



**BETHEL HOMES**  
NORTH DOWNTOWN ATHENS

**PLANNING STUDY**

*New ideas. Better communities.*



**Athens-Clarke County**  
UNIFIED GOVERNMENT

**DRAFT FINAL MASTER PLAN**

Thank you for reviewing the proposed Master Plan for North Downtown Athens!

This presentation will cover:

- The master planning process
- The community's vision for this area, and
- Opportunities for the community to grow and connect to downtown, while maintaining a unique neighborhood identity

We welcome your comments and questions on this final plan.

Please be sure to check out our website [ndathensplanning.com](http://ndathensplanning.com) to find more resources on the planning area and to review past community meetings.

The map you see here includes the area referred to as North Downtown Athens.

This Master Planning effort was funded by voters through the 2020 SPLOST and is focused on how to best utilize public funding for affordable housing, including mixed-income, mixed-use developments.

The area highlighted in yellow includes the current residential communities of Bethel Midtown Village and the Athens Housing Authority community known as College & Hoyt. This “Redevelopment Plan” area will receive direct investment from the SPLOST funding for new infrastructure in the more immediate years.

The pink hashed line indicates the broader “Transformation Plan” area we studied.

This master plan recognizes many great planning efforts already underway locally, adds new ideas, and coordinates them all into a unified roadmap for the future of this area!





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



The team started outreach in early 2020 with in-person workshops and stakeholder interviews, where we received many great ideas and important background information.

Due to COVID, we pivoted to conducting online surveys, individual surveys with residents, 7 Virtual Workshop sessions, and more. This fall, we held outdoor pin-up sessions to safely engage face-to-face with so many of you. Thank you to those who participated in this year of community feedback!

For more information regarding our outreach process, please visit the [Community Input](#) page on the website.

## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN



Neighborhood Transformation Plan of North Downtown



JHP

This Master Plan is meant to provide conceptual direction for two areas of North Downtown Athens.

The first is the greater North Downtown Neighborhood Transformation Plan area, which includes land east of Pulaski Creek (*near the Athens Community Council on Aging*) and north of Dougherty Street including:

- The fire station
- Denney Tower senior housing and
- The current ACC Planning Department Building

You will see that the Neighborhood Plan is more conceptual with fewer defined details, as it looks many years into the future to explore how this area of town can transform.

## NORTH DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



Redevelopment Plan Area of Bethel Village/College & Hoyt



**JHP**

The second area is the Redevelopment Plan, which focuses on the future of Bethel Midtown Village and the College and Hoyt community owned by the Athens Housing Authority.

The Redevelopment Plan area, with funding from SPLOST, is expected to begin to change in the next few years. As such, the plan for this area is more defined.



**NORTH DOWNTOWN  
ATHENS**

**NEIGHBORHOOD  
TRANSFORMATION  
PLAN**





## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN OVERVIEW



**JHP**

What you are seeing is an illustrated vision of what the future area could look like. You will see in the bottom left the Council on Aging building as we look across the current Bethel site towards downtown.

## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN - URBAN AND SITE ANALYSIS

### Big Ideas

1. Reestablish an urban street grid with safe, walkable streets, and connections to Downtown, Lay Park, and Lyndon House
2. Create publicly accessible parks and open spaces that integrate stormwater management and public art
3. Include private open space for residents in new developments
4. Activate streets along College Avenue and Lumpkin Street and encourage active ground-floor uses
5. Focus on community-wide sustainability



**JHP**

With input from many community conversations and professional analysis from the planning team, we generated what we call 'Big Ideas' for the Neighborhood Transformation.

The Big Ideas really unite into overall themes of:

- **CONNECTING** this area of town via parks, paths, roads, and safe crossings, and
- **PRESERVING AND ENHANCING** housing affordability and access to services (like the Neighborhood Health Clinic, the Council on Aging, and Lay Park).



## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN - ACTIVATE DOUGHERTY STREET

BUILDING 1	
Retail at Street	4,000-5,000 SF
Denny Tower:	145 Leasing Units 75-100 New Units 220-245 Total Units
Parking Garage:	240-280 sps

BUILDINGS 2	
Retail at Street	8,000-10,000 SF
Satellite Library at Street	1,500-2,500 SF
Community Service at Street	4,000-5,000 SF
Community or Commercial above	45,000-60,000 SF
Shared Parking Podium Garage	125-150 sps

BUILDING 3	
Retail at Street	8,000-10,000 SF
Commercial/Office above	40,000-55,000 SF
Parking Garage:	120-150 sps



**JHP**

More traffic and parking lots and less active uses make the planning area along Dougherty Street feel like the end of the Downtown energy. The good news is there are so many opportunities to further activate it.

