

DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

PLANNING AREA: CENTRAL

AGENDA

PREVIOUS PLANS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ASSETS + CHALLENGES

A "TLC" APPROACH

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

WHAT'S NEXT?

PREVIOUS PLANS

BUILDING ON PREVIOUS PLANS



RIVER DISTRICT FRAMEWORK PLAN

PRAIRIE STREET BREWHOUSE PLAN

ROCKFORD RIVER WALK VISION PLAN

RIVER DISTRICT FRAMEWORK PLAN UPDATE

DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

MUSEUM CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

SOUTH MAIN CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

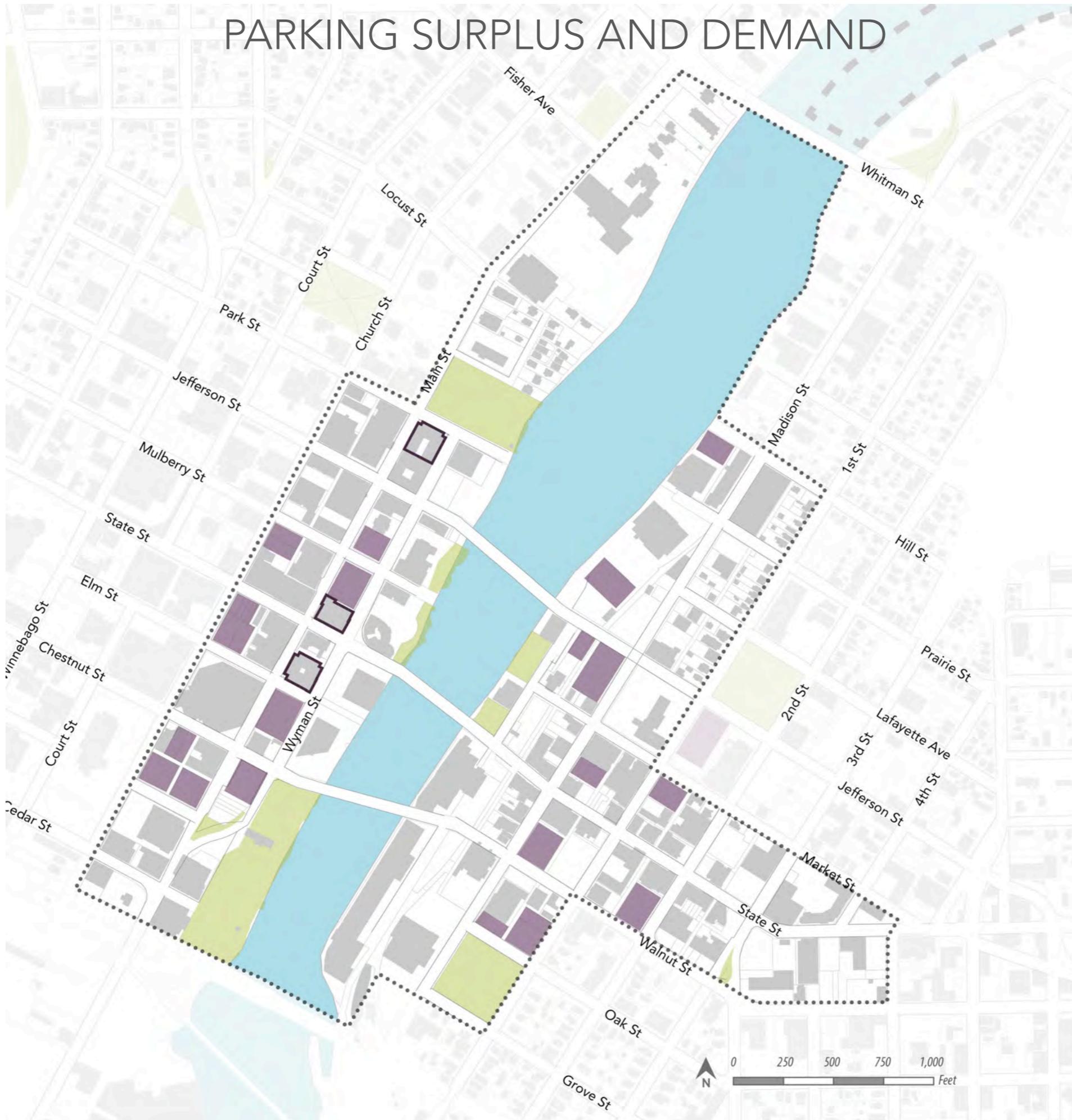


ASSETS + CHALLENGES

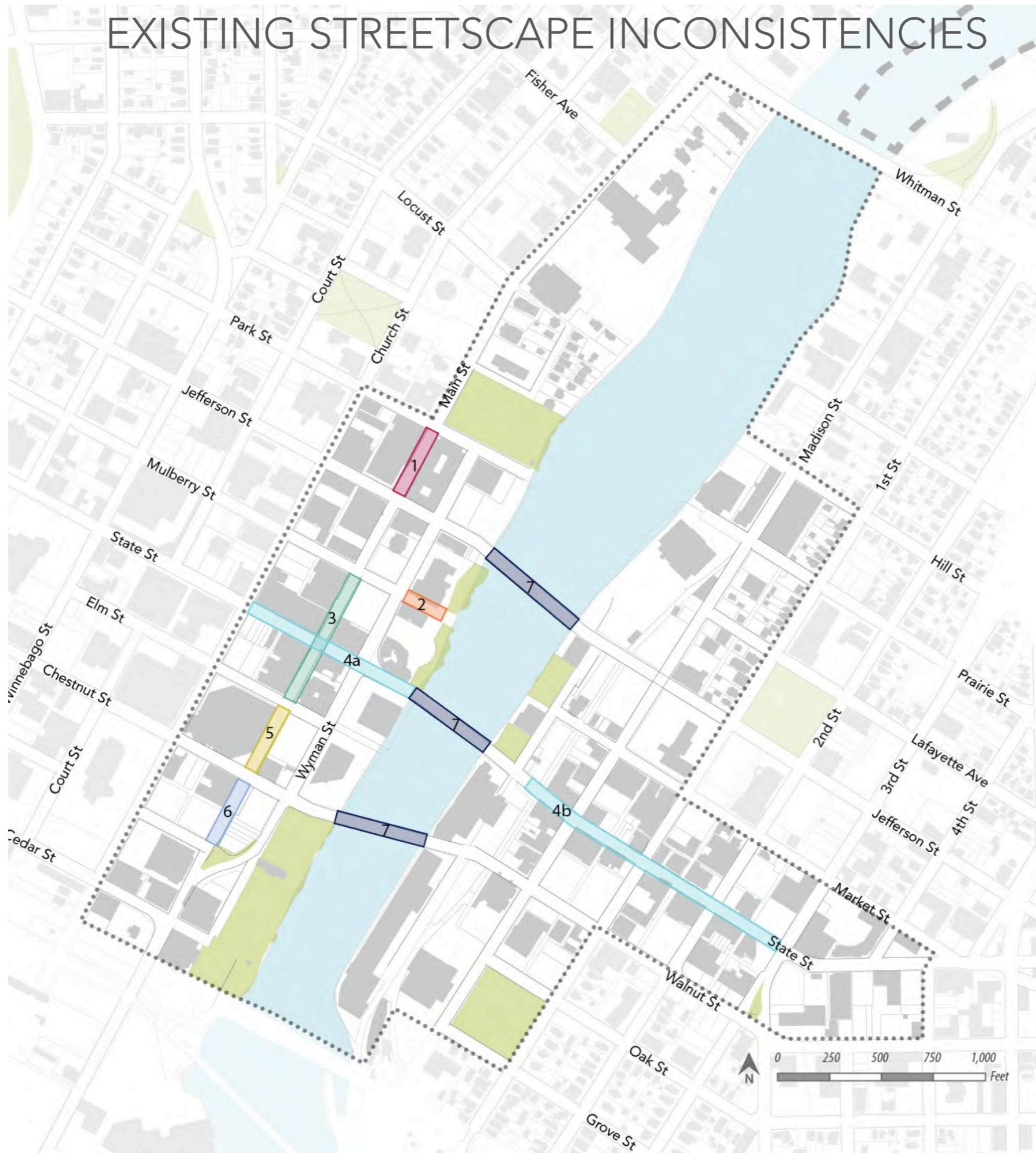
FOCUS AREA EVENTS



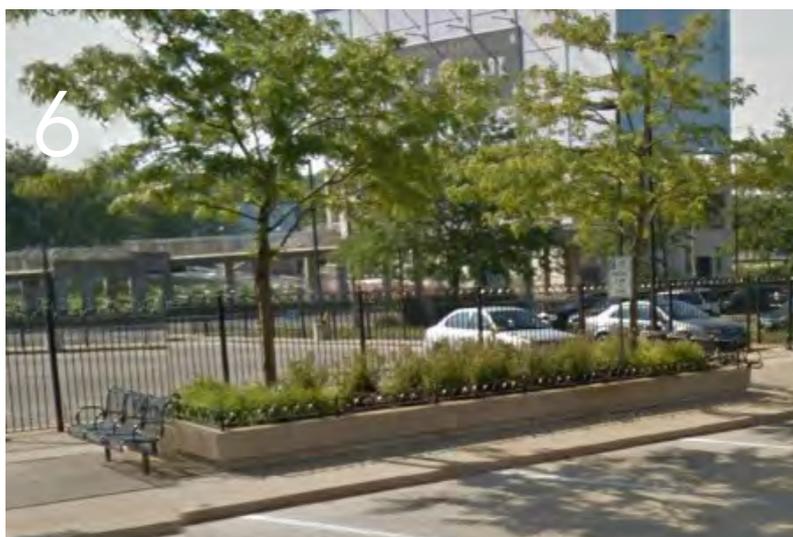
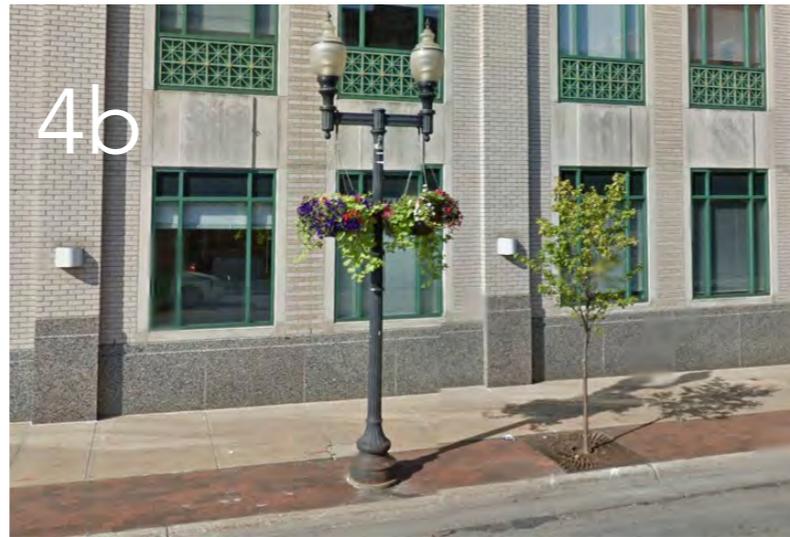
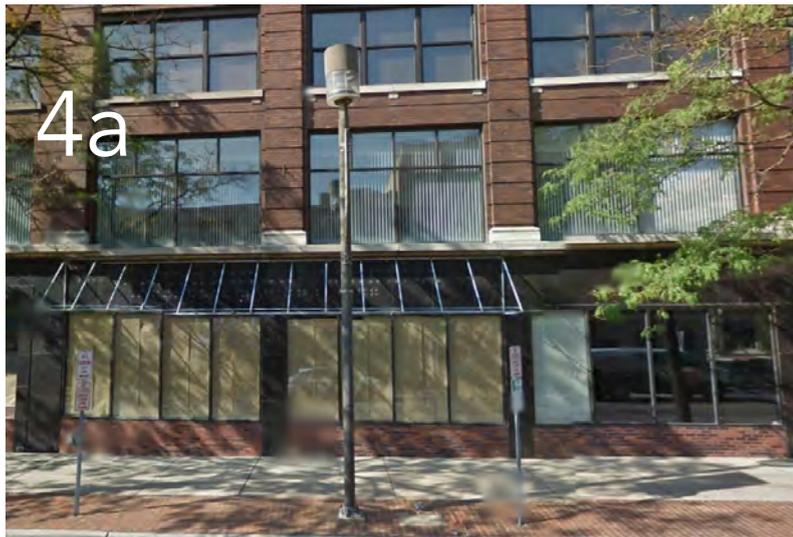
PARKING SURPLUS AND DEMAND



