CASE STUDIES
in Support of
GROVE CITY
TOWN CENTER PLAN

Prepared For:

THE CITY OF GROVE CITY
Grove City, Ohio

Prepared By:

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Columbus, Ohio

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CASE STUDY
1200 GRANDVIEW AVENUE
Grandview Heights, Ohio

Project Type: **Mixed Use Redevelopment**
Developer: **Santer Communities**

Project Profile

The project is a three story structure, containing eight (8) residential condominiums, four on each of floors two and three, plus one office suite of 1,446 square feet, and an enclosed parking garage for 19 automobiles on the ground floor. The office space is located to the front, next to the public entrance to the elevator lobby for access to the residential units. Garage access is from the alley in the rear of the building.

The plans of the residential units vary in size from 1,537 to 2,258 square feet. Three different plans are provided. Each unit has two bedrooms, and an outdoor balcony. Two parking spaces are assigned to each residence.

All utility services are under ground. Trash receptacles are enclosed in the garage portion of the building, with separate access from the rear alley. A roof top garden is provided for use by residents and their guests to enjoy views of street life and activities along Grandview Avenue.

Site

Two parcels of land, fronting the east side of Grandview Avenue were acquired for the project. One parcel contained a parking lot, and the other contained a single story doctor's office building that had been vacant for several years. The two parcels combined measured 80 feet by 100 feet.

Development Approval Issues

The project site and all adjoining sites were zoned for C-1 uses in Grandview Heights. All of the neighboring buildings were houses occupied by commercial or offices uses. The house to the south of the proposed development contained a photography studio, and was considered an historic structure, having been one of the first houses built in the community. Even though the proposal would replace the only commercial building and parking lot in the block, the development was considered to be out of scale with the neighboring buildings and the residential neighborhood across the rear alley.

The developer's original submission proposed 10, two bedroom residential units, with enclosed parking for 20 cars occupying the entire ground floor, except for a lobby entrance for residents and guests. The developer thought that his proposal would require no variances for parking, but it would require variances for rear yard setback, ground coverage, and building height. He would also require a conditional use approval for residential development within the C-1 commercial district.

Other issues rose during planning commission reviews and public hearings, including an expected increase of traffic, the narrow width of the rear alley, housing unit density, and selection of building façade materials. Planning Commission members expressed a preference to provide office or retail space along the Grandview Avenue frontage, instead of a ground floor live/ work apartment. The City recognized limitations of its zoning ordinances in dealing with mixed use projects, and suggested that if both the Planning Commission and the Council would wave the minimum lot size restriction for Planned Community District zoning, then the developer could seek re-zoning to the PCD District and would need no variances.

The developer obtained the PCD zoning, moved the structure closer to Grandview Avenue, providing a setback of 12 feet. The developer changed the building plan to provide office space and parking on the ground floor, and reduced unit count to eight. The developer also provided a 2 foot easement in the rear to allow future alley widening if necessary. The entire review and approval process for the development required eleven months.

This case study was prepared in reference to the Minutes of the Grandview Heights Planning Commission, dated June 15, 2005, June 29, 2005, July 20, 2005, August 17, 2005, September 21, 2005, and May 17, 2006.

CASE STUDY

REDEVELOPMENT HOUSING DENSITY AS A PLANNING TOOL
A Case Study for Grove City

The objective of this case study is to document the basis by which developers determine the feasibility of mixed use redevelopment projects in urban locations such as along Broadway, Columbus Street, or Park Street, and to present the elements of consideration in such a way as to illustrate the contributions that housing density can make in providing civic structure that benefits the public.

POINT #1- **The cost of land per housing unit varies with the position of the redevelopment site within the overall housing market.** Generally **higher market prices are paid** in upscale "hot" or desirable areas. In these locations, buildings provide **for** higher design and construction quality, and **larger, fancier or specialized housing units**. Amenities such as streetscape, excellent parking and common use facilities are expected. **In lower cost market locations, smaller and more simply- appointed housing units are provided** at lower levels of design and constructions quality, and amenities are diminished, unless projects are very large in unit count.

The average land acquisition cost per condominium housing unit in Central Ohio, over the last three to five years is $21,977. For all such projects the cost per unit has ranged from $10,417 to $35,700. Average costs across market areas, however, have little to do with determining the feasibility of a given project within a selected market area.

