BOOKER BUILDING USE FEASIBILITY STUDY
Altavista, Virginia
September 2019
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INTRODUCTION
The Booker Building is a rentable events space owned and managed by the Town of Altavista. The building is located within English Park and is connected to the downtown via a pedestrian bridge. Built in 1908, the 4,900 sf building operated as Booker’s Garage until the Town purchased the facility in 1994. The Town made several upgrades, including transforming the loading dock into a covered stage, and now operates the facility as an event rental space.

The facility is underutilized, so the Town commissioned this feasibility study to determine the most suitable uses for the Booker Building and identify the next steps for the Town to take. As part of the study, the building’s conditions were evaluated, a focus group of stakeholders were interviewed to determine goals for the site, and precedent projects were identified. The report evaluates the five priority uses, as identified by the stakeholders, based on Town objectives, site/building compatibility, and benchmark examples. The report concludes with an implementation plan, describing further action the Town can take in the Booker Building’s revitalization. The Town’s next steps would be to identify the future use of the Booker Building and to move forward with a business plan, partnerships, and fundraising.

BOOKER BUILDING
POTENTIAL USE EVALUATION
The top five uses for the Booker Building identified by the stakeholders were event center and rental, brewery/tasting room, restaurant, parks and recreation programming, and a farmers market. These possible uses were evaluated for the compatibility with the Town’s objectives, the capacity of the building and site to accommodate the use, and the existence of precedent examples as a benchmark. The use feasibility evaluation chart to the right summarizes the findings. Many precedent examples are of sites that include multiple uses of the facility, either at the same time or cycling between. The compatibility chart to the right shows the possibilities of multiple functions within the Booker Building. The feasibility of each of the five potential uses is explored in more detail.
EVENT CENTER AND RENTAL

Objectives:
Developing the Booker Building as an event center and rental space is compatible with all of the objectives identified by stakeholders, except as a destination point. As an event center, the Booker Building would remain empty between events, and so would not be a consistent destination point. The use as an “event center” is compatible with several other evaluated uses that do qualify as destination points, like a farmer’s market and a brewery, so the Town might consider combining an events center with one or more additional uses.

Site/Building Compatibility:
Moderate renovations would be required to develop the Booker Building as an event and rental space, including new floor surfacing, door and window replacement, new interior lighting, remodeling the bathrooms, creating permanent storage space, and installing a caterer’s kitchen. Additional possible renovations would be to climate control the interior, install a full kitchen, and to improve the exterior facilities, including improvements to the stage at the back of the building, developing an outdoor courtyard, and formalizing parking. The level and type of facility renovation depends on the type of events to be hosted in the space.

Benchmarks:
There are many precedents that might be used as examples when developing the Booker Building as an event and rental facility. Some examples of a repurposed building are: Flat Iron Crossroads in Gloucester, Virginia; the Pepsi Building in Danville, Virginia; Second Stage in Amherst, Virginia; the Glass House in Lynchburg, Virginia. Other precedents are benchmarks for business models, including the Harvester Performing Arts Center in Rocky Mount Virginia and the Bedford Public Library in Virginia. The Carrington Pavilion in Danville, Virginia is an example of an outdoor stage pavilion.

BREWERY/TASTING ROOM

Objectives:
Converting the Booker Building into a privately run brewery or tasting room is compatible with many of the objectives identified by the stakeholders, including events, a destination point, visual arts support, and revenue generation. The Booker Building as a brewery would not complement park activities or support park programs, two of the Town’s objectives. A brewery is compatible with
several other uses, including events and park and recreation programming. By establishing a public-private partnership with the brewery, the Town could continue to use the building for events, rentals, and to support parks and recreation programming, without much direct oversight of the space. Care would have to be taken in the crafting of the lease agreement and the design of the brewery space to support a multi-functional space. A brewery would be a permanent destination point and would extend downtown amenities across the railway bridge from downtown. The Town might be limited to the type of programming it could host in a brewery facility and by insurance requirements.

Site/Building Compatibility:
Extensive renovation would be required to convert the Booker Building into a brewery or tasting room, including extensive development of the interior space, remodeling the bathrooms, and climate control for the interior space. If the site became a brewery, floor space would need to be dedicated for the equipment, limiting space for customers and events. Improvement to the exterior building space could provide outdoor seating and a food truck courtyard.

Benchmarks:
Similar facilities that might be used as examples when developing the Booker Building as brewery or tasting room are the Harvester in Rocky Mount, Virginia and Beale’s in Bedford County, Virginia.

