

AGENDA

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF GENEVA, NEW YORK

November 20, 2024

**City Hall
47 Castle Street
2nd Floor Council Chambers
Geneva, NY 14456**

COUNCIL MEETING STARTS AT 5:30 PM

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- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Steve Valentino
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. ROLL CALL
- IV. DISCUSSION
 - A. Economic Development Plan
 - B. Committee Structure
 - C. Storm Task Force Recommendations
- V. ADJOURNMENT

Geneva Economic Development Implementation Strategy

Final Report



Prepared for

The City of Geneva Department
of Planning & Economic Development

and its partners

The Geneva Industrial Development Authority
The Geneva Local Development Corporation
The Downtown Geneva Business Improvement District

Prepared by

Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants (CRRC)

October 16, 2024

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Part One: Introduction

- 0** Executive Summary
- 1** Purpose of the Project
- 2** Methodology and Process
- 3** Strategy Process as a Starting Point



Executive Summary

The City of Geneva Department of Planning and Economic Development contracted with Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants (CRRC) to undertake a City of Geneva economic development strategy planning process. This assignment consisted of a four-month planning process and culminated with the preparation of this economic development implementation strategy.

The planning process was designed to engage a working group of representatives from the four economic development community partners- the City of Geneva Department of Planning & Economic Development, the Geneva Industrial Development Authority (IDA), the Geneva Local Development Corporation (LDC), and the Downtown Geneva Business Improvement District (BID). This working group met with CRRC and City staff to participate in a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, identify economic development actions and activities for consideration, and provided priority rankings for a list of over eighty different projects, programs, policies, and activities.

The planning process also involved several different approaches to reach and engage members of the Geneva community utilizing:

A community online survey

A community input session

Interviews with key community stakeholders

CRRC also used updated 2024 Census data estimates along with 2020 Census data and Placer.ai market data to help analyze the Geneva community.

Based on the work undertaken during this planning process, CRRC has recommended the following goals (for full discussion of goals, see section 11.1):

Economic Development Goals

1. To improve the quality of life for Geneva residents through economic development related activity.
2. To provide a renewed sense of community pride; more positive opinion of Geneva from residents.
3. To grow the City population, halting and reversing decline.
4. To ease the tax burden of the community by increasing the stream of tax revenue from new and expanding businesses and from new investment.
5. To provide for more housing options in the community.
6. To increase the number of visitors and tourism to the community.
7. To share and communicate economic development information with the public and stakeholder groups throughout the city.

Quantitative Goals

1. Jobs: Add 125 gross new jobs at all levels each year.
2. Housing: add 75 new units each year (2/3 renovations; 1/3 new construction).
3. Storefront Vacancies: fill up to 85% .
4. Upper story renovations: reduce vacant space by 50% .
5. Business: conduct annual visits to all major employers with more than 50 employees .
6. Business: Add 10 new businesses/year citywide.
7. Business: See 5 existing businesses expand per year.
8. Tourism: See YOY tourist visits increase by 5% .
9. Neighborhood improvement: 1 event in each neighborhood annually.
10. Communications: a minimum of 12 economic development social media posts per year; 12 economic development press releases/stories per year; 4 public networking or info sessions per year.
11. Create needed economic development infrastructure for success.

Types of Recommendations

The recommendations provided in this document are short and intermediate term in scope. They are suggested for each of the four economic development partners, and full details can be found in sections 11.2, 11.3, and 12. Recommendations cover the following economic development subjects:

Economic Development
Infrastructure

Recruitment Strategy

Retention Strategy

Housing

Economic Development
Marketing

Volunteers

Tourism

Comprehensive Plan

Surplus Properties

Downtown

Community Amenities

Densification

Major Projects

For the City of Geneva

Short Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

CITY1. Conduct a discussion to **determine if the current Comprehensive Plan is still appropriate** or if there needs to be any Plan revisions or an update.

CITY2. **Prepare an RFP or RFQ for the City owned OEO Site** to determine interest and alignment with City goals.

CITY3. Work with an external contract for **economic development marketing services**, or budget to hire internal City staff to perform this task.

CITY4. **Prepare a plan for the disposition of surplus City properties**, ensuring that the plan accounts for and prioritizes economic development needs and goals.

CITY5. Work to sustain and **grow the existing City MAP grant program**.

CITY6. **Convene an Economic Opportunities Task Force** as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that all members of the Geneva community can share economic opportunity.

CITY7. **Convene regular, at least quarterly, meetings of Geneva's economic development partners** to manage and assess economic development strategy implementation.

CITY8. **Prepare and maintain an up-to-date Geneva inventory compilation of available spaces** and properties for rent, sale, and/or investment.

CITY9. **Prepare a formal/systematic process for both business recruitment & retention**, reflecting the need for a key point person, a database for documentation, and plans for targeting priority businesses and prospects.

CITY10. **Adopt a strategic focus on food research and development, food packaging and production** for business recruitment.

CITY11. **Prepare a business visitation plan** that will detail how to prioritize and undertake periodic retention & expansion (R&E) visits to Geneva businesses.

CITY12. **Work to expand and strengthen Geneva's relationship with County TPA**.

CITY13. **Convene regular formal City/Hobart & William Smith meetings** to discuss current and future plans, as well as any issues or concerns.

CITY14. **Convene an annual real estate developer's forum** to create a two-way dialogue with developers about community needs, development issues and concerns, and possible opportunities.

CITY15. Work with leadership from Hobart & William Smith Colleges on a **strategy that could maximize the physical facilities & the talent of the College** to better enhance and benefit the community.

CITY16. **Explore the viability of undertaking another Race for the Space competition**.

CITY17. **Coordinate with and support as appropriate Habitat for Humanity, Finger Lakes Community Action**, and other housing nonprofit organizations.

CITY18. **Convene small business forums and/or networking events.**

CITY19. **Provide support and leadership for Geneva 2030 and efforts to strengthen the Geneva City School District.**

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

CITY20. Facilitate developer selection and **redevelopment of the OEO site.**

CITY21. **Commission a Geneva specific housing market analysis with the IDA.**

CITY22. Secure funding to **complete the BOA/North End Greenway and Castle Creek greenway projects.**

CITY23. **Facilitate mixed-use development projects for both Middle and Exchange Streets.**

CITY24. As part of the business recruitment planning process, **actively seek revenue generating businesses.**

CITY25. Undertake a process to **update and streamline the project permitting process.**

For the Geneva IDA

Short Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

IDA1: Undertake short term efforts to **improve the financial viability of the American Can/GEDC complex**, by adding additional tenants and providing low-cost signage, art, and other beautification.

IDA2. **Create and capitalize a local financial incentive program for the promotion of new housing units in Geneva**, with priority for senior, middle, and affordable/workforce housing development.

IDA3. **Sponsor an annual Geneva economic development awards program with the LDC** to generate a renewed sense of pride and achievement.

IDA4. **Research/propose a redevelopment plan for RT 5/20/Town & Country Plaza area.**

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

IDA5. **Continue longer term efforts to redevelop, renovate, and reconfigure space in the American Can/GEDC complex.**

IDA6. **Commission a Geneva specific housing market study with the City** to specifically assess housing opportunities in Geneva and provide confidence to developers, investors, lenders, and appraisers.

IDA7. Work with local major employers to **create a major industry employee incentive program** that would be able to help facilitate homeownership and equity in City of Geneva housing.

IDA8. Promote and **facilitate the development of priority housing segments, especially senior housing, middle market housing, and affordable/workforce housing.**

IDA9. Upon completion of a plan, **facilitate a redevelopment process at the Route 5/20/ Town & Country Plaza area.**

IDA10. Work with the City and private parties to **prepare more shovel ready sites for businesses and investors.**

For the Geneva LDC

Short Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

LDC1. **Commission and capitalize a Geneva image building campaign,** working in conjunction with City staff and/or a contractor.

LDC2. Concurrently, **prepare a plan for routinely marketing economic development successes** and information to the Geneva community and beyond.

LDC3. **Launch an initiative to promote renewed neighborhood planning and programming,** providing seed funds for neighborhood events and planning exercises.

LDC4. **Sponsor an annual Geneva economic development awards program with the IDA** to generate a renewed sense of pride and achievement.

LDC5. **Work with the BID and property owners to organize new and recurring Race for the Space programs** to encourage new businesses in existing vacant spaces across the City.

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

LDC6. **Plan, capitalize, and launch a Geneva existing housing improvement and repair program.**

LDC7. **Work with other local agencies, partners on local experiences** including historic, cultural, and art-based trail programs **that increase tourism** and improve value of properties in Geneva.

For the Downtown Geneva BID

Short Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

BID1. Continue the **Downtown Geneva Image Building Campaign,** working in conjunction with City staff and the LDC. Prepare a plan for routinely marketing economic development successes as well as information to Geneva and beyond.

BID2. **Nurture and strengthen relationships with Hobart William Smith Colleges**, including students, families, alumni, and staff.

BID3. **Prepare a Downtown vacancy reduction plan** aimed at working with property owners and providing added value to both landlords and the community.

BID4. Work with the City and other economic development partners to **prepare and manage a Downtown building renovation and rehabilitation incentive packaging initiative**.

BID5. Share organization progress and challenges utilizing **an annual BID dashboard** of downtown and organization success metrics.

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

In order of priority:

BID6. Upon completion of a plan, **commit to implementing a downtown vacancy reduction program**.

BID7. **Work with the City and other partners to create a Geneva tourism attraction plan**, with both capital and programmatic considerations.

BID8. Work with the City on efforts to **support continued and expanded Downtown residential development**.

BID9. Specifically brainstorm and **research possible traffic generating projects for Downtown**, selecting 1-2 for facilitation.

BID10. Work with the City to **create an action plan for further improving Downtown/waterfront connections**, including, but not limited to exploring possible visitor shuttle service.

BID11. **Form community partnerships with selected destination businesses in Geneva** to help bolster foot traffic with downtown, including exploring possible connections between downtown and these destinations with a visitor shuttle (such as Geneva on the Lake, Belhurst Castle, Fairfield Inn and Suites)

BID12. Work with State officials to **improve the State's Geneva visitor center's information on both Downtown Geneva and the immediate Geneva community**.

BID13. Work with the City to **Prepare and maintain an up-to-date Geneva inventory compilation of available spaces** and properties for rent, sale, and/or investment.

Section One: Purpose of the Project

In 2023, the City of Geneva Common Council approved funds requested by the Director of Planning and Economic Development to undertake a citywide economic development planning strategy. Following the preparation of a request for proposals and a public solicitation process, a selection advisory committee comprised of representatives from the City of Geneva (the City), The Geneva Industrial Development Authority (IDA), the Geneva Local Development Corporation (LDC), and the Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) selected Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants (CRRC) to undertake the assignment.

The purpose of this project was fourfold:

1 To provide the City Department of Planning and Economic Development, the IDA, the LDC, and the BID with a game plan for economic development implementation.

2 To provide a tool and guidance to the above four partners in navigating the many options and opportunities for economic development implementation.

3 To prioritize project, program, and policy implementation options.

4 To identify the recommended prerequisite processes needed for successful economic development implementation and to identify community partners most likely to assist in the implementation process.

The most successful communities engage in economic development from a systematic and planned approach. Ad hoc economic development may be opportunistic and able to tackle items of immediate concern, but it often fails to build a solid and enduring community economic foundation. A planned and systematic approach to economic development seeks to understand the inherent strengths and shortcomings of a community and devises a strategy that systematically builds upon those strengths and addresses the shortcomings. It should be multi-year in approach, recognizing the long lead time often needed to enact community change and build economic success.

As interested Geneva stakeholders already know, there are far more economic development projects, programs, and policy opportunities than the limited staff of the four primary economic development partners can possibly undertake at one time. This necessitates that any implementation plan include prioritization of items and opportunities, to better match the community workload with the available community resources (both staff time and program dollars). Community economic development success will be more likely if the

volume of prioritized projects matches the available community resources. No one likes a half-finished development project.

Economic development implementation almost always requires partnerships and collaborations. Activities involve and engage various segments of the community and require expertise that typically resides in diverse partners. It is seldom the case that economic development success can be generated and sustained by a single entity. Hence, this economic development planning strategy seeks to identify partners and community entities that are most likely to support and assist with the project implementation set forth.

Section Two: Methodology and Process

The methodology for this assignment was actually a months-long community and partner engagement process built upon a strong foundation of data and feedback. It is vital to ground economic development strategies upon relevant and localized community data. All viable economic development strategies should:

- address documented community needs and shortcomings,
- build upon community strengths and assets,
- be implementable based on appropriate market data, and
- be supported and endorsed by the community and the partner organizations tasked with economic development leadership.

CRRC proposed the following 6-step scope of work to help address these above items:

1. Procure and analyze updated community data to make sure prioritized and recommended projects, programs, and policies were grounded in and supported by community data.

Two primary sets of data have been used in this analysis: updated Census data provided by Claritas and existing American Community Data generated by the US Bureau of the Census. Additional supporting data has been drawn from already completed planning documents (such as the City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan) and Placer.ai data provided by the Geneva Business Improvement District. An analysis of these data sets appears in Section Five.

2. Conduct interviews with economic development community stakeholders.

To better understand the economic development needs and desires of the Geneva community, CRRC initially proposed to conduct one-on-one interviews with 12-15 community members who represented stakeholder groups engaged or interested in community economic development. This list of interviewees, detailed in Appendix 4, grew to 20 individuals. A summary of the findings from the interviewing process appears in Section Four.

3. Conduct a community survey to gauge the economic development thoughts and opinions of the Geneva community.

While stakeholder interviews could capture the sentiment of key community leaders and stakeholder groups, there was also a need to understand the opinions and thoughts of the greater community at-large. This was accomplished via an online community survey that was distributed to individuals and groups from across the Geneva community. Approximately 200 responses were received, and the findings of this community survey are presented in Section Seven.

4. Conduct a community engagement meeting to obtain community input pertaining to economic development implementation for Geneva.

In addition to the community survey, CRRC and the City of Geneva hosted a community engagement session on June 13 to further obtain input and feedback from interested Geneva residents. The session was well attended, with more than 60 people participating in the process. Results from this community session are reported in Section Eight.

5. Convene a working group of representatives from the four partner organizations to guide the project and provide the foundation for economic development implementation.

A key part of the methodology for this project was convening and meeting with an economic development working group. Members of this group (ranging in size from 12-15 members over the three meetings) were drawn from the four economic development partner organizations: the City of Geneva Department of Planning and Economic Development, the Geneva Industrial Development Authority, the Geneva Local Development Corporation, and the Geneva Business Improvement District. This group was charged not only with advising on the project, but also directly engaged with the critical thinking that generated an economic development strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threat (SWOT) analysis; identified project, program, and policy items for consideration; and prioritization of the many economic development items. It will be this group that will be leading the effort to implement most of the prioritized items following the completion of this strategy process. The output of this working group comprises much of the second half of this report.

6. CRRC analysis, compilation, and recommendations

Building upon the above steps, CRRC then pulled together these various data sets and community inputs to produce a series of report findings and recommendations. Utilizing our 40+ years of community economic development experience, CRRC has blended together community and partner needs and desires, along with recommendations on economic development processes. This is described in Sections Eleven and Twelve.

Section Three: Strategy Process as a Starting Point

From the very beginning, it was agreed upon by CRRC, the Advisory Committee, and the Director of Planning and Economic Development that this assignment would not be a traditional planning document, with consultant-based recommendations and prescriptions. Instead, all parties were committed to the creation of a “process” based economic strategy that sought to guide implementation. The accepted CRRC proposal and scope of services spelled out an approach that maximized engaging stakeholders and building community interest and capacity for economic development implementation. It was not sufficient to simply create a shelf report for the community to use as a reference.

Without sufficient community support and elected official leadership, economic development implementation becomes difficult and problematic. Most of the scope of work for this assignment consisted of elements that sought to engage partners and the community and to build ownership and enthusiasm for economic development implementation.

At the heart of this process is the Working Group. This collection of representatives from the four sponsoring organizations, the City of Geneva, the Geneva Industrial Development Authority (IDA), the Geneva Local Development Corporation (LDC), and the Geneva Business Improvement District (BID), was convened to work with CRRC on the development of a strategy. It is the hope that this group will continue to serve as the economic development coordinating committee for the community, providing leadership and support for the implementation of the economic development strategy. The working group was a true partner in the strategic planning process, providing input on community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, identifying and cataloging possible items for attention and implementation, and prioritizing key items from the long list of possible work items.

A successful economic development strategy requires that there be sufficient staff and volunteer capacity to address and manage the prioritized action items. The working group representatives from the four organizations are intended to provide the needed talent and energy required to ensure implementation progress.

The CRRC process also sought to engage the Geneva community, gathering feedback on several different levels. The intent of this outreach was to begin the discussion with the community so that the implementation recommendations emerging from the strategic planning process would be already shown to have public support. This public engagement came in several forms:

- A community survey devoted to economic development issues.
- A community input session focused on economic development issues and opportunities.

It is hoped that this community engagement process will serve as a starting point for continued future outreach and engagement undertaken by both the working group and the City of Geneva.

Part Two: Data & Analysis

- 4** An Analysis of Stakeholder Interviews
- 5** An Analysis of Updated Community Data
- 6** Utilizing Previous Plans
- 7** Community Survey Results
- 8** Community Input Session
- 9** Geneva Economic Development SWOT Analysis
- 10** The Working Group Prioritization Process



Section Four: An Analysis of Stakeholder Interviews

The CRRC proposal called for interviews with approximately 12-15 key community leaders and stakeholders interested in and affected by economic development. During the course of the information gathering stage, CRRC interviewed a total of 20 community members. While not a complete list of all interested and affected stakeholders and community members, it provides a strong base for understanding community issues and concerns, opportunities and desires.

It is recommended that this outreach process of meeting with and interviewing key community leaders continue beyond this strategic planning assignment. It is important to periodically check in with community stakeholders, to better understand their thoughts and motivations. It is especially important to reach out to groups and individuals representing underserved segments of the community. This ongoing interchange of information will be critical to achieving community support and buy-in for economic development initiatives in the coming years.

The list of the 20 interviewed stakeholders appears in Appendix 4. The list was generated from recommendations from the working group and represents a broad cross section of community thought leaders.

An assessment of the notes from these interviews generated the following broad themes:

A. There appears to be a need for more formalized and predictable economic development processes.

Economic development implementation has experienced multiple iterations over the years in Geneva, changing as elected officials and City Manager leadership transitions. In recent years the City position of Director of Planning and Economic Development was unfilled, further diluting any regular and systematic economic development processes. Interviewees commented on a number of ideas that would regularize or systemize how economic development is undertaken. These included:

- Regular partner meetings and strategy sessions.
- A more formal process for recruitment and retention, with a designated point person for each sector.
- An inventory of available space for all sectors.
- Determine who will be doing visits – both retention and recruitment.
- Hobart & William Smith College and the City should have regular formal meetings.
- Quarterly business roundtable meetings.
- A periodic developer forum to allow for interchange between area developers and City/economic development leaders.
- A more predictable, understandable, and efficient permitting process.
- More use of formal metrics to gauge success and progress, particularly for the City and the BIDs
- Periodic visits to learn from other cities.

B. Economic development marketing appears to be missing at all levels.

Multiple interviewees commented upon the need for more marketing pertaining to economic development. Marketing can occur at different levels and for several purposes. One tier is community level marketing: helping the public to better understand and appreciate the successes and assets of their community. This

type of marketing helps to build confidence and pride in a community. At another level, marketing can be tailored toward prospective businesses and investors, seeking to attract jobs, investment, and commerce to the community. Another target for marketing could be attracting new residents. Among the ideas surfaced during interviews were:

- Market successes to the community. Image building is a necessity.
- Contract with an entity to image market the community

C. Geneva may not be fully utilizing relationships and partnerships with Ontario County organizations.

Some interviewees commented on Geneva's relationships with County organizations and entities that are part of the regional economic development landscape. Given that Ontario County offices and staff are located in Canandaigua, there is a perception that the Geneva community does not fully utilize or receive services and assistance from County entities that focus on economic development. Tourism was one segment of economic development that was mentioned multiple times in these comments. Among the comments were:

- There needs to be closer connection to the TPA and more local tourism efforts. While some efforts are underway, the commenters were seeking a strengthened level of engagement with the TPA.
- A strategic tourism plan is needed for both capital projects and programming.

D. The Geneva community is its own harshest critic.

Numerous stakeholder interviewees talked about their concerns with Geneva residents and businesses being unduly harsh about the status and standing of their community. Harsh comparisons were routinely made with other peer cities, especially Canandaigua. A notable aspect of the criticism was how it did not necessarily mesh with the attitudes and opinions of people who were not Geneva based. One suggestion to highlight:

- The school system needs to be built up, not broken down. It needs closer connections to businesses. Market the 2030 Geneva collective impact program to the community and the region.

E. There are underutilized assets in the community.

Stakeholder interviewees identified an impressive list of community assets that they believed were currently underperforming or could be further enhanced. The recognition of these assets is important; it underscores their potential for Geneva's economic development future. This collection of assets is discussed in more detail in subsequent sections. Among the assets and ideas proposed by respondents were:

- The American Can/GEDC building is a major asset and an expensive, time-consuming project. Its renovation or redevelopment will require substantial resources and the resolve of key organizations.
- The City has a large collection of surplus properties. City disposition of properties should support economic development goals.
- Finger Lakes Community College's Geneva satellite campus has high quality space available for programming by other organizations.

- The Seneca lakefront is seen as one of the community's greatest assets. Respondents seemed to agree on the need for better connections from downtown and the neighborhoods with the lakefront. These connections included physical greenway connections as well as transit connections with a shuttle linking the visitor center with downtown.
- Hobart & William Smith Colleges are likewise perceived as a key community asset. Respondents talked about the need to more comprehensively plan for the future with Hobart & William Smith leadership.
- The State Welcome Center was itself cited as another important community asset. It was suggested that there needed to be better information at the Center on Geneva itself.
- It was noted that Geneva has a number of sites for development and business investment, but that there is a shortage of shovel ready sites for industry, business, and housing.

F. The industrial base of the community is strong but not well integrated into a community economic development framework.

Interviewees spoke favorably about the industry that is located in Geneva. Industry representatives spoke about the need to continually seek job applicants and to encourage workers to remain in the Geneva community. Items discussed included:

- Ideas for a possible job placement navigator program to ease the process of seeking applicants.
- The idea of a major industry incentive program to buy/live in Geneva. This might include incentives for workers to purchase a home in Geneva.
- The Cornell Geneva AgriTech campus and its affiliated programs, including TechFarm, a New York State Certified Business Incubator, has a rich collection of businesses, services, and research & development opportunities.

G. There are specific programs and actions that interviewees believe could make a positive difference.

Interviewees had a range of ideas and suggestions for programs that they felt could improve the economic marketplace in Geneva. Some of these receive more attention in subsequent sections of this report. Among the ideas suggested were:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Downtown entertainment, especially family entertainment | • A small business and minority business mentoring program. |
| • A new Race for the Space program, with an emphasis on key types of desired businesses. | • Continuation and expansion of the City MAP grants program. |
| • A tourist/visitor oriented historic walking tour. | • The creation of a retail incubator project. |
| | • A program to address and reduce downtown vacancies. |

H. The community frequently refers to prior plans.

Respondents mentioned several of the prior plans undertaken by the City and other community entities. Most people interviewed had positive opinions about these plans and their defined goals. Section six of this report summarizes the unmet elements of these plans. Among the suggestions offered were:

- Update and/or reaffirm the current 2015 City Comprehensive Plan, especially around the question of lakefront development.
- Prioritize Route 5/20 urbanization in the western part of the City in and around the Town and Country Plaza area.
- Focus on expanding growth and development in the North Exchange Street area.

I. Housing is a key component of economic development.

Housing was a topic mentioned by many interviewees. Geneva has more jobs than housing supply and many interviewees noted difficulty housing employees in the City. Comments covered a broad spectrum of housing issues, including availability of supply, quality of the existing housing stock, and affordability. Among the ideas were:

- A neighborhood-based housing repair and development program.
- Incentives for the creation of middle housing.
- The creation of additional market senior housing, to address the aging demographics of the community.
- With the high cost of housing construction LIHTC may be the most likely to succeed housing opportunity in the near future and would help signal that Geneva is open for housing construction while market conditions continue to improve.

Section Five: An Analysis of Updated Community Data

Demographic data and market data help to inform and guide the preparation of a strategic plan. Data can validate concepts, suggest strategies and actions, and in some cases provide evidence to forego specific strategies or actions.

In our interactions with the working group, CRRC focused on updated Census data provided from the data firm Claritas. In this review and analysis, primary US Census profile data and market data derived from Placer.ai were also utilized.

A Review of 2020 Census Data

Census Profile data can provide a snapshot look at the City of Geneva. Although based on the 2020 Census, most of the data points found in the City summary utilize 2022 updated data. Table 1 provides a summary of key Census Profile items.

Table 1: Overall Demographic Data

Total Population:	12,812	
Median Household Income:	63,602	Lower than State average
Median Household Income (NYS):	79,557	
Education (BA or higher):	33.70%	Lower than State average
Education (BA or higher) (NYS):	40.00%	
Poverty Rate	18.60%	Higher than State average
Poverty Rate (NYS)	14.30%	
Total Housing Units:	5,612	
Occupied Housing Units:	5,026	
Total Households:	4,759	
Hispanic or Latino population:	2,217	
Black/African American population:	1,122	
Median Age:	31.2	Lower than State average
Median Age (NYS):	40.0	
Population 65+	15.30%	Lower than State average
Population 65+ (NYS)	18.10%	
Moved from another State in past year	8.90%	Higher than State average
Moved from another State in past year (NYS)	1.50%	
Average travel time to work	17.1	Lower than State average
Average travel time to work (NYS):	33.0	
Homeownership Rate:	48.40%	Lower than State average
Homeownership Rate (NYS):	54.10%	
Average Family Size:	2.88	Lower than State average
Average Family Size (NYS):	3.12	

(US Census Profile Report, City of Geneva, 2022)

This data set provides insights to how the City of Geneva compares to the New York statewide average. Compared to the statewide average, Geneva residents:

- Have a lower median household income,
- Have a lower percentage with a BA degree or higher,
- Have a lower homeownership rate, and
- Have a higher poverty rate.

However, Geneva residents also:

- Have a lower percentage of people aged 65+,
- Have a smaller average family size, and
- Have a significantly lower travel time to work.

Notably, the City of Geneva outpaces the statewide average of residents who moved from another state in the past year, by nearly five times.

Updated 2024 Census Data

Since the Census is a decennial event, it is important to use updated estimates to assess the current and projected future status of a community. CRRC contracted with Claritas, a national data analytics firm, to provide 2024 update data for the City of Geneva, and for comparison purposes Ontario County and a 25-minute drive time radius surrounding Geneva. The 25-minute radius can be used to simulate a drive time market of likely consumers for Geneva based goods and services.

Population

Table 2 summarizes the historical and projected trends for population.

Table 2: Population Trends

	City	% change	County	% change	25-minute drive	% change
2010 Census	13,253		107,934		62,218	
2020 Census	12,812	-3.33%	112,458	4.19%	61,214	-4.68%
2024 Estimate	12,502	-2.42%	113,191	0.65%	59,943	-2.08%
2029 Projection	12,361	-1.13%	114,886	1.50%	58,985	-1.60%

(Sourced from Claritas/Envionics, 2024)

City population has evidenced a slow decline from 2010, with an expectation that this decline will continue, albeit at a slower rate into 2029. Population loss affects a wide array of funding levels for local government and schools. By contrast, Ontario County posted a notable gain in population from 2010 to 2020 and is projected to continue to slowly increase through 2029. The 25-minute drive time area mirrored the City of Geneva, also showing real and projected decreases in population. A large part of the City of Geneva's population decline can be traced to a lack of new housing units and a declining household size. With fewer people in each home, and very few new homes, the population is forced to decline even when the number of households is rising slightly as seen in the following section.

Households

Table 3 shows the change occurring in the number of households (people living together in a single housing unit).

Table 3: Household count

	City	% change	County	% change	25-minute drive	% change
2010 Census	4,934		43,019		24,884	
2020 Census	5,026	1.86%	46,693	8.54%	24,979	0.38%
2024 Estimate	5,030	0.08%	47,681	2.12%	24,827	-0.61%
2029 Projection	5,033	0.06%	48,879	2.51%	24,626	-0.81%

(Sourced from Claritas/Enviroics, 2024)

While the City of Geneva's population has been decreasing, the number of households in the City has been increasing and is expected to remain flat through 2029. What has happened is that household size has decreased, creating more households even in the midst of a decline in overall population. County households also saw an increase in numbers and that trend is expected to continue. The 25-minute drive time area was more stable, increasing slightly between 2010 and 2020, but declining slightly by 2024.

Table 4: Family Households

	City	% change	County	% change	25-minute drive	% change
2010 Census	2,751		28,380		15,883	
2020 Census	2,563	-6.83%	29,397	3.58%	15,010	-5.50%
2024 Estimate	2,797	9.13%	31,451	6.99%	15,746	4.90%
2029 Projection	2,794	-0.11%	32,215	2.43%	15,599	-0.93%

(Sourced from Claritas/Enviroics, 2024)

Family households are a subset of total households, reflecting only those individuals who are related to each other. Total households also include unrelated people who live together. The City of Geneva saw a notable decline in family households between 2010 and 2020, but more than recouped that loss between 2020 and 2024. Claritas estimates that the number of family households is likely to remain flat through 2029. By contrast, Ontario County showed an increase in family households in 2020, 2024 and in its 2029 projections. The 25-minute drive area essentially mirrors the City of Geneva in its family household trajectory. Nationally and locally, household makeup has been changing over the last several decades. The fastest growing demographic is 1 & 2 person households. This creates a mismatch with existing housing constructed when households were larger and creates market potential for studios and 1-2 bedroom units.

Race/Ethnicity

The City of Geneva has a more diverse population than Ontario County and the 25-minute drive time area. As shown in Table 5, the City of Geneva has a higher rate of both black and Hispanic residents. A majority of

Hispanic residents are of Puerto Rican heritage. Compared to the County, Geneva also has more than twice the percentage of residents who speak Spanish at home.

Table 5: 2024 Race/Ethnicity

	City		County		25-minute drive	
White	8,657	69.25%	97,781	86.39%	50,212	83.77%
Black	1,147	9.18%	3,067	2.71%	2,560	4.27%
Asian	241	1.93%	1,438	1.27%	558	0.93%
Some Other Race	1,145	9.16%	2,925	2.58%	2,131	3.56%
Two or More Races	1,282	10.25%	7,688	6.79%	4,255	7.10%
Hispanic/Latino	2,312	18.49%	6,884	6.08%	4,933	8.23%
Puerto Rican origin	1,495	64.66%	3,621	52.60%	3,074	62.31%
Speak Spanish at home	907	7.61%	3,131	2.90%	1,999	3.51%

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

Sex

Women outnumber men within the City of Geneva by nearly 4.5%, a rate that is comparatively higher than in the County or the 25-minute drive time area.

Table 6: 2024 Population by Sex

	City		County		25-minute drive	
Male	5,978	47.82%	55,273	48.83%	29,490	49.20%
Female	6,524	52.18%	57,918	51.17%	30,453	50.80%

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

Household Type & Size

There are notable differences between the City and County pertaining to household type and size, as shown in Table 7. The percentage of married couples living in Geneva is significantly lower (29%) than in the County (47%). The City shows higher percentages of both sole female head of households (34% vs. 25%) and sole male head of households (29% vs. 17%) than in the County. Not surprisingly, the estimated household size in the City is lower than in the County or 25-minute drive time area. These differences are likely to impact social service provision as well as housing design.

Table 7: 2024 Households by Type & Size

	City		County		25-minute drive	
Married Couple	1,476	29.34%	22,688	47.58%	10,678	43.01%
Female Householder	1,725	34.29%	11,979	25.12%	6,464	26.04%
Male Householder	1,449	28.81%	8,120	17.03%	5,257	23.04%
Est. Ave. HH Size	2.12		2.29		2.30	

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

Household Vehicles & Travel Time to Work

As noted in Table 8, households in Geneva are twice as likely to not own a vehicle, compared to their County counterparts (16% vs. 7%). Almost two thirds of Geneva households own one or no vehicles.

Table 8: Vehicles per Household

	City	County	25-minute drive
No Vehicles	15.63%	7.24%	10.55%
1 Vehicle	48.61%	36.08%	38.52%
2 Vehicles	27.69%	39.56%	35.38%
3 Vehicles	6.70%	12.00%	11.50%
4 Vehicles	1.17%	3.77%	2.48%
5+ Vehicles	0.20%	1.34%	1.56%
Est. Avg. Number	1.3	1.7	1.63

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

The high percentage of households with no vehicle also has some impact on travel time to work. In the City of Geneva, the 2024 travel time is estimated at 20 minutes, with over half the workforce reporting they travel less than 15 minutes to work each day. The City travel times stand in contrast with those from Ontario County, where the average travel time is 25 minutes and only 33% of workers travel less than 15 minutes to work daily.

Table 9: 2024 Travel Time to Work

	City	County	25-minute drive
Less than 15 Minutes	52.86%	33.42%	43.15%
15-29 Minutes	32.07%	35.49%	35.56%
30-44 Minutes	5.39%	20.71%	10.73%
45-59 Minutes	4.54%	5.99%	5.24%
60 or More Minutes	5.14%	4.38%	5.32%
Est. Ave. Travel Time to work (minutes)	20	25	22

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

Housing Characteristics

City of Geneva housing tends to be older and more multi-family in style than what is found in Ontario County overall. The City has a higher percentage of multi-family units (2 units-49 units) than the County by a factor of two. For larger multi-family projects (50+ units), the percentage switches to the County's favor.