POINT #2- In a given market area and for a possible redevelopment project under consideration, the developer must first determine the price point or sales price which the market would likely pay for a housing unit. He must also project the unit size and finish characteristics necessary to meet market expectations for units of that price.

POINT #3- **The sales prices of condominium housing units also vary in relation to the desirability (market position) of the project location**, as well as in relation to the quality of design and construction. **As mentioned above in Point #1, for every market area there is also an expectation of unit size, number of bedrooms, and other unit qualities that will be provided for the unit price**. It is the sum of unit sales which must generally pay for all costs of the development (including amenities), except for ground floor commercial space and its required parking. These costs include land cost, construction costs, site development costs, engineering, architectural, marketing, legal, and real estate sales fees, and the developer's overheard and profit.

RULE #1- **The cost of land acquisition, plus demolition and basic site preparation work must allow a ratio to unit sales price which is workable within the project's market position.** Determining project feasibility is a back and forth, iterative process of projection and calculation. The developer begins with an anticipated unit sales price, measured in terms of $/ square foot. For a given market area, unit sales prices correlate with unit size, configuration and characteristics. The developer also assumes, therefore, an appropriate unit size. Land costs vary from 10% to 18% of unit sales price, and **the developer's first measure of minimum total building area and minimum total unit count can be calculated from projected sales price and land cost**.

Following the initial assumptions above to determine project feasibility, much work remains to be accomplished. Architects and engineers need to prepare a design for the proposed project, responding to actual site dimensions, utility services, and similar factors. The most appropriate parking configuration needs to be determined, and the construction cost of the proposed design needs to be estimated. With a more detailed picture, a detailed projection of total costs can be compared with potential total unit sales to determine feasibility.

RULE #2- **In mixed use, urban redevelopment projects, ground floor space is reserved for commercial tenants, parking, servicing, and pedestrian access. The developer generally allocates the revenue from ground floor commercial space to pay for related parking and streetscape improvements.** Residential condominium units do not sell in ground floor configurations. This means that all residential units required for project feasibility must be located on the second and upper floor levels.

Discussion

1. - Within a given market area, land costs and zoning limits determine redevelopment potential. For example, consider a four family apartment building in a good market area which is for sale at the price of $400,000. Using the $21,977 average land value in Central Ohio for condominium units, a feasible redevelopment design would need to include 18 condominium units. (See attached land cost data.) If zoning regulations would not permit this opportunity, redevelopment would be infeasible.

Zoning ordinances which set housing density limits actually limit opportunity for redevelopment. One story, strip centers become more viable as a redevelopment option.

2. - Developers cannot control land costs. They are in the same boat as communities that have used eminent domain powers to assemble sites for redevelopment. It is customary that property owners increase sale prices after they learn that land parcels are being assembled in an area. The idea behind the eminent domain power was to allow the courts to determine a fair market value for sites being assembled to allow redevelopment for public purposes to proceed without cost gouging. **Every redevelopment proposal by a developer has dealt with the site acquisition issue. Every proposal is, therefore, different and should be evaluated independently.** In a given case, one developer may have obtained a "good deal," or a favorable price. In another case, a developer may have had to agree to pay "top dollar" in assembling a redevelopment site. In either case, if a community is seeking redevelopment in selected areas, each proposal submitted by a developer should be considered an opportunity for the community to achieve its objectives.

3. - Tinkering with building designs submitted by developers is problematic, because most reviewers do not understand the impact of various requests. Each developer determines the necessary program for the design of housing units. This includes setting the size of the unit, the number of bedrooms, whether units are to be partitioned into functional spaces, or designed in open space, or loft fashion. These determinations and others involving interior finishes relate to the developer's sense of what should be offered for the target sale price for units. The developer takes considerable risk in making these decisions, because a given design may miss the market, increasing the time required to sell units. This is why developers resist shifting dollars budgeted for unit construction to pay for improvements or amenities demanded by planning commissions during plan approvals.

