address a concern.

Representatives from the groups shared the following lessons learned:

- ***Be persistent, foster relationships.*** *The success of these groups reflects the continued efforts of the Mayor, leaders in the City's Office of Urban Development, and key leaders at the University. While not every interaction is productive, these individuals believe strongly in the importance of collaboration and seek opportunities to foster relationships in both a formal and casual setting.*
- ***Start small, allow the group to evolve.*** *Identify and reach out to stakeholders from the University that are currently working on areas of mutual interest.*
- ***Be strategic and respectful of other's time.*** *For large groups of stakeholders, try to gather people only when necessary, have meaningful and succinct updates, and arrange separate meetings to address focused issues.*
- ***Have a leader.*** *Someone needs to own and manage the group. In the case of the NPC, the University has staff dedicated to the effort. A strong facilitator is crucial to effective meetings.*

Resources

- <http://communityaffairs.ua.edu/neighborhood-partnership-committee/>
- **Ashley Crites**, Director of Planning, Office of Urban Development City of Tuscaloosa
acrites@tuscaloosa.com (205) 248-5131
- **Dr. Nicole Prewitt**, Director of programs and partnerships for community engagement, Center for Community-Based Partnerships, The University of Alabama | nbprewitt@ua.edu (205) 348-9819

Topic 4: City identity

How could we create a stronger sense of place and community identity (internally and externally) to distinguish our City?

Context

A community's sense of place and identity is a combination of its physical attributes (both the built and natural setting), its culture and people, and its unique amenities. Elements of a community's identity and sense of place are often intangible but they are shaped by that place's physical attributes and strategic messaging.

Community branding is one approach to shaping internal and external sense of city identity and can be a strategy for economic development. A brand is deeper than logos and taglines. It is a set of ideas that reflect emotions people might have about a product, service, organization or place. A brand is expressed through visuals, written and spoken messages, and products or services. Like a brand for a product or service, a strong community brand attracts new people to the brand (place) while strengthening the emotional attachment that existing residents have to their community. When branding a place, collaboration between many entities is essential. A strong community brand should align with how organizations speak and write about the community, the visuals used to convey those messages, and how and where those messages are applied (internal and external).

Unfortunately, studies show that the vast majority of city branding campaigns are unsuccessful. Creating a successful city brand is much like creating a product or personal brand. It involves embarking on a discovery effort to determine what your community can offer and or what it can become. Distilling that discovery into a simple, clear, and compelling idea. Then creating elements needed to support the idea such as communication material. If the community lacks physical elements to support its brand, it should devise a plan to develop them.

Potential Strategies

1. **A collaborative community branding initiative** – A process of discovery and research to define and strengthen the community's internal and external image.
2. **Create or revitalize distinctive physical places** – Districts or facilities that reflect the brand and create or strengthen a sense of place.

Case Study

Nickel Plate District | City of Fishers, Indiana

The Challenge

Fishers is a growing suburban city in the Indianapolis region. Initially called Fishers Station, the community formed around a rail depot and was a town of only a few hundred people until the late 1960s. Since the arrival of I-69, Fishers has grown steadily following a primarily car-oriented pattern. While successful in many measures, the City lacked a downtown center and struggled with a sense of identity to distinguish itself from other suburban communities.

City	College Station	Fishers, IN
Population (2018 est.)	116,218	93,362
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	20%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	1.9 million (11 county Indianapolis MSA)
Median Age	22.7	35.2
City Land Area	51 sq mi	37 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	20-30 miles (Indianapolis)
University	Texas A&M University	NA

*since 2010

The Approach

In 2012, then Town Manager Scott Fadness, initiated an effort to develop a stronger sense of place in Fishers by planning for a unique community gathering place, civic core, and economic center in the downtown area known as the Nickel Plate District. That effort created a downtown master plan that envisioned offices, residences, retail, and a public amphitheater adjacent to its municipal facilities. The conceptual master plan was followed by the creation of the Nickel Plate District development code. Fishers developed a public amphitheater, actively marketed its plan, and sought public-private partnerships with developer.

Since 2015, when Fishers became a city and Fadness its mayor, the community has cultivated an identity as “smart, vibrant, and entrepreneurial.” Those words are a deliberate part of the Fishers identity that are exhibited through its neighborhood development, dedication to supporting high-growth companies, and innovative city processes. Those words are included throughout promotional material, used as organizational themes in the Mayor’s annual State of the City address and even featured throughout the Fishers2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Nickel Plate District exemplifies each of these attributes.

To pursue the “entrepreneurial” aspect of its brand, the City helped create an entrepreneurial facility with programs and co-working spaces to nurture “high impact” startups in the community.