EXISTING STREETScape INCONSISTENCIES



EXISTING STREETScape INCONSISTENCIES

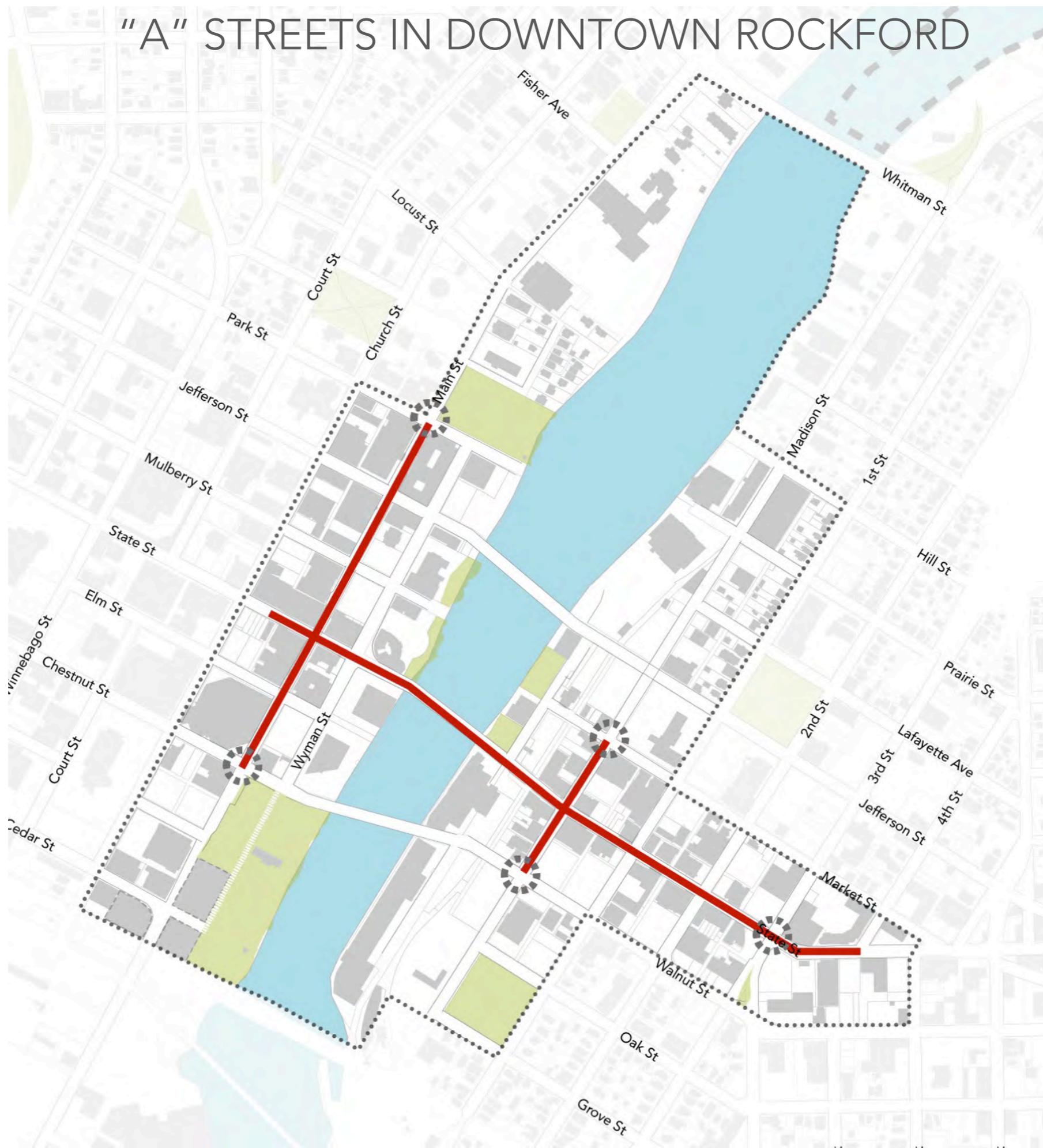


IDENTIFY "A" STREETS



ANN ARBOR, MI

"A" STREETS IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD



A "TLC" APPROACH

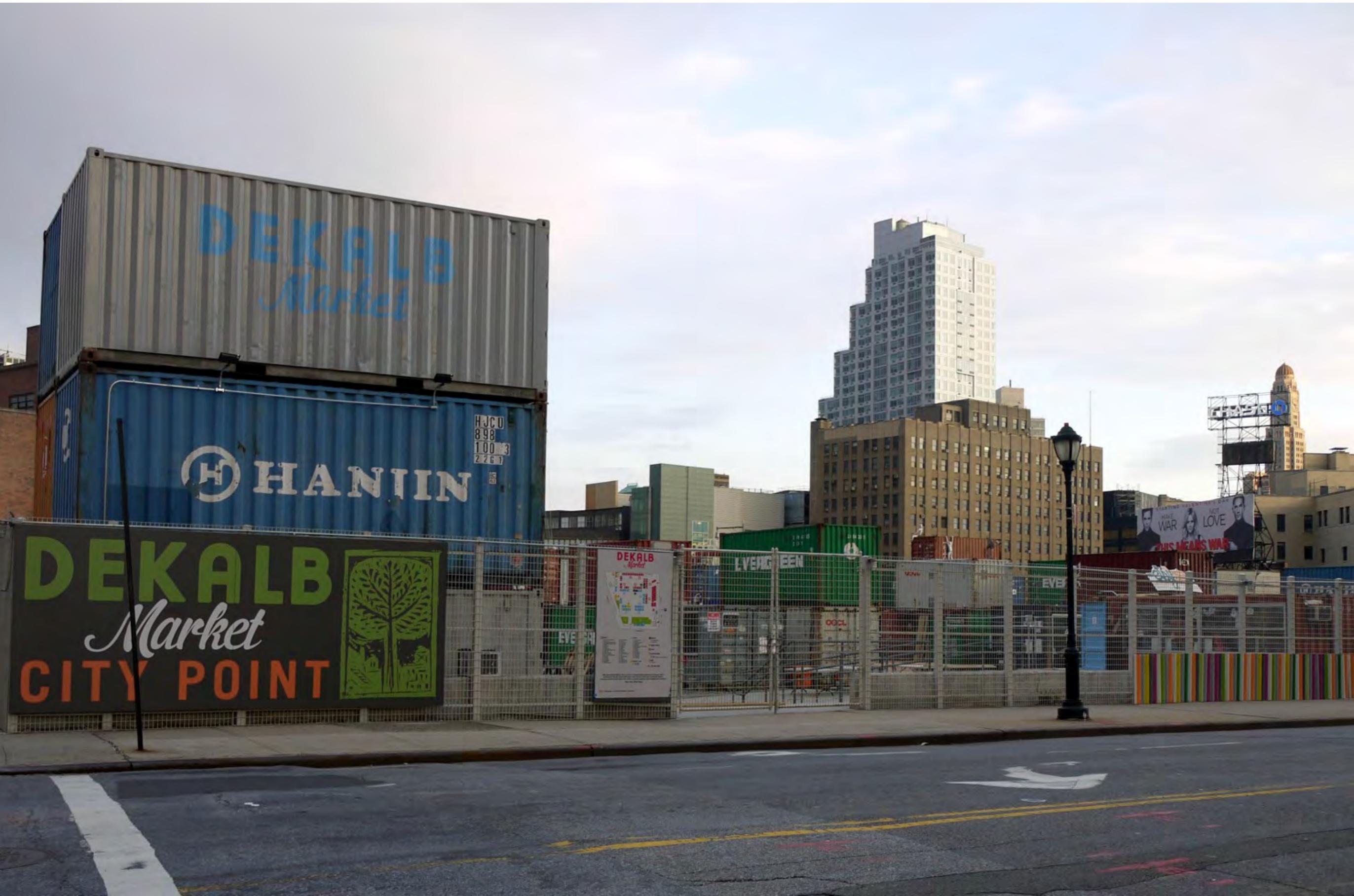
A "TLC" APPROACH



WHAT IS "TACTICAL"?



WHAT IS "LEAN"?



WHAT IS "LEAN"?



LEAN IN ROCKFORD



WHAT IS "CLIMAX"?



