Green Cove Springs
Downtown Form Based Code
Public Workshop #1 Summary

WORKSHOP INFORMATION

Date and Time: Tuesday, August 8, 2023, from 6 to 8 pm

Venue: Green Cove Springs City Hall (321 Walnut St, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a summary of the first Public Workshop for the Green Cove Springs Downtown Form Based Code. The Workshop summarized in this document was the first opportunity for public engagement in a series of two workshops that will help guide the regulations.

Mike Daniels, Development Services Director, opened the workshop by introducing Pat Tyjeski, the Inspire Project Manager, and thanked the community for participating in the workshop. Pat introduced the Inspire Team and shared a brief PowerPoint presentation (attached) introducing the project to the public—the slides of which are included at the end of this document. The presentation discussed the scope and goals of the project, the basic concepts of form-based codes, project boundaries, timeline, and initial findings of the Downtown analysis. A video of a 3D model of Downtown Green Cove Springs showing existing conditions was also presented, demonstrating that when buildings are placed close to the street vehicular traffic tends to slow down. During the presentation it was also explained that the regulations created by this project would only apply to new construction and if existing buildings were to be redeveloped. Workshop attendees were then invited to provide their feedback through engagement activities including an urban form preference exercise and input boards.

Pat mentioned to the attendees that a project website (tinyurl.com/GCSFBC) was created to reach individuals who could not make it to the workshop and for community members at large to find out information regarding the project, download documents, and provide input by using the interactive map feature.

SCAN ME

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Workshop attendees were asked to participate in the engagement activities, starting with the urban form preference exercise and then the input boards placed around the room. The primary purpose of the engagement activities was to generate public input on the issues, opportunities, and strategies that should guide the development of the form-based code. A description of each activity's intent and methodology is provided below. Additionally, a summary of the input received is provided in the **Key Takeaways** section of this memorandum.

Activity One: *Urban Form Preference*

Participants were asked to gather around tables with a map of the study area and were provided with Legos to create their desired development pattern. Participants were asked to consider land use, setbacks, and building height preferences. Participants were given a set amount of time to collaborate. To wrap up the group activity, a group leader from each table presented their group's idea to workshop attendees.

Activity Two: *Preferences by Corridor*

Five boards were set up around the room, asking the participants to rate preferences for development along the five major corridors in Downtown: Orange Avenue, Walnut Street, Ferris Street, Palmetto Avenue, and Magnolia Avenue. Participants were given dots to express their preference in the topics of building height and setbacks, architecture, and public realm improvements. Participants were also given a list of uses and were asked to place a dot showing their preferred land uses along each corridor.

A "catch-all" board was also provided for participants to leave comments that weren't exactly relevant to the other activities, or to suggest ideas that were not mentioned earlier in the workshop. This board allowed the community space to offer unique ideas and perspectives that were not previously considered by the design team.

ACTIVITY RESULTS/KEY TAKEAWAYS

During the first activity, many residents focused their planning efforts on Walnut Street, as that was seen by participants as the main area of the downtown. Most groups wanted to keep the height in this area at two stories; however, some groups were not opposed to development along Walnut Street reaching up to three stories in height. The overwhelming consensus was for Walnut to be commercia—particularly on the first floor, with some groups considering mixed use, office, or multifamily as potential uses on the second story. A couple of groups stated that Orange Avenue (US Highway 17) could allow three stories. Some groups wanted to remind project staff that many buildings downtown are historic, their desire to ensure lower building height adjacent to these historic buildings, and to be mindful of the transition from the historic buildings to new development. All four groups expressed a strong desire to increase safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicycles in the downtown area. One group proposed widening sidewalks along Orange Avenue. Many groups mentioned the desire to have event spaces and green spaces downtown, which some noted may be achieved by expanding Spring Park.

Parking is a concern as local events attract many residents downtown which exacerbates the area's limited parking supply. The City is already looking into potential parking solutions for the downtown area, but several groups suggested establishing some regional parking areas outside the study area which can shuttle riders to and from the downtown. Another parking suggestion was to allow some grass parking areas that could serve as green space for the downtown.

The second activity allowed each workshop participant to indicate what their preference would be along the five main corridors which intersect the study area. Many participants had a mutual agreement for maintaining a two-story limit throughout the downtown area, especially along Magnolia Avenue and Walnut Street, though some thought three or four stories could work along Palmetto, Orange, and Ferris. Most of the participants wanted buildings to be placed close to the sidewalk; however, some desired that the buildings be set back away from the road but did not wish to see parking placed between the building and street. For architectural preference along Magnolia, Walnut, Orange, and Ferris the desire from participants was to have uniform, traditional architecture, though some liked the idea of diverse architecture with standards. Along Palmetto, diverse architecture with standards was the preferred choice amongst participants.

Participants also expressed their desire to improve the walkability of downtown Green Cove Springs and welcomed wider sidewalks and landscaping strips. As far as preferred uses, retail, and dining were the top choices selected on all roads other than Palmetto. Along Palmetto Avenue, the preferred use was office space with participants also selecting townhouses as the other favored use. The data and feedback received during the public workshop will be used to inform the recommendations for form-based regulations for Downtown Green Cove Springs.

WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

City of Green Cove Springs

1. Mike Daniels, Green Cove Springs Development Services Director
2. Jim Arnold, City Attorney
3. Lyndie Knowles, Green Cove Springs

Inspire Placemaking Collective

4. Pat Tyjeski, Project Manager
5. Claudia Sicilia, Urban Designer
6. Nick Hill, Planner
7. Gabriela Castro, Planner
8. Erik Bredfeldt, Economic Development Planner
9. Yesenia Castaneda, Planning Intern

