

WHAT TO DO WITH Second & Frederica



REPORT ON PUBLIC FORUM

The purpose of the forum was to gain a sense of what the citizens of Owensboro-Daviess County would like to see happen on the site of the former state office building and/or the property the building sits on.

Owned by the City of Owensboro, the property is both visible and strategic, located between the planned convention center, Hampton Inn hotel, riverfront park expansion and improvements, Riverfront Crossings and more.

PARTICIPATION

The forum was a public event, open to all. It was promoted through paid advertising, news articles, talk shows, a portable sign, and email blasts to various contact lists.

125 citizens attended the event and up to 100 people voted. The four public officials who attended did not participate in the discussions, but were available to clarify or answer questions. Participants reflected a cross section of the citizenry. (See Appendix.)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For forums such as this to be as meaningful as possible, it is important for participants to be well-informed. In this case, participants were provided a discussion guide that included background information on how the site became available and was purchased by the City, why the site for the hotel and convention center was changed, special possibilities that have been suggested with regard to a Bluegrass Music Center, potential environmental complications and more.

FORMAT

To enable participants to benefit from diverse perspectives, participants were assigned random tables and each group was led by a neutral facilitator. Four strategic options were presented, a description of the options and possible tradeoffs associated with each option.

OPTIONS EXAMINED

The following options were presented:

- HOLD ONTO THE PROPERTY AND POSTPONE A DECISION.**
- SELL THE PROPERTY TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.**
- SOLICIT PROPOSALS FROM DEVELOPERS FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT ON THE SITE.**
- RAZE THE BUILDING; ENSURE THE SITE IS REMEDIATED, AND CONSTRUCT A PUBLIC PLAZA (PERHAPS COMBINED WITH RETAIL) ON THE SITE.**

POLLING RESULTS

Following approximately 40 minutes of dialogue and deliberation at the tables, participants voted using electronic keypads.

QUESTION 1:

(99 VOTED) THE STATE BUILDING PROPERTY IS IMPORTANT TO THE DOWNTOWN AREA.

- 87 percent ♦ Agree Strongly
- 6 percent ♦ Agree Somewhat
- 3 percent ♦ Disagree Somewhat
- 3 percent ♦ Disagree strongly
- 1 percent ♦ No Opinion

QUESTION 2:

(100 VOTED) TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE, WE SHOULD BE WILLING TO:

- 94 percent ♦ Enter into a public-private partnership
- 6 percent ♦ Leave it up to the private sector

QUESTION 3:

(99 VOTED) THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE IS:

- 37 percent ♦ Bluegrass Music Center
- 1 percent ♦ Hotel
- 33 percent ♦ Mixed Use
- 1 percent ♦ Office Development
- 2 percent ♦ Outdoor Amphitheater
- 19 percent ♦ Public Space
- 1 percent ♦ Residential
- 2 percent ♦ Restaurant/Bar
- 3 percent ♦ Retail

QUESTION 4:

(100 VOTED) WHICH OPTION DO YOU PREFER FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE:

- 28 percent ♦ Hold onto the property and postpone a decision.
- 0 percent ♦ Sell the property to the highest bidder.
- 39 percent ♦ Solicit proposals from developers for private investment on the site.
- 33 percent ♦ Raze the building, remediate the site, and construct a public plaza (perhaps combined with retail) on the site.

QUESTION 5:

(100 VOTED) OTHER IDEAS FROM PARTICIPANTS:

- 30 percent ♦ Raze the building, environmental cleanup
- 27 percent ♦ Combination of the EDC/Chamber/CVB offices
- 16 percent ♦ Music center—not just bluegrass
- 12 percent ♦ Lease building until use is found
- 9 percent ♦ Open market
- 6 percent ♦ Theatre/IMAX

*** see appendix for full list***

QUESTION 6:

(100 VOTED) I WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY THE FOLLOWING AMOUNT TO ADVANCE MY FAVORITE IDEAS FOR THE USE OF THIS PROPERTY:

- 55 percent ♦ \$100 or less per year

Note: A “zero” amount was not listed as an option and several participants pointed out that they would have voted for that option had it been available. Overall, there appeared to be little support for additional taxes to fund a project on the site.

- 39 percent ♦ \$100 - \$500 per year
- 3 percent ♦ \$500 - \$1000 per year
- 3 percent ♦ More than \$1000 per year



CONCLUSIONS/TAKEAWAYS

The forum participants reflected a cross section of the community that, while not a scientific sample, was a group whose perspectives and recommendations should be valued by public officials. Participants were informed and benefited from the views of others before they were asked to come to judgment.

Nearly every participant (93 percent) considered this property to be vital to the downtown area.

