

1-25-2018

A New Neighborhood

University of Dayton

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Recommended Citation

University of Dayton, "A New Neighborhood" (2018). *News Releases*. 11062.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/11062

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Thursday January 25, 2018

A New Neighborhood

The University of Dayton and Premier Health have sketched out a preliminary vision for the former Montgomery County fairgrounds for a new kind of neighborhood that builds on Dayton's history of innovation and entrepreneurship and can propel the region's next wave of jobs and opportunity.

A 24-hour place where people live, work, learn and play, it should be a walkable neighborhood that integrates sustainability, advanced technology and unique amenities. Most of all, it should act as an innovation platform, where creative ideas for health care, energy, education, housing, business creation and thriving neighborhoods can be demonstrated and tested.

That's the preliminary shape of a vision for the 38-acre site on South Main Street shared with community members at the fairgrounds on Jan. 25 by planning NEXT, the urban design firm working to develop a master plan for the area. Mary Boosalis, Premier Health president and CEO, and Eric F. Spina, University of Dayton president, were on hand to hear directly from community members.

"There is a great deal of excitement about where we are," Spina said. "The overall direction and thrust identified by planning NEXT feel authentic and right for the site and for Dayton. We're beginning to see the shape of a place that's unique and like no other in the region."

Boosalis said: "We know the proper development of the site for long-term regional impact will require support and investment from a variety of sources that see opportunities in the involvement of a leading health system and leading university on a site across the street from Miami Valley Hospital, a block from UD and less than a mile from downtown."

They thanked all who participated in the planning process through which 42 groups and more than 600 people generated more than 1,300 ideas. The input was carefully considered and very valuable, they said.

Jamie Greene, principal of planning NEXT, said the input and research to date were distilled into 12 principles — or value statements — for the overall development of the site and asked participants to indicate how strongly the principles reflected their thoughts.

"We found there's a development type missing from the region and the region risks losing certain kinds of jobs in emerging, creative, tech-based companies because we don't have the kind of setting they're looking for," Greene said. "There is a demand for places where people can live closer to where there are jobs in research, technology and innovation."

Historically known for innovation and entrepreneurship, the Stewart and Main area sits between UD and Miami Valley Hospital — two significant sources of innovation and advanced technology — and could be a place where the research interests of the University connect with Premier Health's interest in applied technology. As a result, research, development, testing and evaluation could be enhanced in ways that benefit both institutions, Greene said.

Greene also shared a preliminary vision for the physical appearance and layout of the development that includes mixed-income housing; streets in a grid pattern; high quality public spaces such as plazas and green space; retention of the Roundhouse as a focal point; active

than \$25,000, was donated by OGW Energy Resources of Tipp City.

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sidewalks and places for people; institutional and office uses; retail aimed at serving the neighborhood; and creative urban agriculture.

Beyond the physical structure, Greene suggested the buildings and infrastructure of the development can exemplify the core values of the vision.

"This is not just another real estate project; this will be much more meaningful than that," Greene said. "The buildings themselves should incorporate advanced technology and should represent an advanced approach to energy and applied technology such as sensors and autonomous vehicles."

Spina and Boosalis emphasized much work remains to be done on the master plan, which they expect to roll out to the public in the spring. With the distinctive opportunities presented by the likely shape of the vision, the institutions will take time to analyze the next steps. UD and Premier Health expect to complete the planning process this spring and begin working with development and community partners to put together the pieces necessary to begin the first phase, including financing, for a multiyear, phased development.

Premier Health and UD see their role as helping to set the stage for the development of this one-of-a-kind neighborhood and platform for the future in a way that attracts partners and investors who want to be a part of the unique opportunity it presents and who bring an adventurous mindset and complementary assets.

With the vision, Boosalis and Spina said the two institutions intend to create a neighborhood that evokes Dayton's history of innovation and serves as a platform that once again puts the community's creativity and ingenuity to work in creating the future.

To learn more about the preliminary vision for the development, including the 12 principles and other material presented at the workshop, visit FairgroundstoFuture.org.

For more information, contact Cilla Shindell, executive director of news and communications, at 937-229-3257 or shindell@udayton.edu.

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