



CDS ASSOCIATES, INC.

vision



Village of South Lebanon
99 High Street
South Lebanon, Ohio 45065

**Property at Broadway St.
and N. High St.**

Preliminary Observations
And Recommendations

Table of Contents

Cover	1
Introduction	2
Preliminary Observations	
Site	3
Two-Story Classroom Building	4
One-Story Classroom Building	5
Gymnasium	6
Site Context	6
Other Factors	
Flood Risk	7
Tenancy History	8
Preliminary Analysis	
A. Buildings	8
B. Site	9
C. Neighborhood	10
Preliminary Synthesis	
Qualifications	10
A. Short-Term Recommendations	11
B. Long –Term Recommendations	12
C. Recommended Approach	17
D. Other Recommendations	18
E. Next Steps	19
F. Conclusion	19
Photo Gallery	21
Alternate Site Plans	23
Alternate 1: Renovate 2-Story Classroom	
Alternate 2: Village Square Concept	
Alternate 3: New Village Offices	
Alternate 4: Mixed-Use Village Center	
Renovation Cost Opinions	
2-Story Classroom	24
1-Story Classroom	25

Introduction

Weather conditions were optimal, partly sunny, mild, breezy

Justin Jehn and James Turney from CDS Associates Inc. visited the property on 5/10/2010 for the purposes of conducting a preliminary walk-through to better understand the existing conditions and determine next steps.

Mr. Craig, the Village Administrator, accompanied the CDS personnel and provided access, insight and background regarding the property.

The property, or campus, consists of three buildings, all of which were originally constructed for educational use (King's Local School District Elementary School). When the school district constructed a new elementary school, they turned the property over to the Village. The buildings on the site are identified as three buildings. See figure 1.1 for the following:

- | | |
|-----|------------------------------|
| "A" | Two-Story Classroom Building |
| "B" | One-Story Classroom Building |
| "C" | Gymnasium |

The buildings were all built between approximately 1958 and 1963.

Preliminary Observations

Site

Topography is gradually sloping from base elevation 630 at the east, to elevation 622 at the westernmost property line, see figure 1.2.

There is a small area of lawn to the west and east of the 2 story building, and a small number of trees along the northwest property line, which abuts neighboring parcels.

Access to the site is pedestrian as well as vehicular. Concrete sidewalks exist along the west, south and east property lines, and pedestrian traffic is defined with concrete sidewalks to the main building entrances, or is available to secondary entrances along paved parking areas. Vehicles are served by a contiguous asphalt paved parking lot between the two school buildings, and behind the 1 story school building. A curb-cut exists along Main Street that feeds the parking lot, and a connection also exists to Broadway Street, although an extremely high rolled concrete curb limits some vehicular access for underground clearance reasons. There is street parking available in close proximity to the site. There is current development and building construction underway on the parcel to the northeast of the site ("D," figure 1.1) for the South Lebanon Early Learning Center that may improve or impede an existing vehicular access from Forrest Avenue to the parking lot.

Two-Story Classroom Building

The two-story classroom building was visited first. It is located along the western side of the campus, with its main entrance on N. High Street. The building has approximately 8,900 sf on each floor, and a partial basement, housing the boilers. The primary exterior materials are brick, glass block, aluminum (single pane) windows, and metal trim for fascia, gutters and louvers. The building also features metal sunshades on the south and west sides of the building. While still operational, the single pane windows likely contribute significantly to the costs of heating the building. The exterior of the building does not exhibit any significant cracking or damage from settlement or other typical causes. Some of the glass block appears to be cracked, perhaps from vandalism, but it is not pervasive. See Figures 2.1 – 2.4.

The structure of the building appears to be load-bearing masonry walls, and concrete planks used for floor and roof deck, but would require further investigation to validate.

The roof drains to gutters, leading to downspouts, which flow openly into clay tile perimeter drains.

Interior walls in the classrooms are painted concrete block. Corridor walls have a glazed block wainscot with concrete block above, in a pattern of alternating courses of 4" and 8". Ceilings in both the classrooms and corridors are ACT tile, with fluorescent fixtures in the grid. The interior of the building does not exhibit any significant cracking or damage from settlement or other typical causes. A classroom on the upper floor shows signs of a roof leak, and water was dripping from the leak at the time of visit. There is also evidence of leaking and rust at some of the lintels over the glass block windows. See Figures 3.1 – 3.6

The interior of the building still exhibits many of its original fixtures, finishes and equipment. Floors in many places appear to be original to the building. It is possible that some of the tile is VAT tile, which may contain asbestos. Chalkboards, pin-up boards and lockers remain in their original locations. The building currently houses a number of temporary tenants, including the local HEAP program, an honors-system lending library, and elderly services. Funding, staffing and other issues keep these programs operating as part-time tenants. These tenants only occupy a portion of the lower level of the building. The upper level is unoccupied and being used for records storage. See Figures 4.1 – 4.4.

The mechanical electrical and plumbing systems in the building are operational, but not optimal or contemporary. Heat is provided via two boilers in the basement that generate steam. The steam heat is supplemented in the rooms by fan coil units that can blow heated or outside air into the room. See Figures 5.1 – 5.4.

Plumbing fixtures appear to be original to the building. Men's and women's restrooms (boys and girls) were stacked, so that each floor only has bathrooms for one gender. The fixture count (3 stalls on the first floor, 7 on the second) appears low by contemporary standards for a building of this size. The urinals in the first floor restroom were covered over when it was converted to a women's restroom. See Figures 6.1 and 6.2.

At least some of the electric switchgear in the basement, if still operational, is antiquated to the point of being a possible fire hazard. The newest electric panel does not have a door on it. Please refer to Figures 7.1 and 7.2.

This building is currently suffering from a bat infestation. While no evidence of the infestation was observed at the time of the visit, the infestation is well-documented. The bats occupy an interstitial space between the roof and the concrete plank roof structure. The bats belong to a protected migratory species which makes its home here between April and October.

In general the building enjoys the benefits of what appears to be very robust construction. At the time it was constructed, it was a state-of-the-art educational facility. With continued maintenance, it could very well survive another 50 years.

One-Story Classroom Building

The one-story classroom building was visited next. The building is located along the southern side of the campus, along Broadway St. The main entrance is at the corner of Broadway St. and North Section Street. The building appears to have a structural system that is similar to that used in the two-story building – load-bearing exterior masonry walls, and load-bearing masonry interior corridor walls.

While the building echoes many of the architectural features and construction methods of the two-story building, this building does not appear to be in as good shape. Wood fascia trim, windows and window trim all showing signs of deterioration, and in need of scraping, caulking and painting. Pipe/conduit into and out of the building appear to lack proper sleeving. Flashing along the roof at the connection point with the gymnasium appears to be somewhat deteriorated. At least some of the metal sunscreens along the south face of the building are in a state of advanced deterioration. Concrete has spalled from the face of the exposed concrete foundation in some places.

In spite of the observed deficiencies, the building appears to be watertight, shows no signs of differential settlement or other cracking or structural deterioration, and it remains functional and operational.

The building's mechanical electrical and plumbing systems in the building are operational, but not optimal or contemporary. The steam heat is supplemented in the rooms by fan coil units that can blow heated or outside air into the room. The building lacks air conditioning. Individual PTAC-style (through the wall) units have been installed in some of the classrooms. See Figures

The restrooms in the building appear to be original to the building, and do not appear to meet current ADA requirements.

The interior of the building still exhibits many of its original fixtures, finishes and equipment. Walls are primarily block and glazed block. Ceilings are ACT lay-in tile systems, in 2x2 and 2x4 configurations. Floors in many places appear to be original to the building – vinyl tile and terrazzo. It is possible that some of the tile is VAT tile, which may contain asbestos. Chalkboards, pin-up boards and lockers remain in their

original locations. The building currently houses a Head Start Program, and a Food Pantry. The Head Start Program is relocating to a new building under construction on South Section Street, along the eastern side of the campus.