RESTAURANT
Objectives:
As a restaurant, the Booker Building would meet the fewest stakeholder-identified objectives. A restaurant would be a consistent destination point and would generate revenue, but would not accomplish the other objectives of event support or rental, complementing park activities, supporting park and recreation programs, or visual arts support. The function of a restaurant has limited co-functioning compatibility, for example a concert on the stage may disrupt diners, as would using the space for staging during park events. The Town would engage a vendor to manage the daily function and management of the restaurant, but a public-private partnership would have to be carefully drafted to detail costs, fees, and use of the space.
Site/Building Compatibility:
Developing the Booker Building into a restaurant would require extensive renovations. The interior of the building would need to be brought to restaurant code including interior renovations and climate-control, lighting redesign, furnishings, constructing a full kitchen and storage area, and remodeling the bathrooms. The building can support these improvements, and partnership with a vendor or private business could reduce or eliminate any startup costs from the Town.

Benchmarks:
Similar facilities that might be used as a benchmark when developing the Booker Building as a restaurant are Beale’s in Bedford County Virginia, which is a brewery and BBQ restaurant located in a remodeled woolen mill, and the Depot Grill in Lynchburg, which is a remodeled train station.

PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMMING
Objectives:
Using the Booker Building to support Parks and Recreation programs meets many of the objectives identified by the stakeholder group, including events, complementing park activities, supporting park programs, revenue generation, and support of the visual arts. Using the building for parks and recreation programming does not meet the objectives of a destination point. There are several uses that are compatible with parks and recreation programming, some of which meet the objectives that P&R programming space does not. It would be feasible to develop the Booker Building as a multi-functional space, with parks and recreation programming getting combined with event center and rental, a brewery, and/or a farmer’s market. Current levels of parks and recreation programming would leave the Booker Building empty for extensive periods, so to maximize the use of the building, it is recommended that Park & Rec programming be combined with one or more other uses. The Town could partner with a vendor, like a climbing gym or a fitness studio, to provide additional recreational programming in the space. The Town must coordinate any recreation development with the YMCA to ensure that the use will complement and not compete with the YMCA’s programming.
Site/Building Compatibility:
Renovations to convert the Booker Building to a Parks & Rec programming space would be moderate to extensive, depending on the planned programming of the space. All programming would include improvements to resurface the floor, a new lighting system, storage areas, and remodel the bathrooms. The building’s high ceilings permit elevated recreation programming like rock climbing wall and aerial acrobatics, and the open floor plan allows for large space programming, like dance, martial arts, gymnastics, group fitness classes, and fitness weights and machines. The type of programs, users, space requirements, and season of use will inform the type and extent of renovations to the building.

Benchmarks:
Similar facilities that might be used as examples when developing the Booker Building as a Parks & Rec programming space are the Lapham Community Center in New Canaan, Connecticut and the Pepsi Building in Danville, Virginia.

FARMER’S MARKET
Objectives:
Developing the Booker Building into a space for a farmer’s market and other small vendor events meets all of the objectives identified by stakeholders: events, complementing park activities, creating a destination point, supporting park programs, support of the visual arts, and revenue generation. Altavista’s current farmer’s market and vendor market area is the Trade Lot located in the parking lot of the War Memorial Park and YMCA. Relocating to the Booker Building would extend the season of market events and provide shelter from weather conditions. The space could host pop-up markets like craft events or farmer’s markets, or could be configured into a permanent market space with stalls selling crafts, food, art, or produce. A farmer’s market is compatible with parks and recreation programming and an event and event rental space, so the Town could develop the Booker Building with a farmer’s market as one of several uses. Developing the building with permanent vending stalls would limit the multi-functional use of the space.

Site/Building Compatibility:
The Booker Building requires moderate renovations to be converted to a farmer’s market space. The bathrooms would need to be renovated, and the external parking configured for additional vending space. If this was to be converted into a permanent year-round facility, there would be more extensive renovations to construction permanent booths, kitchen facilities, and to weatherize the space.

Benchmarks:
Similar facilities that might be used as examples when developing the Booker Building as a farmers market and vending space are: the Charleston City Market in Charleston, SC and Second Stage in Amherst, Virginia.
BOOKER BUILDING BUSINESS MODELS

The Booker Building can be managed as a private business, as a public-private partnership, or as a publicly run facility. The options are compatible with different uses of the building, and entail a different set of responsibilities and processes for the Town.

