

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

Overland Park Convention Center Catalyst

OVERLAND PARK, KS

SPONSORED BY:
THE CITY OF OVERLAND PARK

April 22-23, 2019



Urban Land **Kansas City**
Institute

ABOUT ULI KANSAS CITY

ULI Kansas City is a district council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a nonprofit education and research organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the Institute today has over 40,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use planning and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better communities.

ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI Kansas City carries out the ULI mission locally by sharing best practices, building consensus, and advancing solutions through educational programs and community outreach initiatives.

ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL (TAP) PROGRAM

The objective of ULI Kansas City's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary, and objective advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the region. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI Kansas City conducts one and one-half day panels offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues, ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. Learn more at <http://kansascity.uli.org/get-involved/uli-action/>.

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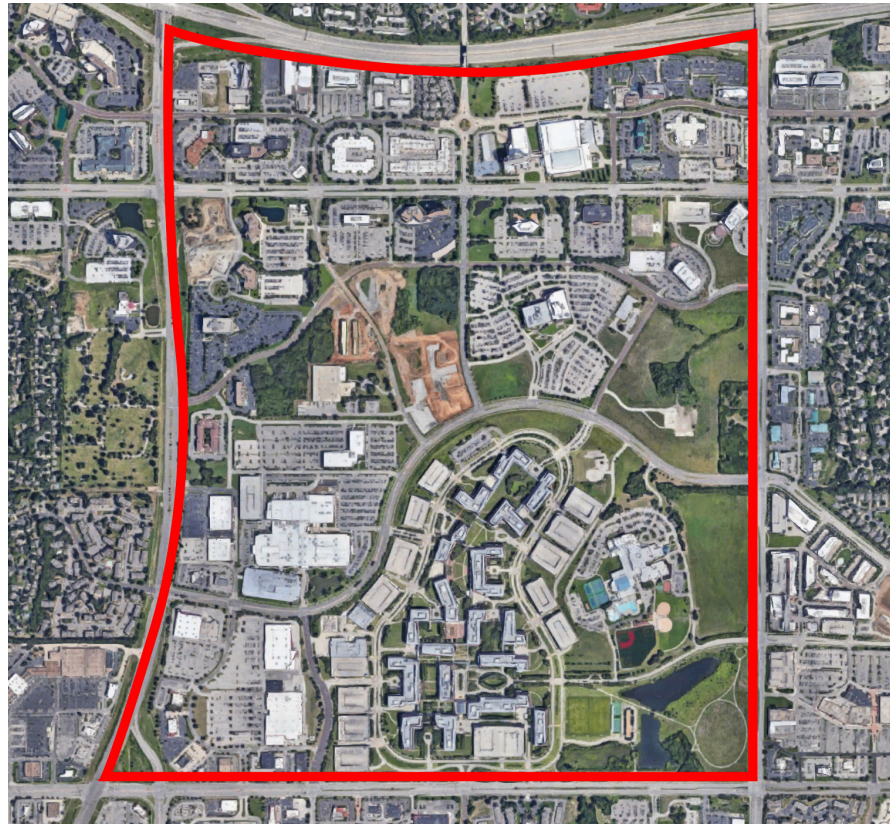
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ULI Kansas City is grateful to the City of Overland Park for inviting this Panel to study and make recommendations for the 10-acre site north of the Convention Center and the surrounding area and business corridor. This Technical Assistance Panel would not have been successful without the help and support of City staff and the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce who provided assistance throughout the TAP and meeting space for the process respectively.

Executive Summary

Map depicting the Convention Center study site and the broader context included in the TAP recommendations.



In Overland Park, Kansas, a ten-acre site sits next to a busy interstate, with corporate America in nearby office buildings and convention business at its southern edge. The site appears poised for development. The question of what kind and how much development was posed to the ULI Kansas City Technical Assistance Program (TAP) Panel in April of 2019.

Through careful study of the site and interviews with key stakeholders, the TAP Panel (the Panel), the ULI members convened to study the site, delivered a set of recommendations back to the City of Overland Park (the City). These recommendations took the form of three options for direct development of the site. Each option took care to meet the needs outlined by City leadership:

- Incorporate a mix of economically viable land uses that will support business and leisure travelers and employees along the corridor.

- Create, or begin to create, a walkable 18-hour environment.
- Include a parking strategy to support the new development along with the parking needs of the Overland Park Convention Center (the Convention Center) and the Sheraton Hotel.

Each of the three development options posed by the Panel suggests the addition of an office building at the site. Through interviews with surrounding stakeholders and business owners, it became evident that there is a good potential market for additional Class-A office space in the College Boulevard corridor, and the visibility afforded by the adjacent interstate makes office development here particularly attractive.

In addition to an office use, there is an interesting potential market for a food hall at the study site. A food hall, a collective of food purveyors, could provide a variety of new dining options for employees in the College Boulevard corridor and visitors to the nearby medical facilities and Convention Center. This collective, essentially start-up space for local chefs featuring a variety of local options that many patrons seek, may also provide the City with a more resilient retail/restaurant strategy than relying on a single operator.

In addition to considering new development options at the site, the Panel noted design modifications to the existing Convention Center building. These modifications focus on transitioning the grade at the southernmost end of the courtyard, which would assist in providing pedestrian access to those walking along College Boulevard and better connect the surrounding area to any new development north of the Convention Center.

Through the course of designing development options to meet these goals and modeling the framework of a financial pro forma for each development option, the Panel faced a significant gap in potential financing for each option considered. This gap led the Panel to also include a fourth option for the site that leveraged existing assets to meet some of the immediate needs identified by the stakeholders. With a strong desire for more dining and retail options for both employees and visitors, there is an opportunity to leverage technology to promote existing dining and retail options and strengthen connections to these businesses, both in the form of digital (presence) and microtransit (access to) improvements.

Ultimately, the Panel encouraged the City to play to its strengths. By planning for the future – by creating an overlay zoning district – and strengthening present assets – by forming a Merchants' Association, improving connections between park-like amenities, and celebrating its diversity – the City can expect to see continued growth and improvement in the College Boulevard corridor. The dual nature of this family-friendly city with its strong corporate presence should be celebrated, promoted, and branded in a manner that inspires its residents, retains its businesses, and attracts more visitors.

Background & Scope

Aerial photo of the 10-acre study site, the Overland Park Sheraton Hotel.



With enviable visibility from Interstate 435, proximate corporate neighbors, and situated next to a successful hotel and convention center complex, the 10-acre parking lot north of and adjacent to the Overland Park Convention Center is an attractive development site. When contemplating the type of development that could provide the highest and best use of the land, the City of Overland Park turned to the ULI Kansas City TAP program and posed the following three questions to the TAP panel:

- 1. Land Use:** What redevelopment options are there for the 10.25 acre parking lot north of the Convention Center? Redevelopment should incorporate a mix of economically viable land uses that will support business and leisure travelers and employees along the corridor in a walkable 18-hour environment. Additionally, the concept should include a parking strategy

to support the new development along with the parking needs of the Convention Center and the Sheraton Hotel.

- 2. Business Attraction:** What strategies are needed to attract restaurant, retail, and entertainment options to this location? Strategies could include financial incentives, zoning code modifications, mobility needs, and ownership/management policies, etc.
- 3. Cost:** What is the financial commitment that the City can expect to bring a plan to reality? What would be the expected return on investment? What partnership scenarios should be considered?

In addition to the careful review of briefing materials provided by the City and a complete tour of the study site, the Panel spent considerable time interviewing stakeholders in the College Boulevard area. These stakeholders included City leadership and staff, convention center leadership, event organizers, adjacent property owners, developers, surrounding hotel operators, office tenants, transit and mobility professionals, and additional real estate advisors with insights on the market around the study site.

Through these interviews, the Panel heard from a diverse mix of stakeholders, each with an interest in what happens in Overland Park and at the study site in particular. Themes included a desire for a more walkable environment, options for more “play” in a Live-Work-Play setting, to be more edgy or “cool,” and to be more accessible. It was also helpful to learn that Overland Park has the highest hotel tax in the United States, a key piece of information that came into play when modeling potential financial scenarios for development.