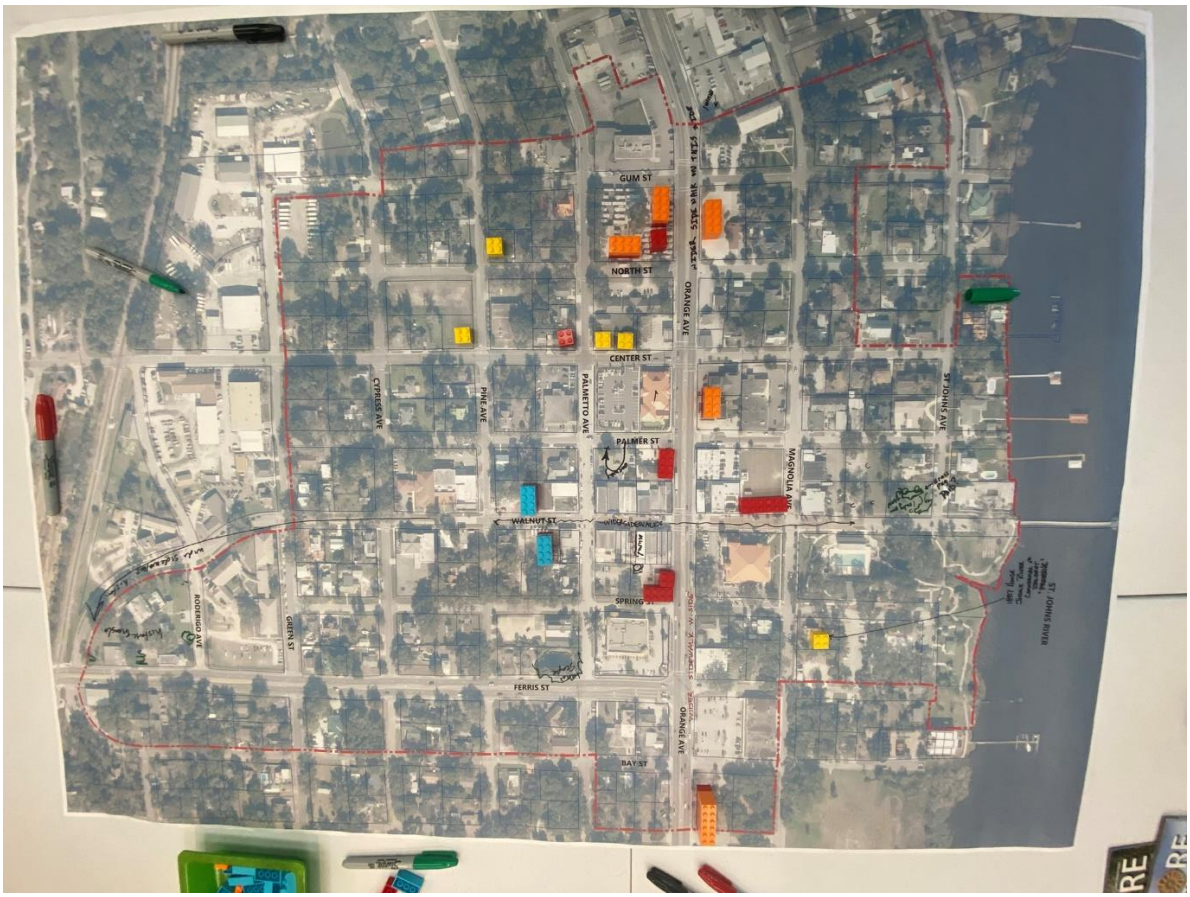
Participants

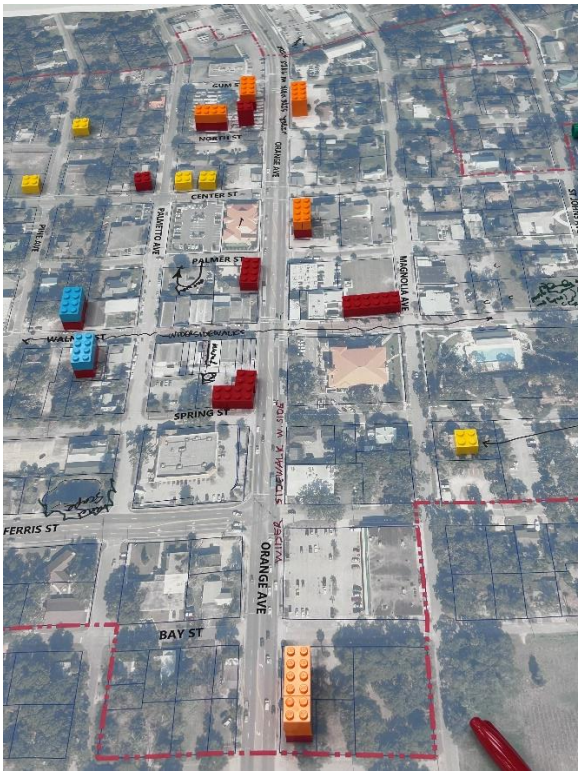
10. Donna Snelling
11. Cindy Sweat
12. Daniel Hutto
13. Rob Justino
14. Joe Kirkpatrick
15. Rosalind Arnold
16. Jim Salem
17. Dan Jollota
18. Dan Nichols
19. Dodie Seling
20. Jane Jollota
21. Susan Hibdon
22. Amy Hutto
23. Pam Lewis
24. Lesley J Davidson
25. Mary Justino
26. Maryanne Scales

URBAN FORM EXERCISE: RAW DATA

Table 1

Table 2


GUM ST
NORTH ST
ORANGE AVE
CENTER ST
CYPRESS AVE
PINE AVE
PALMETTO AVE
PALMER ST
MAGNOLIA AVE
ST JOHNS AVE
WALNUT ST
SPRING ST
GREEN ST
FERRIS ST
BAY ST

