

St. Johns Gateway Improvement Plan



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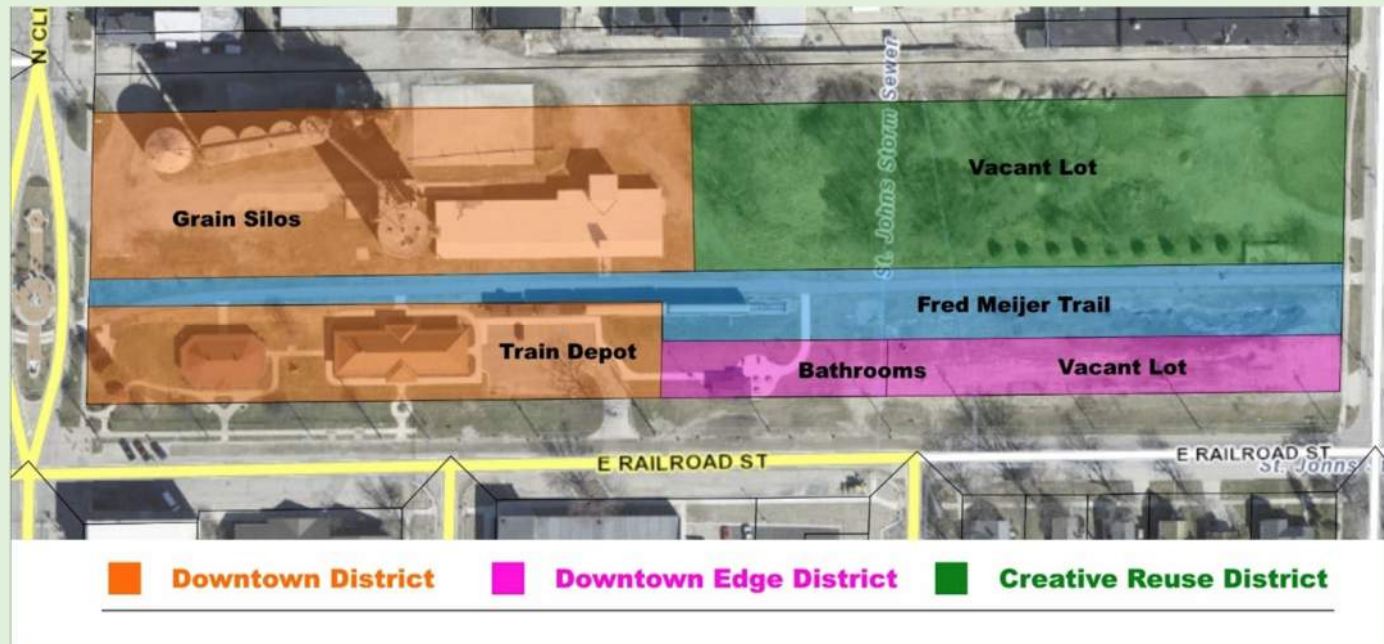
Introduction

- Asked to redevelop the existing site to bring in economic development to the area
- Help extend the downtown district into the future expansion area
- Project Goals
 1. Enhance the Gateway
 2. Community Involvement
 3. Encourage Tourism
 4. Preserve History



Site Analysis

- Six retired large grain silos
- Fred-Meijer Trail
- Train Depot
- Community Pavilion