LaunchFishers was initially housed in a portion of the City library but has grown to a larger facility within the Nickel Plate District. Launch claims to be the largest co-working space in the Midwest. The City has also helped create the Indiana IoT Lab (Internet of Things) to elevate Fishers as a center for tech innovation.

The Impact

The Nickel Plate District development has taken place much faster than anticipated. Initially expected to take shape over a period of 10 to 30 years, the district has been transformed in the past five years. The City's planning and initial investments in infrastructure have led to hundreds of millions of dollars of private investment. The mixed-use district composes less than one percent of the City's land, but it is part of an important economic development strategy for attracting innovative businesses and creative, entrepreneurial talent to Fishers.

The success of private investment has allowed the City to move ahead with new initiatives. It has recently created a greenway master plan to transform part of the Nickel Plate Railroad into a recreational trail with amenities within the Nickel Plate District.

The City's profile within Indiana and nationally has risen significantly in the past 10 years. It has climbed the ranks as one of Money magazine's best places to live, earning the top spot in 2017. The City has also been recognized by International City / County Management Association (ICMA).

Resources

- **Leah McGrath**, Deputy Mayor of Community Development
- <http://online.encodeplus.com/regs/fishers-in-npdc/doc-viewer.aspx?>
- <https://www.ibj.com/articles/71923-how-fishers-created-a-downtown-almost-overnight>
- <https://www.rqaw.com/7-developments-are-adding-vibrancy-to-downtown-fishers/>
- <http://www.fishersecondev.com/101/Entrepreneurship>

Case Study

Branding Campaign | Albuquerque, NM

The Challenge

During the 2008 to 2013 television series run of Breaking Bad, the City of Albuquerque, where the series takes place, was put on the map and experienced an influx of tourists. However, City leaders wanted to be known for more than just a television show and its annual nine-day hot air ballooning event that occurs in October. It had been nearly 15 years since the City's visitor's bureau revised its branding strategy.

The Approach

In 2015 The Albuquerque Convention and Visitor's Bureau engaged an advertising agency to lead the branding effort. That year-long process involved stakeholder engagement and market research to identify community assets and its aspirations, and to develop a brand message. Early on it was important to City leaders to promote an image of innovation, unpretentiousness, and openness.

The branding process led to a comprehensive campaign to highlight the City's distinctive blend of culture, history, cuisine, art, blue skies and high-desert terrain. It included:

- A new marketing tagline "change your perspective"
- a new name for the visitors bureau - *Visit Albuquerque*.
- A modern logo that represented the city, its strong native American roots and beautiful artwork; and
- An advertising campaign across a variety of channels, including print publications, billboards, websites, social media, direct mail and airport kiosks.

In 2017 the City began a campaign that focused on raising awareness about how the City benefits entrepreneurs. The campaign included:

- A content and information hub and a biweekly newsletter on the City's economic development organization's website;
- Utilizing social media (Facebook and Instagram), search engine marketing, digital advertising and content marketing were used as promotional opportunities;
- Sponsored relevant conferences in New Orleans, New York and California to reach entrepreneurs around the country;

City	College Station	Albuquerque, NM
Population	116,218	560,218
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	3%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	915,927
Median Age	22.7	36.2
City Land Area	51 sq mi	187.7 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	N/A
University	Texas A&M University	University of New Mexico
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	24,393
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	-15%

*since 2010



- A 26-page advertorial buy in Southwest Airlines' in-flight magazine;
- Press releases when the City was ranked number one in the country for gender equality, education, pay and homeownership; and
- Organization of a downtown music festival;

These marketing efforts built on other initiatives underway in the city. In 2014, the University of New Mexico purchased a seven-acre site near downtown to create an innovation district. The district, called InnovateABQ, is anchored by a \$35 million, 160,000-square-foot mixed-use building, created as a public private partnership. The building will house students, office space, and the University of New Mexico's Innovation Academy.



The Impact

Initiating the rebranding process was done in phases and focused on tackling small parts of the brand each year. This process allowed the City not only to be successful in the rebranding process but also sustain the initiative. Since the rebrand, Albuquerque is gradually becoming a tourist spot for more diverse things including arts, culture and heritage, cuisine, film and most notably, entrepreneurship.

In a place where there were no previous start-up accelerators, Albuquerque is now home to a few venture capitalists investing in new based businesses. According to U.S. Census Bureau Data, the state had the fourth-highest percent increase in the number of startups from 2013 to 2014. The effort to utilize social media and other tactics paid, as for example, the ABQic videos featuring different entrepreneurs and organizations have earned 44 million views as reported by Forbes.