PRIVATE:
Engaging a private vendor to operate a business in the Booker Building is the most hands-off for the Town, both in obligation and opportunities. The Town can lease the building as-is, or remodel the space and then rent it. The Town can seek a vendor to fulfill a certain use (i.e., brewery, restaurant, fitness center) or can rent the space to whatever business would like to operate there. The Town would receive payments from the lease and/or a percentage of the private organization’s gross sales. The Town has some flexibility in the lease to make provisions for the type of business and operation. All possible uses for the building could be developing privately, though some types of uses may be easier to attract vendors for.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE:
A public-private partnership between Altavista and a private vendor would give the Town a high level of control in input into the operation of the facility, while allowing a private business to operate some aspects. This partnership is particularly well suited to the integration of a restaurant or brewery in the space. Other possible partnerships would be for a fitness/activity center, a permanent market space, or a privately run event and concert venue. Having a private organization cover the cost of equipment, intensive renovation, and operation can be a way for the Town to support a specialty service for the community at a low cost to taxpayers. The Town can customize the lease to identify special provisions for rent, profit sharing, maintenance, and use during Town festivals or events. Sharing the space with a private business will mean that the Town will need to compromise on some uses. For example, if the Booker Building became a restaurant, it could not be a staging area for festivals. The Town will need to develop its own business plan for the building and evaluate the business plan of the private vendor.

PUBLIC:
Town management of the Booker Building will give the Town the greatest control over the use and operation of the facility. Direct operation also means that the Town will bear the greatest expense and risks. Commercial operations like a restaurant or brewery will not be possible, but all other uses are. The Town will need to fund all improvements and operation of the building, and will need to develop a business model for the facility, including revenue streams.
RECOMMENDATIONS

This report identifies the five most feasible uses for the Booker Building. The highest priority use as identified by the stakeholders is an event and rental center. This is what the facility is currently used for and there is an opportunity to expand the building’s capacity and frequency of use through renovation, marketing, and partnerships. An event center is compatible with several other uses, both concurrently and on separate schedules. For example, the facility could be host gatherings and concerts during the warm months and host a sheltered farmer/vendor market in the cold months. The next step is to determine which use or uses the Booker Building will contain, the precise form that use will take, then how to make that a reality.

NEXT STEPS:

Immediate Action (all uses)

- Town Council to review report and determine desired goals and uses of the Booker Building
- Engage a professional building inspector to inspect the Booker Building to evaluate structural stability, code compliance, and safety improvements
- Consider engaging stakeholders on visions and preferences through community meetings, surveys, and media coverage

Event and Festivals Next Steps*

- Determine types of events/festivals
- Identify consumers/partners
- Determine the needs for the facility/pace/infrastructure
- Create an improvements plan for the building and property
- Create an operations schedule
  - Consider overlapping uses
  - Maximize schedule weekly and annually
- Market the venue (bands, event organizers, wedding catalogues)
- Consider hiring an events manager

*Note: may be in partnership or Town-led

Development – In Partnership

- Publish a Request for Information (RFI) seeking an applicant to develop and manage the Booker Building. The RFI defines the Town’s goals and stipulations, and the applicant will conduct market analysis, develop a business plan, and oversee operations

Development – Town Led

- Conduct a market analysis to determine the viability of the use(s), as needed for commercial uses
- Investigate potential partnerships and private vendors to provide services in the Building, as needed by the stated use
- Develop a business plan and determine staffing, funding and revenue strategies, operation and management responsibilities
- Determine project costs and investigate funding sources including CIP, grants, and public-private partnerships
CONCLUSION
The Booker Building is one of Altavista’s key assets, adjacent to both downtown and English Park and providing one of the largest rentable facilities in town. Currently, the Booker Building is underutilized and requires upgrades. A revitalized Booker Building can serve as a destination point and a defining feature of English Park and the Town. The building has a high potential for multiple and overlapping uses, and the Town has the opportunity to direct what those uses will be. This report examines the top five most feasible uses: event center and rental, brewery or tasting room, restaurant, parks and recreation programming, and farmer’s market, and provides the Town with next steps to transform the Booker Building into an iconic and vibrant public amenity.
APPENDIX A: BOOKER BUILDING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY
The building is an open-floor plan concrete block building with a vaulted wooden truss ceiling. There is a covered stage facing English Park at the back of the facility, and an addition with restroom facilities attached to the main bay. The building seems structurally sound but will require a professional building inspection.

There are several key elements that will need improvement for all future uses of the building, including remodeling the bathrooms, building dedicated storage space, improving interior lighting, resurfacing the damaged original concrete slab floor, resurfacing or cleaning the exposed block walls, and replacing damaged or poorly functioning features. Additional renovations that would improve the space are climate control, installation of a full or caterer’s kitchen, improvements to the stage, and expansion of the courtyard as a designed space. The extent of further renovations will depend on the desired use.

