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**mindmixer** PROJECT REPORTS

Idea Report

### **Topic Name: Downtown East Side Development**

#### Idea Title: Greenway Corridor Along Beaver Brook

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

Comment 1: Another great idea, but add a pathway or walking trail.

Comment 2: A greenway corridor along the brook would be a beautiful use of this space. I would love to see it constructed while maximizing flood storage capacity (possibly along the west edge of Carpenter Field and on the old Kingsbury property), but done so in a way so as to improve fisheries and wildlife habitat through added brook meanders and plantings.

Comment 3: This is a great idea!

Comment 4: This would be a terrific way to use the floodway that can't be built on as a trail all the rest of the time it's not infiltrating flood water to connect walkers and bicyclists between Marlboro Street and Railroad Plaza.

#### Idea Title: Flood Storage

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

Comment 1: Frankly Keene has to face that it isn't going to be easy or inexpensive to cure this problem. A band-aid approach is money wasted. The hundreds of property owners in the affected area should be considering a class action suit since it has now been 3 years and 3years closer to the next flood!

Comment 2: Do so in a way that also maximizes habitat, aesthetics, and recreation opportunities.

Comment 3: I agree with Comment 2

Comment 4: Water Storage inspiration from Andy Lipkis:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7g8ELFCwDM>

#### Idea Title: A Multi-use Trail along the Beaver Brook Corridor

Idea Detail: A greenway corridor along Beaver Brook, like a riverwalk, that would be expected to flood each year. A great compromise between the natural tendencies of this waterway and the need for additional public recreation opportunities that connect destinations.

Comment 1: 5 Star Idea!!!

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Comment 2: Terrific! Maybe this could be done as an easement/tax break from the landowners considering the floodway cannot be constructed on anyway.

Idea Title: Community green house/ garden / year round farmers market

Idea Detail: To build a more sustainable community with a community green house and garden. People can rent plots of land to plant their own garden. Surplus will go to the community kitchen, the homeless community will have a plot donated to them to grow and harvest their own food. Classes can be taught on how to grow your own food, inside the green house there can be a small kitchen area where cooking classes can be put on showing the community how to cook with their harvest.

Another building can be devoted to a creative work space. Open concept with studio space for artists, long desk-like tables for the business folks in need of a place to work (freelancers in search of a more office setting without having to rent their own building).

Any new building erected should be build with specifications to house green rooftops which will help with sewer pollution, area flooding, etc. Water runoff can be diverted to the community garden space.

My vision is a fully sustainable, integrated area.

Idea Title: Business Incubator Options

Idea Detail: Perhaps some of the vacant buildings closer to Hannah Grimes could serve as "Business Incubators" . Hannah Grimes is in the business of helping small businesses create a firm foundation, if the Former YMCA or Middle School could be adapted to facilitate that effort, it might make for a unique small business draw for the area.

Idea Title: Indoor/Outdoor Community Gathering Site

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

Idea Title: Turn Kingsbury into green space

Idea Detail: This is not my idea, but it would behoove the tax payers of Keene to purchase this property, raze the building to help mitigate the Beaver brook flooding, extend Victoria street to Marlboro st to help alleviate downtown traffic, create an entrance/exit from the bike path (any body who has used this path understands), and encourage industrial use away from downtown. Look, I'm the first one to complain about City spending, but this just makes sense.

Idea Title: Community garden, greenhouse and farmers market

Idea Detail: A community garden and greenhouse would greatly benefit the community and make it more sustainable. Renting out plots of land to community members will allow them to grow their own food. A plot will be donated to the homeless, where they will be able to grow and harvest their own food, surplus will be

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donated to the community kitchen. In the greenhouse can be a small kitchen for demonstrations on how to cook with your fresh harvest. Classes can be taught on growing food, biodiversity, etc... There can be a designated children's plot where area daycare businesses can bring children to learn and participate in gardening. All newly erected buildings will be built to specifications allowing green rooftops which will prevent water run off pollution, flooding, and water can be collected for the community garden area. A building or space can be devoted to a year round Farmer's Market. Another space can be for a shared office, where those in need of an office space can gather to work.

### Idea Title: Uses can be varied

Idea Detail: Trails to the falls at the upper end, a continued green space along Beaver Brook, with exercise stations, resting benches and picnic tables. There can be housing if at elevations so homes will not be flooded. Low income and homeless shelters again at elevations so they will not be flooded. Water retention areas to disperse water back up from spring ice out should be included. Use of lower areas where flooding is more likely to occur should have restricted use, building should not be permitted.

### Idea Title: A Unique Architectural Theme (visual draw)

Idea Detail: The "Corridor" concept keeps popping up in conversations and it sparked the thought to somehow tie all the ideas into a visual / architectural theme that could run through that corridor. Some ideas include:

- A theme that links the green space parks scattered along a Beaver Brook walkway, perhaps unique landscaping or solar powered street lighting.
- Somehow integrating the historic industrial nature of the area into transitional themed rchitecture. Railroads to greenspace / mixed use etc.
- Building codes that support a theme for the "Corridor".
- Unique street signage / path signage that follows the corridor path and tends to draw traffic along it.
- Walkways lead to green space, lead to small outdoor music venues, lead to business / restaurants etc.

The general idea is to create a visual feel of a "Corridor" that creates a natural flow of people and traffic. West Keene seems to have the major shopping malls; East Keene needs something to tie it in with Downtown.