On the tourism side, the City has seen an increase in visitor spending, hotel occupancy, and number of conventions. Visit Albuquerque reported that the 2018 fiscal year ended with a 7.3 percent increase in the hotel tax revenue.

Resources

- <https://www.visualfizz.com/blog/branding-a-city-albuquerque-new-mexico/>
- <https://www.abq.org/innovation-central.aspx>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/steveolenski/2017/10/23/how-to-rebrand-a-city/#33e1abf63bdf>
- <https://www.inc.com/anna-hensel/how-albuquerque-new-mexico-is-becoming-the-next-entrepreneurial-hot-spot.html>

Topic 5: Neighborhood character and student housing

How do we better maintain the character of established neighborhoods with redevelopment pressure for student housing?

Context

Like many college towns, College Station has faced challenges from students living off-campus in traditional neighborhoods. Similar to other college towns, there are two core issues occurring in College Station: 1) conversion of single-family homes to student occupancy; and 2) redevelopment pressure to create student housing that is out of scale with surrounding development.

When large numbers of “single family” homes in a neighborhood are occupied by students, there can be conflicts with other residents due to noise, traffic, parking, and other nuisance issues. Redevelopment pressure in neighborhoods for student housing can also lead to negative changes to the neighborhood’s physical character. In some places, the zoning in single family residential areas allow for redevelopment of housing intended for single family occupancy with housing designed for students (5-6 bedrooms) that is significantly different in scale from existing homes. In other places, this redevelopment brings multi-story buildings that do not relate well to their surroundings.

Potential Strategies

1. **Rental Licensing Programs** – Mandatory licensing to track and manage the supply and location of student occupancy.
2. **Neighborhood Compatibility Zoning Standards** – Design and form standards to ensure redevelopment or infill development fits in to the existing context. They may regulate the size, scale, and number of bedrooms in homes, on-street or front-yard parking, and accessory dwelling units. For larger development, they may limit the width of a building, façade articulation, or address transitions when adjacent to single family development.
3. **Neighborhood Conservation Overlays** – Special zoning provisions that in seek to maintain a specific area’s existing character, such as historic districts.
4. **Discretionary review processes** – A board of commission reviews projects for design quality; sometimes applied to specific types of projects or locations;

Case Study:

Student Home Licensing, Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative, and Neighborhood Compatibility Standards | State College, PA

The Challenge

The Borough of State College developed along with Penn State University. Like many college towns, the campus is adjacent to the historic downtown and older neighborhoods. Also like many college towns, State College has a large number of students living off campus. The borough has several well-organized neighborhoods near the University that have pushed hard for protections from high levels of student occupancy, gameday rentals, and changes to physical character amid redevelopment pressure for new student housing.

City	College Station	State College, PA
Population	116,218	42,352
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	1%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	162,805
Median Age	22.7	21.6
City Land Area	51 sq mi	4.6 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	85 miles (Harrisburg)
University	Texas A&M University	Penn State University
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	46,803
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	4%

*since 2010

The Approach

State College has put several programs in place and is considering adopting others. These initiatives include:

Student Home Licensing (SHL). The SHL program began in 2015 and requires all one and two-family properties being used as a Student Home (more than one unrelated student living in the property) be licensed, and license renewal once a year. The total number of licenses are managed through a quota system with limits per district to prevent concentrations of student housing in certain areas.

Neighborhood Sustainability Program. The Neighborhood Sustainability Program is a related, exploratory project for converting student duplexes and houses into single family homes in areas that are on the verge of shifting away from primarily resident housing. Competition for houses in the neighborhoods around Penn State University Park drives up prices and investors renting to students can often afford to pay more for houses than families can. The goal of the Neighborhood Sustainability Program is to maintain diversity in the neighborhoods near downtown, keeping students from taking over. The initiative was established by the Borough's Redevelopment Authority in 2014 to advance opportunities for home ownership and to maintain safe, stable and attractive neighborhoods in the Borough. Through this program, the Redevelopment Authority purchases homes in the four State College neighborhoods that are registered as student homes. Prior to resale, the Redevelopment Authority will forfeit the student home license and place a restrictive covenant on the property to ensure the home is maintained as an owner-occupied residence or rented for single family residential purposes. The program has focused on blocks deemed at risk of transitioning to student occupancy.

Neighborhood Compatibility Standards. Amid considerable redevelopment pressure, the borough has currently achieved its neighborhood compatibility and other design goals through a Design Review Board and a set of design guidelines for development in various context areas. Both the Planning Commission and Design Review Board currently review development plans for compatibility. However, this process means that design quality is achieved through negotiation on a per-project basis. The borough is considering updating this discretionary review process to include more design standards within the zoning ordinance and to streamline the plan review process. The neighborhood compatibility standards address building height, massing, and placement; parking location areas; roof forms; and transitions between development types. The rewritten ordinance is currently in the adoption phase.

