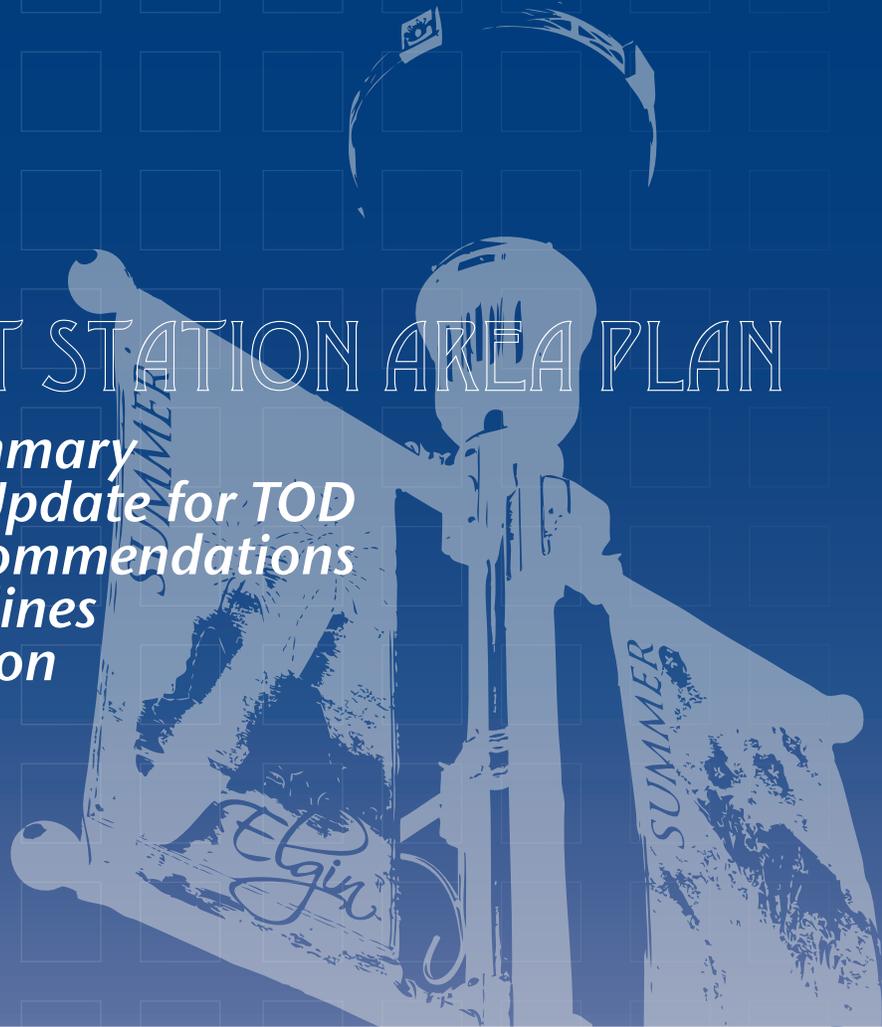


NATIONAL STREET STATION AREA PLAN

*Executive Summary
Master Plan Update for TOD
Sub-Area Recommendations
Design Guidelines
Implementation
Appendices*



submitted by:

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September 2011

Executive Summary - National Station Area Plan Map



Executive Summary

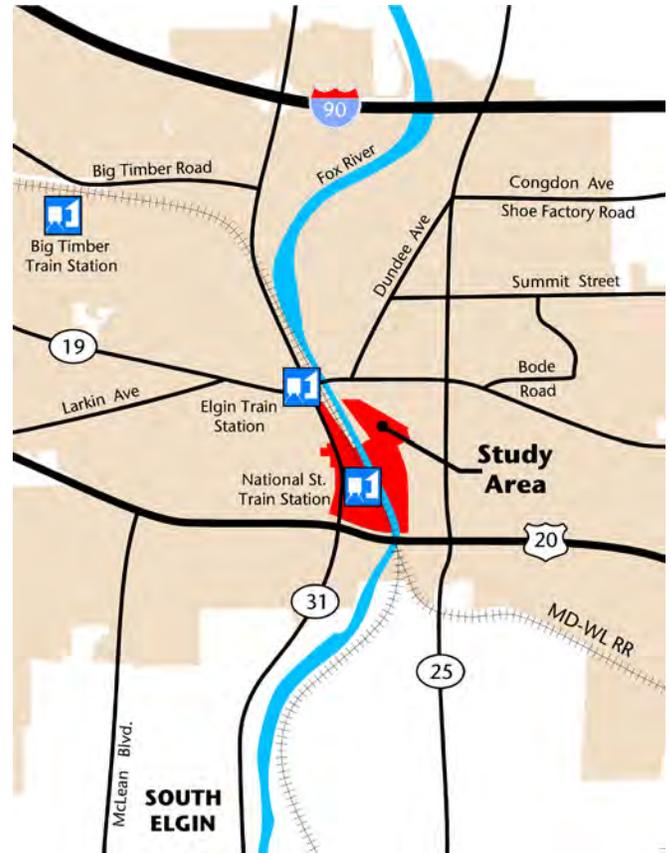
Introduction

Due to Elgin's continued desire to eagerly explore new ideas that can enhance the City's value, the City commissioned Land Vision, Inc. to evaluate and produce recommendations for a comprehensive TOD (Transit Oriented Development) Plan. This work was developed in conjunction with residents, City staff, Metra, RTA, Pace and centered around the National Street Metra Train Station.

Over an 18 month period, Land Vision and its consultant team conducted surveys, public meetings/forums, workshops, interviews, and welcomed extensive comments from residents and staff to formulate recommended improvements to the National Street Station Area Plan. Both the City of Elgin and Land Vision recognize the importance of community support, and have used multiple avenues to allow input from all groups.

As a result of these meetings, long term goals have been produced and the plans/recommendations are contained within this report. It should be noted that in order to achieve some of the goals specified in this document, more detailed studies will be needed. Items that will need in-depth analysis have also been identified.

It is the nature of a TOD to increase density of development, and this plan seeks to center that goal around the National Street Metra Train Station. This plan is specific enough that it refers to land use patterns and development strategies, but is still flexible to respond to current market conditions. It is the desire of this plan to not only restore historical residential structures, but to construct new structures that build on the context of the existing community, and create space for residents to enjoy.



Upon acceptance by the City Council, this document will become an amendment to the City of Elgin Comprehensive 4-Year Plan, and will serve as the foundation for decision making within the study area. Implementation will be facilitated by varying agencies, and will require the cooperation of all parties.



Executive Summary

Existing Conditions/Issues

The diagram below represents the existing conditions, and highlights the current problems regarding the difficulties in accessing the National Street Metra Train Station. The purple jagged lines represent existing barriers from neighborhoods east and west of the Fox River as explained below. The yellow shaded area represents the approximate influence area of proximate vehicular and pedestrian access from neighborhoods to the National Street Metra Train Station.

The Fox River itself is the primary barrier for neighborhood areas on the east side of the river. In this case, many residents and business properties are in close proximity directly across from the station, but are limited to a single roadway and pedestrian crossing which is at National Street.

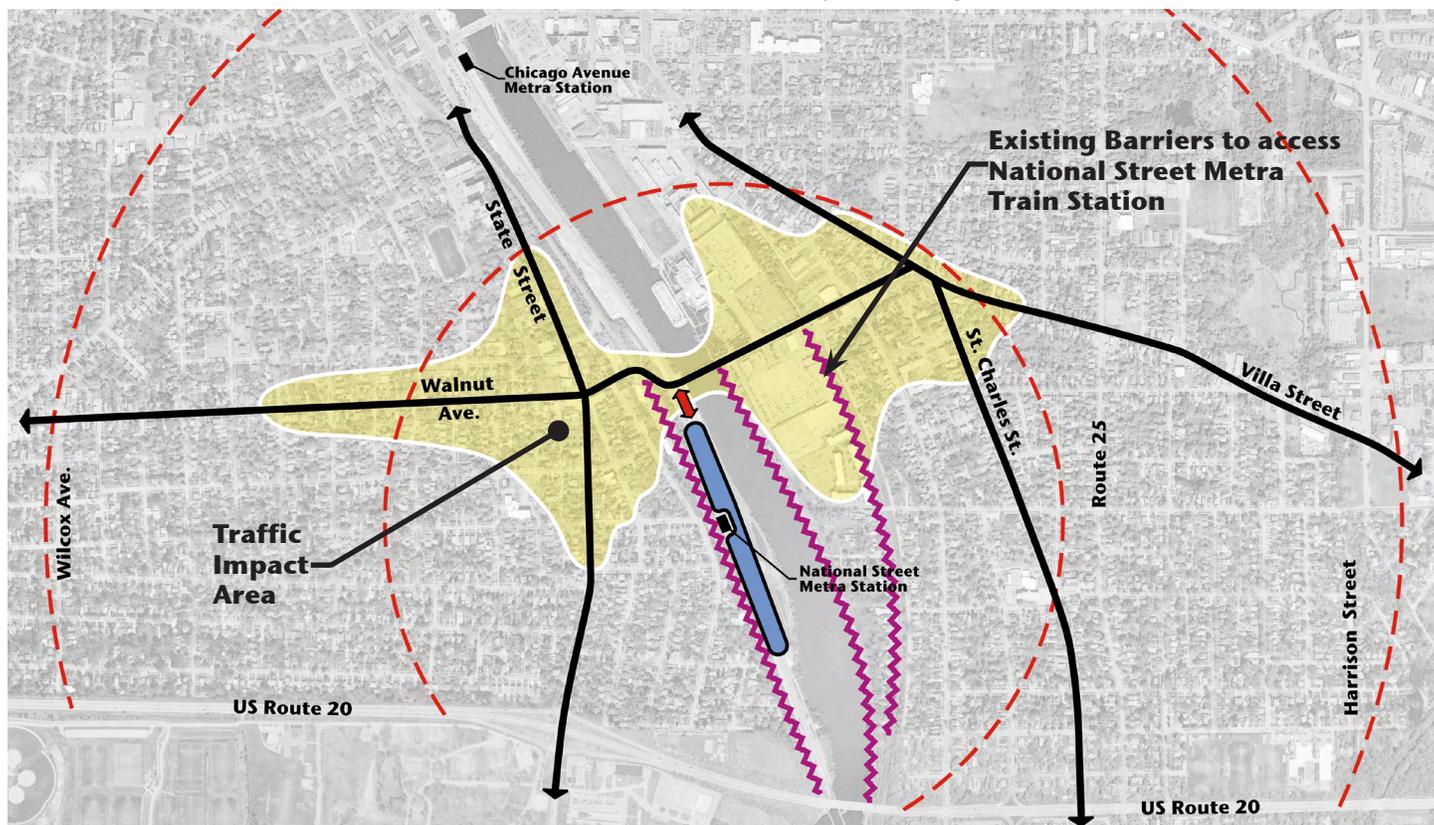
While it is possible for pedestrians to use the National Street bridge crossing, it is not desirable due to the inconvenience of walking north from the east side neighborhood areas, crossing the river, and then walking south to access the platform. In addition, the close proximity of the walk to moving vehicles creates an uncomfortable atmosphere for a pedestrian. This along with the concentration of traffic on both sides of the rail as this is the only vehicular access to the train station platforms, may cause even nearby residents to drive.

Residents living east of Wellington Avenue have a second barrier as there is no vehicular or pedestrian access between US Route 20 and the Wellington Avenue curb-cut for the shopping center entrance just 200 feet from National Street. Effectively, the neighborhood is sealed from any type of access to the Fox River corridor, Fox River regional bike trail, and access to the Metra National Street station until reaching the Clock Tower Plaza parking lots or National Street.

On the west side of the Fox River the neighborhoods in close proximity to the station, have an equally difficult time accessing the platform due to significant topographical changes and the UPRR freight line.



Example of a Wellington Avenue Barrier



Executive Summary

Proposed Conditions/Solutions

The diagram below represents the aggregate of multiple proposed solutions described in detail throughout the Metra National Street Station Area Plan. The primary differences in the two opposing diagrams is the mitigation of the existing access barriers, and the proposed addition of new parking locations and changes to vehicular and pedestrian circulation. In this diagram the improvements and additions to vehicular and pedestrian circulation is shown in the red dashed lines. The yellow shaded area represents the approximate effect and gain of direct and proximate neighborhood access to the National Street Metra Train Station and platforms.

On the east side of the Fox River there is a new proposed grid of streets that simply extends the existing neighborhood streets to the river corridor. The addition of this proposed new pattern of streets serves to remove the existing barriers between the river corridor and the neighborhoods to the east, and also breaks down the super-blocks into a more appropriate scale and pattern to facilitate new transit oriented development.

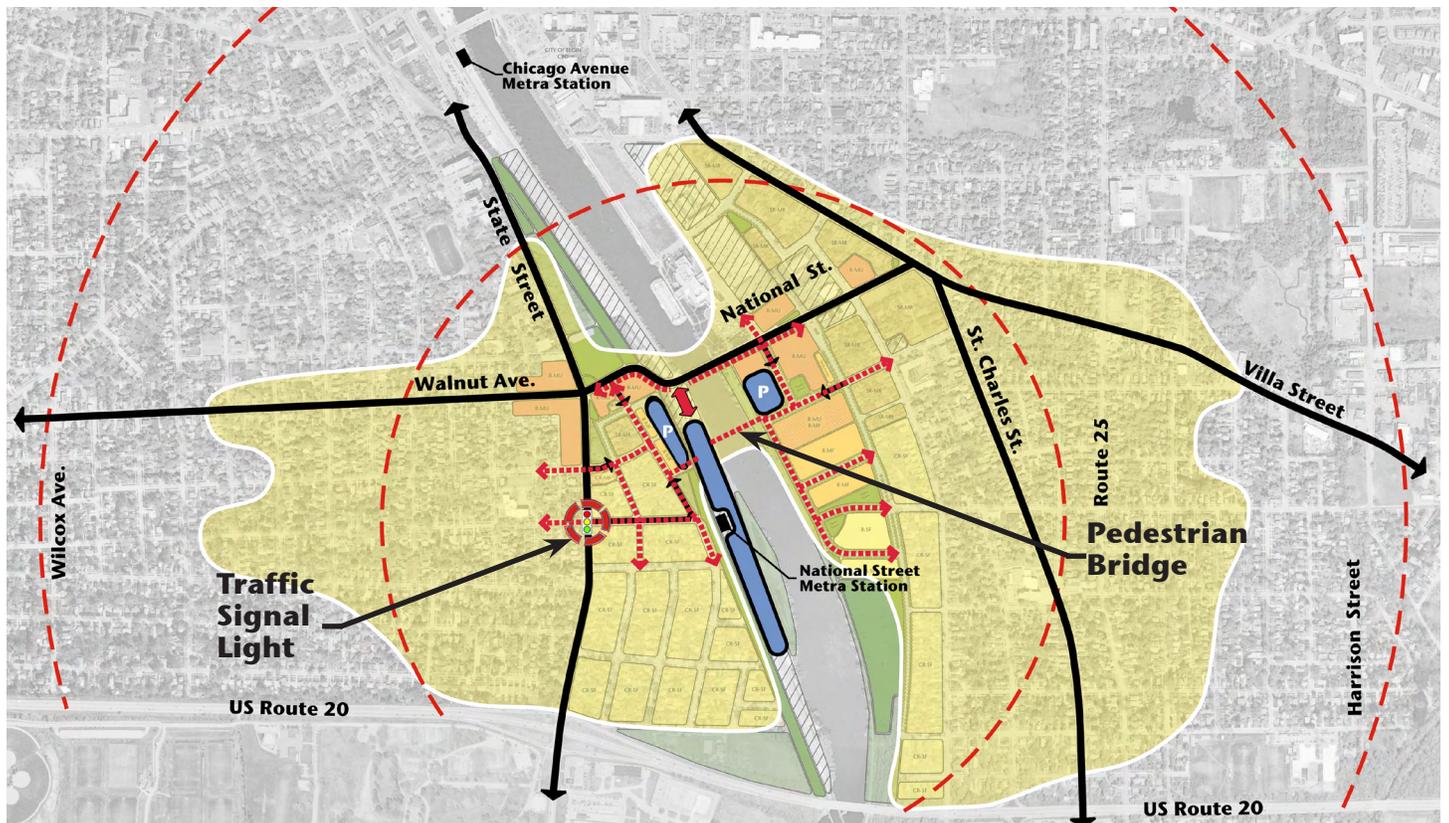
A significant addition to this plan and a further extension of the pedestrian network is the proposed pedestrian bridge connecting the east side neighborhoods directly to the National Street Metra

Train Station. This pedestrian bridge is located in alignment with existing Watch Street on the east and terminates within 200 feet of the station platforms.

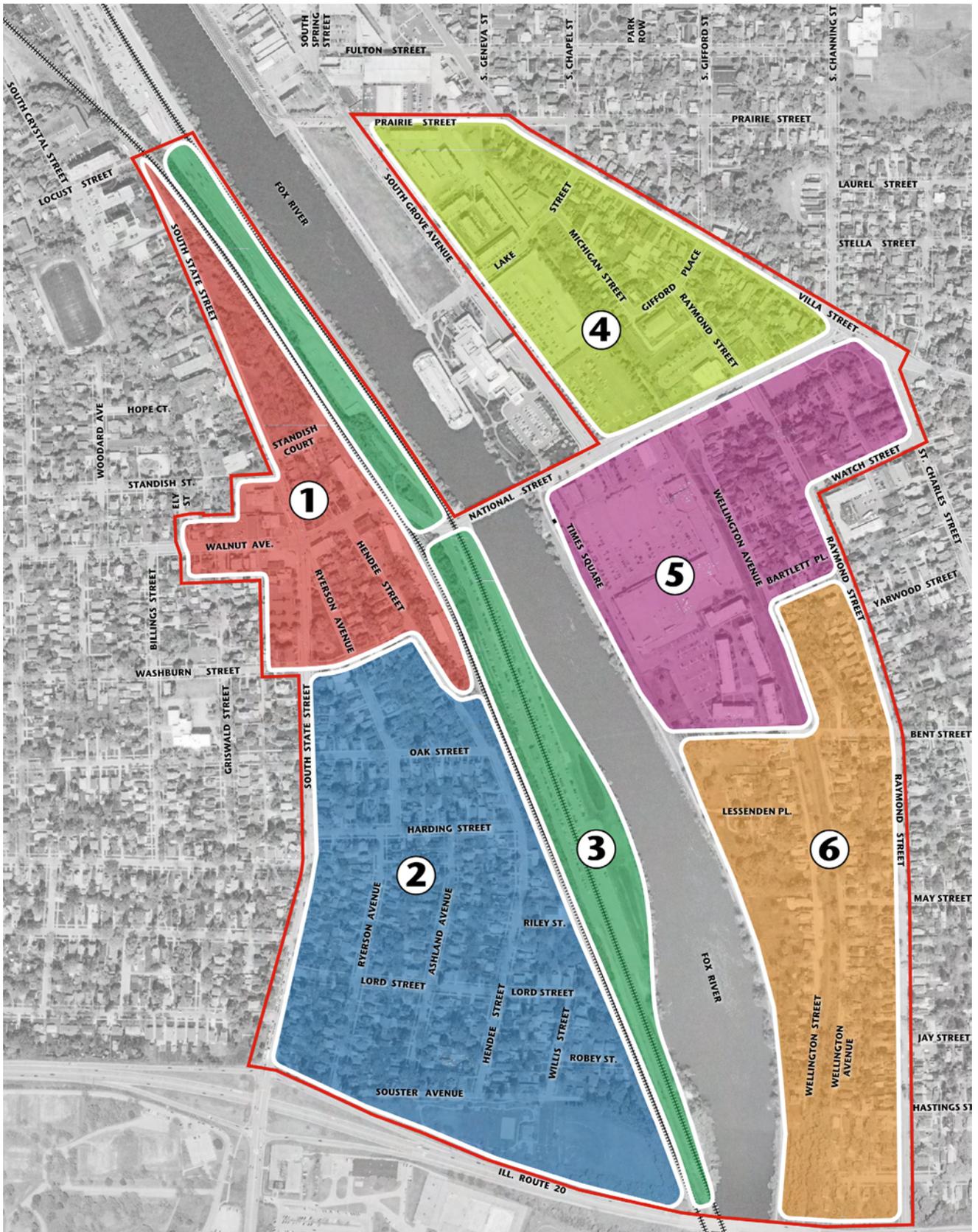
The solution diagram also illustrates new parking facilities on both sides of the Fox River. The proposed parking facility on the east side is located where there is currently surface parking within the Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center and is connected to the previously described pedestrian bridge. Proposed new parking on the west side is located between Hendee Street and the commuter tracks and would be directly connected to the station platforms via a pedestrian tunnel. When built out to final design, added parking on both sides of the Fox River allows access without use of National Street.



Illustration of proposed pedestrian bridge access to the train station



Executive Summary - Sub-Area Map



Executive Summary

Existing Conditions

The study area for the National Street Station Area Plan is comprised of approximately 290 acres of land. To make evaluation of the large parcel feasible, it has been divided into 6 Sub-Areas. These areas have been defined based on current land uses and their impact on transit opportunities. Each Sub-Area presents with needs and goals different from the others and each has been evaluated with their own uniqueness in mind.

Multiple site walks/visits have occurred throughout this endeavor for the purpose of evaluating the sites in seven different categories:

- » Land Use
- » Open Space/Landscape
- » Streetscapes
- » Architecture & Built Environment
- » Transit
- » Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation
- » Bikeways

Within these categories, a number of specific issues were consistent between all of the areas. Some of these issues include:

- » Most sites are being used for their intended land use. A large amount of single family residential sites have been converted to multi-family dwellings. Some are contributory in nature, others are not.
- » Active/passive parks appear adequate on the west side of the river, but the east side is notably lacking in public open space.
- » Streetscapes are less than desirable throughout the study area. Streets lack parkways, parkway trees and wider sidewalks. The crisscross of powerlines contributes to an “unwelcoming” street appearance.
- » Street network is laid out in a grid fashion.
- » A significant amount of architecture dating back to the early 1900’s exists in the Sub-Areas. Some have been maintained in good condition, others have been converted or altered to the point that the original character is lost.
- » The majority of the facades on the buildings are dated, and in need of updating/maintenance.
- » Access to the National Street Metra Train Station is challenging for most patrons living within a

1/2 mile radius. This is due to topographic issues, the Fox River, high tension powerlines, and the existing U.P. freight line.

- » Parking on the west side of the river is at a premium, while parking on the east side of the river is expansive and under utilized.
- » With the exception of the Fox River Bike Trail, there are few trails connecting parks/schools/ points of interest. Very few amenities, (i.e. bike racks, signage, benches, etc.) exist. Access to the trail is severely limited.

In addition to observations found at the site by Land Vision, the public was encouraged to note their concerns with existing physical conditions. Some of the comments that were generated as a result of their efforts include:

- » Need more incentives for home owners to maintain their properties.
- » Access to/from/around National Street from State Street to Grove Avenue. Pedestrian access to train station is difficult.
- » Lack of parking on the west side of the river.
- » Combination sewers back up near the riverfront.
- » Signal lights at National St./Villa St./St. Charles Street need to be timed better.
- » Need to preserve low income housing/ apartments
- » Need to increase pedestrian safety. Sited lack of streetscape (parkways/wider sidewalks) as main reason for safety concerns.
- » Bike trails do not link parks

All of these concerns were taken into account in arriving at the National Street Station Area Plan. Most of the issues that currently face residents in the study area are addressed and improved with this plan. Some of these concerns cannot reasonably be accommodated, such as removal of the high tension wires, bury over head power lines, and re-alignment of National Street between the bridge and State Street.

As the City moves forward with this plan, they will need to continually evaluate existing conditions. The City has demonstrated its ability to be flexible in working with residents and business owners to improve the quality of life in downtown Elgin and will continue to do so in the future.

