

State Center

Summary Document

Prepared by the State Center Development Team and the State of Maryland

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Overview

In March 2006, the State of Maryland selected a development team led by Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse (SBER) to redevelop roughly 28 acres of state-owned property in midtown Baltimore currently known as State Center. The ultimate goal of this effort is to connect and integrate the State's office complex with the surrounding neighborhoods and nearby transit in order to become one of the City's most desirable and active arts, entertainment, retail and residential districts.

The team is currently at work on a number of key tasks in order to lay the groundwork for a future development that embraces Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles. These tasks include a series of investigations to learn more about State Center site and to engage nearby residents, State employees, and other stakeholders in a community-driven collaborative planning process the team has named *CityScaping*. This document has been prepared at the community's request and is designed to provide a concise overview of the redevelopment process at State Center.

Physical Description of State Center

Currently, State Center is a state-owned office complex comprising four main structures and associated surface parking lots. The area is bounded by Madison Avenue to the south, Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd to the east, Howard Street to the north, and 29th Division Street and Dolphin Street to the west. The site is intersected by West Preston and North Eutaw Streets. Roughly 3,000 state government employees from a variety of departments work at the site, distributed among four buildings: 300 W. Preston, 1100 Eutaw, 301 W. Preston, and 201 W. Preston. State Center is also home to the Maryland 5th Regiment Armory. The site is frequented by members of the general public who conduct business at the state office buildings, visit the 5th Regiment Armory, and/or use the transit facilities.

The State Center/Cultural Center Metro station is located within the site on West Preston St. and the Cultural Center Light Rail station just across outside the site's boundaries. A number of established residential neighborhoods are located within a short walk of State Center: Bolton Hill, Charles North, Heritage Crossing, Madison Park, Marble Hill, McCulloh Homes/Spencer Gardens, Mt. Vernon/Belvedere, Seton Hill, and Upton. It is in close proximity to a number of key midtown institutions, including: Maryland General Hospital, Maryland Institute College of Art, University of Maryland Medical Center, University of Maryland at Baltimore, the University of Baltimore, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall.

Development Team

The development team is made up of three main partners: Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse (SBER), McCormack Baron Salazar (MBS), and Doracon Development. The

developers have also hired two key consultants to assist in the planning and development. Design Collective, Inc. is an architectural firm that will lead the design process for the redevelopment of the site; Urban Strategies, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization that will lead the community engagement and human capital planning at State Center.

Relationship between the Development Team and the State of Maryland

The development team and the State of Maryland entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 22, 2007, the first in a series of agreements which will describe the collective responsibilities of both parties as it pertains to State Center. The MOU will be a forerunner to more binding, legal agreements between the development team and the State.

Transition from Previous Community-Led Strategy Process

The current work of the development team at State Center builds on a process that began a few years ago. When the State decided to pursue the redevelopment of the site, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other state agencies convened a charrette (vision) process with the assistance of consultants Parsons Brinkerhoff and Bay Area Economics. This process examined a broad 110-acre area which included the 28-acre State-owned State Center site. This work resulted in the creation of the “Draft State Center Transit-Oriented Development Strategy,” which articulated a framework for the redevelopment of this area.

After this charrette process, a group of neighbors living nearby State Center decided that the broader community needed to be a more integral part of the planning process for the area. This led to the formation of the State Center Neighborhoods Alliance (Alliance), which helped facilitate discussion between residents from the following communities: Bolton Hill, Charles North, Heritage Crossing, Madison Park, Marble Hill, McCulloh Homes/Spencer Gardens, Mt. Vernon/Belvedere, Seton Hill, and Upton. Thanks to the work of a delegation led by State Senator Verna Jones, the State and City were responsive to this dialogue and staffed monthly meetings to discuss a variety of issues including the redevelopment of State Center.

In November 2005, the State of Maryland issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for interested development partners for the 28-acre State-owned site. The State and the Alliance subsequently selected the SBER/MBS/Doracon team in March 2006 after a public interview process. The State has turned over relevant materials from the previous Strategy process to the development team. The current work being undertaken by the SBER development team is informed by the previous efforts of the State, its consultants, and the Alliance. However, the current SBER effort is focused exclusively on the State-owned 28 acres and accordingly a new plan with a new site-specific program must be created.

Stakeholders

For this current process, the term “stakeholders” is broadly defined as those individuals and organizations that will contribute their ideas, talents, and resources to the redevelopment effort in order to reap the benefits of a revitalized State Center. The

development team and the State of Maryland envision the following list as a starting point of stakeholders at State Center:

- Government Agencies – City & State
- The Alliance & Associated Neighborhoods
- Elected Officials
- Faith Based Community
- State Center Office Workers
- Developers: SBER/Doracon/MBS
- Institutions/Civic Organizations/Schools
- Consultants

CityScaping

The development team has crafted a collaborative planning process to maximize the input of the Public/Private/Community Partnership and to create a thoroughly conceived and timely executable development plan. *CityScaping* is a five-stage process which began in May 2007 and is scheduled to run until roughly the end of the year.

Stage 1: Plan the Plan (May – early June)

The goal of the first stage, known as “Plan the Plan,” is for the development team and the community to define and agree to the following concepts and principles: Process, Schedule, Core Values, Participating Stakeholders, and Deliverables. To date, four “Plan the Plan” meetings have been held. It is the expectation of the development team that these sessions will prepare neighborhood residents and other stakeholders for future sessions that will require more hands-on participation

Stage 2: Educate (mid-June to mid-July)

The second stage, known as “Educate,” was established so that the project stakeholders can exchange key pieces of information with one another that will inform future planning phases. Within these sessions, Public, Private, and Community partners will both teach and learn from one another about the buildings, people, and environment which currently exist at State Center and adjoining areas. Sessions will include the History & Context of the area, the Existing Conditions of the area (with regard to both physical and human/social concerns), and the Market & Stakeholder needs. The development team anticipates holding at least two “Educate” sessions.

