



THE CHESAPEAKE GROUP, INC
BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE



PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL For Topsham's Community Center Needs Assessment

December 16, 2022

Submitted to



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THE CHESAPEAKE GROUP, INC
BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE



Corporate &
Personnel

**QUALIFICATIONS
For Topsham's
Community Center Needs Assessment**



Introduction Letter

December 16, 2022

Mark M. Waltz, Assistant Town Manager
Town of Topsham
100 Main Street
Topsham, Maine 04086
mwaltz@topshammaine.com

PROPOSAL FOR TOPSHAM'S COMMUNITY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Dear Mark Waltz and other potential reviewers:

On behalf of The Chesapeake Group (TCG), I would like to thank you for your time and effort in reviewing our submittal.

The Chesapeake Group is a premier needs assessment and market analysis firm in the United States, having prepared more than 1,500 plans and analyses since its inception. TCG has established a national reputation with all forms of entertainment, arts and culture, commercial, residential, technology-driven, and institutional development in established and emerging communities. TCG's effort will involve only highly-skilled principal-level professionals. Howard Kohn will lead the work, serving as Project Manager..

There are **three things you may not know** about The Chesapeake Group:

- ◇ **TCG has been involved in a number of projects in Maine over the last twenty-five years, including Bucksport, Arundel, our most recent effort in Lisbon, and others.**
- ◇ **We have a significant record as well as multi-purpose community facilities that have minimized or eliminated public sector funding and operational costs and with recreation, arts, and cultured activity and facilities.** Most public and private sector clients return consistently to use our services.
- **TCG will use various analytical methods to define opportunities for the above activity.** We want to help you **Build A demand-driven Foundation For The Future.**

The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 8516 Green Lane, Baltimore, MD 21244
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TCG's experience indicates that a community center can take a variety of forms and support various functions that bring people of all ages together. Of critical importance is the physicality or "plant" and the programming of space. Synergy with its surroundings (location) benefitting the community's goals is important. So too are capital and operational fiscal responsibility.

During your pre-Covid comp planning process, the community shared the following.

- √ A desire for more gathering spots to meet and socialize more with others.
- √ Topsham's library acts as a community center.
- √ A desire for a recreation center
- √ A desire for a Main Street with shops and cafes would help create a stronger sense of town identity and others.

Not only does the form and function of the community center and program need to be addressed , but the cost of construction and how operations are handled to ensure its fiscal responsibility. Options for partnerships, fee structure for non-residents, and many other aspects should be explored.

We thank you again for this opportunity. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Kohn (electronic signature)

Howard Kohn, President



Company Information

Contractor

The Chesapeake Group, Inc. (TCG)

- ✓ A Maryland "C" Corporation since 1975 and in operation since 1974.
- ✓ Headquarters in Maryland, 8516 Green Lane, Baltimore 21244.
- ✓ Offices in Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Michigan.
- ✓ Primary telephone number: 410.265.1784/800.745.0185
- ✓ tcgroup@rcn.com.
- ✓ chesapeakegroup.com.

Contractor's Project Manager

Howard Kohn, President of TCG and Project Manager, has more than 35 years of professional economic and needs assessment experience. Howard is authorized to obligate TCG. His resume is found on the following pages with the other assigned personnel.

Specialization Areas

Specializations for TCG include:

- ✓ Assessments of site-specific opportunities within the context of broader geographic areas.
- ✓ Assessments of demand and opportunities for community facilities and activity.
- ✓ Fiscal analyses, including cost-benefit and impact analyses.
- ✓ Economic revitalization, including downtowns, underutilized waterfronts, corridors, "Main Streets," and other established communities.
- ✓ Conceptual land use plans.
- ✓ Economic and community development strategies.
- ✓ Tenant, developer, and investor recruitment.
- ✓ Defining opportunities for a full range of non-exploitive natural resource opportunities.
- ✓ Technology application shifting.
- ✓ Entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Mixed-use development plans.
- ✓ Analyses of transit-oriented development.
- ✓ Tourism development.



BACKGROUND

The Chesapeake Group - Building A Foundation For The Future



Producing Results For You

The Chesapeake Group's mission is to facilitate sustainable land use, community-based activity, business development, redevelopment, and expansion in rural, suburban, and urban settings.

TCG was formed in 1974 and incorporated in Maryland a year later. In addition to our home base in Maryland, we have offices in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Florida. TCG purchased ownership of Ackley Marketing Group in 1998. Now a subsidiary of TCG, Ackley Marketing Group is a full-service marketing and advertising firm that assists clients with targeting markets, formulating creative direction, and communicating sales messages. All projects integrate Principals from our four offices.

ENTERTAINMENT

The Chesapeake Group - Building A Foundation For The Future



Producing Results For You

TCG ...

- ✓ **IS** an independent firm. Our independence allows doing what is best for our clients and not focus on "watching the clock."
- ✓ **HAS** significant experience in many areas of the country, including the Northeast. TCG has had efforts in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, and others..

MAIN STREET

The Chesapeake Group - Building A Foundation For The Future



Producing Results For You

We have worked in smaller and larger population centers than Topsham. We are often directly involved with implementing concepts ad projects, including partners, investors, and developer recruitment.

- ✓ **HAS** stimulated more private investment and higher private sector to public sector dollar ratio investment than any other known organization.
- ✓ **USES** only highly-skilled principal-level professionals and not lower-level staff with minimal experience.

HOUSING

The Chesapeake Group - Building A Foundation For The Future



Producing Results For You

- ✓ **HAS** built its reputation on providing a high level of service, having a real commitment to making efforts successful, and providing a quality product that produces results.
- ✓ **IS** proud that most public and private sector clients return consistently to use our services.
- ✓ **HAS** a diverse client base. We understand the needs of residents, funders, governments, community-based groups, developers, and small and large business interests, as our client base includes all these entities.

- ✓ **HAS** a reputation for being associated with creative, pragmatic, and successful projects.
- ✓ **IS** committed to professional excellence at a reasonable cost.

