

STUDY AREA & CHARACTER

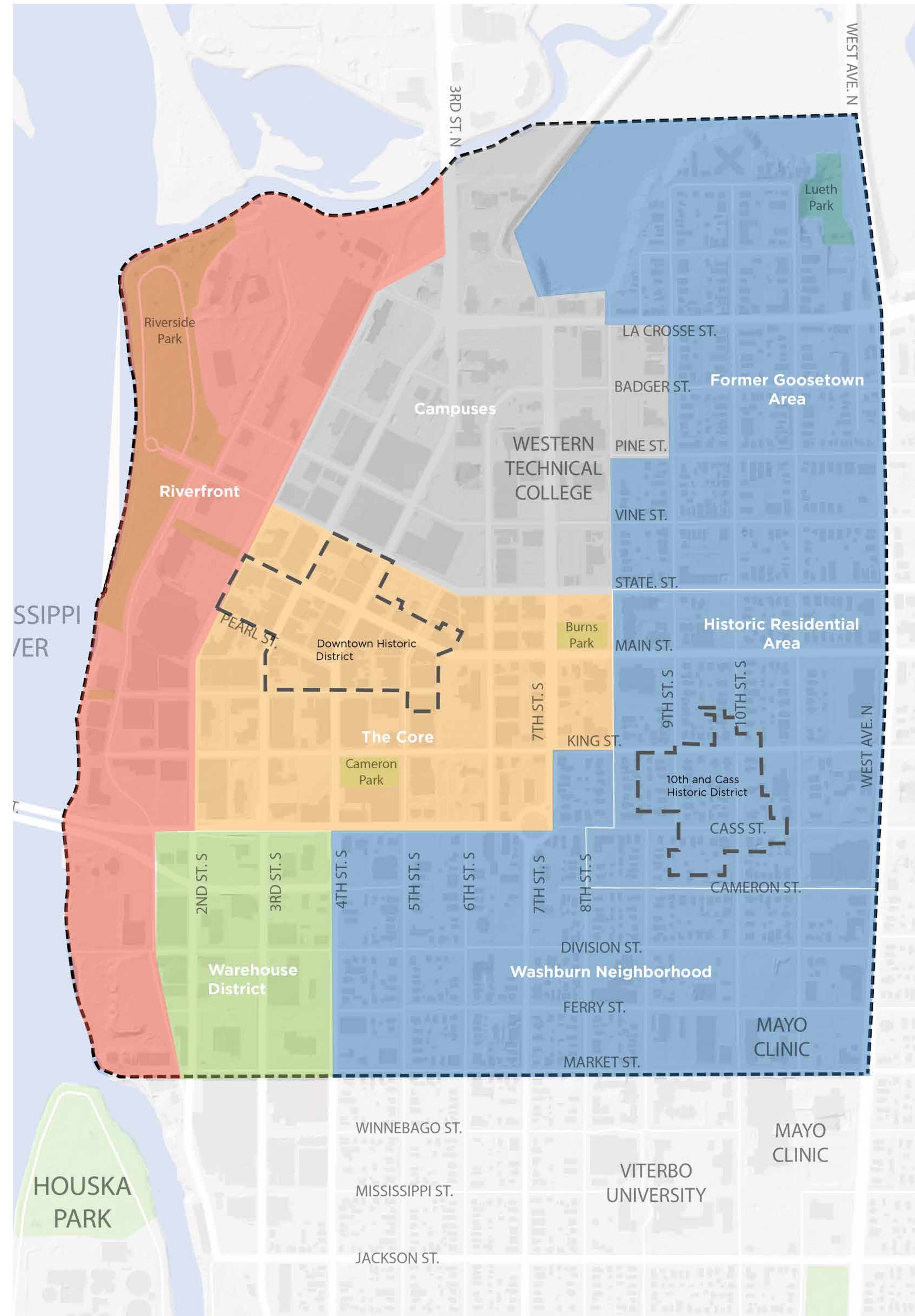
PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Imagine 2040 is La Crosse's Downtown Plan for the next 20 years of initiatives for improvement.

Downtown La Crosse is reflective of the unique businesses, institutions, historic buildings, and activities that thrive downtown. Since 1992 the City of La Crosse and Downtown Main Street Inc. have worked together to plan for the future of downtown. After 20 years of market changes, new developments, and economic pressures the City Vision 2020 required an update.

Downtown is a Neighborhood. This update to the 2020 City Vision Plan expands the original study area to West Avenue and Market Street.



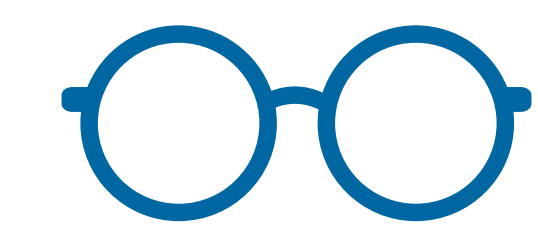
Focused on people

The people who live, work, and visit La Crosse are most important to the planning process and its outcomes. The plan needs to represent everyone's voice, so that the future of downtown becomes an even better district, where people will want to live and visit – to shop at our stores, eat at our restaurants, work in our businesses, and be an active part of our community.



Near-term resiliency, long-term strategy

Resiliency is the ability to recover. Downtown's all across America will be tested on their resiliency amid the pandemic. While we work to support our local business owners during this time of uncertainty, we also need to use this time to imagine the next 20 years. Should we go back to the way it was before or is there an opportunity to transform downtown La Crosse?

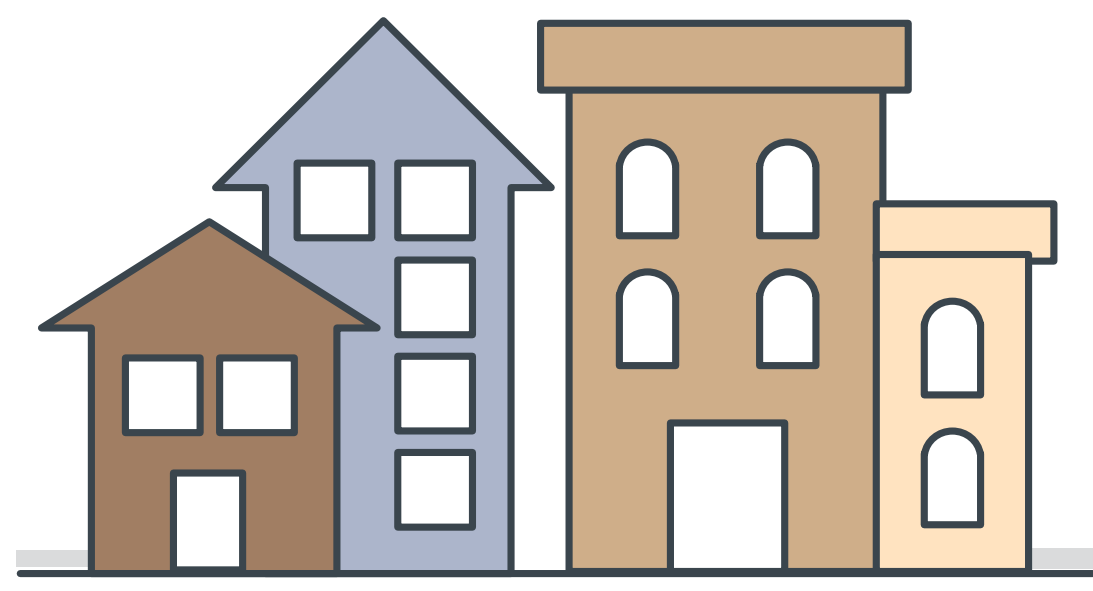


Visionary, yet realistic

The plan will continue to push La Crosse to become a community where everyone belongs. This plan aims to be visionary and push La Crosse to think big and test out new ideas. While testing the boundaries, the plan will be grounded in realistic expectations, making sure ideas make it beyond the planning stage.

PLANNING THEMES + PROCESS

PLAN THEMES



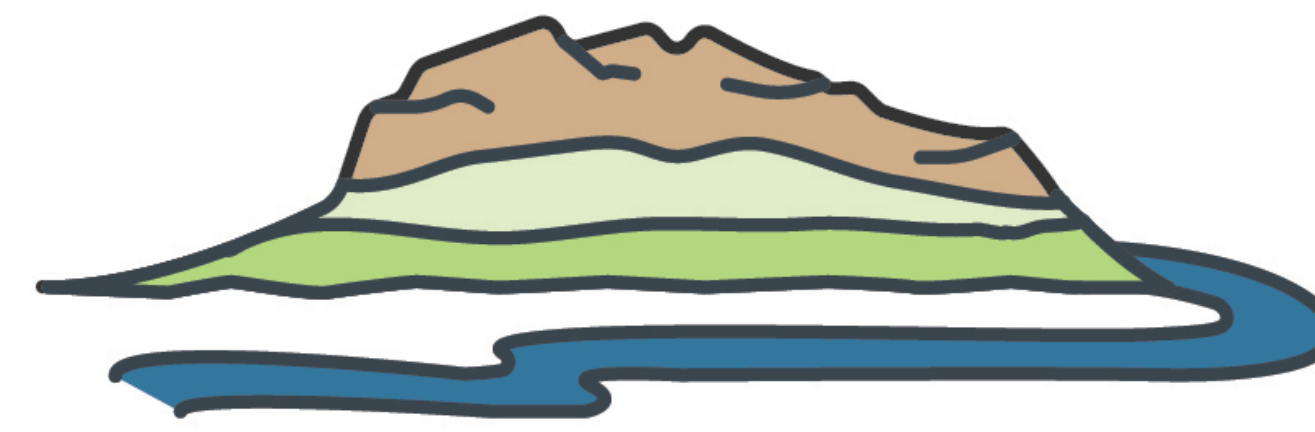
A NETWORK OF STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

We envision a downtown of connected neighborhoods that continues to grow as an urban center.



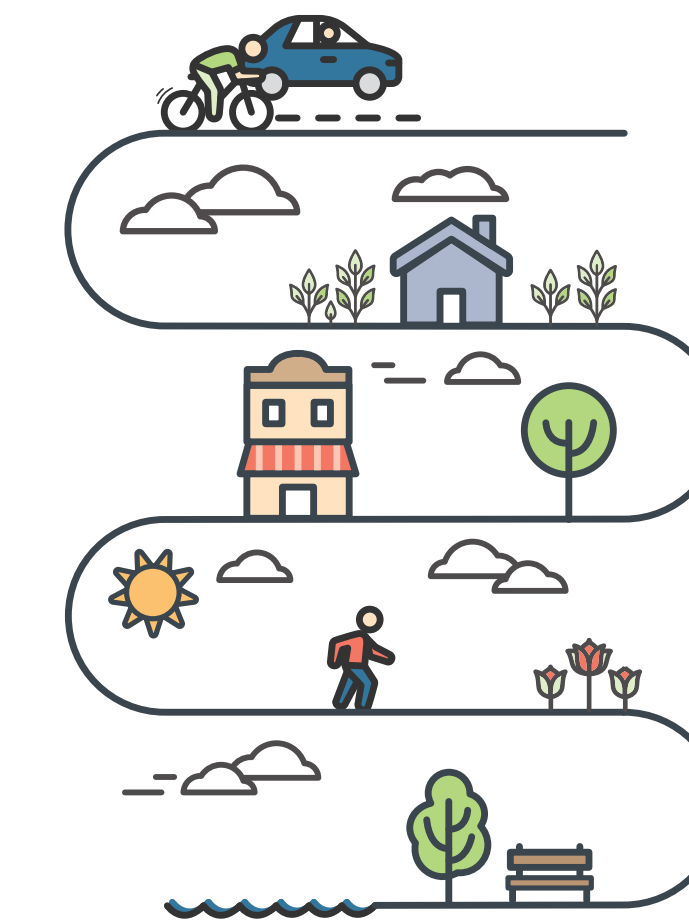
A DESTINATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

We envision a downtown that is a destination for all people.



A CONFLUENCE OF NATURE

We envision a downtown that celebrates and builds on the outdoors with a visible, healthy natural environment. A downtown that, no matter where you look, offers the ability to easily escape into nature.



A CONNECTED CITY

We envision a downtown with strong connections from the river to downtown, to the neighborhoods, and to the bluffs.



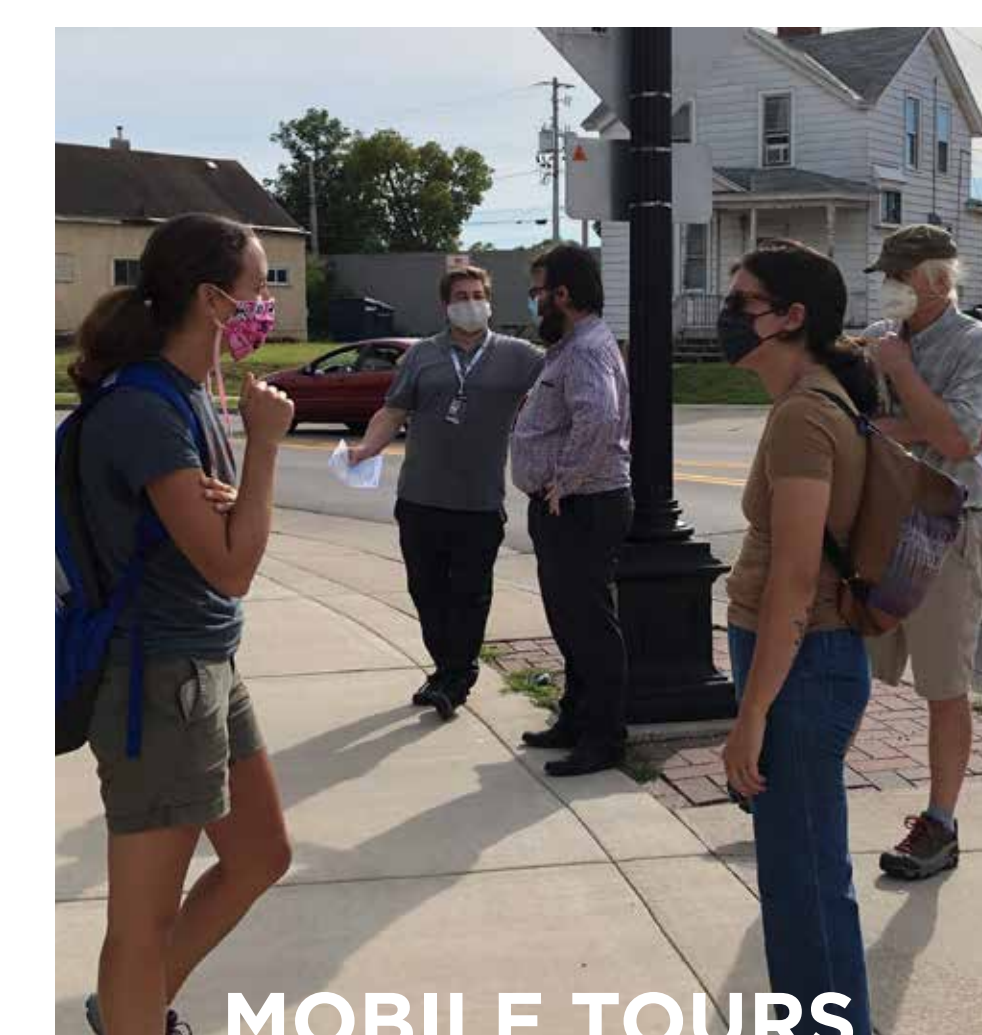
A MARKET FOR DEVELOPMENT

We envision a downtown that continues to be a premier location for development and growth in Wisconsin. We know our available real estate is finite, and we want to maximize its potential for the future.

