

# Kishwaukee Street Corridor Revitalization Plan

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In association with:  
Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc. &  
Gary W. Anderson and Associates



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## Project Study Group / Technical Advisory Group (Representatives from Rockford City Staff):

Jonah Katz – Planner, Community and Economic Development Department  
Ginny Gregory – Planner, Community and Economic Development Department  
Wayne Dust – Planning Director, Community and Economic Development Department  
Patrick Zuroske – Capital Program Manager, Public Works Department  
Robert Lamb – Industrial Development Coordinator  
Richard May – Commercial Development Coordinator  
Reid Montgomery – Director, Community and Economic Development Department  
Wendy Williams – Project Engineer, Public Works Department  
Vicki Manson – Neighborhood Development Coordinator, Community and Economic Development Department  
Tim Hanson – Director, Department of Public Works  
Gary McIntyre – Transportation Planner, Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP)  
Jon Paul Dipla – Transportation Planner, Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP)

## City of Rockford:

Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey  
Alderman Douglas Mark, Third Ward  
Alderman Leonard Jacobson, Sixth Ward  
Alderman Victory Bell, Fifth Ward  
Alderman Jeff Holt, Eleventh Ward  
Jim Ryan, City Administrator

## Consultants:

HNTB Corporation  
Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc.  
Gary W. Anderson & Associates

## Chicago Community Development Corporation Representatives:

Steve DeBretto, Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago (ICNC)  
Pam McDonough, North Business and Industrial Council (NORBIC) and Alliance for Illinois Manufacturing  
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This plan is especially dedicated to the legacy and work of Jon Lundin (1943-2007). As President of the Abilities Center for many years, he was a tireless advocate for bringing positive change to the Kishwaukee Corridor. As a dedicated and knowledgeable historian of the City of Rockford, he also demonstrated a thorough understanding of Rockford's vibrant industrial history. Without his long-term efforts to improve the strength of the local workforce and business climate of the Kishwaukee Corridor, the momentum to complete this planning document would not have been possible. It is our hope that this corridor plan respectfully reflects Mr. Lundin's dedication to this important area of Rockford. The creation of an economically vibrant and attractive area along the Kishwaukee Corridor will serve as a fitting tribute to Mr. Lundin's entrepreneurial spirit and his devotion to the Rockford region.

We also appreciate the involvement of many community residents, business owners, and organizational representatives who participated in interviews, community forums and the Empowerment Workshop during this planning process.

For more information, please contact:

Jonah Katz  
City of Rockford  
Community and Economic Development Department  
Rockford City Hall  
425 East State Street  
Rockford, IL 61104  
(815) 967-6772  
[Jonah.Katz@rockfordil.gov](mailto:Jonah.Katz@rockfordil.gov)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

• Introduction.....	1
• A Vision for the Kishwaukee Street Corridor.....	3
• Principle 1. .... Organize the Corridor as Contiguous Industrial, Commercial and Residential “Nodes” of Development	4
• Principle 2. .... Maintain a Strong Business Investment Environment for the Corridor	7
• Principle 3. .... Foster Quality Residential Conservation and Regeneration along the Corridor	12
• Principle 4. .... Accomodate Improved Mobility within the Corridor for all Modes of Travel	14
• Principle 5. .... Foster an Attractive and Well-Maintained Public Realm Throughout the Corridor	18
• Principle 6. .... Establish Kishwaukee Street as an Aesthetically-Pleasing “Gateway” to the City	32
• Economic Development Initiatives.....	34
• Organizational / Administrative Initiatives.....	36
• Action Strategy Matrix.....	38

## Appendices:

- Appendix A: Additional Meeting Summaries
- Appendix B: Existing Conditions Analysis (Available under separate cover)
- Appendix C: Real Estate Market Assessment (Available under separate cover)

# LIST OF FIGURES

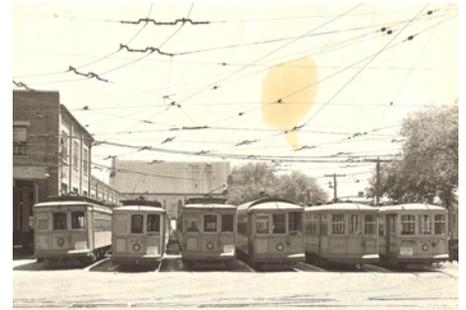
- Figure 1: Vicinity Map..... 2
- Figure 2: Future Land Use Framework..... 6
- Figure 3: Key Opportunity Area 1..... 9
- Figure 4: Key Opportunity Area 2..... 10
- Figure 5: Key Opportunity Area 3..... 11
- **Figure 6 A, B, C: Residential Infill Concepts..... 13**
- Figure 7 A & B: Mobility and Urban Design Framework..... 16
- Figure 8: Auto-Oriented Commercial Node at New Street..... 20
- Figure 9: Auto-Oriented Commercial Node at Existing Street..... 21
- Figure 10: Auto-Oriented Commercial Node - Broadway..... 22
- Figure 11: Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Node - Broadway..... 23
- Figure 12: Arterial Street Access - 15th Avenue..... 24
- Figure 13: Residential Street Access - 16th Avenue..... 25
- Figure 14: Residential Street Access - 20th Avenue..... 26
- Figure 15: Residential Boulevard Access - 22nd Avenue..... 27
- Figure 16: Industrial Stabilization Area..... 28
- Figure 17: Industrial Access Greenway..... 29
- Figure 18: Auto-Oriented Commercial - Kishwaukee..... 30
- Figure 19: Airport Industrial Area..... 31
- Figure 20: Gateway Opportunities..... 33