Howard Kohn, your Project Manager, should we be fortunate enough to establish a contractual relationship with Topsham, was the Keynote Speaker on Maryland's economy at a recent Maryland Building Industry Association Annual Meeting. In Michigan, TCG is also the only consultant involved with the State of Michigan's Redevelopment Ready Community Certification Program for the two most recent administrations and the former "Cool Cities Neighborhood Program" during previous administrations.

The Chesapeake Group (TCG) has arguably been involved with more successful projects than any other firm in the country.



Resumes for TCG members involved in the effort follow.



HOWARD KOHN, PRESIDENT

HOWARD KOHN, President and CEO of The Chesapeake Group (TCG), is an experienced small community, rural, suburban, and urban economic planning consultant. As an economist and market analyst, his work frequently entails defining opportunities, market positioning, and economic impacts of public and private activity and developments. For this effort, he will be the primary analyst and Project Manager for TCG.

EDUCATION

Bachelors and advanced degrees (Master's and Ph.D.) in Economics from the University of Maryland

Master in Urban and Regional Planning from George Washington University

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Keynote Speaker at the Maryland Building Industry Association Annual Meeting
Former President and Treasurer of the Maryland Downtown Development Association

Former member of EPA's Brownfields Task Force

Former Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Economic Revitalization Committee of the Washington-based National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs

Former Board Member of the Neighborhood Design Center

Former Business Advisory Committee Member of the Center for Suburban & Regional Studies at Towson University
Member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the American Planning Association

American Planning Association
Council for Economic Development
National Science Foundation
Small Business Administration
Various State Chapters of the American Planning Association

Howard pioneered the renowned commercial revitalization efforts in Baltimore, beginning his career as the initiator, analyst, and project planner. He later established Baltimore County's revitalization program. During his public-sector career, he prepared major components of four comprehensive city and county-wide plans, defined development opportunities for heavy and light-rail transit stations, defined the successful approach to attracting tourists to the Inner Harbor in Baltimore, and planned and implemented more than 23 neighborhood revitalization programs.

With over 35 years of experience, Howard has directed projects throughout many parts of the United States. His work creates economic and revenue-producing benefits. His comprehensive, community, downtown, and other revitalization projects have been prepared for a broad range of suburban and urban settings – from locales with less than one thousand population to areas within major cities. Howard's plans are successful because of his knowledge of technological change impacting all facets of our lives and his awareness of what attracts people to specific areas for business, shopping, housing, or recreational activities.

Howard has lectured on market assessments and economic development at colleges and universities in the Washington-Baltimore region. He was a consultant to the Main Street Program of the National Trust, Ford Foundation, Enterprise Foundation, C. Stewart Mott Foundation, the Paul C. Johnson Foundation, and others.



GERALD ADAMS, PRINCIPAL

PLANNING EXPERIENCE

City of Belding Comprehensive Plan
 Oshtemo Township Master Land Use Plan
 City of Zeeland Master Plan
 Laketown Township Master Plan
 City of Clare Master Plan
 Ottawa County Development Plan
 Courtland Township Master Plan
 City of Walker Master Plan
 Village of Fowlerville Master Plan

AWARDS

Michigan Society of Planning Officials
 The Municipal League
 American Planning Association
 Grand Valley Planning Council
 Various local jurisdictions

GERALD (JERRY) ADAMS will be involved with various planning and analysis aspects of the effort. Jerry assists TCG through our Michigan office, is recognized as one of the leading Midwest planners, and has received numerous planning awards. He brings over 35 years of experience with land use planning. He is a frequent author and lecturer on development, land use, and planning issues. He has been involved with most TCG efforts in defining competitive trends, rents and mortgage evaluations, and other physical and financial aspects of TCG efforts.

Projects with which he was involved or directed in which The Chesapeake Group was also involved, but before his association with TCG include Delhi Charter Township, Zeeland, Muskegon, Port Huron, Hastings, Muskegon Heights, Boyne City, Muskegon County, Manton, and Montague in Michigan and the Outer Banks in North Carolina.

Jerry has focused on Covid impacts and opportunities for downtowns and small communities for the past couple of years and has authored numerous research-related articles on the topic.



Vol. 38 No. 8 July 2020

OUTDOOR SEATING RAPIDLY EXPANDING IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Above, Traverse City (TC) closed two blocks of main street (Front Street) to vehicles and opened them to pedestrians on Friday, June 22 for the rest of the summer. Not all businesses are yet ready to open outdoor seating, and some may choose not to do so. But it is hard to predict how many people will come. Tourism is way down in Northern Michigan and people have to feel safe, and many people are not yet ready to risk getting COVID-19 by returning to bars and restaurants—inside or outside.

But because many of these businesses have suffered economically for two months, and now have indoor seating severely restricted due to 8' social isolation distances and a 50% cap on capacity as required by gubernatorial executive orders—to keep people safe—communities want to help. As a result, many communities are rapidly acting to allow outdoor seating in the hope of bringing people back to downtowns and other commercial areas. Whether collecting this turns out to be a case of 'build it and they will come,' we do not yet know. What happens in TC may not be what happens elsewhere. This issue presents 12 case studies of communities in Michigan involved in varied experiments to quickly allow outdoor seating. By November, we will know what worked.

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PLANNING & ZONING NEWS



SUSAN ACKLEY, PRINCIPAL

SUSAN ACKLEY is another key professional that will be involved with your effort. Susan brings more than 35 years of research, arts, and marketing experience to the effort.

Susan is a former instructor in marketing with the Women's Business Development Center of a major Florida university.

EDUCATION

University of New Haven, Journalism.