- Asking a developer to plan smaller units to lower building height causes problems. The maximum sales price ($/Sq Ft) for a housing unit in a given market area is possible for a unit sized to meet market demand. Providing a project with smaller units requires a reduction in maximum sales price, and results in an increase in the ratio of land cost to total sales value. The land cost per unit increases to an infeasible level.
- The cost of special building components, such as elevators, would spread over a reduced total square footage, increasing the ratio of construction cost to total sales value.
- To retain the feasible ratio of land cost to total sales value, a greater number of smaller housing units would be required. This would increase parking demand beyond the potential of the site to provide parking.

4. - Other costs and opportunities should be considered during review of redevelopment proposals.

- The width and depth of a site can greatly affect parking area configurations and floor plan (unit count) options. The most critical of these involves site limitations on parking configuration, particularly if structured parking (garage space) is necessary above or below grade. An inefficient parking layout can increase the cost of below grade structured parking by more than $10,000 per space.

- **Significant inefficiency in parking layout generally results each time a developer provides parking for his own redevelopment proposal.** Significant added construction cost is also incurred. As noted above, below grade structured parking adds enormous cost. As and alternative, developers could make cash purchases of licenses for parking spaces in a municipal garage. Such spaces would be assigned by the developer as the public spaces required to service the ground floor, or street level, commercial space of his redevelopment proposal. This would allow the developer's ground floor parking opportunity to be used for tenants of residential units, and could change project economics sufficiently to allow the developer to make other civic improvements.
- **Most communities interested in encouraging redevelopment seek to partner with developers to achieve plans that benefit the entire community.** Town Center parking plans define how both public and private facilities should be laid out. These plans may or may not include metering and other forms of revenue production, such as licensing, but they generally define design guidelines and construction specifications. Cities also prepare their own plans for streetscape improvements, including pedestrian and traffic signalization of intersections.

  Various public / private partnering arrangements are defined to assist in implementing municipal parking and streetscape plans. Some communities simply define what the public will accomplish, and seek to cause developers to accomplish the balance.

- Absent some form of public partnership assistance (such as a municipal parking garage), any unusual or special scope of amenity required by a planning commission for a developer to provide to obtain zoning approval, the developer usually has two options: 1.) increase residential unit count; 2.) reduce design or construction quality to lower costs.
- By increasing unit count within the redevelopment project, a developer could provide civic improvements, such as a portion of the streetscape plan. The rate of contribution would be subject to negotiation, but a place of beginning would be the value of land cost per housing unit.

CASE STUDY
INCUBATORS

A start-up business needs a new idea and an entrepreneur willing to risk time and money to make the idea into an ongoing and successful venture. The new idea might have to do with the retail sales of a niche product or a specialized market, or it might be an idea that is funded by a grant to develop a new technological device to be used by some specialized industrial endeavor. Whatever the idea or its potential marketing thrust, the entrepreneur generally has limited capital, and therefore, limited time to set up shop, so to speak, and try for success.

New businesses have many decisions to make right from the start, and they can ill-afford to make mistakes. Will the business be a proprietorship, a partnership, or a Limited Liability Corporation? Who will provide the legal work? Will the business be on a cash basis or an accrual basis for accounting? Who will obtain the Employer Identification Number? What staffing will be necessary? Who will handle payroll and the required filings? Has a business plan been prepared? Has a market study and marketing plan been done? Who will do the bookkeeping? Will commercially available bookkeeping software suffice? How many computers will be required? What insurance policies will be necessary? What banking services will be necessary? Which vendors will be essential, and what assurances will be necessary to establish credit for monthly services? Where will the business locate? How much rent is affordable? Who will design and print stationary? Will a web site facilitate sales? Who will design and host the web site? What type of telephone service would be best, given expected computer use (email) and web site marketing? Will essential equipment be purchased or leased? Who will finish this list of stuff to worry about? Who will answer all these questions?

Incubators- An incubator is both a place and a program which is established to assist start up businesses, to help them be successful. A program of services is offered by a staff of professionals, and the services are generally focused to help entrepreneurs deal with questions as listed above. Facilities can vary widely in their nature, depending upon the type of businesses being incubated, but they are offered to new businesses at a lower than customary rent level. Lower rents are an essential part of the overall service an incubator provides to help new businesses to succeed. An incubator is established to provide subsidy to worthy start-ups, and candidate new businesses are generally expected to qualify for admission on a competitive basis. This means that each incubator must itself be well funded to allow transfer of staffing and facilities benefits to its new business tenants.

