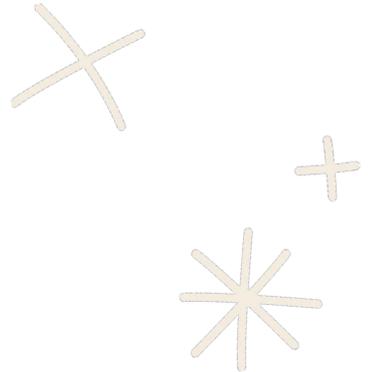


St. Charles PD Site Redevelopment



Engagement Summary Community Survey & Open House #1



OI

Who We Heard From



Participation



Community Survey:
738 responses

Open House:
65 registrants

Respondent Profile



65%
Live in or near
downtown

62%
Visit parks or riverfront
spaces for recreation

58%
Visit downtown for shopping,
dining, and events

73%
Have lived or worked in
St. Charles for 10+ years

Familiarity with site



37%
Very familiar

51%
Somewhat familiar
or aware

How We Engaged

The City gathered public input through an online survey and an in-person community workshop to evaluate redevelopment options for the former Police Department site in Downtown St. Charles.

Engagement included four activities:

**Scenario Preference
Survey**

**Dot Voting on
Redevelopment
Concepts**

**Open-ended
Written Comments**

**“Heart vs. Heartburn”
Values Exercise**

What does the community see as the Biggest Opportunity?

68% Provide community gathering & events

59% Expand public access to the riverfront

56% Improve downtown character

52% Increase open space & recreation

27% Strengthen economic vitality

14% Improve environmental resilience

Takeaway:

Community sees this site primarily as a civic and recreational asset, not an economic development opportunity.

02

Key Themes



6 Themes

Across Survey & Workshop:

1. **Strong attachment to the riverfront**
2. **Overwhelming preference for Public/Programmed Open Space**
3. **Strong opposition to Residential and Hotel uses**
4. **Mixed feelings about Mixed-Use and Entertainment/F&B**
5. **Concerns about public control and ownership**
6. **Concerns about parking**

Overall Takeaway

*The community is open to activation,
but not privatization.*



Residents view the site as a civic riverfront asset. There is strong support for public ownership, programmed open space, and river-oriented uses, and significant resistance to any scenario involving the sale of land or loss of public access.

03

Scenario Interest & Ranking



Survey | Would you be interested in this type of use?



Scenario	Interested	Not Interested	Unsure
Programmed Open Space	68%	20%	12%
Entertainment / F&B	50%	36%	14%
Adaptive Reuse	23%	51%	25%
Mixed Use	27%	59%	14%
Hotel	15%	78%	7%
Townhomes	10%	84%	6%
Multifamily Residential	11%	83%	6%

Survey | Ranked Most to Least Preferred *(weighted score out of 7.0)*



Rank	Scenario	Score
1	Programmed Open Space	5.89
2	Entertainment / F&B	5.43
3	Adaptive Reuse	4.69
4	Mixed Use	4.15
5	Hotel	2.94
6	Townhomes	2.87
7	Multifamily Residential	2.03

Workshop | Dot Voting



Scenario	Green	Yellow	Red
Programmed Open Space	61	6	10
Entertainment / F&B	14	9	29
Adaptive Reuse	4	10	27
Mixed Use	8	7	53
Hotel	6	7	51
Townhomes	3	6	54
Multifamily Residential	10	6	49

Takeaway:

Survey and workshop results are consistent:

- Programmed Open Space is the strongly preferred direction
- Residential and Hotel uses face strong opposition in both



04

Scenario Deep Dive





Survey

68% Interested, Ranked #1



Workshop

61 Green / 10 Red

Community Wants:

- River activation (kayak launch, canoe rental)
- Nature-focused programming and botanical garden
- Public gathering space and farmers market
- Multi-use flexibility (splash park, sculpture garden, bandshell)

Direct Quotes:

"Keep space & land for public usage. The riverfront is a gift not to be exploited."

"The city retaining this property ensures access to the riverfront for all."

"Open space should be active, not passive."

Cautions Raised:

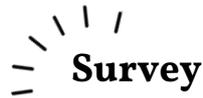
- Avoid duplicating existing venues (Lincoln Park, Pottawatomie)
- Address cost and maintenance
- Preserve or enhance parking



Takeaway: Most Supported!