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

LARGE REDEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MOBILITY

URBAN DESIGN

LARGE REDEVELOPMENT

REDEVELOP LIBRARY AS AN ANCHOR AND LEARNING INSTITUTION OF THE FUTURE

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Use the Library as a venue for programs by joint partnerships (i.e. Rock Valley College, RMAP, EIGER Lab, etc.)	Library Board	RMAP, Rock Valley College, EIGER Lab	2016	
CLIMAX	2. Work with ComEd to redevelop the Library in Downtown Rockford - arrive at a vision and secure partnerships	Library Board	ComEd	2016	ComEd

REDEVELOP THE WELLNESS CENTER AS A HEALTHY LIVING ANCHOR IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Temporarily test entrepreneurship in vacant space for 1-day events. Hold events at the Wellness Center focused on healthy living.	River District	COR	2015	
LEAN	1. Recruit businesses interested in testing pop up shops on a temporary basis (i.e. 3 months). Go through visioning process with stakeholders to arrive at a long term vision for site - consider healthy living retailers, community gardening, community kitchen, and food co-ops.	River District	COR	2016	
CLIMAX	2. Redevelop Wellness Center with permanent tenants and site programming.	COR	Health institutions, River District, City Market	2015	

BUILD AN AQUARIUM IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Generate excitement towards the Aquarium (i.e. Fish and Chips)	Aquarium Board	RWARD, Rockford Park District, RDA, RACVB	2015/2016	
LEAN	1. Install a pop-up aquarium in a vacant storefront or temporary location (i.e. Museum Campus)	Aquarium Board	RWARD, Rockford Park District, RACVB, RPL, RDA	2016	
CLIMAX	2. Brand Downtown Rockford as a river ecosystem	Aquarium Board	RACVB, RDA, Rockford Park District	2015/2016	
CLIMAX	2. Find investors and develop Aquarium at Downtown	Aquarium Board	RAEDC, RACVB, RPL, RPS 205, RRYRD, Winnebago County, RLDC, RDA, Investors	2018	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MAKE DOWNTOWN A COMMERCIAL, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CULTURAL CENTER THAT RESIDENTS TAKE PRIDE IN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Identify occupiable vacant units by unutilized storefronts that can be used for events.	River District Association		Summer/Fall 2015	
TACTICAL	2. Recruit interested tenants to test temporary pop up shops.	River District Association		Ongoing	
TACTICAL	3. Test temporary pop up shops in vacant storefronts for 1-day events.	River District Association	City Market	Fall 2015/Ongoing	
TACTICAL	4. Market vacant properties through storefront stickers and banners (i.e. "I want to see _____ here").	River District Association	RACVB	Fall 2015	
TACTICAL	5. Hold pop-up shops and food trucks in vacant lots during events (i.e. BMOC)	RACVB	River District	Ongoing	
LEAN	1. Designate a Market Leader to manage temporary businesses.	River District Association		Fall 2015	
LEAN	2. Offer insurance options.	River District Association	RAEDC, RPD	Fall 2015	
LEAN	3. Create a contract for temporary occupying adult vacant buildings and identify up to 3 to bring up to market.	River District Association	RDP	Fall 2015	
LEAN	4. Create Department Occupancy Permit that outlines minimum code requirements to be met.			2015	
LEAN	5. Market vacant properties and vendor opportunities through website and social media.			Summer 2015	
LEAN	6. Install container stores on vacant parcels.			2016	
CLIMAX	1. Recruit permanent tenants for vacant storefronts.	River District Association	COR	Ongoing	
CLIMAX	2. Build out vacant parcels.	River District Association	COR	Ongoing	

DEVELOP MORE RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS IN DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
LEAN	1. Run a graphic and social media campaign to begin with marketing available residential units.	RACVB	River District, RACVB	2016	
LEAN	2. Demonstrate how well Downtown works for daily living - jogging, grocery shopping, biking, and dog walking.	RACVB		2016	
LEAN	3. Market adjacent residential communities within 1/2 mile of focus area.	RACVB		2016	
LEAN	4. Research vacant capacity for residential units.	COR	Landlords	2016	
LEAN	5. Recruit small self housing developers to develop with housing permits (2-4 units, unit 3 floor at identified locations).	COR	Developers, RDP, RACVB, RDA, RAEDC	2017	
LEAN	6. Research zoning for allow for a variety of housing types.	COR		2017	
LEAN	7. Expedite and streamline the permitting process to allow for building rehabilitation.	COR		2017	
CLIMAX	1. Recruit an Urban Developer to develop a 15-20 unit residential project that offers a unique amenity (i.e. proximity to River or park)	COR	Developers, RAEDC, RLDC	2018	

MOBILITY

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY & SAFETY THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Test shared use space on State Street for 3 months.	Public Works		Summer 2015	
LEAN	1. Utilize parking spaces as temporary parking.	Public Works	River District	Summer 2015	
LEAN	2. Refurbish crosswalk, signage and lighted crosswalks on identified streets.	Public Works		2017	
CLIMAX	1. Permanently reduce travel lanes on State Street Bridge to one in each direction.	Public Works		CDP 5-Year Plan, 2021	COR

IMPROVE WALKABILITY ON CHESTNUT/WALNUT & JEFFERSON CORRIDORS

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Test shared use space on Jefferson Bridge for 3 months.	Public Works		Summer 2016	
LEAN	1. Continue development of an event ingress/egress plan.	COR	Public Works	2016	
LEAN	2. Negotiate with IDOT to study capacity requests for bridge/corridor further. At a minimum, modify IDOT Chestnut Bridge MUP cross sections to reduce travel lanes to 11' and widen sidewalks.	Public Works	IDOT	Immediately	
LEAN	3. Conduct a traffic study to determine if Walnut and Jefferson can be reduced to 2 travel lanes each. ADOT indicates they can with appropriate signal intersection improvements.	Public Works	IDOT	Investigate 2015	
CLIMAX	1. Reduce travel lanes, add expanded bike facilities & on-street parking.	Public Works	IDOT	2020	

IMPROVE BIKE CONNECTIONS TO AND THROUGH DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Continue to hold recurring bike events (i.e. Critical Mass)		COR, RW, River District Association, RMAP, RPD	Ongoing	
LEAN	1. Fill in on-street bike routes/signage connecting trails to Downtown (Mulberry, Lafayette, and Market are priority).	Rockford Community Futures	Public Works	2016	
LEAN	2. Develop bike facilities master plan.	Rockford Community Futures	RMAP	Immediately	
LEAN	3. Revise new developments and places of employment to provide bike parking for employees and residents.	COR	Developers/Employers	Summer 2018	
LEAN	4. Commission a feasibility study on the in-street bikeway connection from (South) S. Railway Bridge to the Fourth Museum Campus on both sides of the river.	COR	Public Works	Summer 2015	
CLIMAX	1. Reduce travel lanes on Walnut & Jefferson and add expanded bike lanes.	Public Works	IDOT	2020	
CLIMAX	2. Ensure connection through Ingersoll/abandoned railway connection to existing in-street trail.	Public Works		2017	
CLIMAX	3. Study the feasibility of Downtown Bike Share.	COR		2016	