Table 10: Estimated Housing Units by Units in Structure

	City	County	25-minute drive
1 Unit Detached	55.60%	65.62%	68.25%
1 Unit Attached	1.69%	5.57%	1.71%
2 Units	11.64%	4.12%	7.42%
3 to 4 Units	10.61%	4.94%	4.78%
5 to 19 Units	13.45%	7.72%	5.87%
20 to 49 Units	4.03%	1.78%	1.90%
50+ Units	2.86%	3.17%	1.37%
Mobile Home/Trailer	0.12%	7.07%	8.67%

(Sourced from Claritas/EnviroNics, 2024)

Housing in the City of Geneva is older than housing found Countywide or in the 25-minute drive time area. The estimated median year built in Geneva is 1939, compared with 1975 for the County and 1954 for the 25-minute drive time area. Table 11 details housing unit growth by decade. Most notably, only 33 units are recorded as being built in Geneva between 2020 and 2024 and only 205 units between 2000 and 2024. Nearly 60% of all Geneva housing units were built prior to 1939, compared to 26% for Ontario County.

Table 11: Age of Housing Stock

	City		County		25-minute drive	
Built 2020 or Later	33	0.59%	1,191	2.22%	194	0.69%
Built 2010 to 2019	113	2.01%	3,994	7.43%	839	3.00%
Built 2000 to 2009	59	1.05%	6,429	11.96%	1,702	6.09%
Built 1990 to 1999	195	3.46%	5,865	10.91%	2,148	7.68%
Built 1980 to 1989	115	2.04%	6,337	11.79%	2,213	7.91%
Built 1970 to 1979	313	5.56%	6,695	12.46%	2,650	9.48%
Built 1960 to 1969	506	8.99%	3,913	7.11%	2,281	8.16%
Built 1950 to 1959	671	11.92%	3,821	7.11%	2,909	10.40%
Built 1940 to 1949	286	5.08%	1,626	3.03%	1,446	5.17%
Built 1939 or Earlier	3,338	59.30%	13,872	25.81%	11,579	41.41%
Est. Median Year Built	1,939.65		1,976		1,953.57	

(Sourced from Claritas/EnviroNics, 2024)

Education

Educational attainment in the City of Geneva somewhat mirrors the attainment found Countywide, with several exceptions. Geneva had a higher percentage of residents age 25+ than the County with less than a 9th grade education (5% to 2%). The City also had a lower percentage of residents age 25+ with master's degrees (9% to 14%). Conversely, Geneva residents were twice as likely than County residents to have doctorate degrees (4% to 2%).

Table 12: Educational Attainment 25+

	City	County	25-minute drive
Less than 9th Grade	4.88%	2.32%	4.37%
Some High School	5.49%	4.10%	6.25%
High School Grad/GED	26.82%	25.68%	32.96%
Some College, No Degree	16.57%	16.06%	17.63%
Associates Degree	12.45%	12.51%	13.50%
Bachelor's Degree	19.64%	20.59%	14.45%
Masters Degree	8.87%	14.37%	7.87%
Professional Degree	1.29%	2.59%	1.45%
Doctorate Degree	3.98%	1.76%	1.52%

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

Income & Poverty

According to 2024 estimates shown in Table 13, the City of Geneva had an average household income of \$82,232 and a median household income of \$65,349. These estimates are significantly less compared to Ontario County. There is a notable disparity in median income by race and ethnicity, especially among black and Hispanic households. The disparity gap, however, is greater in the County than in the City.

Table 13: 2024 Household Income

	City	County	25-minute drive
Est. Ave. HH Income	\$82,232	\$109,172	\$89,103
Est Median HH Income	\$65,349	\$81,123	\$70,996
White Alone	\$69,940	\$82,784	\$73,890
Black/African Amer. Alone	\$52,053	\$55,662	\$53,026
Asian Alone	\$102,890	\$125,851	\$84,376
Hispanic/Latino	\$41,985	\$57,341	\$46,929
Not Hispanic/Latino	\$72,622	\$82,279	\$72,602

(Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024)

The household income differential between the City and County also translates into a higher poverty rate within the City of Geneva. As shown in Table 14, 10% of City families (note- families not households) are estimated as below the poverty rate, compared with 5% at the County level.

Table 14: 2024 Poverty Rate

	City		County		25-minute drive	
Families at/above poverty	2,512	90.00%	29,939	95.00%	14,590	92.70%
Families below poverty	276	9.90%	1,512	4.80%	1,156	7.30%
Families below poverty with children	186	6.70%	881	2.80%	805	5.10%

(Sourced from Claritas/Envionics, 2024)

Employment Characteristics

Among the age 16+ workforce in the City of Geneva, white collar jobs comprise the largest percentage (61%). The comparable County figure is 69%. Compared to the County, the City shows a slightly lower percentage of blue collar (13% vs. 16%) but a larger percentage of service/farming workers (26% vs. 16%).

Table 15: Employment 16+

	City	County	25-minute drive
White Collar	61.03%	68.74%	57.99%
Blue Collar	12.81%	15.62%	21.99%
Service/Farming	26.16%	15.64%	20.02%

(Sourced from Claritas/Envionics, 2024)

Job classification by type showed the City with a higher percentage of nonprofit sector jobs than the County (27% vs. 15%), most likely reflecting the presence of Hobart & William Smith College.

Table 16: Employment by Selected Class & Occupation

	City	County	25-minute drive
Est. Civ. Employed	6,228	57,119	29,313
For-Profit Private	52.17%	57.66%	58.19%
Non-Profit Private	26.56%	14.67%	16.38%
Local Govt	8.25%	10.48%	9.16%
Self-Employed	7.48%	11.12%	9.26%
Education/Training/Library	10.90%	8.56%	7.70%
Healthcare Practitioner/Tech	5.62%	8.59%	6.49%
Healthcare Support	6.33%	2.86%	4.13%
Management	7.50%	11.89%	10.25%
Office/Admin. Support	12.57%	11.39%	12.37%
Production	3.63%	5.25%	6.40%
Sales Related	9.28%	10.86%	8.57%

(Sourced from Claritas/Envionics, 2024)

Cell Phone Based Market Data

The Geneva BID entered into a contract with the national firm Placer.ai to obtain access to cell phone derived analytical data that can provide information on visitation dynamics in the community. This data, aggregated for the physical Geneva BID area, provides a snapshot of visitation characteristics.

For the seven (7) year period (2017 to Jan 2024), it is estimated in Table 17 that the downtown BID area attracted 13.9 million visits, including 612,700 from visitors from beyond Geneva. According to Placer, the average dwell time for visitor was 154 minutes (two and a half hours), suggesting that many visitors were probably engaged in some dining or entertainment activity.

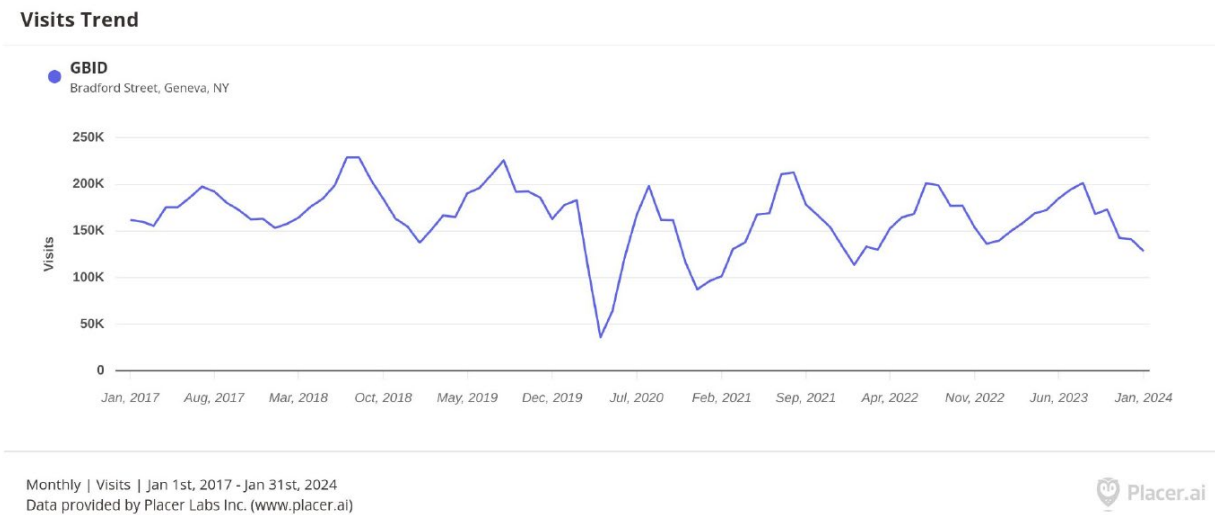
Table 17

Metrics			
GBID 68 Bradford Street, Geneva, NY 14456			
Visits	13.9M	Panel Visits	247.4K
Visitors	612.7K	Visits YoY	N/A
Visit Frequency	23.3	Visits Yo2Y	N/A
Avg. Dwell Time	154 min	Visits Yo3Y	N/A

Jan 1st, 2017 - Jan 31st, 2024
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)

Placer.ai

Table 18



In Table 18, the visitation peaks and valleys become clear, with peaks occurring late summer and valleys in mid-winter. The late summer peaks reflect both tourists and returning students/families to Hobart & William Smith College. A notable deviation from this annual trend was 2020 when COVID created significant decreases in visitation

Table 19

Placer data enables tracking of pre and post visit destinations. It aggregates where people visited before they came to downtown Geneva and where they went after their downtown visit. Hobart & William Smith was the most frequent pre and post destination, followed by big box stores Walmart and Wegmans. The lakefront area also figured as a more frequent pre and post destination.

Prior / Post Compare

GBID / Bradford Street, Geneva, NY					
Prior			Post		
Rank	Name	Foot-Traffic	Rank	Name	Foot-Traffic
1	Hobart William Smith Colleges / Pulteney Street...	4.3%	1	Hobart William Smith Colleges / Pulteney Street...	3.4%
2	Walmart / NY-5, Geneva, NY	1.4%	2	Wegmans / Hamilton St, Geneva, NY	2.7%
3	Wegmans / Hamilton St, Geneva, NY	1.3%	3	Walmart / NY-5, Geneva, NY	2.2%
4	Geneva General Hospital / North St, Geneva, NY	1.2%	4	Lakefront Park / Geneva, NY	1.1%
5	Lakefront Park / Geneva, NY	1%	5	Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Geneva Finge...	0.6%
6	The Belhurst Castle / Route 14 South, Geneva, NY	0.7%	6	Lowe's / Sessler Drive, Geneva, NY	0.6%
7	3 Brothers Winery / Geneva, NY	0.6%	7	Geneva General Hospital / North St, Geneva, NY	0.6%
8	Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Geneva Finge...	0.6%	8	Holiday Inn Express & Suites Geneva Finger La...	0.5%
9	Belhurst Castle and Winery / State Route 14, Ge...	0.5%	9	Seneca Lake State Park / Lakefront Drive, Gene...	0.5%
10	Seneca Lake State Park / Lakefront Drive, Gene...	0.5%	10	Club 86: Bagels & Cakes / Hamilton St, Geneva, ...	<0.5%

Jan 1st, 2017 - Jan 31st, 2024
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)



Table 20 displays the zip code origins of travelers to downtown. As expected, most come from local locations, most within a 30-minute drive time of Geneva.

Table 20

Zipcode / City	Visits (% of Total)
14456 Geneva, NY	4.6M (32.8%)
13165 Waterloo, NY	928.8K (6.7%)
13148 Seneca Falls, NY	540K (3.9%)
14527 Penn Yan, NY	396.7K (2.8%)
14424 Canandaigua, NY	334.9K (2.4%)
14489 Lyons, NY	302.6K (2.2%)
14513 Newark, NY	212.9K (1.5%)
14541 Romulus, NY	210.6K (1.5%)
14532 Oaks Corners, NY	208.4K (1.5%)
14561 Gorham, NY	175.7K (1.3%)

Jan 1st, 2017 - Jan 31st, 2024
 Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)



While the average dwell time was 154 times, the distribution of visit by duration is detailed in Table 21. Most visits fall into the 150 minute+ category, with the second highest category being the 15-29 minute range.

Table 21

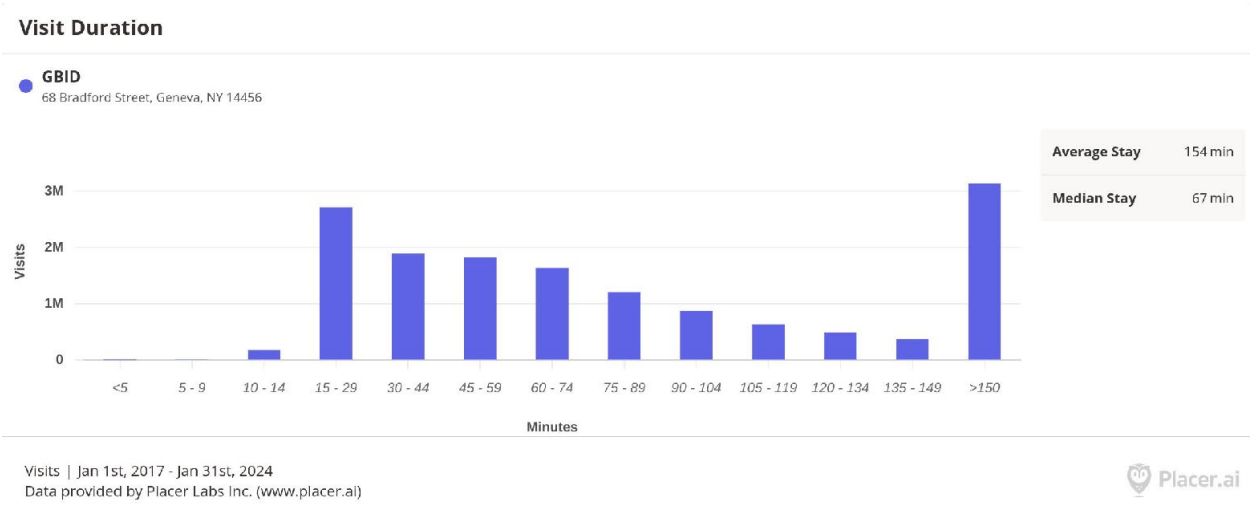
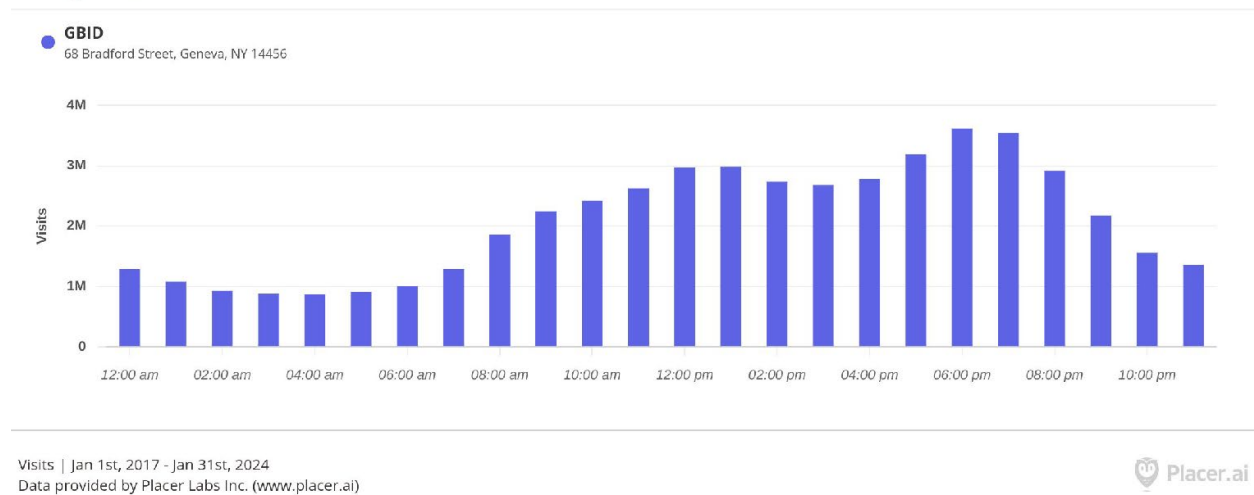


Table 22 shows visits by time of day, with peak times occurring during the dinner hours and secondarily the lunch hours.

Table 22

Hourly Visits



The Placer data for the seven year period 2017-Jan. 2024 also identified favorite places the visitors also visit. These places are composed mainly of regional shopping areas, such as the Eastview Mall, the Waterloo Outlets, Walmart and Wegmans, and Destiny USA. The Lakefront Park area in Geneva was the third most popular place on the list, with over 160,000 visits. Town and Country Plaza also appeared on the list in eighth place, with 130,000 visits.

Table 23

Favorite Places			
GBID / Bradford Street, Geneva, NY			
Rank	Name	Distance	Visitors
1	Eastview Mall / 7979 Pittsford Victor Rd, Fishers, NY 14564	26.1 mi	194.7K (31.8%)
2	Waterloo Premium Outlets / 655 NY-318, Waterloo, NY 13165	6.7 mi	181.8K (29.7%)
3	Lakefront Park / Lakefront Park, Geneva, NY	0.6 mi	160.7K (26.2%)
4	Main Building / 7979 Pittsford Victor Rd, Victor, NY 14564	26 mi	149.8K (24.5%)
5	Walmart / 990 NY-5, Geneva, NY 14456	2.2 mi	145.6K (23.8%)
6	Wegmans / 300 Hamilton St, Geneva, NY 14456	1 mi	140.8K (23%)
7	Destiny USA / 1 Destiny Usa Dr, Syracuse, NY 13204	43 mi	138.4K (22.6%)
8	Town & Country Plaza / 311 Hamilton St, Geneva, NY 14456	1.2 mi	130K (21.2%)
9	Roseland Center / 3225 NY-364, Canandaigua, NY 14424	13.6 mi	103K (16.8%)
10	Victor Crossing / 429 Commerce Dr, Victor, NY 14564	25.3 mi	102.5K (16.7%)

Category: All Categories | Min. Visits: 1 | Jan 1st, 2017 - Jan 31st, 2024
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)

Placer.ai

Key conclusions

There are some key findings that relate directly to this process of economic development strategic planning:

- The decrease in population is slowing. Claritas estimates the likely decrease between 2024 and 2029 to be a total 41 people. This is a small number that a concerted economic development strategy could impact.
- While the poverty rate is higher than countywide, the Claritas data notes that the actual number of Geneva families below the poverty rate is 276. Any positive movement in this number will affect the rate significantly.
- The older housing stock suggests the importance of some programs to address home repair and improvement.
- Smaller households can translate into the need for smaller housing units.
- The low travel to work time can be marketed as a positive for people looking to relocate.
- The diversity of the population has been cited as a community asset and another item to positively market.
- There is a historical base of visitors to Geneva, as shown in the Placer data. This provides a strong starting point for growing annual visitation.
- The College and lakefront both have a strong impact on travel and visitation and could be further utilized to grow visits.

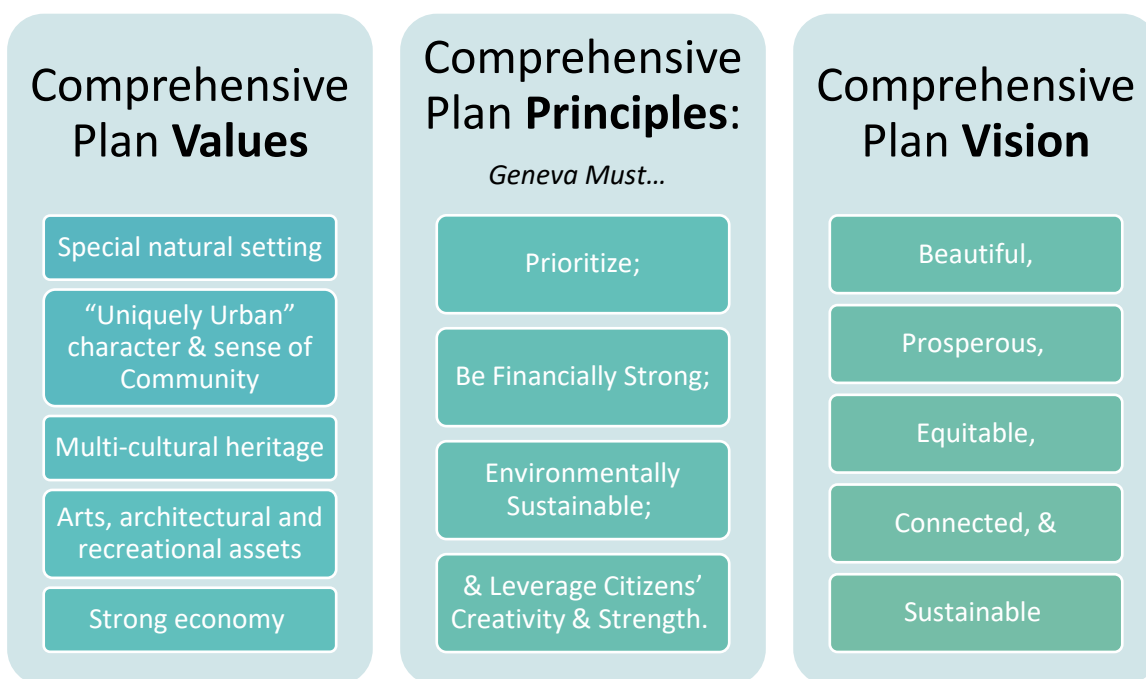
Section Six: Utilizing Previous Plans

Geneva has a strong history and tradition of planning. At a public input session for this economic development strategy, City Planning & Economic Development Director David West reminded the audience about the many plans that have been undertaken in the past decade or so:

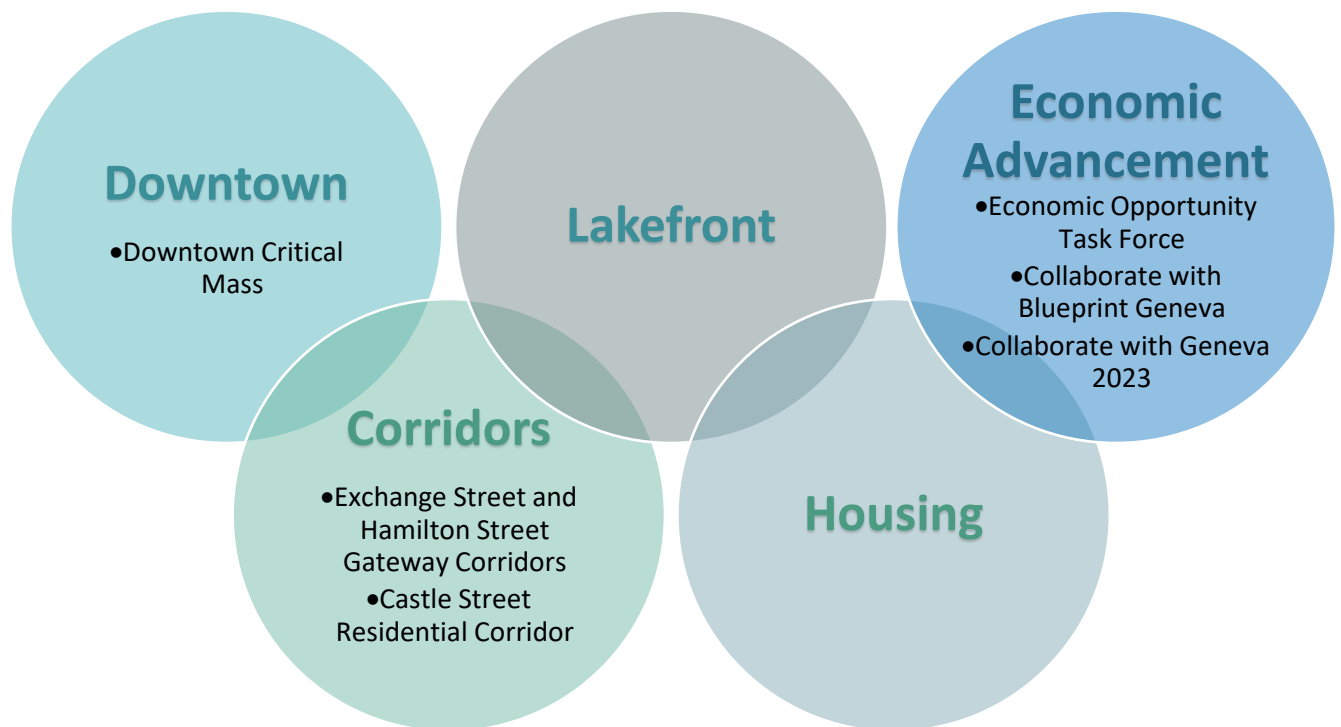
- City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan
- Geneva Brownfield Opportunity Area/Greenway Plan
- Lakefront Amenities Plan
- Neighborhood Study
- Geneva Parking Study
- Let's Talk Economic Opportunity
- Active Transportation Plan
- Lakefront/Downtown Connectivity Study
- Waterfront Infrastructure Feasibility Study – LWRP
- Blueprint Geneva

All of these plans and documents were reviewed for relevance to this economic development strategy. Specific, yet-to-be achieved items from these prior plans were provided to the project Working Group for prioritization.

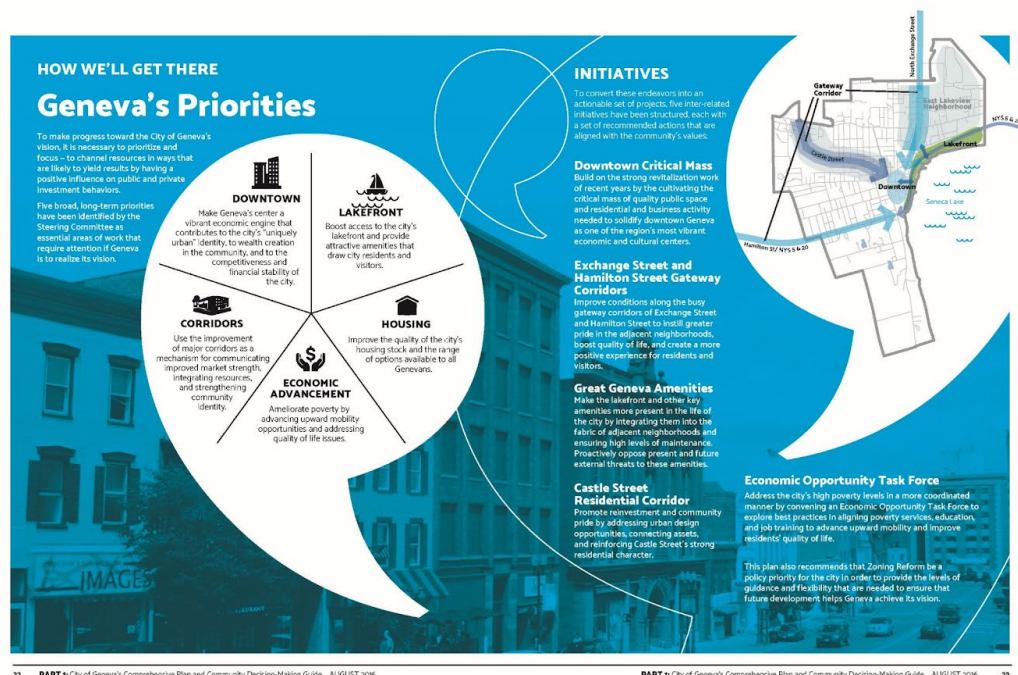
The most relevant and significant of these plans is the City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The preparation of this key community planning document involved its own committee of 25 members, its own community survey, and various outreach and dialogue sessions with the public. The Comprehensive Plan featured the following core values, principles, and vision:

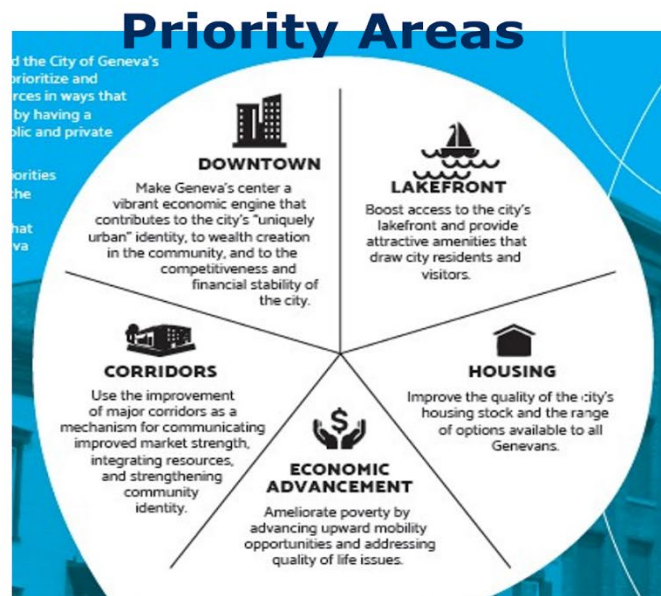


The Comprehensive Plan identified five distinct initiative areas, each with its own strategies and work elements.



The following graphics, drawn from this project's community input session background materials, summarize the 2015 Comprehensive Plan:





Topics drawn from the Comprehensive Plan and other planning documents that were submitted to the Working Group for review are provided in Appendix 2.

Section Seven: Community Survey Results

A tool used to unlock public opinion about economic development was a community survey. Working in tandem with the City Director of Planning and Economic Development, CRRC designed an online survey to elicit thoughts on key questions from the Geneva general public. In particular, the survey sought to reach people who lived and/or worked in Geneva.

Questions covered a broad range of economic development topics including open-ended needs and concerns, comprehensive plan implementation strategies, and opinions on the Downtown OEO site.

Methodology

Some important methodological considerations for the survey included:

- Survey length. The survey instrument took an average of 10 minutes and 38 seconds for a participant to complete. Typically, we aim for a survey that will take 10 minutes or less to complete.
- All the people who started the survey completed it.
- A total of 193 completed surveys were obtained.
- All were obtained online utilizing a shared link to a protected Survey Monkey file.
- The window for survey completion ran for the months of June and July.

We asked several questions to better understand the characteristics of Geneva survey respondents. The people who responded had the following demographic attributes:

The vast majority lived in the City of Geneva.... 83%. Another 12% lived in the Town of Geneva.

Slightly over a quarter of respondents worked in Geneva.... 26%.

More women (62%) than men (38%) completed the survey.

The age distribution was fairly even, except for students. By June, students had already left campus for summer. This survey was not able to capture student (under age 21) opinions.

A disproportionately high number of respondents were white (97%) compared to the actual population. Only a small percentage of responses came from black (3%) and Hispanic (4%) residents.

There was a good distribution of respondents based on how long they lived in Geneva. A quarter (25%) of all respondents had lived in Geneva for less than 5 years. Another quarter of all respondents (24%) had lived in Geneva their entire lives. The remainder of respondents lived in Geneva either 6-15 years (18%) or more than 15 years (30%).

Household size for respondents mirror the latest Census statistics. One-person household respondents were 21% of the total; 2-person household respondents 41%; 3-person household respondents 21%; 4-

person household respondents 9%; 5-person household respondents 5%; and households greater than 5 people totaled only 3%.

Respondents to the survey also tended to have higher annual household incomes. Only 24% of respondents had household incomes less than \$50,000. Another 25% had household incomes at or above \$125,000. The other 50% were fairly evenly distributed between \$50,000 and \$125,000.

These characteristics of respondents do not fully represent the overall demographics of Geneva, particularly with income, ethnicity, and race. Future planning and economic development will need to pay extra attention to reaching these groups of under-represented residents.

Notable Survey Results

A summary of the results of the community economic development survey follows. See appendices 5-7 for complete survey details.

1. “What brought you and/or your family to Geneva?”

While there was an assortment of answers to this question, the most prominent responses were:

- Jobs
- Natives (Born here)
- Colleges
- Community

2. “What keeps you living and/or working here in Geneva?”

Again, while there were a number of different responses, the most frequent were:

- Family/Friends
- Community
- Colleges
- Culture
- Jobs
- The Lake
- Nature
- Love of the City
- Location of the City in the Region

3. “When you talk with other Geneva residents and workers, what have you heard are their most challenging issues or concerns?”

The most cited issues were:

- Housing Expense- (61%)
- Housing Quality- 42%
- Entertainment/Recreation – 37%
- Education- 35%

The least cited issues were:

- Community Connection & Belonging- 16%
- Safety- 18%
- Household income- 24%

Housing affordability and quality were the two top concerns for survey respondents. By contrast, community connection & belonging and safety were mentioned the least.

4. “List up to three things (projects, Policies, programs, actions, partnerships) that you think could be easily and relatively inexpensively undertaken right now by local citizens and/or government that could improve the health and economy of our community?”

There were literally hundreds of ideas which have been shared with City staff. Respondents tended to focus on the following types of ideas:

- Housing code enforcement and dealing with problem buildings
- Creating more affordable housing
- Attracting another grocery store either to Downtown or Ward 5
- Investing in added childcare facilities
- Improving the recreational appeal and utility of the waterfront
- Investing in neighborhood revitalization
- Expanding youth and teen programs and recreation options
- Addressing Downtown vacancies
- Controlling short term rentals
- Adding more festivals and community events
- Efforts to reduce government spending and taxes

5. “More people would move to the City of Geneva if.....?”

Respondents were asked to select from among six different issues or challenges. The most cited responses were:

- There were lower taxes (24%)
- There were more housing opportunities (20%)

Even as these were the most frequently cited responses, they still represent less than a quarter of all respondents.

