



Urban Land
Institute

South Carolina

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL

Graniteville TAP:

Developing a Community Vision

SPONSORED BY:

Graniteville Community Development Improvement Corporation

Mission

To provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI is a non-advocacy research and education institution with some 28,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service.

- Objective, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues developed over the course of one and a half days
- ULI members from across the region volunteer their time to participate as panelists

Developing a Community Vision: Graniteville TAP

Diverse Expertise

- Developers
- Market Analysts
- Planners
- Architects and Urban Designers
- Economic Development Experts
- Attorneys

Developing a Community Vision: Graniteville TAP

Panel Chair:

Tom Hund, *Making Places, LLC, Charleston*

Panelists:

Pat Dilger, *Overstreet Studios, Greenville*

Mac Horton, *Clemson Sandhills Institute, Columbia*

Matt Kennel, *City Center Partnership, Columbia*

Sarah Kirsch, *Technical Writer, Atlanta, GA*

Tommy Lavender, *Nexsen Pruet, Columbia*

Stephanie Monroe, *City of Spartanburg, Spartanburg*

Ron Rasmussen, *IMI Living, Greenville*

Jim Warren, *Wyche, Burgess, Freeman and Parham, Greenville*



QUESTIONS/ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE ULI TAP PANEL:

- What are the strategies for encouraging downtown revitalization?
- What is the best way to regulate development of appropriate housing types in Graniteville and the surrounding communities?
- How can Graniteville improve traffic calming and pedestrian safety?



THE PANEL'S ASSIGNMENT

Grow in **G**raniteville: The mission of this ULI TAP Panel is to identify opportunities to grow Graniteville into a sustainable community for the *NEXT* **G**eneration



Developing a Community Vision: Graniteville TAP

Day 1:

- Project Orientation & Site Tour
- Meeting with Industry Representatives & Elected Officials
- Panel Deliberations

Day 2:

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Panel Deliberations
 - *addressed focus areas*
 - *identified opportunities and challenges*
 - *defined guiding principle*
 - *developed recommendations*
- Public Presentation



COMMUNITY INPUT

1. Public Officials

- *Willingness to help*
- *Lack of Local Representation*

2. Economic Development

- *Demand for Workforce & Market Housing*
- *Potential for Greenfield Development*

3. Education

- *Concerns about the physical quality of middle school*
- *Strong Job Training*



COMMUNITY INPUT

4. The Community

- *Challenging relationship with the county*
- *The importance of the faith-based community & existing businesses*
- *Competing entities with similar missions*



STRENGTHS

1. **Strong Community Pride**
2. **Faith-based Community**
3. **Historic Context of the Community as a Mill Village**
4. **Industrial Core with Substantial Growth**
5. **Water:** *Langley Pond, Horse Creek, Bridge Pond*
6. **Single Land Owner of Five Mills**
7. **Access to Quality Education, Recreation, and Natural Resources**

CHALLENGES

1. **Communications Strategy:** *What is the most effective means to communicate with county, town, and community?*
2. **Lack of Political Leadership**
3. **Limited Practical Industrial Reuse**
4. **Undefined Downtown District**
5. **Relationship with & Perception of the County**
6. **Aging Population:** *How to retain and attract future generations*
7. **What is the vision of Graniteville**
8. **Condition of the Middle School**

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Current & Future Recreation Opportunities:** *YMCA, Cycling Community, Rowing Community, Hiking, Golf, Paddling, Gregg Center*
2. **Arts, Events, and Entertainment**
3. **Connection to Heritage Corridor**
4. **Building Demolition, New Greenfield, & Adaptive Reuse**
5. **Mill and Community Heritage and Culture**
6. **Corporate investment in the Public Realm**
7. **Community Transportation System**

TAP TEAM TWO FOCUS AREAS

1. One team is focused on the authenticity of place including the natural resources, architecture and historic assets to drive economic growth while maintaining the character and sense of place.
2. The second team is focused on land use and zoning issues that that could create a vision to redevelop the area along Canal Street. The group would study development strategies, funding mechanisms, and market dynamics.

TEAM OBSERVATIONS

1. Community pride and commitment
2. Stronger economic growth in the region
3. 1.5 million square feet is equivalent to a regional mall
4. Redevelopment will require phasing over many years
5. Lack of connectivity
6. Mistrust with the county
7. Community Champion
8. The Red Barn; Water Tower
9. Alternative redevelopment plan for Hickman Hall

What are the strategies for encouraging downtown revitalization?

GOAL: To strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses

STRATEGY:

Beautification of the canal corridor into the downtown area

Streetscaping of retail area

Micro loans to support the small business community

Signage to welcome visitors to downtown Graniteville

What is the best way to regulate development of appropriate housing types in Graniteville and the surrounding communities?