Gymnasium

The gymnasium was visited last. It is located along the eastern side of the campus, and is connected to the one-story classroom building along its south wall, connected via an internal corridor. It is approximately 6400 sf in size. The gymnasium appears to share construction materials with the other two buildings, although the roof employs steel joists in lieu of concrete planks. Clerestory windows provide natural light. The original wood floor is completely intact, requiring only a rebuffing.

The Village uses the space as a multi-purpose room, renting it out to organizations and individuals for weddings and other assembly uses, and opening for use in the winter for "open" basketball play. The building still has the ropes and peg boards used in Phys Ed classes of previous generations.

The south wall of the building is evidencing some differential cracking. It is unknown whether it is seasonal, opening and closing with weather and temperature, or it is a deteriorating condition that requires remediation to prevent further degradation of the wall.

The building is not air conditioned, and the boiler appears to be aged, though remains operational.

The Site Context

The site is in a geographically central location to the boundaries of the village, in what might be considered the heart of the village. Several village services are located in the immediate vicinity. The village administration building ("E," figure 1.1) and sheriff's offices ("F," figure 1.1) are located directly to the west, within a public park. The Union County Fire Department ("G," figure 1.1) which serves this portion of the village is closely located directly to the north ("A," figure 1.1.)

The road system of the village is laid out in a grid fashion having two streets, Main and Pike, which connect to Highway 42 offering direct access to Interstate 71, see figure 1.4. Pike street runs west towards the new retail center fronting on Highway 42. Main Street runs south, crossing the Little Miami River before connecting to Highway 42. Along the river is an abandoned railroad line that has been reclaimed and is an operational scenic bike trail more than 70 miles in length ("H," figure 1.1.) Marrow Street to the east transitions to more rural and isolated estate homes and farms ("J," figure 1.1.)

The history of the village is long. South Lebanon is one of the oldest towns in Warren County, being established in 1795. The village has its roots as a stopping place for the early settlers of the county, and is situated along the northern bank of the scenic Little Miami River. There are no buildings in close proximity to the site that are of historical significance. The center of village has buildings that for the most part were constructed in the early to mid 1900's. As you go further out from the center, newer development can be seen. To the north is the retail complex known as River's Crossing ("K," figure

1.1) situated at the Interstate 71 interchange. To the south and southwest, closer to Maineville, Loveland and Mason, newer residential PUD's and pocket retail developments (L) have been built, as township populations grew and public utilities have been expanded.

Other Factors

Flood Risk

The site and majority of the old village center is located along the northern bank of the Little Miami River ("M," figure 1.4.) FEMA has documented a floodway zone and 100 year flood plain, see figure 1.3. New commercial structures and existing commercial structures located in the 100 year flood plain that undergo substantial renovation must adhere to FEMA regulations according to the FEMA Federal Insurance Administration Technical Bulletin 3. The Two-Story Classroom Building ("A," figure 1.1) is located within the 100 year flood plain. The existing village administration building ("E," figure 1.1) and the village sheriff's offices ("F," figure 1.1) are also within the 100 year flood plain.

There seem to be 2 key issues with re-use of Two-Story Classroom Building regarding flood plain risk:

- 1) If there are substantial improvements to this building, it falls under the attached requirements of the Federal Insurance Administration and the National Flood Insurance Program, which states:

NFIP Regulations

The NFIP regulations that specifically apply to the design of flood proofing for non-residential buildings are within Section 60.3(c)(3), which states that the community shall: "Require that all new construction and substantial improvements of non-residential structures within Zones A1 -A30, AE, and AH on the community's FIRM (i) have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the base flood level, or (ii) together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, be designed so that below the base flood level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy. "

- 2) The FIA regulations further describe the nature of flood-proofed buildings:

Note: While buildings need only be protected to the BFE for floodplain management purposes, freeboard is considered for flood insurance rating purposes. Because of the additional risk associated with any floodproofed building, 1 foot is subtracted from the elevation to which a building has been floodproofed, for insurance rating (if the building is floodproofed at least to the BFE). Therefore, to receive an insurance rating based on 100-year flood protection, the building must be floodproofed to an elevation at least 1 foot above the BFE. Insurance premiums will be lower if flood proofing exceeds this requirement.

Tenancy History

According to the village there has been difficulty in securing on-going tenant contracts for the adapted re-use of these buildings, since the deeding of the three school buildings

by the school district. They have never been fully utilized, but have had community outreach programs and similar functions periodically over this term. It has been noted that newer commercial development and tenant activity have been concentrated further outside the city center, around and along State Route 48.

Preliminary Analysis:

Based on the meetings held with Village officials, physical observation of the property, and examination of documents obtained, CDS is able to offer the following findings:

A. Buildings

1. There is significant interest in adaptive reuse of the 2-story structure. The Village believes it can mitigate any flood-related risks involving insurance, FEMA, etc, locally. The building is iconic and seen as a landmark structure for the Village.
2. The Village has, through a combination of monitoring and maintenance, extended the useful life of the three structures on the campus. By performing some remedial work, primarily on the 1-Story structure, and continuing the "monitor and maintain program", the Village should be able to keep the buildings operational for their current uses for the foreseeable future.
3. The gymnasium is seen as an asset to the community, and there is significant interest in preserving it in its' current use for the foreseeable future.
4. The one-story building is seen as having the most flexibility in terms of adaptive reuse, as it does not have the iconic value of the two-story structure, nor the unique purpose-built function of the gymnasium.
5. The Village does not see the campus being returned to its original use under any circumstances. The school district has invested heavily in new construction, and, has no interest in, or need for, these buildings.
6. While the structure and envelope of the buildings are in generally good condition, their age and condition of their systems is less than optimal, especially with fundamental systems like air conditioning and fire protection (sprinklers) entirely absent. Retrofitting structures with these types of systems can often be cost-prohibitive, but the cost-free acquisition mitigates some of the financial pressure, and the gymnasium can continue to function in its' current use without significant system upgrades.
7. While temporary uses and short-term tenancies are making relatively good use of the space and buildings, permanent occupancies, especially involving uses that are different than the original occupancy, will trigger code compliance and other issues involving the "big-ticket" items noted in the previous comments. Those issues may include, but, also, may not be limited to:

- a. Air conditioning
- b. Power/electrical service replacement
- c. Sprinklers
- d. Fire alarms and detection
- e. ADA compliance
- f. Energy efficiency code
- g. Security system (use-based, not code-driven)
- h. New roofs
- i. Window replacement

These costs would be in addition to the typical costs for demolition and reconfiguring space using walls/partitions to accommodate the new uses, new finishes, painting, signage, or lighting.

B. Site

1. The existing campus is largely paved, and is currently being used primarily by contractors building the Head Start building on the east side of the property. The site is under the same "Monitor and Maintain" program that is used to keep the buildings operational. The Village should take measures to hold the contractors accountable for any damage they inflict to the parking lot as a result of their activities.
2. A change of use by either of the two classroom buildings will likely trigger some changes to the parking.
3. Relocation of the police to the site will impact parking and onsite traffic issues, as the vehicular traffic of the first-responders flows better when separated from employee and public parking.
4. Passive acquisitions of the remaining parcels on the block would enable the Village to better control the long-term development of the campus, regardless of the direction the Village chooses to take.
5. With no special assets that would be affected by it, the flood plain demarcation does not have any special influence on current site features.

