

SOUTH MAIN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

City of Rockford, Illinois

VOLUME 2 : REVITALIZATION VISION + IMPLEMENTATION

PREPARED BY:

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Klehm Arboretum
Pilgrim Baptist Church
Comprehensive Community Solutions
Southwest Ideas for Today and Tomorrow (SWIFTT)
Rockford Public Library

This plan is especially dedicated to the legacy and work of former Alderman Victory Bell. Representing Southwest Rockford for over 35 years, Alderman Bell was a tireless advocate for the South Main Corridor as the area went through many turbulent times. His dedicated support for community investment and redevelopment into the 5th Ward for decades established a foundation of strong neighborhoods and dedicated stakeholder groups that have made our outreach and planning efforts throughout the course of this project tremendously successful. The millions of dollars of investment in South Main that will be underway in the next few years serve as a fine tribute to Alderman Bell's service, and the strategy outlined in this corridor revitalization document reflect the ideals he brought as an influential Rockford leader for over a generation.

We also appreciate the involvement of the many community residents, business owners and organizational representatives who dedicated their time to participate in interviews, focus groups, community forums, and online surveys, which ultimately helped craft the following vision as presented in this document.

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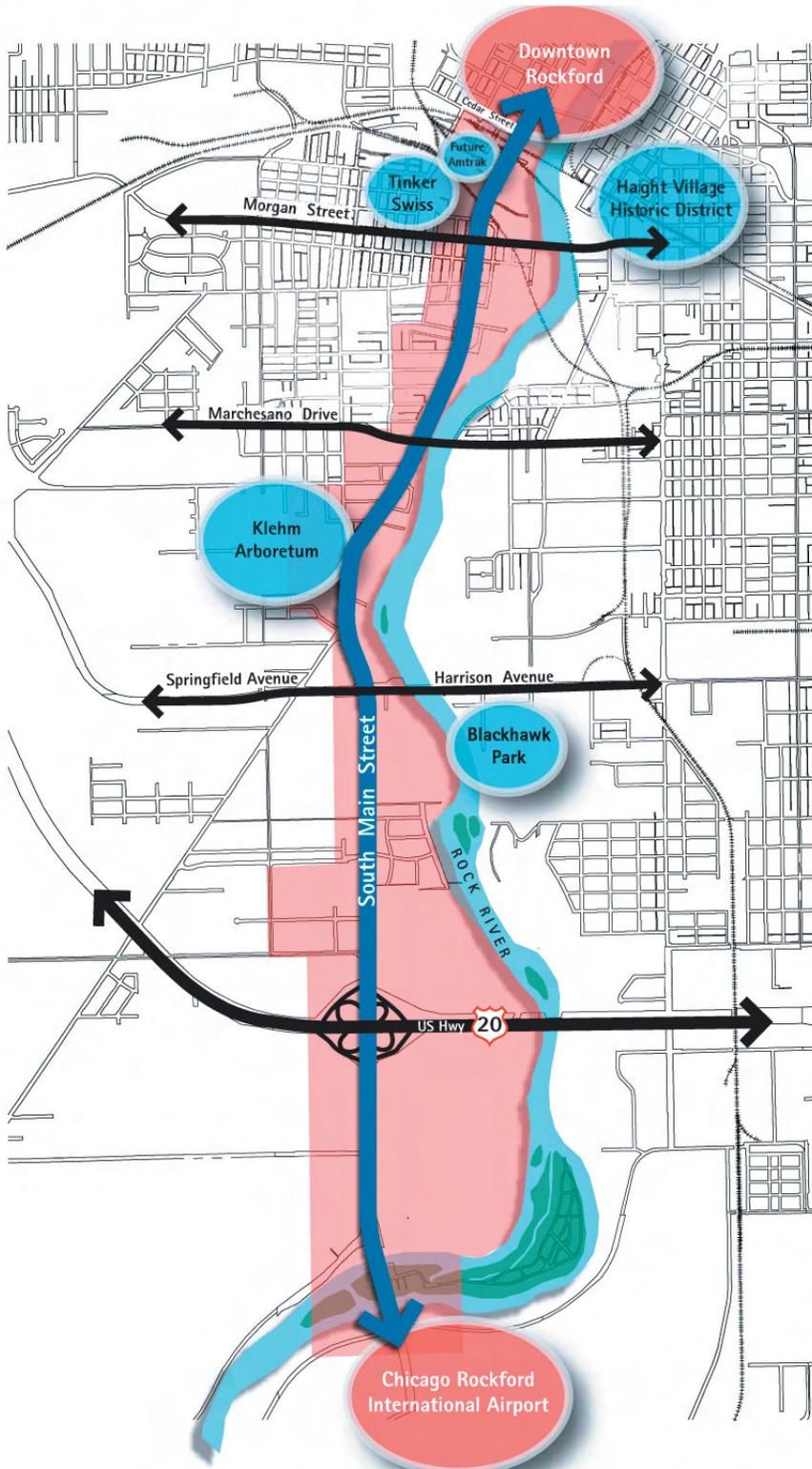
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REVITALIZATION VISION



STUDY AREA CONTEXT

The Corridor links several major regional attractions and destinations all within close proximity to Downtown and regional transportation networks.

Legend

- South Main Street
- Major Street
- Railroad
- Study Area

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Revitalization Vision

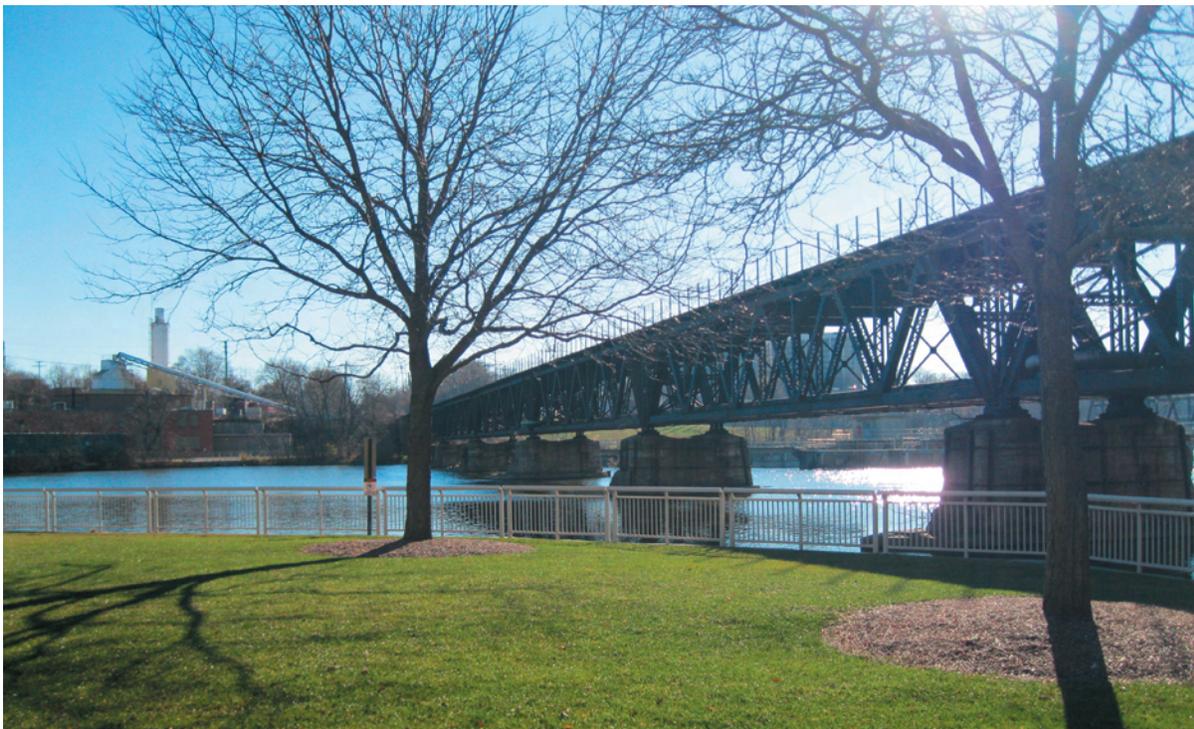
The South Main Revitalization Strategy provides a vision for how the South Main Corridor can be enhanced and transitioned into a more vibrant, mixed-use, transit-supported district that includes a variety of new retail, residential, office, service, industrial and institutional uses. The fundamentals of this Revitalization Strategy are based on balancing preservation of the community’s existing assets—such as surrounding residential neighborhoods, historic buildings, the Rock River, open spaces, landmarks and key destinations—with strategies for enhancing its character with a combination of physical improvements and appropriate new development intended to provide positive changes along this important roadway.

The following fundamental principles were outlined by the team and Project Study Group, refined, tested and built upon through community participation and used in the development of the Revitalization Strategy. These principles include:

- ❑ Build upon or leverage the momentum of planned and in progress large transportation infrastructure improvements, including the Illinois Department of Transportation’s (IDOT) reconstruction of South Main Street and the Morgan Street Bridge replacement.
- ❑ Create and support regional strategies for increased public access and linkages to the Rock River.
- ❑ Strengthen the community’s existing commercial areas and local business environment by supporting independent shops, retailers and restaurants through marketing, awareness and training.
- ❑ Provide efficient, effective and safe transportation connections and linkages for all modes of transportation including car, bicycle, and pedestrian, as well as create an environment for future transit service to the area.
- ❑ Organize the Corridor into appropriately focused “Character Zones” or sub-areas based on land use, transportation environment and physical condition to establish an appropriate framework for phased revitalization efforts and timing.
- ❑ Strive to achieve a range of higher density multi-family residential opportunities that support current and future resident lifestyle needs and income levels.
- ❑ Build upon and strengthen the cultural and ethnic history of the community and area and its many institutions.



- ❑ Provide for continued streetscape and open space improvements and additions through a coordinated and phased implementation plan.
- ❑ Provide strategies for enhancing and using existing buildings and structures, where feasible. Promote continued environmental cleanup and reuse of area brownfield sites.
- ❑ Enhance and support the needs and goals of key South Main civic institutions, landmarks and activity generators.
- ❑ Promote and support on-going property owner reinvestment in properties.
- ❑ Support and assist the City's economic development goals of attracting and relocating new technology, business and industrial uses within the Corridor.
- ❑ Develop an improved and efficient regulatory framework that provides a clear definition of the City's and community's shared vision for the Corridor and creates a sense of predictability in the overall development process.



South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Goals and Objectives

The following overarching goals represent the “big picture” guidelines as derived from the South Main planning process. The objectives are more specific elements that are defined within the Revitalization Strategy.

Goal: Land Use|Urban Design

Attract a range of sustainable land uses and development patterns consistent with community character, existing infrastructure capacities and City initiatives in order to achieve a critical mass of market activity that will support existing and future businesses and mixed-use redevelopment.

REVITALIZATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Encourage compact, mixed-use development that supports current and future resident lifestyle needs, as well as supports future transit in the area.
- ❑ Promote development/redevelopment of vacant, underutilized and inefficient properties throughout the Corridor.
- ❑ Discourage “mall-style” big box retail, drive-through retail and auto-dominated stores and services within the historic commercial core of the neighborhood.
- ❑ Encourage adaptive use and rehabilitation of key historic buildings and structures found throughout the Corridor, particularly the Barber-Colman buildings.
- ❑ Support City goals for promoting the incorporation of industrial, research and technology businesses in appropriate locations within the Corridor.
- ❑ Provide increased visibility, awareness and access to the Rock River as a linked regional public open space amenity.
- ❑ Create a landmark public open space that provides a destination location for community events and a “Village Market” that promotes local business development and entrepreneurship.
- ❑ Provide for a variety of sustainable public and private open spaces and streetscape environments that improve the physical appearance of South Main Street and Southwest Rockford.





- ❑ Foster a sense of “pride of place” amongst property owners to encourage regular maintenance and improvement of private property and buildings.
- ❑ Create a distinct unifying community, neighborhood or Corridor “brand” with a cohesive design and character.



Goal: Economic Development

Create a vibrant and economically sustainable Corridor that serves the needs of area residents, business owners, employees and visitors.

REVITALIZATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Differentiate South Main Street’s commercial activities so they are distinct within Rockford and so its core retail components are unique within the region.
- ❑ Adopt and apply relevant economic development strategies, as appropriate to the scale and challenges of South Main Street’s several sub-areas.
- ❑ Create a vibrant traditional neighborhood core that serves as a convenience shopping center for neighborhood residents and, at the same time, attracts customers from beyond Southwest Rockford to its Latino and African American specialty businesses.
- ❑ Use historic preservation as a tool that adds value to the historic commercial buildings on South Main Street.
- ❑ Direct new commercial development to South Main Street (rather than the East Side) by reducing development barriers and offering incentives – and by making it harder to develop elsewhere in the City.
- ❑ Stimulate local entrepreneurship through community-based financing.
- ❑ Begin to generate activity (e.g., through events and temporary markets) on key catalytic sites in preparation for future development.
- ❑ Start to build local capacity by bringing diverse local skills together in a revitalization partnership.



South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Goal: Transportation

Develop the South Main Corridor to accommodate all types of roadway users including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and users of transit in a safe and efficient manner to local and regional destinations.



REVITALIZATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Develop all streets within the South Main Corridor to accommodate motorists, bicyclists, and transit users of all ages and abilities.
- ❑ Improve access to and mobility along South Main Street.
- ❑ Improve pedestrian safety and encourage walking.
- ❑ Promote a shared use path along the full length of the South Main Corridor.
- ❑ Encourage best practices in access management to minimize congestion along South Main Street.
- ❑ Improve pedestrian access to and facilities at bus stops.
- ❑ Provide adequately spaced crossings on South Main Street to minimize barriers and improve neighborhood connectivity.
- ❑ Provide replacement parking for on-street parking that is eliminated with South Main Street improvements.
- ❑ Encourage access to the Rock River and encourage views of the river that showcase its natural features.
- ❑ Promote local and regional transit at the proposed Amtrak station.



Revitalization Strategy Components

The Revitalization Strategy and supporting illustrative vision plans present a vision for the next 20 years. Development densities shown in the Plan reflect what development is possible considering South Main Street’s physical land and capacity potential, such as block and property sizes, parking layouts, site access and infrastructure. The Strategy includes several “catalytic” or “target” redevelopment opportunities that could increase business and developer interest in Southwest Rockford, which over time could exceed market and development projections. Ideally, the current businesses located on parcels impacted by the IDOT roadway realignment and construction will relocate to other vacant corridor properties in appropriate locations based on their business and site needs. On sites that are not targeted for redevelopment, the plan identifies opportunities for improvements to existing buildings, storefronts, parking lots and landscaping.

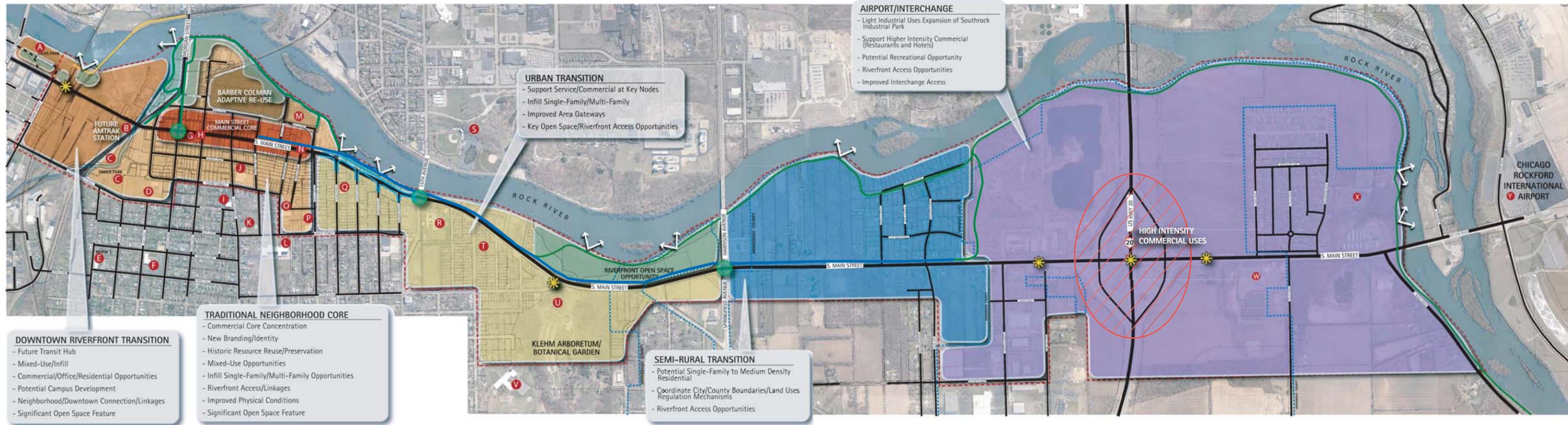
The South Main Revitalization Strategy and vision plan delineates conceptual building massing, parking layouts and site design to illustrate how the area could ideally be developed in a comprehensive, coordinated manner. Actual building locations, heights and densities, as well as landscaping and parking layouts will vary as property owners, business owners and developers generate more detailed site plans.

The following is a more specific description of the framework and individual development components depicted in the Revitalization Strategy.

Revitalization Strategies Framework

To help frame the development recommendations and physical enhancements for the South Main Corridor, the Revitalization Strategies Framework delineates five Corridor sub-areas based on future potential land use conditions and transportation improvements. Illustrative planning concepts were developed for “target” opportunity sites within each of these sub-areas. The sub-areas include (**also see Figure 6.1**):

- ❑ **Downtown | Riverfront Transition**
- ❑ **Traditional Neighborhood Core**
- ❑ **Urban Transition**
- ❑ **Semi-Rural Transition**
- ❑ **Airport | Interchange**



Area Attractions/Landmarks

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| A Davis Park | J King Elementary School | S Blackhawk Park |
| B Future Amtrak Station | K Mandeville Park | T Taylor Park |
| C Tinker Park - Tinker Swiss Cottage Museum, Suspension Bridge | L Washington Elementary | U Klehm Arboretum/ Botanical Garden |
| D Booker Washington Park/ Community Center | M South Park | V Julia Lathrop Elementary School |
| E Maria's Italian Cafe | N St. Elizabeth Community Center | W Faith Center Church |
| F St. Anthony's Church | O New Zion Missionary Baptist | X Gem Field Park |
| G Graham-Ginestra House | P St. Peter and Paul Apostles Church | Y Chicago Rockford International Airport |
| H Ethnic Heritage Museum | Q Southside Church of God | |
| I Montague Branch Library | R Poor Clares Corpus Christi Monastery | |

FIGURE 6.1: REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES FRAMEWORK

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Downtown|Riverfront Transition

The Downtown|Riverfront Transition sub-area is defined by Chestnut and Cedar Streets on the north, the Canadian National Railroad on the south, Winnebago Street on the west and the Rock River on the east. The area is largely defined by the vacant rail/switching yard west of South Main Street, active industrial uses and vacant property on the east and Davis Park and vacant downtown buildings, including Tapco and Amerock on the north. Future land uses for this sub-area include opportunities for commercial/retail, light industrial, office and residential development in a compact, mixed-use environment. There is also potential for additional open space, both in the short and long term, as well as river access tying into Davis Park. With future Amtrak service planned for the existing Canadian National Railroad tracks and the possibility of Metra commuter rail on the Union Pacific tracks on the north, this area has the potential to be a key transit hub for Rockford and a true transition from Downtown to the smaller scale neighborhoods to the south.

New development at the catalytic rail yard site could be instrumental in bridging the physical gap from Downtown to Southwest Rockford and the rest of South Main Street.

Participants in community workshops and stakeholder discussions repeatedly noted that the community feels “disconnected” from Downtown due to the large vacant parcels between Cedar Street and the Canadian National Railroad tracks. Future redevelopment in this area, especially along the South Main Street frontage, would help close the physical gap between downtown and the primary commercial and residential areas of Southwest Rockford.



The vacant rail yard property just south of Downtown envisions a future Amtrak station, potential Metra station and mixed-use development (Source: Google Images).



The Rockford Multimodal Station will provide residents of the Rockford metropolitan area with bus, rail and vehicular transportation options (source: Tiger II Grant Application).



Rendering of the future Rockford Amtrak Station (Source: Tiger II Grant Application)



The Plan envisions higher-density housing for the Downtown/Riverfront Target Area, such as townhomes and apartments.



Ideally, the South Main frontage would consist of multi-story mixed-use buildings as an extension of Downtown.

DOWNTOWN|RIVERFRONT TRANSITION TARGET AREA (FIGURE 6.2)

The Revitalization Strategy concept depicts the long-term vision for the Downtown|Riverfront Transition Target Area as a transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood with new riverfront open space opportunities. The frontage along South Main Street, including the W.A. Whitney frontage, would be 2 to 4-story mixed-use buildings with commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential or office on upper floors. This development would provide an important physical and visual link, or transition, from Downtown to the commercial and residential areas further south. With the planned Amtrak station and parking lot proposed north of the Canadian National Railroad tracks combined with new commercial, office and residential uses, this portion of South Main Street would become a more active urban environment.

For the remainder of the rail yard site to the west, the Plan envisions higher density residential housing, including 3 to 5-story apartments or condominiums, urban rowhomes and townhomes. A compact grid street system forms the core blocks of the site, tying into Wheeler Drive and an extension of Mill Street across South Main. The Plan estimates approximately 330 residential units on this site for the long-term vision.