CREATE MORE ON-STREET PARKING IN DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
LEAN	1. Continue to pursue transfer of Wyman from State of Illinois.	COR	IDOT	2018	
CLIMAX	1. Modify zone vision to include parallel parking on the northbound side of Wyman Street.	Public Works	IDOT	2020	
CLIMAX	2. Add on-street parking in identified locations on State, Jefferson, and Walnut Streets.	Public Works		2018	

IMPROVE PARKING STRATEGY THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN TO BALANCE DEMAND

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Install temporary signage, and lights at garages on west side particularly for City Market.	COR	RACVB, City Market	Summer 2015	
LEAN	1. Encourage "park once" attitude by creating an appealing point of public parking - expand existing directional signage and lighting, maintain cleanliness of decks, improve general mobility to and from.	COR	RACVB	2016	
LEAN	2. Better enforce parking time limits.	COR		2016	
LEAN	3. Work with employers to provide employee parking in decks in lot.	River District		2016	
LEAN	4. Work with retailers to create incentives to shop.	River District		2015	
LEAN	5. Test parking meters by installing at key locations on "A" streets.	Public Works		2018	
CLIMAX	1. Develop a Downtown Parking Authority.	COR		2017	
CLIMAX	2. Install meters with mobile app/payment options in Downtown.	Downtown Parking Authority	Public Works	2020	
CLIMAX	3. Install technology at parking garages and use to let people know of real-time parking availability in Downtown.	Downtown Parking Authority	Public Works	2020	
CLIMAX	4. Allow garage pricing structure to balance demand with market use on-street spaces.	Downtown Parking Authority	COR	2020	

URBAN DESIGN

MAINTAIN DAY-TO-DAY VIBRANCY IN DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Hold a "Sidewalk Day" where retailers and restaurants can test sidewalk shops.	COR	River District	Summer/Fall 2015/Ongoing	
TACTICAL	2. Water sidewalk permitting fees.	COR			
TACTICAL	3. Secure tables and chairs (i.e. permits to rent for Sidewalk Day).	River District Association	City Market		
TACTICAL	4. Post artwork, lighting, and community engagement boards in vacant storefronts and on blank walls on "A" streets and "B" streets.	RACVB	RACVB		
LEAN	1. Create "parklets" in parking spaces for outdoor dining and seating.	COR	River District, RACVB		
LEAN	2. Create a blanket permit that allows outdoor dining and seating at-of-right.	Public Works			
LEAN	3. Create a contract for all businesses/employees to sign in Downtown with terms for sidewalk, space, permits, and parking requirements.	River District			

ADOPT CONSISTENT STREETSCAPE STANDARDS FOR DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Recruit interested tenants to test temporary pop up shops.				
TACTICAL	2. Test temporary pop up shops in vacant storefronts for 1-day events.	River District Association	City Market		
TACTICAL	3. Market vacant properties through storefront stickers and banners (i.e. "I want to see _____ here").	River District Association	RACVB		
TACTICAL	4. Hold pop-up shops and food trucks in vacant lots during events (i.e. BMOC)	RACVB	River District		
LEAN	1. Patch and repair critical streetscapes based on priority list provided.	River District Association			
LEAN	2. Continue to install consistent signage on "A" streets and key intersections on both sides of the river as part of the Banner Program.	RACVB			
LEAN	3. Install hanging street lights, lights at intersections, and/or tree lights on "A" and "B" streets.	RACVB		Fall 2015	
CLIMAX	1. Create design standards for Downtown Rockford.	RACVB	Environmental Design Consultant	2017	
CLIMAX	2. Present Design Standards to stakeholders for feedback and approval.	RACVB		2018	
CLIMAX	3. Install and enforce streetscape standards.	COR		2020	

CREATE A NARRATIVE AND BRAND IDENTITY SPECIFICALLY FOR DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD

	STRATEGIES	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING
TACTICAL	1. Create an elevator speech about the identity of Downtown Rockford for all organizations and ambassadors to use.	RACVB	River District Association	2015	
TACTICAL	2. Schedule community events for Downtown locations.	RACVB	River District Association	Ongoing	
LEAN	1. Work with a consultant to develop a "brand identity" used by all organizations in Downtown Rockford.	RACVB	River District Association, Brand Consultant	2015/2016	
CLIMAX	1. Run a national campaign that promotes the revitalized Rockford.	RACVB	Brand Consultant	2017	

LARGE REDEVELOPMENT

1

REDEVELOP THE ROCKFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY AS AN ANCHOR AND LEARNING INSTITUTION OF THE FUTURE.

2

REDEVELOP DAVIS PARK TO BECOME A STRONGER ANCHOR IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD.

3

REDEVELOP THE WELLNESS CENTER AS A "HEALTHY LIVING" ANCHOR.

4

DEVELOP AN AQUARIUM IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD.

5

CONTINUE TO PURSUE LARGE-SCALE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