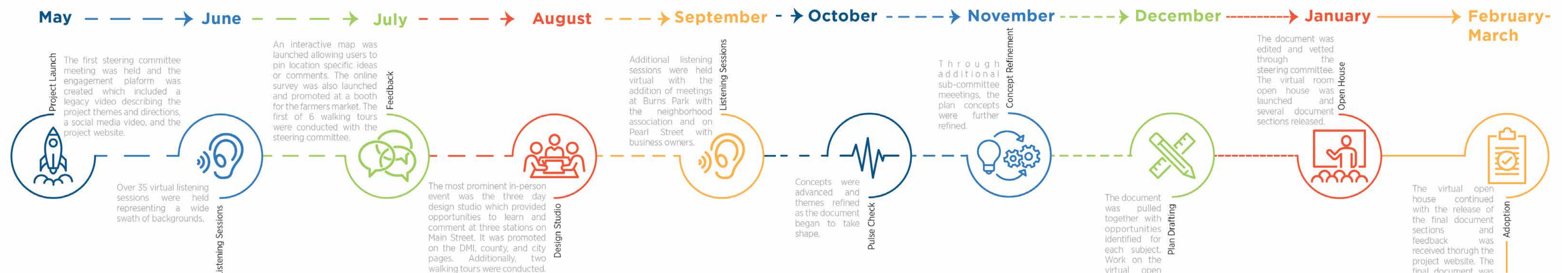
PROCESS + SCHEDULE

The process included interactive mapping, survey, listening sessions, public committee meetings, and virtual open houses. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, activities in the community shifted from large events to decentralized outdoor activities.

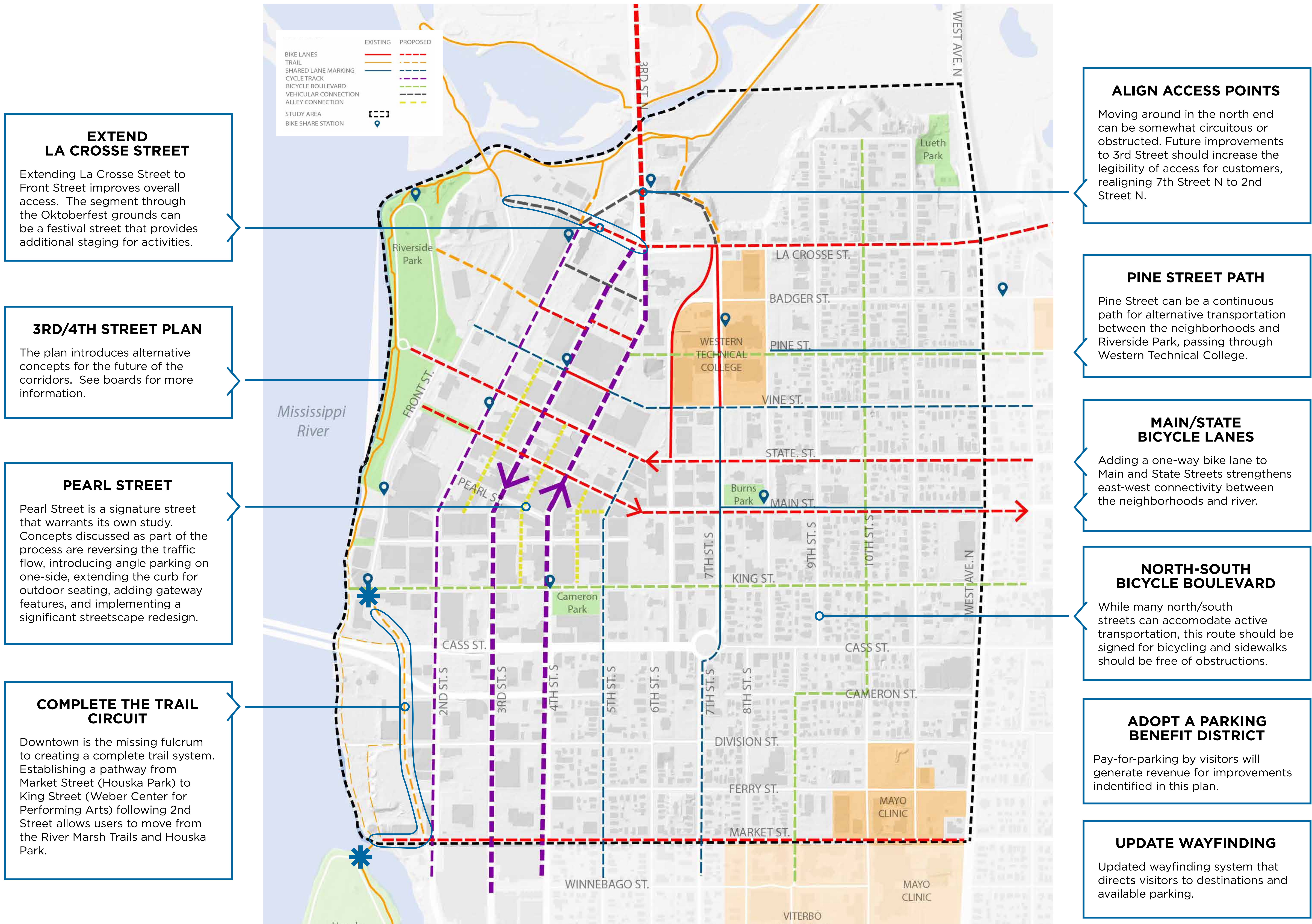
We made sure to reach a broad audience, even with the pandemic		
1,310	Unique comments received among all outreach efforts	6 Tours Conducted
80 Zoom Meetings	91,609 Social Views	
3,876 Page Views	561 Online Participants	552 Surveys Taken



A dedicated steering committee representing a broad group of the community met monthly (and often multiple times a month!!!). Their direction was guided by hundreds of people who contributed their ideas.



CONNECTED CITY: POSSIBILITIES



EXTEND LA CROSSE STREET
Extending La Crosse Street to Front Street improves overall access. The segment through the Oktoberfest grounds can be a festival street that provides additional staging for activities.

3RD/4TH STREET PLAN
The plan introduces alternative concepts for the future of the corridors. See boards for more information.

PEARL STREET
Pearl Street is a signature street that warrants its own study. Concepts discussed as part of the process are reversing the traffic flow, introducing angle parking on one-side, extending the curb for outdoor seating, adding gateway features, and implementing a significant streetscape redesign.

COMPLETE THE TRAIL CIRCUIT
Downtown is the missing fulcrum to creating a complete trail system. Establishing a pathway from Market Street (Houska Park) to King Street (Weber Center for Performing Arts) following 2nd Street allows users to move from the River Marsh Trails and Houska Park.

ALIGN ACCESS POINTS
Moving around in the north end can be somewhat circuitous or obstructed. Future improvements to 3rd Street should increase the legibility of access for customers, realigning 7th Street N to 2nd Street N.

PINE STREET PATH
Pine Street can be a continuous path for alternative transportation between the neighborhoods and Riverside Park, passing through Western Technical College.

MAIN/STATE BICYCLE LANES
Adding a one-way bike lane to Main and State Streets strengthens east-west connectivity between the neighborhoods and river.

NORTH-SOUTH BICYCLE BOULEVARD
While many north/south streets can accommodate active transportation, this route should be signed for bicycling and sidewalks should be free of obstructions.

ADOPT A PARKING BENEFIT DISTRICT
Pay-for-parking by visitors will generate revenue for improvements identified in this plan.

UPDATE WAYFINDING
Updated wayfinding system that directs visitors to destinations and available parking.

CONNECTED CITY: INTERSECTIONS

Demonstration of typical streetscape enhancements for all of downtown's streets shown at Main and 3rd Streets. Over the next 20 years, streets will need improvement and should share a family of features.



A Standard crosswalk on state highways

B Artisan crosswalk on local streets

C Countdown timer at all crossings

D Pedestrian paths that are obstacle-free

E Uniform bicycle parking and benches

F Uniform receptacles (waste/recycling)

G Uniform, energy-efficient streetlights

H Stormwater Best Management Practices

I Restore urban tree canopy

J Uniform parklet dining

K Parking Pay Kiosk

STREET CONFIGURATION POSSIBILITIES

The condition of 3rd and 4th Streets are poor, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is planning to make improvements in ~2028. WisDOT needs to understand the nature of the street's future configuration in Spring 2021 to proceed with improvements. The following concepts consider scenarios for the street's future configuration. Dimensions will change when the project advances into schematic design.

CONCEPT A: TODAY'S CONFIGURATION

The sidewalk could be expanded a few feet by reducing the width of the travel lane.



CONCEPT C: BIKE LANES

Add bike lanes on 3rd and 4th Streets, requiring removal of parking from one side.

PAINTED LANE



ALTERNATE: CURB SEPARATING BICYCLIST FROM STREET

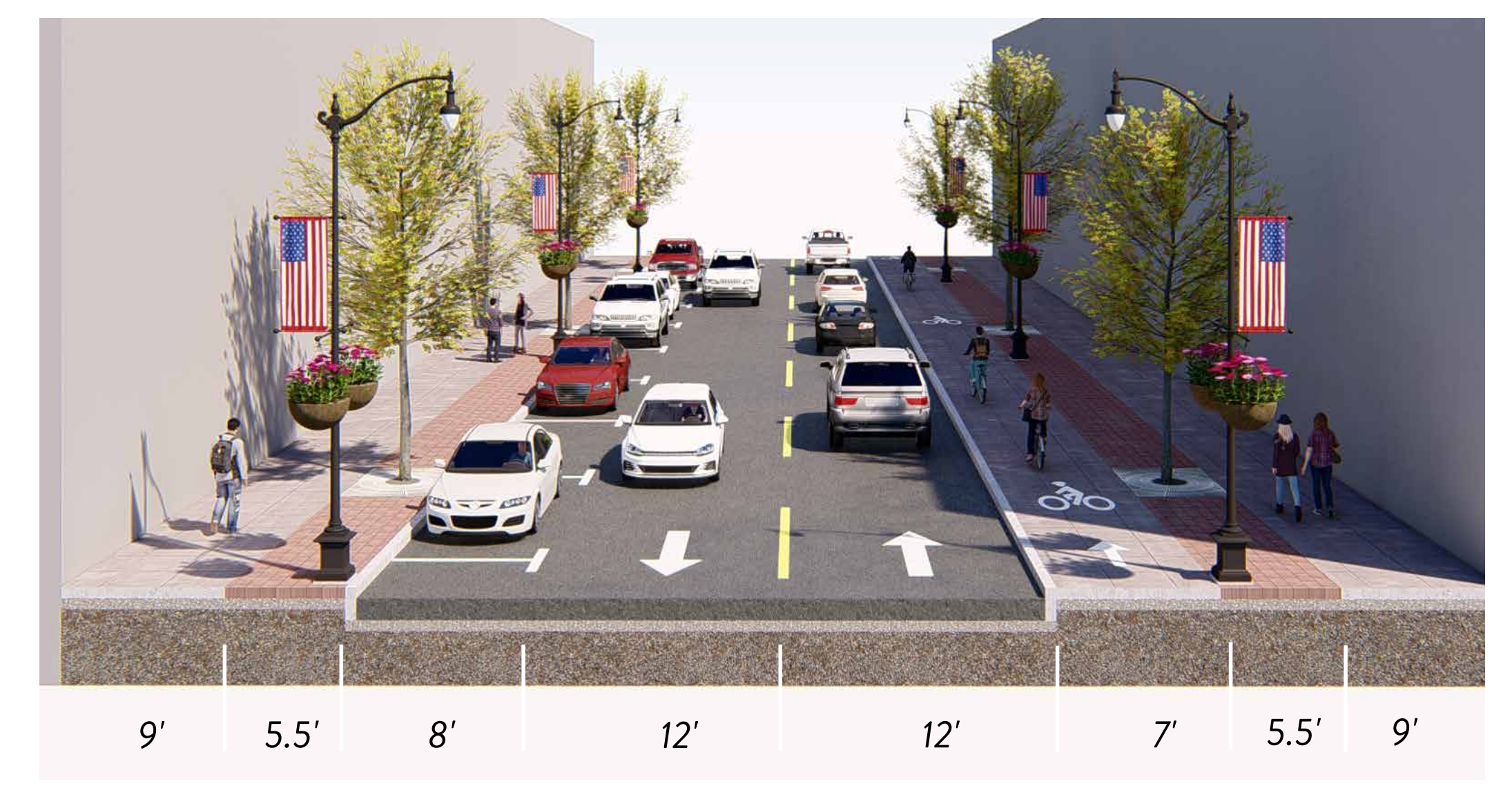
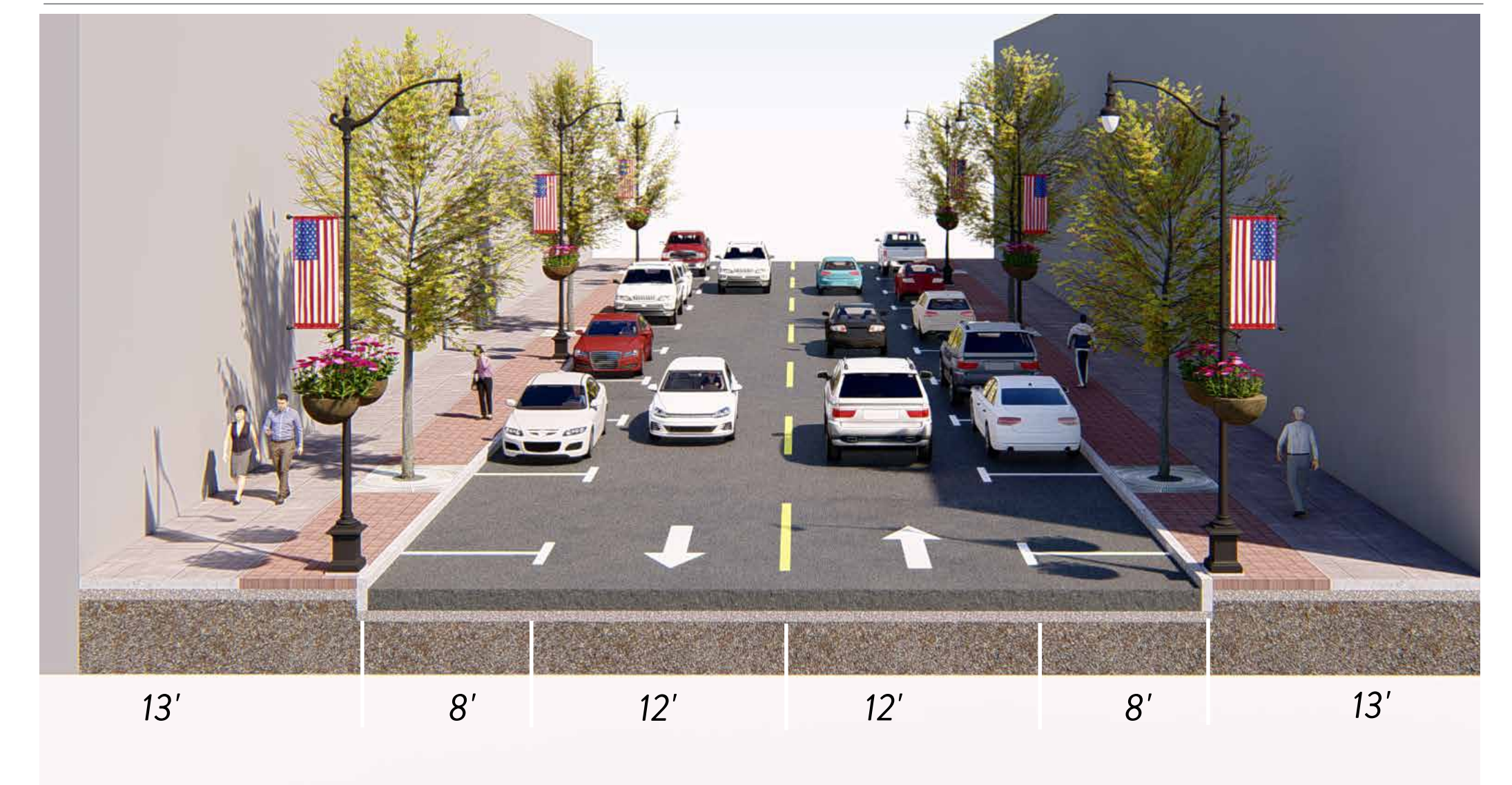


Bike lane can be raised to be above the curb (at the same level as the sidewalk as shown in Concept D).

CONCEPT D: CONVERT TO TWO-WAY CIRCULATION

Proceeding with this concept will likely delay the street improvement project beyond 2028 to prepare a traffic study for the one-way to two-way conversion.

