



City of Clinton

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN



ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL MAY 24, 2011

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Executive Summary

HR Green is pleased to submit the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* to the City of Clinton and Lyons Business District stakeholders. This plan is both visionary and achievable, and will benefit the entire community. To ensure future success, the residents and leadership will need to embrace this plan and be forward thinking.

The overall purpose of this Master Plan is to create a genuine place to live, work, shop, dine, and play, and to sustain and increase tax revenue. In order to achieve this overall purpose, the Master Plan focuses on recommendations for key items such as:

- Theme and branding
- Vehicular and pedestrian circulation
- Land use and zoning
- Aesthetics and conceptual streetscape elements
- Infrastructure
- Complete streets
- Parking

To accomplish the goals and recommendations an implementation plan has been established which identifies short and long range action items. Through the continued successful improvement of the existing downtown area and redevelopment of vacant properties the Lyons District could become a vibrant center consisting of a compact retail core with specialty shops, mixed use structures and efficient and safe vehicular and non-vehicular modes of transportation.



1.0 Introduction and Purpose

Identifying the exact boundaries of “Lyons” is impossible. Nevertheless, the referenced area maintains a distinct identity and associated history within the community. Names of businesses and feedback from local residents reflect this prevailing sentiment. In fact, the term “Lyons” is a lasting legacy associated with the original development of the area.

Elijah Buell founded the town of Lyons in 1835. He selected the site along a narrow portion of the Mississippi River so he could more easily ferry individuals across the waterway¹. The community’s setting along the river dictated much of its future development.

Lyons originally prospered as a grain and milling center and later as a lumber manufacturing center. The town’s advantageous position along the Mississippi River allowed it to receive lumber rafts from areas to the north. The industrial growth, in combination with an announcement of a potential railroad locating within the community, spurred further expansion. Lyons contained two banks, fifty-three stores and groceries, two sawmills, a planing and lath mill, a



sash, door/blind factory, a marble works, an iron factory, and a broom factory by 1856². Lyons grew from 200 residents in 1852 to a population of 5,000 by 1858³. This situation allowed Lyons to create a well-established city center located along Main Avenue.

The nearby City of Clinton also benefited from its proximity to the Mississippi River. However, the two cities remained independent and developed separately. The “big tree” located on North 2nd Street was more than a symbolic divide between the two communities; the tree also served as the city limits. The City of Clinton eventually incorporated Lyons in 1895.



The City of Clinton named a lookout structure along the Mississippi River after Elijah Buell. Buell founded Lyons in 1835.

The study area contains a diverse mixture of single-family homes, local businesses, industries, and recreational opportunities. It also includes the “Lyons Business District” which is one of the community’s two “traditional” downtowns. This important asset is located within a predominately residential neighborhood and anchors the northern portion of Clinton. Specialty retail shops, professional offices, restaurants, and essential city services characterize the area. Further, it is home to the annual community gatherings such as the Lyons Street Dance festival and a Farmer’s Market.

The displacement of key area businesses, deteriorating physical conditions of buildings and public infrastructure, and reduced traffic counts have combined to negatively impact the once vibrant downtown. These conditions have collectively resulted in vacant land, underutilized buildings, and general disinvestment within the area and surrounding neighborhoods.

¹ *Clinton: A Pictorial History*

² *Lyons: 150 Years North of the Big Tree*

³ *Timber Connections: The Joyce Lumber Story*



In order to reverse this situation, key stakeholders such as area business owners and residents initiated a grassroots-driven effort to revitalize the district. This work resulted in the creation of a City Council-appointed Steering Committee tasked with producing a document to help guide the successful redevelopment of the area. The subsequent *Lyons Business District Master Plan* will serve as a tool and framework for the City of Clinton to successfully guide the redevelopment of the area. This approach includes identifying appropriate future land uses for underutilized parcels, helping guide future capital improvements program (CIP) projects and providing various strategies to create an active corridor which is sustainable and serves the needs of area residents.

Vision Statement

The formulation of the *Lyons Business District Master Plan's* Vision Statement evolved through a dedicated public outreach initiative focused on maximizing community participation. This involved engaging key stakeholders with varying interests such as business owners, area residents, city staff, and elected officials throughout the preparation of the document. The City actively sought feedback through a variety of forums including the creation of a Steering Committee, the hosting of a public open house, and through formal presentations at City Plan Commission and City Council meetings.

The Vision for the Lyons Business District Master Plan is to revive the Main Avenue Corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods to its once vibrant past. This involves preserving the area's unique history and integrating the Mississippi River in the creation of a dynamic and attractive area which offers a diverse mixture of land uses and recreational opportunities to serve the needs of the entire community. Once achieved, the Lyons Business District will become a sustainable, center of activity while maintaining its traditional "downtown" appearance.

The City of Clinton compiled the following goals and objectives in order to achieve this vision:

GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT ALONG EASTERN PORTION OF MAIN AVENUE CORRIDOR

- Objective 1: Identify vacant and/or underutilized properties available for redevelopment opportunities
- Objective 2: Promote future development and establishment of an "anchor" which will attract individuals to Main Avenue east of North 2nd Street

GOAL 2: PLAN FOR APPROPRIATE AND COMPATIBLE FUTURE LAND USES

- Objective 1: Encourage future development/redevelopment that complements existing land uses
- Objective 2: Identify areas with incompatible land uses in close proximity and recommend more appropriate future uses

GOAL 3: IMPROVE THE AESTHETIC QUALITY OF THE CORRIDOR THROUGH FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS AND STREETScape PROJECTS

- Objective 1: Encourage appropriate façade improvements for existing structures
- Objective 2: Identify areas appropriate for streetscape improvements (i.e. gateway and/or way-finding signage, benches, bike racks, street lighting, etc.)
- Objective 3: Create a prioritized installation/construction schedule for the targeted areas
- Objective 4: Specify potential sources of funding to install/construct the public improvements

GOAL 4: PRESERVE TRADITIONAL "MAIN STREET" APPEARANCE AND PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION OF THE CORRIDOR

- Objective 1: Ensure new development and redevelopment projects are compatible with character of existing corridor (i.e. building materials)
- Objective 2: Maintain common site design practices for new construction in downtown Lyons (i.e. zero front yard setbacks, parking located in rear of properties, pedestrian-scale development, etc.)

GOAL 5: USE THE CITY OF CLINTON ZONING REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT PLANNING POLICIES

- Objective 1: Establish tools and requirements that foster quality development
- Objective 2: Amend or modify existing code as needed to allow for appropriate site development within the study area



GOAL 6: EXPAND THE AMOUNT OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

- Objective 1: Identify lands ideal for the development of future passive and active recreational spaces
- Objective 2: Encourage the development of multi-use trails in accordance with the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Routes Plan*
- Objective 3: Create links with other existing open spaces within the community
- Objective 4: Preserve and expand areas of natural beauty within the corridor, particularly those associated with the Mississippi River

GOAL 7: MAXIMIZE VISIBILITY AND USE OF THE RIVERFRONT

- Objective 1: Identify potential improvements and areas to provide additional access to the Mississippi River for residents of Lyons and the greater Clinton area.
- Objective 2: Create additional open space areas along the River
- Objective 3: Connect a trail/walk-way from the Lyons District to the Discovery Trail along the River



GOAL 8: IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE NECESSARY PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Objective 1: Identify infrastructure improvements appropriate for inclusion within the city's Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Objective 2: Prioritize identified projects for inclusion in the CIP

2.0 Project Approach

The creation of this Master Plan involved several tasks in order to help examine the various external factors collectively serving as an influence on existing conditions, future land development, and subsequent growth. The tasks below represent HR Green's approach to completing this assignment and preparing a Master Plan that will guide future land use and municipal investment decisions within the study area.

- *Existing Plan and Report Analysis:* Reviewed several adopted plans relevant to the study area that influence future development and public sector investment decisions. The documents reviewed include: *The Riverfront Vision, Clinton, Iowa* (1993), *Clinton Development Plan* (2000), the Iowa Department of Economic Development's *Lyons District, Clinton, IA- Downtown Assessment Visit* (2006), the City of Clinton's *Iowa Great Places* application (2005), a draft version of the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Routes Plan* (2009), the *City of Clinton Zoning Regulations*, the *City of Clinton Zoning Map*, *Clinton Urban Revitalization Program*, *Lyons Redevelopment Urban Renewal Plan*, and FEMA Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps pertaining to the study area. HR Green reviewed the materials to provide a historic context of the City of Clinton, the Lyons Business District, and other factors influencing or guiding its future growth or development.
- *Existing Physical Conditions Analysis:* Visited the area and its surroundings in order to further define the condition of public infrastructure, including subsurface utilities such as water, storm and sanitary sewer, and inspect physical facilities such as coal chutes, lighting, parking, condition of streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, etc.
- *Steering Committee Meetings-* The City of Clinton City Council appointed the Lyons Planning Steering Committee on July 27, 2010 to "substantiate the purpose, goals, and objectives" of the *Lyons Business District Master Plan*. The five-member committee comprised of area business owners and residents. HR Green and city staff met with the Lyons Planning Steering Committee three times during the preparation of the Master Plan document to discuss project progress and to receive input/feedback on recommendations and implementation strategies. Section 4.0 provides a summary of each work session meeting.
- *Public Involvement:* Hosted a public open house within the study area. This event offered citizens an opportunity to discuss the project with city staff/HR Green representatives and provide comments on the proposed future land uses, public improvements, etc. Section 4.0 gives a summary of the feedback received by the City.
- *Approval Process:* Following the analysis and public input stages, the Master Plan went through a formal approval process through the City of Clinton as follows:

City Staff – HR Green involved city staff throughout the entire development of the Master Plan. City staff also reviewed and provided comments on the final draft version of the document prior to review by the City Plan Commission.

City Plan Commission - Once finalized, the City submitted the Master Plan to the City Plan Commission for review, input, and recommendation.

City Council - The City Council considered the Master Plan formal approval and adoption of this project, as public policy.



3.0 Description of the Study Area

Physical

- **Study Area Boundaries:** The study area is generally bounded by 25th Avenue North to the north and 17th Avenue North to the south. The Mississippi River forms the border to the east while the area in-between North 3rd and North 5th Streets bound the area to the west. Exhibit 1 in Appendix A highlights the boundaries of the study area.
- **Size:** According to the United States Census Bureau, the City of Clinton is comprised of 35.6 square miles of land. The study area contains approximately 246 acres which represents roughly 0.01% of the total land within city limits.
- **Zoning:** Zoning is an important tool used by the City to control the built environment and implement planning policies. The *City of Clinton Zoning Regulations* establishes permitted land uses, height and area requirements, and development criteria for individual properties.



Many businesses in the Lyons District Downtown area along Main Avenue have been established for generations.

The study area consists of a diverse mixture of zoning districts ranging from residential to industrial uses. Further, the referenced districts vary in the degree of intensities allowed. The *City of Clinton Zoning Regulations* permits less intensive uses (i.e. single-family homes) to locate within more intensive zoning districts (i.e. commercial and industrial areas) but not vice-versa. The following summary of zoning districts located within the study area is from the *City of Clinton Zoning Regulations*.

Commercial Districts

C-1 (Local Commercial District). The C-1 District permits neighborhood-scale commercial development. The district is often located within walking distance of single-family homes in order to serve the daily needs of nearby residents. The C-1 District restricts the types of commercial activities allowed (i.e. limited to convenience stores, restaurants, small retail shops and offices) and the total number of employees for businesses. The district permits all types of residential uses.

The district does not have a required minimum lot area or minimum lot width. The front yard and rear yard setbacks are 20 feet and 15 feet respectively. The district does not require a side yard setback unless it abuts a residential district (5 feet). Buildings within the C-1 District cannot exceed 35 feet in total height.

C-2 (General Commercial District). The C-2 District encourages automobile-oriented commercial development which serves the entire community. The district is often located along arterial streets and within major corridors. The C-2 District does not restrict the number of employees allowed on business premises. The district permits all types of residential uses.

The district does not have a required minimum lot area or minimum lot width for commercial development. The front yard and rear yard setbacks are 20 feet and 15 feet respectively. The district does not require a side yard setback unless it abuts a residential district (5 feet). Buildings within the C-1 District cannot exceed 45 feet in total height.

Residential Districts

R-1C (1-Family Residential District). The R-1C District emphasizes protecting single-family homes. Traditional neighborhoods containing compact, narrow lots served by alleyways located in the rear of properties characterize the district. R-1C Districts are often located in the older neighborhoods surrounding the community's urban core. Permitted uses are limited to single-family homes and public/quasi-public facilities (i.e. parks, churches, schools, golf courses, etc.).

The district has a minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet (public sanitary system) and minimum lot width of 50 feet. The front yard and rear yard setbacks are 30 feet and 25 feet respectively. The district has a side yard setback requirement of 5 feet. Buildings within the R-1C District cannot exceed 35 feet in total height.

R-2 (2-Family Residential District). The R-2 District provides an opportunity for the construction of zero-lot line homes. The district is located throughout the community and often serves as a buffer between single-family residential districts and more intense land uses. Permitted uses include all uses allowed within an R-1A district, attached single-family homes, and two-family dwellings.

The district has a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet (1-family homes) or 6,000 square feet (2-family homes) and a minimum lot width of 50 feet. Both the front yard and rear yard setbacks are 25 feet while the required side yard is 5 feet. Buildings within the R-2 District cannot exceed 45 feet in total height.

R-4 (Apartment Residential District). The R-4 District permits multi-family dwellings. The district is located throughout the community and traditionally serves as a buffer between adjoining single-family residential districts and more intense land uses such as general commercial districts or downtown areas.

The minimum lot areas for the district are 5,000 square feet for 1-family homes, 6,000 square feet for 2-family homes, and 2,500 square feet (and an additional 1,500 square feet for each unit) for multi-family units. The district requires a minimum lot width of 50 feet. The front yard and rear yard setbacks are 25 feet and 25 feet (interior lots) and 15 feet (corner lots) respectively. Buildings within the R-4 District cannot exceed 45 feet in total height.

Industrial Districts

M-1 (Industrial Light District). The M-1 District allows industrial developments which have fewer negative externalities (i.e. noise, odors, dust, etc.) associated with their operations. Permitted uses primarily focus on light assembly, warehousing, and storage yards.

The district does not have a required minimum lot area or minimum lot width. The district does not require a rear or side yard setback unless it abuts a residential district (20 feet and 10 feet respectively). The front yard setback is 20 feet. Buildings within the M-1 District cannot exceed 45 feet in total height.

M-2 (Industrial Heavy District). The M-2 District is reserved for intense industrial development. Permitted uses include manufacturing/processing operations and all uses allowed within M-1 zoning districts.



The district does not have a required minimum lot area or minimum lot width. The district does not require a rear or side yard setback unless it abuts a residential district (20 feet and 10 feet respectively). The front yard setback is 20 feet. Buildings within the M-1 District cannot exceed 45 feet in total height.

Exhibit 2 in Appendix A shows the current zoning within the study area.

- *Existing Land Uses:* The study area is primarily comprised of single-family homes. Compact, narrow lots served by alleyways located in the rear characterize the traditional residential neighborhoods.

Two distinct commercial nodes emerge within the study area. Properties along North 2nd Street in the southern portion of the study area consist of large-scale developments which are heavily automobile-dependent. These businesses include a big box store, convenience store, and banking institutions. The commercial development intensity decreases heading north along the roadway where 21st Avenue North serves as a noticeably-visible separation barrier. These properties, and those located along Main Avenue, consist of neighborhood-scaled commercial/retail uses which include a mixture of restaurants, unique boutique shops, and professional office services. Many of the businesses located within the Main Avenue Corridor are locally-owned and operated.

Land located east of McKinley Street contains light industrial development. Uses include mini warehouse storage units, an auto body shop, and a soft drink distribution center. Further, Canadian Pacific railroad tracks transect the area from north-south.

The eastern portion of the Main Avenue Corridor contains numerous vacant/undeveloped properties. This includes a former auto dealership area located at the eastern terminus of the roadway near the earthen dike. The referenced properties contain approximately 7.06 acres of land. Further, a combination of building demolitions and fires has caused the traditional downtown to have gaps in its built environment.

The study area also contains several public and semi-public facilities critical to the success of the Lyons Business District. These uses have the ability to regularly draw community residents into the corridor. The referenced facilities include the following:

- Catholic Historical Center at St. Boniface- 2500 Pershing Boulevard
 - Clinton Public Library, Lyons Branch- 105 Main Avenue
 - Clinton Fire Department Station #3- 2311 Roosevelt Street
 - Lyons Post Office- 97 Main Avenue
 - Lyons Rail Depot- 56 25th Avenue North
 - Sawmill Museum- 2231 Grant Street
- *Built Environment:* The study area originally developed as a municipality independent from the City of Clinton. Consequently, its built environment reflected this situation. Lyons maintained an established downtown which stretched east-west along Main Avenue. The business district contained retail shops, service-oriented businesses, etc. while residential neighborhoods surrounded the referenced area. Many of the structures associated with the early development of Lyons remain.



The Lyons Business District maintains several essential municipal service locations.

The Main Avenue Corridor contains many prominent buildings constructed during the mid-to-late 1800s and the early 1900s. Specifically, a one and one-half block frontage of Main Avenue located east of Roosevelt Street is the heart of the historic downtown and is of architectural significance⁴. This area includes the 1st National Bank of Lyons (1907) and several Italianate-style structures such as J.P. Gage Union Hall (1861) and the Miller and Schumm building (1874). However, instances of inappropriate façade improvements have damaged the historical integrity of several of the area's buildings. Further, improper maintenance practices have contributed to the continued physical deterioration of structures within the corridor.

The study area also has numerous architecturally-significant residential homes. A substantial amount of the structures are located within the 2200 block of Garfield Street. The homes are primarily of the Italianate-style or influenced by the Italianate-style but also include simplified Renaissance Revival Style. Moreover, many of the referenced properties are well-kept which contributes to the overall stability of the neighborhood.

- *Vehicular Access and Circulation:* The study area includes a combination of local streets, collectors, and arterials which strictly follow a grid pattern. This transportation pattern fosters a high degree of connectivity. Major access points into the study area include:
 - North 2nd Street / U.S. 67 / IA 136 and North 3rd Street which transect the study area from north-south.
 - 19th Avenue North / IA 136 which serves as a gateway into the community and state from the east.
 - Main Avenue / IA 136 which runs east-west along the northern edge of the study area.

The City of Clinton has classified the above-referenced roadways as arterial streets based on their respective design, functionality, and daily volume of traffic. In fact, the roadways are some of the most heavily-traveled corridors in the community. The following table summarizes annual average daily traffic (ADT) information obtained from Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) Traffic Flow Maps.

Street	Segment	ADT (2006)	ADT (2002)	ADT (1998)
Main Ave.	West of N. 3 rd St.	6,300 vehicles per day	5,800 vehicles per day	4,790 vehicles per day
Main Ave.	Between N. 2 nd St. and N. 3 rd St.	7,000-8,200 vehicles per day	7,700-8,200 vehicles per day	7,500-7,600 vehicles per day
Main Ave.	East of N. 2 nd St.	2,790 vehicles per day	3,120 vehicles per day	4,210 vehicles per day
N. 2 nd St.	South of Main Ave.	6,800 vehicles per day	7,500 vehicles per day	7,800 vehicles per day
N. 3 rd St.	South of Main Ave.	8,000 vehicles per day	8,400 vehicles per day	9,000 vehicles per day

Continued on next page...

⁴ *The Architecture of Clinton, Iowa*



As evidenced above, North 2nd Street traditionally carries a significant daily volume of traffic through the community. The loud noises, faster speeds, and space constraints associated with the roadway form a barrier within the study area by disrupting the pedestrian-friendly environment. This situation becomes a primary concern when considering safe pedestrian mobility near the Lyons Central Business District. As such, the City of Clinton and the IDOT will need to continue working together to optimize a safe non-vehicular system.

Exhibit 4 in Appendix A identifies existing transportation patterns within the study area.

- *Public Transportation:* The City of Clinton Municipal Transit Administration (MTA) offers services Monday-Friday from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. and on Saturday from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. The MTA does not offer services on Sundays. Two designated bus routes serve the study area including the Main Avenue West and Camanche Avenue/South Clinton route and the Main Avenue North and Camanche Avenue route. Both referenced routes have stops along North 2nd Street and Main Avenue. The City of Clinton is presently studying the feasibility of establishing a bus system which would connect the community to the various towns within the region including Camanche, IA and Fulton, IL.

Exhibit 4 in Appendix A highlights existing bus routes within the study area.

- *Pedestrian Mobility/Walkability:* Sidewalk encroachments such as building facades, street and traffic lights, signage poles, etc. limit the width of sidewalks to as little as three feet in many areas of the Main Avenue Corridor. This narrow width is not appropriate for downtowns as it can cause conflicts when there are a greater number of pedestrians and streetscape elements. Further, the narrow sidewalk clearance can cause difficulties for people with disabilities, such as those in wheelchairs, as well as people with small children and strollers.
- *Infrastructure:* The study area is a built environment served by existing infrastructure (i.e. roads, storm and sanitary sewers, water, etc.). The infrastructure in the area has received minimal maintenance and much of it is in need of repair or replacement. Most of the area is still being served by a combined sewer system, such that the storm water and sanitary flows in the same pipes. Exhibit 6 in Appendix A displays existing water main, storm sewer, and sanitary sewer locations within the study area.

HR Green conducted an inventory of the physical sidewalk conditions for the Main Avenue Corridor area on November 16, 2010. The sidewalks were divided into four categories (no defects, minor defects, moderate defects, and major defects) based on the prevalence and size of cracks, amount of pavement heaving, etc. HR Green used the moderate defect category as a base to determine the most appropriate physical condition category for the sidewalks. As such, the majority of sidewalks within the corridor fell within the referenced category. Exhibit 9A in Appendix A shows existing sidewalk conditions.

HR Green also conducted an inventory of existing site furnishings (i.e. benches, lighting, planter boxes, etc.) within the Main Avenue Corridor on August 18, 2010. The area currently has few furnishings and most are relatively old and in need of repair or replacement. Additionally, no apparent theme exists amongst the improvements as many of the furnishings are of varying types and colors.