The Panel related the themes relate to the study site, contemplated how the surrounding area might benefit from development at the site, and identified the following takeaways from the stakeholder interviews, which could help inform the Panel’s work and eventual recommendations.

- Low Interaction.** There is currently a lack of interaction between businesses along the College Boulevard corridor (the Corridor). Employees of different buildings do not have much incentive to leave the building in which they work, except to get in a car and drive to lunch or leave for the day. Thus, there is little interaction among the corporate employees in the area.
- Auto-centric.** The current land use along the Corridor is very automobile-centric and existing infrastructure supports that focus. College Boulevard contains six lanes of traffic and a grassy median. Blocks are long and do not provide opportunities for safe pedestrian crossing except at signaled lights at one-mile intervals. The Corridor’s design enables swift and efficient movement of vehicles with little regard for other transit or mobility options.

Stakeholder Interviews What the Panel Heard

Walkability

More restaurants

Gathering place

Family-friendly city

Focus on the visitor

Current businesses are expanding quickly

Uses other than office may be challenging

Strong city leadership

Drive-in market is strongest (for convention)

Live & Work, but Play is missing

Be cooler, edgy

Accessible

Diverse

Hotel tax is highest in US

Empties out at 5:00 pm

No expansion plans for Convention Center

This could be a regional center

Good talent pool

Retention of employees is important

Client experience is important

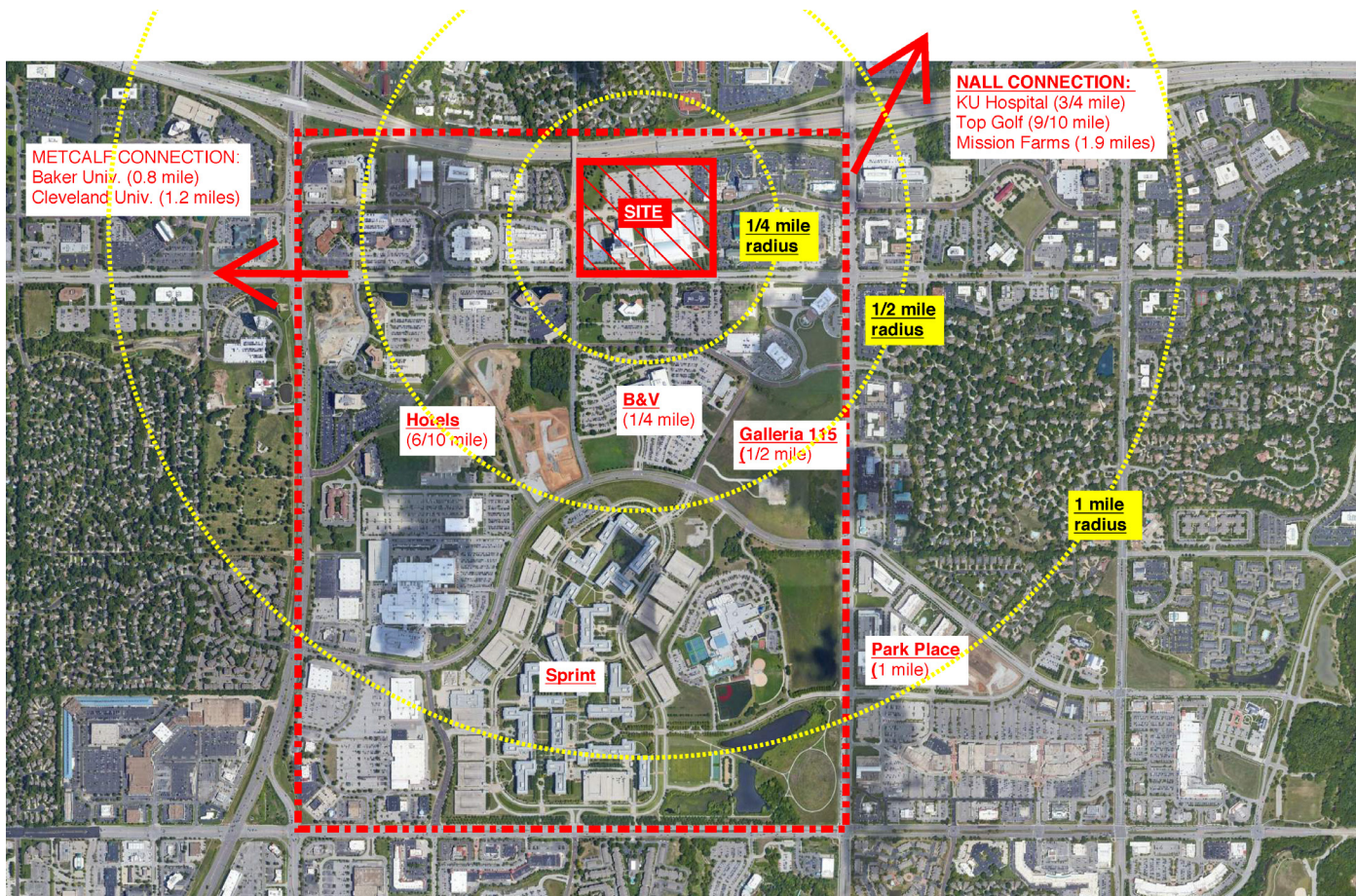
Microtransit pilot underway

- **Single-use Development.** The Corridor is defined by a single-use development pattern with large setbacks. These setbacks place buildings far into each property and place parking and large grass lawns between the buildings, the sidewalk, and street. The City has expressed an interest in changing this land use pattern and supporting future design and planning that fosters a more pedestrian-friendly and pedestrian-scale environment.
- **Linear Office Park.** The College Boulevard Corridor is a linear office park.
- **Sustainability is Important.** The City is willing to invest in infrastructure improvements and updates that promote sustainability and is exploring the possibility of instituting a “road diet” for the Corridor, which would replace an automobile lane in each direction with a lane for alternative forms of transportation.
- **Many Centers.** Overland Park is a city of many centers, each offering something different to residents and visitors. While there is not a central business district or easily-identifiable downtown to Overland Park, these various city centers appear to be working well for the community.
- **9 to 18-hour Environment.** The College Boulevard Corridor is a nine-hour area (truly a corporate 9-to-5 business district) wanting to be an 18-hour district. Meeting this goal will require the addition of residents to the area and a much more robust selection of after-work dining and entertainment options.
- **Alignment of Political Will.** There is also a need to align the City’s political will – that of elected leadership and City staff – with the overarching desire for change and progress. This alignment would include such areas as policy matters, funding opportunities, municipal codes, and community and further stakeholder engagement.

The Study Area – Context

A great deal of community engagement and planning work has already taken place in Overland Park, most recently resulting in the City’s planning document, **OP Central: Master Plan & Design Strategies for the Overland Park Corridor** (June 2018). This study, conducted by Perkins + Will, provided rich context for the Panel and helped inform a number of foundational assumptions the Panel made with regard to infrastructure redesign (e.g. “road diets”) and data. The Panel also referenced the City’s **Forward OP** plan throughout their work and found this and the **OP Central** plan to be of great use in allowing them to ‘hit the ground running’ for this TAP.

The ten-acre study site is bound by 110th Street to the south, Children’s Mercy Hospital’s westernmost parking lot to the east, Interstate 435 to the north, and Lamar Avenue to the west. The Panel considered the current surrounding



land uses and connectivity to College Boulevard amenities and mapped a quarter-mile radius around the study site, generally considered by planning professionals to be the distance over which pedestrians will generally feel comfortable walking, assuming it feels safe and there are options for shade and seating. The Panel noted that pedestrians are walking in the Corridor today, yet, not with the frequency or regularity one might find in a more urban environment. The Panel also noted the current construction of additional multi-family housing in the area surrounding the study site will provide an influx of additional people moving through and walking in and around the area at times outside of the Corridor’s current 9-to-5 lifecycle and should add to the vibrancy of the Corridor, moving it closer to an 18-hour community.

The study area, notable surrounding developments, and the distances between the study site and each development.