East of South Main, the Plan works around the remaining industrial users located on Founders Landing. The frontage is depicted as two 2 to 4-story mixed-use buildings which would match the west side of the street. Access and parking for these buildings would build upon the existing circulation system already in place and ideally be located behind the buildings. Current vacant property (approximately 2.2 acres) along the riverfront would be converted to park space and linked to Davis Park beneath the Union Pacific Railroad bridge to create a terminus to the planned Illinois Railnet bridge bike path. Ultimately, if W.A. Whitney, Rockford Bolt & Steel Company and other active industrial users relocate within the Corridor, additional property would be available on the eastern riverfront to extend this open space system, creating a landmark “Founders Landing Park.”

North of the Union Pacific Railroad overpass, the Plan focuses on how Davis Park can be extended and enhanced as a result of two future City planning objectives: the demolition of the Tapco Building and the elimination of a portion of Wyman Street between Cedar and Chestnut. Essentially, this would create an additional 2.4 acres of potential open space to be used for public gatherings, events and parking. The concept shows the Amerock Building remaining with the potential for rehabilitation and reuse. In addition, as a long-term strategy, a Metra station has been shown with potential access located from an alley/drive south of Cedar Street. The station would be served by diagonal parking from the drive, as well as a potential shared parking structure on the Cedar Street/South Main Street intersection.



SOUTH MAIN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

- A** ELIMINATE WYMAN CROSSOVER
EXPAND PARKING TO THE SOUTH
- B** DAVIS PARK EXTENSION
- C** SHARED PARKING DECK
- D** FUTURE METRA STATION
- E** RESIDENTIAL TOWNHOME UNITS
- F** 3 TO 5 STORY RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS
- G** 2 TO 4 STORY MIXED-USE BUILDINGS
ALONG SOUTH MAIN STREET
1st Floor: Commercial
Upper Floors: Residential or Office
- H** RAILROAD BRIDGE BIKE PATH
- I** SOUTH MAIN STREET STREETScape
ENHANCEMENTS
- J** FUTURE AMTRAK STATION

SITE DATA

MIXED-USE BUILDINGS: 280,000 S.F.
RESIDENTIAL: 330 UNITS

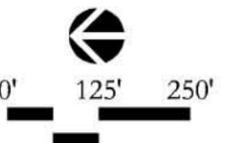
South Main Revitalization Strategy

Rockford, Illinois

Figure 6.2: Downtown Riverfront Transition Target Area: Preferred Concept

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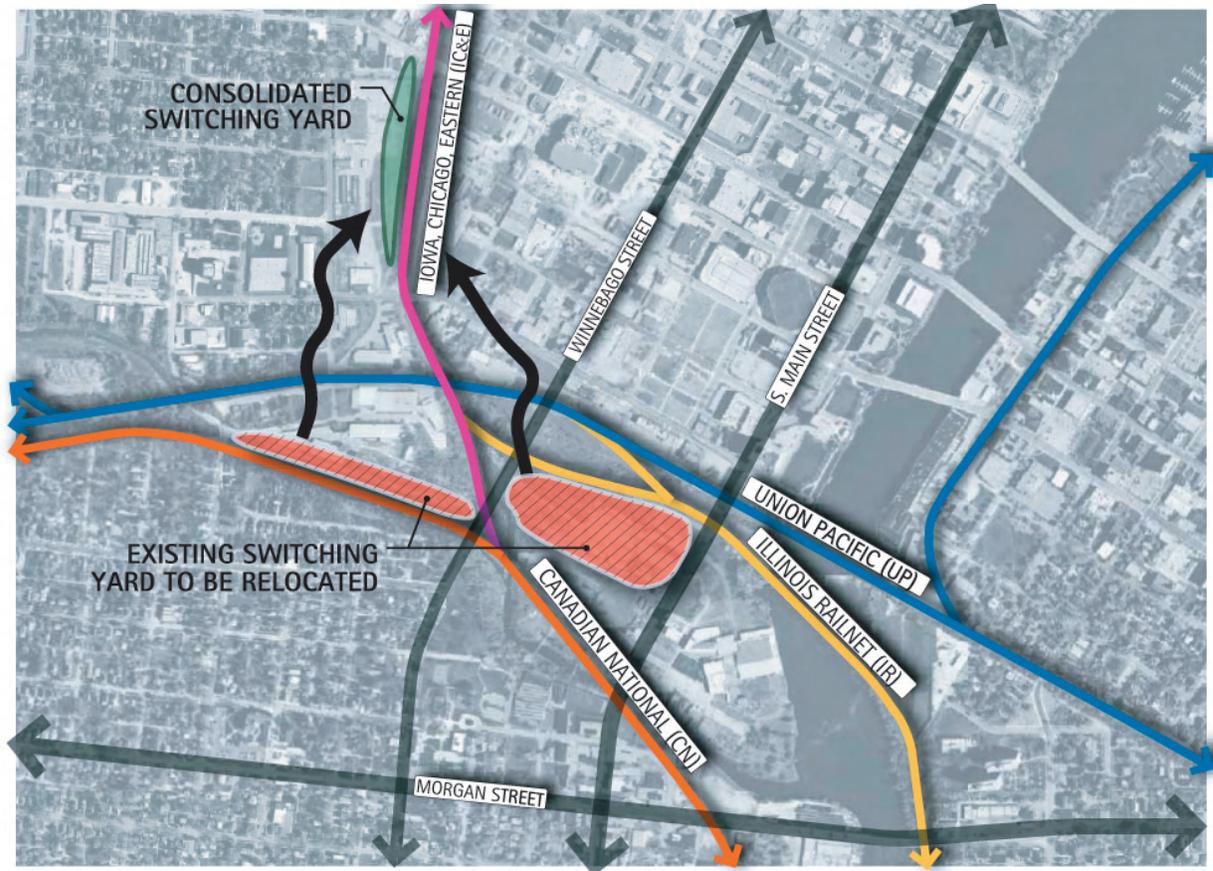
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South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision



The Railroad Consolidation Study outlines steps for eliminating portions of track and switching yards currently located on the Downtown/Riverfront Transition Target Area.



To connect to Davis Park on the north, an urban riverwalk character and additional open space could be developed for a portion of Founders Landing.

Conceptual Target Area Phasing

The Downtown|Riverfront Transition Target Area will most likely need to be developed in a phased approach, as it relies upon the timing of the railroad consolidation plan to unfold, as well as an improved economy and housing market. Although a portion of the Illinois Railnet tracks will ultimately be abandoned and the switching yards (currently located on the rail yard site) consolidated further west, these yards must remain active in the short term. Therefore, short-term concepts and strategies were developed to provide guidance for potential implementation. While ultimately the actual development sequence of this site will depend on a number of factors, the following describes an optimal incremental scenario that builds up to the overall Plan vision.

The first phase concept for developing the Downtown|Riverfront Transition Target Area focuses on the Amtrak station, including its parking and circulation, as well as establishing a building frontage with three of the commercial/mixed-use buildings on South Main Street. With the switching yards remaining active, the property to the south could be converted to public active recreation and passive open space. The concept depicts up to six youth soccer/football fields, as well as 2.3 acres of community gardens. In this scenario, shared parking associated with the commercial buildings and/or temporary parking could support the open space.

The second phase concept assumes that the switching yards have been consolidated further west and the remaining site would be available to redevelop. The concept depicts two additional commercial/mixed-use buildings located further north along the South Main frontage, as well as three residential apartment or condominium buildings to the west. The vehicular and pedestrian circulation system would be expanded to form a loop drive system. This phase also shows additional recreation fields and expanded community gardens for the remainder of the site.

The third phase concept introduces approximately 45 rear-loaded townhome residences on the southwest portion of the rail yard site, while keeping the northwest portion open for park space. Ultimately, the long-term strategy envisions that the townhome development would expand to form a residential neighborhood for the remaining western half of the site, as shown in the long-term illustrative Revitalization Strategy Plan.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision



Phase 1 plan components:

- ❑ *Amtrak Station*
- ❑ *Commercial/mixed-use building frontage*
- ❑ *6 youth soccer/football fields*
- ❑ *2+ acres of community gardens*
- ❑ *Potential Metra station + parking deck*
- ❑ *Expanded Davis Park (north of railroad bridge)*



Phase 2 plan components:

- ❑ *Remaining commercial/mixed-use building frontage*
- ❑ *3 residential apartment or condominium buildings*
- ❑ *Additional recreational fields*
- ❑ *Expanded community gardens*
- ❑ *Riverfront park space (south of railroad bridge)*



Phase 3 plan components:

- ❑ *45 townhome units*
- ❑ *Additional street system and infrastructure extensions*

Phase 4 plan components (Figure 6.2)

- ❑ *44 townhome units*
- ❑ *32 rowhome units*
- ❑ *Completed street system and infrastructure extensions*

Traditional Neighborhood Core

The Traditional Neighborhood Core includes the community's key commercial and retail area, the Barber-Colman complex, active and vacant industrial properties and surrounding traditional residential blocks. The overall sub-area can generally be defined by Morgan Street/Canadian National Railroad tracks on the north, Lincoln Avenue on the south, Winnebago/Court/West Streets on the west and the Rock River on the east. As previously discussed, this sub-area contains numerous key community institutions, landmarks and activity generators, such as Tinker Swiss Cottage Museum and Park, Graham-Ginestra House, Ethnic Heritage Museum, King Elementary School and neighborhood retail, among others.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD CORE TARGET AREA (FIGURE 6.3)

Throughout this planning process, the Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area was largely considered the key redevelopment opportunity due to its historic function as a neighborhood commercial district; central location and visibility; large amount of vacant property; proximity to the Rock River; adaptive use potential; and the presence of the remaining Barber-Colman complex. The Target Area shown in the preferred Revitalization Strategy Plan is generally bounded by Kent Street on the north, Lane Street on the south and extends east to the river.