While most of the infrastructure within the study area is in need of maintenance or replacement, there have been a few projects recently completed within the study area. The City of Clinton has recently completed the following projects within the study area:

- North 2nd Street/Highway 67 Street Improvement project (2010). This involved resurfacing 17 blocks of the roadway between 7th Avenue North and Main Avenue. The project also included resurfacing 3 blocks of Main Avenue from North 2nd Street to North 3rd Street.
- East Central Lyons Sewer Separation project (2010). This improvement involved the separation of the existing combined sewers and the reconstruction of the following streets: 23rd Avenue North from North 2nd Street to Harding Street, 22nd Avenue North from North 2nd Street to the alley east of McKinley Street, McKinley Street from Main Ave to 22nd Avenue North, and Garfield Street from Main Ave to 22nd Ave North. City officials estimate approximately 75% of the study area still contains a combined sewer system.
- *Parking:* A variety of off-street and on-street parking options are located within the Main Avenue Corridor to serve the needs of area residents, businesses, and shoppers. However, most users of the downtown area feel a parking shortage exists. HR Green conducted an inventory of all formal parking areas⁵ within the Main Avenue Corridor area on November 23, 2010. HR Green divided the parking facilities into the following categories: on-street versus off-street and municipally-owned versus privately-owned.

The inventory identified 74 parallel on-street parking spaces predominately located along Main Avenue. The referenced spaces were free but restricted to a two-hour time limit. The remaining on-street parking areas within the corridor lacked striping. All on-street parking spaces are located within the public right-of-way.

The inventory also identified approximately 405 off-street parking spaces within the corridor. This included 65 municipally-owned spaces (amongst 3 lots) and 340 privately-owned spaces. Formal off-street parking areas were principally located west of North 2nd Street along Main Avenue and behind building frontages. However, several properties located along the south side of the roadway contained surface parking lots. The eastern portion of the corridor contained many informal off-street parking areas.

Identifying areas appropriate for future parking expansions will be critical as the area redevelops. The City of Clinton's *Zoning Regulations* establishes off-street parking requirements for all new development within the community. The following is a listing of example uses likely to locate within the Main Avenue and their associated parking requirements:

- Office: 1 space/250 square feet
- Restaurant, tavern, and entertainment: 1 space/ 100 square feet plus 4 spaces for each drive-in window
- Retail sales and service-general: 1 space/200 square feet; other than ground level; 1 space/250 square feet

Exhibit 8 in Appendix A identifies all existing parking areas and highlights potential future locations for the development of municipally-and-privately-owned off-street parking lots.

⁵ Formal parking areas contain an all-weather surface (concrete, asphalt, etc.), striped parking spaces, signage, etc.

- *Significant Physical Attributes:* Railroad tracks owned by Canadian Pacific transect the eastern portion of the study area from north-south. Additionally, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) has trackage rights to the referenced railroad line. The Surface Transportation Board (STB) of the U.S. Department of Transportation categorizes both railroads as Class I based on their respective annual operating revenues which exceed \$250 million.

The railroad serves as a physical barrier separating the Mississippi River and the land located west of the tracks. An estimated 16 trains (eight each way) travel the line per day. The study area contains a total of five railroad crossings to facilitate the safe travel for motorists across the rail lines. The designated crossing for 17th Avenue North is between Roosevelt and Garfield Streets while the crossings for 21st Avenue North, 23rd Avenue North, Main Avenue, and 25th Avenue North are all between Grant and Harding Streets.

The high amount of rail car traffic experienced within the corridor can delay commute times and creates noise concerns for nearby properties. Future development must consider these potential negative externalities during site development. This master plan respected the location of the railroad when identifying appropriate future land uses for the impacted areas.

Environmental

- *Open Space:* The study area contains the following municipally-owned and operated facilities which provide residents with recreational opportunities:

- Lyons 4 Square, located at Main Avenue and Roosevelt Street, serves as the focal point of downtown Lyons. The park contains approximately 1.6 acres of passive open space and features a band shell. The park is home to the Lyons Street Dance annual festival and the Farmers Market during spring and summer months.
- Elijah Buell Terrace is a 1.2-acre scenic overlook located at the eastern terminus of Main Avenue and adjacent to the Discovery Trail. The facility features a gazebo and provides the only formal access point to the Mississippi River within the study area.
- The Discovery Trail is a 4.8-mile, multi-use recreational trail which begins at 7th Avenue South and terminates at Eagle Point Park. The trail is an asphalt/concrete path which parallels the Mississippi River. The trail is located along an earthen dike south of 25th Avenue North but drops to the street level at the referenced roadway.
- Although not within the study area, both Earl F. Mayer Park and the 25th Avenue North boat ramp are important recreational facilities for the community. Earl F. Mayer Park is located one block to the north at the intersection of 26th Avenue North and Garfield Street and contains two baseball fields. The public boat ramp is located adjacent to the northern border of the study area on 25th Avenue North. The latter facility is one of three ramps which provide recreational boaters with direct access to the Mississippi River within the



Four Square Park is one of the main park and open space amenities in the Lyons District.

community. The ramp underwent an approximate \$200,000 renovation in 2009 which expanded the facility from two lanes to three. The expansion also added 15-feet to its existing length and 8-feet to its existing width.

Many of the neighborhoods within the southern portion of the study area are not within walking distance⁶ of the referenced facilities. Exhibit 12 in Appendix A highlights the locations of the open spaces/parks.

- *Natural Features:* The study area is located along the western banks of the Mississippi River. As such, the waterway is a significant asset for the Lyons Business District and the entire community. The river offers a sense of natural beauty through its scenic views. It also provides recreational opportunities (boating, swimming, and fishing) for residents and serves as a haven for wildlife.
- *Floodplain:* Car Barn Creek transverses the study area from the northwest to the southeast. The creek flows in a south/southeasterly direction and eventually empties into the Mississippi River. Consequently, a significant portion of the adjoining lands lie within the 100-year flood plain.

The Mississippi River forms the eastern boundary of the study area. The City of Clinton constructed a formal earthen dike during the 1970s to prevent flooding. As a consequence, the study area does not have any floodplain areas associated with the river.

Future development within the floodplain will need to coordinate with regulating agencies to receive the proper approval prior to construction. Exhibit 3 in Appendix A shows the existing floodplains within the study area.

- *Topographical Features:* A Clinton USGS 7-1/2 Minute Topographic Quadrangle Map (1991) shows the study area is generally flat.

⁶ As defined by one-quarter mile distance or 1,320 feet.



4.0 Public Involvement

The City of Clinton understands the importance of having its citizens help shape the community's future. As such, the City placed a heavy emphasis on actively involving the general public during the creation of this Master Plan. The outreach initiative involved seeking input through a variety of means including a Council-appointed Steering Committee, the hosting of a Public Open House within the affected area, and formal presentations of the Master Plan to the City Plan Commission and the City Council. The referenced interactions helped foster communication amongst the general public, City Plan Commission members, city staff and elected officials.

Gathering input from the general public is a critical step in creating a successful plan. The process of expressing concerns, opportunities, thoughts, and ideas in a public forum often helps communities create a shared vision. The practice of gaining widespread acceptance improves the likelihood for the successful long-term implementation of a plan.

The following is a list of public involvement activities associated with the development of the *Lyons Business District Master Plan*:

- **October 19, 2010 – Kickoff meeting and work session with Steering Committee**
- **December 14, 2010 – Work session with Steering Committee**
- **March 23, 2011 – Public open house at the Sawmill Museum**
- **April 20, 2011 – Work session with Steering Committee**
- **May 4, 2011 – Plan recommended for approval by City Plan Commission**
- **May 10, 2011 – Plan presented at City Council Committee-of-the-Whole meeting**
- **May 24, 2011 – City Council formally adopted the *Lyons Business District Master Plan***

Steering Committee

HR Green and city staff met with the Lyons Planning Steering Committee several times throughout the development of this Master Plan to discuss project progress and to receive input/feedback on recommendations and implementation strategies. This high level of engagement helped the various key stakeholders establish a common vision for the area. The following is a summary of each interaction:

10.19.10. HR Green hosted a joint kick-off meeting/work session with the Lyons Steering Committee at the Lyons Depot building. The intent of the kick-off meeting was to summarize the project, associated work plan, and schedule. HR Green and the committee also discussed the project purpose, goals, and objectives.

The work session included a bus and walking tour of the study area which allowed HR Green to inventory and map significant physical features, evaluate existing conditions, assess the adequacy of current amenities, and interview steering committee members. Following the tour, HR Green conducted an exercise intended to build upon discoveries resulting from the tours. Discussion focused on the following areas with regards to the study area: desirability, uniqueness, detracting factors, available activities, missing items, and desired image of portrayal. These conversations allowed HR Green to gain an understanding of the full range of issues perceived by the various interests.

12.14.10. HR Green hosted a work session at the Sawmill Museum to present and discuss exhibit maps pertaining to the following areas: infrastructure, zoning, transportation, future land use, streetscape improvements, and parking. HR Green prepared the exhibits based on feedback received during the previous work session and information obtained during its inventory of existing conditions.



04.20.11. HR Green hosted a work session at the Sawmill Museum to present a final draft version of the Master Plan to the Lyons Planning Steering Committee. The intent of the meeting was to receive the Steering Committee's official endorsement of the document.

The work session focused on discussing recommendations developed during the preparation of the Master Plan. HR Green summarized each recommendation and asked follow-up questions designed to generate feedback. HR Green then directed the Steering Committee to assign a priority level to each recommendation. Committee members identified the following as being most important with regards to implementation:

- Plan for Appropriate and Compatible Future Land Uses by Amending the Official Zoning Map
- Encourage Redevelopment along the Eastern Area of the Main Avenue Corridor
- Improve the Aesthetic Quality of the Corridor through Façade Improvements
- Identify Public Infrastructure Improvements
- Develop a Funding Strategy for Planned Improvements

HR Green utilized input received during these activities to help prioritize implementation action steps within the final document.

Notes from all Steering Committee meetings are included in Appendix D.

Public Open House

Consultants from HR Green and city staff hosted a public open house for the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* on March 23, 2011 at the Sawmill Museum. The City of Clinton posted notice of the meeting on its website, in the *Clinton Herald*, and at City Hall, the Building and Neighborhood Services Building, the Ericksen Center, and the public libraries. The City also mailed out notices to the Lyons Planning Steering Committee, City Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, representatives of the local economic development corporation and chamber of commerce, elected officials, local media outlets, and city staff. The City sought to encourage a high level of citizen participation/involvement through these concerted efforts. Approximately 61 citizens attended the 2-hour meeting.

HR Green presented a combination of "current conditions" maps and "future concept" maps at the open house. The former maps identified items such as transportation routes, existing zoning, infrastructure locations, etc., while the latter maps illustrated a future land use pattern and potential streetscape improvement types and locations. Participants used the "current conditions" maps as a basis for formulating opinions about how target area could develop to meet local and city-wide goals and achieve the community vision.



Many people attended the public open house on March 23, 2011 to review draft exhibits and to provide comments and feedback on the Master Plan.

HR Green directed participants to review the "future concept" maps and provide written feedback on a comment form in order to gather their opinions, thoughts, and concerns regarding the redevelopment of the study area. Specifically, the form focused on the following issues/topics:

- Likes related to the Future Land Use Concept map
- Dislikes related to the Future Land Use Concept map
- Suggested improvements to the Future Land Use Concept map

- Challenges associated with the redevelopment of the study area
- Unique features of the Main Avenue Corridor
- Strengths of the Main Avenue Corridor
- Missing items from the Main Avenue Corridor
- Streetscape improvement suggestions
- Important issues facing the Main Avenue Corridor

The City collected completed forms at the end of the meeting and encouraged participants requesting additional time to submit their comments to the Engineering Department at City Hall within two weeks following the meeting.

The City identified several commonalities amongst the feedback including the following:

- An implicit desire to maintain and respect the historical integrity of the area.
- The need to create a more densely populated area which focuses on maintaining the area's pedestrian orientation and promoting alternative methods of transportation through the expansion of the trail system and by increasing the number of available bus routes.
- A desire to develop the area into a unique destination offering specialty shops, restaurants, etc. while also maintaining a "small town" feel. Participants offered numerous potential "models" including Iowa City, IA, Le Claire, IA, and Galena, IL.
- Concerns about funding related to project implementation.

HR Green and city staff reviewed the comments and incorporated them into the final revision of the Master Plan. Refer to Appendix B for a summary of the comments received by the City of Clinton.

City Plan Commission

HR Green presented the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* to the City Plan Commission on May 4, 2011. The Commission unanimously recommended approval of the document to the City Council.

City Council

HR Green presented the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* to the City Council on May 10, 2011. The Council formally adopted the Plan by Resolution No. 2011-211 on May 24th, 2011.



5.0 Existing Report and Plan Analysis

The Riverfront Vision, Clinton, Iowa, as adopted on 09/14/93

Summary of the Plan: The *Riverfront Vision* took a long-term, comprehensive look at the future of the city's riverfront. The objective of the master plan was to assist the City of Clinton in maximizing and promoting public access and utilization of the Mississippi River. This initiative primarily revolved around the goals of maintaining/increasing public lands along the river and improving river accessibility on current public lands. The document also served as a "sub-area" plan within the *Clinton Development Plan*.

Plan elements focusing on the study area: The master plan highlighted two sub-areas within the study area including the "Lyons Commercial District" and the "Fulton Bridge Landing." The "Lyons Commercial District" was generally bound by 26th Avenue North to the north, 19th Avenue North to the south, the Mississippi River to the east, and North 2nd Street to the west. The "Fulton Bridge Landing" area encompassed the lands surrounding the base of the 19th Avenue North Bridge.

Recommendations for the "Lyons Commercial District" focused on maintaining a pedestrian-oriented district which offers a diverse variety of services, businesses, and attractions to increase its vitality. Recommendations pertaining to the "Fulton Bridge Landing" focused on making the area an attractive entryway into the community. Appendix E lists the identified goals from the plan and anecdotal notes for each district.

Clinton Development Plan, as adopted on 03/28/00

Summary of the Plan: The document serves as the City's comprehensive plan and is comprised of the following four sections: Planning Process; Existing Conditions, Needs, and Opportunities; Development Plan Objectives and Implementation Strategies; and, Future Land Use Plan. The purpose of the plan is to guide future development and redevelopment within the City of Clinton.

The "Objectives and Implementation Strategies" section provides guidance to the City of Clinton to help to achieve its desired goals and outcomes. However, the related "action items" are provided within a 10-year timeframe for execution. As such, the Plan's useful shelf-life expired in 2010.

Plan elements focusing on the target area: The Plan referenced *The Riverfront Vision* when discussing recommendations regarding future land uses/improvements within the Lyons Business District.

The Plan referred to Highway 136 (which encompasses parts of 19th Avenue North, North 2nd Street, and Main Avenue) within the "Transportation" section. The roadway serves as an arterial road within Clinton and connects the community to Fulton, Illinois. The document stated Highway 136 sufficiently served the community and that current conditions did not warrant an expansion to increase capacity.

Appendix C provides a summary of the *Clinton Development Plan* objectives and implementation strategies associated with the study area.

Lyons District, Clinton, IA- Downtown Assessment Visit

Summary of the Plan: Conducted by the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) in 2006, the study intended to assist the City of Clinton and the Lyons District Business and Professional Association (LBPA) in their continual efforts to improve the Lyons District physically, economically, and socially. This process involved the downtown assessment team making observations about the district and conducting interviews with numerous key stakeholders. Several themes emerged during the preparation of the document including a strong desire to construct the North River Drive project. Further,



participants were unified in the belief that the area's potential revolves around its history and the Mississippi River.

Clinton Urban Revitalization Program (CURP)

As stipulated by Chapter 404 of the Code of Iowa, the Clinton Urban Revitalization Program (CURP) allows the issuance of property tax exemptions to qualified real estate within a designated Urban Revitalization Area. The program intends to stimulate private investment by exempting a portion or all of the assessment valuations resulting from new taxable improvements. As a result, a property owner avoids paying additional property taxes on certain eligible investments. A threshold requirement of this program is that properties taxed residentially and commercially/industrially must invest in taxable improvements that are at least 10% and 15% greater than the base value of the site improvements, respectively. This added valuation can consist of either new construction, the rehabilitation of existing structures, or new additions to existing buildings. The City of Clinton has two designated Urban Revitalization Areas within the Lyons Business District study area.

The City-Wide Urban Revitalization Area, which encompasses all of the land within city limits, provides a 3-year, 50% property tax exemption for eligible residential properties. The Lyons Business District Urban Revitalization Area provides a 3-year, 100% tax exemption for eligible commercial or industrial properties. All land within the study area, except that in-between North 4th Street and Pershing Boulevard, are within the latter Urban Revitalization area. Consistent with Resolution No. 2010-032, Clinton's City-Wide Urban Revitalization Program is set to expire on 02/01/13.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Routes Plan

Summary of the Plan: Approved by the City Plan Commission on 05/06/09, the Plan identifies existing trails and areas for future route expansion in an effort to enhance connectivity within the City's system. A Trail Committee is in the process of identifying potential funding sources and prioritizing the improvement schedule for the City.

Currently, the Discovery Trail and the newly-constructed Mississippi River Trail are the only multi-use trails within the community. The former trail runs along the bank of the Mississippi River from Eagle Point Park to 7th Avenue South while the latter trail parallels U.S. 30/ Camanche Avenue from the U.S. 30/67 intersection to South 4th Street. The City envisions these trails as forming the basis for the eventual creation of a comprehensive system which will loop around the developed portion of Clinton.

Plan elements focusing on the study area: The Plan highlights two bicycle routes within the study area for future development. The planned trails will connect numerous residential neighborhoods to downtown Lyons, the riverfront, and the existing trail system. This situation will encourage nearby residents to use an alternative mode of transportation to travel to work, shop, etc. Further, the identified expansions will encourage/attract additional recreational bicycle enthusiasts to utilize the community's bike paths.

One of the two identified trails is currently under construction in conjunction with the 19th Avenue North project. The 10 foot-wide concrete bike path will eventually connect Mill Creek Parkway to North 2nd Street. City officials anticipate a completion date of late 2012 or early 2013 for the off-street trail.

The second route is currently unfunded. The eventual route will begin and terminate along the existing Discovery Trail. The proposed north-south, on-road trail will primarily be located on Pershing Boulevard.

Exhibit 4 in Appendix A identifies the proposed/existing trail locations within the study area.



6.0 Lyons Business District Planned Public Improvements

The City of Clinton recently approved a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which outlines and prioritizes improvement projects. Items eligible for inclusion are limited to major non-recurring expenditures or improvements of physical facilities in excess of \$25,000. The CIP contains a 6-year schedule indicating what improvements will be constructed, where, when, at what cost and by what means of financing. The first CIP solely consists of roadway, trail, and sewer projects. Subsequent CIP elements will also include buildings, certain trucks, and recreational facilities. City officials will begin utilizing the CIP in FY 2012.

The CIP includes the following projects within the study area:

- 18th Avenue North Sewer Separation project. The \$1.2 million project involves the reconstruction of streets, sanitary sewers, and storm sewers along 18th Avenue North from North 3rd Street to Garfield Street and along 17th Avenue North from North 2nd Street to North 3rd Street. The City has applied for a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to fund the sewer portion of the project. The City will likely use General Obligation Bonding to fund the remaining costs. The construction period will last approximately 1 year and 6 months during FY 2011/2012 and 2012/2013. The project has a department priority ranking of #1 for FY 2011-2012.
- 19th Avenue North project. The project involves 1.85 miles of new concrete street construction of 19th Avenue North from Mill Creek Parkway to Highway 67 and the Highway 136 Bridge. The arterial street will serve as a primary east-west transportation route which completes the existing beltway around Clinton through its connection of Mill Creek Parkway and the northern bridge across the Mississippi River. The City has divided the project into three phases which has a total cost of \$6.475 million. Preliminary design is underway for Phase III of the project which includes the reconstruction of 19th Avenue North from Randall Court to North 2nd Street within the study area. The City has yet to set a letting date but expects it will occur in 2011. The City currently has a funding shortfall of \$2.2 million for the project but hopes to fill the gap shortly in order to begin construction by 2012.
- Discovery Trail Re-surfacing project. The \$360,000 project involves the full depth reclamation of the existing asphalt surface and rolled stone base. The full depth reclamation will create a stabilized, graded, and compacted base for the new 3" asphalt service. The City has applied for a Statewide Enhancement Grant to fund a portion of the project while the remaining cost would come from local matching funds. The trail work will take approximately 1 year to complete during FY 2012/2013.
- Roosevelt Street Reconstruction project. The \$850,000 project involves the reconstruction of Roosevelt Street from 20th Avenue North to Main Avenue. The project is currently unfunded and will take approximately 1 year to complete. Project work will occur in FY 2012/2013 and 2013/2014.



7.0 Lyons Business District Master Plan Recommendations

The following 12 recommendations provide the City of Clinton and the Lyons Business District with multiple ideas and concepts to implement in future years. These recommendations, listed below, are aimed at providing opportunities for living, shopping, business, recreation and leisure in the Lyons District in order to foster improvements to the area over time. The Master Plan recommendations address key items such as:

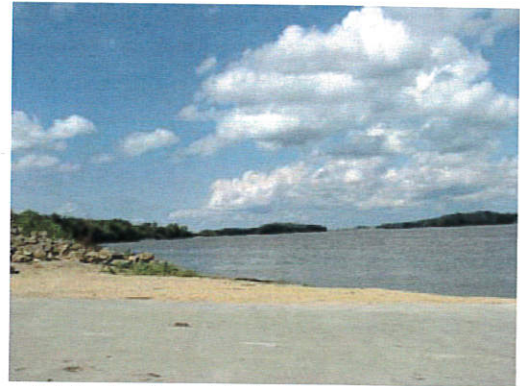
- Balancing between preservation and new development.
- Expanding the Lyons District as a mixed-use environment.
- Increasing the amount of people living in the district to establish a larger population base to support existing and future businesses.
- Establishing improvement and development guidelines for land use areas.
- Improving vehicular circulation and parking.
- Establishing guidelines for buildings and storefronts.
- Improving the pedestrian environment.
- Enhancing other urban design aspects of downtown.

