
INTRODUCTION

The Business Route 20 / West State Street corridor is a four-mile length of road that passes through some of the most economically depressed areas of Rockford. Beginning in Winnebago County at Meridian Road on the west, it stretches east to the Rock River in downtown Rockford. Years of deferred investment and maintenance of residences and infrastructure have contributed to the decline of the area so that now it is generally considered to be the “wrong side” of town. This perception has led to the area being underserved by the business community; there are no major grocery stores, drug stores, banks, or fast food chains represented along the entire length of the corridor. Several public housing communities lie within or are in proximity to the corridor further reinforcing negative images of the corridor and the overall West Side community.

The corridor also has its strengths. Several schools, churches, and social service providers give an institutional and community presence to the area. Area neighborhoods, those both to the north and south of West State Street, have had a strong sense of identity and strength in the past, although this is being eroded in places now. The Ingersoll Golf Course is adjacent to West State Street and is a public facility that is a regional attraction.

The neighborhoods along the corridor and, by extension, the entire west side of Rockford, are clearly at a crossroads. While other areas of the metropolitan area are expanding rapidly with new housing and businesses, the West Side is in danger of being left further behind unless something is done to address its problems.



When the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced plans in 1999 to allocate \$4.25 million for improvements to the corridor, the City of Rockford recognized this as an opportunity to use the improvements as a redevelopment tool. By using the infusion of new capital and infrastructure into the area as an economic stimulus, it was thought that several of the underlying issues affecting the corridor could also be addressed. At this point, the City committed to develop a plan that would be incorporated by IDOT into its Phase One engineering report. This report was scheduled to begin in late-2002.

In the spring of 2001, the consulting design team of Wight and Company, Wolff Clements and Associates, and Gary W. Anderson and Associates was retained by the City of Rockford. Real Estate Planning Group joined the team in early 2002. The scope of the team’s work was to create a vision for the IDOT improvements and to do so with an eye toward improving the overall viability of the corridor and its neighborhoods.

After the team interviewed several key stakeholders (representatives of various businesses, institutions, neighborhoods, and government), a Steering Committee was formed to serve as a sounding board and advisor to the team. Over the next several months, the design team met with the Steering Committee and the general public to hear concerns, test ideas, and propose solutions. Those proposals are incorporated into this report and constitute the vision that the

City of Rockford had in mind when it originally considered this opportunity to work with IDOT and improve the West Side. The following designs reflect the collective vision of the Steering Committee, the general public, and the design team. The proposed road realignment has been worked out in some detail in plan, but additional study is needed to refine the vertical alignment. Likewise, many of the proposed amenities, such as walls, lights, landscaping, bike trails, and paving materials are shown at a schematic design level of detail. Additional refinement of these elements will be needed as the Phase One engineering study is undertaken by IDOT.



Local media coverage of the public workshops was extensive.

HISTORY

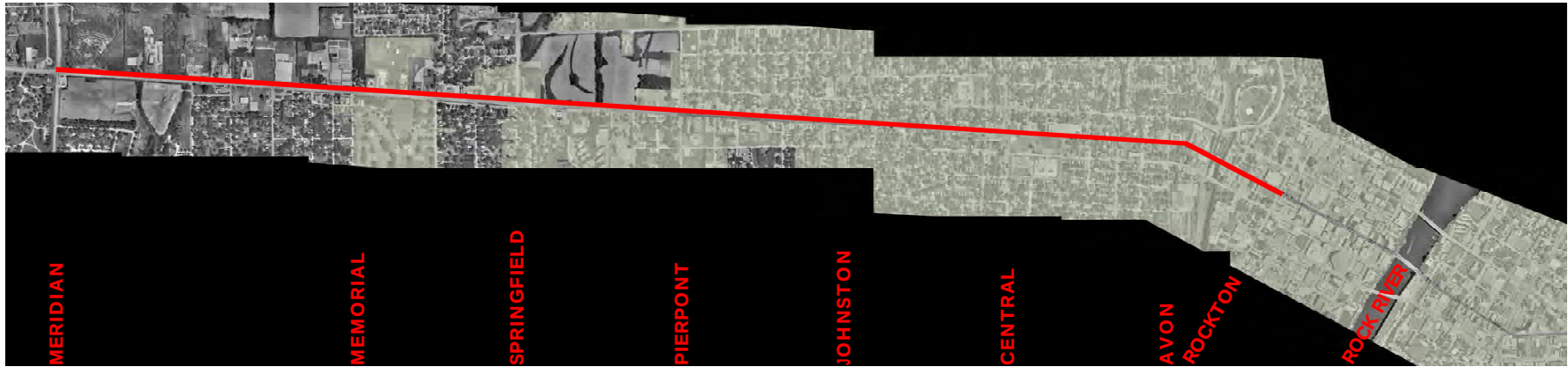
Understanding the recent history of the West Side of Rockford, and specifically the West State Street Corridor, gives some understanding of the current conditions and helps foster a context and an appreciation for the proposed designs. Forty years ago, West State Street served as the business route into Rockford from the west and as U.S. 20 from Chicago to Dubuque and Galena. Land uses along the corridor were a mixture of residential, commercial, institutional, and agricultural. Prior to the original “interstate” system being constructed, West State Street served as a major east - west local route. Before 1920, almost all long-distance transportation of people and goods was by railroad. During that era, West

State Street was lined with residences and a minor amount of commercial development at the street car stops such as at Avon Street and Central Avenue.

Then, West State Street was designated U.S. 20 and land was rezoned to business and commercial uses. Single family residential property was bought for speculative reasons in anticipation of re-selling the land at a profit to businesses and commercial ventures. Although some highway-oriented commercial development occurred, these plans were never fully realized because much of the commercial development took place on vacant land beyond the City limits.

Once the U.S. 20 Bypass was constructed in the mid-1960s, this effectively removed traffic from the West State Street corridor. Thus, the economic activity along the corridor became increasingly neighborhood-oriented with ever-decreasing market shares, and severe deterioration of many of the commercial properties took place. As this downward trend continued, the demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods changed. Property values declined, demographic shifts occurred, public housing projects were built, and city services and utilities became less responsive to needs. In short, the West State Street corridor became the main road running through the “wrong side of town.”

The West State Street corridor area passes through land in both the City of Rockford (light grey) and Winnebago County jurisdictions.



EXISTING
CONDITIONS

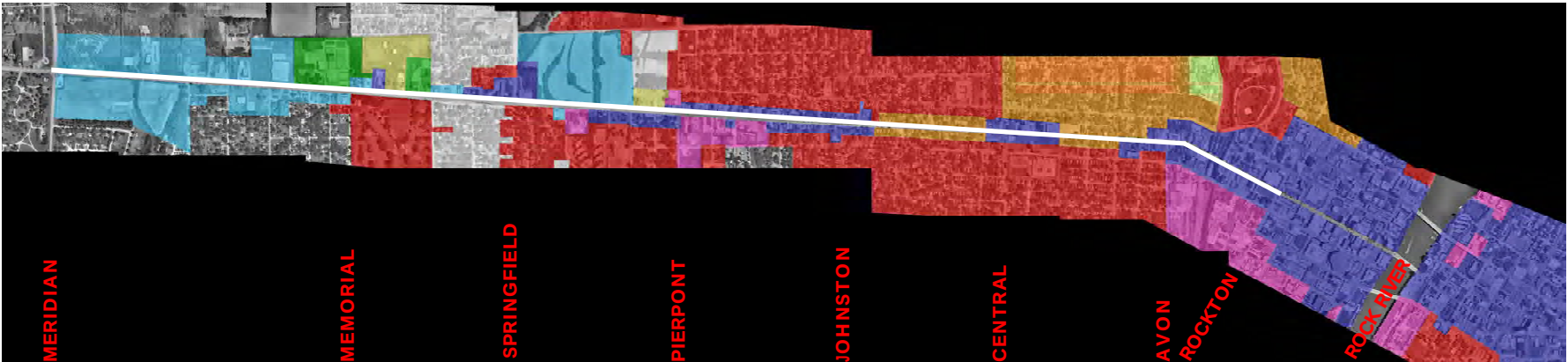
As a first step in understanding the situation facing the West State Street corridor, the consultant team undertook a study of existing conditions. This included interviews with several key stakeholders from along the corridor. Major points from these interviews and site observations are briefly summarized here.

Zoning

- Many of the marginally successful businesses exist because of special use permits. There are over fifty special use permits along the corridor, and many represent the reuse of commercial property for a use different from original construction. (A good example is the numerous auto repair facilities at sites of former gas stations.) The practice of granting these permits should be stopped to focus commercial growth into areas where it can be supported and maintained.
- County building and zoning site development codes are less stringent than city codes. This creates an inconsistent appearance along the corridor as it moves through city and county limits.
- There is insufficient market demand for all the land zoned for office and commercial uses. Much of the land that is zoned for commercial use is vacant or underutilized by existing uses.
- A majority of storefront churches do not meet life safety codes. However, the city has been lax in its enforcement of those codes, allowing these churches to take property off the tax roles while detracting from the appearance of the corridor.



- RED: Residential 1
- DARK YELLOW: Residential 2
- LIGHT YELLOW: Residential 3
- LIGHT GREY: County residential
- DARK BLUE: Commercial
- PINK: Industrial
- GREEN: County agricultural
- LIGHT BLUE: County commercial





Several residences are but a ghost of their former condition.



Many residential properties need to be brought up to code.



Abandoned commercial buildings provide opportunities for redevelopment.

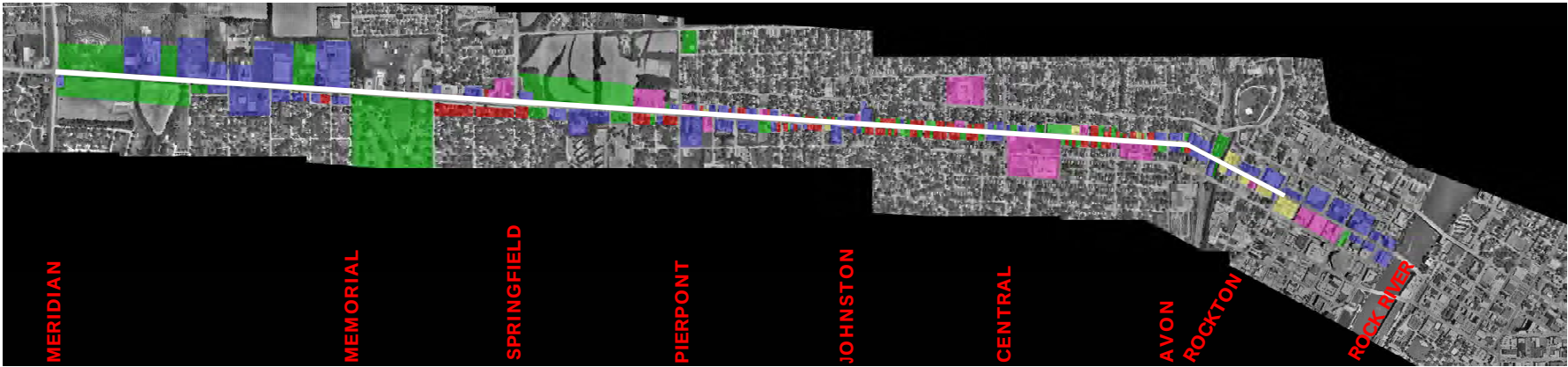


Convenience stores cannot meet the general shopping needs of the community.

Land use

- The creation of more multi-family housing along West State Street is not desirable. The existing neighborhoods already have a sufficient supply of such housing.
- Businesses are spread out throughout the corridor without any sense of critical mass or economic power.
- Municipal and civic institutions such as police, fire, libraries, and park district facilities are under-represented in the corridor.
- Annexation of county property at the west end of State Street needs to be more aggressive and strategic. This will bring more of the corridor under one jurisdiction and allow a more uniform level of code enforcement and property maintenance.

- PINK:** Civic / institutional
- BLUE:** Businesses
- RED:** Housing
- YELLOW:** Parking
- GREEN:** Open space

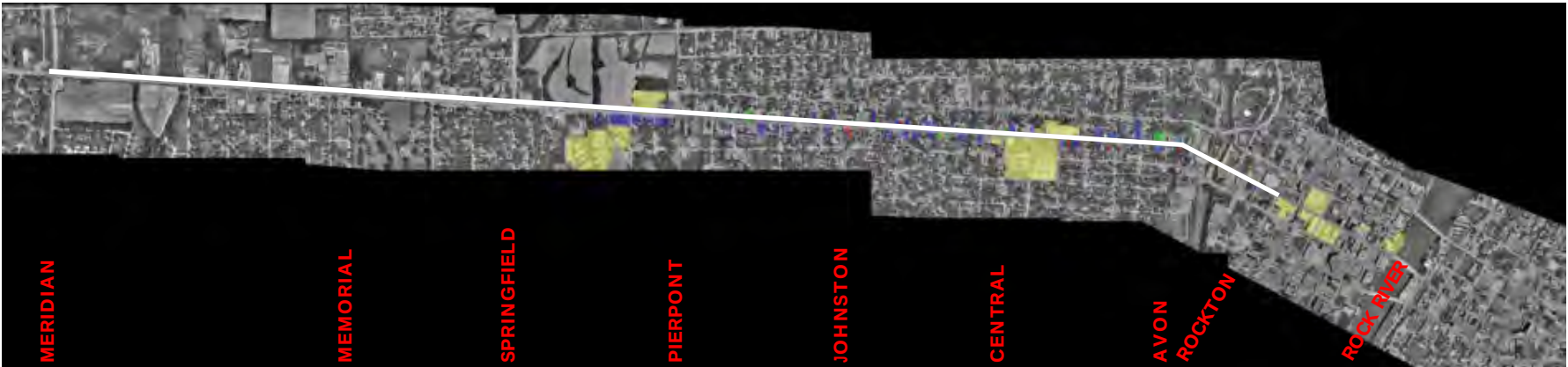


Improvement opportunities

- Code enforcement for buildings and properties is not proactive.
- Several buildings are scheduled for demolition or are in condemnation proceedings.
- Some housing along State Street is not in bad shape but the existence of lead-based paint makes it expensive to rehabilitate them.
- Board-ups and deteriorated conditions of the commercial and residential properties create a poor image of the corridor and the neighborhoods.
- Most buildings are indistinguishable and are in need of repairs and/or demolition.
- Buildings that have significant architectural character to become assets should be fixed-up.
- The potential cost of repairs to many of the houses along the corridor exceeds the value of the property.
- The majority of rental housing is not owner-occupied.
- A majority of rental housing units along West State Street are owned by outside interests (essentially three landlords).
- Local street programs are not coordinated with housing renovation activities. (i.e., curb replacement and lighting).



GREEN: For sale
BLUE: Vacant
RED: Abandoned
YELLOW: Publicly owned





The Farm and Fleet exemplifies the rural development pattern.



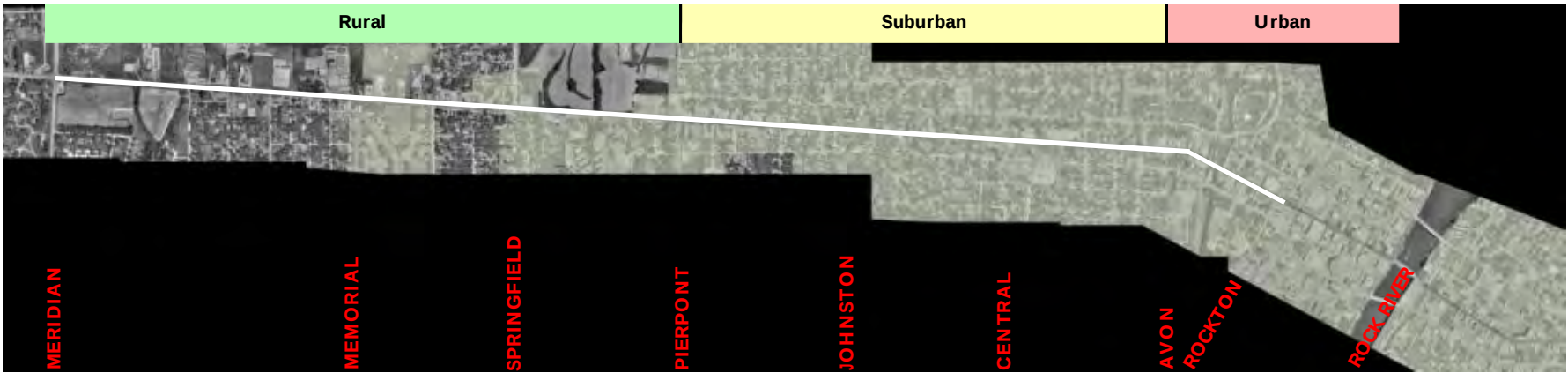
The Shopsted is an example of suburban development.



Taller buildings and better-defined pedestrian zones are typical of the urban area.

Image and character

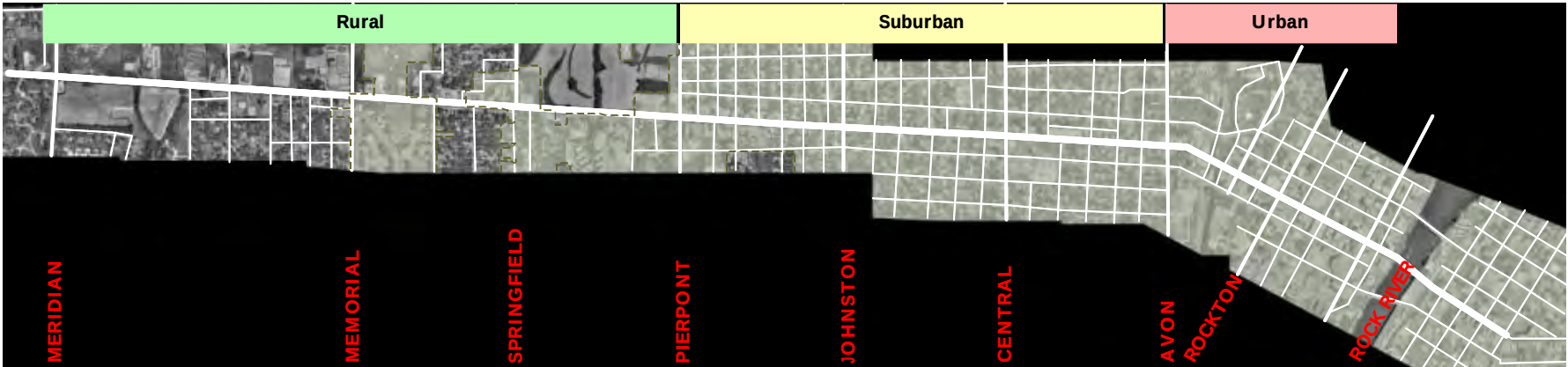
- There is no sense of arrival or gateway to the city. (Where does Rockford start?)
- There is a lack of any overall character or positive image for the corridor.
- There are no special or distinguishing features that help break up the monotony of the corridor.
- The corridor lacks any perceivable landscaping within the road right-of-way or in the corridor in general.
- Multiple driveways and abandoned parking lots add to the visual and functional problems of the corridor.
- Overhead utility lines add to the visual clutter.
- Commercial signage is in poor condition and adds a sense of clutter.