AWARDS

Citizen of the Year in Miami Shores
Chair of the Miami Shores Fine Arts Commission
Vice-Chair of Miami-Dade County's Art in Public Places Trust
Chair of the Miami Shores Community Alliance
Chamber Board Member and Secretary

In 1988, Susan formed Ackley Advertising, now known as Ackley Marketing Group (AMG), a full-service Florida-based marketing entity. AMG was created to assist clients with targeting markets, formulating creative direction, and communicating "sales" messages. TCG purchased AMG in 1998 to expand services to its clients.

Susan is heavily involved with TCG efforts to define Research and Development opportunities, niche retail, and community arts. However, she is also very active in arts and culture, leading communities to some areas deemed impossible. She is the current Chair of the Miami Shores Fine Arts Commission in Miami Shores and the Vice-Chair of Miami-Dade County's Art in Public Places Trust.

As a professional, Susan created the arts in public places program in 2009, which continues to expand. The program includes permanent installations, commissioned work, a mural wall constructed and created by a South Florida mural artist, several 'loan' exhibits, the Lobby Gallery, and a new sculpture park installed in 2018. She has facilitated regional artists' requests and achieved the loan of works for exhibition for specific periods.

Also, as a professional, Susan has

- Coordinated annual special performances, which brought focused performing arts to the event schedule, including Opera, African Drumming, Folk and Acoustic Music, Modern/Contemporary Dance, Dramatic Performance, Gospel singing, and Peruvian Flutes.
- Coordinated exhibitions, performances, and events and solicited funding from public and private sector entities.

TCG has found that creating places, whether for one land use or mixed-use, is vital to the development community.

The following are some highlighted multi-purpose, culture, and arts community facilities projects.

PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY CULTURAL ARTS CENTER WELLINGTON, FLORIDA



TCG developed the preliminary feasibility assessment for a cultural arts center in Wellington, Florida. The analysis intended to provide direction for pursuing a Cultural Arts Center. Addressed were market factors and primary fiscal factors and issues. The needs assessment reflected the opinion of TCG based on the presented information and TCG's experience in dealing with projects in other locations.

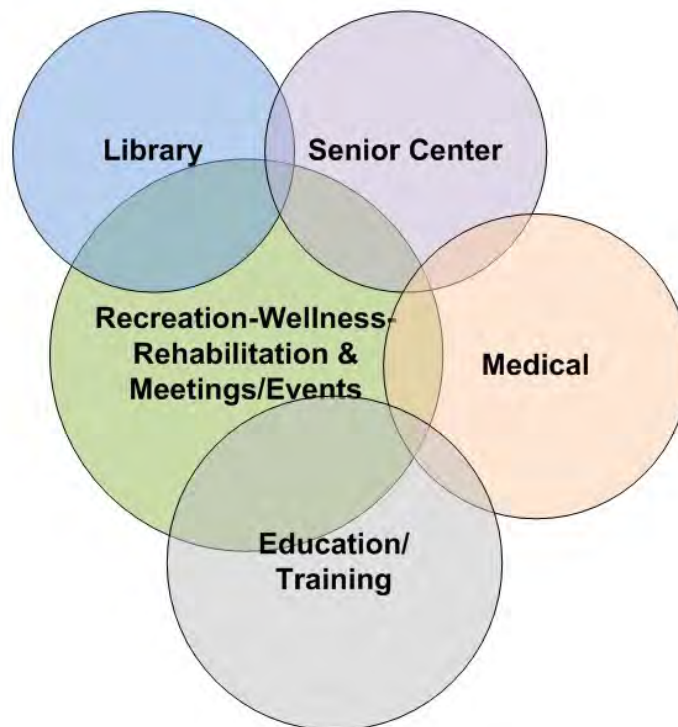
Defining opportunities for the potential facility involved substantial analyses and related activity. These included the following.

- Survey of Wellington area residents.
- Survey of area businesses.
- Limited stakeholder interviews.
- Inventorying existing cultural arts facilities in Palm Beach County.
- Inventorying cultural arts-related organizations in Palm Beach County.
- Inventorying of venues for special events and select performance activities, such as dinner theaters and comedy clubs.
- Identification of gaps and potential niches that Wellington could serve.
- Identification of potential spatial needs without identifying sites.
- Estimations of preliminary revenue potential.
- Estimates of initial development costs based on the assumption of a new structure.
- Comparison of preliminary revenues versus costs.

MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY PLAN

STEPHENVILLE, TEXAS

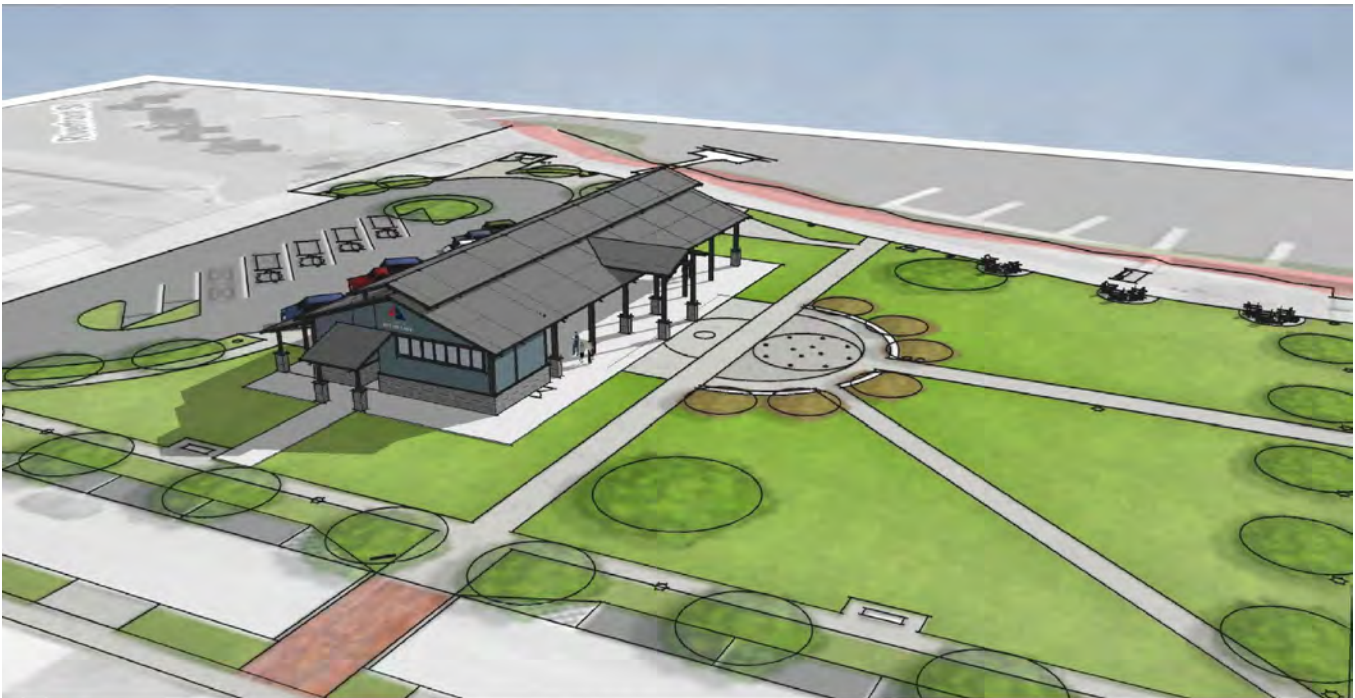
MULTI-PURPOSE CONCEPT B



Stephenville, Texas, defines itself as the Cowboy Capital of North America. TCG conducted a feasibility assessment of the opportunities for enhanced meeting and event space in Stephenville. TCG developed a concept that expanded upon the initial scope of activity to enhance private sector funding and diminish the need for bonding and deficit operational costs.

Concept B being pursued is one of the most intensely developed of the six concepts. It includes five functions within the initial Phase One, with the most potential to generate private sector investment and community return while addressing all demand components. Because of its potential for private investment, the initial phase will not likely create a fiscal drain on Stephenville or any other public sector entity. The second phase includes a new arena focused on rodeo, equine, and other related activities.

FISCAL ANALYSIS MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER SPRING LAKE TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN



TANGLEFOOT PAVILION (SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PARCEL #70-03-15-

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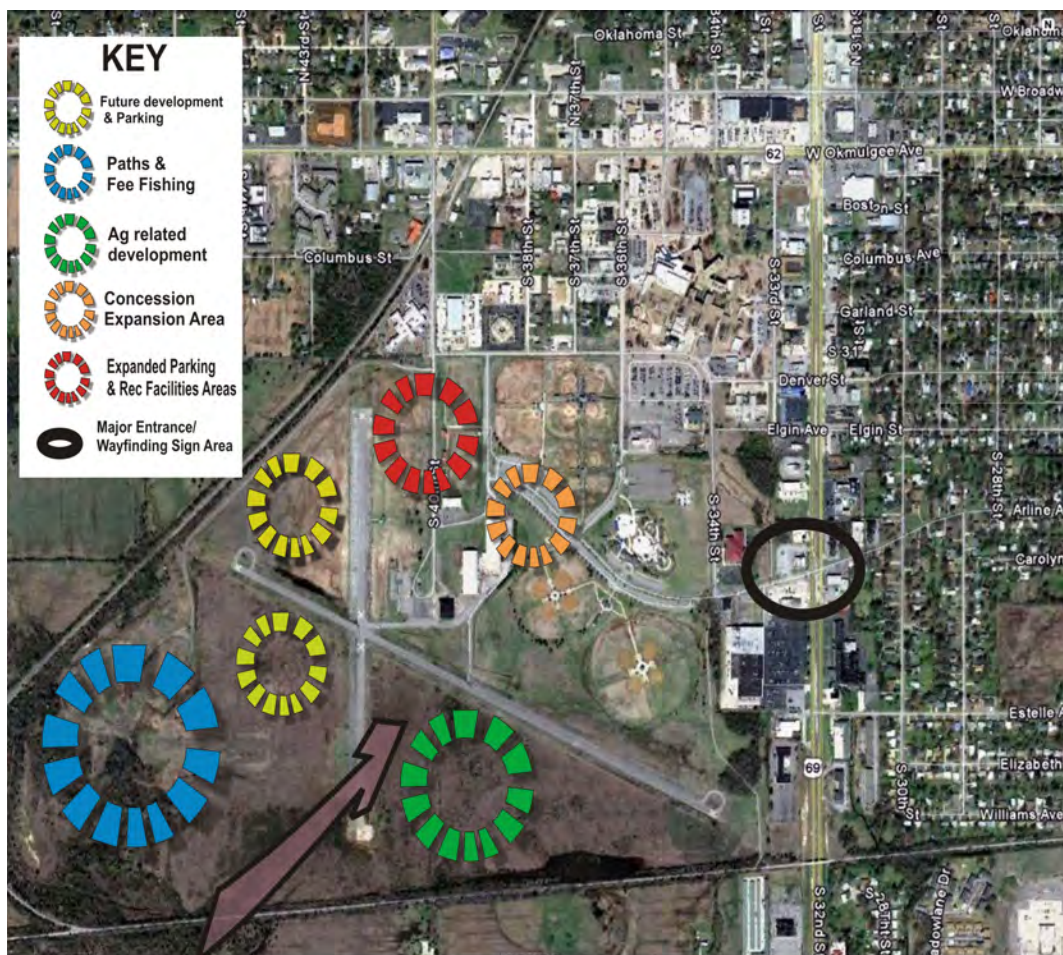
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In 2019, TCG was involved with two efforts in Spring Lake Township, a jurisdiction with a population of about 15,000. This effort involved identifying the opportunities and competitive positioning for an event center in the community's core that would take advantage of the waterfront.

TCG examined all potential competitive facilities in a multi-county area of West Michigan and developed needs and use/demand estimates for a possible Spring Lake facility. Two options were provided.