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Marketing Project Summary

ERA|AECOM was engaged as part of the Land Vision team to evaluate market opportunities for transit-oriented development (TOD) around the National Street Metra Station. The analysis shows that the National Street Metra Station area planning study is occurring in a complex regional and national landscape, influenced in large measure by the pace of recovery from the recession and a return to job growth. For Metropolitan Chicago and Elgin, the pace of recovery appears to be generally consistent with national trends, i.e. a slow recovery. At the same time, however, our experience shows that key underlying long-term trends remain in place, which will continue to influence areas such as the National Street train station area, in spite of the recession. These elements include:

- » Baby Boom aged household retirement and downsizing has only been delayed. As housing markets recover, we expect that interest in walkable and more urban locations will gradually shift into greater favor, covering rental and owner occupied housing.
- » While the recession has dampened growth in utility and energy costs, the nation remains dependent on gasoline in large measure, and prices will grow as the economy improves. In this context, sites that are suitable for mixed use and served by public transportation will benefit in the long run.

For Elgin and National Street, the analysis begins with the residential market. From 2000 to 2009, the city added a total of about 4,700 units, with about 300 in the downtown area. Moving forward to 2030 based on CMAP forecasts, Elgin is predicted to add an additional 26,000 housing units. Assuming that downtown sustains just 6% of total new units through 2030, that would amount to a further 1,700 housing units in the downtown area through 2030. This potential growth in units for the downtown area needs to be kept in perspective, as a total of 2000 projected downtown housing units in Downtown Elgin would represent only 3% of total housing unit demand forecasted for 2030 (57,740 housing units).

Our analysis shows that while Elgin currently has fewer households that are interested in urban living compared to national averages (20% to 30% on average), the overall market opportunity (3% of housing downtown by 2030) remains equally modest in comparison. On a broader level, we believe that the National Street Station Area Plan can be part of broader efforts to improve the competitive position of Elgin for a share of regional households that are looking for urban locations. From our perspective, the core concern is not the number of units built, it is the price of the units. Public sector efforts to manage the price of downtown housing have focused on the following:

- » Use of Density bonuses and other incentives to encourage affordability



Existing conditions at National Street and surrounding area.

Executive Summary

- » Provision of lower cost land to encourage development of specific sites
- » Use of TIF and other standard incentives, linked with improving economic conditions
- » Use of zoning and planning tools, to include public provision of parking, as well as the allowance of higher density development

These tools remain relevant in managing the challenge of urban revitalization, which impacts communities larger and smaller than Elgin. Issues include:

- » Difficulty of getting financing for mixed-use projects
- » Perceptions of increased risk
- » Extended entitlement and development review policies

Our experience argues that several steps, all accommodated in the National Street Station Area Plan, are important in encouraging urban revitalization:

- » Build public consensus and involvement upfront
- » Secure preliminary entitlements for priority sites
- » Target infrastructure and access improvements and link them with transportation

Market Overview

In general, the National Street Planning Area has the potential to improve accessibility and provide new amenities. While current market conditions necessitate a longer redevelopment horizon, creating stronger and easier connections between transit options and considering redevelopment opportunities could enhance the value of the study area and improve ridership of transit options.

While the waterfront is considered a valuable amenity, topographical issues within the planning area along with the Metra Station along the waterfront requires careful consideration in order to identify redevelopment options. The design of vehicular and pedestrian access as well as new parking options will all factor into the potential to successfully integrate new development into the fabric of the existing neighborhoods.

The Clock Tower Plaza is currently the only substantial retail development in the study area. This existing neighborhood retail center presents an opportunity for significant re-development in the area based on its location and land area. This center has seen a recent increase in vacancy and it is important that it be stabilized and revitalized in the future. Anchored by a successful supermarket that serves to the local neighborhoods, the balance of the center is occupied by bargain retail. Avoiding increasing vacancies, upgrading and modernizing the appearance and condition in the near-term, with the potential for incremental



Overall plan for all Sub-Areas combined.

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redevelopment and increased density in the long-run, is a recommended strategy. The creation of greater density on this site in the long-run helps to offset redevelopment costs and improve financial feasibility of such options. Opportunities to reconnect the larger land parcel into the surrounding neighborhood street network, is also recommended to create improved



access benefitting both the neighborhood and the retail businesses.

Downtown Elgin has seen several projects come online or proposed, such as River Park Place, Fountain Square, and Water Street Place. These recent condominium and townhome projects have been targeted at largely luxury and high-end markets, in the context of a surrounding community that is generally comprised primarily of moderate income households. While the fruition of these projects has been delayed by the broader economic environment, they are generally a step in the right direction. Future development should continue to build on the current market strengths that these developments were based on – establishing a vibrant downtown and market place, continuing phases of development, and offering new housing options in the city center.

Ultimately, development and redevelopment within the area of the National Street Metra station to accommodate a cohesive package of mixed uses in a walkable neighborhood can help maximize the land from a land value perspective, as well as from the perspective of continuing to maximize one of Elgin's greatest unique asset, the Fox River. The focus on establishing stronger green corridors or parks on either



side of the river in the plan not only creates a valuable public amenity, it also can improve the quality of the neighborhood as well as strengthen property values in the neighborhood. Various studies have shown that homes located directly adjacent to neighborhood and community parks can achieve premiums in value.

The flexibility within the plan for multi-family residential development allows developers and the City to respond to changing market conditions as the greater planning area evolves. Consecutively, careful consideration within identified sub-areas to preserve single family housing can help to maintain the historic character of the area.

Additionally, creating connections to the National Street train station would make walking distance to the passenger rail platforms shorter, increasing the opportunity for people to walk to the station rather than use other means, as well as generally provide access to residents who may otherwise have disregarded the use of the Metra station because of its current perceived inconvenience. In opening up safe access to neighborhoods on either side of the river to the station, this also has the potential to make these neighborhoods more desirable in which to live and work, again creating an opportunity to strengthen property values in the larger neighborhood. It also contributes to synergy for mixed-use/higher density redevelopment to occur for properties like the Clock Tower Plaza site identified in the plan.

Transit Oriented Development Marketing Perspective

Analysis indicates that only about 4 percent of metropolitan area residents outside the Chicago city limits live within one-quarter mile, or walking distance, of a Metra station. With increasing energy costs, rising costs of living, and continued economic pressures, municipalities that offer the option of convenient passenger rail transportation and live-work options will be well positioned to attract new residents and continue to revitalize or maintain their downtown communities. Even given its relative distance from central Chicago, there appears to be a comparably higher concentration of residents around the Elgin and National Street Metra stations. That said, it also indicates room for improvement in maximizing the value of the National Street station area.



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Transportation

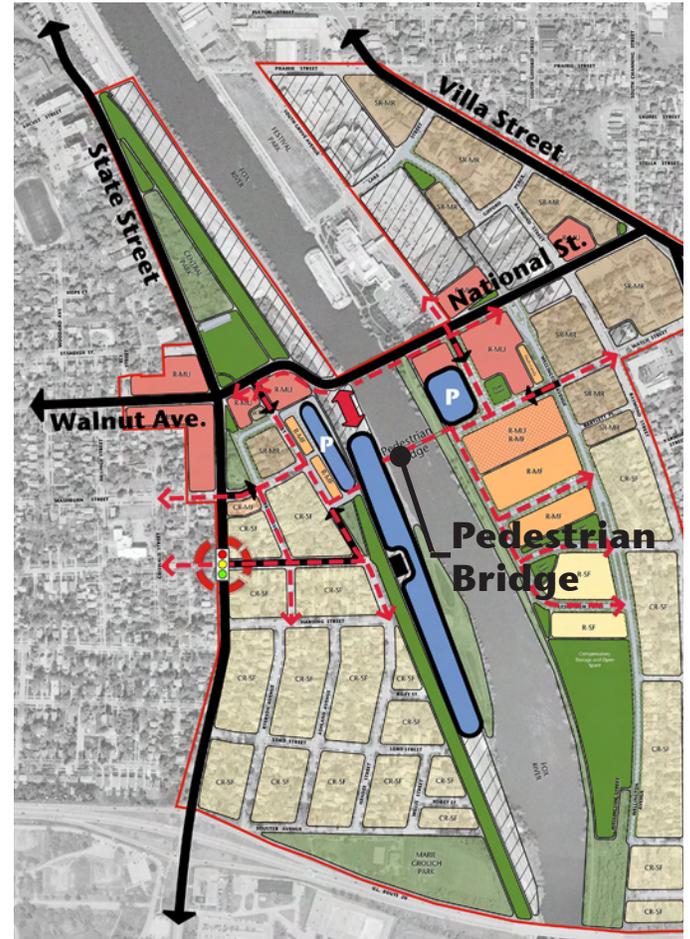
The overall roadway and pedestrian circulation pattern in the study area is disrupted by the presence of the Fox River, the Metra Milwaukee District West Line and a Union Pacific Railroad freight line, allowing for only National Street to bridge both sides of the river in an east-west direction.

Due to the topographic conditions, National Street transcends the bluff via two sharp narrow curves on a steep grade. Straightening out and widening National Street so that the street could be navigated easier would require significant property acquisition, disrupting the potential for transit-oriented development near the Metra station, and was not recommended in this study.



Therefore, an objective of the study is to identify other options to alleviate vehicular congestion along National Street and improve access to the Metra station. As part of the Plan, two parking structures are proposed, one on either side of the Fox River. (Shown in the exhibit to the right, identified with a "P") These parking structures would provide another option for accessing the station instead of only having one access point into the station from National Street.

As part of the parking structures, a pedestrian bridge linking directly into the station area is proposed. Pedestrians using the east parking structure would have a shorter walk from the parking facility to the station platforms. For pedestrians coming from the west, a pedestrian tunnel from the parking structure could be used, and they would not have to negotiate the steep descent of National Street.



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Minor geometric roadway improvements may be recommended for the area surrounding a new parking structure on the west side of the river. A study should be undertaken to evaluate the turning movements onto National Street from Hendee Street. Due to difficult traffic conditions at National Street, it may be appropriate to limit the “T” intersection to right-in, right-out turns from Hendee Street.

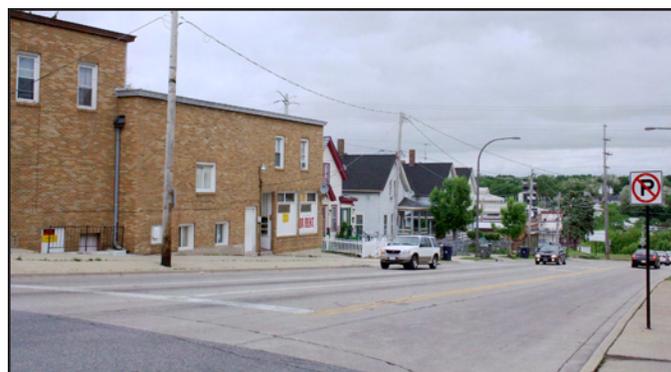


Likewise, if Ryerson Avenue is connected to Hendee Street, it would be appropriate to evaluate the area adjacent to the park for traffic calming devices. Of primary concern, possible “cut-thru” traffic that would try and avoid the intersection of National Street and State Street. Devices used to discourage such movements would benefit the adjoining residences.



In addition, a traffic signal is proposed at Oak Street and IL Route 31 to provide an alternate way to get to and from the parking structure instead of through the IL Route 31/National Street intersection. It is thought that this traffic signal is necessary due to existing traffic conditions within the neighborhood, the location of Lowrie Elementary School on the west side of IL Route 31, and the proposed redevelopment concepts including the potential location of Metra parking.

Minor improvements are also recommended at the entrances to the Metra National Street Station in order to help manage the traffic and turning movements during the morning and evening rush hours. Improvements could consist of enhanced signage indicating “Do Not Block Intersection” with a flashing light and pavement re-striping to improve visibility of the station entrance and minor geometric improvements to the entrance which would help slow down the right turn movement into the station. Enhanced pavement striping and installation of reflective markers would aid in channeling traffic through the area.



Consideration should be given to widening National Street, from the west side of the river to State Street. If the properties in the northeast corner of National Street and State Street are acquired, and redeveloped into open space/park space, additional road right-of-way (ROW) could be dedicated. This additional width could be used for the installation of a median or a dedicated right turn lane from westbound National Street to northbound State Street.

As shown in the Plan, and illustrated in the exhibits to the right, most changes to the roadway infrastructure would occur east of the river in Sub-Area 5.

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The existing street network lacks continuity, primarily in an east-west direction, prohibiting access to the riverfront. The Plan suggests extending Watch Street, Yarwood Street, Bent Street, and Lessenden Place east-west, with Lessenden Place also providing access north-south. Bent Street and Watch Street could be designated as the redeveloped area's major streets, since they extend to Raymond Street, which has a signal at National Street. Bent Street also crosses IL Route 25 and continues eastward to Villa Street, which may prove to be an attractive route for people to get in and out of this redeveloped area. This roadway has the potential to attract pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic.

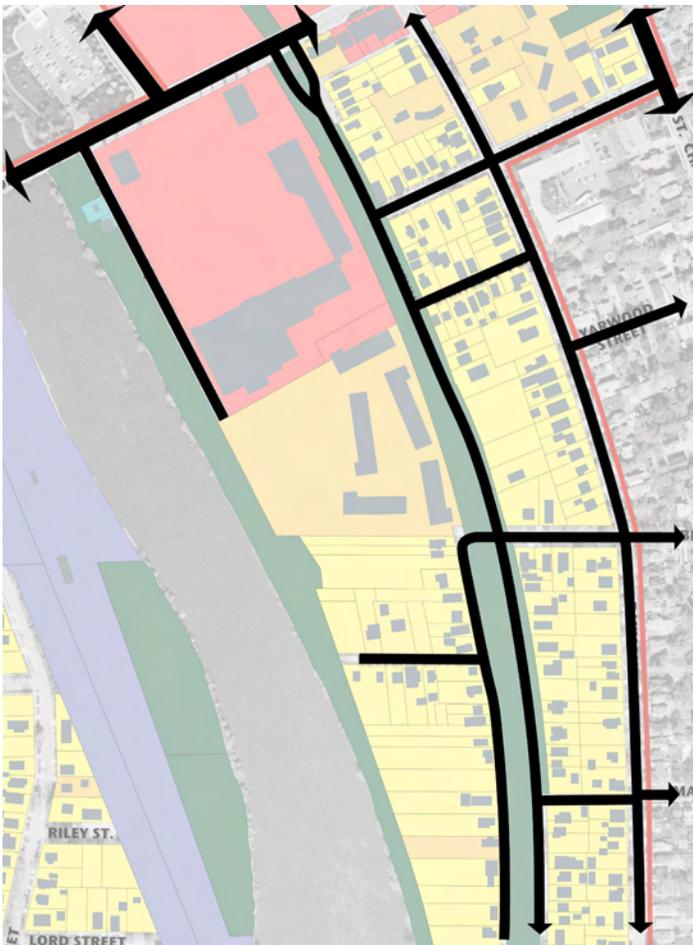
New roadway patterns would need to be initiated to accommodate the future redevelopment of the Clock Tower Plaza and apartment complex. Multiple access points into and out of the redeveloped site will encourage visitors, and can provide easy access for commuters in a structured, shared parking garage. As shown in the exhibit below, pedestrian traffic (shown in red) and vehicular traffic (shown in black) have multiple points of egress/ingress to access the proposed parking

structures.

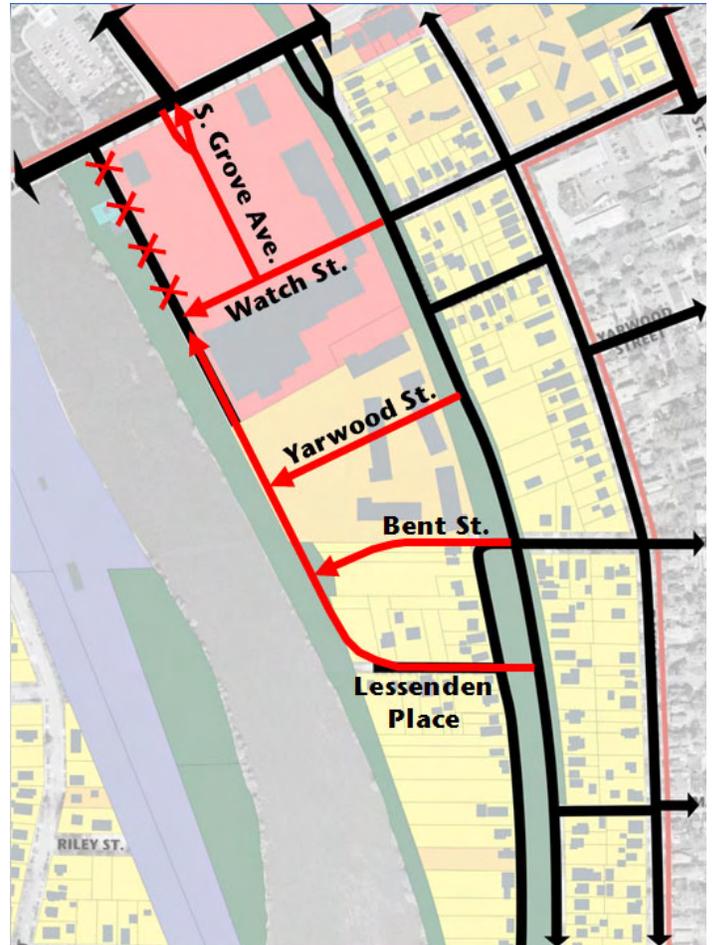
The extension of these streets may take some of the congestion off of National Street. Allowing for additional east-west streets allows any traffic from the proposed developments to be distributed more evenly. The proposed parking structure, located south of National Street and west of the proposed extension of Grove Avenue within the Clock Tower Plaza property, could be accessed off of Grove Street.

In addition to the lack of a street network the existing street infrastructure on the east side of the river, south of National Street is deficient. At a minimum, streets need to be reconstructed to provide for adequate right-of-way, proper drainage, appropriately sized parkways, and adequate sidewalks.

Any land use changes and improvements in the study area should take into consideration pedestrian access. Marked crosswalks, continuous sidewalks, on street bike lanes, streetscape features, and other amenities are appropriate and will contribute to a pedestrian friendly environment.

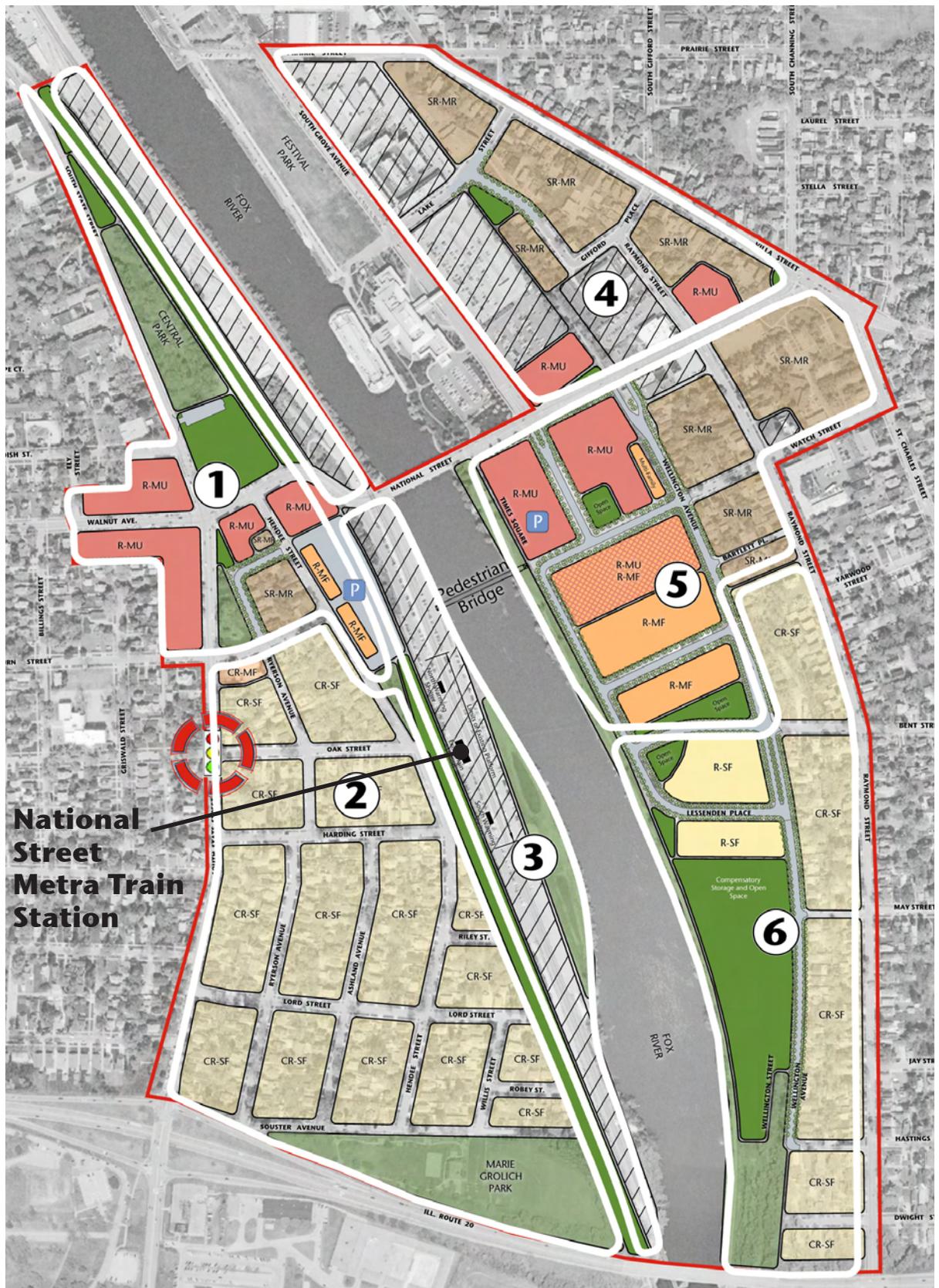


Existing Roadway Network at Sub-Area 5



Propose Grid Addition to Roadway Network at Sub-Area 5

Executive Summary - National Street Area Plan Map



Executive Summary

Sub-Area 1

This area contains an eclectic mix of uses and needs. For ease of discussion, this Sub-Area has been further divided into quadrants, using the intersection of Walnut/National Street and State Street/IL Route 31 as the origin.

Northeast Quadrant

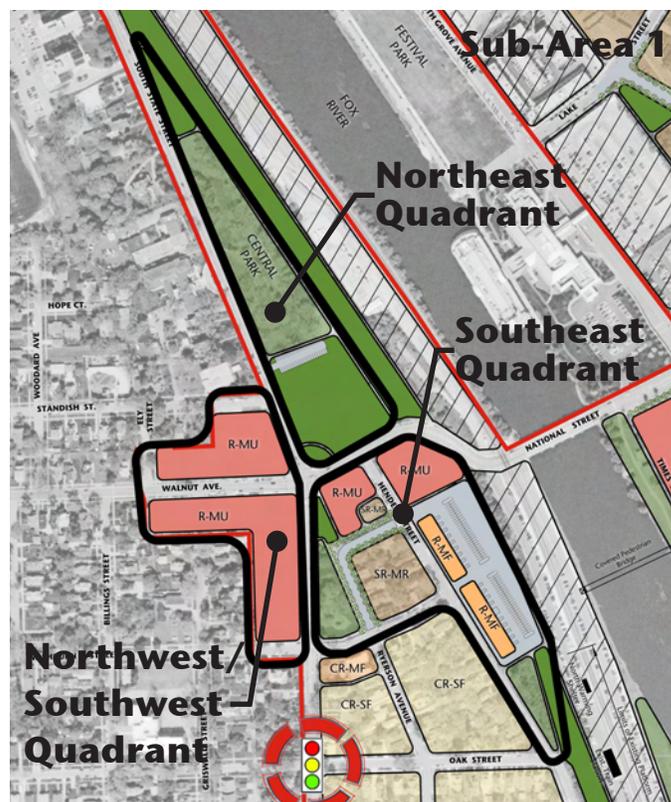
- » This area contains Central Park and a mix of uses.
- » Given that the intersection of Walnut/National and State/US Route 31 is one of the main entrance points into the Center City Area, it is recommended that this corner be opened up to allow the views to the Fox River and the Grand Victoria Casino.
- » Create an gateway feature noting City of Elgin at the northeast corner of this intersection.
- » Expand Central Park to National Street.