Rather than leave it up to the private sector, participants felt strongly (by 94 percent to 6 percent) that we should enter into a public-private partnership. This is likely because participants did not want the City of Owensboro to lose control and risk an incompatible development occurring on the site.

By a narrow margin, (37 to 33 percent), participants see the greatest potential for the site to be a Bluegrass Music Center, followed by a preference for a mixed use development (some combination of retail, restaurants, entertainment, office or residential). Public space (generally characterized by amenities such as a plaza/park, seating, performance area, public art, street vendors, etc.) was the third choice at 19 percent.

In terms of strategic options for moving forward, the top three options were relatively close. Almost four in 10 (39 percent) recommended that the City solicit proposals from developers for private development – whatever the market may support: office,

retail, restaurants, etc. One in three recommended that the City demolish the building, remediate any environmental complications, construct a public plaza that could include some retail space. Nearly one in three (28 percent) recommended that the City simply hold onto the property for now and postpone a decision.

Participants were invited to make other recommendations. None of these ideas were supported by more than 30 percent. These included (in order of support): raze the building and clean up the site (of environmental problems), relocate the convention and visitors bureau and potentially other agencies to the site (closer to visitors), develop a music center that is more than bluegrass.

More than half (55 percent) would only be willing to pay \$100 or less per year to advance their favorite idea. (A significant number of participants indicated that they were not willing to pay anything even though “zero” was not listed as an option.) Nearly 40 percent were willing to pay between \$100 and \$500 annually. Overall, there appeared to be little support for additional taxes to fund a project on the site, but since there was significant support for a public-private partnership, we conclude that the participants would support public funding if the selected project could be paid for through existing public resources.

APPENDIX

FORUM PARTICIPANTS:

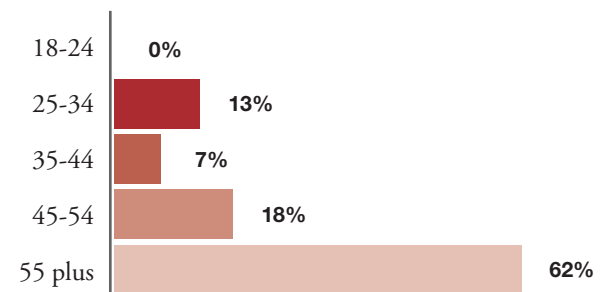
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|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Belinda Abell | Steve Ford | Anne Leazenby | Mary Roach |
| Patti Acquisto | Keith Free | Tammy Maglinger | Forrest Roberts |
| Gary Adams | Josh Gann | Larry Maglinger | Jamie Roby |
| Carolyn Ahnell | Craig Grant | Joseph Martin | Keith Sanders |
| Emil Ahnell | Gabrielle Gray | Joanne Masters | Elissa Sanders |
| Ed Allen | Charlene Greer | Al Mattingly | Bobby Ray Self |
| Sally Barker | Sharon Hagerman | James Mattingly | Catherine Shelton |
| Debbie Benedek | Chad Hall | Kathleen Mattingly | Larry Shelton |
| Barbara Bennett | Casey Hamilton | Guy McAllister | George Skiadas |
| Joe Berry | Donna Hanley | Pat McKeegan | Pam Smith-Wright |
| Rodney Berry | Donna Hawn | Karen Miller | Roger Stacy |
| Larry Bidwell | Catheline Hayden | Larry Miller | Jane Stevenson |
| Greg Black | Jason Hayden | Paul Morsey | Kathy Strobel |
| Terry Blake | Rick Hobgood | Ashley Myers | Casey Taylor |
| Richard Brown | Allen Holbrook | Jordan Myers | Jack Tomer |
| Malcolm Bryant | Mary Bryan Hood | Aubrey Nehring | Steve Vied |
| Margaret Cambron | Hervey Howell | Shelly Nichols | Sydney Warren |
| Steve Champion | RaShae Jennings | Suzanne Northern-Blazer | Sandra Watts |
| PattiChism | Stewart Jennison | Deborah Nunley | Justin Weaver |
| Danny Clark | Cynthia Johnston | Nate Pagan | Ralph Wible |
| Martha Clark | Jim Kamuf | Bill Parrish | Dennis Wilson |
| Rose Mary Conder | Charles Kamuf | Mayor Ron Payne | Roxi Witt |
| Larry Conder | Charles Kamuf, Jr. | Linda Perry | Sally Wood |
| Bob Darling | Carlos Knight | Josephine Poe | Terry Woodward |
| Sharla Darnell | Rod Kuegel | Claud Porter | Martha Wrona |
| Silas Deane | Bruce Kunze | Dayna Reid | Ron Wrona |
| Jim DeMaio | Jim Lambert | David Renshaw | Paula Yevincy |
| Sean Dysinger | Chris Langdon | Sam Riley | Jim Zabek |
| Travis Estes | Ken Lawson | Pam Riley | |