TWO-WAY WITH PARKING



CONCEPT B: EXPANDED SIDEWALKS

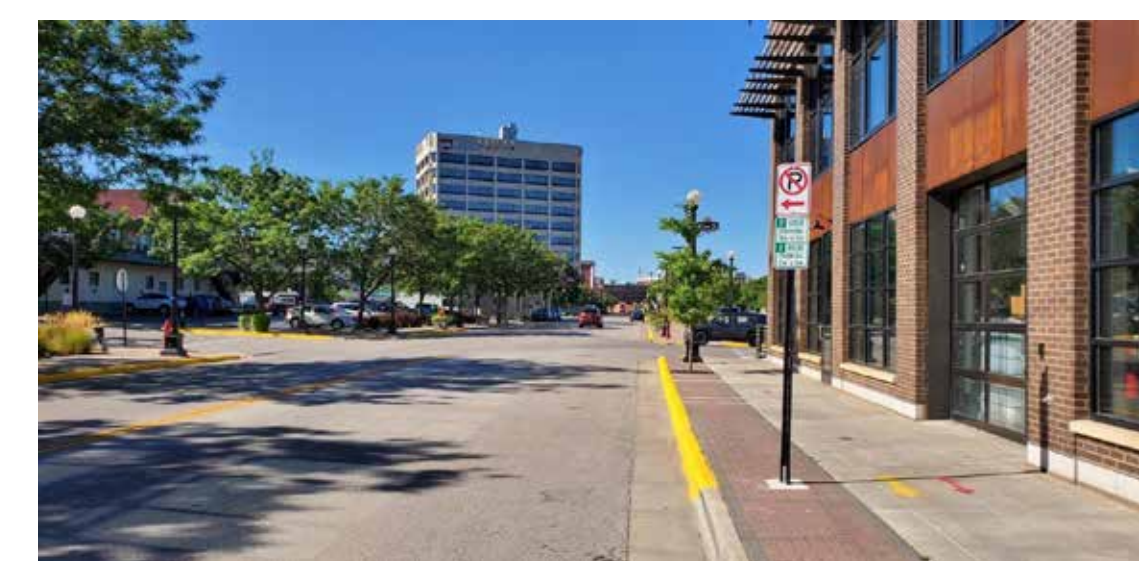
Wider sidewalks with removal of parking.



2ND STREET CYCLETRACK



2nd Street looking south to Vine Street



A cycletrack provides dedicated space to cyclists, connecting them from the marsh trails to Houska Park.

MAIN + STATE COMPLETE STREETS



MAIN STREET



STATE STREET

Adding one-way bicycle lanes on State and Main Streets are ideal locations. This concept preserves parking and two-way vehicular traffic while creating much needed east-west crosstown bicycle access.

State Street looking east from 8th Street

VISION

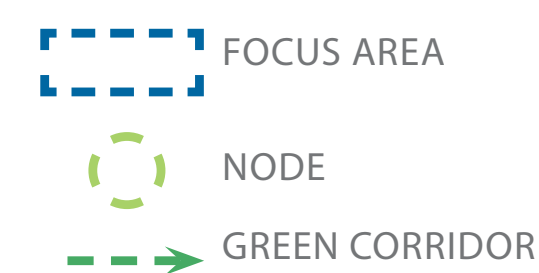
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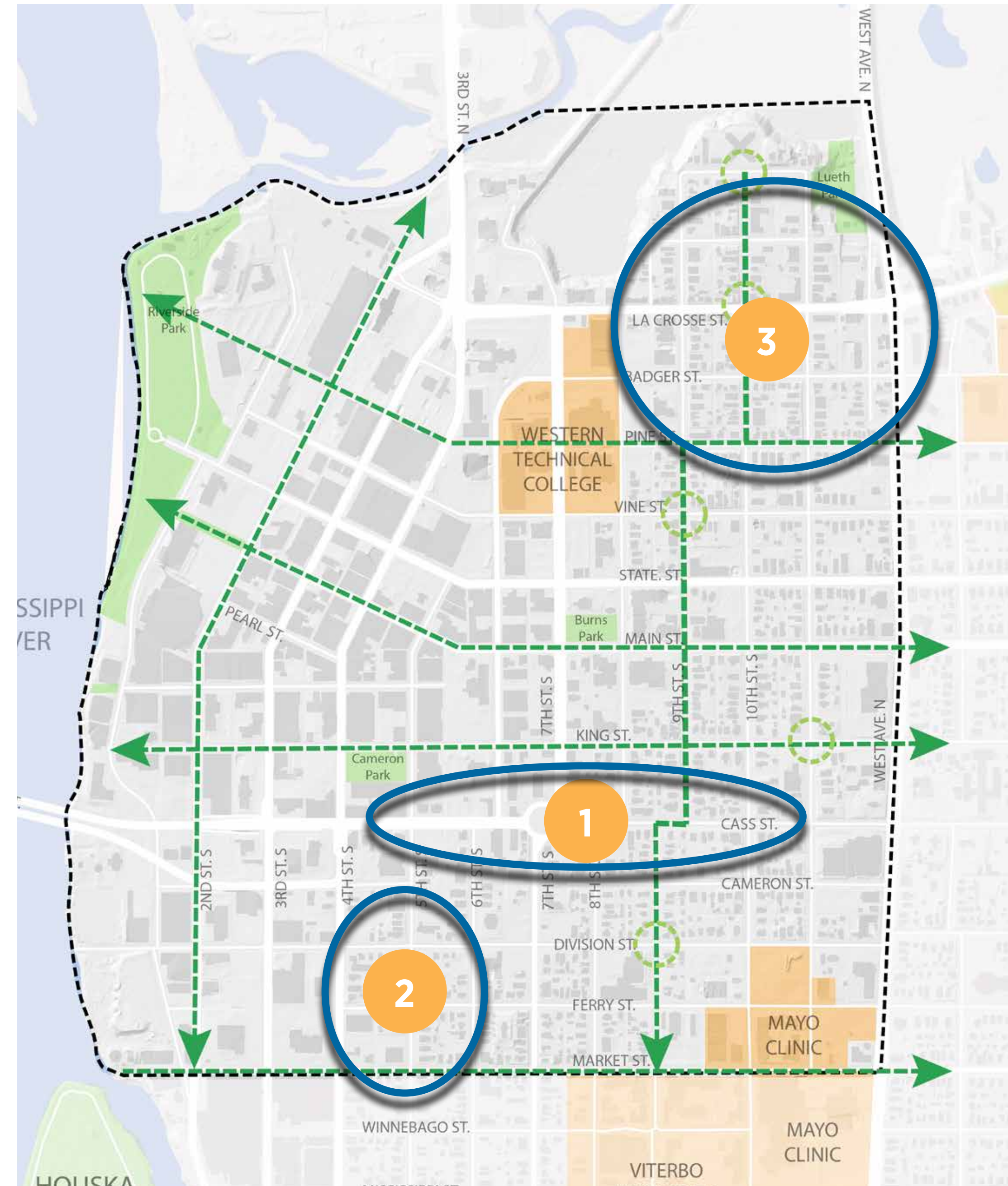
We typically think of neighborhoods as residential areas separate from commercial districts, but downtown is a vibrant urban center comprised of homes and businesses woven together. Strengthening these distinct, but symbiotic areas is important for near-term recovery from the pandemic and our long-term future.

Downtown makes up **8%** of the regional population while the city itself comprises **58%**.

La Crosse added **485 new households** between 2010 and 2020, **137** of which were located downtown



INVESTMENT POSSIBILITIES



POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

Commit Funding to More Code Enforcement

Adopt a Voluntary "Seal of Approval" Rental Inspection Program

Continue Housing Renovation Loan Program

Recruit the Next Generation of Locals to Restore Homes

Ensure Policies & Codes Support Affordable Housing

Create Mechanisms to Share Risk

Support a Housing Demonstration Project

1 CASS STREET AREA

CONCEPTED PENDING
Anticipated completion 2/22/2021

EXAMPLE

PROJECT

PROJECT

Cass Street is imagined as a corridor where drivers slow down to appreciate their surroundings and witness new investment happening.

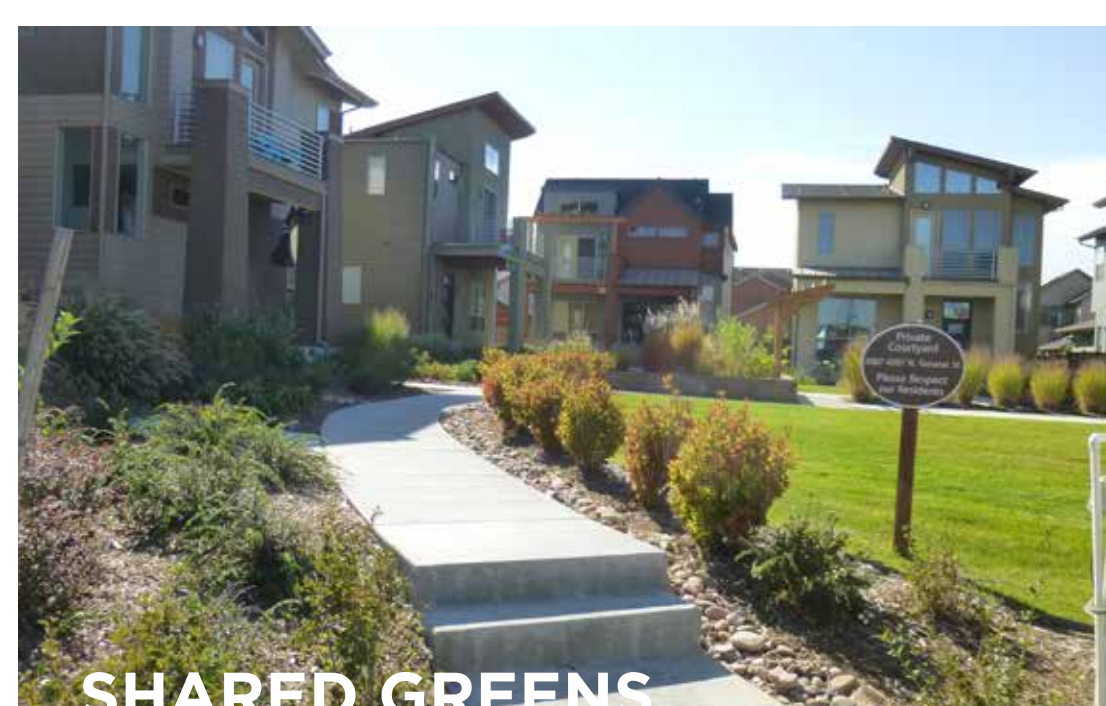
2 SOUTH DOWNTOWN

ROWHOMES >
Provides new a housing option to downtown and reinforcing the area as a neighborhood.

SMALL-LOT SINGLE-FAMILY >
Provides new a housing option and transition to neighborhood.



MORE HOUSING OPTIONS
Public input and the market data suggest the need for more options for housing within the marketplace.



South Downtown is imagined as a full-block redevelopment for new neighborhood housing.

3 OLD GOOSETOWN AREA



< **LA CROSSE STREET REDEVELOPMENT**
Projects should frame the street by building to the property line and parking available from behind.

< **MULTI-FAMILY REDEVELOPMENT**
The plan presents new housing options with independent entries. The project may have greater intensity than shown, like the Hive project.

< **DEEP LOT REDEVELOPMENT**
Some deep lots are subject to redevelopment. The concept shows a scenario for cottage housing that generates a yield of smaller units that respects the single-family context of its surroundings.



Imagine 2040 recognizes that some sites may be subject to market changes in the Old Goosetown Area. The plan presents incremental reinvestment for half blocks rather than full-block redevelopment.

A DESTINATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

VISION

A DESTINATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

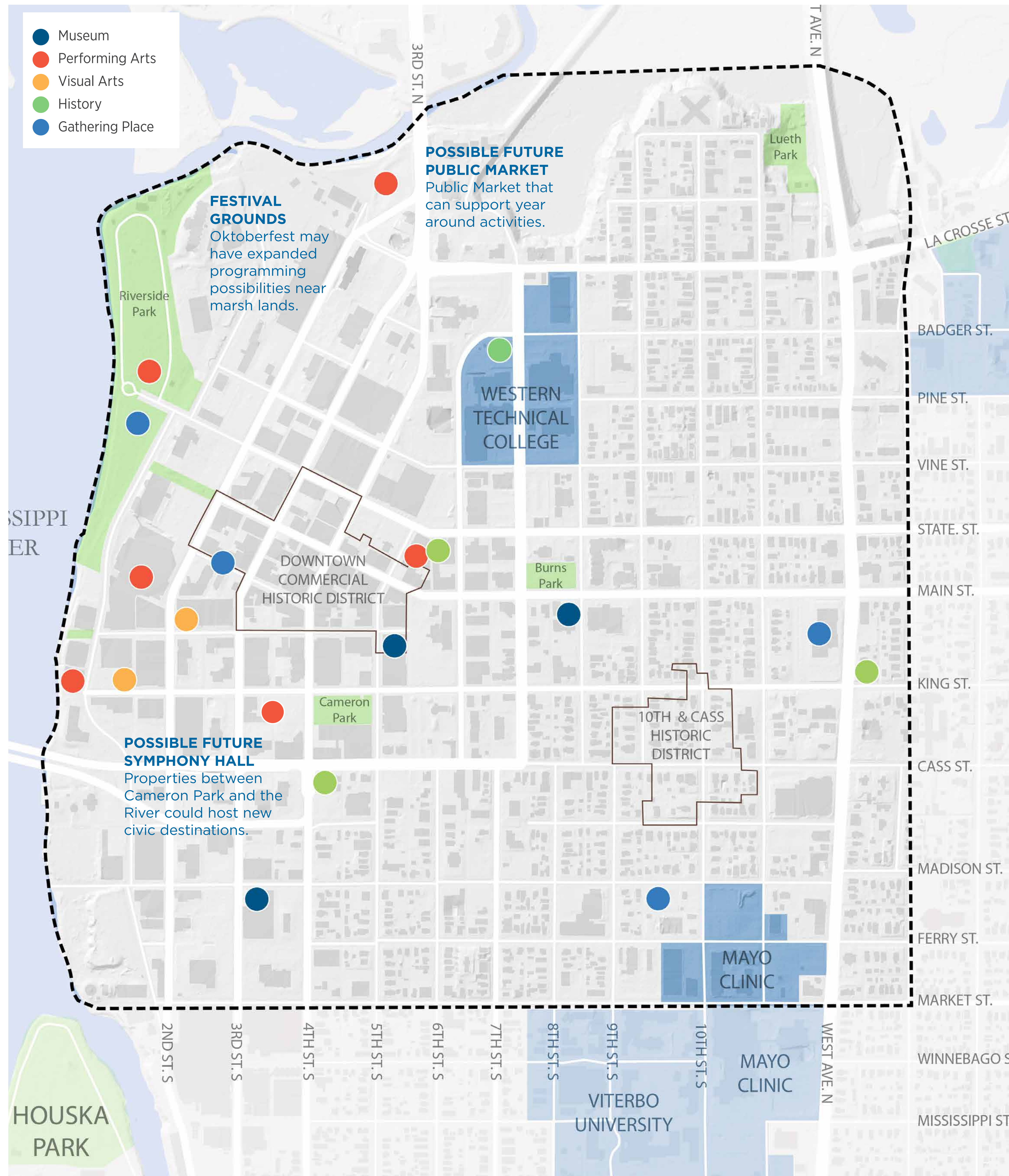
We envision a downtown that is a destination for all people.

Residents, tourists, students, and employees are all patrons of downtown. Residents want a safe and inviting space that serves their daily needs. Students want opportunities to connect with friends, eat, and have fun. Tourists want unique experiences. Employees want a place that appeals to them, and employers want to recruit talent.