Of all the locations in the Corridor, this Target Area provides the best opportunity to concentrate new development and physical enhancements to create an impact from which to build. The preferred concept depicts a number of strategies meant to revitalize the district, including:

- ❑ **Commercial Core Enhancements**
- ❑ **Local Business Incubator Space and Support Industry**
- ❑ **Village Market**
- ❑ **Barber-Colman Redevelopment**
- ❑ **New Open Spaces and Linkages**
- ❑ **Shared Parking**



SOUTH MAIN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

- A** COMMERCIAL CORE BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS
- B** NEW PUBLIC PARKING LOTS
- C** SOUTH MAIN STREET STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS
- D** PUBLIC PARKING LOT AS PART OF ETHNIC HERITAGE CAMPUS - New Corner Plaza
- E** 2 TO 3 STORY MIXED-USE BUILDINGS ALONG SOUTH MAIN STREET
- F** 1 TO 2 STORY LIGHT INDUSTRIAL OR SMALL OFFICE BUILDINGS
- G** NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET SPACE
- H** 4 TO 5 STORY MIXED-USE "CAMPUS" BUILDINGS (OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL)
- I** NEW OPEN SPACE NATURAL PRAIRIE AND RIVER ACCESS
- J** MULTI-USE PATH CONNECTION WITH CONTINUOUS PUBLIC ACCESS TO RIVER
- K** BARBER COLMAN ADAPTIVE REUSE FOR LARGE "CAMPUS" USER
- L** NEW GROCERY USE IN EXISTING BUILDING
- M** BIKE/CANOE RENTAL RIVER ACCESS

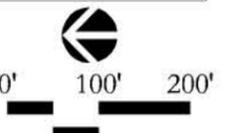
SITE DATA

EXISTING BARBER COLMAN: +/-500,000 S.F.
 MIXED-USE BUILDINGS: 175,000 S.F.
 CAMPUS/OFFICE BUILDINGS: 465,000 S.F.
 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL: 70,000 S.F.

South Main Revitalization Strategy Rockford, Illinois

Figure 6.3: Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area: Preferred Concept

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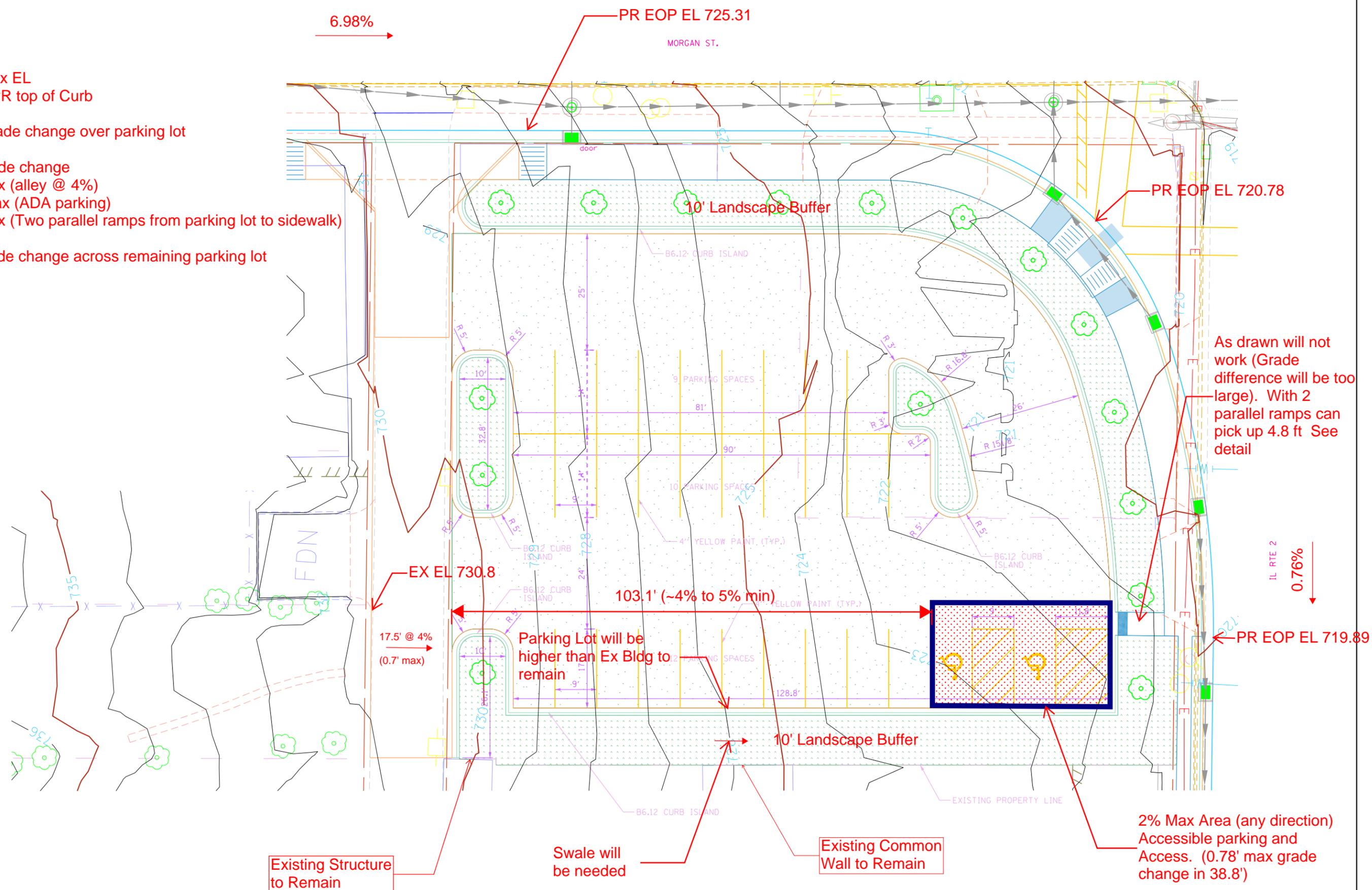


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ADDITION TO FIGURE 6.3 – TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD CORE PREFERRED CONCEPT

As part of the South Main Street (Illinois Route 2) reconstruction project, the Illinois Department of Transportation will be constructing a parking lot at the Southwest Corner of Morgan & Main. The exhibit on the following page is the final design for the parking lot. While this is a different concept than what is shown in Figure 6.3, adjustments can be made at a later design and planning stage (led by the City of Rockford) to allow for additional signage, greenspace, and seating at this intersection.

- 730.8 Ex EL
- 720.27 PR top of Curb
- 10.5 ft of grade change over parking lot
- 10.5' grade change
 - 0.7' max (alley @ 4%)
 - 0.78' max (ADA parking)
 - 4.8' max (Two parallel ramps from parking lot to sidewalk)
- 4.2' min grade change across remaining parking lot



As drawn will not work (Grade difference will be too large). With 2 parallel ramps can pick up 4.8 ft See detail

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

PARKING LOT - SOUTH OF MORGAN ST.

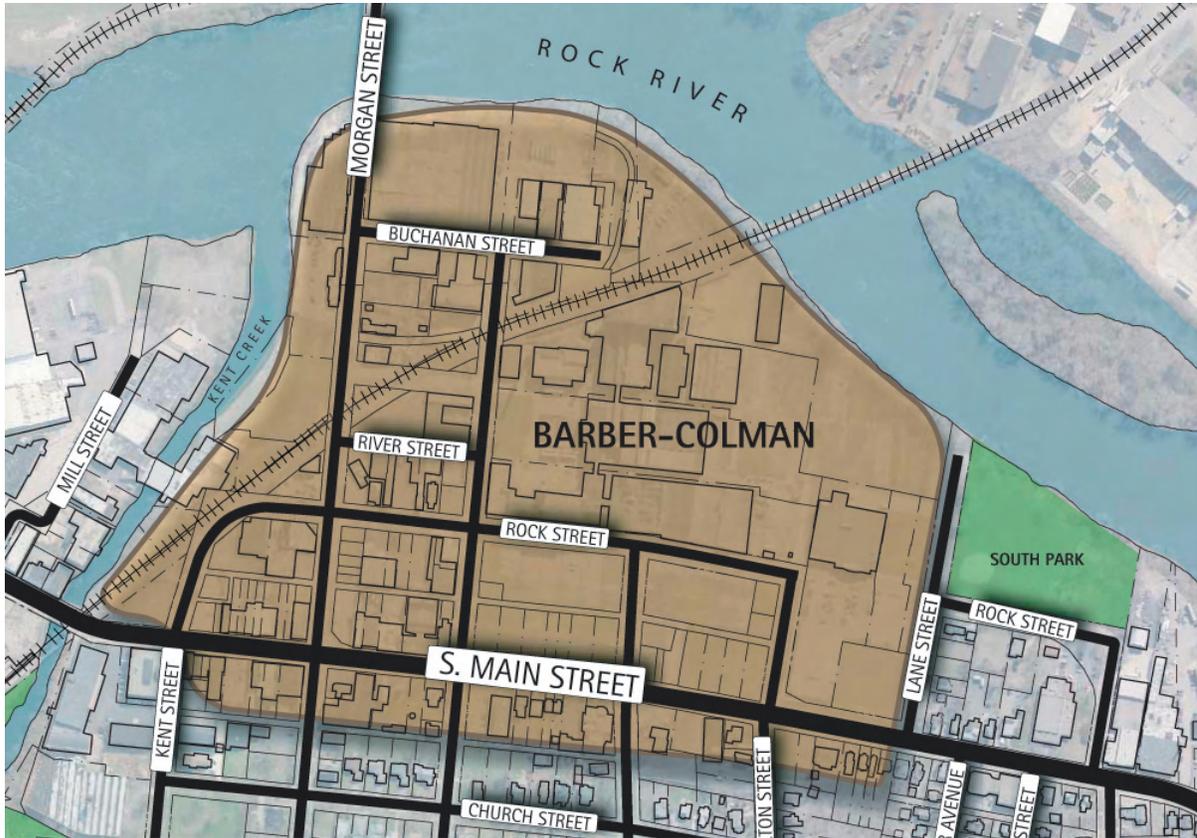
FILE NAME =	USER NAME = *USER*	DESIGNED -	REVISED -
*FILE#		DRAWN -	REVISED -
	PLOT SCALE = *SCALE*	CHECKED -	REVISED -
	PLOT DATE = *DATE*	DATE -	REVISED -

SCALE: 1:10 SHEET NO. OF SHEETS STA. TO STA.

F.A.P. RTE.	SECTION	COUNTY	TOTAL SHEETS	SHEET NO.
742	(32,33) R-1	WINNEBAGO		
CONTRACT NO. 64821				
ILLINOIS FED. AID PROJECT				

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision



The Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area encompasses the prime commercial frontage along South Main Street, as well as the vacant Barber-Colman site.

Commercial Core Enhancements

For this area, the Revitalization Strategy Plan envisions enhancements to existing buildings combined with new development on vacant sites as an approach to rejuvenating the neighborhood commercial core. Ideally, the existing commercial buildings between Kent and Loomis Streets would undergo façade improvements to upgrade the look and character of the district. These improvements may include removing bars and boards from storefront windows and doors; cleaning and tuck pointing bricks; replacing old windows; painting; removing poor quality materials from building fronts; removing sign clutter/replacing signs; and adding planter boxes, awnings and/or decorative lighting. Building owners should not only focus on the front facades, but also the rear facades, since many of these buildings are highly visible from traffic crossing the Morgan Street bridge and may also have future parking lots located in the rear.

Some before and after visualizations for conceptual façade improvements were developed as part of this planning process, as shown on the following page.