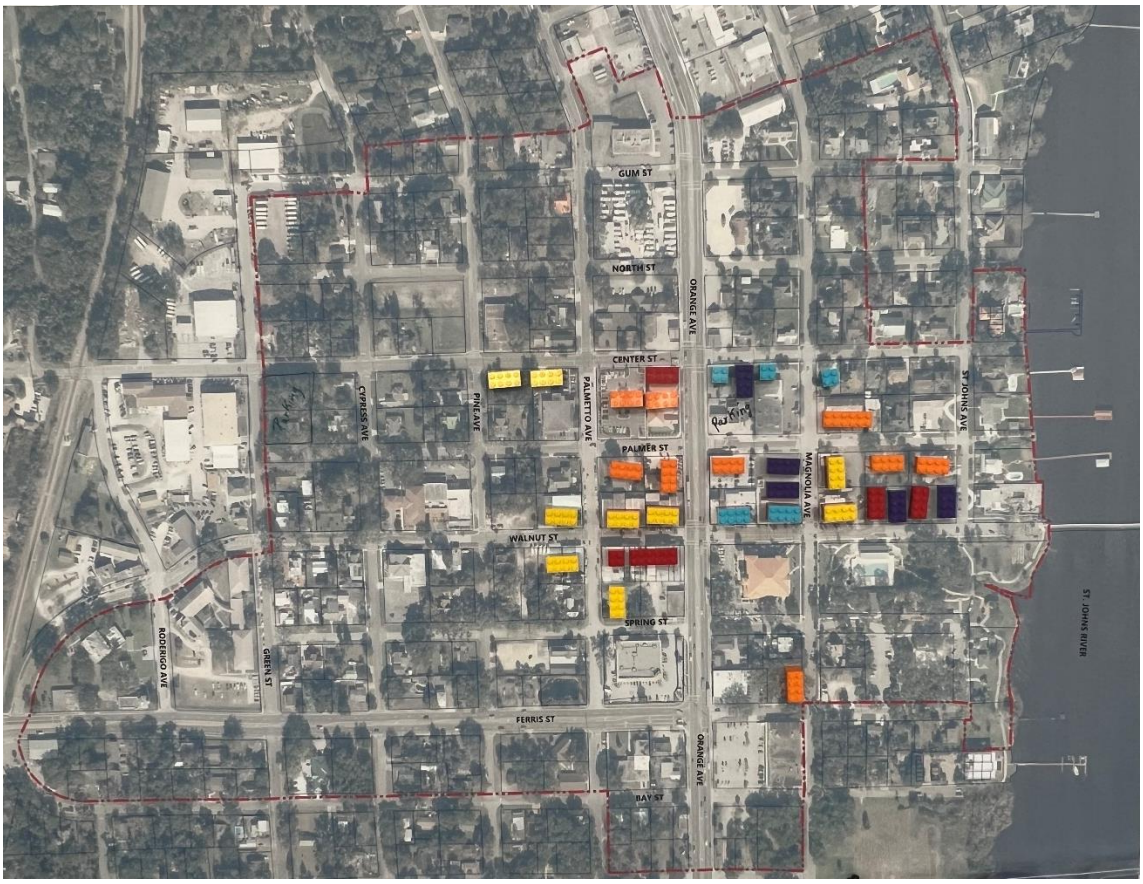

GUM ST
NORTH ST
ORANGE AVE
CENTER ST
PALMETTO AVE
PALMER ST
MAGNOLIA AVE
SPRING ST
FERRIS ST
ORANGE AVE
BAY ST

PALMER
WIDE SIDEWALKS

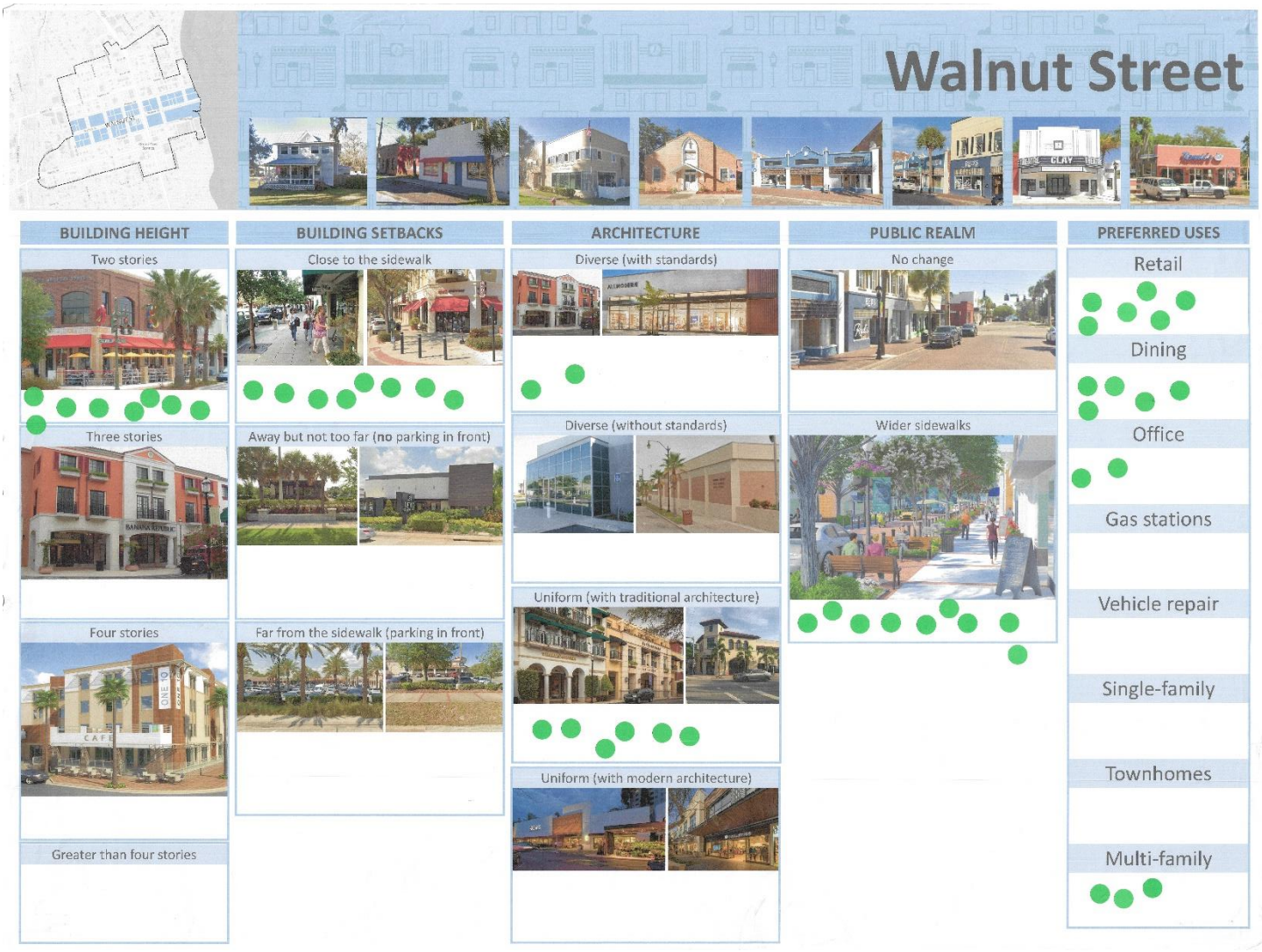
Table 3

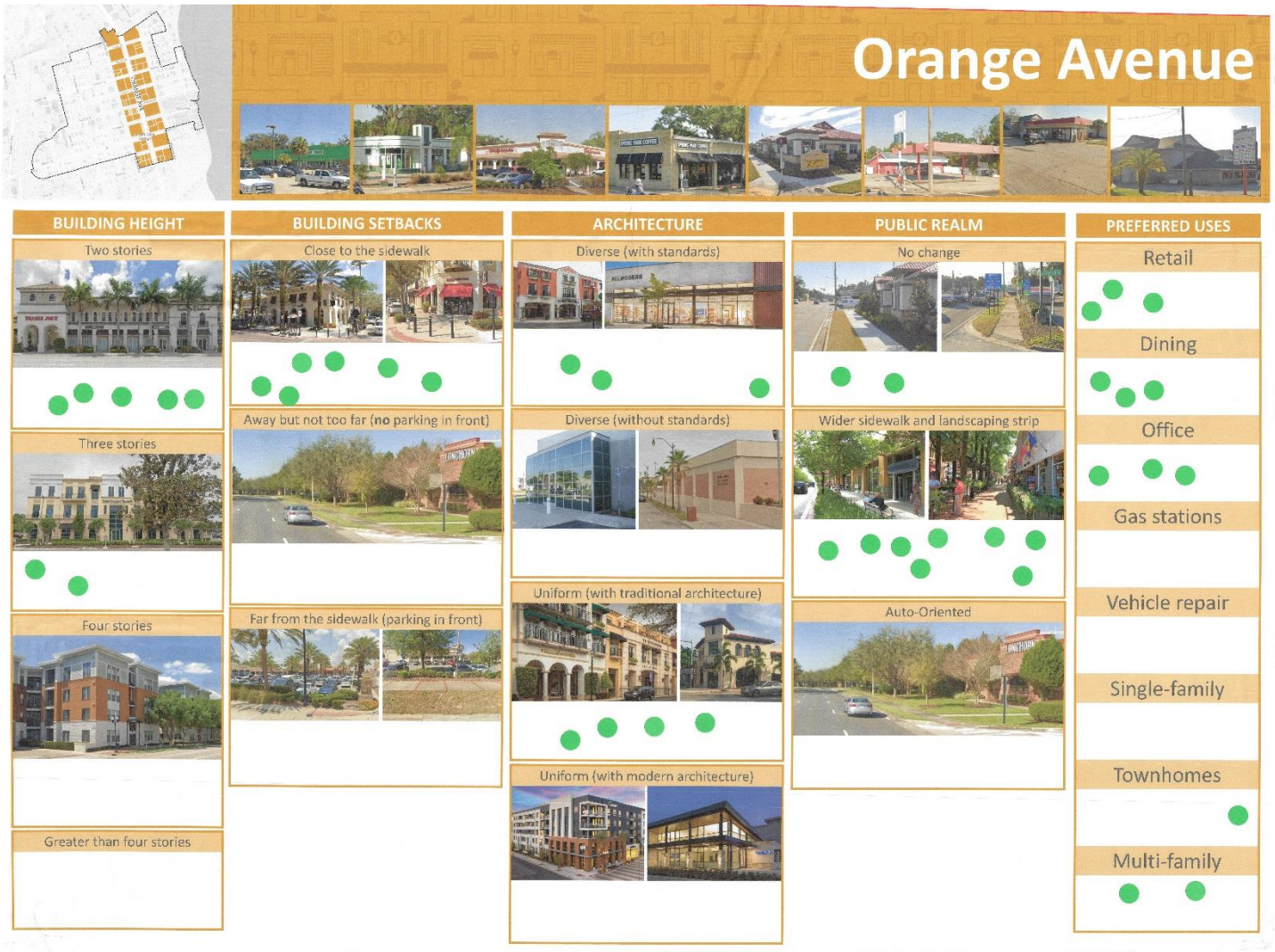
GUM ST
NORTH ST
ORANGE AVE
CENTER ST
CYPRESS AVE
PINE AVE
PALMETTO AVE
PALMER ST
MAGNOLIA AVE
ST JOHNS AVE
WALNUT ST
SPRING ST
ST JOHNS RIVER
RODERIGO AVE
GREEN ST
FERRIS ST
ORANGE AVE
BAY ST