The Impact

The student home licensing program has been successful in limiting the proliferation of student rentals within traditional neighborhoods where it is not desired. The community's strong neighborhood groups and the Borough's thorough enforcement of the licensing requirement mean that there has been a high level of compliance (residents report suspected violations).

The Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative to convert student rental homes to resident occupancy has seen modest success. The program has bought and sold a half dozen houses between 2014 and 2018. This low number is partly due to the cost of acquiring properties and available funding. The properties that have sold, have received for more than asking price. The numbers alone however, do not reflect the potential impact. A block can quickly transition from mostly resident occupancy to mostly student once it reaches 10-15% student occupied. One property could be enough to change the trajectory of an entire block. The program has been successful in maintaining resident occupancy in designated areas. The borough is considering other, potentially cost-effective changes to the program, including buying the student rental permits instead of the homes.

Resources

- **Edward LeClear**, Director of Planning & Community Development, Borough of State College (814) 234-7109 | elecLEAR@statecollegepa.us
- <http://www.statecollegepa.us/2847/Student-Home-License>
- <https://statecollegepa.us/2750/Neighborhood-Sustainability-Program>

Case Study

College and University Neighborhoods District | Baylor University, Waco, Texas

The Challenge

Enrollment at Baylor University is approximately 17,000 and has grown by more than 2,000 since 2010. It is estimated 65% of students live off-campus. The University growth has driven interest in student housing development, with a number of student housing project built in the City in recent years.

Existing residential neighborhoods has been disrupted by large student housing development as it brings parking, traffic and noise to the neighborhoods. To mitigate these negative impacts, the Waco City Council sought to better manage the development of student housing and protect existing neighborhoods.

The Approach

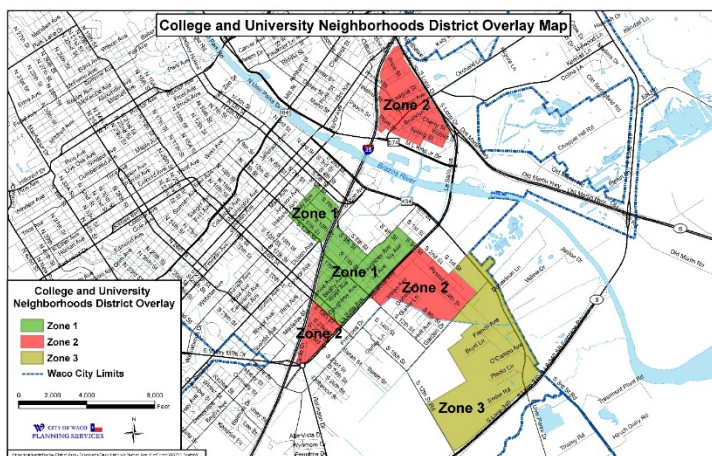
Waco's approach is similar to many university communities. The City created zoning standards to address the location and compatibility of large student housing developments. It also has special standards to protect the character of certain existing neighborhoods.

In 2014 the City created a special zoning overlay district for areas around the university that may be prime locations for student rental housing projects. The *College and University Neighborhoods District* is located within approximately a 2.85 mile radius around the University. The overlay was developed to protect neighborhoods and not displace existing neighborhoods in favor of development. It has three context zones with different standards regulating front yard parking, building heights, landscaping, and architectural features such as requiring windows front major streets.

In zone 1, which includes part of campus and downtown, permitted building heights are greater, which allows for large-scale student housing developments. In zones 2 and 3, the standards are more in keeping with the scale of single-family residential development.

City	College Station	Waco, TX
Population	116,218	138,186
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	11%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	271,942
Median Age	22.7	28.6
City Land Area	51 sq mi	88.96 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	95-100 miles (Austin, Dallas)
University	Texas A&M University	Baylor University
University Type	Public	Private
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	17,217
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	16%

*since 2010



The Impact

The regulations initially faced some skepticism and received a 5-5 vote from the City's planning commission. Although there was some concern that the regulations would reduce affordability and lead to higher property taxes, those fears were unfounded. There was criticism that the City waited too long to put the policies in place. A 2018 City study highlighted several larger projects (undertaken in zone 1) including:

- URSA – 3 story, 250 units student housing community with on-site amenities. The development is located in an area where it is compatible with adjacent properties that are also of similar nature.
- The view on 10th – 4 story, 178-bedroom housing with amenities and reserve parking. The development is located at an intersection, with windows and entrances facing the street, promoting pedestrian activity. The development is scaled to “step down” to the heights of adjacent existing properties, and height transitions between properties are appropriate or are similar to existing buildings. In parts of the development that are adjacent existing single detached homes, proper landscaping treatment has been applied to prevent parking along the student building.
- West Campus Lofts – 3 story, 180-bedroom student project that received Tax Increment Funding for public improvements in the amount of \$465,000. The building has an appropriate front yard setback, parking on site and is compatible in height with the adjacent two-story rental units and single-family homes located across the street. Side street parking has been provided at the front.