Southeast Quadrant

- » This area contains a mix of uses commercial, residential, light industrial and open space.
- » Eliminate the dead-end condition at Ryerson Avenue. Construct a street segment to connect Ryerson Avenue to Hendee Street. Locate this street 200± feet south of and parallel to National Street.
- » This street segment creates a sizeable parcel for new mixed use buildings to line National Street. Align the new mixed use buildings on the setback line, creating a defined street wall for pedestrians.
- » Continue mixed use buildings and the street wall concept, easterly, along National Street, following the curve of the street, to the river front.
- » Expand Ryerson Park to National Street.



View looking south at intersection of National Street/State Street



- » Evaluate the residential block bound by Hendee/Ryerson/Washburn and the new mixed use development, on a lot by lot basis. Rehabilitate multi-family sites, de-convert homes where possible, evaluate for new multi-family buildings.
- » Construct a parking deck that would be built into the bluff, between Hendee Street and UP right-of-way. It will be necessary to acquire the full UP ROW to construct the deck as depicted, but a smaller deck with more challenging access to the station may still be possible without this acquisition. The deck would serve the patrons of the mixed use area, general parking and commuter parking.
- » The parking deck would connect to a pedestrian tunnel to allow easy access for pedestrians into the National Street Metra Train Station.
- » Align the east and west edge of parking deck with townhomes/row homes.

Northwest/Southwest Quadrant

- » This area contains a mix of commercial businesses and single family homes used for business.
- » Update facades on all buildings.
- » Remove Citgo Gas Station and Payday Loans buildings. Construct new mixed use buildings that create a street wall at the corner.

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Sub-Area 2

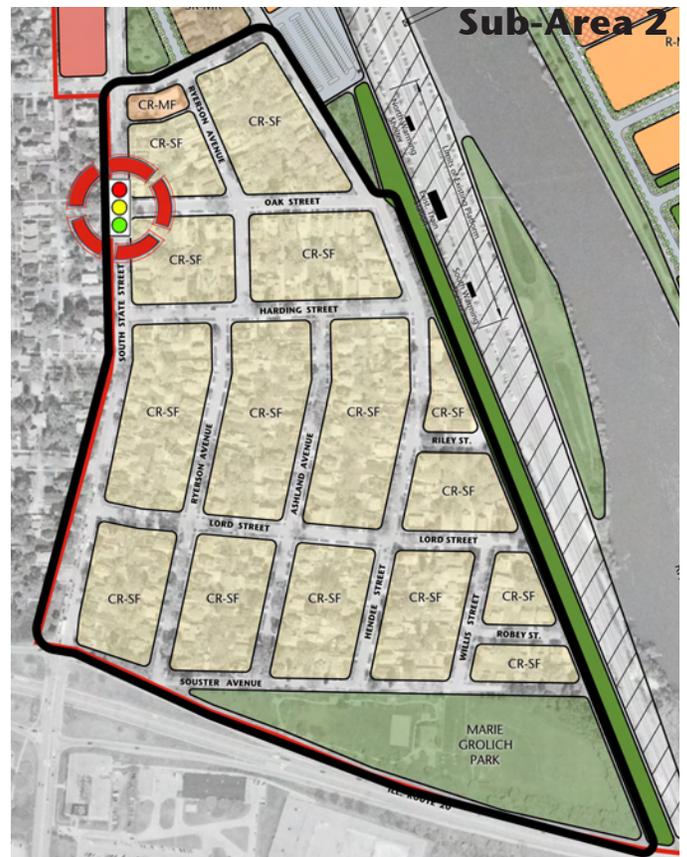
This area is predominately single family home sites, with several conversions to multi-family. Some conversions are contributory, others have created structures that lack the character unique to this Sub-Area.

- » Continue to provide incentives for multi-family homes to be de-converted back to single family.
- » Consider making the area part of the historical district preservation program. Several homes have historical significance, and should be maintained.
- » Work to provide direct access from this neighborhood, and those to the west, into the National Street Metra Train Station site. This can be accomplished via the parking deck in Sub-Area 1.
- » Initiate a study for signalization of the intersection at State Street/IL Route 31 and Oak Street.
- » Explore ability to link Marie Grolich Park with Central Park via a bike trail on the current U.P. freight line right-of-way.
- » Install a gateway feature at US Route 20 and IL Route 31, as this is considered an entrance into the City of Elgin.
- » Continue to improve streetscapes, complete sections of missing sidewalk/curb and gutter.

Sub-Area 3

This area consists of the National Street Metra Train Station and rail lines, U.P. freight lines, ComEd substation with high tension lines, and a storage yard for Metra.

- » Of primary concern is the lack of pedestrian access into the National Street Metra Train Station. While solutions to this access issue exist within this report, (i.e. parking deck) it will take cooperation of multiple entities to achieve this goal. Some, but not all of the parties involved in this endeavor are: Developers, City of Elgin, Metra, RTA, and Pace Bus.
- » In the same manner, providing additional commuter parking spaces will require the cooperation of these same entities. This parking needs to be able to service several uses, not just commuters. It is estimated that by 2030, an additional 150-250 parking spaces will be needed to service commuters. These additional spaces can be shared with compatible uses as long as they do not conflict with a commuters ability to find available parking.
- » The City of Elgin should invite discussion with Metra and UPRR (Union Pacific Railroad) to eliminate the need for the freight line running through the City. Sharing the existing Milwaukee



District West Line (Metra Commuter Line) would eliminate multiple train/street crossings and the maintenance/safety issues that accompany such crossings.

- » Explore ability to construct a bike trail on the UP ROW if the railroad is abandoned and this property is acquired by the City of Elgin or another public entity. This trail would link Marie Grolich Park to the river front and Central Park.
- » The City of Elgin should continue to negotiate the removal of the billboards along National Street. These advertisements detract from the ability to view/enjoy the Fox River.
- » Explore the possibility of a pedestrian bridge to link the east side of the river to the Train Station.



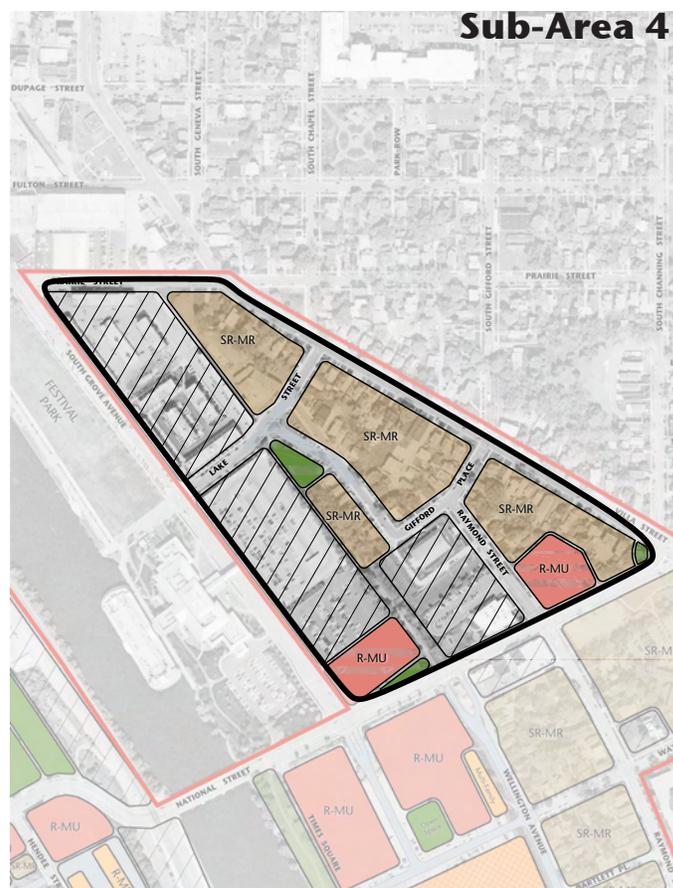
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Sub-Area 4

This Sub-Area contains a variety of uses, from the new River Park Place Townhomes, to historical sites, to extensive parking areas.

- » A significant portion of this site has already undergone TOD improvements initiated by private developers (River Park Place Townhomes). This development should continue to the east, enveloping the vacated Courier Press site, located along Lake Street.
- » The majority of this Sub-Area is within the National Watch Historic District. Efforts to preserve significant structures, such as the National Armory Building, need to continue. Efforts to preserve historic single family structures should be increased.
- » City of Elgin should continue/strengthen their efforts at de-conversions in this Sub-Area. A significant number of single family home sites have been converted to multi-family. Most of the conversions in this area have not been contributory in nature. Some of the conversions are beyond reasonable repair, and will need to be reconstructed. Evaluation of which sites meet this need will be done on a case by case basis, and is beyond the scope of this report. It is recommended that the City of Elgin work with the Elgin Heritage Commission in conducting this survey.
- » Multiple curb cuts along Villa Street for private driveway access are unattractive and create conflicts on the well travelled four lane collector street. The City should explore efforts to eliminate these drives by providing an alley similar to the one on the northerly side of Villa Street.
- » In order to accomplish the installation of an alley, Michigan Avenue may need to be realigned where it connects to Lake Street.

Sub-Area 4



- » Review the need for expansive surface parking at the northeast corner of Grove Avenue and National Street. This corner should be improved with a mixed use structure to anchor the corner and provide a street wall for pedestrian traffic.
- » Similarly, the northeast corner of Raymond Street and National Street should be reconstructed to anchor the corner and encourage parking at the rear of the mixed use building.



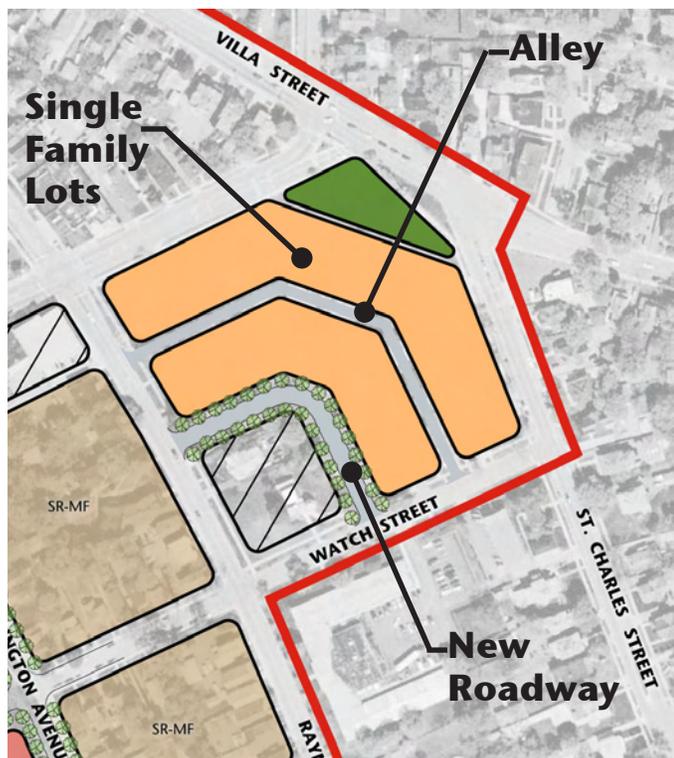
Executive Summary

Sub-Area 5

This Sub-Area presents the greatest opportunity to develop a significant TOD within this study area. This area consists of multiple uses which individually and collectively contribute to the basis of a sustainable TOD.

- » The City of Elgin needs to begin negotiations to acquire the abandoned UP railroad right-of-way. This ribbon of land is critical to providing adequate access into and out of, the development site.
- » With the acquisition of the abandoned UPRR right-of-way, reconstruct Wellington Avenue from National Street to Hastings Street, as a two-way street with parkways and sidewalks.
- » The easterly portion of this Sub-Area is comprised of single family home sites. Some of these homes have been converted to multi-family, and not all of the conversions have been contributory to the neighborhood. Efforts/incentives by the City to de-convert these homes should continue. Evaluation of which homes can be restored to their original condition should be done on a case by case basis. Some homes may have been altered beyond reasonable repair and will need to be redeveloped.
- » The “super-block” that is bound by National Street/Raymond Street/Villa Street/St. Charles Street/Watch Street needs to be studied for a

Sub-Area 5



resubdivision. Given the width and depth of this block, it is difficult to create useful single family lots. A possible solution is shown to the left.

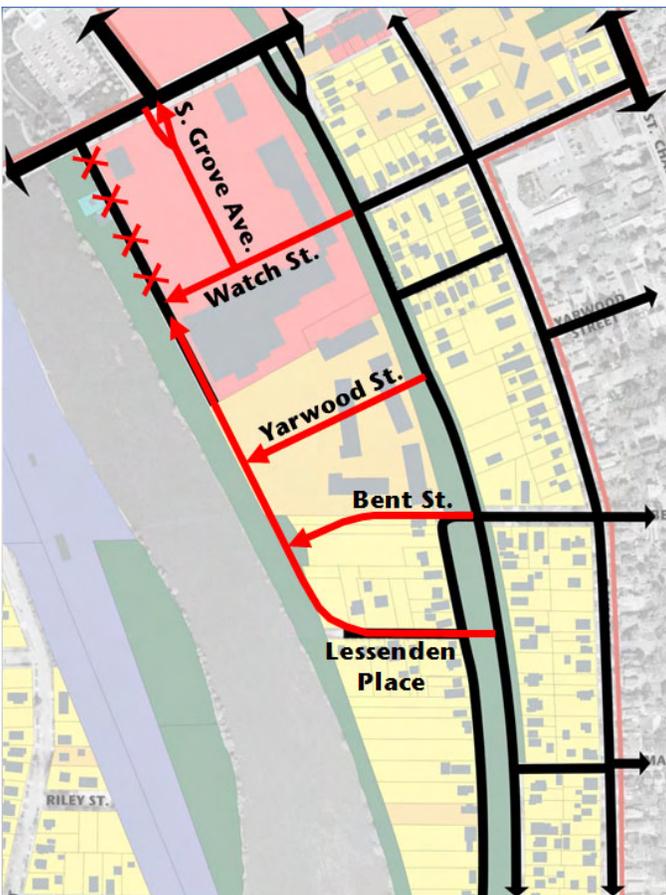
- » Adding a short segment of street in the shape of an inverted “L” that would isolate the existing Observatory and creating an alley so that curb cuts along the collector roads can be avoided is one possible scenario.
- » The majority of this Sub-Area is within the Elgin National Watch Historic District. Efforts to preserve significant structures, such as the Observatory Building, need to continue. Efforts to preserve historic single family structures should be increased.
- » It is recommended that the half street of Bartlett Place be improved to a standard street cross section per City of Elgin Design Standards.
- » The second “super-block” that exists in this Sub-Area contains Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center and the Rivers Landing Apartment. Similar to the previously mentioned “super-block” it is recommended that this area be resubdivided

Executive Summary

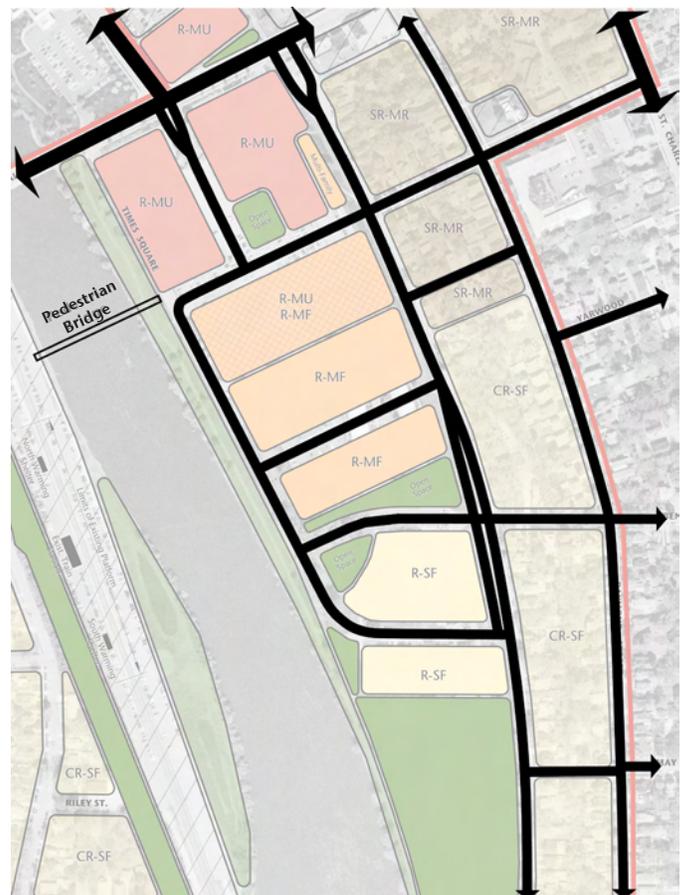
and additional right-of-way be dedicated to create parcels that are more conducive to phased development. Additional public right-of-way will also allow access into the river front for residents to the east of Wellington Street.

- » In the exhibit below, Watch Street is extended to the river front. This new street would line the front of Butera's Grocery Store, and provide easy access for residents from the east.
- » South Grove Avenue is extended to "T" into the extension of Watch Street.
- » Watch Street is then turned to the south, to create a new river front roadway that will connect into existing Lessenden Place.
- » Yarwood Street and Bent Street are also extended towards the river front, and will "T" into the new river front roadway.
- » Abandon the existing Times Square Road. Access to the pump stations may remain off of National St.

- » It is recommended that the southwest corner of Grove Avenue and National Street be reconstructed to a mixed use development with a sizable portion of the building being a parking structure. This parking area can serve patrons of the Grocery Store, new mixed use fronting this structure, residential housing located on the upper floors of the building, and commuter parking for the National Street Metra Train Station. Once again, this parking will need to be a collaborative adventure, as it will serve multiple entities.
- » In order to make the parking structure attractive to commuters, it is recommended that a pedestrian bridge be constructed to connect the east side of the river to the west side. This bridge would reduce a commuters walk to the train platform, compared to, if they had parked in the long lineal lots at the train station.
- » The southeast corner of Grove Avenue and National Street can be redeveloped to mixed use, with residential units on the upper floors. The majority of the base floors can be structured



Existing roadway grid in black. Future roads in red.



Proposed roadway grid Sub-Area 5

Executive Summary

parking, with mixed use fronting National Street.

- » It is recommended that a row of townhomes be constructed along Wellington so that a positive streetscape is created between National Street and Watch Street.
- » A pocket park is proposed for the northeast corner of Watch Street and Grove Avenue. This park is central to all the new development in this Sub-Area and will provide a good location for small community events.
- » The existing Rivers Landing Apartment complex can be replaced, building by building. This would allow the developer to construct units that better meet the current market conditions, that being, more affordable/multi bedroom units, and not displace any of the existing tenants.
- » As the topographic changes from the river to Wellington Avenue can be up to a 30 foot difference, the buildings that will line the riverfront can be up to 5 stories in height.
- » It should be noted that each portion of this plan



can be constructed independent of the others. It is critical that the City of Elgin first acquire the abandoned railroad right-of-way so that there is space available for the reconstruction of Wellington Avenue. The actual construction of the roadway, however, can be phased in, or done in it's entirety by an outside developer. The improvement does not have to be done by the City of Elgin.



Executive Summary

Sub-Area 6

Similar to Sub-Area 2, this area is predominately single family home sites, with several conversions to multi-family. Some conversions are contributory, others have created structures that lack the character unique to this Sub-Area.

- » Continue to provide incentives for multi-family homes to be de-converted back to single family.
- » Consider expanding the limits of the Elgin National Watch Historic District to Hastings Street. Several homes have historical significance, and should be maintained.
- » Work to provide direct access from this neighborhood into the National Street Metra Train Station site. This can be accomplished via the parking deck and pedestrian bridge improvements outlined in Sub-Area 5.
- » Improve Wellington Avenue (upper Wellington) to a standard street cross section per City of Elgin Design Standards. This improvement should extend to Hastings Street.
- » Similarly, improve May Street and Hastings Street to a standard street cross section.
- » Extend existing Lessenden Place to the new riverfront roadway. This will open access to the riverfront for residents living east of Wellington Avenue.
- » Evaluate homes along Lessenden Place on a case by case basis, to determine if the residence should be rehabilitated or redeveloped. During the site visits, some homes were in the process of being rehabilitated, and others were already in good condition.
- » Acquire residential homes along Wellington Street (lower Wellington) as they become available.
- » As the City of Elgin acquires properties along Wellington Street, raze the existing structures and create a new park/open space/compensatory storage area. This area will be combined with the adjacent portion of abandoned railroad right-of-way to create a significant park site for the residents.
- » Provide bike trails from Wellington Avenue, through the new park, and connect to the existing Fox River Trail.



Executive Summary

Guidelines

The design guidelines included in this report provide a framework for sustainable, context-sensitive, and aesthetic redevelopment of sites as well as encourage greater transit and pedestrian friendly amenities on public/private property within the National Street study area.

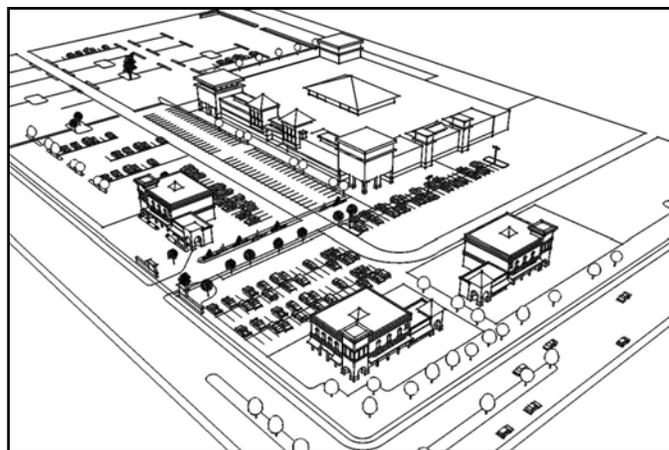
The goal of the design guidelines is to provide clear and concise directives for the Community Development Department, elected officials, and the community to corroboratively achieve the city's transit oriented development objectives for the study area.

The community input obtained as part of the Image Preference Survey, combined with the unique physical and socioeconomic characteristics of the study area have shaped the design guidelines.

Within this report, it has been recommended several times that existing structures be rehabilitated. Said improvements should be done in conformance with the guidelines contained herein. In particular, those that are related to transit and pedestrian improvements.

The guidelines contained within this report are presented as an addition to the "Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines" adopted by the City Council in 2005, and the Elgin Design Guideline Manual of the Elgin Heritage Commission.

As a large section on the east side of the river has already been identified as part of the Elgin National Watch Historic District, and several other sections of this study area have been recommended to be included in a Historic District, the Heritage Commission will become an integral participant in new construction, as well as, rehabilitation.