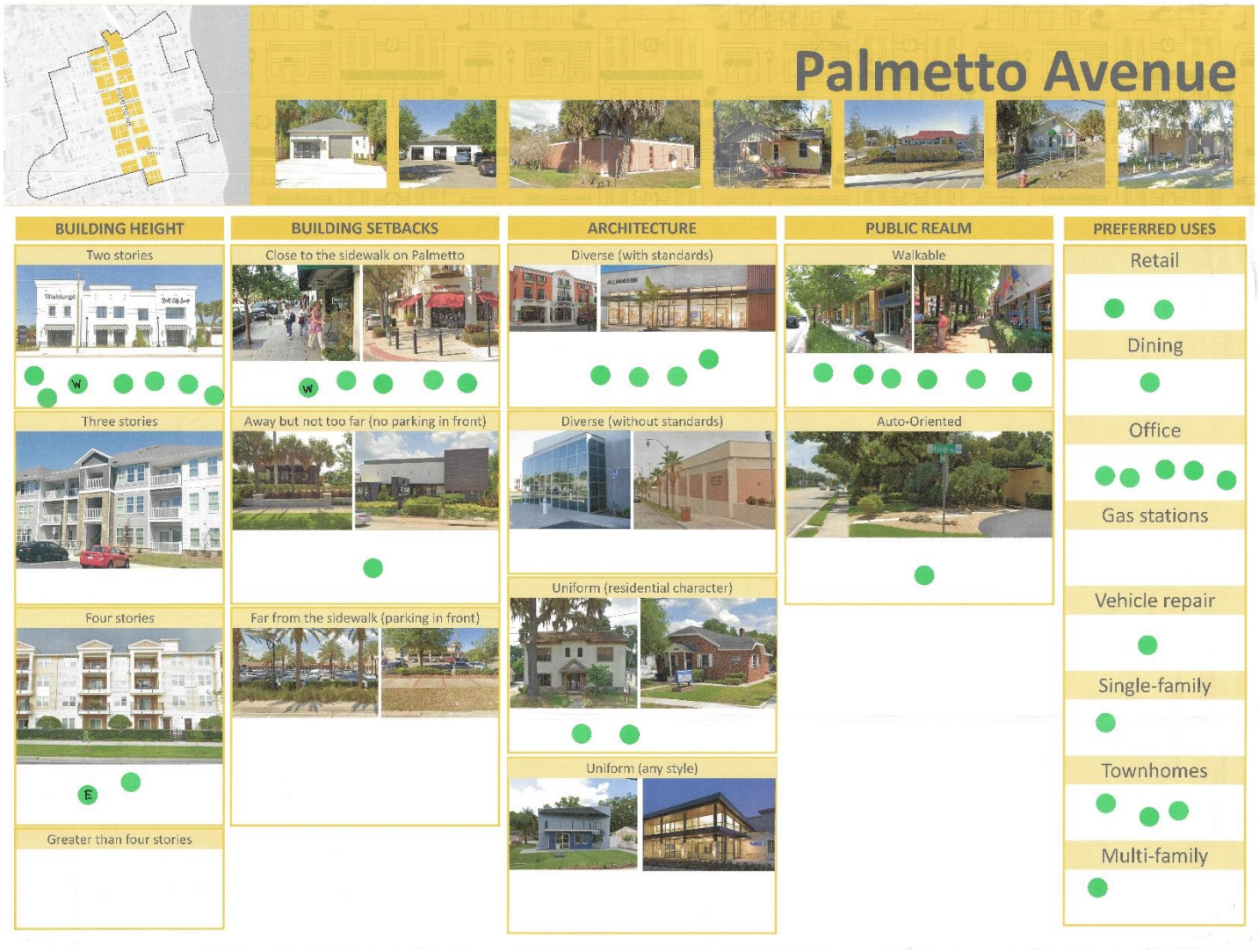
Table 4

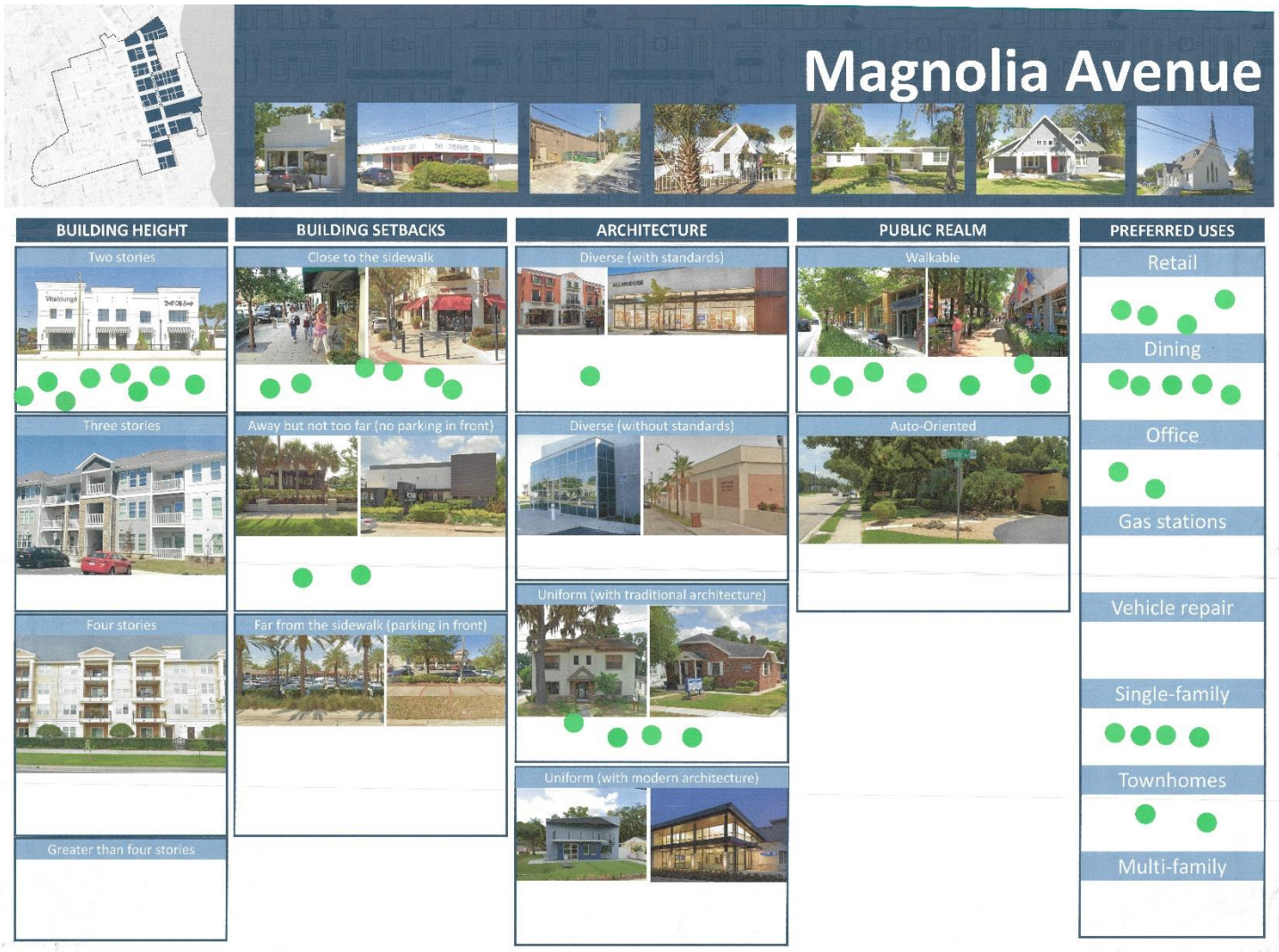

GUM ST
NORTH ST
ORANGE AVE
CENTER ST
CYPRESS AVE
PINE AVE
PALMETTO AVE
PALMER ST
MAGNOLIA AVE
ST JOHNS AVE
WALNUT ST
SPRING ST
ROBERTO AVE
GREEN ST
FERRIS ST
ORANGE AVE
BAY ST
ST JOHNS RIVER

