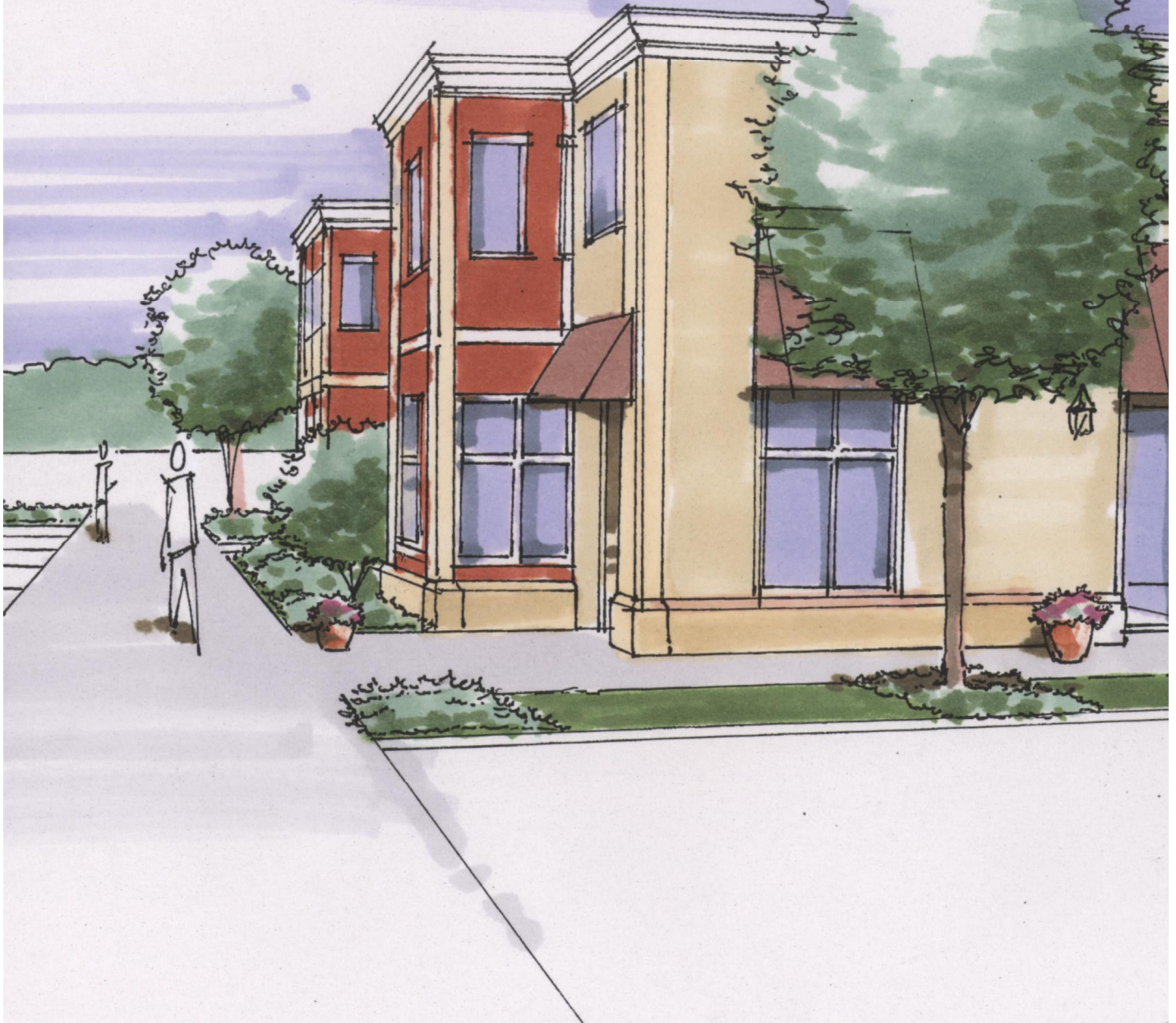


Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan



Prepared for the

City of Evansville, Wisconsin

By R.A. Smith & Associates, Inc.

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Introduction

U.S. Highway 14 (Union Street) extends north from Evansville's historic downtown area. This road is the principal commuter route to and from the City to larger communities in neighboring Dane County, including the City of Madison and its suburbs. As such, the corridor serves as an important gateway to the City.

This ***Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan*** is meant to address adverse conditions that exist within the corridor, and to provide a roadmap for its future development and economic vitality. The City of Evansville holds a vision of the district as a healthy and attractive business environment that is well integrated into the adjacent downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Commercial uses have developed along this corridor over a period of several decades. The City of Evansville's ***2005 Comprehensive Plan*** recommends a continuation of these types of uses. More recently, though, a stronger commercial area has developed on the east side of the City. This new commercial strip has impacted the vitality of both the North Union Street project area and the adjacent downtown. As a result, Union Street businesses must define a market niche in the face of both local competition and regional competition from surrounding communities. Actions to steer appropriate commercial development into the North Union Street Corridor

will be a critical factor in the future development and viability of the district.

Because of their age, many of the existing properties in the Allen Creek & North Union Street project area have been developed prior to current City standards for building and site design. The appearance of some of these properties is a concern to the community, which desires consistent standards and a coordinated design to create a distinctive sense of place throughout the district. This plan provides recommendations for new development standards that recognize the site design needs of businesses likely to locate in different parts of the corridor, while still creating a pedestrian-friendly commercial district.

Lastly, the City of Evansville seeks to establish a physical tie between the Allen Creek & North Union Street corridor and the historic downtown. This connection will be accomplished through a variety of means including vehicle and pedestrian connections, land uses, site design, and streetscape.

The ***Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan*** was prepared under the supervision of the City of Evansville's Redevelopment Authority, which approved the final plan on September 18, 2007. The plan was approved by the Plan Commission on November 5, 2007, and adopted by resolution of the Common Council on November 13, 2007.

Allen Creek & North Union Street Project Area

The Allen Creek & North Union Street project area, depicted in Map 1 on the following page, is generally bounded by Church Street on the south, Allen Creek and the railroad right-of-way on the west, the City limits to the north, and roughly the first tier of parcels bordering the east side of Union Street.

Land Use

The project area consists of 33 properties on either side of North Union Street or Main Street, totaling 39.85 acres. In addition to these, portions of two larger properties, located on the east side of Highway 14, fall into the area.

A majority of these properties are in the City's B-3, Community Business District, although a small number of parcels bordering Main Street are in the B-2, Central Business District and a handful of properties along the railroad track are zoned B-5, Special Use Business District. Eight parcels at the north end of the project area are zoned R-1, Residential District, and large tracts east of North Union Street are zoned A-1, Agricultural District or C-1, Lowland Conservancy District.

The City's **2005 Comprehensive Plan** identifies a mix of future land uses in the project area. These vary from commercial, retail, and office uses in the southern half of the project area, to a mixture of light industrial, governmental or institutional, residential, and commercial, retail, and office uses further north and along the edges of the district.

Environmental Features

The topography of the project area is generally level, sloping downward to the west to drain into Allen Creek. There is one wetland area located on the east side of Union Street, near the center of the project area. A portion of this wetland is in the C-1, Lowland Conservancy District. In addition, parts of the project area in this vicinity are heavily wooded.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently in the process of updating its 100- and 500-year floodplain mapping for Rock County. Preliminary maps for the City of Evansville indicate that the majority of the project area is outside of the 100-year flood zone. The exceptions to

this are found near the southwest corner of Union Street and Main Street, along a drainage ditch and Allen Creek.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has identified two sites within the corridor where environmental remediation activities are ongoing. These are at 65 North Union Street and 340 North Union Street. The contamination at these sites is minor in nature and should not be an impediment to redevelopment.

Leonard Park is an important feature in the area. This large community park includes a pool, recreational facilities, and part of the shoreline of Lake Leota. The park can help to anchor the district, and should be made identifiable from the corridor.

Transportation

Union Street, which is also U.S. Highway 14 and State Highway 59, is a two-lane highway entering the City of Evansville from the north. The highway was reconstructed in 2005. The portion of the road extending south approximately from Madison Street was built as an urban cross-section with curb and gutter. The northern portion has a rural cross-section with a gravel shoulder.