By contrast, the least cited responses for this question were:

- There were more services provided by the public sector (2%)
- There were more places to shop and dine. (3%)
- There were more recreational and entertainment opportunities. (7%)

6. “What type of new housing should be prioritized in the coming years?”

Respondents were far more likely to gravitate around three types of housing:

- Middle market housing (59%)
- Affordable housing (52%)
- Senior housing (42%)

By contrast, the least mentioned housing types in the survey were:

- High end market rate housing (12%)
- Duplex/triplex (13%)

7. The City owns land at the south end of Exchange Street, often referred to as the OEO site. This property is likely to be redeveloped in the next several years. In choosing a developer, how important are the following items?"

Survey respondents were provided with a list of nine different items ranging from housing type to architecture style, to viewsheds, and community benefits. On a scale of 1-5, with five being the highest score, the nine items were clustered in a band that ranged from a low of 2.4 to a high of 4.1. Unlike other questions, these responses were fairly closely ranked. The highest ranked items were:

- Property tax generation (4.1)
- Traditional building architecture (3.8)
- More affordable housing (3.7)
- Preservation of views from Main Street (3.7)

The lowest ranked items were:

- Nontraditional architecture (2.3)
- More upscale housing (2.4)

If property tax generation is to be a major determinant of an applicant project's benefit to the community, it will be important to assess the total benefit in relation to tax incentives as well as to the other community benefits that a project might deliver.

8. "In 2016 the City of Geneva completed a long-term comprehensive plan. In this plan there were a number of proposed projects and key issues/initiatives. Eight years later, please rate each of the following projects pulled from this comprehensive plan in terms of their importance and relevance today."

Nine yet to be completed elements from the comprehensive plan were selected for this question. The goal was to assess current public opinion about the importance and relevance of these items. The highest ranked items were:

- Downtown building rehab and adaptive reuse program (4.2)
- Continued City park improvements (4.2)
- City planning & engagement at the neighborhood level (4.1)
- Lakefront recreational improvements (3.8)

The lowest ranked items were:

- Lakefront marina development and Long Pier improvements (3.0)
- Continued improvements to City entrances (3.4)

This question also has a relatively narrow range of response rankings, ranging from 3.0 to 4.2. This suggests that there were no items that were significantly higher or lower in appeal. It also suggests that even the lowest ranked items were still at or above the score average.

9. “Rank these items....”

Survey respondents were asked to rank each of 11 different items pertaining to community well-being and economic development on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the top rank. The highest ranked items were:

- Lake access (3.9)
- My own image of Geneva as a place to live/work (3.8)
- Geneva’s cultural offerings (3.7)
- Public safety (3.5)

The lowest ranked items were:

- Housing availability (2.2)
- The mix of business along the Route 5/20 corridor (2.5)
- Housing affordability (2.7)
- The outside world’s image of Geneva as a place to live/work (2.9)

The Lake appears to remain an important community asset and respondents were interested in assuring that the public has access to the lakefront. Respondents appeared satisfied with cultural offerings and public safety. They were less happy about business offerings along the Route 5/20 corridor and with housing availability and cost. Respondents personally perceived Geneva to be a good place to live and/or work, but at the same time were more likely to think others from outside the community thought less of Geneva as a place to live and/or work.

Full details and responses from this survey appear in Appendices 5-7.

Section Eight: Community Input Session

Part of the outreach strategy for this project was to convene a public input session to obtain the comments and insights of Geneva residents and workers. This meeting was held on the evening of June 13 at the Downtown Hobart & William Smith Barzano Center for Entrepreneurship. Over 60 people gathered to receive updated economic development information and data and to provide specific input centered around four thought provoking questions.

What would be one new initiative to spur prosperity?

This question was designed to elicit public comment on the types of actions they felt would result in positive economic activity for Geneva. Working in groups, the assembled participants identified a long list of possibilities:

- Downtown grocery store
- Improve transportation
- Housing for middle income to grow into
- Workforce housing
- Solve vacancies with new businesses and residents
- Something for kids
- Downtown arcade
- Expand downtown boundaries
- Expand winter tourism
- Address homeless problem
- Create upscale housing/townhouses
- Microenterprise incubator
- Law to address vacant properties
- Pedestrian bridge/ more walk downtown/lakefront
- More festivals
- Safety
- Lakefront attractions/amenities
- Customer service training program
- Electric bike rental
- Downtown trolley/shuttle
- Historic tours
- Town & Country Plaza reboot
- Pool
- Tech start-up
- Summer youth internships
- More housing

A more in-depth review of the group notes suggests that the participants most often suggested:

- Housing-related actions that would create new and/or improved housing.
- Strengthening Downtown through actions to fill vacancies, provide destinations for young people, improve connectivity with waterfront, and add more downtown businesses.
- Improving transportation within the City for both locals and visitors.
- Further enhancing the Lakefront to make it a place that attracts more people, through events and amenities.

What does successful economic development mean?

This question was asked to help participants grapple with the metrics of economic development success. Asked another way, how do you know when you have been successful? This topic is an important part of any economic development strategy, understanding the measures of success are broadly expected and

anticipated. The public input session participants again used small groups to discuss and report out the following ideas:

- Young people come and stay
- Safe, affordable housing for all
- Better paying jobs
- Equitable economic development for all income levels
- More small manufacturing
- Start-up homes for young people
- Greater inclusivity
- More jobs
- Food access for all
- More locally owned businesses
- Less LLC ownerships
- More sustainability
- Lower taxes
- Successful local businesses
- A welcoming community happy with their quality of life
- More public/private partnerships
- Increased tax base
- Increase population & critical mass
- Pride in City by everybody
- More working families & young professionals
- Retaining seniors
- New businesses that don't require subsidies
- Dealing with problem buildings

One clear observation from this exercise is that people have broad and divergent definitions of what constitutes economic development success. Among the recurring ideas generated were:

- Production of more and better housing
- Business retention and recruitment success
- Job and wage growth
- Attracting new people to live in the community & retaining current residents
- Building a more robust tax base

What can we each do?

This is one of two questions designed to spark thought about personal responsibility. Economic development is often interpreted and perceived as a task performed by professionals, and not involving the general public. The intent of this question was to suggest that there are opportunities for the public to become a part of the economic development implementation process. The various groups produced the following ideas:

- Communicate positively about Geneva
- Volunteer
- Shop local
- Take care of properties- garden/paint
- Pitch in to help neighbors
- Residential consulting for aesthetics
- Reach out to new neighbors
- Improve housing conditions
- Create an arcade
- Improve communications
- Start more music programming
- Inventory business conditions
- Evaluate upper floors in downtown
- Create a volunteer database

- Stop silos/work collaboratively
- Be present/participate
- Raise awareness and network
- Vote
- Discourage negativity and divisiveness
- Share information on social media

Most of these ideas reflect this notion that individuals can be a part of community economic advancement and that all of these ideas help to advance the standing of the community as a vibrant, prosperous place.

What will I do next week?

This is the second question directed toward personal involvement. It specifically attempts to illuminate the sense that there are some items and actions that can be undertaken in the near term. The items collected as part of this discussion exercise were:

- Buy local
- Introduce self to two new people
- Communicate to others and public about community meetings
- Housing organization volunteering
- Welcome ambassadors for downtown
- Create a Geneva volunteer corps
- Encourage cell phone free zones
- Improve communications between nonprofits and businesses
- Community calendar
- Host community meetings throughout the city
- Create unified & accessible info hub
- Work to cancel marina project
- Have BID visit all businesses
- Better outreach
- Spring cleaning/facelift
- Bike drive
- Free state park admission for one day
- Coffee with Council
- Sign with a map of businesses
- Zoom presentations on economic development by Planning Dept

Several themes permeated this discussion:

- Improved and enhanced communication about economic development with the community.
- Finding ways to utilize and engage community volunteers.

Section Nine: Geneva Economic Development SWOT Analysis

Activity prioritization and recommendations are derived, in part, from an analysis of community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), in this case oriented around economic development. Working Group session #1 was devoted to conducting a strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis. The results are shared below.



Strengths

- Character of housing stock
- History of community
- Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Cornell, & Finger Lakes Community College
- Central Finger Lakes location
- Diversity
- Broad mix of economic activity/businesses
- Walkability
- Welcome Center
- Food, culinary & wine
- Festivals & events
- Recreational tourism

This is a deep and strong list of community assets that can serve as assets for economic development. From this list of strengths, we understand that Geneva is a centrally located, diverse, walkable city characterized by a broad assortment of economic activities, historic housing, its culinary & wine offerings, its festivals & events, its community heritage and its association with key institutions of higher education, Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Cornell University's AgriTech Campus, and the Geneva branch of the Finger Lakes Community College, including the Viticulture and Wine Center. All these strengths represent strong assets to build an economic development strategy upon.



Weaknesses

- Tax rate/pressures
- Housing availability, cost, and quality
- Perception of schools
- Poverty
- Community image and cohesion
- Resistance to change
- Things for kids to do
- Unresponsive landlords

These weaknesses are the current shortcomings and deficits that the community is working to address. All have a potential negative impact on the health and welfare of the community. They are concerns that were perceived by the Working Group. Perceptions such as perceptions of the local schools, community image & cohesion, are as important to understand as specific tangible, data driven issues like poverty, tax rate, and housing availability/cost. An economic development strategy should seek to address at least some of these weaknesses.



Opportunities

- Leveraging location
- National trends favor Geneva (climate change, remote work, preference for good urbanism)
- Agricultural and food innovation
- Town & Country Plaza location
- City & IDA properties

In crafting an economic development strategy, it is important to take advantage of the potential opportunities that are available to a community. The Working Group identified some key opportunities relating to the CU agritech efforts already active in Geneva, the possibilities related to the Town & Country Plaza site on Route 5/20, and the City's inventory of surplus vacant properties. The Group likewise noted that Geneva is poised to benefit from climate change relocations and remote work opportunities as well as the spinoff effect of regional growth from Micron and associated businesses.



Threats

- National retail trends
- Rising construction costs
- Shrinking population impact on services, schools, revenues
- Regional competition for new residents and business/industry
- Stresses to the lake

Threats are trends and pressures that need to be acknowledged and considered as part of any forward-looking economic development strategy. Threats are not readily changed; they typically represent pressures that are beyond the scope of local resources. Retail trends and rising construction costs are national/global concerns that reach into communities such as Geneva. Regional competition and Seneca Lake stresses are Finger Lakes region threats that will necessitate collaborative efforts with regional partners.

Section Ten: The Working Group Prioritization Process

A goal of this economic development strategy planning process has been to empower a group of local stakeholders, the Economic Development Working Group, to assume a leadership role in project and program implementation. To facilitate this effort, the Working Group was asked to participate in a prioritization process that identified projects, programs, and policies that were deemed to be most important to the Geneva community.

Following the SWOT analysis, the Working Group was asked to identify and list actions and ideas for local economic development advancement without regard to priority or funding. This list, shown in the Appendix, was a comprehensive assortment of 89 different topics.

CRRC merged this list with the list of ideas generated from the stakeholder interviews, and a review and scan of appropriate prior Geneva plans, along with key topics proposed by CRRC that had not been identified by these other methods. This long list of 89 topics and actions was then segmented into nine broad topic areas:

Downtown revitalization	Community Amenities	Agri-Tech/Industry
Housing	Economic Development Process	Economic Development Marketing
Redevelopment of Key Properties	Densification	Business Recruitment, Retention, & Entrepreneurship

See the Appendix for a complete list of these combined topics.

At their third work session, the Working Group was asked to rank and prioritize all of the items within the nine topic areas and then prioritize the topic areas themselves. This was achieved using an online ranking. These priorities are listed below:

Downtown Revitalization

- Continue to actively pursue downtown residential development
- Create a building renovation task force
- Package & aggressively promote building renovation & rehab incentives
- Address downtown vacancies
- Improve Downtown/lakefront connections

Community Amenities

- Complete Castle Creek greenway
- Create a plan to bolster park maintenance
- Provide new infrastructure to benefit farmers' market and other events on the lakefront
- Work with Hobart & William Smith Colleges on a strategy to maximize facilities & talent for community benefit
- Provide ongoing support to the school district

AgriTech/Industry

- Actively seek new revenue generating businesses
- Facilitate & promote CU AgriTech
- Create a major industry incentive program for employees

Housing

- Create a Geneva housing improvement/repair program
- Continue to pursue new Downtown residential development
- Undertake 2024 CDBG rehab/housing study/update
- Collaborate with relevant nonprofit organizations
- Create a Geneva homeownership program
- Pursue renewed neighborhood planning & programming

Economic Development Process

- Undertake a review of the current comprehensive plan
- Create and manage an ongoing economic opportunities task force
- Create a task force to address area workforce issues
- Collaborate with Geneva 2030 and Blueprint Geneva
- Arrange for regular economic development partner meetings

Economic Development Marketing

- Create a market Geneva image building campaign
- Contract with a 3rd party entity or hire staff for economic development marketing
- Create a strategy for routinely marketing successes

Redevelopment of Key Properties

- Pursue redevelopment of the City-owned OEO site
- Facilitate the process for the sale of surplus properties
- Pursue redevelopment of Lake Street IDA property
- Pursue redevelopment/reuse of the Foundry

Densification

- Plan for and facilitate the redevelopment of the Town & Country Plaza site
- Create a strategy for continued 5/20 corridor, Middle St., Castle St. and Exchange St. densification

Business Recruitment/Retention/Entrepreneurship

- Prepare a strategy for small business development
- Create & maintain a comprehensive inventory
- Undertake a new Race for the Space program
- Define & enact a more formal and systematic process for business recruitment/retention

These priorities are important to this economic development strategy. As the top ranked items from the Working Group, they represent actions that the Working Group can collectively promote and pursue. They are incorporated into the recommendations that appear in the following sections.

Part Three: Recommendations

Drawing from the priorities of the Working Group, a review of the updated community data, the prior plans, the stakeholder interviews, the community survey, and the community input session, CRRC has prepared recommendations for the City of Geneva and its three local economic development partners (the Geneva IDA, the Geneva LDC, and the Downtown Geneva BID). These recommendations are divided into six sections:

11.1 Underlying Goals

11.2 Summary of short-term recommendations

11.3 Summary of longer-term recommendations

12 Detailed descriptions of recommendations

13 Engaging other Economic Development partners

14 The Future of Geneva: An Economic Development perspective



Section Eleven: Summary Goals & Recommendations

Section 11.1—Underlying Goals

Goals are essential for an economic development strategy. Without goals, it would be difficult to determine if a strategy is meeting its intended purpose and its implementation is yielding the desired results. Based on the various inputs obtained during this information gathering process, the following goals are suggested:

Economic Development Goals:

1. To improve the quality of life for Geneva residents through economic development related activity.

Genevans desire a high quality of life. They live in a beautiful place surrounded by an equally beautiful region. Economic development actions should improve this quality of life for all Geneva residents.

2. To achieve a renewed sense of community pride and a more positive opinion of Geneva as a place to live and work from residents.

How people feel about their community matters. When residents are concerned that their community is not meeting their expectations, there is room for improvement. When residents present a negative image of their community it can impair economic development efforts creating a vicious cycle.

3. To grow the City's population, halting and reversing the decline.

A declining population has several deleterious effects on a community. It constricts the resources available for schools and public services. It reduces the local demand for goods and services. It can have a negative impact on residents' perceptions of their community as a successful place. Geneva has the potential to grow with new private housing investment.

4. To ease the tax burden of the community by increasing the stream of tax revenue from new and expanding businesses and from new investment in housing.

A high tax rate has been cited by a number of Geneva residents as a concern for the present and the future. There are only two ways to address a high tax rate—reduce spending and cut services, or increase the tax base. It is far less painful and contentious to do the latter.

5. To provide more housing options in the community.

A common theme throughout the information gathering process was the need for more housing opportunities in Geneva. Housing options are limited, the existing housing stock is old with much of it in need of renovation or improvement, and residents remain concerned about housing costs.

6. To increase the number of visitors and tourism to the community.

Geneva is an attractive community located in an attractive region. It can be a center for tourism, above and beyond the current visitation rate. Increasing tourism is also necessary to support Geneva's retail businesses

which currently exceed the spending capacity of local residents but are deemed to be important to the community.

7. To share and communicate economic development information with the public and stakeholder groups throughout the city.

Throughout the strategic planning process, it was clear that the Geneva community was interested in their economic development future. They sought information and points of contact as well as avenues for direct involvement in the future of the community.

Establishing Quantitative Goals

These seven broad economic development goals can be converted into multiple measurable quantitative goals. Here are twelve suggested broad community-level quantitative goals for Geneva economic development moving forward:

- **Jobs:** Add 125 new jobs each year at all levels.

Rationale: Jobs are synonymous with economic vibrance. People who work in Geneva will be more likely to spend discretionary income there. Jobs can attract people to live in the community. Jobs support households. There will always be some job attrition, due primarily to the normal fluctuation in businesses downsizing or going out of business. Hence, there should always be a goal to add jobs to the community to both replace and grow. There are currently 6,228 people with civilian jobs living in Geneva. It will be a stretch but it is worthy to aspire to a 2.0% annual increase, resulting in 125 new jobs per year and 625 over a 5-year period.

- **Housing:** Add 75 new units annually.

Rationale: Housing is one of the community's most frequently mentioned needs. According to the 2024 Claritas Census update, there are 5,629 housing units in Geneva City. Geneva's housing stock is older than the surrounding county and hence is likely to need improvement or renovation. Residents talk about the lack of certain types of housing- senior, workforce, middle market, higher end. The Ontario County Housing Study indicated that in 2020/21 the City of Geneva built 32 units of single family for sale housing and 106 of multi-family rental housing. These figures are low relative to other Ontario County communities. The County study also showed that there were 137 home sales in the City of Geneva in 2022. Without its own housing market analysis, it is challenging to determine the number of new units that the marketplace could support annually. Based on the above figures, it is recommended that the City strive for creating an additional 75 units per year, with the majority coming from renovation of vacant or underutilized properties, but also a significant number from new construction. Over a five-year period, this would increase the City housing stock by 375 units.

- **Storefront Vacancies:** Fill up to 85% ground floor storefront area.

Rationale: Vacancies project a negative image to both residents and visitors alike. In a high performing marketplace, there will always be vacancies due to the vagaries of small business. In fact, a modest vacancy rate of 15% or less allows for new businesses to enter the market. A 5% vacancy is considered "full

occupancy” as there is always some churn in retail space which is necessary for allowing new businesses into the community.

- Upper story renovations: Reduce vacant space by 50% over five years.

Rationale: Unused or underused upper story space represents the utilization of the community’s real estate assets. Effort to bring upper story space online and up to code is an important economic development goal. It is critical to determine the amount of existing upper story space and then seek to support initiatives to reduce the amount of vacant or underperforming space by 50% in the next five years.

- Businesses: Annual visits to all major employers over 50 employees.

Rationale: It is challenging to attract new businesses to a community, especially major employers. It is important for economic development leaders to conduct annual visits to all (100%) of major businesses to share information, obtain feedback, and provide timely support when appropriate.

- Businesses: Ten (10) new businesses per year citywide.

Rationale: Each year there should be a goal of adding new businesses to the City landscape. This will help to offset businesses that do not succeed as well as grow the business community and job base in Geneva. One key metric to understand is the actual number of current businesses in the community. A goal of adding ten (10) new businesses of any type each year is a modest goal. This would include efforts at the Cornell Agri-Tech campus, Tech Farm, and USDA research facilities.

- Business expansions: Five (5) per year citywide.

Rationale: One sign of marketplace strength is the growth and expansion of existing businesses. Each year the community should aspire to work with at least five (5) expanding businesses of all types.

- Tourism: YOY visits increase by 5%.

Rationale: Tourism already serves as a major driver of the Geneva downtown retail economy. There appears to be significant growth potential in tourism, particularly with renewed attention to other elements recommended in this document. A 5% annual growth rate in visitation is a solid and reasonable goal.

- Neighborhood improvement: 11 events each year.

Rationale: People live in neighborhoods, and Geneva has identified eleven different neighborhoods throughout the City. A number of stakeholder interviews spoke about the prior City efforts to highlight and support neighborhood improvement. There should be a goal of encouraging at least one event in each neighborhood (eleven total events) each year.

- Communications: Number of annual economic development posts: 12; Number of annual economic development press releases/stories: 12 ; Number of annual public networking or information sessions: 4.

Rationale: Public input from the community input session and the community survey suggests a thirst for more communications regarding economic development. The City should lead the effort to develop information sharing communications with the public through social media posts, public relations stories and articles, and networking sessions. Annual minimum goals would help facilitate this effort.

- Create needed economic development infrastructure for success.

Rationale: Fundamental to any sustained economic development success will be the creation of needed economic development infrastructure. The specific elements of this infrastructure are detailed below. A goal should be to develop this infrastructure as soon as feasible—hopefully within two (2) years.

Section 11.2—Work Project Recommendations by Partner

For the City of Geneva

Short Term Recommendations

These represent actions and activities that can be implemented immediately or in the short term, defined as 1 – 2 years. Items are listed in recommended order of priority.

CITY1. Conduct a discussion to **determine if the current Comprehensive Plan is still appropriate** or if there needs to be any Plan revisions or an update.

CITY2. **Prepare an RFP or RFQ for the City owned OEO Site** to determine interest and alignment with City goals.

CITY3. Work with an external contract for **economic development marketing services**, or budget to hire internal City staff to perform this task.

CITY4. **Prepare a plan for the disposition of surplus City properties**, ensuring that the plan accounts for and prioritizes economic development needs and goals.

CITY5. Work to sustain and **grow the existing City MAP grant program**.

CITY6. **Convene an Economic Opportunities Task Force** as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that all members of the Geneva community can share economic opportunity.

CITY7. **Convene regular, at least quarterly, meetings of Geneva’s economic development partners** to manage and assess economic development strategy implementation.

CITY8. **Prepare and maintain an up-to-date Geneva inventory compilation of available spaces** and properties for rent, sale, and/or investment.

CITY9. **Prepare a formal/systematic process for both business recruitment & retention**, reflecting the need for a key point person, a database for documentation, and plans for targeting priority businesses and prospects.

CITY10. **Adopt a strategic focus on food research and development, food packaging and production** for business recruitment.

CITY11. **Prepare a business visitation plan** that will detail how to prioritize and undertake periodic retention & expansion (R&E) visits to Geneva businesses.

CITY12. **Work to expand and strengthen Geneva's relationship with County TPA.**

CITY13. **Convene regular formal City/Hobart & William Smith meetings** to discuss current and future plans, as well as any issues or concerns.

CITY14. **Convene an annual real estate developer's forum** to create a two-way dialogue with developers about community needs, development issues and concerns, and possible opportunities.

CITY15. Work with leadership from Hobart & William Smith Colleges on a **strategy that could maximize the physical facilities & the talent of the Colleges** to better enhance and benefit the community.

CITY16. **Explore the viability of undertaking another Race for the Space competition.**

CITY17. **Coordinate with and support as appropriate Habitat for Humanity, Finger Lakes Community Action,** and other housing nonprofit organizations.

CITY18. **Convene small business forums and/or networking events.**

CITY19. **Provide support and leadership for Geneva 2030 and efforts to strengthen the Geneva City School District.**

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

These are actions and activities that are recommended for the intermediate/longer term, defined as up to five years or beyond. Items are listed in order of recommended priority.

CITY20. Facilitate developer selection and **redevelopment of the OEO site.**

CITY21. **Commission a Geneva specific housing market analysis with the IDA.**

CITY22. Secure funding to **complete the BOA/North End Greenway and Castle Creek greenway projects.**

CITY23. **Facilitate mixed-use development projects for both Middle and Exchange Streets.**

CITY24. As part of the business recruitment planning process, **actively seek revenue generating businesses.**

CITY25. Undertake a process to **update and streamline the project permitting process.**

For the Geneva IDA

Short Term Recommendations

These represent actions and activities that can be implemented immediately or in the short term, defined as 1 – 2 years. Items are listed in recommended order of priority.

IDA1: Undertake short term efforts to **improve the financial viability of the American Can/GEDC complex**, by adding additional tenants and providing low-cost signage, art, and other beautification.

IDA2. **Create and capitalize a local financial incentive program for the promotion of new housing units in Geneva**, with priority for senior, middle, and affordable/workforce housing development.

IDA3. **Sponsor an annual Geneva economic development awards program with the LDC** to generate a renewed sense of pride and achievement.

IDA4. **Research/propose a redevelopment plan for RT 5/20/Town & Country Plaza area.**

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

These are actions and activities that are recommended for the intermediate/longer term, defined as up to five years or beyond. Items are listed in order of recommended priority.

IDA5. **Continue longer term efforts to redevelop, renovate, and reconfigure space in the American Can/GEDC complex.**

IDA6. **Commission a Geneva specific housing market study with the City** to specifically assess housing opportunities in Geneva and provide confidence to developers, investors, lenders, and appraisers.

IDA7. Work with local major employers to **create a major industry employee incentive program** that would be able to help facilitate homeownership and equity in City of Geneva housing.

IDA8. Promote and **facilitate the development of priority housing segments, especially senior housing, middle market housing, and affordable/workforce housing.**

IDA9. Upon completion of a plan, **facilitate a redevelopment process at the Route 5/20/ Town & Country Plaza area.**

IDA10. Work with the City and private parties to **prepare more shovel ready sites for businesses and investors.**

For the Geneva LDC

Short Term Recommendations

These represent actions and activities that can be implemented immediately or in the short term, defined as 1 – 2 years. Items are listed in recommended order of priority.

- LDC1. **Commission and capitalize a Geneva image building campaign**, working in conjunction with City staff and/or a contractor.
- LDC2. Concurrently, **prepare a plan for routinely marketing economic development successes** and information to the Geneva community and beyond.
- LDC3. **Launch an initiative to promote renewed neighborhood planning and programming**, providing seed funds for neighborhood events and planning exercises.
- LDC4. **Sponsor an annual Geneva economic development awards program with the IDA** to generate a renewed sense of pride and achievement.
- LDC5. **Work with the BID and property owners to organize new and recurring Race for the Space programs** to encourage new businesses in existing vacant spaces across the City.

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

These are actions and activities that are recommended for the intermediate/longer term, defined as up to five years or beyond. Items are listed in order of recommended priority.

- LDC6. **Plan, capitalize, and launch a Geneva existing housing improvement and repair program.**
- LDC7. **Work with other local agencies, partners on local experiences** including historic, cultural, and art-based trail programs **that increase tourism** and improve value of properties in Geneva.

For the Downtown Geneva BID

Short Term Recommendations

These represent actions and activities that can be implemented immediately or in the short term, defined as 1 – 2 years. Items are listed in recommended order of priority.

- BID1. Continue the **Downtown Geneva Image Building Campaign**, working in conjunction with City staff and the LDC. Prepare a plan for routinely marketing economic development successes as well as information to Geneva and beyond.
- BID2. **Nurture and strengthen relationships with Hobart William Smith Colleges**, including students, families, alumni, and staff.
- BID3. **Prepare a Downtown vacancy reduction plan** aimed at working with property owners and providing added value to both landlords and the community.
- BID4. Work with the City and other economic development partners to **prepare and manage a Downtown building renovation and rehabilitation incentive packaging initiative.**
- BID5. Share organization progress and challenges utilizing **an annual BID dashboard** of downtown and organization success metrics.

Intermediate & Longer-Term Recommendations

These are actions and activities that are recommended for the intermediate/longer term, defined as up to five years or beyond. Items are listed in order of recommended priority.

BID6. Upon completion of a plan, **commit to implementing a downtown vacancy reduction program.**

BID7. **Work with the City and other partners to create a Geneva tourism attraction plan**, with both capital and programmatic considerations.

BID8. Work with the City on efforts to **support continued and expanded Downtown residential development.**

BID9. Specifically brainstorm and **research possible traffic generating projects for Downtown**, selecting 1-2 for facilitation.

BID10. Work with the City to **create an action plan for further improving Downtown/waterfront connections**, including, but not limited to exploring possible visitor shuttle service.

BID11. **Form community partnerships with selected destination businesses in Geneva** to help bolster foot traffic with downtown, including exploring possible connections between downtown and these destinations with a visitor shuttle (such as Geneva on the Lake, Belhurst Castle, Fairfield Inn and Suites)

BID12. Work with State officials to **improve the State's Geneva visitor center's information on both Downtown Geneva and the immediate Geneva community.**

BID13. Work with the City to **Prepare and maintain an up-to-date Geneva inventory compilation of available spaces** and properties for rent, sale, and/or investment

Section Twelve: Detailed Look at Recommended Actions

Sections 11.2 lists the various recommended actions. This Section describes these actions and activities in more detail. They are cross referenced by Organization and number. Rather than re-list and expound on each item, CRRC presents 13 categories where focus will be necessary, and suggests how all four organizations might consider these key challenges facing the Geneva community.

Economic Development Infrastructure

(CITY6, CITY7, CITY8, CITY9, CITY11, CITY13, CITY14, CITY18, CITY25, BID13)

Throughout the data gathering, interviewing, and community engagement process, there were repeated references to the need for additional processes and procedures for economic development in Geneva. Given the gap in staffing for economic development at the City, some of these processes and procedures were lost or simply lacked the staffing time to undertake or maintain. This economic development infrastructure serves as the backbone for an active, ongoing program. The following are recommended actions and activities:

1. Point person and team

There should be a single point of contact for economic development inquiries and communications. This would typically be the Director of Planning and Economic Development. While other people can and should be engaged and involved in the economic development process, it is important that they coordinate with and through the designated point person. Contact information for the point person needs to be both communicated to the community and promoted throughout the region.

One key benefit from a point person approach to organizing economic development is the ability to track and monitor prospect data. There should be a prospect database that is maintained and updated regularly to ensure that is proper follow through on leads.

Follow-up on both prospects and projects is crucial to success. A point person enables follow-up to be more systematic and less likely to fall through the cracks.

2. Inventories of Space

Ideally, there should be one central/master list of available spaces and properties for rent, sale, and/or investment. This inventory should not be seen as a MLS or Zillow listing, but rather a compilation of opportunities that can be easily and readily accessed by businesses, investors, and developers interested in doing business in Geneva. It can refer folks back to detailed data that might reside in other formats (i.e. in a MLS or Zillow listing). The key is to make it easy for prospects to access Geneva space information. Compiling all space listings into one inventory can accomplish this.

The inventory will need to be promoted to enable prospects and community members to be able to find and access the data. Community members should be able to send interested parties to the inventory. Prospects combing the local and regional sites should be able to find a link to the inventory.

The data would not be propriety, but rather available for public review and use.

A key part of an inventory project is the capacity and commitment for updating and keeping the data current. An inventory with old and expired data is not useful. It is important to adopt a plan for periodic review and updating of all entries.

Unlike a real estate multiple listing service (MLS) or a third-party online application like Zillow, the intent would be to use this database inventory for all the various space opportunities in the community—sites and buildings, rental and for sale space, office spaces and retail units. It can link back to more detailed information stored in other locations.

Marketing and adjusting space offerings at the GEDC is a significant component of this effort since the building has the capacity to grow jobs locally and its financial viability is important to the viability of various groups including City DPW, existing business tenants, and the IDA.

3. Retention and expansion (R&E) visits – industrial & large businesses

Retention & expansion (R&E) visits are a staple tool for economic development programs. Major employers represent key pillars of the local economy. It is essential to understand their status, issues and concerns, and potential plans for expansion or contraction.

Compile and/or update the list of large businesses/entities in the City, including nonprofits and schools. Start with a cut-off of 100 employees or more. If this list is too short, drop back to 75 or 50 minimum employees.

Visits should occur annually, and findings maintained in a database for follow-up or year-over-year comparisons.

Visits will inevitably generate a need for follow-up and potential troubleshooting. It is important to recognize that time will be required to respond to inquiries for information, assistance, or to help address or refer any problems or issues uncovered.

4. Retention & Expansion (R&E) visits – commercial & small businesses

While there usually are a relatively short list of major employers, the roster of small businesses can be long. It is not possible for a single staff person charged with multiple tasks to physically visit all City businesses. There will be a need to prioritize visits, conduct visits over a multi-year period, and to seek the assistance of potential helpers/volunteers. The use of volunteers can be quite impactful, but only if these helpers are seen as noncompetitive and able to adhere to strict confidentiality. Volunteers for R&E visits need to be trained as well as vetted to understand the need for confidentiality of all information obtained in the R&E process.

Just like the major employers, there will be a need to assemble and/or update a master list of small businesses. This list can be assembled from community data as well as from in-person street and building walk-by trips.

Because the small business list will be large, there will be a need to prioritize who is selected each year. Start with those businesses that you deem at risk or that might be possible candidates for expansion.

It is important to visit different businesses each year. Do not always talk to the same people. It is important to both show businesses that the community has an ongoing interest in their success and to approach people who may not be considered joiners or who may have contrary views.

Visits inevitably generate the need for follow-up and referral to address any concerns or issues uncovered. It is crucial that this follow-up occurs, even if the issues or problems are not ones that can be readily addressed.

Use of an ongoing business database will help the program track and monitor R&E visits and the necessary follow-up. The database also allows for subsequent review of past activity with a business.

5. Economic Opportunities Task Force

Geneva's current Comprehensive Plan calls for the creation of an Economic Opportunities Task Force. The intent of this task force would be to provide a forum for the City and other economic development partners to meet regularly with community representatives to ensure that economic opportunity extends to all segments of the community.

This task force should be convened by the City and charged to meet at least two to four times annually.

6. Developer roundtable

Developers are special people. They seek to convert ideas into projects, by leveraging resources, all the while generating sufficient returns on investment. They must be both dreamers and hard-nosed practitioners. Only a relatively few people have the skill and resource sets needed to be successful developers. Not surprisingly, developers have particular needs and motivations. It is important for the City to have an ongoing dialogue with the development community, to better understand their requirements and preferences and to help developers likewise understand the goals and resource capacity of the City.