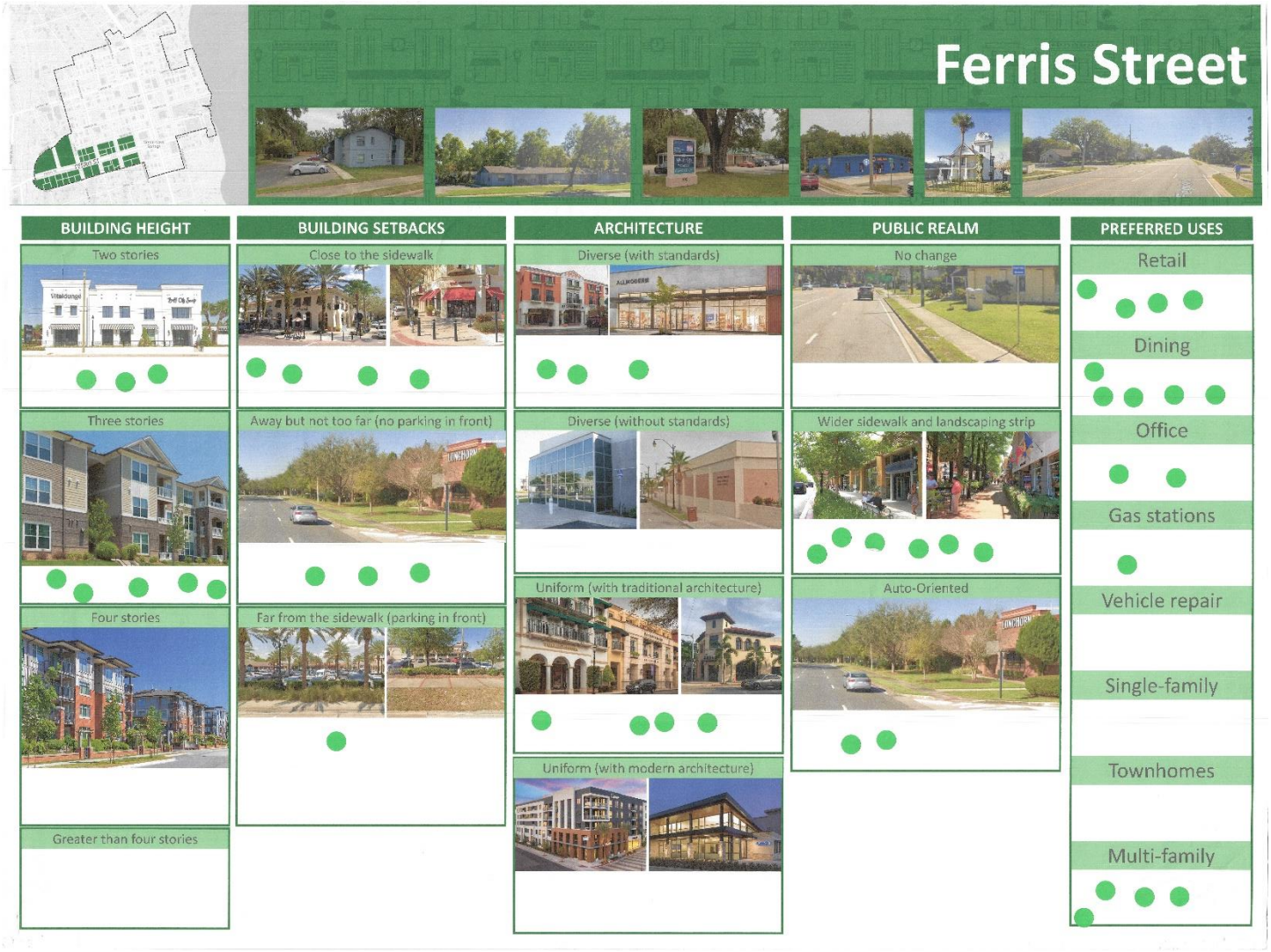
BOARD RESULTS: RAW DATA

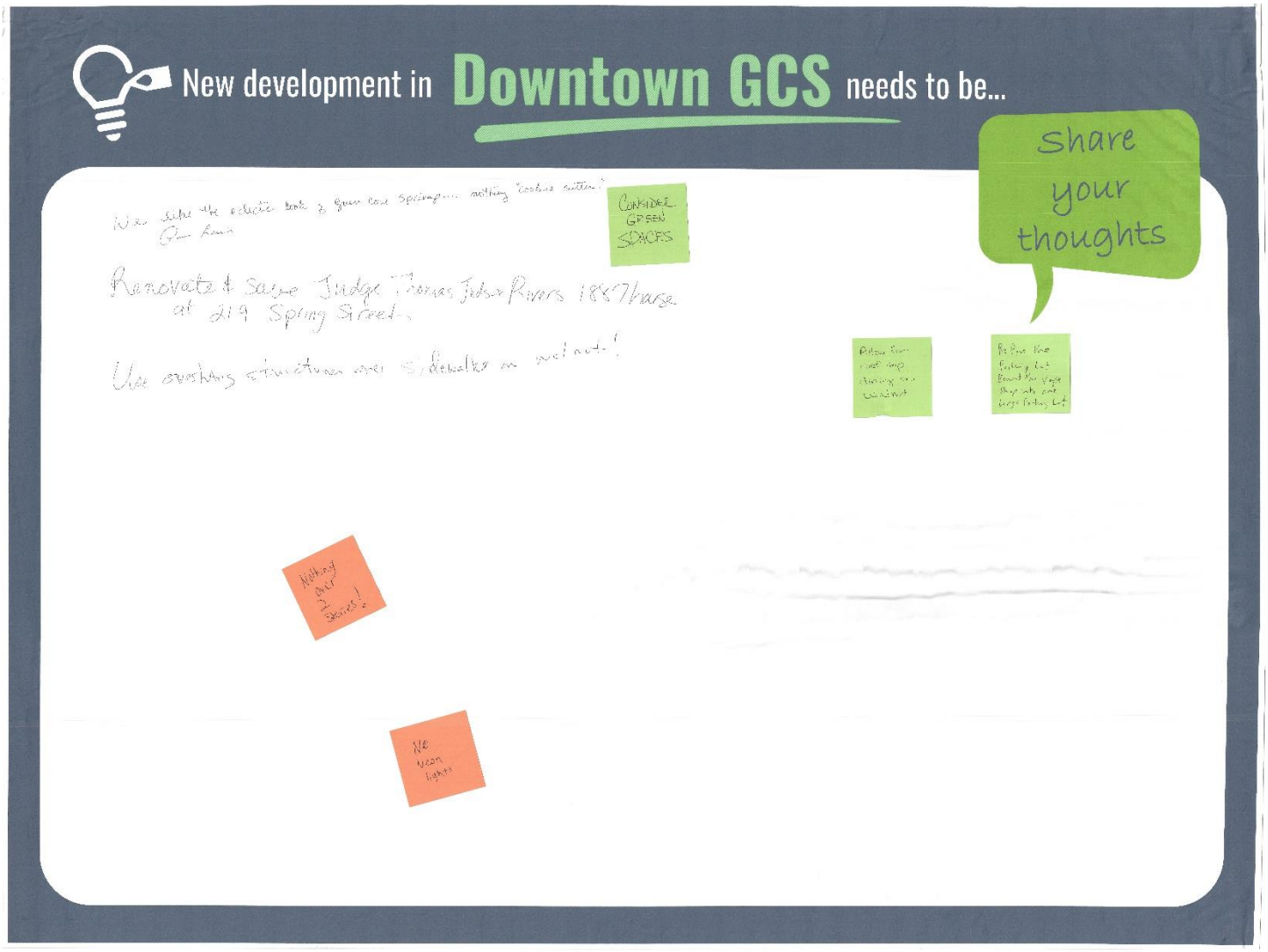



Orange Avenue
BUILDING HEIGHT
Two stories
Three stories
Four stories
Greater than four stories
BUILDING SETBACKS
Close to the sidewalk
Away but not too far (no parking in front)
Far from the sidewalk (parking in front)
ARCHITECTURE
Diverse (with standards)
Diverse (without standards)
Uniform (with traditional architecture)
Uniform (with modern architecture)
PUBLIC REALM
No change
Wider sidewalk and landscaping strip
Auto-Oriented
PREFERRED USES
Retail
Dining
Office
Gas stations
Vehicle repair
Single-family
Townhomes
Multi-family