Retail incubators are the least common, as they have been the least successful. During the 1960's the produce co-op emerged as a simplified version of the retail incubator. Members paid dues, which generally paid utilities and rent for a place in a lower rent area. Members also volunteered time slots, essentially providing staffing on a collaborative basis. All this was done so that members could purchase produce at reasonable "non-profit" prices.

In Columbus, The North Market operates as a sort of incubator for small retail businesses and retail start-ups. The City owns the market facility, and staff is provided, paid out of rents and parking revenue. The rent for a "stall" is much lower than a small storefront on High Street, which allows start-ups to try for success in retailing. This is where Jeni's Ice Cream started under the name of Scream. The Somali community in Columbus operates a similar market in the Northland area.

Some economic development consultants are currently working to set up incubators for start-up retail businesses. The idea is to arrange a number of separate stores within a retail building in a commercial district. Each store would be allocated 400 to 500 square feet of floor space, and each proprietor would receive on-the-job training in retail operations. Six or seven such businesses fit within a typical ground floor area of old buildings. Issues that are important in such

an undertaking include favorable bank financing for inventory, store displays and fixtures, and for as much as eleven or twelve months of operations. Low rent is also essential.
The task of marketing each business to allow the establishment of individual store identities is, perhaps, the most crucial aspect of retail incubators, however. Successful retail businesses generally require visibility from the street. Retailers often achieve identity through their window displays. Retail incubators draw customers on the basis of cumulative attraction, the fact that many small businesses exist in one place. This is why start-up businesses in a retail incubator must be compatible. The situation is very much like the collaborative retailing among many proprietors in the antique mall. The antique mall, however, also illustrates the difficulty each proprietor confronts in trying to establish an individual brand for his/ her shop. Each shop owner usually possesses insufficient inventory to open their own store. This fact goes unnoticed when such dealers group together in a mall setting, but the situation prohibits the individual dealer from setting up a specialty.

The small retail merchants that prove to be most successful operate a mail order or web page sales program. Internet sales open each shop to the world of customers, the potential of which is perhaps best illustrated by eBay.

The **business incubator** (sometimes referred to as the Technology Business Incubator) is the most common form of incubator, and the most successful. The business incubator provides space and services for start-ups that are involved with the essence of developing, or with various ways of employing the fruits of, technology. These “tech” businesses operate within a constant state of evolution and change, and they need to invest their capital in the technology and equipment necessary to develop their strong idea into successful business ventures. Incubator facilities for tech business start-ups are generally quite large in size, often 20,000 square feet or larger. The most successful provide floor space for primary work stations, plus opportunity for laboratory space, and common areas such as meeting rooms, a central copy area, lounge space, and toilet areas.

Technology business start-ups generally produce work in the format of highly flexible teams of people collaborating together. The work environment is, therefore, very open and flexible. An open architecture for the facility is necessary to allow changes in utilities and technology infrastructure, as well as in office space configuration. Specialized support facilities, such as wet labs, bottle wash, autoclaves, toilets and conference space are generally fixed in convenient locations, but it is best if the facility provides a level of incompleteness in the overall incubator platform. The resulting theatrical character of the interior environment, the visual sense of being back stage, or on “the verge,” adds excitement to the business incubator and encourages a surprising level of sharing between and among tenant businesses.

CASE STUDY
TECH COLUMBUS- THE BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CENTER
1275 Kinnear Road
Columbus, Ohio

The information for this case study is provided by Lincoln Street Studio, the project architect.

Entry Lobby. Photo by Steven Elbert.

The Business Technology Center was founded in early 1984 as a non-profit business incubator. It was initially set up in an off campus location on Summit Street in Columbus, in an old University lab building. The BTC was relocated into the office wing of the old Simmons Mattress Factory at 1275 Kinnear Road around 1990. The new location was renovated in the mid-1990's, and expanded in 2000. The expansion consisted of renovating 37,000 square feet of high bay factory space adjacent to the office wing, plus renovating 4,000 square feet of the office wing to provide a new entrance and lobby area.