C. Neighborhood

1. The abandoned, fire-damaged properties adjacent to the site (at the southwest corner) represent potential opportunities to further control the long-term development of the area in which the campus resides. The Village should consider including these parcels into the overall long-term strategic vision for the community.
2. The parcels opposite the campus on the north, west and south sides appear, with the exception of the church, to also be underperforming real estate assets. A long-term plan for the campus should consider the impact of each upon the other, with

a view towards how each might be developed in ways that are beneficial to the other.

3. With the community's perception that the 2-Story Classroom Building represents the "heart" or "core" of "Old South Lebanon", the decision as to whether to invest in the building raises issues beyond the technical feasibility and cost.
4. CDS Associates is aware that the Village is considering relocation of its offices to an alternate site, nearer to Rt. 42 and the highway, where significant commercial development has already taken place.
5. CDS Associates is also aware that the Village may find its' status changing as a result of the census. That change could have significant impact on the decisions about how to make best use of the property and the buildings on it

Preliminary Synthesis:

Qualifications

CDS Associates, in undertaking this preliminary planning effort, has been made aware of the significance of three issues that impact both the report and the property, but are not bounded by the physical limits of the site, or the assets thereupon.

First, the Village's potential and pending transition to City status has a significant impact on our recommendations. The Villages' decision about whether and/or when to undertake the transition colors our findings dramatically. Among other things, it may require the Village to develop a court system and health district/department.

Second, the Village's interest in locating the civic functions closer to the new commercial development further complicates the findings of this report, as a decision to make such a move renders the recommendations about renovation of the properties for a civic function moot.

Third, the Village does not currently have a Comprehensive Master Plan. Because of the complexity of the issues facing the Village, and the revelation that long-term development of the campus is linked to significant, evolving issues, CDS Associates highly recommends that the Village begin the process of developing a Comprehensive Master Plan for the District immediately surrounding the campus, at a minimum, and, optimally, for the entire Village. The Master Plan should include the following:

- A. Transition Plan for converting over to a City, (if necessary) including a timetable
- B. Infrastructure assessment, including IT
- C. Strategic Financial Plan, including a Capital Improvement Plan
- D. Design Guidelines
- E. Zoning Plan Updates, including possible Overlay District(s)
- F. Community Participation

Based on these issues and further analysis stemming from the work performed, CDS Associates makes the preliminary recommendations to the Village of South Lebanon:

A. Short-Term Recommendations

1. Continue the “monitor and maintain” program until the Village has a clearer picture about the long-term disposition of the campus.
2. Continue to seek short-term uses and users to keep the property operational, and visible to the public as being operational. The Village may wish to consider “marketing” the space, using the website or other tools available to it. Banners hung from the building may also be an effective method to tout the ongoing use of the building to the community. Raising the profile of public awareness regarding the Village’s use of the property is a key step in building support for large-scale future investments, if the Village elects to take that route.
3. The gymnasium and 1-story classroom building have been operating somewhat successfully as housing community outreach programs. The Head Start Program, currently occupying six classrooms of the 1-story building, will vacate this year and move to the adjacent new construction. The best temporary re-use of this space is community related services, as it fits into the “monitor and maintain” program, and should not trigger substantial adaptive re-use upgrades.
4. CDS Associates does not recommend a temporary or interim move of either the Village offices or the police department into any of the school buildings, as it would likely trigger a code-mandated set of costly building improvements that the Village would be required to implement in order to remain. Instead, the Village should first determine whether to make the campus the permanent home for the Village offices, and allow the decision-making process flow from the direction that decision establishes.
5. Use the cost opinions provided in this report (see appendix) to help determine whether the Village wishes to consider the possibility to use any of the buildings as the new Village offices or police building.
6. Begin to take the next steps in the planning/design process to further define the highest and best short- and long-term use of the property, beyond the findings and recommendations of this report. Those steps may include:
 - i. A full facility assessment (including forensic investigation for conditions not readily apparent, full code analysis, roof conditions analysis, etc.), including a detailed cost schedule for ongoing improvements
 - ii. Full architectural programming, including potential future city functions not currently covered by this document,
 - iii. Market analysis to examine to determine whether other development opportunities exist for the buildings, and whether

there might be other properties available that might better suit the civic purposes the city is considering locating here

7. Begin to seek public input and feedback about the development of the campus.
8. Seek opportunities to acquire adjacent properties when and as they arise. Control of the entire block yields greater flexibility for use.

B. Long-Term Alternatives

Based on our findings CDS Associates has identified three general directions for the development of the property from which the Village can choose.

1. Develop the property as the new civic center for the Village.

Under this option, the gymnasium can retain its' current function. Further exploration is recommended to assess the viability of creating a community center around the gym building, by locating additional community services adjacent to the gym, either in renovated classroom space or through an addition to the building.

For the classroom buildings, several "sub-options" exist under this "umbrella" recommendation, with very different consequences/outcomes. They include:

a. Renovate the 2-Story building to accommodate Village office and police functions.

Pro's:

- i. The Village's most readily identifiable structure assumes a high priority function and role.
- ii. In renovating the building, the Village demonstrates a long-term commitment to revitalizing "Old South Lebanon".
- iii. The Village will be occupying an extraordinarily robust building, which, if improved and maintained, will serve the Village well for many years to come.
- iv. The 2-Story Building appears to be in better condition than the 1-Story Building and should require less investment to remediate physical deterioration.

Con's:

- i. Renovation costs will be high, due to the significant investment in systems required to bring the building into code compliance and make it support the civic functions that would reside there. A significant portion of that cost would include the addition of an elevator to the building.

- ii. Those costs have to be incurred “up front”, because the Village will have to make the improvements before it occupies the building.
- iii. The building’s footprint (8,900sf/floor) is not sufficient for the Village’s planned needs (10,000sf), requiring either functions to be divided between the two floors, or an addition of sufficient size to accommodate the projected space requirements.
- iv. Demolition of the 1-story building would eventually be necessary to further develop the campus.

b. Renovate the 1-Story building to accommodate Village office and police functions.

Pro’s:

- i. The 1-story building will not require an elevator.
- ii. The 1-story building does not share the symbolic significance of its taller “sibling”, and has greater flexibility to accommodate the change of use.
- iii. In renovating the building, the Village demonstrates a long-term commitment to revitalizing “Old South Lebanon”
- iv. The Village will be occupying a robust building, which, if improved and maintained, will serve the Village well for many years to come.
- v. Defers renovation of the 2-Story Building until such time as needed to accommodate the additional operational responsibilities associated with transitioning to a City. In particular, the 2-Story Classroom may work well as a municipal courts building.
- vi. Allows the Village to renovate only for the SF it needs. The 1-Story Classroom Building could be split into two buildings as part of the redevelopment.

Con’s:

- i. Renovation costs will be high, due to the significant investment in systems required to bring the building into code compliance and make it support the civic functions that would reside there.
- ii. Those costs have to be incurred “up front”, because the Village will have to make the improvements before it occupies the building.
- iii. The physical connection to the gymnasium may complicate exiting and security considerations, especially if the east end of the 1-Story Classroom building is reprogrammed as a community center.
- iv. Demolition of the 2-story building would eventually be necessary to further develop the campus.

c. Move the Village offices to the 1-Story Building, and move the police into the 2-Story Building with the new municipal courts when they become necessary.

Pro's:

- i. Increased security for suspects and prisoners. Can move them from holding cells to courtrooms without leaving the building.
- ii. Defers relocation of the police department, reducing up-front costs.
- iii. Gives the police the option of temporarily occupying the current Village offices for minimal cost.
- iv. Allows the Village to renovate only for the SF it needs. The 1-Story Classroom Building could be split into two buildings as part of the redevelopment.

Con's:

- i. Renovation costs will still be high, due to the significant investment in systems required to bring the building into code compliance and make it support the civic functions that would reside there.
- ii. Those costs have to be incurred "up front", because the Village will have to make the improvements before it occupies the building.
- iii. 2-story building remains dormant longer, remaining an "eyesore" and possibly driving up renovation costs.

d. Redevelop the property by demolishing the 1- and 2-Story Classroom Buildings and creating a completely new civic center for the Village/City.