Palmetto Avenue
BUILDING HEIGHT
Two stories
W
Three stories
Four stories
E
Greater than four stories
BUILDING SETBACKS
Close to the sidewalk on Palmetto
W
Away but not too far (no parking in front)
Far from the sidewalk (parking in front)
ARCHITECTURE
Diverse (with standards)
Diverse (without standards)
Uniform (residential character)
Uniform (any style)
PUBLIC REALM
Walkable
Auto-Oriented
PREFERRED USES
Retail
Dining
Office
Gas stations
Vehicle repair
Single-family
Townhomes
Multi-family


Magnolia Avenue
BUILDING HEIGHT
Two stories
Three stories
Four stories
Greater than four stories
BUILDING SETBACKS
Close to the sidewalk
Away but not too far (no parking in front)
Far from the sidewalk (parking in front)
ARCHITECTURE
Diverse (with standards)
Diverse (without standards)
Uniform (with traditional architecture)
Uniform (with modern architecture)
PUBLIC REALM
Walkable
Auto-Oriented
PREFERRED USES
Retail
Dining
Office
Gas stations
Vehicle repair
Single-family
Townhomes
Multi-family

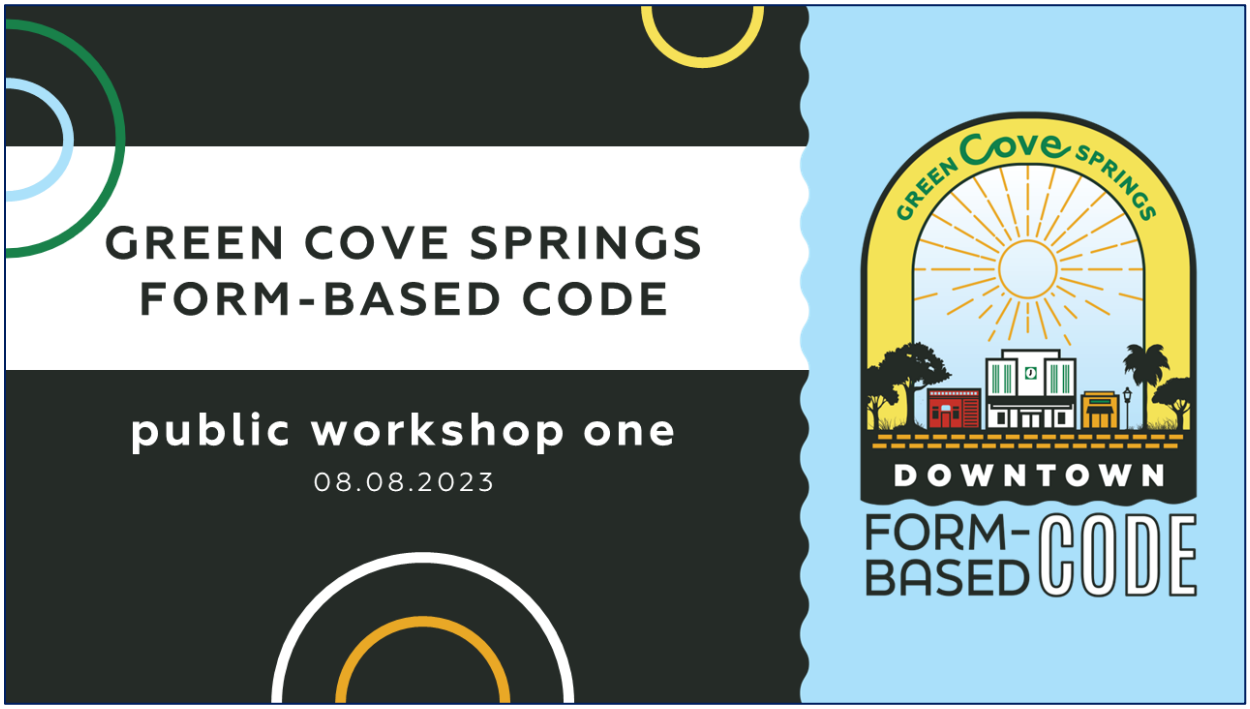

Ferris Street
BUILDING HEIGHT
Two stories
Three stories
Four stories
Greater than four stories
BUILDING SETBACKS
Close to the sidewalk
Away but not too far (no parking in front)
Far from the sidewalk (parking in front)
ARCHITECTURE
Diverse (with standards)
Diverse (without standards)
Uniform (with traditional architecture)
Uniform (with modern architecture)
PUBLIC REALM
No change
Wider sidewalk and landscaping strip
Auto-Oriented
PREFERRED USES
Retail
Dining
Office
Gas stations
Vehicle repair
Single-family
Townhomes
Multi-family

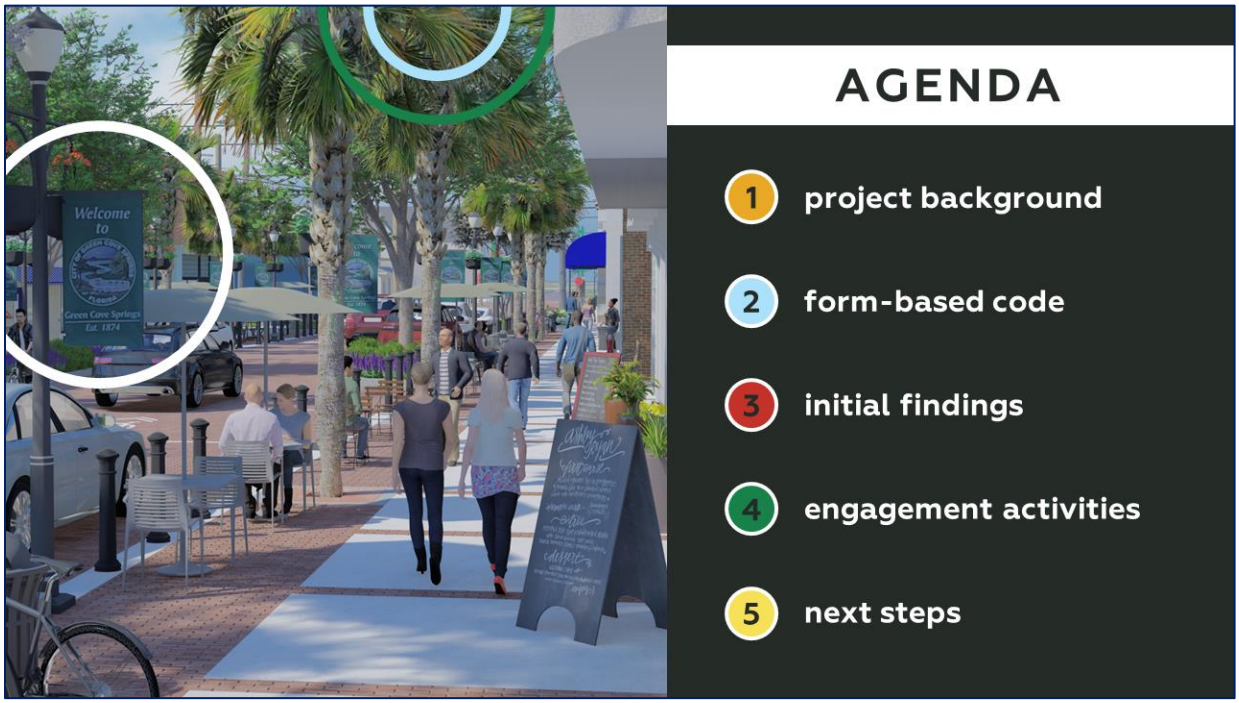


Share your ideas!