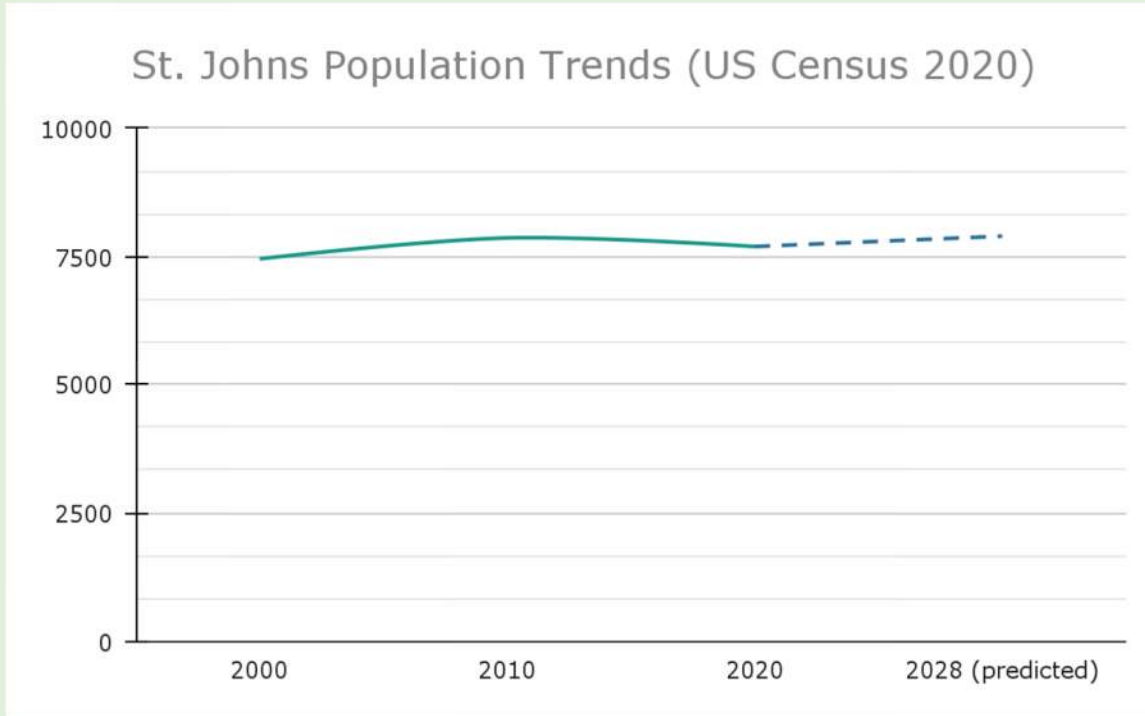


Socio-Economic Profile



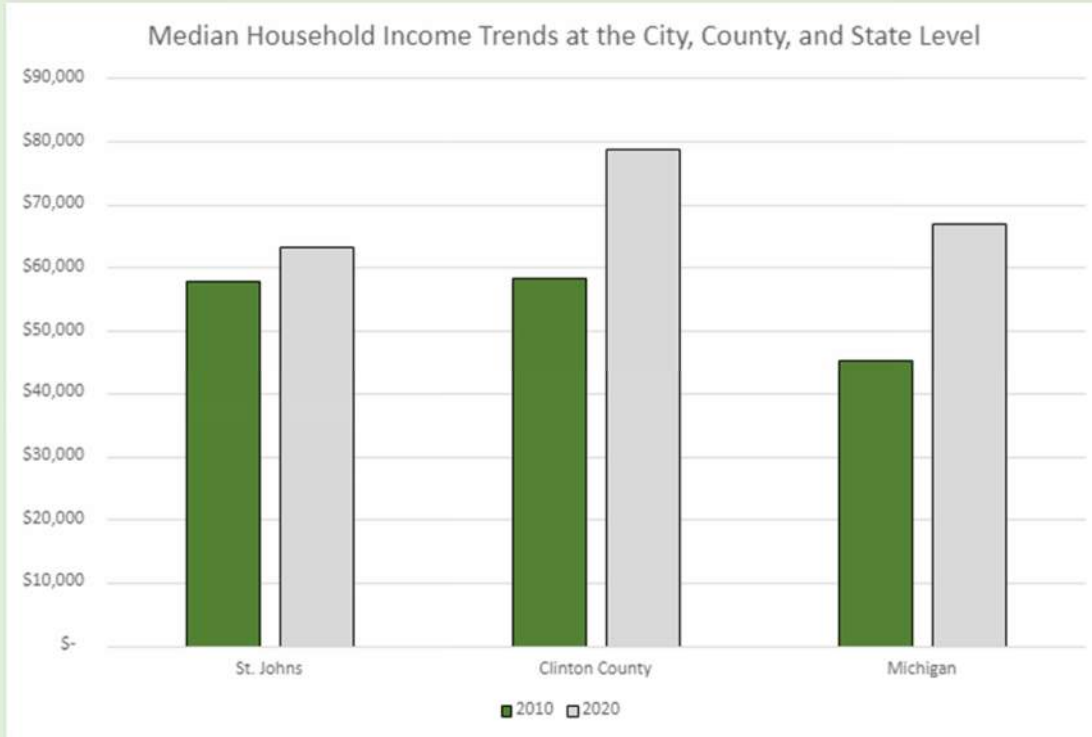
Population

St. Johns has had a relatively steady population hovering at around 7,600 and predicted to increase to almost 8,000 in 2028.