Denney Tower could be renovated to modernize the current senior apartments and create more housing, while also hosting street-level retail along Dougherty.

The existing Planning Building and the Athens Downtown Development Authority parking lot next to the Uncommon Apartments provide excellent opportunities for denser mixed-use buildings.

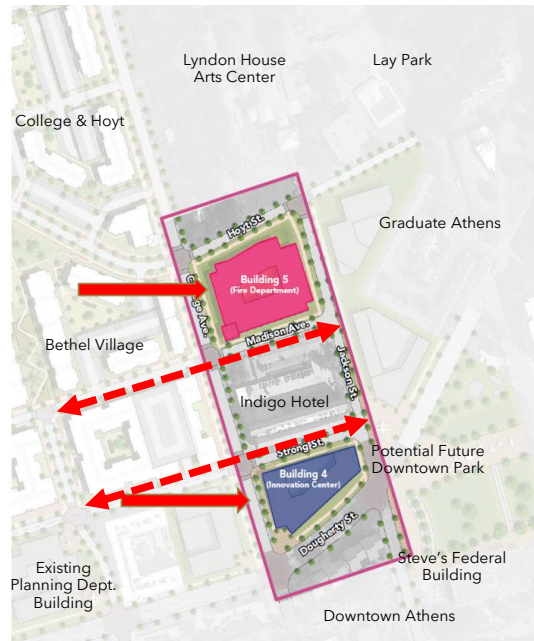
Strong Street could be reconnected as it once was years ago providing vehicular and pedestrian connections from College Avenue to Hull Street.

Lumpkin Street can become the 'gateway' into a redeveloped Bethel community if extended further northward.

## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN – JACKSON STREET WEST

<b>BUILDING 4 (INNOVATION CENTER)</b>	
<b>Retail at Street</b>	10,000-12,000 SF
<b>Innovation Center Above</b>	45,000-60,000 SF
<b>Parking Garage:</b>	100-140 sps

<b>BUILDING 5 (FIRE DEPARTMENT)</b>	
<b>Retail or services at Street</b>	8,000-10,000 SF
<b>Art &amp; Culture Space Above</b>	3,500-5,000 SF
<b>Housing Units Above</b>	120-140 Units
<b>Parking Podium Garage:</b>	200-235 sps



**JHP**

We also studied the area highlighted here. We suggest the eventual relocation of the Fire Station would provide opportunity for creative arts and culture space, housing, and street level services that would reflect the character of the Jackson Street Art Walk plans, further activate College Avenue into a ‘main street’ and provide prominence to the Lyndon House.

Likewise, the parking lot between the Indigo Hotel and Dougherty Street is a prime opportunity for a dense office building with ground floor retail that could be parked with a garage.

Also, this eastern zone of the neighborhood plan sets the roadway pattern to be extended over into the Bethel area.

## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN – JACKSON STREET EAST



**JHP**

The Areas East of Jackson Street have a lot of development efforts already underway that we want to acknowledge here including:

- The Jackson Street Art Walk
- The proposed redevelopment along the Jackson Street art walk, behind the Graduate Hotel and
- The proposed downtown park at the Federal Building, which will further link the North Downtown Area to events at the Classic Center



## NORTH DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION PLAN – URBAN STREETSCAPES

### Streetscape Goals

- Walkability/Connectivity
- Increased Safety
- Better Lighting
- Smart Crossings
- Warning Signage - RRFB
- Active Streets
- Traffic Calming/Slowing Traffic
- Coordination with ACC street Standards



College Avenue - example of a Complete Street



**JHP**

The study also reviews the character of the neighborhood streets.

We heard the need for safe crossings and Complete Streets in nearly all our community conversations. As such, we are proposing several different street sections.

Here you see the example of College Avenue with space for trees, a sidewalk, bike lane, on-street parking and two lanes of traffic. Have you seen the blinking crosswalk beacons on Dougherty Street that signal traffic to stop for pedestrians? Those are known as RRFBs, and we recommend them here, as well as enhanced lighting and more street trees.