Fiscal analyses were performed to define the ability to cover operational and capital costs and gaps that needed to be addressed.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION FACILITY PLAN WITH COMMUNITY CENTER MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA



TCG prepared an analysis for the former Love Field (airport) site in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The site is near the area’s two major visitor attractions – the Muskogee Creek Nation’s Casino and The Castle. The multi-hundred-acre area contained a waterpark, additional recreation activities, and sports fields. TCG assessed the opportunities for future development of the site based on its location within the transportation network, current activity, demand for goods and services, surrounding agricultural development, existing infrastructure, and possible linkages to and joint ventures with the Creek Nation.

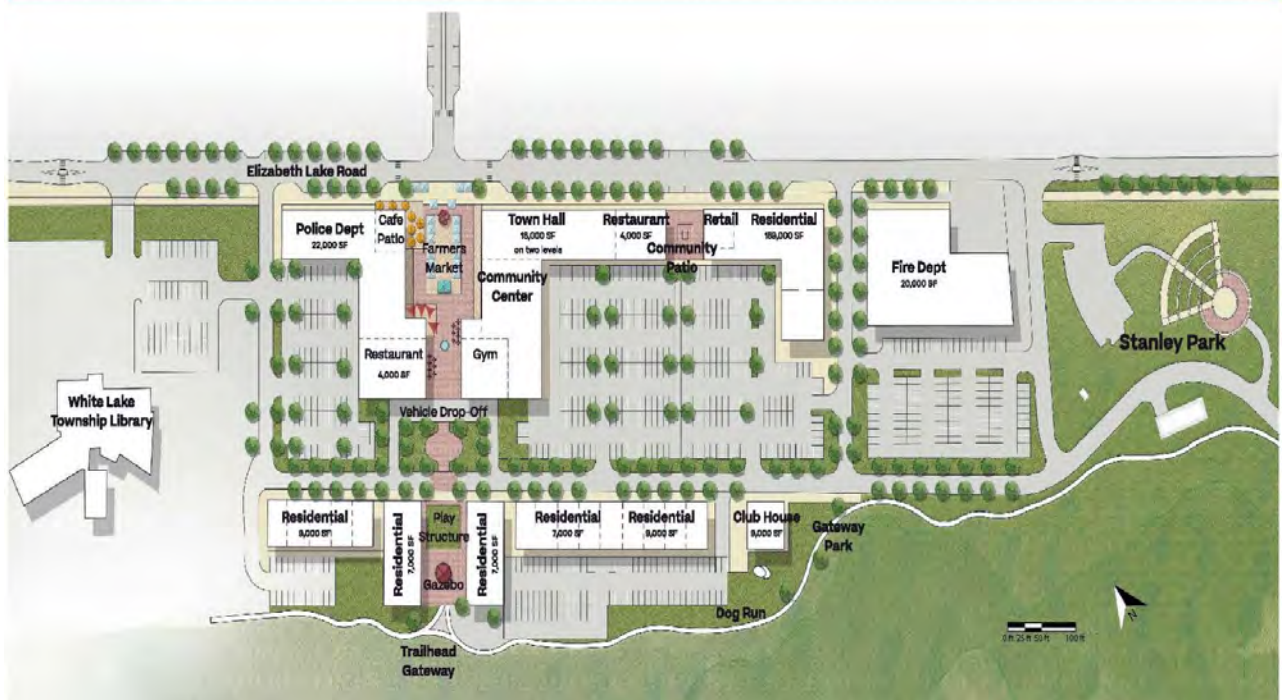
Recommendations included expanding the sporting activity, developing a full-year indoor and outdoor market, adding agricultural events and facilities, and potentially a joint-use multi-purpose community center managed or operated by the Creek Nation.

REDEVELOPMENT MARKET & OTHER ANALYSES PLUS DEVELOPER RECRUITMENT EFFORT

WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

White Lake Township Civic Center Development

Detailed Site Plan



TCG continues under contract to conduct various analyses, including defining market opportunities, developing an RFQ for recruitment purposes, soliciting appropriate developers, and negotiating a master developer agreement for White Lake Township. The analysis determined the need for a community center serving the full range of residents. (Initially, White Lake had only defined the need for a new senior center.)

TCG successfully recruited a mixed-use developer and is guided negotiations for three phases of a developer agreement in this jurisdiction with a population of about 31,000. The site is roughly 11 acres and is situated next to a 50-acre park and waterfront. The site currently houses public services to be rebuilt as part of the development. Along with the municipal services will be a civic hall, farmers market, select retail, and a range of housing.

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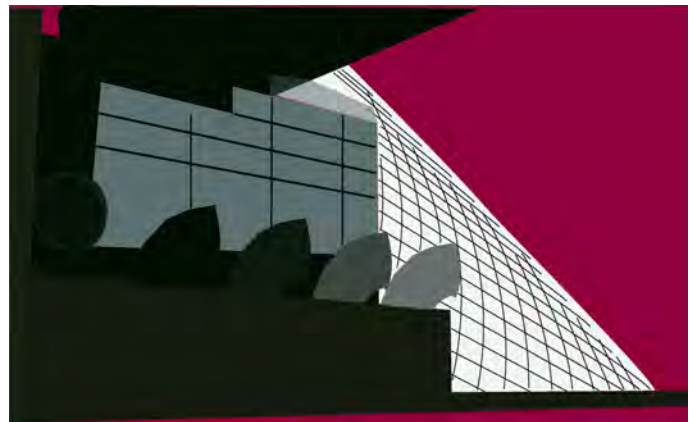
RFQ

WHITE LAKE, MICHIGAN
...active lifestyle living

FOR SELECT DEVELOPERS



REDEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE FOSS WATERWAY TACOMA, WASHINGTON



TCG was heavily involved with redevelopment efforts in downtown Tacoma, Washington, including the development strategy and use plan for the Foss Waterway as part of the City's master plan update. The effort led to millions of dollars in new investment, including but not limited to the creation of the Museum of Glass (in honor of Dale Chihuly), the redevelopment of the fish market and other nearby properties, the creation of an automobile museum, and additional significant private and university investment. The Museum of Glass includes exhibits and working glass-blowing and molding activities.