Recommendation # 1 – Maximize Opportunities along the Mississippi Riverfront

Maximize views and access to the river

The Mississippi River is immediately adjacent to the Lyons District on the east side. This incredible natural resource offers recreation and scenic views like no other in the region. Just northeast of the Lyons District the Mississippi River is expansive in width, thus offering spectacular views from Eagle Point Park. This Master Plan recommends that redevelopment occur adjacent to the River as well as increased public open space that are unparalleled in the region.

Currently the access to this amenity is lacking from the Lyons District with the exception of the Discovery Trail and Elijah Buell structure. This Master plan recommends access be improved further by increasing the amount of sidewalks and trails that connect to Discovery Trail and to the Riverfront.



Existing boat launch in the Lyons District – This master plan recommends improved access to the Riverfront and environmental sensitivity to the Mississippi River.

Environmental Sensitivity

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* also recommends environmentally-sensitive techniques be utilized, in order to preserve and enhance this most valuable feature. Therefore, protecting the Mississippi River through preservation of natural features utilizing various techniques, such as innovative storm water solutions, is the first Master Plan recommendation. Environmentally-friendly methods such as Rain Gardens and other Best Management Practices (BMP's) are highly recommended within the trail system corridors and/or the downtown area, where feasible. These innovative storm water solutions will ensure steps are being taken to protect and preserve the Mississippi River.

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends implementing alternative storm water management techniques (i.e. biobasins and bioswales) to limit the potential for flooding and to cleanse storm water

runoff. Additionally, minimizing impervious areas such as excessive concrete and asphalt areas, roofs, etc. will have a significant impact on reducing runoff. These innovative storm water techniques allow infiltration of runoff into the ground to recharge the groundwater and aquifer water resources. The natural systems can occur in parking area medians, with native landscape material that absorbs and cleanses the water before releasing to the adjacent creeks and the Mississippi River. Green roof methods should also be utilized, where feasible, to reduce the amount of water running off roofs.

Recommendation # 2 – Encourage Redevelopment along the Eastern Area of the Main Avenue Corridor

The area along Main Avenue located east of North 2nd Street has experienced a decline exacerbated by the relocation of key businesses. A former auto dealership had previously helped to create a “location-destination” which attracted individuals to the corridor. Its move eliminated the area’s “anchor” and resulted in a noticeable decrease in traffic counts (refer to Section 3.0) which dramatically affected the customer base of nearby retail, restaurant, and service establishments. The reduction in traffic has ultimately contributed to higher vacancy rates and helped perpetuate the continued physical decline of nearby properties. This unfortunate situation reinforces an image of general disinvestment.



The former auto dealership property is a key area for future development of the Lyons District.

Finding a replacement “anchor” is essential to redeveloping the Main Avenue Corridor. Identifying uses or activities which generate activity and attract various groups to the area will help create a synergy between the eastern and western portions of Main Avenue. Incorporating existing assets, such as the Sawmill Museum and the Mississippi River, will help create the critical mass of uses (i.e. retail stores, professional offices, entertainment and recreational opportunities, etc.) necessary to encourage additional traffic. The resulting increase in activity will improve the vitality of the entire downtown. Potential “anchors” for the area include the following:

- Hotel/convention center
- Grocery store or other retail anchor
- Theatre
- Indoor Farmer’s Market facility
- Expansion of the Sawmill Museum
- Regional sports facility
- Water-based facility



*Pictured above - Main Avenue (west portion)
The west end of Main Avenue is well-established while the eastern portion a prime location for redevelopment.*

Securing an “anchor” along the eastern area of the Main Avenue Corridor will serve as an impetus to spur additional redevelopment. However, the facility alone will not attract enough residents and ancillary businesses required to make the downtown truly viable. Therefore, the City must undertake a more comprehensive approach. Working with the Clinton Regional Development Corporation and the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce, the City should endeavor to design a vibrant downtown, appealing to - and attracting - the various market groups listed below. A market study was not included in the scope for this

Lyons Business District Master Plan project; however, it is important to also understand how the Lyons area might attract the following market groups to the downtown in order to make it a truly vibrant place.

Community residents. For this group, downtown Lyons should represent the center of social recreation, as well as a place to live and conduct business. Downtown Lyons can also draw residents from throughout the City for special events and other occasions. Currently the Farmer's Market and Lyon's Street Dance are fantastic draws. Also, many citizens periodically frequent downtown retailers, restaurants, and bars. A truly successful downtown revitalization will cause more community residents to visit the downtown more often, greatly contributing to the vitality of the area.



Pictured above-Four Square Park
Events like the Farmers' Market are great social events that bring residents of the area and region to the Lyons District.

Local students and youth. Many young people are attracted to downtowns and, therefore, youth-friendly stores should be provided. Stores selling clothing, toys, music, candy, soda, etc. and restaurants attract younger consumers. Additionally, community events attract high school students and young families to the downtown.

Downtown residents. A fair number of people already live within walking distance of downtown Lyons and this plan proposes efforts to increase the number of residents in the immediate area. Higher densities that are typically appropriate in an urban core bring additional consumers within walking distance to a marketplace. Also, having a significant population in the downtown draws visitors from out of town. Having a significant population base (and subsequent purchasing capacity) is typically a critical component of a successful downtown. Therefore, the Future Land Use map (**Exhibit 5 in Appendix A**) displays a significant amount of residential uses at higher densities within the Main Avenue Corridor.

Age-targeted residents. The inclusion of a wide array of housing options within the Lyons District can contribute to more sustainable neighborhood – offering diversity of age groups, retail and service needs among residents, etc. While much of the study area is dedicated to residential neighborhoods, it may be advisable to seek assisted living or related age-targeted residential options for this area.

Entertainment and a Work Place

While attracting diverse market groups is very key, there are other factors that will encourage redevelopment and overall improved vitality to the Lyons District. For example, shopping, food, entertainment and a strong work place environment often are the catalyst for redevelopment and re-investment in a downtown area. A downtown with a large number of restaurants and entertainment options will typically do very well. Lyons currently has several establishments that bring people to the area. As the Lyons District improves, the area will need to improve on the diversity and amount of food and entertainment options. Restaurants, bars, and other entertainment venues can often benefit greatly from special events or special occasions. Visitors are likely to stay longer (and spend more) downtown, if venues are held there.

Attracting businesses and offices is a key component to having a vibrant downtown during the day. People who work downtown represent a significant market for restaurants (breakfast, lunch, and coffee break). Also, after work hours, bars and restaurants are prime destinations, and shops can offer convenience shopping, as well. As mentioned above, it is important to have a downtown that is appealing

to these groups, to truly make it a vibrant area. While some streetscape improvements can attract people to an area, it is often the synergy of the above items that brings people to a downtown.

Recommendation # 3 – Improve the Aesthetic Quality of the Corridor through Façade Improvements

The Main Avenue Corridor served as the center of activity in Lyons during the community's initial development. This is especially true for the land east of North 2nd Street. The downtown area contained numerous two-and-three-story buildings of the Italianate-style. A number of these architecturally-significant buildings remain but a lack of maintenance and inconsistent physical alterations have damaged the historical integrity of many of the structures.

Feedback received during the development of this Master Plan overwhelmingly demonstrated a significant community desire to protect/maintain the historical legacy of Lyons. Much of this heritage lies within the architecture of the referenced structures. As such, it will be important for the City to encourage their preservation.

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the establishment of a façade improvement program administered by the City or other designated entity. The public-private partnership would provide an incentive and/or revolving loan fund for private property owners to reinvest in their buildings by offering grants or revolving loan fund proceeds to eligible participants. The façade improvement program would improve the image of the area, enhance property values, and reinforce prevailing design characteristics cited in this document.



*Pictured above-Buddy Gourmet on Main Avenue
Façade improvements and aesthetically pleasing signage should be incorporated to businesses in the Lyons District*

Eligible uses of the funds could be dedicated to:

- Building façade improvements (e.g., tuck pointing, window replacement, etc.);
- Removal of siding or other alterations inappropriate to the design of the original building;
- Painting of the building;
- Installation of signage consistent to the design of the original building;
- Or other improvements deemed appropriate.

Recommendation # 4 – Expand the Amount of Existing Open Space within the Study Area

The Lyons Business District study area offers some recreational opportunities for its residents. Dedicated open spaces include 4-Square Park, Elijah Buell Terrace, and the Discovery Trail. In fact, the latter facilities are located along the Mississippi River and highlight its natural beauty. However, the scope of available activities for these spaces is very limited. The facilities are entirely dedicated to passive recreation (i.e. 4 Square Park) or are very activity-specific (i.e. the Discovery Trail). Further, many service gaps exist as a large segment of the homes located within the study area are not within walking distance of a



More parks and open space is needed in addition to 4-Square Park.



park (refer to **Exhibit 12 in Appendix A**). These circumstances force individuals to travel to other areas of the community to fulfill their recreational needs.

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the City develop additional open spaces as the study area redevelops and its density/population subsequently increases. **Exhibit 12 in Appendix A** highlights suggested locations for future open space. The identified areas primarily include natural features (i.e. drainage ways and land along the dike near the Mississippi River) and lands containing incompatible uses in close proximity to residential homes. Developing open space using this approach will help the city accomplish the following:

- protect single-family homes from negative externalities (noise, dust, lighting, etc.) associated with nearby incongruent uses
- protect areas of natural beauty
- increase the amount of neighborhoods within walking distance of an open space facility
- increase public access to the riverfront

The new facilities will need to be diverse in the segments of the population they serve. Consequently, the City will need to offer varying types of open space. This includes creating parks ranging from neighborhood-scale to regional-scale which include activities (i.e. soccer fields, playground equipment, picnic shelters, etc.) to satisfy the needs of their respective users.

Potential Greenway

Car Barn Creek traverses through the Lyons District and is currently viewed as a detriment versus an asset. This Master Plan recommends future improvement to this corridor to eventually create a “greenway” which could become a tremendous asset to the area. It is understood that this effort would be a long term project yet a very important effort. In order to be fully integrated and connected open space corridor properties may need to be acquired or easements may be needed to allow public access along this natural drainage. Also, significant storm water infrastructure improvements will be needed to improve the function and aesthetics of the corridor. The City should undertake a study of this corridor to determine feasibility of such improvements.



Car Barn Creek runs through the Lyons District – this corridor could become a future Greenway for the area.

The following recommendations are provided for the Car Barn Creek Corridor:

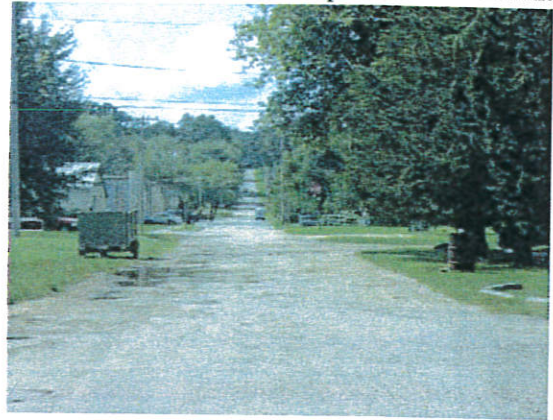
- Connect the Car Barn Creek Corridor with the Mississippi River as a greenway with trails, walkways and rest areas
- Connect the Car Barn Creek Corridor to the existing residential areas in the Lyons District.
- Utilize the corridor for a network of rain gardens and bio-swales
- Provide rest stops with benches and trash receptacles at key locations along the greenway
- Provide pocket parks along the trail corridor at key locations
- Develop a “first phase” plan for implementation

This greenway project will take significant time and financial resources, however the benefits are multiple and potentially dramatic.

Recommendation # 5 – Identify Public Infrastructure Improvements

Much of the infrastructure within the study area is aging, in poor condition, and out of date. This includes instances of crumbling streets, cracked sidewalks, and facilities that do not meet today's ADA guidelines. This situation presents a poor image of the area and contributes to the lack of private investment occurring within the corridor. Moreover, these inefficiencies can also represent a significant safety concern for pedestrians and motorists. The combination of referenced circumstances ultimately deters individuals from patronizing the corridor.

The City's CIP does not identify any streets within the study area for possible inclusion in the 2011 cycle of the Asphalt Pavement Management Program. The program is a comprehensive effort to improve the City's overall asphalt pavement conditions. The project involves overlaying existing concrete streets, resurfacing existing asphalt streets, and full-depth reclamation and surfacing of severely-deteriorated asphalt and chip-sealed streets. We recommend the City evaluate including a portion of the study area into the 2012 cycle. The City should give first priority to Main Avenue.



McKinley Street may be a good connection to 20th Street but needs improvements to become a local collector for the Lyons District.

Realize, however, that resurfacing these streets is a short term solution. The advantage is that it is a low cost alternative to complete reconstruction and, along with sidewalk and other streetscape/landscape treatments, will make the corridor appear revitalized. Resurfacing will also improve the driving conditions of the roadway. Making the driving conditions more favorable will encourage travelers to use these streets, bringing people into the district.

Long term, the aging and deteriorating infrastructure will need to be addressed. The pavement will need to be replaced and the utilities brought up-to-date. The combined sewer system will need to be separated into a storm water system and a sanitary sewer system and the water main may need to be replaced.

Roadway improvements

This Master Plan recommends the following roadway corridor be improved:

- North River Drive Alternative #1 as shown in **Exhibit 4 within Appendix A**. The Steering Committee unanimously preferred this location/alignment over Alternative #2 which recommended improvements to 20th Avenue North/McKinley Street. The intent of this roadway improvement is to encourage/entice additional traffic into the Main Avenue Corridor.

Additionally, **Exhibit 4** demonstrates several transportation related improvements such as:

- Improved bus service-existing and proposed routes identified on the exhibit.
- Expanded trail system and connections to Discovery Trail-east west trails are proposed along 19th Avenue North and Main Avenue.



- Improved vehicular access to the northeast section of the study area (i.e. North River Drive alternatives mentioned above).
- Streetscape improvements at major and minor intersections.
- Intersection improvements-Several intersections have been identified as prime candidates for future improvements in the area of pedestrian safety. Improvements at these intersections may include bump outs, pedestrian refuge islands, special crosswalk pavement (see below), and additional signage and pavement markings.

Exhibit 4 also demonstrates existing transportation routes and the level of service. 19th Avenue North, North 3rd Street, North 2nd Street and Main Avenue are key “major routes” through the Lyons District and will need to be maintained at a high level of quality.

Sidewalk improvements

Throughout the Lyons District, the sidewalks are in need of repair or replacement, and in some cases the sidewalks are missing altogether and need to be constructed. **Exhibit 9B in Appendix A** identifies and prioritizes areas necessitating sidewalk improvements. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* highlights the Main Avenue Corridor for the first phase of improvements in order to encourage pedestrian traffic into the corridor, and to ensure safe pedestrian mobility once they are in the area. The remaining referenced sidewalks serve as a critical component in providing a connection between downtown Lyons and the Mississippi River.

Any sidewalk improvements should be designed and constructed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All street crossings and curb ramps should also meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Important considerations include the width, cross slope and longitudinal grade of the sidewalks. Excessive cross slopes can cause difficulty for people on crutches, using walkers, and in wheelchairs requiring them to work against the force of gravity and making lateral balance more difficult. Sidewalks must also be wide enough to allow for operating space for these users, as well as allowing for walking pedestrians to pass each other comfortably. In some areas the longitudinal slope of the sidewalk can also be a concern, however; since the majority of the Lyons District is fairly flat, excessive longitudinal grades should not be an issue.

Recommendation # 6 – Incorporate Consistent Streetscape, Gateway and Wayfinding Signage Improvements in the Downtown

The physical environment within the Main Avenue Corridor detracts from its potential appeal. Previously-installed streetscape improvements, including decorative lighthouses and ornamental lighting, are inconsistent, outdated, and sparsely located throughout the area. Moreover, a lack of signage prohibits individuals from discerning their arrival into the Lyons Business District. These conditions fail to create an identifiable theme or “sense of place” for the corridor and do little to encourage pedestrian/bicyclist activity. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the City pursue funding to make public improvements such as:

Streetscape

The City of Clinton should establish clear and consistent Streetscape Design Guidelines to improve the aesthetics in the downtown and surrounding areas. These potential improvements should build upon the existing qualities and historic character of the region (refer to the “Theme” section



A proposed theme for the Lyons District mimics the Sawmill Museum and the rich history of the area.



below). Consistent streetscape elements, such as street trees, street lighting, paving materials, banners, bollards, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and planters, will help the area become a more unified district. The Streetscape Illustrative Plan (**Exhibit 10 in Appendix A**) identifies examples and potential locations for the referenced improvements.

Gateways and Wayfinding Signage

Gateways and wayfinding signage are an important component of the *Lyons Business District Master Plan*. These features can help motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists find specific locations in the downtown area, navigate through the core area, find available parking lots, and locate major activity areas and destinations. It is critical that appropriate viewing areas are identified for the gateways and wayfinding signage based on their location along major streets, proximity to landmarks/areas of interest. **Exhibit 7 in Appendix A** highlights potential locations for the gateway signage.

Theme

An important step in the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* project was to identify some theme ideas that would ultimately impact streetscape, gateway and wayfinding signage improvements in the future. Important historical items, proximity to the Mississippi River and the general character of the Lyons area were incorporated into the theme options and, subsequently, the overall signage program. As the Vision and Concept demonstrates, the overall themes focus on the physical and natural characteristics of Lyons. See Exhibit 11.

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the theme be finalized in the future and then implemented at key locations. Potential locations need to be highly visible areas such as along sidewalks, public parks, plazas, trailheads, etc.



Existing streetscape elements in the Lyons District consist of varying colors and forms.

Recommendation # 7 – Implement Complete Street Concepts throughout the Lyons District

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* calls for re-focusing transportation projects and planning efforts on creating walkable and bikeable streets that provide transportation options and a better balance between cars, bikes and pedestrians. Also called “complete streets,” these roadways are a key part of a safe, enjoyable downtown for Lyons and the overall region. The pedestrian is the priority; however, the automobile is still accommodated. Streets are a significant component of a downtown area, and their role is very important in the safety of bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Well-designed streets can also dramatically impact the look and feel of Lyons.

The recommendations below have been created in order to encourage a safe, comfortable, pleasant environment throughout Lyons. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* proposes future improvements to the downtown corridor, specifically, in order to create an environment that is friendlier to bicyclists and pedestrians. Some of the design aspects to consider are as follows:

- Pedestrians are effectively separated from moving traffic (wide sidewalks or medians).
- Pedestrians can cross the street safely and easily at designated locations, such as clearly marked crosswalks.
- Intersections are designed to reduce pedestrian crossing distances (bump outs).
- Safe refuge (resting) islands are provided periodically for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Barriers are minimized – designed for people with disabilities, older adults and children (ADA compatibility with curb ramps, etc.).

- On-street parking is provided, but does not dominate the street scene.
- Vehicle access, speeds and geometrics are designed with the pedestrian in mind.
- Signing is placed at key locations.

It was determined that, in order to achieve the design aspect goals listed above, many improvements are needed. In order to provide safe and convenient pedestrian circulation, sidewalks will need to be completed, pedestrian crossings added and some sidewalks will need to be widened, repaired, or in many cases constructed where no walk currently exists. The sections below describe some background information and potential techniques to achieve a more walkable environment in the Lyons District.

Pedestrian Environment in Downtown Lyons

The primary pedestrian routes within downtown Lyons are the sidewalks. While many of the sidewalks within the downtown area are in fair condition, sidewalks in other areas are either missing, or may require significant maintenance and repair. The plan should identify a continuous, safe and attractive sidewalk system, to service all areas of downtown Lyons. The existing pedestrian network has been examined, specifically, one block north and south of Main Avenue-See **Exhibit 9A-Sidewalk Inventory**. Based upon those findings, the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends sidewalk improvements within this defined area - as specified on **Exhibit 9B-Priority Sidewalk Improvements**. Priority corridors shown on the exhibit as “identified for improvement” were chosen because they achieve one or more of the following goals:

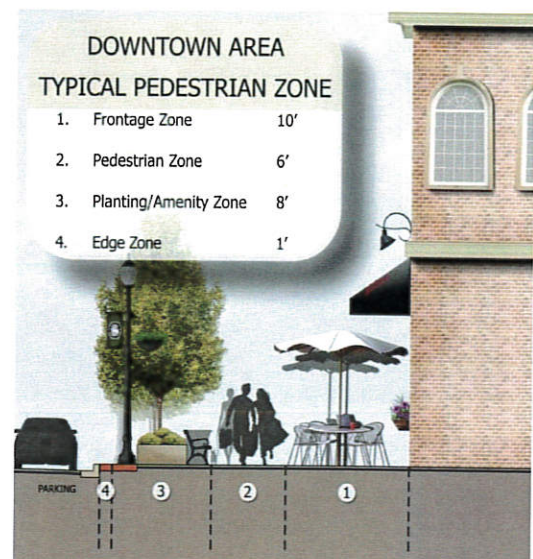
- Improve walks in areas devoid of sidewalks
- Direct access to the key areas of Main Avenue
- Provide efficient mobility and direct routes
- Enhance accessibility and connectivity
- Promote a comfortable/attractive environment

By implementing the sidewalk improvements, the core of downtown Lyons will become a much more walkable area.

Pedestrian Zones

Appropriate pedestrian zones in the downtown core area are an important focus, when trying to achieve a better pedestrian environment. The pedestrian zones are located between the curb and the front property line or building façade of adjoining parcels. These zones provide areas along the street corridor for landscaping, street furnishings, and pedestrian through movements. Currently the downtown street corridors lack defined or appropriately designed zones. This *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends incorporating these design recommendations as property re-develops, and as future streetscape improvements occur. The following section discusses the specific functions and minimum dimensions for each sub-zone within the pedestrian zone. There are typically four sub-zones (See descriptions and exhibits below)

1. Frontage Zone
2. Pedestrian Zone
3. Planting/Amenity Zone
4. Edge Zone



1) Frontage Zone

The frontage zone is the area adjacent to the property line. It may be defined by a building facade, landscaping area, fence, or screened parking area. A minimum width of three (3') feet should be provided for the frontage zone. The width of the frontage zone may be increased, to accommodate a variety of activities associated with adjacent uses, such as outdoor seating or merchant displays. If space does not permit, this zone can be eliminated.