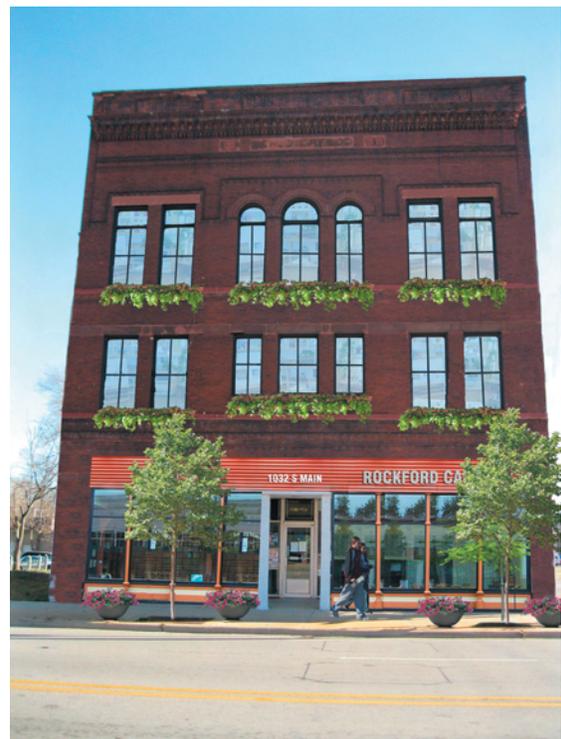
Facade improvements can reflect the ethnicity and character of the surrounding community in a simple and tasteful way.



BEFORE: Many older buildings are in need of facade improvements and maintenance.

South of Loomis Street on the east, the Plan depicts the frontage consisting of an articulated “street wall” of multiple 2 to 4-story mixed-use buildings bisected by plazas that allow pedestrian movement to rear parking areas. The ground floor of these buildings would be new retail/commercial space with upper floors potentially containing office spaces or residential apartments or condominiums. Shared parking lots would be located in the rear of the buildings and accessed from local streets, such as Loomis, Montague and Knowlton. The key strategy is to create a continuous street frontage of active storefronts that replace the existing vacant lots located in these blocks. Ideally, these storefronts would contain small spaces for neighborhood retail, services and restaurants—uses that spur pedestrian activity and support local entrepreneurs. While development of this frontage will most likely not occur all at once, the expectation is that over time the buildings can be built in a phased approach starting from the north and moving south, creating a larger retail shopping and service district over time.

The overall concept plan depicts approximately 60,000 square feet of new commercial space along the South Main Street frontage, while also assuming vacant storefronts in the area will ultimately find new tenants.



AFTER: Facade improvements may include new awnings or sign bands; new windows; brick cleaning; window boxes or planters; and storefront renovations with high quality materials.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision



Potential Capitol Theater improvements include new windows; removing bars at entries; brick cleaning and facade restoration; new awnings and sign bands; gooseneck lighting; blade signs; store front materials; and window boxes/ planters.



Potential facade improvements include removing bars from store front windows; brick cleaning; painting; new awnings and sign bands; gooseneck lighting; enhanced entrances and store front materials; and window boxes/ planters.



Building and site improvements for this auto service center depicts: new streetscape treatment; removal of paving and addition of landscape area; consolidating curb cuts; simplifying signage and windows; and developing a paint scheme and color palette that does not show dirt and pollution.



South Main Revitalization Strategy

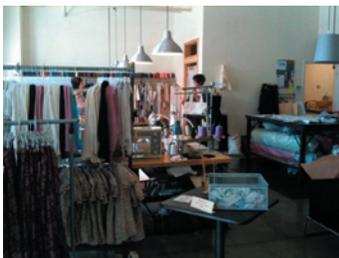
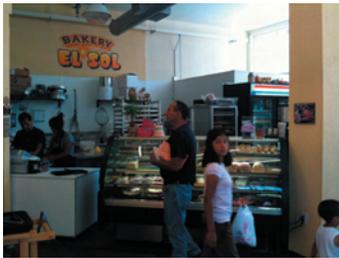
Section 6: Revitalization Vision



View of South Main Street from Morgan Street looking north: North of the tracks, the vision depicts redevelopment of the vacant rail yard site, while south of the tracks the traditional core of buildings and sidewalks would be enhanced.



The Plan envisions redevelopment of the vacant blocks south of Loomis as a mixed-use extension of the existing commercial district.



A key to revitalizing the Traditional Neighborhood Core is to create a “cluster” of local businesses to manufacture goods, provide services and develop products. (Source: J. Bloom)

Local Business Incubator Space and Support Industry

Behind the mixed-use buildings along Rock Street, the Plan shows smaller 1 to 2-story light industrial and/or commercial/office buildings. These buildings would supply small, independent incubator spaces for local businesses that would not normally have locations. In some cases, existing buildings along Rock Street to the north may also provide space for multiple businesses, small manufacturers, artists and entrepreneurs. The main idea is that the users in these buildings would manufacture goods, provide services or develop products that can be used or sold either on-site, within retail space on South Main Street or at a regularly-scheduled outdoor market. The combination of the industry or manufacturing and commercial/retail space would create a “cluster” of businesses that serve local Latino and African American residents, while also attracting shoppers from outside the area.

The Plan shows approximately 70,000 square feet of flexible light industrial or small office space within the Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Village Market

The Plan depicts a signature space that would be an ideal location to hold large events, seasonal festivals or a regularly scheduled “Village Market.” This area is envisioned as a large open green space or neighborhood commons, ringed by a decoratively paved street system, as well as diagonal parking spaces. The intent of this common space is not to compete with the City Market, but rather provide local businesses with an additional location to sell and promote their goods, while catering to the surrounding neighborhood and attracting visitors to explore Southwest Rockford.

Potential elements of the park space may include a location for a sculpture or water feature, open lawn areas for tents and picnics and multiple seating areas. The surrounding streets, such as Rock and Montague, and parking areas would ideally consist of brick or concrete pavers, providing the park with a more pedestrian feel and “European character.”



A central open space would provide a location for seasonal festivals and community gatherings.



The “Village Market” concept would provide local businesses and start-ups with additional opportunities to promote their goods and services to both the surrounding neighborhood and visitors from outside the area.



Barber-Colman complex

Barber-Colman Adaptive Use

East of Rock Street, the Target Area concept shows the creation of a large “campus” on the Barber-Colman site, which currently represents approximately 500,000 square feet of vacant building space. The recommendation is to reuse the existing buildings, as well as situate new 4 to 5-story mixed-use buildings along an extension of the existing grid street system. To provide better connectivity and access to the campus, Knowlton Street would be extended east to the river. Parking would be provided behind the buildings within the interiors of the blocks. The rehabilitation and use of these buildings by a college/university, local school district, corporation, institution or entertainment use would bring a significant and new population of people to the area. This population would help support local businesses (both new and existing) and the “Village Market,” bring activity to the streets and generate momentum for other redevelopment and physical improvements.

The City has hired a development team to specifically study the Barber-Colman buildings and site, a process that is currently in the early stages. The recommendations made within this Revitalization Strategy are meant to help inform and foster a creative, coordinated vision for this campus.



Some cities have successfully rehabilitated and used old industrial buildings as commercial, office, institutional, residential or entertainment use.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

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New Open Spaces and Linkages

A major component of the Revitalization Strategy Plan is to provide additional public access to the Rock River, which currently does not exist today. The Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area concept recommends creating a large 15-acre open space on the riverfront parcels that have been cleared and graded both north and south of the Morgan Street Bridge, as well as an expansion of South Park adjacent to the Barber-Colman site. Ultimately, a continuous multi-purpose bike/pedestrian path will link these open spaces, as well as tie into paths planned within the Rock River Greenway Master Plan. Other potential elements in these spaces include an amphitheater, multiple overlooks, natural prairie restoration areas, playfields, community gardens, a playground and bike/canoe rental kiosks.

In the short-term, these parks would coexist with existing industrial users located adjacent to the river. However, in the long-term if the industrial users relocate, the open spaces can be expanded, forming a large contiguous 22-acre riverfront park, mirroring the look and feel of Blackhawk Park to the east.



A number of buildings have been or will be demolished as part of the Morgan Street Bridge project, creating opportunities for better access to the river. These buildings are shown in red above.



New riverfront open space has the potential to provide activities for a variety of uses including (clockwise from top left): multi-purpose bike/pedestrian paths, an amphitheater, natural prairie restoration areas and community gardens.

Shared Parking

With the upcoming reconstruction of South Main Street, in which on-street parking will not be allowed, the Plan has shown a number of locations for small shared parking lots. East of South Main, existing lots on the corners of Kent and Morgan Streets will remain, while new lots are located with access from the north-south alley behind the buildings. The Plan depicts a new public lot on the southwest corner of Morgan Street and South Main that can serve the existing and new businesses, as well as the Ethnic Heritage Museum. The Plan also recommends that all parking lots be brought up to current zoning code standards and/or improved with decorative metal fences for screening, as well as landscaping and trees, where feasible. These elements would contribute to improving the physical appearance and character of the Corridor and district. The concept shows approximately 52 additional parking spaces between the blocks of Loomis and Kent Streets.



Parking lots should be improved with landscaping and trees, where feasible.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Urban Transition

The Urban Transition sub-area describes a large portion of the Corridor from Lincoln Avenue on the north to Harrison/Springfield Avenue on the south. This area contains primarily compact traditional single-family neighborhoods with a small number of townhomes, as well as a mobile home park. It also contains Klehm Arboretum and Forest Preserve property, as well as auto-oriented commercial nodes at the Marchesano Drive and Harrison/Springfield Avenue intersections.

On the west side of South Main Street within this sub-area and extending north into the Traditional Neighborhood Core (generally between 15th and Morgan), there are a number of scattered and vacant commercial properties that are no longer part of an overall commercial district. As a policy direction, the City should consider transitioning these properties into residential uses, creating a more consistent and continuous land use pattern and consolidating/concentrating commercial activity further north. This consolidation will help focus the revitalization efforts in the Traditional Neighborhood Core, which would have a more immediate impact. Some actions that the City may undertake to achieve this transition of land use include:

- ❑ Developing an inventory/map of vacant/underutilized commercial properties
- ❑ Forming an acquisition strategy for these properties
- ❑ Conducting Environmental Assessments (in the case of former gas station, light industrial or dry cleaner sites)
- ❑ Rezoning the properties along this frontage to a residential district that is more compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods

This strategy will likely take a number of years, but can be set into action in the very short-term. With the roadway shift, locating commercial uses fronting South Main Street does not appear to be a viable long-term strategy in this area.

Also within this sub-area, two key Target Areas were developed during this planning process including the Main and Marchesano Target Area and the Harrison/South Main Intersection Target Area, which straddles the Urban Transition and Semi-Rural Transition sub-areas.