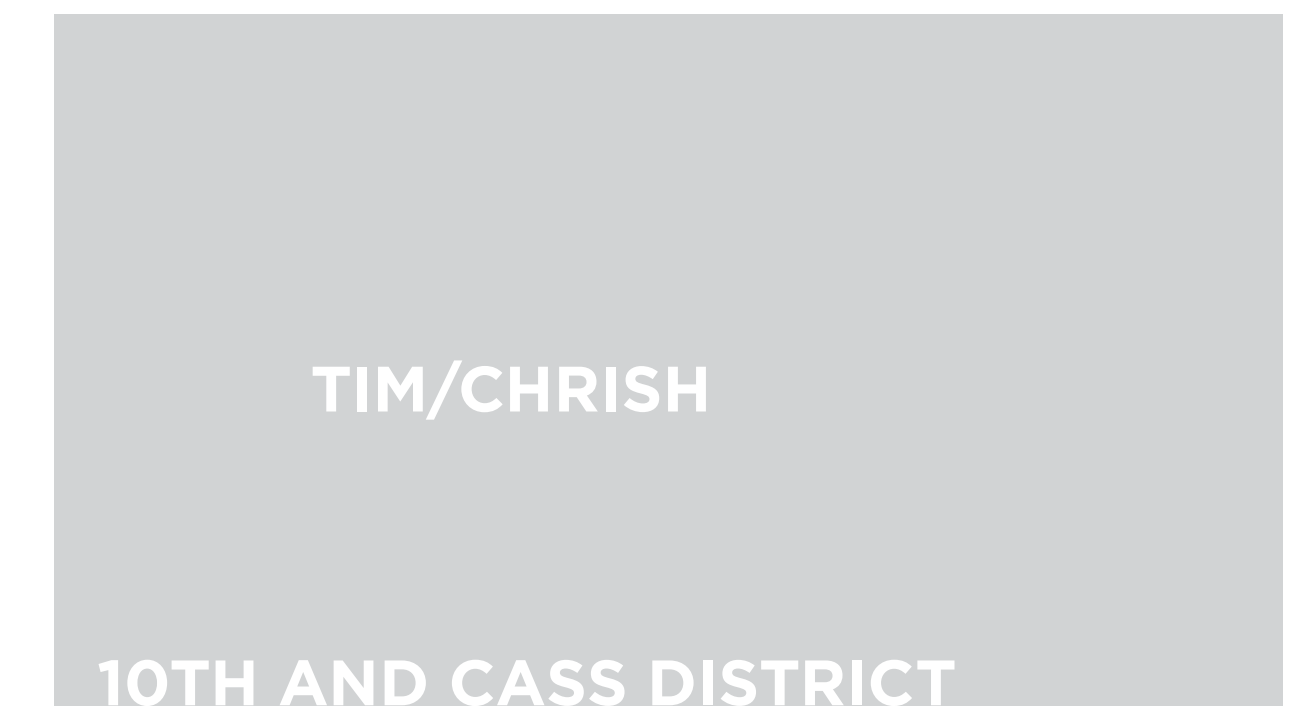
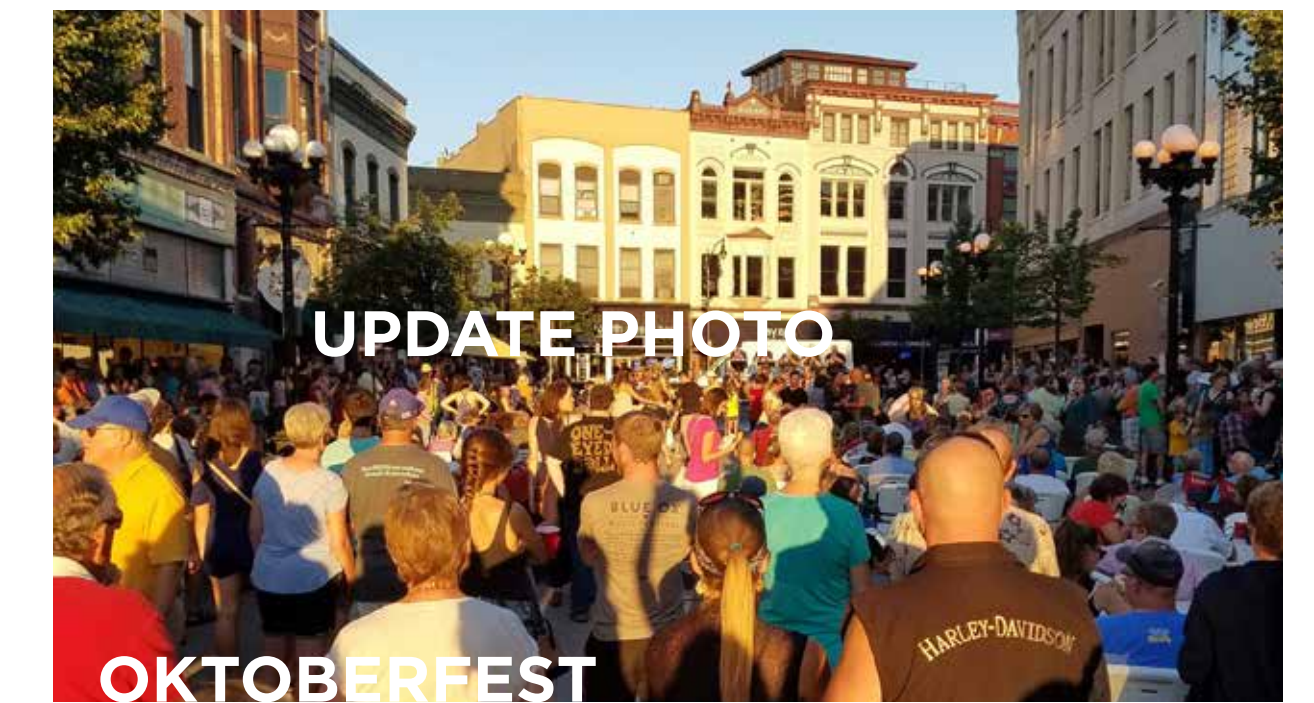
We want to appeal year-round to tomorrow's patrons through the rich diversity of our shops, restaurants, galleries, music venues, and the scenic beauty that surrounds the district.

What might be future civic destinations for downtown?

Public Market?
Symphony Hall?
Museum?



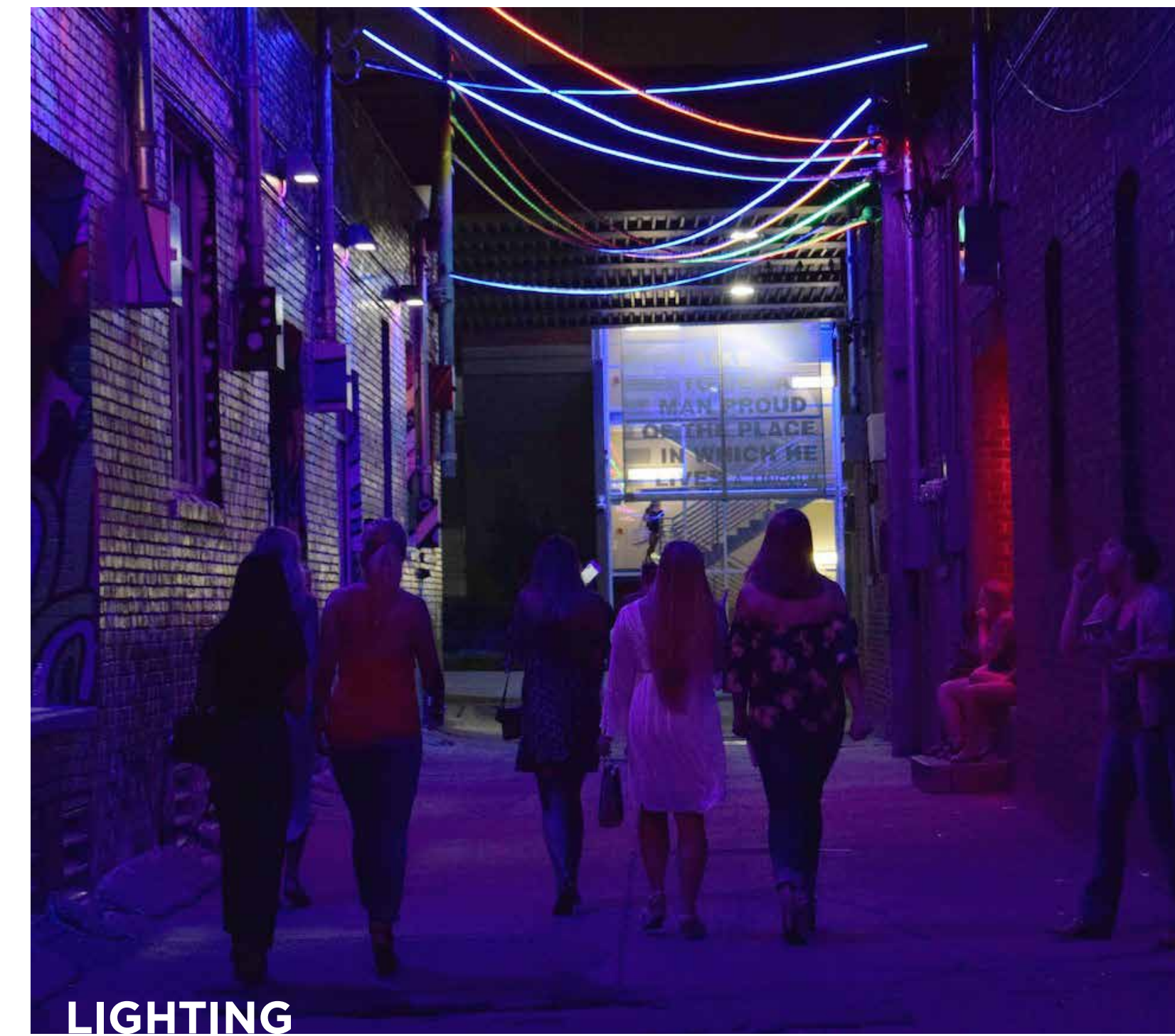
Building Memories for a Lifetime



Attracting people to live, work, and play in downtown.

A DESTINATION FOR ALL PEOPLE

gALLEYS gallery + Alley = gAlley

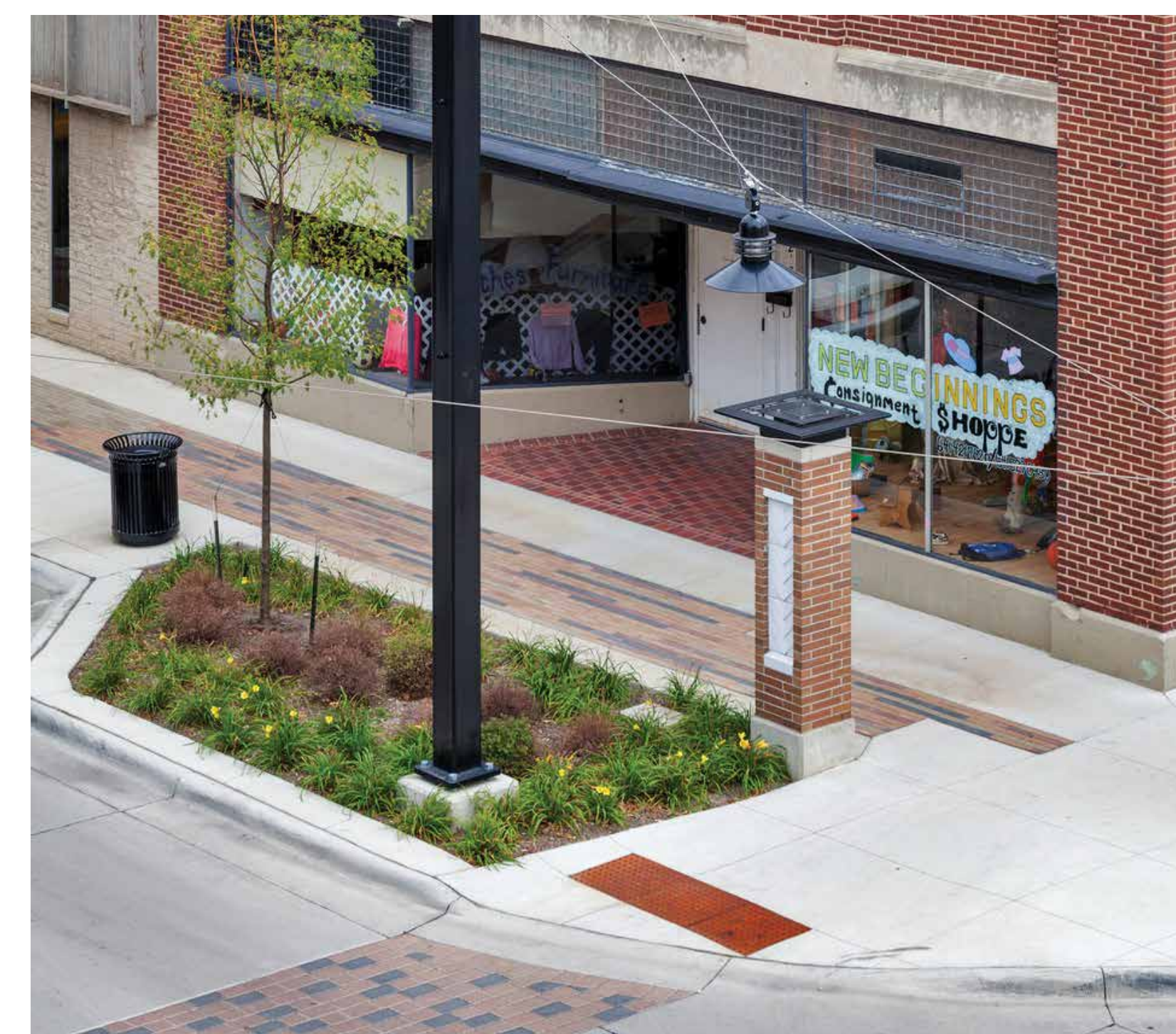


Adding murals, lighting, planters, and ornamental features to alleys will make them become more alive, while connecting them to destinations.

gAlley is bookended by two parking structures, which could be the city's pilot project.



STREETS the urban experience to destinations

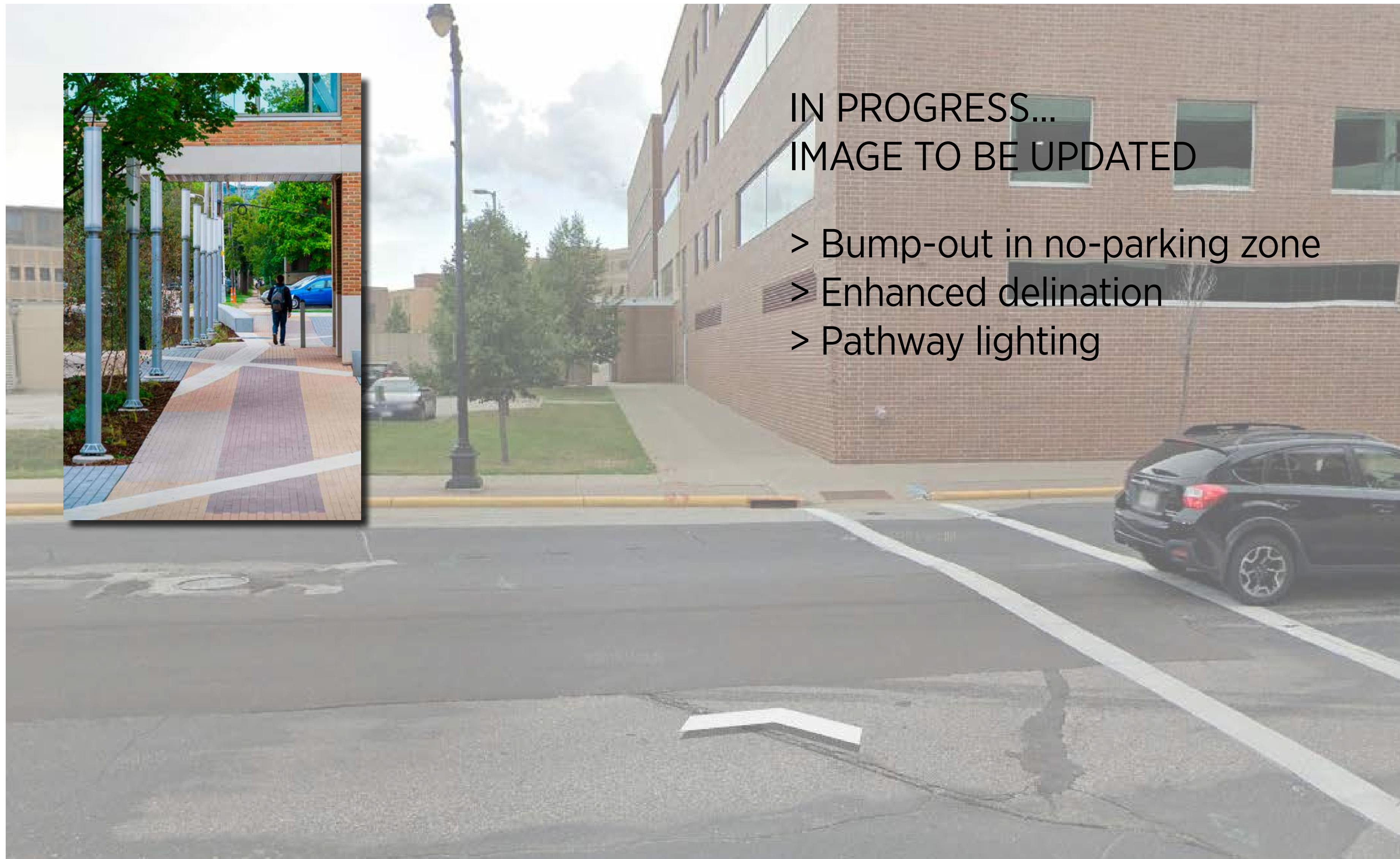


Streets have a lifespan that eventually necessitate their replacement. Over the next 20 years, the city should have a unifying features throughout downtown. Places like Pearl Street, Riverside Park, and Oktoberfest Grounds may have their own unique personality, yet the city should manage the tapestry of elements to ensure predictable maintenance.