POLLING

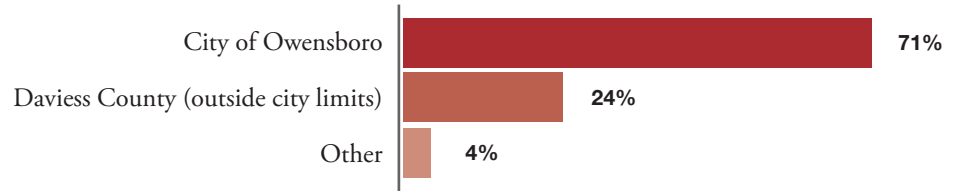
ARE YOU ...



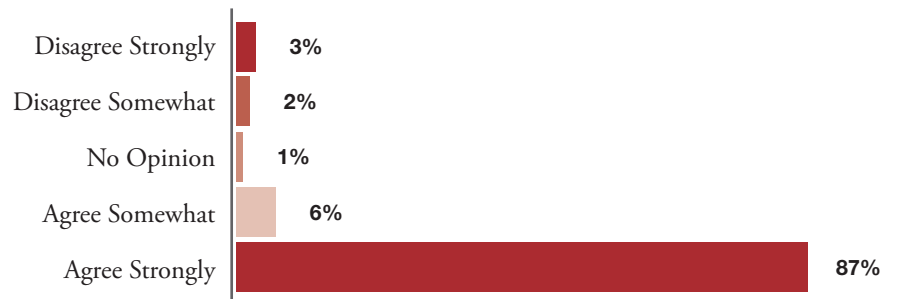
WHAT IS YOUR AGE RANGE?



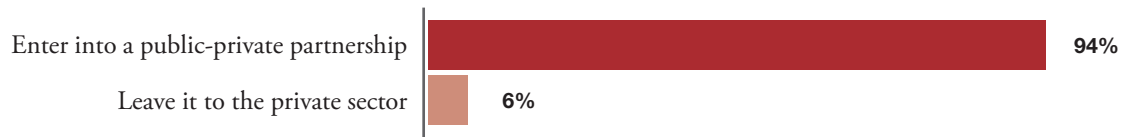
WHERE DO YOU LIVE?



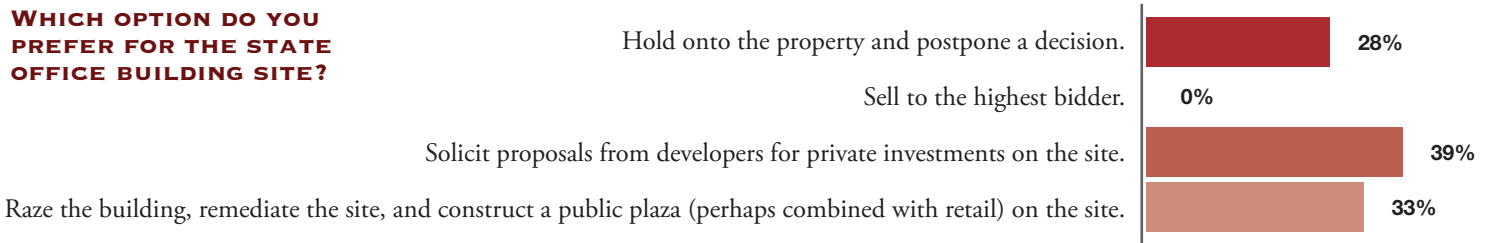
THE STATE BUILDING PROPERTY IS IMPORTANT TO THE DOWNTOWN PLAN.



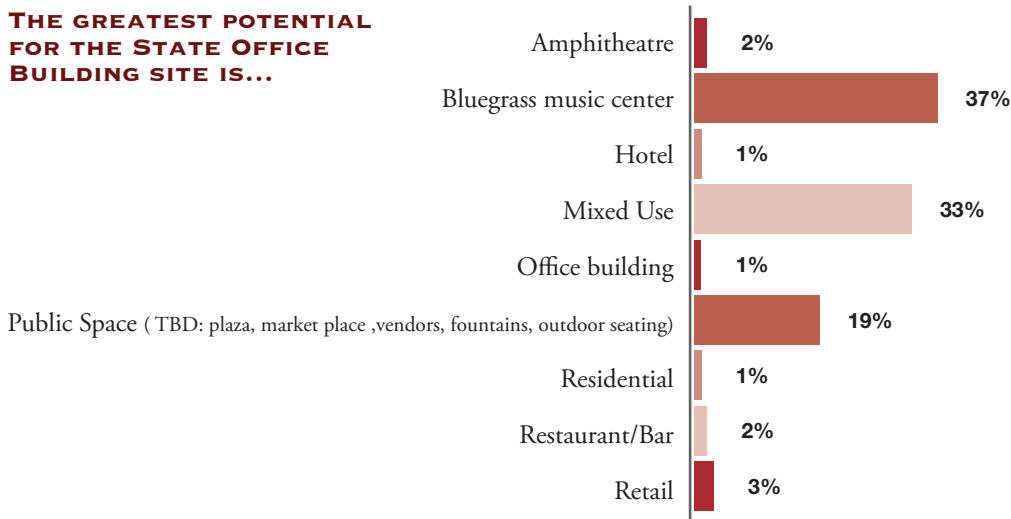
TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE, WE SHOULD BE WILLING TO...