The building is well suited to repurposing and has the flexibility to fit many potential uses. The open floor plan with clear spans; the high ceiling, 16’-6” to the exposed roof trusses and another 16’ to the roof peak; and abundant natural light from the large windows and rolling bay doors are all advantageous features of the building that could be highlighted by future renovations.
Building Interior Conditions Inventory:

**Lights:**
- 6 wall-mounted utility lights, one is non-functioning.

  *Condition: Type of light provided is not compatible with requirements of interior events.*

  *Recommendation: Replace lights with interior grade lights for extended use of*

**Electric:**
- Outlets every 6’, as allowed by doors
- Breaker box, capacity unconfirmed
- Electric mounted in conduit to block masonry walls

  *Condition: Current amps are apparently serving the needs of the user’s, include band equipment connections.*

  *Recommendation: Confirm that current electric capacity is sufficient for any planned renovations.*

**Ceiling:**
- Exposed wooden trusses
- Uninsulated ceiling
- 16’ from bottom of truss to peak of roof
- 16’-3” from base of truss to floor
- 7 total trusses at 11’-4” on center.

  *Condition: No apparent leaks and roof appears to be in good condition.*

  *Recommendation: Structural assessment of trusses and roof with necessary repairs. Insulate the roof.*
APPENDIX A: BOOKER BUILDING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Heating

- 4 units in corners of room
- Wall mounted units in bathroom

*Condition: Use of the facility is not possible during colder months due to cold temperatures inside the building, limiting the rental capacity of the building.*

*Recommendation: Install an HVAC system and properly insulate the building.*

Cooling

- 6 ceiling fans
- Passive venting in attic by opening rolling doors and window panels

*Condition: Use of the facility not possible during much of the summer months due to oppressive heat.*

*Recommendation: Install an HVAC system and properly insulate the building.*

Floor

- Open floor plan, 96’-6” x 48’-9”

*Condition: Floor is the original concrete slab and is pitted and cracked, with an uneven pour around the outer edge. There are no floor drains.*

*Recommendation: Resurface, evaluate drainage and requirements for a floor drain.*
Walls

- Painted concrete block, some of the block is decorative
- Appear to be structurally sound
- Walls are dirty and the paint is in poor conditions
- Walls are uninsulated

*Condition: Walls are dirty and the paint is in poor condition.*

*Recommendation: Insulated and repaint or resurface.*

Doors

- Three (3) Double doors, zero height entry, none are automatic
- Front two (2) doors are ADA accessible with concrete walk
- Side door has a concrete step and faces the presumed parking area
- Front and back doors have emergency exit signs
- Back door is utility door to stage
- Plywood sliding barn door provides access to the back of the outdoor stage. The door is warped and in poor condition. The gap beneath door is not sealed and the door is secured with only a padlock.

*Condition: Most doors are in good condition, though the architectural style is inconsistent. The sliding barn door access to the stage is in poor condition and is a security risk.*

*Recommendation: Replace sliding door to stage with a more secure and attractive design. Consider adding automatic openers to the rolling overhead doors.*
Amenities

- Plywood stage with outdoor fabric: 1’ high x 24’-2” wide x 12’-2” deep
- Additional electric outlets at stage
- No storage areas for tables, chairs or trash cans
- A small storage area for cleaning supplies adjacent to the bathrooms
- No kitchen or cold storage

Condition: Amenities are serviceable, but not of consistent quality. The lack of storage area and kitchen facilities restricts the use of the space.

Recommendations: Construct a formal stage structure. Add a storage area for tables and chairs. Locate the trash and recycle containers in an unobtrusive location or construct a screen to shield them from view. Consider adding a caterer’s or full kitchen to expand the usability of the space.

Restrooms

- The restrooms are contained in an addition adjacent to the main building.
- The addition contains separate men’s and women’s restrooms and a cleaning equipment storage area. A roll-up door provides exterior access.
- Dimensions:
  - Addition (interior total): 22’-8” x 23’
  - Hallway: 4’5” wide
  - Restrooms: 18’ deep, 9’-10” wide
  - Drop ceiling at 8’-8” high
  - Roll-up door: 8’ wide
- Women’s Restroom
  - 3 stalls + 1 ADA (4 Total)
  - 2 hand dryers
  - Sink, not ADA accessible
  - Trash can is not ADA accessible
  - Stalls are undersized
  - No mirror
- Men’s
  - 2 urinals
  - 1 stall + 1 ADA (2 Total)
  - Sink, not ADA accessible
  - No mirror

Condition: Restrooms are unattractive, elements are undersized and inconsistent, and the design does not meet ADA accessibility standards.