Pro's:

- i. Radically reinvents image of South Lebanon.
- ii. Build exactly what you need – very cost-effective from that standpoint.
- iii. Can be tied into the transition to a city, and the creation of an overlay district that guides development for the entire neighborhood.
- iv. Can create a "green space" that links to the adjacent park.
- v. Can go underground for parking.
- vi. The schedule can be managed over a longer time frame for better financial, tactical and operational results.

Con's:

- i. Has to overcome the eventual "boondoggle" criticisms.
- ii. If the Village does not make the transition to a City, the hurdles (financial, logistical, etc.) may make this scenario unfeasible.
- iii. Adds the cost of demolition of the existing buildings into the overall project cost (See Appendix).
- iv. The Village and police station remain in their current locations longer.

2. Develop the property as an expansion of the existing adjacent park.

Under this option, the gymnasium retains its' current function, anchors the eastern end of the park, and provides an opportunity to use a portion of the existing 1-Story Classroom as a community center. The 2-Story Classroom would be demolished, and the park would extend across High Street.

Village offices would relocate, when and as appropriate, to another location, possibly in or near the new retail center. The police building could either be co-located with the new Village offices or incorporated into the community center, or at another location within the Village.

Pro's:

- i. The Village creates a significant, public, community asset as the new heart of South Lebanon. With the right combination of features, it could also readily serve as the "face of South Lebanon", a function that the 2-Story Classroom has incurred by default.
- ii. In expanding/renovating and re-branding the gymnasium as a community center, the Village demonstrates a long-term commitment to revitalizing "Old South Lebanon".
- iii. The Village Offices will be occupying new construction, specifically tailored to its needs, with potentially fewer maintenance issues and greater flexibility to accommodate future changes.
- iv. In siting the new Village offices at or near the retail center, the Village creates a two-magnet village master plan, which might facilitate revitalization better by providing two assets around which to cluster new construction.
- v. The evolution of the site to a park can be done incrementally, as funds become available.
- vi. Creating quality park space can be a cost-effective way to make the neighborhood even more attractive.

Con's:

- i. Demolition of the 2-Story Classroom Building might be unpopular if handled incorrectly.
- ii. Adds the cost of demolition to the overall project (See Appendix)
- iii. The property may deteriorate while the planning and fundraising for the park takes place, requiring investments to keep it safe in the interim.
- iv. Will need to find a home for the agencies currently located in the 2-Story Classroom.
- v. Does the Village need a larger park?

3. Develop the property as a mixed-use development.

Under this option, the entire property is redeveloped and revitalized as a mixed-use venue, along the lines of contemporary planning principles, including some “New Urbanism” tactics.

In this scenario, the street level is fronted by retail/commercial space, with offices and housing above. Redevelopment along the flanking streets would further help to establish the critical mass necessary to draw people in sufficient numbers to keep the project viable. Examples of this approach include “The Greene” in Beavercreek or, on a larger scale, “The Banks”, or, to a lesser extent, “Newport on the Levy”, and the two-phase “Rookwood” development in Norwood.

This approach does not preclude the civic functions outlined in Alternative 1, but offers the option of placing it within a larger framework of revitalization for the whole of South Lebanon. It also allows for the possibility of retaining either or both of the existing school buildings, and folding them into the overall development. The existing gymnasium and/or potential community center could also be wrapped into the overall project.

Pro's:

- i. The Village creates a whole new district, and, in doing, sets the tone for the future of the Village. .
- ii. The plan fully addresses and embraces the strategic vision for South Lebanon as written on the website, in a way that a renovation of the existing buildings would struggle to match.
- iii. The Village Offices will be occupying new construction, specifically tailored to its needs, with potentially fewer maintenance issues and greater flexibility to accommodate future changes.
- iv. This approach provides the greatest flexibility for the Village in regards to future issues surrounding the transition from a Village to a City, as the additional responsibilities can be folded into the plan.
- v. The evolution of the site can be done incrementally, as funds become available, and pushes a significant of the development costs into the private realm.

Con's:

- i. Demolition of the 2-Story Classroom Building might be unpopular if handled incorrectly.
- ii. The property may deteriorate while the planning, fundraising and engagement of a private developer takes place, requiring investments to keep it safe in the interim.
- iii. The current economic/market conditions simply don't support adding spec retail space to the market.
- iv. Relying on the private sector puts the control of the project and the parcel in the hands of a third party, whose interests may not mirror those of the Village.

C. Recommended Approach

In examining the alternatives for the campus, CDS Associates arrived at the conclusion that the Village would make best use of the property by adopting the following:

1. Accept all of the short-term recommendations, and maintain the buildings for short-term outreach programs.
2. Develop a better understanding of the Villages' plan for transitioning to City status, and what types of obligations that entails. Determine the space needs for those obligations after they are established.
3. Do not invest in moving the Village offices to either existing school building, as the preliminary assessment of those structures revealed that renovation costs (see appendix) are likely to approach the total construction cost of a new 10,000 sf building.
4. Use the previously recommended planning process to fully evaluate the alternatives available to the Village for the ultimate development of the property, the neighborhood and the entire Village. The fundamental question for the development of this property is whether it should function as a "solid" – a fully developed parcel of a variety of building types and uses, or a "void" – park-like, community green space around which civic, commercial and residential functions are clustered.
5. Key for the Village is to evaluate their options and choose an outcome, and begin the steps to reconfigure the efforts of the Village to make that outcome a reality.

D. Other Recommendations

In addition to the above recommendations, the Village should be aware of and consider the following:

1. The residential and commercial properties that abut the site along Forest Avenue, Broadway Street, and Section Street should be considered integral to any master plan. The Village, if undertaking a Master Plan, should also consider including the entire neighborhood.
2. If/when the Village offices and police department are relocated, the buildings in which they currently reside will become unused. Some options to consider include:
 - i. Turn the buildings over to Public Works or Parks Department.
 - ii. Demolish the buildings and fold the land back into the park.
 - iii. Sell the property to a private developer who will develop it in accordance with the recommendations of the Master Plan.
3. With the growth that South Lebanon is experiencing, especially in the light of the last 18 months of economic struggles, it may be fair to predict that, when the economy emerges from its' doldrums, that South Lebanon will be uniquely poised among Miami Valley municipalities for strong and rapid growth. It's proximity to I-71, fast-growing Mason, Kings Island,

and the availability of land suitable for residential development, coupled with the “next up the road” syndrome, place it squarely in the sights of regional developers. The Village should consider examining this growth potential and its’ timetable and impact more intently to get a better picture of the 10-year forecast for itself and surrounding areas. CDS believes that it is crucial for the Village to get ahead of the impending changes that are coming for the government and the citizens of South Lebanon.

E. Next Steps

CDS recommends that, as a simple first next step, the Village determine whether to act on any of the recommendations provided in this report. Once that first step has been taken, the Village will have begun to chart a course for the future of the property, the neighborhood in which it resides, and the Village as a whole.

In order to make that determination the Village may wish to:

1. Seek additional financial and forensic information regarding the buildings and the costs associated with renovating and demolishing them, and weigh that against current industry costs for new construction.
2. Seek other opinions to validate the recommendations of this report.
3. Interview other villages that have made the transition to a city, and seek information from the State and other sources to better understand the consequences of that change.

CDS recommends that, if the determination is made to move forward, that the Village engage a consultant to undertake a Comprehensive Master Plan for South Lebanon. The Master Plan should help the Village identify and prioritize capital improvement expenditures and establish a timetable for their start and completion.

