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Frequently Asked Questions – Conceptual Project for the Redevelopment of Downtown Loganville

1. Why is this project needed?

Going back to 2008, the city has had in its long-range plans the redevelopment of downtown – which has included mixed-use developments with apartments and townhomes. The redevelopment of downtown has been pushed by the citizens as an important part of the future of Loganville. We frequently receive comments from residents on why there are not better places to eat and why isn't downtown more attractive. Main Street was once the focal point of the city, where older residents can remember dances being held in the street on weekends and people gathered at the city center for more than just commerce. We want to make the downtown an integral part of the city once again, a place offering the opportunity to come together as a community beyond just when there are city-sponsored events.

2. Why are we just now hearing about this project and why has the public not been allowed to have input on this proposal?

While city officials have met with many potential developers in recent years interested in the redevelopment of downtown, CONNOLLY was selected based off their presentation and willingness to commit to the betterment of downtown. Once plans were submitted, the concept reached the level where it was time to be brought to the public. The mayor and council know that this will be an involved process and at the moment impact and feasibility studies are under way. Once more additional information is available, it will be shared with the public. There will be additional public forums as more information is received. Residents can

continue to address the mayor and council the second Thursday of each month in the Council Chambers at their regular council meetings during the public comment section of the meeting, which begins at 6:30 p.m. The elected officials and our City Manager Danny Roberts can also be reached via telephone or email, with their information available at www.loganville-ga.gov/government#ElectedOfficials

Unfortunately the format of the December open house was changed at the last minute and it appeared disorganized. The reality was this meeting was meant to be an open house introducing visual components of the project and to interact with the public in small groups to better facilitate dialogue. The mayor and council will continue to meet with small groups, including local homeowners associations, and respond to emails and phone calls. As responsible leaders, we are doing our due diligence and learning what we need to know about this project before making any definitive decisions.

3. What about the sense of community and small-town feel of Loganville?

Our small-town feel is always going to be challenged because growth is going to happen regardless of the fate of this project. The addition of people to our great city does not lessen what makes Loganville a place people are proud to call home. Just like you added something to this community, that potential lies with any newcomer whether they choose to rent or own.

This city's sense of community lies within its people – we agree that our sense of community is what makes Loganville stand out from the rest. But our city limits were not closed after you came here. Just as you were allowed to move in and contribute to our great city, that same opportunity should be afforded to anyone that wants to call Loganville home.

4. Why does the revitalization of downtown require rental properties?

City officials have spoken with many developers in recent years and each has offered the same message: the redevelopment of downtown will not happen without the inclusion of some sort of residential component in the form of apartments or townhomes. Apartments and townhomes have been part of the revitalization plans dating back to the 2010 Livable Centers Initiative and the 2019 Urban Redevelopment Plan, both of which are studies that included active public participation. Those were the findings of the best use for land targeted for

development in the Loganville Centerpiece Building Concepts Market Assessment conducted by the Bleakly Advisory Group in 2017.

What has not been settled as of yet is how many. The city is currently awaiting an independent analysis conducted by Haddow & Company who are looking at the feasibility of the project proposed by CONNOLLY, who welcomed the outside consultants. The fact is we do not have enough information at the moment to truly be able to measure the merits of this project. But we are all operating on the understanding that revitalizing downtown Loganville will likely require residential density or it just simply will not be done.

5. The city already has traffic problems. What is being done to address current problems and how will the city deal with the new traffic?

The city is in contact almost monthly for updates on potential projects and improvements inside our city limits. Part of the challenges for traffic improvements in the downtown area were because of the one-way road pair project that was planned for the better part of the past 30 years. GDOT was reluctant to approve improvement projects that would be essentially re-done by the one-way road pairings. Once that project was abandoned, we were able to work with GDOT to get the improvements on CS Floyd / Highway 81 and Lawrenceville Road into the fast track program. More about current GDOT projects can be found in the city's newsletter at

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/96934dd3-e6ed-4094-bf22-a3e0944973f4>

As this project remains very much just a concept, a variety of studies are being done to analyze the impact of a project this size – including traffic. We expect to have those findings sometime in March and will work to share them with the public once they are available. In addition, prior to the announcement of this project the city applied for a grant through the Atlanta Regional Commission to fund a complete traffic study of Loganville that would include analysis on where the cars are going and offer possible solutions on improvement projects.

6. How will this impact infrastructure?

The city is currently in the second of three planned phases for the expansion of our wastewater treatment plant. The facility is operating at 70% capacity at treating 1.4 million gallons per day. Once the second phase is completed, the city will have

the ability to treat 3.3 million gallons of wastewater per day. While there is no timetable currently to begin the third phase of the expansion, once complete the city would be able to treat 5 million gallons of wastewater a day.

Loganville officials are also in the process of extending a water line from the city to Monroe to provide another source of water for residents. Once complete, we will be able to purchase up to 3 million gallons per day and coupled with a second water intake point to purchase additional water from Walton County will reduce the city's reliance on water provided by Gwinnett County and accommodate future growth.

That being said, any project of significance will require improvements to upgrade the outdated infrastructure that currently exists on Main Street.

7. Why did the city spend money to renovate the old school and make it City Hall if they are going to turn around and sell it? Isn't that a waste of taxpayer money?