2) Pedestrian Zone

The pedestrian zone is intended for pedestrian travel only, and should be entirely clear of obstacles and provide a smooth walking surface. The throughway zone should be, at a minimum, six (6') feet wide, which is the minimum comfortable passing width for two wheelchairs on a sidewalk.

3) Planting/Amenity Zone

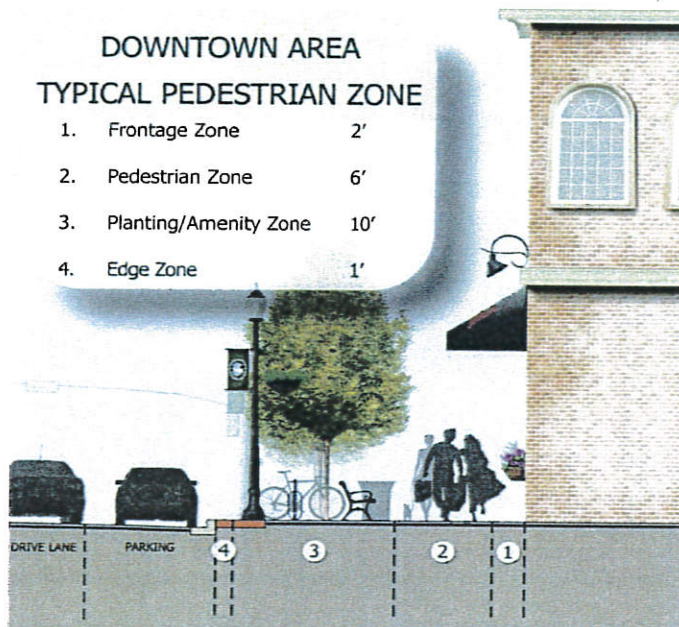
The planting/amenity zone is the key buffer component between the active pedestrian walking area and the vehicle traveled area. Street trees, planting strips, street furniture, bollards, signal poles, signals, electrical, telephone and traffic signal cabinets, signs, fire hydrants and bicycle racks should be consolidated in this zone, to keep them from becoming obstacles to pedestrians. The planting/amenity zone should have a minimum width of three (3') feet in narrow road sections. A more comfortable and, therefore, desirable dimension is eight (8') feet for the planting/amenity zone.

4) Edge Zone

The edge zone (sometimes called obstruction free zone) provides an interface between parked vehicles and street furniture. This zone should, generally, be kept clear of any objects. Parking meters or other small vertical features may be placed here with consideration to door swings. The edge zone should have a minimum width of 1' (preferable 2').

Often existing conditions do not allow the appropriate amount of space for all of the pedestrian zones. Therefore, options are provided below for reference; however, each street should be studied in detail and planned on a case-by-case basis, depending on available space.

The two options below show the "typical" treatments that could possibly occur along Main Avenue.



Option # 1.

- This section is utilized when ample space exists between the building and street curb edge

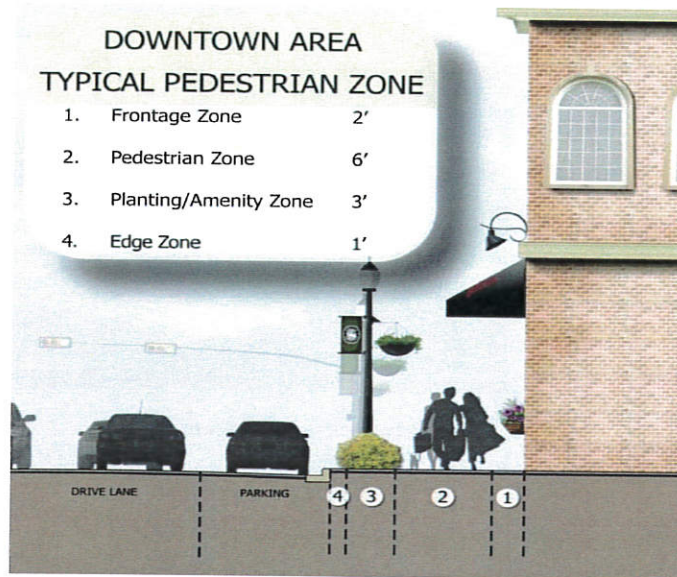
- 19' total width is needed

- Large frontage zone contains street lighting and potential for a larger Edge Zone.

- Emphasis on the planting/amenity zone, to allow maximum area for street trees, benches, bike racks, flower beds, etc.

Note: These are conceptual illustrations only designed to fit within the existing right-of-way. However field conditions and other variables may not allow the exact dimensions as shown. Roadway improvements and easements may need to be acquired in some areas, to achieve the proposed cross-section. The sections also assume potential redevelopment on sites where easements could be acquired.

Based upon the understood pedestrian zones described above, the *Lyons Business District Master Plan* specifically suggests future improvements to streets in downtown Lyons. The overall characteristic of street cross-sections should create an environment that is appropriate to the design speed of the street. When modifying a street cross section, the typical design elements need to be considered, along with the traffic volume. Design elements relevant to the vehicle include lane widths, pavement markings, materials and colors; curb design, and on-street parking.



Option # 2.

- This is utilized when the available space is more limited (12' total)

-Amenity planting zone is reduced to 3'

-Edge Zone and Planting Amenity Zone contain light poles, small landscape areas and hanging baskets

-This situation is fairly typical in most downtown areas, due to limited space.

Design elements more relevant for pedestrian areas include: building setbacks, street trees, sidewalks and furnishings. The greater the level of pedestrian activity, the lower the design and posted speed should be, to improve the pedestrian environment in downtown Lyons. The streets listed below were studied to determine how they could be modified in the future to be more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.

- Main Avenue
- McKinley Street
- North 2nd Street
- Roosevelt Street

Traffic Calming Techniques

Modifying or improving street cross-sections is an important step in making downtown Lyons a more pedestrian-friendly place. In relationship to the street sections there are various other traffic calming and safety techniques to be considered and, therefore, recommended as part of this *Lyons Business District Master Plan*.

Traffic calming is a combination of techniques used to: reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. Traffic calming objectives are: enhance the street environment and aesthetics, reduce cut-through vehicle traffic, slow vehicles down, reduce accidents, and increase safety perceptions. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends consideration of traffic calming techniques such as;

- Refuge islands (bump outs) with barriers (where needed) to protect the pedestrian
- Intersection improvements

- Alternative trail and sidewalk surfaces and colors at crossings
- Raised pavement areas
- Safe sight and stopping distances
- Clearly visible traffic and directional signing and pavement markings
- Use of landscaping to identify differing zones of activity

Crosswalk Treatments

Crosswalk treatments can occur at intersections and mid-block crossings. Improved crossings should be established at intersections (as mentioned above), to better unify the downtown areas and provide safe connections between existing and future locations such as:

- Main Avenue and the existing downtown core area
- Surrounding residential areas
- Riverfront (Mississippi River)
- Future public plazas, shopping areas, civic uses

When designing crosswalk treatments, appropriate signage and striping measures should be applied per the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices). The hierarchy and appropriate locations include the following applications:

- Standard Markings - All crossings should be identified with parallel lines.
- Enhanced Markings - Ladder striping, if colored/textured pavement is not utilized (i.e. stamped concrete).
- Colored pavers – A distinctly patterned paver may be applied to distinguish intersection crosswalks and mid-block crossings in the core or transition zone, consistent with the proposed theme and as shown on the **Streetscape Plan-Exhibit 10**



Improved cross walk treatments should be installed throughout the Lyons District specifically along Main Avenue.

Walkability and grade changes along Main Avenue

Along Main Avenue (primarily the western portion) significant grade change occurs resulting in several steps from the sidewalk to the parallel parking areas that are on-street. While this provides access from the storefronts to the parallel parking that is on Main Avenue, this condition is not ideal in a downtown pedestrian environment. This needs to be studied further to determine the best course of action, however, some conceptual ideas include;

- Allow controlled access points at specific locations only
- Provide ramps in a few locations to improve ADA accessibility
- Marked mid-block crossing with corresponding yield signs for vehicular traffic.



Existing condition along the north side of Main Avenue in the Lyons District

Recommendation # 8 – Preserve Traditional “Main Street” Appearance and Orientation of the Corridor through the Adoption of an Overlay Zoning District

The City of Clinton is in a unique position as it contains two city centers. The Main Avenue Corridor is a traditional downtown in both its design and functionality. This is especially true for the area located east of North 2nd Street. The referenced structures are similar in many aspects such as total height, the use of permanent building materials in their construction, site layout, etc. Other design features, such as zero front yard setbacks and parking lots located in the rear of the properties, help create a very walkable environment that engages individuals and attracts them to the area. The land within the Main Avenue Corridor is also similar in its use. The area offers neighborhood-scale commercial development including professional and governmental services, specialty retail shops, restaurants, and entertainment options.



The referenced attributes provide the Main Avenue Corridor with a sense of uniqueness which helps form its distinct character. As such, it will be important to maintain this situation as the area redevelops. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the adoption of a zoning overlay district ordinance to ensure the study area redevelops consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in this document and facilitates the movement towards a more unified, historic district.

An overlay district addresses specific issues or concerns not addressed in the current zoning ordinance and only apply to a specific area. Essentially, an overlay district places additional zoning requirements (beyond those in the underlying base zone) on properties within a defined area in order to achieve a specific purpose. The overlay district should have a stated purpose of “Ensuring new construction within the corridor complements existing development in both its design and use.”

The Overlay District should include design standards such as:

- Required use of permanent building materials (i.e. brick, stone, manmade stone, etc.) in the architectural features and facades of all new structures
- All off-street parking areas must be located in the rear yard of the property
- All buildings must have a zero front yard setback
- Buildings cannot exceed three stories in total height
- Signage must be consistent with the architectural and historical context of the building (i.e. no pole signs, neon signs, roof-top mounted signs, electronic message board signs, etc.)



This Master plan recommends an Overlay District be implemented to set the standards for redevelopment of key properties such as the former auto dealership.

The Overlay District should also restrict the types of uses allowed within the area. Permitted uses should be limited to the following:

- Mixed use developments with retail/office space located on lower floors with residential units located on upper stories
- Entertainment venues such as art galleries, museums, movie theaters, and auditoriums
- Parks
- Hotel/motel
- Restaurants and taverns
- Professional offices
- Retail shops including the sale of items such as antiques, appliances, art supplies, automobile supplies, bakeries, candy, clothing, convenience stores, computers, delicatessens, electronics, fabric, furniture, garden supplies, groceries, hardware, home improvements, jewelry, office supply, pharmacy, plants, flowers, shoes, sporting goods, stationary, toys and videos.
- Municipal facilities (i.e. fire stations, police stations, etc.)

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends that the overlay district includes all properties with street frontage along Main Avenue in-between Harding Street to the east and North 3rd Street to the west. **Exhibit 7 in Appendix A** demonstrates how the physical environment could look if the overlay district is adopted.

Recommendation # 9 – Plan for Appropriate and Compatible Future Land Uses by Amending the Official Zoning Map

Numerous underutilized and/or vacant parcels are located within the Lyons Business District. This includes critical properties such as the approximate 7-acre site associated with the former auto dealership and numerous lots located adjacent to the core of the Main Avenue Corridor. The study area also has several instances of incompatible land uses being located in close proximity (see **Exhibit 3 in Appendix A**). Incongruent land uses include residences immediately adjacent to mini-warehouse units, an auto repair shop, and a soft drink distribution center. As a consequence, opportunities exist to redevelop the referenced sites into more suitable uses.

It will be important for the community to identify future land uses and development densities which will complement the existing environment as the area redevelops. This practice will be especially critical when considering adjacent single-family homes and neighborhoods. The City must pay special attention to ensure compatibility. Negative externalities associated with certain uses (i.e. noise, traffic, dust, lighting, etc.) or out-of-scale development (i.e. a building much larger than its surroundings) can potentially have an undesirable effect on adjoining properties. This may come in the form of lower property values, increased vacancy rates, etc.

Exhibit 5 in Appendix A provides a detailed insight as to how the area could redevelop. The recommendation minimizes potential negative externalities by utilizing transitional land uses and incorporating greenspace such as parks, trails, landscape treatments, etc. as a buffer between incompatible uses. The future land uses in this Master Plan generally respect the existing land uses of the study area; however, some instances advocate the relocation of more intense land uses (i.e. industrial) in order to protect nearby existing residential development. The Future Land Use map also increases the amount of greenspace along the Mississippi River to maximize public access to the riverfront. This situation reflects the general desire of the public obtained during the input process. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends the City amend its official Zoning Map to reflect the future land uses outlined in **Exhibit 5 (Appendix A)**.



Recommendation # 10– Develop a Funding Strategy for Planned Improvements

The *Lyons District Master Plan* includes several design concepts such as:

- Gateways
- Streetscape Improvements
- Intersection Improvements
- Greenspace
- Parks and Open Space
- Traffic Circulation
- Parking Areas

This section of the Plan begins the process of establishing a funding strategy and highlights several funding options, including competitive grants. Ultimately, this discussion should help community leaders evaluate and determine which funding sources have the greatest potential based on “fit” with project/community needs and the community’s ability to meet the requirements of the respective funding source.

Summary of Targeted Funding Sources

The initial step involved with developing a funding strategy is to carefully define various improvements and then identify alternative funding sources based on the specific characteristics of each project element. This process helps define the overall funding theme and strategy that the community can consider when associating different funding sources with specific project elements.

Next, each funding source is associated with a possible use of funds. For example, sidewalk/trail improvements along Main Avenue could be associated with Transportation Enhancement Program funding. It is also important to distinguish different funding sources (e.g., local, state, federal, etc.) because each fund is administered by a separate agency, solicits proposals on during various times of the year, and mandates varying funding match requirements, etc.

Cities have a number of different funding options and financial inducements that can help facilitate private investment – often times spurring additional tax revenues that can be directed to local capital improvements and ultimately help revitalize areas within the community. Some of these sources include *revenue-based funding* that can be invested in certain types of capital improvements. Additionally, a discussion of *avoided cost opportunities* is also summarized in this section to illustrate how these mechanisms can help create an environment more conducive to attracting private sector investment. The distinction between “revenue-based” funding and “avoided-cost” incentives is that the former provides a source of capital that can be reinvested in allowable improvements. Alternatively, “avoided-cost” incentives do not generate general fund or tax increment financing revenues initially. Rather, these sources provide an inducement for the private sector to invest based on avoiding the payment of applicable taxes for a specified period of time.

While the Lyons District was within a City designated Urban Renewal /TIF Area, this district closed out in the mid-1990s. Since that time, the Clinton Urban Revitalization District provides property tax exemptions for eligible projects within the district. While this tool has helped facilitate some success, it does not provide a mechanism to capture revenue in the form of tax increment.



The remaining subsections identify and illustrate how various forms of funding (originating at the local, state, and federal level) can be used to address project specific improvements.

Local Revenue-Based Funding Mechanisms

Urban Renewal/Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Iowa Code Chapter 403 references the state's Urban Renewal Statute. Section 403.19 provides a mechanism for the collection of tax increment revenues and the use of these funds to capitalize local public works projects, fund incentive programs, and target revenues for other eligible projects. Additionally, it provides an avenue for cities to leverage funding from outside sources – including satisfying funding match needs with outside funding sources, facilitating private sector investment, and creating criteria and performance mechanisms that ensure desired outcomes occur. The statute also enables municipalities to create an Urban Renewal/TIF Area based on two definitions: slum and blight or economic development. The former, allows the municipality to perpetuate the TIF mechanism indefinitely. However, the economic development designation only allows for the collection of tax increment revenues for 20 years. While this study did not include a task to determine if the area qualifies under the slum and blighting conditions definition of the Iowa Code, several observations, including the amount of vacant land in the eastern section of the study area, several examples of buildings and public infrastructure showing signs of distress, are consistent with the “slum and blighting conditions” definition cited in the Iowa Code.

TIF can be advantageous in that the city can capture essentially the gross property tax levy (i.e., city, county, school district property tax levies) to offset debt service on bonds. Often times this triples the buying power when compared to the city's levy. In addition, tax increment revenues can be used to satisfy funding match requirements that are linked to other competitive grant programs.

Special Assessments: The purpose is to offset public improvements through the assessment of costs. Special assessments are levied against property taxes and retired within 10 to 15 years. Assessments are limited to 25% of the assessed value of the property.

Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID): SSMID's can be an effective tool to construct and maintain hardscape and plant materials that are associated with streetscape projects. Adoption of a SSMID is predicated on securing the support of property owners within a proposed district. The funding mechanism associated with SSMIDs applies an additional property tax levy that is determined by a consensus of the owners and is applied to all commercial and/or industrial properties with the designated area. Residential properties are exempt from this tax. Proceeds of the funds are designated by a SSMID Commission and concurrence from the City Council. Iowa Code Chapter 386 outlines the procedures associated with creating and operating these districts. This option was of little interest to the Steering Committee.

Local Option Sales Tax: Clinton voters approved a perpetual local option sales tax to provide property tax relief and fund street reconstruction projects. The tax generates an average of \$2.6 million in revenues annually which are evenly distributed between tax relief and street projects.

City General Fund: Implementing large-scale projects can be funded through the issuance of general obligation debt. Both the City of Clinton and Clinton County can issue bonds to help finance project improvements, subject to what the Iowa Code allows. In general, municipalities are given some discretion in determining how the debt service obligations on the bonds are addressed. The State statutes allow cities to issue general obligation debt up to five percent of their gross valuation.



Avoided-Cost Financial Incentives

Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption: Iowa Code Chapter 404, Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption statute is designed to encourage private property investment to occur where it otherwise would be unlikely without a public financial incentive. The incentive is provided by exempting the newly constructed improvements from the building improvement portion of the property valuation. Consequently, the avoided cost provides an incentive to the property owner.

As mentioned in Section 5, the City-Wide Urban Revitalization Plan covering most of the city and one additional district, the Downtown/Lyons Urban Revitalization District is presently in place. It is important to note that while this financial inducement can help spur new investment the benefit to the business is avoiding paying property taxes on the improvements for a period of time. As such, this tool does not generate additional revenue that can be directed to other improvements in the district.

The City of Clinton has the ability to use both the Urban Revitalization tax exemption and Urban Renewal/TIF mechanism to direct tax increment revenues into downtown improvements. For example, by creating an Urban Revitalization and Urban Renewal overlay, the *revitalization* element provides the private sector incentive to invest in taxable improvements. Alternatively, the *tax increment* element captures revenue that can be redirected into streetscape improvements; capitalize revolving loan funds, etc. The key assumption in this arrangement is that tax increment is only generated when property owners select the *partial exemption* alternative. For example, if \$250,000 in taxable improvements is made to a building located within an overlay district, the owner avoids paying 80 percent of the applicable property taxes on those improvements in the first year of the 10-year period. The remaining 20 percent of taxes paid on the new improvements can be captured as tax increment revenue and reinvested in the area.

Iowa Enterprise Zone (EZ): The Iowa Enterprise Zone statute (Chapter 15E.191 – 196) was adopted to promote new economic development activities in economically disadvantaged areas by targeting resources in ways to attract private sector investment.

The statute allows cities with populations of 24,000 or more to create an EZ, subject to certification by the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED). For cities smaller than 24,000 citizens, the community can appeal to the county to designate an EZ within one or more contiguous census tracts if two of the following criteria are met:

- The area has a per capita income of \$9,600 or less based on 2000 U.S. Census;
- The area has a poverty rate of 12% or more according to the 2000 U.S. Census;
- 10% or more of the housing units in the area are vacant;
- The valuations of each class of property in the designated area of the census tract is 75% or less of the county wide average for that classification of property based on the most recent valuations; and,
- The area is blighted.

Qualifying projects are eligible to receive:

- Supplemental New Jobs Credit of 1 ½ % of gross wages;
- Property tax exemption equal 50% of the value of the new improvements for each of three years;
- Investment Tax Credit equal to 10% of the new investment corresponding to new jobs created;
- Research Activities Credit for increasing research activities. This credit is equal to 6½ % for qualifying expenditures;
- Refund of sales, service and use tax paid to contractors and subcontractors.



A business located within an EZ must satisfy all of the following criteria to be eligible for these incentives:

- Is not a retail business or is limited by a cover charge or membership requirement;
- Provides all full-time employees health or dental insurance;
- Pays an average wage that is at or greater than 90% of the lesser of the average county wage or average national wage. Under no circumstance will the wage be less than \$7.50 per hour;
- Creates at least 10 full-time equivalent positions (FTE) and maintains the positions for at least 10 years;
- Makes a capital investment of at least \$500,000.

Regional and State Matching Grant-Based Funding Opportunities

Clinton County Development Association: A portion of the gaming revenues resulting from operations and the Wild Rose Casino and Resort are provided to CCDA for distribution throughout Clinton County. While the investment of funds are subject to project eligibility requirements, the Association has directed funding to projects similar to those being contemplated in this Plan (e.g., streetscape enhancements).

Funds are distributed among two accounts – named Fund A and Fund B. Characteristics associated with these resources are summarized below:

- Fund A can be used for projects that accomplishing economic, civic or community development goals within Clinton County, Iowa. In addition, projects that stimulate job creation and retention, or otherwise improve the area economy are also eligible. Fund A will provide up to 50% of the capital needed for a project with a minimum cost of \$150,000. The application deadline is the second Tuesday in April.
- Fund B is similar to Fund A; however, funds are directed to smaller-scale projects. For example, Fund B can offset 75% of the project cost up to a cap of \$75,000. The application deadline is the second Tuesday in July.

Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) & Enhancement Funding: The East Central Intergovernmental Association serves as the regional planning agency for Clinton. As such, the agency receives STP funding for road projects that are on the federal aid system, transit systems, bicycle and pedestrian systems and/or transportation planning activities. In fiscal year 2012, ECIA will receive \$2,628,540 annually in Surface Transportation Program funding.

Additionally, the City also has the option of applying for Statewide Enhancement funding through the Iowa Department of Transportation. Programmed funds target projects that address *scenic and natural resources projects* (e.g., acquisition of scenic easements, scenic highways programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification, etc.), *historical and archaeological projects* (e.g., acquisition of historic sites, historic preservation, establishment of transportation museums, etc.), and *trails and bikeways projects* (e.g., facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, preservation of abandoned railway corridors, etc.).

- **Eligibility:** Member of the RPA/MPO or applying through the statewide program. The statewide program generally accepts applications every October.
- **Eligible Uses:** Road, trail, transportation related study.



- **Funding:** A minimum 30 percent non-federal match is required for state program funds and 20 percent for regional funding. In addition, several federal requirements must be satisfied in using these funds.

State and Federal Funding Program Opportunities

Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) and River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT) Programs⁷: Iowa Code Section 15.F provides for the CAT Program and makes funding available to communities that would result in the construction of *vertical infrastructure* focusing on tourism and related community attractions. Since the creation of this fund, four communities have received partial funding for streetscape related improvements. In addition, RECAT provides funding for vertical infrastructure projects that enhance rivers, lakes, and associated bodies of water.

- **Eligibility:** The CAT program targets projects under \$20 million that funds permanently located recreational, cultural, educational or entertainment activity that is available to the general public. Eligible applicants include municipal government (counties and cities) and non-profit organizations. Some communities and multiple counties have also worked to develop a regional plan and project to cultivate financial support. In addition, the statute provides for one-third of funds be reserved for smaller communities and schools. This set aside also provides for specific milestone dates that if funds are not obligated to projects in smaller communities become eligible statewide.
- **Match Requirements:** By statute, CAT funding cannot constitute more than 50 percent of the total project costs. Up to 25 percent of resources provided by the applicant may be in the form of in-kind or non-financial contributions, which may include but are not limited to the value of labor and services. Historically, CAT funding commitments have been less than 25 percent of the overall project costs. Comparatively, RECAT caps awards at 1/3 of eligible project costs.

Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP): ICAAP funds are set aside for transportation projects that reduce air borne emissions. For example, funds can be used to offset intersection improvements such as signalization, grade-separations/bridges, roadway extensions, roadway capacity improvements. In addition, the fund will provide up to 80% of the funds to design and construct eligible improvements. Applications must be filed by October 1 annually. In addition, these are federal funds designated for distribution to the Iowa DOT. As such, all projects fall within the jurisdiction of the Iowa DOT for approvals, lettings, etc.

Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy Program (RISE): The RISE program provides funds to offset transportation projects resulting in new economic development projects and ultimately job creation or retention. The fund is distributed into *Immediate Opportunity* funding and *Local Development Projects*. Immediate opportunity funds are reserved for projects that will generate jobs in the short-term. Projects such as this are eligible to receive up to 80% of the funds necessary to design and construct approved transportation improvements and communities can apply for these funds throughout the year. Local development projects are speculative in nature. For example, a typical project involves the construction of a transportation improvement (road extension) to serve a business or industrial park without a specific development project. Projects are eligible to receive up to 50% of the funds necessary to design and

⁷ As this Plan is being prepared, the Vision Iowa Board/Community Attraction and Tourism Committee temporarily suspended acceptance of new CAT and RECAT applications due to uncertainty of future funding commitments from the Iowa General Assembly. The City is encouraged to track the status of this program.



construct the project and applications can be filed twice per year – February 1 and September 1. It is also important to note that the program defines “economic development” to include tourism. As such, this may have some potential for the designed sawmill museum area.

Iowa Brownfield Redevelopment Fund: While funding appropriated by the Iowa Legislature for this program has been reduced substantially over time, it has served as an effective source for small awards to acquire environmentally impaired (brownfield) sites. Funding applications are solicited by the Iowa Department of Economic Development in the fall or early winter and can be used to offset 25% of the costs of a brownfield project.

Bus and Bus Facilities: This federal fund is a discretionary account that is generally authorized through a direct appropriation (i.e., earmark). Over the past few years, this account has funded a significant number of transit facilities, buses and associated transit vehicles. While public transportation is a component of this plan and no specific “transit related” improvements were identified, it is recommended that the City remain mindful of this source of funds and consider citing it in future federal funding requests in the event that transit facilities or rolling stock becomes a priority.

Federal Trails Program: This highly competitive program provides 80% of the funds necessary to construct trails, resurface trails, or construct related improvements to a trail system. The Iowa DOT administers the application process and the deadline for filling applications is October 1.

State Trails Program: This program is very similar to the Federal Trails Program; however, eligible applicants can submit applications twice per year – January 2 and July 1.

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP): The REAP program is administered by the Iowa DNR and proceeds are distributed among several sub-funds. The City Parks and Open Space account has some relevance to the Lyons Master Plan project in that funding can be designated for parkland expansion and multi-purpose recreation developments. Applications are generally due to the Iowa DNR in early September and based on Clinton’s current population the city is eligible to receive \$150,000 toward approved improvements. This fund does not require matching funds.

Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP): TCSP is a comprehensive initiative of research and grants to investigate the relationships between transportation and community and system preservation and private sector-based initiatives.

- **Eligibility:** States, local governments, and metropolitan planning organizations are eligible for discretionary grants
- **Eligible Uses:** To plan and implement strategies that improve the efficiency of the transportation system; reduce environmental impacts of transportation; reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments; ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examine private sector development patterns and investments that support these goals.
- **Funding:** The TCSP Program is a FHWA program being jointly developed with the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Rail Administration, the Office of the Secretary, and the Research and Special Programs Administration within the US Department of Transportation, and the US Environmental Protection Agency.



Recommendation # 11– National Register of Historic Places

The Main Avenue Corridor has a concentration of architecturally-significant structures built during the late 19th century. This is especially true for the area located east of North 2nd Street. As such, it is important for the community to preserve these buildings as part of its history. The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* recommends studying the inclusion of individual properties onto the National Register of Historic Places in order to help achieve this desire.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. Benefits of listing include potential eligibility to access to federal preservation tax credits.

8.0 Implementation of Priority Action Steps

This Master Plan provides a long-term blueprint for improving community livability and strengthening the Lyons Business District. The City of Clinton and its partners must make a concerted effort to implement the recommendations identified in Section 8.0 to fully realize these benefits. It is important to seize the opportunity to honor the tremendous commitment, time and energy that citizens, business people, the Lyons Planning Steering Committee, and city staff have devoted to the creation of this plan. The following implementation plan proposes a realistic and timely strategy for positive change and is founded on the principle that public and private dollars must be spent over time to spark widespread and sustainable reinvestment in the area.

As the City turns its attention to implementing this plan, it is advisable to use the schedule cited below as a guide to prioritizing actions and help position the Lyons Business District study area to develop in a manner consistent with this plan.

- Recommended actions in the first six months: Adopt the Plan; amend and/or adopt policies that are consistent with recommendations cited in the Plan (e.g., zoning ordinance amendments, and associated regulations that will govern future land use, transportation, and public infrastructure improvements within the study area);
- One year – three-years post Plan adoption: Commission more detailed studies concerning complete streets, initiate design of high priority capital improvements – particularly transportation and related capital improvements. Studies and/or related design initiatives should also include the creation of construction cost opinions. This will contribute to creating a more detailed financial plan focusing on planned improvements on Main Avenue, North River Drive, and others referenced in this document. At the outset, these projects should be prioritized and incorporated into the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). To the extent these actions are required; the City should also modify internal plan review processes to ensure that requests for change in zone and/or plats comply with recommended development standards.
- Post three-years: Major capital improvements should be scheduled and implemented in accordance with the CIP and/or priorities resulting from developer initiated projects. Additionally, it is advisable to track development activities within the district to determine if land use types, scale and densities are consistent with those cited in the plan. As the district develops/redevelops, it is important for the City to modify plans to reflect changing land use needs, and development practices.

Priority Action Items

Priority # 1 – Pursue Funding for Planned Improvements

Several recommendations cited in Section 7 of this Plan reference higher priority capital improvements within the Lyons District. As the City and its partners consider implementing these recommendations it is also important to couple those funding options listed in Section 7 with the cited capital improvements. While the concept of preparing funding applications may seem obvious, it is important for the City to engage a process to review and cull each funding opportunity. The outline below highlights this process and suggested next steps.

- *Identify funding options that meet the needs of the community and the project.* While this step is addressed in Section 7, the City should evaluate the suitability of each funding source for the



project. For example, determining the reporting requirements and other administrative responsibilities can help the City assess if the anticipated use of funds meets a project need and the administrative responsibilities associated with securing funding are not burdensome for administrative officers.

- *Determine if the funding source(s) are consistent with the project needs and the community's capabilities.* With input from the Lyons Steering Committee and City staff funding options should be discussed – citing advantages and disadvantages associated with each funding option. The less desirable sources should be culled and the preferred list of sources should advance for further pursuit.
- *Prepare a funding strategy that focuses on implementation.* Based on the short list of funding options a tailored funding strategy should be developed. This strategy includes a proposed schedule of activities and listing of milestone events.
- *Preparation of successful funding proposals.* Evaluating funding opportunities should not simply consist of grant preparation. Rather, engaging prospective grant makers to examine past funding commitments can provide great insight as the application is prepared.
- *On-going contact with fund program managers.* On-going contact with the funding source is encouraged once the proposal is submitted. Often, contacting grant makers can emphasize your interest in securing funding, provides a means of addressing questions that may have come up during the review, and determine how the proposal is advancing.

Priority # 2 – Attract an Anchor

As proposed in this Master Plan, redevelopment of the former auto dealership site should be one of the highest priorities. With a coordinated approach in dealing with the vacant properties, their development potential could be maximized. Creation of a new riverfront park (see Exhibit 12) and “new Main Street” concept that reflects Main Avenue to the west will create a thriving environment for businesses. The key will be to attract an “anchor” which will take a coordinated effort by the City of Clinton, the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce, the Clinton Regional Development Corporation, property owners, and business owners.

Benefits of redevelopment include:

- Establishment of early momentum – a sign that the City is dedicated to implementing the Master Plan and seeing the Lyons District becoming a thriving area.
- Redevelopment of underutilized parcels that currently portray a poor image for the area.
- Improving street access and upgrading existing utilities/infrastructure to create “ready to build” parcels.
- Strategically locating new parking areas to effectively serve redevelopment.
- Providing new ground floor retail with residential above to replicate the Main Avenue Main Street concept.
- Possible new hotel and high density residential development – new residents will live in the Lyons District and provide existing businesses new customers.

In the course of meeting with the Steering Committee considerable discussion was given to the redevelopment of this area and how a hotel/conference center would be a complimentary use. In addition, Committee members indicated that a facility of this type would satisfy a need currently unmet in Clinton. At the preparation of this Plan, the City Council is considering a proposal that would commission a study to evaluate the feasibility of siting a hotel within the Main Avenue Corridor.



Priority # 3 – Amend the Zoning Regulations and Official Zoning Map

Amend the *City of Clinton Zoning Regulations* to include a Zoning Overlay District restricting permitted uses, height and area requirements, and site design within the Main Avenue Corridor. Further, amend the City of Clinton's Official Zoning Map to reflect the future land uses outlined in Exhibit 5 (Appendix A). These changes will allow the City of Clinton to help control the built environment by ensuring that future development/redevelopment is compatible with existing uses.

Priority # 4 – Establish Façade Improvement Program

Two strong community desires emerged through the preparation of this Master Plan. A considerable amount of public input received by the City focused on the following: 1) wanting to improve the aesthetic quality of the Main Avenue Corridor and 2) wanting to maintain the historical integrity of the area through building preservation. Providing an incentive for property owners to re-invest in their structures will help facilitate the City accomplishing both desires. In addition, improvements to private property will also compliment upgrades to the public right-of-way (e.g., decorative paving, lighting, benches, etc.).

Priority #5 –Install/Construct Public Improvements

Improving the physical environment is critical to generating additional traffic within the Main Avenue Corridor. Further, a consistent streetscape project will help create an identifiable “brand” for the area (Exhibit 11 provides examples of potential themes for the streetscape elements). The City should seek funding sources identified in Recommendation #10 (Section 7.0) in order to install/construct the public improvements consistent with those highlighted in Exhibits 7, 9B and 10 in Appendix A. Exhibits 7 and 10 provide a conceptual plan for future streetscape improvements and preferred locations for gateway and wayfinding signage. Exhibit 9B provides phased recommendations for sidewalk improvements within the corridor.

Priority #6 – Conduct an Open Space Study to Facilitate the Purchase of Additional Open Space

The study area lacks adequate public areas dedicated to passive and active recreation as many homes are not located within walking distance of a park, trail, etc. However, the area contains numerous opportunities to expand the referenced facilities. This is especially true with regards to the Mississippi River as the general public has expressed an interest in improving access to the riverfront. The City of Clinton should conduct an Open Space Study to audit current open spaces and to assess the community's future needs in terms of space, equipment, facilities, etc. as the area redevelops. The document will help guide and prioritize future open space projects within the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Priority #7 – Identify and Study Historic Structures for Possible Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places

The Main Avenue Corridor contains numerous structures with architectural significance. The community has strongly indicated a desire to preserve these buildings. Registering structures on the National Register of Historic Places will help preserve the historical integrity of the buildings as all future rehabilitations funded by historic preservation tax credits must meet standards established by the Secretary of the Interior. It should also be noted that as the Steering Committee discussed this recommendation, several members expressed some concern about the restrictions imposed on properties that are subject to this designation.



Implementation Tools

This section highlights a series of implementation tools available to the City in fulfilling the recommendations and priority action items cited in the Master Plan. Community leaders, residents, developers, governmental institutions, and community based organizations will need to work together to accomplish the overall vision and goals. Successful implementation will require a conscientious effort over many years.

Administrative Actions

The City of Clinton should implement the following components that require administrative action and/or public policy to implement. These actions do not require a significant allocation of funds and can be completed in a fairly short time frame.

Adoption of the Lyons Business District Master Plan

The *Lyons Business District Master Plan* should be adopted as a subarea plan, as part of the *Clinton Development Plan*. While it is important that this Plan be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, City staff, the City Council, City Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment must recognize that the more detailed recommendations and implementation schedule of the sub-area plan supersedes the more general recommendations referenced in the Comprehensive Plan. Moreover, it is essential that the Plan be adopted for use by City staff, boards, and commissions to review and evaluate all proposals for improvement and development within the study area. The Master Plan can be incorporated into the updated Comprehensive Plan currently being developed by the City.

Communication with stakeholders

The City should continue to meet with residents, business owners, and other interested parties to transition into implementing the recommendations cited in the Plan. Subsequent actions should be positioned to take action on recommendations. However, stakeholders from the Lyons District must also recognize that participation among other organizations, including the City is subject to completing needs for capital improvements throughout the community. The City should make the plan available and immediately accessible to all stakeholders and residents of the City. The City should post a copy of the Plan on the City's website for download. A hardcopy of the Plan should also be kept at the City Hall and prominent locations like the public library.

Role of City

The City of Clinton should assume the leadership role in implementing the Master Plan. Development plans that are submitted to the City within the Lyons Business District study area should be analyzed using this Master Plan for compliance. The Master Plan should be used in communicating the vision of the City to business owners and investors. In addition to carrying out the administrative actions and many of the public improvement projects recommended in the Plan, the City may choose to administer a variety of programs available to local residents, businesses and property owners. To ensure success of this Master Plan, there will need to be strong partnerships between the City, business owners, and residents.



Organization

- Maintain the existing Steering Committee as the Master Plan Implementation Team.
- Consider adding Steering Committee members with experience in various fields such as public relations, finance, recreation and others not currently represented.
- Consider adding City employees to the Committee.
- Consider adding Clinton Regional Development Corporation and Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce staff.
- Retain Steering Committee to assist consultants, property owners, developers and City leaders throughout the implementation process.
- Create and update prioritized Steering Committee work plans annually.
- Determine staffing and/or consulting services required for master plan implementation.

Responsibilities

Implementation of this plan will require focused, aggressive efforts by the public and private sectors over the coming years. For this plan to be successful, a comprehensive, consistent and coordinated effort will be necessary. The groups or entities listed below will be responsible for the following:

City of Clinton

- Administer loan and grant programs contributing to Lyons District revitalization.
- Improve and/or construct public infrastructure and amenities such as streetscape elements and street furniture.
- Provide off-street public parking areas within the Main Avenue Corridor to relieve existing demand and to serve as an incentive to induce private development.
- Need to develop an interdepartmental implementation team to coordinate public sector efforts.
- Develop and implement urban redevelopment activities, such as attracting developers, assisting in site assembly, and reviewing and approving development plans.
- Participates in retail recruitment, outreach and marketing programs.

Policies, Regulations and Guidelines

The City of Clinton will be responsible for carrying out any relevant changes to policies, regulations and community guidelines. Master Plan recommendations generally comply with existing plans, policies and regulations. Where recommendations do not comply, the City of Clinton will need to make changes to the existing policies and regulations to be consistent with the Master Plan.

Development Review

To ensure that the recommendations and policies of the Master Plan are implemented as envisioned by the community, additional updates or creation of new regulatory and discretionary review documents are needed.

Design Standards

Development and adoption of essential design standards and permitted uses. These should be highly graphic maps that describe street edge conditions and ground floor uses for only those critical areas in the downtown where the form of development must be very prescriptive.

Design Guidelines and Review Process

The Design Guidelines and the Design Review Process should be adopted as the primary tool for review of downtown buildings and public areas. A new structured process and review committee should be determined.



Policies, Regulations and Guidelines

This process may involve a new committee or may incorporate the range of existing review bodies such as Historic Preservation Commission, and the City Plan Commission. The new committee could provide recommendations to the City Plan Commission and City Council, using the Design Guidelines as an exclusive evaluation tool.

Public Area Requirements

Design standards and details should be codified for the entire downtown to ensure unified and consistent development of streets, sidewalks, intersections and public spaces. While these standards must address roadway safety requirements for automobiles and trucks, they should be developed with an emphasis.

Review and Update Actions

In order for the Plan to remain as up-to-date as possible, the document needs to be used and reviewed on a constant basis. The Plan is not a static document and as changes in the community occur, especially new or different opinions or ideas, they should be part of the review and update process. These changes can be brought forth to the City at any time, and should be part of the Plan's review process. The following procedures should be used in reviewing and updating the Plan.

Periodic Monitoring and Administration

The City should initiate a full review of the Plan every 3-5 years or simply incorporate into the overall Comprehensive Plan to be reviewed every 3-5 years. In addition, the City should monitor accomplishments, successes, outstanding steps, and new issues or opportunities. Preparation of the annual review should coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and Capital Improvement Program.

To ensure that the City is not alone in the monitoring and review of this Master Plan it is important to utilize the Implementation Team to ensure the plan moves forward. This group should meet regularly to track progress and effectiveness. The City of Clinton staff, City Plan Commission and City Council is ultimately responsible for implementing the Plan which may also include undertaking any additional studies within the corridor.

Routine examination of the Plan will help to ensure that the document is implemented.