F. Conclusion

CDS believes that the Village of South Lebanon is in a very special position. The commercial and residential development that has been rushing headlong towards it for the last 10 years or more has, because of the recession, paused, giving the Village the opportunity to plan its future with greater control, and maximize the potential in the campus property that was the focus of this report.

Whether the Village elects to renovate or build new offices, the need is genuine, and will only become more pressing over time. Both options offer the Village an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to carefully planned, carefully managed growth – the kind that can provide new jobs, attract new businesses, and improve the quality of life for every citizen. They represent different directions on the same path, and part of the key to having a successful outcome, regardless of the choice made, is how the Village engages with and communicates its decisions to the community it serves.

By undertaking the efforts to develop and implement new and expanded planning tools, the Village can create both the vision and the processes, regulations and guidelines it will need as it evolves from a Village to a City, so that it can remain true to its goal of providing a “balance of residential, retail and business opportunities” that are “combined with community revitalization efforts”, so that the “small-town atmosphere” it treasures is maintained for now and for generations to come.

Respectfully Submitted,

CDS Associates, Inc.

James G. Turney, AIA, LEED[®], NCARB

Photo Gallery

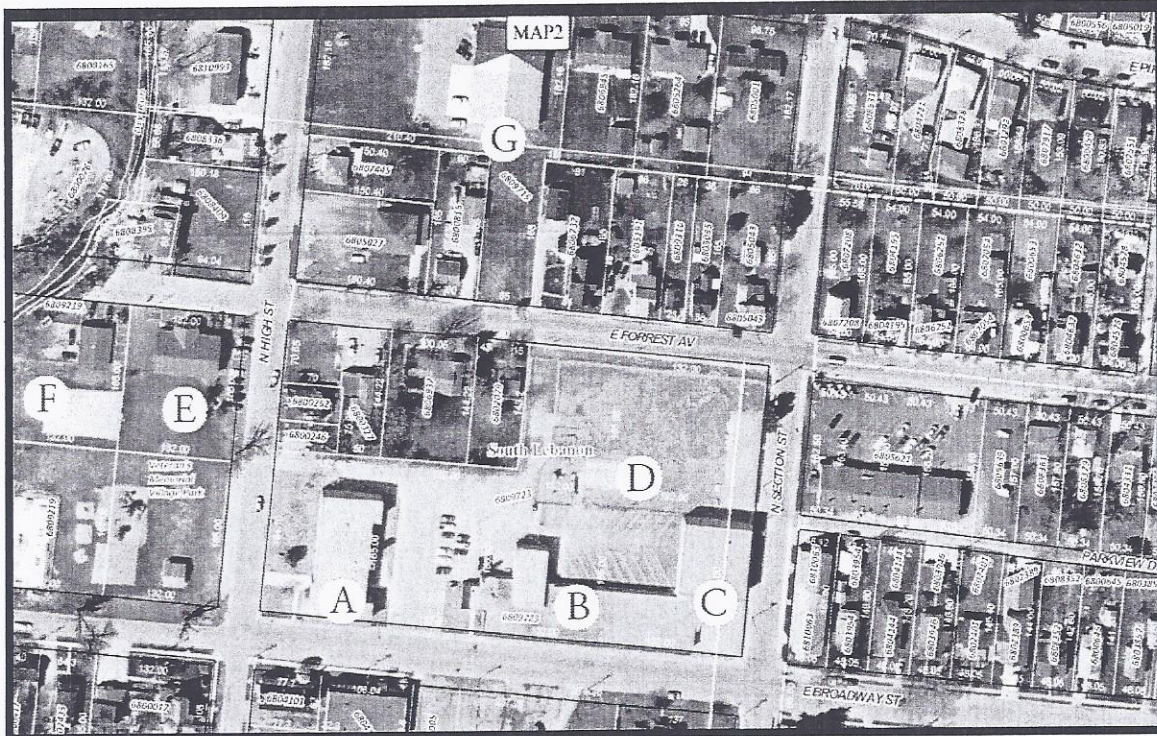


Figure 1.1 – Aerial

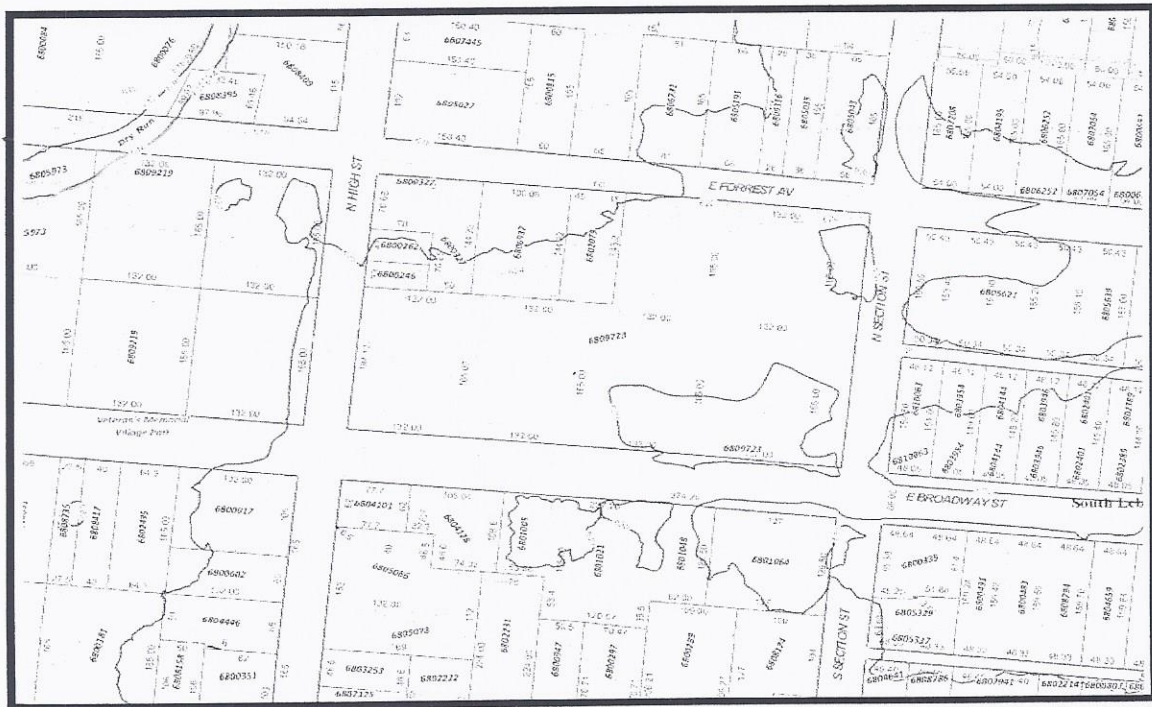


Figure 1.2 – Topography Map



Figure 1.3 – FEMA Flood Plain Map

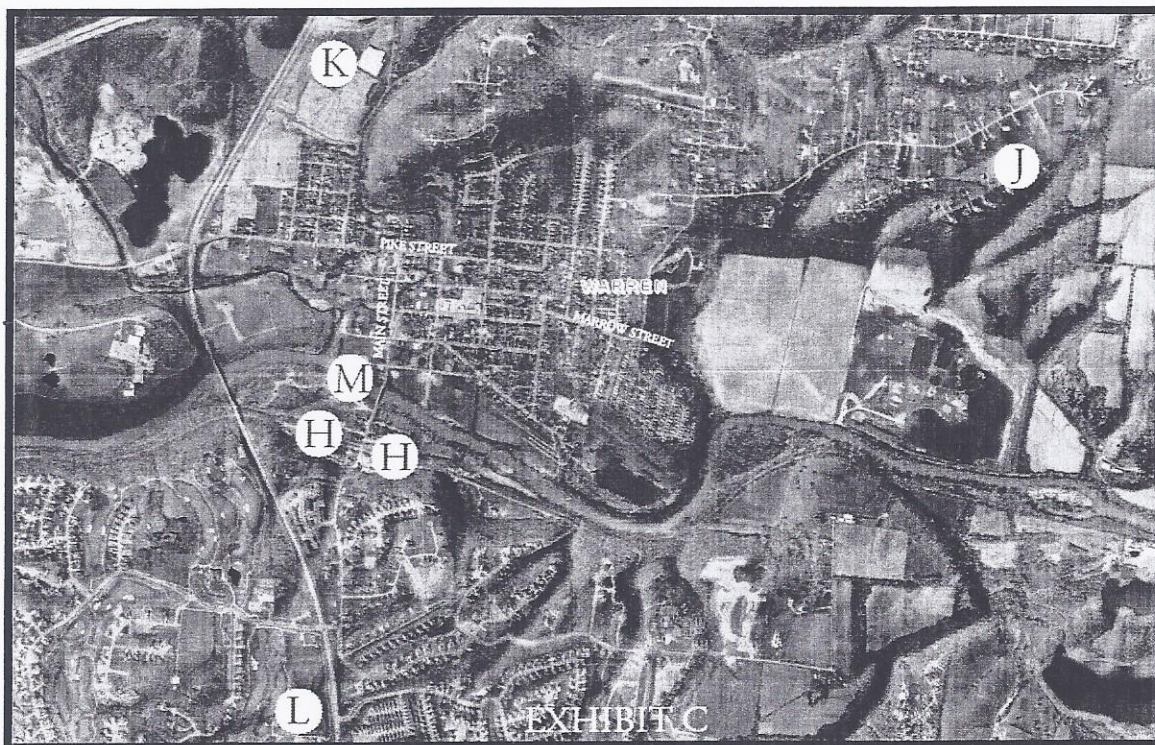


Figure 1.4 – Aerial

Alternate Site Plans

The four site plans attached to this report are intended to reflect a range of options available to the Village for redevelopment of the property. Some of the ideas in each can cross-populate the other schemes. Each has advantages and disadvantages tied to

the discussions found earlier in this report. The Alternate Site Plans are intended to stimulate the dialogue and provide an image that ultimately helps to establish a direction for the Village.

a. Alternate Site Plan 1: Renovate 2-Story Classroom

Under this option, the gymnasium is expanded and reconfigured, using a portion of the existing one-story classroom building, to create a new community center, with a main entrance at the corner of Section and Broadway. The remainder of the one-story classroom building would be demolished to allow for parking and other improvements.