### Idea Title: Make this neighborhood the jewel of Keene

Idea Detail: Attract young families and retirees looking for parks and greenways, bike paths, green housing options, community gardens and proximity to downtown

### Idea Title: Green Space/Park

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: Affordable Small Business Start Ups

Idea Detail: I would love to see the YMCA and/or the former Middle School get converted into spaces with affordable rents for small business start ups. We should also house the Keene Farmer's Market in the KMS

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field in the summer, and a good sized space inside in the winter- permanently. Other communities have much larger farmer's markets, and Keene should too.

### Idea Title: Community Investment Cooperative

Idea Detail: No matter what we decide we want to see happen on the East Side, we can explore this model of economic development -- owned by community members: <http://www.yesmagazine.org/new-economy/neighbors-got-together-buy-vacant-buildings-renting-bike-shop-brewer/>

And: <https://incipe.ca/community-investment-co-ops-putting-money-work-locally/>

### Idea Title: Businesses to Generate Jobs

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: Upgrade Infrastructure

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: performance/rehearsal space

Idea Detail: Use some or part of the existing buildings as performance, rehearsal, production space that would be available for a modest rental fee. Groups that use the space would either individually or collectively be responsible for liability insurance and the development and maintenance of the space. It could also function as classroom space and activity space for the community

### Idea Title: Small OWNED not rented housing for singles and couples.

Idea Detail: Not condos. The only way anyone is going to be a good citizen is if they feel they have a chance to get ahead in life and thus have a vested interest. Owning a piece of the pie creates active interest in civic affairs and builds equity which is the surest way to get there. I'm talking one bedroom cabins on a small piece of property big enough for a garden and patio, a couple of parking spaces and a front screened porch. These don't need to feel like a ghetto. For instance: Key West. Alleys are useful =prevent street clutter. Worker/ starter/ low income whatever! Designed well with walkable conveniences and parks nearby it would encourage employers to invest here because we've secured the working class by giving them a hand to get to the first rung on the ladder.

### Idea Title: Arts & Cultural Activities for Younger Folks (Music School?)

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: Expand TIF District to Fund Infrastructure Improvements

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: Middle School field saved as OUR PARK.

Idea Detail: In order to restore a neighborhood balance of single family homes on the east side we need to provide ATTRACTIVE, SAFE, outdoor space for many generations. An excellent park with a super skateboard facility, trees for shade along the perimeter with seats and tables for adults to gather, play checkers and converse, a open playing field in the middle that could be used for festivals

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impromptu soccer and football matches. This field already exists! It would make the surrounding properties much more desirable for redevelopment. Our Park is a great name for it.

### Idea Title: A water park or theme park for a tourist draw.

Idea Detail: based on the idea of Storyland in North Conway or something similar, It would be close enough to downtown to stimulate the economy, and give people something fun and entertaining to do!!

### Idea Title: Continued open space, homeless shelters.

Idea Detail: This would make a nice urban park along the brook , with several park benches.

Any use of this land, because of the flooding, should be for uses that would have little adverse impact from the high water. Because of the many buildings already in place this will be difficult. Some of the older buildings could be repurposed to house those with out homes. Upper floors arraigned with small bedrooms would avoid most of the flood damage. Other bigger rooms could be fashioned to house homeless families.

### Idea Title: Renovate the middle school

Idea Detail: Make it a combination Community Kitchen/Shelter. There is a great kitchen. The building is large enough that part can be a mens shelter, part a womens and part a family shelter. The yard is fenced in so any children have a safe place to play. It's a great idea and maybe the contractors in Keene and surrounding towns will volunteer some time to work on it. Just a thought. It is getting ridiculous to see all the empty buildings just sitting. Time to start using them. Maybe the YMCA can be used along with the middle school. The people staying there can compensate by doing cleaning, light maintenance, etc. Some of these homeless are just jobless so it will also give them some purpose in their daily life.

### Idea Title: Privately owned property works to best use by economic force

Idea Detail: When a business fails leaving behind a empty bldg. the value of that property is determined by the market for it. In case of properties that have sat empty unsold for a specific long period of time they should be considered blighted and there should be appropriate legal steps to force the owner to improve the bldg or to tear it down down through city statutes. If there is no market there is no value to the bldg. and it should be removed for higher use of the property. If the bldgs. mentioned remain unused they should be torn down. Empty bldgs affect the surrounding neighborhood values and create a spiraling of neglect of surrounding properties. Believe me I'm from Detroit. Once gone new ideas may have room to sprout with uses appropriate to the time we live in.

### Idea Title: Hub of Services for Vulnerable Populations

Idea Detail: This idea received many votes at the public forum held February 24th at Heberton Hall. Share your feedback on this idea here.

### Idea Title: Convert the Middle School into apartments or condos.

Idea Detail: Create a park, gardens, and parking in the fields behind the school.

### Idea Title: YMCA building into parking lot

Idea Detail: This is another no brainer. The City should purchase this for a parking lot at a considerably less cost per space than building a stupid parking garage. Just because MEDC proposes a parking garage does not

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make it a good idea. Is this what the City really wants? Elevated concrete structures instead of a parking lot that can incorporate some green space?

Idea Title: Empower people

Idea Detail: Give homes to the homeless and/or sustainability and restoration.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/22/home-free>

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/sustainabilityatwork/62111>

Idea Title: I would like to see a Foreign Language and ESL Lab

Idea Detail: Set aside a small area dedicated to foreign language instruction for anyone trying to improve their language skills. Arrange for regular classes. Also, provide training to volunteers willing to teach English as a Second Language courses to recent immigrants who would like to learn English and establish regular classes.