Transportation

- Stopping some intersecting side streets with cul-de-sacs would give residential neighborhoods more protection from through traffic.
- Narrow rights-of-way limit opportunities for landscape and streetscape improvements.
- New and improved walkways would encourage and facilitate pedestrian activity.
- The corridor should accommodate the hike/bike trail systems.
- Existing West State Street pavement and walkways are in need of repair.
- Bus service area appears to be adequate but times of service are inadequate, particularly on week-ends.
- The need exists for bus turn-outs at the Crusader Clinic and other locations of future commercial land uses.
- Mulberry Street should be closed to through traffic.
- On-street parking should be removed.
- Jefferson Street should be diverted to West State Street to eliminate through traffic in residential neighborhoods and concentrate traffic on to West State Street.
- Chestnut Street should be realigned to better link IL 70 and U.S. Business 20 (West State Street) to the downtown area and to eliminate 90-degree turns.

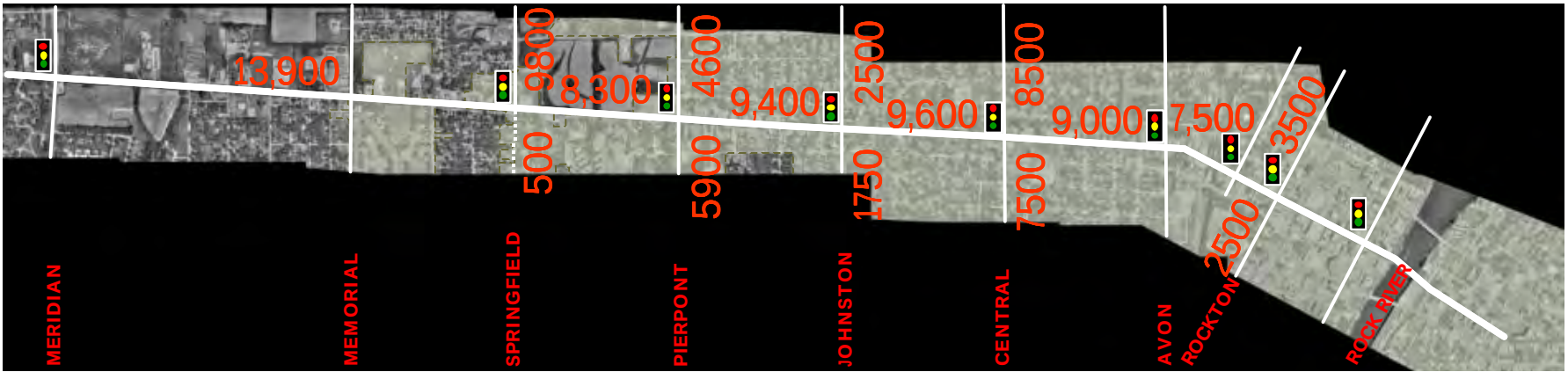
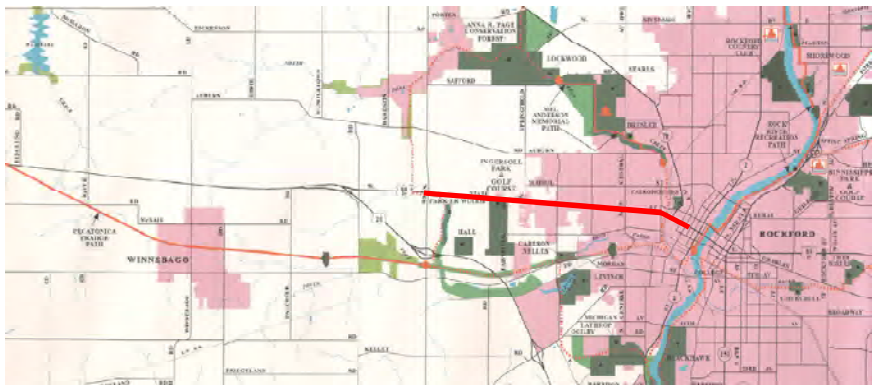
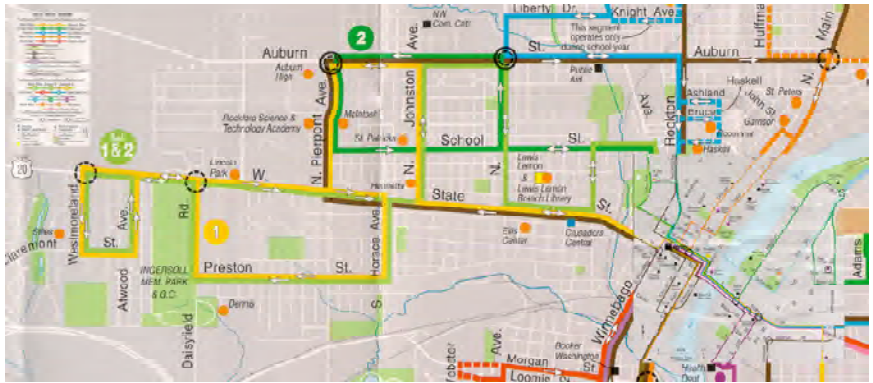
The street pattern is a well-defined grid in the urban and suburban areas that gradually breaks down into a larger and less-defined pattern to the west.



TOP: Bus service along the West State Street corridor needs to be expanded both in area served and times of service.

MIDDLE: The corridor is not well-connected to the regional hiking and biking trail system.

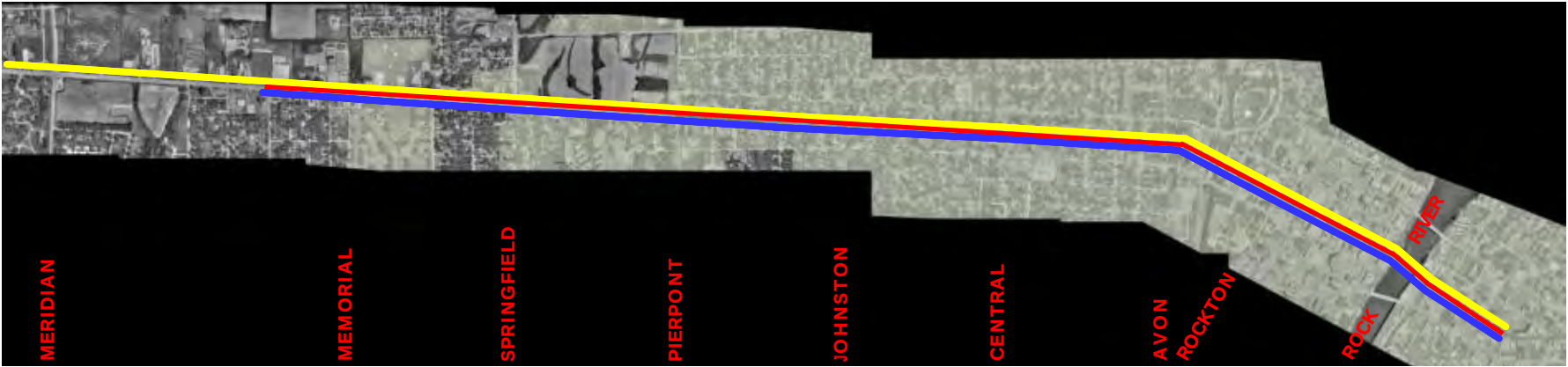
BOTTOM: Existing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) levels at major intersections along the West State Street corridor indicate relatively low traffic levels.



Utilities

- Existing city utilities are sized to handle the existing densities of the corridor.
- Utility extensions to the west end of State Street are potentially expensive because there is minimal soil cover over rock.
- West State Street light levels are poor.

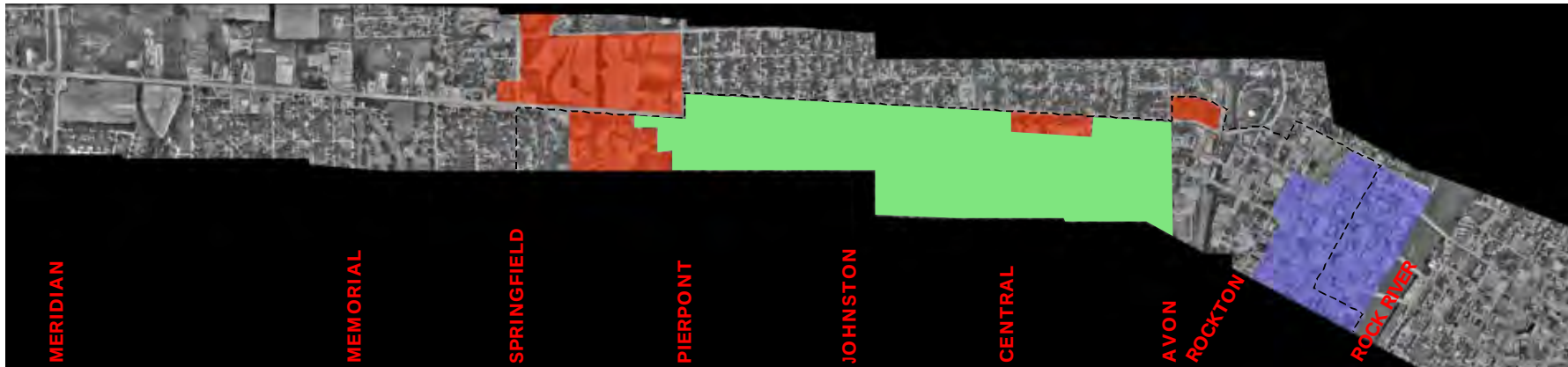
BLUE: Water
RED: Sanitary sewer
YELLOW: Overhead utilities



Economic development

- New businesses should provide opportunities for local ownership.
- Several social service organizations, churches and public housing facilities etc. could use assistance in property consolidation and rezoning for expansion purposes.
- There are several plans for building expansions and relocations in the River District that could benefit this corridor.
- Some existing businesses need help with additional parking and space for dumpsters.
- Many people believe the section between Pierpont Avenue and Avon Street should be the main commercial area along State Street.
- The intersection at the new Springfield connector and West State Street has high development potential.
- Properties along State Street in the county have high development potential in the future, but need city water to develop.
- Light industrial uses would create local jobs.
- Proposed and existing Tax Increment Financing districts (TIFs) and the existing block grants and enterprise zone are positive programs for west side redevelopment.

BLUE: Existing TIF district
RED: Proposed TIF district
GREEN: Enterprise zone



SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted as a part of the information gathering and corridor assessment phase of the project. Designed for obtaining input from the general community, it had two primary objectives:

- 1. Gather information from Steering Committee and citizens regarding problems and opportunities, perceptions, and ideas about the West State Street corridor.
- 2. Provide benchmark data for evaluating alternatives.

The survey was made available at the first steering committee meeting and the first community meeting. Results were tabulated and presented back to the committee and community later in the project. These results were key components of the design solutions presented in this report.

Questions focused on three basic areas:

- 1. Physical issues such as streets, sidewalks, and lights.
- 2. Social services issues such as police, fire, and garbage collection.
- 3. Overall quality of life.

While the scope of the project was more narrowly defined around physical issues, the decision was made to address these other, broader topics as well. This was done in order to understand the concepts and attitudes that shape the design context.

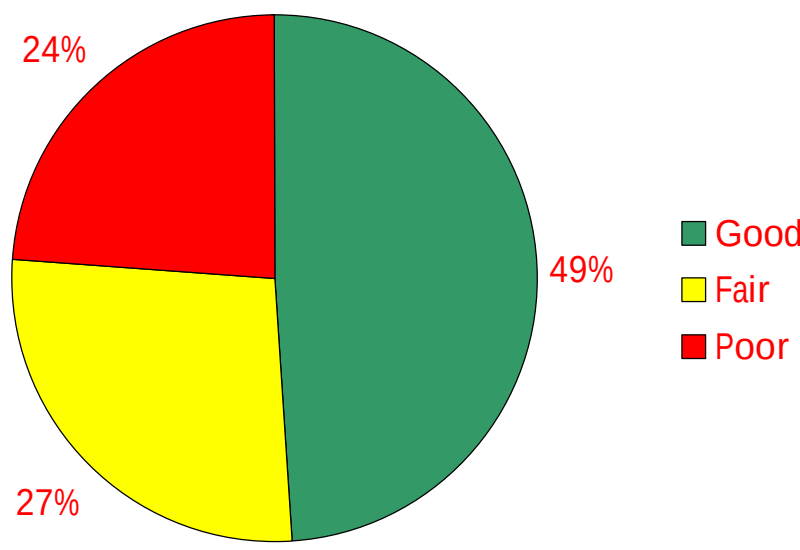
An overview of significant findings is as follows:

- An overwhelming majority of respondents consider the current image of the corridor and the overall quality of life along the corridor to be poor.
- A large majority of respondents rate the shopping opportunities, public services, personal safety, and open space as poor.

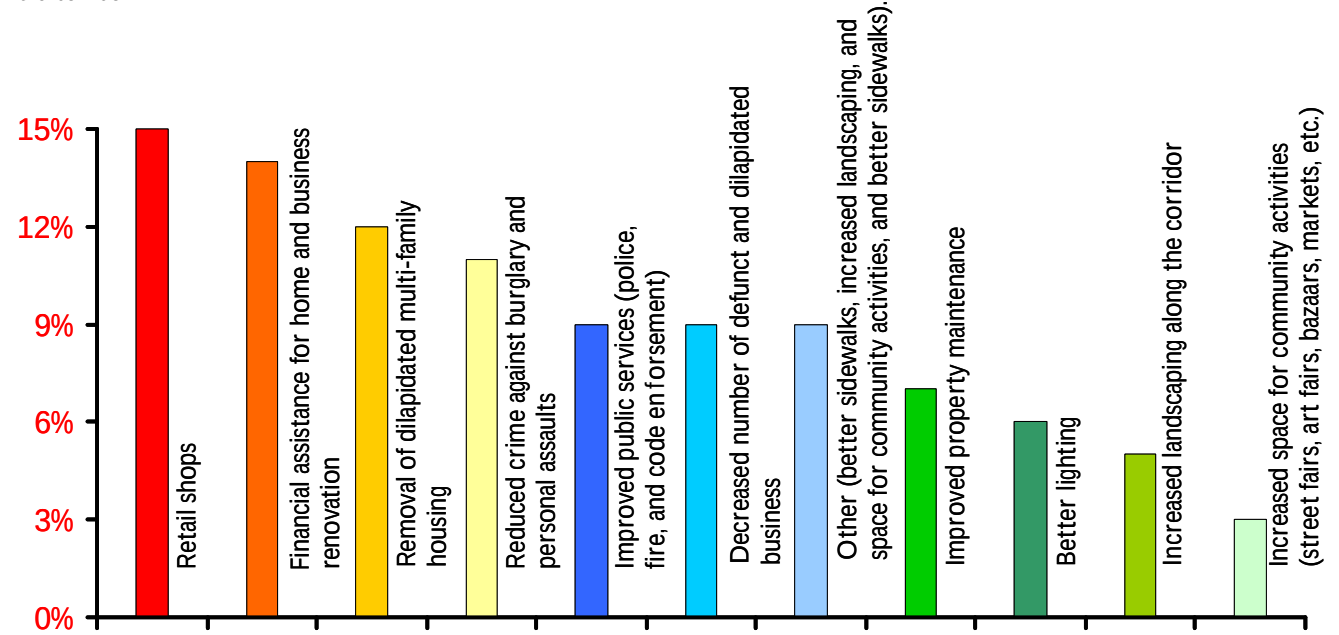


Nearly two hundred residents completed the survey during the first community meeting.

“How would you rate the future prospects for improvement?”



“What are the most important needs along the corridor?”



- Respondents were nearly unanimous in their opinion that rental housing and retail should be upgraded and enhanced and that the corridor needs stronger building and property code enforcement.
- Most respondents felt that the city can do better in providing sanitation, fire, and police services.
- Three-quarters of the respondents feel that the prospects for improvement are fair or good and almost as many rate the opportunities to be involved in those changes as fair or good.
- One response summed up many of the prevailing sentiments very well as, “More businesses, more landscaping, fewer multi-family residences, better services.”

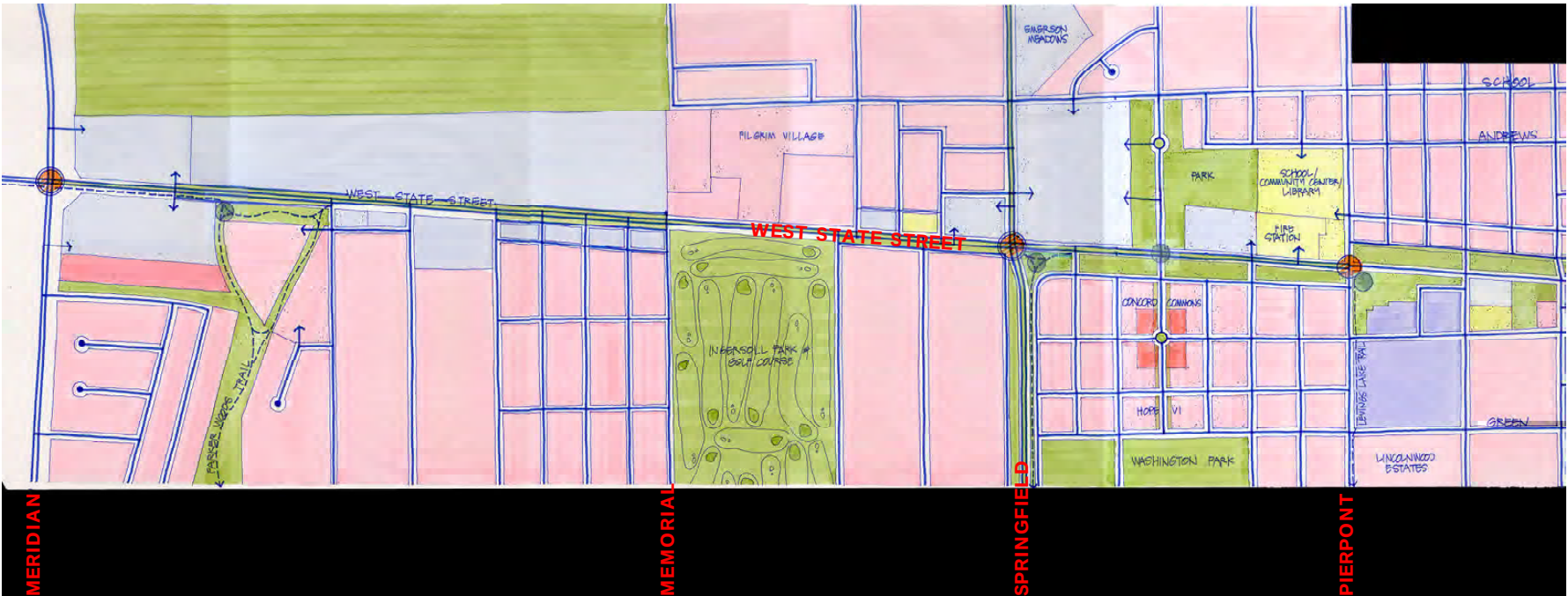
A copy of the survey and a more exhaustive record of the results can be found in Appendix A.