This museum, coupled with the Washington State Museum, the Antique Vehicle Museum, and a branch of the University of Washington, forms a highly successful nucleus of entertainment and culture-focused attractions based on activities, products, and people associated with Tacoma.

JAZZ HALL OF FAME & CONCERT HALL AND NEGRO LEAGUE MUSEUM KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The Chesapeake Group was hired by the Black Economic Union of Greater Kansas City to create viable economic activity in the 18th and Vine area.

TCG conducted a detailed assessment and determined that there were opportunities through activity that could reunite the “Black” or “African-American” population and expand the interest to the broader majority population. Two concepts were conceived, with sufficient analyses developed to support the concepts. These were: sports, particularly the former Negro League, and music, particularly jazz which Kansas City claimed was founded at this location.



The following are some additional related project examples.

Entertainment	Location
Analysis of the Opportunity for a Dance Studio	Mt. Rainier, MD
Graceland Market Assessment & Strategic Implementation Program	Memphis, TN
Boone Hall Plantation Analysis	Charleston, SC
Davis Farmland Agrieducation and agritainment Complex Market Assessment	Sterling, MA
Energy Matters Feasibility Study for Proposed Theme Park	Great Bend, KS
Ripken Sports Concept Development & Bonding Feasibility Analysis	Aberdeen, MD
River Market Redevelopment Analysis	Kansas City, MO
Shining Time Station (Thomas & Friends) Marketing Plan	National

The following are some additional “gather spot” related project examples.

**MARKET ANALYSIS FOR THE CITY MARKET
 KANSAS CITY, MO**



TCG performed the market analysis for the well-known market that enhanced the neighborhood and created entrepreneurial activity.

**MARKET ANALYSIS FOR SOULARD MARKET
 ST. LOUIS, MO**



TCG performed the market analysis for the well-known market that enhanced the neighborhood and created entrepreneurial activity.

**CROSS STREET MARKET ASSESSMENT
 BALTIMORE, MD**



Howard Kohn performed the feasibility analysis for the expansion of this city market.

**LEXINGTON MARKET EXPANSION FEASIBILITY
 BALTIMORE, MD**

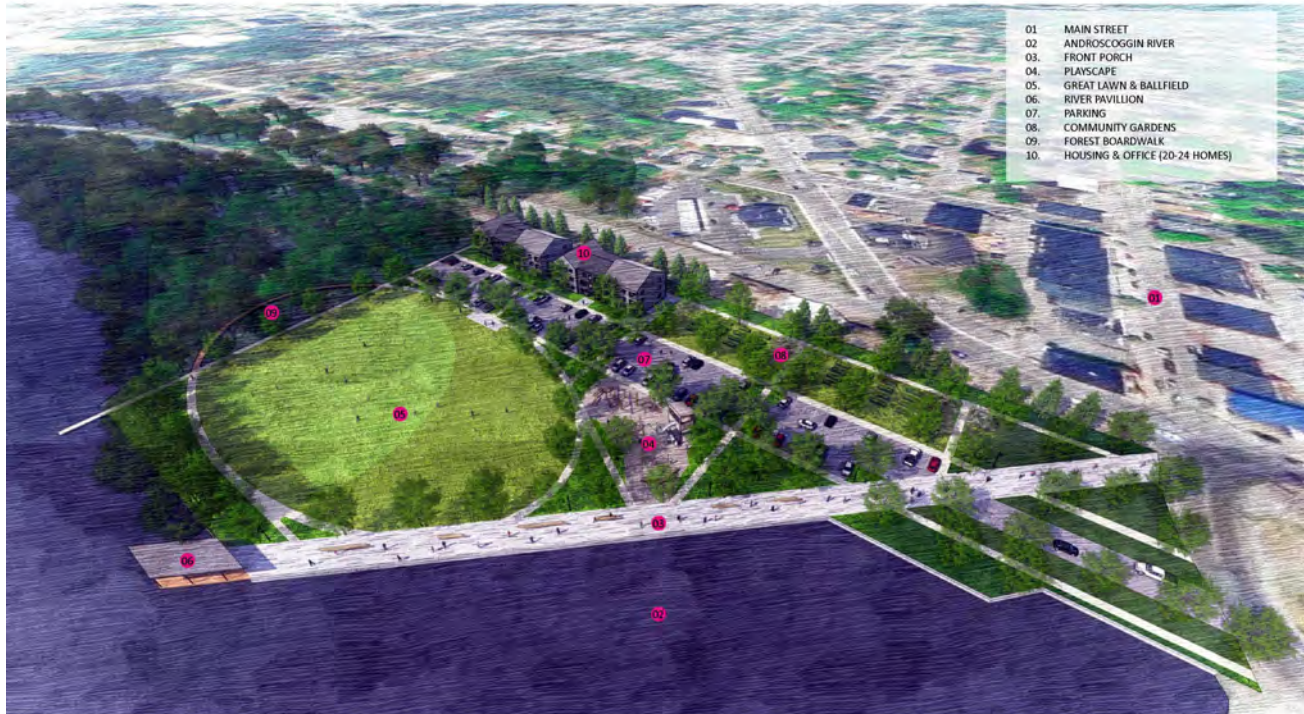


Howard Kohn performed the feasibility analysis for the expansion of this city market.



MARKET ANALYSIS & FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF THE WORUMBO STRATEGIC SITE LISBON, MAINE (TCG's most recent Maine effort.)

OPTION 'B' | COMMUNITY PARK W/HOUSING



WORUMBO MILL SITE VISIONING
02/23/22

ALA
ACETO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN

Lisbon is included in the Lewiston–Auburn, Maine Metropolitan New England city and town area. In some ways, it is currently the “hole in the donut” with communities, including Lewiston, Auburn, and Sabattus, to its north and west, Brunswick and Topsham to its south and east.