A developer roundtable discussion session should be scheduled on an annual basis.

To facilitate attendance, other communities have used featured speakers and topics of particular interest to the development community, such as assessment, incentives, or information on State programs.

The idea would be to invite both local and regional developers, folks who are already investing in the community and regional entities that possibly could work in Geneva if so motivated.

7. Small business forums/networking events

To more effectively communicate with small businesses, the City should host several small business forums each year that can serve as both networking opportunities and forums to disseminate information on programs and policies of interest.

These forums could be organized in conjunction with other partners.

8. Convene regular meeting of Geneva's economic development partners

The planning process for this economic development strategy brought together representatives from the four primary community economic development partners. It is recommended that these meetings continue on a regular, periodic basis (quarterly or monthly) to facilitate strategy implementation and to focus and coordinate efforts.

9. Convene regular formal City/Hobart & William Smith Colleges meetings

In some college communities, the City and the institution of higher education arrange to formally meet on a regular and periodic basis to exchange updates and relevant information, to engage in planning discussions, and to discuss topics of mutual interest. While individuals currently perform this role on an ad hoc basis, it is recommended that there be more formal meetings that involve and engage key leadership from both parties.

10. Undertake a process to update and streamline the project planning process

To help facilitate the new and rehabbed housing creation goals in this strategy it will be important to undertake a review of the project planning process currently used by the City to determine how it can be streamlined and updated. Some interviewees expressed concern that the current process can be long and cumbersome to applicant developers.

A Recruitment Strategy

(CITY9, CITY10, CITY16, LDC5)

Attracting new businesses to Geneva is a key part of any economic development strategy. To improve the likelihood of success, there should be a process plan in place to help guide attraction efforts. The following actions summarize a recommended approach to attraction.

1. Preparing a recruitment action plan

Recruiting new businesses to the community is best achieved with the help of a plan or strategy to guide the process. Many communities rely on purely ad hoc approaches that require prospects to first approach the community. This approach limits the pool of prospects and may not help the community realize its recruitment goals.

Fundamental to the planned approach toward recruitment is the identification of the desired types and numbers of businesses. These goals will vary based upon the recruitment category- retail, office, professional, tech, industrial, and entertainment/hospitality. Attraction goals should be calibrated to reflect the inventory of available sites and spaces in the community and data illustrating which businesses are likely to succeed. The Geneva BID will have its own subset of attraction goals for Downtown.

Background research is a crucial part of goal setting. A community may want a business that simply is not suited for the size or demographics of a community. Many communities want a Target store, yet most do not have the demographic requirements that such stores demand. Research will help the community better understand what businesses are likely to “fit” and provide a first level of sales information for use in the recruitment process.

A recruitment plan should include key community sectors: industrial, tech, office, retail, hospitality, and entertainment.

Recruitment seldom works simply by sending email or text messages. Recruitment essentially asks prospects to consider a major investment in a new location/community. This is best communicated using targeted calling and visits.

2. Recruitment Database

A database to track and monitor prospects is an essential tool. Recruitment is usually a multi-year process, and it will be necessary to track prior communications. This database should reside with the Director of Planning and Economic Development.

3. Strategic focus—Food research and development

While the City and its partners should undertake their own assessment of recruitment targets and priorities, one sector stands out as a key focus of attention: food research and development and agritech.

Geneva benefits from the investment of Cornell University and the USDA in its Geneva AgriTech Campus, Tech Farm, and Center of Excellence and its efforts to engage and recruit food research and development and agritech firms. This complex represents a hub of sectoral expertise that is global in stature. It provides a strong and unique opportunity for business recruitment and development in the agritech and food research and development sectors. Cornell has already engaged with other partners in the complex, including USDA, FLCC, and a number of cutting-edge businesses.

Cornell maintains its own economic development team to develop the campus. The role for the City and other local economic development partners is to (a) thoroughly understand inherent value that has been clustered together, (b) provide the needed local support and assistance needed to grow the campus, and (c) work with the Cornell staff and regional economic development staff to identify and attract new investment and new tenants/employers to the campus.

4. Commercial/Retail Targets of Opportunity

As part of this assignment CRRC has provided the City with 2024 Claritas on Retail Market Power data. This data provided detailed supply and demand estimates for a large number of retail goods and services. It is used to illustrate opportunity gaps - where demand from the local population remains larger than the local supply. This data is used to help identify opportunities for specific types of retail, recognizing that it is only assessing the existing resident population and existing supply base. It does not account for tourism and

patronage from outside the study area. The data can be used as part of a larger, more comprehensive effort to assess retail opportunity.

The Retail Market Power data shows that the City of Geneva is significantly overrepresented by restaurants relative to its existing population. What this means for Geneva is that the many restaurants that residents enjoy are supported not just by locals, but by tourists and out-of-town visitors and patrons. This industry sector has been able to attract non-local patrons in significant numbers and has become a niche known for serving not only locals, but a regional audience as well as tourists. In this instance, a negative opportunity gap (more local supply than local demand) is not in itself a negative.

The Retail Market Power data shows that a large number of retail types show opportunity gaps for the City of Geneva. These gaps lessen and disappear as the geography studied is increased.

Within the City, an example of two retail types that show sizable opportunity gaps are sporting goods and jewelry. Estimated local demand for these retail types exceeds the current estimated local supply. This data has been provided to the Director of Planning and Economic Development for use when considering recruitment and attraction priorities and for providing additional support to local businesses.

5. New Race for the Space

Geneva has used the Race for the Space program as a tool for business attraction in the past. The concept was mentioned by multiple interviewees as one of the community's former successes. If willing landlord(s) can be identified, it makes sense to offer this business development tool again.

Race for the Space programs require a package of incentives that are compelling enough to motivate prospects to participate. In most cities that have utilized this program, the rent portion of these incentives are provided by landlords, with additional programmatic incentives offered by the public sector or other nonprofits.

It is important to decide on possible desired priority business types to target. These priority types should reflect the recruitment plan goals.

One lesson that has been shared by communities who have offered Race for the Space programs is to arrange incentives to ramp down over time, to avoid the shock of moving from a no rent situation to 100% rent the following month. Such steep changes can prove fatal to businesses. The program should work to prepare and condition businesses to transition from a subsidized state to a market state.

6. Recruitment Partners – landlords and brokers

Business recruitment typically involves multiple parties. There are frequently brokers/realtors involved in the process and property owners/landlords/property managers are always part of any transaction.

To facilitate smooth work relations with the broker community, real estate broker meetings should be held periodically (annually would work in Geneva) to discuss goals and to help parties understand how they can benefit each other.

Landlord/property owners are essential to any effort to attract new businesses. Apart from a developer's forum, the City should convene an annual meeting with landlords to discuss business attraction goals and strategies and enable property owners to be able to articulate their thoughts on the recruitment process.

7. Partners—other Economic Development organizations

Beyond brokers and property owners, there are other stakeholders and partners in a business recruitment process. In Geneva these will include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- the Ontario County economic development department and its staff;
- the Ontario County TPA (tourism planning organization) that can be useful with hospitality business attraction; and
- the regional Empire State Development office and staff, who can provide assistance with selected incentives and grants.

A Retention Strategy

(CITY5, CITY9, CITY11, CITY18)

Retention and recruitment are twin pillars of economic development. Retaining and growing existing businesses is a cost-effective method for job and tax base growth. It is usually much easier and less expensive to assist a growing local business than to attract a new business. Retention can cover many different topics and approaches. It is recommended that Geneva, at a minimum, work to incorporate retention & expansion (R&E) visits into its economic development portfolio.

1. Retention and expansion (R&E) visits – industrial & large businesses

Retention & expansion (R&E) visits are a staple tool for economic development programs. Major employers represent key pillars of the local economy. It is essential to understand their status, issues and concerns, and potential plans for expansion or contraction.

Compile and/or update the list of large businesses/entities in the City, including nonprofits and schools. Start with a cut-off of 100 employees or more. If this list is too short, drop back to 75 or 50 minimum employees.

Visits should occur annually, and findings maintained in a database for follow-up or year-over-year comparisons.

Visits will inevitably generate a need for follow-up and potential troubleshooting. It is important to recognize that time will be required to respond to inquiries for information, assistance, or to help address or refer any problems or issues uncovered.

2. Retention & Expansion (R&E) visits – commercial & small businesses

While there usually are a relatively short list of major employers, the roster of small businesses can be long. It is not possible for a single staff person charged with multiple tasks to physically visit all City businesses. There will be a need to prioritize visits, conduct visits over a multi-year period, and to seek the assistance of potential helpers/volunteers. The use of volunteers can be quite impactful, but only if these helpers are seen

as noncompetitive and able to adhere to strict confidentiality. Volunteers for R&E visits need to be trained as well as vetted to understand the need for confidentiality of all information obtained in the R&E process.

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It is important to visit different businesses each year. Do not always talk to the same people. It is important to both show businesses that the community has an ongoing interest in their success and to approach people who may not be considered joiners or who may have contrary views.

Visits inevitably generate the need for follow-up and referral to address any concerns or issues uncovered. It is crucial that this follow-up occurs, even if the issues or problems are not ones that can be readily addressed. Even if the City and its partners do not have financial incentives available for existing businesses, there are things that can be done to assist and support small businesses:

- Referrals for business planning assistance;
- Growth or expansion referral assistance;
- Assistance with day-to-day concerns in the public domain—such as parking issues, beautification, trash, and other City services;

Use of an ongoing business database will help the program track and monitor R&E visits and the necessary follow-up. The database also allows for subsequent review of past activity with a business.

3. Sustain and Grow the Current MAP grant program

The City has successfully capitalized and managed a microenterprise grant program for Geneva small businesses, called MAP. Community stakeholders report that this program has been well received by businesses and entrepreneurs. Primary capitalization comes from the CDBG program. It is recommended that this program be continued and refunded as possible.

Housing

(CITY2, CITY4, CITY14, CITY20, CITY21, CITY23, IDA2, IDA4, IDA6, IDA7, IDA8, IDA9, LDC3, LDC6, BID4, BID8)

Throughout the community outreach portion of this project, housing was consistently identified as one of the most important and highest priority topics. Three dimensions of housings were frequently mentioned.... housing stock condition, housing supply/availability, and the cost of housing for many residents. Developers likewise identified financial incentives for housing development as key actions needing attention and resources. The following recommendations are designed to help the City of Geneva better tackle its housing issues:

1. Meeting community goals

Foremost in any housing discussion should be an understanding of the housing goals of the City and community. As listed in Section 11.1, Geneva should adopt a set of aspirational goals for:

- Rehabbing/improving existing owner-occupied units;
- Rehabbing/improving existing rental units;
- Creating new housing units from existing buildings;
- Creating new housing units from new construction;
- Promoting and facilitating a higher rate of homeownership

These goals can guide the design of the program recommendations below.

2. Homeownership program

The City of Geneva has a 48 % rate of home ownership among City residents, significantly below the State average of 54%. This is common for cities relative to Towns or counties and is unlikely to grow significantly but the City can and should explore a program to facilitate and support home ownership to the greatest extent possible. Homeownership programs often include home ownership training and education as well as some form of financial incentives, such as down payment subsidy or renovation subsidy. Such a program would need to determine a goal for the number of participants and seek to assemble the necessary capitalization to support the program.

3. Large employer home ownership assistance program

Large businesses report that a significant number of their employees choose not to live in Geneva. It is recommended that a program be explored that would involve a partnership between the Geneva IDA (or some other economic development partner) and major businesses who would opt into this program. The goal would be to incentivize employees with an opportunity to purchase residential property in Geneva. Funding would come from the participating businesses as well as the community. This program would support community goals of increasing home ownership and attracting new residents, as well as business goals of retaining employees.

4. Priority housing development areas

The City should identify specific target areas where it wants to encourage new housing development. While such areas are already generally known, new programs will want to be targeted to achieve optimal neighborhood impact.

5. Housing development assistance program (interest write down; gap funding)

To encourage developers to invest in new housing in these priority areas, the Geneva IDA could create a program to provide additional financial incentives. Subsidies could be delivered in the form of an interest

write down or gap funding. To capitalize the project, it will be necessary to determine the number of new units to be created and the per unit subsidy to be applied.

6. Priority for middle housing, affordable housing and senior housing

During the community engagement process for this project, three specific types of housing were frequently cited as missing from the Geneva landscape.... middle market housing, affordable housing, and senior housing. These types were also recognized and cited in the recent Ontario County Housing Study section pertaining to Geneva. The City should consider establishing program priorities for specific types of housing, providing extra incentives for developers able to address these specific housing types.

7. Neighborhood promotion

People live in neighborhoods and Geneva has a strong collection of eleven neighborhoods. Interviewees and community members frequently referenced the former grant funded City program that created a neighborhood support program. When grant funding ended, so did the program. Yet the concept of promoting and supporting neighborhoods is important to residential living in the City. It is recommended that the community begin baby steps to again promote its neighborhoods by creating a program to provide modest grant funding to support neighborhood events and/or planning activities. The LDC has expressed interest in this topic and aspires to create an initiative to encourage at least one event each year in each of the neighborhoods. It is recommended the LDC create a small grant program to provide neighborhoods with the seed money necessary for implementing this action.

8. Geneva Housing Market Analysis

While the County recently published a countywide housing market study that included the Geneva area, the study was limited in its capacity to project housing demand in Geneva by housing type and price. A Geneva specific study would prove to be a valuable tool for convincing developers to tackle projects and for lenders to be sympathetic to project financing, it would also help funding organizations “right size” incentives to encourage development without unnecessarily giving away potential revenue.

9. Geneva Home Improvement and Repair program

A companion to the homeownership and the housing development incentive fund, this program would provide assistance to both landlords and owner occupants to make specific improvements to their properties. The goals would be to improve the condition of housing in the Geneva marketplace through strategic investments that improve the livability of existing housing. This program would require capitalization, with a significant portion likely to come from grant funding.

Economic Development Marketing

(CITY3, LDC1, LDC2, LDC4, BID1, BID12)

Marketing is an important component of economic development. At a minimum, programs need to market to prospective business prospects as well as market for tourism, to attract visitors. It is likewise important to

market within your own market, to communicate the ambitions and successes of the city and to reach out to local residents, employees, and businesses who may be candidates for further community investment.

1. Economic development marketing services

Since economic development marketing is undertaken to forward the City's economic development goals, it makes sense for it to be amended to or be affiliated in some way with the City's economic development program. This could mean hiring a staff position to undertake economic development marketing activities or contracting with a vendor/contractor/organization to provide these services.

2. Marketing to Geneva residents

Local marketing to the Geneva community can provide the following benefits:

- It enables the City to communicate both successes and program aims to the community.
- It provides an opportunity to mine the local market for business/investment prospects.
- It helps to foster pride in the community by showcasing successes.
- It helps with strengthening the image and brand of the community.

The City of Geneva should lead the effort to upgrade economic development communications and marketing.

3. Marketing to visitors

Tourism is already a key asset and significant component of the local economy. Building upon this asset requires a commitment to marketing to attract more visitors. This would require researching and selecting target external markets for both promotional campaigns. Marketing to attract visitors should also be coordinated and partnered with the County TPA.

4. Marketing to business prospects

A key component of economic development marketing is the effort to identify and reach business and investment prospects. Following a recruitment plan, such activity would include identifying business types, selecting possible external markets for prospecting, researching specific candidate businesses and entrepreneurs, and preparing necessary collateral materials, both online and printed.

5. Image marketing

Efforts to strengthen and bolster the image of Geneva locally, regionally, and nationally are part of image marketing. A strong image can translate into more business and investment opportunities for the community, as people respond and react to the strong positive image of Geneva as a place to live, work, and invest.

6. Annual Geneva Economic Development Awards Event

It is important to share successes and recognize the investments made by individuals, businesses, and developers in the advancing economic development in Geneva. An excellent and straightforward tool for accomplishing this is for the IDA to organize and host such an awards event for the community.

Creating a Volunteer Corp

(LDC3)

The community outreach process for this project identified volunteerism as a potential opportunity for a City economic program. While much economic development activity is best managed by professional staff, there are a number of opportunities for volunteers to provide assistance and support and become engaged in the community building process.

1. Volunteer database

There is a need to solicit volunteers and then capture volunteer information in a volunteer database. During the outreach portion of this project, numerous individuals offered their time and talent. There would be a need to catalog this interest and create a process for engaging people into appropriate project opportunities.

2. Identify candidate project opportunities

Concurrent to soliciting volunteers, there is a need to identify the types of projects and opportunities where volunteer help can be readily utilized.

3. Volunteer recognition

Volunteer recognition helps to ensure that people feel appreciated and willing to return for further support and help. Recognition can include certificates of appreciation, receptions and appreciation parties, and invitations of award events.

Tourism

(CITY12, LDC1, LDC7, BID1, BID7, BID9, BID10, BID11, BID12)

Tourism is a component of an overall economic development program and Geneva already has a strong tourist/visitor side to its economy. The Placer.ai data for Downtown Geneva helps to illustrate the magnitude of visitation. The area benefits from some outstanding visitor-oriented assets:

- Seneca Lake and the Geneva lakefront;
- Nearby wineries
- Nearby farms and agricultural assets
- Geneva's intact historic architecture
- Geneva's history with the underground railroad
- The presence of Hobart & William Smith Colleges

There are a number of local businesses that derive a meaningful amount of their annual revenues from visitation.

It is recommended that the community work to build upon its current base of tourism and visitation, looking to expand the number of visitors to the community.

1. Where does tourism promotion reside in Geneva

Most cities have an organization charged with overseeing tourism promotion and development. Often these entities serve as TPAs (Tourism Promotion Agencies) able to receive and disburse NYS tourism funds. No such entity exists in Geneva. The TPA serving Geneva is the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection. located in the county seat of Canandaigua serving all of Ontario County. Without a City specific local advocate organization, collaboration in tourism promotion is extremely important.

Local tourism planning requires the collaboration of the City Department of Planning and Economic Development, the Geneva Business Improvement District, the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, the Welcome Center, and local tourism businesses and nonprofits.

2. Create a tourism operating and capital plan for Geneva

While the Ontario County TPA is responsible for tourism throughout the County, it does not necessarily have a specific plan for boosting tourism within the City of Geneva. To move visitation in Geneva to a new and higher level, we suggest that a Geneva centric plan be created, focusing on strategies and action steps for increasing visits and for improving the destination as a place to visit. This plan would be developed in collaboration with the TPA and ultimately used to improve TPA impact in Geneva. Included in the plan would be a discussion about possible capital projects that could enhance Geneva as a travel destination- such as more hotels and/or another attraction or reason to extend a stay

3. Geneva Visitor Center – Geneva centric materials

One approach to expanding and prolonging visitation would be to work with the State operated Finger Lakes Welcome Center in Geneva's waterfront park to improve the displays and materials that focus on the City of Geneva and particularly the Downtown area. There is only limited information readily visible to direct visitors across the street to Geneva attractions and businesses. This is a lost opportunity to capture visitors who may only stop at the visitor center and miss the chance to explore the City and its Downtown. Such an effort will require discussions with the State and a commitment to help prepare quality, appropriate displays.

Comprehensive Plan

(CITY1)

1. A Comprehensive Plan Audit- do you need an update?

During conversations with community members, many folks referenced the City's 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan provided the community with a robust collection of goals, strategies and associated actions. Many have been successfully accomplished, while others remain yet to be tackled or completed.

In the ensuing years new conditions have emerged and it is appropriate to ask- is the community and its leadership still okay with the 2016 Plan goals? For example, one place where there appears to be ongoing contention are goals pertaining to the Lakefront.

It would be valuable for the City to review and either reaffirm its continued support for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, or if there are points of disagreement, work to amend or update the Plan. This action would help provide confidence to the community that current and future decision making aligns with a publicly adopted and supported Plan.

Surplus Properties

(CITY4)

1. Ensure that economic development goals help drive disposition decisions

The City owned surplus properties represent an impressive and powerful asset that the City can utilize to help advance its economic development goals, if the decision-making process is designed to include economic development considerations. These would include such items as housing development and neighborhood strengthening as well as growing the tax base.

2. Implement the City's surplus property disposition plan

First steps have begun with this item in 2024. It is important to continue this work, identifying properties to be offered for sale, determining a framework for obtaining bids and evaluating offers, and making sure economic development goals are part of the evaluation framework.

Downtown

(CITY2, CITY16, CITY20, LDC5, LDC7, BID1, BID2, BID3, BID4, BID5, BID6, BID7, BID8, BID9, BID10, BID11, BID12, BID13))

Downtown Geneva serves as a commercial hub for the City. Located adjacent to the lakefront, the downtown core is characterized by its well-preserved historic architecture and its eclectic collection of goods and services. It has a robust food and beverage sector, a variety of retail shops, and remains a center of government, banking, professional services, and arts.

The downtown area is managed and represented by the Geneva Business Improvement District, an organization that is charged with ongoing management and revitalization. While the Geneva BID has its own work plan, there are several items specific to downtown that featured in this citywide economic development strategy.

1. Vacancy reduction action plan

Vacancies cast a disproportionate negative image on the commercial district and the community in general. To both residents and visitors, they are perceived as weaknesses in the community. They diminish the overall image of the downtown district. Vacancies occur for many reasons. Some pertain to the prevailing economic climate. Some were the result of casualties from the COVID pandemic. Some reflect the individual issues with particular businesses. Some may be attributable to actions or inactions of the landlord. Regardless of the

reason, there is an imperative to reduce the number of existing vacancies and replace the empty units with contributing commercial/retail businesses.

It is recommended that the BID undertake a planning process to (a) identify the existing vacancies in the district, (b) assess the reasons for each vacancy, (c) devise possible remedies as necessary, (d) determine the preferred, desired use for each vacant unit/property and (e) create an action plan for filling spaces by marketing and promoting the availability of units to desired prospects. This activity should be undertaken in partnership with the City.

2. Building Renovation Task Force

Emerging from the public input process for this economic development strategy was an idea to convene a working group of downtown and city leaders to champion two specific themes: downtown building renovation and downtown residential development. The downtown working group should examine the barriers and constraints to building rehabilitation and propose remedies to overcome such challenges.

3. Downtown residential development

Along with building renovation, the working group should also use the same methodology to examine downtown residential development. What are the current constraints and barriers to undertaking more urban residential development and what are proposed remedies to address barriers and challenges?

Community amenities

(CITY15, CITY19, CITY22, CITY23)

The character of a community is often defined by the amenities made available to its residents and visitors. Geneva already has a strong collection of community amenities. During the interviewing and community engagement for this project, several additional ideas emerged. All pertain to existing efforts already underway. Completed, they will each make an impact on the economic vitality of the community.

1. Complete the Greenway Projects

The BOA/ North End Greenway project is a community support effort to use public and railroad right of way to create a greenway park and trail that bisects the community and connects to the waterfront. Both the working group and community members participating in the engagement process endorsed the idea of prioritizing the completion of this amenity. This effort will require additional, most likely State grant funding. The value of the greenway to the wellbeing of Geneva's neighborhoods needs to be highlighted. along with the ability to use the greenway as both a tool for transportation within the City as well as another asset to share with visitors and guests.

The Castle Creek Greenway project was identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a corridor to consider creek daylighting and stormwater improvements to combat flooding, provide a public amenity and improve the neighborhood. This project would require the purchase of significant amounts of privately held land but would greatly improve the resilience of surrounding properties. Funding for this has not been identified but should be a key priority.

2. Hobart & William Smith facility utilization

Hobart & William Smith Colleges have an outstanding campus and individual building facilities. The College has a tradition and track record of working with the community and collaborating on many fronts. It is possible to build upon this already solid relationship to devise a utilization plan that could help the community to further make use of the facilities and talents of the institution. It is suggested that an ad hoc group of college and community leaders meet to assess the opportunities and challenges and propose a plan first to the College and then to the community for collaboration and improved opportunities for utilization/collaboration. This effort could also be overseen by the proposed regular City/Hobart & William Smith working planning meetings suggested earlier.

3. Geneva school district support

The strength of a community often resides in its public K-12 school system. A school system provides the future citizens, workers, and leaders of a community and its impact on the local economy can be significant. Residential life is often defined around schools. People choose neighborhoods and communities based on the reputation of schools.

The Geneva City School District has a long tradition of service to the residents and families of Geneva. Over the past decade there have been concerns raised about performance metrics, although they have improved in recent years. The district reflects changes in demographics in the community. According to Superintendent Dr. Bo Wright, 72% of students are considered economically disadvantaged. The District has partnered with Hobart & William Smith Colleges, the City, and other community stakeholders on a collective impact model branded as Geneva 2030, designed to strengthen the district and bring the collective resources of the community to bear on the district. The City is an active participant in the Geneva 2030 process.

It is recommended that the City continue its support of the school district and urge other community stakeholders, including the business community, to likewise provide their own support. The Geneva 2030 program appears to be a solid and reputable model for engagement and improvement.

Densification

(IDA4, IDA9)

In a City like Geneva, it can be challenging to identify areas where densification can be an effective tool for economic and residential growth. Existing neighborhoods have capacity for small-scale infill but larger projects are often contentious which makes development risky. Corridors with significant existing traffic can be opportunities for strategic growth that comes with less difficulty.

One opportunity for densification is in the west side of Geneva along Route 5/20, particularly in the area around the Town & Country Plaza Site. Placer.ai data shows that this Plaza has historically been one of the community's stronger destinations. Recent retail vacancies, including the loss of the cinema, have undoubtedly changed the dynamics of the Plaza.

The area has been rezoned to accommodate greater density. While discussions need to occur with the ownership of the Plaza property regarding future plans, the idea of redeveloping portions of the Route 5/20 corridor to accommodate denser development is strong and deserves further planning.

Density is beneficial in multiple ways. It enables developers and property owners to maximize the value of their properties by allowing for larger and taller structures. It allows for a greater number of housing units to be built in a smaller area. It can facilitate pedestrianization, by clustering goods and services in a small, tight area. It can increase assessed valuation and generate greater tax revenues. The City has a limited supply of land and must think strategically about maximizing the value per acre of taxable land where development is possible.

1. Create a conceptual plan for a densified Route 5/20 corridor

Often, new project ideas need the power of a visual conceptual plan to illustrate the possible alternative to the current land utilization. A conceptual visual plan for this area could be helpful in securing investment and development interest, and in motivating a reluctant or dispassionate ownership.

Major projects

(CITY2, CITY20, CITY22, CITY23, IDA1, IDA4, IDA5, IDA9)

Major projects are large development-oriented efforts that typically will require public private partnerships and/or extensively private investment to implement. They are high profile development projects that will markedly change the City landscape and could materially expand the tax base of the community.

1. Housing Projects

Taken collectively, the creation of 375 units of new or rehabbed housing over 5 years can be considered a major project undertaking. While each project may range in size, the cumulative cost for adding 375 units of housing is likely to exceed \$75 million in private investment. To meet this goal, there is a need for the public sector to provide support to projects in the form of stepped tax abatement for larger projects and more direct financial assistance for both larger and smaller projects.

2. Tax revenue goals

A common refrain from community engagement has been the desire for Geneva to solicit and support projects that will enhance and improve the tax revenue collections of the City and School District. This is a useful lens for evaluating municipal support of projects and should be regularly used and reported to the community.

3. OEO site

Owned by the City, the OEO site represents the largest existing urban redevelopment opportunity at this time. The OEO site resides within the greater downtown footprint and has views of the lakefront. The City has been considering the creation of an RFQ for soliciting private development interest for this site. It is recommended that this solicitation process move forward.

A solicitation RFP or RFQ should include any goal expectations and community benefit requirements. These expectations should refer to growing tax revenues as well as housing unit goals. It will be important to remember that certain goals and expectations may affect likely project tax revenue contributions and or sale price.

4. The Route 5/20 and Town & Country Plaza site

It is recommended that the City, through its IDA, lead a planning effort to conceptualize the redevelopment of this area under new denser zoning. Once a concept plan has been completed, it is also recommended that the City and IDA pursue opportunities to redevelop the area into a denser mixed-use environment. The City/IDA should serve as a project facilitator, working with the property owner, Hobart & William Smith Colleges and other key stakeholder groups. Unlike the OEO site, this property remains in private ownership so the City will be facilitating rather than defining any project(s).

5. Promote and facilitate mixed-use and/or housing development projects for both Middle and Exchange Streets

Both Middle and Exchange Street sites offer the opportunity for new and expanded housing opportunities, as well as possible ground floor commercial space. The City and IDA should actively work to facilitate strong projects for these locations, utilizing tax incentives as well as the gap filling funding assistance recommended in this strategy.

6. Prepare more shovel-ready sites and properties for business and investor development

This is a challenging recommendation - to prepare more shovel ready locations for both businesses and developers. Sites without the requisite infrastructure will be challenging to market and will be less competitive than locations in other communities that are already outfitted as shovel ready. Working with the County economic development team, Geneva should identify possible candidate locations for upgrades and seek funding to help elevate these priority locations to shovel ready.

7. Continue efforts to redevelop and renovate the American Can/GEDC complex

The Geneva IDA has taken a leadership role in both reusing portions of this complex as well as commissioning a study to better understand the capital needs of the building. The American Can company complex has a large amount of space that could be more effectively utilized for economic advancement. It is recommended that the IDA continue its efforts and use the findings from the study to help shape a strategy for building reuse with a multi-track approach starting with some quick and inexpensive adjustments to raise the profile of the building and proceeding to the major work that needs to be done for the long-term viability of the building

Section Thirteen: Engaging Other Partners

This economic development strategy project was designed to provide insight and a game plan to four key community economic development entities: the City of Geneva (through its Department of Planning & Economic Development), the Geneva IDA, the Geneva LDC, and the Geneva BID. While these entities are the organizations most likely to be engaged and involved in the implementation of an economic development program, there are other entities and stakeholders who also need to be considered and engaged.

Hobart & William Smith Colleges

Hobart & William Smith Colleges represents a City major land owner, employer, and community asset. Their decision making can materially impact the local economy and their facilities and operations are already responsible for significant economic community benefit. When the pandemic closed the campus, the impact on the community was notable.

While this strategy does not recommend any major college initiatives, it does recommend that the City/community and the Colleges meet regularly on a formal basis to share, communicate, and plan. The strategy also recommends that an ad hoc committee be created to facilitate broader use of College facilities and talent for community benefit.

Finger Lakes Community College—Geneva Branch

While Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC) is headquartered in Canandaigua, it has several branch facilities located throughout its service area, including Geneva. Community Colleges can be important economic development partners. They tend to be particularly nimble at offering micro credentials or targeted training for industry and sectors. FLCC itself currently offers such training and educational modules as emergency medical services (EMS), nursing assistants, advanced manufacturing, welding, viticulture, cloud computing, advanced technology, cybersecurity, business operations, hospitality, and information technology. Connecting FLCC with employers with specialized employee needs is an important service that the community can facilitate.

According to FLCC President Dr. Robert Nye, the FLCC Geneva Center has capacity for additional community utilization. The School currently only uses 30-40% of the space, leaving an underutilized community asset. They are interested in renting space and teaming with community partners.

County Tourism—Finger Lakes Visitor Connection

As discussed, tourism promotion and marketing in Geneva relies on Ontario County's Tourism Promotion Agency (TPA) - the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection. This organization is charged with the planning and promotion of tourism throughout the County and is the recipient of State of NY tourism funds.

Within Geneva, there is no specific plan for tourism development or promotion. This strategy recommends such a plan be produced in consort with the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection and be integrated into the overall County tourism initiatives. This strategy also calls for improved communications and liaison with the TPA.

Ontario County Economic Development

At the county level, Ontario County operates an economic development program and is charged with administering the County IDA, a County LDC, and a County economic development corporation charged with lending. County economic development staff are frequent visitors to Geneva and seek to work closely with local officials. One of the County's program priorities is industrial recruitment and attraction. They are an important partner in efforts to identify and recruit business businesses. Their strategic plan identifies food and agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and supportive healthcare as priority businesses. The County utilizes a consultant to conduct its retention & expansion (R&E) visits. The County also participates in the nine county Greater Rochester Economic Development organization.

It is important that the City continue its strong affiliation and communications with the Ontario County Economic Development program and utilize its resources to support and bolster local efforts.

The Large Employers of Geneva

Geneva has a collection of large employers, primarily industrial, institutional, financial, medical, and hospitality. These are economic development partners in the community and should be periodically visited as part of a local R&E visitation program. A number of these employers have noted the challenges of recruiting and retaining employees. This strategy also recommends that a local housing incentive program be explored with this group of employers.

Key Community Housing Nonprofits

Nonprofit organizations can be significant participants in the housing development process, typically producing badly needed affordable and workforce housing. In Geneva there is no single dominant housing nonprofit organization but there are several local entities and several regional entities that can be engaged in the community. Habitat for Humanity and Finger Lakes Community Action are examples of local nonprofits seeking to engage in housing development and improvement in the City of Geneva. Lakeview Health Service is a Geneva headquartered service and housing provider that owns housing here and throughout the region. At the regional level, Rochester based Pathstone is an example of a housing nonprofit capable of undertaking projects in the community.