While “neighborhood compatibility standards” are a “best practice” in college towns, it is worth noting that many communities’ standards address things that Waco’s regulations do not. Specifically, most have different standards for building height and setbacks when student housing is adjacent to single-family properties. They may also limit building width and include other architectural standards such as for façade articulation.

Resources

- <https://www.waco-texas.com/planning-special-zoning-overlay-districts.asp>
- https://www.wacotrib.com/news/government/controversial-baylor-area-overlay-district-gets---council-vote/article_10065868-3678-5cdc-8070-7457ce5d5df2.html
- <https://www.waco-texas.com/economic-development/pdf/12.26.18.Downtown%20Market%20Study%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Other university communities that have recently implemented new zoning regulations related to the location and character of student housing include:

- Columbia, SC
- Columbia, MO
- Ann Arbor, MI
- Chapel Hill, NC
- Bloomington, IN

Topic 6: Housing Affordability

How could we create more opportunities for new housing that is affordable to moderate income households, including families and young professionals?

Context

The challenge of providing housing that is affordable and desirable to young adults, families, and moderate-income households is one facing most communities today. Following the Great Recession, housing construction trailed population growth while costs of construction exploded. In most markets today, it is now impossible to build market-rate housing that is affordable to most of the population without subsidy. Beyond rising housing costs, lifestyle factors, and high rates of personal debt are compelling many young adults to delay purchasing a home. Desirable and affordable rental housing is important. But rents are also increasing, particularly in growing cities and those with large universities where students disrupt the market.

This is an extremely complex issue and there is not a single strategy that solves it. Most communities having any success are addressing multiple cost drivers (some of which are difficult for a city to solve). These cost drivers are: price of land, capital and financing costs, construction costs, development soft costs, and expected return on investment.

Potential Strategies

1. **Regulatory incentives** – Such as fee reductions (development soft costs) or density bonuses (expected developer return on investment).
2. **Pre-approved building plans** – That reduce the uncertainty in the development process and the risk in building new housing types (development soft costs).
3. **Land banking or land acquisition** – Where the city or another entity acquires land for future redevelopment (price of land)
4. **Community land trust** – Where a public entity owns and leases land for affordable housing (price of land).
5. **Workforce housing capital pool** – Where a public entity establishes a fund that is used for various types of affordable housing initiatives (capital costs). Source of funding varies.

Case Study

Georgia Initiative for Community Housing | Athens-Clarke County, GA

The Challenge

Between 2000 and 2016, the Athens-Clarke County population grew by 7,000 residents. The City is a high poverty community with 37% of residents (including students) living below the poverty line. Approximately one in four families earn less than the low-income threshold (\$58,000).

Nearly half of Athens residents are considered “cost burdened,” meaning they pay more than 30% of their gross income on rent. To put the issue in perspective, a two-person household earning minimum wage (\$7.25/hour) would require working 97 hours a week to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment (average rent is \$911 /month) and not be qualified as a cost burden.

Homeownership is also out of reach for many low to moderate income residents. Based on the city's median household income of \$32,162, affordable home prices should range from \$130k to 150k. However, the average sale price for a home is between \$200,400 and \$338, 028.

Rental availability has also been a challenge. Nearly 30% of residents are students and about 50% of rental units are student occupied. Newly constructed units that have been built recently have been dedicated to student occupancy.

The Approach

In 2015, Athens-Clarke applied for and was accepted into the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH), which is a preeminent source for housing best practices, information and training. The program helps communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through development of locally driven and revitalization strategies. The local Athens GICH is composed of members from the public, private and non-profit sectors who, as part of the three-year program, developed a plan to address the affordable housing needs in the community.

The planning process involved a detailed study of the local housing market and best practices. The resulting plan includes a set of priority recommendations and actions. In developing the recommendations, the team realized that a variety of options was important in addressing the systematic nature of the challenge. The recommendations include five initiatives that are supported by specific actions or policies.