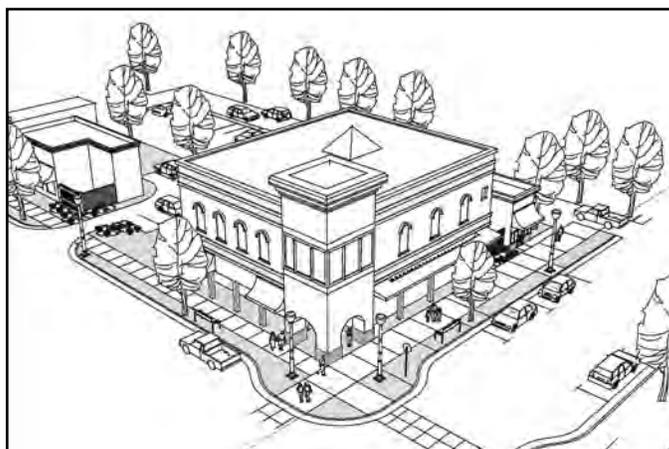
Shared parking between buildings as well as division of large lots



Buildings opening directly onto pedestrian paths



Consistent building frontage to help define street edge



Off-street parking located at rear of building

Executive Summary

Implementation

Developing the desired transit improvement recommendations for the National Street Station Plan is the initial step in the planning process to enhance transit opportunities within the study area. To assist the City and its affiliates in prioritizing the diversity of advisory initiatives recommended within the plan, the key initiatives are summarized within this report

These implementations are based on the long term development/redevelopment/rehabilitation that will occur surrounding the National Street Metra Station area.

The conditions and variables upon which the transit improvements are built, are by their nature, fluid. They cannot always be easily or accurately predicted. To ensure the plan assumptions and recommendations presented in this document continue to be representative of the community and their long range goals, these priorities should be periodically re-evaluated. This re-evaluation will allow necessary modifications and adjustments to the plan so this is kept current with the long-term vision and needs of the City of Elgin. It is encouraged that the plan be reviewed annually, with preparation of appropriate updates every five (5) years.

To ensure the success of the National Street Station Area Plan, the City will have to overcome continually changing priorities, budgetary constraints, facilitation difficulties among numerous public agencies and private interests in the area.

Preliminary Actions

Recommendations within this document are based on several activities that should be accomplished prior to undertaking the long range improvements. These are:

- » Adopt the National Street Station Area Plan
- » Acquire property, abandoned UP railroad right-of-way between upper and lower Wellington.
- » Remove UP RR Freight Lines through downtown Elgin. Freight lines to utilize Metra Commuter rail lines.
- » Acquire property, and/or work with the owner of Clock Tower Shopping Plaza to secure dedicated ROW as outlined within this report.

Construction of the roadways/improvements, can be initiated by either the City of Elgin, the current parcel owner, or a developer. It is recommended that future streets become part of the public right-of-way system, and not be privatized, as they have the potential to become access points for multiple entities.

Following the previously listed items, improvements/recommendations outlined in this report can be accomplished as the market demands/allows, and are not dependent on a sequence of events.

Funding Mechanism Alternatives

Financial attainability is among the most critical elements to implementation of the advisory recommendations of a Transit Oriented Development Plan. To assist the City of Elgin in identifying and applying for the monies necessary to implement the advisory recommendations over the next several years, an inventory of potential funding sources has been compiled. The funding sources listed within this report are intended to serve only as an initial guide to the City of Elgin in undertaking the significant number of improvements for the plan. The potential funding sources are listed by program name and provide preliminary details on project eligibility, administrator, general applicability to the City of Elgin, and an internet link to acquire additional information.





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Acknowledgements

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Richard Dunne - Council Member
Robert Gilliam - Council Member
David Kaptain - Council Member
John Prigge - Council Member
F. John Steffen - Council Member
Mike Warren - Council Member

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Local residents

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Linda Conro – Neighbors of South East Elgin

Business leaders

Leo Nelson, Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce
Tonya Hudson –Downtown Neighborhood Association

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This document summarizes the work conducted for the City of Elgin. The document was prepared under contract with the Regional Transportation Authority of Northeastern Illinois. Preparation of the document was financed in part through a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, and the Regional Transportation Authority. The contents of the document do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, the Regional Transportation Authority or the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Regional Map of Study Area Boundary



Study Area Boundary

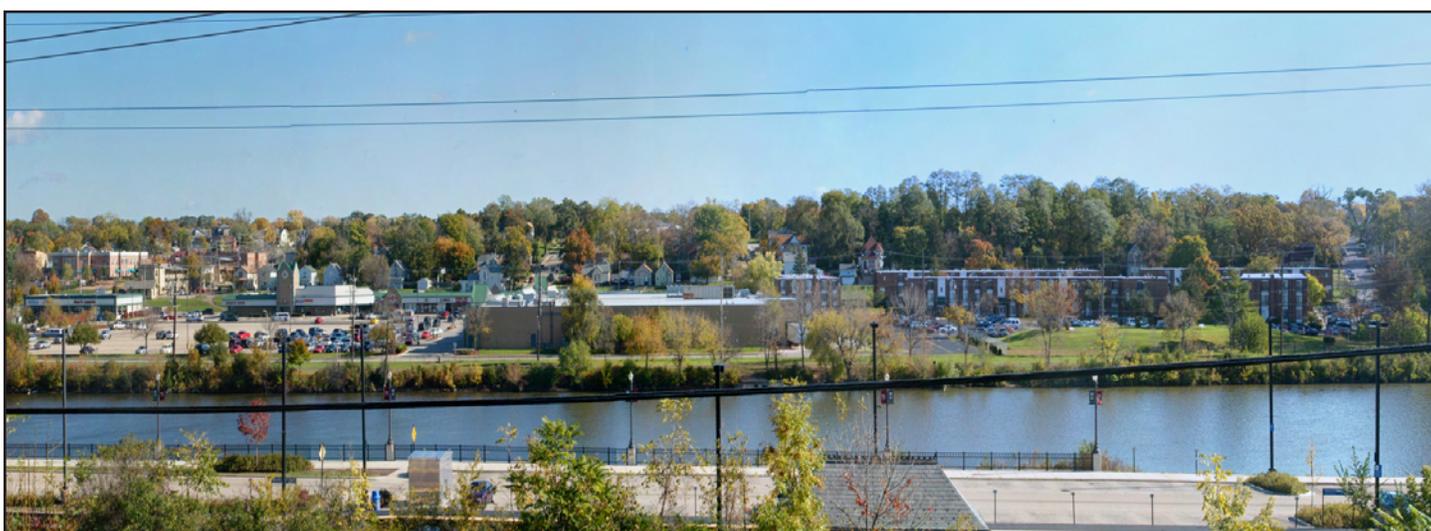
The National Street Metra Station Area Plan boundary consists of approximately 290 acres generally located south of Elgin's historic central business district. The study area is bisected by the Fox River and has a boundary defined by existing collector streets centered on the National Street bridge crossing over the Fox River and the National Street Metra Station and parking area.

The primary goal of the TOD (Transit Oriented Development) is to evaluate the sites surrounding the National Street Metra Station for the following:

- » Create recommendations to address commuter parking needs at National Street Metra Station.
- » Create recommendations for existing sites to be improved per a long range TOD plan.
- » Create recommendations regarding open space/parks available to the public.
- » Create recommendations regarding streetscape issues/deficits.
- » Create recommendations to address the architecture environment through design standards.
- » Create recommendations for improvements to vehicular transportation needs.
- » Create recommendations relative to pedestrian transportation.



Study Area Boundary is centered around the National Street Metra Train Station. The majority of the study area is less than 1/2 mile from the Train Station.



Portion of Planning Area looking East towards Clock Tower Plaza

National Street Station Area Land Use Plan



Proposed Land Use Classifications

Redevelopment:

R-MU - Redevelop Mixed Use: This land use category calls for significant redevelopment of the area with most of the existing uses and buildings to be removed and replaced. This land use allows for new mixed use structures. They may include retail, entertainment, office, institutional properties and housing. Consideration should be given to the context of surrounding uses and structures in terms of the intensity of new proposed uses, architectural design, building height, site carrying capacity and parking needs. While the redevelopment would remove most or all of the existing structures, it may be determined that an individual structure should be retained in the redevelopment design. Buildings to be retained would be those that have architectural and historical merit that can also become a viable adaptive reuse.

R-SF - Redevelop Single Family: This land use category calls for significant redevelopment of the area which is currently a majority of single family housing or adjacent to existing single family housing. This land use denotes that the location is most appropriate for single family homes in an area that is best served to allow for the potential consolidation and re-platting of existing parcels and the removal and replacement of most of the existing structure. There may be selected existing structures that merit significant or minor rehabilitation that should remain in place. This land use category also includes the need for significant improvement or complete replacement of existing infrastructure in order to facilitate the improvement of the housing.

R-MF - Redevelop Multi-Family: This land use category calls for significant or entire redevelopment of the area where it is appropriate to locate higher density housing where it is adjacent and/or in close proximity to retail services and transit opportunities. New Multi-Family housing should include design guidelines to create an urban environment where buildings front along streets that create an inviting pedestrian atmosphere. Larger parking areas should be placed behind or beneath the structures. The streets should be public streets that are well lit and accommodate on-street parking, sidewalks and street trees. The buildings should be designed in a manner to avoid a large monolithic structure creating a negative visual impact. The new Multi Family housing is anticipated to allow for a mix of for sale and for rent housing units that will serve the local market demand.

Conservation/Rehabilitation

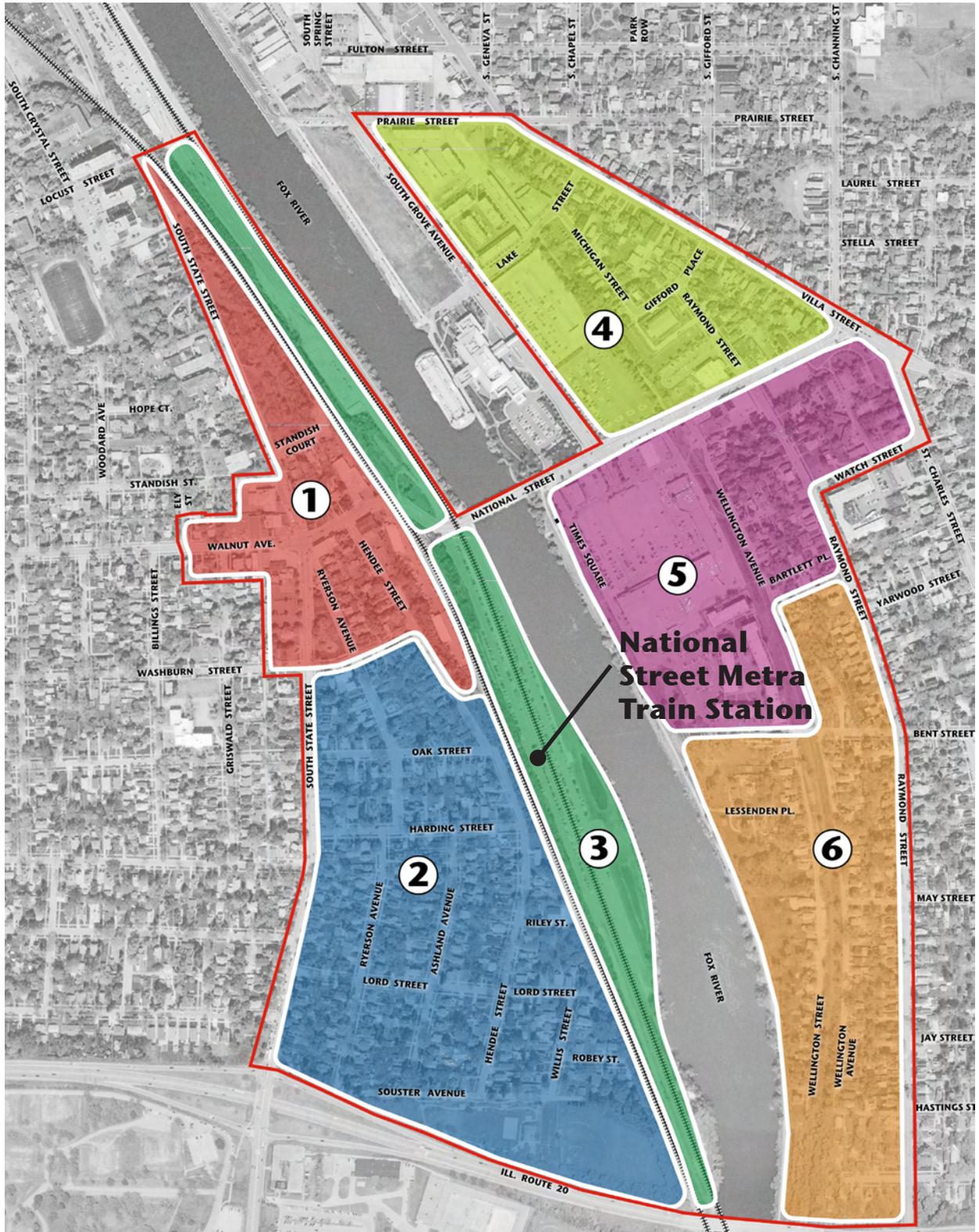
CR-SF - Conservation/Rehabilitation Single Family: This land use denotes areas that have predominately existing single family structures. While these areas may include some original single family structures that have been converted to multi family use, the long term intent is to return to original single family use. There may be isolated cases where an existing structure is beyond the point that rehabilitation is feasible to return the structure to a viable and contributing single family use. For both rehabilitation and isolated replacement of homes, consideration needs to be given to the architecture and history of each structure.

CR-MF - Conservation/Rehabilitation Multi-Family: This land use denotes areas that have predominately existing multi-family use structures in an area that is appropriate for that use. These areas also include a substantial collection of structures that merit rehabilitation rather than replacement. These structures contribute to the historic urban fabric of the neighborhood and the streetscape and may need rehabilitation. There may be isolated cases where an existing structure is beyond the point where rehabilitation is feasible to return the structure to a viable and contributing multi-family use. For both rehabilitation and isolated replacement of the structure, consideration needs to be given to the architecture and history of each structure as well as the site carrying capacity to support the number of existing or proposed residential units.

Strategic Redevelopment

SR-MR - Strategic Redevelopment Mixed Residential: This land use area includes both single family homes, single family home conversions to multi-family and multi family structures. These areas require strategic planning in greater detail to create a positive evolution, working towards a combination of rehabilitation and redevelopment. Mixed Residential in this area can include; single family, town homes, condominiums, and/or apartments. In the areas fronting Villa Street or Wellington Avenue, an effort should be made to remove the individual driveways and access the lot from the rear by constructing a new alley system. Many structures in this area merit rehabilitation while other structures may be replaced. Redevelopment and rehabilitation of this area will require strategic planning and investment that will require a private public partnership. The positive evolution of these areas may also require the consolidation and/or cooperation of many individual landowners in order to make significant changes.

Sub-Area Map



Introduction

In order to evaluate the overall plan effectively, it has been divided into 6 Sub-Areas. Each of these areas has been studied in depth, and the recommendations for each area are within the following pages.

These Sub-Area divisions have been created with long term redevelopment in mind. Each Sub-Area can be studied independent of the others. Likewise, throughout this report, each recommendation can be accomplished independent of the others. However, the overall plan of the Study Area was devised with the entire area eventually being rehabilitated.

The City of Elgin needs to begin work to acquire ownership of the abandoned UP Railroad ROW (right-of-way) that runs along the east side of the river, centered between Wellington Street and Wellington Avenue. This ROW has been abandoned as a railway line, and should be incorporated into the City as potential open space and roadway right-of-way. This ribbon of property is challenging, given the topographic conditions. At this time, the City is performing the maintenance on the parcel, and billing the Railroad for the work.

The City of Elgin should work with the Union Pacific Railroad to begin negotiations to abandon their right-of-way west of the Metra tracks from the Fox River to the west side of Elgin along the west side of the Fox River. The UP RR Freight Line is not heavily utilized and would better serve the residents of Elgin if the City took ownership of the property and worked to create additional trails for their existing trail system.

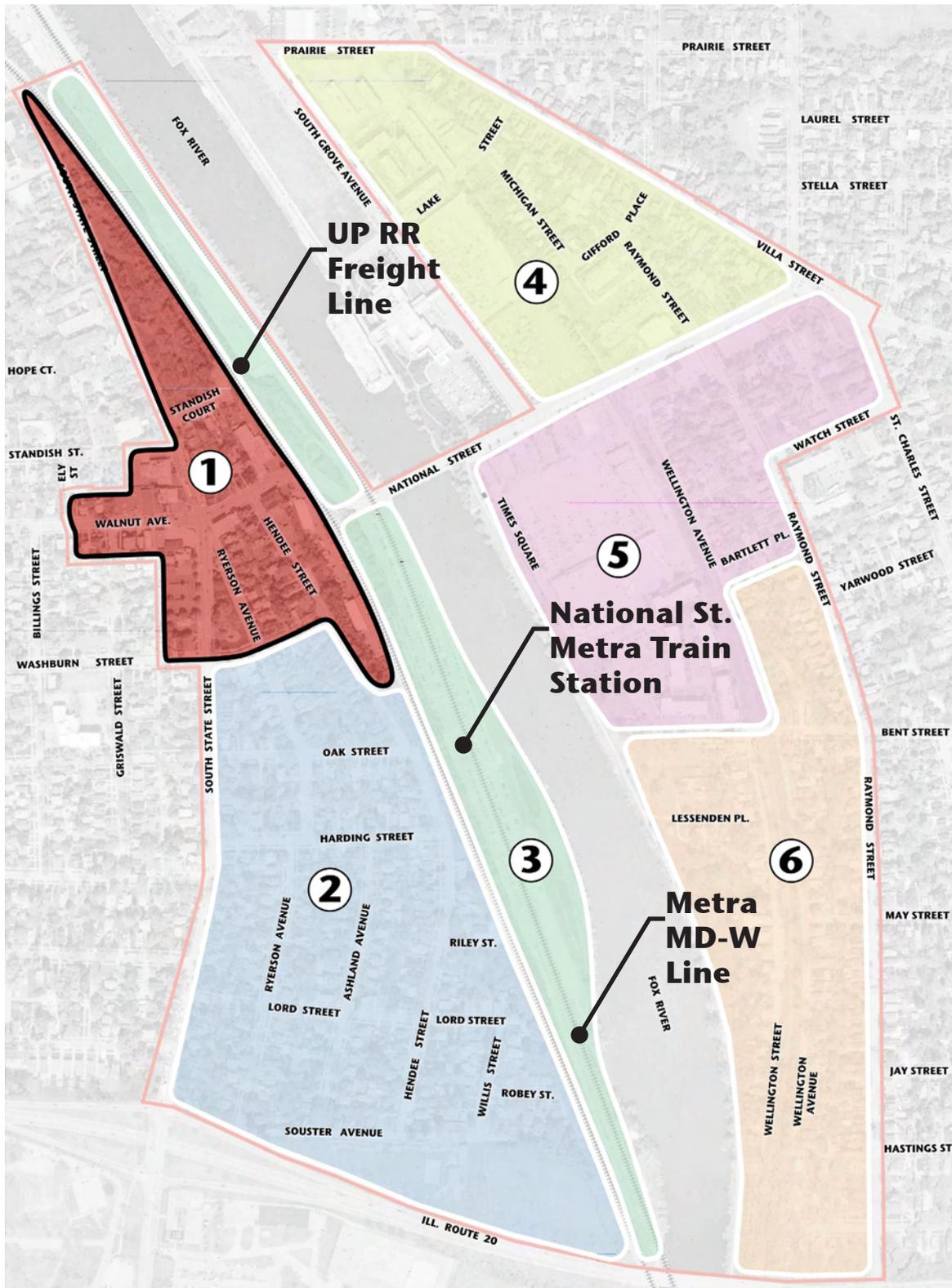
The implementation of the remainder of the master plan can be accomplished in phases that are independent from one another.

This plan seeks to set out a vision with guidelines for the purpose of guiding the City of Elgin, developers and property owners in making future decisions. The implementation will happen over time and will depend on market conditions and the willingness of property owners to participate.

To the extent that implementation will be incremental, it is paramount to have a consensus by residents and governing entities, for the overall study area, in order to achieve the best possible outcome over a period of time.



Sub-Area 1



Sub-Area 1

Observations

Arriving at the State Street (IL Route 31) National Street / Walnut Street corridor you begin to see a variety of newer and older commercial structures that unfortunately do not form a positive impression at this key point of arrival to the City of Elgin. Not only is the aesthetic impression poor, but the intersection creates a challenging environment for pedestrians with narrow sidewalks close to traffic.

The physical and visual “street wall” that begins to define the pedestrian realm is missing as some of the buildings are pushed back from the street. Where historic commercial structures remain, the condition of the mixed use buildings is poor and uninviting with narrow sidewalks, a by-product from previous roadway widening efforts. The sidewalks along the roadways are

also compromised by numerous curb cuts into private lots and driveways that contribute to the challenging pedestrian environment.

The topographic changes, in excess of 40 vertical feet, from the National Street bridge to State Street (IL Route 31) creates multiple issues. Tight curves in the roadway to accommodate additional slope, can be difficult to navigate, particularly in inclement weather. This is true not only for vehicle movements, but pedestrians.

A notable item that is missing from the intersection is identification that you are in the City of Elgin. As this intersection can be considered the entrance to the downtown area, the City of Elgin should mark the corner with an identity sign.



Existing conditions looking southeast

Sub-Area 1

Improvement Plan

The proposed plan for Sub-Area 1 seeks to repair the urban fabric at the primary intersection of State Street / IL Route 31 and National Street / Walnut Street.

This area represents three unique sub-sections or quadrants of the South State Street / IL Route 31 and National Street / Walnut Street intersection. Each quadrant of the intersection is unique in its relationship to the larger neighborhood and accessibility to the National Street Metra Station. Each of the intersection quadrants has specific existing conditions as well as potential for change which can have a dramatic effect at this key location.

Following is a more detailed description of the Northeast quadrant, the Southeast quadrant and the combined Northwest and Southwest quadrants.

Northeast Quadrant

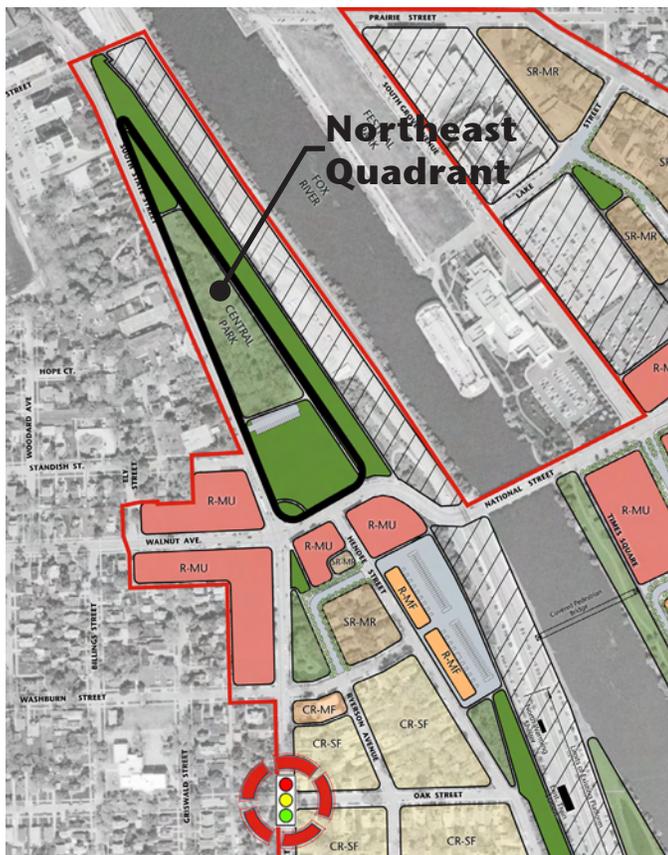
The Northeast quadrant of the intersection of National Street and South State Street is an eclectic arrangement of commercial, residential, mixed-use, open space and industrial uses. This area is a wedge of property, triangular in shape, in which the majority

of the area includes Central Park. This area consists of approximately 7.4 acres of land of which 4.2 acres is currently open space and 3.2 acres is currently developed land.