FRAMEWORK PLAN

The inventory of existing conditions and the survey were combined with additional input from city staff and the steering committee into a Framework Plan. This plan was used to distill the gathered information into a direction for the creation of the alternatives and, finally, the recommended design. The plan showed several key concepts in graphic form that would be incorporated into the actual designs. These were as follows:

- Create a critical mass of retail and commercial development sites with attractive locations and sizes.
- Relocate businesses to generate synergy and concentrate them into viable enterprises.
- Provide expansion room for businesses and institutions.
- Remove housing that is in poor repair and too expensive to fix.

The Framework Plan was a drawing that distilled ideas and concepts into a plan that could then be tested and given form by more refined corridor designs.



Legend

- ROAD
- ALLEY
- CUL-DE-SAC
- BIKE TRAIL
- IMPORTANT INTERSECTION
- NEW LAND USE
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
- MULTI FAMILY RESIDENCE
- INDUSTRIAL
- BUSINESS
- CIVIC, INSTITUTIONAL
- OPEN SPACE
- GREENWAY CONNECTION

- Provide a green, landscaped boulevard, consisting of a median with pedestrian and highway lighting, where possible.
- Limit the curb cuts and cross streets to reduce neighborhood cut-throughs.
- Reinforce the presence of institutional buildings along the road.
- Accommodate regulatory requirements and guidelines.

The Framework Plan could be summed up as having three goals:

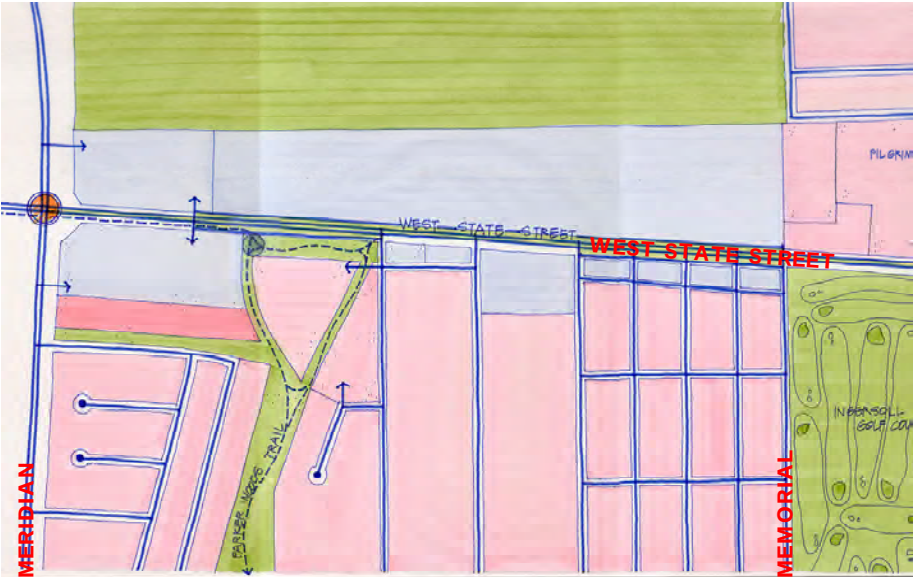
1. Improve the quality of life along the corridor.
2. Increase access to downtown Rockford from the west.
3. Increase business opportunities along the corridor.

The enlargements of the Framework Plan on the the following pages show these concepts in greater detail.



1. Meridian to Memorial

The intersection of West State Street with Meridian is a logical location to establish a gateway into Rockford. This image is strengthened by creating a strong boulevard effect in the West State Street median. Consolidating business entrances and connecting to the regional trail system should also be a priority.



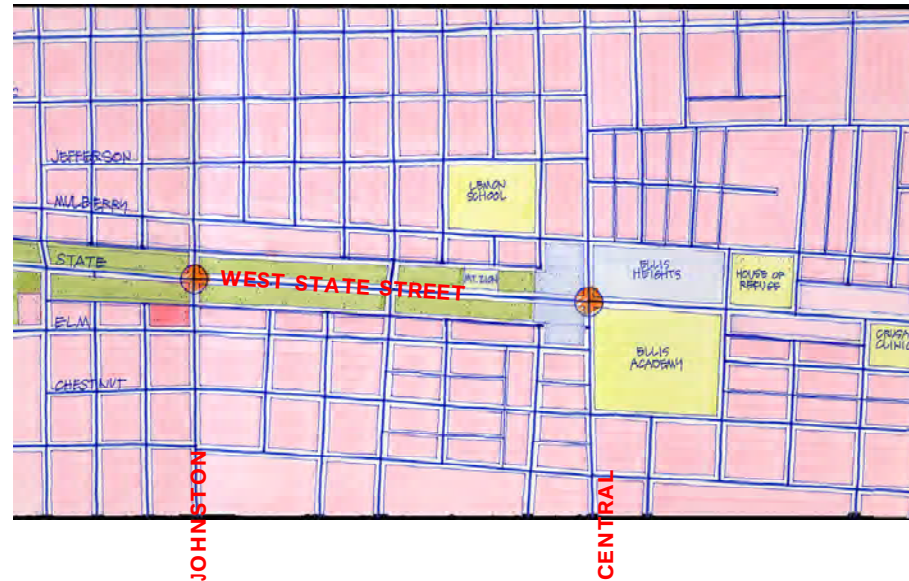
Legend

- ROAD
- ALLEY
- CUL-DE-SAC
- BIKE TRAIL
- IMPORTANT INTERSECTION
- NEW LAND USE
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
- MULTI FAMILY RESIDENCE
- INDUSTRIAL
- BUSINESS
- CIVIC, INSTITUTIONAL
- OPEN SPACE
- GREENWAY CONNECTION

2. Memorial to Johnston

Business development on the north side of West State Street could take advantage of the opportunity provided by the new Springfield Connector while providing a heightened image similar to the gateways at either end of the corridor. Widened rights-of-way, new parkland, expanded civic institutions, a strengthened residential street grid, and connections to the regional trail system are also priorities.





3. Johnston to Avon

The removal of dilapidated and abandoned residences and businesses allows the creation of a wider landscaped parkway on either side of the proposed boulevard. The number of residential streets crossing West State Street is reduced to limit vehicular conflicts with other automobiles and people on the trails or sidewalks.



4. Avon to Rockton

The West State Street crossing of Kent Creek provides a significant opportunity to provide a landscaped gateway. It also creates a great opportunity to connect to the north / south trail along the creek, thereby giving area residents another point of access to the larger Rockford community. If unsightly buildings in the vicinity are removed, the gateway will be further enhanced.

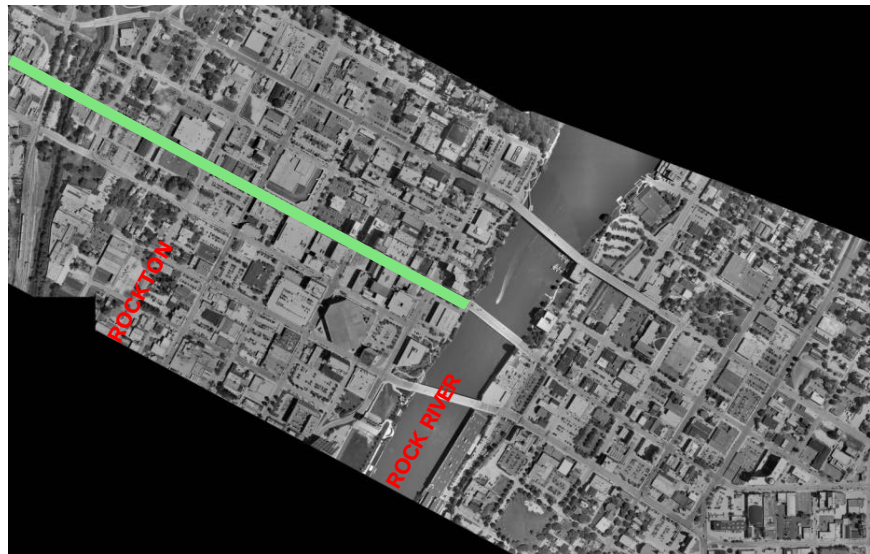
CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

A result of creating the Framework Plan was the recognition of a need for regulatory tools to implement and maintain the objectives proposed by the plan. One tool that was pursued was the idea of a Corridor Overlay District. This district would create a zone along West State Street that holds developers, landlords, residents and tenants to a higher standard for façade treatments, landscaping, screening and maintenance. Of course, such a district would achieve its stated objectives only if the higher standards were both encouraged (i.e. home owner education programs, matching funds, grants, etc.) and enforced (i.e. citations, fines).

The existing zoning districts may need to be modified in places to implement the Framework Plan and Overlay District. This will ensure that land use objectives and policies align with the legal tools that are in place. This could include downzoning recommendations that are more consistent with the Framework Plan.



GREEN: Limits of proposed corridor overlay district.



CORRIDOR
GEOMETRIC DESIGN

Proposed Cross Section

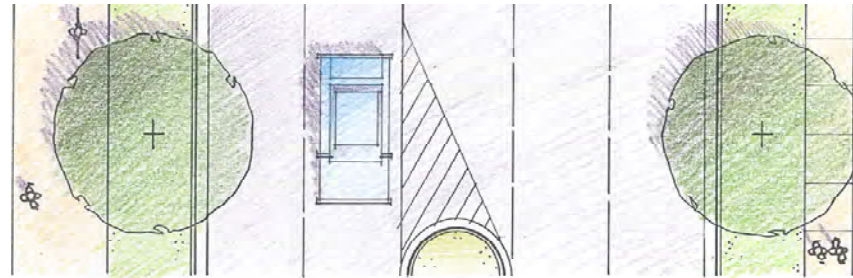
As a result of the many interviews with the City Staff, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) staff, and the Steering Committee, it was determined that West State Street be improved to safely and efficiently move vehicular and pedestrian traffic through the area and to make the experience of traveling through the west side of Rockford more inviting. The design team reviewed various alternate typical roadway cross sections for the project to try to achieve these objectives. These typical roadway cross sections that were developed included varying width

medians, two and four lane divided pavements, on-street bike lanes and off-street bike lanes and the elimination of on-street parking. The various alternate roadway cross sections were presented to the City Staff, IDOT Staff, the Steering Committee, and the public. The consensus by these entities was that a 4 - 12' lane cross section divided by a 22' wide median, a 12' wide multi-use bituminous path located in the south parkway, a 6' wide side walk in the north parkway, and 10.5' grass and tree lined parkways on both sides of the street meets the objectives of safely and efficiently moving vehicular and pedestrian traffic through the area.

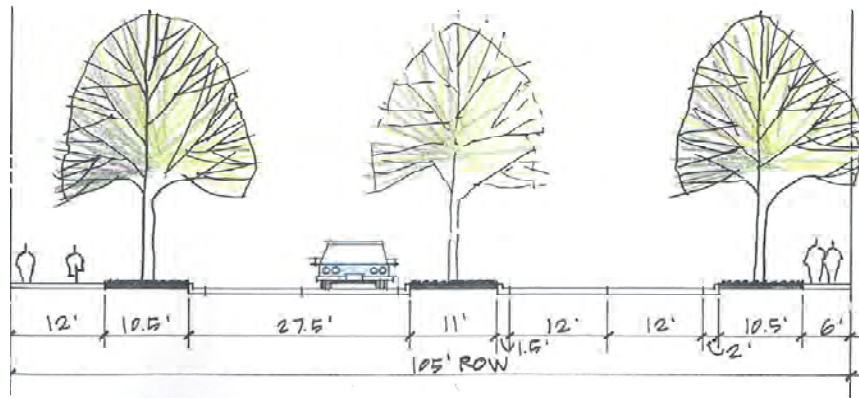
RIGHT: Proposed roadway section showing four 12'-wide travelways divided by a landscaped median. Trees in parkways and a sidewalk or multi-use trail on either side complete the design.

BOTTOM: Aerial photo of existing conditions with proposed changes in color. Purple areas represent key intersections or gateways, green areas note landscaped medians or rights-of-way, and red lines show sidewalks or multi-use trails.





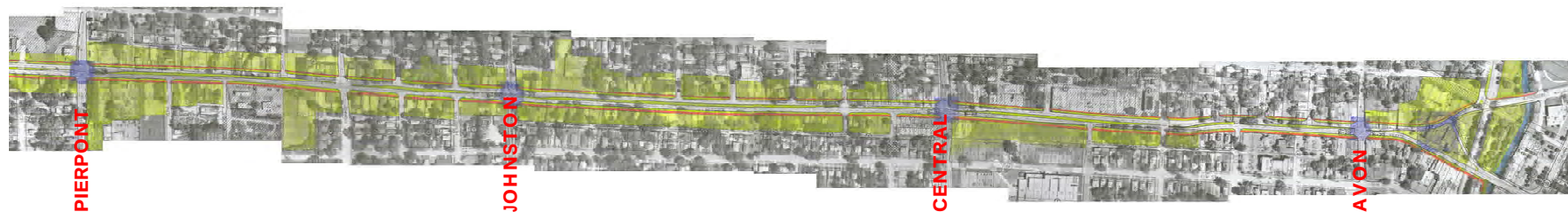
This typical cross section also conforms to the minimum IDOT design requirements for roadway widths and conforms to standards by the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) for bicycle lane location and width.



The proposed landscape/streetscape features of the four lane divided cross section include shade tree and pedestrian-scaled lighting where appropriate in the parkways, ornamental roadway light fixtures and low level plantings in the median, landscape buffers for adjoining residential neighborhoods where possible, and special paving at key intersections.

Proposed Geometric Plan

A conceptual geometric plan for the four lane divided cross section was developed. The objectives in the development of the roadway geometry were to maintain minimum IDOT design standards, improve the level of service at existing major signalized intersections, provide proposed intersections at anticipated locations of new developments or as required for life safety requirements, reduce the number of overall curb cuts to West State Street, and to avoid existing facilities key to the area along the corridor.



Meridian Street to Springfield Avenue

The section of West State Street from Meridian Street to Springfield Avenue is currently a four lane cross section with a bi-direction left turn lane and a wide right-of-way (ROW). This unincorporated area is wide open with minimal development. The proposed geometry in this area requires minimal ROW acquisition. In anticipation of future development in this area and to address life safety access, the geometric plan includes a proposed future full access intersection just east of Meridian Avenue, at Euclid Av-

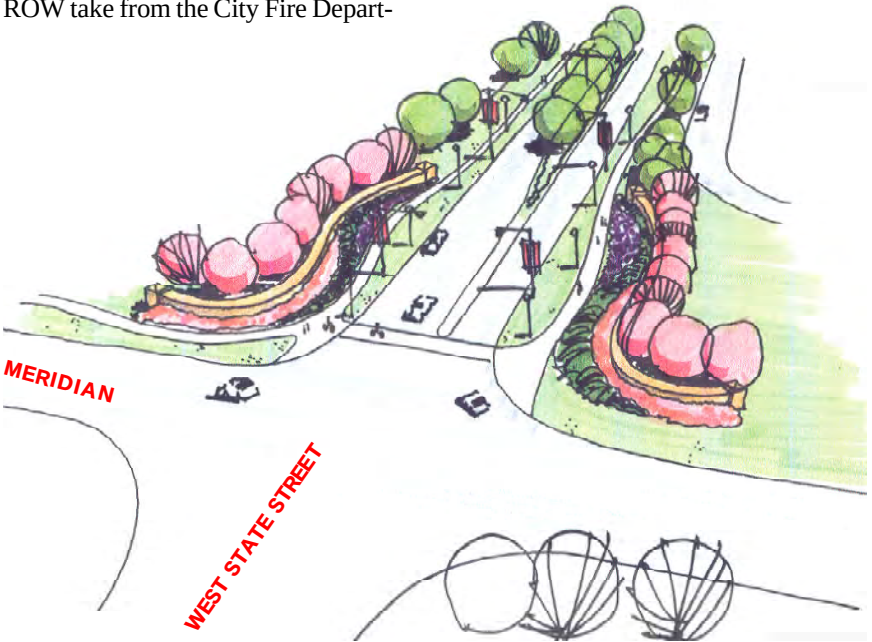
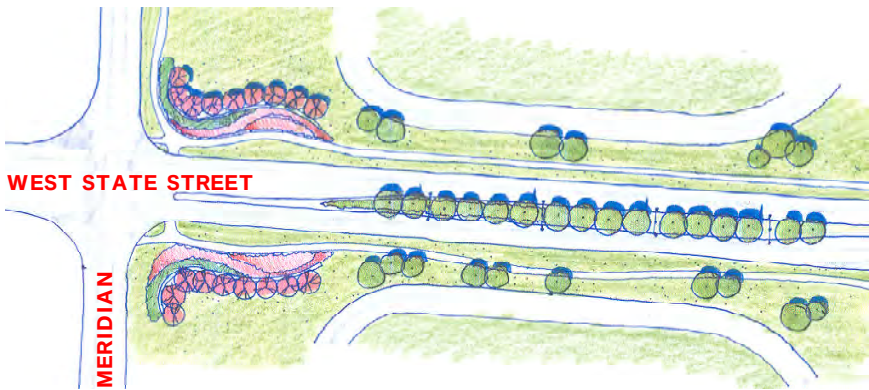
enue, at Memorial Avenue, and at Daisyfield Road. A curb cut is proposed at Atwood Avenue on the north side of West State Street in anticipation of future development. Any future development in the area would be required to develop a frontage road system tied into the intersections thereby reducing the number of curb cuts onto West State Street. The existing frontage roads along the south ROW of West State Street are to remain until such a time as the area is redeveloped. All of the existing intersecting side street curb cuts in this area are to remain open.

Springfield Avenue to Johnston Avenue

The area of West State Street between Springfield and Johnston Avenues has a suburban characteristic to its surroundings with existing 66' ROW, two through lanes in each direction, and buildings set back off the ROW. The proposed geometry in this area would require substantial ROW acquisition and demolition of existing building structures. Between Springfield and Pierpont Avenues, the proposed alignment required shifting to the south to minimize the amount of ROW take from the City Fire Depart-

LEFT: Plan view of proposed west gateway at the intersection of Meridian and West State Street.

RIGHT: Aerial perspective, looking east, of proposed west gateway at the intersection of Meridian and West State Street.



LEFT: Aerial perspective, looking west, of proposed east gateway at Kent Creek and West State Street.

RIGHT: Plan view of proposed east gateway at Kent Creek and West State Street.



ment located at the northwest corner of West State Street and Pierpont Avenue. The proposed alignment is then shifted to the north through the Pierpont Avenue intersection to avoid an existing environmental concern at the southeast corner of West State Street and Pierpont Avenue. The alignment remains shifted to the north to avoid two key institutions along the south side of West State Street between Willard and Horace Avenues. The alignment then shifts back to the center of the existing ROW. In

anticipation of future development in this area and for life safety access to existing residential areas, the geometric plans include proposed future full access intersections at Cameron Avenue, Elm Street, and Horace Street. A median cut is proposed west of Pierpont Avenue at about Lexington Avenue for access by the City Fire Department only. Lexington Avenue is proposed to be closed at West State Street which will reduce the possibility of unwanted left turns at this proposed median curb cut.