ABOUT THE PLAN

PINE STREET PATHWAY

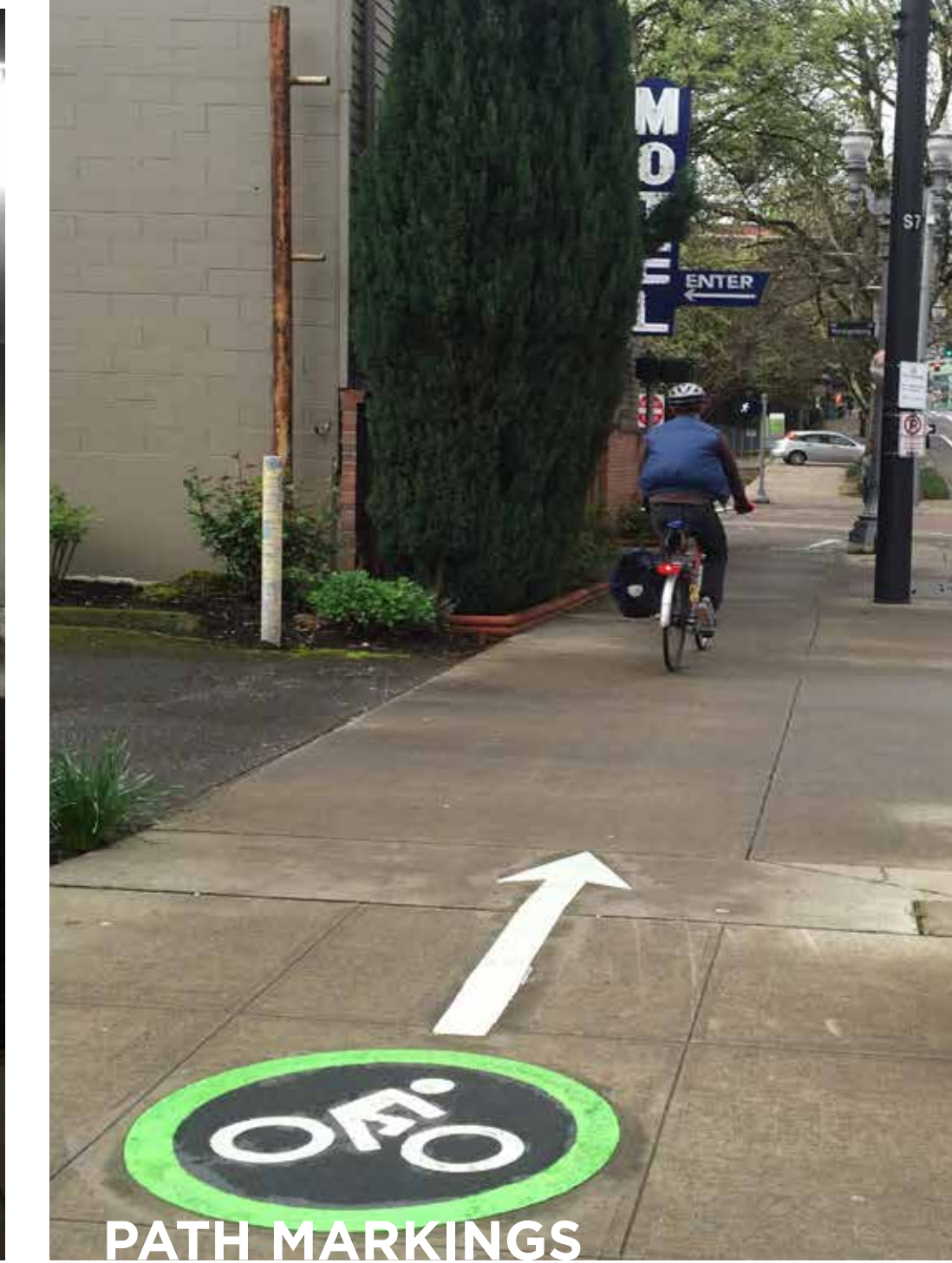


IN PROGRESS...
IMAGE TO BE UPDATED

- > Bump-out in no-parking zone
- > Enhanced delineation
- > Pathway lighting



LIGHTING



PATH MARKINGS

“Pine Street Pathway” connects people from Riverside Park through Western Technical College to the neighborhoods.

Adding lighting, graphics, and signage will guide users to destinations.



BRAND THE PATH

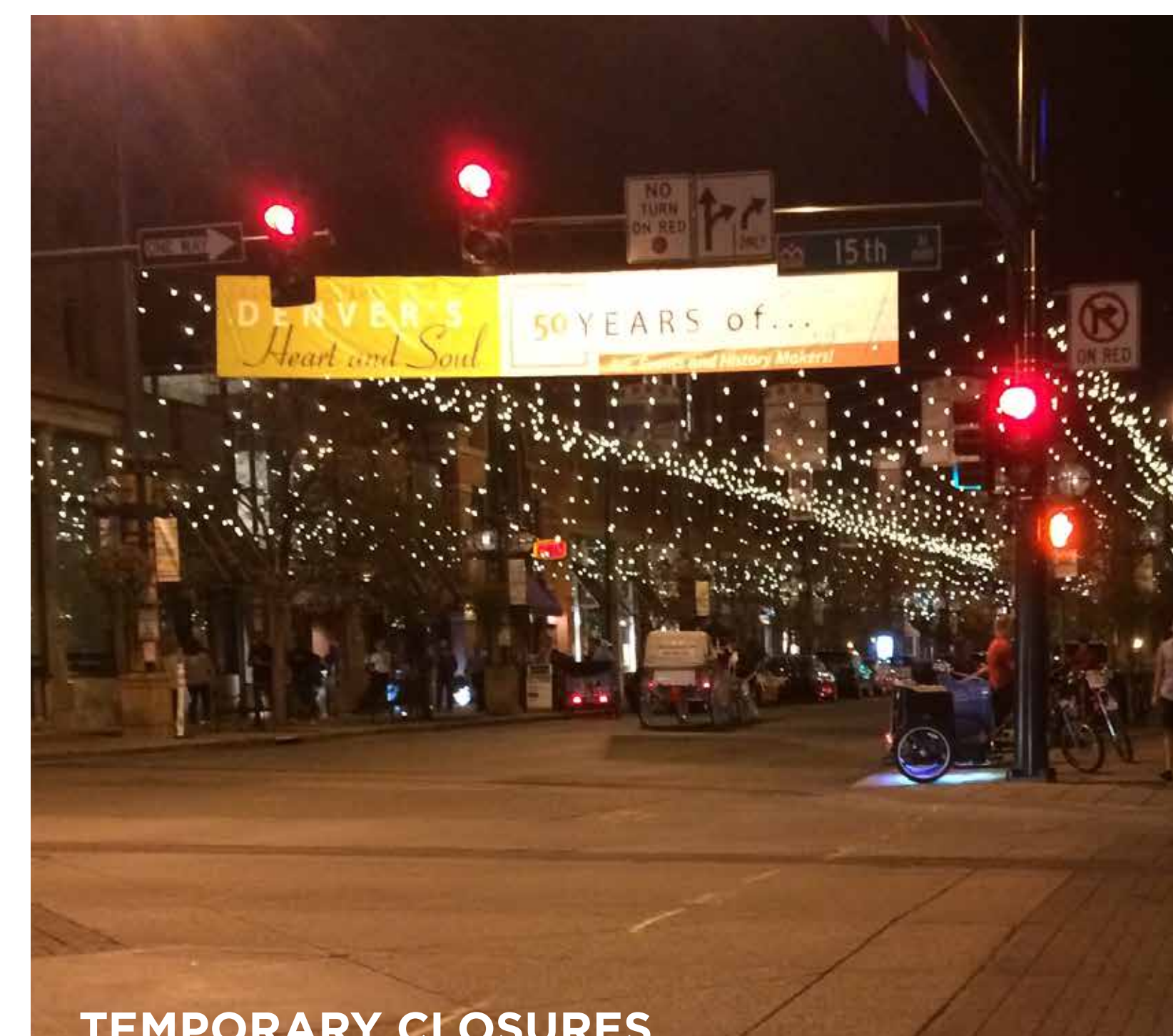


SIGNAGE



LIVING WALLS

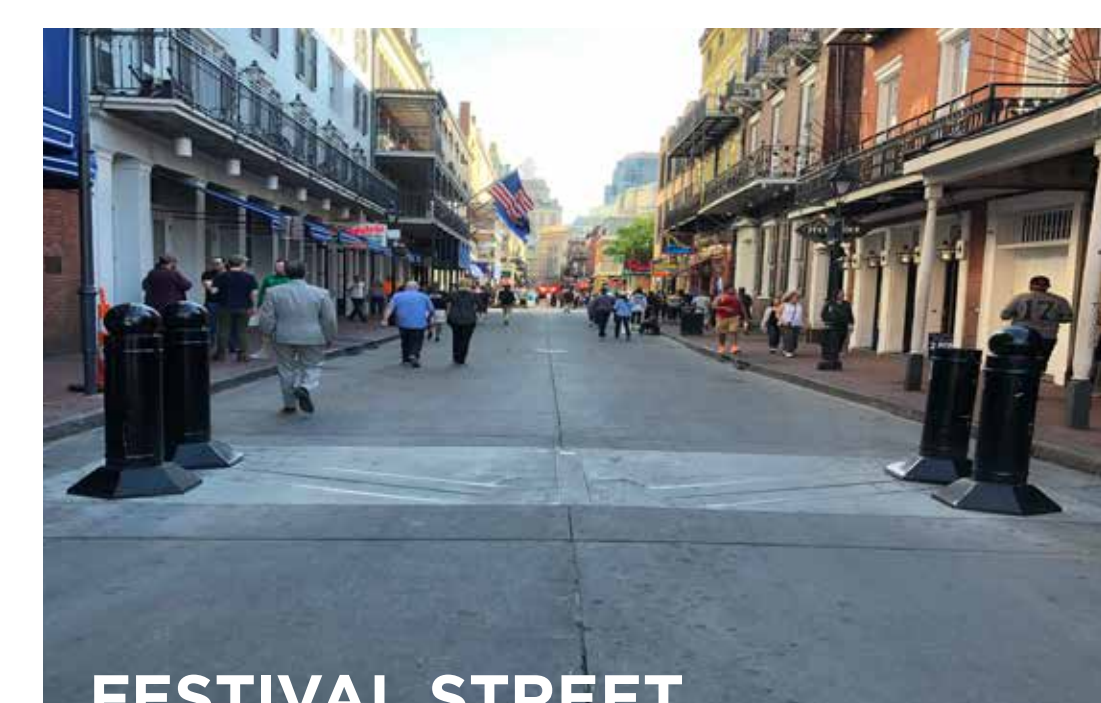
PEARL STREET - FESTIVAL STREET



TEMPORARY CLOSURES

Pearl Street is a distinctive district within downtown. Future considerations for the district for the next 20 years include:

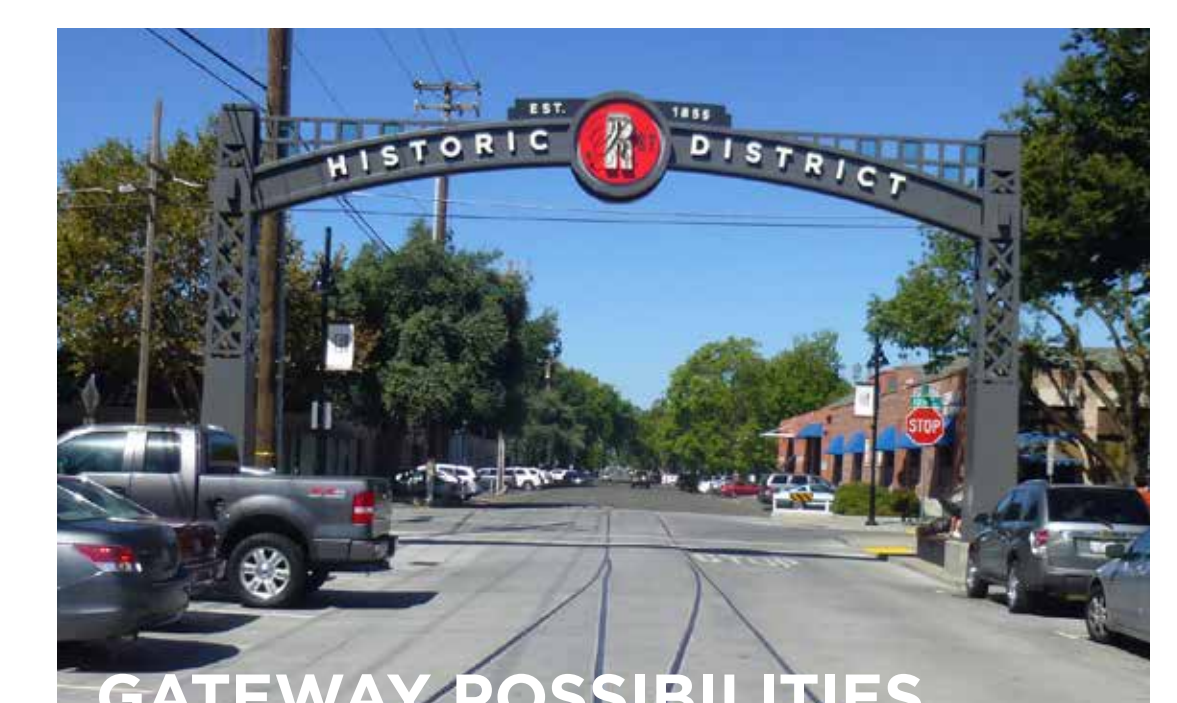
- Adding gateway features
- Shifting traffic flow from one-way west-bound to east-bound.
- Renewing the streetscape



FESTIVAL STREET



GATEWAY POSSIBILITIES



GATEWAY POSSIBILITIES

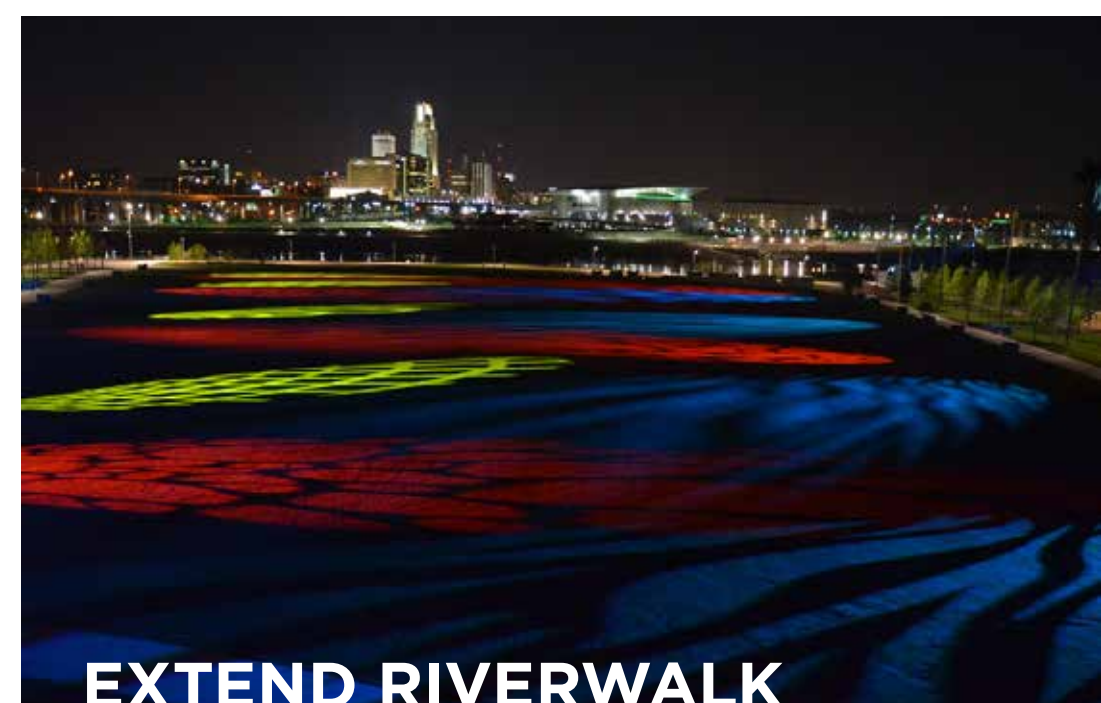
A CONFLUENCE OF NATURE

VISION

A CONFLUENCE OF NATURE

We envision a downtown that celebrates and builds on the outdoors with a visible, healthy natural environment. A downtown that, no matter where you look, offers the ability to easily escape into nature.