State 3: Vision (late July to early September)

The first two stages were designed to provide basic information and context for the planning process so that residents and other stakeholders can get the most out of their experience in the critical third stage, known as “Vision.” In this stage, the development team and its consultants will facilitate a collaborative, hands-on working session in which residents and stakeholders will brainstorm and discover what the redeveloped State Center *could* be. The development team will share national best practices from comparable redevelopment efforts, and will encourage participants to contribute big ideas, discuss their hopes and fears, and engage in out-of-the-box thinking. The team will diligently record and document these resident/stakeholder contributions.

Stage 4: Plan (mid-September to early October)

Armed with the ideas collected in the “Vision” sessions, the development team will work to create a “Plan” that embodies what the redeveloped State Center will be. The development team will narrow and focus all of the ideas and concepts into a series of tests and models and begin to evaluate what is possible and what makes practical sense. These test-fits and models will eventually be condensed into a series of visual plans and written documents that will describe and depict what the State, City, and residents/stakeholders can expect a new State Center site to be. The development team will present these plans to the *CityScaping* group through a number of meetings with multiple opportunities for input.

State 5: Deliverables (mid-October to late December)

After completing the “Plan”, the development team will then create the final “Deliverables” which will reflect all of the work of the previous stages. The development team is envisioning two distinct deliverables: a Planned Unit Development (PUD) document and a Human Capital Plan. The PUD will describe the various proposed land uses (residential, entertainment, commercial, open space) for the State Center site and will include a series of preliminary site and building design plans as well as written narratives. The development team’s goal is to complete this PUD by the end of the year so that it can be considered by Baltimore City Council for approval in the beginning of 2008. The development team will also create a Human Capital Plan that will detail the social service and people-centered programming that is envisioned for State Center. This plan will describe the resources needed and chart a course for implementation of these human capital programs at the site.

In addition, the team will document the entire participatory stakeholder process, as well as the ways in which stakeholder input informed the plan.

Due Diligence Work Underway

To date, the development team has devoted much of its energy and resources to learn more about the physical details of the State Center site itself. In conjunction with the State of Maryland, the development team is managing a number of consultants who are creating a series of reports that will help inform the development process. All reports described in the following sections will soon be available on the State Center website:

<http://www.statecenter.org>

Building Assessments

SBER/Doracon/MBS hired Design Collective and other consultants to conduct walkthroughs of the existing State-owned office buildings, catalog what structures currently exist and describe their overall condition. This exercise will help the development team, the State of Maryland, and the stakeholders decide which buildings are candidates for adaptive re-use in a new development, and which should be demolished. This assessment was completed in December 2006.

Compilation of Geotechnical Reporting

The State of Maryland hired Robert Balter Company to compile existing information known about the geotechnical conditions known about the land itself at State Center. This report describes the state of the soil and other materials and seeks to describe any potential hazards or conditions that the development team will have to consider as it plans for redevelopment. This assessment was completed in December 2006.

Environmental

The State of Maryland hired Environmental Resource Managers (ERM) to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) of the State Center site. The Phase I ESA describes the environmental condition of the physical structures on the site and the underlying land. For the Phase I, the consultants primarily gather information by examining historical records/maps rather than conducting soil testing. The Phase I seeks to identify any potential environmental concerns such as the presence of hazardous materials. This assessment was completed in November 2006.

Green Consultant

The development team plans to hire a specialized green consultant to assist in the formation of green building and sustainability strategies throughout the development process.

Preliminary Traffic Study

The State of Maryland hired the engineering firm of RK&K to conduct a preliminary traffic study at State Center. This study will provide data regarding current traffic conditions including traffic counts. This baseline information will be used by the development team to understand existing conditions at the site and will be expanded upon in the coming months by more advanced studies and models. A draft report of this preliminary traffic study is expected to be released later this summer.

Stakeholder Meetings

SBER/Doracon/MBS/State conducted stakeholder meetings with neighborhood groups, surrounding institutional businesses, city and state government agencies and elected officials. These meetings helped to educate the development team and formed the basis of the *CityScaping* process.

Utility Surveying

The State of Maryland hired the engineering firm of STV to conduct a survey of existing utilities currently located at State Center. The location, size, and condition of the utility lines (electric, gas, water, sewer, etc...) can have a profound impact on the feasibility and cost of redevelopment at the site. This assessment was completed in March 2007.

Title Work

SBER/Doracon/MBS hired the Talon Group to complete title work reports for the State-owned property comprising State Center. This work was completed in August 2006.

www.statecenter.org

SBER/Doracon/MBS hired no|inc. to design the web portal www.statecenter.org through which all project information is shared. The web portal is described in more detail in the following section.

Information Management and Ongoing Communication

The collection/management of information and ongoing communication between the development team and the resident/stakeholders will be of critical importance throughout the *CityScaping* process in 2007 and beyond. Accordingly, the development team and the State of Maryland are trying to think of more efficient and effective mechanisms to deliver information to the community.

In addition to the public meetings described above in the *CityScaping* process, the team has created an interactive web portal to distribute and collection information. We encourage all interested persons to visit this website at <http://www.statecenter.org>. For those without access to a personal or office computer, the team is working to set up an information station at a convenient public location such as a state facility or library/school. This station will include a computer terminal as well as hard copies of relevant documents.

The development team also plans to hire a part-time employee/intern to work exclusively on communicating with the community. This new hire will be charged with promoting the community *CityScaping* meetings and following up on specific requests from stakeholder organizations and individuals.

The development team asks any interested persons to share any thoughts about this document or the process at an upcoming *CityScaping* meeting or by visiting the website.