Design Drivers

Before contemplating new uses for the study site, it was important for the Panel to identify the design drivers, informed by previous studies and information gathered from the stakeholder interviews. These elements included:

- **Zoning.** By detailing a vision for future land use and building siting along the Corridor, the City can encourage more urban and pedestrian-friendly land use by creating an overlay zoning district that will help guide new development in the area and begin to enhance the walkability of the Corridor.

- **Business Connections.** Improved communication and interaction between the Corridor's businesses and their employees can assist in creating linkages along the Corridor among the people who work and want to play there, and should eventually strengthen the physical and social connectivity along the Corridor.
- **Food and Entertainment.** Stakeholders made clear their strong desire for more dining options, particularly walkable options, along the Corridor, yet a single restaurateur may be challenged to find success at the study site. A variety of operators, however, could spread the potential risk to a more manageable level and ultimately provide a more successful and sustainable dining solution.
- **Parks and Green Space.** The Corridor is flanked by wide lawns of grass and park-like spaces, yet the spaces are rarely used and connections between those potential recreation and relaxation areas are tenuous at best.
- **Branding.** The Corridor is very much seen as a linear office park, consisting of a disparate series of corporate tenants. Taken together, these businesses represent an impressive collection of technology, medical services, and business innovation that could be leveraged to the Corridor and the City's benefit. Branding the Corridor in a manner that provides linkage in the minds of employees, residents, and visitors would be incredibly beneficial and would help add to a sense of place.
- **Diversity.** Overland Park is a very diverse community, representing a host of different races, ethnicities, ages, cultures, and religious affiliations. This diversity of population could be actively celebrated to help attract additional residents, employees, and visitors and, at the same time, help retain the rich mix already in place.
- **Technology.** Advances in technology, specifically tools relating to place and movement, could provide the City with compelling tools to help strengthen the social fabric of the Corridor and further connections among residents, employees, and visitors to one another and to the businesses and services already operating in and around the Corridor.
- **Strengths.** Overland Park and the area surrounding the study site specifically possess a number of strengths that could be leveraged to the City's advantage, including: the wide array of corporate office tenants; the Corridor's park-like setting; the geography of the City and its connections to transportation infrastructure; additional employment and nearby residential centers; ease of access to and within the Corridor; and the family-friendly nature of the City.

Development Options

When considering the potential development options for the study site, the Panel held three primary constituencies of the College Boulevard corridor in mind: (1) convention and event visitors; (2) employees of the businesses along the Corridor; and (3) the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. These constituencies formed the basis upon which design decisions were formed.

The Panel arrived at four design and development options for the study site. The first three options focused on the integration of new uses at the site, including office, restaurant/entertainment, and activated public space, while accommodating current and expanded parking needs. The final development option veered away from traditional brick and mortar development and instead relied on existing infrastructure and new technology to improve connections and access to and throughout the study area and could be used as an incremental step toward future development.

Courtyard Treatment

In each of the first three development scenarios, the Panel recognized great potential for activation and connection with the existing courtyard at the Convention Center site. By transitioning the grade from the drop-off area for the hotel and Convention Center down into the courtyard, there is an immediate and pleasant connection from College Boulevard through the courtyard and to the study site. This physical and visual connection would be



Existing courtyard space at the convention center, blocked from College Boulevard by a wall along its southern edge.

of great importance to development at the site, helping to draw pedestrians into the site and providing a glimpse of what could be found and experienced by exploring in the area further.

The elevation change between College Boulevard, the courtyard, and the study site provides an interesting opportunity to regrade the courtyard and

Sources of Inspiration Terraced Seating and Interactive Outdoor Spaces



Terraced seating at Zighizaghi, an urban garden in Favara, Italy. Source: OFL Architecture, Pinterest.



Terraced seating and steps in XXX. Source: XXX.



Partially-covered seating for dining at Berlin's BRLO Brwhouse. Source: XXX.



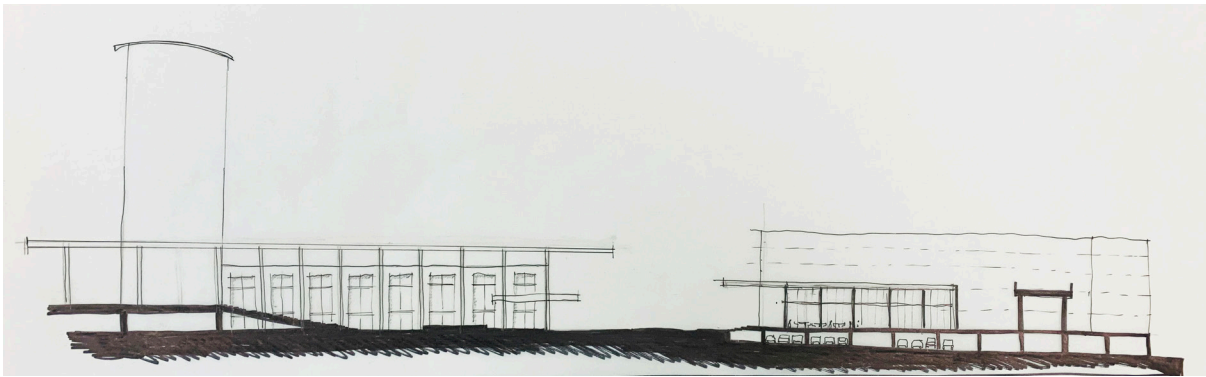
Yoga on the public green at Millineum Park, Chicago, IL. Source: City of Chicago.



"Mirror Labyrinth," by Jeppe Hein, Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York, NY. Source: Brownstonr.



Proposed pickleball courts at Bonita Canyon Sports Park, Newport Beach, CA. Source: Newport Beach Indy.



treat it with a tiered or stepped system. This tiering could provide opportunities for additional programming at the courtyard such as musical performances, outdoor festivals, and more. Treating the courtyard in this manner, tiering the ground and integrating the elevation into the same plane as the study site, improves visitor access and mobility between the Convention Center and the development beyond. By removing the changes in elevation to the study site, easier visual connections can be made and visitors can begin to experience the site in a seamless fashion without the interruption of stairs or access ramps. The new elevation also allows for the addition of parking in a deck at grade and an additional level of parking below, which will enhance the pedestrian experience and potentially improve the safety of pedestrians moving around the Convention Center and surrounding development.

A cross-section of how the new courtyard could be tiered and integrated into the same plane as a new development at the study site with parking below. Source: TAP Panel.