City	College Station	Athens-Clarke County, GA
Population	116,218	125,964
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	9%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	211,306
Median Age	22.7	26.2
City Land Area	51 sq mi	116 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	70 miles (Atlanta)
University	Texas A&M University	University of Georgia
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	38,652
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	11%

*since 2010

The initiatives are:

1. **Investing in the housing trust fund** – involves creating a fund for affordable housing from a special sales tax and a payment-in-lieu from a density bonus incentive.
2. **Incentivizing inclusionary development** – involves evaluating development processes, fees, and other regulatory standards to incentivize housing affordability.
3. **Identifying opportunities for redevelopment** – Involves inventorying opportunity sites and considering specific rezonings to promote redevelopment.
4. **Solidifying code enforcement practices** – involves using the housing trust fund to establishing a property maintenance fund strengthen code enforcement to maintain the existing rental housing stock.
5. **Combating displacement** – involves developing a tool for tracking neighborhood change and evaluating a property tax freeze on low income residents/landlords.

The Impact

Since joining the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing and establishing its plan, the City has:

- Received a Georgia Dream award in the amount of \$881,015. This award is given to help first time home buyers purchase a home.
- Evaluated the feasibility of an inclusionary zoning ordinance in Athens-Clarke County. By doing this, they were able to establish a housing trust fund, and other mechanisms for creating accessible, affordable rental housing.
- Partnered with the Athens Land Bank Authority to meet with the Center for Community Progress and discuss the viability and feasibility of voluntary inclusionary zoning in Athens-Clarke County. Vital elected officials and community members attended this meeting and discussions continued to progress for the potential implementation.
- Approved a memorandum of understanding for affordable housing. The MOU provides a non-binding basis for negotiations between Athens-Clarke County and the Athens Housing Authority. To help an area Athens that has struggled in the past, approximately \$39 million of the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) money will go towards the renovation or redevelopment of the low-income Bethel Midtown Village apartment complex. The funding comes out of the proposed \$44.5 million SPLOST Affordable Housing Project budget.

Resources

- <https://www.accgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/57881/GICH-Final-Report?bidId=>
- <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-program-reports>

Case Study:

My Chatt House, Online Pattern Book and Building Plans | Chattanooga, TN

The Challenge

The City of Chattanooga sought to address two related issues: 1) residential infill and redevelopment in its desirable traditional neighborhoods that is not in keeping with the existing character of the areas; and 2) an imbalance between housing supply, demand, and affordability.

The Approach

After completing an analysis of “missing middle housing types” in 2016, the City set out to create a pattern book with design guidance to encourage development of new housing that addresses those two challenges. Unique to Chattanooga, this pattern book took the form of a website.

“My Chatt House” as the website is called, is a resource developed for the Chattanooga community to encourage appropriate development in two of their central neighborhoods. The two neighborhoods are outside of the city’s downtown form-based code and are not protected by historic districts. The effort was a collaboration involving the Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise, the Chattanooga Design Center, and the City. The site contains design guidance and resources pertaining to landscaping, additions, renovations, and new construction to help homeowners and developers uphold the characteristics of these unique neighborhoods.

City	College Station	Chattanooga, TN
Population	116,218	180,557
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	6%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	547,776
Median Age	22.7	37
City Land Area	51 sq mi	137 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	125-134 miles (Knoxville, Nashville)
University	Texas A&M University	The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	11,587
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	10%



A key component of this program is the preparation of building site plan, floor plans, and elevations for a variety of single-family and small multi-family homes. The homes are based on common architectural styles of the neighborhoods from colonial to craftsman and include details for the minimum lot size, floor plans, gross square footage, and design elements such as porches, patios, etc. These plans streamline the process for developers and homebuilders by providing the baseline requirements for a variety of residential homes that integrate into the neighborhood context. Local

manufacturers are listed with building material specifications to further encourage high-quality design.

The Impact

The website has been active for nearly two years, but the direct impact is unclear. The idea behind a pattern book is to communicate expectations and provide ideas for potential development. For small developers, the resources should reduce effort, uncertainty, and streamline the development process. These factors all reduce “development soft costs,” which is one small factor behind the costs of development, albeit one that a City can potentially impact.

Chattanooga is also pursuing additional initiatives to address the affordable housing needs. These include a Neighborhood Reinvestment Fund and an Affordable Housing Fund.

Some communities have taken the idea of pattern books a step further by establishing formally pre-approved plans. In addition to reducing effort and uncertainty, a builder can enjoy an expedited permitting process by selecting a pre-approved plan. Roanoke, Virginia, and Knoxville, Tennessee are two examples.

Resources

- **Martina Guilfoil**, President and CEO, Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise.
- **Eric Myers**, Executive Director, Chattanooga Design Studio
- <http://www.mychatthouse.com/>
- [*Report: Missing Middle Housing Types for Chattanooga*](#)

Topic 7: Redevelopment and Infill Development

How do we encourage redevelopment or infill development?