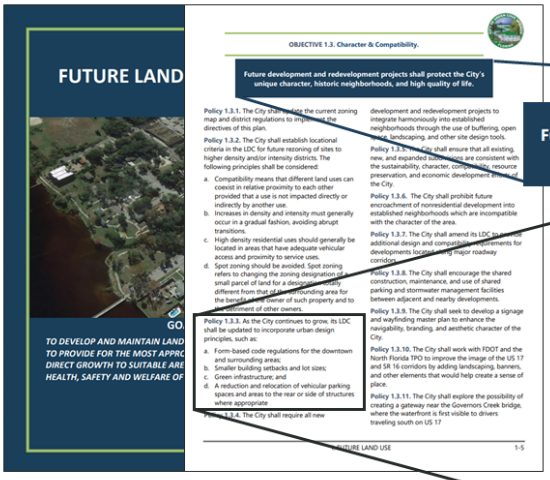
- We like the eclectic look of Green Cove Springs… nothing “cookie cutter”
- Renovate & Save Judge Thomas Judson Rivers 1887 house at 219 Spring Street
- Use overhang structures over sidewalks on Walnut
- Consider Green Spaces
- Allow for rooftop dining on Walnut
- Repave the parking lot behind the vape shop into one large parking lot
- Nothing over 2 stories
- No neon lights

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION





PROJECT BACKGROUND



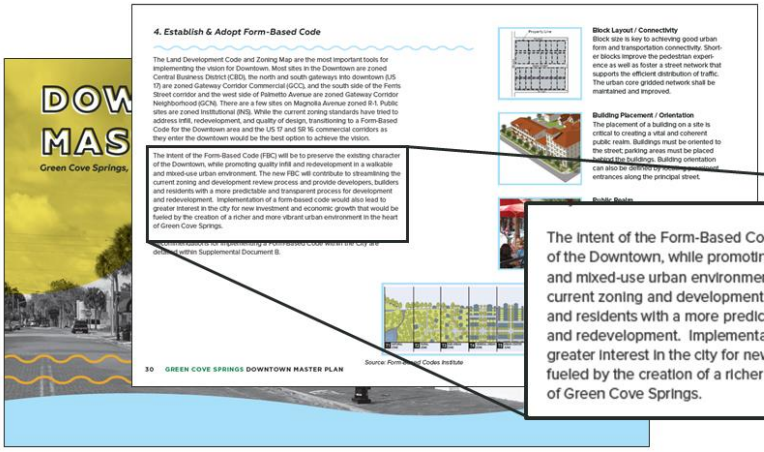
Future development and redevelopment projects shall protect the City's unique character, historic neighborhoods, and high quality of life.

Policy 1.3.3. As the City continues to grow, its LDC shall be updated to incorporate urban design principles, such as:

a. Form-based code regulations for the downtown and surrounding areas;
b. Smaller building setbacks and lot sizes;
c. Green infrastructure; and
d. A reduction and relocation of vehicular parking spaces and areas to the rear or side of structures where appropriate

February 2022

PROJECT BACKGROUND



The intent of the Form-Based Code (FBC) will be to preserve the existing character of the Downtown, while promoting quality infill and redevelopment in a walkable and mixed-use urban environment. The new FBC will contribute to streamlining the current zoning and development review process and provide developers, builders and residents with a more predictable and transparent process for development and redevelopment. Implementation of a form-based code would also lead to greater interest in the city for new investment and economic growth that would be fueled by the creation of a richer and more vibrant urban environment in the heart of Green Cove Springs.

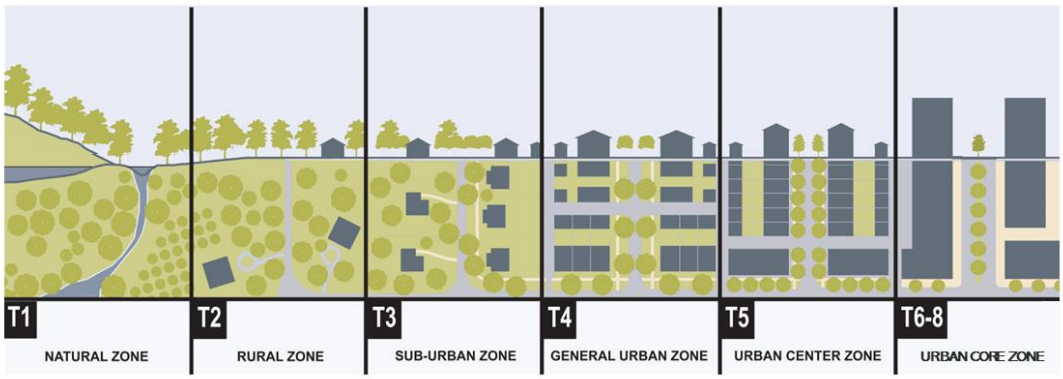
April 2022

FORM-BASED CODE

Form-Based Codes are:

- an alternative to conventional zoning
- regulations, not guidelines
- focused on the appearance and design of buildings, rather than their use
- concerned with how the site is accessed by a range of transportation options

FORM-BASED CODE



FORM-BASED CODE

COMPONENTS

- regulating plan
- block layout
- list of uses
- site design
- buildingform
- building architecture
- public space design
- definitions