APPENDIX A – EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1	Study Area Map
Exhibit 2	Existing Zoning Map
Exhibit 3	Framework Map
Exhibit 4	Transportation Map
Exhibit 5	Future Land Use Map
Exhibit 6	Utilities Map
Exhibit 7	Main Avenue-Framework
Exhibit 8	Main Avenue-Parking Inventory
Exhibit 9A	Main Avenue-Sidewalk Conditions Inventory
Exhibit 9B	Main Avenue-Proposed Sidewalk Improvement Corridors
Exhibit 10	Streetscape Illustrative Plan
Exhibit 11	Theme and Character
Exhibit 12	Parks Map



STUDY AREA-EXHIBIT 1









LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

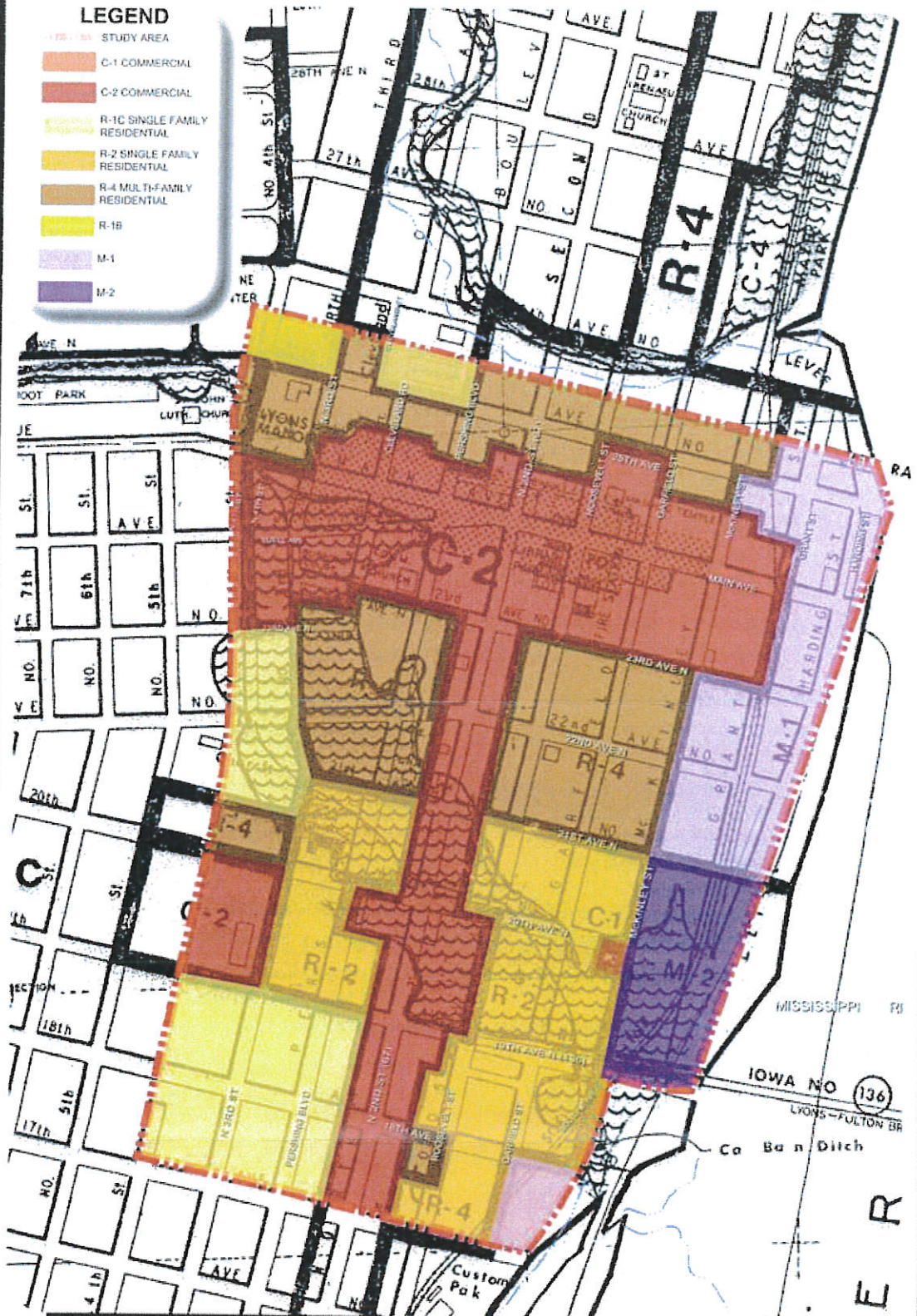


DATE: MARCH 23, 2011



STUDY AREA

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
|  | C-1 COMMERCIAL |
|  | C-2 COMMERCIAL |
|  | R-1C SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
|  | R-2 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
|  | R-4 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
|  | R-1B |
|  | M-1 |
|  | M-2 |

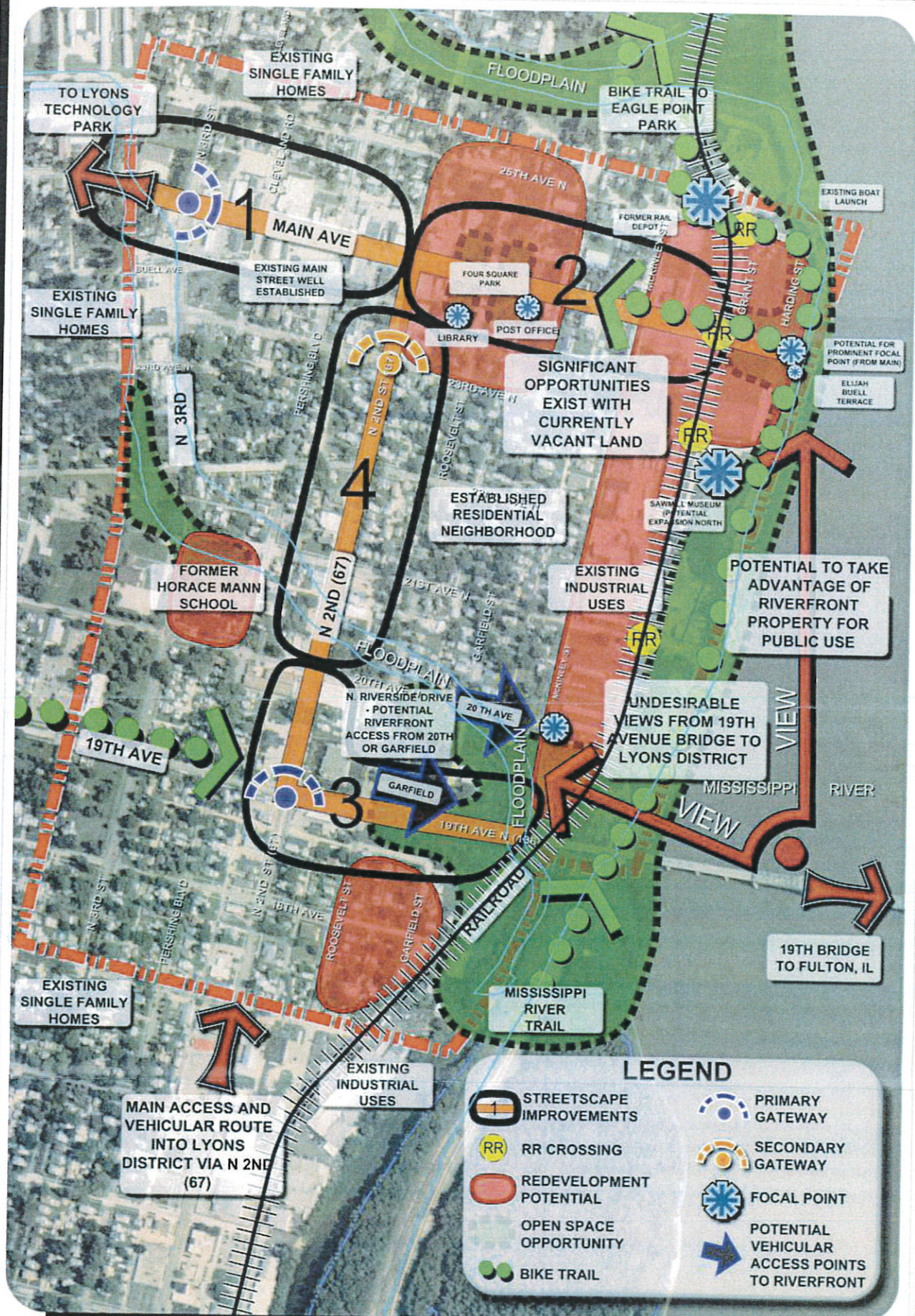


EXISTING ZONING-EXHIBIT 2

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

1433

DATE: MARCH 23, 2011 HRGreen

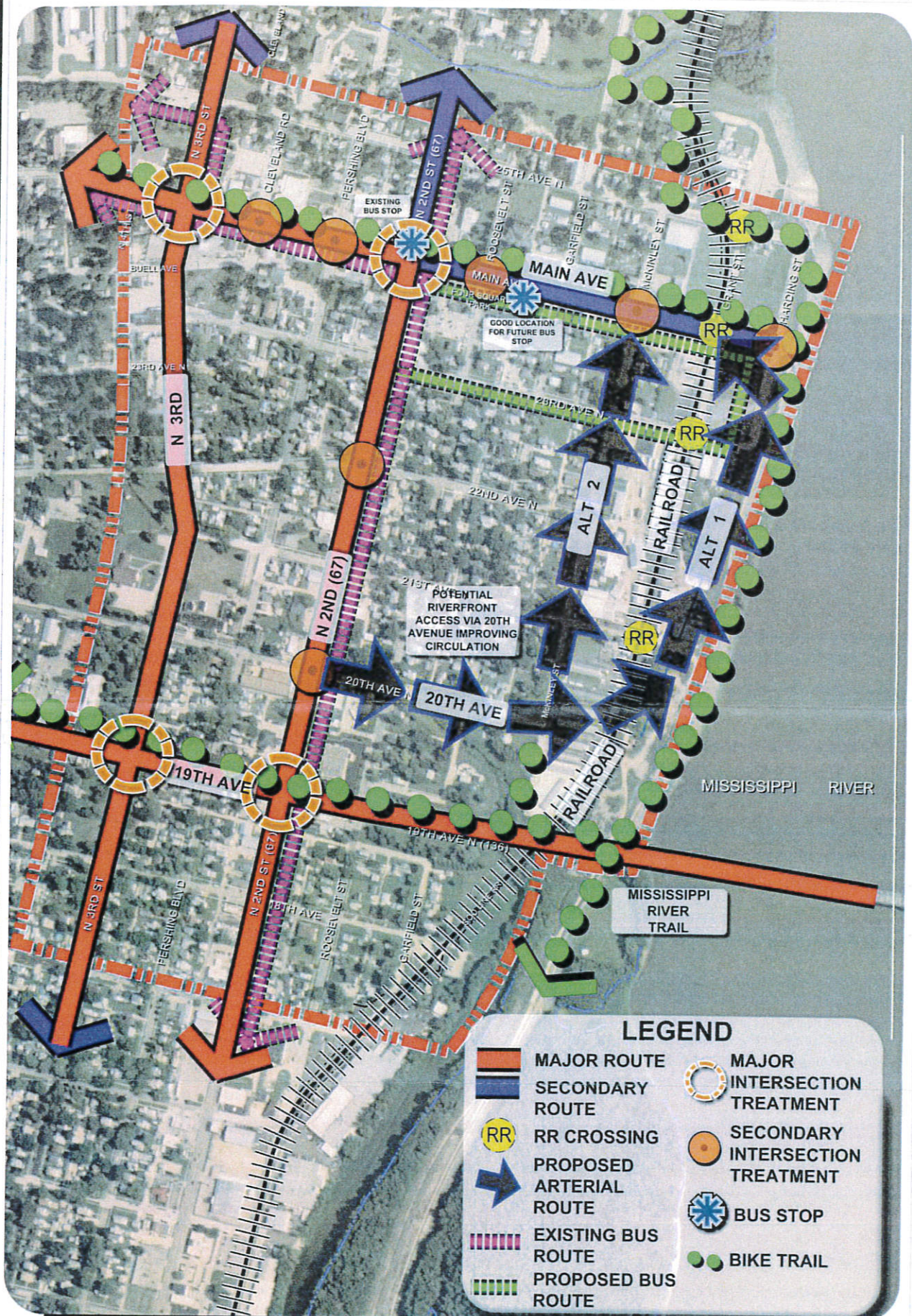


FRAMEWORK PLAN - EXH 3

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

DATE: MARCH 23, 2011



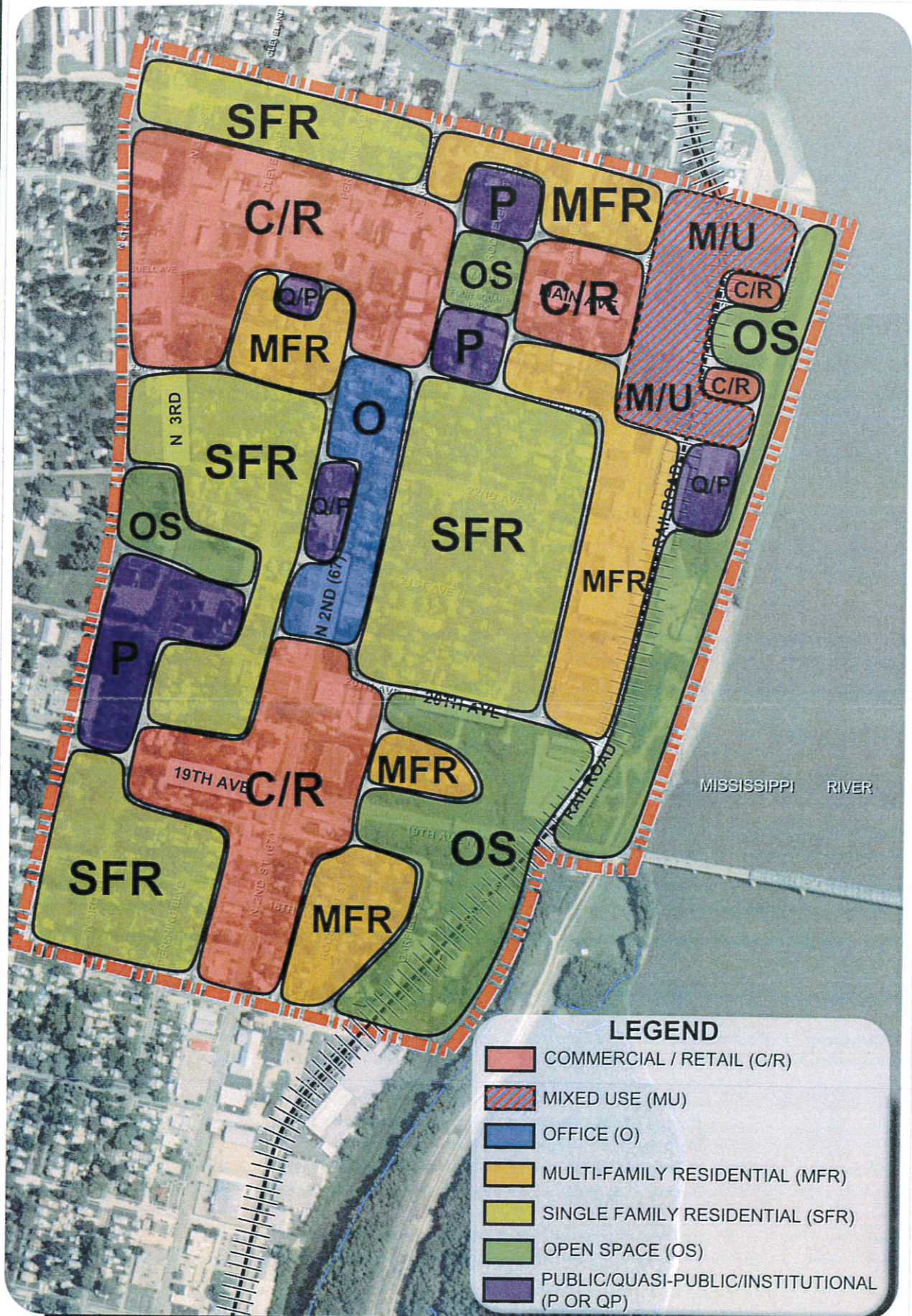


TRANSPORTATION-EXH 4

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

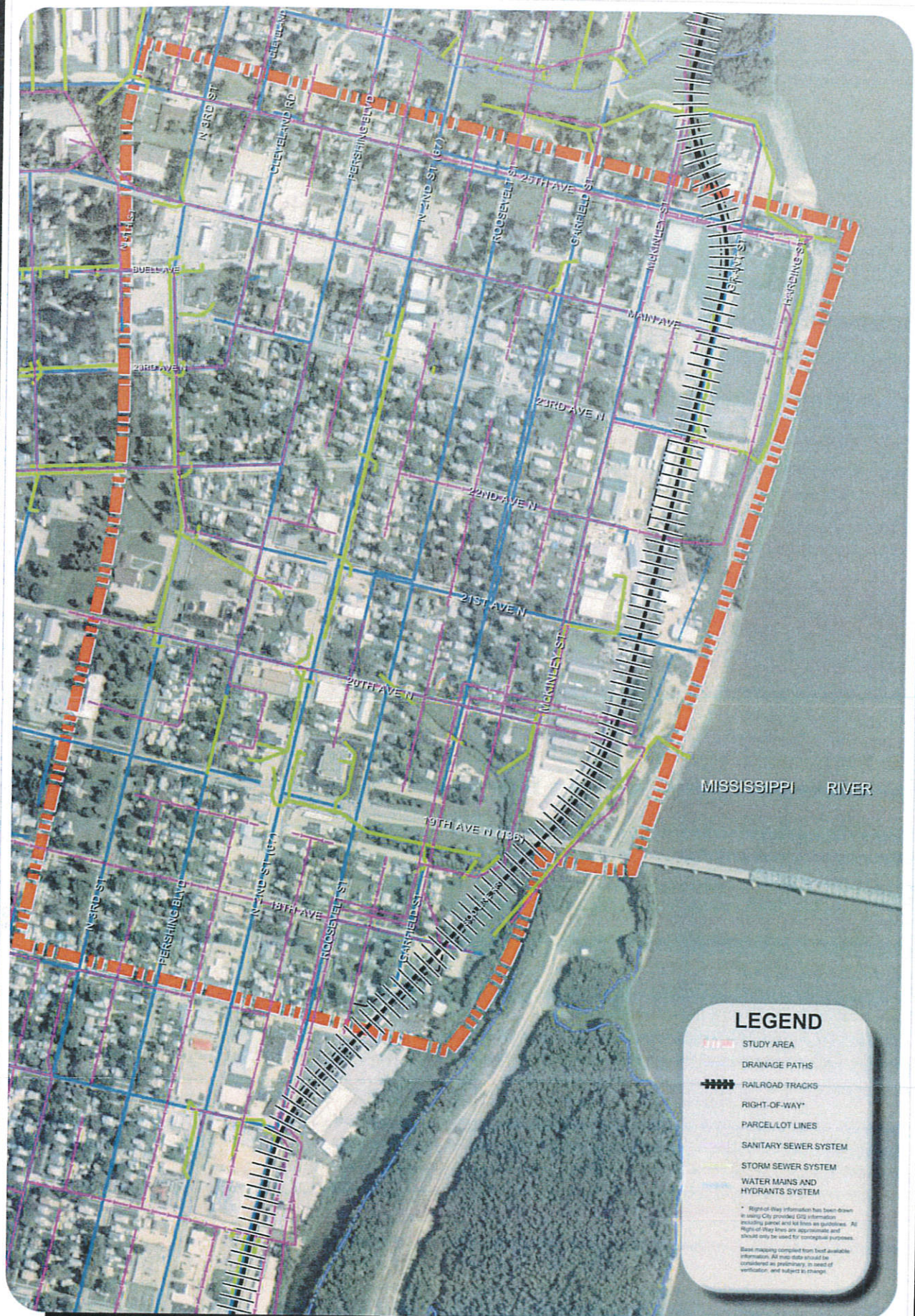
DATE: MARCH 23, 2011





PROPOSED LAND USE - E. 5

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA



LEGEND

- STUDY AREA
- DRAINAGE PATHS
- + + + + RAILROAD TRACKS
- RIGHT-OF-WAY*
- PARCEL/LOT LINES
- SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM
- STORM SEWER SYSTEM
- WATER MAINS AND HYDRANTS SYSTEM

* Right-of-Way information has been drawn in using City provided GIS information including parcel and lot lines as guidelines. All Rights-of-Way lines are approximate and should only be used for conceptual purposes.

Base mapping compliant from best available information. All map data should be considered as preliminary, in need of verification, and subject to change.

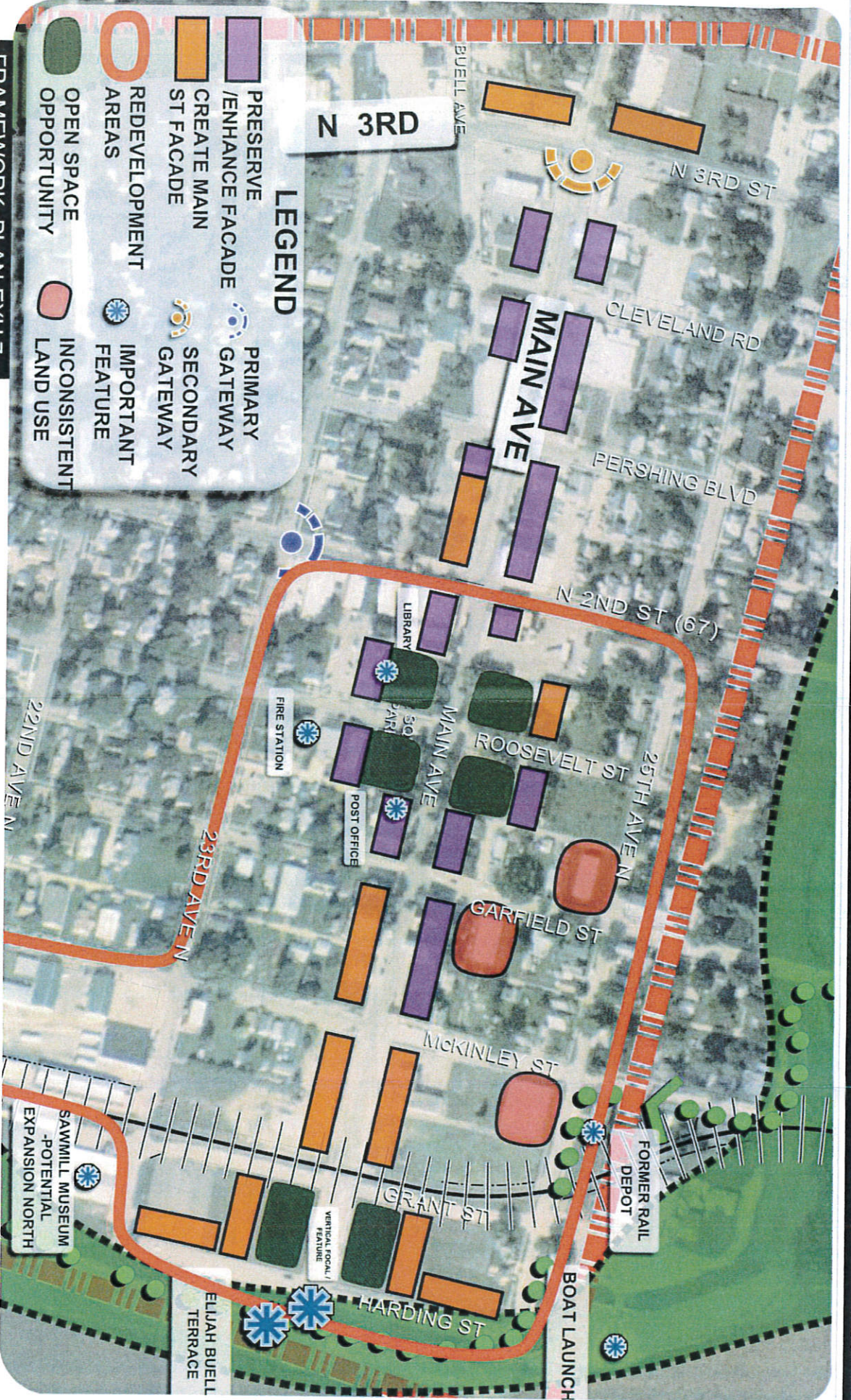
UTILITIES-EXHIBIT 6

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA



DATE: MARCH 23, 2011





FRAMEWORK PLAN-EXH 7

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

MAIN AVENUE CORRIDOR

PUBLIC PARKING
(MUNICIPAL)

PROPOSED
PARKING

PRIVATE
PARKING

PEDESTRIAN
CONNECTION

ON-STREET
PARKING (STRIPED)