The Winnebago County Highway Department is currently undertaking plans to improve the intersection at Springfield Avenue and West State Street. The County's improvements include eliminating the McLain Avenue curb cut to West State Street and connecting McLain Avenue to Ashley Avenue. The West State Street study proposes to eliminate the curb cut at Ashley Avenue and continue the McLain frontage road to Cameron Avenue. This study also calls for a frontage road south of



West State Street from Lexington Ave. to Cameron Avenue due to the proposed elimination of the side street curb cuts to West State Street at Lexington Avenue. The proposed frontage road intersects with Elm Street and Concord Avenue. A frontage road is also proposed north of West State Street between Carbaugh and Willard Avenues due to the proposed elimination of the side street curb cuts to West State Street from Carbaugh, Burbank, and Willard Avenues.

All of the existing intersecting side street curb cuts in this area are to remain open except for the following:

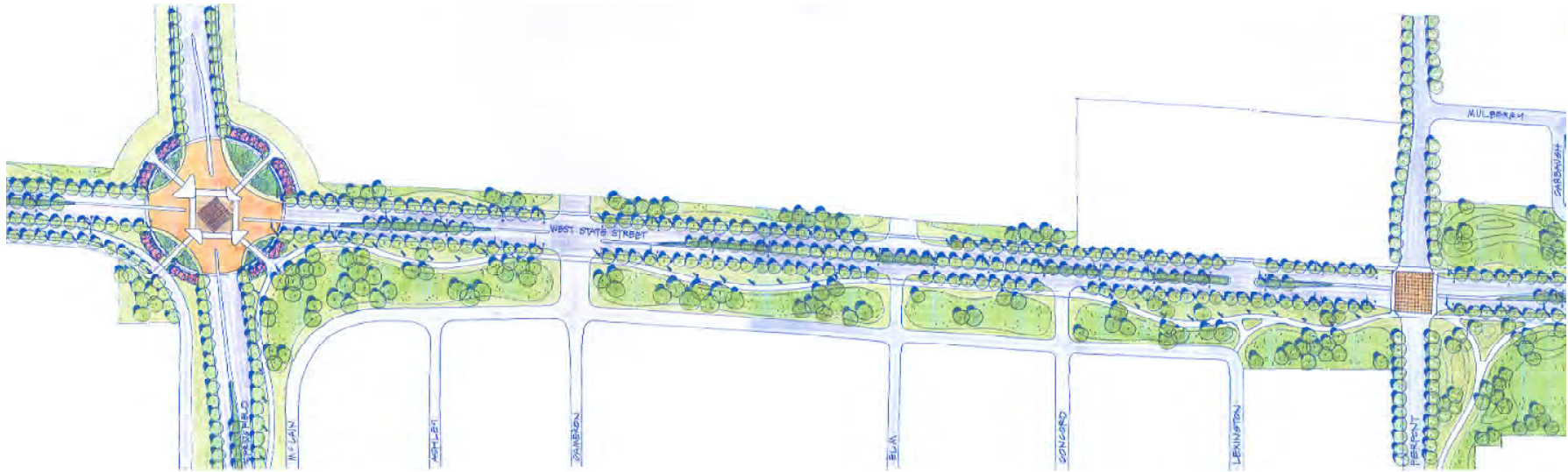
- Ashley Avenue.
- Lexington Avenue.
- Carbaugh Avenue.
- Burbank Avenue.
- Willard Avenue (North of West State Street only).

Willard Avenue at Elm Street is also proposed to be closed as part of this study.

Johnson Avenue to Central Avenue

The area of West State Street between Johnston Avenue and Central Avenue also has a suburban character with existing 66' ROW, two through lanes with parking, and buildings set back off the ROW. The proposed geometry in this area would require substantial ROW acquisition and demolition of existing building structures. The proposed alignment in this area is centered about the existing ROW except for the northerly

shift in the alignment at Central Avenue to avoid a key institution at the southwest corner of West State Street and Central Avenue. In anticipation of future development in this area and for life safety access to existing residential areas, the geometric plans include a proposed future full access intersection at Sunset Avenue. This intersection includes an additional curb cut along the south side of West State Street to accommodate the south leg of the proposed intersection.



FACING PAGE: Plan view of proposed intersection improvements at Springfield and West State Street showing special paving, crosswalks, entry walls, landscaped median, and street lights.

LEFT: Aerial perspective, looking north, of proposed intersection improvements at Springfield and West State Street.

RIGHT: Consistent use of distinctive and appropriate light fixtures, in a variety of heights, is an important part of creating a new image. Landscaping and entry walls are also very important.



All of the existing intersecting side street curb cuts in this area are to remain open except for the following:

- Foster Avenue.
- Howard Avenue.
- Webster Avenue.
- Stewart Avenue.
- Independence Avenue (North Side of West State Street only).

A frontage road is proposed along the south side of West State Street from Johnston Street to Independence Street to provide the traffic circulation necessary for life safety needs in the area due to the elimination of the side street curb cuts to West State Street in this area.

Central Avenue to Avon Street

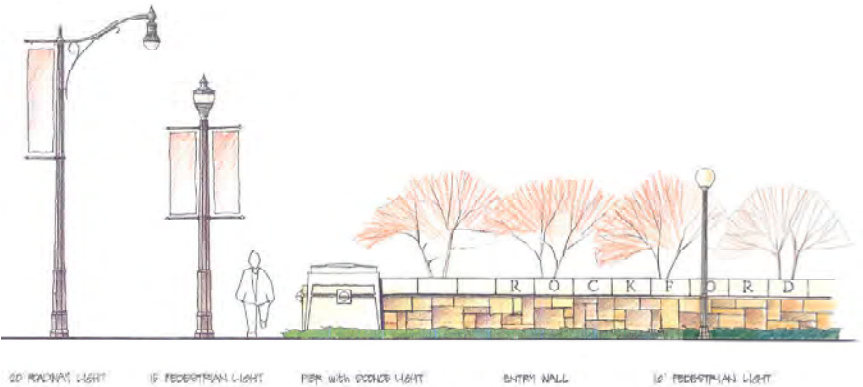
The area of West State Street between Central Avenue and Avon Street also has a suburban characteristic to its surroundings with existing 66' ROW, two through lanes with limited parking, and buildings set back off the ROW. The proposed geometry in this area would require substantial ROW acquisition and demolition of existing building structures. The proposed alignment in this area varies about the center of the existing ROW. The alignment shifts to the south to minimize the ROW taken at a key institution located at the northwest corner of West State Street and Hinkley Street. The alignment then promptly

shifts back to the north to avoid the impacts to a key institution located between Tay Street and Avon Street on the south side of West State Street. For life safety access to existing residential areas, the geometric plans include proposed future full access intersections at Hinkley Street and at Tay Street.

All of the existing intersecting side street curb cuts in this area are to remain open except for the following:

- Oakley Street.

A frontage road is proposed along the south side of West State Street between Central Avenue and Tay Street in this area.



Avon Street to the Rock River

The area of West State Street between Avon Street and the Rock River has an urban characteristic to its surrounding with narrower ROW, two through lanes with no parking, and nonexistent building setbacks. The proposed four lane divided cross section terminates between Avon Street and Kilburn Street where it transitions into a two lane cross section with limited parking east of Kilburn Street. From Kilburn Street to the Rock River, it is anticipated that the pavement will be rehabilitated, with minimal changes to the roadway geometrics, and that trees would be planted where possible. The proposed multi use path along the south side of West State Street would terminate at and be tied into a future multi use path along Kent Creek.

“One-Way Pair” realignment

This study also identified the need to reduce the amount of traffic on Mulberry St. by more efficiently tying the “one way pair” roadway system,

Jefferson Street / Mulberry Street westbound back into West State Street. The concern is that westbound vehicles on Jefferson Street continue west into the residential area where Jefferson Street turns into Mulberry Street. This study proposes to realign Jefferson Street and tie it into westbound West State Street at Avon Street. Jefferson Street would transition from an existing three lane westbound cross section to a two lane westbound cross section as it crosses the CMSTP&P railroad tracks and become the westbound east leg of the West State Street and Avon Street intersection. The westbound lane of West State Street west of Kilburn Street would be a single through lane realigned to intersect with the realigned Jefferson Street and would be controlled by a stop sign. The eastbound east leg of the West State Street and Avon Street intersection would consist of two through lanes. One of the through lanes would become the right turn lane as it approached the West State Street and Kilburn Avenue intersection. Mulberry Street would be realigned and tie into Ogden Avenue.

The City Fire Department requested that Ogden Avenue tie into the realigned Jefferson Street with a right-in / right-out intersection.

The reconfiguration of the “one-way pair” system directs more traffic back to West State Street which strengthens the retail activity in the area. The realignment also consolidates neighborhood green space and redevelopment opportunities in this area and provides a more efficient way to enter the eastbound one-way pair system.

The eastbound one-way pair tie-in to West State Street is proposed as a realignment of Kilburn Ave. south of West State Street The realignment would include providing a 3-lane section on Kilburn Ave. between West State Street and Elm St. consisting of 2 southbound through lanes and 1 northbound through lane. From Elm St. to Chestnut St. the one-way pair would consist of 2 one-way through lanes southbound tying into Chestnut St. at Rockton Ave. Some modifications to Kilburn Ave. north of West State Street would be required for alignment purposes.

Another alternative to the eastbound one-way pair tie-in to U.S. Business 20 eastbound (Chestnut Street) is to divert traffic from West State Street to Elm Street at Avon. Traffic would then cross the Elm Street bridge and cross over to Chestnut Street at the Kilburn Avenue (IL 70) intersection via a new roadway connection.

This alternate provides a smoother transition to U.S. Business 20 eastbound, but also adversely impacts the signalized intersection of Avon Street. Further geometric and traffic study needs to be completed on this alternative, and it is hoped that this will be a key focus of study under the IDOT Phase I engineering study.

The eastbound crossover is very important for the downtown area, as U.S. Business 20 is the main route to the Metro Centre arena, Davis Park festival grounds, and the proposed Federal Building and Winnebago County correctional facility.

The one-way pair realignment will provide a fluid and efficient traffic pattern for cars travelling in an east / west direction, while giving an appropriate terminus to Route 70 / Kilburn Avenue.



CORRIDOR
INTERSECTION
DESIGN

There are existing signalized intersections at:

- Pierpont Avenue.
- Johnston Avenue.
- Central Avenue.
- Avon Street.
- Kilburn Street.

These will require improvements with auxiliary left turn lanes on West State Street and on the side streets as needed. New traffic control systems with side street loop detectors and an interconnection system should also be incorporated into the final design. Further study is required to determine if an additional auxiliary lane will be necessary for right turn movements at the intersections.

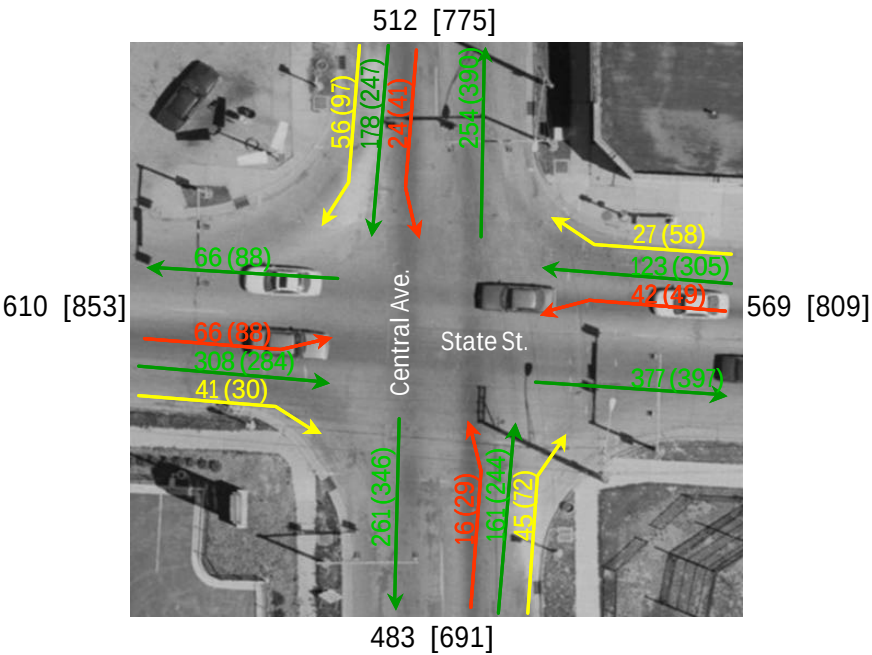
The intersection at Central and West State will require additional turn lanes and other improvements to accommodate traffic flows.

Existing traffic levels:
7:30 to 8:30 a.m. traffic
[# #] 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. traffic

There are proposed full access intersections at:

- East of Meridian Road.
- Euclid Avenue.
- Memorial Avenue.
- Daisyfield Road.
- Cameron Avenue.
- Elm Street.
- Horace Street.
- Sunset Avenue.
- Hinkley Street.
- Tay Street.

These are proposed to have auxiliary left turn lanes on West State Street. Additional studies will be required to determine when or if traffic signals will be warranted and whether auxiliary lanes will required on the side streets. The realignment of Horace Street both north and south of West State Street is proposed as part of this study.



CORRIDOR CHARACTER AND FEATURES

Not only is moving traffic through this corridor a main objective of this study, but the use of landscaping and streetscaping also plays a large role in the type of cross section that is proposed for this project. In addition to the wider median and parkways for planting trees and other plants, visual accents are proposed at gateways and primary intersections; special paving, walls, and landscaping will be

used at these key intersections. These will help to give identity to the neighborhood. There will also be wide landscape buffers between West State Street and the residential neighborhoods to the north and south of West State Street. These character enhancing features provide a positive image that shows a commitment by the residents and governments to improve their community.

This aerial perspective, looking west, of proposed right-of-way improvements shows the positive impact that a boulevard roadway with a planted median, a limited number of curb cuts, and screening along the edges can have on the image and character of the corridor.



BUDGET ESTIMATES

The following estimate is provided as a rough approximation of possible costs associated with the redevelopment of the West State Street corridor. It should only be used for macro-scale planning and budgeting purposes. The estimates will need to be updated as the design plans are developed further.

		Meridian St. to Springfield (Includes Frontage Rd.)	Springfield to Pierpont (Includes Frontage Rd.)	Pierpont to Johnston (Includes Frontage Rd.)	Johnston to Central (Includes Frontage Rd.)	Central to Avon (Includes Frontage Rd.)	Avon to Rockton
1	Pavement Removal (Includes Curb & Gutter, Pavement, Sidewalk, & Driveways)	\$1,251,400	\$360,400	\$541,000	\$579,000	\$538,000	\$540,000
2	Pavement (Including PCC Base, Bit. Overlay, Subbase, and Curb & Gutter)	\$3,364,000	\$1,425,000	\$1,582,000	\$2,085,000	\$1,737,000	\$1,770,000
3	Sidewalk and Bituminous Multi Use Path	\$420,000	\$115,000	\$195,000	\$200,000	\$188,000	\$271,450
4	Traffic Signals *	\$360,000	\$120,000	\$240,000	\$120,000	\$240,000	\$240,000
5	Ornamental Pedestrian Lighting Standard	\$1,300,000	\$360,000	\$450,000	\$500,000	\$470,000	\$756,000
6	Ornamental Roadway Lighting Standard	\$2,000,000	\$560,000	\$760,000	\$815,000	\$795,000	\$1,251,000
7	Storm Sewer	\$700,000	\$360,000	\$294,000	\$446,000	\$354,000	\$460,000
8	Parkway Topsoil & Sod (Inside ROW)	\$150,000	\$40,000	\$73,000	\$74,000	\$69,000	\$878,000
9	Parkway Topsoil & Seed (Outside of ROW)	\$60,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
10	At Grade RR Crossing Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000
11	Trees and Plantings (Inside of ROW)	\$285,000	\$116,000	\$116,000	\$116,000	\$125,000	\$60,000
12	Trees and Plantings (Outside of ROW)	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$100,000	\$75,000	\$100,000
13	Street Furniture	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
14	Enhanced Pavement	\$450,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$150,000
15	Streetscape Enhancements	\$225,000	\$75,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$150,000
16	Maintenance of Traffic	\$424,016	\$158,656	\$189,240	\$217,600	\$199,840	\$308,458
	20% Contingency	\$1,954,603	\$752,931	\$875,848	\$1,015,720	\$931,568	\$1,495,982
	TOTAL	\$12,979,019	\$4,877,987	\$5,796,088	\$6,673,320	\$6,127,408	\$9,515,890

* Updated and new traffic signals are proposed at the following streets: Meridian, future intersection, Euclid, Cameron, Pierpont, Horace, Johnston, Central, Hinkley, Avon, Kilburn.

This estimate does not include costs for right-of-way acquisition, environmental remediation, or demolition of existing structures within affected ROW.

PHASING AND SCHEDULES

Completion of the improvements outlined in this corridor plan will likely take several years to complete. The phases outlined in this section are an attempt to break the overall project down into more manageable pieces. While there may be some activities that logically span more than one phase and could be done all at once (e.g. some land aquisition or remedial environmental engineering), most construction activities will work well in a sequential manner. Using the preceding budget estimates as a guide, the overall project was broken up into five phases, each of which could be further broken down as required by financial and logistical constraints.

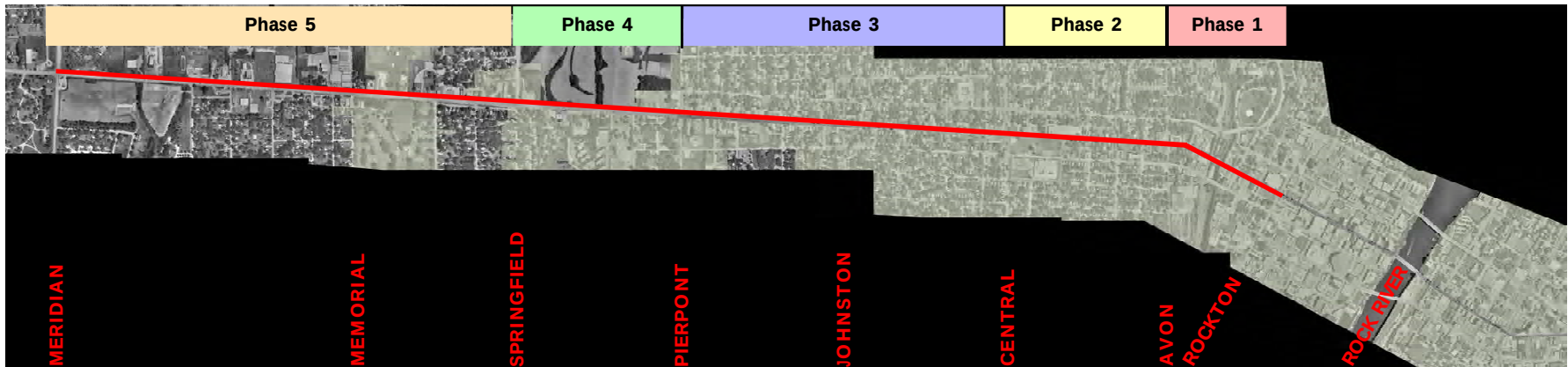
Phase 1: Rockton to Avon
This portion should be completed first for several reasons; it is the connecting point for the eastward-moving traffic on West State Street into the downtown Rockford street system; it resolves the terminus of State Route 70 / Kilburn; it includes the eastern gateway park; and it connects the neighborhood to the regional biking trail system.