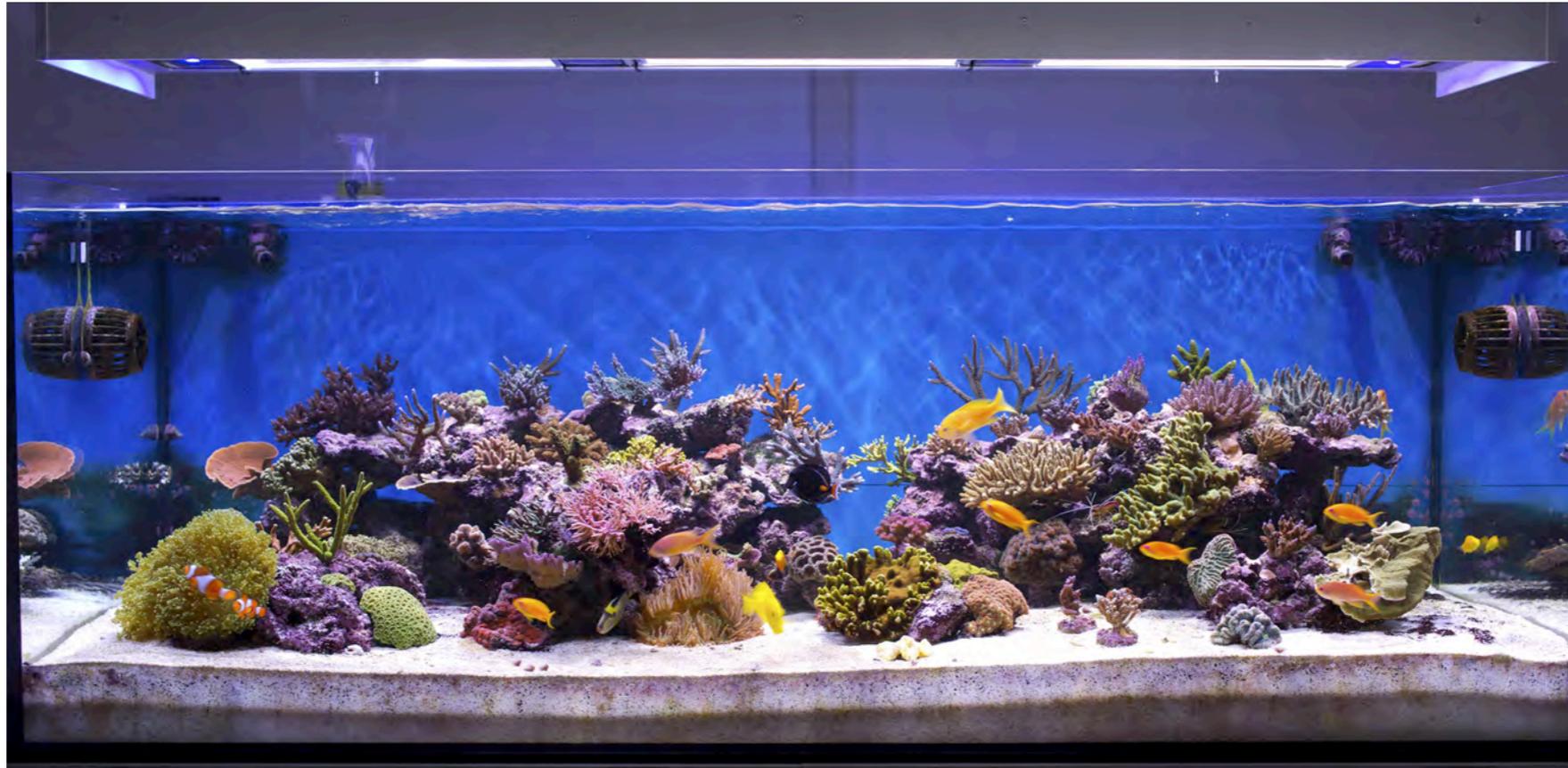
LIBRARY REDEVELOPMENT PLANS IN PROGRESS



DAVIS PARK MASTER PLAN IN PROGRESS



POP-UP AQUARIUM PLANS IN PROGRESS



+



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1

MAKE DOWNTOWN A
COMMERCIAL, ENTERTAINMENT,
AND CULTURAL CENTER

2

DEVELOP MORE RESIDENTIAL
OPTIONS IN AND AROUND
DOWNTOWN – INCLUDE A
GREATER DIVERSITY OF
HOUSING TYPES

SINCE WE STARTED...