Development Option A – Courtyard

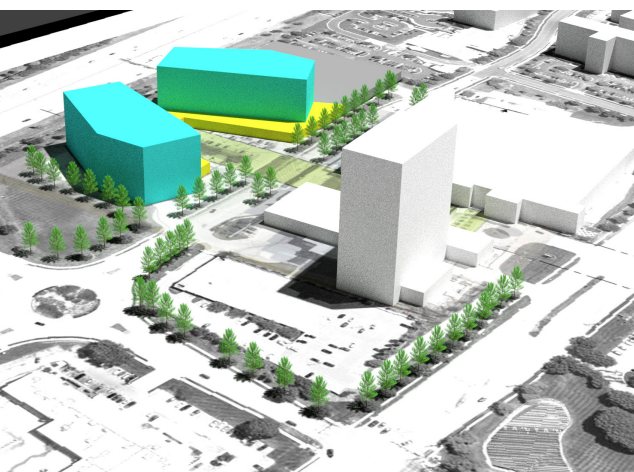
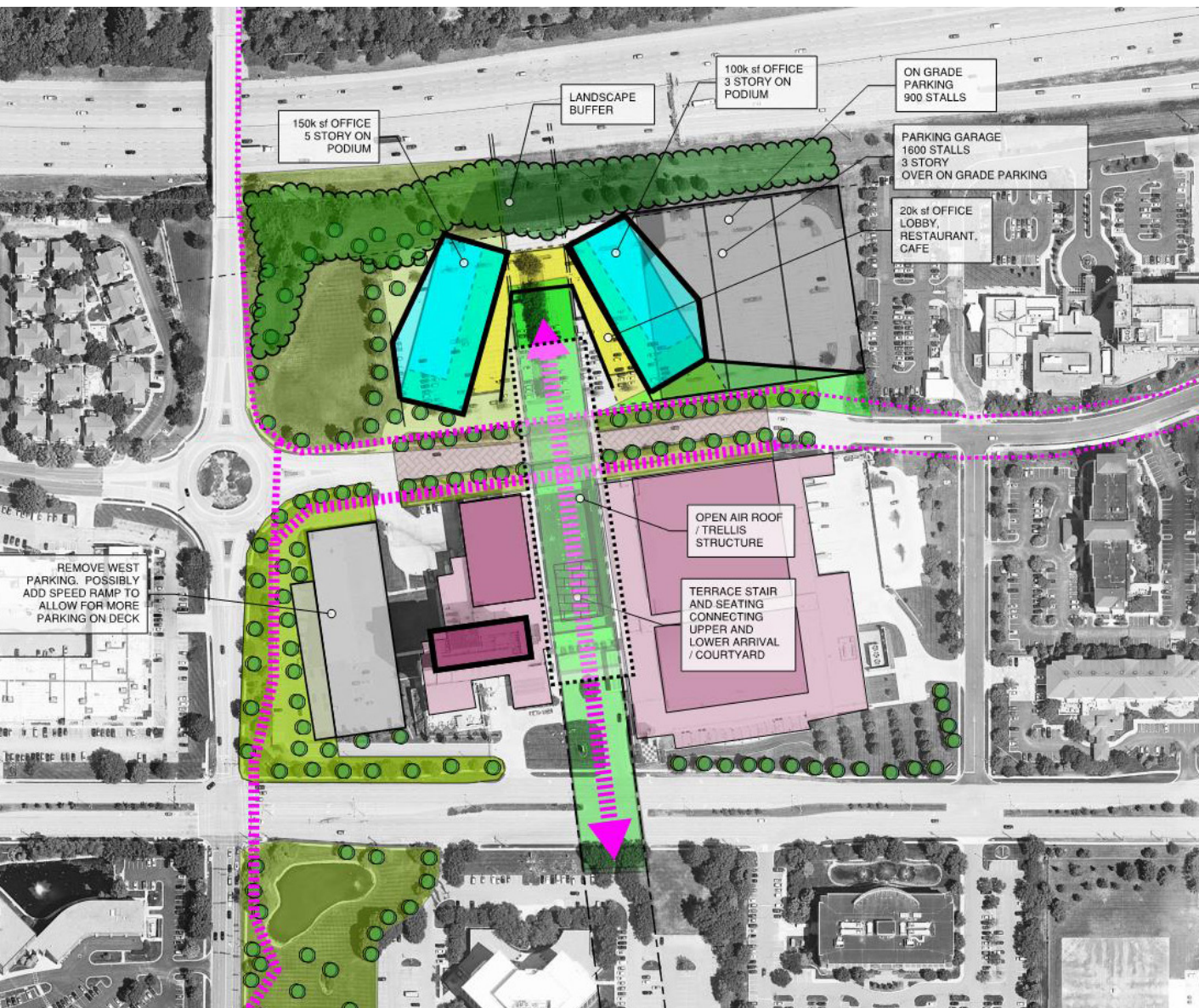
Given the powerful combination of the site's proximity to and visibility from Interstate 435 and the identified need for additional office space in the Corridor, the City is encouraged to view an office development as the leading opportunity for development at this site.

It is important to note at the outset that the parking needs at the site are not insignificant. Today, the current Convention Center surface parking lot holds 1,000 parking spaces and, at its current size, could benefit from an additional 500 spaces, a need which is currently met via overflow parking at businesses on the south side of the Corridor. Any new development at the site therefore will need to provide 1,500 spaces in addition to the spaces a new use would require. The office space contemplated by the Panel is 250,000 square feet, a size that would suit the needs of the growing market and begin to make financial sense to a developer. This might require as many as an additional 1,000 spaces (four spaces for each 1,000 square feet of space) for a total of 2,500 parking spaces on site.

To meet the parking needs at the site in Development Option A, the Panel suggests building structured parking on the east end of the site, parking approximately 900 cars on grade and another 1,500 cars on a structured three-story deck above the on-grade parking.



The transition between the parking lot and the Convention Center today utilizes a flight of stairs. Source: TAP Panel.



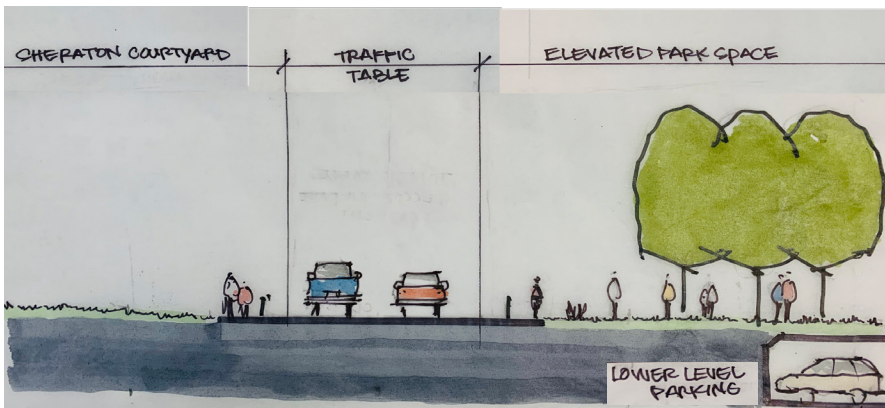
Development Option A plan and 3D views.
Source: TAP Panel.

Moving west, flanking the terminus of the newly opened courtyard connector to College Boulevard, two traditional floor-plate office towers could be built on a podium at three and five stories each, with the taller of the two buildings placed closer to Lamar Avenue. Within the space created between the buildings, a public gathering space could be realized, benefiting from the protection from the highway and parking lot by the structure of the office buildings, which could also assist with acoustics should the space be used for performances.

This new courtyard terminus, an attractive destination at the end of the Convention Center courtyard, could be surrounded on two or three sides by 15,000-20,000 square feet of restaurant/food hall space. The courtyard would be an attractive location



Further detail of the revised Convention Center courtyard, proposed office development, and new courtyard terminus. Source: TAP Panel.



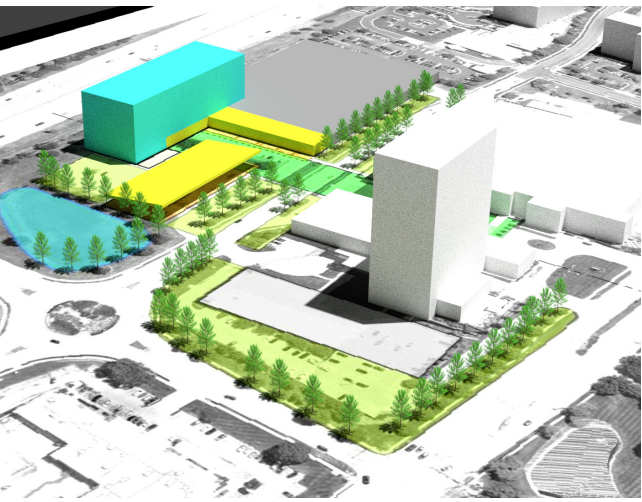
Section depicting new at-grade transition between Convention Center space and the new elevated park space. Source: TAP Panel.

for family-friendly entertainment or activities, e.g. a splashpad, that would help draw residents to the area and encourage visitors to linger.

The greening of the Corridor and Lamar Avenue, as noted in the Perkins + Will plan, is an important recommendation to consider. Building on those plans, additional plantings along 110th Street could help create a more park-like atmosphere, continue to build recreational connections into and throughout the community, and further encourage pedestrian activity along the Corridor and into this newly-redesigned Convention Center site.

Design Option A introduces an exciting opportunity for a new ‘front door’ for the Convention Center. At present, the formal entry or ‘front door’ to the Convention Center is accessed from College Boulevard, yet the vast majority of visitors enter the building from the parking lot to the north. The entry experience for visitors entering from the parking lot feels much like the ‘back door’ to the space and does not provide a welcoming first impression.

This development option would require some modifications to the utilities in the surrounding area.