Looking south on Union Street (U.S. Highway 14)

There is a sidewalk on the west side of the street that extends from the intersection with Main Street to just north of Madison Street. There is a small seg-

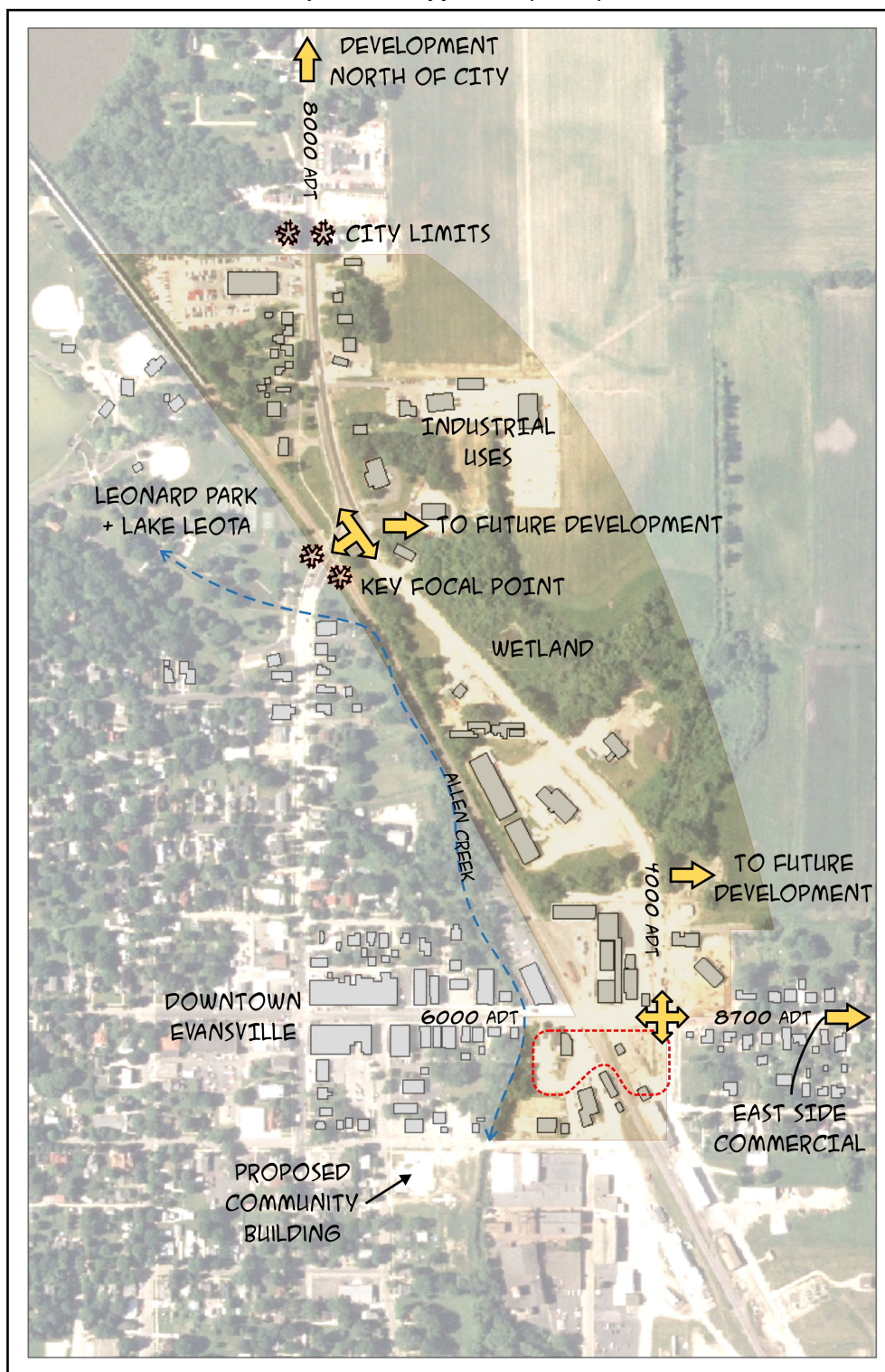
ment of sidewalk on the east side of the street near the intersection with Main Street. Decorative lighting was installed on Union Street between Main Street and Madison Street, and overhead power lines were relocated to the railroad corridor. Trees have been planted in the terrace.

The transportation element of the City's **2005 Comprehensive Plan** suggests the potential for a bypass route on U.S. Highway 14. This would route traffic around the City, reducing the volume of traffic through the project area. Many of the existing or potential future businesses along this route will depend on traffic passing through the City. The economic impacts of a bypass should be considered for both their impact to the North Union Street corridor and to the downtown.

In 2003, North Union Street carried a total of only 4,000 cars per day near its intersection with Main Street. This would be considered very light traffic for a commercial corridor. Main Street had somewhat higher counts, with 6,000 cars per day to the west of Union Street, and 8,700 cars to the east. The traffic count on Highway 14 north of the city limits was also higher, at 8,000 cars per day.

The **2005 Comprehensive Plan** identifies two off-road bicycle and/or pedestrian paths planned

Map 1: Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Area
Project Area Opportunity Analysis



within the project area. These include a trail along Allen Creek and the railroad corridor, linking downtown to Lake Leota, and a second trail extending east from the intersection of Madison Street and

Union Street, connecting to future residential development areas.

Private Property Development

A small portion of the project area lies along Main Street near Allen Creek. The character of buildings in this area is much more typical of a traditional downtown, although most of the properties included in the project area have been cleared. This segment of Main Street was also reconstructed in 2005. The City is considering replacement of the bridge over Allen Creek in 2008.

Properties in the project area represent building styles and development standards spanning a century. As might be expected, some of these existing developed areas do not match current expectations with regard to site design, architecture, construction materials, or landscaping, as reflected in the City's codes or design guidelines. Access management issues, however, have been partially addressed through reconstruction of Union Street.

The City of Evansville prepared a report on **Commercial Development Design Standards** in 2006, in response to concerns raised during preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. These design standards recommend limiting new commercial buildings to no more than 50,000 square feet, and contain additional recommendations related to franchise design, landscaping standards, parking lots, and lighting. The report discusses specific guidelines that may apply to the Allen Creek & North Union Street area, including:

- ✧ application of the standards to both new construction and as buildings are altered;
- ✧ requirements for the use of quality exterior materials consistently on all building façades;
- ✧ establishment of a minimum window area on the street elevations of buildings;
- ✧ regulation of the acceptable color palette for buildings;
- ✧ prohibitions on the use of neon lighting, except in signs;
- ✧ requirements for a prominent building entry;
- ✧ orientation of the primary building façade and entrance toward the street;

- ✧ articulation of the façade to break up its mass;
- ✧ variation of the building's roofline;
- ✧ modification of franchise design and color schemes to reflect community character;
- ✧ location of a majority of the parking to the side and rear of buildings;
- ✧ provision of screening for all mechanical equipment;
- ✧ provision of screening for loading areas;
- ✧ regulation of fencing types and its construction;



Looking south on Union Street at the intersection with Main Street

- ✧ application of identical standards to secondary or accessory buildings;
- ✧ regulation of access on larger commercial buildings;
- ✧ establishment of driveway connections between adjacent properties; and
- ✧ provision of community amenities on large commercial buildings.

The City has also adopted design standards for the Evansville Historic district. While the Allen Creek & North Union Street project area does not fall within the historic district, these standards may provide a benchmark for establishing a cohesive design approach.

Community Input

Staff from R.A. Smith & Associates interviewed several of the property and business owners in the Allen Creek & North Union Street corridor to determine their concerns and desires for the area. These stakeholders represent a variety of uses including residential, commercial, and light industrial sites. A more detailed review of their input is provided in Appendix C.

The impact of recent road construction on U.S. Highway 14 and on Main Street has been a consistent concern of many of the stakeholders. There is a perception that this construction has diverted customer traffic, and businesses have suffered from this along with poor access. Some stakeholders commented that a bypass would have a similar impact. The commercial businesses rely on passing traffic for their customers.

Most of the people interviewed agreed that the corridor should remain primarily commercial. Several people noted the potential for neighborhood commercial development on the northern stretch of U.S. Highway 14, where it could serve the daily commuter traffic headed north to the Madison area. One comment specifically singled out hotels as a desirable use within the corridor. At the time, a hotel development was being considered for a site on U.S. Highway 14 just north of Main Street.

There are mixed feelings on what additional land uses, if any, should be permitted. Residential or mixed-use development appears to be favored by a majority, provided that it is secondary to the commercial areas.

There is less support for light industrial uses, yet owners of these businesses tended to express concerns that they might be forced out if the area were to redevelop. Several acknowledged that, due to the nature of their business, their properties may not be particularly attractive.

Property owners generally support redevelopment within the project area. Several property owners indicated that they have considered redevelopment, or would be open to an opportunity if it came along. Of those who have considered redevelopment projects, several would favor multi-family residential or mixed-use buildings, while a couple have looked at strictly commercial development. Completion of the multi-year street reconstruction project is seen as an inducement to spur redevelopment, and some property owners expressed a desire for the City to actively promote this new investment.

Although most interviewees felt that the existing aesthetic along the corridor is less than appealing, business and property owners tend not to favor strict design standards for the project area. There is a concern that these would not be perceived as "business-friendly." A number of business owners commented that the City's effort might be better directed to encouraging better property maintenance. Maintaining green space along the corridor is seen as important as well as promoting the history of the City.

Market Analysis

Evansville is a small community surrounded by larger metropolitan areas that provide substantial competition for its retail businesses. While this is the first consideration for determining what businesses may be supported within the community, the City's other commercial districts (downtown and East Main Street) further help to determine what businesses may locate within the Allen Creek & North Union Street project area.



Ace Hardware on East Highway 14

Trade Area and Competition

A quick way to begin defining the City's trade area is to examine the locations and strength of discount and grocery stores in the region. These are evolving, as Roundy's recently acquired Copp's and Dick's Supermarkets, and Wal-Mart is currently planning to replace its discount stores in Stoughton and Monroe with new supercenters selling both general merchandise and groceries.