NO PARKING
ON-STREET

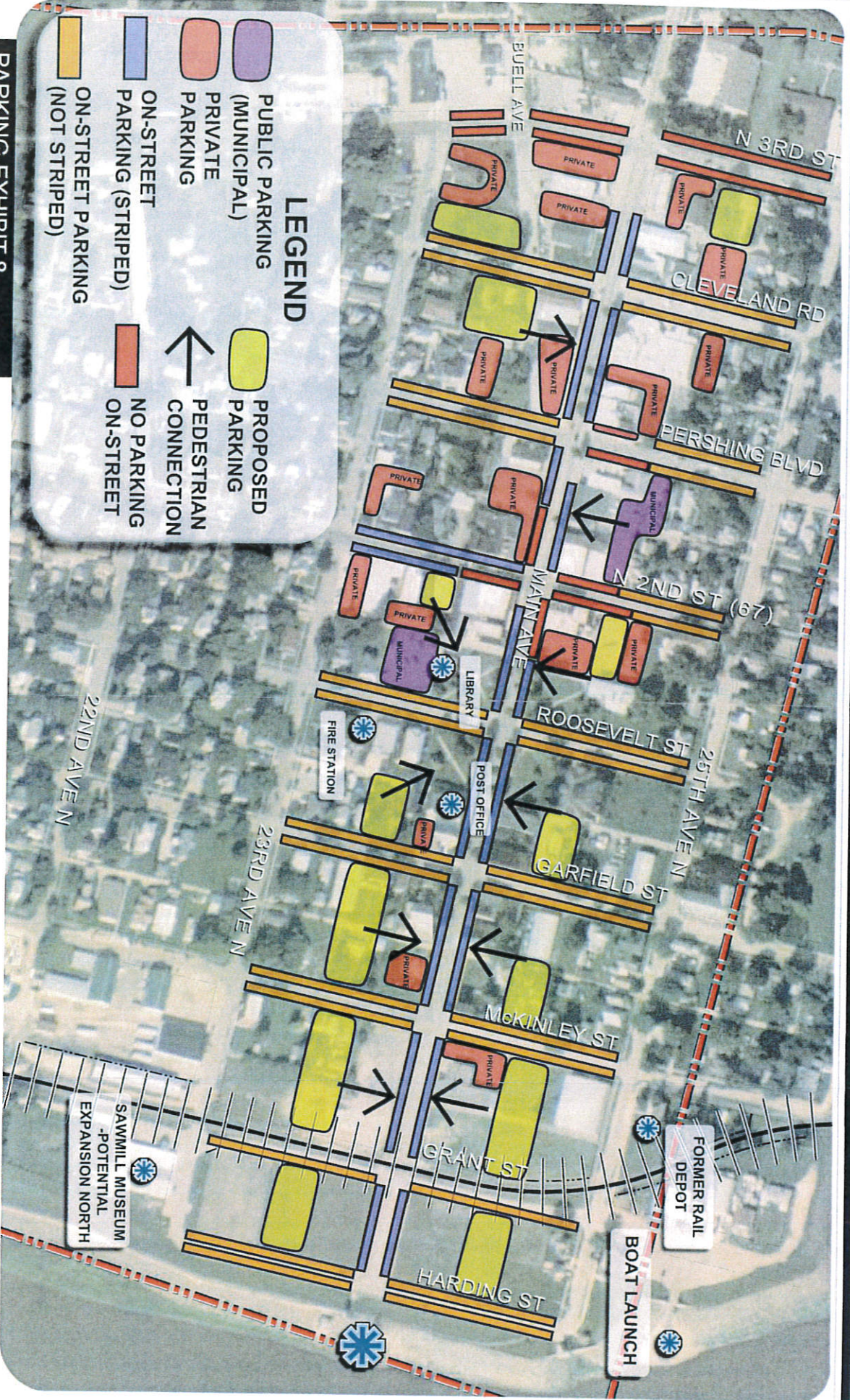
ON-STREET PARKING
(NOT STRIPED)

PARKING-EXHIBIT 8

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

MAIN AVENUE CORRIDOR

DATE: MARCH 23, 2011





LEGEND

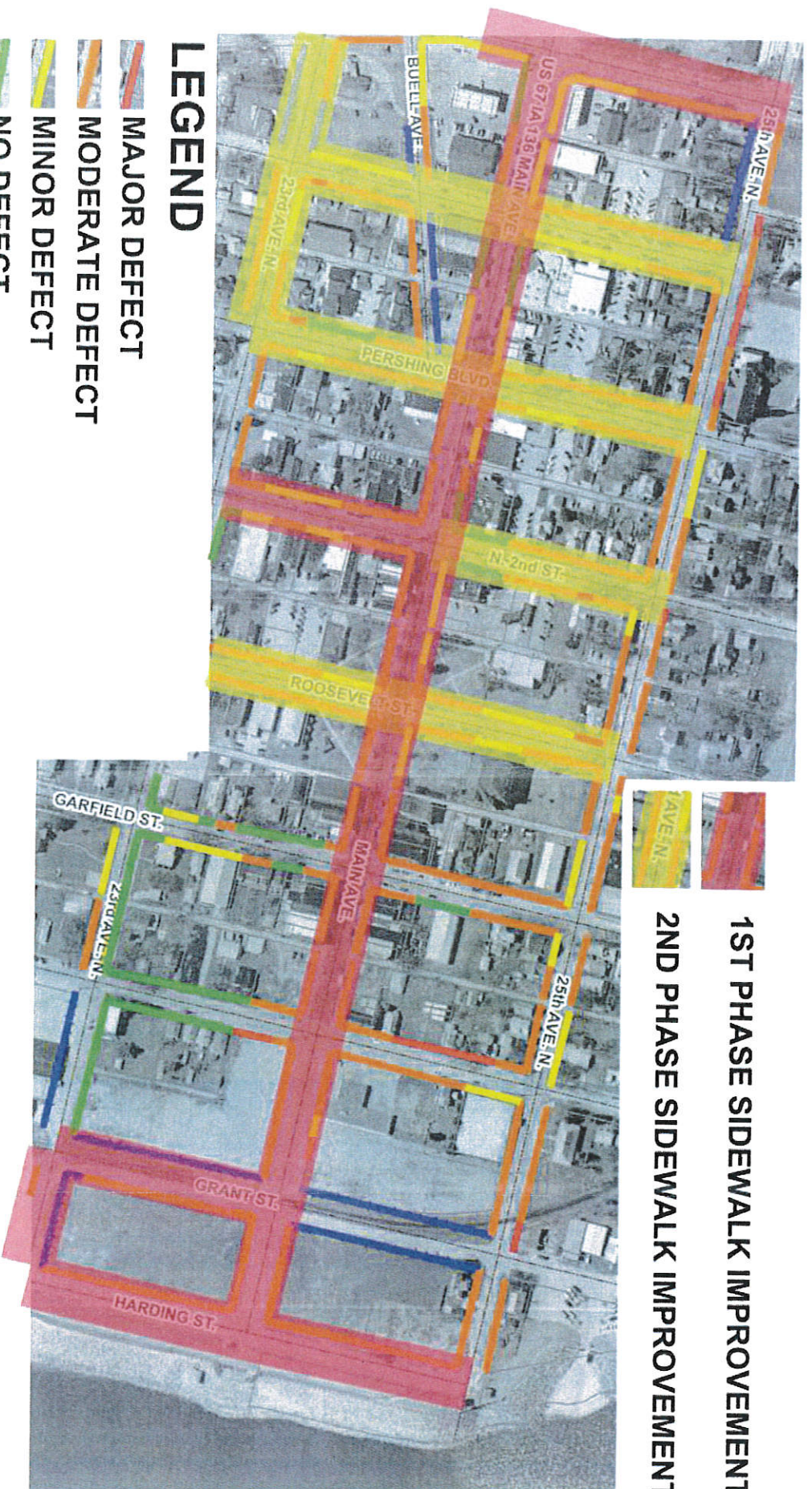
- MAJOR DEFECT
- MODERATE DEFECT
- MINOR DEFECT
- NO DEFECT
- NO SIDEWALK

SIDEWALK INVENTORY-E 9A

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

NOT TO SCALE

DATE: APRIL 13, 2011



NOT TO SCALE

DATE: APRIL 13, 2011

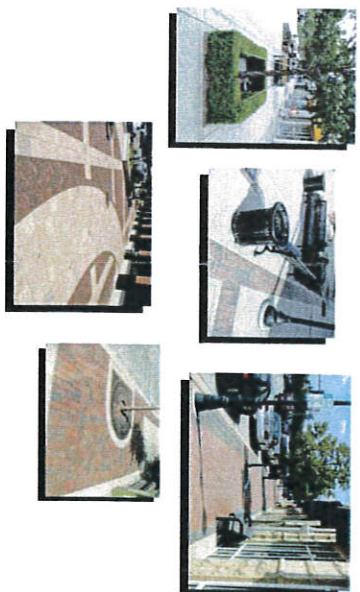
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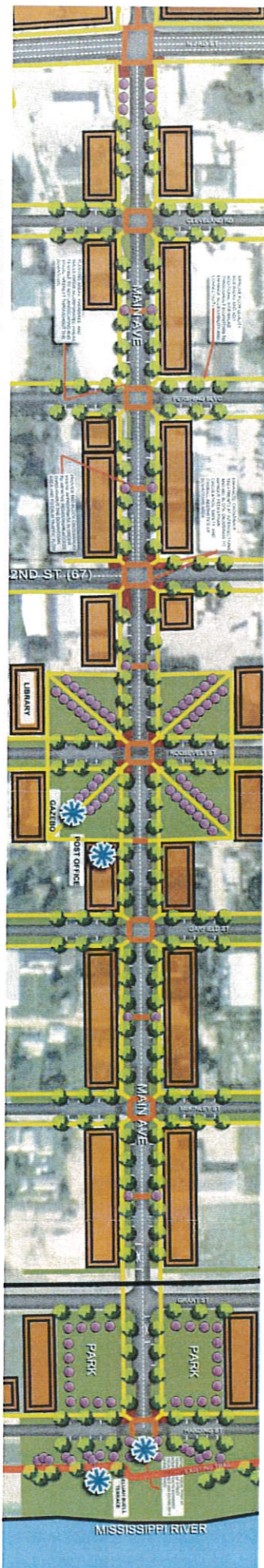
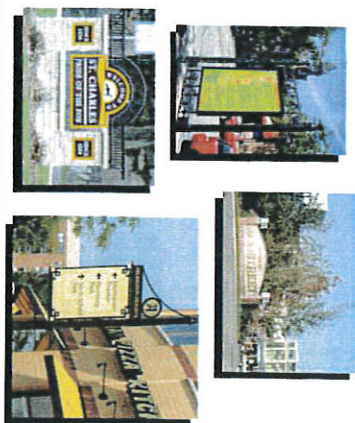
POTENTIAL LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS



PEDESTRIAN AND WALKWAY TREATMENTS



TYPES OF STREETSCAPE SIGNAGE



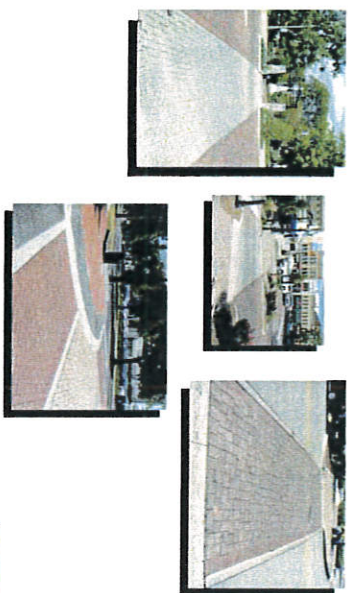
EXAMPLES OF STREETSCAPE FURNISHINGS



SOCIAL SPACES



PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK ALTERNATIVES



STREETSCAPE - EXH. 10

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

ILLUSTRATIVE STREETSCAPE PLAN

DATE: MARCH 23, 2011 H+3 Green



Why have a theme for the Lyons District?

Revitalization of downtown Lyons would involve economic development and incentive strategies but also aesthetic improvements creating a common theme throughout Lyons. In order to guide future streetscape improvements and re-development this Master Plan seeks to define an overall theme that can be implemented to create a cohesive downtown environment. Successful downtowns begin with a good "first impression" and "sense of arrival" which is often displayed through elements such as gateways, lighting, benches, signage, banners, and paving patterns.

The Lyons District is rich in history and architecture, therefore, two theme options are proposed in this context.

OPTION # 1 — Sawmill Theme

From the 1850's to the 1890's, Clinton was "The Lumber Capital of the World" out producing all other lumber centers and major cities, including St. Paul and St. Louis. The peak of the lumber industry in Clinton was 1892, when the city was producing over 195 million board feet of lumber, enough to build about 25,000 houses, businesses and barns.

The Lyons District theme and character could display this great history into future streetscape elements and architecture such as new buildings, gateway signage, parks, and shelters.

OPTION # 2 — Italianate Theme

In the downtown Lyons District there are many different types of architecture, however, an Italianate style (from the Victorian era) is displayed in many of the buildings. This style of architecture consists of cornices that are ornately detailed and it typically displays horizontal layers and archway elements.

The Lyons District theme and character could reflect the great architectural elements into future streetscape elements and architecture such as new buildings, gateway signage, parks and shelters.

EXHIBIT 11

LYONS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

Historical relevance...



The Clinton/Lyons area has a rich history of the lumber history.

Historical relevance...



The Downtown Lyons District has many buildings with an Italianate style of architecture.

Examples of streetscape elements



Color, form, type and styles of streetscape elements (i.e. lighting, tree grates, benches and trash receptacles) will be selected to fit with the selected theme for the Lyons District

Representative elements of the Sawmill Theme



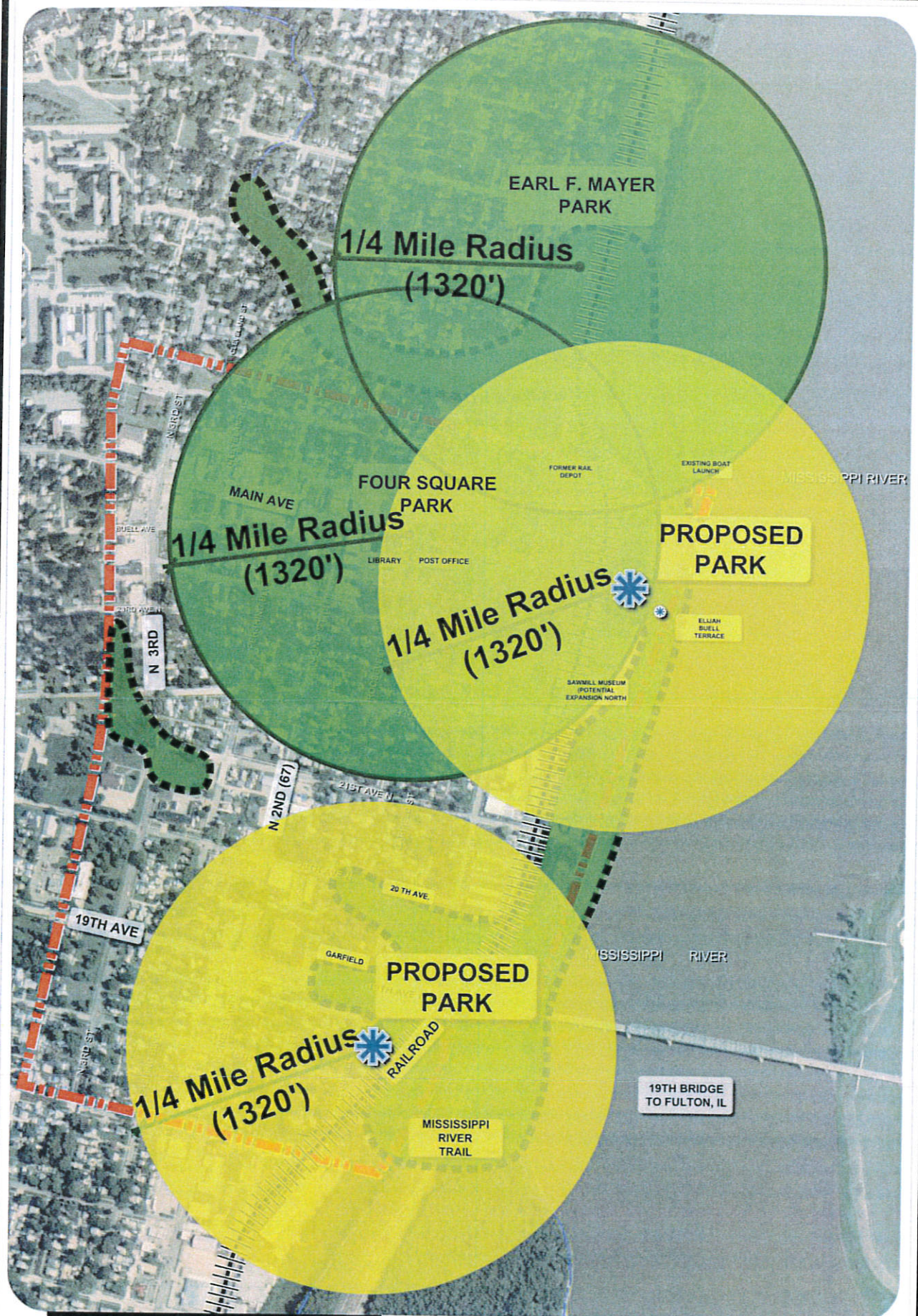
Representative elements of the Italianate Theme



THEME AND CHARACTER

DATE: APRIL 13, 2011





PARKS - Exhibit 12

LYONS BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF CLINTON, IOWA

NOT TO SCALE



DATE: MARCH 23, 2011



APPENDIX B – PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

1) *What specific features do you like about the future land use concepts?*

- The commitment to open space promotion and streetscape design.
- Promotion of green fixtures and natural plans.
- The promotion of multiple modes of transportation (pedestrian, bus, bike).
- Utilization of the property with a common theme and purpose.
- The opportunity to restore an area that is in decline would be a goal for the district.
- Development of east end of Main Avenue.
- Re-routing traffic from North 2nd Street.
- Proposed parking.
- Italianate theme of said corridor.
- The use of Italianate theme to complement existing historical buildings in an attempt to preserve the history of this very unique area and city. We need to preserve the uniqueness that this was the lumber capital not of this nation, but of the world, and the people who built it, both commercially and in residential homes/areas.
- Although I like progress and a view of the future, I doubt it will work. There is no state money. All the younger citizens who would have benefited from it have moved on to places where there are jobs. There are fewer jobs in the Lyons area because there are fewer places to work (no more implement building, McEleney's, Three Star Candy Tobacco, Snack Harbor, Lyons Café, Porky's, Lyons Drug Store, Bicker T.V. Repair, Ben Franklin, and Western Auto). No places to work, no jobs. Sorry.
- Lyons has a unique history. No one alive today lived in Lyons yet we call it Lyons.
- I like that a Plan is being proposed.
- Making the riverfront north and south parks into one grand park.

2) *What specific features do you dislike about the future land use concepts?*

- There could be even a bigger commitment to bike trails and busing.
- Not enough promotion of density. Need more 2 & 3 floor apartment buildings and 3 & 4 floor commercial properties.
- It takes in an area that continues to support the history of the district and capitalizes on the unique features of small close-knit communities.
- Theme-carrying out the same look and features that emphasizes the history of the district.
- Mid-block crossings and the difficulty of snow removal, and the safety of the said crossings.
- The possibility of using new buildings to replace our historical buildings.
- We've paved paradise and put up a parking lot! Commercial development pushing out homeowners and property owners.
- We should follow the examples of Galena, IL and Iowa City and save what historic building we already have.
- You left out St. Irenaeus and St. Boniface!
- It doesn't go far enough. Both St. Boniface and St. Irenaeus should be included.

3) *How could the City improve the future land use concepts?*

- Promote townhousing, row housing, and apartment buildings with shared backyard and better non-auto access.
- Gear the Lyons Business District toward small shops and offices with a small town feel like Galena or LeClaire (This could allow downtown Clinton to compete with Dubuque/Iowa City/Ames without competing against Lyons).
- More in-take from the public prior to the actual presentation.



- Look at other cities, see what is successful, what is not, work from this research.
 - Take a look at Galena, Illinois with its similar stores; small fronts but long from front to back. They are very efficient in store usage, and area usage, including mid-town parks, trolleys to move peds, also, buggy and horse, rickshaws, diagonal parking vs. parallel parking, and one inconspicuous (non-visible) parking ramp.
 - Don't build a 19th Avenue North extension. Leave well enough alone!
 - Run McKinley and Roosevelt Street (improve it) under the bridge legs.
 - Change the route for 19th Avenue North extension. Use Main Avenue instead. Stick to original plan to create extension of Stockwell Lane.
 - Include tourism.
 - Include more people and organizations in the planning.
- 4) *What are some challenges associated with the redevelopment of the area?*
- No major catalyst for district (no big people draw).
 - Highway 136 creates unfriendly atmosphere for District on Main Avenue.
 - Money! This area has long needed the attention and energy of the City in developing a plan and implementing the plan.
 - When money is used for quality of life venues, matching grant using the base money would help extend the project and complete portions not using the basefunds.
 - Maintaining the eccentric feel of this area.
 - Slowing traffic down along Main Avenue to allow for more mid-block pedestrian crossings. A woman with a baby in buggy was struck just last fall at the major intersection of 2nd Street and Main Avenue. This is another area of concern, since it appears that traffic must go through this intersection to come and go from the area.
 - Also, to route traffic off of this bridge, east on 20th Avenue North, north on either McKinley or Harding. 20th Avenue North and McKinley are residential and therefore increasing potential danger to residents (children) and Harding you must cross the railroad tracks (more accidents).
 - Save the historic mansions on North 3rd Street.
 - No Riverview Drive. Lyons Root Park was (?) up.
- 5) *What is unique about the Main Avenue Corridor?*
- Its small town feel and appeal.
 - Already established small town shops and restaurants.
 - This area is a neighborhood supported by the businesses and property owners in the district. They are cohesive in their thinking.
 - History.
 - Many old Victorian buildings remain from the 1800s, the time frame of the roots of the Lyons Area.
 - The lumber capital of the world is as unique as you can get.
 - We need to preserve our heritage, and the history, of this great little community.
 - Also unique is the start of Main Avenue from the mighty Mississippi.
 - Our proximity to Rockford, Chicago, IL which no other towns or cities in Iowa have.
 - Since we have no terminal, no bus, trains, or air service to these cities (we would benefit from such links because we are closer) we have missed out. Our opportunities are gone with the wind- as will be the populace.
 - The culture and history of Lyons.
 - Main Avenue is unique. However, Lyons itself, has the richest history in the area including the oldest church.