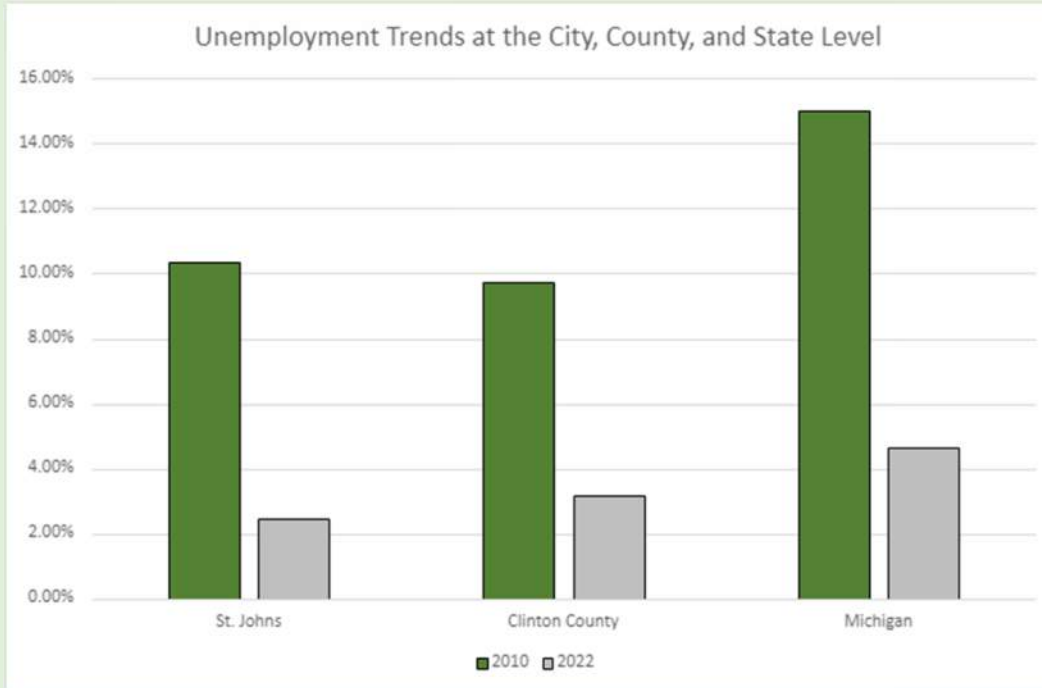
Income

St. Johns' median household income has remained steady compared to the rapid growth of Clinton County and Michigan.



Unemployment

St. Johns has rebounded from the 2008 recession more successfully, in regard to unemployment rate, than both Clinton county and the state of Michigan.



Location Quotient (LQ)

LQ is an analytical statistic that measures a region's industrial specialization relative to the nation (Bureau of Economic Analysis)

- High concentration of natural resources and mining, construction, and good-producing
- Low concentration of professional services, information, and education and health services

Industry	Location Quotient
1011 Natural resources and mining	3.94
1012 Construction	2.37
101 Goods-producing	1.88
1027 Other services	1.63
1021 Trade, transportation, and utilities	1.4
1013 Manufacturing	1.36
10 Total, all industries	1.02
1029 Unclassified	0.99
1026 Leisure and hospitality	0.88
102 Service-providing	0.82
1023 Financial activities	0.8
1025 Education and health services	0.64
1024 Professional and business services	0.55
1022 Information	0.14



Existing Conditions





Grain Silos



Train Coach as Exhibits



Vacant lot in Northeast area of site



Fred Meijer Trail



Trail Rest Area



Gathering Pavilion



Train Depot



Vacant lot in Southeast area of site



Future Land Use

- 2020 Master Plan adopted by St. Johns was Developed by McKenna, a private planning firm
- Land use for the project site falls under 3 categories: **Core Downtown District, Creative Reuse District, and Downtown Edge District**
- This plan emphasizes aligning new developments with the current urban landscape

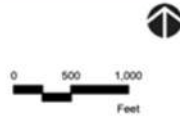
Downtown Future Land Use

City of St. Johns, Michigan

December 30, 2019

LEGEND

- Core Downtown District
- Civic Center District
- Core Neighborhood District
- Residential Preservation District
- Downtown Edge District
- Creative Reuse District
- Highway Commercial District
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood District
- Legacy Business Overlay District
- Roads



Baseemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
City of St. Johns 2019; McKenna 2019.