Evansville has a small Piggly-Wiggly grocery store on U.S. Highway 14 on the east side of the City. There are no general merchandise stores in the community, although Ace Hardware may fill this role to a small extent. For the most part, small communities around Evansville (such as Belleville, Oregon, Edgerton, Brodhead, Albany, Monticello, and New Glarus) have a similar range of retail shops.

Stoughton has a larger grocery and a Wal-Mart, currently planned for conversion to a supercenter. Already located on an important route to Madison, Stoughton presents stronger competition than other neighboring communities.

To the southwest, Monroe is the principal influence on Evansville's drawing power. That city has a Wal-Mart also slated for conversion to a supercenter, a Farm & Fleet, and a Shopko. Its groceries include a new Piggly-Wiggly, a new Pick 'n Save, and Aldi.

Much stronger competition is located in the metropolitan areas of Janesville and Madison. In addition to regional malls (one in Janesville and three in Madison) these communities have Target, Shopko, Wal-Mart, and Farm & Fleet discount stores, along with grocery chains including Sentry, Pick 'n Save or Copp's, Cub Foods, Aldi, and Woodman's.

The trade area may be further delimited by examining commuting patterns, which serve as a good surrogate for shopping trips. By far the largest flow of workers (37.2%) is northward to the Madison area. In comparison, 20.2% of workers commute to Janesville or elsewhere in Rock County.

Map 2, on the following page, depicts the extent of regional retail competition and a likely trade area for the City of Evansville. This trade area would be applicable to a more general level of commercial activity, including such items as groceries, hardware, pharmacy items, and personal services. Evansville falls almost entirely within the trade areas of its metropolitan neighbors for general merchandise and specialty goods.

Market Potential

In Wisconsin, the typical household spends about \$23,300 annually on the kinds of goods and services which would be purchased from businesses in a typical commercial setting¹. There are approximately 10,176 people living within the delineated trade area for Evansville, resulting in aggregate annual purchases of about \$237 million. Given that

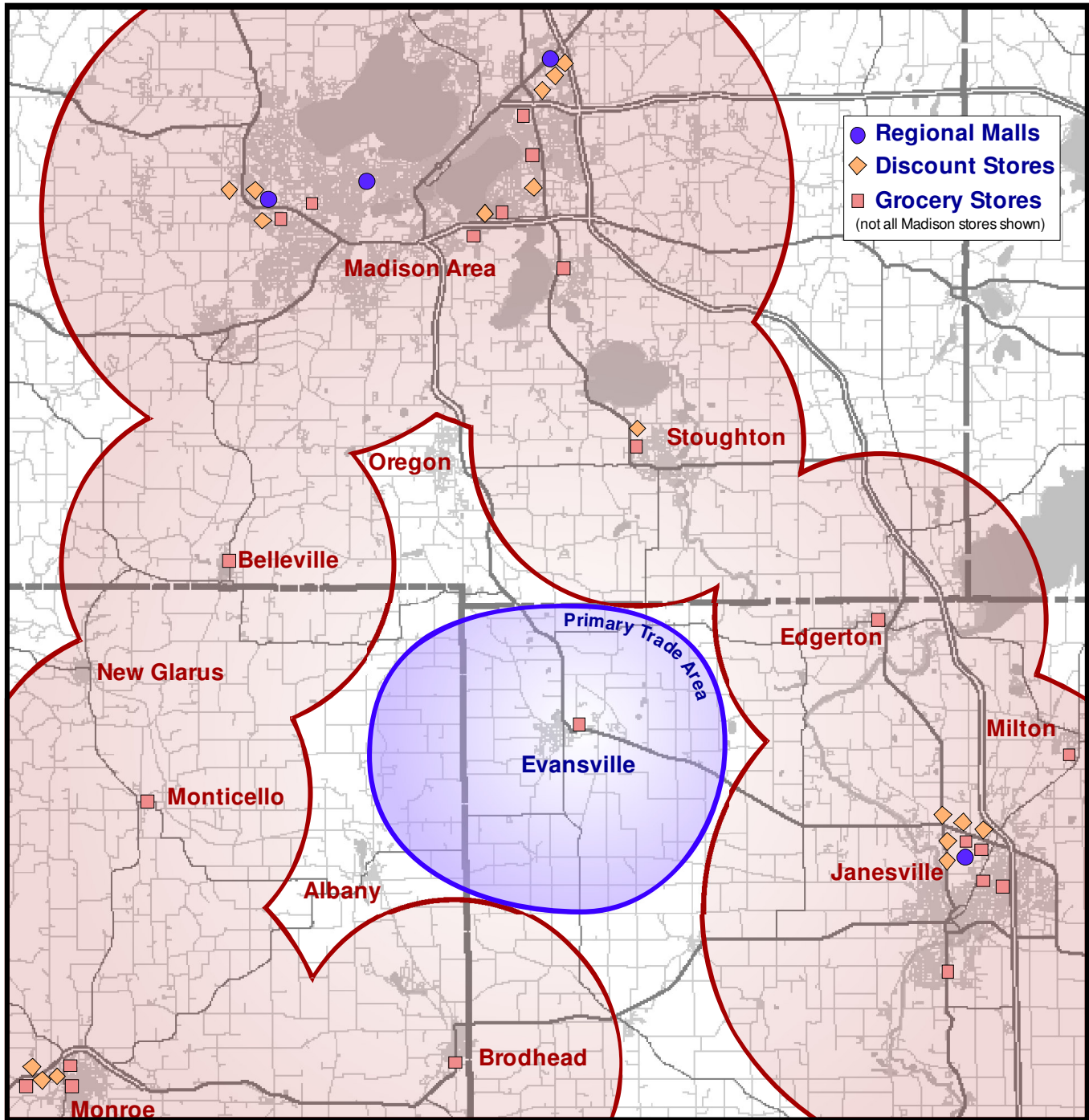
¹ Derived from U.S. Bureau of the Census data. This figure does not include rent, mortgage, utility, or similar payments which would not be purchased in a retail setting.

Evansville lacks many common categories of retail goods and services, a substantial share of this market potential is "leaking" from the city to larger communities with a more diverse commercial sector.

Retail and Service Business Markets

Based on population thresholds for retail stores and services in Wisconsin, the City of Evansville might expect to have several of the retail goods and services listed in Table 1. A population threshold is de-

Map 2: Regional Grocery and Discount General Merchandise Store Competition



rived by dividing the population of the state by the number of establishments of a given type. This gives some indication of the number of people in a trade area that may be needed to support a particular kind of business, and in turn, point to market opportunities in the community. Table 1 lists all of the retail and service businesses with a threshold of 20,000 people or less (roughly twice the population in Evansville's trade area). This is not intended to be interpreted as a list of the kinds of businesses to be attracted to the City, but to indicate the character of businesses, which will help to plan an appropriate development pattern to accommodate them.

The retail and service businesses considered most likely to locate within the Allen Creek & North Union Street corridor include business and professional offices, personal services, automotive and convenience-oriented retail, and eating places. The limited trade area population and competition from the well-anchored East Main Street commercial district make significant community-oriented retail (ex., furniture, clothing, general merchandise, etc.) development along North Union Street a difficult proposition.

Professional offices may include legal, medical, financial, or similar kinds of services. Many of these uses are currently located within the downtown area. Locations along North Union Street could provide an expansion opportunity for these existing businesses in addition to sites for new businesses in the community. In addition, this district may be a suitable location for any primary business which operates in an office environment.

Personal services include hair care, spas, laundry, and similar services. This is a growing economic sector nationally, and the area's population growth will only tend to fuel that growth locally. As these new businesses enter the community, they may find the North Union Street area to be a desirable location.

North Union Street, and even more so, U.S. Highway 14 north of the intersection with Madison Street, is the principal route for commuters entering or leaving the City to travel between Evansville and Madison. As such, it is an ideal location for the convenience-oriented retail catering to this market. Examples of these businesses include limited-