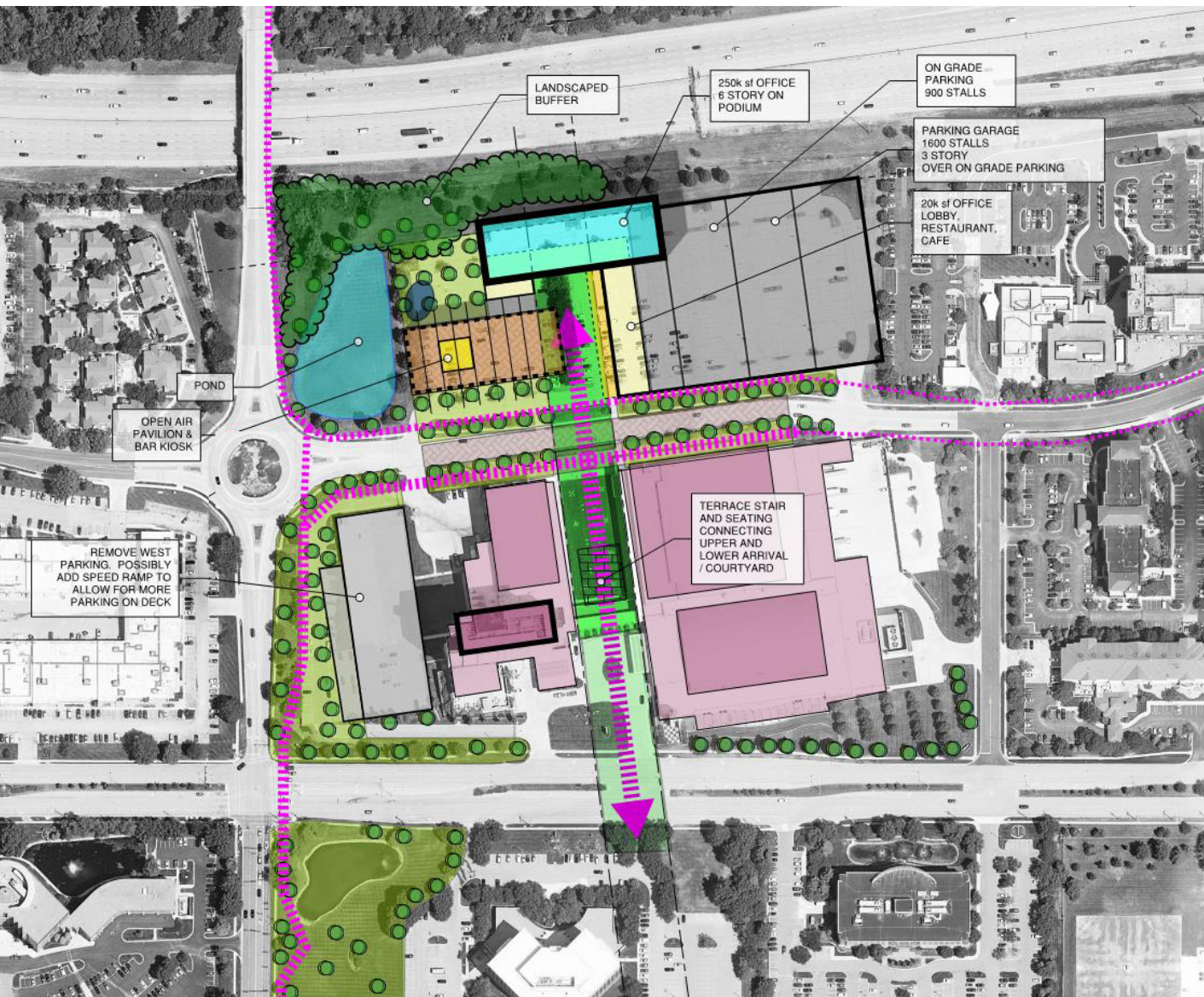
Development Option B plan and 3D views.
Source: TAP Panel.

Development Option B – Open Air Market Pavilion

In this development scheme, the design opens to the surrounding community with a singular office building situated along the northern edge of the site. This development option, which maintains the grand connection to the Convention Center and is more open to its surroundings, has the greatest potential of the Panel's designs to create an 18-hour environment.

The office tower is slightly larger in this option at six stories, but the delivery of square footage remains at 250,000, a figure at which construction costs and marketability begin to make sound development sense.

Parking in Option B is handled in much the same manner as Option A, with 900 spaces at grade and 1,600 spaces on a



deck in a new three-story structured parking facility. The western edge of the parking structure, however, would now house approximately 20,000 square feet of restaurant space.

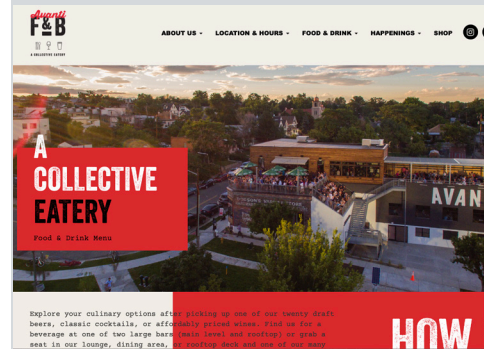
While relying on a single restaurateur to determine the success or failure of a ground-floor space may be too risky, there are successful 'food hall' models that may be better suited for this site. From Avanti in Denver to Parlor in Kansas City, developers are taking a more collective, entrepreneurial approach to food. In these instances and as contemplated for the study site, a large restaurant space could be outfitted with the infrastructure and service items necessary to house multiple vendors. Each vendor would operate in a rather small space (e.g. 600 square feet), serve a unique food that creates a draw to the food hall, and is able to focus on food preparation and service instead of building ownership, leasing, or management. The risk is lower for the vendor and the collective management, and vendors are easier to replace as needed. There is also an interactive and vibrant environment created by this multiple-vendor scenario not found in a traditional restaurant setting. That vibrancy, combined with the authenticity of featuring entrepreneurial local vendors and the activities that could be programmed into the public gathering space noted below, has the potential to create a destination at this location.

As contemplated in Option B, the western end of the study site could feature an open space that might be used in a variety of ways to engage the community – kiosks with coffee or craft beer, a structure to shade those who choose to linger in the space, kid-friendly activities to attract families, or other active uses. It has the potential to become a central gathering space for the community. Even further on the western edge, close to Lamar Avenue, green space today provides a mechanism for managing stormwater runoff from the surrounding development and parking lots. That green space could be turned into a pond, providing a visual amenity while still serving the water retention/drainage function.

The recreational nature of this design and the goal of drawing people in – on foot, bike, or other means – also led the Panel to consider the viability and safety of the roundabout at the intersection of Lamar Avenue and 110th Street. As roundabouts are designed to facilitate the movement of vehicles through an intersection with as little friction or impediment as possible, they are generally unfriendly to pedestrians. If the City wishes to make the Corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods more walkable, it should consider removing the roundabout and reverting to a signalized intersection with timed pedestrian crossings.

Development Option B would require some modifications to the utilities, particularly the sewer lines, in the surrounding area.

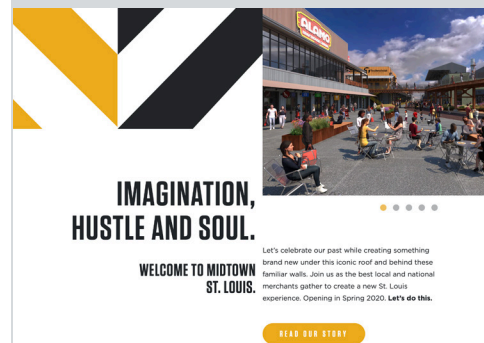
Food Hall Movement Local, Authentic, Vibrant



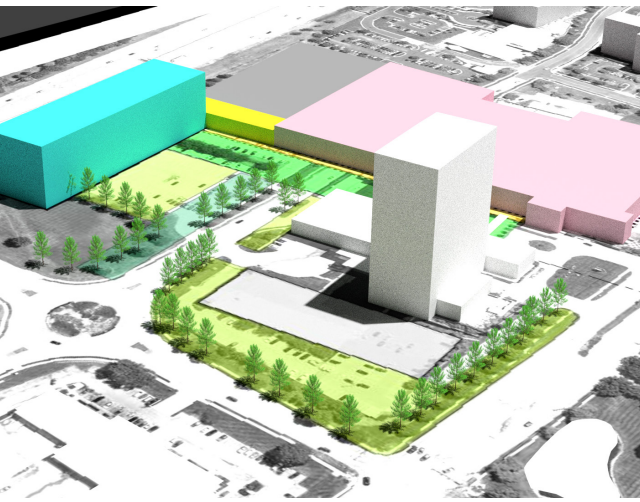
Avanti in Denver, Colorado.
Source: AvantiFandB.com.