Strongest and most consistent direction, particularly if active, river-integrated, and parking is preserved or enhanced.





Survey

50% Interested, Ranked #2



Workshop

14 Green / 29 Red

Community Concerns:

- Restaurant oversaturation downtown
- Noise, light, and wildlife impacts
- Fear of commercialization or loss of control

Direct Quotes:

"This has merit, as long as it benefits the public."

"Land belongs to the people and should be preserved for all to use, not commercial."

"Never! We have too much of this now."

Some Support if:

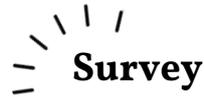
- Clearly tied to public benefit
- Includes outdoor/riverfront programming
- Does not compete with existing businesses



Takeaway: Cautious Support

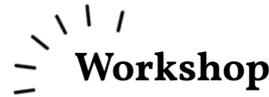
Viable only if tightly integrated with public use and clearly differentiated from existing downtown offerings.





Survey

23% Interested, Ranked #3



Workshop

4 Green / 27 Red

Community Feedback:

- Some support for preserving the 1970s wing; skepticism about the older east half
- Desire for clearer programming vision before committing
- Many prefer full demolition and a fresh start
- Concern about lack of City control over future use

Direct Quotes:

"West half (1970s edition) lends itself to more modern uses. Keep this only."

"Tear it down and start over."

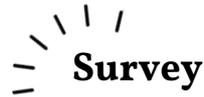
"Needs a more concrete vision for use."



Takeaway: Cautious Support

Adaptive reuse alone does not inspire confidence without a compelling, community-serving use attached





Survey

27% Interested, Ranked #4



Workshop

8 Green / 53 Red

Community Feedback:

- Divided opinion:
 - Some see vibrancy and economic benefit
 - Others fear overdevelopment, loss of control, and "strip mall" feel
- Height, scale, and parking are critical concerns
- Strong resistance to selling land to a developer

Direct Quotes:

"Mixed use makes most sense for a vibrant downtown."

"Never! The City has no control after the sale of our riverfront."

"Only with strict checks and balances: height, green space, riverside bistro."



Takeaway: Skeptical

May align with economic development goals, but currently lacks public trust without strict safeguards and visible public benefit.



Shared themes across all three:

- Strong belief site should remain public
- Perceived as private benefit, not community benefit
- Loyalty to Hotel Baker; concern about market competition
- Better locations exist elsewhere in town for housing

Direct Quotes:

- "No \$1,000,000 townhomes. Hard no."
- "No — how does this benefit the average citizen?"
- "We need to support Hotel Baker, not compete with it."
- "No residential should be public space — for all to enjoy, not just a few."

Hotel

Survey
15% Interested

Workshop
6 Green / 51 Red

Multifamily

Survey
11% Interested

Workshop
10 Green / 49 Red

Townhomes

Survey
10% Interested,
Ranked #4

Workshop
3 Green / 54 Red



Takeaway: Strongly Opposed

Residential and hotel uses at this location face overwhelming community resistance and are unlikely to gain broad support.



Heart vs. Heartburn



- Open space and public gathering
- Nature center, botanical garden, bandshell
- Community events, farmers market, kayak launch
- City retaining ownership and control



- Selling or giving up public land to a developer
- Townhomes and condos that are unaffordable and exclusionary
- Hotels competing with Hotel Baker
- Losing the last open riverfront space downtown
- Tall buildings blocking river views

Key Insights for Council

01

The community sees the riverfront as a civic asset, not a development opportunity

02

Programmed open space resonates most, but needs active programming

03

Residential and hotel uses face strong emotional resistance across both channels

04

Public ownership and long-term control is “non-negotiable” for many residents

05

Parking solutions must accompany any scenario

06

Frequently mentioned comparisons: *Batavia Boardwalk*, *Naperville Riverwalk*, *Geneva French Market*

05

Next Steps



Community Event #2:

April 8th, 2026

Purpose: Dive deeper into top scenarios; understand the "why" behind preferences

Planned Engagement Format: Site Design Mapping, “What Belongs Here” prioritization, and identifying trade-offs.

Output: Actionable guidance and refined direction for Council consideration