MAIN AND MARCHESANO TARGET AREA (FIGURE 6.4)

The Main and Marchesano Target Area preferred concept envisions physical enhancements and redevelopment for the commercial nodes at the Marchesano/South Main and Michigan/Clifton Avenue intersections, as well as infill residential north of Michigan Avenue. Currently, this area consists of auto-oriented commercial “strip” development characterized by large building setbacks with parking lots in front and multiple vehicular curb cuts. The frontages of these properties lack any buffering, screening



The Main and Marchesano Target Area



This image of the shopping center on Marchesano received the lowest score in a Visual Preference Survey at the first community open house. Participants noted the lack of landscaping, trees, sidewalks and appearance of the building as key factors to how it is perceived.

and/or landscaping. Early in the planning process, this commercial strip center received the lowest score in a Visual Preference Survey in terms of its physical appearance and overall appeal. Additionally, further west a large vacant shopping center consists of unoccupied buildings and a vast abandoned parking lot, which was also discussed at community workshops as a key redevelopment opportunity site.

The Revitalization Strategy Plan depicts a mixture of existing building rehabilitation and new commercial development to reenergize the area. The Plan recommends improving the facades for the commercial buildings on the Marchesano/South Main intersection, as well as the parking lots. This may include the following:

- ❑ Using brick or other high quality materials to create a more unified facade and building design.
- ❑ Improving views into the storefronts with new, more prominent windows.
- ❑ Adding a combination of sign bands and/or awnings to create a more traditional “shopping street” feel and to highlight the storefronts.
- ❑ Providing new sidewalks along Marchesano Drive to connect to surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- ❑ Screening all parking lots with decorative metal fences and/or landscaping around the perimeter.
- ❑ Creating “islands” of green space within the parking lots for trees



SOUTH MAIN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

- A** MULTI-USE PATH CONNECTION
- B** SCREEN PARKING LOTS / CONSOLIDATE CURB CUTS
- C** PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS (NEW TREES WITH LANDSCAPE ISLANDS)
- D** FACADE IMPROVEMENTS
- E** NEW TOWNHOMES
- F** NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- G** REUSE EXISTING BUILDING - IMPROVE FACADE AND PARKING LOT
- H** NEW POCKET PARK / PLAZA
- I** POOR CLARES CORPUS CHRISTI MONASTERY

SITE DATA

RESIDENTIAL: 14 UNITS
 RETAIL: 13,000 S.F.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Rockford, Illinois

LAKOTA

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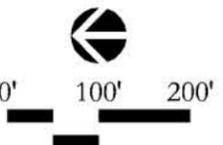


Figure 6.4: Main and Marchesano Target Area: Preferred Concept



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South Main Revitalization Strategy

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A visualization of the shopping center on Marchesano depicts parking lot screening, landscaping, new sidewalks and facade enhancements.

and landscaping and to provide better stormwater drainage.

- ❑ Reorganizing parking lots for safer vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
- ❑ Replacing outdated and deteriorating parking lot lights with more attractive pedestrian scale lighting.
- ❑ Screening service and trash areas at the rear of the buildings with trash enclosures, fencing and/or landscaping.
- ❑ Installing street trees along the frontages of Marchesano Drive, West Street and Michigan Avenue.



For the vacant shopping center at the Clifton/Michigan Avenue intersection, the Plan envisions rehabilitating the remaining series of storefronts and finding new local businesses to occupy these spaces. In addition, two new commercial buildings would be located along the Michigan Avenue frontage, highly visible and easily accessible. These uses could be restaurants, professional office, convenience stores and/or neighborhood services. In addition to building improvements, the Revitalization Strategy Plan also envisions parking lot and site enhancements, including continuous sidewalks and street trees along Michigan/Marchesano and Clifton, perimeter parking lot screening and internal green islands in the parking lot.

Potential new commercial at the Clifton/Michigan Avenue intersection would ideally consist of a mix of service uses, restaurants and professional office.

Finally, the Plan shows 14 new infill townhomes on the north side of Michigan Avenue, which would provide a higher density housing product for this area.

HARRISON/SOUTH MAIN INTERSECTION TARGET AREA (FIGURE 6.5)

The Harrison/South Main Intersection Target Area is a largely undeveloped portion of the Corridor extending from south of the Harrison intersection to Clifton Avenue on the north. Currently, this area includes Klehm Arboretum and undeveloped frontage on the west and Riverview Mobile Home Park, Forest Preserve property, single-family homes and a gas station/convenience store on the east. Both the City's and Winnebago County's future land use maps show the intersection of Harrison/Springfield Avenue as commercial development on the northwest and southeast corners; park/open space on the northeast corner; and medium density residential further south of Harrison Avenue on the east.



The Harrison/South Main Intersection Target Area

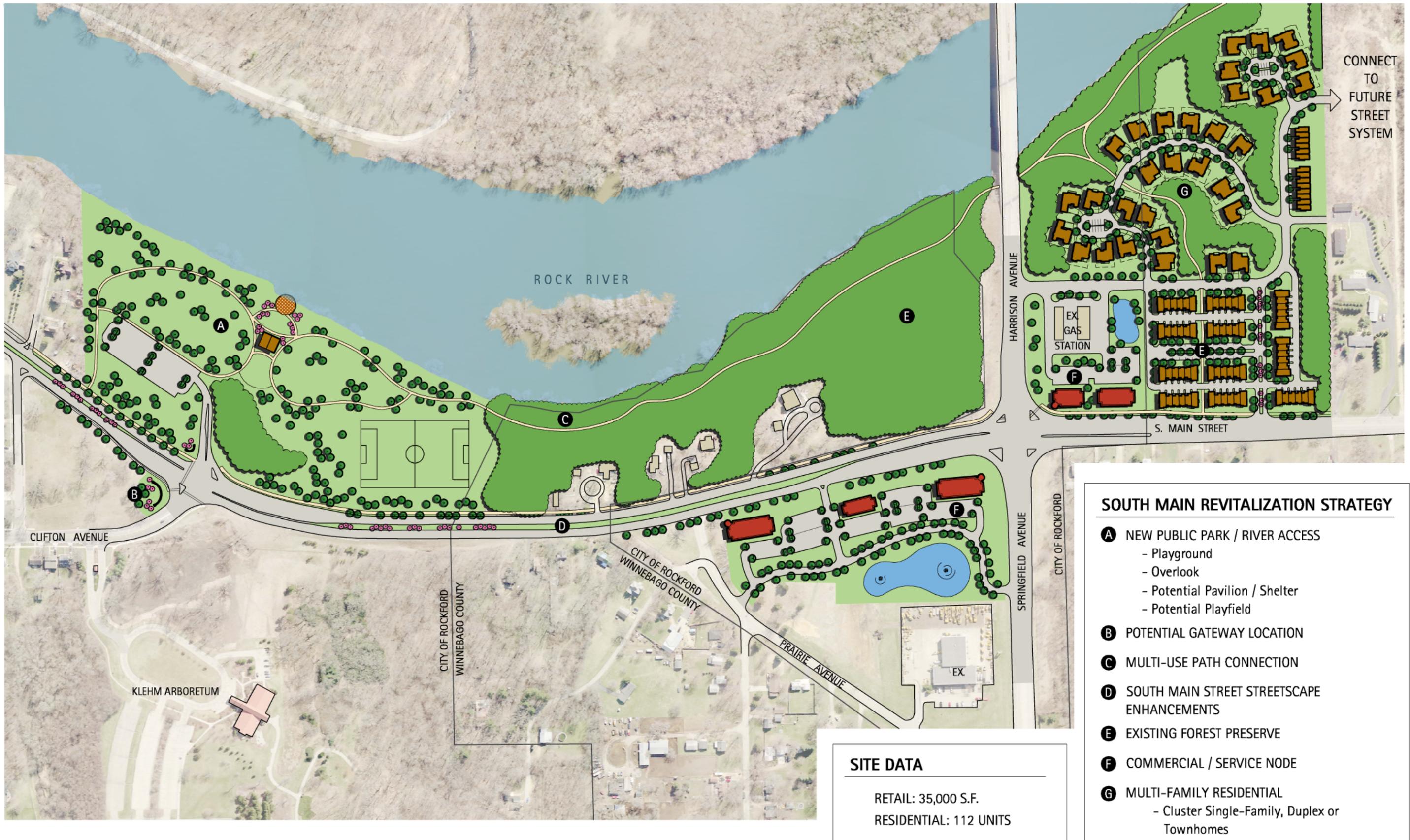


The Plan for this area depicts infill commercial and service uses.

In keeping with the future land use maps, the Revitalization Strategy Plan envisions a variety of uses for this area including auto-oriented commercial; townhomes/rowhomes and cluster single family or duplex residential; and new open space and river connection opportunities.

Commercial

The Plan for the southeast corner of Harrison/Springfield Avenue and South Main depicts infill commercial along the South Main Street frontage. Access for these buildings would be shared with the existing drive for the gas station off Harrison Avenue. Additional commercial uses are shown on the northwest corner of the intersection. A full access point would be located on Springfield Avenue with partial right-in/right-out only access serving South Main Street, due to a center median planned for this portion of the street reconstruction project. Parking lots for these uses would ideally be linked together for efficiency and located in the rear of the buildings. The potential commercial uses for this intersection would most likely be auto-oriented service uses and restaurants or professional office uses. This concept shows a total of 35,000 square feet of commercial space.



South Main Revitalization Strategy Rockford, Illinois

Figure 6.5: Harrison/South Main Intersection Target Area: Preferred Concept

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South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

Residential

The Revitalization Strategy Plan shows a variety of residential housing types south of Harrison Avenue and extending east to the Rock River. Along South Main Street, townhomes are shown as an option connecting to future commercial to the north. Further east, the Plan depicts cluster single-family or duplex units that take advantage of the changes in topography to maximize access to the river and views, as well as preserve as much of the existing wooded and natural areas as possible. The street system would connect to the existing driveway at the existing Shell gas station, as well as to the existing apartment buildings further south and could be extended as future development occurs. Any new residential development would also be linked to the overall multi-use/bike path system that is planned in the Rock River Greenway Master Plan. Overall, the Revitalization Strategy Plan shows a total of approximately 102 new residential units as a long-term vision.

Open Space

The Plan envisions that the Riverview Mobile Home Park property be redeveloped into a public park along the riverfront tying into the adjacent Forest Preserve to the south. This property was repeatedly described at workshops and stakeholder interviews as a key open space redevelopment opportunity due to its location across from Klehm Arboretum; position within the 100-year floodplain; prime river access; and proximity to several residential neighborhoods. The concept shows an 18-acre park space with potential for a river overlook, pavilion or shelter, playground, multi-use trail connections and a small recreation field. This park would enjoy full access from the signalized intersection at Clifton Avenue and would serve as a key open space for a portion of the Corridor that is lacking in park amenities and river access opportunities.



The multi-use path could have locations for bike parking within new riverfront open spaces.