La Crosse's beauty derives from its location at the confluence of three rivers surrounded at the heart of the driftless region. The beauty of the natural environment draws people to La Crosse and connects us with the indigenous culture and legacy of the region. Protecting this natural asset is a priority for all and supports pursuing initiatives that make downtown an oasis for the outdoors.



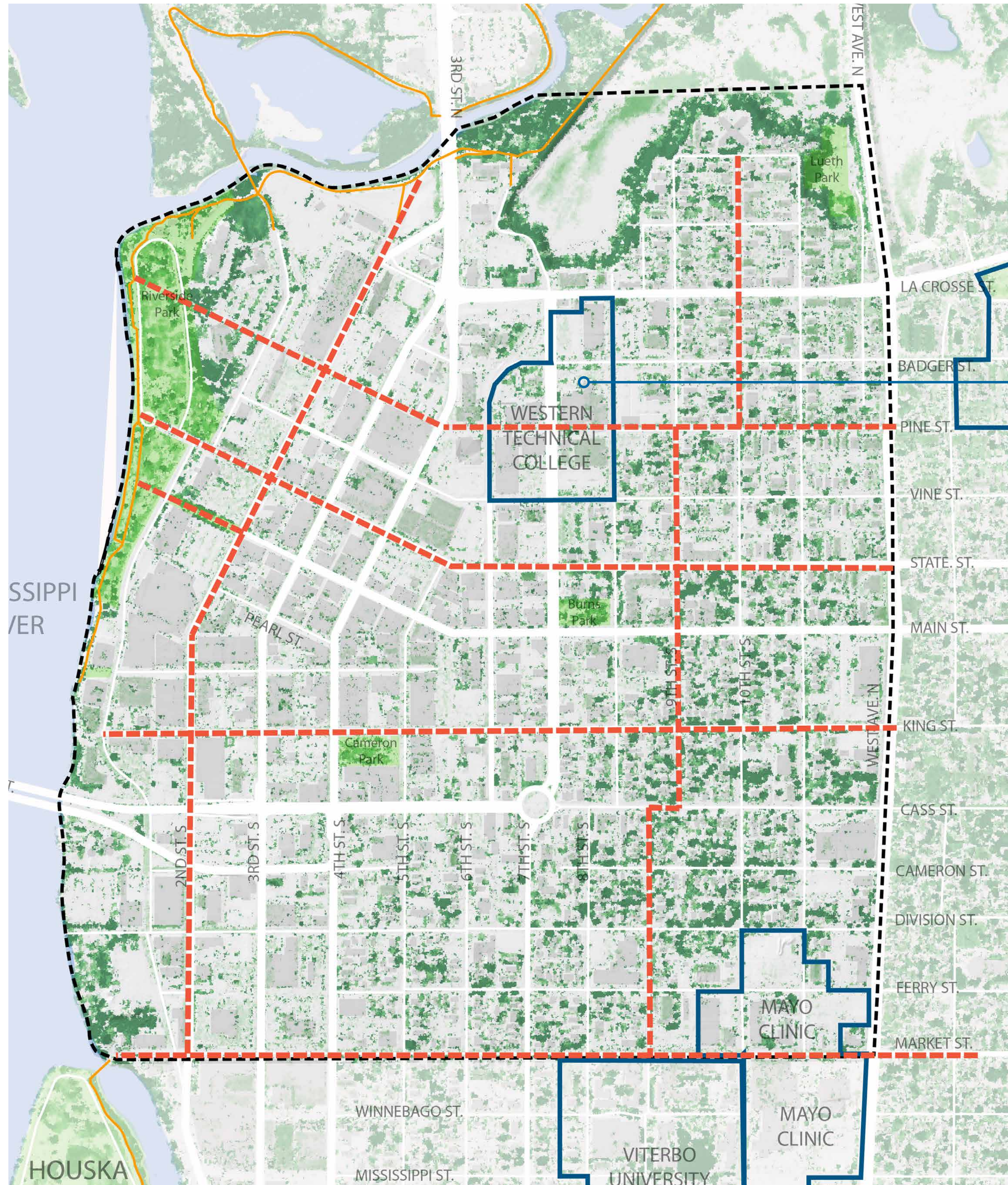
EXTEND RIVERWALK



BIKE SHARE STATIONS



TRAIL SIGNAGE



REQUIRE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Intercepting stormwater and managing its conveyance helps relieve flooding and improves stormwater quality.

CREATE A MODEL SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT

Elements of the plan should:

- Identify all applications for sustainable improvement.
- Include a phased implementation program over 10 years.

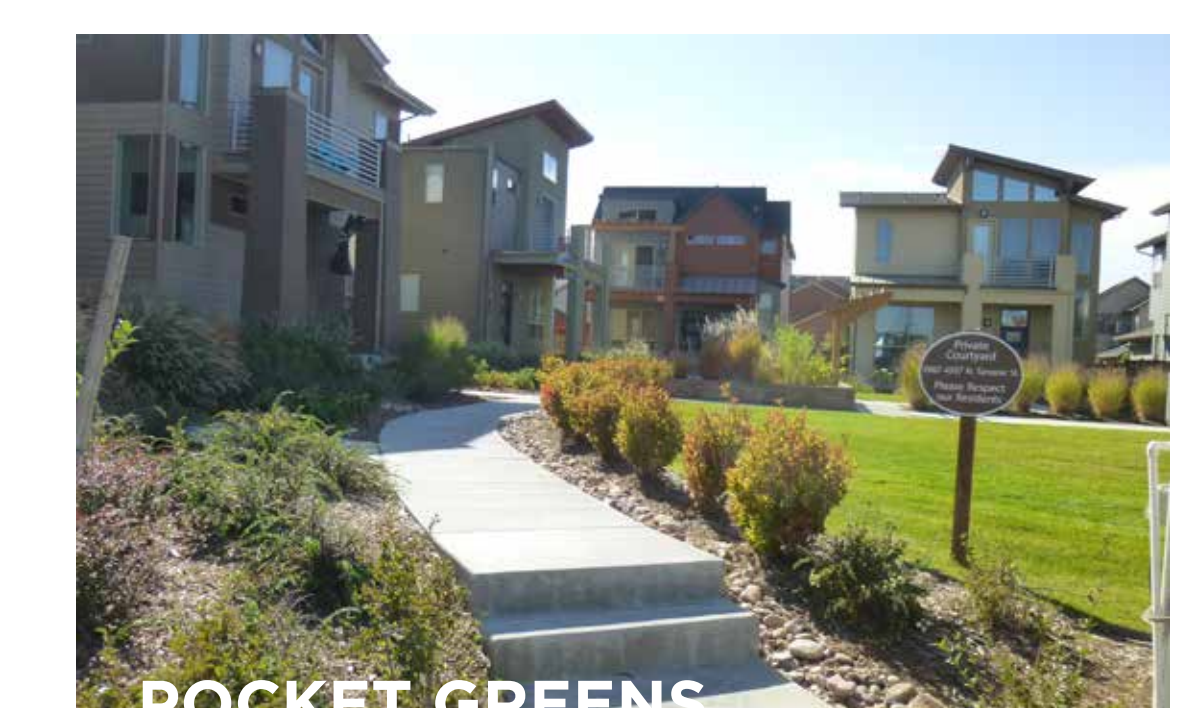
RETREE PROGRAM

Trees meet their lifespan and need to be replaced. Restoring the tree canopy in downtown and ing neighborhoods provides color and cooling effects. Also, trees have been linked to improving a person's psychology and spending habits.

GREEN STREETS

Green Streets are paths that become demonstration streets for sustainable practices and connecting neighborhoods. While all streets are eligible, initial priority streets include:

- East/West: Pine, State, King
- North/South: 2nd and 9th

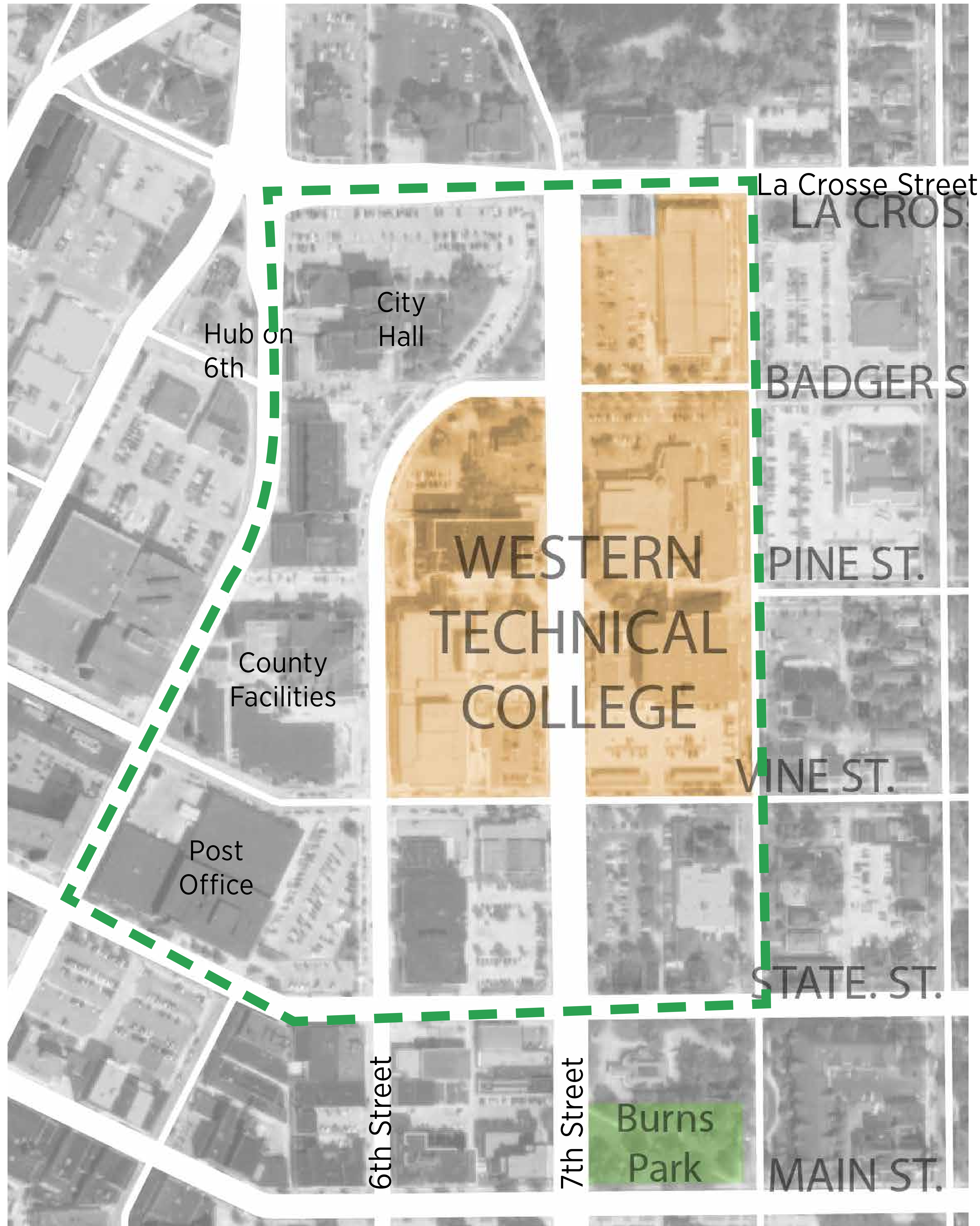


POCKET GREENS

Concepts for redevelopment should have a relationship to the outdoors, either on rooftops or shared green spaces.

A CONFLUENCE OF NATURE

MODEL SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT

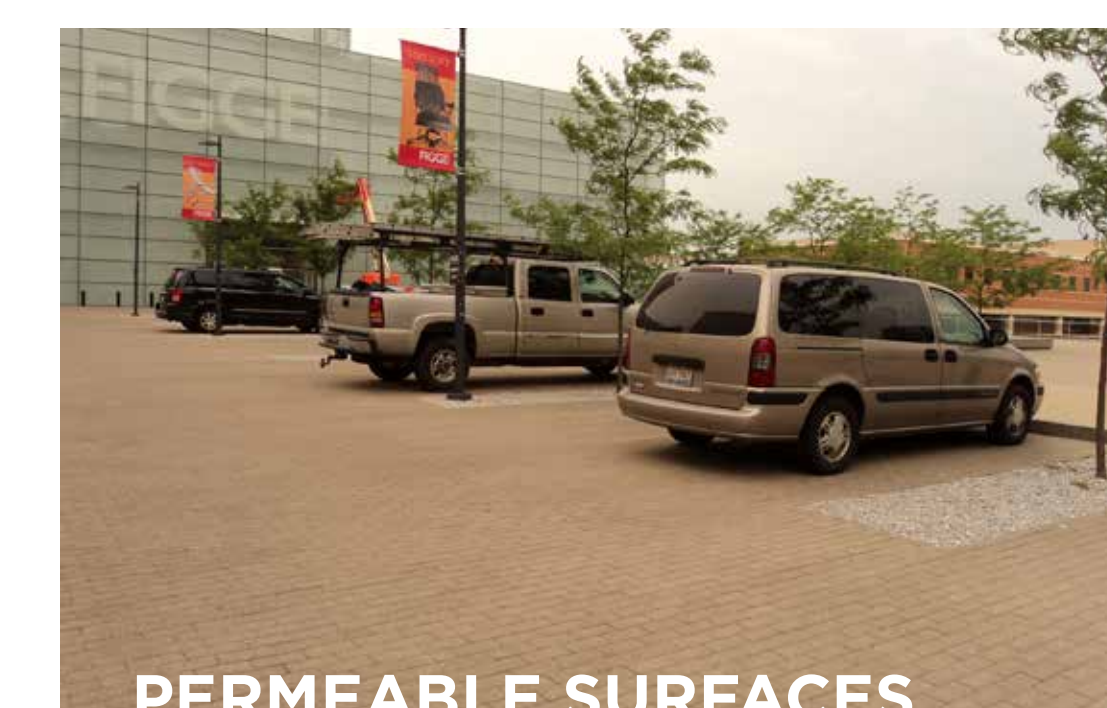


A District Packed with Demonstrations for the Region to Model

ACTION: PREPARE A SUSTAINABLE MODEL DISTRICT PLAN

Elements of the plan should:

- Identify all applications for sustainable improvement.
- Include a phased implementation program over 10 years.
- District heating/cooling assessment.
- Repurpose surface parking.