Context

College Station has several geographic areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan as intended “redevelopment areas” as well as other places that are appropriate for infill and redevelopment. Yet, aside from a few small areas, actual redevelopment activity has been limited. With the rising long-term costs of infrastructure and recent state laws making annexation more challenging, growing inward through infill and redevelopment is increasingly important for the City. Encouraging redevelopment or infill development typically involves a combination of factors including marketing and communication, financial incentives, removing regulatory barriers, or leveraging catalytic public or private investment.

Potential Strategies

1. **Establish or refine incentives** – Such as fee or tax reductions, density bonuses, or more flexible development standards for specific types of development (reducing costs, reduce developer risk).
2. **Create catalytic investments** – Such as proactive infrastructure improvements or a public-private partnership to create development momentum and leverage limited funding.
3. **Prepare and communicate a vision** – A conceptual plan or vision for a district that may be accompanied by a marketing/communication component (like a development prospectus, clear vision, etc). An important part of the vision is political alignment in support of the vision (getting politics in order, to reduce uncertainty).

Case Study

Economic Development Partnership and Land Swap | Lexington, KY

The Challenge

The City of Lexington has an extraterritorial boundary, its urban service area. It was established in 1958 to limit sprawling development from the unique Bluegrass landscape and horse farms surrounding the city. The boundary was last expanded in 1996 when 5,400 acres were added. In 2017, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council held a public hearing to vote for the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan recommended that the urban service area boundary not be expanded for the next five years and instead the City should focus on its recent policy of infill and redevelopment within existing urban land.

City	College Station	Lexington, KY
Population	116,218	323,780
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	9%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	516,697
Median Age	22.7	34.3
City Land Area	51 sq mi	283.65 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	75 miles (Louisville)
University	Texas A&M University	University of Kentucky
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	29,182
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	5%

*since 2010

At that time, staff's recommendation not to expand the urban service boundary had raised concerns about the potential impacts the city may face. For example, business leaders felt that Lexington did not have enough land available to accommodate growing businesses or attract new ones. As well, the existing 100-acre Bluegrass Business Park was full, and City Officials had expressed concerns that a lack of publicly controlled industrial park land would decrease job growth and business recruitment.

The Approach

A day before the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council was to vote for the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, an announcement of a land swap between Lexington and the University of Kentucky was made. The City of Lexington would allow the University of Kentucky (UK) to control 13 acres of roadways sections of 26 streets and alleys near campus. UK would contribute \$3 million and the City \$1 million for the next 10 years towards traffic safety improvements in the area. In exchange, UK transferred (at no cost) 250 acres of land at Coldstream Research Park to the City.

As part of the land swap, the City received 50 acres of "shovel ready" land within the Coldstream Research Campus plus 200 acres located close to the Coldstream Research Park and the Bluegrass Business Park. These lands are located within the designated urban service boundary.

The City intended to sell land within the 50-acre site to potential businesses. Proceeds would then be split 50/50 between the City and University. The City profits would be spent on improving roads and infrastructure on the 200 acres of land, while the University would use their share towards relocating the agricultural research operations from the 200-acre site.

The University agreed to develop a transportation safety improvement plan that will discuss enhanced wayfinding, improvements to intersections, infrastructure and safety, and traffic mitigation (i.e. speed tables). The study will focus on the neighborhoods surrounding the campus, and street avenues and corridors. Other issues that would be addressed as expressed by the community include parking on lawns and trash cans that have been left out for days.

The land swap transaction required state approval. On December 12, 2017 both the state and the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees approved the proposal for the land swap. A memorandum of understanding, which sets the conditions and time-line for the land swap and the Master Development Agreement for a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district was approved and signed by the parties.

The Impact

The partnership has opened opportunities that will benefit both the City and University. For the City, the deal preserves farmland, limits long-term utility infrastructure costs, revitalizes an important gateway, brings new employment and commercial growth to expand the tax base, and creates new job opportunities will benefit residents (including students). On the University's side, the partnership advances the institution's campus development and demonstrates its interest in public-private partnerships and in strengthening and community connections.

The land swap was praised locally as an important partnership for economic development in Lexington and increasing safety in the campus areas. In 2019 the land swap initiative received national recognition as a finalist in the 2019 University Economic Development Association (UEDA) Awards of Excellence for their impactful and creative initiatives. The UEDA Awards validate and promote innovative programs that contribute to economic prosperity and encourages other institution and communities to adopt similar programs.

The global headquarters for A&W Restaurants Inc. will likely be the first company to located in the new industrial park. The city sold properties to the company for \$585,000 and an agreement is planned to be finalized by January 2020.