- It is a frontier town and is older than New York, Iowa and was preeminent long before Clinton, Iowa.
- 6) *What are some strengths of the Main Avenue Corridor?*
- As a former downtown, big opportunity to be premier north end commercial district.
 - Also as former downtown, allows for shop specialization (i.e. antique shops, hobby shops, décor stores, etc.)
 - Connection and views of the Mississippi River.
 - Connection to the Mississippi River Trail.
 - It allows commerce to take place without leaving area.
 - Many old Victorian buildings still remain.
 - The location close to river.
 - 4-Square Park offers park congregation areas.
 - Many business owners are concerned with preserving the history of this community, and many work well together.
 - At least the bus stops there.
 - Old buildings that should be restored.
- 7) *What is missing from the Main Avenue Corridor? In other words, what type of land uses (i.e. business, recreational opportunity, etc.) would help draw individuals to the area?*
- Restaurants and cafes.
 - Lyons should be geared to be competitive against cities like Galena, LeClaire & Village of East Davenport. Specialty shops, pedestrian interaction and some form of cultural center. Lyons is our small town feel and should be HEAVILY marketed as such.
 - Connect more to Eagle Point Park somehow. Maybe through the proposed new Riverfront Park. Maybe (money probably wouldn't exist) a special trolley that connects to Eagle Point Park at the Lyons Depot?
 - Streetscaping and a focal point at the base of Main and River Drive that draws you to the area.
 - A destination hotel/conference center that supports the Sawmill Heritage experience.
 - Overlooks to the River and a view of Lock and Dam 13.
 - Business land uses. This is in dire in this area.
 - Everything. This should have been planned, worked on, implemented 20, 30 years ago when most kids were in elementary or junior high school.
 - No centrally-located Lyons Junior High, no food stores, no shopping mall, a horrible big corp. gas station, no businesses or companies farther north, no visitor's bureau, no place to buy gas, refreshments once one leaves Lyons Business District (last chance gas...) should be someplace near Eagle Point Park on way out of town.
 - Tourism. Old buildings on the register. St. Irenaeus-St. Boniface-St. John's-Grace Episcopal congregations.
 - The historical impact the entire area could have on Clinton.
 - Specialty shops like Galena (art, wine, etc.).
 - Marketing to cosmopolitan areas.
- 8) *What types of streetscape improvements (i.e. street lights, benches, bike racks, gateway signage, intersection pavement treatments, etc.) would you like to see installed along the Main Avenue Corridor?*
- Make the streetscape resemble downtown Clinton but give subtle differences to things like color or signage. Creates community unity but gives individual district flair.
 - Bike racks and bike paths promote pedestrian-friendly atmosphere essential to this district.

- Streetlights, signage, pavers that continue throughout the district and connect to the river at the front door of the riverfront.
- No mid-block crossing (safety first).
- Theme #2- Italianate style to complement existing Victorian theme.
- Bike racks.
- Bike-friendly streets.
- More parks
- Antique lights.
- Façade improvements to Italianate buildings.

9) *What is the single most important issue facing the Main Avenue Corridor?*

- Lack of a people draw. Sawmill will help, but may not be enough. Maybe convert former Lyons High School to full-time farmer's market? Create playhouse/dollar movie theater near 4-Square Park?
- Lack of suitable density for a downtown environment.
- Funding for the project.
- A point of contact to keep the project on-track.
- Funding of said project without increase of property taxes.
- How to raise funds for improvements without raising taxes (they increased this year) or having private businesses be responsible; in our economic troubled times I believe a lot of small business owners in the north end couldn't fund this type of project. Maybe grants, or matched grants, may be options.
- Money and people.

Other comments received:

- Capture the history of Lyons again! It's not dead, there is a culture.
- Need to capture buildings and St. Irenaeus, St. Boniface, St. John's, Grace Episcopal congregations.



APPENDIX C – CLINTON DEVELOPMENT PLAN- OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Section 3.1- Land Use

Objective #2- Preserve natural areas and resources within the corporate limits.

- In cooperation with state and federal regulatory agencies, preserve natural areas.
 - Examples:
 - Agencies might include IDNR, Army Corps of Engineers, Iowa DOT, EPA, etc.
 - Target areas may include the Mill Creek Expressway, Harts Mill Creek, Mississippi Area, etc.

Section 3.3- Transportation

Objective #3- Create connections between Mill Creek Expressway and existing city streets.

- Initiate plans for arterial connections between Mill Creek Expressway and Downtown/Lyons.
 - Examples:
 - 2nd Avenue
 - 13th Avenue
 - 19th Avenue
- Plan for upgrading arterial connections between Mill Creek Expressway and Downtown/Lyons.
 - Examples:
 - 2nd Avenue
 - 13th Avenue
 - 19th Avenue
- Securing funding for arterial connections between Mill Creek Expressway and Downtown/Lyons.
- Construct arterial connections between Mill Creek Expressway and Downtown/Lyons.
- Secure funding for and construct Mill Creek Expressway northern extension from IA 136 to U.S. 67.

Objective #4- Improve 2nd Street (Highway 30/67 Phase III reconstruction) between the Downtown and Lyons. Route traffic across both Mississippi River Bridges.

- Initiate final plans for 2nd Street improvements, including landscaping that draws attention to the downtown area and Lyons commercial district.
- Establish 2nd Street Working Committee.
- Research funding options for 2nd Street.
- Secure funding.
- Begin and construct 2nd Street improvements.

Section 3.4- Parks and Recreation

Objective #1- Examine all park areas to determine needs.

- Initiate detailed inventory of park and recreation needs.

Section 3.5- Economic Development

Objective #2- Continue efforts to redevelop/revitalize Downtown and the Lyons Commercial District.

- Create strong incentives for redevelopment and continued investment in Downtown and Lyons.
 - Examples:
 - Make economic programs stronger in downtown and Lyons versus other areas.
 - Investigate options of having the city buy property, redevelop, and re-sell to private sector.
 - Investigate the creation of a business improvement district in Lyons.



Section 3.9- Environmental Issues

Objective #1- Protect and enhance natural areas including woodlands, wetlands, and riparian areas.

- Evaluate and amend zoning ordinances and zoning map to be consistent with the Development Plan.
- Establish greenways throughout the community that enhance natural areas as opportunities arise.
- Create policy to assess impact fees to developers that alter nature areas or specified preservation areas.

Section 3.11- Public Buildings, Services, and Facilities

Objective #1- Ensure that all public service buildings are easily accessible to the public by foot, bicycle, transit, and private automobile.

- Retain public buildings in the downtown and Lyons.
 - Examples:
 - Mandate that all potential downtown or Lyons sites are evaluated before a decision to place a public building outside of these areas is made.
 - Acquire property in Downtown or Lyons that could be used for future public buildings.
- Engage in creative planning to allow the expansion of existing public buildings within existing community centers.

APPENDIX D – LYONS PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE NOTES

**Lyons Planning Steering Committee Work Session and Study Area Tour
October 19, 2010**

Attendees:

Sheralyn Bartels, Steering Committee
Jim Halverson, HR Green
Rodger Holm, Mayor, City of Clinton
Rich Phelan, Steering Committee
Steve Prideaux, HR Green
Mike Rastrelli, Steering Committee
Michael H. Reynolds, City Planner, City of Clinton
Phil Stuepfert, HR Green
Brenda Thornton, Steering Committee

Location: Lyons Train Depot

Meeting notes:

The meeting began with Jim Halverson introducing the HR Green team and providing an overview of the agenda.

The group discussed the following items prior to the tour and during the tour of the district;

- The bridge into Lyons 40 years ago that was removed was a big detriment to the downtown.
- Traffic flow is key to the success of Lyons in the future.
- “Big tree” project at center of Main Avenue will be good for the area – neat project.
- Depot was by the museum and should be moved back there.
- Theme for downtown might be tied to lumber history.
- Need to get the word out about the museum.
- Christmas Walk in Lyons for past 25 years is a great success – need more events like that.
- Some historical homes in the district – an inventory has been completed.
- Future North River Drive would have a big impact on Lyons. 2.5 acre park may occur by the location of the new road (along river).
- Aesthetics are important – river is a huge asset.
- 10 trains/day roughly on the tracks through the district.
- Urban Revitalization has not been utilized much yet.
- Bike path along the river is in bad shape – will be redone soon.
- U.S. Bank offering some of their property for more parking (west side of their property).
- Mike Kearney did a historical analysis and we should refer to that.
- 2 old schools are vacant within the district. Other functional schools in the area are in good shape.
- Farmers Market in Lyons going very well.
- 8.5 acres of McEleney’s is a prime area for redevelopment.
- Infrastructure for street lighting in Lyons is in bad shape. In the past the cooperation for better lighting has not been good.
- Need to tie Lyons to the technology park.
- Will be a challenge to get people to go east on Main Avenue.

After the tour the group sat down to debrief and discuss observations of the tour and share thoughts and ideas on the Lyons District. HR Green posed questions to solicit feedback.



Did anyone have any surprises or highlights from the tour?

- The group was surprised that some residential property owners are not up-keeping their properties.
- Not many people walking from core downtown to the river.
- Need better condition of the streets and infrastructure – it is tired.

What makes the neighborhood a desirable location to live, work and play?

- Need to build on the strength of Lyons which is “family oriented” – many generations.
- River is a huge asset and need to capitalize on it.
- Restaurants and bars busy at night, entertainment is established.
- Parking is a big issue.
- Antique store and bicycle shop are busy.
- Need more events in Lyons – the city needs to do more!
- Promotions are good but could be better (i.e. Halloween, Art in the Park).
- Need 1 person to lead it.
- Craft fair in the park is good.
- Need to get the vacant ground developed in Lyons.

What makes the area unique?

- Small scale
- Lyons has great traditions – need to expand on that.
- History and pride is evident in the community.

What factors detract from the neighborhood?

- Abandoned buildings – decaying and aesthetics is poor.
- Parking is an issue – 1 municipal lot behind the library-by Main Avenue and North 2nd Street need more parking-turn lanes took away parking and it is needed.
- Condition of the streets is poor.
- Steps along Main Avenue are a problem.
- Lighting needs to be better and more aesthetically pleasing.
- Weeds are growing up in some locations-city needs to take action.
- Overhead power lines a problem.
- May need a better façade program.

What kinds of activities are available to residents and visitors?

- Parks, swings – need more active parks.
- Need a recreational park.
- The group thinks the neighborhood is not necessarily an aging population.
- Ice skating rink needed.

What is missing in the Lyons Area?

- Grocery
- Florist
- Condos and housing
- Better traffic flow needed
- Need signage (gateway and directional)
- 19th Avenue North is key



- 17th Avenue North is one way going north –
- Main Avenue and North 3rd Street – gateway opportunity by the Automotive place

What image do you want Lyons to portray?

- Celebrate history but look forward as well.
- Sawmill.
- Progress – we are on the move.
- Progressive and dynamic.
- Ashford University- very important and need to make that connection- Tech park is not far away.

Transportation

- Bus route exists in the district.
- Need bus route map.
- Bike path to Main Avenue needed (direct access to businesses).
- Going east on Main Avenue is a challenge.

Roadblocks?

- Money.
- Not a priority of the city.
- Communication to all of the district community is needed – do through email, churches, etc.

Schedule

- The schedule was discussed that HR Green would come back with three concept plans in Nov/Dec timeframe.

**Lyons Planning Steering Committee Work Session
December 15, 2010**

Attendees:

Sheralyn Bartels, Steering Committee
Jim Halverson, HR Green
Charlie Mulholland, Councilman, City of Clinton
Rich Phelan, Steering Committee
Steve Prideaux, HR Green
Mike Rastrelli, Steering Committee
Michael H. Reynolds, City Planner, City of Clinton
Phil Stuepfert, HR Green
Brenda Thornton, Steering Committee

Location: Sawmill Museum

Meeting notes:

Jim Halverson began the meeting by providing an update on the project's status. Items discussed included next steps, implementation schedule, etc. Phil Stuepfert then presented exhibit maps pertaining to the following areas: infrastructure, existing zoning, transportation patterns, future land use, streetscape improvements, and parking. The Steering Committee and city staff provided the following comments regarding the exhibits.

Transportation Exhibit

- Idea arose concerning the potential for a new bus route along McKinley Street. This route would help change the area's transportation pattern. –Note: comments related to the construction of North River Drive Road option #1 or #2.
- Participant stated that no left turns are allowed past North 2nd Street when traveling east on 19th Avenue North. This will be a challenge when considering potential North River Drive locations.
- Participant felt Clinton does a poor job of utilizing its riverfront. Felt that option North River Drive #3 was the best because it gave people a reason to go on the dike.
- Participant preferred North River Drive option #1 over #2.
- Participant suggested the City do something similar to Savanna, IL with regards to the dike.
- A participant indicated the Mississippi River Trail needed additional formal access points into the neighborhoods. Users are only able to get off the trail once in-between the Marina Building and 25th Avenue North (Main Avenue- via stairs). Suggested points of access included the Sawmill Museum and Main Avenue.
- A participant stated the original goal of the North River Drive project was to get people to participate in activities at an elevated view on the top of the dike (i.e. create parkland on the dike).
- Participants liked the idea of designating the lands located east of the railroad as “green space.”

Future Land Use Exhibits

- Committee members unanimously agreed on the need to eliminate residential space from the first floor of mixed-use development and existing downtown structures. An existing Overlay Zoning District accomplishes this desire.
- City staff commented that existing multi-family units are a detriment to the surrounding areas-how can the City address this issue?



- The participants had a general consensus that the eastern portion of Main Avenue needed additional multi-family residential development. Additional agreement on the need to increase the area's density.
- A participant stated that the entire area located along Main Avenue and east of North 2nd Street needed commercial/retail storefronts.

Main Avenue Framework Exhibit

- The Sawmill Museum representative indicated the non-profit organization owns much of the vacant land associated with the former McEleney site. The non-profit organization indicated it would hold a portion of the land for expansion but would likely sell the remaining area to private developers.

Parking Exhibit

- Participants liked the idea of locating all off-street parking areas behind the buildings for properties fronting on Main Avenue.
- One participant talked about finding better uses for all surface parking lots fronting along Main Avenue.
- Participant stated the area business owners should pursue the City about turning the U.S. Bank "green space" into a municipal parking lot.



**Lyons Planning Steering Committee Work Session
April 20, 2011**

Attendees:

Julie Allesee, President, Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce
Sheralyn Bartels, Steering Committee
Jim Halverson, HR Green
Jim Holstein, President, Midwest Lumber Museum
Rich Phelan, Steering Committee
Steve Prideaux, HR Green
Michael H. Reynolds, City Planner, City of Clinton
Phil Stuepfert, HR Green
Brenda Thornton, Steering Committee

Location: Sawmill Museum

Meeting notes:

Jim Halverson began the meeting by providing an overview of the project including goals of the Master Plan, methodology, current study area conditions, etc. Phil Stuepfert and Jim Halverson then summarized the Master Plan recommendations. The presentation involved several questions designed to help solicit input from city staff and the Steering Committee. The following is a synopsis of feedback received from the two referenced groups.

Recommendation #1- Maximize Opportunities along the Mississippi Riverfront

- Participant stated a previous conversation with an Army Corp. of Engineers official identified the area surrounding the 19th Avenue North Bridge as being a good location for greenspace.
- A participant echoed HR Green's statement that the riverfront area located north of the 19th Avenue North Bridge is highly visible.

Recommendation #2- Encourage Redevelopment along the Eastern Area of the Main Avenue Corridor

- Participants agreed that a "draw" is needed in order to increase area traffic.
- A participant stated all suggested potential "anchors" in the document were good ideas.
- Participant indicated that a hotel would be a good fit. Idea arose that the facility may be city-owned which would eliminate having to recruit a hotel to the area.
- A participant said that the area needs a grocery store.

Recommendation #3- Improve the Aesthetic Quality of the Corridor through Façade Improvements

- Participant said that a similar façade improvement program exists in downtown Clinton. Stated the city and business owners provided a pool of money to help with building improvements. Stated the program worked well but that demand always exceeds the available money.

Recommendation #5- Identify Public Infrastructure Improvements

- Unanimous consensus to endorse the North River Drive project. Participants stated the goal was to bring people to the riverfront and they felt building a road along the levy would best accomplish that desire.
- A participant questioned the recommendation to improve McKinley Street. Stated this was not necessary as the North River Drive alternative #2 would not accomplish the same purpose as the North River Drive project itself. General consensus to remove North River Drive alternative #2 and only forward the North River Drive project recommendation.
- General agreement in phased sidewalk improvements as identified in Exhibit 9B.



Recommendation #6- Incorporate Consistent Streetscape, Gateway and Wayfinding Signage Improvements in the Downtown

- Participant suggested combining elements associated with the two streetscape themes into the final streetscape project.
- Participant highlighted the importance of utilizing signage to direct motorists/pedestrians east along Main Avenue from North 2nd Street.
- A participant raised concern about gateway and wayfinding signage being located along North 2nd Street. Cited previous issues/concerns with the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Recommendation #8- Preserve Traditional “Main Street” Appearance and Orientation of the Corridor through the Adoption of an Overlay Zoning District

- A participant questioned the exact boundaries of the overlay district and how it would be determined.
- Participant raised an issue restricting the total height of a possible hotel/convention center being located on former McEleney property along the river. Must allow the project to be economically-viable for the developer.

Recommendation #9- Plan for Appropriate and Compatible Future Land Uses by Amending the Official Zoning Map

- A participant reiterated the importance of this recommendation. Stated the property owned by the Sawmill Museum is currently zoned industrial and that the museum’s board of directors would like to change the designation.

Recommendation #11- National Register of Historic Places

- Participant raised a concern with listing properties on the National Register of Historic Places. Stated the designation can limit redevelopment opportunities and that it can “tie the hands” of a property owner. The participant cited examples of other buildings in Clinton which are underutilized.

HR Green then directed committee members to assign a priority level (high priority, medium priority, or low priority) to each Master Plan recommendation. The following list ranks the recommendations based on Steering Committee responses.

- Plan for Appropriate and Compatible Future Land Uses by Amending the Official Zoning Map
- Encourage Redevelopment along the Eastern Area of the Main Avenue Corridor
- Improve the Aesthetic Quality of the Corridor through Façade Improvements
- Identify Public Infrastructure Improvements
- Develop a Funding Strategy for Planned Improvements
- Maximize Opportunities along the Mississippi Riverfront
- Incorporate Consistent Streetscape, Gateway and Wayfinding Signage Improvements in the Downtown
- Preserve Traditional “Main Street” Appearance and Orientation of the Corridor through the Adoption of an Overlay Zoning District
- Expand the Amount of Existing Open Space within the Study Area
- Implement Complete Street Concepts throughout the Lyons District
- National Register of Historic Places

HR Green concluded the meeting with a request for final feedback. The Steering Committee recommended the City amend the study area boundaries to incorporate the former St. Irenaeus Church located at 2811 North 2nd Street. Committee members indicated the action would help advance a cultural district designation request currently sought for the area.



APPENDIX E – THE RIVERFRONT VISION, CLINTON, IA

Lyons Commercial District	
Goal	Notes
1. Maintain a pedestrian-oriented district	The district maintains its walkability through pedestrian-scaled commercial development located on the first floor of structures. Additionally, improvements such as street benches help encourage foot traffic.
2. Program festivities centered on 4-Square Park	4 Square Park hosts annual events such as Farmer's Market, a craft fair, Frontier Days, etc.
3. Encourage expansion of specialty shops	Examples of specialty shops along Main Avenue include a jewelry store, an animal bakery and boutique, an antique store, etc.
4. Establish a variety of restaurants ranging from fine dining to outdoor cafes	The district has an array of dining options including a bakery, a sandwich and soup shop, an Italian restaurant, and several taverns offering traditional "bar food."
5. Develop the relocated railroad freight depot as an interpretive facility	The Clinton Jaycees currently operates the former railroad freight depot which is available for public use as a community room. Numerous local organizations utilize the facility each month.
6. Establish the district's identity through special vocabulary	Way-finding signage identifying the district's location is located throughout the community.
7. Maintain Main Avenue as a corridor to the river	Elijah Buell Terrace remains the only formal access point to the river located within the district.
8. Develop programming and promotion of the business community	The Lyons Business District maintains a professional business association which has regularly scheduled meetings.
9. Create a landmark pavilion on the levee line with Main Avenue as a focal point to the district	Elijah Buell Terrace, located at the eastern terminus of Main Avenue, includes a covered shelter which provides a scenic overlook of the Mississippi River. The structure is highly-visible from street level on Main Avenue.

Fulton Bridge Landing	
Goal	Notes
1. Create a formalized landscaped entry	The area surrounding the base of the Highway 136/19 th Avenue North bridge does not contain any landscaping.
2. Develop signage that enhances the image of Clinton and the State of Iowa	The Highway 136/19 th Avenue North bridge contains welcome signage awarded as part of the Iowa Great Places program.
3. Create a Welcome Center shelter building with information available about the area	The area does not contain a Welcome Center shelter building.
4. Establish a public picnic area with access to the river	The area does not currently have a public picnic area.
5. Realign the access road to Joyce's/Willow Island along 20 th Avenue North to increase visibility and allow for more direct access	No access road to Joyce's/Willow Island exists along 20 th Avenue North. A gravel access roadway to the referenced area is located on 19 th Avenue North.