Potential park space north of Harrison Avenue envisions a river overlook, multi-use bike paths, a pavilion and a playground.

Semi-Rural Transition

The Semi-Rural Transition sub-area extends from Harrison/Springfield Avenue on the north to Southrock Industrial Park on the south and is bounded by the river on the east. By and large, this entire area is located within Winnebago County and is comprised of deep lots containing larger single-family homes, as well as an older, more traditional suburban single-family neighborhood further south. As previously discussed, the County's long-range land use plan denotes this area as future medium density residential. As described above, the Revitalization Strategy Plan concept for the Harrison/South Main Intersection depicts how a medium density neighborhood potentially could tie into the existing natural topography and context of this area. Since this sub-area has undeveloped portions of land, over time this type of development pattern would be appropriate as residential infill.

Other recommendations for this sub-area include the following:

- ❑ Create zoning standards for this area that match the form, bulk, density and quality of new development desired for the area.
- ❑ Coordinate the City of Rockford/Winnebago County boundary to ensure that future development plans match zoning standards and infrastructure meets potential densities and capacities.
- ❑ Establish a plan and implementation strategy for constructing multi-use path linkages throughout this area as future growth occurs.
- ❑ Create a strategy for acquiring and setting aside riverfront land to maintain opportunities for future public access.

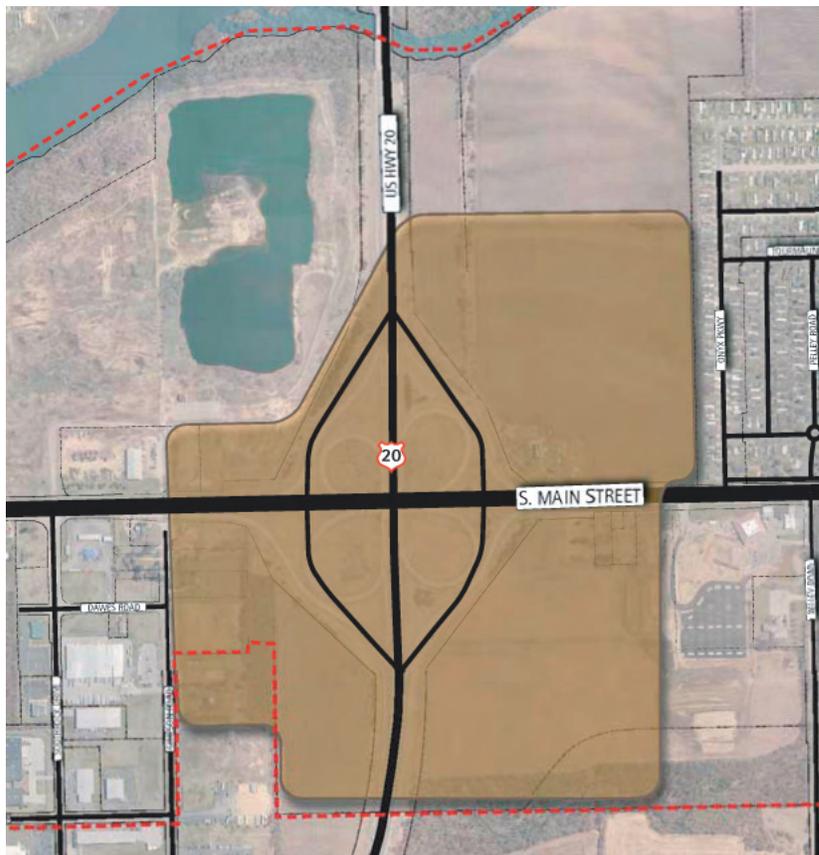
South Main Revitalization Strategy

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Airport|Interchange

The Airport/Interchange sub-area encompasses a large portion of both City and County land from just north of Southrock Drive to the Rock River on both the south and east and Central Avenue extended on the west. This sub-area contains Southrock Industrial Park, a large mobile home neighborhood, sporadic commercial uses and Faith Center Church, as well as large parcels of undeveloped property. Both the City and County future land use maps designate the majority of this property as a mix of light industrial and commercial uses, primarily centered on the U.S. Highway 20 interchange with South Main Street.

The City has been marketing the property between the mobile home neighborhood and U.S. Highway 20 as an industrial/business park development with the frontage along South Main as potential commercial uses. In addition, the City and State have plans for a new interchange configuration for U.S. 20, which would reconfigure the clover leaf ramps into a diamond interchange and provide more development opportunities.



The Interchange Target Area



INTERCHANGE TARGET AREA (FIGURE 6.6)

The Interchange Target Area concept depicts potential development of the interchange with a mix of commercial and industrial uses. As the Corridor grows in the future, this interchange would provide the ideal location for a consolidated industrial or business campus due to convenient access to U.S. Highway 20 and the airport; shared synergies between business and industries; and large amount of undeveloped land.



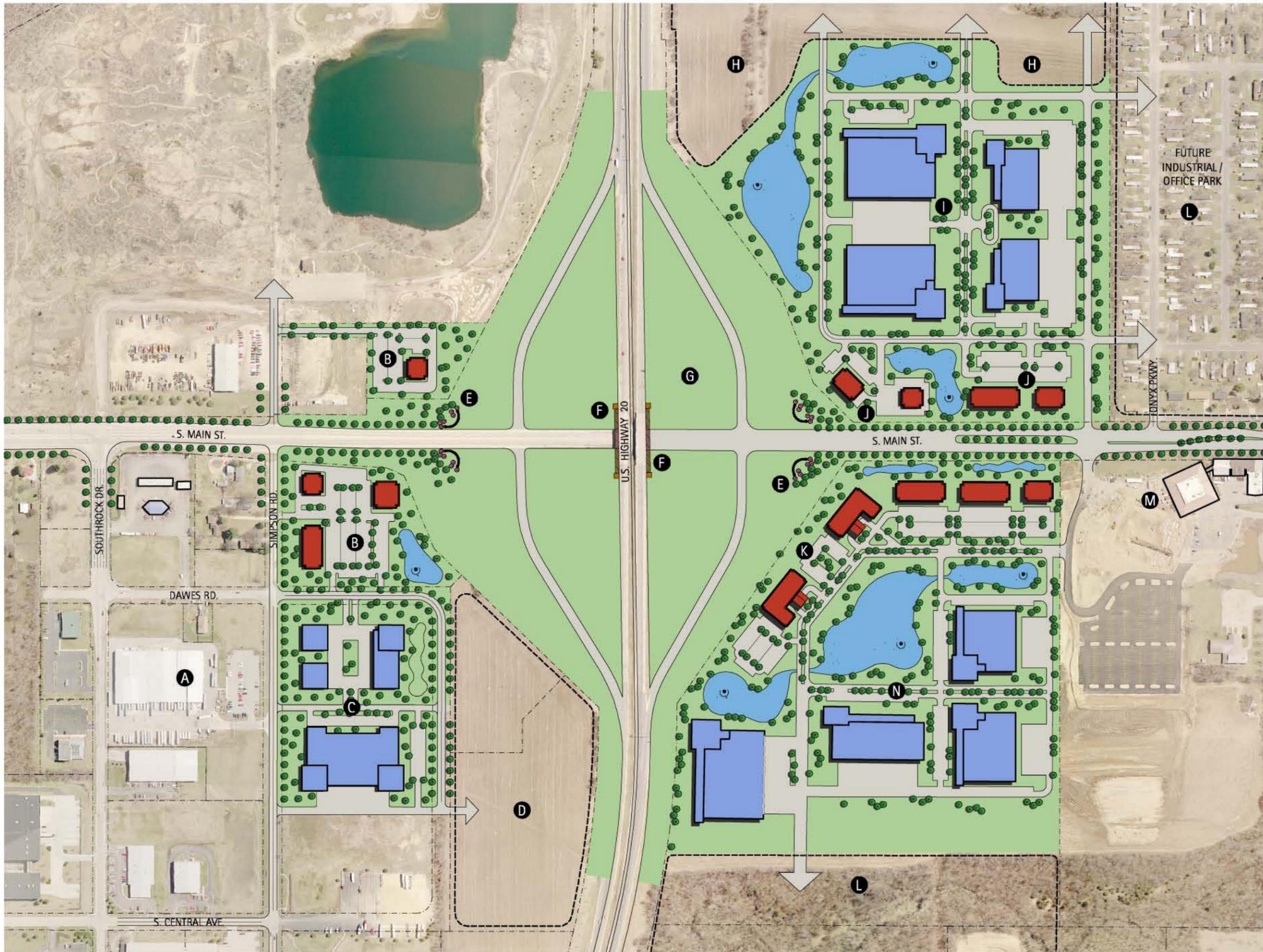
The Revitalization Strategy Plan a shows the existing undeveloped property on the northwest corner of the interchange as an expansion of Southrock Industrial Park. Both Dawes and Simpson Roads have been extended to create better access and new parcels for industrial users. Commercial buildings would be grouped along the South Main Street frontage in highly visible and accessible locations. These businesses would serve both travelers of U.S. Highway 20 and South Main Street, as well as employees in the area. Generally, the Plan shows 35,000 square feet of commercial and 125,000 square feet of industrial for this north portion of the Target Area.



A new industrial/business park would have an attractive, green appearance with common setbacks, ample landscaping and screening of loading/service areas.

South of U.S. Highway 20, the Plan envisions land uses that correspond with the City and County future land use maps. On both the east and west, the main access point for a new industrial/business park would align with the entrance to Faith Center Church. This main drive would access a new modern, more sustainable environment for industries and businesses needing larger facilities. It is designed with a grid system of streets and large efficient blocks that can accommodate a range of building sizes with shared off-street parking and service areas. The concept depicts buildings ranging in size from 45,000 square feet to 100,000 square feet, but the amount of property available could accommodate larger format facilities, if needed.

The new industrial/business park would have an attractive, green appearance with common setbacks, parkway landscaping and screening of loading/service areas. New buildings would be clustered to share service drives and loading/service areas where possible. Such areas would be centered within blocks away from streets to reduce visibility



SOUTH MAIN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

- A** EXISTING SOUTHRock INDUSTRIAL PARK
- B** NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
- C** NEW INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
- D** FUTURE JOHN DEERE RETAIL CENTER
- E** POTENTIAL GATEWAY LOCATION
- F** POTENTIAL OVERPASS GATEWAY SIGNAGE
- G** NEW INTERCHANGE CONFIGURATION
- H** FUTURE INDUSTRIAL / OFFICE PARK
- I** NEW INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
- J** NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
- K** NEW HOTEL DEVELOPMENT
- L** FUTURE INDUSTRIAL / OFFICE PARK
- M** EXISTING FAITH CENTER CHURCH
- N** NEW INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

SITE DATA

RETAIL: 110,000 S.F.
 HOTELS (2): 36,000 S.F. PER FLOOR
 INDUSTRIAL: 725,000 S.F.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Rockford, Illinois

LAKOTA

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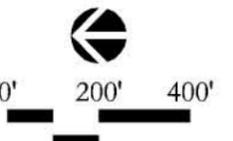


Figure 6.6: Interchange Target Area: Preferred Concept



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South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

and truck turning movements and maximize buildable land area. Ideally, the industrial/business park would also include a shared stormwater detention system. The detention areas delineated in the Plan would provide open space and buffers between uses and could provide a pedestrian path system and park-like amenities for employees.