**JHP**

Looking south with the Hotel Indigo to our left and neighborhood clinic on the right, the intersection of College Avenue and Hoyt Street could become a safe crossing for everyone by adding lighting and signage, beacon signal crosswalks, and different pavement colors to slow the traffic. You can see how the redevelopment of the area could start to create a walkable feel, very much like downtown!

More street sections and details will be available in the final booklet.



Now, we will transition from the Neighborhood-wide Transformation Plan and zoom into the Redevelopment Plan for the Bethel and College & Hoyt communities.





Redevelopment Plan Area of Bethel Village/College & Hoyt



**JHP**

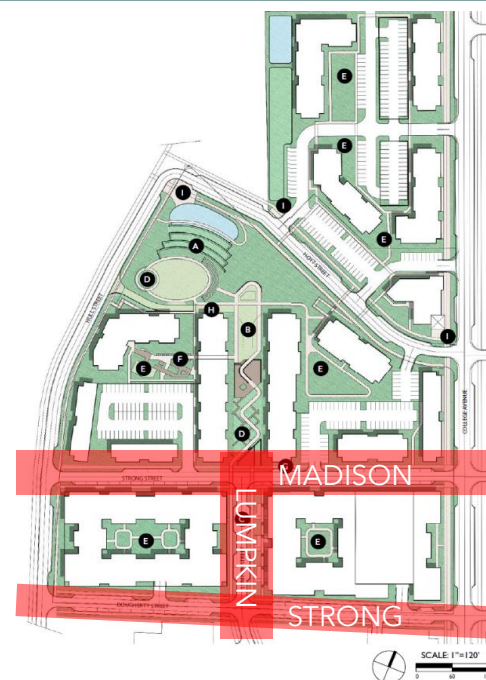
Recall those big ideas generated from our community conversations. Let's revisit them and see they translated into actionable strategies for this Redevelopment Plan area.

## Urban Design “Big Ideas”

### 1. Reestablish an urban street grid



Conceptual view of Lumpkin Street



**JHP**

The historic street patterns of this area originally connected Lumpkin Street northward across the entire existing Bethel community. And while the topography is too steep to accommodate current roadway design standards for this connection, we suggest a northward extension of Lumpkin as seen in the graphic here.

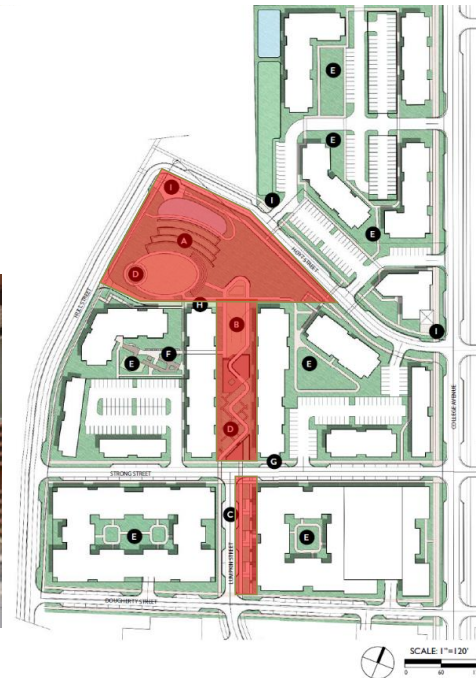
Madison and Strong Streets should also connect from Hull Street to College Avenue. This reintroduces the block pattern typical of downtown Athens and knits the current Bethel area into the activity of Lay Park and the Jackson Street Art Walk.

### Urban Design “Big Ideas”

1. Reestablish an urban street grid
2. Create publicly accessible parks and open spaces that integrate stormwater management and public art



Examples of integrated stormwater management



**JHP**

Another strategy for this Redevelopment Plan is the connectivity of the parks and open spaces.

New planned public greenspaces include:

- A linear park Along the new extension of Lumpkin Street is
- Above Madison Street is a completely pedestrian park
- An expansive Wetland Park that includes usable open space for programming community gatherings and activities, manages stormwater runoff with an attractive landscaped pond, and provides a connection from the Pulaski Creek Greenway to College Avenue.