## Introduction

The Kishwaukee Street Corridor Revitalization Plan was initiated by the City of Rockford to establish a long-term Vision for the future of this central artery through the City, linking Downtown Rockford on the north to the Chicago Rockford International Airport on the south. Along its approximately 4.3 mile length, Kishwaukee Street exhibits a varied character that includes both large scale and small scale industrial uses, retail and commercial service businesses, and multi-family and single family residential areas. Like many streets that traverse older neighborhoods in cities such as Rockford, increasing truck traffic and overall traffic volumes have placed a heavier burden on Kishwaukee Street than it is was originally designed to accommodate. The age, scale and condition of structures along the corridor vary widely, and incompatibilities between land uses that have evolved over time are commonplace. In response to increasing traffic and aging infrastructure conditions, changing patterns of retail development that favor newer sites in outlying areas, and the evolving needs of the industrial sector, many properties along Kishwaukee Street are suffering from ongoing disinvestment. While many well maintained properties are present along the corridor, the overall perception of blighted conditions has stifled interest in reinvestment.

The Kishwaukee Street Corridor Revitalization Plan will provide a consensus-based strategy to undertake targeted public investment and foster public-private partnerships that will stabilize and enhance the corridor. The Plan is based upon the results of a community planning process, involving local stakeholders and the community at large in discussing creative solutions to stem further decline along Kishwaukee Street and foster a viable and sustainable pattern of development in the future. The Plan builds upon the findings of both the completed Existing Conditions Analysis and Real Estate Market Assessment (available as an appendix to this document) to re-imagine the future of the Kishwaukee Street Corridor.

This report establishes a Vision for the future that recognizes the historical role of the Corridor as the industrial center of Rockford while acknowledging the existing mixture of land uses, the altered nature of the global industrial market, and the current vulnerability of the existing residential neighborhoods within the Corridor. This Vision is supported by several Planning Principles which will be achieved through key redevelopment opportunities, public realm improvements, and economic development initiatives. This report concludes with a list of organizational and administrative initiatives that the City can undertake to further support the realization of this Vision. This Vision can only be achieved through the coordinated and sustained efforts of both the public and private sectors and stakeholders throughout the Corridor.



Kishwaukee Street Car Barn

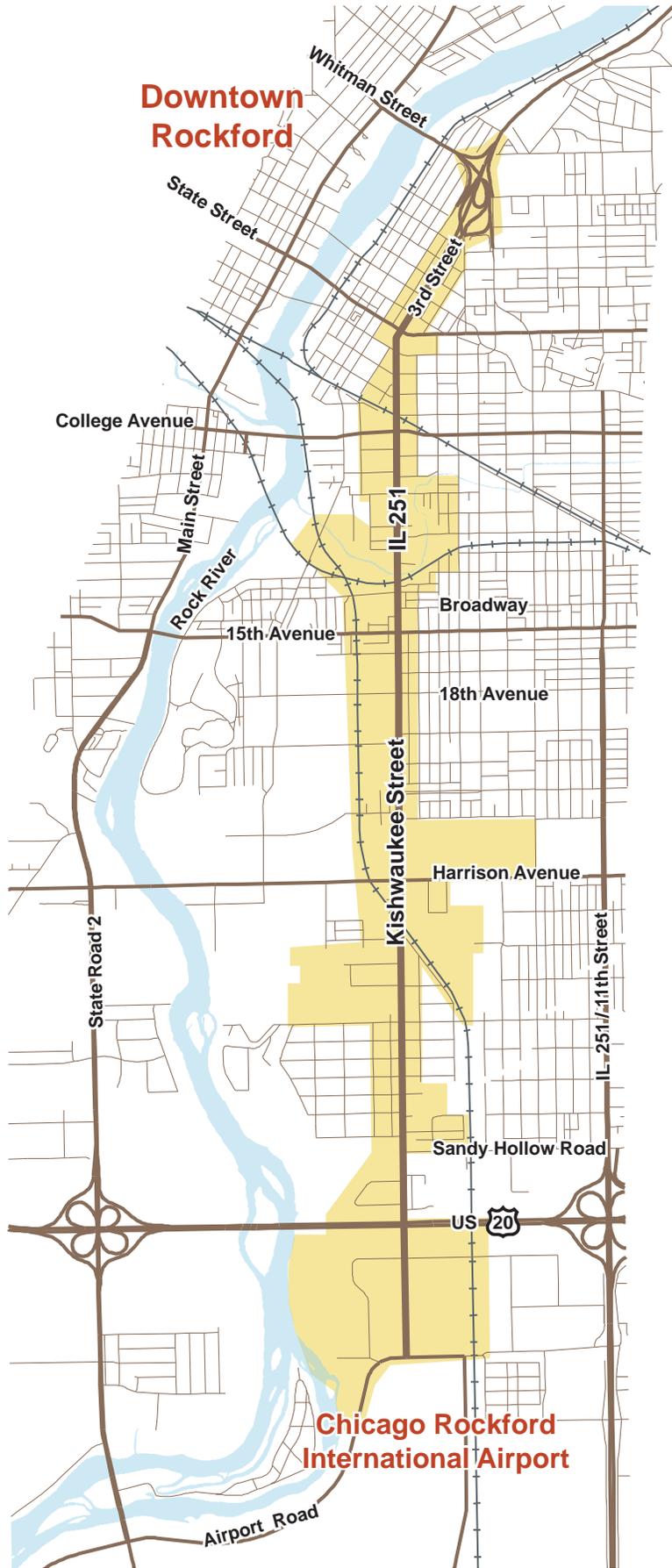


National Mirror Works



Shumway Market

*Photos courtesy of Midway Village & Museum Center, Rockford, Illinois*



Vicinity Map

Legend

 Study Area Boundary

Figure 1



Not to Scale



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