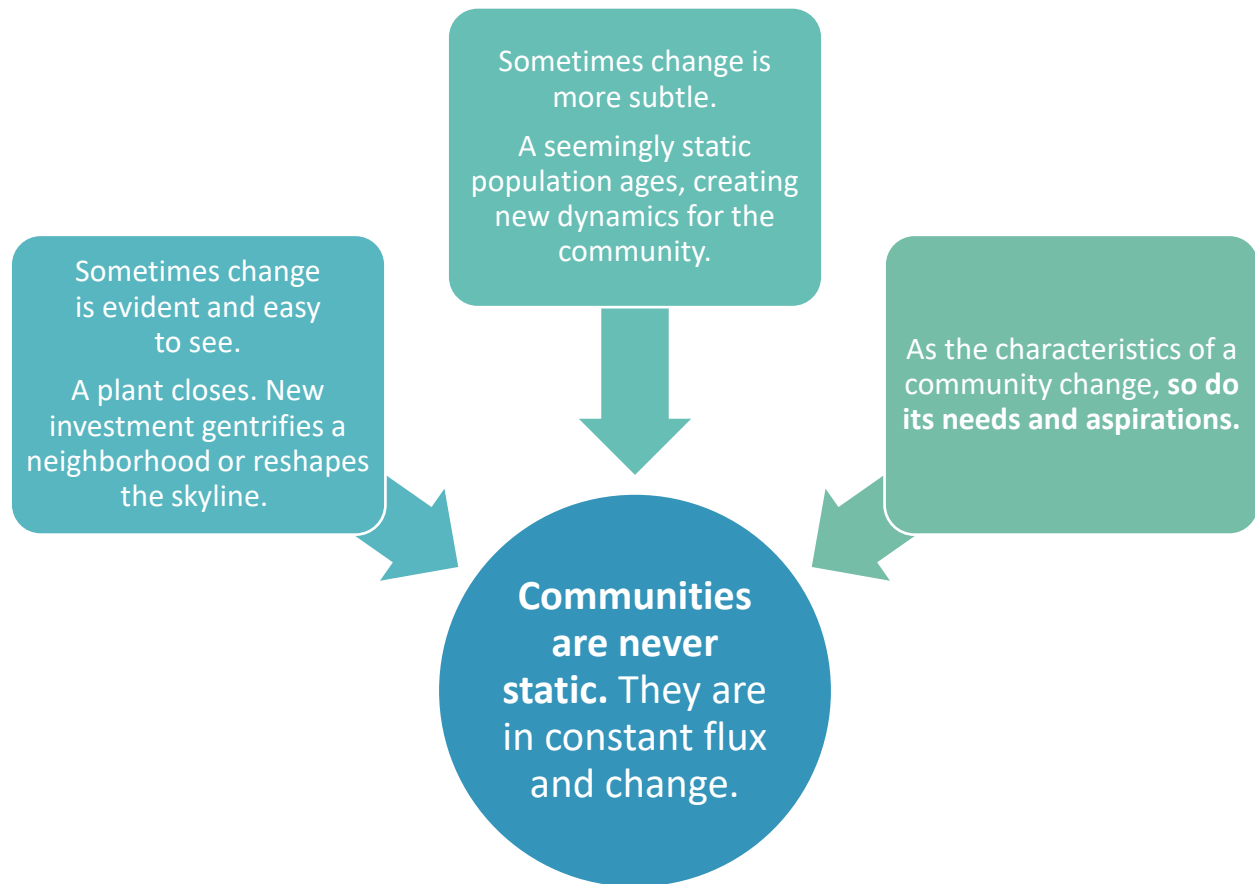
It is important for the City to maintain ongoing dialogue with these various nonprofits, seeking to assist when appropriate and possible.

Ongoing Community Engagement

The community and general public remains another partner that should be regularly engaged. Economic development tends to proceed more smoothly when the public has an informed understanding of the goals and strategies of the community. It is a best practice to periodically engage the community to hear and understand their evolving issues and desires, and to communicate economic development goals and activities.

Section Fourteen: The Future of Geneva—An Economic Development Perspective

There are several characteristics attributable to all communities that are important to consider as the City of Geneva and its partners implement their economic development agenda:



Economic development seeks to address these needs, creating the wealth, security, and stability a community needs to meet its ever-evolving needs and desires.

Post World War II the emphasis of economic development tended to be driven primarily by job creation and growth. Success and growth were perceived as synonymous and the key to growth was job creation.

This approach to economic development has shifted in recent decades. While job creation remains an important component of an economic development strategy, there is a new recognition that economic development is more akin to community betterment. Rather than indiscriminately growing a community, there is a desire to improve livability and to spread economic prosperity and opportunity to all residents. It is in this context that this Geneva Economic Development Strategy has been crafted.

A Strategy of the Community

Rather than prescribe the best consultant driven formula for growth, this project was designed to help the Geneva community wrestle with the fundamental question- what constitutes community betterment for Geneva? Many of the recommendations in this strategy are extracted from the thoughts and aspirations of the community. They reflect a local definition of success and community betterment.

The timeline for this strategy is one to five years. Many economic development initiatives will take place over longer intervals of time. A primary charge of this project was to provide a game plan for day one; to prioritize the immediate and short-term work that should be tackled by the City and its partners to advance economic prosperity. While short term actions predominate, there are longer term initiatives as well.

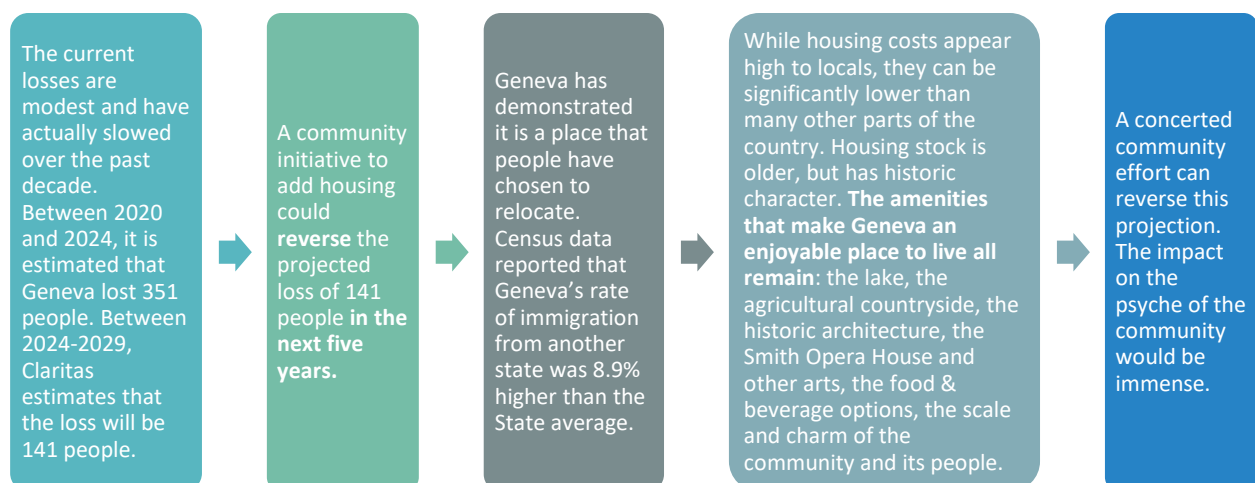
It will be important to periodically recalibrate the economic development strategy to reflect the inevitable change that will occur in the community. For example, many communities have discovered that some of their pre-COVID strategies need to be reshaped to reflect a post-COVID world. Pre-COVID, remote work was typically considered a novelty and exceptional. Today, remote work has new meaning and significance that could positively impact communities like Geneva.

Observations about the Economic Future of Geneva

The following are observations made during the course of this four-plus month strategy creation process.

Reversing the Population Drain is Possible

Many of the people interviewed for the project as well as people who participated in the public forums were able to articulate the demographic trajectory of Geneva over the past 50 years.... a community that reached its population zenith in the mid- to late twentieth century and thereafter has experienced a slow but steady population decline that has also reduced available resources and stressed local government's ability to provide services. According to projections from Claritas, a national demographic data analytics firm, Geneva is likely to still experience population loss in 2029, five years into the future. Based on the research and work preparing this strategy, it is possible to speculate that Geneva does not need to continue in its population decline. How could this trend change?



Communications and Image Building—Key Components of a Strategy

The Geneva community could benefit from a dose of positivity. The demographic trends of the past several decades can be deflating. It is possible to become grounded in a scenario that only features closures, losses of resources, resultant higher taxes, and a losing city/suburb competition. To the external world, Geneva remains an interesting and exciting place that has a host of community amenities and has further engaged in a number of creative and innovative projects and programs. Its external image is notably stronger than its internal, self-defined image.

Self-image is important to economic development. Investment decisions are not always driven 100% by data; they frequently reflect and are influenced by perception and image.

Genevans can choose to view their community from different angles. How they arrive at their particular angle often depends on the information they have at their disposal. Communicating economic development information to the community is an important task. It helps shape a community's view of itself. In recent years, the flow of information has slowed. There is a need to share successes and aspirations with the community. This action will help improve the self-image of the community and contribute to image building.

There is much to share. For example, the successes of the Cornell Agri-Tech campus are global in scope and deserve to be better understood and appreciated. The task of image building and communicating to the community is not trivial or minor. It is a fundamental part of sustaining a healthy community.

Do not overlook basic economic development processes

Economic development is more than tackling projects. It is an ongoing process for continually improving the health and vitality of a community, through attracting investment and ensuring that community betterment applies to all segments of the population. For the process to proceed smoothly and efficiently, there is a need for processes to be built and maintained with steady ongoing effort and investment.

This strategy describes a number of inexpensive yet important processes that can materially improve the efficiency and capacity of the City and its partners to undertake an ambitious economic development agenda. When these processes are in place, recruitment and retention becomes less cumbersome.

It is easy to dismiss these actions as minor and less significant than a major project. Yet, collectively they represent a powerful tool that will help the community yield dividends over time.

Housing is important to Geneva

Housing is a topic of great community interest. In Geneva, people are concerned about housing for several reasons:

- It is perceived to be expensive, particularly relative to household income.
- Geneva's existing housing is notably older than the surrounding County. Older housing is generally correlated with housing in need of updating or improvements. In Geneva, both rental and owner-occupied housing have deficiencies that need attention.

- There has been little new housing built in recent decades. Households seeking newer housing options are therefore less likely to find a desired unit in Geneva.
- Certain housing types are particularly under-represented. These include middle market housing, affordable housing, and senior housing.

This strategy identifies goals for the creation of new and rehabbed housing units over the coming years. Housing development can be challenging in today's economy. Construction costs are high. Lead times are long. Financing and funding can be problematic. The City does not build housing; the private and nonprofit sectors build housing. The City can facilitate housing development by the way it can streamline and fast-track permits and reviews, and by signaling investment in the importance of housing that can help developers secure state and federal funds for affordable projects. The City can help troubleshoot projects, working with developers to find creative solutions to the inevitable hurdles that projects encounter.

Downtown Geneva—Building upon Strengths

Downtown Geneva is the heart and core of the Geneva community. The Downtown district has an impressive collection of historic properties, and several signature destinations, such as the Smith Opera House and the reactivated Linden Street. Like a number of other upstate New York communities, Geneva's downtown is disproportionately large relative to its population. The Downtown was built for another era and its size provides both opportunity and challenge.

Downtown management and revitalization efforts in Geneva are led by the Geneva Business Improvement District (BID), which has been actively engaged in efforts to strengthen the central business district since 1986.

The downtown area has some specific strengths and assets it can further build around:

- the architectural character of many downtown properties, which begs for more heritage sign interpretation. Such an effort could itself become a visitor attraction.
- the populating of downtown buildings with additional housing. Geneva has the character and appeal to attract a segment of the population who thrive in an urban lifestyle.
- further expanding downtown as a center for the arts.
- an expansion of the already solid downtown food and beverage sector.
- tapping into the visitor traffic that stops at the State visitor center that may not now venture across Route 5/20 into the heart of downtown.

Engagement and volunteers—Building and Stretching Capacity

There appears to be a group of Genevans interested in participating in a community rebuilding process. While the magnitude and ambitions of such a group will need to be better defined, it is possible to utilize volunteers to expand and stretch the capacity of the City and its partners to undertake certain community economic development activities.

The opportunities for engaging interested volunteers could include such activities as:

- hospitality ambassadors
- background researchers for projects such as walking tours
- neighborhood leaders to organize events and activities to strength neighborhoods
- event volunteers

Some actions and tasks are not well suited for volunteers and need to rely on staff and trained elected officials. But the menu of opportunities is deep and the staff capacity of the City is only so large.

Growing the tax base

One of the most important outcomes of a successful economic development program is its ability to help grow the community tax base. A larger tax base enables a greater ability to spread the tax levy over more ratepayers, resulting in a larger pool of revenue and/or a better ability to moderate and manage the tax rate.

Governments typically manage their budgets in one of three ways. They can reduce services in an effort to control or manage the tax rate. They can seek external funds from State, Federal, or other grant sources to supplement local tax collections. Or, they can attempt to grow the tax base. Economic development is generally charged with working to achieve the latter- growing the tax base.

Both new and improved buildings typically generate added assessment valuation, which can translate into new revenue or a lower tax rate for all. Certain businesses also provide sales tax, with a portion reverting back to the municipality. New business and industry also participate in water, sewer, and other services provided by the City, at some level reducing the net cost to ratepayers.

Because taxes are a significant community concern, it becomes important to invest in economic development programming.

Densification can make a difference

Densification throughout the city is a goal for increasing property values and reducing displacement that comes from a limited housing supply. In existing neighborhoods this could take the form of residents adding ADUs to existing lots and redeveloping abandoned homes, but the larger shifts in density are most likely to be successful along major corridors identified in the Comprehensive Plan particularly Castle St., Middle St., Exchange St., Hamilton/5&20 in addition to downtown opportunity sites. The density of land use is closely tied to the value per acre, and the City must make the most of the limited land available in providing housing and generating tax base.

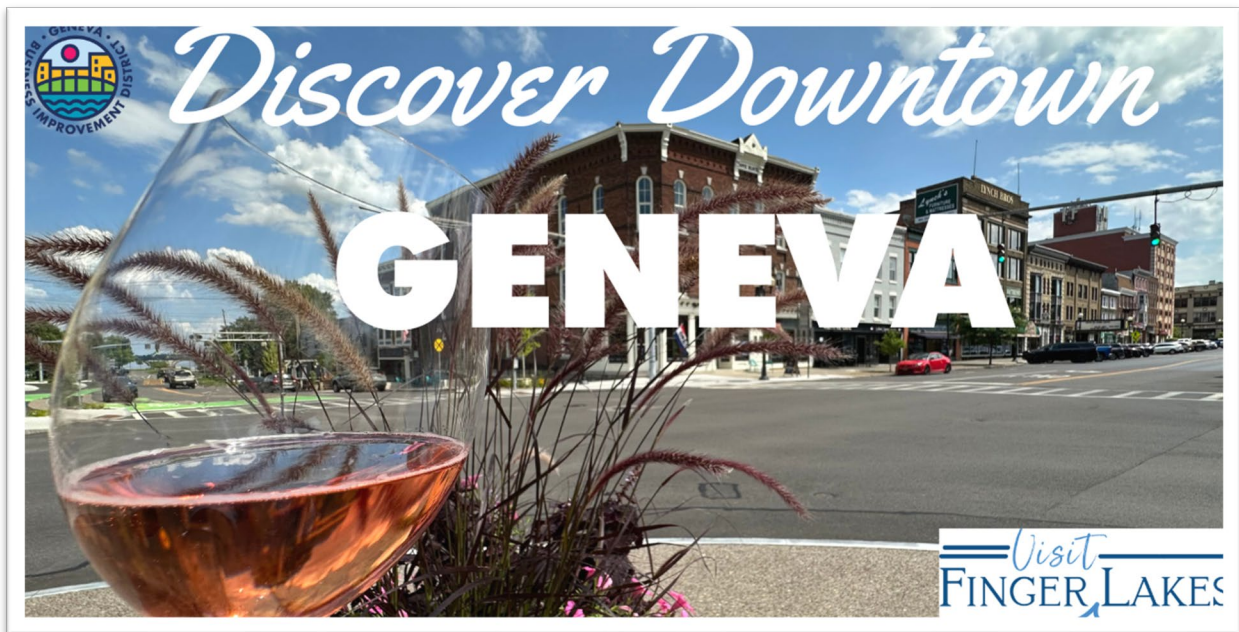
The westside Route 5/20 corridor, including the currently stressed Town & Country Plaza represents one potential area of Geneva where significant densification could fit into the fabric of the neighborhood and provide opportunity for success. It is a challenging undertaking to redevelop a significant area at another density level. The Plaza area is the size of the entire historic Downtown. It would be a long-term process that will only invoke change over a period of many years. But the eventual return could be important to the City in terms of a new densified district and its ability to provide more pedestrian opportunities in an otherwise

vehicular location, and as a companion to the existing investment of Hobart & William Smith Colleges in the vicinity.

Final Thought

Every city in the United States has its own list of economic development challenges to face and overcome. **Geneva is not alone.**

But, unlike some communities, Geneva has a strong opportunity to utilize its collection of community assets to be successful in mastering its economic development goals and needs. This strategy will help move the City and its partners in that direction of achievement and success.



Geneva Economic Development Implementation Strategy: Appendices Final Report

Prepared for

The City of Geneva Department
of Planning & Economic Development

and its partners

The Geneva Industrial Development Authority
The Geneva Local Development Corporation
The Downtown Geneva Business Improvement District

Prepared by

Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants (CRRC)

October 16, 2024

Appendices

1. Claritas 2024 Geneva Data – Power Point Summary
2. Power Point Presentation to June 13, 2024 public input forum
3. Geneva Community Economic Development Survey Questionnaire
4. Community Survey Results—Power Point Presentation of Jul 12, 2024
5. Community Input Forum (6/13/24)—Summary of Results
6. Working Group Workshop #1- Summary of Results
7. Working Group Workshop #2 Presentation – Prioritization and Ranking of Action Tasks
8. Workshop #3—Categorized Tasks/Items
9. Economic Development Action Item Template
10. Geneva Economic Development Organizations & Task Matrix

Economic Development Strategy: Data Update

Prepared by

Gary Ferguson

Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants

July 12, 2024

Census Update Data

- Sourced from Claritas/Environics, 2024
- 2024 estimates prepared from 2020 Census data and Census updates
- Comparative data sets
 - City of Geneva
 - Ontario County
 - 25-minute drive time from Downtown Geneva (City Hall)

Population

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>2010 Census</u>	13,253	107,934	62,218
• <u>2020 Census</u>	12,812 (-3.33%)	112,458 (4.19%)	61,214 (-4.68%)
• <u>2024 Estimate</u>	12,502 (-2.42%)	113,191 (0.65%)	59,943 (-2.08%)
• <u>2029 Projection</u>	12,361 (-1.13%)	114,886 (1.50%)	58,985 (-1.60%)
	Decrease	Increase	Decrease

Households

	City		County		25-minute drive
• <u>2010 Census</u>	4,934		43,019		24,884
• <u>2020 Census</u>	5,026	(1.86%)	46,693	(8.54%)	24,979 (0.38%)
• <u>2024 Estimate</u>	5,030	(0.08%)	47,681	(2.12%)	24,827 (-0.61%)
• <u>2029 Projection</u>	5,033	(0.06%)	48,879	(2.51%)	24,626 (-0.81%)
	Increase		Increase		Increase
	Flat				Slight Decrease

Family Households

	City		County		25-minute drive
• <u>2010 Census</u>	2,751		28,380		15,883
• <u>2020 Census</u>	2,563	(-6.83%)	29,397	(3.58%)	15,010 (-5.50%)
• <u>2024 Estimate</u>	2,797	(9.13%)	31,451	(6.99%)	15,746 (4.90%)
• <u>2029 Projection</u>	2,794	(-0.11%)	32,215	(2.43%)	15,599 (-0.93%)
	Decrease		Increase		Decrease
	Increase				Increase
	Flat				Decrease

Race/Ethnicity

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>White</u>	8,657 (69.25%)	97,781 (86.39%)	50,212 (83.77%)
• <u>Black</u>	1,147 (9.18%)	3,067 (2.71%)	2,560 (4.27%)
• <u>Asian</u>	241 (1.93%)	1,438 (1.27%)	558 (0.93%)
• <u>Some Other Race</u>	1,145 (9.16%)	2,925 (2.58%)	2,131 (3.56%)
• <u>Two or More Races</u>	1,282 (10.25%)	7,688 (6.79%)	4,255 (7.10%)
• <u>Hispanic/Latino</u>	2,312 (18.49)	6,884 (6.08%)	4,933 (8.23%)
• <u>Puerto Rican origin</u>	1,495 (64.66%)	3,621 (52.60%)	3,074 (62.31%)
• <u>Speak Spanish at home</u>	907 (7.61%)	3,131 (2.90%)	1,999 (3.51%)

2024 Population by Sex

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Male</u>	5,978 (47.82%)	55,273 (48.83%)	29,490 (49.20%)
• <u>Female</u>	6,524 (52.18%)	57,918 (51.17%)	30,453 (50.80%)

2024 Population by Age

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Median Age</u>	33.77	44.80	41.69
• <u>Median Age, Male</u>	31.64	43.24	39.86
• <u>Median Age, Female</u>	35.89	46.37	43.35
• <u>Average Age</u>	38.40	43.90	42.24
• <u>Average Age, Male</u>	37.20	42.70	41.08
• <u>Average Age, Female</u>	39.50	44.90	43.33

2024 Households, by Type & Size

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Married Couple</u>	1,476 (29.34%)	22,688 (47.58%)	10,678 (43.01%)
• <u>Female Householder</u>	1,725 (34.29%)	11,979 (25.12%)	6,464 (26.04%)
• <u>Male Householder</u>	1,449 (28.81%)	8,120 (17.03%)	5,257 (23.04%)
• <u>Est. Ave. HH Size</u>	2.12	2.29	2.30

Vehicles per Household

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>No Vehicles</u>	15.63%	7.24%	10.55%
• <u>1 Vehicle</u>	48.61%	36.08%	38.52%
• <u>2 Vehicles</u>	27.69%	39.56%	35.38%
• <u>3 Vehicles</u>	6.70%	12.00%	11.50%
• 4 Vehicles	1.17%	3.77%	2.48%
• 5+ Vehicles	0.20%	1.34%	1.56%
• Est. Ave. Number	1.30	1.70	1.63

Est. Housing Units by Units in Structure

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>1 Unit Detached</u>	55.60%	65.62%	68.25%
• <u>1 Unit Attached</u>	1.69%	5.57%	1.71%
• <u>2 Units</u>	11.64%	4.12%	7.42%
• <u>3 to 4 Units</u>	10.61%	4.94%	4.78%
• <u>5 to 19 Units</u>	13.45%	7.72%	5.87%
• <u>20 to 49 Units</u>	4.03%	1.78%	1.90%
• <u>50+ Units</u>	2.86%	3.17%	1.37%
• <u>Mobile Home/Trailer</u>	0.12%	7.07%	8.67%

Age of Housing Stock

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Built 2020 or Later</u>	33 (0.59%)	1,191 (2.22%)	194 (0.69%)
• <u>Built 2010 to 2019</u>	113 (2.01%)	3,994 (7.43%)	839 (3.00%)
• <u>Built 2000 to 2009</u>	59 (1.05%)	6,429 (11.96%)	1,702 (6.09%)
• <u>Built 1990 to 1999</u>	195 (3.46%)	5,865 (10.91%)	2,148 (7.68%)
• Built 1980 to 1989	115 (2.04%)	6,337 (11.79%)	2,213 (7.91%)
• Built 1970 to 1979	313 (5.56%)	6,695 (12.46%)	2,650 (9.48%)
• Built 1960 to 1969	506 (8.99%)	3,913 (7.11%)	2,281 (8.16%)
• Built 1950 to 1959	671 (11.92%)	3,821 (7.11%)	2,909 (10.40%)
• Built 1940 to 1949	286 (5.08%)	1,626 (3.03%)	1,446 (5.17%)
• Built 1939 or Earlier	3,338 (59.30%)	13,872 (25.81%)	11,579 (41.41%)
• Est. Median Year Built	1939.65	1975.64	1953.57

Educational Attainment (25+ Age)

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Less than 9th Grade</u>	4.88%	2.32%	4.37%
• <u>Some High School</u>	5.49%	4.10%	6.25%
• <u>High School Grad/GED</u>	26.82%	25.68%	32.96%
• <u>Some College, No Degree</u>	16.57%	16.06%	17.63%
• <u>Associates Degree</u>	12.45%	12.51%	13.50%
• <u>Bachelor's Degree</u>	19.64%	20.59%	14.45%
• <u>Masters Degree</u>	8.87%	14.37%	7.87%
• <u>Professional Degree</u>	1.29%	2.59%	1.45%
• <u>Doctorate Degree</u>	3.98%	1.76%	1.52%

2024 Household Income

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Est. Ave. HH Income</u>	\$82,232	\$109,172	\$89,103
• Est Median HH Income	\$65,349	\$81,123	\$70,996
• White Alone	\$69,940	\$82,784	\$73,890
• Black/African Amer. Alone	\$52,053	\$55,662	\$53,026
• Asian Alone	\$102,890	\$125,851	\$84,376
• Hispanic/Latino	\$41,985	\$57,341	\$46,929
• Not Hispanic/Latino	\$72,622	\$82,279	\$72,602

2024 Poverty Rates

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Families at/above poverty</u>	2,512 (90.13%)	29,939 (95.19%)	14,590 (92.66%)
• <u>Families below poverty</u>	276 (9.87%)	1,512 (4.81%)	1,156 (7.34%)
• <u>Families below poverty with children</u>	186 (6.65%)	881 (2.80%)	805 (5.11%)

Employment (16+)

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>White Collar</u>	61.03%	68.74%	57.99%
• <u>Blue Collar</u>	12.81%	15.62%	21.99%
• <u>Service/Farming</u>	26.16%	15.64%	20.02%

2024 Travel Time to Work (16+)

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Less than 15 Minutes</u>	52.86%	33.42%	43.15%
• <u>15-29 Minutes</u>	32.07%	35.49%	35.56%
• <u>30-44 Minutes</u>	5.39%	20.71%	10.73%
• <u>45-59 Minutes</u>	4.54%	5.99%	5.24%
• <u>60 or More Minutes</u>	5.14%	4.38%	5.32%
• Est. Ave. Travel Time to work (minutes)	20	25	22

Employment: Selected Class & Occupation

	City	County	25-minute drive
• <u>Est. Civ. Employed</u>	6,228	57,119	29,313
• For-Profit Private	52.17%	57.66%	58.19%
• Non-Profit Private	26.56%	14.67%	16.38%
• Local Govt	8.25%	10.48%	9.16%
• Self-Employed	7.48%	11.12%	9.26%
• Education/Training/Library	10.90%	8.56%	7.70%
• Healthcare Practitioner/Tech	5.62%	8.59%	6.49%
• Healthcare Support	6.33%	2.86%	4.13%
• Management	7.50%	11.89%	10.25%
• Office/Admin. Support	12.57%	11.39%	12.37%
• Production	3.63%	5.25%	6.40%
• Sales Related	9.28%	10.86%	8.57%



Economic Development

June 4, 2018



What is
Economic
Development?

Quality of Life





How does it
work?

- **Have a clear direction**
- **Work steadily – many small wins over a long time period**
- **Build partnerships and coalitions**



How it doesn't
work?

- **Run in a new direction with every news cycle, election, development offer**
- **Rely on one big project, silver bullet, etc.**
- **Build partnerships and coalitions**



Plans, Plans,
Plans

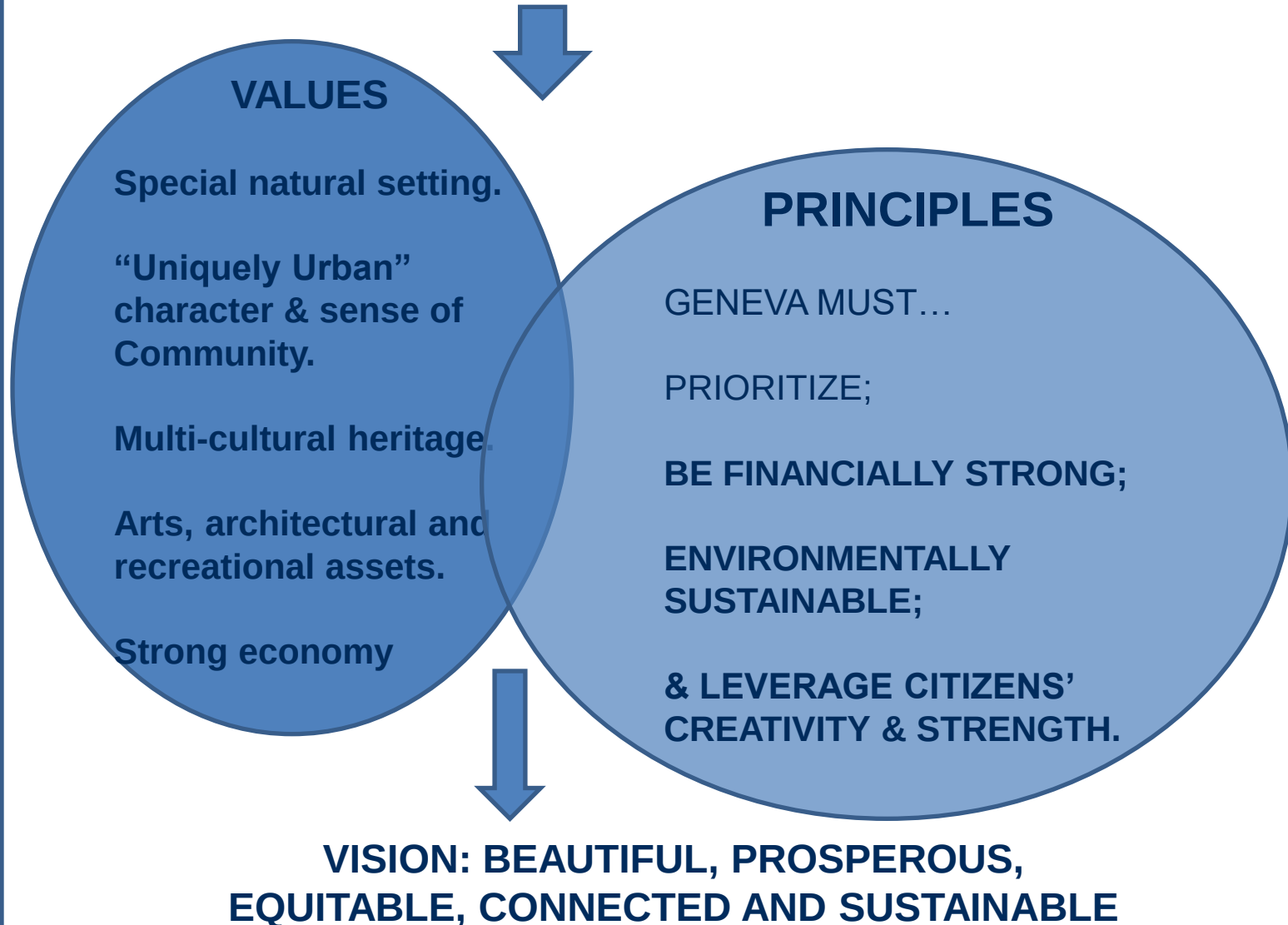
So Many Plans

- **Comprehensive Plan**
- **Brownfield Opportunity Area/Greenway**
- **Lakefront Amenities**
- **LWRP**
- **Neighborhood Study**
- **Economic Opportunity**
- **Active Transportation Plan**

The Planning Process

- **Consultant guided, committee led with modifications made along the way to reflect community input**
 - 25 committee members representing the community
 - Monthly meetings, homework for small community discussions, game activity
 - Survey – 675 participants
 - Dialogues – 120 participants, 30 volunteers (Collaboration with Tools for Social Change)
 - Community meetings and plan draft reviews
 - County Planning Board, Planning Board and City Council review
 - Project website

The Decision Making Framework



Beautiful

Our uniquely urban character is part of who we are...our arts, architectural, and recreational assets are important to us...

Prosperous

It is important to us that our economy is strong...our economic development efforts are focused on bolstering the economic status of our residents and the financial sustainability of City facilities, programs, and services...

Sustainable

We are stewards of our
special natural setting, and
will protect and celebrate it...

Connected

Inclusive interactions and transparent decision making makes us feel connected, as does our tight development pattern and commitment to multimodal transportation...

Equitable

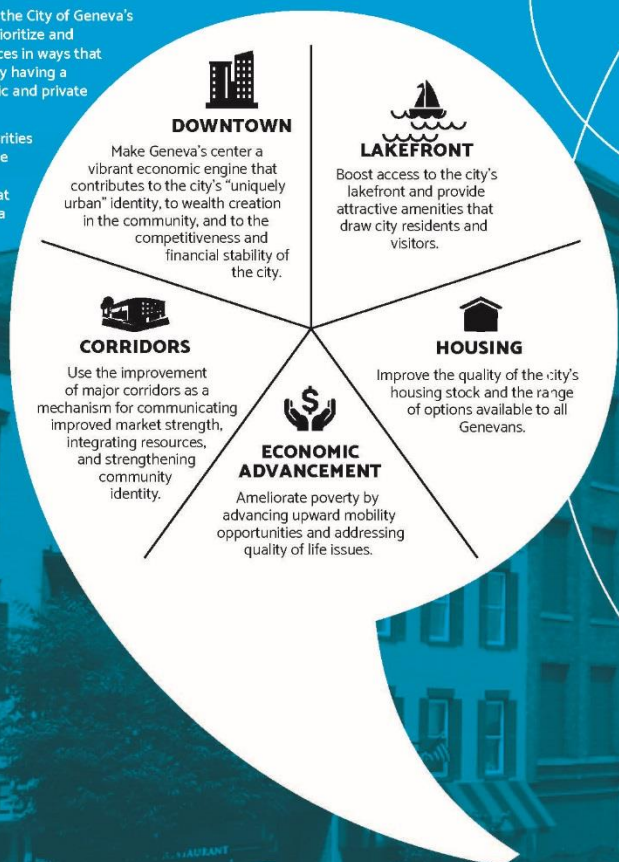
We are a community rich in diverse identities, traditions, customs, and histories that warrant inclusion and celebration...