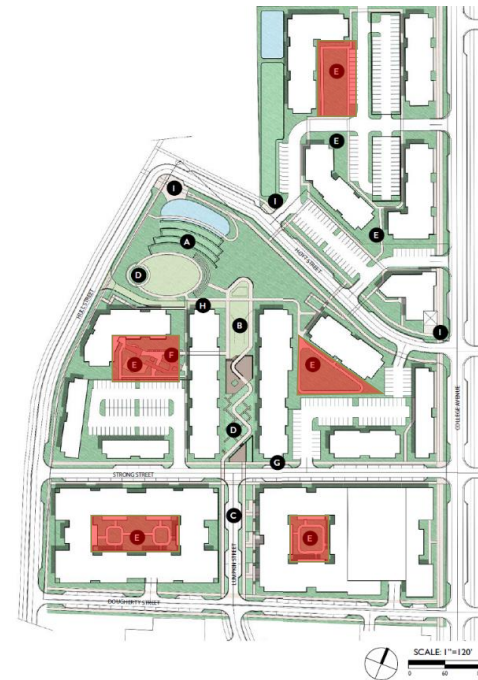


### Urban Design “Big Ideas”

1. Reestablish an urban street grid
2. Create publicly accessible parks and open spaces that integrate stormwater management and public art
3. **Include private open space for residents in new development parcels**



Examples of private resident open space



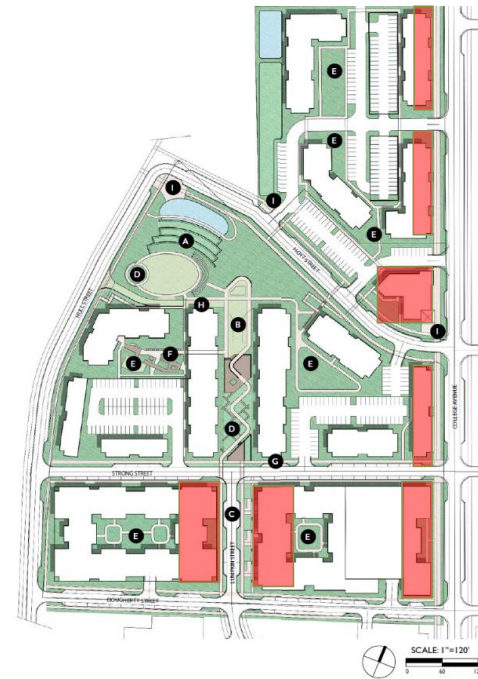
**JHP**

Reflecting the need for safe playgrounds and smaller gathering areas, the vision includes a variety of gardens, gazebos, and playgrounds interior to the residential areas, pictured in red

Check out the Progress page of the website to review the more detailed landscape vision!

### Urban Design “Big Ideas”

1. Reestablish an urban street grid
2. Create publicly accessible parks and open spaces that integrate stormwater management and public art
3. Include private open space for residents in new developments
4. **Activate streets along College Avenue and Lumpkin Street and encourage active ground-floor uses**



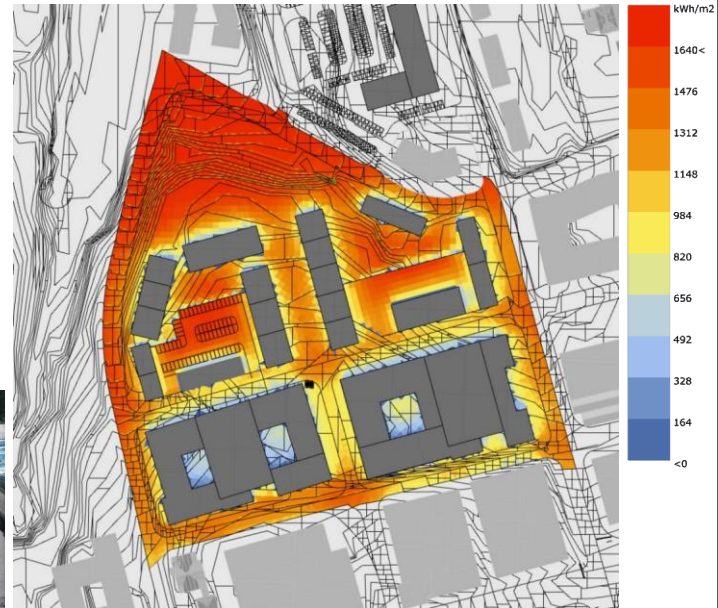
**JHP**

A fourth Big Idea for the Redevelopment Plan area is to encourage active ground floor uses in the areas highlighted in red.

This includes a new Neighborhood Health Clinic located just across Hoyt Street from its current location, retail along parts of College Avenue, and active uses along Lumpkin interior to what is now Bethel Village. All this activation helps create a walkable community to live or visit!