The Chesapeake Group, Inc. prepared a market analysis under contract to the Town of Lisbon. The market assessment is based on historical data, proximity to larger markets, an area residents’ survey conducted during this effort, interviews with stakeholders, property sales trends, and additional independent research. The opportunities are not linked to specific development proposals, sites, structures, or land tracts. However, the development opportunities lend themselves to traditional downtowns and Lisbon’s strategic sites, either in or near the core. They include the following.

1. Eighty to ninety non-traditional, “attached” homes
2. Senior housing, ranging from a distinct development for active adults or a compendium of care
3. About 245,000 square feet of additional retail goods and related services space, focused on food, food services operations, and smaller “boutique” miscellaneous operations.
4. About 47,000 square feet of “flex” office space.

Fiscal proformas identified issues that should be addressed to provide for a developer’s Return-On-Investment. These include construction costs for new development not supported by current rent levels, and methods for overcoming the issues were provided. TCG also prepared a parking study identifying supply issues.



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Approach, Scope &
Fee

TECHNICAL COMPONENTS For Topsham's Community Center Needs Assessment



Approach & Scope/Technical Proposal

Topsham is seeking to define the opportunities for a community center with a yet-to-be-established capacity based on potential activities and uses that may include a range of hobbies, education, arts and cultural activities, events, performances, recreation, or other gatherings. The needs analysis must identify the market and market viability/sustainability of such a facility. TCG does not know and has no preconceived notions as to the feasibility at this time. However, TCG understands that the analysis must provide a conclusion as to opportunities and whether sufficient demand warrants development. It must also provide clear direction as to fiscal responsibility for Topsham.

Approach

Many issues must be reviewed during the needs analysis process, and TCG does not profess to know all those issues currently. However, TCG's approach and methodology provide quality "real world" information and opportunities' definitions.

We have developed our comprehensive product because of our unique and innovative but tested approach. We approach the effort with the philosophy that includes:

- Listening.
- Providing guidance and direction while not directing.
- Providing the highest quality product.
- Providing a sustained high level of service and cooperation with the client.

Critical to the above is the guidance and direction. We have built our reputation on telling people the "truth" based on "hard" empirical evidence.

We recognize that there was and continues to be a level of community support for a community center that provides a focal point of activity for residents and potentially others around Topsham. This support has been expressed in the comp planning process and in the RFP.

Pre-Covid

The communal nature of our society has and will continue to change. In the last three years, one major factor has been the pandemic.

- ✓ **Gatherings with those we know and those we don't know.**



Before Covid, there was little concern about collective gatherings in safe environments by most population segments. Comingling was common and desired. While time was always spent in the home, shared time outside was often part of a household's routine.

✓ **Demographic changes impact all facets of life, including what is purchased and where we want to live.**

Pre-dating Covid but continuing, external market forces are factors including declining birth, fertility, and marriage rates, and changing desires of both younger and aging households, which make up much of the housing and commercial market in the country.

In the past three years, TCG has performed more than 15,000 household surveys in many communities. Fifteen years ago, safety and schools were the primary factors driving where people lived or wanted to live, and today's primary factors are safety and walkability.

✓ **There are evolutionary changes in retail activity and related development.**

Before the pandemic, there were fundamental changes to retail and related commercial activity and development. Additional changes were emerging, impacting future retail goods, associated services, and professional services before the pandemic. A number of those changes follow.

Made to order and fit - Clothing and many other commodities are "made to fit." The entities offering such existed and required much less space than traditional operations as inventory needs are reduced.

Online growth - Purchasing online continued to grow at double-digit or exponential rates. Shifting of traditional box and megastores to online operations will only further this growth.

Retail in general - Retail is redefining itself. All aspects favor smaller operations – often defined as craft retail - more befitting some traditional downtowns, neighborhoods, and mixed-use areas. Creating experiences and not shopping trips are growing phenomena. Once depicted as the "killer" of small businesses, Amazon now serves as a marketing window for many operations throughout the country. This opens markets for many beyond otherwise possible.

People no longer need to go shopping - Anyone can purchase virtually any product desired or required online. Successful commercial is about the experience of the trip. Nodes are increasingly a blend of differing activity with housing.

Professional offices in traditional multi-tenant spaces - Less space per employee than in the past was the trend. Open spaces to foster comfort and collaboration also diminished space needs in buildings, increasing net space.

Home office activity - Pre-Covid, the home office was not yet the majority but was the most rapidly growing office "space" market. The market growth resulted from a growing number of employees working part or full-time from home, technological advances, and home-based business activity.

Changes in technology are evolving that will impact operations - For the past seven-plus years, manufacturing has been returning to the United States due to minimizing labor costs through the technological application.

Covid

Covid is NOT the cause of any patterns, trends, or conditions noted previously. Covid accelerated the trends, speeding up what might have taken five years into a little over two years.

Covid did, however, change some dynamics as follows. Some are short-term changes, while others are longer-term changes.

✓ **Fear and changes.**

Much of the disposable income in the surrounding region and the United States is in the Baby Boomers' hands. Since March 2020, many in this population or market cluster have feared making unnecessary trips, including shopping or, more importantly, going to shopping areas for purposes other than "one-stop."

Fear is a short-term phenomenon that has and will continue to reverse as conditions change. Whether or not the fear diminishes to the pre-Covid levels in such population clusters as baby boomers" is unknown.

✓ **The growth in hobby activities.**

Many hobbies were performed at home flourished during Covid. The growth in home-based activity for many areas of arts, education, adult learning, crafts, culture, etc. is transferable to community settings, potentially raising the need for related space.

✓ **The delaying of events and activities for households, business interests, for and non-profit organizations, and others.**

From family events to organization's board meetings, in-class adult education, and others, Covid postponed the demand for many. "Zoom" activity became a mainstay often. Households often put off some celebratory activities. Some of this will return to communal settings, while others will continue in either remote or hybrid situations.