Phase 2: Avon to Central
This phase improves the section up to and including the Shopstead, further strengthening another economic initiative. Empty lots will have infill residential units constructed or relocated in this Phase.

Phase 3: Central to Pierpont
This phase establishes a major roadside greenway and improves the buffers to the neighborhood.

Phase 4: Pierpont to Springfield
The intersection at Springfield and West State is the centerpiece of this section of work. Roadside greenways will continue to be extended, with trail connections made to Levings Lake at Pierpont and to the Pecatonica Prairie Path at Springfield.

Phase 5: Springfield to Meridian
The corridor is improved out to the west end. An entry feature there will complement the one completed in Phase 1 on the east end.



ECONOMIC
REDEVELOPMENT

The evaluation of the West State Street Corridor’s retail potential was a three-step process. First, a competitive market study was undertaken to learn if this market was being adequately served by basic retail services. Second, locations along West State Street were compared with other retail markets in Rockford; and finally, the market feasibility of sites on West State Street was assessed for supermarkets and drug stores.

This analysis found that West State Street is a grossly underserved market. Second, it is an inferior location compared with many existing retail sites in Rockford. However, because this market area is so underserved, the potential for either a drug store or supermarket to enter the community would allow them to have higher market shares than they have at many of their existing locations. As a result, the market feasibility shows that both drug stores and supermarkets have a potential to generate sales comparable with other Rockford locations. The redevelopment of this corridor, along with improvements to Springfield and a program to begin rebuild-

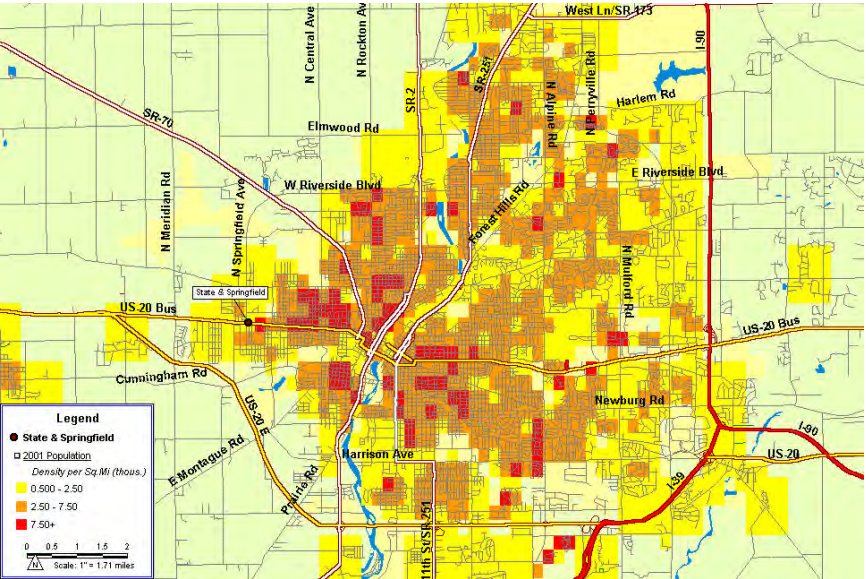
ing this community, may help convince retailers that they will have an opportunity to operate a successful store in this neighborhood.

Demographic overview

Before specifics of these sites can be examined, the demographics of West State Street must first be understood. When retailers say, “location, location, location,” they are frequently evaluating an area’s population den-

sity, and its buying power to determine if their goods and services will be successful.

The maps in the appendix show that population density varies along the four-mile corridor. The area along the east end of the corridor has comparatively high density for Rockford, with more than 7,500 people per square mile (shown in red below). Areas west of Springfield show low densities of less than 2,500 people per square mile (shown in yellow).



The buying power is average in the areas east of Springfield, but lower than average west of Springfield. The average household income in areas east of Springfield is mostly low to moderate (\$27,300 to \$43,600 average household incomes), with some low income, that is, households with incomes below \$27,300. The low population density areas west of Springfield show higher average household incomes between \$43,600 and \$100,000.

In summary, communities have basic needs no matter what their income. This area is primarily a low to moderate-income neighborhood that does not have the same basic goods and services in proximity to their residents that many other neighborhoods in Rockford can offer. For this reason, it appears that this market is grossly underserved.

Drugstore analysis

Competitive market analysis for drug stores
Drug stores are typically viewed as an important retailer to a community because they deliver basic needs. An analysis of drug store locations shows that stores in the Osco chain are placed about six-minutes apart while Walgreen’s stores, which target a smaller trade area, are placed just four-minutes apart.

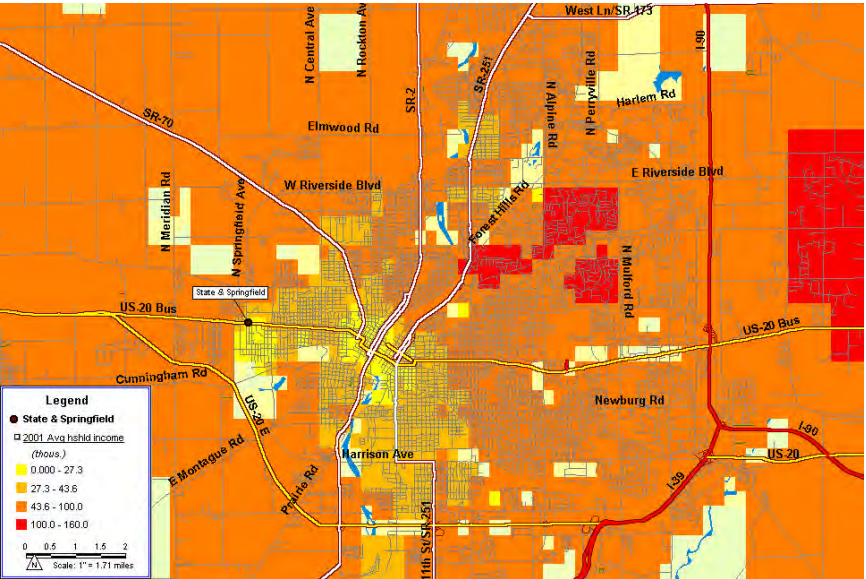
Only the trade area of the Walgreen’s store at Auburn and Central covers part of the West State Street community. Also, the Walgreen’s store at Auburn and Central does not have a drive-thru pharmacy lane, which is now a required part of most new Walgreen’s stores. Osco does not have a store near this market.

Needless to say, other major retail chains such as K-Mart, Wal-Mart and Target are not in this market.

In summary, this area is an underserved market; residents of this area need to travel outside of their neighborhoods and farther to find stores that meet their basic needs.

Drug store analogs
The second step in the analysis was to compare sites along West State Street with existing store locations in the Rockford marketplace. These are called analog models. The team selected two sites along West State Street that provided opportunity for retail development.

One site is at the intersection of State and Central and the other is at the intersection of State and Springfield. The State and Central site is smaller and was only compared with other drug store sites. The State and Springfield site is much larger and could accommodate a supermarket and drug store either on the same site, or at the same intersection, but different sites.



More specifically, the two, three, four, and five-minute drive times have the following demographic characteristics:

Selected Demographic Characteristics at State and Springfield

2-minute Drive Time

Population:	3,890
Households:	1,298
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$41.2
Avg. Household Income:	\$31,187

3-minute Drive Time

Population:	8,686
Households:	2,935
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$102.5
Avg. Household Income:	\$34,685

4-minute Drive Time

Population:	14,692
Households:	4,856
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$176.6
Avg. Household Income:	\$36,073

5-minute Drive Time

Population:	19,846
Households:	6,468
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$232.1
Avg. Household Income:	\$35,148

While the State and Central intersection has a higher population density than State and Springfield, it does not have a site large enough to accommodate a supermarket. However, the site is large enough to allow for the construction of a drug store.

Selected Demographic Characteristics at State and Central

2-minute Drive Time

Population:	10,283
Households:	3,092
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$100.0
Avg. Household Income:	\$31,606

3-minute Drive Time

Population:	20,043
Households:	6,659
Agg. Income (Mil.):	\$219.9
Avg. Household Income:	\$31,657

Two locations that the team identified were compared with existing sites where the drug stores Osco and Walgreen's have previously located along with several of the supermarket chain locations in Rockford.

Comparative Drugstore Analysis

Osco 3-minute (N =6)

Population:	11,332
Households:	4,702
Aggregate Income (Mil.):	\$251.0
Avg. Household Income:	\$52,950

Osco 3-minute (Ranges)

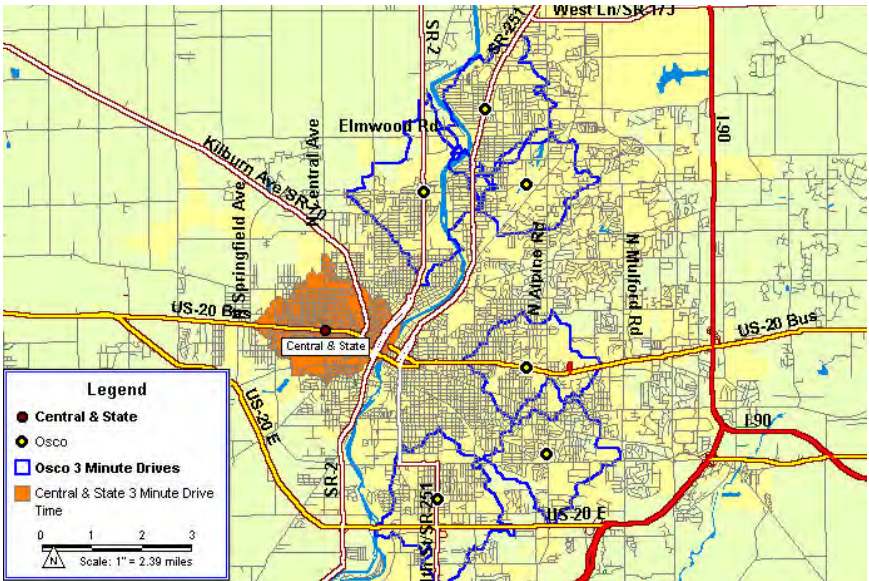
Population:	7,732 – 13,695
Households:	3,370 – 5,533
Aggregate Inc. (Mil.):	\$168.6 – 293.4
Avg. Household Income:	\$32,151 – \$74,271

Walgreen's 2-minute (N =9)

Population:	7,313
Households:	2,981
Aggregate Income (Mil.):	\$137.9
Avg. Household Income:	\$45,796

Walgreen's 2-minute (Ranges)

Population:	3,539 – 12,392
Households:	1,293 – 5,502
Aggregate Inc. (Mil.):	\$92.7 – 197.3
Avg. Household Income:	\$32,151 – \$74,271



Osco locations are based upon a 3-minute drive time (i.e. six-minutes between stores) and the Walgreen's locations are based upon a 2-minute drive time. Walgreen's has a densification strategy that places their stores closer together than Osco.

The analog models suggest that the population with both the traditional two and three minute drive times from State and Springfield are far below the present pattern of site location identified in Rockford by both Osco and

Walgreen's. Based on the analogs, it is unlikely that either drug store chain or any other drug store chain would consider this location for a freestanding store. However, if a drug store followed on the "coat-tails" of a supermarket, the trade area would be larger and this larger trade area may be sufficient to support a drug store.

Drug store market feasibility

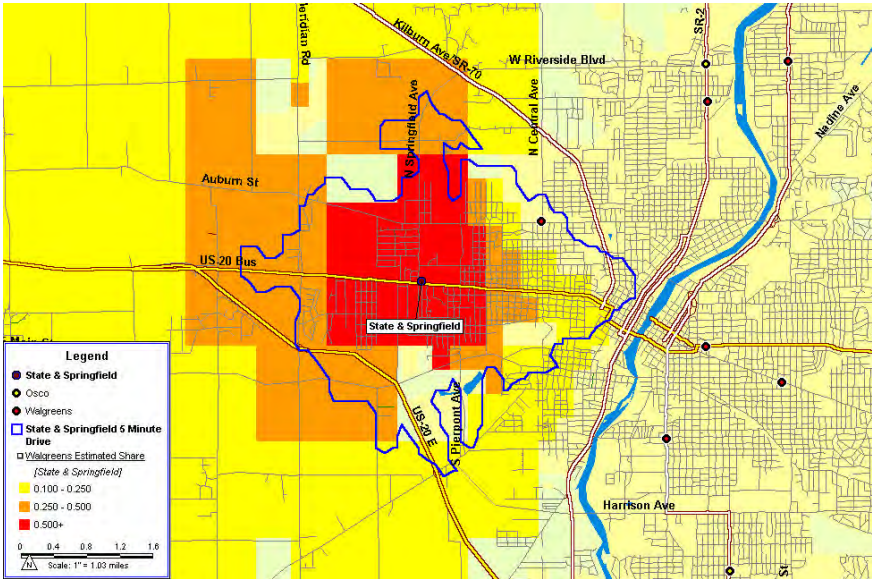
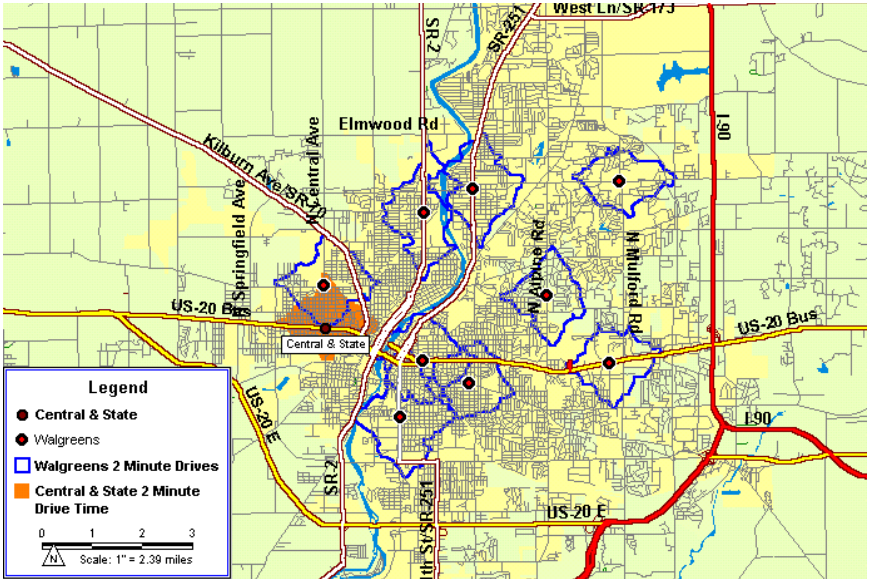
To analyze this potential, a gravity model was applied to this location to

estimate a drug store's sales potential. A gravity model estimates the probability of a resident living within the trade area of shopping at a location based on the proximity of that location to their home and the distance to other alternative drug stores in the marketplace.

Based upon a 4-minute drive time, the trade area has a population of 14,692, while a 5-minute drive time suggests a trade area population of 19,846 people. It is estimated that these

populations have the potential to generate sales of approximately \$5 million for a drug store.

However, if drugstores were located at both Springfield and Central, the model estimates that the Springfield site would have its sales reduced by approximately a half million dollars. A drugstore at Central and State based upon a 3-minute drive time primary trade area would generate, according to the model, an estimated \$5 million in sales.



[This is based upon the assumptions that each per capita prescription sales are \$446, drug stores will capture 66 percent of prescription sales (Mass merchandisers receive 10%, food stores 11% and mail order 13%), prescriptions account for 57 percent of drug store sales, that a drug store at State and Springfield will capture 37 percent of the drug store sales within the five-minute drive time of that location, and that the 5-minute trade area will represent about 75 percent of the market potential. If drugstores were at both Springfield and Central the market share of the Springfield location is an estimated 33 percent of the five-minute trade area, and the Central and State location would capture 36 percent market share of a three-minute drive time primary trade area.]

An average chain drug store generates about \$5.2 million in annual sales. However, specific chains vary. Walgreen’s, for instance, averages \$7 million per store and CVS stores generate \$4.9 million on average annually.

Summary of drug store
Without a supermarket at State and Springfield, it is doubtful that this location would support a drug store because the population within the traditional two to three-minute drive time is insufficient.

However, the population density increases east of Springfield, so that a location at State and Central, for example, which has a population of 20,043, would likely have both higher market share (41%) and greater sales potential than the State and Springfield site.

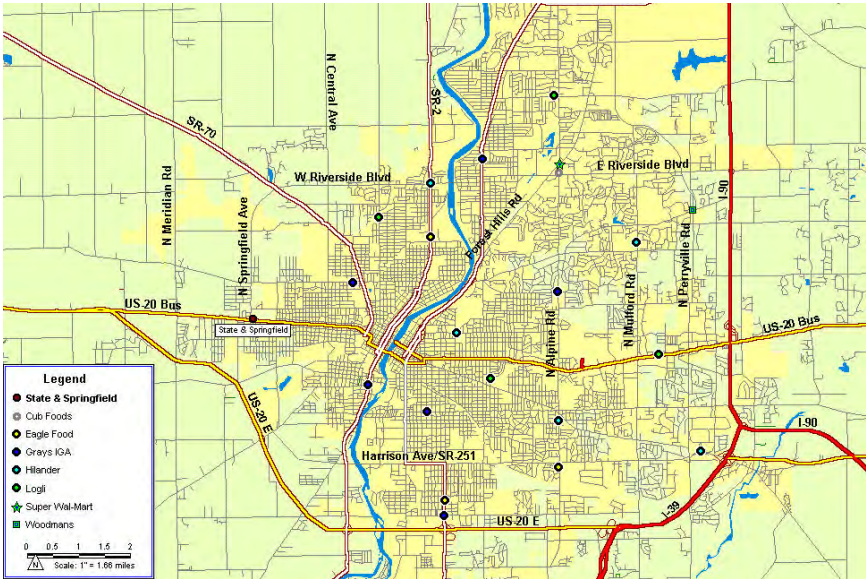
However, locating a drug store at State and Central and supermarket at State and Springfield may have mutually exclusive results. That is, State and Central is attractive as a site for a free-standing drug store, but it is not large enough to accommodate a supermarket; conversely, State and Springfield is large enough to accommodate both a supermarket and a drug store, but because of its low population density in the immediate area it would not support a stand-alone drug store.

The two proposed drugstore locations on State Street — Springfield and Central are about two-miles apart. The model shows that West State Street has the potential to support two drugstores.