**Table 1: Retail and Service Business
Population Thresholds**

Retail Store or Service Type	Population Threshold	Expected Number
Full service restaurants	980	10.38
Limited service restaurants	1,434	7.10
Drinking places	1,487	6.84
Insurance agencies and brokerages	1,541	6.60
Offices of physicians	1,860	5.47
Gas stations with convenience stores	2,007	5.07
Offices of lawyers	2,037	5.00
Offices of dentists	2,146	4.74
Beauty salons	2,240	4.54
Automotive mechanical repair	2,257	4.51
Accounting, tax prep., bookkeeping	2,504	4.06
Commercial banking	2,587	3.93
Child care services	2,693	3.78
Computer services	3,624	2.81
Management consulting services	3,696	2.75
Grocery stores and supermarkets	3,999	2.54
Hotels	4,193	2.43
Automotive body and painting	4,733	2.15
Building materials dealers	4,985	2.04
Offices of chiropractors	4,996	2.04
Engineering services	5,075	2.01
Gift, novelty, and souvenir shops	5,309	1.92
Auto parts stores	5,553	1.83
Pharmacies and drug stores	5,966	1.71
New car dealers	6,540	1.56
Securities brokerages	6,696	1.52
Veterinary services	7,307	1.39
Temporary help services	7,709	1.32
Used car dealers	8,128	1.25
Sporting goods stores	8,262	1.23
Fitness or recreation centers	8,386	1.21
Direct selling establishments	8,712	1.17
Credit unions	8,763	1.16
Women's clothing stores	9,100	1.12
Furniture stores	9,327	1.09
Florists	9,386	1.08
Snack and beverage stores	9,465	1.08
Jewelry stores	9,566	1.06
Savings institutions	9,711	1.05
Specialty food stores	9,948	1.02
Shoe stores	10,015	1.02
Beer, wine, and liquor stores	10,267	0.99
Nursery, garden, farm supply stores	10,314	0.99
Gas stations	10,385	0.98
Hardware stores	10,482	0.97
Other miscellaneous stores	10,943	0.93
Photographic services	10,996	0.93
Travel agencies	11,023	0.92
Funeral homes and services	11,776	0.86
Floor covering stores	11,932	0.85
Radio, TV, and appliance stores	12,028	0.85
Family clothing stores	12,855	0.79
Offices of optometrists	13,118	0.78
Used merchandise stores	13,188	0.77
Dry cleaning and laundry services	13,433	0.76
Other home furnishings	14,064	0.72
Home health care services	14,710	0.69
Bowling centers	15,055	0.68
Architectural services	15,106	0.67
Car washes	15,524	0.66
Offices of physical therapists	15,966	0.64
RV parks and recreational camps	16,495	0.62
Offices of mental health practitioners	16,617	0.61
Graphic design services	16,678	0.61
Office administrative services	16,741	0.61
Other personal care services	16,741	0.61
Outpatient care centers	16,930	0.60
Offices of other health practitioners	17,256	0.59
Tire dealers	17,322	0.59
Household appliance stores	17,525	0.58
Hobby, toy, and game stores	18,463	0.55
Optical goods stores	18,851	0.54
ALL STORES AND SERVICES		139.51

service (i.e., fast food) restaurants and gas stations with convenience stores.

Finally, this location may be suited to full-service restaurants. This may especially be true if the site may offer additional amenities such as views of Allen Creek (such as along Main Street) and attractive outdoor dining or event space.

Additional Market Opportunities

Several development opportunities may exist in addition to the retail and service uses identified above. These include contractors and related product showrooms, residential housing, and industrial uses.

Evansville has grown rapidly in recent years, as it is seen as a low-cost housing location within a commuting distance of the Madison area. In similar communities, residential growth of this nature has led to growth of the local construction industry. As these contractors seek expanded locations, some may also provide a showroom or retail space in their facilities. This market could be attractive as a means to introduce retail elements into the North Union Street commercial district.

Several construction-related businesses are already located within the corridor. The character of these, though, is more industrial rather than retail. Industrial uses are, in fact, a potential market for property in the corridor, and some light industrial areas are identified on the City's Comprehensive Plan. If these continue to be considered as a targeted use, care must be taken in determining which uses are suitable, and in ensuring a design that is compatible with other desired uses in the corridor.

There are currently a few small, single-family homes located along U.S. Highway 14. While it may not be desirable to replicate this kind of development, residential uses may be compatible with corridor development plans. This may include vertical

mixed-use development (ground floor offices or retail with residential units above) or multi-family residential buildings such as senior-oriented housing and care facilities.

The Comprehensive Plan anticipates a demand for future multi-family housing. Accessibility for commuters, Allen Creek, and the proximity of Leonard Park and the downtown contribute to make this corridor attractive for these uses.

Relationship to Other Business Districts

Some of the communities around Evansville have attempted to develop a specialty, tourist-oriented business community in their downtowns. Stoughton and New Glarus have had good success in this, bringing in galleries, antique stores, and other specialty shops. While a similar business cluster has not developed in Evansville's downtown, the City may consider this as an approach to downtown revitalization. These uses would not be attractive for the Union Street corridor.

Filling the downtown's historic buildings with retail shops and services catering to visitors would be a significant inducement for the service businesses now located there to seek new locations on North Union Street. These businesses could be an important market for new development on North Union Street.

In general, the Allen Creek & North Union Street project area will benefit from strong physical ties to the neighboring downtown. There is a good opportunity to create a synergy between these two districts, as they pull more customers when combined than either may pull individually. While the two districts may compete as a location for some types of businesses, there can be variation in their core tenants. Because of their adjacency, it is still more desirable for a business to be located in the neighboring district rather than elsewhere in the community.

Real Estate Analysis

As noted in the market analysis, commercial opportunities well-suited to the market and to the Allen Creek & North Union Street project area include professional offices, business and personal services, and highway-oriented commercial uses. Additionally, residential and some light industrial uses may be supported in the area.

Land Use Analysis

In evaluating the physical qualities of the district, some of the likely uses may be better-suited to certain locations in the project area. Generally, the project area may be considered to have three sub-areas, including a downtown extension along Main Street, a downtown fringe or transitional commercial area on North Union Street between Main Street and Madison Street, and a highway commercial area extending along Union Street north of Madison Street.

The current patterns of land use do not necessarily reflect the areas described above. Although there is already some of the clustering described above, there are a variety of uses in the district, and often several on individual lots. These include retail, services, contractor shops, storage, and other activities.

Highway 14 has the highest traffic volume north of the intersection with Madison Street. It is the principal route for commuters exiting or returning to the City. This stretch of the corridor, therefore, is best suited to highway commercial uses. These may include gas stations and convenience stores, fast food restaurants, and other auto-oriented uses. Automobile sales, such as the dealership already located on North Union Street, may fall within this area.

Professional offices, business services, and personal services will be more likely to benefit from proximity to the downtown and would therefore be more suited to locations along Union Street south

of the intersection with Madison Street, or along Main Street.

Retail uses may locate at any point within the project area, however, they are more likely to choose locations along Union Street where on-site parking may be provided.

Residential uses may be appropriate as a secondary use at any location along the corridor. Areas along Main Street and on Union Street south of Madison Street may be more suitable than the northern part of the project area. Residential is not recommended as a primary use at any point along the corridor, with the exception of semi-commercial residential facilities such as assisted living complexes. These should be held to the same design standards as commercial uses.

Parcel Configuration

Individual properties within the district vary in size from about a quarter-acre to four or five acres, although a majority are less than an acre in size. These are appropriate sizes for the kinds of businesses that are likely to have an interest in locating in the project area. The small professional office, service, and retail uses that can be supported in Evansville will typically locate (or co-locate) in buildings around 2,500 to 5,000 square feet in size. A quarter to a half-acre lot is often sufficient to accommodate buildings of this size. As a result, land assembly is not likely to be a significant component of redevelopment plans for the project area.

Development may be constrained by the configuration of some of the properties in the project area. Many of the earlier-platted lots have frontage that is narrower than the lot depth. Other properties are shallow, particularly on the west side of Union Street near the Madison Street intersection. Finally, some properties on the east side of Union Street will be constrained by wetlands and environmental corridors that prevent development.

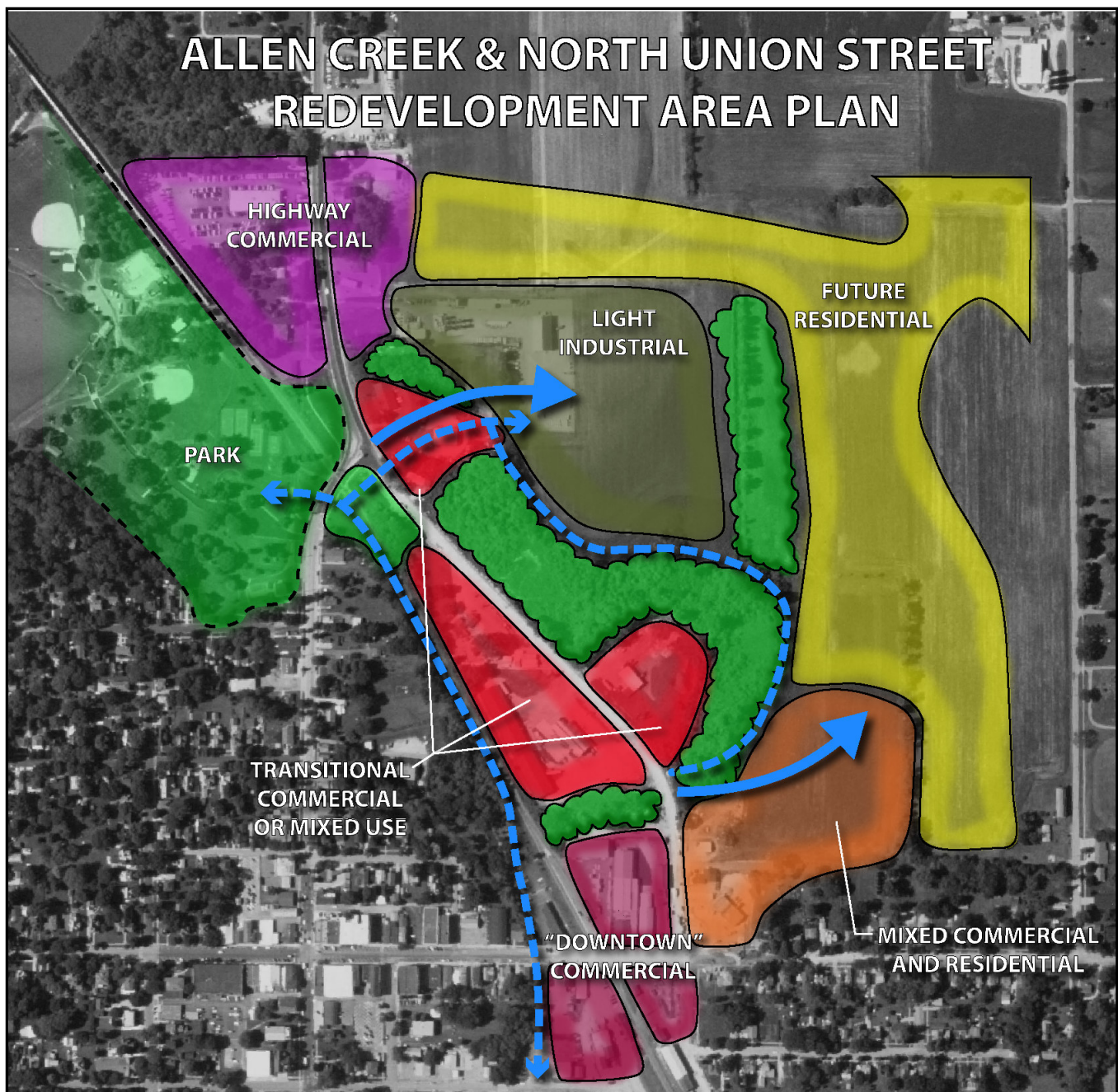
Redevelopment Plan & Development Standards