Recommendations: Remodel the restrooms to bring them up to code and a positive feature of the space.
Outdoor Performance Stage

- The rear loading dock of the building has been converted into a covered stage that is used for festivals, concerts, and events. The stage faces English Park and there is a large grass area in front of the stage for spectators.
- The stage’s concrete surface has been resurfaced, the surface is stained and cracked.
- There are outlets on back building wall and base of stage.
- Shingled roof with gutters and downspout. Roof shows signs of water damage adjacent to the building’s wall. There is inadequate drainage at the downspout outlet and stormwater puddles.
- Limited light - one flood light in corner.
- Wooden support posts are sheathed in metal, except for the one that touches the ground, which could lead to decay of that support post.
- Stage access: one unattached modular step set on one side.

Condition: The stage’s construction and arrangement is serviceable, but there are several safety and design omissions that limit the full use of the stage. There is inadequate lighting for night performances, access to stage is limited and unsafe, and the building’s walls are damaged in areas where tension wire was installed.

Recommendations:

- Resurface concrete stage surface.
- Add permanent and/or connection points for night time stage lighting.
- Confirm that electrical service meets the needs of musicians and other performers and expand service if restricted.
- Construct French drains or install piping to direct the downspout flow away from the structure.
- Determine the location and cause of water leak into ceiling of stage and repair.
- Construct a permanent and secure access route to the stage. Consider constructing a ramp for ADA access.
- Replace post in direct ground contact with a concrete footer and an offset Simpson Strong-tie post base, or similar.
- Repair damage to masonry concrete block walls and properly install tension wires for banner display.
- Install a permanent stage sign.
Building Exterior Conditions Inventory:

**Roof:** Metal

*Condition:* no gutters or snow/ice guards; flashing is warping.

*Recommendation:* Install snow/ice guards above doorways, repair flashing and roofing where required.

**Lighting:**

- Lantern-style lights flank the doors
- One flood light on rear corner of building near the stage. Light is non-functioning.
- No flood or area lighting for space around the building, including parking.

*Condition:* The lantern style lights flanking the doorways do not match the architectural character of the building and do not provide enough illumination for outdoor events or to safely illuminate the parking area.

*Recommendation:*

- Conduct a photometric evaluation of the site, locating lights to provide sufficient illumination at doorways and parking lots.
- The style of the new light lights should match the building.
- Consider adding string or patio lights to the area outside of the roll-up doors to expand its available use into the evening.

*Recommendations:* Remodel the restrooms to bring them up to code and a positive feature of the space.
**Walls:** Painted concrete block.

  *Condition:* The paint is in poor condition and there is some damage to exterior walls.

  *Recommendation:* Repair walls where they are damaged, and clean and repaint.

**Walkway:**

- Concrete sidewalk to the two front doors.
- Decorative donor brick plaza

  *Condition:* The concrete sidewalk is cracked in places, and both the donor bricks and concrete are dirty.

  *Recommendation:*
  
  - Powerwash the bricks and sidewalk
  - Reset bricks as needed.
  - Replace cracked concrete sidewalk panels

**Landscaping:**

- Raised planter with boxwoods at the front of the building.

  *Condition:* Very limited landscaping around the building. Some of the boxwood shrubs in the planter are dead.

  *Recommendations:*
  
  - Replace dead boxwoods in planter
  - Consider developing and implementing a landscaping plan for the facility.
Gravel Yard Surrounding Building:

- The areas to the north, east (front), and south of the Booker Building are open undefined gravel areas. Currently, the space is used for parking and event support.
- The gravel area on the south side is enclosed by the Booker Building on 2 sides and is accessed by the three roll-up doors to the main building space. There is no defined entrance to the gravel area from the road. The open area is currently unprogrammed but has the potential to be a courtyard extension of the interior space and/or a defined parking area.
- No defined ADA parking spaces

**Condition:** Space around building is not well defined, including parking areas, and building does not have separation from the road.

**Recommendations:**

- Create distinct, defined vehicular entrance points from the road to the facility. This will aid in visitor wayfinding and provide a buffer to the facility.
- Define the parking areas with signage and striping. Install ADA parking spaces.
- Develop a courtyard on the south side of the building to expand the functional use of the building.
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APPENDIX B: BOOKER BUILDING STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW RESULTS

SUMMARY
LPDA interviewed a focus group of stakeholders in August 2019 about their goals and vision for the future of the Booker Building. Stakeholders were part of the Town Council, departmental staff, and advisory groups. The responses are in alignment and envision the Booker Building as a destination point and defining feature of Altavista, serving as an event/rental space that complements park activities.