Supermarket analysis

Competitive market analysis
The site location pattern that supermarkets have demonstrated in Rockford has been a store placement that

is between eight or ten minutes drive time apart. The smaller supermarkets like Gray’s IGA and Hilander are about eight minutes apart and the larger stores like Logli are placed about a ten-minute drive time from each other. Therefore, the primary trade area of supermarkets in Rockford, that is, where approximately 75 percent of the customers live, is an area that can be best defined as a diamond shaped area created by a four to five minute drive time from each supermarket.



When the trade areas from the existing supermarkets were plotted, only the Gray’s IGA store on Auburn and the Logli store on Rockton had trade areas that cover fringe areas of the West State Street community. This means that residents of this area must travel farther than most residents of Rockford to buy food.

Only the fringes of this market area are now served by a 32,000 square foot Gray’s IGA store on Auburn. This analysis considered the proposed Gray’s IGA on Main Street and assumed it would be of similar size as the Auburn Gray’s IGA. The market feasibility analysis shows that both of these Gray’s stores would be negatively impacted if a supermarket from a competing chain were built at State and Springfield.

The Gray’s IGA stores, because they are smaller than the other supermarkets in Rockford, are placed closer together. Analysis shows that Gray’s IGAs are separated by a contour that represents a six-minute drive time, so that each store has a three-minute trade area.

If Gray’s IGA was to assume a defensive strategy and locate a new store at State and Springfield, thereby keeping competing chains out of the area, a hypothetical three-minute drive time drawn from that location would fit into the spacing pattern that Gray’s IGA has demonstrated at other locations in Rockford.

Since no other supermarkets are on the central and southwest side of Rockford, it appears that from a competitive market position that a site at State and Springfield is not being adequately served.

Analog model of supermarkets
The next step in the analysis is the analog model. That is, how does this three-minute drive time trade area around State and Springfield compare with other Gray’s IGA locations? In addition, how does this site compare with other trade area areas of the other supermarket chains in the Rockford area?

An analysis shows that the population within a three-minute drive time

is insufficient to support a freestanding drug store, and it is assumed that the results would be similar for a supermarket. Therefore, larger trade areas for support were considered. At a five-minute drive time, this location does not compete with other non Gray’s IGA supermarkets and at five-minutes the number of households is 6,468 (Analysis models use households for food, since food expenditure data is at that level, whereas prescription drug expenditures are reported on a per capita basis).

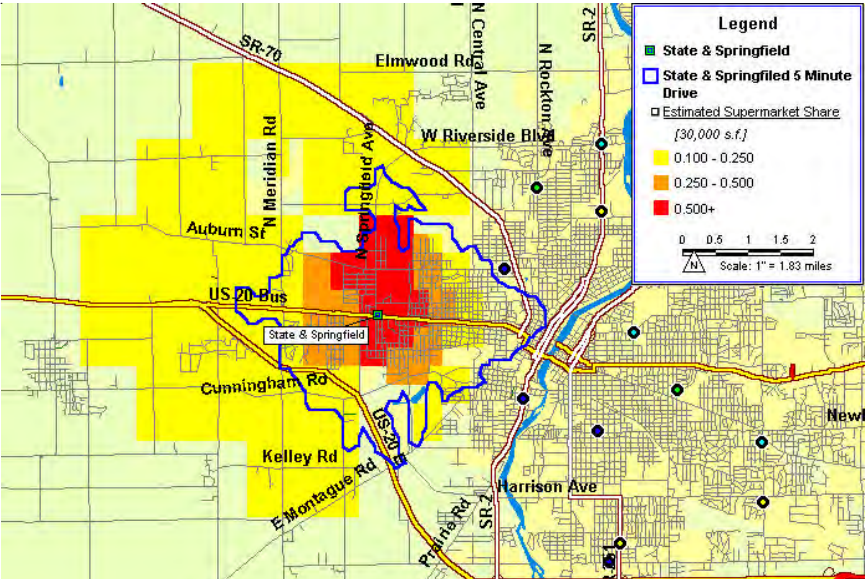
Comparative Supermarket Analysis

Gray’s IGA 3-minute (N=6)

Population:	16,311
Households:	6,500
Aggregate Inc. (Mil.):	\$277.5
Avg. Household Income:	\$42,094

Gray’s IGA 3-minute (Ranges)

Population:	9,301 – 23,104
Households:	3,775 – 8,731
Aggregate Inc. (Mil.):	\$172.8 – 347.9
Avg. Household Income:	\$30,665 – \$78,687



38

ing customers to easily reach this location and critical to attracting a drug store or supermarket.

Supermarket feasibility

A traditional gravity model was used to estimate the sales potential. The same model was used for the drug stores. However, drug stores are relatively similar size in area, whereas supermarkets vary greatly. Therefore, the model was adjusted to reflect store sizes. In the Rockford market, estimates of store size ranges from a

low of about 30,000 square foot up to an estimated 200,000 square feet for the new Woodman’s supermarket. The gravity model adjusts for the size of these stores in estimating market share. Based upon the results of the economic modeling, the State and Springfield site will need a supermarket larger than 30,000 square feet in order to attract a customer base of support. A supermarket of between 45,000 and 55,000 square feet has the potential to generate a modest \$14.5 million in sales potential. At this size,

it would be competitive with the other supermarkets besides Gray’s IGA.

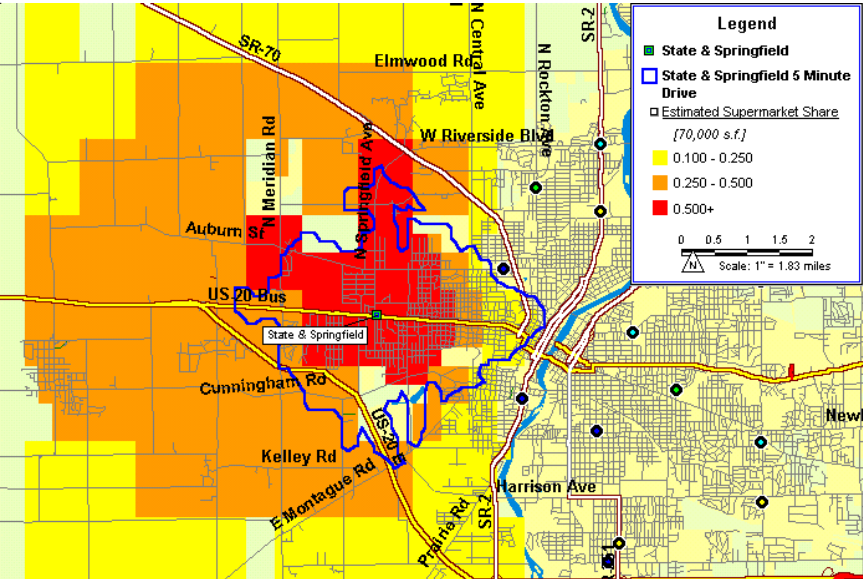
In addition, a larger size supermarket is necessary to maximize the potential of this site by becoming an alternative for residents that live west of Rockford along U.S. Route 20. The area between Rockford and Freeport does not have a supermarket and a modern supermarket at this location begins to have the potential to attract this customer base. This also assumes that the West State Street corridor is improved and that shoppers feel comfortable about traveling along the corridor to shop.

Summary of supermarket

In summary, a supermarket at State and Springfield has the potential for modest sales volumes. However, chains have many choices of where to build new stores and it is unlikely that this location would be toward the top of their list. Therefore, we believe that the city will need to provide incentives to encourage a supermarket to build on this site.

For stores like Hilander and Gray’s IGA, building a supermarket on this site would be a defensive decision. For Gray’s IGA in particular, they would have the most to lose if another supermarket chain entered this area. That is, their other stores would be negatively impacted. To a lesser extent, other Hilander stores would also be negatively impacted if Hilander were not the supermarket operator. Hilander, which is now owned by Kroger, might consider one of their other operations such as, Food 4 Less, for this market. Kroger is entering the Chicago DMA (Designated Market Area) with this concept and they may consider expanding into the Rockford DMA, but this opinion is purely speculative.

Other supermarket chains may consider this site if this location is part of a broader strategy that they have for the Rockford market. However, in all cases, the improvement of the West State Street corridor is imperative. In addition, the improvement of Springfield into a thoroughfare from a collector street will greatly enhance the value of the site.

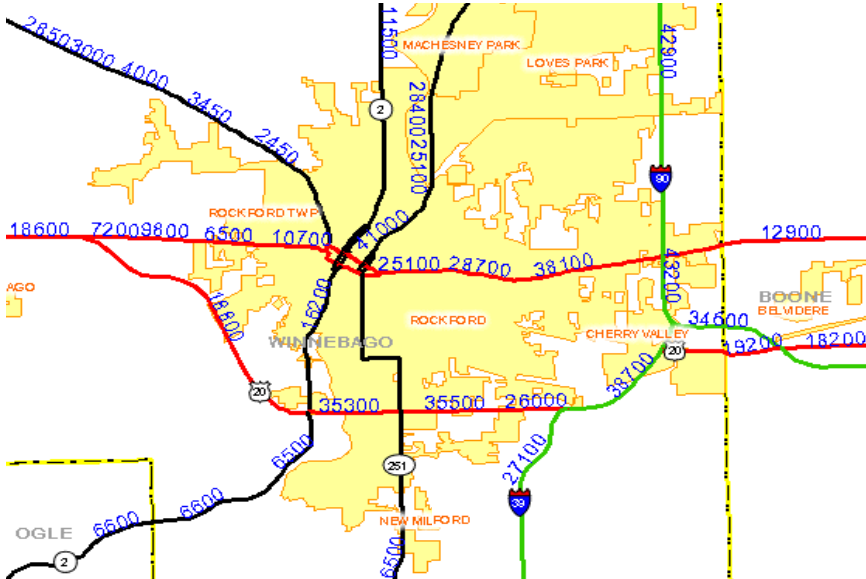
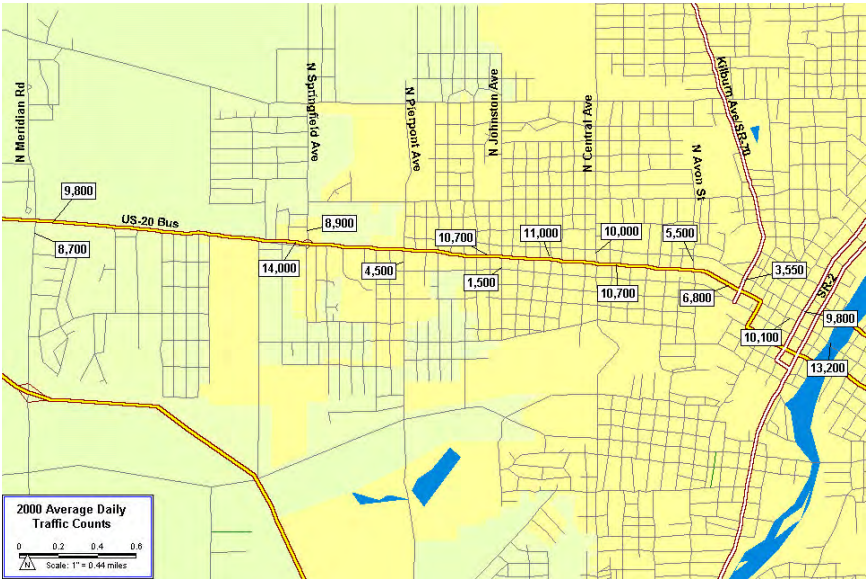


The automobile traffic along West State Street is about 10,000 cars daily. Many retailers like to see the traffic double to more than 20,000 to support operations that rely upon automobiles. While the improvements along the State Street corridor are unlikely to double the traffic volume, it will likely see substantial improvement. What this site has to offer a supermarket is a high market share of the available buying power from area residents. Improving Springfield and State Street will allow access to a

broader market and allow a retailer to dominate this underserved marketplace. In addition to a supermarket/drug store, the amount of other retail uses is surprisingly limited today; this is because many supermarket chains put restrictive clauses in their leases that prohibit many other uses that were typically found in neighborhood shopping centers. However, if the supermarkets do not insist upon exclusivity clauses, the expanded list of

uses may include dry cleaners, laundries, women’s hair salons, unisex hair studios, videotape rentals, and nail salons. Food service users are also popular and include fast food restaurants such as pizza, chicken, and Chinese fast food. Other casual dining restaurants are sometimes found in out lots to neighborhood centers. Supermarkets also attract medical and dental office uses as well as financial institutions.

Conclusion
In conclusion, the retail opportunities along the West State Street Corridor are initially limited. The development of a drug store and supermarket will begin to fill the retailing needs of the community, but to attract both of these types of business will require city assistance. Part of that assistance is the rebuilding of West State Street and Springfield. These infrastructure improvements will be the first step in rebuilding this neighborhood and allow retailers to enter this market and fill the underserved needs of area residents.



ARCHITECTURAL
CONSIDERATIONS

The West side of Rockford contains a large number of homes that are architecturally significant. However, the West State Street Corridor does not contain many of these significant homes. The corridor does contain a few homes that have a distinct architectural style that may warrant preservation. Preserving the architecture of a neighborhood is essential to preserving its value and identity. In evaluating the current housing stock, some homes should be preserved by either staying in the same location or by being relocated. In most cases, relocation will be the only alternative to demolition.

In order to fairly evaluate the potential threat the new roadway will have on homes and the neighborhood, criteria should be established to assist in the reviewing of whether a home should be demolished, relocated or maintained in its current location. A property’s value should be measured by more than dollars and cents. Other intangibles should also be considered in determining the value of the buildings and their relationship to the neighborhood.

The West State Street Corridor between Rockton Avenue and Pierpont Avenue has severely depressed property values that do not reflect the true value of comparably sized structures in other parts of the community. These structures do not have the same assessed value. They do have some redeeming features that are worth preserving, and / or renovating as part of the revitalization of West State Street. The preservation and renovation of worthy structures will reinforce and enhance the proposed corridor improvements. It is essential to preserve these significant elements to establish value and reestablish the neighborhood’s integrity and identity.

The costs of saving a structure are significant. Therefore, selecting significant and worthy architectural features that will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood are extremely important. A property value is measured by its resale value or the mortgage it can support. Since a property’s value is typically determined by the surrounding neighborhood, investing large sums in a home along West State Street is risky. For



Crusader Clinic



Mount Sinai Church



House of Refuge



Hardware store

homes that are to remain in the corridor, every effort should be made to provide the necessary funding to enhance and reinforce the other improvements. Most of the homes have a current value that ranges from \$10,000 to \$30,000. Improvements and renovations made just to bring a structure into compliance with applicable codes can cost \$50,000 to \$90,000. On the other hand new construction costs will be \$120,000 and up. Presently, new homes in this area are valued far less than what it costs to build them. In older neighborhoods, there is greater value in preserving the structures than in building new ones that have a lower quality of materials and design. Renovation can offer a superior end product with a long term value if approached properly.

If the property has to be relocated, those additional costs will be difficult to recover or even justify. Relocation plus rehabilitation is expensive and is only suitable for the most worthy of structures. In order to determine whether a structure is worthy of relocation or rehabilitation, one or more

of the following criteria needs to be met:

1. The structure needs to be architecturally significant, have a distinctive architectural style, and use materials and architectural details in a way that are unique to the neighborhood.
2. Three to five architecturally significant structures on a single block probably contribute to a positive impression of the neighborhood, and give cohesion to a block.
3. The exterior appearance of a structure should not be the sole governing factor as to whether or not a house should be removed or demolished. The interior condition, such as the quality of the woodwork, architectural details, and room layout should also be a factor in determining the value of the structure.

4. Structures that have been significantly altered to change their architectural appearance from that of the original may be considered if those changes are reversible. The cost to make those changes should be considered as part of the structure's real value.

In general, if a home were to be relocated, the cost to move, install a new foundation, reinstall and connect utilities, provide walks, drives and landscaping is approximately \$55,000. There is an additional cost of relocating overhead utilities such as telephone, cable, and electrical that may range from \$5,000 to \$15,000 depending on the length of the move, which, to be cost-effective, cannot be very far away.

The cost of relocation and rehabilitation in most cases will result in demolition of the structure. Therefore, in cases where groups or blocks of homes contribute to the architectural integrity of the neighborhood, preservation of those structures should be strongly considered. However, it is extremely important that enough re-

sources are provided to make them attractive for investment by a homeowner, and that value will be maintained. Such block opportunities exist only on the south side of the 1300 block, and the south side of the 2600 block of West State Street. In these areas, there are three or more uniquely styled structures that provide a sense of neighborhood with a great deal of integrity.

Other structures such as Crusader Clinic, The House of Refuge and the Mount Sinai Church, are significant neighborhood and community based resources that need to be preserved. Routing a new and improved corridor around these structures is crucial to enhancing and reinforcing a neighborhood asset.

Commercial structures in the corridor, for the most part, do not contribute any redeeming architectural features that are worthy of preservation. The hardware store on the north side of the 2700 block of West State Street is one possible exception. However, the bungalow styled homes across the street have a great deal more integrity

as a block unit, and should be considered for preservation over the hardware store.

One of the most significant architectural homes in the neighborhood is at 2105 West State Street. Preserving this structure would come at a high cost. However, it could serve as a catalyst and a focal point in preserving and renovating the neighborhood. It would also enhance the other road and parkway improvements in the corridor.

The purpose of preserving major cultural institutions, religious structures or architecturally significant homes is to highlight those elements that add to and promote the value of the neighborhood.



2105 West State Street



1300 block



2600 block



1300 block



1300 block



2600 block

AFTERWORD

The redevelopment of the West State Street corridor is a project that extends well beyond the asphalt and curbs of the re-surfaced roadway. It is an opportunity to significantly improve the quality of life of thousands of Rockford’s residents. As such, it represents the potential for uniting many of the citizens and government officials in a common effort. It is hoped that this study will be the first step of many down the path that leads to this goal.

The following are specific actions that should be taken to turn the ideas represented herein into reality.

- Complete Phase One engineering studies for the corridor.
- Identify and complete a demonstration project along the corridor.
- Coordinate efforts by the various City, County, and private agencies and institutions to address social and physical needs of the surrounding community.
- Assemble economic stimulus and aid packages for new businesses.
- Promote the corridor as a unique opportunity for businesses to area merchants (invite representatives to high-level meetings with leading civic administrators).
- Create a way to publicize, on a regular basis, the positive changes taking place in the corridor (quarterly newsletter, press releases, etc.).
- Improve response times by police and emergency agencies, increase patrols in the area.
- Aggressively enforce code violations.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY RESULTS

West State Street Corridor
Plan 2001
Community Survey Results

July 27, 2001

The City of Rockford and the West State Street Corridor Steering Committee are preparing the West State Street Corridor Plan. The plan is expected to benefit the community in several ways. For example, the visual image of the corridor will be greatly improved, transportation issues will be addressed, and reinvestment in the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods will be stimulated.

This survey will help the West State Street Corridor Steering Committee and the planning consultant generate ideas and priorities for the corridor, ones which will be implemented over the course of the next decade. It addresses general corridor / neighborhood issues, and asks you to express your attitudes and opinions concerning specific improvements.

Thank you for your assistance in this important planning process.