The 2-story building is renovated and improved in order to serve as the new municipal center. It sits within a new park created, in part, by closing High Street between Forrest and Broadway. The park creates a new town center by providing a place for outdoor events and ceremonies, as well as a place for informal gatherings and year-round activities.

b. Alternate Site Plan 2: Village Square Concept

Under this option, the one-story classroom building is renovated, reconfigured, and split, with a portion of the western half serving as the new municipal center. The gymnasium is expanded and reconfigured, using a portion of the remainder of the existing one-story classroom building to create a new community center, with a main entrance at the corner of Section and Broadway. The two buildings are configured to create a new plaza between them.

The Village Square depicted is actually just one of several possible variants. This version shows a new "mini" street grid wrapping the square and providing a zone a slower, one-way traffic. Other possibilities include pushing the edge of the Square to Forrest and Broadway, keeping or closing High Street between Forrest and Broadway, and changing the road configuration. The flexibility of this concept, and its traditional basis afford this alternate significant appeal.

c. Alternate Site Plan 3: New Village Offices

Under this option, both classrooms are demolished to make way for a new municipal facility, which, with the expanded gymnasium, serves as the anchor for a new park. Under this option High St. could either remain open or be closed to connect the new park with the existing park to the west.

d. Alternate Site Plan 4: Mixed-Use Village Center

Under this option, the two-story classroom building is renovated and expanded to serve as the new municipal center. The gymnasium and a portion of the one-story

classroom building is renovated and expanded to serve as a new community center.

The most significant feature of this plan is the creation of a new, 37,000 sf mixed-use building, with small retail at the first floor and professional offices at the second. (It may be possible to construct a three-story building, with 54,000 sf).

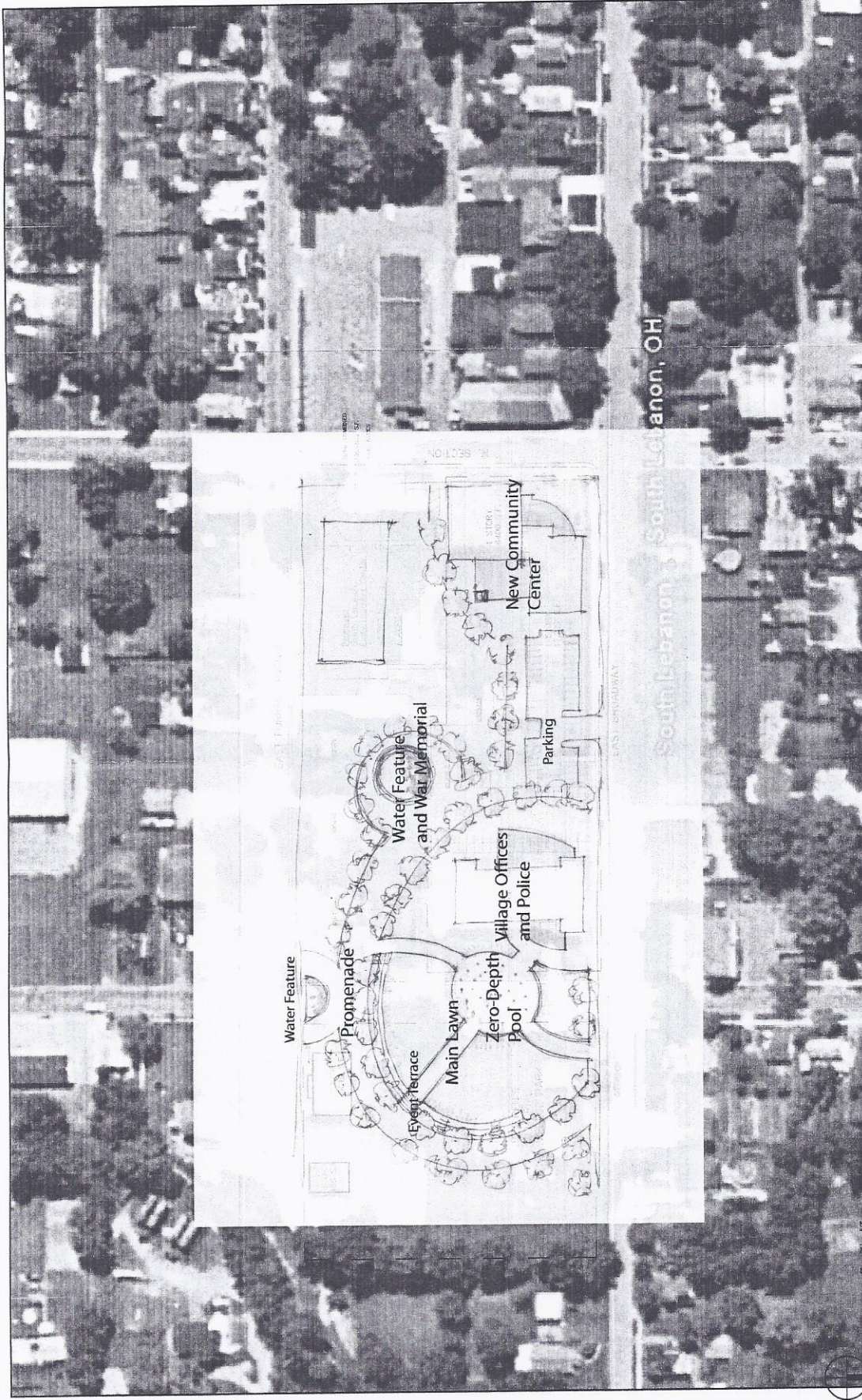
The other feature is the creation of a 20,000 sf building that could be used either as a library or a mixed-use building, or both.