HOW WE'LL GET THERE

Geneva's Priorities

To make progress toward the City of Geneva's vision, it is necessary to prioritize and focus – to channel resources in ways that are likely to yield results by having a positive influence on public and private investment behaviors.

Five broad, long-term priorities have been identified by the Steering Committee as essential areas of work that require attention if Geneva is to realize its vision.



INITIATIVES

To convert these endeavors into an actionable set of projects, five inter-related initiatives have been structured, each with a set of recommended actions that are aligned with the community's values:

Downtown Critical Mass

Build on the strong revitalization work of recent years by the cultivating the critical mass of quality public space and residential and business activity needed to solidify downtown Geneva as one of the region's most vibrant economic and cultural centers.

Exchange Street and Hamilton Street Gateway Corridors

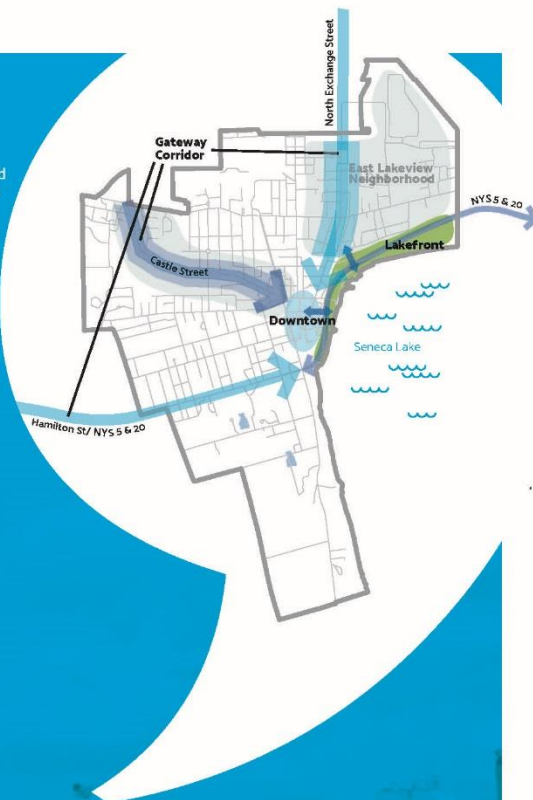
Improve conditions along the busy gateway corridors of Exchange Street and Hamilton Street to instill greater pride in the adjacent neighborhoods, boost quality of life, and create a more positive experience for residents and visitors.

Great Geneva Amenities

Make the lakefront and other key amenities more present in the life of the city by integrating them into the fabric of adjacent neighborhoods and ensuring high levels of maintenance. Proactively oppose present and future external threats to these amenities.

Castle Street Residential Corridor

Promote reinvestment and community pride by addressing urban design opportunities, connecting assets, and reinforcing Castle Street's strong residential character.



Economic Opportunity Task Force

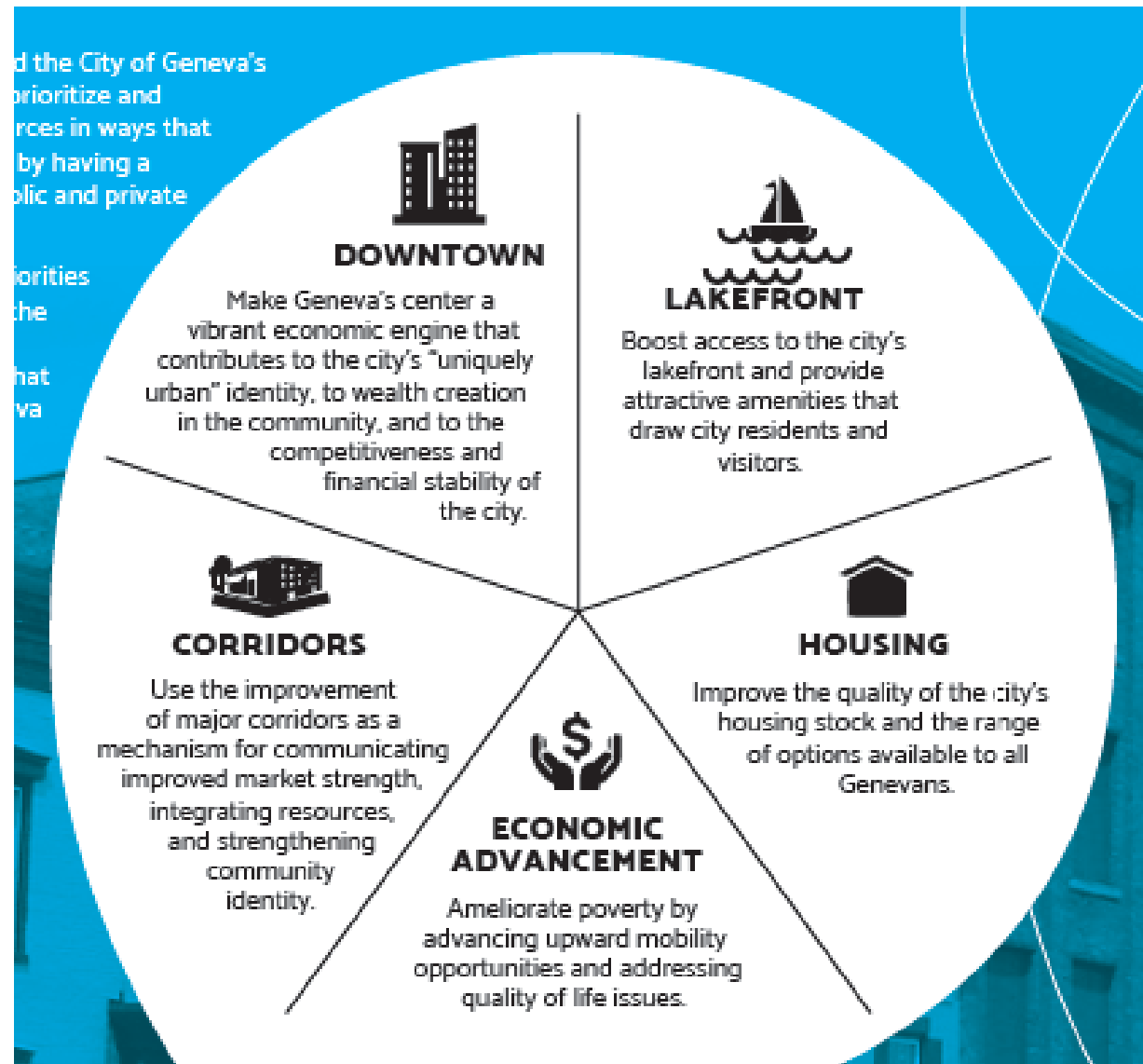
Address the city's high poverty levels in a more coordinated manner by convening an Economic Opportunity Task Force to explore best practices in aligning poverty services, education, and job training to advance upward mobility and improve residents' quality of life.

This plan also recommends that Zoning Reform be a policy priority for the city in order to provide the levels of guidance and flexibility that are needed to ensure that future development helps Geneva achieve its vision.

Priority Areas

and the City of Geneva's
prioritize and
resources in ways that
by having a
public and private

priorities
the
that
va



City of Geneva Economic Development Strategy: Community Input Session

JUNE 13, 2024

DAVID WEST, CITY OF GENEVA DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC
DEV.

GARY FERGUSON, CRRC

Project Partners

- City of Geneva
- Geneva Industrial Development Authority (IDA)
- Geneva Local Development Corporation (LDC)
- Downtown Geneva BID



Why Economic Development?

Add wealth to the community

Provide employment opportunities

Grow/expand the tax base

Improve quality of life for residents

Attract new investment and new residents

Retain/grow existing investment and residents

Nurture a sense of community pride



Prior Plans

- Comprehensive Plan
- Neighborhood Study
- Brownfield Opportunity Area/Greenway
- Lakefront Amenities Plan
- LWRP
- DRI



Prior Programs

- MAP Grants



Currently Underway

The Economic Development Planning Process



- Interviews with community stakeholders (17)
- Review of existing plans
- Community data update
- Meetings with partner groups
- Community survey
- Community input session
- Planning group work sessions
- Draft strategy
- Public presentation and feedback

Strategy Output

- Priorities for the next five years
- Roles/tasks for partners and stakeholders



Broader Economic Development Trends

Manufacturing sector subject to national/international inputs

Upstate tourism rebounding

National retail sector in flux

Food & beverage sector hampered by labor shortfalls

Medical sector experiencing mergers and consolidations

Education sector (higher ed) facing student cost barriers

Nonprofit sector growing but facing uncertain income opportunities

Geneva Demographic Trends to Consider

- City population has been declining
- Regional population has been growing
- # of City households has been increasing
- City population is more diverse than the County
- City population is younger than the County,
- City population also aging (2022 v 2010)
- City housing stock is older than the County
- City household income lower than the County
- Travel to work times much shorter in the City than the County



Opportunities for Geneva

Manufacturing

Agri-Tech

Eds/Meds

Housing prices

Commercial property pricing

Tourism



Challenges for Geneva

Self-perception

2nd city status

Limited resource base

K-12 education perception

Aging housing stock

An agreed upon long-term strategy & process



Emerging Ideas

1. Economic development partnerships & relationships
2. Refining economic Development Processes
3. Advancing downtown revitalization
4. Leveraging & increasing tourism
5. Promoting & supporting industry
6. Undertaking marketing
7. Facilitating development
8. Involving underserved populations
9. Priority projects & programs
10. Metrics for Success
11. Longer term steps

YOUR TASK THIS EVENING

Answer some broad questions: [Slido.com](https://www.slido.com) [#3654801](https://www.slido.com/join/3654801)

What do you like most about living/working in Geneva?

What do you like least about living/working in Geneva?

What brought you here tonight?

What questions about economic development do you have?

SMALL TABLE QUESTIONS

- (1) If we could launch one new initiative to spur prosperity in our City, what would it be?
- (2) Successful economic development means?
- (3) What could you personally do to help improve the health and vibrancy of our community?
- (4) What could we do next week, without any major new funding, staffing, or grants, that would make a positive impact for people here in Geneva?

TAKE THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7LCSY7D>

Geneva Economic Development Community Survey

Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation Consultants (CRRC) is working with the City of Geneva on a communitywide economic development strategy and plan. This strategy will help the City chart a five year game plan for improving the economic health and wellbeing of the Geneva community.

Part of this planning process includes gathering input from the workers and residents of Geneva. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and provide us with your opinions and thoughts. Survey results are anonymous and will be summarized and included into the strategic planning process.

1. What brought you and/or your family to Geneva?

2. What keeps you living and/or working here in Geneva?

3. When you talk with other Geneva residents and workers, what have you heard are their most challenging issues or concerns? (select three topics)

☐ Housing Expense

☐ Housing Quality

☐ Household Income

☐ Cost and/or Availability of Childcare

☐ Employment

☐ Community Connection & Belonging

☐ Entertainment and recreation

☐ Safety

☐ Food Security

☐ Education

4. List up to three things (projects, policies, programs, actions, partnerships) that you think could be easily and relatively inexpensively undertaken right now by local citizens and/or government that could improve the health and economy of our community.

Suggestion 1

Suggestion 2

Suggestion 3

5. More people would move to the City of Geneva if... (pick one response)

☐ There were more well-paying jobs.

☐ There were more places to shop and dine.

- ☐ There were more recreational and entertainment opportunities.
- ☐ There were more housing opportunities.
- ☐ The reputation of the public schools was better.
- ☐ There were lower taxes.
- ☐ There were more services provided by the public sector.
- ☐ Other (please specify)

6. What type of new housing should be prioritized in the coming years? (select any or all that apply- with yes, no, or not know/not sure)

- ☐ - Higher end market rate housing
- ☐ - Middle market housing
- ☐ - Affordable or low/moderate income housing
- ☐ - Single family detached.
- ☐ - Duplex/triplex
- ☐ - Attached townhouses
- ☐ - Small apartments
- ☐ - Larger apartments
- ☐ - For sale properties
- ☐ - Rental properties
- ☐ - Senior housing

☐ - Housing for people with disabilities

☐ Other (please specify)

7. The City owns land at the south end of Exchange Street, often referred to as the OEO site. This property is likely to be redeveloped in the next several years. In choosing a developer, how important are the following items?

Rank each on the following scale:

	Least important	Not very important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Most important
Providing more affordable housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing more upscale housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing more retail space	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Property taxes generated by the project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Traditional building architecture that readily fits into the landscape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Nontraditional building architecture that is distinctive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Least important	Not very important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Most important
Preservation of views from the Main Street area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Creation of views from the new building	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. In 2016 the City of Geneva completed a long-term comprehensive plan. In this plan there were a number of proposed projects and key issues/initiatives. Eight years later, please rate each of the following projects pulled from this comprehensive plan in terms of their importance and relevance today.

Rate each project independently using the following scale:

	Least important	Not very important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Most important
Continued major street reconstruction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continued funding of the micro enterprise grant (MAP) program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
City planning & engagement at the neighborhood level	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continued City park improvements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lakefront marina	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Least important	Not very important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Most important
development& Long Pier improvements					
Continued improvements to City entrances	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lakefront recreational improvements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Downtown building rehab and adaptive reuse program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
City property disposition plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Rank these items on the following scale:

	Poor	Not so good	Neutral	Good	Great
- My own image of Geneva as a place to live and/or work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- The outside world's image of Geneva as a place to live and/or work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Public safety in Geneva	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Housing affordability in Geneva	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Poor	Not so good	Neutral	Good	Great
- Housing availability in Geneva	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Job opportunities for me and my household	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- The mix of businesses along the 5/20 corridor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- The mix of business in downtown Geneva	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Geneva cultural offerings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Geneva recreational offerings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Access to the Lake	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. I.... (select all that apply)

- ☐ Live in the City of Geneva.
- ☐ Live in the Town of Geneva.
- ☐ Live outside the City and Town of Geneva
- ☐ Work in the City of Geneva.
- ☐ I am a college student here in the City of Geneva.

11. How long have you lived here?

- ☐ Less than one year
- ☐ Between 1-5 years
- ☐ Between 6 and 15 years
- ☐ Over 15 years
- ☐ My entire life
- ☐ I don't live in Geneva city or town.

12. How long have you worked in the City of Geneva?

- ☐ Less than one year
- ☐ Between 1-5 years
- ☐ Between 5 and 15 years
- ☐ Over 15 years
- ☐ My entire life
- ☐ I don't work in Geneva city or town.

13. Are you:

- ☐ Under 21 years old
- ☐ 21 – 45
- ☐ 46- 64
- ☐ 65 or older

14. Are you:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Nonbinary/ Other

15. Are you: (answer any that apply)

- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Native American
- ☐ White

16. My current household size is:

- ☐ Myself only (1 person)
- ☐ 2 people
- ☐ 3 people
- ☐ 4 people
- ☐ 5 people
- ☐ More than 5 people

17. As of today, my estimated annual household income (all people in the residence) is:

- ☐ Less than \$15,000/year
- ☐ \$15,000 - \$30,000/year
- ☐ \$30,001 - \$50,000/year
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$75,000/year
- ☐ \$75,001 - \$99,999/year
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$125,000/year
- ☐ \$125,001-\$150,000/year
- ☐ Over \$150,000/year

Done

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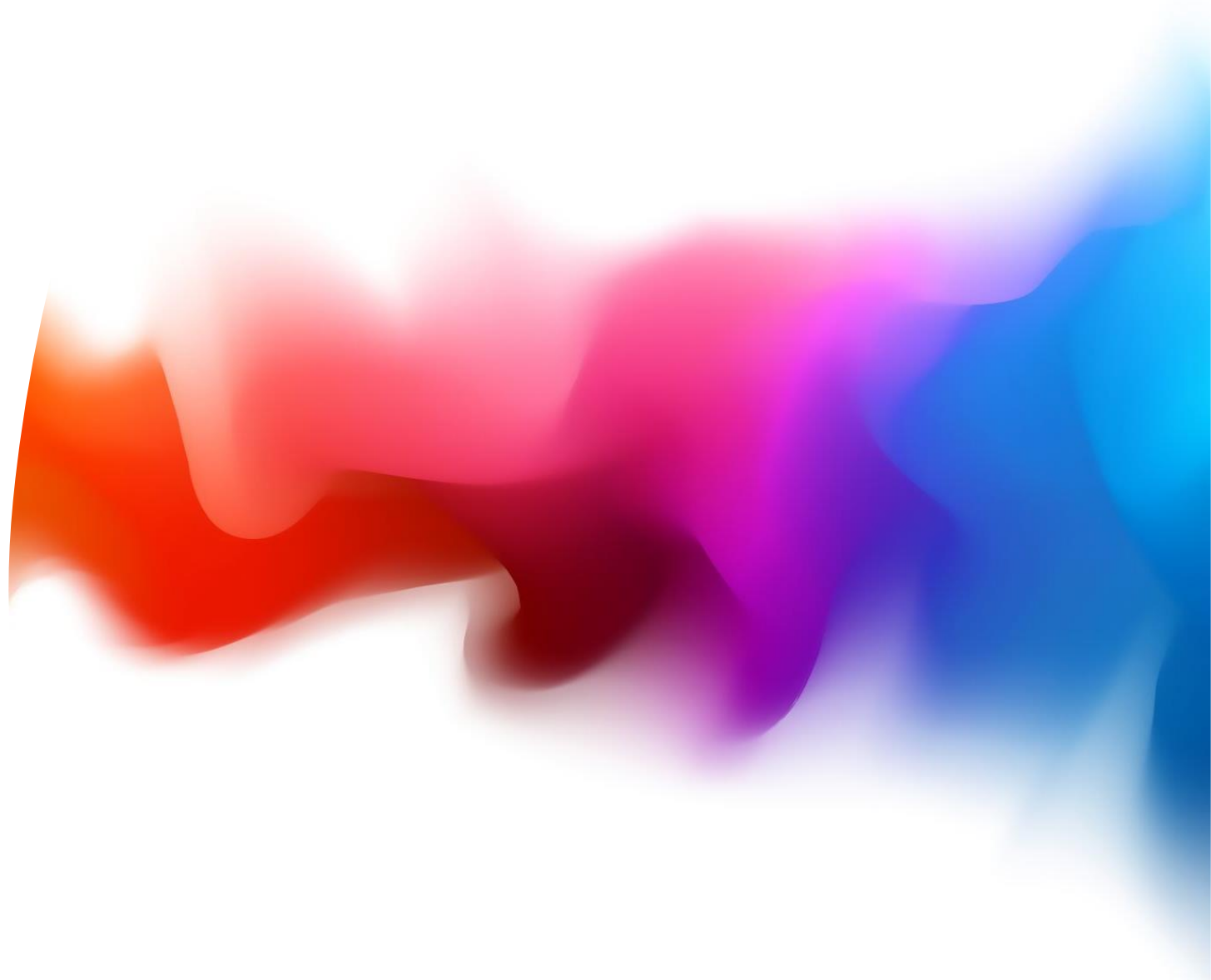
Geneva Economic Development Survey: High Level Results

Prepared by

Gary Ferguson

Community Revitalization & Rejuvenation
Consultants

July 12, 2024



Purpose of Survey

01

Provide a tool for
community
engagement

02

Reach people
who may not
attend a public
event

03

Seek information
from respondents
about key Geneva
issues

04

Provide another
data set for
overall analysis

Survey Particulars

- 188 responses
- Between June 7 - July 11
- Avg. 8 minutes for each completion
- 64% completion rate



Respondent Demographic Highlights

	<u>Respondent</u>	<u>2024 Geneva City Data</u>
• Average Annual HH income:	20% in \$75-99K	\$82,232
• Current HH size:	41%- 2 people	2.12
• Race:	97% white	69% white
• Sex:	63% F	51% F
• Age:	35%- 21-45 yrs.	33.77 yrs.
• Location of Residence:	83% live in City	-
• Work in the City/Town	61% work local	-
• Live in the City/Town:	95% live local	-

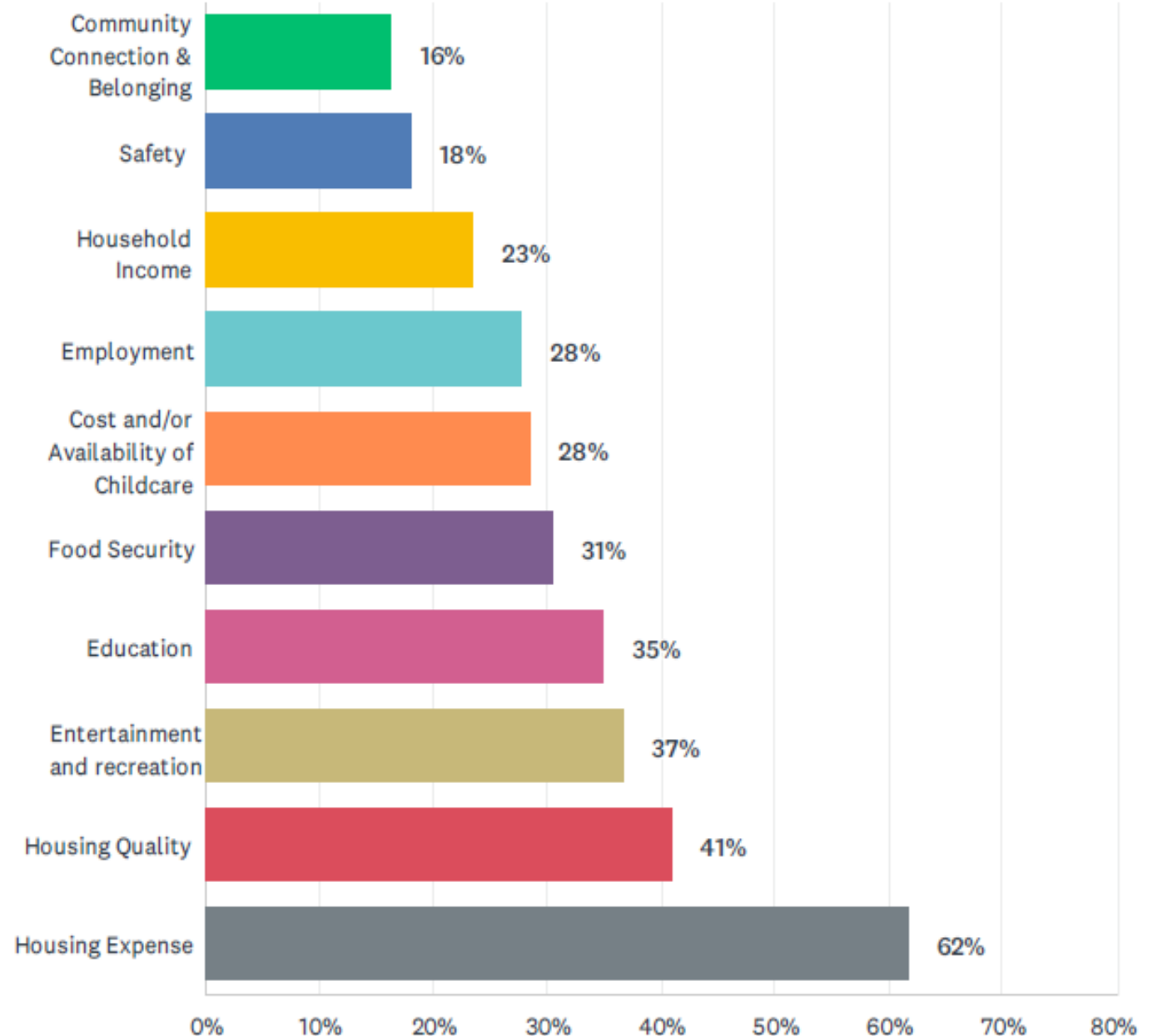
Q1:
What brought
you and/or
your family to
Geneva?



Q2:
What keeps
you living
and/or
working here
in Geneva?



Q3:
When you talk
with other Geneva
residents and
workers, what are
the most
challenging issues
or concerns?
(pick 3)

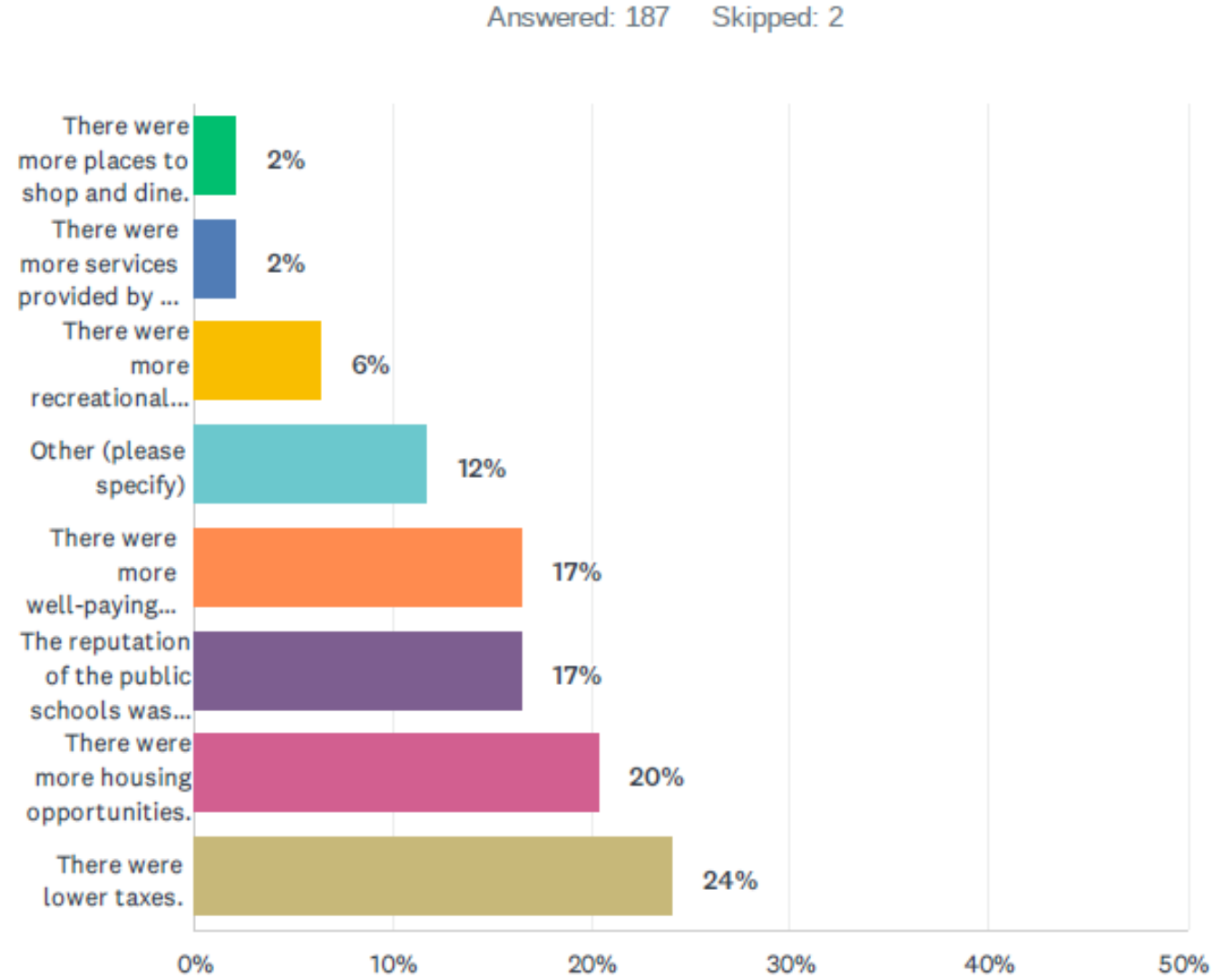


Q4 Suggestion #1

List up to three things (projects, policies, programs, actions, partnerships) that you think could be easily and relatively inexpensively undertaken right now by local citizens and/or government that could improve the health and economy of our community.

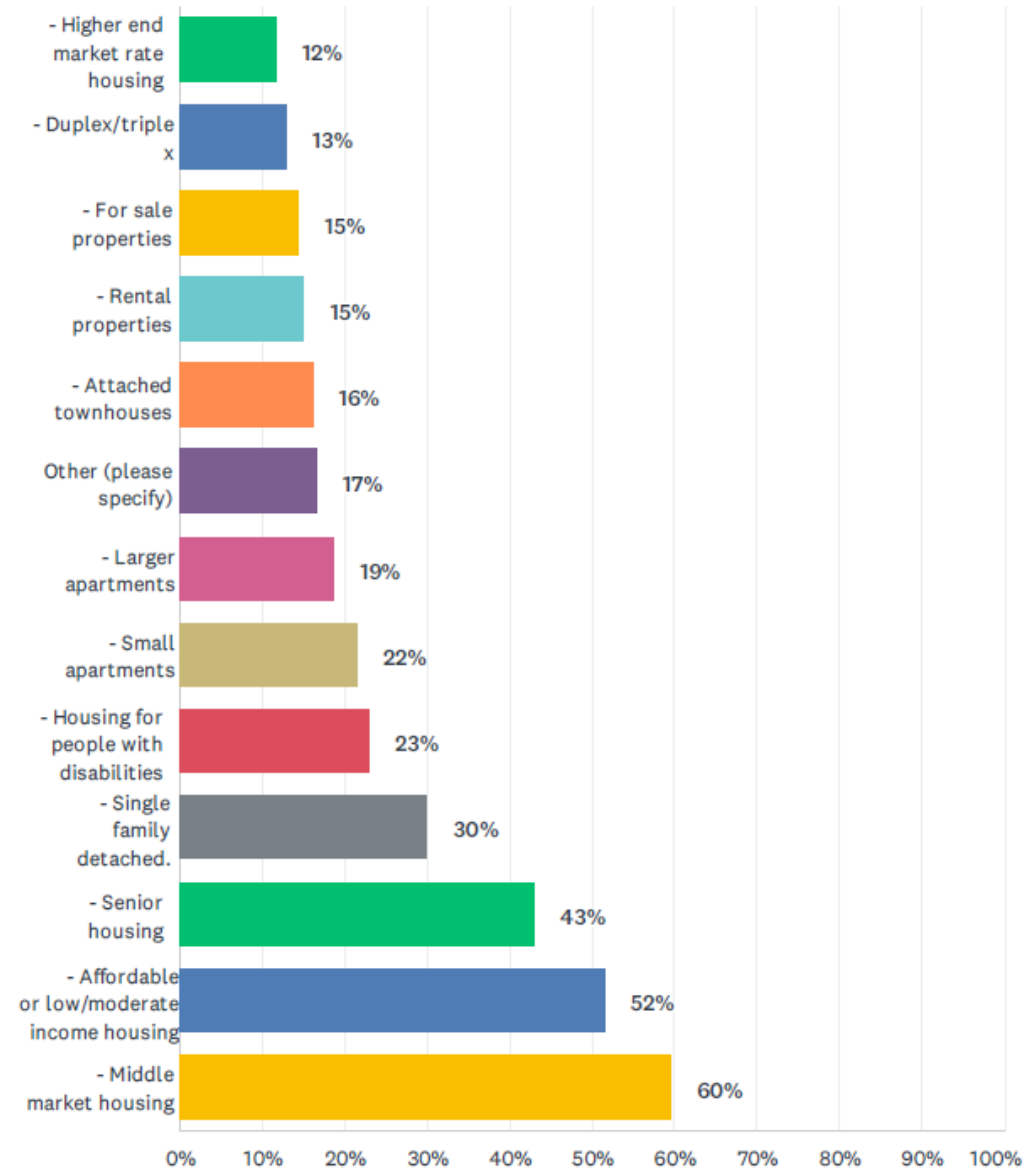
▼ city		11.39%	18
▼ downtown		11.39%	18
▼ housing		8.86%	14
▼ businesses		6.96%	11
▼ grocery store		6.96%	11
▼ taxes		6.33%	10
▼ community		6.33%	10
▼ programs		5.06%	8

Q5:
More people
would move
to the City of
Geneva if...
(pick 1)