From Lansing Master Plan

FORM-BASED CODE

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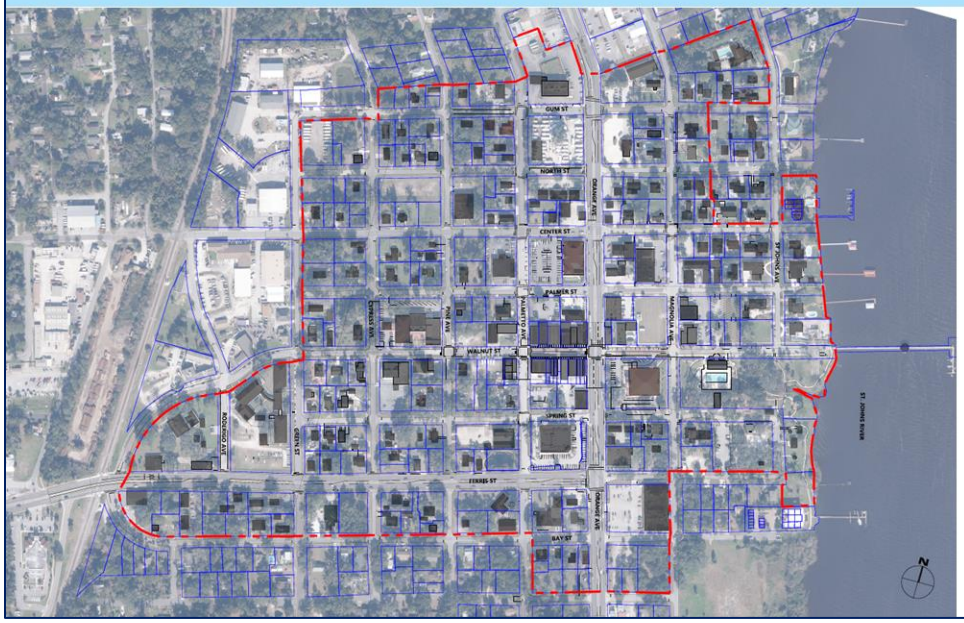
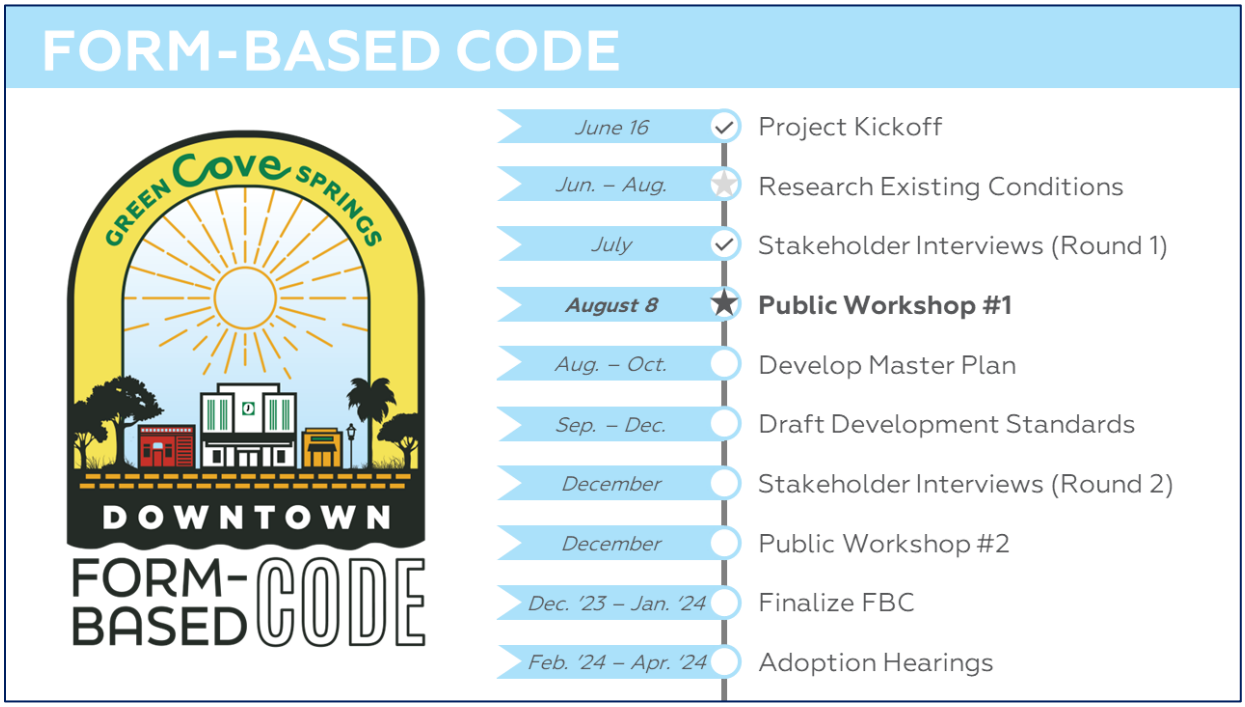
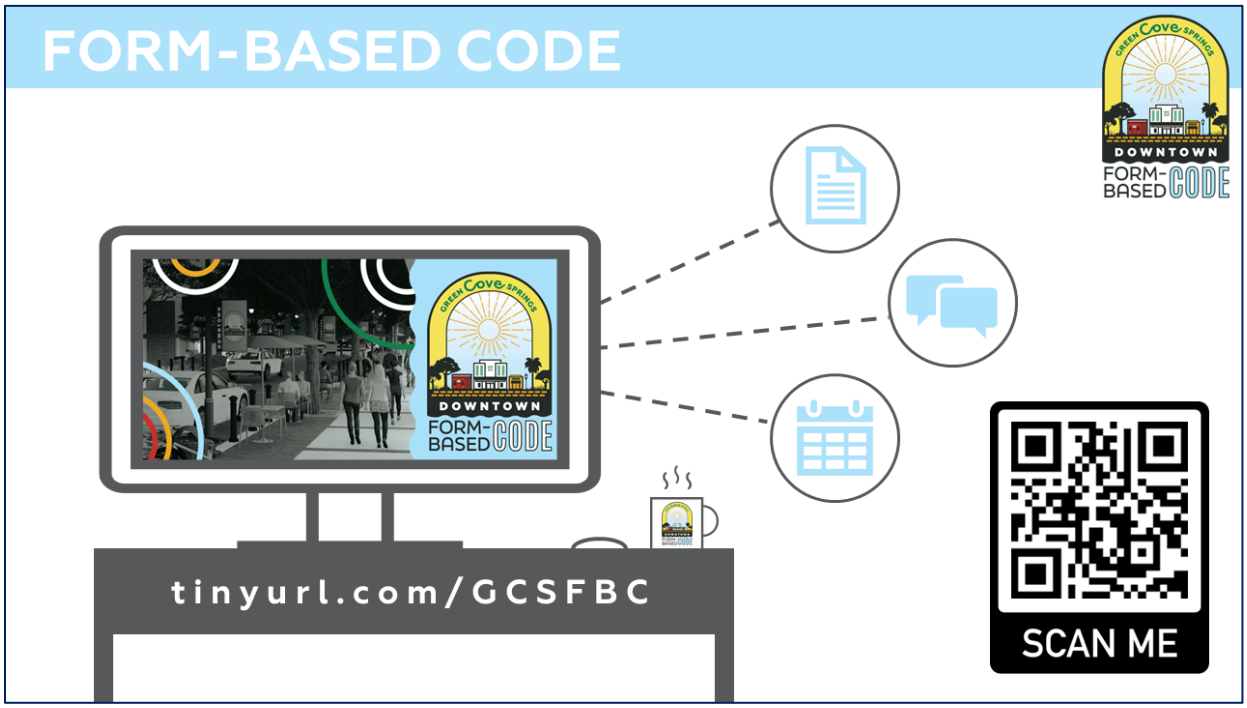


Study Area


FORM-BASED CODE
GREEN Cove SPRINGS
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE
June 16
Project Kickoff
Jun. – Aug.
Research Existing Conditions
July
Stakeholder Interviews (Round 1)
August 8
Public Workshop #1
Aug. – Oct.
Develop Master Plan
Sep. – Dec.
Draft Development Standards
December
Stakeholder Interviews (Round 2)
December
Public Workshop #2
Dec. '23 – Jan. '24
Finalize FBC
Feb. '24 – Apr. '24
Adoption Hearings


FORM-BASED CODE
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE
tinyurl.com/GCSFBC
SCAN ME

INITIAL FINDINGS

There are institutional and residentially zoned properties not expected to redevelop

Refine the boundaries of the FBC Area

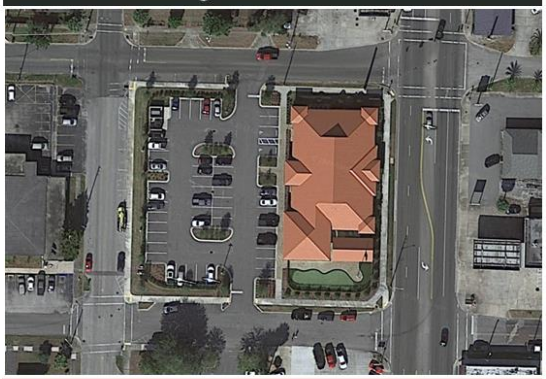
Prescence of nonconforming lots, structures, and uses

Re-examine requirements

desktop analysis | stakeholder interviews | site visits

INITIAL FINDINGS

Lots fronting on more than one street



Specify in the regulations which roads will have primary frontage

Suburbanization of the Study Area over time

Revise regulations to support more urban, walkable developments

desktop analysis | stakeholder interviews | site visits

INITIAL FINDINGS

Coexistence of residential and nonresidential uses

Include compatibility requirements within the FBC

Property owners often struggle to meet current parking requirements

Review current parking standards for new development

desktop analysis | stakeholder interviews | site visits

INITIAL FINDINGS

Historic character of buildings is not protected from redevelopment

Consider establishing architectural standards to retain existing character

Review possibility of allowing more than 2 stories

Ensure views of water are protected

desktop analysis | stakeholder interviews | site visits

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A

B

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
Walnut Street
Orange Avenue
Ferris Street
Palmetto Avenue
Magnolia Avenue
BUILDING HEIGHT
BUILDING SETBACKS
ARCHITECTURE
PUBLIC REALM
PREFERRED USES
Retail
Dining
Office
Gas stations
Vehicle repair
Single-family
Townhomes
Multi-family
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
BUILDING HEIGHT
Two stories
Three stories
Four stories
Greater than four stories
BUILDING SETBACKS
Close to the sidewalk
Away but not too far (no parking in front)
Far from the sidewalk (parking in front)
ARCHITECTURE
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Multi-family
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE

NEXT STEPS
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE
SCAN ME
1 Visit tinyurl.com/GCSFBC
2 Attend Workshop #2 (Dec. 2023)

THANK YOU!
DOWNTOWN
FORM-BASED CODE