Surrounding Environment

- Clinton Avenue's main stretch is three blocks long and runs from the courthouse to the project site
- The core downtown district is centered around this stretch
- Hosts a variety of retail and mixed-use properties
- Trees planted along Clinton Ave are well developed and are a great start to a greener urban environment
- Lack of a consistent theme, with many of the buildings having different colors and designs



Clinton County Veterans Memorial



View of Mixed Use development



View facing south on Clinton Ave



Waypoint Coffee shop



St. Johns Brewing Co



Streetscape and Infrastructure on N Clinton Ave



Street Furniture

Parking

- Abundance of parking
- Street parking does fill up as it is the most desirable spots
- Lots of close lots available for public use with no permit, such as **4, 5A, and 5B.**



Situational Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Reuse District • Proximity to St. Johns' downtown district • Historic Train Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grain Silo removal costs • Personal Vehicles as Main Transportation • Insufficient Outdoor Social Gathering Space
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underused land around the gateway to the town • The Fred Meijer Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee Trail • Reactivated industrial building directly north • Collaboration with the DDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Contamination • Aging Population • Denial of funding opportunities for removal of silos

Survey

- Online Survey
- **354** Responses
- Two written response questions, four multiple choice



77% would like to see more recreational space in the area.



92%

do not want the grain silos to remain as they are.

72%

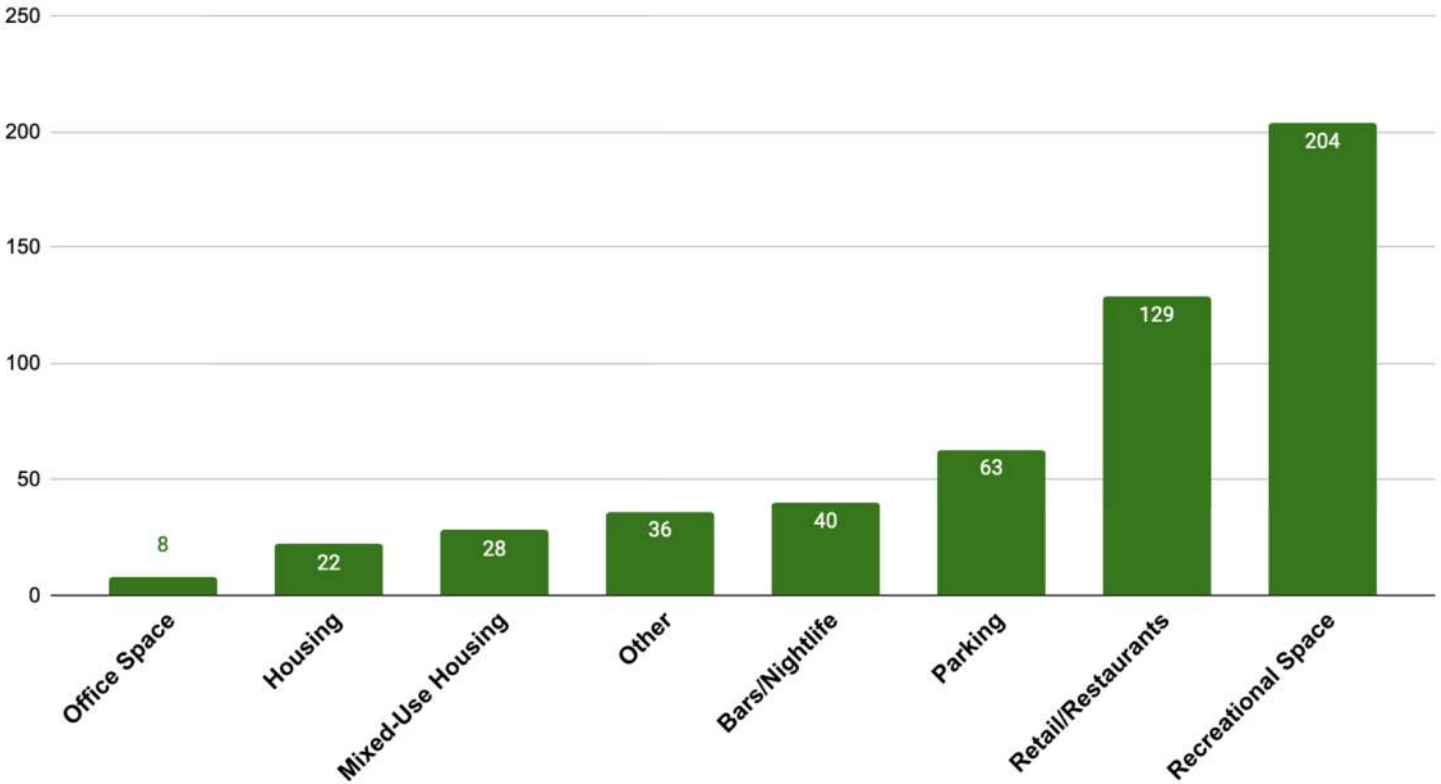
want the train depot to remain as it is.