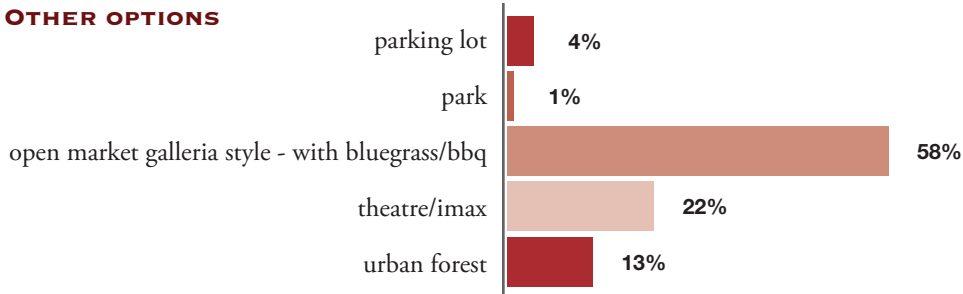
WHICH OPTION DO YOU PREFER FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE?



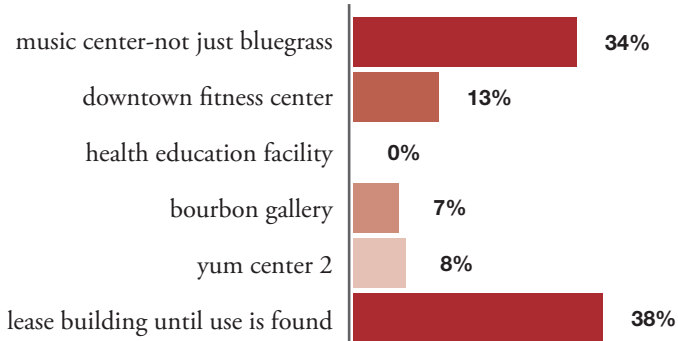
THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE IS...



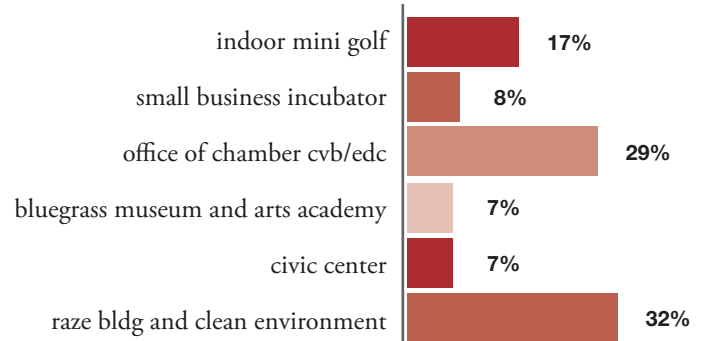
OTHER OPTIONS



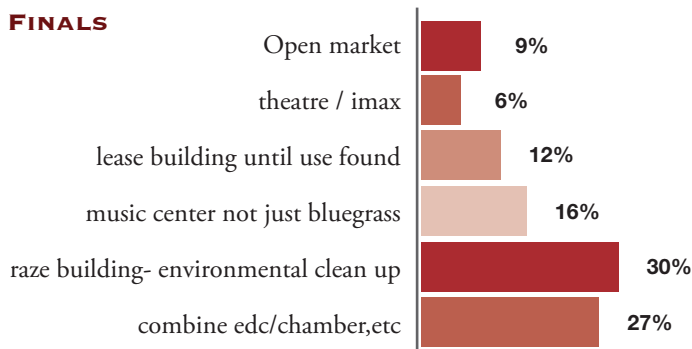
OTHER OPTIONS



OTHER



FINALS



I WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY THE FOLLOWING AMOUNT TO ADVANCE MY FAVORITE IDEAS FOR THE USE OF THIS PROPERTY