Even with the denser build-out, there is still enough room on the site to create a plaza and walkways that would draw people to it, and serve as the center of the Village.



CDS ASSOCIATES, INC.

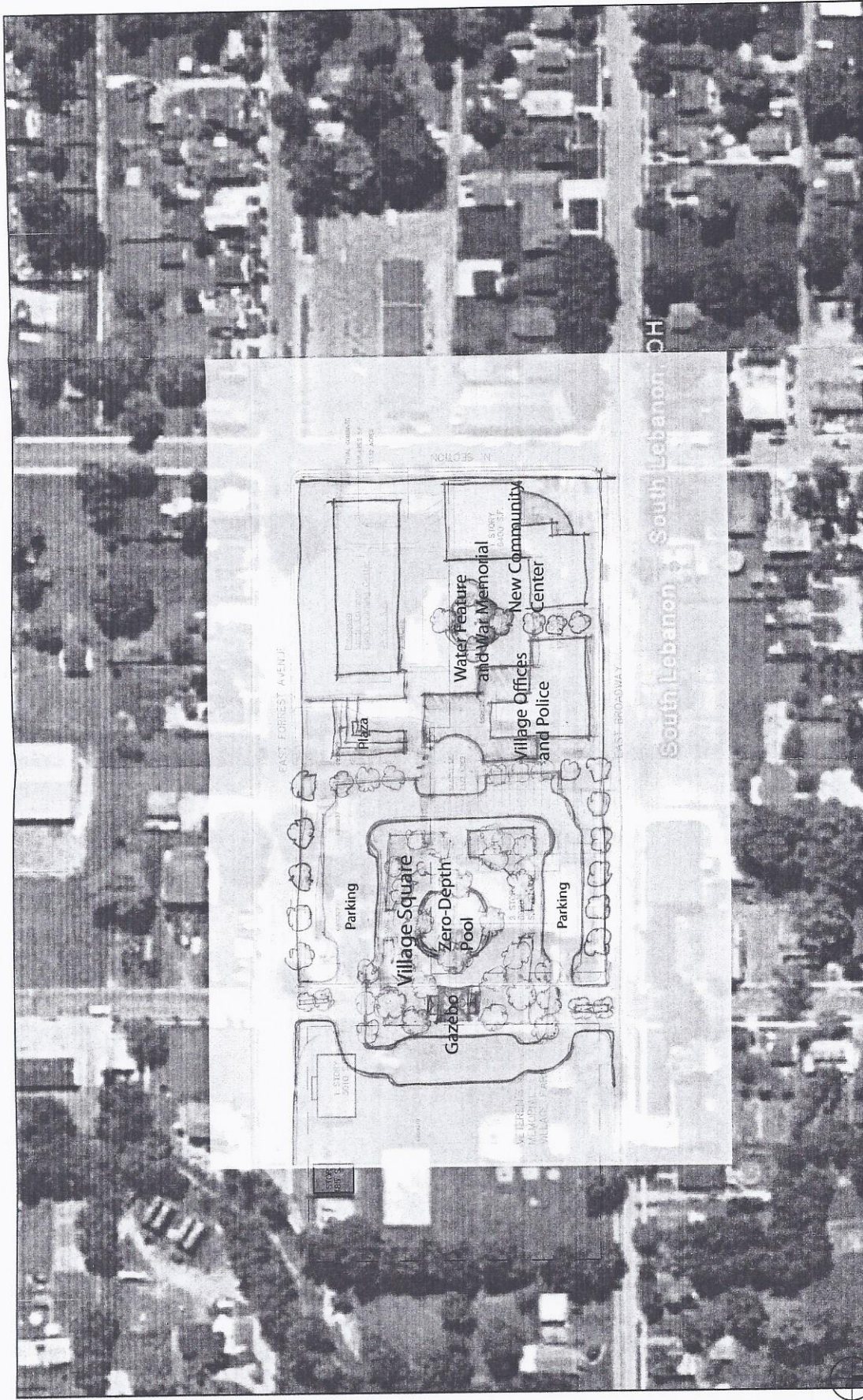
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Site Plan

South Lebanon Facility Study

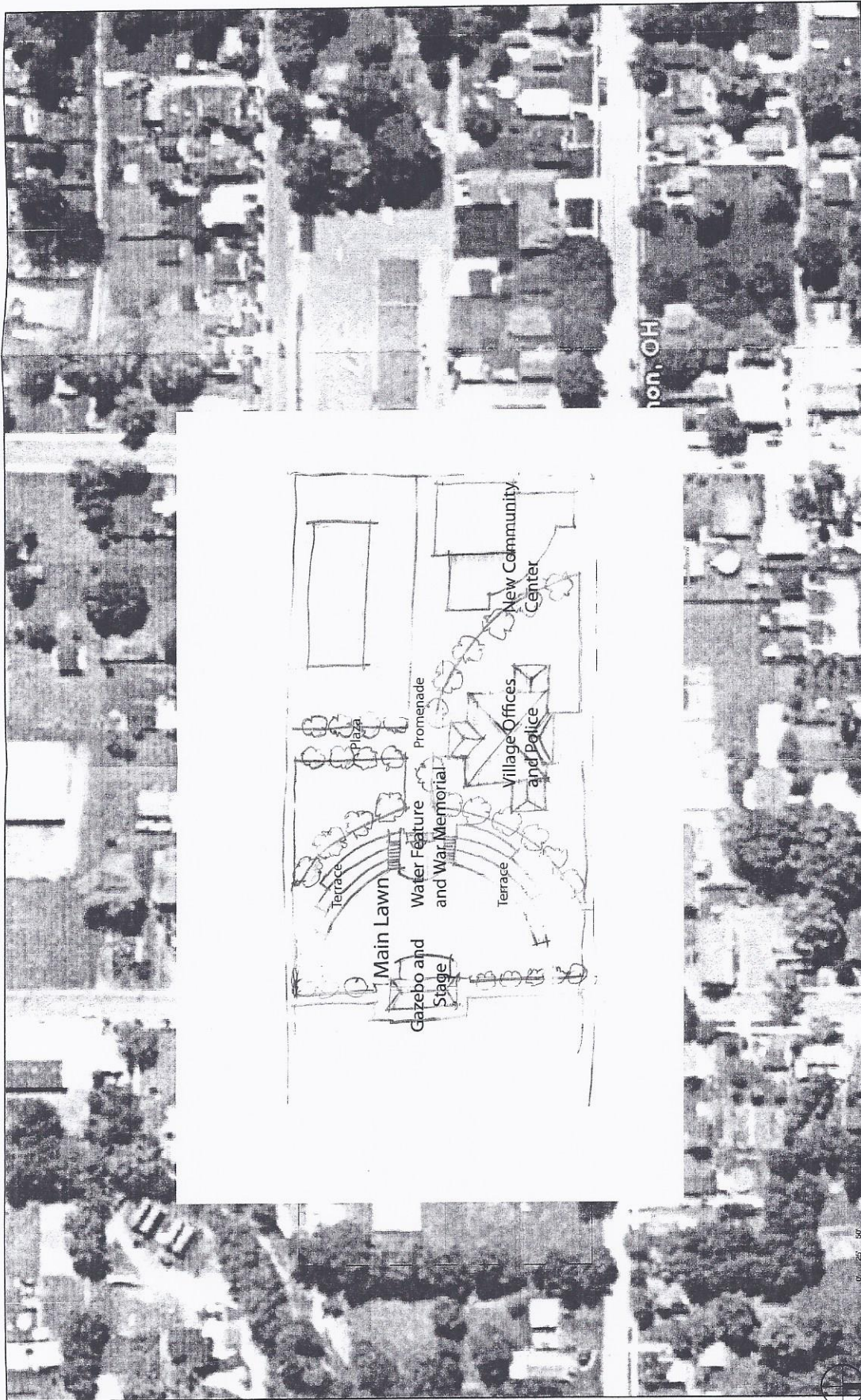
Alternate 1 - Renovate 2-Story Classroom