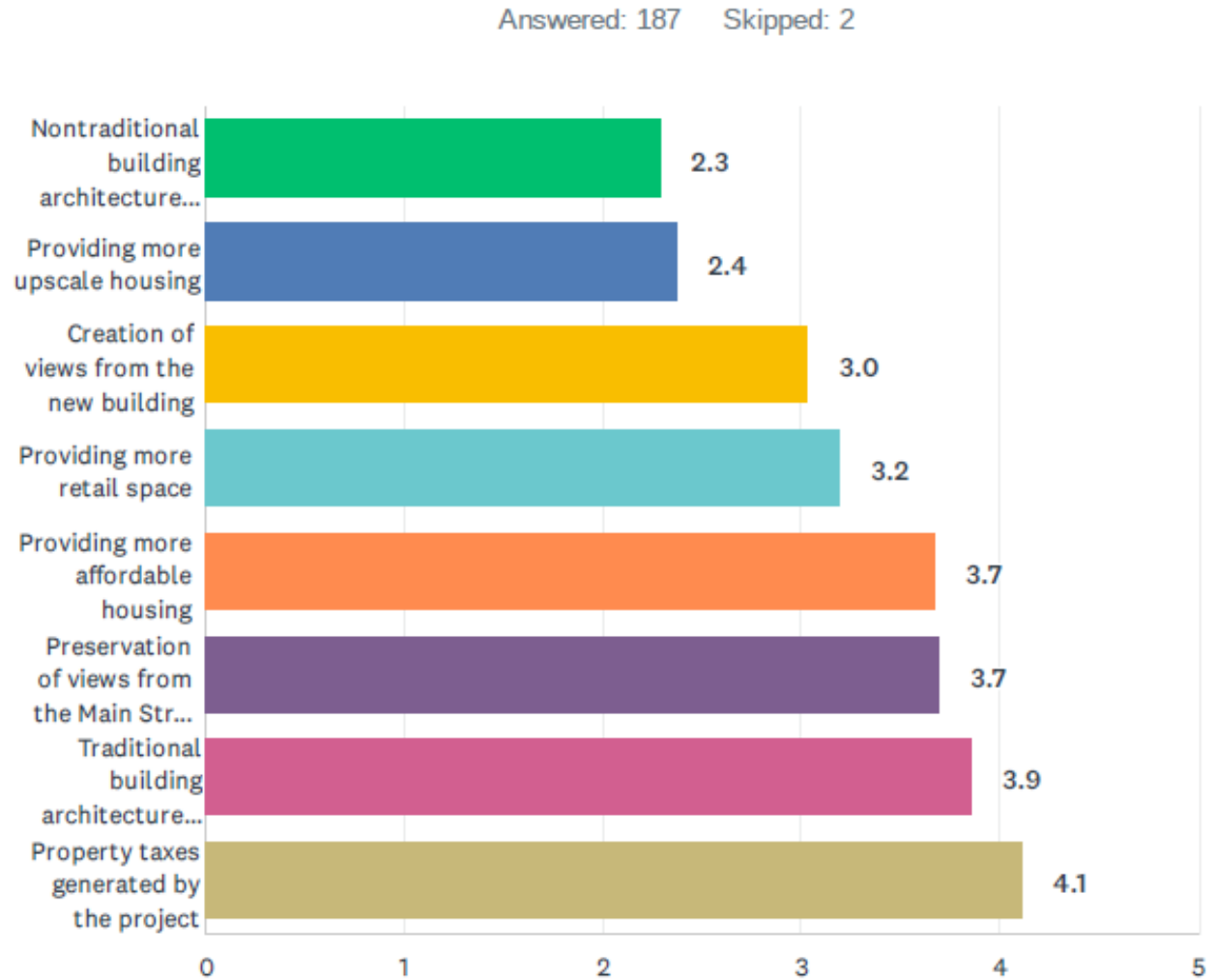
Q6:
What type of
new housing
should be
prioritized in
the coming
years?
(select any)

Answered: 186 Skipped: 3



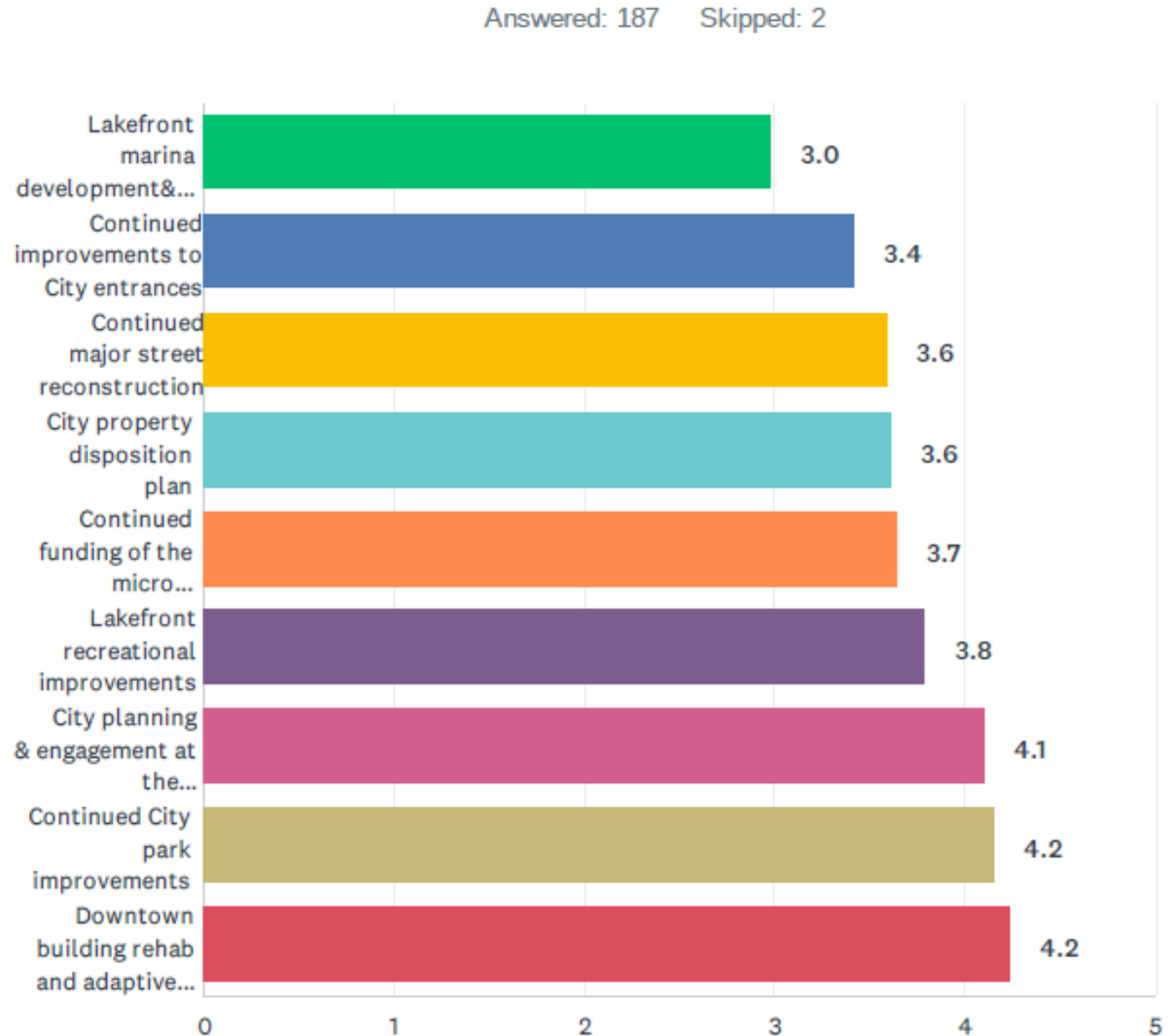
Q7:

The City owns land at the south end of Exchange Street, often referred to as the OEO site. In choosing a developer, how important are the following items? (Rank 1 to 5)

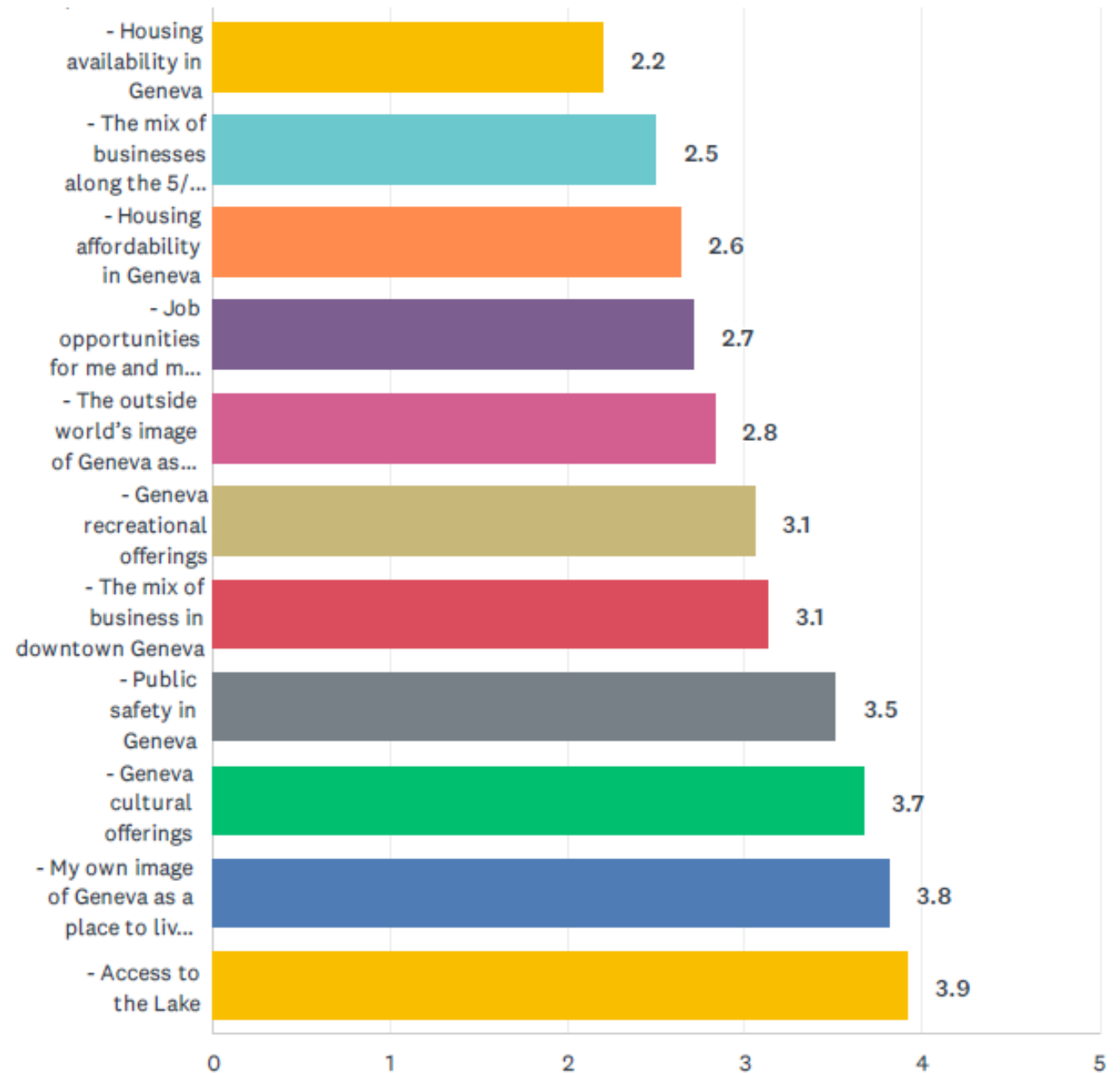


Q8:

Please rank each of the following projects pulled from the comprehensive plan in terms of their importance and relevance today. (rank 1-5)

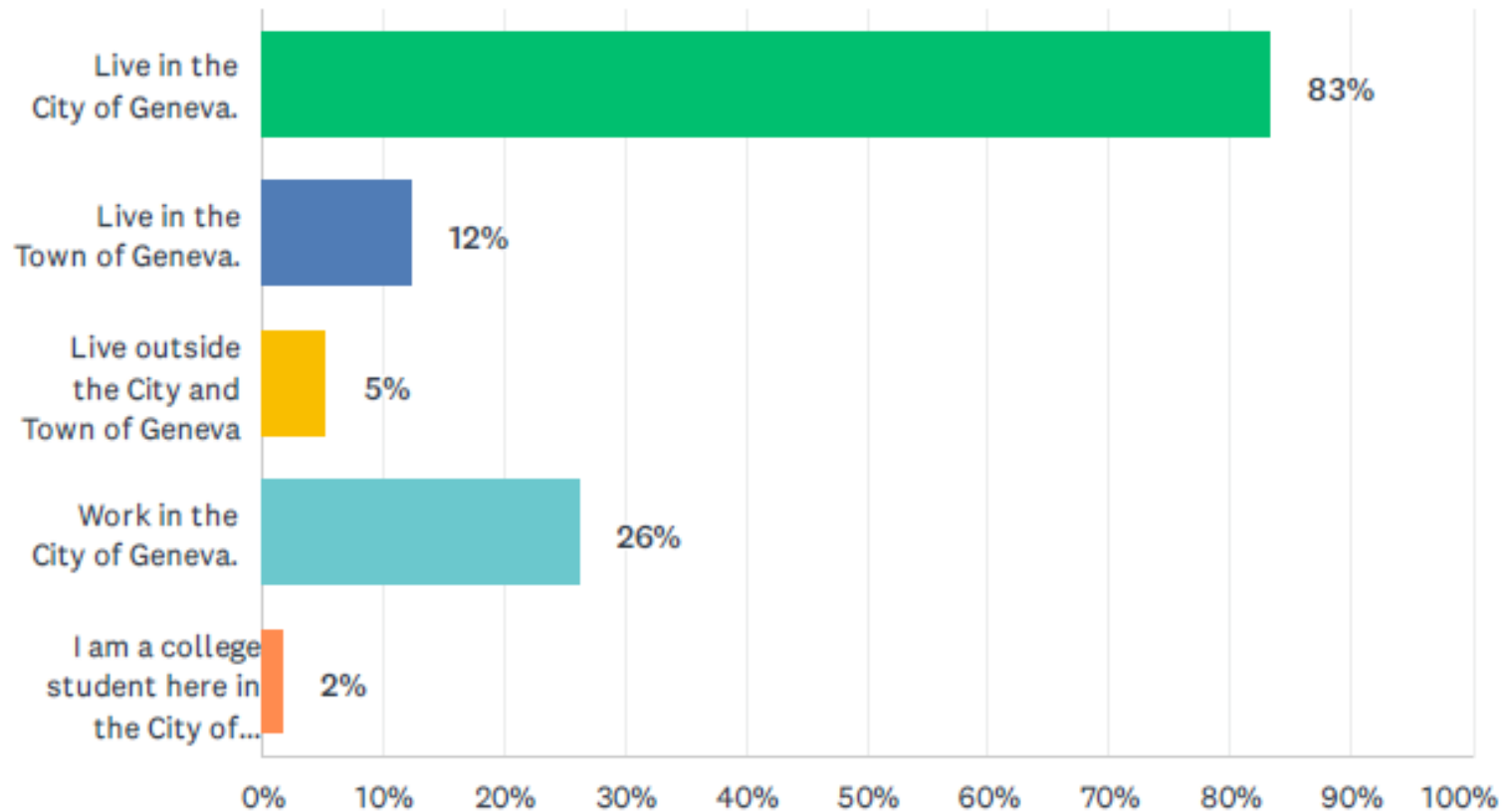


Q9:
Rank these
items
(rank 1-5)

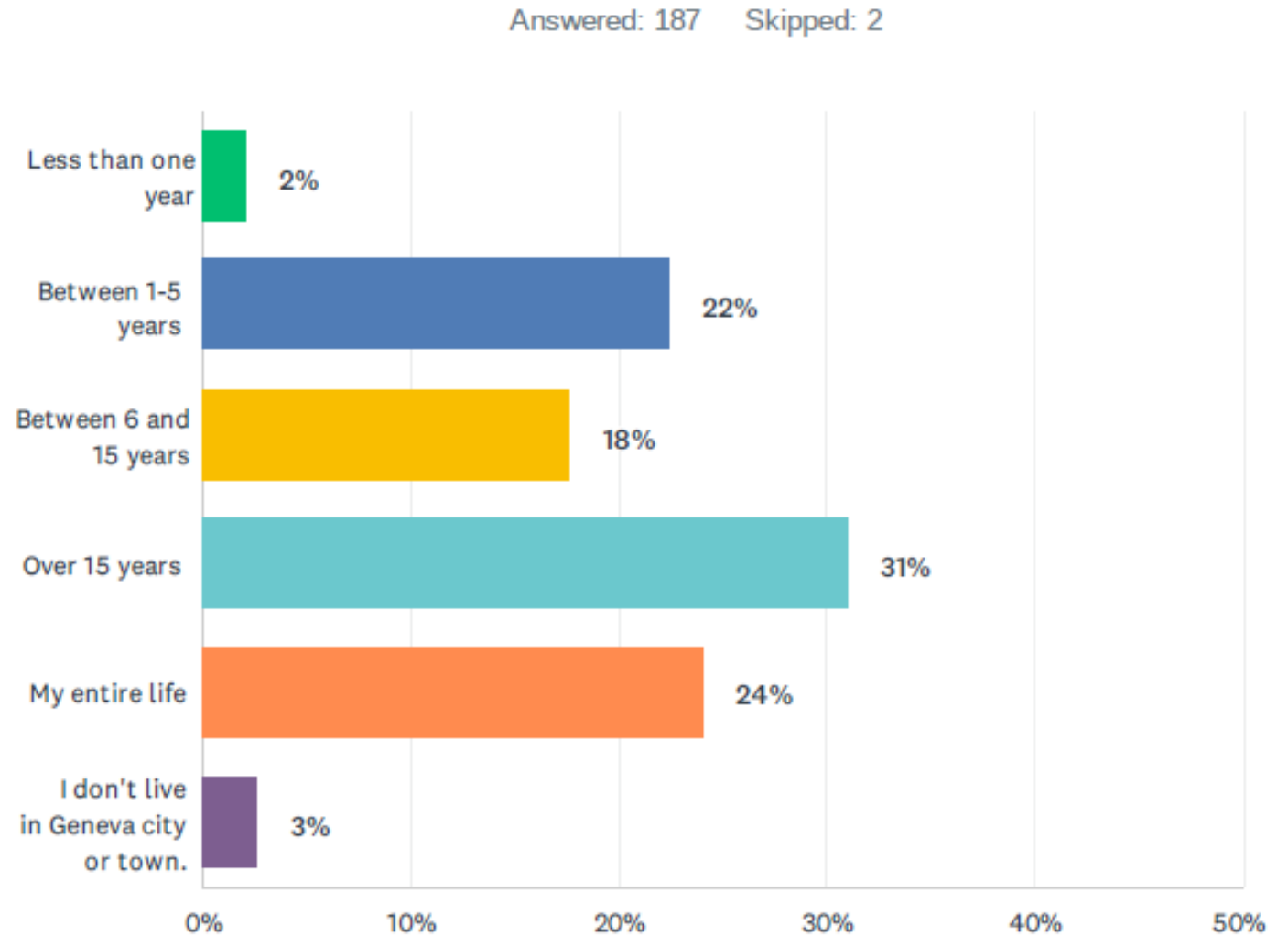


Q10: Demographics

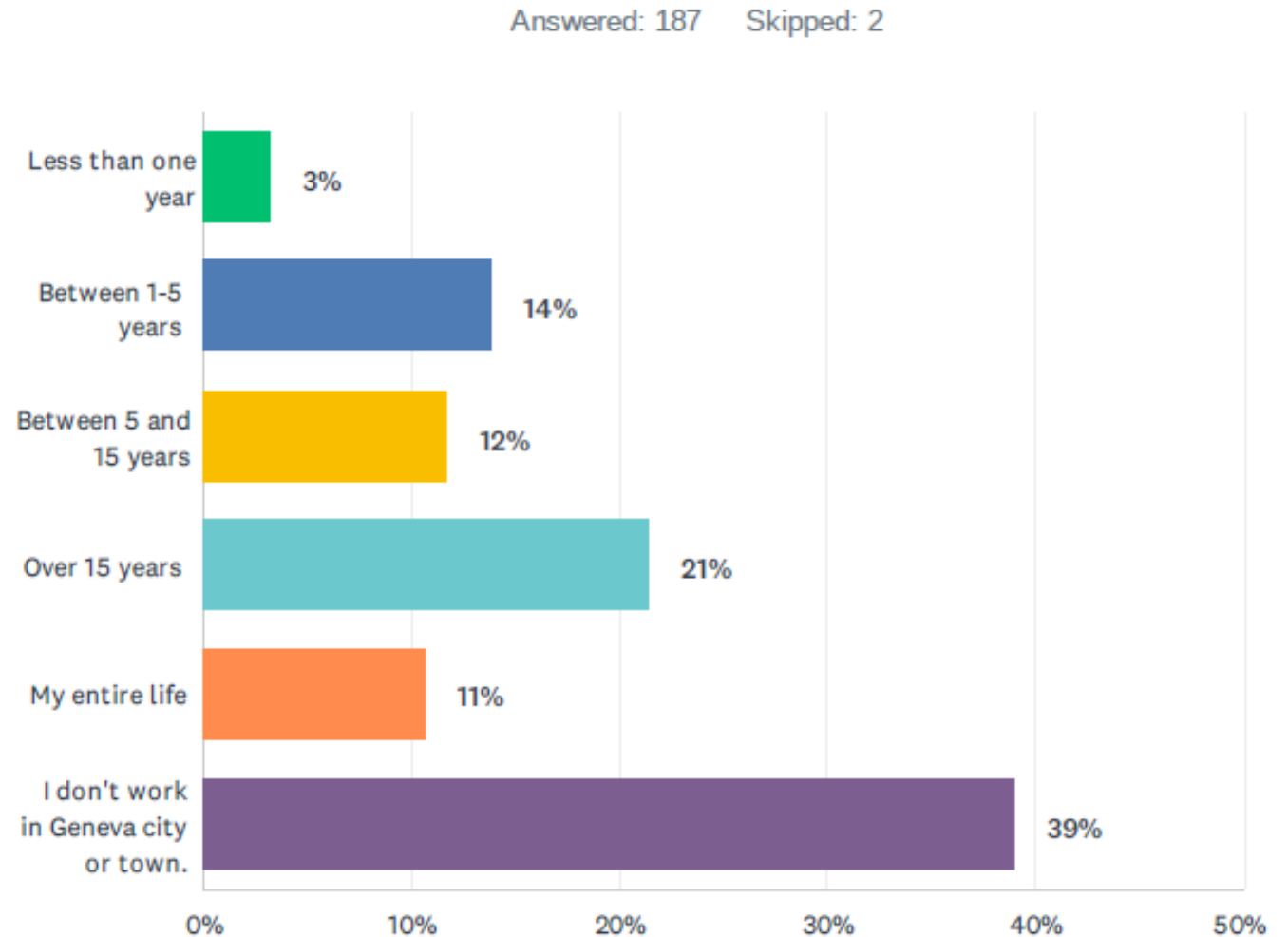
Answered: 187 Skipped: 2



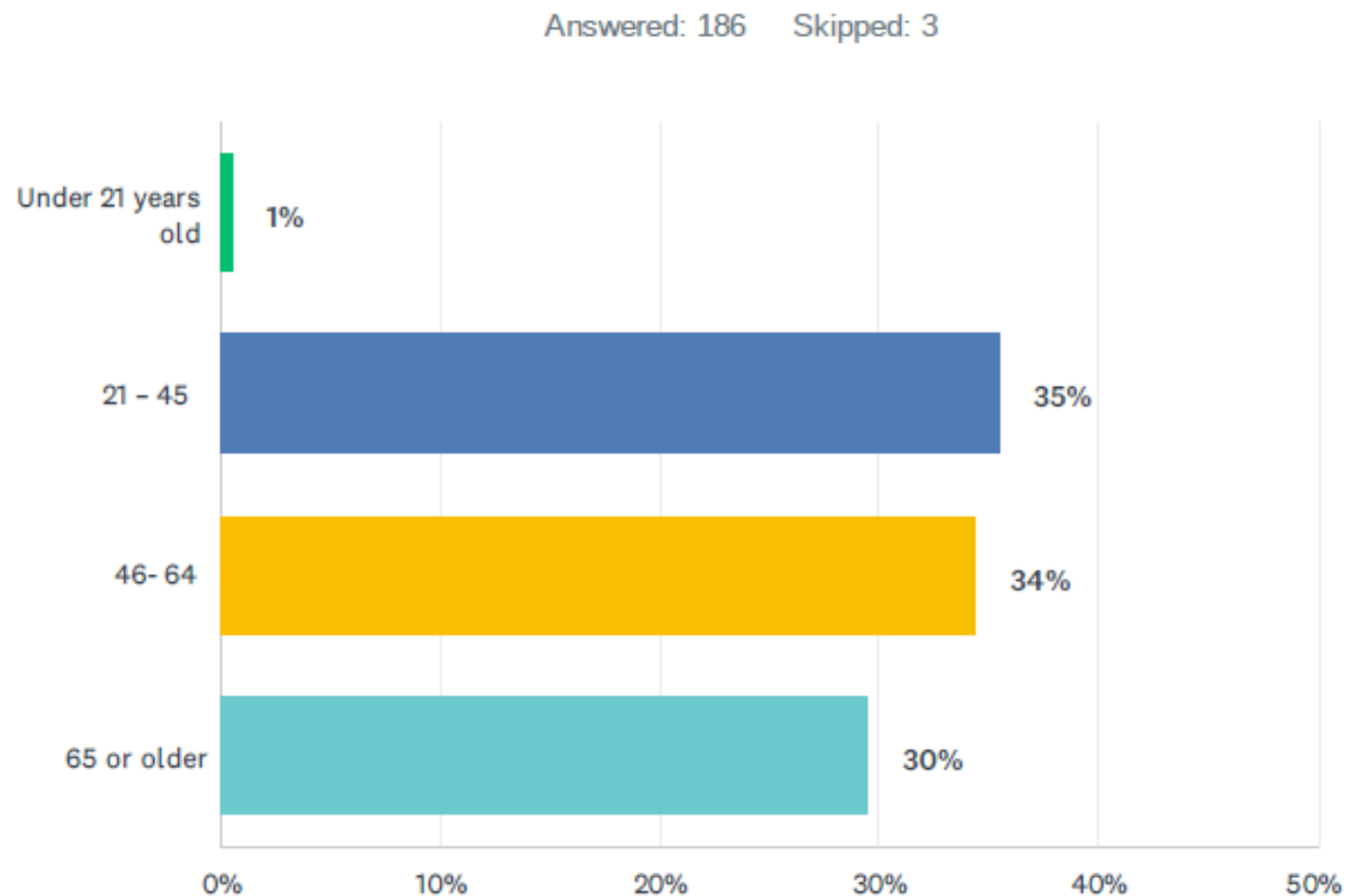
Q11:
How long
have you
lived here?



Q12: How long have you worked in the City of Geneva?