Parlor in Kansas City, Missouri.
Source: ParlorKCMO.com.



City Foundry in St. Louis, Missouri. Source: CityFoundrySTL.com.

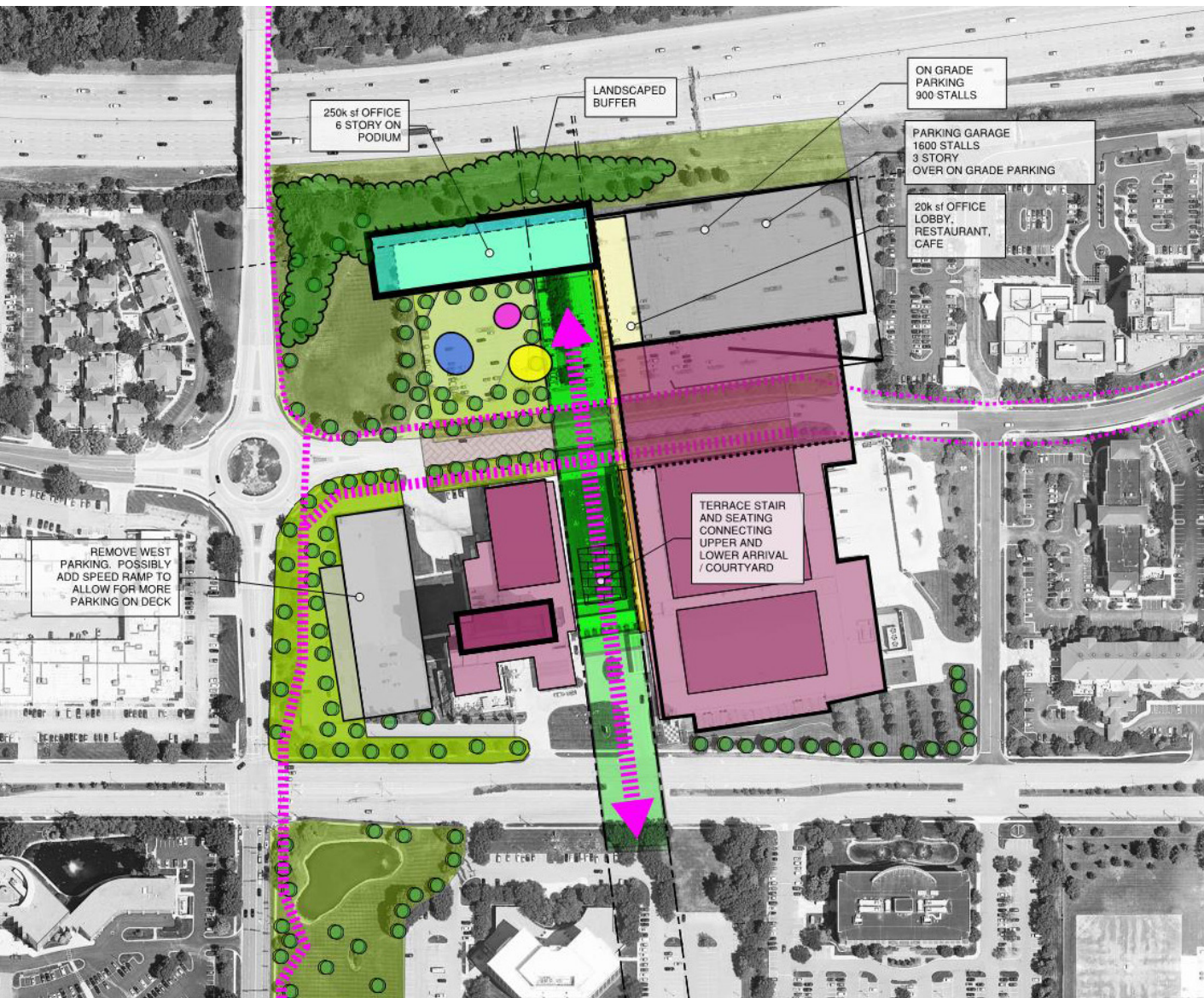


Development Option C plan and 3D views.
Source: TAP Panel.

Development Option C – Boardwalk

In this third development option, there is an intentional focus on expanding the Convention Center facility while also adding office, creating public gathering space, and addressing the collective parking needs of an expanded and reconfigured site.

The Convention Center today is experiencing success at its current size, which is classified as ‘small’ in the convention industry. Utilizing the entire parking lot for expansion would double the facility’s size and would place it at a slight disadvantage as it enters the medium-sized convention classification but at the small end of the spectrum. There is another option, however, to expand



by 50 percent, pushing the Convention Center to the large end of the small-convention category and perhaps gaining additional market share.

In this scenario, parking would again be placed at grade on the site (900 spaces) and on a three-story structured deck above (1,600 spaces). The configuration becomes more rectangular, encompassing more of the parking lot footprint and edging closer to the Children's Mercy Hospital parking lots to the east.

Similar to Option B, a six-story, 250,000 square foot office building anchors the northern end of the Convention Center courtyard and the food hall option plays a key role in helping to activate the public space at the terminus of the courtyard.

Development Notes for Options A, B, & C

In all three development options, 110th Street becomes the welcoming 'front door' for Convention Center visitors and, when combined with an enhanced street curb cut and drop off option, will help insure the safe and efficient movement of people and vehicles around the Convention Center.

The sidewalk experience around the Convention Center could benefit from significant improvements. The Perkins + Will plan recommended a street diet for College Boulevard, which would reduce vehicle lanes to four from six. This narrowing of the thoroughfare would allow for on-street parking along College Boulevard, additional street trees, seating options, and wider sidewalks, making the pedestrian experience along the Corridor much more appealing.

Improvements that begin to enclose the space around the Corridor, to bring it down to a more pedestrian scale, will increase the walkability of the Corridor and help create a sense of place that is appealing to those who want to Live and Play, in addition to Work in Overland Park. Future improvements in the Corridor and siting buildings closer to the street should also be viewed through a pedestrian lens. Much like the way the collective eatery Avanti sits close to the street in Denver, the northeast corner of the intersection of Lamar Avenue and College Boulevard may be an interesting location for a new building, demonstrating this new placement concept to the community and showing the way toward a more walkable, human-scale Corridor.

In addition to the greening suggestions of the OP Central plan, additional consideration is needed to better connect pedestrians to those improved green areas. The suggested HAWK signal mid-block on College Boulevard, between Nall Avenue and Lamar Avenue, would benefit pedestrian circulation, but a more permanent and structured crossing would make pedestrians feel safer crossing College and accessing the places and space at the proposed new development around the Convention Center. Improved connections north and south of College, along the streets and along pedestrian paths (both



Sketch of the greening of College Boulevard and the connections to be made going north and south. Source: TAP Panel.

High-intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK)

While several roadway treatments are available to address pedestrian concerns, only a few are appropriate for high-speed or wide-crossing conditions. The HAWK beacon was developed to address these conditions. At a HAWK crossing, drivers receive multiple cues to emphasize the potential presence of a pedestrian. These cues include a unique configuration of the HAWK beacon (two red lenses over a single yellow lens), high-visibility crosswalk markings (ladder-style markings as opposed to only two transverse white lines), a stop bar approximately 50 ft from the crosswalk, 8-inch solid lane lines between through travel lanes, signs that can be illuminated and read "CROSSWALK," and School Warning signs. When activated, the HAWK uses a red indication to inform drivers to stop, thereby creating a time period for pedestrians to cross the major roadway.