The renovation plan provided 42 office work places of approximately 300 square feet, 16 fully equipped laboratories 300 square feet in area, 5 conference rooms, one major meeting space, a bottle wash and autoclave room, one data cabling and telephone terminal room, toilet facilities, and lounge area. A primary objective of the renovation was to preserve the existing spatial character of the high bay space, its visual excitement of exposed network of steel columns, girders and beams, and the existing fire suppression system. A second objective was to devise an interior lighting system that would dispel the darkness of a completely interior location. Achieving flexibility in office space configuration, to allow businesses to expand with little dust and disruption was also important.

Typical Wet Lab. Photo by Steven Elbert.

An Interior Business Street. Photo by Steven Elbert.

Rather than traditional office partitions with closed ceilings, an interior of open-ended and partially enclosed architecture made the work places. The project was conceived as a small city, with a series of “buildings” within the high bay factory space, organized hierarchically, with the public forum and meeting spaces at the center. Office use spaces ringed the perimeter of the forum, providing frontage for the primary interior street, and enclosing 16 generic laboratory buildings, support facilities, the conference center and stand-alone office pods. Skylights, indirect lighting using the roof deck, and playful lighting achieved a sense of daylight throughout. A new glass and metal lobby was designed in the shape of a wedge to visually pierce the old building to provide access and a physical connection between the existing BTC offices and new tenant space deep within the old factory. The modern nature of the entry design provided an enhanced identity from the road, establishing the sense that the existing incubator had been expanded with new activity. The BTC rented up in ten months, exceeding expectations by more than a year, and in 2003 it received the Randal M. Whaley Incubator of the Year Award from the National Business Incubation Association.

The incubator provided the start-up businesses with flexible, short term leases, at approximately $10 per square foot under market rate rents. Leases were written to allow tenants to “bundle” the costs of furnishings and certain equipment into a single lease fee. Business advisory services offered to tenants included preparation of a business plans, assistance in conducting market surveys, and assistance in grant writing. Specialized services could also be arranged for tenants in the areas of patent law, accounting, and human resources. Being on the Science and Technology Campus of The Ohio State University also offered many advantages, including access to a part time graduate student work force and to professors and researchers with their intellectual infrastructure on such topics as domain-specific IT, technology transfer and commercialization, bioscience and advance materials.

By 2002, the Business Technology Center had provided facilities for 21 start-up business tenants.

- Adler Consultants (Non Destructive Testing)
- Automatiq Measurements (Circuit Testing)

- BFD (Advanced Structural Materials)
- Consumer Product Innovations (Consumer Product Testing)
- Entrotech (Speciality Adhesives)
- FourthChannel (Sales Software)
- HealthSafe (Microbial Contamination Control)
- IAM Technology (Business Software)
- MetGet (RF I.D. Tags)
- OncoImmune (Cancer and MS Therapy)
- Oztech (Automated Tracking Systems)
- The Platform Lab (Software Test Facility)
- Secure Interiors (Corporate Network Security)
- Skilled Trades Company (Employee Leasing)
- TeamDynamixs (Project Management Software)
- TopoGEN (Pharmaceutical Reagents)
- Transmap (Digital Mapping)
- Funk Metallurgical (Start-up Consulting)
- Cabot Performance Materials (Cabot Corp. Thin Film Spin-Off)
- Global Seven (Consumer Product Formulation)
- Athenor Global (Management Consulting)

These businesses created more than 100 jobs, and generated approximately $8.1 million in investments. By the end of 2002, the BTC had graduated more than 40 businesses into the market rate economy, 32 of which were still operating.

Also in 2002, The Columbus Technology Council was created through the merger of two organizations, the Industry and Technology Council (ITC), and the Columbus Technology Leadership Council (CTLC). In 2006, the Business Technology Center merged with the Columbus Technology Council to form Tech Columbus. Tech Columbus now operates the technology business incubator, and the facility on Kinnear Road carries the name Business Technology Center.

CASE STUDY

GREAT PARKS AND GREAT STREETS CAN SPUR REDEVELOPMENT

This study is based upon material presented in the following publications.