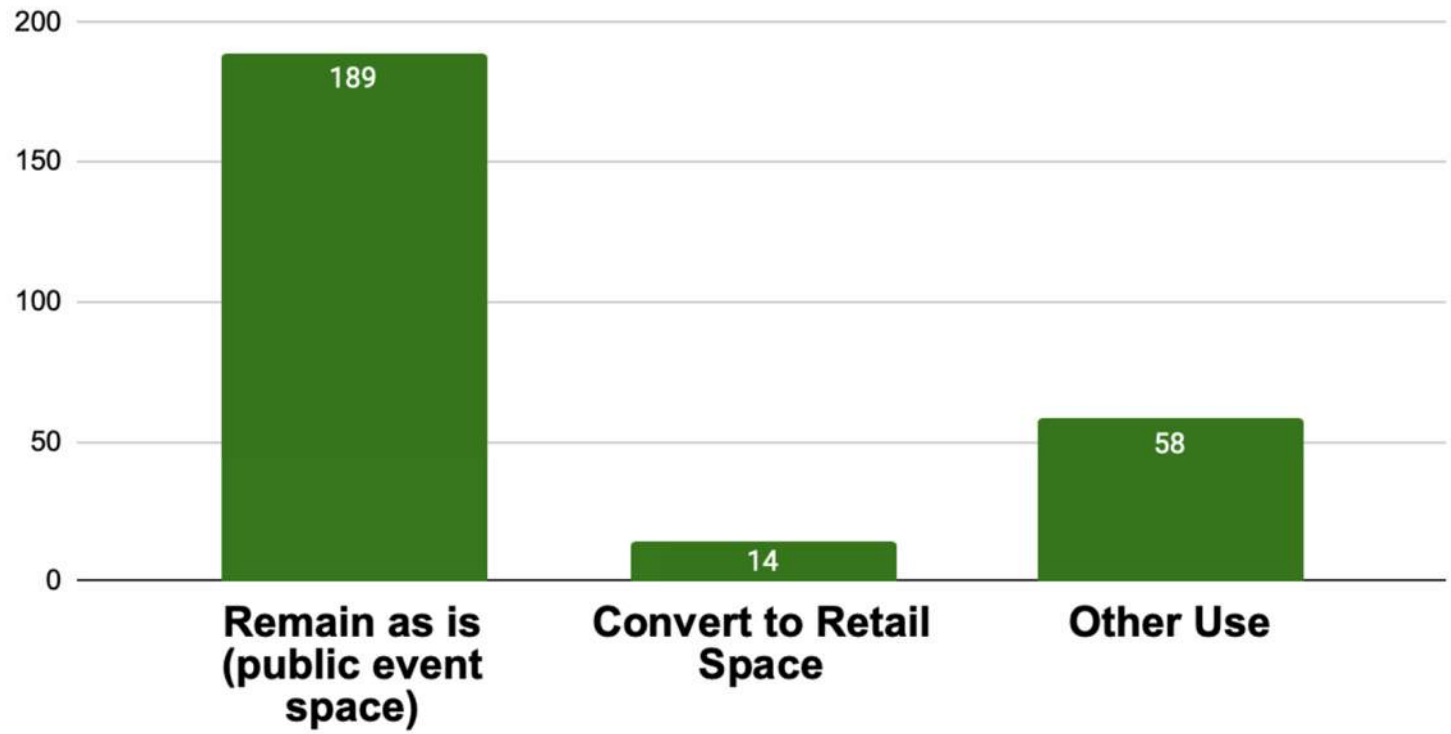
58%

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