BMPs (Best Management Practices) for managing stormwater efficiently and safely.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is U.S. Green Building Council's program for sustainable projects.
www.usgbc.com

MARKET FOR DEVELOPMENT

VISION

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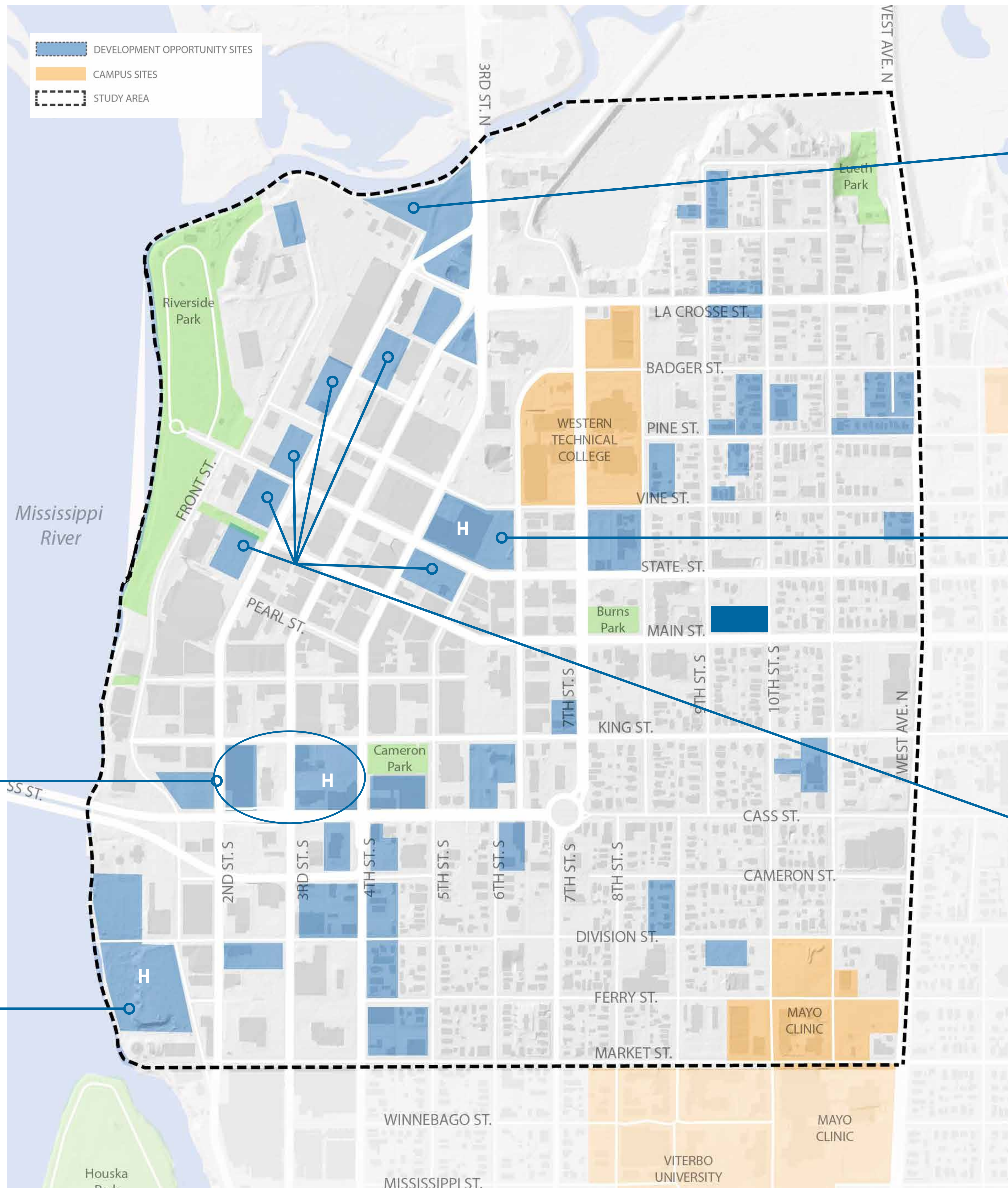
Downtown has many sites that could be better utilized, some of which were identified in the previous plan, others that emerged since. This plan presents a future direction that enhances downtown as a place to live, work, and visit. It complements other development efforts like River Point District and the surrounding neighborhoods.

CORE GATEWAY

Redeveloping the 300 and 400 blocks between Cass and King Streets would transform the entrance to the core district and expand the walkability of downtown. Possible uses may include a civic-oriented attractions like a symphony hall, cultural arts center, or museum.

HOUSKA VILLAGE

Houska Village is a master planned development that can be built in phases, yet its ultimate completion should behave as a single development project.



LA CROSSE RIVER AREA

Development can be more feasible with greater access, such as an extension of La Crosse Street to Front Street.

NEIGHBORHOOD CLUSTERS

Market conditions may influence development demand within the neighborhoods. To maximize development yield that improves a developer's financial proforma, sites may need to be assembled to create larger projects that can be built in unison.

U.S. POST OFFICE

The Post Office in downtown is not an optimal use for the area, and may be more appropriately located in an industrial area. Redeveloping the site for a project that reinforces downtown as a walkable district with housing, commercial, office, and civic uses (museums/performance). The site's redevelopment may exhibit the scale and magnitude of the Belle Square to its west.

SURFACE PARKING LOTS

Downtown has a surplus of parking and surface parking lots are candidates for future mixed use development. Parking is not an optimal use and fractures the districts activity.

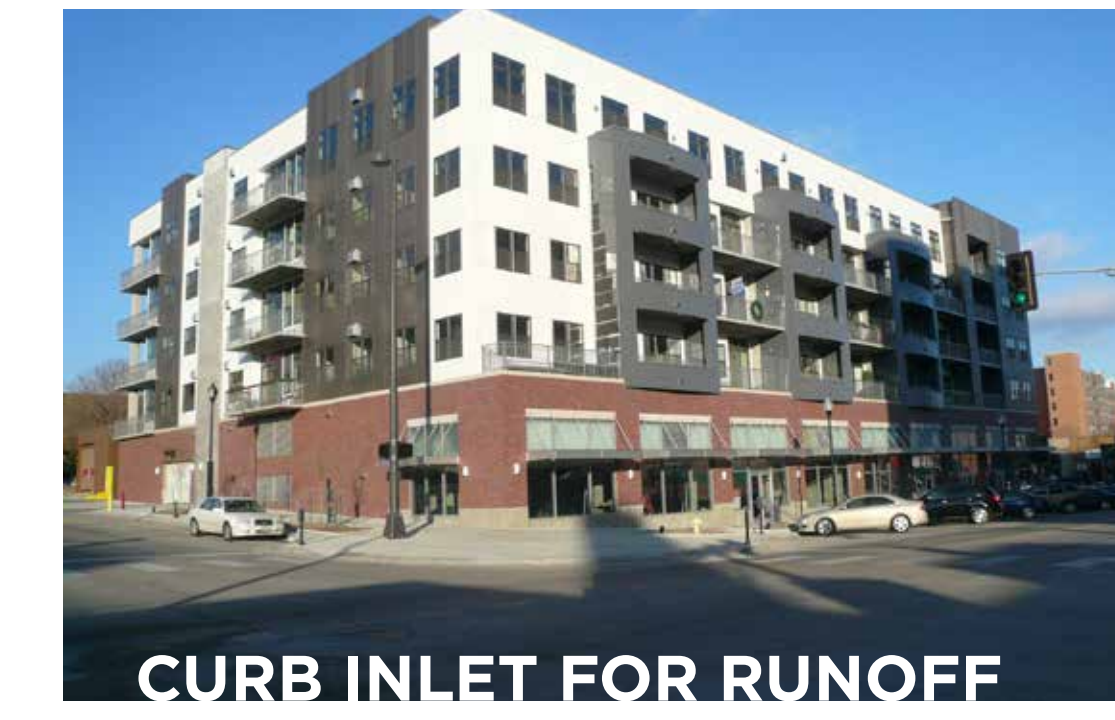
AUTO DEALERSHIPS

Imagine 2040 acknowledges that auto dealerships in a tight urban setting limits their growth potential, and that these uses may migrate to suburban settings like they have in many communities. Any redevelopment of these sites should follow the high and medium-high block diagram.

BLOCK DIAGRAMS

INTENSITY DEMONSTRATIONS

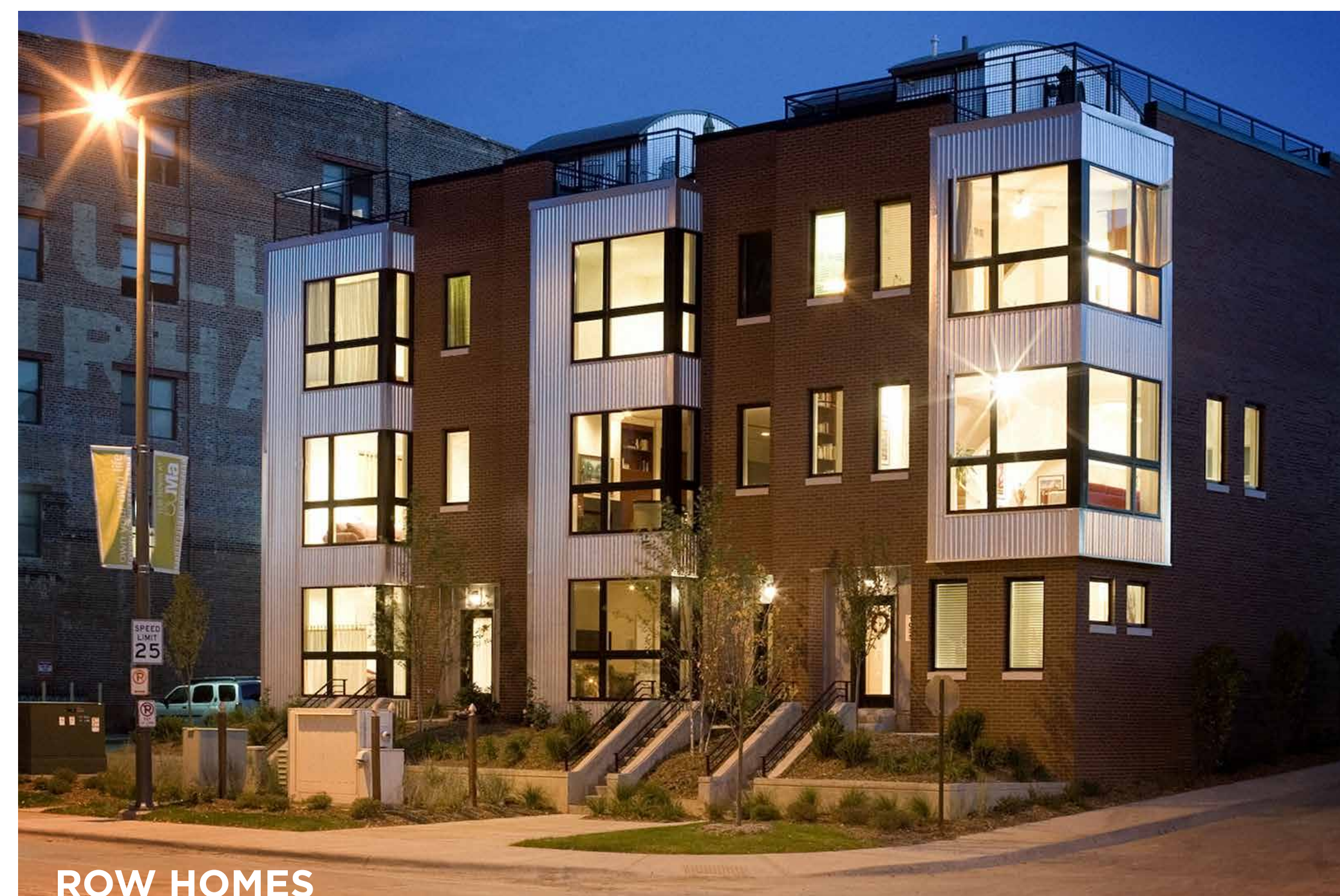
INTENSITY
 HIGH
 MEDIUM-HIGH
 MEDIUM



High-Intensity Mixed Use

FEATURES:

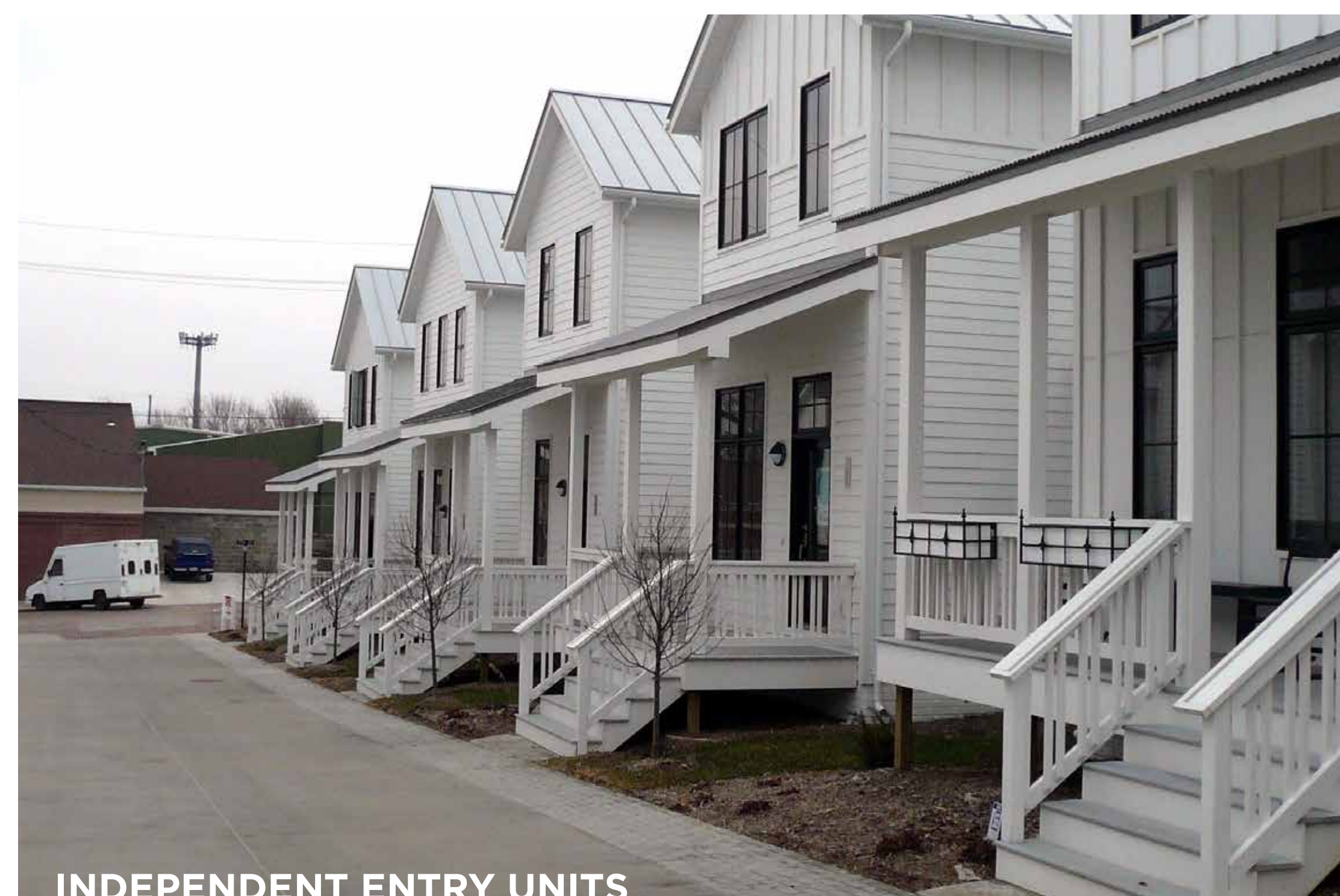
- > 5+ Stories
- > Main Level: Active Uses
- > Upper Level: Residential/Office
- > Lower Level: Parking/storage