1. Mark L. Gillem. "Priming the Pump-Downtown Parks can drive redevelopment." Eugene Weekly. January 24, 2008.
2. Mark Hinshaw, FAICP. "Great Neighborhoods." Planning. January, 2008.
3. Ruth Knack, AICP. "Great Streets." Planning, 2008.

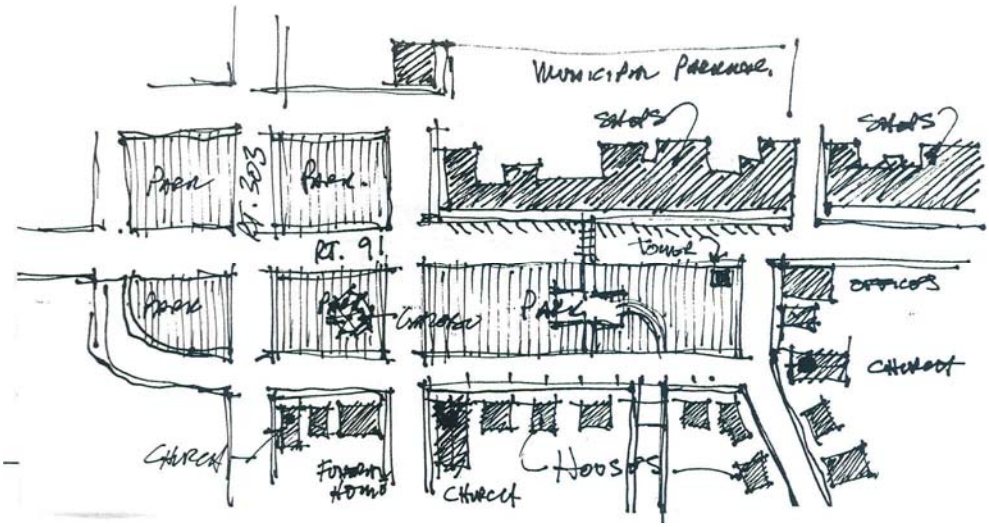
The American Planning Association established its Great Places in America awards program in 2007 to recognize the great neighborhoods and great streets in America. Applications responded to the following criteria to explain how their nomination complied. To be considered great neighborhood, each nomination had to:

1. Have a variety of functional attributes that contribute to the day to day living of residents (residential, commercial, or mixed use).
2. Accommodate multimodal transportation (pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers).
3. Have design and special architectural features that are visually interesting.
4. Encourage human contact and social activities.
5. Promote community involvement and maintain a secure environment.
6. Promote sustainability and respond to climatic demands.
7. Have a memorable character.

Goodale Park, Columbus, Ohio

Great parks can, in and of themselves, address each of the criteria, and it is interesting that most of the winning neighborhoods included at least one public spot where people spend time. Several of these were parks.

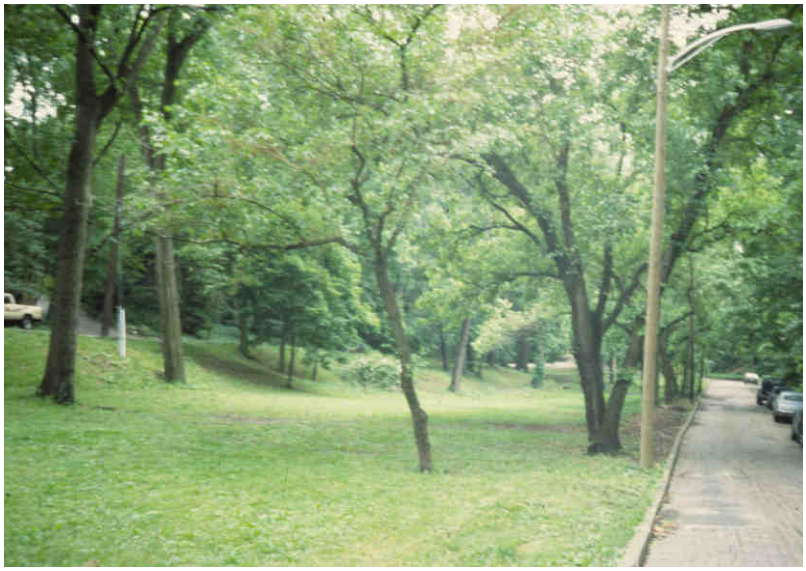
In an article in the Eugene Weekly, entitled *Priming The Pump*, architect and planner Mark Gillem reports that “Urban parks attract economic development, increase the desirability of living downtown, and enhance environmental sustainability.” Mark is a Professor of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Oregon, and he is very interested in the role that parks play in urban centers. He and his students completed an extensive urban park study involving parks in Vancouver, Corvallis, Beaverton, Portland, and Albany, conducting more than 100 interviews and learning from 200 hours of observation. They concluded that parks are equally important in small cities, and large, if there is interest in attracting new housing, new businesses, and tourism to the town center areas.