1. Are you proud to say you live in the West State Street Corridor area?

- ☒ Yes53
- ☒ No27

Comments

I don't like to pass through it.

If you fix it up.

If you follow through with what was stated.

Only if improvements are made.

Don't live here.

I do not live in the area.

I would be prouder if it was improved.

2. Are there adequate retail/commercial services in the corridor? If not, what services are most needed?

- ☒ Yes5

☒ No87

Comments

1.

x

major grocery store
2.

x

grocery store, restaurant
3.

x

all types of commercial and retail businesses
4.

x

grocery store, bank
5.

x

quick oil change-auto repair
6.

x

drug, grocery, banks
7.

x

grocery store, pharmacy
8.

x

grocery, dry goods, banks, auto repair, quicklube
9.

no answer
10.

x

grocery store, clothing stores
11.

x

grocery store, dry good store, shopping center
12.

no answer
13.

x
14.

x

laundromat, convenience store

☒ Yes	☒ No	Comments	☒ Yes	☒ No	Comments
15.	x	grocery store, shopping mall with theaters, hotels	36.	x	grocery stores, banks, clothing store
16.	x	food store, clothing, theater, hardware, flower shop, bakery	37.	x	eateries, upscale restaurant facilities
17.	x	stores, mini malls, food markets, theaters	38.	x	
18.	x		39.	x	dining/ gathering facility
19.	x	grocery stores ie. Sav-a-lot, Retail or Goodwill	40.	x	grocery, gas, fast food
20.	x	mall; everything that is on the east side	41.	x	grocery, all stores of any kind, theaters, restaurants
21.	x	pharmacy, shops, supermarkets, retail stores, restaurants, etc.	42.	x	supermarkets, service stations
22.	x	full service grocery store, clothing/ department store, restaurants	43.	x	grocery stores, dry cleaners
23.	x	grocery store	44.	x	grocery stores, bank, restaurant-major chains
24.	x		45.	x	grocery, restaurant, clothing, high tech, cleaners
25.	x	almost anything	46.	x	grocery store, bank
26.	x	grocery, discount store (Wal-mart, K-mart)	47. x		dress store, bank
27.	x	grocery store, bank	48.	x	supermarket, gas station, mid-size mall, better municipal services-like eastside
28.	x	Borders, Wal-mart, grocery market, mall, major restaurants-Dunkin Donuts	49.	x	grocery store, restaurant
29.	x	major grocery chain, major retailers: Wal-mart, K-mart	50. x		shopping center
30.	x	large stores:Wal-mart, Logli	51.	x	shopping mall, grocery store
31.	x	supermarket, Wal-mart, K-mart	52.	x	grocery store, retail clothing
32.	x	supermarkets, variety stores	53.	x	grocery store
33.	x	large supermarkets, cleaners, clothing store, hardware store	54.	x	retail, grocery, shopping mall
34.	x	grocery stores that are free from people who hang out in parking lot	55.	x	
35.	x	major grocery store, community center, better housing, more gas stations	56.	x	
			57. x		
			58.	x	
			59.	x	
			60.	x	hardware store, grocery store
			61.	x	grocery store, hotels, mini malls
			62.	x	hardware store, grocery store
			63.	x	food center- Super Wal-mart, restaurants

☒ Yes	☒ No	Comments	☒ Yes	☒ No	Comments
64.	x	grocery store, major department stores, restaurants	87.	x	grocery store, mall complex
65.	x	grocery, national chain stores- Wal-mart, Krispy Kreme	88.	x	grocery stores, retail shopping- K-mart, not a generic strip mall
66. x			89.	x	business need a modern look and known name
67.	x		90.	x	grocery store-Logli's, Eagle, major retail stores
68.	x		91.	x	grocery store
69.	x		92.	x	grocery stores, clothing stores
70.	x	grocery store	93.	x	grocery store
71.	x	Wal-mart	94.	x	a decent grocery store
72.	x		95.	x	grocery / convenience store
73.	x	grocery, mall park with children's bike path	3. Some residents have complained about unwanted traffic cutting through their neighborhood. Is this a problem?		
74.	x	clothing stores, book stores, banks, libraries- Wal-mart, Eagles, Barnes & Noble	☒ Yes	65	
75.	x	supermarkets	☒ No	18	
76.		no answer	4. If better sidewalks, lighting, bike paths, etc. were provided along State Street, would more people use them?		
77.	x		☒ Yes	90	
78.	x	retail, restaurants, supermarkets	☒ No	2	
79.	x	grocery store, restaurants- McDonalds, drug store	5. Should West State Street be renamed? If so, what would you suggest it be called?		
80.	x	grocery store, better housing or none, bank, restaurants	☒ Yes	6	
81.	x	grocery stores, viable retail stores-clothing	☒ No	85	
82.	x	grocery	Comments		
83.	x	grocery store, shopping centers, community centers, parks	The name is not the problem.		
84.	x	grocery store, fast food, coffee shop, ice cream, department store	No! It needs more retail stores and commercial business.		
85.	x	all	Improve the quality of economic conditions and the stereotype that exist.		
86. x					

If no improvements- just band-aids-West State should be own city.
Rename Multi-nationality West State because of the different residents.
Was East State Street renamed?
Martin Luther King Dr.
This street has been here over 100 years only the image needs changing.
It would only increase confusion. ‘North 2nd’ / ‘Martin Luther King Jr’ is still referred to as ‘North 2nd’ to most ‘Rockfordians’

6. From the list below, circle the five most critical needs for the West State Street Corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Rank	Item	Responses
1.	Increased financial assistance for home and business renovation	58
1.	Increased number and variety of retail shops	58
1.	Removal of dilapidated multi-family housing from State Street.	58
4.	Decreased number of defunct and dilapidated businesses	49
5.	Reduced crime against property/home burglary and personal assaults	45
6.	Better lighting	42
7.	Increased landscaping along the corridor	41
8.	Improved public services (police and fire protection, code enforcement, etc.)	35
9.	Improved property maintenance	32
10.	Better sidewalks	25
11.	Increased space for community activities (street fairs, art fairs, bazaars, markets, etc.)	23
12.	Improved traffic circulation	18
13.	Better signage	11
14.	Reduced visual impact of overhead power lines	8
14.	Increased open space and pocket parks	8

7. Of the five needs you circled above, please prioritize these five needs, starting with the most important to the least important.

Rank	Item	Responses
1.	Increased number and variety of retail shops	188
2.	Increased financial assistance for home and business renovation	173
3.	Removal of dilapidated multi-family housing from State Street.	158
4.	Reduced crime against property/home burglary and personal assaults	135
5.	Improved public services (police and fire protection, code enforcement, etc.)	119
6.	Decreased number of defunct and dilapidated businesses	114
7.	Improved property maintenance	85
8.	Better lighting	77
9.	Increased landscaping along the corridor	58
10.	Increased space for community activities (street fairs, art fairs, bazaars, markets, etc.)	39
11.	Better sidewalks	33
12.	Improved traffic circulation	29
13.	Reduced visual impact of overhead power lines	19
14.	Increased open space and pocket parks.	10
14.	Better signage	10

8. For each of the characteristics listed below, please circle whether you feel they are good, fair, or poor along the West State Street Corridor.

Corridor image

☒ Good	6
☒ Fair	6
☒ Poor	79

Personal safety (police and fire protection)

- ☒ Good 6
- ☒ Fair 53
- ☒ Poor 34

Public services (street cleaning, snow removal, trash collection, etc.)

- ☒ Good 12
- ☒ Fair 46
- ☒ Poor 37

Shopping opportunities

- ☒ Good 1
- ☒ Fair 3
- ☒ Poor 88

Dining opportunities

- ☒ Good 2
- ☒ Fair 4
- ☒ Poor 89

Open space / parks

- ☒ Good 2
- ☒ Fair 25
- ☒ Poor 65

Overall quality of life

- ☒ Good 3
- ☒ Fair 23
- ☒ Poor 68

Opportunity to be involved in the neighborhood

- ☒ Good 19
- ☒ Fair 39
- ☒ Poor 30

Future prospects for improvement

- ☒ Good 43
- ☒ Fair 24
- ☒ Poor 21

9. For the following statements, circle your relative level of agreement or disagreement.

The West State Street Corridor is experiencing decline.

- ☒ Strongly agree 34
- ☒ Agree 46
- ☒ Disagree 11
- ☒ Strongly Disagree 1

There is a need for stronger business associations along the corridor.

- ☒ Strongly agree 35
- ☒ Agree 46
- ☒ Disagree 1
- ☒ Strongly Disagree 1

Sidewalk and street improvements are needed in the corridor.

- ☒ Strongly agree 60
- ☒ Agree 29
- ☒ Disagree 3
- ☒ Strongly Disagree 0



The corridor is in need of major image improvements.

- ☒ Strongly agree **63**
- ☒ Agree **25**
- ☒ Disagree **2**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **0**

The corridor should express a greater sense of the surrounding West Side neighborhoods.

- ☒ Strongly agree **50**
- ☒ Agree **34**
- ☒ Disagree **1**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **0**

Rental housing should be upgraded and enhanced.

- ☒ Strongly agree **57**
- ☒ Agree **27**
- ☒ Disagree **5**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **2**

More people would move in and stay in this corridor/neighborhood if the image of the corridor was improved.

- ☒ Strongly agree **59**
- ☒ Agree **29**
- ☒ Disagree **1**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **0**

The corridor needs stronger building and property code enforcement.

- ☒ Strongly agree **47**
- ☒ Agree **42**
- ☒ Disagree **1**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **0**

More needs to be done to reduce criminal activity along the corridor.

- ☒ Strongly agree **57**
- ☒ Agree **35**
- ☒ Disagree **0**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **0**

There is a need for greater separation or buffers between corridor retail activities and the adjacent neighborhoods.

- ☒ Strongly agree **19**
- ☒ Agree **48**
- ☒ Disagree **18**
- ☒ Strongly Disagree **1**

10. For each of the proposed changes listed below, please tell us if you think it would improve the corridor a lot, a little, or not at all.

Improved streetscape appearance (sidewalks, lighting, trees, etc.)

- ☒ A lot **70**
- ☒ A little **17**
- ☒ Not at all **1**

Fewer vacant and boarded up houses

- ☒ A lot **89**
- ☒ A little **3**
- ☒ Not at all **1**

Fewer vacant or dilapidated shops

- ☒ A lot **83**
- ☒ A little **6**
- ☒ Not at all **0**

Fewer multi-family residences

☒ A lot	42
☒ A little	36
☒ Not at all	6

Enhanced landscaping along the corridor

☒ A lot	70
☒ A little	19
☒ Not at all	1

Better mix of shops and services

☒ A lot	85
☒ A little	4
☒ Not at all	0

Increased number of office, commercial and light industrial businesses that could provide neighborhood employment

☒ A lot	71
☒ A little	14
☒ Not at all	1

Improved street lighting

☒ A lot	72
☒ A little	14
☒ Not at all	1

Other

☒ A lot	14
☒ A little	2
☒ Not at all	1

(please specify)

- More law enforcement
- Community center-connected to school, family sit-down dining
- Discount dept. store (2 responses)
- No more liquor stores or garages
- If property improvement means higher taxes, reverse the law.
- Fewer rental properties.
- Recreation area (2 responses)
- Amenities, such as park benches
- Home appliance, remodeling store
- Retail and grocery stores

11. Which of the following stores would you most likely shop at if they were in the corridor? (Circle all that apply.)

Rank	Item	Responses
1.	Major grocery chain	83
2.	Financial institution (bank, savings and loan)	67
3.	Clothing store	65
4.	Bakery/café	61
5.	Hardware/home repair/lawn and garden supplies	59
6.	Pharmacy	52
7.	Book store/gift items/card shop	46
8.	Specialty retail items (jewelry, hobby, camera, sewing)	40
9.	Flower shop	37
9.	Games, toys, children’s play things	37
11.	Small appliance repair	32
11.	Arts and crafts supplies	32
13.	Health club	29
14.	Health store	1

12. If you have other comments or recommendations concerning the West State Street Corridor, please share them with us in the space below.

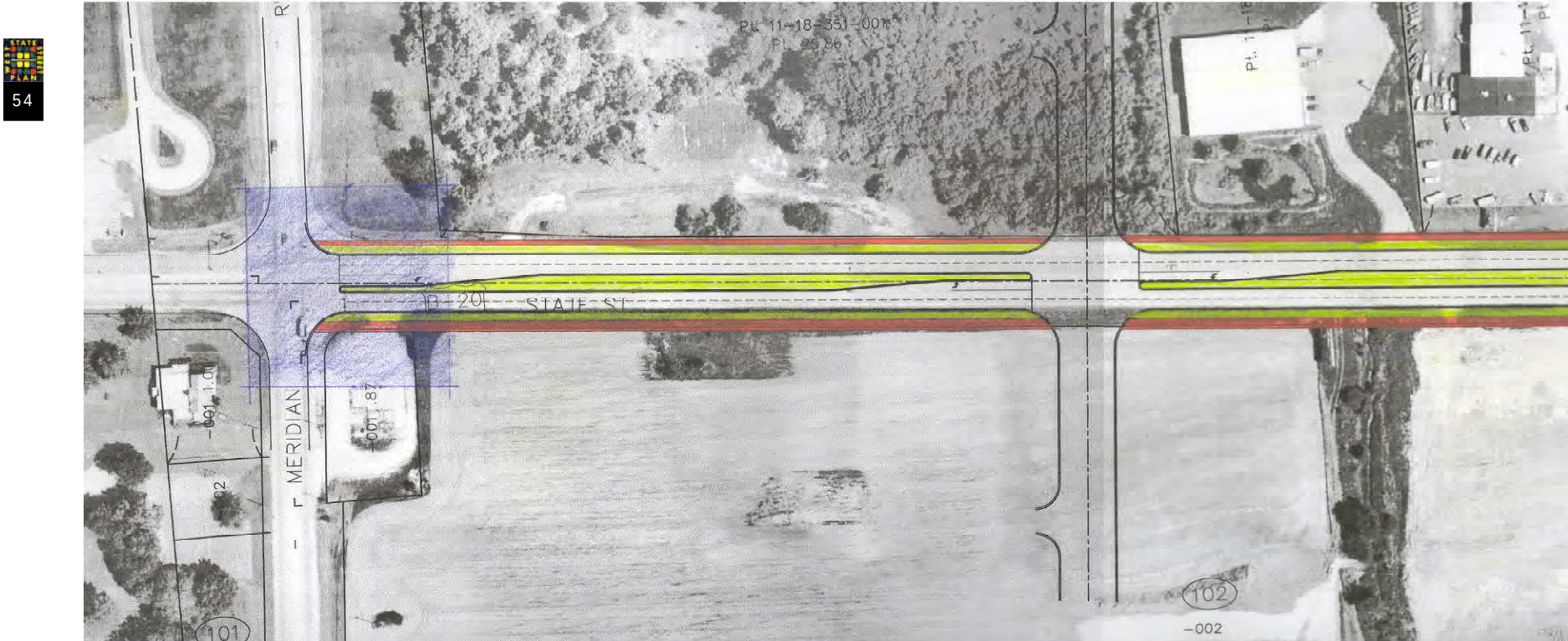
1. Just do it.
2. West-siders use west side. Speed regulations.
3. Support community based organizations.
4. Water needs to be brought to Park-er-Woods.
5. Major grocery needed.
6. Involvement from local business and homeowners.
7. What about boarded up houses within blocks of State Street?
8. If corridor becomes retail is there low income housing construction available to offset displacement of the poor and those who cannot afford to purchase their own home.
9. Grocery store, department store or restaurant.
10. Please don't allow these ideas to sit shelf.
11. Stop talking-do something.
12. Make West State useful and comfortable for us to live.
13. Have meetings to include smaller sections of corridor. This meeting too technical for too large an area. Too much on Chicago that doesn't applied to local situation.
14. Stringent guidelines regarding granting of licenses, zoning etc.
15. How soon will this take place? The sooner the better.
16. You should make changes to all alike. Not just pick one.
17. There needs to be signage near schools. More family dining, discount stores, and comprehensive community center (with health care, adult ed. Child care, recreational opportunities for children, adults, and families, laundry facilities and technology lab.
18. Every time another new store opens on the east side it is another reminder the west side has been left out.
19. The entire city should care and support.
20. Put a ceiling on rental property.

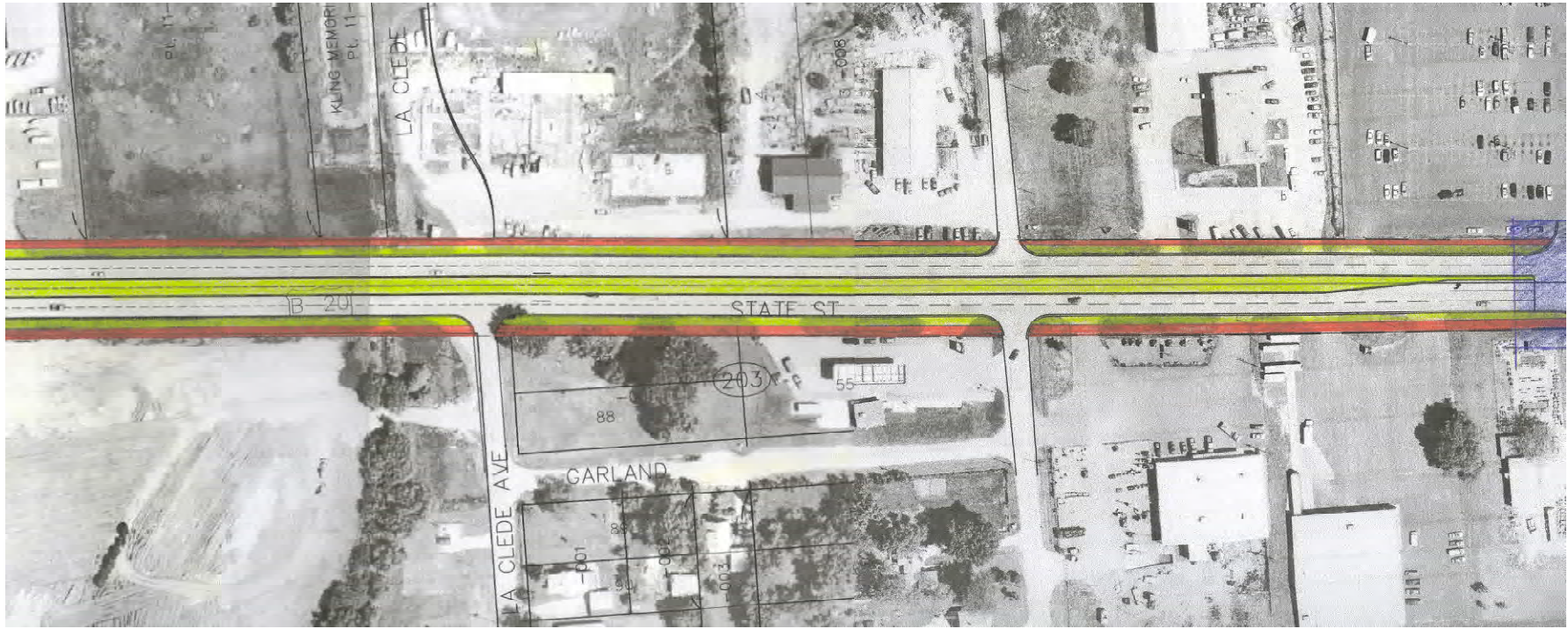
21. Let residents be involved. Publicize well.
22. Please don't let ideas stop at this meeting.
23. Requirement of store front churches and business to have parking off bus zone.
24. Improve public transit.
25. We need less liquor stores.
26. Great idea, don't throw by the wayside.
27. Financial assistance to small business.
28. Funding is needed to achieve these goals.
29. Financial assistance to existing homeowners and businesses.
30. Restaurant
31. The target area for city finance should be wider.
32. West State Street community center for boys and girls. Creates jobs and builds stronger families.
33. How did East side, Riverside, Mulford, Perryville expansion/ improvement take place? Who were the movers behind it? Are they involved in this process?
34. Eagle, A&P, and two drugs stores failed in corridor. Spend less money on corridor and more money on improving existing housing.
35. Banking, Wal-Mart
36. Bus transportation
37. What happen to other projects that were introduced to the city?
38. Ideas to improve pedestrian traffic- walkways, open green space, crosswalks.
39. Lets get the job done.
40. Consider a separation from the city and should be afforded some quality, quantity and services that the East side neighbors are receiving. Major retail and financial services should be given to the area.
41. The zoning office pushes special use permits through the city. They are destroying zoning in Rockford.