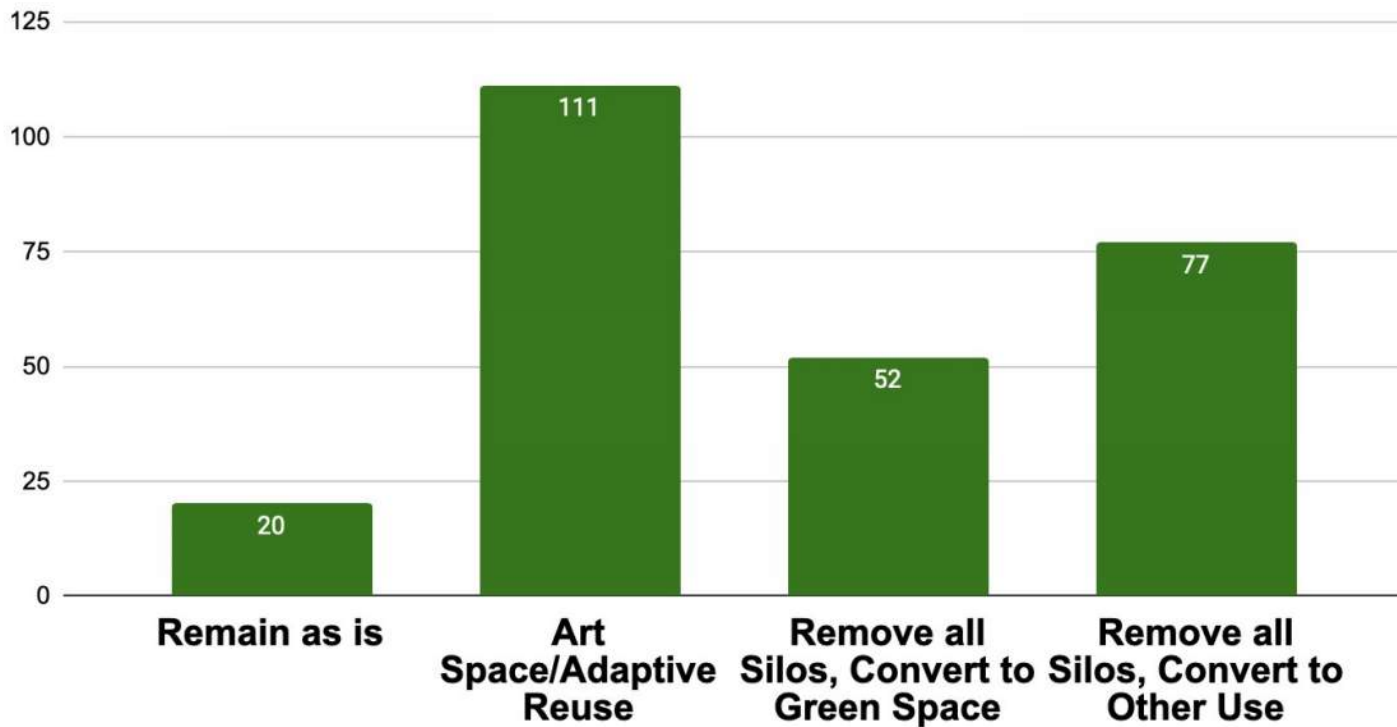
What Would You Like to See More of in the St. Johns Downtown Area?