The students concluded that great parks should be located in the heart of downtown, and they should be open to a variety of uses, and surrounded with residential buildings and shops. They should be shaded by tremendous trees, bordered by streets with parking, and maintained by the City. Hudson Ohio serves as a small town example, with shops along one bordering street, and houses along the opposite bordering street.

Urban parks attract economic development, because they attract visitors and businesses. Developers know this, which is why they provide parks within their own developments. This is a photo from a retail development in East Cleveland called Legacy.

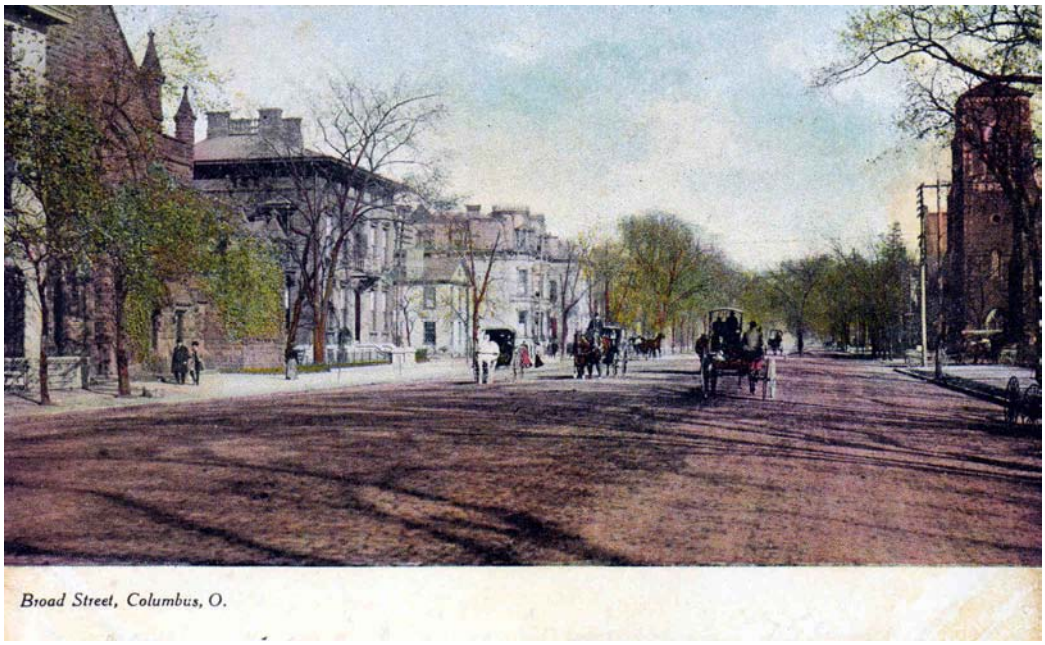
Urban parks are attractive for new residents interested in living in urban locations. These ground floor retail uses and the housing units above are located across the street from Victor Steinbrueck Park in Seattle.



Urban parks enhance the environment's sustainability. It is reported that, depending upon size, one tree can absorb up to 70 pounds of carbon dioxide in a year's time, plus approximately 10 additional pounds of other air pollutants. In addition, a canopy of large trees can absorb hundreds of gallons of rainfall, greatly reducing storm runoff.

Building at higher housing densities allows open space which can be made accessible for public use. Density and open space must be provided together.

Great Streets have many things in common, but each is different with its own personality.