-
- 42. Pleased to see positive action for west side.
 - 43. Please restore this once great street to a beautiful and useful part of our city.
 - 44. Balance East and West State Street.
 - 45. Major chain such as a Wal-Mart
 - 46. Meridian and West State are nice land space for a major grocery / retail chain which would draw West side residents as well as surrounding subdivisions in Winnebago, Pecatonica, Seward etc. who travel to Freeport or far east Rockford.
 - 47. We want to see the West Side shine and start reaping the benefits of what the East side seems to always have.

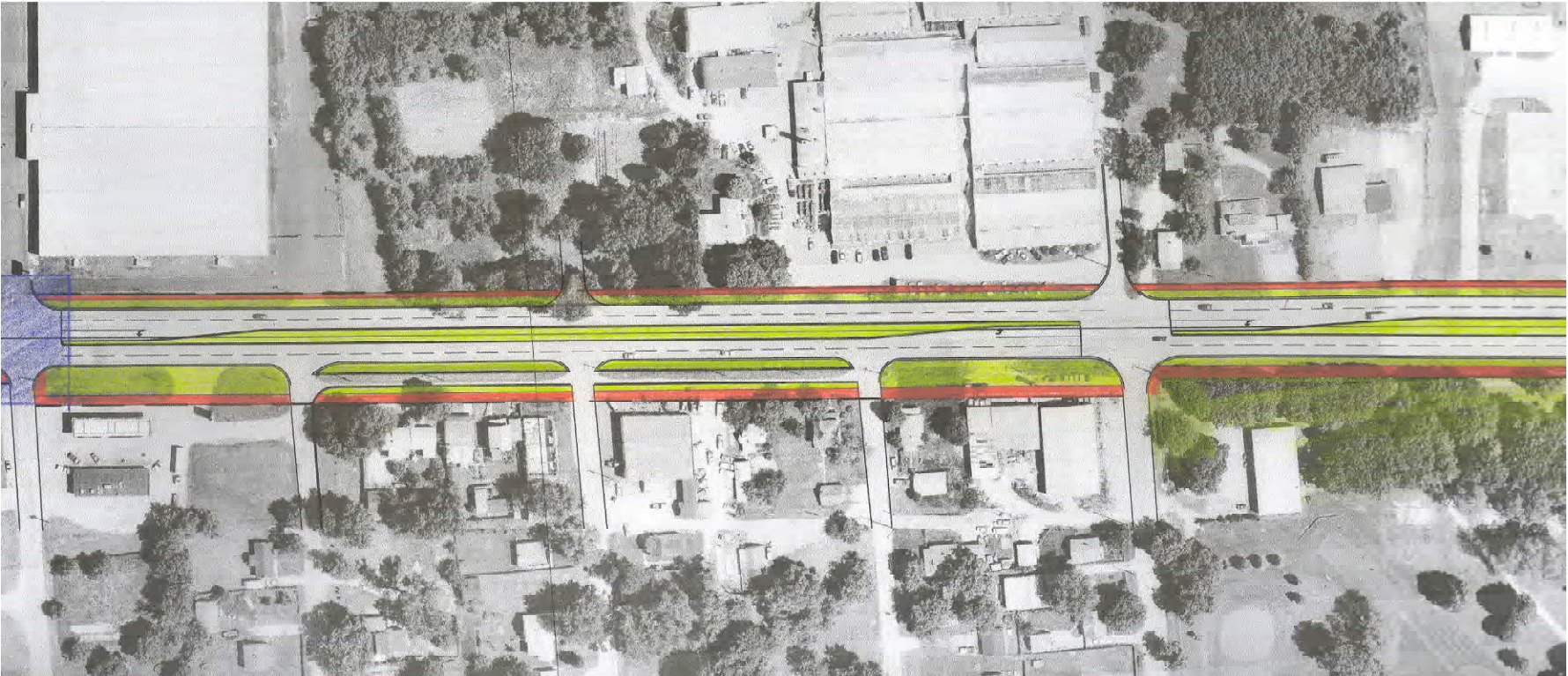
APPENDIX B:
ENLARGED CORRIDOR
GEOMETRIC DESIGN

PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway



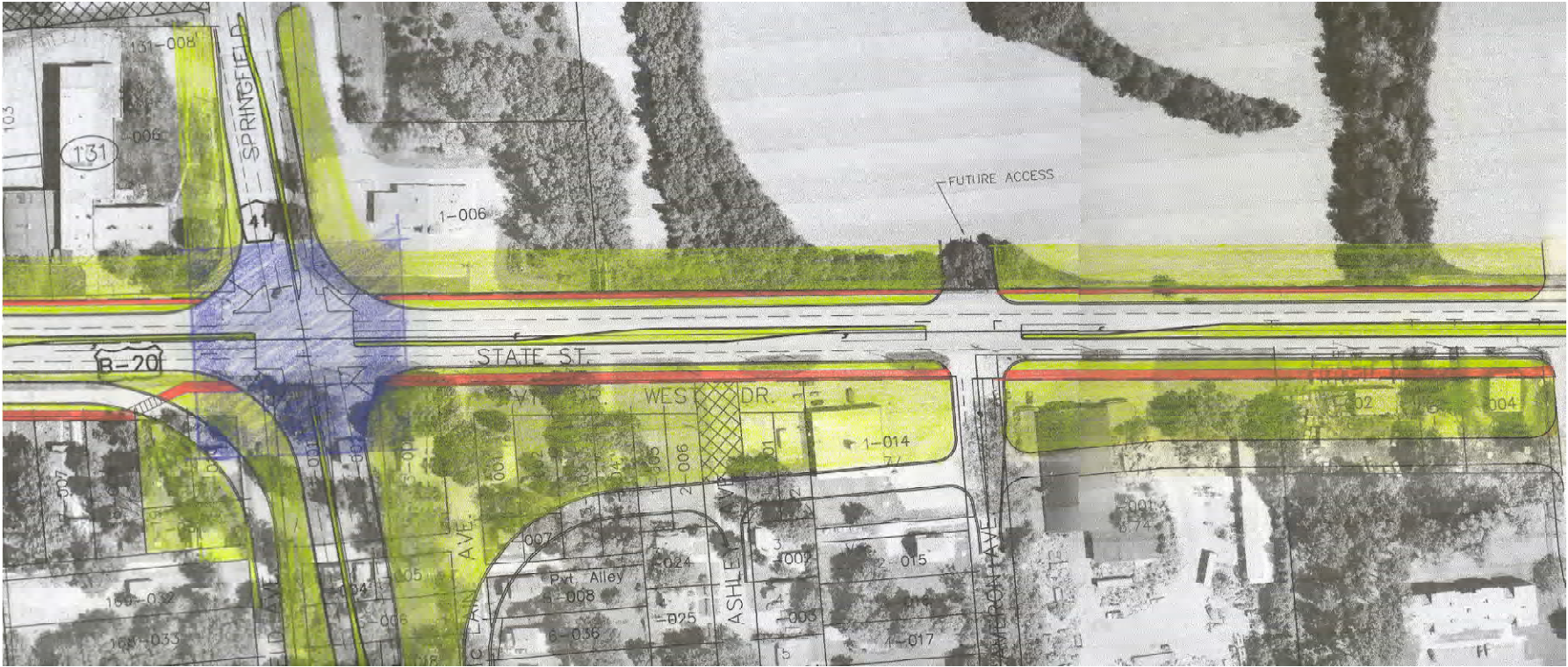


PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway





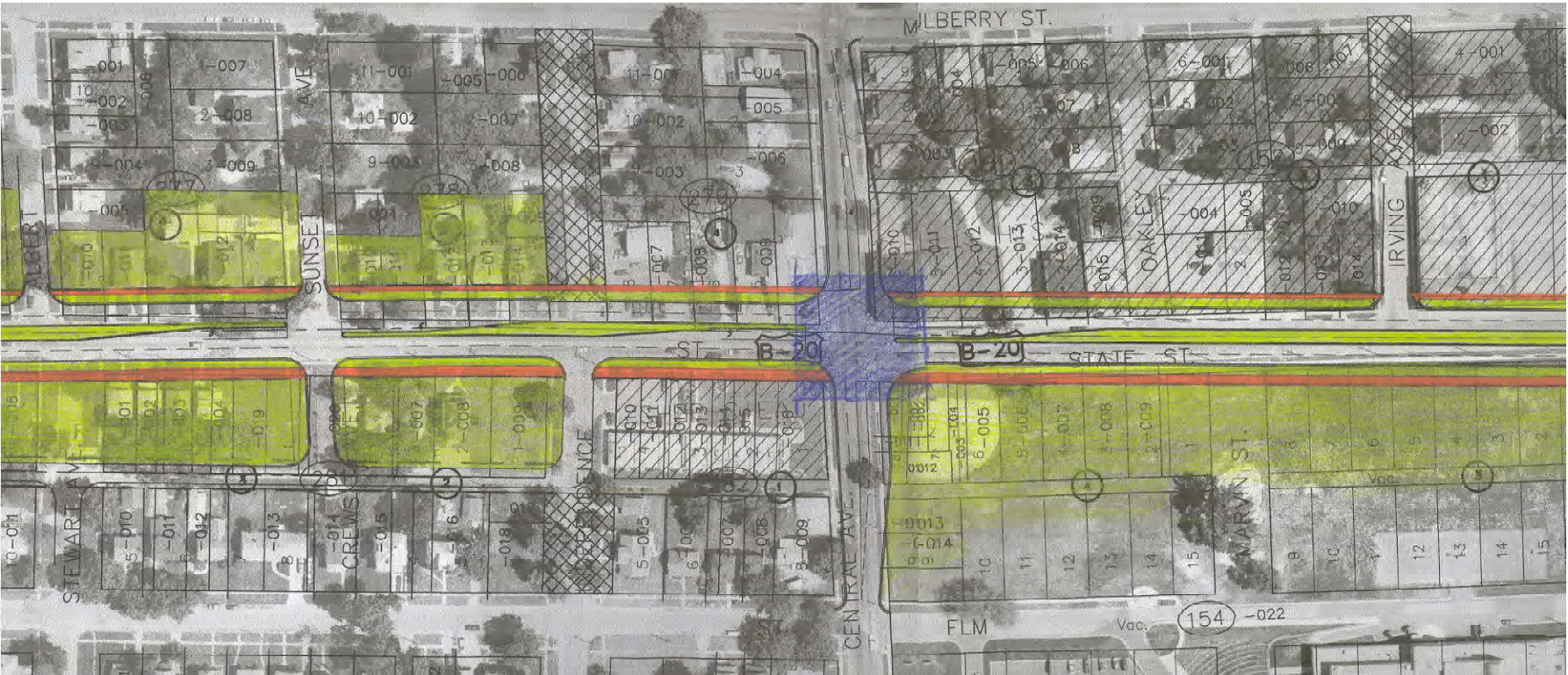
PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway



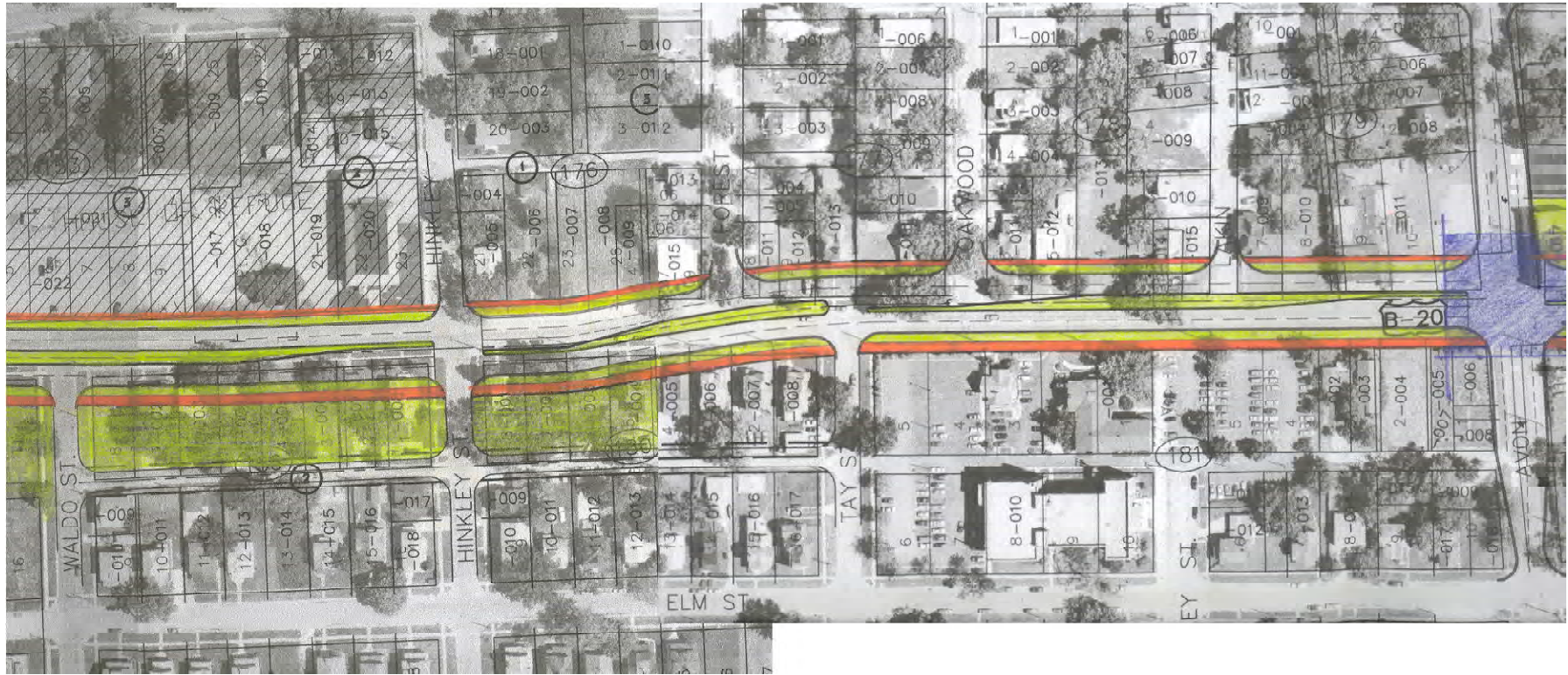


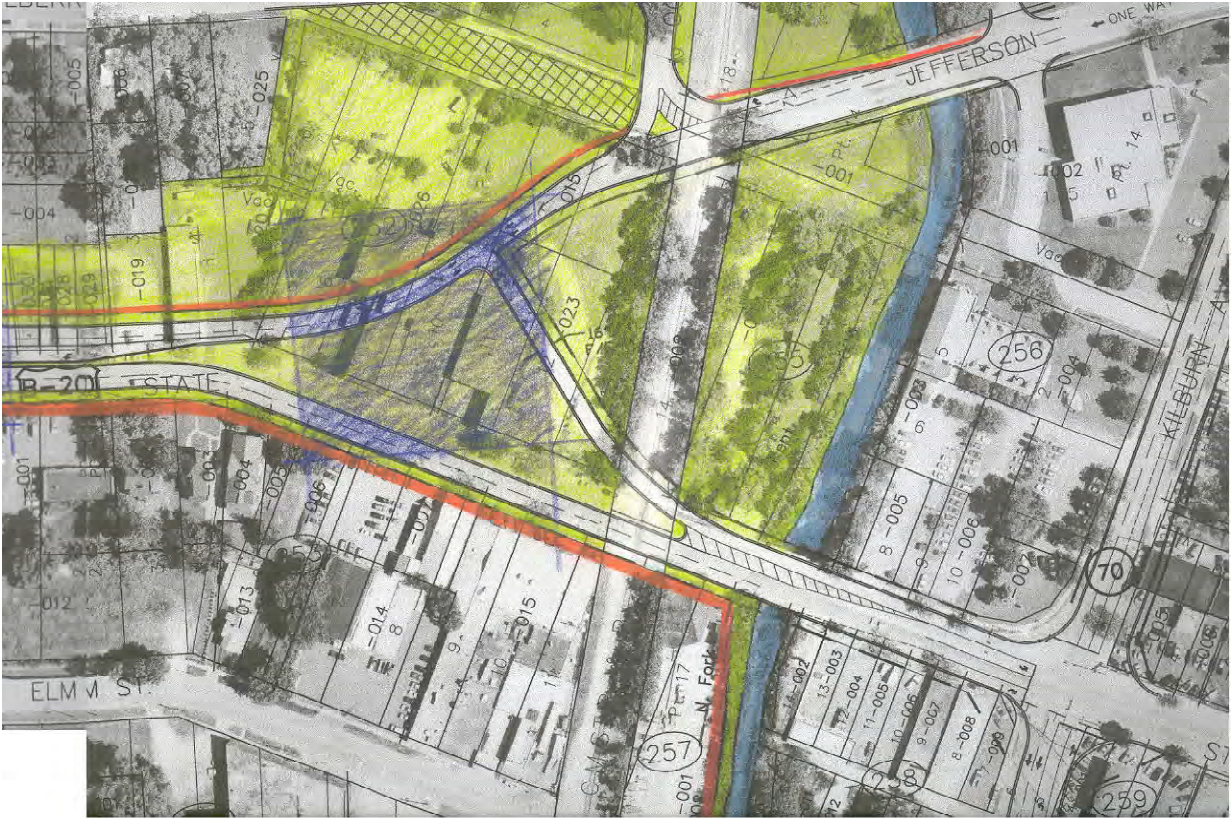
PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway





PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway





PURPLE: Gateway
RED: Sidewalk / multi-use trail
GREEN: Landscaped median and parkway