

# Appendix B: Developer Interviews

The Second Street Study project team compared notes on the vision for the corridor with those experienced in developing real estate. The goal was to ensure that the results of the planning process would include the highest and best use of available resources and to assist in producing a final plan that would be both creative and responsible. Participants met with local as well as regional developers, with those experienced in developing housing, commercial and mixed-use real estate in urban markets. Developers included both those with experience and those without experience developing along the Second Street Corridor in Rochester. Following is a summary of the questions posed to the developers and their responses:

**1. As a developer, what is the most attractive aspect of redevelopment in this corridor?**

Location-near St. Marys, between St. Marys and Mayo Clinic/downtown; the presence of a comprehensive plan for the area; design standards (especially building materials)--confidence that a laboriously-conceived and well-designed project will not be adjacent to a cheap-looking project; the location is the gateway/door to the Clinic and downtown

**2. What is the least attractive aspect of redevelopment of the corridor?**

Providing adequate parking within individual development sites; the lack of alternative modes of transportation: any increase in development creates large demand for parking; old and hodge-podge buildings currently along the street

**3. What land uses do you see as most viable (by district)?**

Clinic-Related Retail (not destination retail)/Service/Specialized Housing in St. Marys District; Housing/Institutional Support/Specialized Housing in East District; Office/Hotel in Gateway District; Destination retail; should be viewed as an extension of downtown

**4. What competing developments might hinder development on Second Street?**

Downtown or other high-density housing development: Condos, etc.; too many hotels

**5. What are your thoughts about current market conditions as they relate to the Second Street Project?**

It's a great time to be planning

**6. What would be the minimum parcel size that could feasibly be developed in this area?**

a. What is the feasibility of developing the half-block depth lots in the East District? Feasible—but parking on site is challenging; higher density residential along 1st is challenging due to the parking needs of residents; current lot sizes are not sized to develop anything of significance that meets the vision—City should be VERY aggressive in acquisition; it is nice to have courtyards in the middle of blocks, only very limited amount of half-block development is feasible

b. What thoughts do you have regarding the placement of a new alley in the East District? Essential if only half-block development; Needed for dumpsters etc.; don't know;

**7. Is the proposed structured parking feasible? Would the market bear the required lease rates?**

Yes--apparently works for Canadian Honker and hotels;

**8. What are the barriers to developing shared parking opportunities with other uses on the street?**

In the St. Marys District where parking is most needed, potential for shared parking is not great because the redevelopment that has already occurred has provided its own parking: there are not many contiguous redevelopment parcels that are adjacent; timing of projects; (are there utilities in the alleys?); 3 hotels that are new; organization

**9. What kind of outside participation (public or other source) would be needed to make these development projects feasible?**

- a. **Incentives**—TIF and Abatement are useful for redevelopment; very important because of small lots
- b. **Parking Requirements**—fixed rail would assist with funding of/ and tenant attraction for projects; very important because of small lots; City parking requirements for neighborhood uses is too high esp. restaurant;
- c. **Localized Parking Structure**—Would assist with flexibility in meeting site design requirements and desires; would assist in creating a destination-type atmosphere (vs. stop-and-go); helps to stimulate development; helps to organize multiple project owners; very important because of small lots; important that such a structure be public because private market cannot compete with City ramps/rates
- d. **Site Acquisition and Preparation**  
VERY important because of small lots

**10. Do you see the proposed public improvements (small parks, wider sidewalks, landscaped medians, etc.) as adding value to potential commercial/residential projects along the street?**

Learn from Peace Plaza—very successful

**a. Which public improvements add value to potential projects?**

A comprehensive plan for the area; Public plaza/mini parks—especially deep sidewalk vs. an alley-type park; small gathering places or small outdoor dining areas; well-maintained and coordinated landscaping and planters; wider sidewalks (14 ft); pedestrian amenities: pavers, bump-outs, railings, attractive passages to parking; increased sidewalk width for outdoor seating and streetscape amenities is great; parking structures that have either active uses on first level or appearance of activity; centralized bicycle corrals; transit facilities as part of comprehensive plan important; Gateway district artwork/monument would be very nice; design standards would benefit everyone developing/owning along 2nd Street; realignment of 16th Ave connection to 2nd Street; amenities that allow people to stroll; Learn from Peace Plaza—very successful.

**b. Which public improvements do not add value to potential projects?**

Overly-burdensome zoning regulations hamper creativity and enthusiasm can detract from the achieving the best possible project—PUD-type of process works best; pocket park in St. Marys District is on too valuable a piece of land

**11. What are the barriers to developing mixed-use projects (both commercial and housing) in this corridor?**

Land acquisition; additional parking is desperately needed

**12. Land Use and Transportation**

Concentrating density and intensity along 2nd Street is great but transportation drives development; fixed rail allows the addition of intensive development that will not be possible without massive structured parking; addition of fixed rail to the plan and accumulated land sites will attract bigger, more visionary developers who can get the job done; fixed rail would assist with funding of/ and tenant attraction for projects; very important because of small lots; Parking needs necessitate that the development that is achieved does not match up with what seems to belong or “fit” on a site; trolley would be a big benefit to the area—it would change the type of development that would be produced; would see the benefit of the trolley to the area and would be willing to help pay for it

**13. Additional thoughts or comments**

It is stupid to try to preserve the SF character of the residential homes along 1st Street SW; One large urban gathering space is better than several small spaces; the commercial strip should tie into Mayo Campus and downtown; Green buildings should be encouraged; bicycle routes identifies within and between neighborhoods a great idea; on-street parking is not critical; property owners need more than encouragement to do something—they need to be firmly told; not more than 2-3 bus stops in district: exhaust decreases the atmosphere and large number of stops decrease the atmosphere as a place to stroll; reduction of traffic lane size is good—use to accommodate pedestrians/transit users; exposed aggregate is a great material to use for contrasting pavement—not brick; close off the street at 12th Ave to encourage larger development; comprehensive plan will need a “keeper” of the design, some entity or group to act as a mediator/ helper between developer and zoning ord. admin. staff