### Urban Design “Big Ideas”

1. Reestablish an urban street grid
2. Create publicly accessible parks and open spaces that integrate stormwater management and public art
3. Include private open space for residents in new developments
4. Activate streets along College Avenue and Lumpkin Street and encourage active ground-floor uses
5. **Focus on community-wide sustainability**



**JHP**

Sustainability emerged as a main priority from conversations with the community and local leadership. We studied how this Redevelopment Plan area can manage stormwater in an innovative way, create buildings that are solar and electric vehicle adaptable, use native landscaping throughout, explore the use of eco-stations for recycling, and more.

A solar analysis and heat study (as seen here) will inform the best locations for vegetable gardens, solar panels, and inform building and landscape designs! One of the redevelopment goals is to achieve a community-scale green certification, such as LEED for Communities.

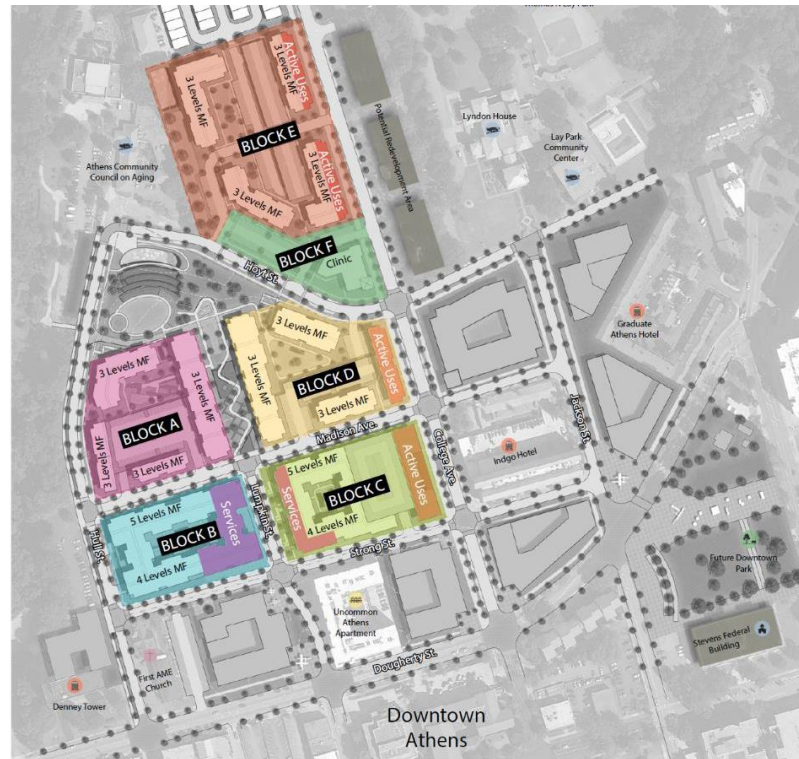


## CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN - DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

### Proposed Redevelopment Program

#### Approximate Ranges

- 715-875 Residential Units
- Active Uses /Services  
49,000-69,000 GSF



**JHP**

We envision between 715-875 residential apartment homes across the Bethel Village and College & Hoyt communities with active uses throughout.



Bethel Village Diagram looking Northwest



**JHP**

Here's a view of the same area looking northwest from above – a perspective you might see looking from the roof of the Hotel Indigo. Note the 'active uses' on the ground floor with residential above and a variety of parking options, from two level open decks to more dense garages. From here, you can see some of the interior open spaces, the Wetland Park, Council on Aging and Neighborhood Health Clinic relocation mentioned earlier.

We can creatively design a variety of building types and scales around this grade change to provide secured parking for residents, access to views of nature, walkable streets, and public parks and pathways.

Let's now take a look at what individual blocks might look like.

## CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN - PROPOSED BLOCK A

BLOCK A (2.5 ACRES)	
Units:	<b>110-125 units</b> (3&4 Stories)
Parking:	<b>115 sps</b> (2 Levels Deck+On-street)



**JHP**

Block A overlooks the Wetland Park with the pond to the north, newly created Madison Street to the south, Hull St. to the west, and a park to the east. We envision this block to step down towards Hull Street and the Community Park, such that those lower sides contain 4 stories of housing while the side facing Madison contains three stories. By stepping the building down this way, we can avoid large retaining walls.

The block will feature resident-only amenities within in a courtyard and secured parking for the residents as shown in the pink diagram above.



## CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN – PROPOSED BLOCK C

BLOCK C (2.3 ACRES)	
Units:	180-220 units (4&5 Stories)
Parking:	375 sps (5 Levels Garage + On-street)
Active Uses & Services	17,000-22,000 SF



**JHP**

Across the site, Block C is a denser area since it is closer to Downtown. It would contain ground-floor active uses. In order to provide both residential and retail parking, would wrap around a parking garage.

We envision this block as a “gateway” entrance to the neighborhood as it activates College Avenue and the Lumpkin Street extension into the area.

## CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN – LUMPKIN AND STRONG STREET



**JHP**

Here are a few concepts of what these types of densities may look like. This perspective is looking up a newly created Lumpkin Street with Block C to the right and Block B to the left.

Notice the Linear Greenspace Park on the right, active Ground Floor uses, and low impact development “green” streets.



Potential View at College Ave. & Strong St. looking Northwest



**JHP**

Here we are standing on College Avenue looking northward with Block C to the left and the Hotel Indigo to the right.

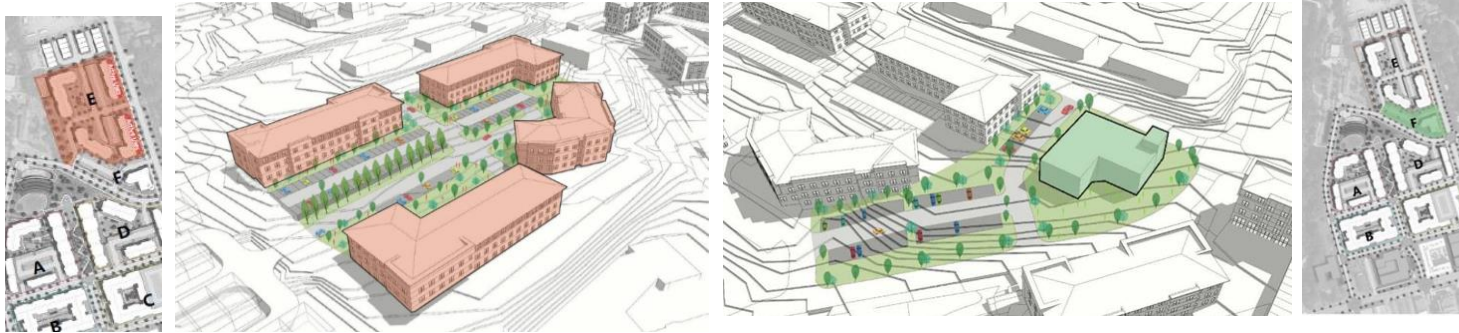
The current entrance to Bethel Midtown Village is located on the left at this intersection.



## CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN – PROPOSED BLOCK E & F

BLOCK E (4.4 ACRES)	
Units:	<b>125-160 units</b> (3&4 Stories)
Parking:	<b>160 sps</b> (2 Levels Deck+On-street)
Active Uses:	<b>8,000-12,000 SF</b>

BLOCK F (1.2 ACRES)	
Clinic:	<b>8,000-11,000 SF</b> (1-2 Stories)
Parking:	<b>60 sps</b> (Surface+On-street)



**JHP**

Moving off of the Bethel site, the College & Hoyt community provides space for approximately 160 apartments in 3 to 4 story buildings on Block E and a new Neighborhood Health Clinic on Block F.

Here you can see how the housing, in pink, wraps around parking and courtyard areas, and the new clinic would anchor the corner of Hoyt Street and College Avenue. This would provide additional exam rooms, a bigger waiting area, more parking, and updated facilities.

### Further Details/Links

- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Landscape/Open Space Visions](#)
- [Sustainability/Green Analysis](#)



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[WWW.NDATHENSPANNING.COM](http://WWW.NDATHENSPANNING.COM)

Thank you so much for helping shape the North Downtown Athens Master Plan!

The final plan will be a booklet with further information, imagery, and details beyond this presentation. Sign up for our newsletter by going to the Contact page of the website, and we will definitely let you know when it is available for review!

If you're interested in taking a deeper dive into our Community Engagement process, Landscape Visions, or Sustainability Strategies, please click on the links that are found on the Draft Final Master Plan page of our website.

If you have any questions or comments, let us know by leaving a comment on the Draft Final Master Plan page of the website or by emailing [info@ndathensplanning.com](mailto:info@ndathensplanning.com).

The plan is scheduled to be finalized in Winter 2021, but there is still time to make your ideas heard!