The **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** reflects broad community desires to extend Evansville's downtown, while recognizing market conditions that will determine likely uses and design needs within the project area. The plan seeks to provide a balanced approach to assuring the highest possible design quality while still being attractive to the limited market for new

commercial development that exists in the City of Evansville.

Plan Areas

The plan divides the project area into several sub-areas, all of which may develop with a different character (although not necessarily different uses).



These sub-areas were delineated based on a combination of market factors and physical features. (See figure on page 15.) These sub-areas should not be confused with zoning districts, as the intentions of the plan may be accomplished by having differing development standards apply within different portions of the same zoning district.

✧ Downtown Extension Area

This area includes those portions of the project area on either side of Main Street, extending west from Allen Creek to North Union Street. It is adjacent to the existing downtown, and future development in this area is anticipated to have the same character as in the downtown district.

Properties bordering Allen Creek are expected to develop in a manner that uses the creek as an amenity. A bicycle and pedestrian trail may pass through the area. Upper-level residential

uses are encouraged.

Parking areas on properties located between Main Street and West Church Street are presently used informally as a pathway for vehicle traffic between these two streets. The City has considered construction of an actual street in this location. Concept plans for this area demonstrate how this may be accomplished and provide public parking for businesses at the east end of the downtown.

✧ Transitional Commercial Area

This area extends along both sides of North Union Street from the edge of the Downtown Extension Area, north to Madison Street. Site development within this area should create a desirable pedestrian environment, although greater accommodation is made for automobiles than is the case in the Downtown Extension Area. Buildings are still oriented to the street, however, and parking areas are well screened.

This area contains extensive environmental corridors including wetlands. These are anticipated to remain, and will create considerable lengths of green-space along the east side of Union Street. Commercial development along that side of the street, therefore, will not be continuous. The plan indicates a path along the edge of the environmental corridor as a preferred means of providing pedestrian access on the east side of Union Street.

✧ Highway Commercial Area

Further accommodations for automobile traffic are made in this area, in recognition of the traffic volume and the types of businesses likely to be drawn to the area. While more parking may be located near the street, pedestrian access should still be emphasized and the impact of



auto-related features, such as drive-through windows and gas pumps, should be minimized through placement to the side of buildings.

✧ Mixed Commercial and Residential Area

This area is likely to be a gateway to future residential development east of the project area. It is a deep site, at least compared to other properties in the corridor. It is also a site where development may be constrained by an environmental corridor, that could become an asset for certain kinds of uses.

The **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** proposes to use this site as a transitional area between commercial uses (located toward Union Street) and low-intensity office or residential uses further back on the property. These uses would take access on a public road extending from Union Street to future development sites east of the site. One of the goals of this strategy should be to provide a less intensive transition from existing residential uses on Main Street (east of the project area) to the more intensive commercial uses on Union Street.

✧ Leonard Park Area

Leonard Park lies north of Madison Street, immediately west of the project area. As Evansville's community park, it is a center for activities and a traffic generator for businesses in the Union Street corridor. The intersection of Madi-

son Street with Union Street offers an opportunity to extend the park east of the railroad tracks to Union Street. This will create a strong, central focal point in the corridor and an improved gateway to the park.

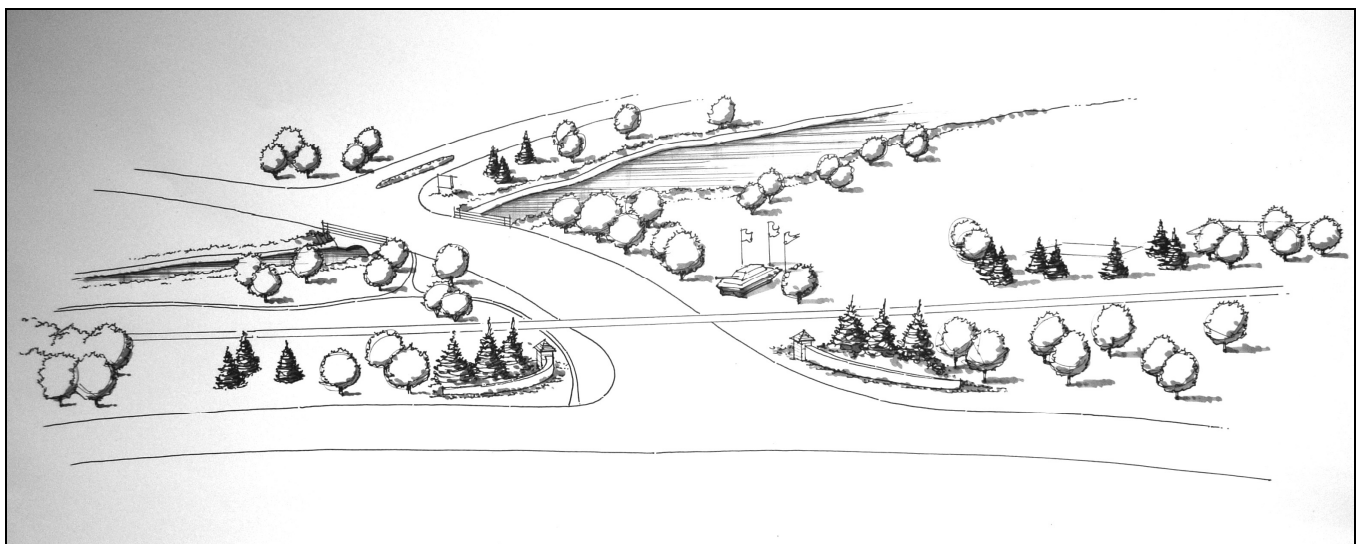
There is a significant area of right-of-way east of the railroad tracks, in which the City of Evansville may create a gateway feature to the park. This should utilize the same materials found in the historic parts of the park, including limestone walls.

✧ Light Industrial Area

There is an existing industrial zone east of the project area, near its northern end. The City's **2005 Comprehensive Plan** shows this area expanding, although the Union Street frontage will remain commercial. This **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** recommends that access to the site be provided by an extension to Madison Street, where traffic control may be provided at some future time, as warrants are established. Madison Street may be extended through the industrial area to future residential neighborhoods indicated in the **2005 Comprehensive Plan**.

✧ Future Development Areas

Evansville's **2005 Comprehensive Plan** recommends residential development on land east of the project area. Planning for the North Union Street corridor should provide accommodation



Conceptual gateway feature to Leonard Park from North Union Street at Madison Street

for public road access to these future development sites, providing customers a convenient route to businesses in the corridor and in the downtown. An extension of Madison Street east of Union Street is the most desirable location for this access. A second access point is shown further to the south, through the mixed commercial and residential area.

Bicycle / Pedestrian Path

The City of Evansville has long desired a bicycle and pedestrian path following Allen Creek and linking the downtown to Leonard Park. While locating the path next to commercial uses on Union Street might make these uses more accessible, a rail spur would necessitate locating the path next to the road, where there is already a sidewalk. In addition, a path on the east side of the railroad track would not allow views or access to Allen Creek. For these reasons, the **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** recommends locating the path on the west side of the railroad tracks, along the bank of Allen Creek, from Main Street north to the entrance to Leonard Park.

At Madison Street, the path is shown to split, with an extension across North Union Street to an environmental corridor on the east side of the street. One branch of the path will turn south through the environmental corridor, eventually returning to North Union Street. A second branch of the path would continue east into future development areas.