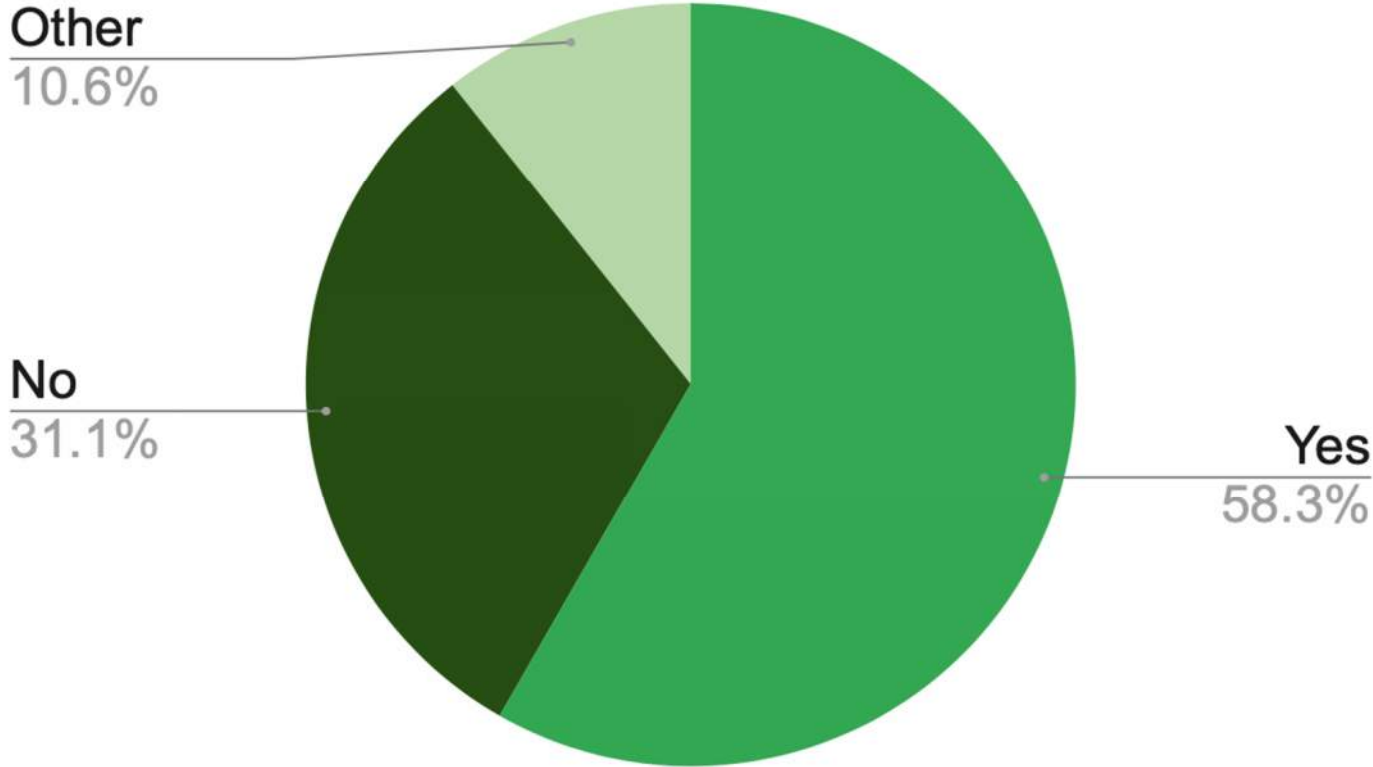
What Role Do You See the Train Depot Playing in the Future of St. Johns' Downtown?



What Role Do You See the Grain Silos Playing in the Future of St. Johns' Downtown?



Would You Prefer More Green Space in the Train Depot Site?

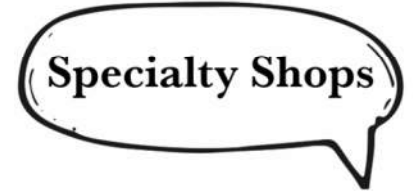


Survey

Written Response Questions:

1. What do you like or enjoy when visiting the downtown area?

2. How do you think the downtown area could be improved?





Recommendations



Grain Silos

- Beautify the Gateway Site
 - Ex. Art, Murals, Welcome Sign
- Transform the Silos into a Landmark
 - Incorporate silos into park design
- Demolish the Grain Silos
 - Utilize the space for other purposes



Proposed conceptual render

Before:



After:

Train Depot

- Adaptive Reuse
 - Potential for Public-Private Partnership
 - Preserve Historic Architecture
- Connect the Gateway Site to the greater downtown area



Union Depot – Lansing, Michigan



Depot Salon – Ionia, Michigan



Connectivity

Pedestrian Accessibility

- Create pedestrian-oriented signage
- Widen sidewalks on N. Clinton Avenue

Bicycle Accessibility

- Add bicycle parking to the Gateway and downtown
- Create bicycle lanes connecting the Gateway and downtown

Parking

- Guide visitors to city parking lots
- Reduce usage of on-street parking on N. Clinton Avenue



Park and Recreational Space

- **Public Health:** Outdoor activities boost mental and physical health.
- **Community Engagement and Attraction:** Parks as community gathering spaces. Attract visitors downtown with green spaces.
- **Site-specific Recommendations:** Utilization of the west side for parks, adaptable to the silos' future



Twin Silo Park – Fort Collins, CL



Magnolia Market at The Silos
In Waco, Texas

Downtown Activities

- **Food Trucks:** Driving foot traffic and revitalizing unused lots.
- **Farmers Markets:** Supporting local agriculture and community engagement.
- **Live Music and Concerts:** Energizing public spaces and fostering cultural connections.
- **Social Districts:** Promoting social interaction and flexible enjoyment of public areas.
- **Policy Frameworks:** Incorporating community feedback and adapting local ordinances to support vibrant public spaces.