**7 NEW
BUSINESSES
HAVE OPENED**

OPPORTUNITIES STILL AVAILABLE



1,780' (60%)
of Ground Level Occupied

106,800 SF
of Ground Level Occupied

1,200' (40%)
of Ground Level Vacancy

72,000 SF
of Ground Level Vacancy

810'
of Parcel Vacancy

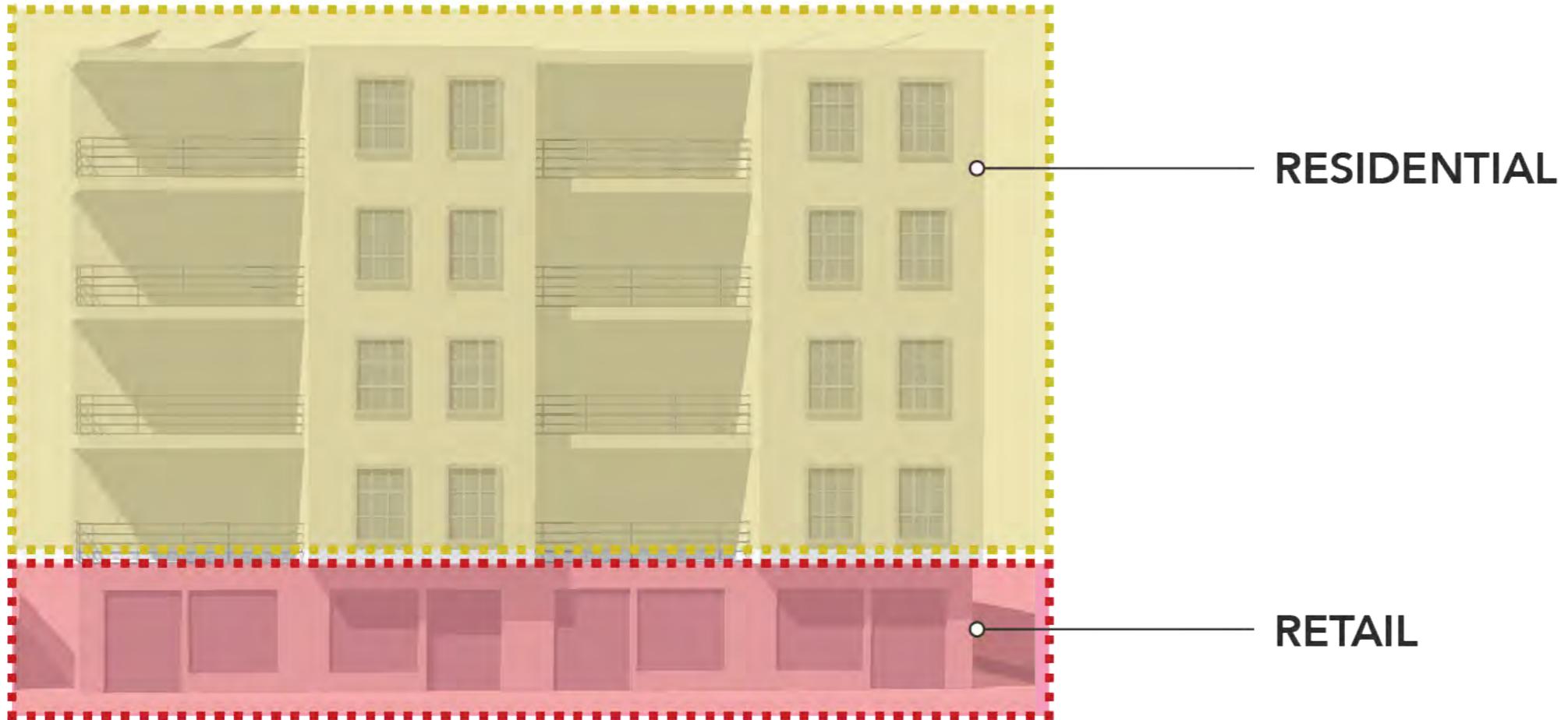
48,600 SF
of Parcel Vacancy

120,600 sf
AVAILABLE

122,600 sf
CAN BE SUPPORTED

VERTICAL MIXED-USE NOT RECOGNIZED AS AN INVESTMENT ASSET CLASS

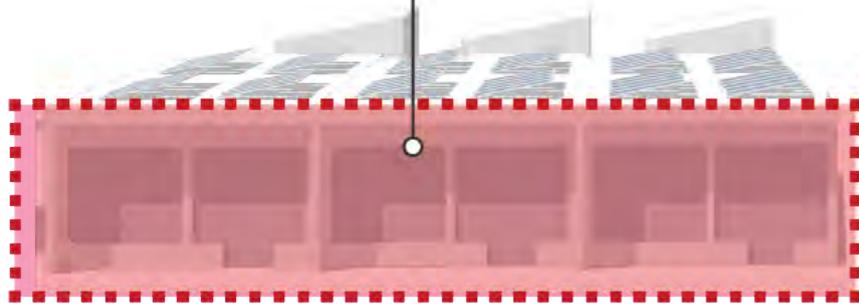
CLIMAX CONDITION



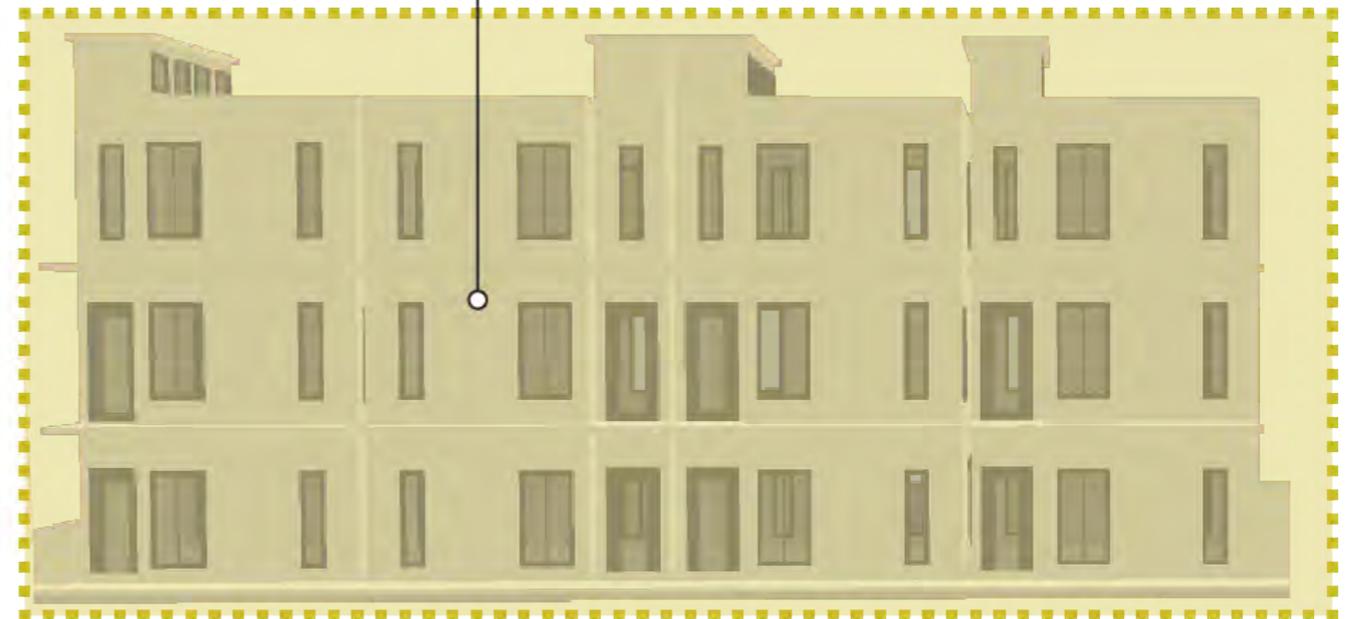
LEAN DEVELOPMENTS CAN BE FINANCED IN UNIQUE WAYS

LEAN CONDITION

RETAIL



RESIDENTIAL



LEAN RESIDENTIAL: OPTIONS

FIND ROOKIE DEVELOPERS

APPLY CREATIVITY IN FORM

LEAN RESIDENTIAL: PARKING LOT LINERS