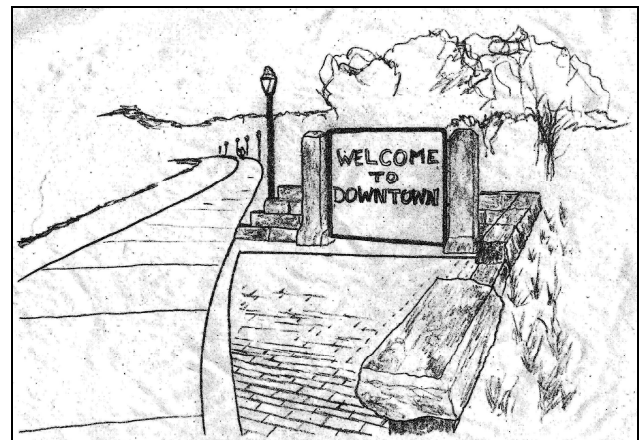
Plans for a senior center are being considered at a location on the southeast corner of Church Street and Maple Street. The path may be extended to Church Street along Allen Creek to provide a connection to this building.

Access Management

Traffic on North Union Street varies from 4,000 to 8,000 cars per day. As more businesses locate in the corridor and more workers use the corridor to commute to and from Madison, it will be important to manage access to the highway to maintain traffic flow and reduce conflicts. This is typically achieved by limiting the number of access drives any lot may have, and by encouraging shared access drives whenever possible.

Depending on the volume of traffic and the configuration of parcels, communities will often limit driveway access to one drive for every 100 to 300 feet of frontage. Seven of 23 properties bordering on North Union Street have less than 100 feet of frontage. Another six have less than 200 feet of frontage. This **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** recommends that the number of driveways be limited to a minimum of one for every existing lot, and no more than one for every 200 feet of road frontage. When adjacent lots are jointly developed or under common ownership, a shared drive may be required so that there is no more than one driveway for every 200 feet of combined frontage.

These access management standards and decisions related to future driveway access may need to be reviewed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.



Concept for a gateway feature

Gateways

As people enter and pass through the North Union Street corridor, they will encounter several important gateways. These include the entry to the City at the north end, Leonard Park at the intersection with Madison Street, and the entry to the downtown on both Union Street and Main Street. These entries should be addressed with a combination of signage and landscaping intended for both pedestrians and automobiles.

Development Standards for the Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Area



Development Standards

Development standards are intended to provide guidance on site and building design for future development in the project area. These standards represent a balanced approach to the community's desire to see the project area develop with a pedestrian character similar to the downtown, and the

realization that new development needs to provide accommodation for automobile traffic. The three commercial areas, mixed-use area, and light industrial area in this plan vary in the manner in which they prioritize pedestrian or automobile orientation, based on the nature of the uses most likely to be found in each area.

The following standards are meant to apply to all new construction or renovation within the project area. These standards are intended to foster a physical environment that is functional and attractive for both vehicles and pedestrians. The development standards will assure a minimum quality of development and a harmonious design for the corridor. The following principles were used in preparing these standards.

- ✧ North Union Street is an urban street and not a rural highway. As such, preference is given to creating a quality urban environment and a functional commercial corridor. Moving traffic quickly is a secondary concern.
- ✧ The public streetscape should be attractive and well maintained. Sidewalks should be

wide, offer a refuge from traffic, and connect all destinations in the corridor. Ornamental lighting and street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.) should contribute to creating a sense of place. Street trees should provide shade for pedestrians and improve area aesthetics.

- ✧ Private development should create an attractive street wall. Buildings should engage both pedestrians through an attractive design, transparent storefronts, entries on the street, and attractive landscaping. Parking and service areas should be easily accessed, but still have a minimal presence from the street.
- ✧ Lighting should be adequate to provide safety and security, without being excessive.

- ✧ Various types of signs should be provided to address both pedestrians and vehicles.

This section begins with general standards applicable in all areas of the Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Area. Alternate standards for different parts of the project area are identified.

General Architectural Standards

The City of Evansville envisions that new development within the Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Area will be compatible with the historic downtown and neighboring residential districts, and that the corridor will develop in a manner



New building designed in a traditional style

that is friendly to pedestrians as well as automobiles. To that end, the following design standards will apply to the architecture of new or renovated buildings within the project area.

- ✧ Buildings should be designed to reflect traditional architectural styles found in the existing downtown area and adjoining neighborhoods.
- ✧ Buildings will be designed at a pedestrian scale (proportions, massing, articulation, etc.), and exhibit a high quality of detail and materials at the pedestrian level.
- ✧ The primary entry to the building must be oriented to the street façade. Principal entries should be easily identifiable and emphasized through architectural treatment, lighting, awnings, or other appropriate features.
- ✧ Buildings must be designed to be compatible with surrounding development. Excessive dif-

ferences in height, scale, color, style, or other characteristics will be avoided, or mitigated through appropriate design techniques.

- ✧ Architectural treatments such as cornices, overhanging eaves, transom windows, awnings, window moldings, sills, horizontal or vertical banding, and similar details should be provided to add interest to the building façade.
- ✧ Architectural treatments (details, materials, fenestration, etc.) will be applied consistently across all visible building facades.
- ✧ Street-level façades should be designed to be mostly transparent (a minimum of 50% transparent or lightly tinted glass). Building design should provide a distinction between upper and lower façades.
- ✧ The building exterior should be designed to reflect the interior arrangement of units through the use of features such as individual entries, groupings of windows, columns or piers, material changes, or other techniques.
- ✧ Uninterrupted wall or roof planes of thirty feet or more will be avoided. Windows, doors, dormers, offsets, or other features may be used to break up the plane.
- ✧ Buildings should incorporate sign bands as an appropriate location for business signage.
- ✧ Buildings located at the intersection of two public streets should incorporate prominent architectural details that enhance the visual quality of the corner.
- ✧ Buildings consisting of two or three stories are encouraged. Where only one floor is provided, a parapet wall or other treatment must be used to increase the building's height.
- ✧ Buildings façades fronting on Allen Creek should incorporate windows, doors, and other detail that creates an attractive appearance from the creek banks. Long, blank walls should be prohibited. Properties on the creek bank should be encouraged to view the creek as an amenity, providing outdoor seating, patios, walkways, or other site amenities tied to the creek.

- ✧ Generally appropriate building façade materials include brick, stone or cast stone, wood, cement resin board, and transparent glass. Materials such as concrete block, tile, concrete, EIFS, metal, spandrel (opaque) glass or glass block may be appropriate as accent materials. Standing seam metal panels, T-111 or similar plywood panels, and vinyl siding should be avoided.
- ✧ Exterior building colors should be compatible and used consistently on all building façades. Contrasting colors and franchise colors should use muted tones. Primary colors should typically be avoided.
- ✧ Customary "franchise architecture" should be modified to fit within the unique context of the project area.
- ✧ Lighting should be provided to illuminate building entries and accent the building façade. Lighted display windows are encouraged.
- ✧ All building mechanical, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and similar features must be completely concealed from view from any public right-of-way.
- ✧ Garage doors may not face any public right-of-way. When located on a side wall, garage doors will be set back a minimum of fifty feet from the right of way and screened with landscaping.
- ✧ Accessory structures located on a single lot should reflect the same architectural style, materials, colors, and character of the primary structure.

General Site Design Standards

Sites within the Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Area will be designed to offer an attractive street edge for both pedestrians and vehicles. Buildings and landscaping will help to define a consistent street wall along the corridor. Parking will be located to the side or rear of the principal structure, and service uses will be located at the rear of the lot.

- ✧ Buildings should be placed to help define a street wall along any public right-of-way.

Minimum and maximum building setbacks are provided as follows:

- Downtown extension area: No setback from Main Street; 5 to 10 foot setback from other public streets.
- Transitional commercial area: 5 to 10 foot setback from right-of-way.
- Highway commercial area: 25 foot setback.
- Mixed commercial and residential area: 5 to 10 foot setback from North Union Street; 25 foot setback from other public streets.
- Light industrial area: 25 foot setback.



Example of a traditional downtown with buildings set back from the street.

- ✧ Accessory Structures may be located no closer to any street than the primary structure.
- ✧ In order to maintain the street wall, buildings should be designed to extend across a minimum length of the street frontage. The following standards apply to all street frontages:
 - Downtown extension area: 75 percent.
 - Transitional commercial area: 60 percent.
 - Highway commercial area: 40 percent.
 - Mixed commercial and residential area: 60 percent on North Union Street; 40 percent on other streets.

- Light industrial area: 40 percent.
- ✦ Building proximity and density are significant influences on the pedestrian environment, and property owners should be encouraged to pursue development that fully utilizes the property available. To that end, the following maximum lot coverage ratios (for buildings and for impervious surfaces) should be established:
 - Downtown extension area: 90 percent
 - building and lot coverage.
 - Transitional commercial area: 50 percent building coverage; 80 percent impervious surface lot coverage.
 - Highway commercial area: 40 percent building coverage; 70 percent impervious surface lot coverage.
 - Mixed commercial and residential area: 50 percent building coverage; 80 percent



Summary of Proposed Site Development Standards

Project Area Location	Downtown Extension	Transitional Commercial	Highway Commercial	Mixed Commercial and Residential	Light Industrial
Building Setback (Minimum)	None (West Main) 5-10 feet (Other)	5-10 feet	25 feet	5-10 feet (Union Street) 25 feet (Other)	25 feet
Building Setback (Maximum)	None (West Main) 5-10 feet (Other)	5-10 feet	25 feet	5-10 feet (Union Street) 25 feet (Other)	25 feet
Street Frontage (Minimum Coverage)	75%	60%	40%	60% (Union Street) 40% (Other)	40%
Building Lot Coverage (Maximum)	90%	50%	40%	50%	40%
Impervious Area Lot Coverage (Maximum)	90%	80%	70%	80%	70%
Building Floor Area Ratio (Maximum)	200%	100%	80%	100% (Union Street) 80% (Other)	50%

impervious surface lot coverage.