This area within Sub-Area 1 overlooks the Fox River, Festival Park and the Grand Victoria Casino. There is an opportunity to capture this scenic vista which is currently blocked by the existing built environment. The existing group of buildings is predominately made up of non-contributing structures. This collection of mixed use, converted single family, light industrial, and commercial buildings remains as an isolated group which has a lack of parking and is difficult for vehicular and pedestrian access.



Standish Court and South State Street at Central Park



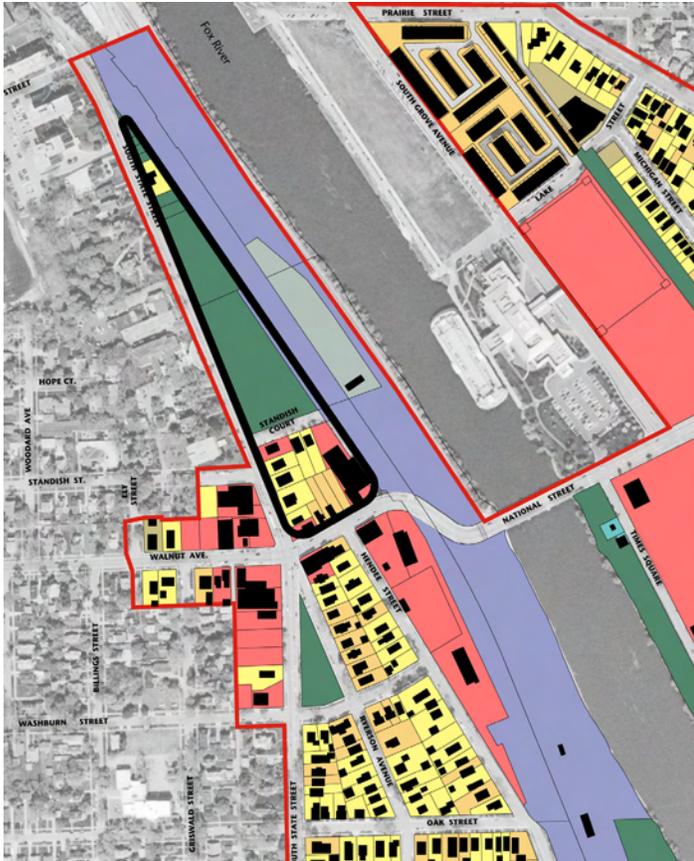
The Elgin National Street Station Area Plan recommends that these buildings be removed so that Central Park may be extended to National Street.

It is also recommended that a focal point for residents and patrons visiting the City of Elgin be established which will capture views from all directions as you approach this gateway intersection. The focal point would consist of a small public plaza and a monument that should be designed to take advantage of the site.

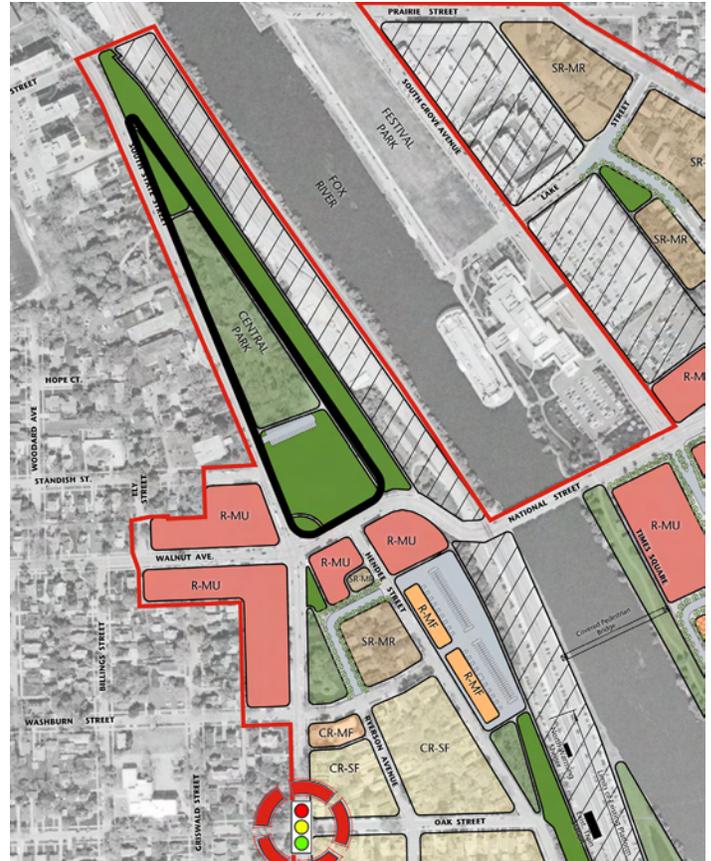
Existing Standish Court can be converted into a new parking area to allow residents from greater distances the opportunity to visit Central Park. The balance of existing curb-cuts currently serving the businesses along National Street and State Street would be removed. Eliminating the existing curb-cuts will reduce conflicts with traffic movements through the intersection.

At this time, the City is attempting to negotiate the removal of the billboards that line National Street between State Street and the Fox River. It is recommended that this endeavor remain a priority to remove unattractive and oversized advertisements from this area.

Sub-Area 1



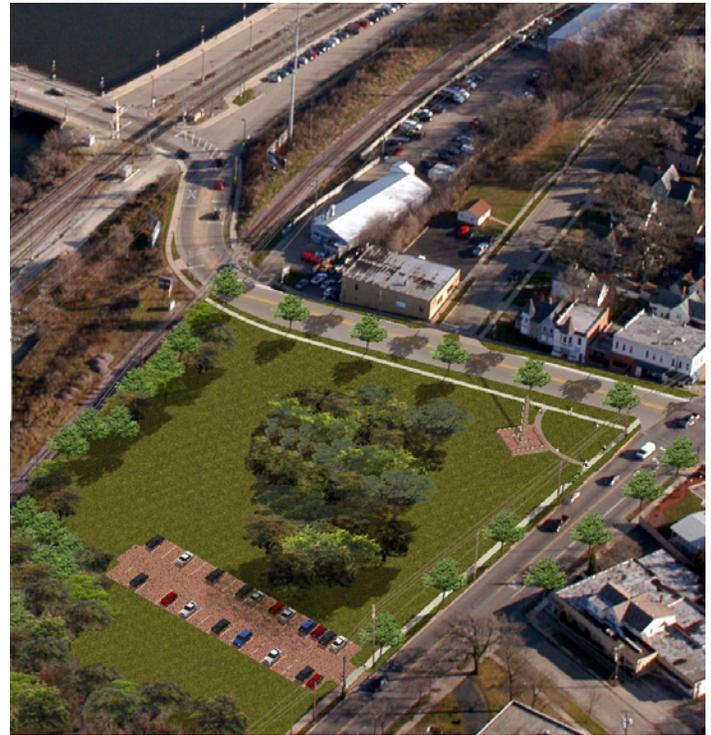
Northeast Quadrant - existing conditions



Northeast Quadrant - proposed conditions



Existing conditions at the northeast corner of National and State Streets

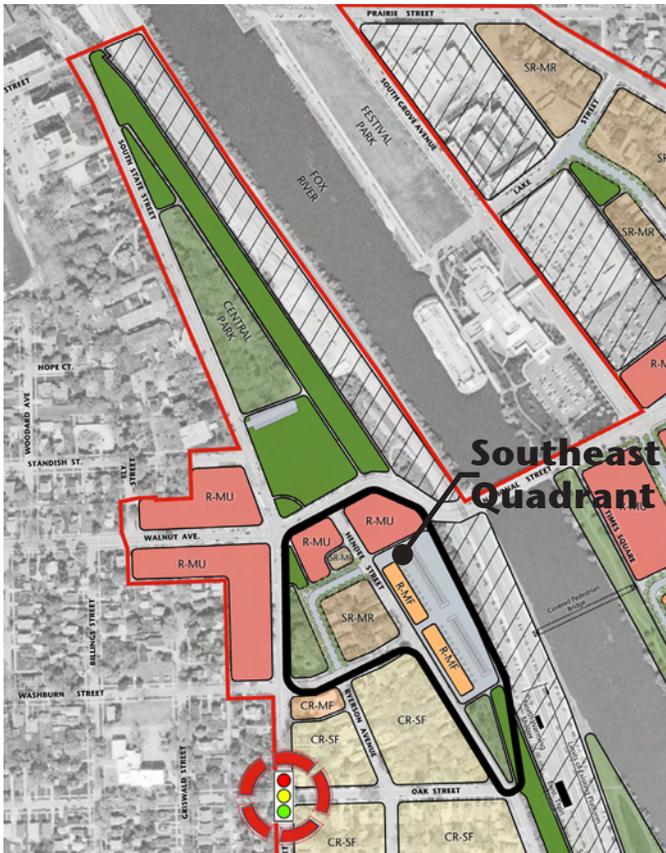


Proposed extension of Central Park to National Street

Sub-Area 1

Southeast Quadrant

The Southeast quadrant of the intersection of State Street and National Street is a 10.5 acre area that also includes an eclectic mix of land uses in a relatively small area. There are commercial business as well as multi-family residential properties within this quadrant. Many of the multi-family properties are the result of conversions of historic single family homes.



This quadrant sits on a bluff overlooking the Fox River. This area includes a fair amount of topographic relief and sits approximately sixty (60) feet above the Metra railroad tracks and the National Street Metra Station area. The natural conditions, as well as the impediment of a freight rail line between the neighborhood area and the station area, prohibits direct access to the National Street Metra Station from Hendee Street.

The proposed plan recommends that a parking structure be developed with an elevator and pedestrian tunnel to provide a direct and convenient linkage from this neighborhood area to the National Street Metra Station. If this pedestrian access and parking is developed, it will create a convenient access not only

to this immediate quadrant of the National Street and State Street (IL Route 31) intersection, but to the larger residential neighborhoods to the south, west and northwest.

A parking facility as shown on the proposed plan would be constructed along the east side of Hendee Street within a wedge shaped parcel that is currently used for commercial uses. This parking structure would be accessible from the street level, and the parking deck would extend down from that level, meeting the current elevation of the Metra commuter parking lots. At full build-out, the four story deck could generate approximately 990 additional parking spaces.

This parking deck could serve multiple purposes. It would provide parking for the new mixed use buildings along National Street, additional parking for Metra commuters, and extra parking for Elgin events that occur in Festival Park. Metra estimates that an additional 150 to 250 commuter parking spaces may be required by 2030 due to projected growth in population and the number of households. The proposed parking structure could help to satisfy a portion of the projected demand.

Row homes or townhomes are proposed to line a portion of the parking structure to create an attractive residential façade along the Hendee Street Corridor, and overlooking the Fox River.

It should be noted that the land area along the east side of Hendee Street is narrow. This land area can be increased in width by obtaining the UP Railroad right-of-way adjacent to this parcel. This subject is covered in greater detail in the description of Sub-Area 3. The size and design of the proposed structured parking facility will depend on successful acquisition of this right-of-way.

Due to difficult traffic conditions on National Street, (steep slopes, tight curves) it would be appropriate to evaluate the possibility of limiting access from Hendee Street onto National Street once the parking structure is in place. A study should be initiated to determine if the “T” intersection should be redesigned to allow only right-in, right-out access at Hendee Street onto National Street. This type of access control should help improve traffic flow and minimize the potential for accidents due to conflicting movements on the hill west of the river. Restricting this traffic movement at National Street would direct the traffic to the IL Route 31/Oak Street intersection, where a traffic signal has been proposed as discussed in Sub Area 2.

The feasibility of constructing a parking deck will need to be studied beyond the scope of this report. Multiple entities, including, but not limited to, the City, developers, residents, Metra, etc., will have input to the

Sub-Area 1

design and use of the structure. Factors too numerous to review in detail within this document will need to be considered. Some of the issues specific to Metra are:

- » Metra estimates structured parking costs approximately \$23,000 per space, whereas surface parking costs approximately \$10,000 per space.
- » Parking structures are extremely costly to build, operate, and maintain.
- » Throughout each step of the redevelopment process, the amount of commuter parking in the station area should remain at its current level, resulting in no net loss of spaces during any of the phases of construction.
- » Any new or replacement parking should be within the line of sight of a station.
- » Metra does not have funds to build structures for commuter parking.
- » Grant dollars for the construction of structured parking has been limited to date and securing these funds is a highly competitive process.
- » Consideration should be given to involving multiple partners (public and private) in order to share the spaces and costs of a proposed parking structure and any new infrastructure associated with the facility (roads, sidewalks, etc.)
- » While Metra has participated in funding new commuter parking spaces within structures, the level of participation has generally equated to the cost of building an equivalent number of surface spaces (e.g. \$10,000 per space).
- » Commuter parking fees within the proposed parking structure need to remain comparable and competitive with commuter parking fees within the Metra system.

In the interim and as funding becomes available and need arises, a smaller surface lot may be constructed on the proposed parking deck site. Where possible, the surface lot will include features that will make it possible for a deck to be installed. The installation of the deck may take part in multiple phases. Images on the following pages describe how the deck may look and be phased over a period of time. An additional engineering study will be needed to study the deck further. Access to the surface lot will utilize the existing crossing at National Street until a tunnel can be constructed under the UP Rail Road lines.

The exhibit on page 17 demonstrates how the proposed parking deck will improve accessibility to the station area for the residents of Elgin. In contrast to the existing

long lineal commuter parking lots, the proposed parking structure provides multiple vehicular access points (shown by the heavy black lines), which will allow traffic at peak commuter times (early morning and late evening) to dissipate more quickly.

Likewise, pedestrians will have easier access to the National Street Metra Train Station through the proposed parking structure. Possible walking routes are along the existing sidewalk system, illustrated with a red, dashed line in the exhibit.

In order to facilitate traffic flow and access to the proposed parking structure, the plan recommends that a stoplight be installed at the intersection of Oak Street and IL Route 31/South State Street.

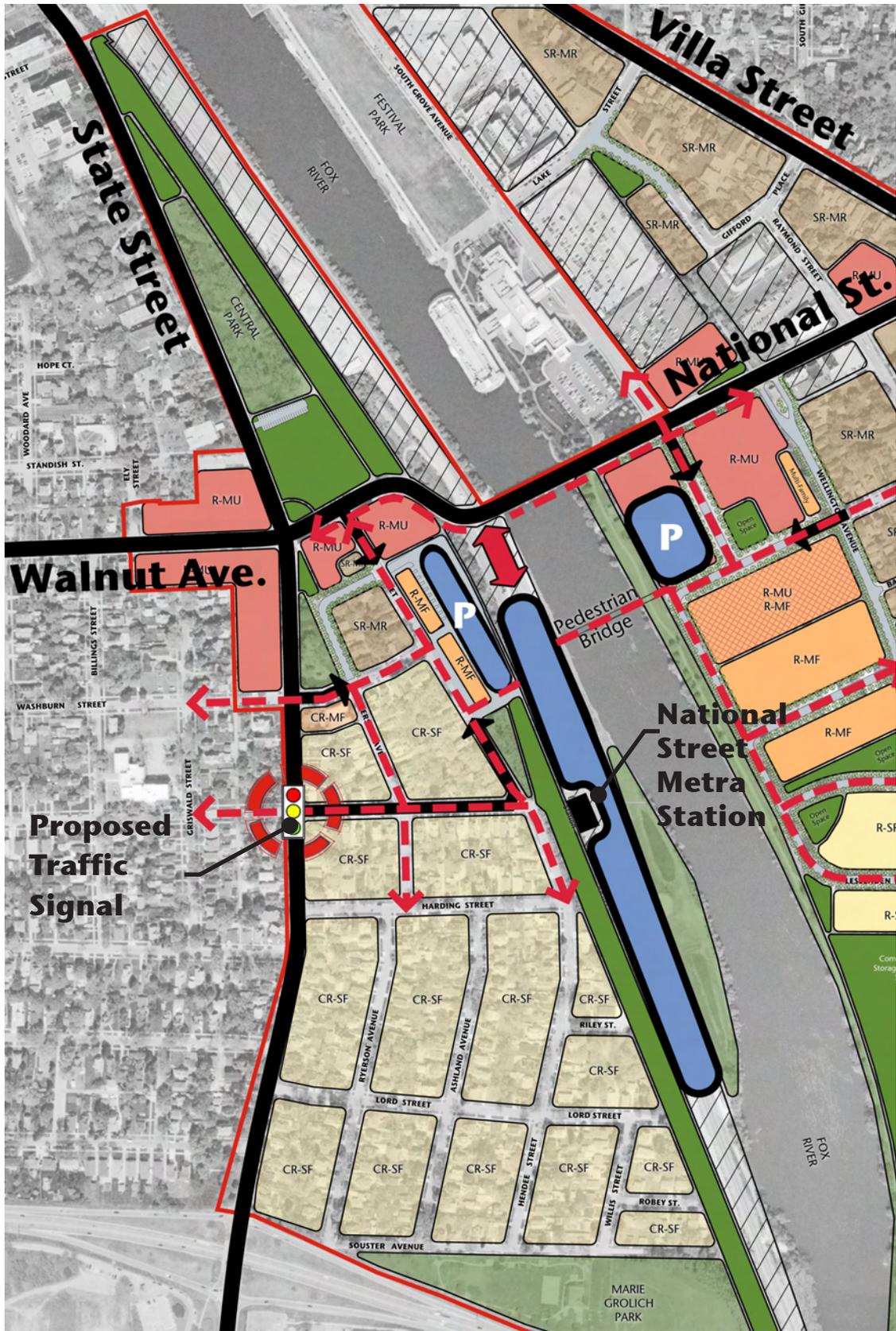
This intersection currently serves as a busy pedestrian school crossing which would greatly benefit from the addition of a signalized intersection. Even with a school crossing guard it is difficult for pedestrians to cross IL Route 31/South State Street as there is a great deal of passenger car and truck traffic. A signalized intersection would create a safe crossing at all times of day, and would strengthen the pedestrian and bicycle linkages to the National Street Station Area from neighborhoods located west of IL Route 31/South State Street.

Cross-sections representing potential phasing for the proposed parking structure are shown on the following pages. The four (4) phases progress from a surface parking lot with approximately 280 parking spaces, to a four (4) level parking structure with approximately 990 parking spaces and multi-family housing facing Hendee Street.

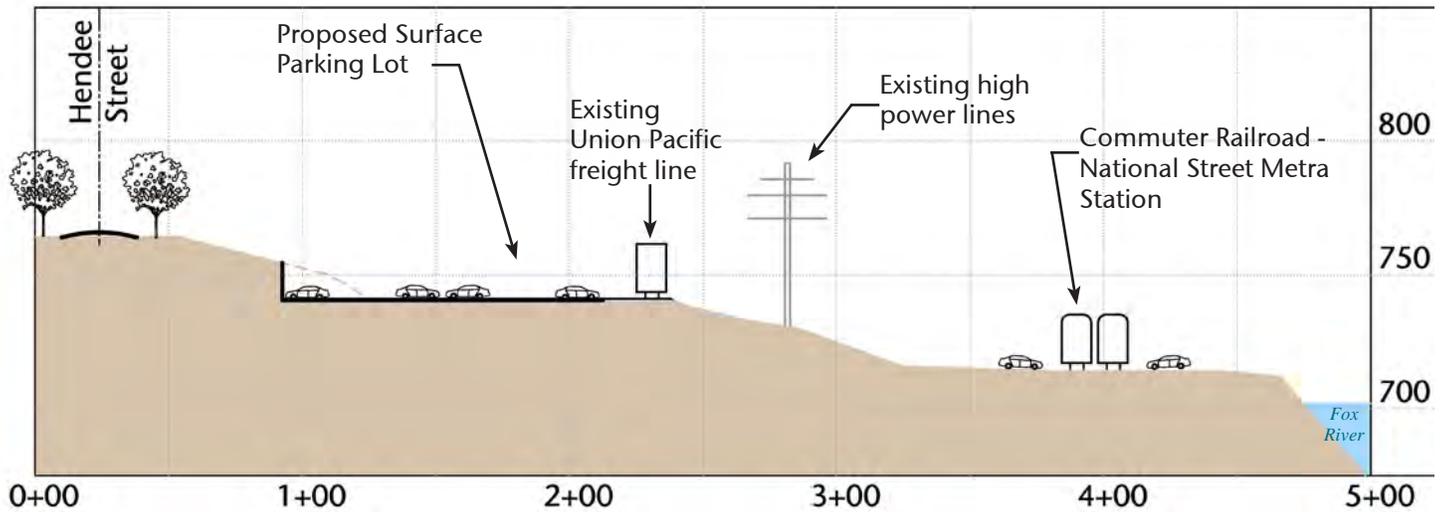
The purpose of the cross-sections is to demonstrate the ability to incrementally add a significant amount of parking at this location through multiple phases over subsequent years. The need for parking and available funding will determine the pace at which parking spaces are added.

- » Phase 1 begins as a surface parking lot requiring minimal infrastructure improvements and providing approximately 280 parking spaces.
- » Phase 2 progresses to a two level parking structure with an approximate total capacity of 528 parking spaces.
- » Phase 3 adds a third level to the parking structure with a total capacity of approximately 792 parking spaces.
- » Phase 4 progresses to a four level parking structure with an approximate total capacity of 990 parking spaces, and includes multi-family housing facing Hendee Street.

Sub-Area 1

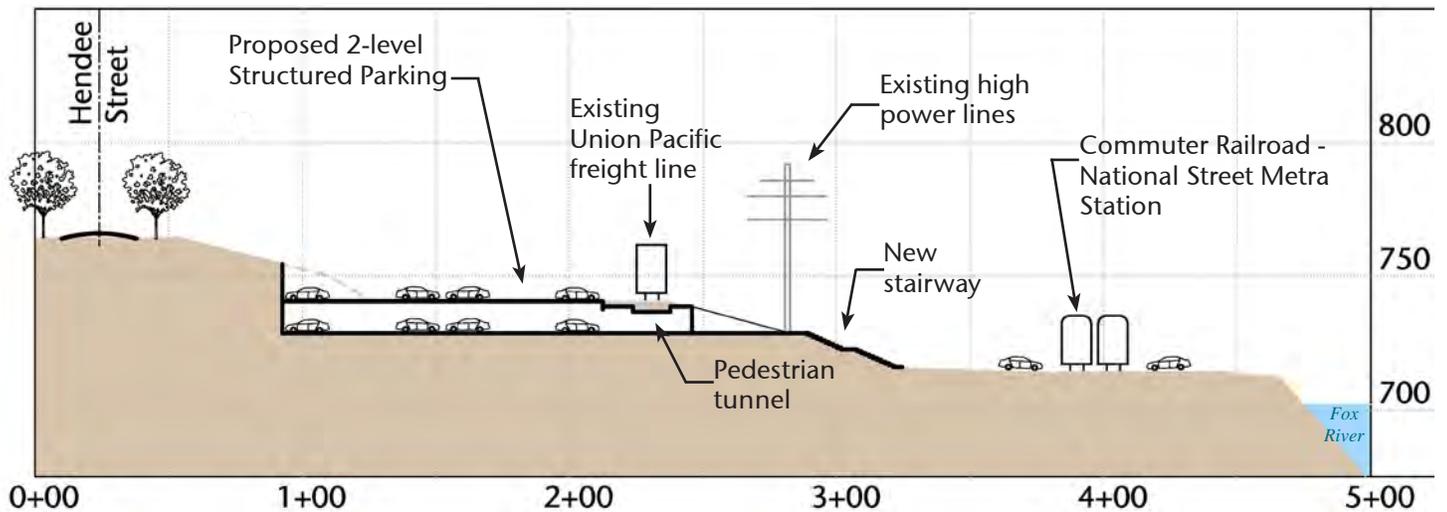


Sub-Area 1



Phase 1: Surface Parking Lot. Access via existing National Street sidewalk and curb cut.