The city purchased the old school property not only to serve as City Hall but to also be able to control the fate of 10 acres of prime real estate in our downtown. The city took out a \$1.6 million loan for the purchase of the land and for renovations. An additional \$215,000 was spent on roof work and \$38,000 for a second round of renovation work when additional staff moved into the building. While no formal negotiations have taken place regarding the sale of the school property, it is reasonable to expect that the sale of 10 acres of land on the corner of two state highways in the downtown area of our city would bring in more than the money that has been spent on the building.

8. Does the city have enough police and firefighters to handle this large influx of new residents?

There is currently a study under way as required by the state for a project of this size to assess the impact on public safety. This would be used as a tool to guide city leaders in the coming years, as redevelopment is expected to occur over a number of years.

As far as any perceived rise in crime, at this point in time the two already existing apartment complexes do not create any more burden on our police or fire department than an average neighborhood when broken down based on a per

population basis. Currently the greatest demand on our fire department are medical calls related to elderly residents and for traffic accidents for our police officers. While we have seen an uptick in serious crimes in our city, these are being committed by those who do not live inside the city, as most law enforcement officials will tell you that criminals do not like committing crimes in their own backyard.

9. How will this impact our taxes?

There is no way for this to be measured at the moment because no formal negotiations have taken place regarding the sale of any city property. But there are no taxes currently paid on the 14 acres owned by the City of Loganville in the downtown area and because apartment property qualifies as being commercial and not residential, the value is typically greater and thus contributes more to the local tax base.

10. What is being done about the impact this will have on our overcrowding schools?

The unpopular answer is the schools are not within the scope of responsibilities of the City of Loganville Government but rather the Walton County School District. City officials do consult with district officials about large-scale projects but a project cannot be denied because of any potential burden that may be placed on a local school system. CONNOLLY has indicated that they will be marketing their property toward those without children – a kind of workforce housing catering to single teachers, police officers, firefighters, health care workers, public employees, etc. But any questions about planning for the impact on the local school system should be directed toward Walton County School District officials, as we cannot speak for them.

CONNOLLY has done a study related to school-aged children in comparable projects. It can be found under the References tab on the project website www.loganvillemainstreet.com

11. How will the city prevent these properties from becoming Section 8 housing or a future blight on the downtown landscape?

There is nothing the city can do legally to prevent any property inside the city limits from becoming Section 8 housing. Currently the largest segments of Section

8 housing reside in the city's neighborhoods, the result of homes becoming bank-owned as a result of the recession. Just as there was no feasible way for the city to prevent the housing from becoming Section 8, there is no way to prevent properties in the proposed project from doing the same.

As far as future blight on the downtown landscape, the city has ordinances in place with a variety of rules and regulations regarding the upkeep of property that would be a tool in combating any degradation in the property. The Main Street Overlay District, which this project is included in, also lays out specific design criteria not only for aesthetic purposes but also to encourage quality construction.

12. Why has the city not done more for the revitalization of downtown?

The Downtown Development Authority in 2007 created a façade grant program that went unused by downtown businesses. While a lot has been asked about seeking grants for the existing businesses, most grant applications need to be filed by property owners and cannot be completed by the city. In addition, they are not free money and typically require matching funds from the property owner. The city can serve as a pass through for funds and assist property owners who seek grant funding – as the Loganville Development Authority successfully did last year when it helped facilitate a Georgia Facilities Foundation Revolving Loan Fund grant for a property owner at 76 Bay Creek Road.

13. What about the proposed apartments on Tommy Lee Fuller Road and Highway 81 S and other apartments coming to the city?

There are currently two apartment projects in Loganville. Along Highway 81 S they are developing the mixed-use portion of the Logan Point development that will create 208 apartments. This was a project approved by the City Council years ago that is just now being completed. The other project is a proposed re-zone for a complex with 121 apartments on Tommy Lee Fuller Road. It was scheduled to go before the Planning Commission on Jan. 23rd, but the applicant asked to table the application for 30 days and may come before the commission again on Feb. 27th if it is not withdrawn. Once the commission makes a recommendation on the project, it will come before the council at their next regular council meeting. Both of these meetings are scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers at City hall.

There are no other proposed apartments inside city limits at this time.

14. How could the city allow the rental-only development on Highway 81 N?

This project came before the City Council just like any other proposed neighborhood and was approved for residential zoning in 2005. There was no indication at that time the houses would be rental only, though it would have been irrelevant because the city cannot legally reject a project because it is only offering rental properties. The City of Loganville is governed by state law for planning and zoning matters and there are very few reasons a proposed project can be denied that will not result in a costly lawsuit.

15. How can we stay informed and let our opinions be known to the mayor and council?

Any and all studies and research conducted related to this project are public documents and will be made available once they are completed. They will be presented to the public either during a council meeting, which are the second Thursday of each month in the Council Chamber at City Hall beginning at 6:30 p.m., or during a meeting specifically called for this project which are traditionally covered by our local media. We will also make public any information via our social media, which includes the City of Loganville – Government page on Facebook, as cityofloganville on Instagram and @LoganvilleGa on Twitter. Press releases as well as contact information for the elected officials can be found on the City of Loganville website at www.loganville-ga.gov

The mayor and council encourage residents to email them with their concerns and will provide limited time at the end of regular council meetings for public feedback.