- Light industrial area: 40 percent building coverage; 70 percent impervious surface lot coverage.
- ✧ The following floor area ratios should be established.
 - Downtown extension area: 200 percent.
 - Transitional commercial area: 100 percent.
 - Highway commercial area: 80 percent.
 - Mixed commercial and residential area: 100 percent on North Union Street; 80 percent on other streets.
 - Light industrial area: 50 percent.
- ✧ An attractively planted landscaping strip should be provided across the entire street frontage of the lot. This landscaping strip should extend 5 to 10 feet back from the street right-of-way, identical to the building setback, and include a combination of groundcover, low (under three feet), and canopy plantings.
- ✧ A paved pedestrian walkway must be provided from the public sidewalk to the principal building entrance(s).
- ✧ Parking must be located to the side or rear yard. No portion of any parking lot may extend closer to the street than the street facade of the principal building on the lot, or closer than 10 feet to the right-of-way, whichever is greater.
- ✧ Parking lots should be screened from the street through a combination of a berm or low wall, along with plants, to a minimum 30 inches in height, extending the length of the parking lot's street frontage. Large parking areas (more than 40 stalls) should include internal landscaping islands.
- ✧ A minimum of one driveway opening will be provided for existing lots in the project area. A maximum of one driveway opening will be provided for every 200 feet of frontage for existing lots in the project area. Shared driveways between adjacent lots are encouraged.

If any existing lot is subdivided, shared access must be provided so that the number of driveway openings is no more than would be permitted for the original lot.

- ✧ Drive-through or drive-up service areas are permitted at the side or rear of buildings. A single, one-way driving lane may be provided between the building and right-of-way only in the highway commercial area, no closer than 10 feet to the right-of-way, and must be extensively screened with a combination of a berm or low wall, and plantings.
- ✧ Service areas, including loading areas and trash receptacles, must be located at the rear of any building and screened from view from the public right-of-way.
- ✧ Where permitted, outdoor storage must be effectively screened from view from any public right-of-way. Stored vehicles or materials may not project above the height of the screening provided.
- ✧ Adequate site lighting should be provided for both pedestrian and vehicle circulation.

General Sign Standards

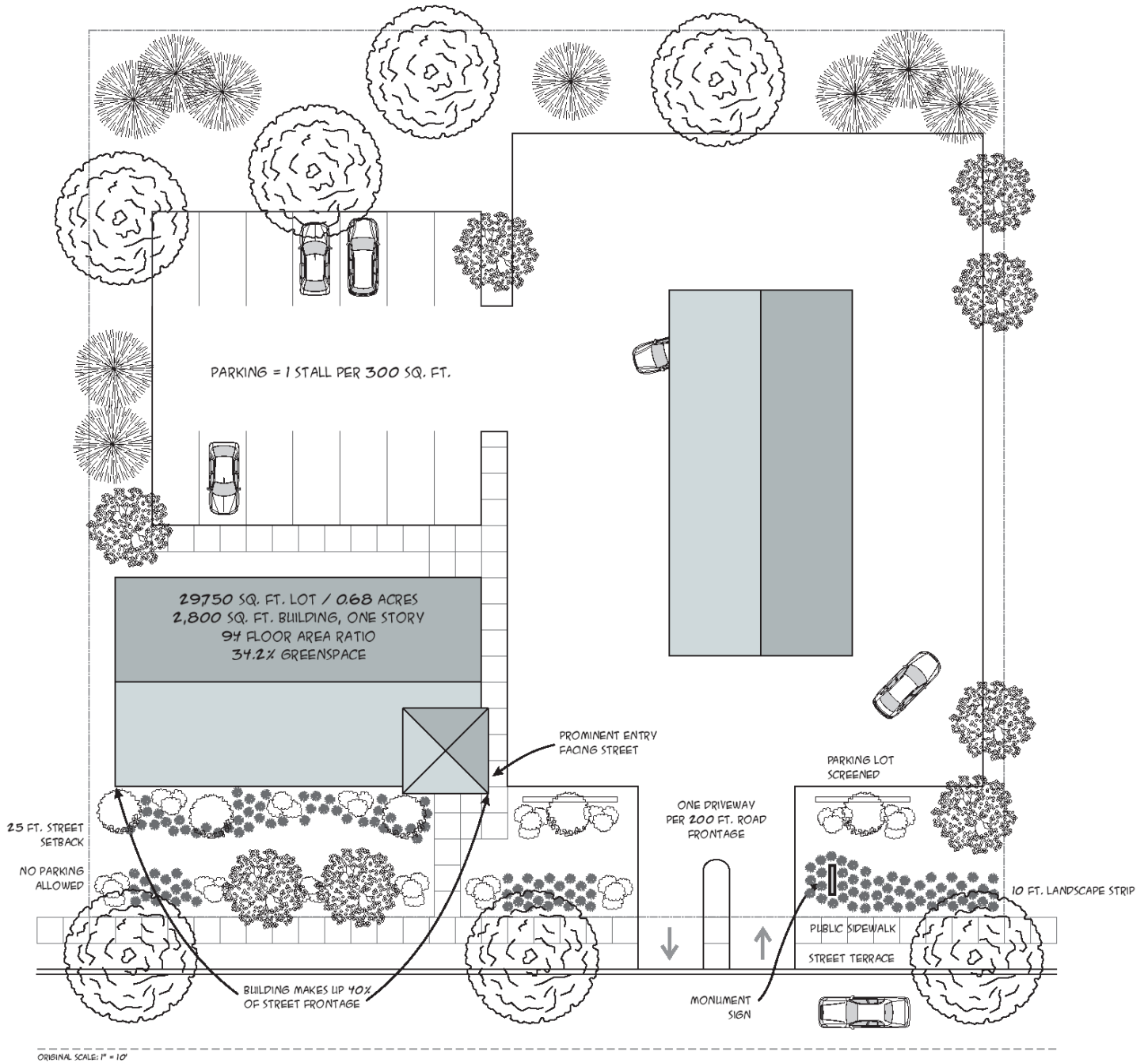
Buildings are encouraged to provide a combination of signage designed for both pedestrians and vehicles. The following are guidelines for appropriate signage.

- ✧ Signage mounted on a building should be designed to fit within the architecture of the building.
- ✧ Sign colors should be chosen to compliment the colors on the building façade. A minimum number of colors is preferable.
- ✧ Indirect lighting is preferable to internally-illuminated signs. Back-lit box signs with translucent faces will not be permitted.
- ✧ One monument sign should be permitted for each development. This sign may list multiple tenants in the development. Monument signs should be no more than 4 feet tall and should be externally-illuminated.
- ✧ One wall-mounted sign should be permitted for each building tenant.