LEAN RESIDENTIAL: PARKING GARAGE LINER



LEAN RESIDENTIAL: 4-PLEX



PROPOSED BUILDING TYPOLOGY BY ZONES

BUILDING TYPOLGOIES		PARKING LOT LINER HOUSING	TOWNHOMES	DUPLEX	4-PLEX	ELEVATOR APT	WRAPPER BUILDING	IMPERMANENT (CONTAINER, MOBILE)	1-STORY RETAIL	MIXED-USE
LR Lean Residential		●	●	●	●	●	●			
CR Climax Residential						●	●			●
LRT Lean Retail								◐	●	●
CR Climax Mixed-Use								◐	◐	●

● ALLOWED ◐ TEMPORARILY ALLOWED

MOBILITY

1

IMPROVE MOBILITY ON STATE,
CHESTNUT/WALNUT, AND
JEFFERSON CORRIDORS

2

IMPROVE BIKE CONNECTIONS TO
AND THROUGH DOWNTOWN

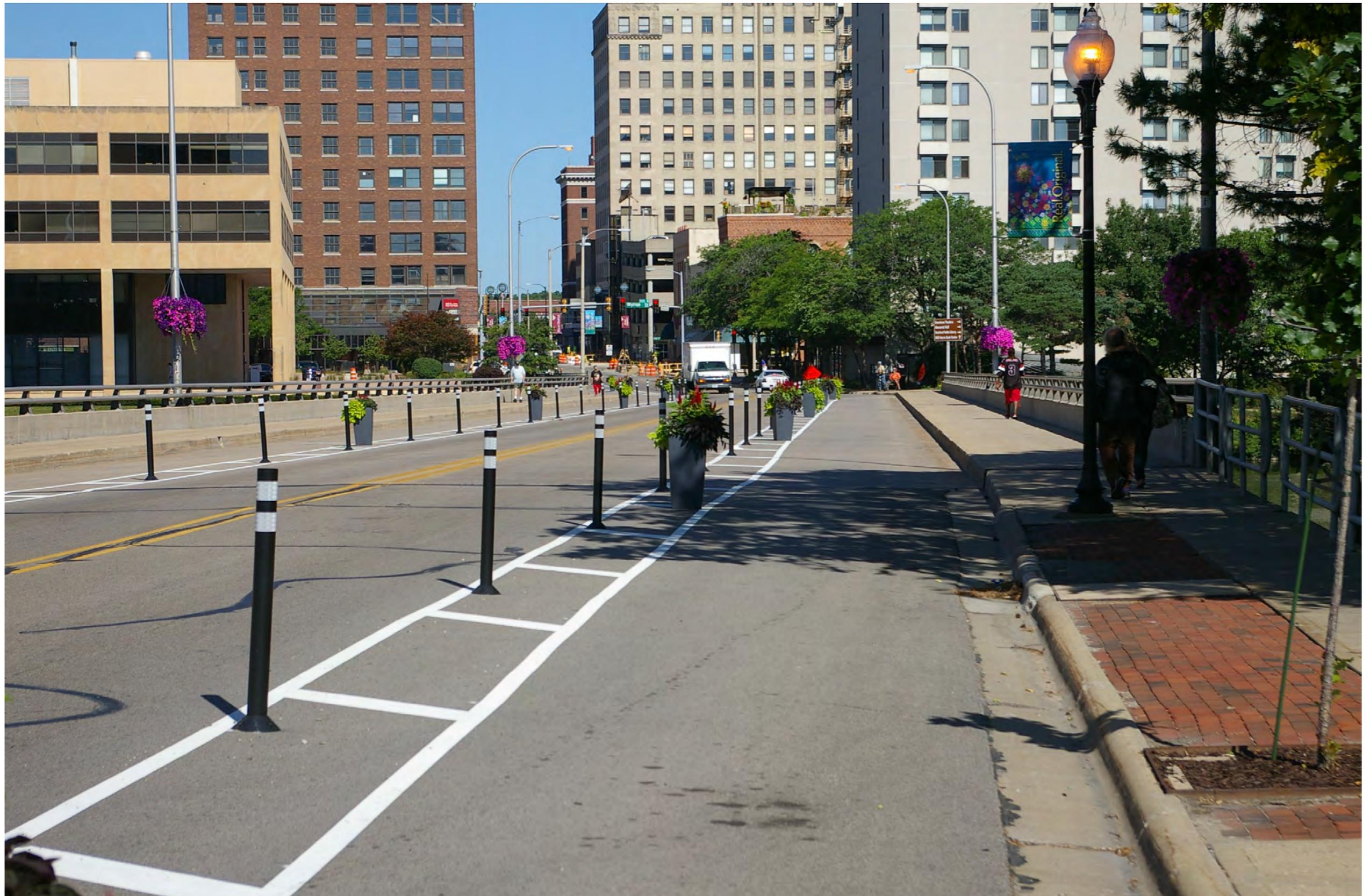
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CREATE MORE ON-STREET
PARKING IN DOWNTOWN