Question #1:
Which of the following use categories would you like to see integrated into the Booker Building? (Ranked in order of preference)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Use Category</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
<th>Medium Importance</th>
<th>Low Importance</th>
<th>Weighted Totals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Arts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event/Festival</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail/Business</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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Summary: Event/Festival is the preferred use for the Booker Building, with 12 out of 12 respondents ranking it as their top priority. Cultural/Arts was 7 of the respondent’s second priority and many envision an event space that caters to culture and arts as the future for the Booker Building.

Question #2:
What are your objectives for the adaptive reuse of the Booker Building?

Summary: Event Space and Event Support is the highest objective for the adaptive reuse of the Booker Building. All interviewed selected this objective. Complement Park Activities and Uses was a close second priority, with 10 out of 12 interviewees selecting this objective.

Additionally, one respondent selected “other” and listed concert venue and commercial kitchen.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Complement Park Activities and uses</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrate with park programs</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue generation</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax base expansion</td>
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<td>Destination point</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event space and event support</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expansion of park programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual arts support and development</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Question #3: How do you envision the Booker Building could be used?

Summary: Rental for weddings and reunions, etc. and Event Center are the two most desired uses for the Booker Building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Art Gallery</th>
<th>Artist Incubator Studio</th>
<th>Rental for weddings, reunions, etc.</th>
<th>Brewery</th>
<th>Restaurant</th>
<th>Outdoor outfitter/bike and kayak rental</th>
<th>Parks and recreation programming</th>
<th>Event center</th>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Pop up market space</th>
<th>Farmers market</th>
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Question #4: What is your vision for the Booker Building and list benchmark examples for this vision?

Vision Comments with benchmark precedents:

“An improved venue for community events and rental for private events”
Lapham (CT) Community Center, New Canaan, CT
Flat Iron Crossroads, Gloucester, VA

"A venue for music. Renovation to the point new floors, new baths, commercial kitchen for event rentals, add a large sunshade attachment to the outdoor stage for more cover."
The Harvester, Rocky Mount, VA

"I think the Booker building would be a great location music events or perhaps a micro-brewery."
The Harvester, Rocky Mount, VA
Beale’s in Bedford

"Food/beverage/special events/destination point"
The breweries in Nelson County

Word cloud showing the frequency of words describing the vision of the Booker Building
“Create a central place for civic activities like a civic center by expanding the physical building"
Carrington Pavilion
The Harvester, Rocky Mount, VA

"A space for indoor events, concerts and cultural events, as well as a central location for parks and recreation events"
The Harvester, Rocky Mount, VA
Bedford Public Library (Concerts)
Second Stage, Amherst
246 the Main in Brookneal
The Glass House, Lynchburg
Gretna Theater

"A multi-purpose building that provides space for reunions, events, concerts for the community"
The Pepsi building in Danville, VA

"The primary of several buildings around the downtown area to be used by the town and public for special and daily events as well as English Park support, a community center"

"An events destination; concerts, festivals able to use rain or shine"

"To be a place the public associates Altavista with"
Berglund Performing Arts Center
Harvester Performance Center
Riverview Manor

“Events Center”

“A hub for the community”

Summary: The responses are in alignment and envision the Booker Building as a destination point and defining feature of Altavista, serving as an event/rental space that complements park activities. The exact manifestation of the programming, including the possibility of a permanent dining facility will need to be determined in the next phase of planning.
List of Stakeholders:

Waverly Coggsdale (WC): Town Manager
Tracy Emerson (TE): Town Council Member
Tim George (TG): Town Council Member
Bill Gillespie (BG): EDA Chair
Altavista On Track (AOT): AOT Board
John M. Jordan, Jr. (JJ): Chairman of the Planning Commission
Thomas Merricks (TM): Chief of Police
Wayne Mitchell (WM): Town Council/EDA Board Member
Gil Ragland (GR): Chamber of Commerce Board Chair
Tobie Shelton (TS): Finance Director
David Garrett (DG): Public Works Director
James Higginbotham (JH): Town Council Member
APPENDIX C: PRECEDENT BENCHMARK PROJECTS

Lapham Community Center, New Canaan, CT
Laphamcenter.org

“The Senior Center provides programs and services for seniors that will help them to live happier, healthier and more productive lives.”

Type of Venue: Community and Senior Center

Background Information: 1918 cottage (former luxurious vacation home of Lewis Henry Lapham) into an enhanced senior center with 2 additions to the building. Bedrooms were converted into classrooms, but the building retains the atmosphere of an old new England inn or hotel.

Uses: Senior center and a place for various community programs and classes offered by the Center, as well as for the town’s Parks and Recreation Department and the Norwalk Community-Technical College's continuing education program. Activities and programs include: adult education, the arts, health, recreation, nutrition, information and referral and other supportive services as well as opportunities for volunteer work.