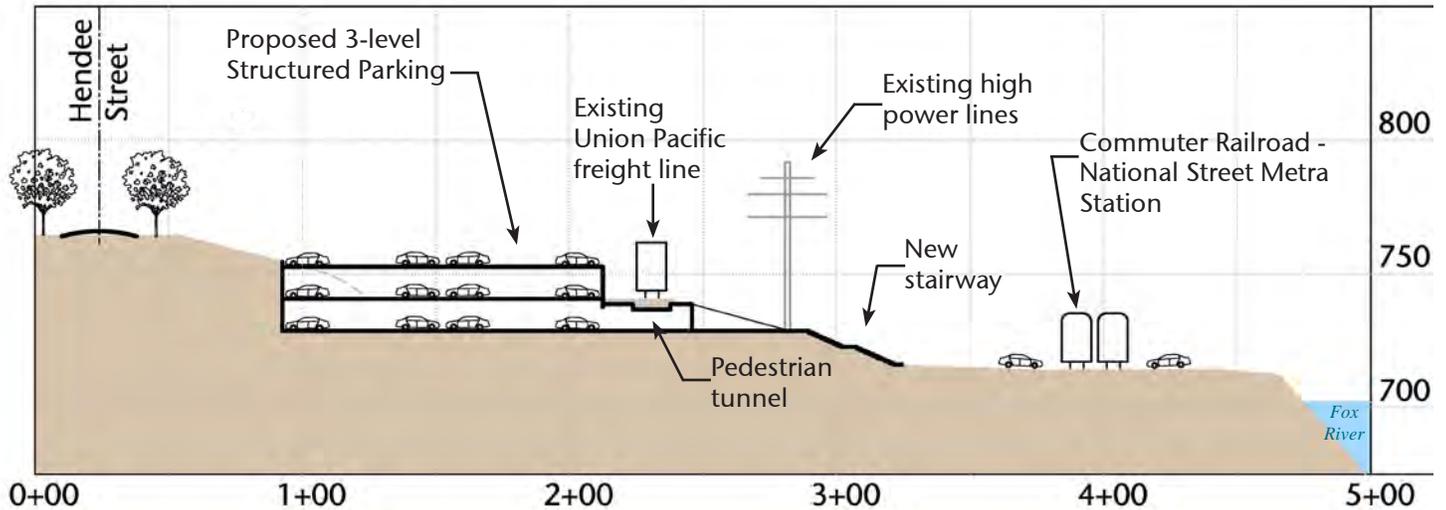
Phase 1 estimated parking capacity is 280 spaces.



Phase 2: Two-level structured parking with tunnel beneath existing freight tracks to existing Metra parking and platform.

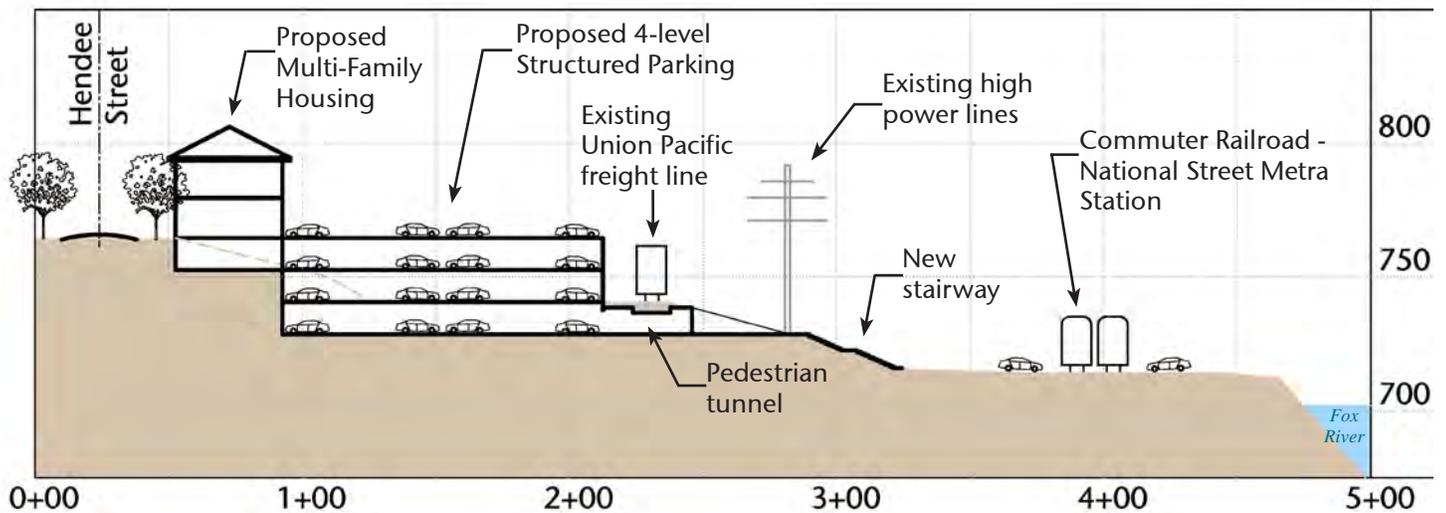
Phase 2 estimated parking capacity is 528 spaces.

Sub-Area 1



Phase 3: Addition of third level to parking structure.

Phase 3 estimated parking capacity is 792 spaces.

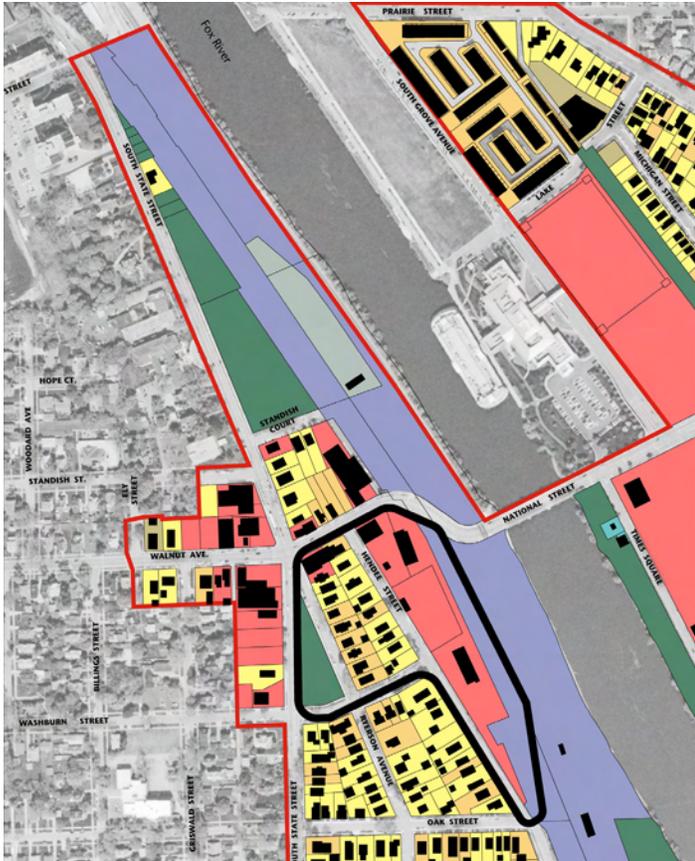


Phase 4: Addition of fourth level to parking structure and construction of rowhomes facing onto Hendee Street.

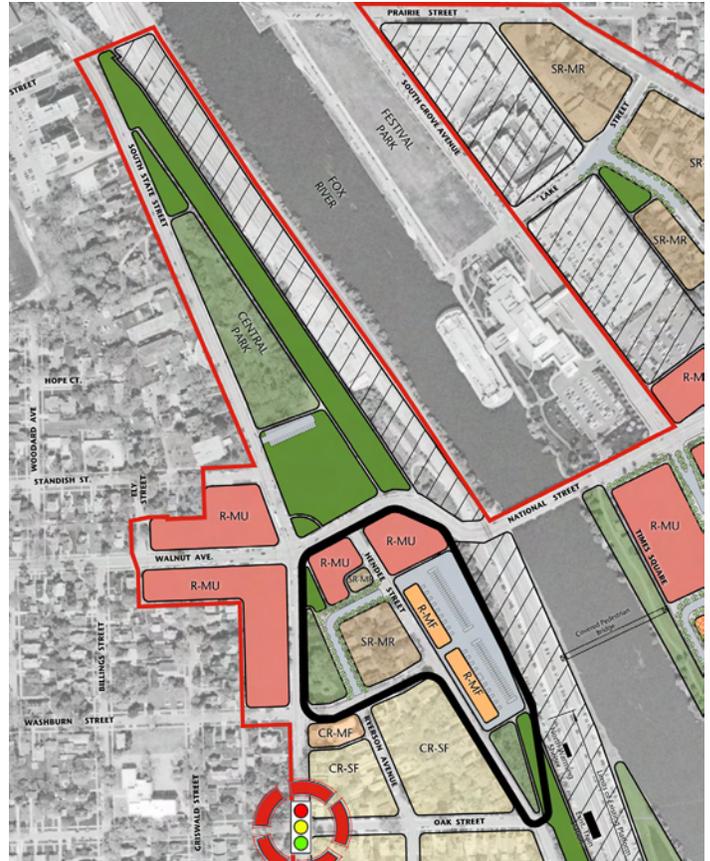
Phase 4 estimated parking capacity is 990 spaces.

Note: Structured parking design as shown is based on estimated grades. Detailed design will require on-site surveying to verify existing cross-section and actual parking design and capacity.

Sub-Area 1



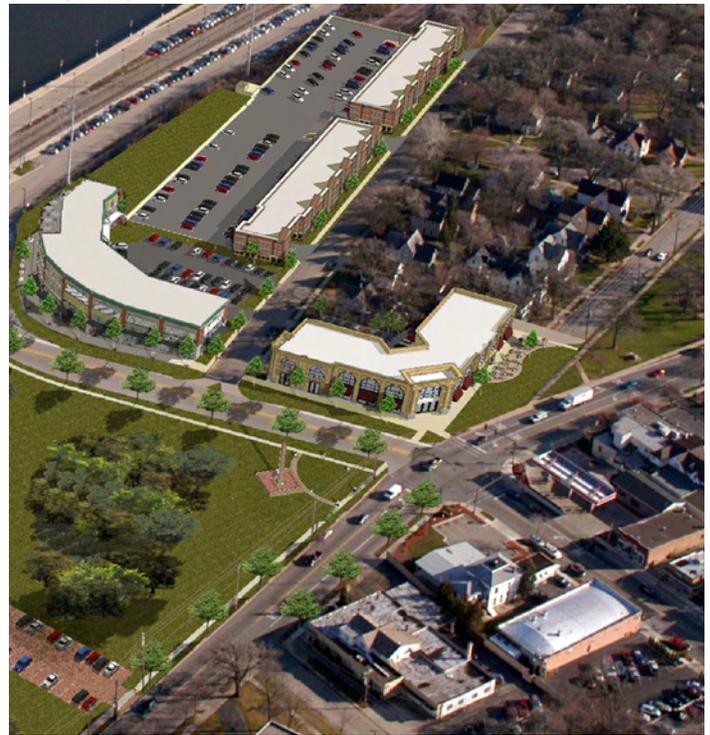
Southeast Quadrant - existing conditions



Southeast Quadrant - proposed conditions, showing full build-out of the parking deck



Existing conditions at the southeast corner of National and State Streets



Proposed redevelopment of the southeast quadrant, showing full build-out of the parking deck

Sub-Area 1

The proposed plan recommends that the existing commercial structures along National Street east of IL Route 31/South State Street be redeveloped with new mixed-use buildings. New development guidelines would call for new structures to be moved back slightly from the existing National Street curb line to allow for installation of new, wider sidewalks allowing for tree planting and a landscape treatment to create both an attractive streetscape as well as provide a buffer for pedestrians.

The new structures would allow a mix of land-uses including retail, office and residential. The new structures should be designed to be in harmony with the historic Elgin architectural styles, but can take on a contemporary design. The new buildings would face National Street and have parking behind including the possible use of the proposed structured parking facility described earlier.

The proposed plan also calls for the extension of Ryerson Park to National Street by removing a section of Ryerson Avenue where it formerly intersected with National Street and IL Route 31/South State Street (see the existing conditions in the photograph on page 20). Replacing this paved area with the extension of Ryerson Park will open the southeast corner of the intersection creating a very attractive “long view” of Ryerson Park and allow for an attractive new green extension of the park all the way to National Street.

In the case that Ryerson Park is extended to National Street, the northerly 150’ of Ryerson Avenue would be removed and turned ninety degrees to the east to connect with Hendee Street. This change to Ryerson Avenue will eliminate the current dead end condition and also allow for improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation in this immediate area.

The new section of east/west roadway would help to create a better defined residential block. This area is comprised primarily of original single family homes converted to multiple dwelling units. Several of these home sites are in need of significant repair, possibly replacement.

This area is designated as Strategic Redevelopment Mixed Residential (SR-MR) on the proposed plan. This designation calls for the area to be studied in greater detail in order to make decisions regarding restoration vs. redevelopment on a parcel by parcel basis.

The SR-MR designation also allows for a mix of multi-family and single family structures within individual neighborhood blocks.

The extension of Ryerson Park to National Street combined with a new attractive mixed-use building at the southeast corner of the intersection will dramatically improve the aesthetics and use of this area. The proposed redevelopment would concentrate mixed-use buildings in close proximity to the new proposed pedestrian stairwell/elevator and tunnel to access the National Street Metra Station Area. The new structures will line National Street walking up the hillside from the railway tracks to the intersection with IL Route 31/South State Street. This will create an actual street wall feel for pedestrians. As mentioned earlier, the new pedestrian realm along National Street will allow for greatly improved utilization.

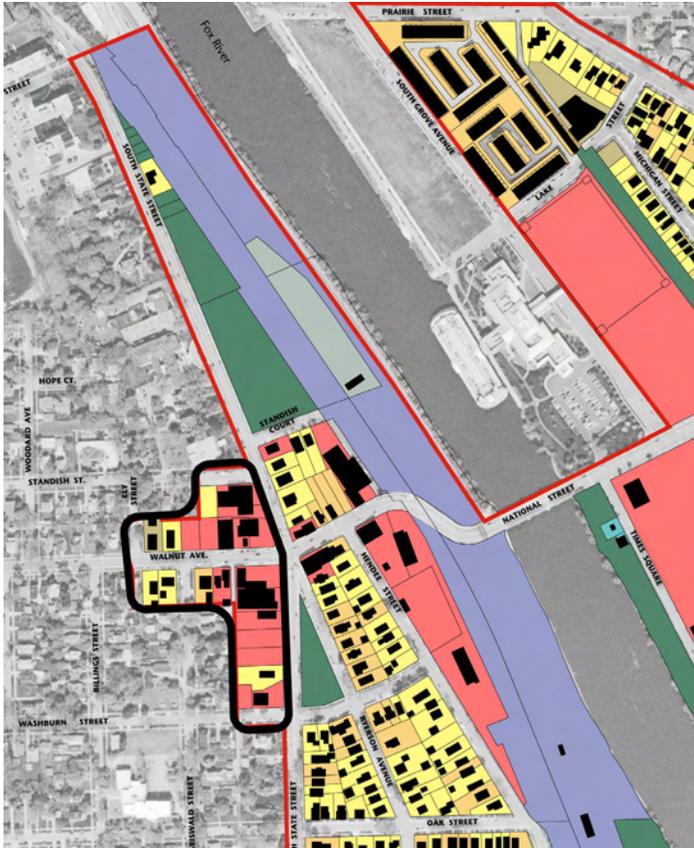


Ryerson Street at the existing dead-end.

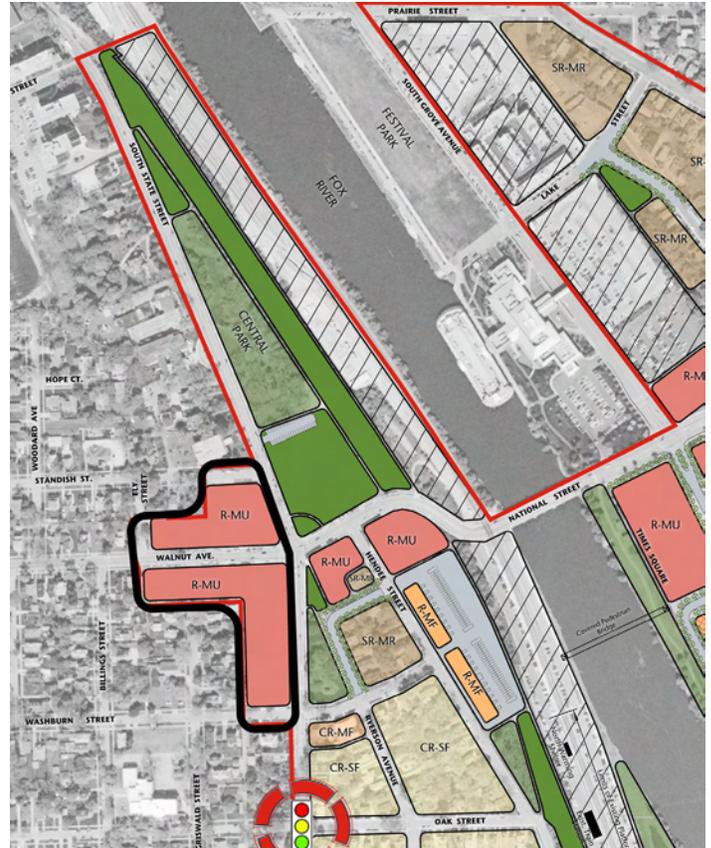


Ryerson Park looking north along State Street.

Sub-Area 1



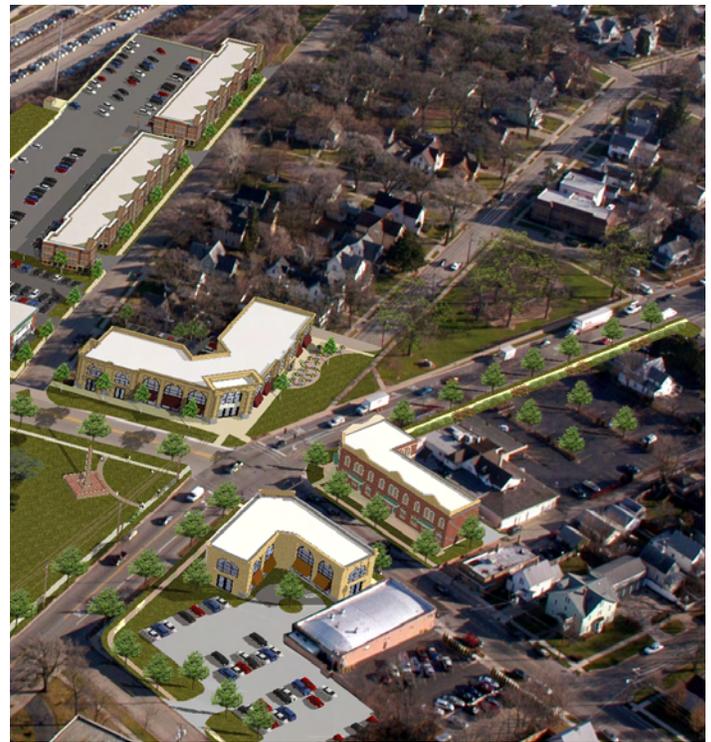
Northwest and Southwest Quadrants - existing conditions



Northwest and Southwest Quadrants - proposed conditions, (showing full build-out of parking deck in southeast quadrant)



Existing conditions at the Northwest and Southwest quadrants

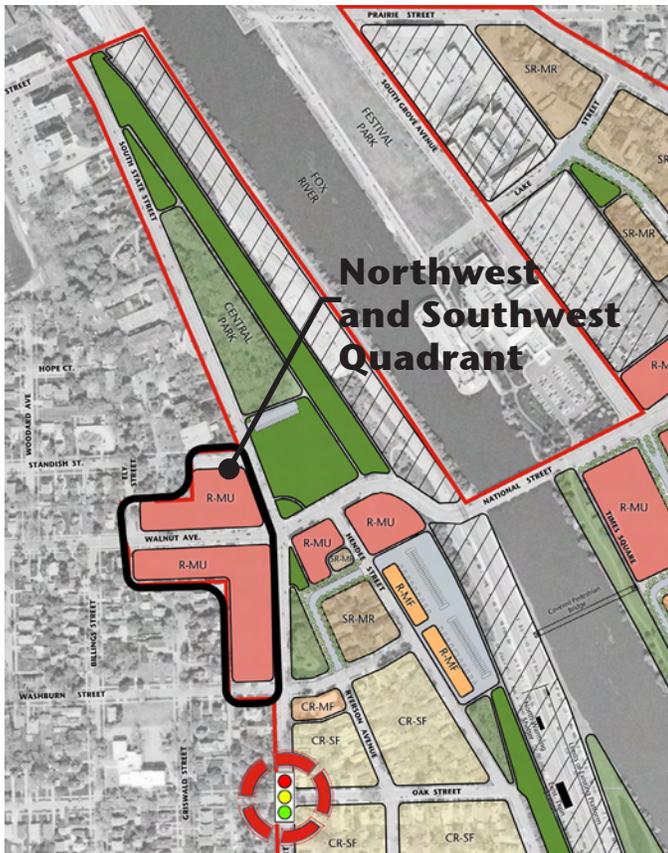


Proposed redevelopment of the Northwest and Southwest quadrants, (showing full build-out of parking deck in southeast quadrant)

Sub-Area 1

Northwest and Southwest Quadrant

The Northwest and Southwest quadrants of the Walnut Street and State Street (IL Route 31) intersection form a small retail node serving the casual visitor traffic as well as the immediate neighborhoods surrounding this area. These quadrants create a two block Walnut Street Corridor that includes established businesses. The proposed plan calls for both quadrants to be redeveloped (R-MU) with mixed-use buildings.



It should be noted that the definition of redevelopment for the purposes of this plan and planning document, includes a provision to preserve those structures that have architectural and historic merit. In both the northwest and southwest quadrants there are several structures that should remain. Redevelopment of new structures in concert with those buildings to remain will reinforce the street-wall to define this commercial neighborhood node.

This area is well established with a variety of commercial developments. A day care center, funeral home, restaurants, and converted single family residences

line both Walnut Avenue and State Street. A number of individual businesses have taken the initiative to renovate existing structures to accommodate today's needs.

At the northwest corner of the intersection the existing building (which was a former gas station) is setback from the streets. This existing condition works against the desire to create a sense of place at this gateway location. The Station Area Plan calls for new buildings to define the street-wall, creating an improved pedestrian realm along the roadways. This requires a "build to" line to be created rather than a "set-back" line. The plan envisions a new building constructed out to the corner of the northwest quadrant that will become a focal point entering the intersection from the east and from the south.

The street-wall should be extended west along both sides of Walnut Street balancing parking needs and working with structures that will remain. On the north side of Walnut Street, it may be possible to consolidate parcels to allow for an increase in building frontage with parking located behind, or north of the new structures along Walnut Street. This block redevelopment should take into account all of the parcels between Walnut Street and Standish Street to the north.

Consideration should also be given to reduce the number of curb-cuts on Walnut Street. Curb-cuts should be consolidated and if possible moved as far west from State Street as possible. A shared parking arrangement should also be evaluated in order to make the best use of the limited proposed re-development area.

The southwest quadrant of the intersection shares the same lack of building definition at the corner where currently there is an operating gas station. The existing gas station draws steady traffic onto a limited site area. The gas station also has wide curb-cuts on both State Street and Walnut Street which combined with the traffic, severely compromises the pedestrian realm at this key location.

The Station Area Plan calls for the redevelopment of this corner to create an attractive and inviting architectural design that will become a highly visible memorable landmark anchoring the southwest quadrant. Similar to the northwest corner, parcel consolidation may be required to balance the desired outcome of defining the street-wall along Walnut and State Streets with the need for parking and access to parking areas. The plan illustrates an L shaped redevelopment area parallel to Walnut Street and State Street.