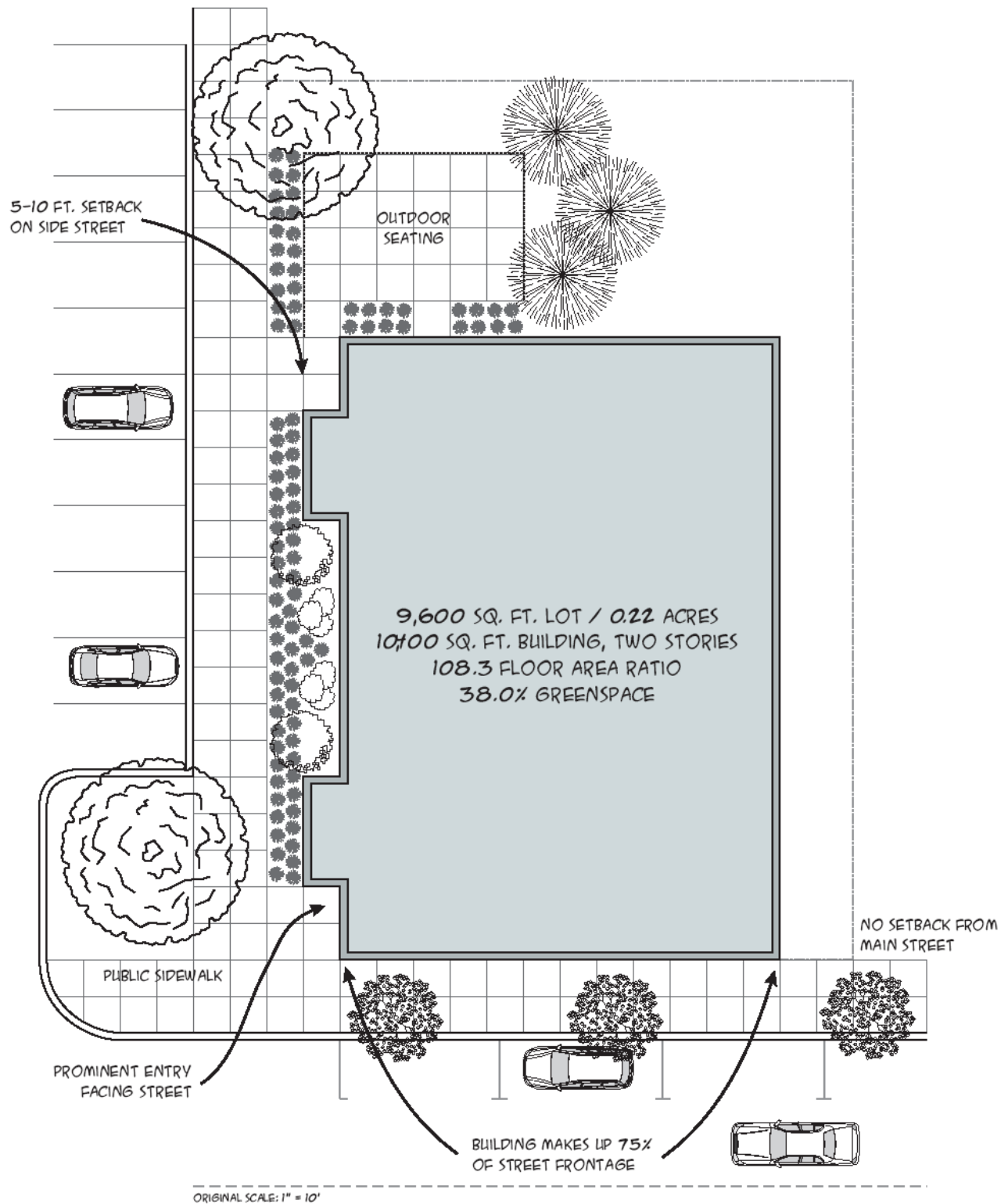
- ✧ Pedestrian-level signage should be provided on the street-level building façade. This may include wall-mounted or window signs, including a directory of building tenants. Pedes-

trian signage will not contain characters larger than 2 inches in height, or cover an aggregate area of greater than 10 percent of the street-level building façade.

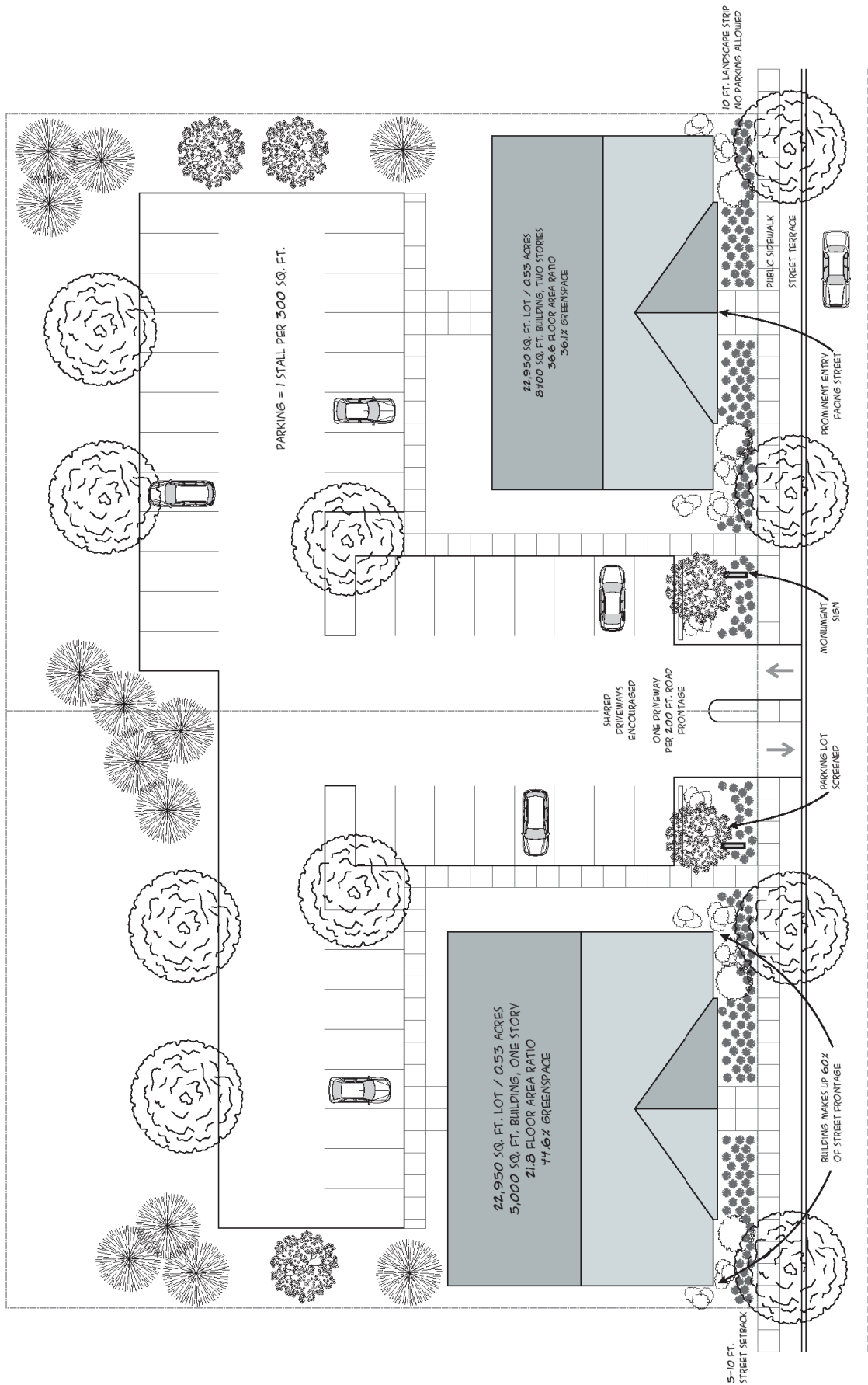
SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS - HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL AREAS



SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS DOWNTOWN EXTENSION AREA



SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS – TRANSITIONAL COMMERCIAL AREAS



Implementation Strategies

Implementing the recommendations contained in this plan will include both physical improvements and amendments to the City of Evansville's Comprehensive Plan and ordinances. Key implementation measures are discussed in this section of the project report.

Physical Improvements

The **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** contains recommendations for several public capital development projects that are meant to spur private redevelopment in the project area. These include:

- ✧ developing gateways to the community and to the downtown;
- ✧ extending the entrance to Leonard Park east to North Union Street;
- ✧ constructing a new street extending between Main Street and West Church Street, in a location west of the railroad tracks; and
- ✧ constructing a bicycle and pedestrian path along the bank of Allen Creek, between West Church Street and the entrance to Leonard Park.

A majority of the project area falls within the boundaries of the City of Evansville's Tax Incremental District No. 5 (TID 5), as amended in 2005. The path along Allen Creek was included as an itemized project in the TID 5 plan, with construction anticipated in 2008. While not listed in the TID plan, the new road and the gateway features may be considered for funding through the TID.

The City of Evansville is considering dredging Lake Leota and potentially making other improvements in Leonard Park within a 2008-2010 time frame. This may be an appropriate time to consider extending the park entry to North Union Street.

Comprehensive Plan Updates

Neighborhood plans such as the **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** are typically adopted as amendments to a community's Comprehensive Plan. While this plan provides much greater detail for land uses and development

standards within the project area, it does not include substantial departures from general concepts contained within the **2005 Comprehensive Plan**. Three exceptions to this are

- ✧ the bicycle/pedestrian path shown on the east side of North Union Street;
- ✧ the two future road connections leading east from North Union Street; and
- ✧ a discussion of the proposed U.S. Highway 14 bypass's impacts on both the downtown and the North Union Street corridor.

Of these, the proposed bypass is the most important. The market analysis pointed out the importance of traffic to the commercial viability of the North Union Street corridor. A bypass would divert a substantial portion of this traffic, including commuter traffic to and from Madison. Commercial businesses in both the North Union Street corridor and the downtown would likely suffer from a loss of this traffic. For that reason, the **Allen Creek & North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan** has recommended that the City reconsider its plans for a bypass, and amend the **2005 Comprehensive Plan** to reflect this change.

Official Map

The City of Evansville may consider amendments to its official map to reflect the recommendations in this plan. The most important of these would be the new street proposed to extend between Main Street and West Union Street.

Code Amendments

The development standards contained within this report differ from the standards found in the City of Evansville's Zoning Code in several areas. Changes that may be considered would include:

- ✧ Permit residential uses an accessory use by right within all zoning districts in the project area, while prohibiting or limiting them as the primary use.
- ✧ Allow buildings larger than 5,000 square feet as a conditional use.

- ✧ Allow buildings over two stories as a conditional use
- ✧ Amend the dimensional standards (setbacks, building frontage, lot coverage, floor area ratio, landscaped areas, etc.) to be consistent with the design standards.
- ✧ Establish access management standards consistent with the recommendations in the plan.
- ✧ Adopt design guidelines based on the recommendations of the plan.