4

IMPROVE PARKING STRATEGY
THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN TO
BALANCE DEMAND

TEMPORARY STATE STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS



URBAN DESIGN

1

ADOPT CONSISTENT STREETScape STANDARDS FOR DOWNTOWN.

2

MAINTAIN DAY-TO-DAY VIBRANCY IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD.

3

CREATE A NARRATIVE AND BRAND IDENTITY SPECIFICALLY FOR DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD.

TEMPORARY PARKLET IN DOWNTOWN



SHOP THE BLOCK IN DOWNTOWN



SHOP THE BLOCK IN DOWNTOWN



WHAT'S NEXT?

TEMPORARY PARKLETS/SIDEWALK SHOPS (SUMMER/FALL)

POP-UP SHOPS IN VACANT STOREFRONTS (FALL)

POP-UP AQUARIUM (FALL/SPRING)

HANGING STREET LIGHTS (FALL)

THANK YOU

IMPROVE EXISTING AMENITIES AND ADJUST PRICING STRUCTURES



TEST TEMPORARY BUSINESS MODELS

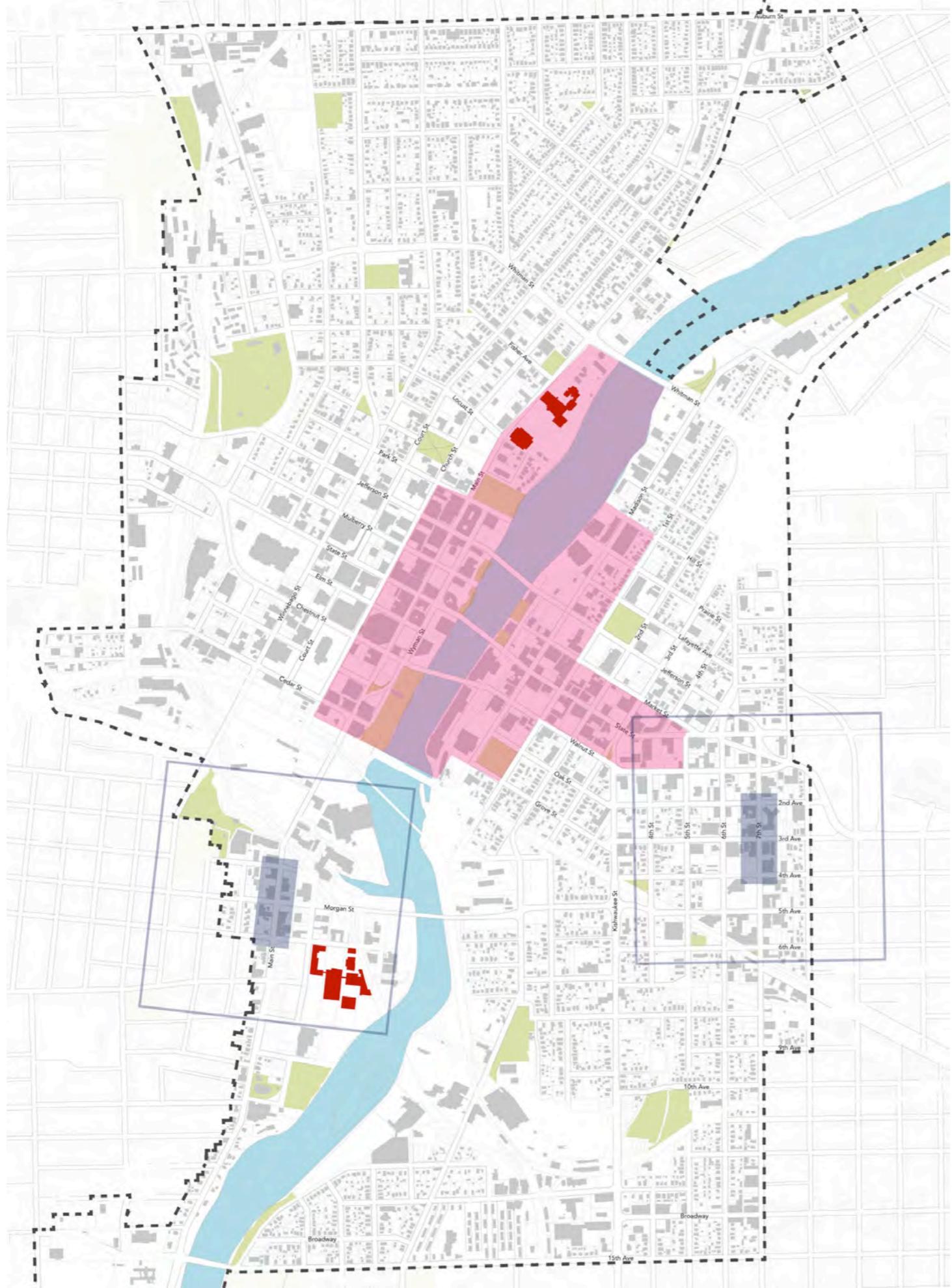


TRANSITION TO LEAN BUILDING STRATEGIES



INCREASE VIBRANCY WITH HANGING STREET LIGHTS

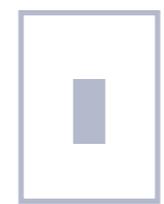




Downtown Focus Area



Large
Redevelopment Area



Neighborhood
Centers