Building:

- Dining hall, Lecture hall, reception area, library, instructional and recreation spaces, commercial kitchen, workshop, greenhouse, game room, exercise room and small office
Flat Iron Crossroads, Gloucester, VA
flatironcrossroads.com

“Flat Iron Crossroads in an intersection where performing artists and the music enthusiast meet”

**Type of Venue:** Non-profit Modern Performing Arts Center

**Background Information:** Revitalized 100-year-old gas station located on the corner of Flat Iron Road and Daffodil Lane in Gloucester, Virginia. Just as gas stations have prepared travelers for journeys since the advent of motor transportation, Flat Iron Crossroads strives to help patrons discover “avenues” of musical adventure both familiar and untraveled.

**Uses:** “A vital community; a culture of performing artists”; Music workshops, event rentals, wine festival, Christmas shows, New Year’s Eve party

**Building:**

- Addition on left side (not visible in photos): 8 x 8’ front door and exterior green room door all on ground floor; green room separate stage entrance with bath and shower.
- Approx. 3000 sf with seat capacity: 150 (no standing room)
- Stage dimensions: 24’ wide x 12’ deep x 18” high with state of the art lighting and sound system and other musical instruments

Before: garage building formerly used as a lawn mower repair shop

After: Today’s Flat Iron Crossroads
The Harvester, Rocky Mount, VA
https://harvester-music.com

Type of Venue: Performance/Event Center

Background Information: The Harvester Performance Center is a new, mid-sized music venue serving Rocky Mount, VA, and surrounding areas with great live performances in all kinds of genres.

Uses: Performance Events, Event rentals, Private Meetings.

Building/site Features:
- A covered drop-off area
- Parking is available all around the venue
- The upper entrance level box office and lobby areas for the main room
- Beverages, food and merchandise are available at a concession counter and may be taken freely through the venue, including during performances; ABC on premises
- Bathrooms near the entranceway into the main room
- Kitchen
- 2 Meeting Rooms
- 2 music rooms:
  - Room 1: 475-person seating capacity with 40’ wide stage and state of the art audio, lighting and video systems; 700-person capacity for standing room shows
  - Room 2: 200-person seating capacity; 350-person capacity for standing room shows
Beale’s, Bedford County, VA
www.bealesbeer.com

Type of Venue: Brewery, taproom and local BBQ restaurant

Background Information: Named after the famed Beale’s Treasure that legend indicates is buried somewhere in the mountains of Bedford County. Beale’s is a new spot that’s part of the booming craft beer scene in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains. Located in a historic building that once served as the Hampton Looms woolen mill, the space has been transformed into a beautiful showcase of craft beer and BBQ.

Uses: BBQ Restaurant, 30-barrel production brewery (beer to be sold in local grocery stores), taproom; private events, happy hours and live music at an outdoor stage

Building/site Features:
- Games, outdoor patio and pet-friendly
- Craft beers
- Wood smoked BBQ food from local sources
- 16,000 SF historic building – once the Hampton Looms woolen mill
- Merchandise (T-shirts and hats) is available for sale
The Crossing: Complex including Carrington Pavilion and Pepsi Building
Carrington Pavilion, Danville VA
www.danvilleva.gov

**Type of Venue:** Outdoor Amphitheater: outdoor concerts, theater productions and events

**Background Information:** Located on a site which was once part of the Richmond and Danville rail yard in 1856. In 1979 the vacant site was reclaimed for a public park and amphitheater. In 1981, the first World Tobacco Auctioneering Championship was held there leading to the name Auctioneer’s Park. In the early 21st century, the park was renovated into the Carrington Pavilion and the first concert was held in 2003.

**Uses:** General events and Special events such as: Fourth of July, Harvest Jubilee, plays, concerts, and other community functions

**Building/site Features:**
- 1200 covered seats capacity
- Tensile, membrane roof
- 2+ acre lawn with 4-5,000 seating capacity
- Complete backstage facilities: theatrical lighting dimming system, 3 professional dressing rooms, a wardrobe room, property room and a “green” room
- Catwalk, control area, performer’s tour bus electric and local hookups
Old Pepsi Building, Danville VA
www.danvilleva.gov

Type of Venue: General event rentals and community classes

Background Information: Refurbished historic warehouse. Old 1885 Continental Brewing Co, which became Celery Cola Bottling Company in 1931. The building has experienced numerous transformations, from a brewery to a recycling center, to a storage facility. In 1996, the building was renovated with help from the Pepsi-Cola Company. Serves as one of three trail entry points for the Riverwalk Trail.