Site Plan

Alternate 2 - Village Square Concept

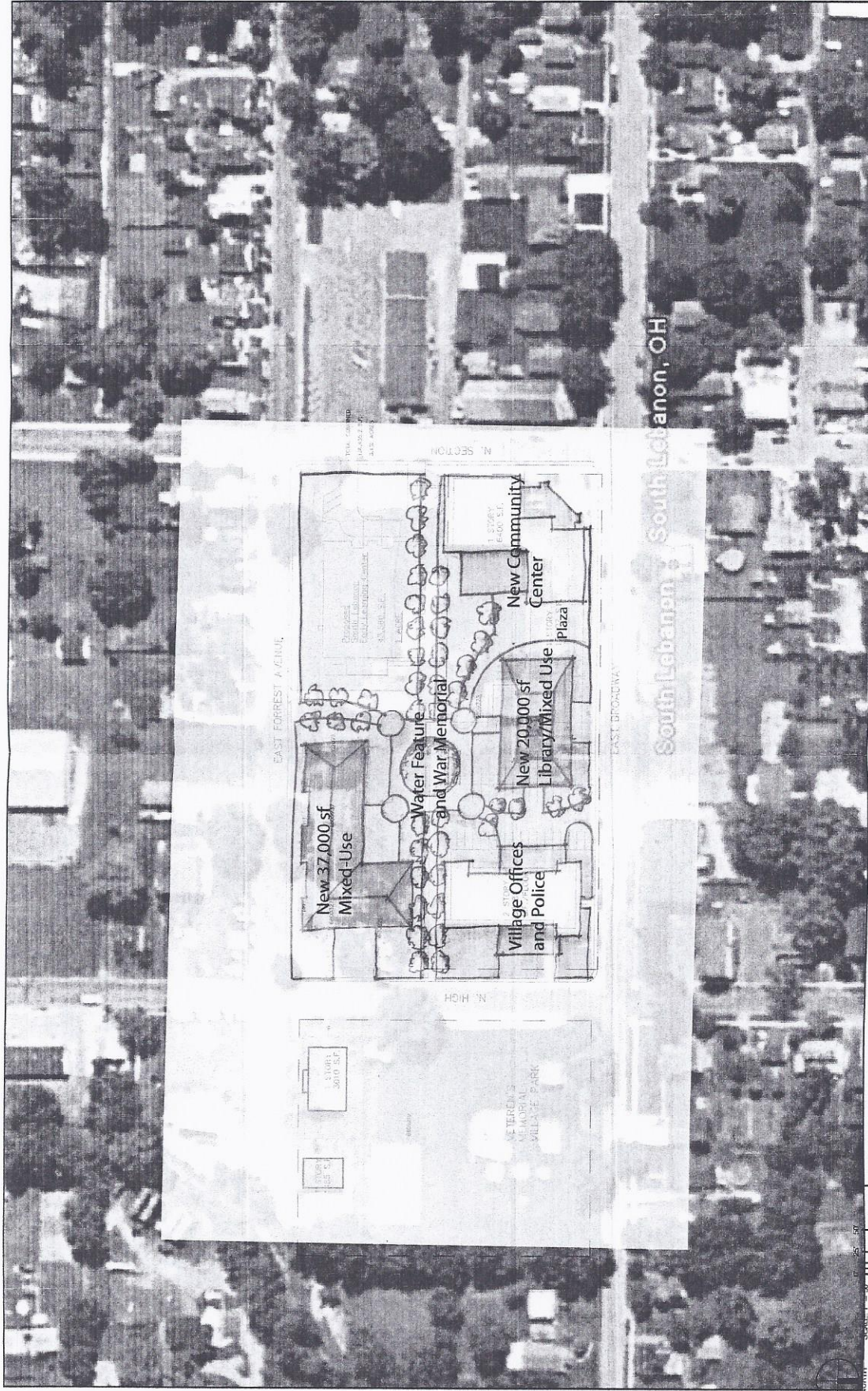
South Lebanon Facility Study



Site Plan

South Lebanon Facility Study

Alternate 3 - New Village Offices



Site Plan

South Lebanon Facility Study

Alternate 4 - Mixed-Use Village Center



Renovating the 2-Story Classroom Building					
Task	Unit Cost		Range of Magnitude		
	Low	High	Low	High	
Misc. Demolition	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 35,600.00	\$ 53,400.00	
New Elevator			\$ 150,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	
New Flooring	\$3.00/sf	\$6.00/sf	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 90,000.00	
Furr Out and Insulate Exterior Walls	\$10.00/sf	\$15.00/sf	\$ 91,600.00	\$ 137,400.00	
Renovated Toilet Rooms	\$20,000 ea.	\$30,000 ea.	\$30,000	\$ 50,000.00	
New Gable Roof					
a. Metal Roof for 8,900 sf	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 106,800.00	
b. Wood Trusses for 8,900 sf	\$3.25	\$4.00	\$ 28,925.00	\$ 35,600.00	
Misc. New Walls and Paint	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$ 53,400.00	\$ 89,000.00	
New Electrical Service & Upgrades *	\$18.00	\$30.00	\$ 320,400.00	\$ 534,000.00	
New HVAC **	\$15.00	\$22	\$ 267,000.00	\$ 391,600.00	
New Sprinkler System	\$2.75	\$3.25	\$ 48,950.00	\$ 57,850.00	
New Fire Alarm System	\$1.25	\$2.50	\$ 22,250.00	\$ 44,500.00	
Window Replacement	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$42,000	\$70,000	
New CIT Infrastructure	\$5.00/sf	\$8.00/sf	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 142,400.00	
Total			\$ 1,313,125.00	\$ 2,052,550.00	

Renovating the 1-Story Classroom Building				
Task	Unit Cost		Range of Magnitude	
	Low	High	Low	High
Misc. Demolition	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 34,600.00	\$ 51,900.00
New Flooring	\$3.00/sf	\$6.00/sf	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
Furr Out and Insulate Exterior Walls	\$10.00/sf	\$15.00/sf	\$ 76,000.00	\$ 114,000.00
Renovated Toilet Rooms	\$20,000 ea.	\$30,000 ea.	\$30,000	\$ 50,000.00
New Gable Roof				
a. Metal Roof for 17,300 sf	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$ 173,000.00	\$ 207,600.00
b. Wood Trusses for 17,300 sf	\$3.25	\$4.00	\$ 56,225.00	\$ 69,200.00
Misc New Walls and Paint	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$ 51,900.00	\$ 86,500.00
New Electrical Service & Upgrades *	\$18.00	\$30.00	\$ 311,400.00	\$ 519,000.00
New HVAC **	\$15.00	\$22	\$ 259,500.00	\$ 380,600.00
New Sprinkler System	\$2.75	\$3.25	\$ 47,575.00	\$ 56,225.00
New Fire Alarm System	\$1.25	\$2.50	\$ 21,625.00	\$ 43,250.00
Window Replacement	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$33,000	\$55,000
	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
New CIT Infrastructure	\$5.00/sf	\$8.00/sf	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 142,400.00
Total			\$ 1,236,825.00	\$ 1,877,675.00