✓ **Commercial cores, downtowns, and neighborhoods flourishing based on a "back to the future" type model** - For about one generation, many large and smaller neighborhood and community downtowns "lost their way." Downtowns were initially successful because they provided services, were places to go, mingle, and meet people, and were near people's homes. All that was reversing due to many noted Pre-Covid factors, with neighborhoods and downtowns becoming the place to seek an experience, not just a duplicative shopping trip.

Much of the activity resulted from the incredible growth of independent or non-national chain food service or restaurant establishments and the physical creation of a sense of place through public and private infrastructure investment and a mix of uses.

- ✓ **Rising interest rates** – Markets are currently impacted by interest rates which have increased this past year substantially, impacting all borrowing forms, including construction and mortgages. The need for creativity in financing buildings is increasingly necessary even when resources have been set aside.

While rates have risen, they continue to be low by historical standards. However, short-term shock is apparent. This impacts borrowing for family functions, such as weddings, when such borrowing is often a perceived necessity.

TCG'S GOALS FOR THE TOWN

- ✓ **Exceed Your Expectations** - TCG's goal is to exceed expectations, not simply meet them. We try to "raise the bar" in our efforts.
- ✓ **Combine Pragmatism with Creativity** - TCG believes that the needs assessment and strategy must be simultaneously pragmatic and creative. Suggestions must be realistic and implementable.
- ✓ **Understand Perceptions Area Reality** - Accentuating and effectively utilizing assets are keys to success.
- ✓ **Create Quality Output From Quality Input** - TCG believes that quality output results from quality input.
- ✓ **Provide ROI For All Stakeholders** - All parties or stakeholders (residents, government, involved business and property owners) in a process must receive a Return-On-Investment. The definition of ROI varies for each participant group.
- ✓ **Work cooperatively With The Town** - TCG will essentially work as adjunct staff to Town's staff.

Preliminary Scope

This proposed work program was prepared to address the identified and likely issues associated with the needs assessment; the scope as required by professional standards; TCG's approach; TCG's significant experience in other communities and efforts like yours; and TCG's methodology particularly associated with generating quality information. The work program for the plan calls for four phases, some of which overlap. These are as follows.

1. Initial Input & Data Gathering Processes
2. Need/Demand Forecasting
3. Submittal of the Analysis Document
4. Revenue Versus Cost Analysis and Conclusions

The following is the proposed scope. The scope can be modified based on contract discussions with Topsham.

Phase 1 - Initial Input & Data Gathering Processes

The following is associated with the initial phase.

Surrounding Area Reconnaissance. This includes a reconnaissance of the Town and surrounding communities and activities that could influence the use of a multi-purpose community center. Staff may be asked to coordinate and lead the local reconnaissance.

Leadership Focus Group Session. A small focus group session is anticipated, composed of no more than 15 people. Among those invited would be local elected officials, key City staff, appropriate representatives of the culture and art interests, and Chamber of Commerce staff or leadership. The focus group session will likely last two hours.

Online Resident Survey. A survey of residents of Topsham and surrounding areas will be conducted. The survey has five primary purposes. These are to: define those who may use the facility for family and life events in the next five years; to gather their opinion on current other facilities they would consider an option; to identify any organizations, clubs, etc. which they are associated that might also utilize such a facility; generate what might consider reasonable user fees based on recent experiences, and generate any entertainment, recreation or other area gaps that they feel might exist that could be associated with such a facility. Other purposes will be addressed as well.

One-on-One, In-person Stakeholder Interviews. Face-to-face, "Zoom," or in-person interviews will be conducted with about 20 to 25 "critical actors" or "stakeholders." Critical actors or stakeholders may include elected officials, culture/arts organization interests, recreation interests, craft-related groups, adult and continuing education interests, health care providers, social clubs, residential community leadership, business community leadership, key business operators, key government staff, and others. Each interview is expected to take between one-half and one hour.

One-on-One, In-person Stakeholder Interviews. A review of regional-wide competition will be conducted based on online sources and stakeholder interviews. The competition range is determined after the online resident survey and stakeholder interviews to assess the likely range of functions for the potential community center.



Available Data, Reports, and Documents. Topsham will provide all available data and documents at no cost to TCG. (TCG recognizes some may be obtained from online websites and secondary sources directly by TCG.)

Phase 2 – Need/Demand Forecasting

The second phase will involve estimating the need/demand from internal and external markets associated with annual use of the potential facility. The need/demand forecasting will be based on the generated information in Phase 1 and includes defining the following.

- ◇ Market components.
 - ◇ Types of activities associated with each component of the market.
 - ◇ Potential users associated with each component of the market.
 - ◇ Demand generated by the collective use on an annual basis.
 - ◇ The likely average user fee charge (if any) and depending on the type of activity.
 - ◇ Total use revenue.
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Phase 3 - Analysis Document

TCG will produce a camera-ready 8-1/2 x 11 analysis document, including the process, the findings, conclusions, and suggestions. It is also noted that the document will be transmitted through USB and the internet. PDF file formatting will be used for the transmittal.

TCG will also prepare and participate in a PowerPoint presentation and provide a maximum of two presentations after the needs assessment.

Phase 4: Revenues Versus Cost Analysis

In the fourth task, TCG will compare likely revenues versus capital repayment and estimated operational costs on an annual basis and suggestions made to bridge gaps that may exist.



All-Inclusive Fee-For-Services

TCG anticipates an "all-inclusive" contract. That fee is **\$15,000 for Phases 1 through 4**. The fee is payable based on monthly invoices submitted by The Chesapeake Group, based on the percent complete of each element in the table below unless TCG agrees to other terms.

Phase	Fee
1 – Data Gathering Process	\$4,500
2 – Need/Demand Forecasting	\$4,500
3 – Analysis Document	\$3,500
4 – Revenues Versus Costs	\$2,500
TOTAL	\$15,000