Sub-Area 1



Existing conditions - Intersection of National Street/Walnut Avenue and IL Route 31/State Street



Extension of Central Park to National Street

Sub-Area 1

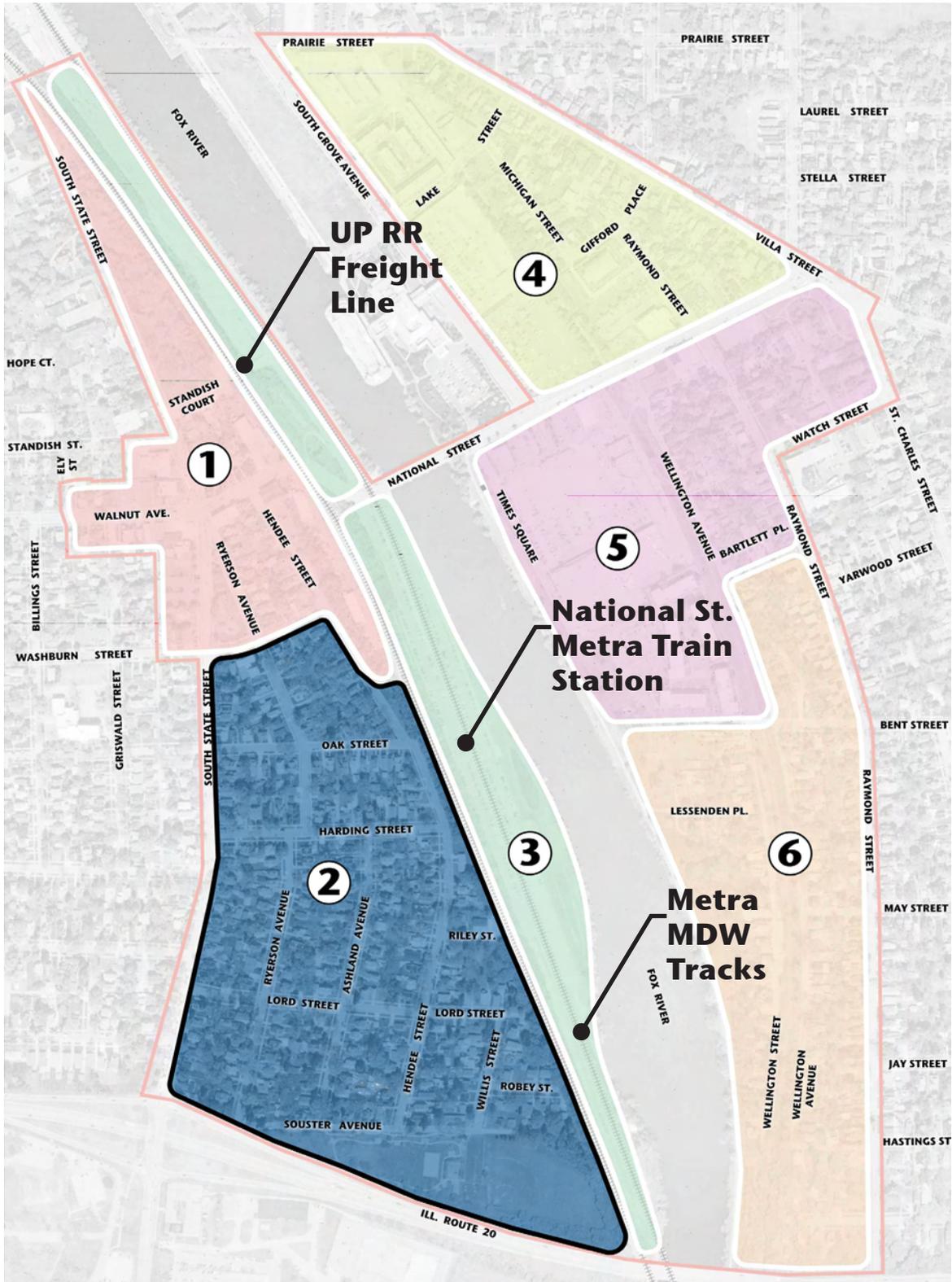


Redevelopment of the southeast quadrant, showing full build-out of parking deck



Redevelopment of the northwest and southwest quadrant, showing full build-out of parking deck in the southeast quadrant

Sub-Area 2



Sub-Area 2

Analysis

Sub-Area 2 is bounded by Washburn Street on the north, the UP railroad tracks and row on the east, US Route 20 on the south and State Street (IL Route 31) on the west. This sub-area is the largest sub-area within the National Street Station Area plan and includes 65 acres in land area.



Existing Conditions for Sub-Area 2. Current land use is shown in color and existing structures are darkened.

Land Use/Existing Assessment

Sub-Area 2 is a well established and intact neighborhood of predominately single family homes. A few original apartment buildings exist and many single family structures that have been converted to multi-family. A large active park exists at the south end of this Sub-Area. Marie Grolich Park is a vital amenity to this neighborhood. Streetscapes lack ample sidewalks, parkways and landscaping. Bus transit is available within 1/4 mile, but access into the Train Station is challenging primarily due to topographic conditions.

Marketing

This sub-area is entirely residential in nature. Strategy efforts emphasize the goal of rehabilitating and sustaining this area. From a market standpoint, homes in the area remain affordable, but are generally smaller and lack some modern conveniences. Proximity to Metra remains a key advantage, enhanced by improved access. As a result (and over time), we would expect there to be gradual pressure for housing teardown and replacement as well. Pressure for this can be offset by renovation programs (including sustainability measures), as well as clear standards for new construction in these areas. De-converting existing single family homes from multi-family status back to single-family status is a relevant goal.

Transportation

Sub Area 2 consists of a series of residential streets that have low volumes of traffic, although it is expected that there is “cut through” traffic in order to avoid the light at IL Route 31 and National Street.

While this entire neighborhood is in very close proximity to the National Street Metra Station, there is no direct access other than National Street to the north. Severe slopes, the existing UP Railroad, Metra commuter station is difficult due to the distance required to walk north to National Street and then return south down the linear commuter parking lots, to the platform. The walk along National Street is steep with no buffer from the National Street traffic.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the west is also difficult as there is no traffic control from US Route 20 on the south to National Street on the north. The near constant traffic along IL Route 31 makes turning movements in and out of the Sub-Area 2 neighborhood very difficult. In addition, there is a school crossing at Oak Street which is a challenge even with a crossing guard in place before and after school.

Observations

The majority of the homes in this area are well maintained. Some are in need of additional attention, and it may be in the interest of the City to explore code violations. A number of single family homes have been converted to multi-family, and not all have resulted in structures that are contributory to the neighborhood.

Lack of identity feature at US Route 20 and IL Route 31 is notable.

Sub-Area 2

Improvement Plan

The entire existing residential area within Sub-Area 2 is designated as Conservation/Rehabilitation (CR-SF) on the National Street Station Area Plan. This designation calls for the continued rehabilitation of the neighborhood and individual properties seeking to return multi tenant homes back to single family use.

This designation supports continued efforts by the City of Elgin to de-convert properties that are used for multiple dwelling structures that were originally intended for single family use. If there are properties in

this sub-area that are utilized as multi-family dwellings and that was the original use, then those properties would remain with that use and seek to be restored if necessary.

It is recommended that this area be evaluated for inclusion in the Historic Preservation District. Such strategy efforts will emphasize the goal of rehabilitating and sustaining this area.

This entire neighborhood is in very close proximity to the National Street Metra Station, yet there is no direct access into the train station. Currently, a resident from this neighborhood would have to walk north to National Street, easterly to enter the parking area, and then travel south down the long lined parking areas, to access the train platform. Combine this distance walked with the steep slopes and the lack of a buffer to National Street traffic for a pedestrian; and it is easy to see why residents perceive the walk as too difficult.

As presented earlier in the Improved Plan Section for Sub-Area 1, a proposed structured parking facility with a pedestrian stairwell and elevator is incorporated into the National Street Metra Station Area Plan. This infrastructure would allow residents of the Sub-Area 2 neighborhood a direct and convenient access to the Metra commuter rail station without having to drive or walk on National Street. In this case, there is a captive audience which needs a direct access to take greater advantage of the National Street Metra Station.

The National Street Station Area Plan also calls for a signalized intersection at Oak Street and State Street (IL Route 31). This proposed traffic control is necessary to regulate traffic and turning movements for the proposed structured parking facility described earlier in Sub-Area 1 to the north. The proposed signal at Oak Street would allow residents of the Sub-Area 2 neighborhood safe turning movements to enter and exit the neighborhood. The traffic signal would also benefit the Oak Street school crossing and provide a continuous safe pedestrian and bicycle east/west crossing of State Street (IL Route 31).



Example of single family homes along Hendee Street

Sub-Area 2

It is thought that this traffic signal is necessary now, due to existing traffic conditions within the neighborhood, the location of Lowrie Elementary School on the west side of IL Route 31, and the proposed redevelopment concepts including the potential location for additional Metra parking.

The intersection of IL Route 31/Oak Street is approximately 1,000 feet south of National and about ¼ mile north of the signalized IL Route 31/US Route 20 north ramps intersection. IL Route 31 is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Since IL Route 31 is not a Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA), IDOT does not have a specified distance requirement between signals. However, IDOT does require that a new signal needs to be warranted under certain existing traffic conditions (as opposed to proposed conditions). Vehicular and traffic conditions would need to be analyzed by using a Synchro model to determine if they meet IDOT's criteria for a signalized intersection. If current traffic conditions do not require a signal, future conditions may warrant the signal as additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic is generated by new land uses.

If a signal is warranted, IDOT could require that the signal be interconnected with an existing interconnect system between the IL Route 31/US Route 20 ramp intersection and the Elgin Mental Health Center driveway intersection to the south. This interconnect system may be extended north of the US Route 20 ramps to include the signal at Oak Street.

Finally, the IL Route 31 corridor heading north from US Route 20 is certainly a primary entrance from the south into the City of Elgin. There is a lack of a sense of entry to the City of Elgin. Consideration should be given to installing signage or a gateway monument to identify the City of Elgin and the approach to National Street and the center city.



Entrance feature into Marie Grolich Park



Intersection of US Route 20 and IL Route 31

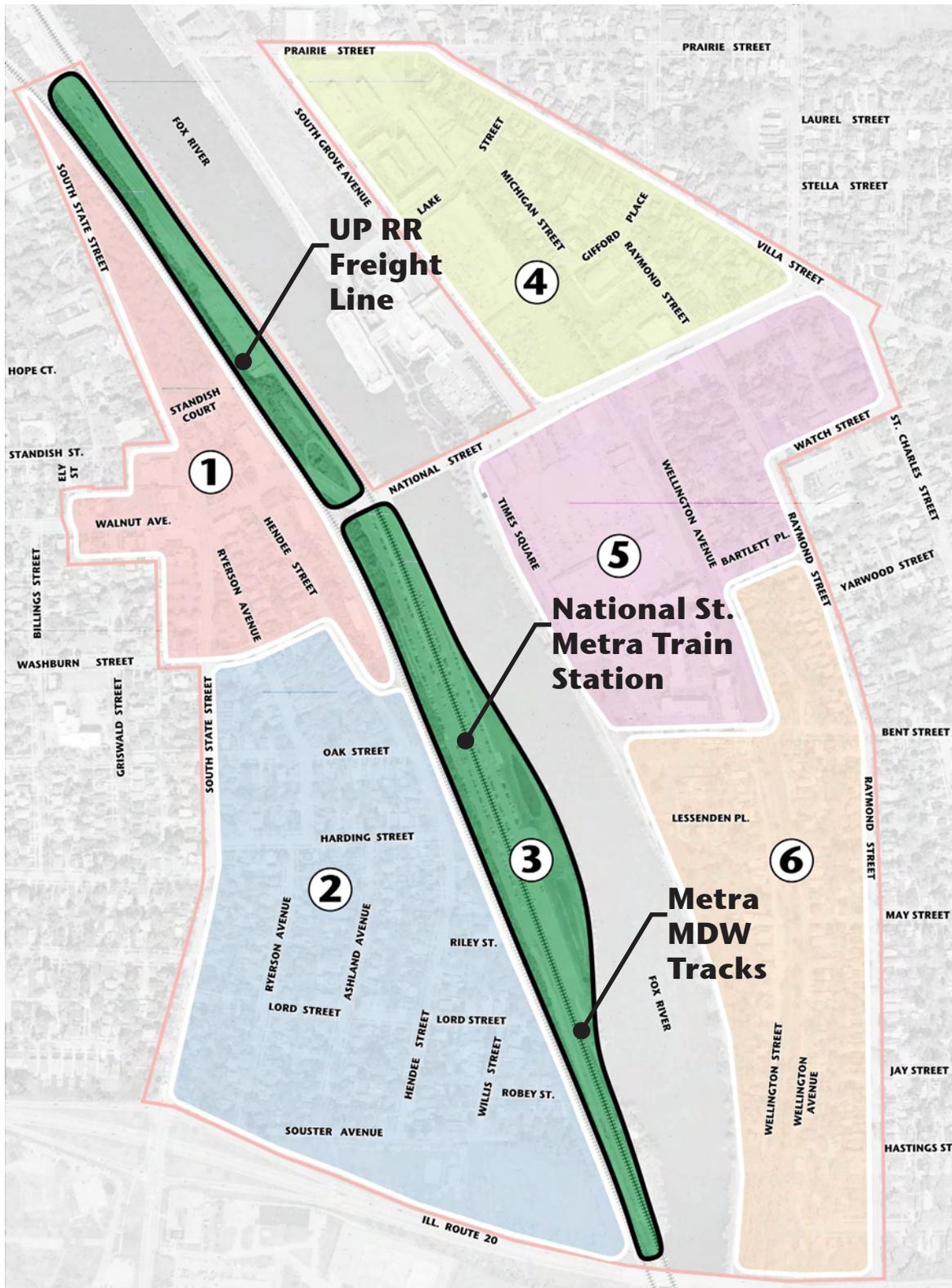


Example of a single family home within Sub-Area 2



Example of multi-family complex within Sub-Area 2

Sub-Area 3

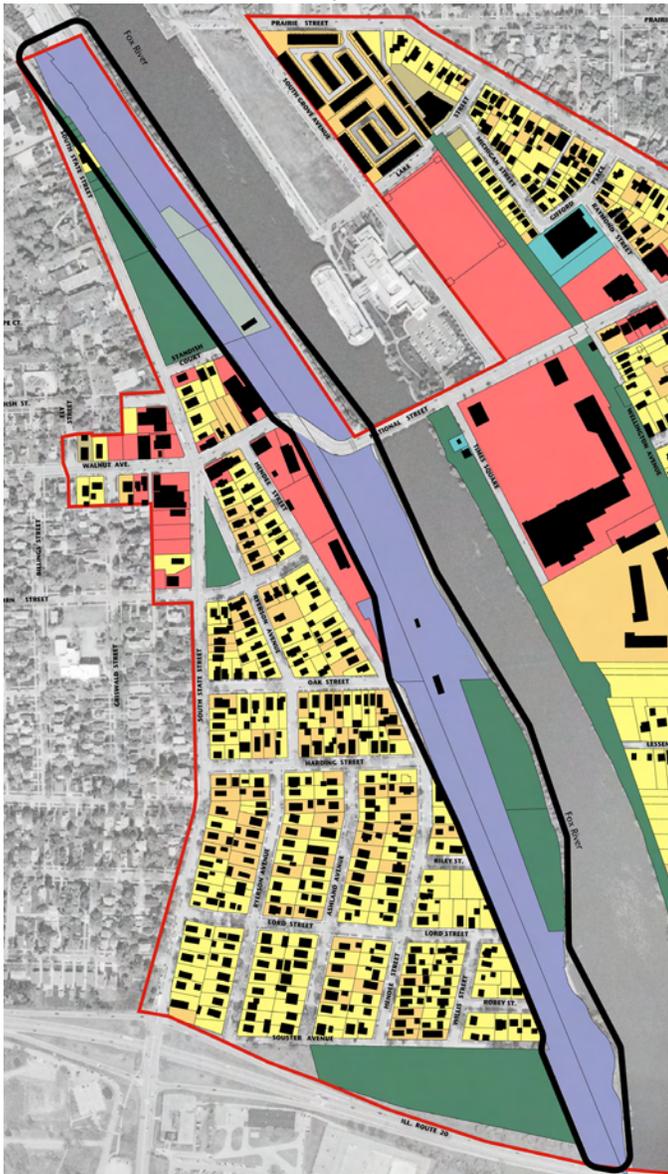


Sub-Area 3

Improvement Plan

Sub-Area 3 has multiple uses, all are considered service in nature. It contains the Metra commuter rail; the National Street Metra Station; the train platform and linear parking lots for National Street Metra Station; the UP freight Rail line; a ComEd substation; high tension power lines; the Metra Storage Yard; and detention ponds.

The current National Street Metra Station area is only accessible from dual access points from National Street,



Existing Conditions for Sub-Area 1. Current land use is shown in color and existing structures are darkened.

which are in close proximity to each other, separated only by the width of the double set of tracks. These access points are also located at the bottom of a relatively steep sloping “S” curve in National Street. These design factors make ingress and egress difficult for users of the station area and parking facilities.

Pedestrian access is also compromised especially from the west where the sidewalk also follows the “S” curve and slopes of National Street without a buffer from the National Street traffic. Pedestrian access from the east is less difficult as the grade is flat coming across the National Street bridge. There is also a wider sidewalk running along the west bank of the Fox River providing a dedicated space for pedestrians moving towards the platform crossings.

In recent years, the National Street Metra Station has undergone several upgrades including; replacement of the station depot, improvements to the parking areas, and pedestrian circulation. As a result of anticipated growth in the area and increased population in the center city, Metra is seeking to explore options for future parking needs and to improve accessibility to the station area. Current projections show that by 2030, Metra will need an additional 150-250 commuter parking spaces. These spaces can be shared with compatible uses as long as they do not conflict with a commuters ability to find available parking.

The National Street Metra Station plan is more focused on directions and opportunities for change in the balance of the area under study more than a detailed look at the existing Metra facilities located within Sub-Area 3. The Station area Plan illustrates the existing Metra tracks and station area facilities as “Existing Conditions to Remain”. Metra will continue to evaluate the infrastructure at the station area for consideration of future upgrades.

The most important consideration regarding land and facilities within Sub-Area 3 is the discussion of the potential sharing of the lower double set of tracks for both Metra commuter rail service and UP freight traffic. The UP freight usage on the existing upper tracks is light and there are advantages in adding a crossover just after crossing the Fox River in the southern tip of Sub-Area 3. If this is accomplished the UP tracks can be abandoned and both Metra and the UP could utilize both of the existing bridges over the Fox River.

Use of both bridges allows for the ability to complete bridge maintenance work on one bridge while shifting the rail traffic to the other bridge. Currently that is not possible and a bridge closure would interrupt and

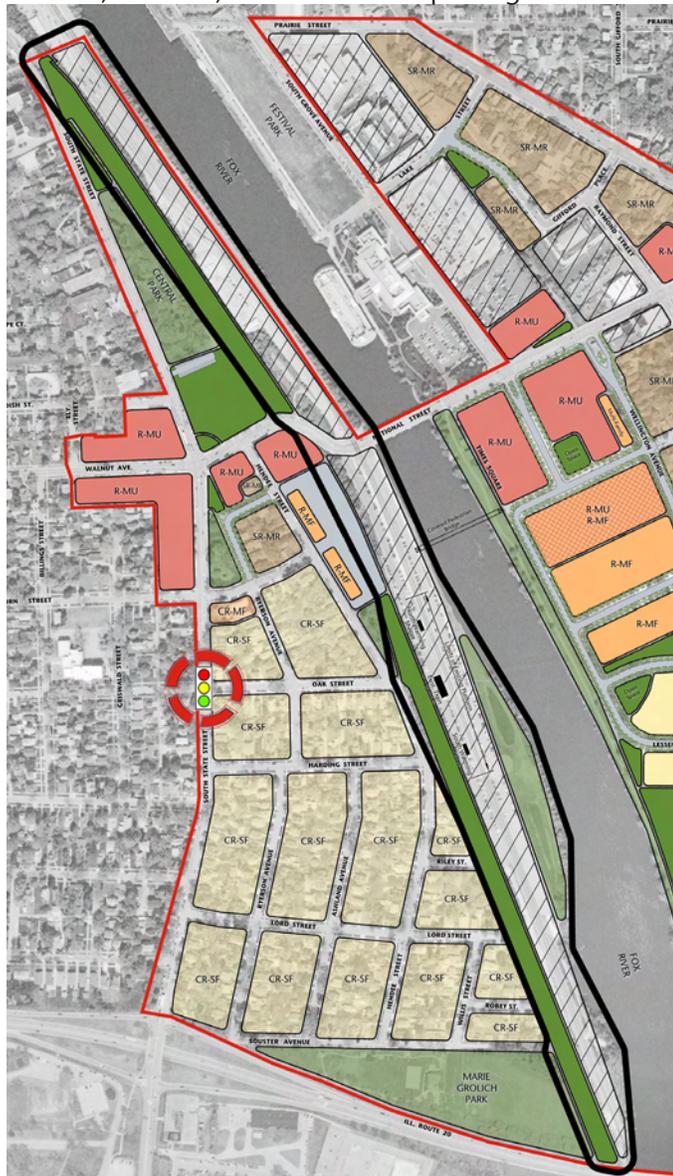
Sub-Area 3

suspend rail service until the bridge can be put back into use.

The potential for sharing the tracks would allow the removal of the UP RR Freight Line tracks and several rail overpasses/crossings through downtown Elgin. The abandoned tracks and right-of-way could be utilized as a linear trail system. Combination of the rail lines will require ongoing communication/negotiations between the City of Elgin, Metra, and UP Railroad.

In the exhibit to the right, locations of possible additional parking areas are shown. This parking would not only serve Metra commuters, but would be a joint venture between multiple entities to benefit the residents of Elgin.

There is an option to construct parking on either side of the river, however, to make the east parking area “user



friendly” a pedestrian bridge should be constructed to connect the structured parking with the Train Station. Currently, a commuter parking in the deck on the east side of the river would need to cross the river via the National Street bridge. While there are walks along National Street, they are directly adjacent to the motoring public, which creates an unfriendly atmosphere for the pedestrian. In addition, once a commuter reaches the west side of the river bank, the wide access points of the existing linear commuter lots seem to leave a pedestrian without a defined space to walk within.

Given the challenging atmosphere of a pedestrian crossing the river via the National Street bridge, consideration should be given to constructing the pedestrian bridge with or without the parking decks.