Proposed conceptual renders

Before:



After:

Mixed-Use Development

- **Vacant Land Transformation:** From underused lots to vibrant community hubs.
- **Mixed-Use Vision:** Retail, residential, and recreational spaces in one location.
- **Benefits:** Enhances economic, social, and environmental wellness.
- **Community Engagement:** Developed with and for St. Johns residents.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Leveraging public and private investment.



Proposed conceptual renders

Before:



Revitalization of the Historic Train Depot

After:

Proposed conceptual design



Integrated Recreational Spaces within the Mixed-Use Housing Development



Enhanced Streetscape in the Mixed-Use Development Area

INTRODUCTION

THE ST. JOHNS GATEWAY CONSISTS OF SEVERAL PARCELS THAT CONTAIN SIX RETIRED GRAIN SILOS, RETIRED RAILCARS, AND A TRAIN DEPOT THAT IS NO LONGER IN OPERATION. A SMALL PAVILION, A VENUE FOR EVENTS IN THE AREA, IS ALSO PRESENT. THE MAJORITY OF THE SITE IS GRASSLAND AND A GRAVEL PARKING LOT.

OUR VISION FOR THE GATEWAY CONSISTS OF FOUR KEY GOALS:

1. ENHANCING THE GATEWAY
2. GATHERING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
3. ENCOURAGING PATRONAGE AND TOURISM
4. PRESERVING HISTORY

SURVEY FINDINGS



77%

WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE RECREATIONAL SPACE IN THE AREA.



92%

DO NOT WANT THE GRAIN SILOS TO REMAIN AS THEY ARE.



72%

WANT THE TRAIN DEPOT TO REMAIN AS IT IS.



58%

WANT MORE GREEN SPACE IN THE AREA.

STRENGTHS

- HIGH EMPLOYMENT GROWTH
- CREATIVE REUSE DISTRICT
- PROXIMITY TO DOWNTOWN
- HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT
- GREENSPACE

WEAKNESSES

- GRAIN SILO REMOVAL COSTS
- STORMWATER PIPE LAYMENT
- PERSONAL VEHICLES AS MAIN TRANSPORTATION
- LACK OF OUTDOOR GATHERING SPACE

SWOT

OPPORTUNITIES

- UNDERUSED LAND IN DOWNTOWN
- FRED MEIER CLINTON/IONIA/SHILWASSEE TRAIL
- REACTIVATED INDUSTRIAL BUILDING NORTH OF PROJECT AREA
- COLLABORATION WITH DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND PID

THREATS

- AGING POPULATION AND HOUSING SHORTAGE
- SAFETY CONCERNS
- DECLINING POPULATION
- LACK OF FUNDING FOR SILO REMOVAL

RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- MAKE THE SILOS AN ART SPACE
- PRIVATIZE AND RENOVATE THE TRAIN DEPOT
- REMOVE ALL BUT ONE TRAIN CAR
- REDUCE RELIANCE OF ON-STREET PARKING ON CLINTON AVE.
- IMPROVE BIKE ACCESSIBILITY/PARKING

LONG-TERM

- REPLACING ON-STREET PARKING ON N. CLINTON AVENUE
- DEMOLISH THE SILOS
- CREATING A CITYWIDE BIKEWAY
- CREATING MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROJECT AREA
- ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL DISTRICT AROUND THE GATEWAY



IMPROVEMENTS TO FRED MEIER TRAIL

FARMERS MARKET & FOOD TRUCK

AREA FOR EVENTS, PARKS, AND RECREATIONAL SPACES

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE TRAIN DEPOT AND SURROUNDING AREA

ENHANCEMENTS ALONG THE TRAIL



REVITALIZATION OF THE HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT



INTEGRATED RECREATIONAL SPACES WITHIN THE MIXED-USE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



ENHANCED STREETSCAPE IN THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AREA