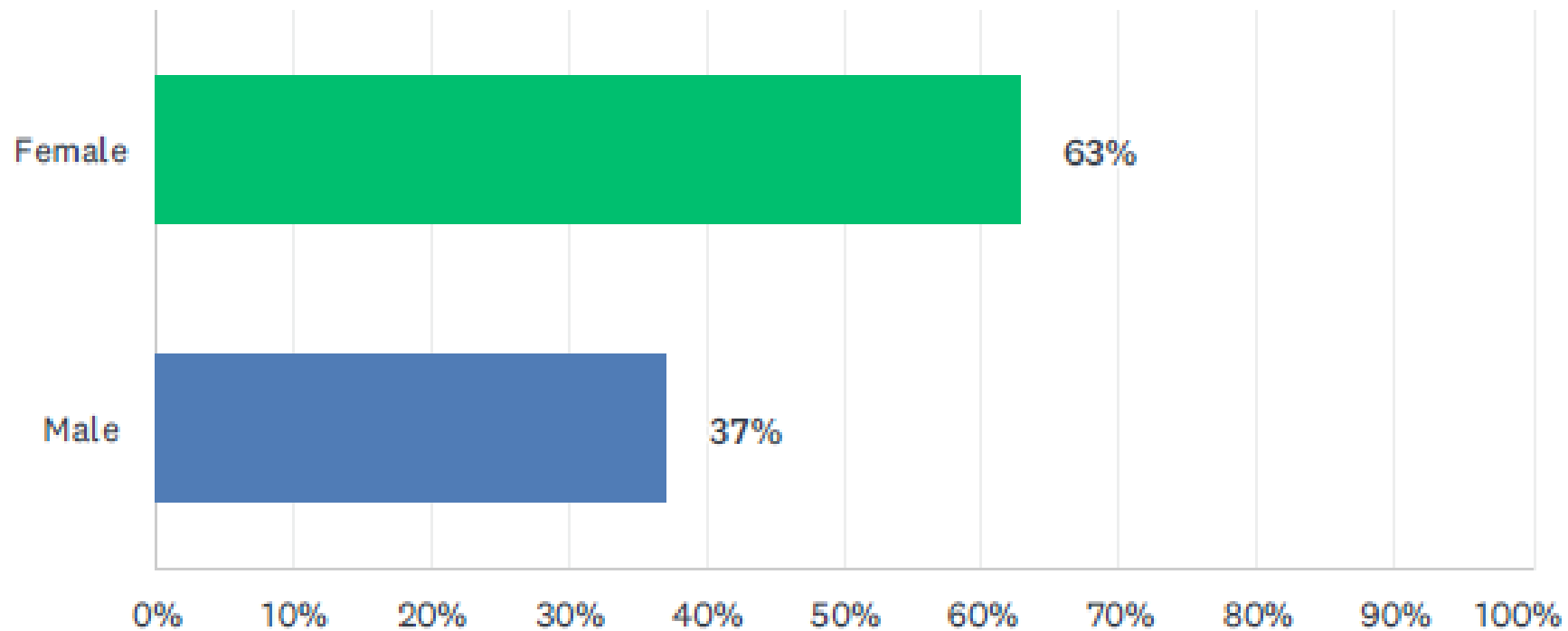


Q13: Age



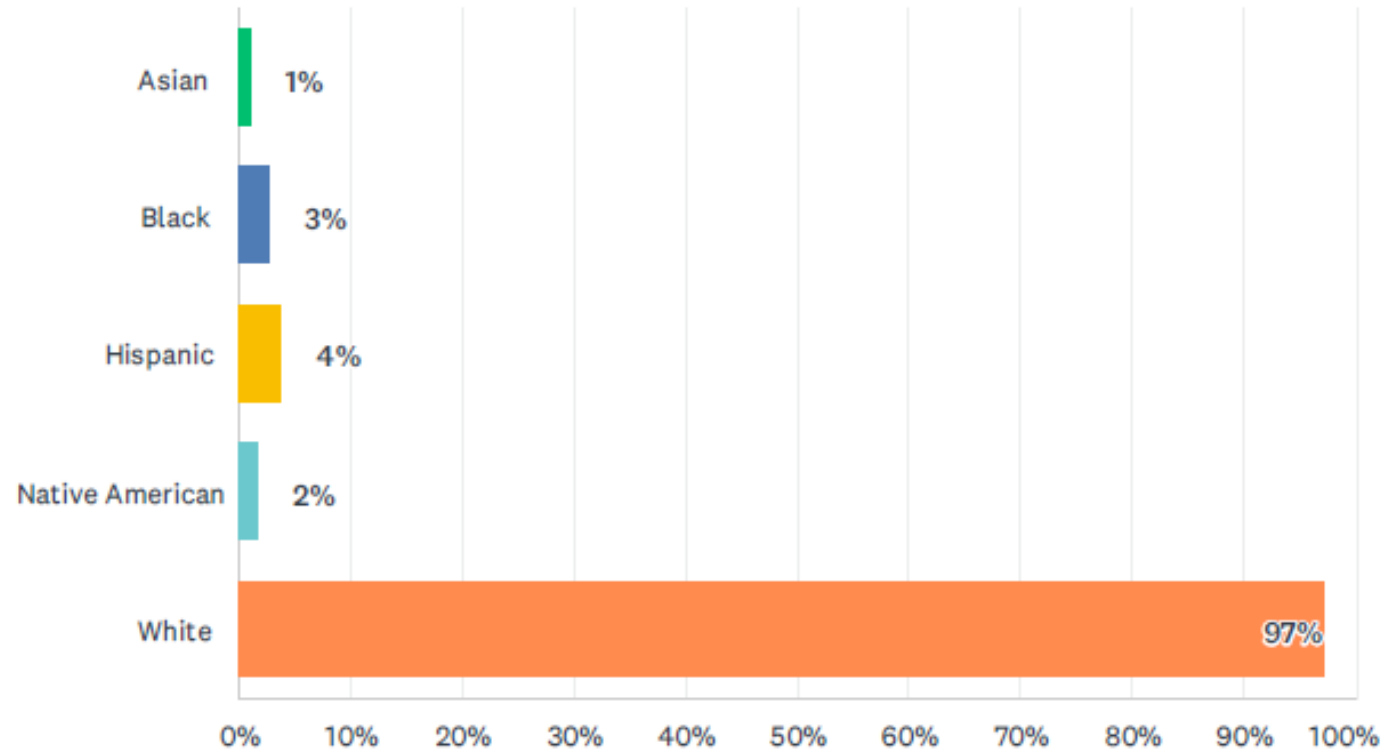
Q14: Gender

Answered: 184 Skipped: 5



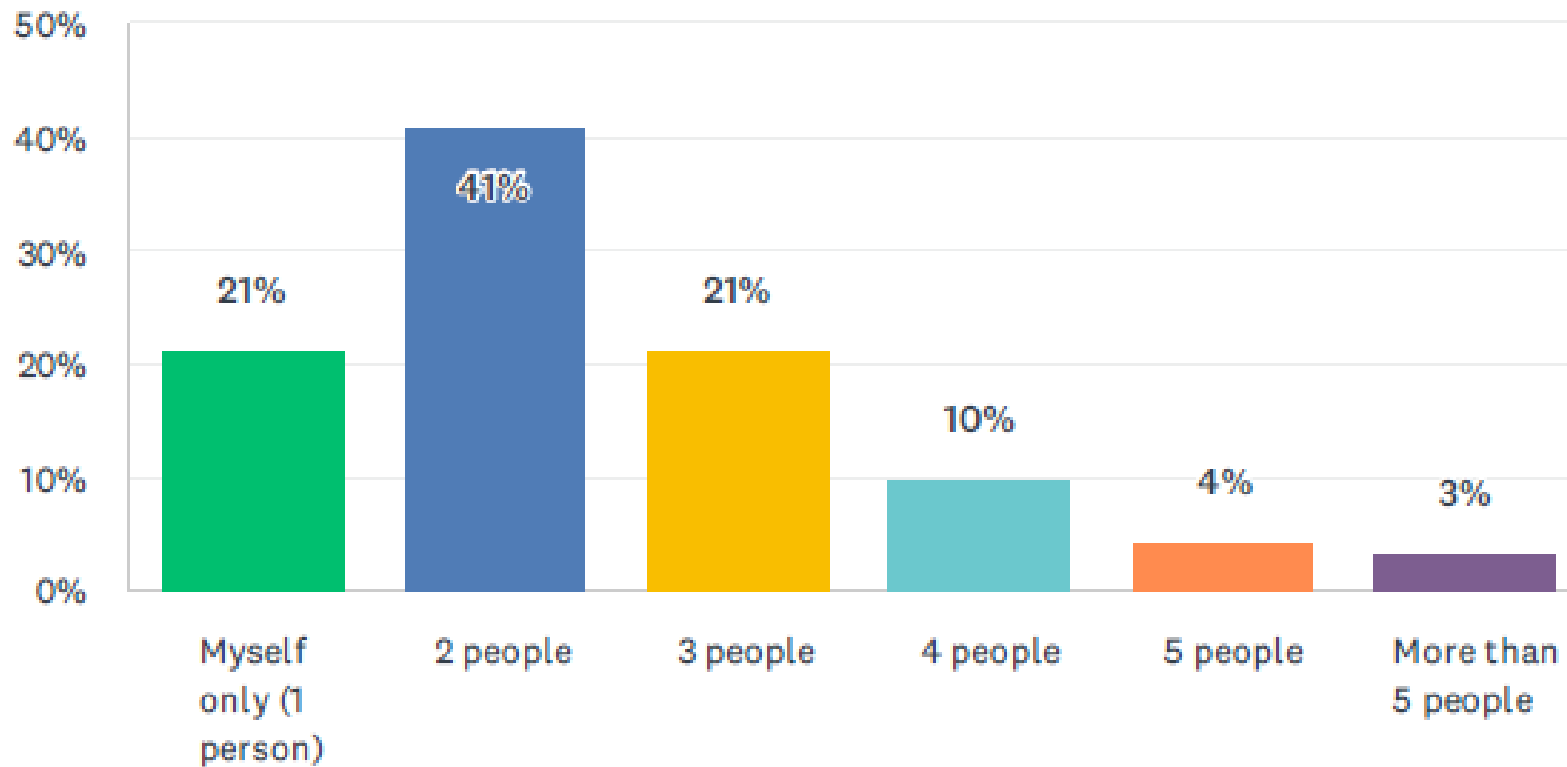
Q15: Ethnicity

Answered: 181 Skipped: 8

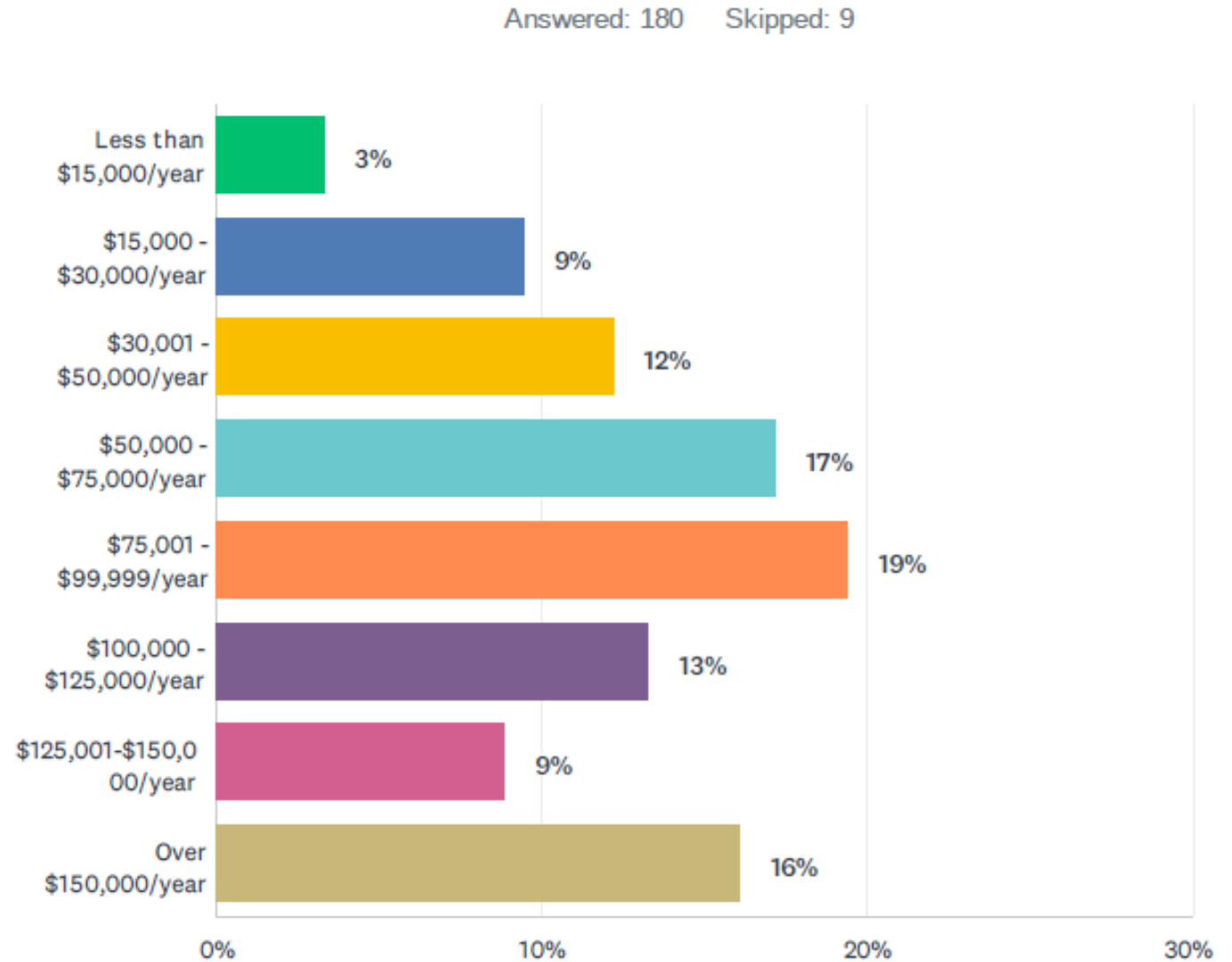


Q16: Household size

Answered: 186 Skipped: 3



Q17: Estimated annual household income



June 13, 2024
City of Geneva, NY
Public Forum – Economic Development and Quality of Life

Stakeholder Input from small groups gathered around tables to discuss questions.

- Q 1) What would be one new initiative to spur prosperity?
Q 2) What does successful economic development look like?
Q 3) What can/will we each do to help?
Q 4) What is one thing I will do in the next week?

INPUT FROM SMALL GROUPS, transcribed from what was handwritten on newsprint:

Q 1) What is one new initiative to spur prosperity?

Group A Grocery store downtown Expand downtown boundary, i.e. to lake and further Empty buildings downtown must be fully occupied Improve transportation Addressing homeless problem Expand winter tourism	Group D Downtown grocery store Housing downtown, OEO property and Plaza Develop lakefront – food, activities Something for kids Downtown arcade Develop customer service training program and certification
Group B Upscale housing/townhomes Develop blighted properties Housing for middle income to grow into Workforce housing	Group E Electric bike rental at Lakefront, or all over the city Punch clock to record “Internal Peace Corps” Partner with County to improve transportation Downtown Trolley Historic Tours Rethink T & C Plaza/make housing and retail A Pool!
Group C Microenterprise incubator Solve vacancies/business + residential, (upper floor), local policies, untapped resources/grants Zombie houses, laws? Make Geneva more attractive, following Comprehensive Plan words/descriptors Attractions, pedestrian bridge, more walkable lakefront/downtown Festivals, music at lakefront Safety	Group F Tech startup Agro-Tech Enhance RTS and bus services Video arcade and youth activities Summer internships for youth/good for businesses Group G Utilize unused properties Provide more housing How do we get everyone who is eligible to work? There is alot of opportunity out

Q 2) What does successful economic development mean?

Group A How do we know when we are successful Getting young people to come and stay in Geneva Safe, affordable housing for everyone Better paying jobs Equitable economic development, across all income levels More small manufacturing in downtown More start up houses for young people to stay and invest, creative solutions using current stock	Group D Lower taxes and/or tax rate Good local jobs Safe streets Successful local businesses Group G Quality of life, a sense of a welcoming community Public and Private Relationships, including non-profits
Group B Organic growth without the crutch of grants or outside money Equitable advancement Having good wages for people who live here and work here	Group E Improve quality of life Increase tax base Economic development needs to be for all Increase critical mass/population Genuine pride in city by everybody
Group C Removal of food deserts Everyone has a chance Inclusivity Job Creation More local business owners Less LLC ownership Lowering tax base but not “selling the farm” Sustainability	Group F More working families, young professionals, spending and retention of seniors New successful businesses that don’t need subsidies No zombie buildings

Q 3) what can we each do; what will be each do - to help?

Group A Communicate positively about Geneva Volunteer	Group D Volunteer Parking in downtown will become an issue when Sessler develops the park at the lakefront (see long suggestion re sending a delegation to Sampson to see what Sessler did there)
Group B Shop in small, local businesses Garden, paint homes, take care of property Pitching in to help neighbors Residential consulting for aesthetics Group G Reach out to new neighbors and residents Project a positive attitude of the best of Geneva	Group E Housing condition/inventory and solutions Bring arcade/pinball facility Improve communications Start music programming @ small venues or festival Land development/storm control/expertise Inventory/assess downtown spaces; how business is doing/how to help What is going on in 2 nd and 3 rd floor? Increase volunteer base, create a database

Group C We are (volunteer) Stop silos-work collaboratively Vote, use voice Be in the room Raise awareness, network	Group F Discourage negativity Discourage political divides/not discuss politics Talk to people about meetings like this Share meetings like this on social media
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Q 4) what will I do next week?

Group A Group G Buy local! Encourage buying local Introduce myself to two new people Better communication to the public about these meetings and initiatives	Group D Cancel the marina project Keep up social media posts to keep us informed, also those not on social media, some kind of ambassador initiative (this meeting was not well publicized) Have BID visit every local business # about Geneva that is used by everyone
Group B Volunteer organization for housing updates/upgrades Welcoming ambassadors to downtown Developing a Geneva Volunteer Corps Encourage cell phone free zones	Group E Spring cleaning/facelifts Bike drive Free admission to State Park for one day
Group C Report about this meeting, share details Communication between non-profits and businesses Community calendar Community meetings throughout city Promotion – unified/accessible info hub	Group F Improve communication, send texts about meetings Coffee with council Zoom presentations on economic development by this department A sign with a map of businesses

GENEVA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING

WORKSHOP #1

SUMMARY OF RESULTS & PREPARATORY MATERIAL FOR WORKSHOP #2

Noted Strengths

Natural Beauty
History of the community (incl. underground RR)
Character of the housing stock
HWS College & FLCC – higher education
Culinary and wine making talent and associated businesses
Central Finger Lakes location
Size of city (not too big/not too small)
Service hub for the region
Mix and diversity of population
Both newcomers & old timers
Broad economic mix of businesses (tech, agri-tech, industrial, service)
Geneva 2030
Existing plans
Connectiveness of the community
Urban parking supply provided for free
Walkability
Public art
State Welcome Center
Wegman's
Restaurants
Smith Opera House
Public Library
Festivals & Events
Recreational tourism
Philanthropic community

Noted Weaknesses

Tax rate and tax pressures
Housing availability, cost, and quality
Poverty rate
Perception of the school district
Community image issues
Downtown traditional retail (parallels national trend)
Community cohesion
Uncooperative landlords
Labor force
NYS economic and taxation barriers

Limited recreational opportunities and programs
Resistance to change
Things for kids and families to do (K-12)
Self-interested leadership

Noted Opportunities

Leveraging our location in the Finger Lakes
Growing the Smith Opera House
National trend toward remote work could benefit Geneva community
Climate change shifting migration patterns northward
Agricultural innovation (CU Tech Park) and opportunity for tech park land development
City & IDA owned properties
Town & Country Plaza (5/20) site for redevelopment
Potential for City and Town mutual cooperation
Create an event destination
Enhancing public beautification

Noted Threats

National retail trends pushing against brick & mortar retail stores
Rising construction costs
Immigration policy confusion & polarization
Stresses to the health of the Lake
Infrastructure shortcomings related to climate change
Agricultural costs and problems affecting both the Lake and wineries
Shrinking population impact on service provision and cost, including school district
Ongoing regional competition for people (new residents) and jobs (businesses/industry)

Topics/Actions to Consider

Continued downtown residential development
Traffic generating projects for downtown
Redevelopment of 5 Star Drive property
YMCA- construction and location
Facilitating and promoting Cornell Agri-tech efforts
WHS College- maximizing facilities and talent for community benefit
Expansion of public art
Inventory of space (for all types)
Noncompleted comprehensive plan elements (see below)
Possible update/clarification of the existing comprehensive plan
Homeownership program
Creating a labor task force to address workforce issues
Small business development – both recruitment and support
A new Race for the Space program

Marketing the City

Plan to increase the number of events & festivals

Seeking revenue generating businesses (tax generating)

More activities for kids and families

Redevelopment of key City parcels (OEO site, Foundry, Lake Street, Middle Street, Crystal Street)

Plan for redevelopment of the Town & Country Plaza on 5/20

Reinvigorate the GEDC

Castle Creek greenway project

Annual awards program to recognize success and progress

Repurposing of multiple churches in the community

Topics/Actions from Previous Plans (From David West Presentation)

Downtown

Package and aggressively promote building renovation & rehabilitation incentives

Create a building renovation task force to facilitate mixed-use projects

Leverage Geneva entrepreneurial lab to grow new and existing businesses

Improve downtown project coordination capacity

Lakefront/Downtown connectivity study element- OEO site

BOA- call for redevelopment of Middle Street and the Foundry

Active Transportation Plan elements- sidewalk infrastructure, improved bus stops, bike boulevard, and 6 priority intersection improvements

Lakefront

Connective streets and greenways

Increased programming at the lakefront

Marina construction

Boat ramp reconfiguration

Farmers' Market/event infrastructure improvements

Park maintenance

Housing

Castle Street residential corridor improvements (exposure and greenway)

Housing improvement program

Public space improvements at Agricultural Experiment Station property

Target zone for healthy neighborhoods programming

Sale of City surplus properties

2024 CDBG rehab/housing conditions study update

Collaborations with Habitat for Humanity & FL Community Action

Economic Advancement

Create and manage an economic opportunity task force – quarterly meetings

Collaborations with Geneva 2030 and Blueprint Geneva

Corridors

Exchange Street- housing loan and grant programs
Exchange Street- cooperative code enforcement
Exchange Street- BOA greenway (wards 4.5.6 plus connection to waterfront)
Hamilton Street- mixed-use off campus & senior housing
Hamilton Street- Town & Country Plaza redevelopment
Hamilton Street- celebratory features
Hamilton Street- median construction

Geneva Economic Development Strategy Interviews: A Summary of Feedback

1. There needs to be regular partner meetings and strategy sessions.
2. There needs to be a more formal process for recruitment and retention, with a designated point person for each sector.
3. Create an inventory of available space for all sectors.
4. Determine who will be doing visits – both retention and recruitment.
5. Market successes to the community. Image building is a necessity.
6. If tourism is so important, there needs to be closer connection to the TPA and more local efforts.
7. The American Can building may be sapping the resources and resolve of key organizations.
8. The school system needs to be built up, not broken down. It needs closer connections to businesses. Market 2030 Geneva collective impact.
9. City disposition of properties should support economic development goals.
10. CC facility under-utilized.
11. HWS and City should have regular formal meetings.
12. Strategic tourism plan needed... capital projects and programming.
13. Update and/or reaffirm comp. plan, especially for lakefront development.
14. Better connections with the lakefront.

15. Job placement navigator.
16. Downtown entertainment, especially family entertainment
17. Race for space.... Key types to focus on.
18. Business roundtable- quarterly meetings
19. Planning for the future with HWS
20. Historic walking tour
21. NHS style program
22. Major industry incentive program to buy/live Geneva
23. City- contract with an entity to image market the community
24. Business mentoring program
25. Incentives for middle housing
26. Senior housing- market rate
27. Developer forum
28. City MAP grants – continue and expand
29. Retail incubator option
30. Predictable, understandable, efficient permitting process
31. Transit- Lakefront to DT
32. Visitor center- better information on Geneva itself
33. Shovel ready sites for industry/or business/housing
34. BID metrics; ED metrics
35. Visits to other cities
36. Addressing Downtown vacancies

-
37. Continued 5/20 urbanization (especially Town & Country Plaza area)

38. N. Exchange Street expansion

Preparation for Workshop #2 (Tuesday July 23 @ 9:30 am at City Hall)

At workshop #2, we will be systematically working through the above material to prioritize and rank all the various actions and items. All of the above actions and items seem to fall within one of ten distinct categories:

- Downtown Renovation/Rehab/Revitalization
- Community Amenities
- Agricultural Technology
- Economic development processes
- Housing
- Economic development marketing
- Programming & Events
- Redevelopment of key City and community parcels/properties
- 5/20 densification
- Business recruitment, retention, and entrepreneurship
- Key City corridors

We will be working within each of these categories to set priorities and then rate/rank the ten clusters themselves. This will be a hands-on session with lots of critical thinking.

GENEVA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP #2

PRIORITIZATION AND RANKING OF ACTIONS AND TASKS

Review of Workshop #1

- SWOT analysis
- Review of previous plans
- Presentation of interview results

Where these 80 items came from

- Previous plans
- Interviews
- Workshop #1

Today's plan

- Go through each category together, responding and ranking in real time.
- Rank categories in overall priority
- Provide “extra vote” for items that are top priorities

Link to survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FM93N5X>



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (14)

Continue actively pursuing Downtown residential development

Pursue traffic generating projects for Downtown

Package & aggressively promote building renovation & rehab. incentives

Create a building renovation task force to facilitate mixed-use projects

Leverage Geneva entrepreneurial lab to grow new & existing businesses

Improve Downtown project coordination capacity

Invest in sidewalk infrastructure, improved bus stops, bike boulevards, and six priority intersection improvements (per Active Trans. Plan)

Improve Downtown/lakefront connections, including possible pedestrian shuttle

Create new Downtown entertainment options, particularly for youth and families

Address Downtown vacancies

Adopt BID dashboard and metrics

Undertake a North Exchange Street expansion initiative

Create a plan to increase the number of events & festivals

Create downtown and community historic walking tours and promote to visitors

COMMUNITY AMENITIES (10)

Facilitate YMCA location and construction

Work with HWS on a strategy to maximize facilities & talent for community benefit

Complete the Castle Creek greenway project (BOA plan)

Construct a new public marina on the Lake

Reconfigure and improve the current boat ramp

Provide new infrastructure to benefit the farmers' market and other lakefront events

Create a plan to bolster park maintenance

Work with the Community College to fill current empty or underutilized spaces

Provide ongoing support to the school system and work to improve district/business connections

Create an ongoing public art program

AGRI-TECH/INDUSTRY (5)

Facilitate & promote Cornell agri-tech efforts in Geneva

Actively seek new revenue generating business (tax generating)

Institute a Geneva job placement navigator program

Create a major industry incentive program to facilitate employees buying and living in Geneva

Undertake additional public space improvements at the Agric. Experiment Station property

HOUSING (11)

Continue to pursue new Downtown residential development

Create a Geneva homeownership program

Create a Geneva housing improvement/repair program

Pursue renewed neighborhood planning & programming

Undertake/complete 2024 CDBG rehab/housing condition study update

Collaborate with nonprofits committed to improving housing such as Habitat for Humanity & Finger Lakes Community Action

Create an Exchange Street area housing loan/grant program in conjunction with cooperative code enforcement

Pursue mixed use campus and senior housing in the Hamilton Street corridor

Create local incentives to promote middle housing development

Facilitate the creation of market rate senior housing

Facilitate the development of a local housing nonprofit charged with focusing on neighborhood improvement

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (13)

Undertake a review, clarification and/or update of the current Geneva comprehensive plan

Create a task force to address Geneva area workforce issues

Reinvigorate the Geneva EDC

Create and manage an ongoing economic opportunities task force with quarterly meetings

Collaborate with Geneva 2030 and Blueprint Geneva

Arrange for regular economic development partner meetings and strategy sessions

Forge a closer relationship with the County TPA as well as strengthen local tourism planning efforts

Institute more formal and regular meetings between the City and both HWS and FLCC

Create a Geneva strategic tourism plan that covers both capital and programmatic items

Convene a Geneva area developers forum

Commit to an updated predictable, understandable, and efficient City permitting process

Work with the State visitor center to improve the information and displays pertaining to Geneva

Work on an effort to create shovel ready sites for industry, business, and/or housing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY MKTG (6)

Create a market Geneva image building campaign focusing on the City and community

Initiate an annual awards program to celebrate successes and achievements

Create a strategy for routinely marketing successes to the community and beyond

Contract with a third-party entity or hire City staff to coordinate community marketing

Create and maintain dashboards for both City economic development efforts and BID efforts

Initiate annual community visits to other cities to share/learn economic development information

REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY CITY & COMMUNITY PROPERTIES (9)

Pursue the redevelopment of the Five Star Drive property

Pursue redevelopment of the City owned OEO site

Pursue redevelopment/reuse of the Foundry (American Can) properties

Pursue redevelopment of Lake Street property

Pursue redevelopment of Middle Street properties

Pursue redevelopment of Crystal Street properties

Facilitate the process for the sale of surplus city owned properties, ensuring that sales contribute to economic development goals

Research and plan for a retail incubator project

Facilitate the repurposing the multiple underutilized church properties in the City

5/20 DENSIFICATION (4)

Plan for and facilitate the redevelopment of the Town & Country Plaza area properties

Create a strategy for continued 5/20 corridor densification

Complete Hamilton Street median reconstruction

Complete Hamilton Street celebratory features work

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT / RETENTION / ENTREPRENEURSHIP (8)

Prepare a strategy for small business development that focuses on both recruitment and support/retention of existing businesses

Undertake a new Race for the Space program

Create and maintain a comprehensive inventory of available spaces for all sectors

Define and enact a more formal and systematic process for business recruitment & retention

Create a business visitation plan and schedule

Convene periodic (quarterly) business roundtable meetings

Create/facilitate a business mentoring program

Continue and expand the City MAP grant program

Workshop Session #3: Categorized Tasks/Items

Priorities from working group voting

Recommended baseline process actions

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (13)

Continue actively pursuing Downtown residential development- BID, City,

Pursue traffic generating projects for Downtown- BID, City,

Package & aggressively promote building renovation & rehab. incentives- City, BID

Create a building renovation task force to facilitate mixed-use projects

Leverage Geneva entrepreneurial lab to grow new & existing businesses

Improve Downtown project coordination capacity

Invest in sidewalk infrastructure, improved bus stops, bike boulevards, and six priority intersection improvements (per Active Trans. Plan)

Improve Downtown/lakefront connections, including possible pedestrian shuttle - City, BID, State, Trans, agency

Create new Downtown entertainment options, particularly for youth and families

Address Downtown vacancies- BID,

Adopt BID dashboard and metrics

Undertake a North Exchange Street expansion initiative

COMMUNITY AMENITIES (10)

Facilitate YMCA location and construction

Work with HWS on a strategy to maximize facilities & talent for community benefit- City, HWS

Complete the Castle Creek greenway project (BOA plan) - City

Construct a new public marina on the Lake - City

Reconfigure and improve the current boat ramp

Provide new infrastructure to benefit the farmers' market and other lakefront events

Create a plan to bolster park maintenance - City

Work with the Community College to fill current empty or underutilized spaces

Provide ongoing support to the school system and work to improve district/business connections

Create an ongoing public art program

AGRI-TECH/INDUSTRY (5)

Facilitate & promote Cornell agric-tech efforts in Geneva

Actively seek new revenue generating business (tax generating) - City, LDC, IDA, BID

Institute a Geneva job placement navigator program

Create a major industry incentive program to facilitate employees buying and living in Geneva - City, Industry leaders

Undertake additional public space improvements at the Agric. Experiment Station property

HOUSING (11)

Continue to pursue new Downtown residential development

Create a Geneva homeownership program

Create a Geneva housing improvement/repair program - City, CDBG, LDC

Pursue renewed neighborhood planning & programming - City, LDC,

Undertake/complete 2024 CDBG rehab/housing condition study update -City

Collaborate with nonprofits committed to improving housing such as Habitat for Humanity & Finger Lakes Community Action - City, nonprofits

Create an Exchange Street area housing loan/grant program in conjunction with cooperative code enforcement

Pursue mixed use campus and senior housing in the Hamilton Street corridor

Create local incentives to promote middle housing development - City, IDA, LDC

Facilitate the creation of market rate senior housing

Facilitate the development of a local housing nonprofit charged with focusing on neighborhood improvement

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (14)

Undertake a review, clarification and/or update of the current Geneva comprehensive plan - City

Create a task force to address Geneva area workforce issues

Reinvigorate the Geneva EDC

Collaborate with Geneva 2030 and Blueprint Geneva

Arrange for regular economic development partner meetings and strategy sessions

Create and manage an ongoing economic opportunities task force with quarterly meetings - City, LDC, IDA, BID

Prepare a plan for business visitation

Forge a closer relationship with the County TPA as well as strengthen local tourism planning efforts

Institute more formal and regular meetings between the City and both HWS and FLCC.

Create a Geneva strategic tourism plan that covers both capital and programmatic items

Convene a Geneva area developers forum

Commit to an updated predictable, understandable, and efficient City permitting process

Work with the State visitor center to improve the information and displays pertaining to Geneva

Work on an effort to create shovel ready sites for industry, business, and/or housing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY MARKETING (6)

Create a market Geneva image building campaign focusing on the City and community - City, BID, HWS,

Initiate an annual awards program to celebrate successes and achievements

Create a strategy for routinely marketing successes to the community and beyond - City, BID, HWS

Contract with a third-party entity or hire City staff to coordinate community marketing

Create and maintain dashboards for both City economic development efforts and BID efforts

Initiate annual community visits to other cities to share/learn economic development information

PROGRAMMING & EVENTS (2)

Create a plan to increase the number of events & festivals
Create downtown and community historic walking tours and promote to visitors

REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY CITY & COMMUNITY PROPERTIES (9)

Pursue the redevelopment of the Five Star Drive property
Pursue redevelopment of the City owned OEO site - City, IDA
Pursue redevelopment/reuse of the Foundry (American Can) properties
Pursue redevelopment of Lake Street property
Pursue redevelopment of Middle Street properties
Pursue redevelopment of Crystal Street properties
Facilitate the process for the sale of surplus city owned properties, ensuring that sales contribute to economic development goals - City, IDA, LDC, BID
Research and plan for a retail incubator project
Facilitate the repurposing the multiple underutilized church properties in the City

5/20 DENSIFICATION (4)

Plan for and facilitate the redevelopment of the Town & Country Plaza area properties - City, HWS
Create a strategy for continued 5/20 corridor densification
Complete Hamilton Street median reconstruction
Complete Hamilton Street celebratory features work

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT/RETENTION/ENTREPRENEURSHIP (9)

Prepare a strategy for small business development that focuses on both recruitment and support/retention of existing businesses
Undertake a new Race for the Space program
Create and maintain a comprehensive inventory of available spaces for all sectors
Define and enact a more formal and systematic process for business recruitment & retention
Create a business visitation plan and schedule
Convene periodic (quarterly) business roundtable meetings
Create/facilitate a business mentoring program
Continue and expand the City MAP grant program - City
Create a plan to address Downtown vacancies

Workshop Session #3: Priority Tasks/Items

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (13)

1. Continue actively pursuing Downtown residential development- **BID, City,**
2. Pursue traffic generating projects for Downtown- **BID, City,**
3. Package & aggressively promote building renovation & rehab. incentives- **City, BID**
4. Improve Downtown/lakefront connections, including possible pedestrian shuttle - **City, BID, State, Trans, agency**
5. Address Downtown vacancies- **BID,**

COMMUNITY AMENITIES (10)

6. Work with HWS on a strategy to maximize facilities & talent for community benefit- **City, HWS**
7. Complete the Castle Creek greenway project (BOA plan) - **City**
8. Construct a new public marina on the Lake - **City**
9. Create a plan to bolster park maintenance - **City**

AGRI-TECH/INDUSTRY (5)

10. Actively seek new revenue generating business (tax generating) - **City, LDC, IDA, BID**
11. Create a major industry incentive program to facilitate employees buying and living in Geneva - **City, Industry leaders**

HOUSING (11)

12. Create a Geneva housing improvement/repair program - **City, CDBG, LDC**
13. Pursue renewed neighborhood planning & programming - **City, LDC,**
14. Undertake/complete 2024 CDBG rehab/housing condition study update - **City**
15. Collaborate with nonprofits committed to improving housing such as Habitat for Humanity & Finger Lakes Community Action - **City, nonprofits**
16. Create local incentives to promote middle housing development - **City, IDA, LDC**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (14)

17. Undertake a review, clarification and/or update of the current Geneva comprehensive plan - **City**
18. Create and manage an ongoing economic opportunities task force with quarterly meetings - **City, LDC, IDA, BID**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY MARKETING (6)

19. Create a market Geneva image building campaign focusing on the City and community - **City, BID, HWS,**

20. Create a strategy for routinely marketing successes to the community and beyond - City, BID, HWS

REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY CITY & COMMUNITY PROPERTIES (9)

21. Pursue redevelopment of the City owned OEO site - City, IDA
22. Facilitate the process for the sale of surplus city owned properties, ensuring that sales contribute to economic development goals - City, IDA, LDC, BID

5/20 DENSIFICATION (4)

23. Plan for and facilitate the redevelopment of the Town & Country Plaza area properties - City, HWS

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT/RETENTION/ENTREPRENEURSHIP (9)

24. Continue and expand the City MAP grant program - City

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ITEM TEMPLATE

(Item name/title)

Success metrics:

- We will know we are making progress when:
- We will know we have successfully completed this item when:

To successfully complete this item, the following resources will be needed:

Where will we seek these resources and how certain are they?

What is the time schedule for this item. Identify tasks by quarter:

Year 1

Q1:

Q2:

Q3:

Q4:

Year 2

Q1:

Q2:

Q3:

Q4:

Year 3

Q1:

Q2:

Q3:

Q4:

Beyond Year 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEMPLATE

Redevelop the OEO site

(Item name/title)

Success metrics:

- We will know we are making progress when:
RFP prepared and issued with Council agreement
- We will know we have successfully completed this item when:
Developer selected, site plan review completed, and construction underway

To successfully complete this item, the following resources will be needed:

Likely local tax incentives

Time for staff to prepare a RFP

Where will we seek these resources and how certain are they?

Tax incentives from the IDA

Staff time from- David West

What is the time schedule for this item. Identify tasks by quarter:

Year 1

Q1: Obtain Council agreement to proceed

Q2: Draft RFP

Q3: Issue RFP and collect proposals

Q4: Evaluate proposals and select preferred developer; enter into agreement with developer

Year 2

Q1: Developer preliminary design and geotech work

Q2:

Q3: Site plan review process commences

Q4:

Year 3

Q1: Site plan approval

Q2:

Q3:

Q4:

Beyond Year 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND TASK MATRIX FOR GENEVA, NY

	<u>Who does this?</u>	<u>Who else should?</u>
Industrial business attraction	CoED	City PED
Industrial business retention & expansion	CoED	City PED
Industrial business ongoing support	CoED	City PED, IDA
Workforce training	Co workforce prog Nonprofits, Nonprofits, FLCC	----
Workforce navigator	---	FLCC, nonprofits
Micro credentialing/training	FLCC	----
Office business attraction	Private sector	City PED, BID
Office business retention	---	City PED, BID
Office business ongoing support	Local Chamber	BID
Retail/Service business attraction	BID some; City ED Landlords/Prop. owners	BID, City PED
Retail/Service business retention	BID some	BID
Retail/Service business ongoing support	BID some	BID
Hospitality business (lodging, F&B) attraction	City PED some	Support from Co.
Hospitality Business retention	---	Support from Co.
Hospitality business ongoing support	---	BID, Co tourism
Entrepreneurship development- tech	CU/Tech Park FLCC	
Entrepreneurship development- commercial (inc. retail)	HWS Entrep. Prog	FLCC
Micro business development /promotion- loan/grant/TA	Iberro, City PED	
BIPOC business development and promotion- loan/grant/TA	Iberro	
Angel capital	---	---
Venture capital	---	---
General business investment pool	---	---
Commercial façade programs	City some	---

Commercial signage programs	---	---
Commercial or mixed-use developer/investor recruitment	City some	---
Housing development/investor recruitment	City some	---
Minority developer recruitment/nurturing	---	---
Real estate development facilitation	City some	---
Housing development facilitation	City some	IDA/LDC
Housing rehab facilitation (incl. grant/loan programs)	City- prior	IDA
Energy efficiency programs for commercial and housing	----	---
Homeownership promotion	-----	LDC
Land/property banking	City	---
Predevelopment facilitation	---	LDC
Site readiness- industrial	IDA	---
Site readiness- housing	IDA	---
Site readiness- commercial	----	---
Tax incentive programs (incl. abatements and TIF)	IDA	---
Economic development community infrastructure (internet, properly sized utilities)	City some	---
Downtown revitalization	BID, City	---
Neighborhood district revitalization	prior- City	---
Other commercial district revitalization	City	---
Employee transportation	Co transp.	---
Employee childcare	---	---