Goal: To protect and enhance property values through land use regulations

Strategy:

Create a community redevelopment plan to be incorporated into the Aiken County Comprehensive Plan

Evaluate and pursue rezoning efforts

Package the 13 “Blue Row” and other mill homes for refurbishment

DESIGN CONCEPTS



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Establish Neighborhood Connections



Leverage Existing Assets

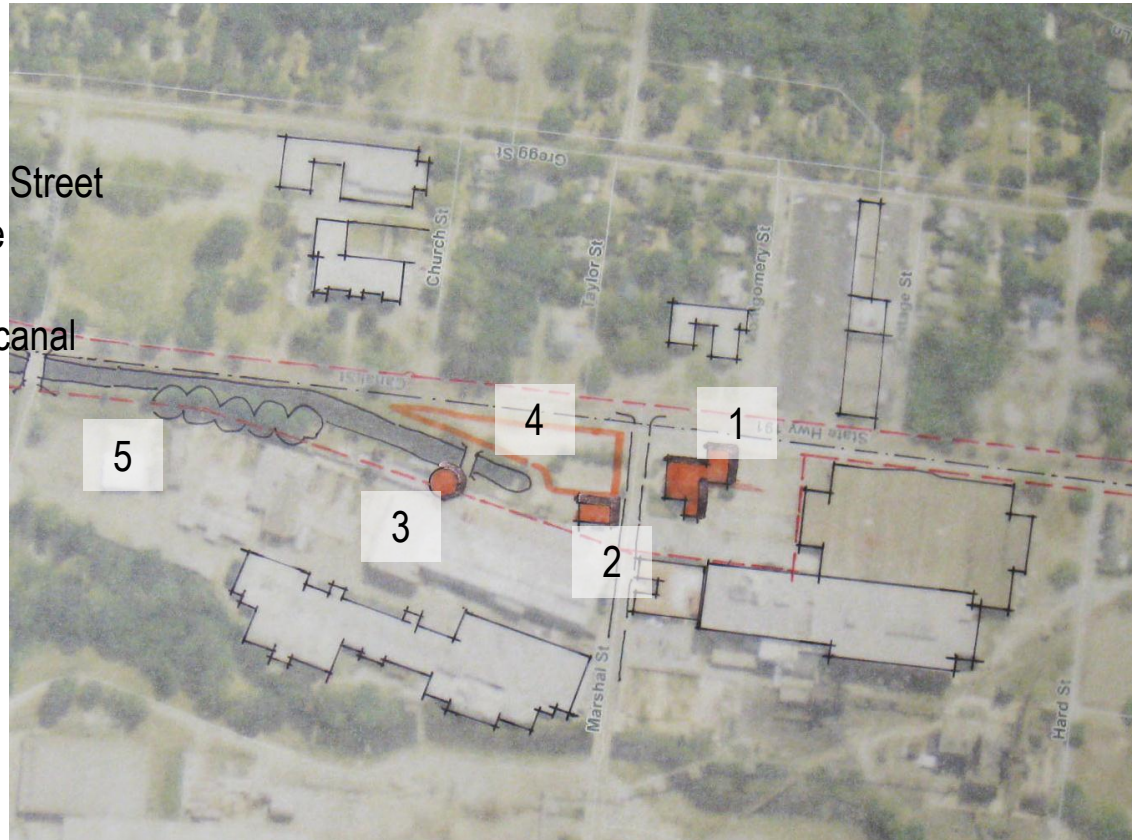


Leverage Existing Assets

Community Gateway

Phase 1

1. Renovate & Occupy Hickman Hall with Civic Uses
2. Renovate Purchasing Office
3. Renovate Water Tower
4. Create New Park at Canal Head
 - Space for Community Events
5. Develop new streetscaping for Canal Street
 - Improve pedestrian experience
 - Provide new lighting
 - Landscaping along street and canal
 - Install community signage



PRECEDENT STUDIES



Downtown Greenville, SC



Downtown Graniteville, SC

RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Capitalize on community sense of place
2. Create a vision for downtown
3. Create a mechanism for implementation and communication

RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES

1. CAPITALIZE ON COMMUNITY SENSE OF PLACE

- Protect & Create Green Space
- Leverage Existing Natural Assets
- Historic and Cultural Assets
- Enhance Community Engagement & Pride

2. CREATE A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

- Establish Task Force of Community Leaders and Stakeholders
- Identify Priorities
- Develop a Communications Strategy
- Development of Physical & Strategic Master Plan

3. CREATE MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION & COMMUNICATION

- Schedule a series of County Council Meetings in Graniteville
- Bridge the Relationship with Aiken County Administrative Offices
- Monthly Task Force Meetings

SHORT TERM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In the next (30 – 60 Days)

- Host a county council meeting in Graniteville
- Host one community program in the Mill Building
- Highlight the work of the Youth Mission by opening Hickman Hall to the public for a specific period of time(s)
- Increase the sense of community and the voice of the community
- Identification of Task Force

MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In the Next (60 – 180 Days)

- Recreation-centered event to attract the Rowing and Cycling Communities with community festival following the removal of the steam pipes (April 2012)
- Partner with Aiken County Parks and Recreation to promote the use of the waterways
- Initiate a vision exercise to define the downtown district through the identification of task force leaders

LONG TERM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Long Term (More than 180 Days)

- Physical & Strategic Master Plan
- Designate Horse Creek as part of the SC Waterways
- Historic Building Designations
- Exploit Recreation Opportunities including new water trail
- Engage with the County School Board regarding the viability of the Middle School
- Explore Special District Under South Carolina Municipal Improvement Act

DONT STOP DREAMING

- Graniteville the Tuscany of the Carolinas
- SCAD to Fill Up Mill Buildings
- Rowing Mecca with Indoor Training Facility

KEY TAKE AWAYS

- Empowering, engaging, and connecting leaders