The American Planning Association recognized ten Great Streets as part of its 2007 Great Places in America awards program. Each of the honored streets was different, but they shared the common ground of exhibiting good planning. The program considered such factors as maintenance, safety, and sustainability. Great streets may feature important architecture or significant natural areas. Connectivity is an important aspect of planning great streets, how they link up with the thoroughfare network. Great streets may be defined by great trees, or by frontage shops, or they may incorporate traffic calming or special design aspects in and of themselves. Whatever the specific configuration, all great streets are memorable. They contribute greatly to the sense of place within a community.

Great streets do not need to be super-sized to be great. The Harrison Plat in Columbus' Victorian Village area serves as an example of how creative planning of neighborhood streets can achieve great civic value. Small roundabouts within the neighborhood punctuate intersections, calm traffic, and establish a strong sense of place.

Great streets can be shaped by great trees, as in the top photo of South Columbia Avenue in Bexley, or they may be defined by other forms of landscaping, as in this view along Outer Circle Road, Regent Park, London. In each case, the natural landscape lends immeasurable character to the street.

Planning great streets involves much more, however, and the list of considerations is extensive. A few of the important issues are listed below.

1. How will the street address the need to balance automobile parking, loading zones and transit stops? Will there be provision for bicycles, scooters, and perhaps even segways?

2. Will the street focus on retail or mixed use development? If so, how will the street facilitate the social activities of shopping, and at the same time allow continuous pedestrian movement?

3. Will the design of the street provide a memorable character?

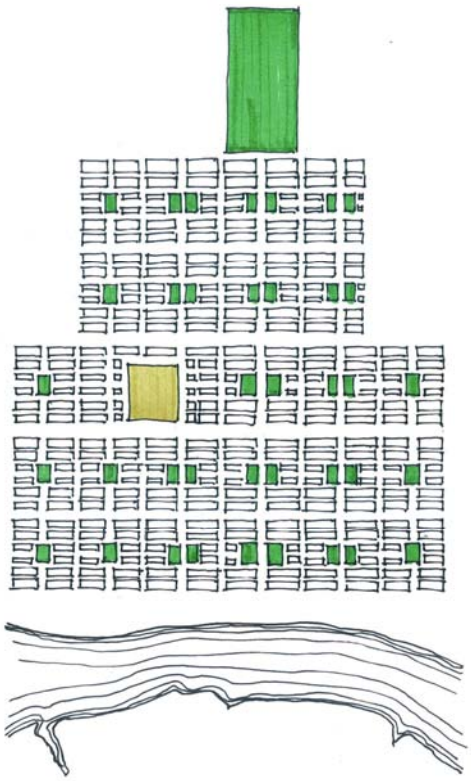
4. Will the street be designed to provide a sense of safety for pedestrians?

5. The character of streets often changes along their entire length. This is also often true about the key function that each street must achieve. One of the key features of each street, however, is its connectivity. How does it link up with the entire network of streets? Does it lead anywhere?

The plan of the old quarter of Savannah is perhaps the best example of how great streets and great parks can combine to establish an extraordinary urban pattern, one that remains unique in its overall sense of place. In 1732, James Oglethorpe laid out an array of squares with parks at their center, in grid fashion, with streets running from the north, perpendicular to the Savannah River, through the center of each square and it central park. A grid of east and west streets was laid over all to separate the squares, which were called wards. The parks were 315 feet by 270 feet in size. The streets running north and south were given a right of way of 75 feet in width, and the right of way for east and west streets was set at 37 ½ feet. Lanes of 22 ½ feet in width were located on center with each park, and were planned to run east and west serving the service functions of alleys behind the residential lots.

Today there are 26 wards, and the original pattern is broken only once to accommodate a cemetery. Oglethorpe had apparently not expected the town to grow so large to encompass the cemetery, which had been located outside the bounds of anticipated expansion. Buildings three stories in height surround each park within its ward, and the overall scale town is charming and very residential in character. The quarter mixes density and open space in a very magical way.

The primary street running north and south is Bull Street. It carries mixed use zoning, and connects five of Savannah's most historic parks, from the river's edge to Forsyth Park on the north edge of the old quarter. Bull Street also runs through SCAD (the Savannah College of Art and Design), its campus being the fabric of the City. Bull Street is a great street, and the parks are great parks.



Views of Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia

One of the parks along Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia

One of the parks along Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia (above) and Forsyth Park, Savannah, Georgia.