Resources

- <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/economicdevelopment>

Case Study

Infill Incentive Plan | Yuma, AZ

The Challenge

As the City of Yuma grew over the years, development codes changed to accommodate automobile-centric development and new construction in existing areas of the City became more difficult. Today, many properties in the City sit vacant or in disrepair.

The City realized that as government budgets become tighter, there was a strong need to grow through infill and redevelopment, rather than expanding outwards.

City	College Station	Yuma, AZ
Population	116,218	97,908
Pop. Growth Rate*	23%	8%
Metro Pop. (2019)	273,101	229,957
Median Age	22.7	34
City Land Area	51 sq mi	120 sq mi
Proximity to larger cities:	95-100 miles (Waco, Austin, Houston)	185-237 (Phoenix, Tucson, Mesa)
University	Texas A&M University	Arizona Western College
University Type	Public	Public
Total Enrollment (2017)	68,603	11,493
Enrollment Growth Rate*	63%	-16%

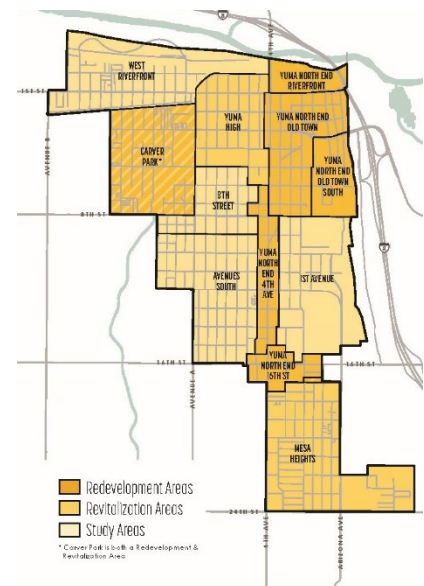
*since 2010

The Approach

Encouraging infill development has been a topic of discussion amongst the City of Yuma Council and staff for several years. In 2016, Council directed planning staff to develop incentives that would encourage infill development. Staff prepared a draft ordinance to identify the twelve targeted areas within the Infill Overlay (IO) District, which is located in the historic heart of the City and the Infill Incentive Plan that outlines incentives related to the development within the IO. The Infill Incentive Plan explored issues associated with infill development and identifies potential incentives available to those who develop or redevelop within the Infill Overlay District.

The plan and the designation of the IO was prepared as per the Arizona State Statute (ARS 9-4999.10) which allows areas to be designated as an Infill Incentive District if they meet at least three of the six State requirements. The following three requirements, are met and applicable to the City:

- Large number of vacant older or dilapidated buildings or structures;
- Large number of vacant or underused parcels of property, obsolete or inappropriate lot or parcel sizes or environmentally contaminated sites; and
- Absence of development and investment activity compared to other areas in the city.



As part of the plan, The City prepared an Infill Incentive Toolkit that describes the thirteen incentives available for development within the IO:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Reduced setbacks | 6. Alternative Alleyway paving | 10. Utility fee waivers |
| 2. Increased lot coverage | 7. No-build easements | 11. Development fee credits |
| 3. Accessory dwelling units | 8. International existing building code | 12. Reduce permit and review fees |
| 4. Reduced landscaping | 9. Fire code flexibility | 13. Lease excise tax |
| 5. Reduced parking | | |

The toolkit functions as a “deck of card” where staff can help developers assemble their best hand for each project. As such, not all incentives apply to every project, but staff can determine the appropriate incentives on a case by case basis.

The Impact

Since the Infill Development Plan was passed by council in June 2017 the following development has occurred:

- After a year since adoption, there have been 68 predevelopment meetings (62% increase since the previous year) for potential projects in the target areas.
- There were 67 planning cases (almost double from the previous year) and 18 new homes versus seven from the previous year.
- Developers have been purchasing property within the IO and proposing projects.
- Applicants have met with the City for improvements to existing buildings ranging from patios to building additions.
- Interest to redevelop smaller commercial properties.
- Larger developments including an apartment building and hotels such as the Hilton 2 Suites have been constructed.
- Schools have been supportive, as they anticipate increased enrollment to counter the impacts as families moved to new subdivisions on the outskirts of the City.
- New residents are moving in and improving the neighborhood.

Resources

- <https://www.yumaaz.gov/community-development/community-planning/infill-yuma.html>
- https://www.yumaaz.gov/documents/community-development/miscellaneous/Infill_Incentive_Plan_ADOPTED_20170621_LowRes.pdf
- https://www.yumachamber.org/documents/attachments/YumaBIZ_05May_2019_sm.pdf