US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

formal and informal) will also help improve the pedestrian experience and encourage additional foot traffic in the Corridor.

Development Option D – Leverage Existing Infrastructure & Technology

In the face of challenging financing scenarios associated with the preceding development options (detailed on page 23), the Panel explored the potential for addressing stated stakeholder needs incrementally, providing services and enhancements via existing infrastructure and technology.

Abundant dining and retail options exist in the area surrounding the study site. The challenge is readily identifying those options and facilitating connections to and from each. Technology exists that can help with these connections. Phone apps can notify visitors when they enter a pre-defined geography, alerting them to the restaurant options in the area, detailing hours of operation, and assisting with reservations. These apps can also connect visitors to recreational amenities, such as walking and biking paths or rental facilities

Aerial photo of the neighborhood businesses surrounding the study area. Source: Google Earth, TAP Panel.





Widened sidewalks allowing for bikes and pedestrians to move freely along the Corridor. Source: OP Central.

where gear may be borrowed for a short time. A microtransit pilot is underway in the area and should continue to prove helpful in facilitating easy movement around the Corridor and surrounding neighborhood without a personal vehicle. Working with the Convention Center and the surrounding businesses, the City could take the lead in designing and consolidating applicable resources for visitors, residents, and employees who wish to experience Overland Park as a Live, Work, and Play environment.

With regard to existing infrastructure, widening sidewalks and improving pedestrian and biking trails will help facilitate non-vehicular movement along the Corridor. Simple new infrastructure improvements, such as installing interactive art that encourages people to get out, play, and explore, will also support the City's efforts to entice people outside to enjoy the Corridor more fully and move the area closer to an 18-hour environment.

Microtransit is a form of demand-responsive transit, typically complimenting traditional public transit, that utilizes minibuses running flexible routes and flexible schedules.



Arthur Kraft's "Court of the Penguins" in Country Club Plaza is an excellent example of interactive art. Source: kcur.org.

Financing Considerations

In each of the first three development options, the Panel identified a substantial gap in the potential financing available to achieve the development objectives. While it is not uncommon for initial gaps to occur, each is a hurdle that must be overcome in the development process.

Given the financial constraints around private development at the study site, all of the financing considerations for each of the contemplated development options will rely heavily on strong public/private partnerships.

As mentioned previously, the study site is the current parking lot for the Convention Center. To the extent that the site is redeveloped, that Convention Center parking will need to be replaced and will involve a price point higher than the existing value of the site.

Based on the information at hand and the proposed development options, the Panel conducted 'back of the envelope' financial modeling to determine the financial viability of each scenario and the potential associated costs and/or returns.

DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR OPTIONS A, B, & C

Development Uses

Parking: 2,500 spaces (existing spaces + parking for new development)

Office: 250,000 square feet

Estimated Development Cost: \$125,000,000

Estimated Office Rents: \$32.00*/square foot (full service)

* Office rents are conservative and based on similar developments in Johnson County. It may be possible to achieve higher rents than contemplated here, but in the interest of providing conservative estimates, the Panel used \$32/sf.

In its financial discussions, the Panel also operated under the number of assumptions:

- Financing would involve a mix of debt and equity.
- The City would contribute the ground to the development so the capital stack would not include land acquisition costs.
- Public financing could include Economic Revenue bonds, a Community Improvement District (CID), a Transportation Development District (TDD), Sales Tax Revenue (STAR) bonds, and/or a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

HIGH LEVEL SOURCES & USES, OPTIONS A, B, & C

USES

Office	\$ 50,000,000 (\$200*/sf; 250,000 square feet)
Parking	\$ 50,000,000 (\$20,000/space for structured parking; including existing parking)
Site	\$ 7,000,000
Soft Costs	\$ 18,000,000 (developer, legal, architecture fees)
Total Cost	\$125,000,000

SOURCES

Private Debt	\$ 55,000,000 (based on loan to value and current under writing standards)
Public Debt	\$ 40,000,000
Gap	\$ 30,000,000
Total Uses	\$125,000,000**

* New office construction costs for comparable buildings in today's market may be typically found in the range of \$150-250 or \$300/sf. By using \$200/sf, a developer should be able to build a quality product and achieve the rental rates contemplated here.

** The Panel did not contemplate opportunities posed by the sale of nearby, City-owned land, which could assist in financing development at the study site.

With an initial \$30 million gap, it may not be possible today to design and build one of the initial three development options. It may, however, be possible over time as density increases, which will allow for higher rents at the contemplated development site. Construction costs are also at a high point in today's market and, as these markets are cyclical, future construction costs may, in fact, be lower than what is seen in today's market.

While there is an opportunity for the City to take a leadership position and close the \$30 million gap in order to catalyze additional development and redevelopment in the area, there may be other opportunities for investment by the City (Development Option D), which may deliver incremental benefits to

the community and enhance connectivity in the meantime, until a larger, more catalytic development vision might be more readily achieved.

As noted previously, Development Option A and Development Option B will require significant public financing support. Development Option C will require public support for expansion of the Convention Center. Finally, Development Option D, which focuses on improving utilization of existing amenities, will also likely require support for increased technology and connectivity costs.



The TAP Panel working through the designs and financial models. Source: ULI Kansas City.

Recommendations

As the City contemplates potential development at the 10-acre site north of the Convention Center, as well as additional development or redevelopment in the surrounding area, it should leverage its strengths as a business- and family-friendly city, diverse in population and culture, and rich in infrastructure and transportation access.

Although development at the study site may be several years off, actions can be taken today to help meet the needs identified by the stakeholders, build important connections throughout the area, and prepare the site for eventual development.

- Technology can be leveraged to better connect visitors, area employees, and residents with the dining and entertainment options they seek.
- Continued use of microtransit in the Corridor and beyond can assist in today's transportation needs and lay the foundation for more permanent transit options in the future.
- An overlay zoning district can assist the City in guiding new development and shaping it closer to the walkable, 18-hour city it desires.
- Forming a business or merchants' association can help improve communication between business leadership and employees, strengthening bonds, potentially identifying new business opportunities, and provide venues for employees to mix and mingle with one another outside of their respective office buildings.
- Celebrating diversity in the community will encourage diverse residents, visitors, and employees to view Overland Park as welcoming community and will help attract additional diverse populations to the City.
- Improving connections between park-like amenities will help promote health and wellness in the Corridor and give constituents more of a reason to get out and enjoy the City on foot or on bicycles.

- Overland Park is known as being family-friendly today. Continuing to embrace this reputation and seeking opportunities to strengthen or expand it will serve the City well into the future.
- Branding may also assist the City in sharing and celebrating its strengths. By way of example, the City could identify College Boulevard as the Health & Wellness Corridor, highlighting the businesses associated with the health care industry, providing ample opportunities to venture outside for exercise, and seeking additional food purveyors that are known for providing healthy, fresh food.

Overland Park is in an enviable position with its strong corporate presence and continued economic growth. Catalyzing additional growth and development around the Convention Center, specifically at the north parking lot, is a long-term goal worth pursuing.

Panelists



Jeff Bennett, LEED AP

Vice President, Business Development, McCownGordon Construction

As a member of the Executive Leadership Team at McCownGordon, Jeff oversees all business development related activities including oversight of the business development team, strategic planning and execution, vertical and geographic market expansion, and overall client/partner engagement. Jeff has more than 25 years of experience in business development in the construction industry and has worked on projects throughout the continental United States, Hawaii and Guam.



Scott Bingham

Principal, BBN Architects

Scott Bingham, PLA, ASLA, LEED-AP, is a Principal at BBN Architects and leads the site planning and landscape architectural efforts for the firm. Scott is responsible for a wide variety of project types, ranging from public plazas, parks, streetscapes, athletic complexes, and natural stormwater systems. This diversity of experience brings a comprehensive approach and set of skills to every project, regardless of its scale or purpose. Scott is dedicated to seeking out new methods to bring the most

value to his clients while providing meaning and purpose to the outdoor spaces he designs. Scott holds a Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture from Kansas State University and a Masters of Architecture from the University of Kansas.