The Revitalization Strategy Plan shows auto-oriented commercial uses along the frontage of South Main Street on both sides. These uses could be hotels, restaurants, car rental locations or other compatible businesses that would support the industrial/business park, area travelers and/or the airport. The south portion of this concept shows approximately 80,000 square feet of commercial, as well as two hotels, and 570,000 square feet of industrial space. It is envisioned that the industrial campus would be extended as needed in the future both east and west. However, the Plan recommends that any future development plans should set aside an open space buffer along the Rock River for public access and open space linkages.



Shared detention areas have the potential to provide open space amenities and buffers between uses.

ALTERNATE TARGET AREA CONCEPTS

Alternate concept plans were developed for each of the key target opportunity sites within the South Main Corridor study area. These are provided to allow flexibility to the Revitalization Strategy and show options that may be feasible, but ultimately were not the preferred direction in the planning process. See Section 8: Appendix for these concept plans.

Zoning Recommendations

One of the keys to realizing the vision of the Revitalization Strategy Plan will be to update both the City's and County's zoning ordinances to be consistent with the land use strategy shown in the Plan. Although zoning ordinance changes are just one component of the plan implementation strategies, such changes would go a long way towards signaling the City's intent to carry out the Plan's vision and goals. This section describes several potential zoning district map changes that Rockford and Winnebago County should consider to help ensure the zoning ordinance is consistent with the South Main Revitalization Strategy.

Zoning Classifications

As previously noted, the study area is currently classified by 10 City and 9 County zoning districts. Within this long Corridor study area, the allowed uses, densities/intensities, heights and bulks, parking requirements, buffers and other development regulations shift depending on the context and jurisdiction. Some of the land use concepts shown in the Plan may result in a policy and developmental change for how particular parcels, districts and/or areas of the Corridor are classified. The following are recommendations for the focused Target Area sites.



The C-4: Urban Mixed-Use District would be an appropriate zoning classification for the Downtown/Riverfront Target Area.

DOWNTOWN|RIVERFRONT TRANSITION TARGET AREA

Currently, the Downtown|Riverfront Transition Target Area primarily consists of Industrial zoning districts I-1: Light Industrial and I-2: General Industrial. These classifications are consistent with existing land uses and are a product of this area being the manufacturing and rail hub of Rockford's past. However, the Revitalization Strategy Plan envisions this area becoming an extension and transition of Downtown as an active mixed-use environment, including new commercial, office, residential and open space uses. With this shift in land use strategy, the C-4: Urban Mixed-Use District would be a more appropriate zoning classification. The C-4 district is meant to encourage pedestrian-oriented, compact development consistent with the vision for this area. It also allows a wide variety of housing types such as lofts, townhomes and condominiums, which are the types of multi-family housing products shown in the Plan. In addition, the C-4 classification also respects the existing urban form of the commercial district to the south and would provide an ideal transition from Downtown to the neighborhood.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD CORE TARGET AREA

The Traditional Neighborhood Core Target Area, located between Kent Street on the north and Lane Street on the south and extending east to the Rock River, currently consists of three zoning districts: I-1: Light Industrial, C-2: Limited Commercial and C-4: Urban Mixed Use District. The C-4 zoning classification is optimal for the prime redevelopment blocks between Loomis and Lane Streets, as well as the Barber-Colman site. As described previously, this district fosters a more active and walkable urban environment. It also specifically addresses the goal of the continued use and rehabilitation of historically significant buildings or older character contributing buildings. The C-2 district could be an option for the frontage along South Main Street, as this is consistent with the existing zoning for this Target Area and is compatible in terms of allowable uses and urban form.

With some of the riverfront property no longer occupied by industrial buildings, and with a push to gain more public open space at the river, the Plan envisions much of this property becoming park space. The City may consider new regulatory tools that set aside and protect future open space.



The City may consider new regulatory tools that set aside and protect future or planned open space.

MAIN AND MARCHESANO TARGET AREA

The Main and Marchesano Target Area recommends limited new development, instead focusing on improving physical conditions and rehabilitating and re-using existing storefronts. The exception is the addition of new commercial development along the Marchesano frontage east of Clifton on the existing vacant commercial site. Currently, this property is classified as C-3: General Commercial, which allows a very broad range of businesses, including those that allow outdoor storage. The City may consider changing the zoning for this area to C-2: Limited Commercial, which would foster appropriate development that is more respectful of the surrounding residential context.



The vacant shopping center site along Marchesano may be a location to change zoning to C-2: Limited Commercial.

HARRISON/SOUTH MAIN INTERSECTION TARGET AREA

The Plan for the Harrison South Main Intersection Target Area depicts a mixture of commercial and residential uses, while also crossing over the City/County border. The northwest and southeast corners of the intersection envision service commercial uses in the Plan. The zoning for the northwest corner is split between City I-1: Light Industrial and C-3: General Commercial and, therefore, should ultimately be changed to ensure consistency in new development. Ideally, commercial zoning throughout the Corridor, with the exception of the area at the interchange, would be changed to C-2: Limited Commercial. The C-3 zoning district fosters a more auto-oriented character and strip center site design, which is not the desired urban form for the majority of the Corridor. Therefore, it would be appropriate for both the northwest and southeast corners to be classified as C-2 Districts.

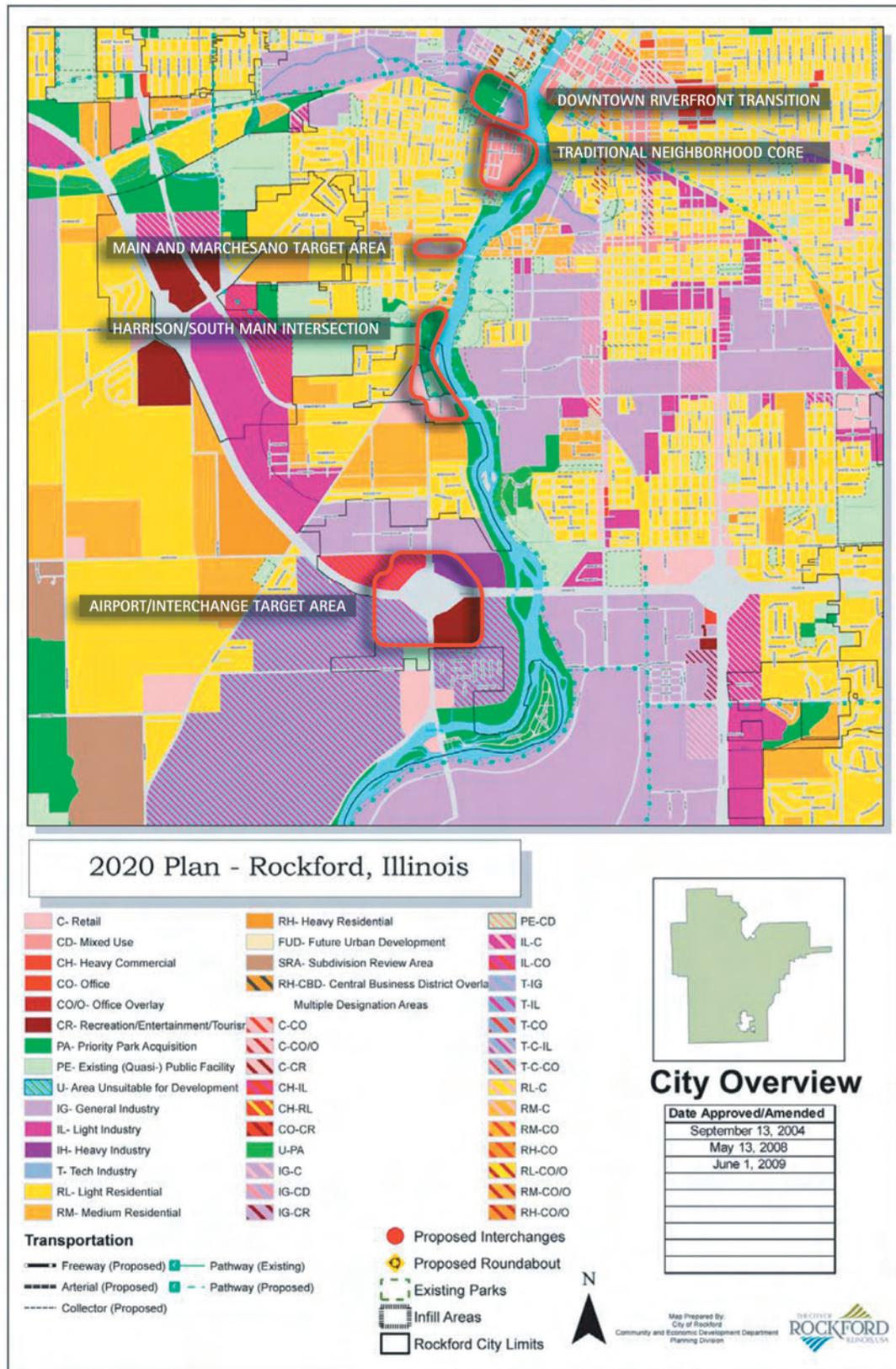
The property east of South Main Street and south of the Harrison/South Main intersection is currently classified as County RR: Rural Residential zoning. Ultimately, as shown in the County's future land use maps and the Revitalization Strategy Plan vision for this area, a more compatible zoning category would be one that allows multi-family residential development, such as R2: Two-Family Residential or R3: Multiple-Family Residential Districts.

AIRPORT/INTERCHANGE TARGET AREA

The Airport/Interchange Target Area depicts more auto-oriented commercial uses along the frontage with industrial/business park uses for the large undeveloped parcels both east and west of South Main Street. This vision corresponds closely to the existing allowed zoning, which currently consists of C-3: General Commercial and I1: Light Industrial. The northwest corner contains an area of Winnebago County surrounded by City-owned land. The County zoning in this relatively small area contains AG: Agricultural Priority District, RR: Rural Residential and CC: Commercial Community District. It is recommended that a strategy is developed to create a more consistent and predictable land use development pattern in this area that complies with the Revitalization Strategy vision and future City/County land use maps.

South Main Revitalization Strategy

Section 6: Revitalization Vision



Updating both the City's and County's zoning ordinances to be consistent with the land use strategy shown in the Plan and the Rockford 2020 Future land use map (above) will be key to realizing the vision for the Corridor (Source: City of Rockford).