Uses: Public and Private Meetings, Parks and Recreation Classes, special events (birthday parties, family gatherings and reunions, wedding parties, and receptions), and recreation programs. The basement provides public restroom facilities for the Carrington Pavilion.

Building/site Features:
- 160-person capacity
Bedford Public Library, VA
http://www.bplsonline.org/

Type of Venue: Public Library with event/meeting spaces

Background Information: The Bedford Public Library System provides meeting room space for community, educational, recreational, cultural, civic and charitable groups. Meeting rooms are available on an equitable basis to local groups and organizations engaged in legal activities, regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members. Small group study rooms are made available, when not in use by the library, on a first come, first serve basis, to local groups, organizations, and groups of individuals working together.

Uses: Live music, community meetings, smaller intimate meeting rooms

Building/site Features:
- Located next to the loading dock behind the library by the parking lot
- 100-person capacity meeting/concert room “The Bedford Room”
- 25-person room “The Bedford Peaks Room”
- Intimate setting
- ADA accessible
**Second Stage, Amherst VA**
https://www.secondstageamherst.org/

“To inspire creativity and community by providing a place where the cultural, civic and economic vitality of Amherst County is encouraged.”

**Type of Venue:** Non-profit Creative Arts Performance and Event Venue; Community Center

**Background Information:** Leased Former Amherst Baptist Church facility; second Stage pays an annual fee of $10 to use the building and agrees to invest $10,000 per year into improvements.

**Uses:** Host performances, community events such as workshops, classes, meetings and conferences. Long-term rental space available for small business entrepreneurs, as well as short-term rental space for citizens to host everything from meetings to birthday parties to weddings. Farmers’ Market for our local farmers and growers in partnership with double-SNAP benefits program, brings fresh food to those who might not otherwise have access to it.

**Building/site Features:**

- Main Hall – Elegant space for birthday parties, weddings and receptions, larger meetings, luncheons, and performances
- Community Room (1200 SF with a 275 SF kitchen) – casual meetings, dinners and classes. Includes an attached kitchen, which can also be used for cooking classes
- Green Room – board meetings, small classes, and workshops
- Performance Theater (2100 SF) with a stage (15 x 35’) and attached reception room (465 sf)
- ADA accessible
- Bathrooms and other rooms available
246 the Main in Brookneal, VA
https://www.246themaintheatre.com

“Family friendly theatre every show, all the time!”

Type of Venue: Performance/Cultural Arts Theatre

Background Information:

Uses: Local acting troupe produces plays/musicals each year; venue also hosts opera, bluegrass, Christmas concerts, art openings, book signings, and benefit events; available for rentals including traveling theater groups, and private events such as: reunions, corporate meetings, and parties.

Building/site Features:

- Seats 134, with a capacity for 225 for special events; 70 for sit-down dinner
- Modified “thrust” theatre, with seating on 3 sides and an open floor stage with high-tech computerized lighting and sound systems
- “Sweet entreats” concessions
- “Props Gift Shoppe”
- Lobby and will-call office
- On and off-street parking available with ADA parking and special needs seating upon request
The Glass House, Lynchburg, VA
https://www.theglasshouselyh.com/

“A unique venue for live bands and private events nestled adjacent to Riverfront Park in Downtown Lynchburg, VA!”

**Type of Venue:** Performance Arts Theatre and private events venue adjacent to Riverview park

**Background Information:** It was a “diamond in the rough waiting to realize its potential”

**Uses:** Private parties, wedding ceremonies, receptions, concerts and free summer series, and other events

**Building/site Features:**

- 3,000 SF main theater room
- 2,000 SF outdoor patio with roll-up garage doors and outdoor bar and fire pits
- Connected catering kitchen
- Fully equipped stage with professional lighting and sound equipment
Charleston City Market, Charleston SC
thecharlestoncitymarket.com

**Type of Venue:** Indoor/outdoor Market with shops and restaurants year round; popular tourist destination

**Background Information:** Originally known as Centre Market, City Market was developed as a replacement for the city’s beef market building, which burned in 1796. It was a place for area farms and plantations to sell beef and other produce, and it also acted as a place for locals to gather and socialize.

**Uses:** market for souvenirs to jewelry, baskets, food and produce to also housing the Charleston’s Confederate Museum

**Building/site Features:**

- Greek revival building on the national register of historic building. 3,000 Sf main area
- 1240 feet through continuous series of sheds
- Rectangular structures with open stalls and center walkways.
- Spans 4 city blocks
- Easily accessible from downtown; free trolley to market
- Ample nearby parking options