Nick Christopher

Senior Associate I Architect, gouldevans

Nick is an architect and designer who enjoys being involved with all aspects of the building process from creative design to detailed construction. He attended Southern Illinois University for his Bachelor of Architecture and Clemson University for his Master of Architecture where he was awarded the Mickel Prize. For Nick, a project is a holistic design opportunity. He places equal importance on the designed experience of landscapes, exteriors, interiors, furnishings, and systems, which when considered

together make for a successful and vibrant project. Having been involved in the design of corporate headquarters, mixed-use developments, multi-family housing, creative office space, and single family homes he is comfortable and familiar working with a diverse and varied group of clients and project types. Clients value Nick's enthusiasm, thoughtfulness, and understanding of how projects come together. Keeping an open mind, he works with patience and tenacity to help distill a client's vision into reality. Believing that great design is a sound investment he works to create environments that enhance the way we work and enrich the lives we lead. Nick is a licensed Architect in California and Missouri.



Judd Claussen, PE

Phelps Engineering, Inc.

Judd is a principal civil engineer with Phelps Engineering, Inc. with 25+ years of civil engineering experience. His responsibilities have included the management and design of commercial, industrial, residential development projects and public infrastructure projects throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. Judd earned a bachelor of science civil engineering degree from the University of Kansas and is licensed to practice in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Nebraska and Iowa. Judd is a member of American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Public Works Association.



Andy Crimmins

Principal, Crossroads Retail Group

Andy Crimmins has been in mixed use development, leasing and brokerage since 1996. He started his career with RED Development as a leasing representative and rose through the ranks where he oversaw the leasing of junior anchor opportunities throughout the RED Development portfolio. His expertise in the retail industry has garnered him invaluable expertise on both the retail and tenant side of the business.

Andy has personally leased over 3,500,000 SF of retail space in various venues. He has expertise leasing power centers, malls, outlet centers, lifestyle centers, mixed-use centers and grocery anchored developments. Perhaps most importantly are the close relationships Andy has cultivated over the years with most major retailers, restaurateurs and theaters. As a former Director of Real Estate for Williams-Sonoma, Andy managed site selection and negotiations for Williams-Sonoma, Pottery Barn, Pottery Barn Kids and West Elm throughout the Midwest and Southeastern United States. In March of 2016, Andy started his own company, Crossroads Retail Group. Crossroads is a brokerage firm specializing in providing owners of retail properties the expertise required to maximize value. CRG works with developers to create ground up mixed-use destinations, as well as repositioning existing shopping centers in economically viable locations.



Dominique Davison, AIA LEED AP NCARB, Co-Chair

Principal, DRAW Architecture

Fueled by the desire to explore the intersection between research, resourcefulness, and simple, clean forms, Dominique Davison, AIA LEED AP founded DRAW architecture + urban design in 2005 - named Firm of the Year by the American Institute of Architects Kansas City Chapter, 2014. With 19 years of experience, Dominique is a thought leader in the architecture industry, and deeply committed to improving sustainable design. In 2013, while working on a project, Dominique was frustrated by the

lack of technology available to make sustainable design more efficient, affordable and achievable for small architectural firms and building owners – leading her to pose the question: Why don't you just build the tool you need? This frustration was the genesis of her second firm, PlanIt Impact, an open data tool that generates accurate performance metrics which help building design and planning teams understand building impacts and energy performance in the earliest stages of the development process. Dominique is currently involved in some of the largest projects in the history of Kansas City, including KC's largest infrastructure project – the new KCI Terminal project, which will transform KCI into a truly international airport. She is also currently working on the Fontaine Hotel, a large, 1,000-unit multi-family housing project in Downtown Kansas City, and the Kansas City Catalytic Urban Redevelopment Initiative, which aims to create and galvanize broad cross-sector support for a comprehensive, place-based neighborhood redevelopment strategy for the City's urban core neighborhoods.



Leah Fitzgerald, Co-Chair

Director, Development Services, VanTrust Real Estate LLC

With a background in architecture, construction, and real estate development, Leah draws upon a multi-faceted view of the industry. Leah has estimated and managed construction projects throughout the country and has set herself apart by showcasing her expertise in multiple areas related to project management, scope procurement and contract negotiations. Leah has a Bachelor's degree in Interior Architecture and a Certificate of Community Planning and Real Estate from Kansas State University.

Her broad experience has provided her with a unique view of the real estate profession, which enriches her ability to see issues from each stakeholder's perspective. The U.S. Green Building Council has recognized Leah as a LEED Accredited Professional with expertise in Building Design and Construction. She is a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and Urban Land Institute (ULI). Leah is also a licensed storm water professional and a licensed general contractor in the State of Florida. She was honored in the "20 under 40" ENR Magazine in 2012 and is a 2011 recipient of the Allen Block Scholarship towards her CCIM designation. Leah is a frequent guest speaker with the AIA and has served on the advisory board for Pi Beta Phi, Fraternity Housing Council. She is currently completing her architectural license.



Zach Flanders, AICP

Urban Planner, Department of Urban Planning and Land Use, Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS

Zach Flanders is a land use planner with over 10 years of experience in both the private and public sectors. He is currently an urban planner with the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. Zach has managed long range plans including the Rosedale Area Master Plan and Northeast Area Master Plan in Kansas City, Kansas. He is also a computer programmer and contributes to open source software with Code for America's Kansas City Brigade.



Steve Foutch

CEO, Foutch Brothers, LLC

Steve Foutch is the CEO and co-founder of Foutch Brothers, LLC, a diversified set of companies that re-purpose Historic and under-utilized properties into new concepts and living environments. Steve received his Bachelor of Arts in Architecture in 1988 from Iowa State University, and then a Masters of Architecture and an MBA from the University of Illinois in 1991. He then did Strategic Real Estate Consulting projects for Ameritech and Sprint encompassing millions of square feet of office space design and consolidations. He then returned to Architecture as a partner with Gastinger Walker Harden Architects where he became involved with Historic properties and tax credit concepts. Since jumping into Development in 2003, and then adding his brother Scott in 2004, Steve has led the company in producing over 3,000 residential units at a cost of over \$300MM. The company now has another \$100MM under construction, and that much again in motion over the next two years. The company does their own design, development, tax credit syndication and construction, and has begun offering these services to outside entities and projects. A foray into athletic facilities is their latest twist in diversification and community improvement. Steve is a Governor for the Iowa State University Foundation, and won the recognition as their 2016 Emerging Philanthropist. He is an inaugural Advisor for Iowa State's Masters of Real Estate Development program, is an Advisor for the Kansas City chapter of the Urban Land Institute, an advisor to UMKC's Athletic Director, and serves on multiple Faith and non-profit Boards. Steve and Mary Jane have been married for 30 years. Their son, Jackson, is running for UMKC, and their daughter, Honor, will soon be rowing at Creighton.



Chip Walsh

Founding Partner, Sustainable Development Partners

E.F. "Chip" Walsh is a founding partner of Sustainable Development Partners, an adaptive reuse CRE development company. The company's most recent development, Westport Commons, earned a 2018 Cornerstone Award from the Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City. Chip is experienced in handling a variety of development matters including: historic tax credit financing, new market tax credit financing, conventional and HUD senior debt financing, public entitlements, zoning, project management (including supervising third party professionals), external project communication and community outreach. For the past several years his focus has been on multi-family and commercial development projects with a growing interest on the role technology serves in supporting these activities. Chip has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Redlands (CA) in 1993, where he graduated with honors. He earned his JD in 1996 from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law. Chip maintained an active law practice until 2008, during which time his peers selected him on three occasions to The Kansas City Business Journal's Best of the Bar publication.



Christal Watson

Deputy Chief of Staff, Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS

Outside of her role serving as advisor and assisting with administrative processes, policy and research support for the Mayor, Christal's primary role supports neighborhood/ small business development. Prior to the appointment as Deputy Chief she served as President and CEO of the Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce (a regional chamber servicing Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas). A seasoned executive with over 25 years of experience with organizations such as Sprint, United Way, and Truman Medical Centers, her leadership abilities in business development, business process improvement and community development has garnered her local and regional recognition.



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