Medium-High Intensity

FEATURES:

- > Rowhomes or Townhomes with independent entries.
- > Corner lots can be commercial
- > Shared underground parking
- > Shared internal green space

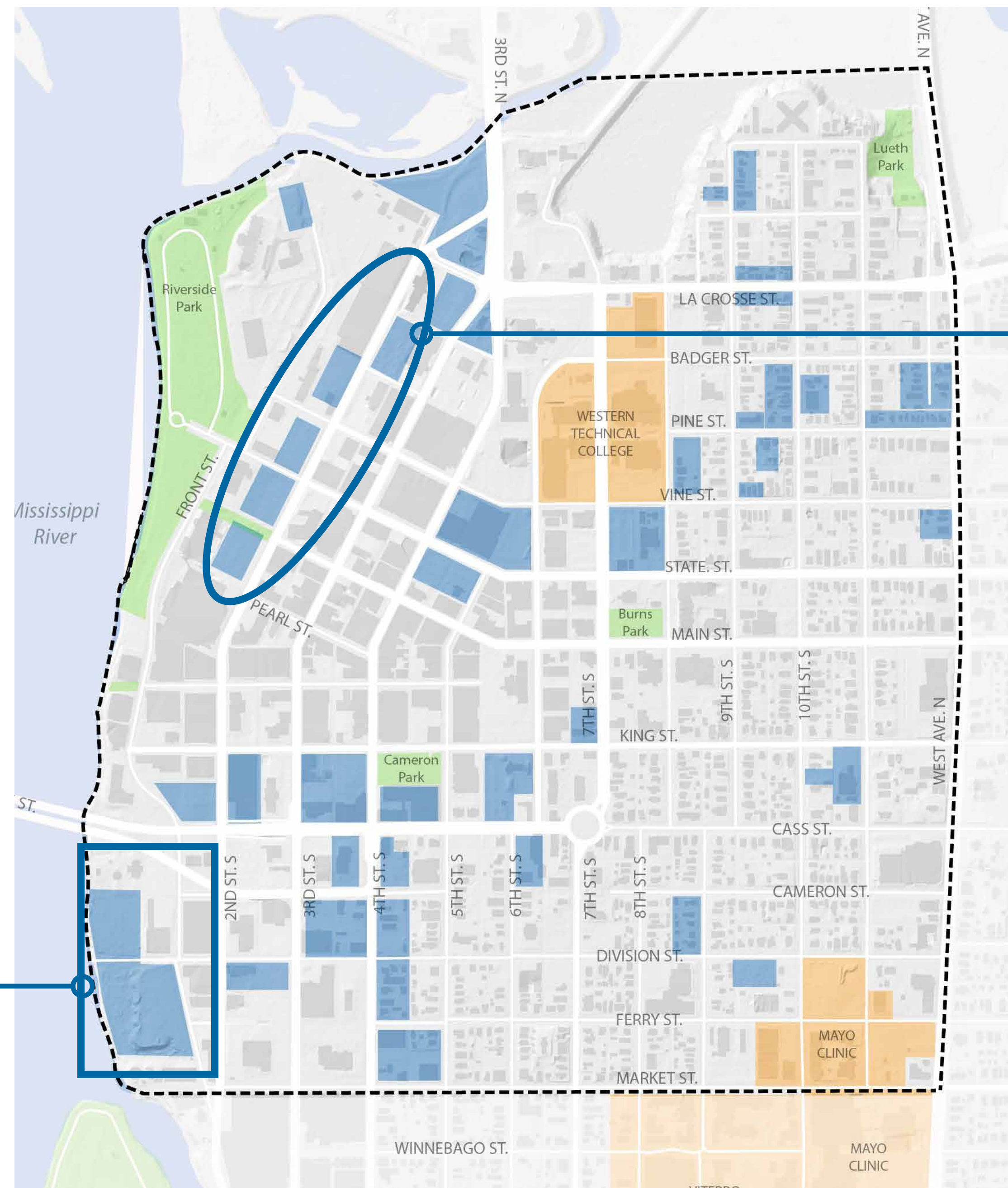


Medium Intensity

FEATURES:

- > Small lot, single-family
- > Semi attached housing with independent parking.

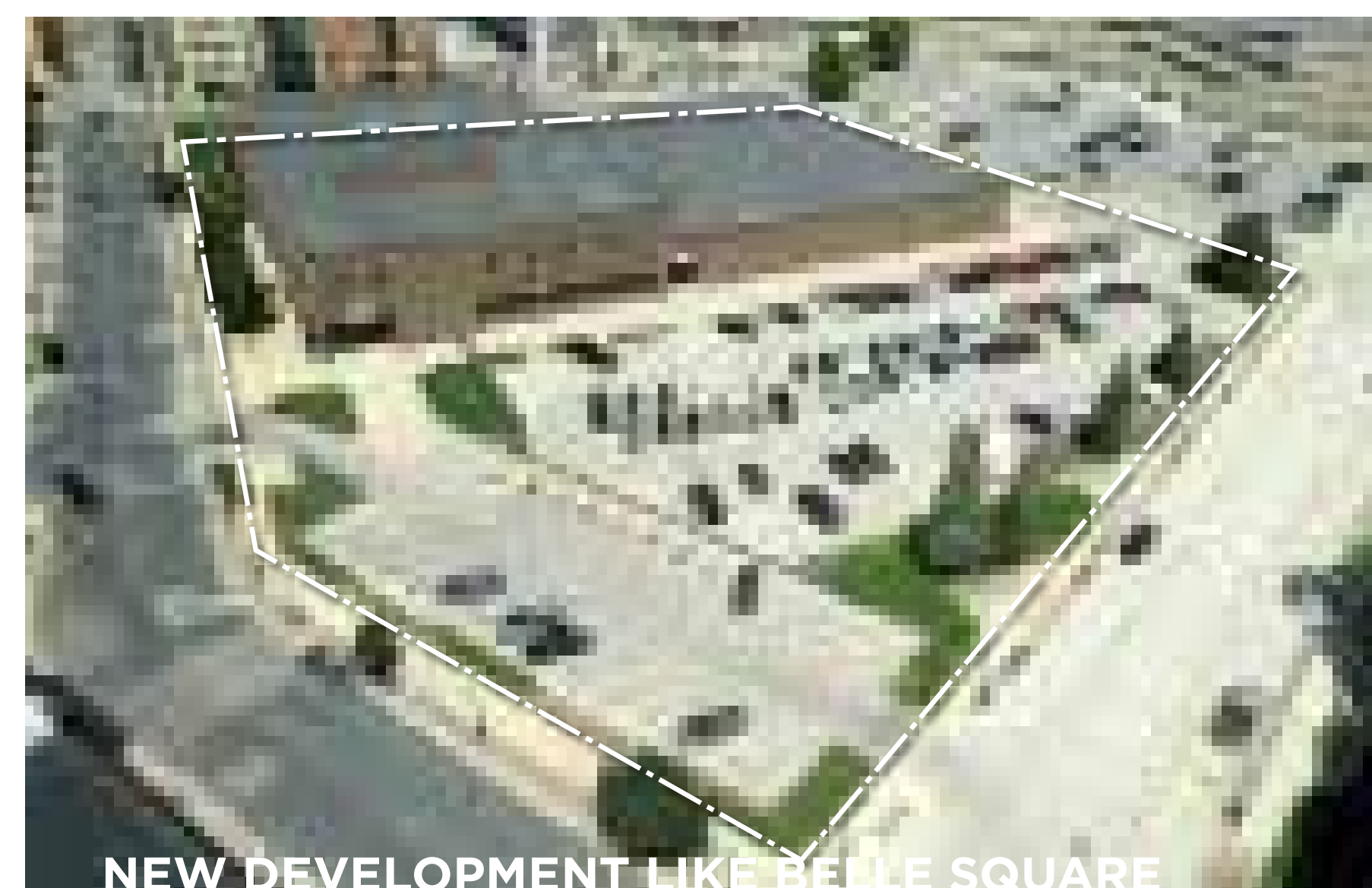
RIVERFRONT POSSIBILITIES



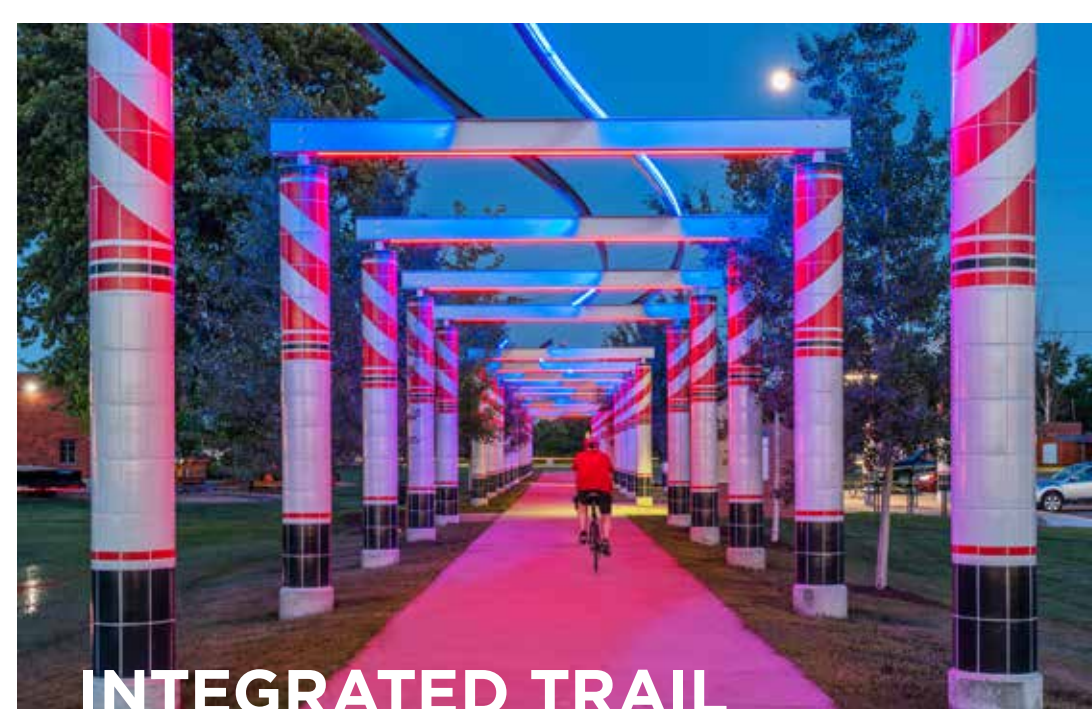
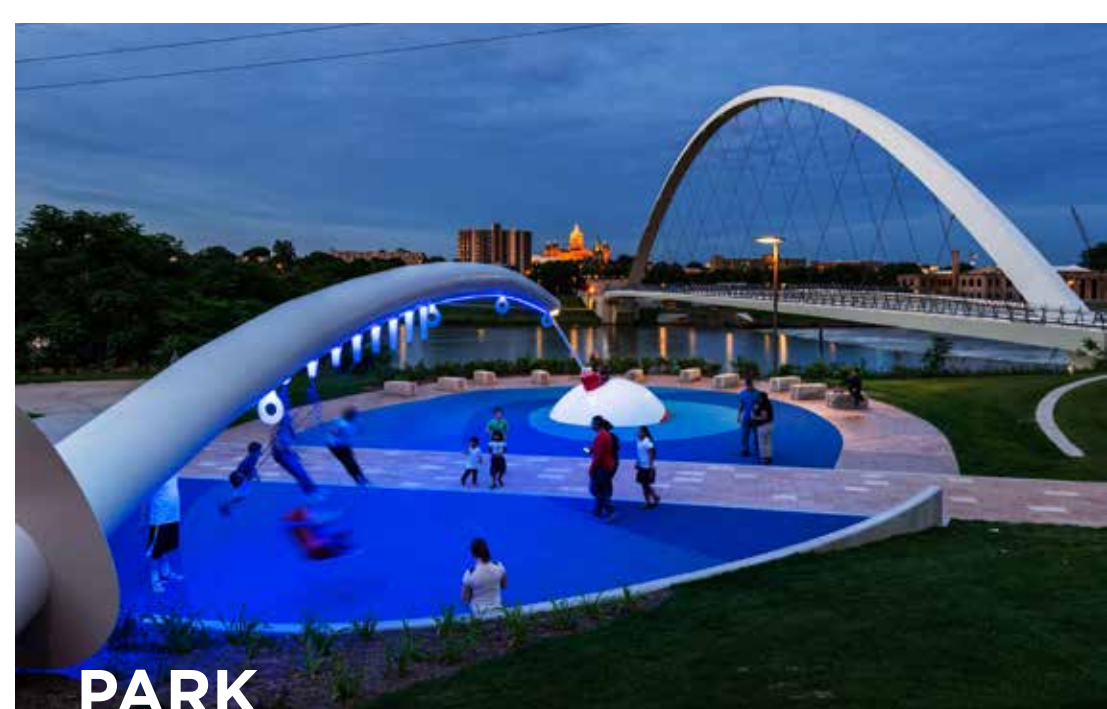
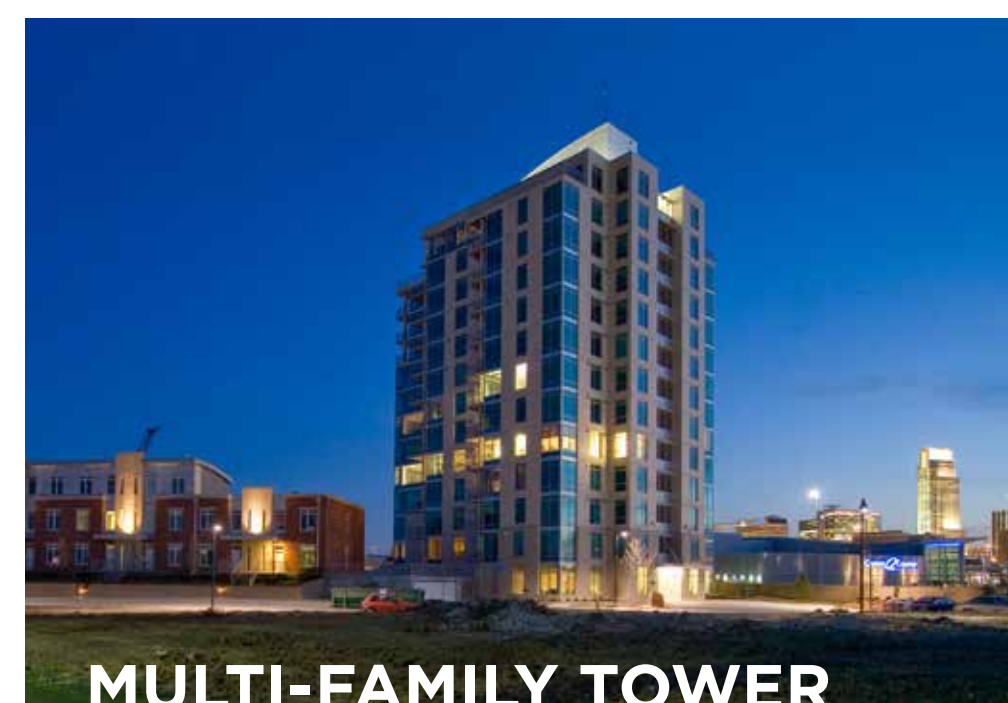
SURFACE PARKING POSSIBILITIES



POST OFFICE SITE POSSIBILITIES



While there is no plan for the Post Office to move elsewhere, Imagine 2040 considers this site as a future location that can support new housing, shopping, employers, and cultural attractions. The site could support a civic function, such as the public market, symphony hall, or cultural arts center.



Lower-level: Commercial, covered parking, and common amenity space.
Upper-levels: Office or residential.
Rooftop: Amenity space overlooking downtown.