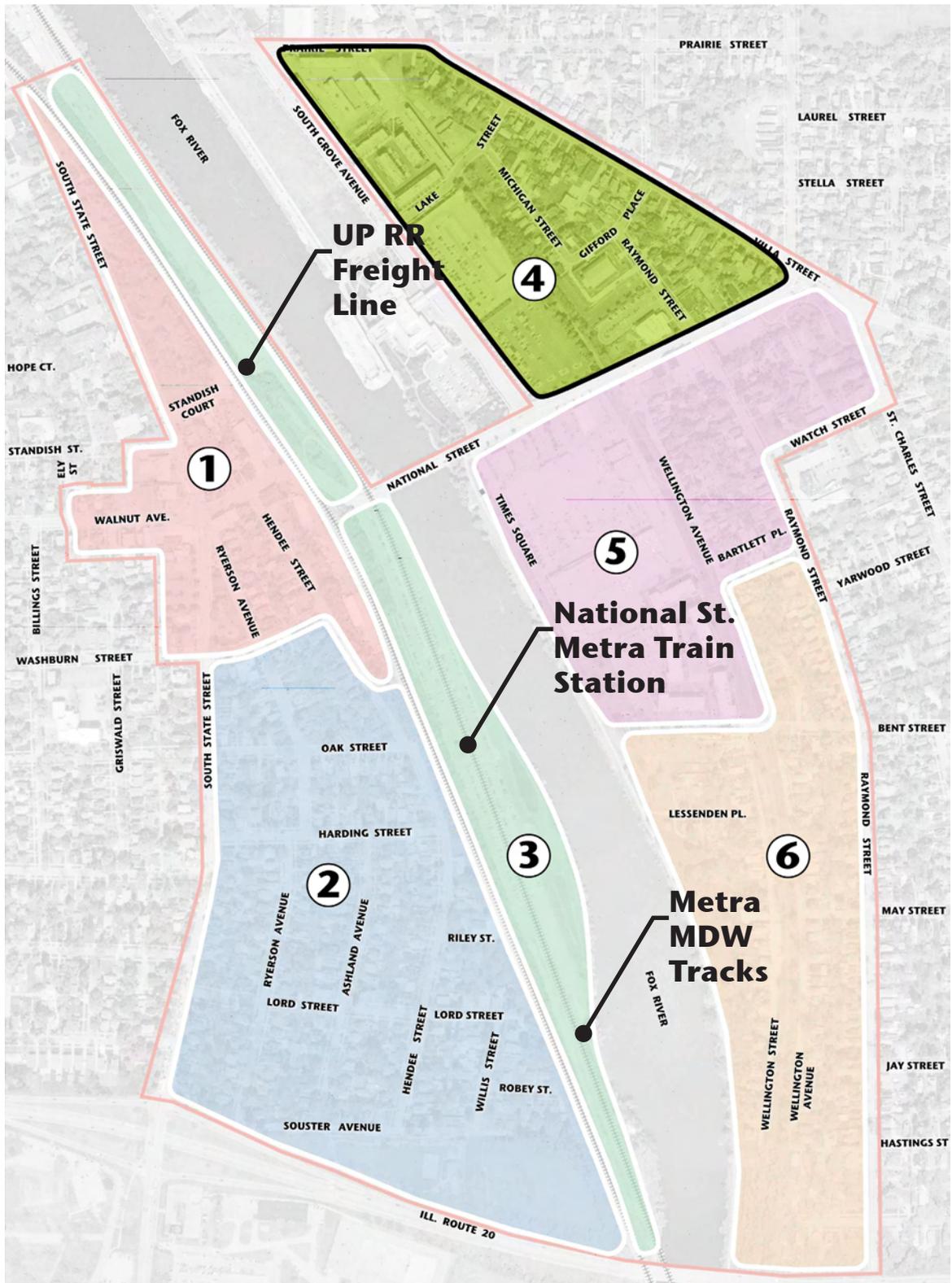
On the exhibit to the right, the black lines indicate where vehicular traffic would utilize access points, while the red dashed lines show connection to the train station for the pedestrian.

In each of these parking options, pedestrian access would be through a stairwell/elevator system that would be constructed as part of a structured parking deck.



Commuter Train

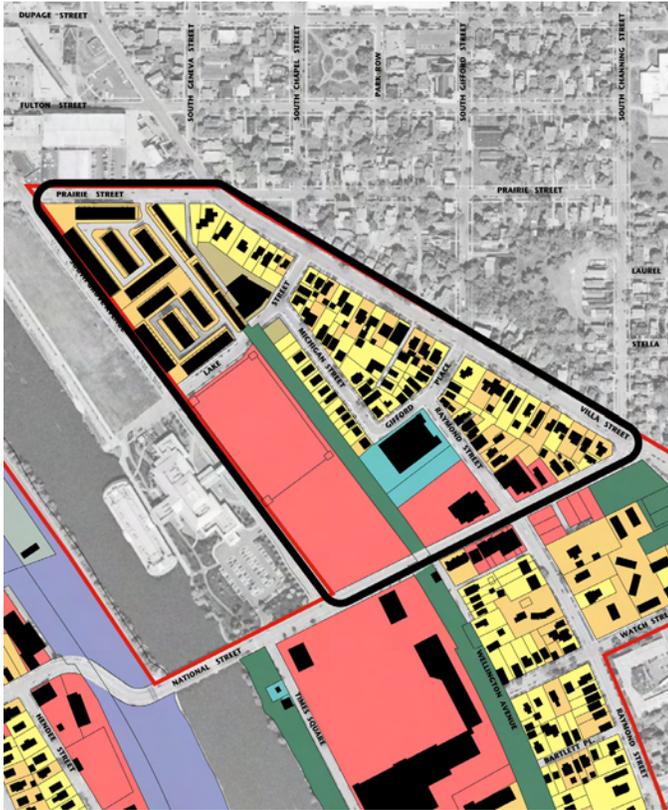
Sub-Area 4



Sub-Area 4

Analysis

Sub area 4 is bound by National Street on the south, Villa Street on the east, Prairie Street on the north, and South Grove Avenue on the west.



Land Use/Existing Assessment

Sub-Area 4 contains the structured parking facility and surface parking lots for the Grand Victoria Casino, River Park Place Townhomes, a newer day care center, the historic National Guard Armory, several business properties, multi-family and single family dwellings. Sub-Area 4 also contains a fifty foot wide strip of the abandoned railway ROW (right-of-way). Streetscapes lack ample sidewalks, parkways and landscaping. Bus transit is readily available, but access into the Train Station is challenging primarily due to crossing the river.

Marketing

This subarea includes a mix of both older and newer residential units, as well as parking facilities for the Grand Victoria Casino. As with sub areas 1 and 2, goals for this area allow for selected redevelopment of parcels, consistent with the character of adjacent use. From a market standpoint, we would expect to see the

emergence of mixed use development along National Street east of the Fox River, offset by lower densities in adjacent neighborhoods. While the owners of the Grand Victoria Casino have made no public comments about their plans for this casino, we would assume that over time, they would be contemplating an array of land based facilities to support the casino.

Transportation

National Street borders the south part of Sub Area 4. The National Street bridge has recently been reconstructed and the street infrastructure is in good condition, allowing good traffic flow into the Grand Victoria Casino facilities and other residential and commercial buildings in this area. All three signalized intersections along National Street, - Grove Avenue, Raymond Street and Villa Street, - operate well ranging between LOS B and C (limited congestion) during the a.m. and p.m. rush hours. All signalized intersections have marked pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals.

Sub Area 4 is bounded on the east by the St. Charles\ Villa Street\St. Charles Street intersection, a complicated intersection due to the offset of the three streets. Any attempt to reconfigure these intersections to meet as a four legged intersection would require major property and park land acquisition and is not recommended.

Observations

A portion of this sub area that sits up on the bluff between Villa Street and the abandoned railway ROW is known as the Michigan Triangle. There is a very distinct and abrupt elevation change from the flatter area containing the Grand Victoria Casino parking facilities and the River Park Place Townhomes and Michigan Triangle.

In recent years, this area has seen significant changes in use and the built environment. Approximately fifty percent of the Sub-Area 4 land area has been redeveloped in the last 16 years beginning with the construction and opening of the Grand Victoria Casino in 1994. More recently the River Park Place Townhomes and the Elgin Day Care Center have been completed.

The Elgin Day Care Center is a very attractive newer structure that has been constructed on the northwest corner of National Street and Raymond Street, creating a strong corner view. The day-care center provides an excellent example of a new building designed and located in a manner that is in context with Elgin's urban planning heritage.

Sub-Area 4

The River Place Park townhomes anchor the north end of Sub-Area 4 and create an attractive and formal street-wall framing in Festival Park and the Fox River corridor. These townhomes are a prime example of a functioning transit oriented development (TOD). The residents are within walking distance to the National Street Metra Station, Pace bus routes, shopping, Festival Park and the balance of Elgin's center city. The City should continue to encourage similar redevelopment, and expand this type of development into the vacated Courier News Building/ Lot (located in the northwest corner of Lake Street at Michigan Street).

It should be noted that the Grand Victoria Casino and Festival Park are not within the boundary of the National Street Metra Station Area Plan, but are adjacent to Sub-Area 4, and certainly have a great impact on this area. Festival Park hosts various events throughout the year which historically generates a significant parking demands. Both of the proposed structured parking facilities that are a part of the Station Area Plan are within walking distance of Festival Park, and may be able to be utilized for festival event parking.

There is a small collection of existing commercial uses at the northeast corner of National Street and Raymond Street, with the balance of Sub-Area 4 consisting of residential uses.



Improvement Plan

For ease of discussion, this Sub-Area has been broken into three areas, the east section, west section and south section. Each sub-section presents with unique issues and recommendations.

Easterly Section

Beginning with the residential properties along the southwest side of Villa Street, fronting both sides of Michigan Street and the northeast side of Raymond Street, the National Street Metra Station Area Plan designates the existing residential areas as Strategic Redevelopment Mixed Residential (SR-MR).

This designation calls for a combination of preservation and rehabilitation of structures that will remain, as well as strategic redevelopment of structures that are to be replaced or parcels that will be redeveloped. Elgin's continued goal to "de-convert" sites that were previously single family units, and are currently utilized as multi-family dwellings, is also a goal that is reinforced in this Station Area Plan.

This triangular shaped existing neighborhood includes a mix of original multi-family dwellings, original single family homes that have been previously converted to

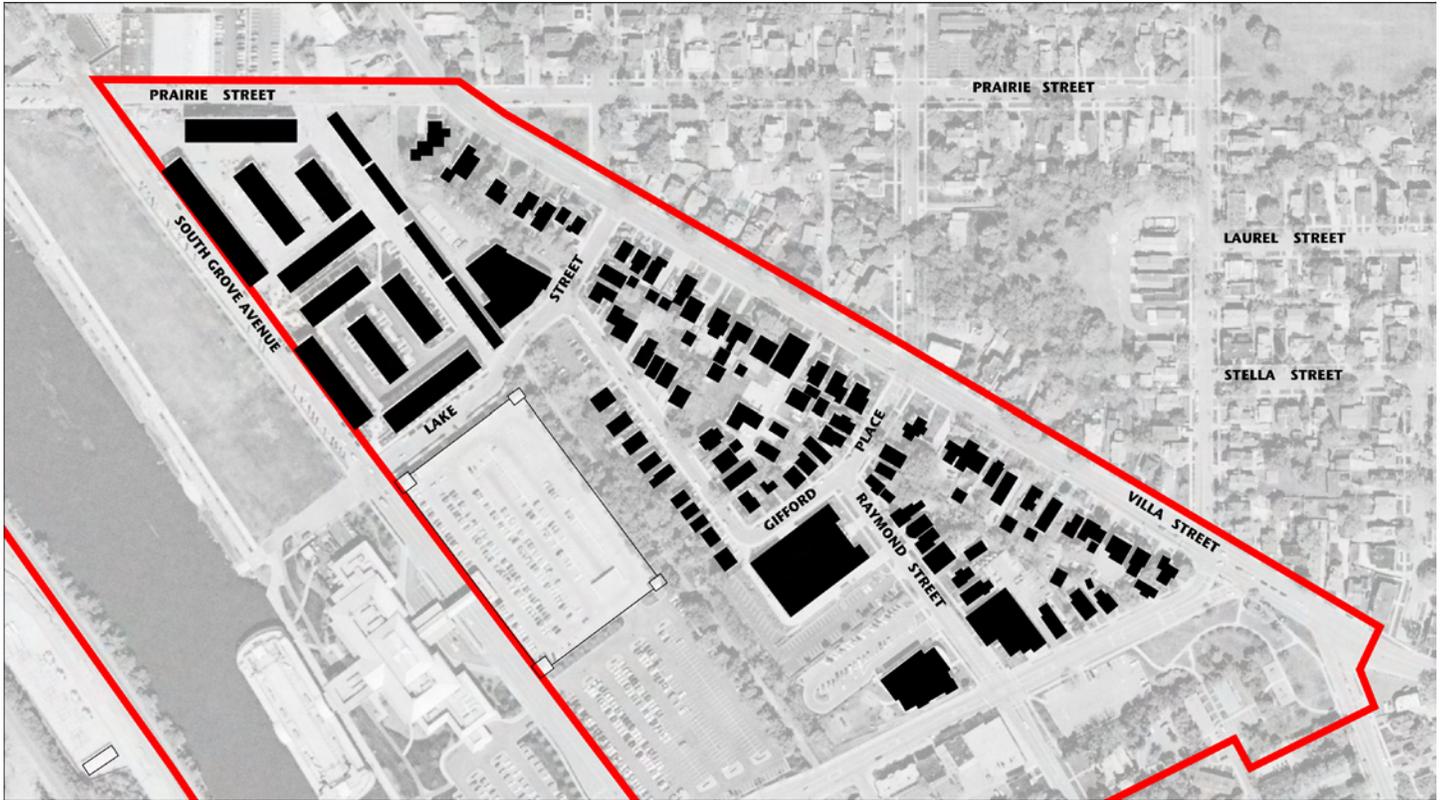


Limited access onto Villa Street

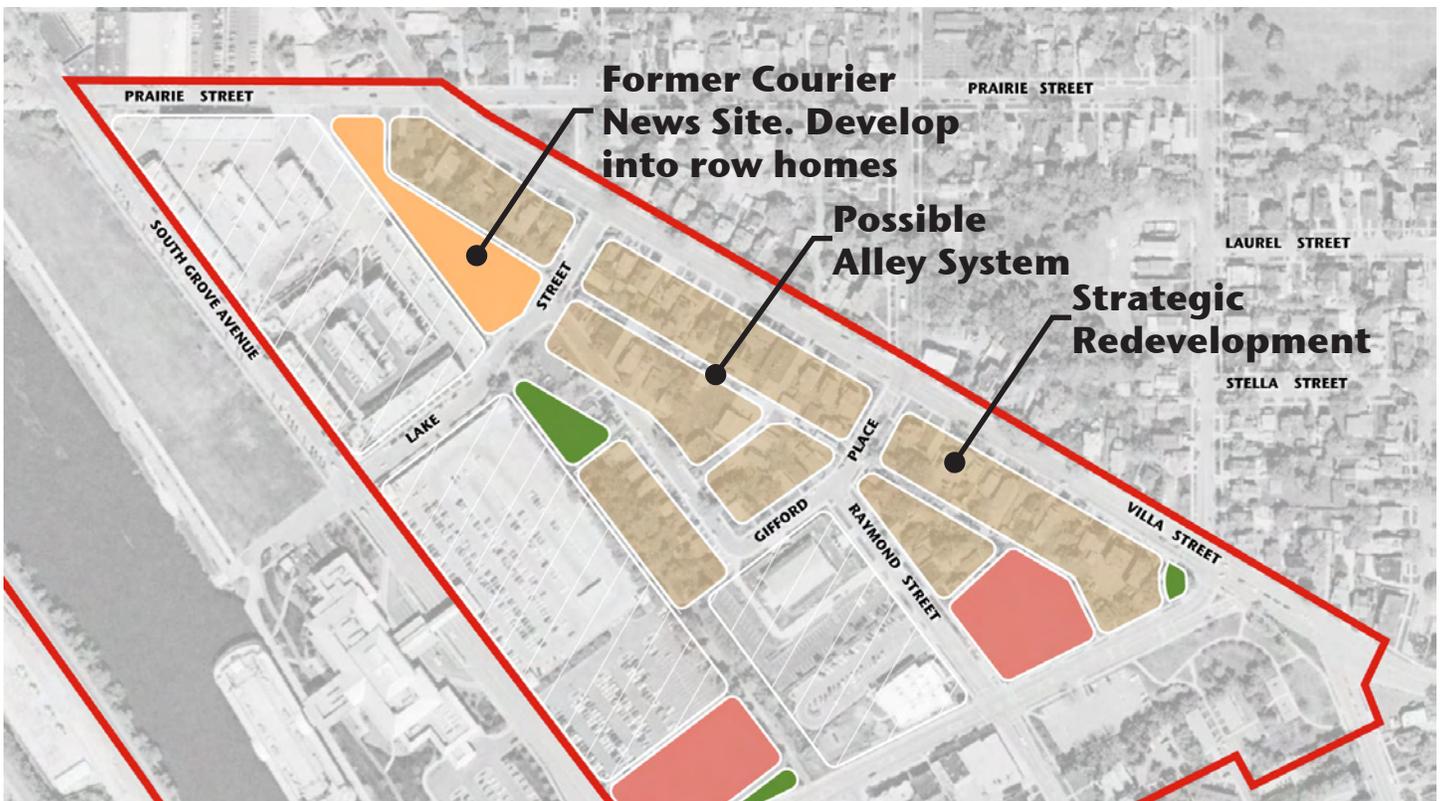
multi-family dwellings, and single family dwellings. There is a wide variety of existing conditions ranging from very well maintained structures that retain their historic architectural integrity as well as structures that are in deteriorated condition and/or have been stripped of the original architectural character.

Villa Street has few curb-cuts on the opposite side of the street from the Sub-Area 4 boundary due to the presence of an alley system which provides rear access to the homes facing Villa Street. The southwest side of Villa Street within the Sub-Area 4 boundary has numerous curb-cuts along Villa Street which are unattractive and create conflicts on the well travelled four lane collector street.

Sub-Area 4



Schematic of existing buildings within the Sub-Area



Schematic of possible alley locations along residents that front Villa Street.

Sub-Area 4

With all of the above factors in mind, the Station Area Plan recommends that this residential neighborhood should be evaluated in greater detail to determine which structures should remain in place and which structures and parcels are candidates for redevelopment. The Elgin Heritage Commission currently maintains an exhibit showing which homes are considered significant, contributing, or non-contributing. While this exhibit is a good starting point, the City will need to work with the owner to determine how best to restore the structure to its original condition.

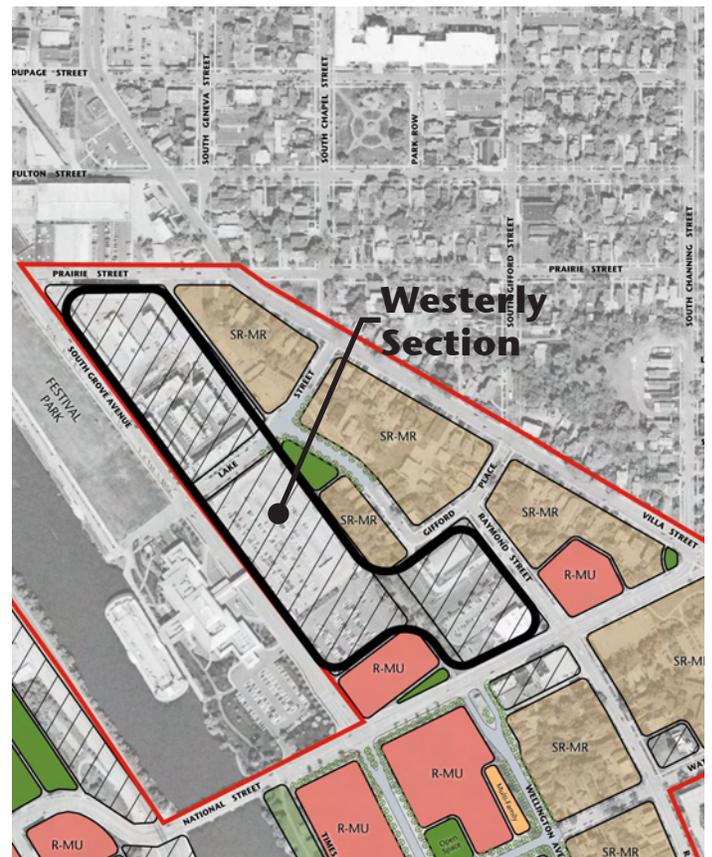
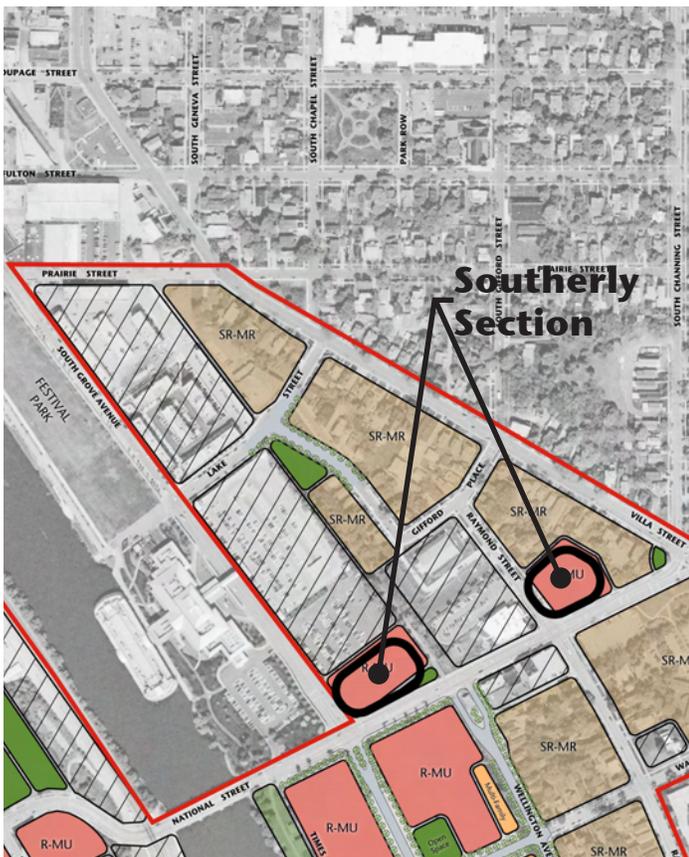
Once this base information is established, a detailed plan for the rehabilitation and evolution of this neighborhood area should include recommendations for infrastructure improvements including minor revisions to the street geometry (e.g. at the corner of Michigan Street and Lake Street) as well as the potential to install an alley parallel to Villa Street. This alley would eliminate individual curb-cuts onto Villa Street between National Street and Lake Street.

The exhibits on the previous page include an example of how this Strategic Redevelopment could be accomplished.

Southerly Section

The Station Area Plan illustrates two locations that are designated as Redevelopment Mixed-Use (R-MU). One location is at the northeast corner of National Street and Raymond Street where there are existing businesses located in a combination of non-contributing commercial structures and prior converted single family homes. The Station Area Plan recommends that this corner be redeveloped so as to retain businesses in new structures and be designed to be in context with the established character of the existing neighborhood. Parking areas are limited in this area. Which will have an impact on the scale and uses for proposed new structures.

The second location designated as Redevelopment Mixed-Use (R-MU) is located along the north side National Street between South Grove Avenue and the railway ROW. This area is located directly across the street from the existing Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center. This site is currently utilized as a surface parking lot for the Grand Victoria Casino. The plan is recommending redevelopment of this site to allow for expansion of the National Street corridor and to



Sub-Area 4

develop an urban street-wall opposite the proposed redevelopment of the Times Square Shopping Center. This northeast corner of South Grove Avenue and National Street would need to be redeveloped along with the southeast and southwest corners. This intersection is almost the mirror of the Walnut/National Street and State Street/IL Route 31 wherein three corners need to be developed with a street wall, and the remaining corner is to be open to allow views into the Fox River and Riverboat.

Westerly Section

Finally, the National Street Metra Station Area Plan illustrates sites which have previously been redeveloped. These areas are shown with a hatch pattern, and indicate that the “Existing Conditions are to Remain.”

Within this section, significant rehabilitation has already occurred, or the existing structures are complimentary to the overall plan.

The Elgin National Guard Armory, Elgin Day-Care Family Resource Center, River Park Place Townhomes and the Grand Victoria Casino structured parking facility, are all beneficial to the community.

Final Transportation Note

As the Plan is implemented, particularly for recommendations of land use changes to the south of National Street in Sub Area 5, consideration needs to be given to any potential impacts of future traffic conditions. In order to resolve any potential traffic conflicts between existing conditions and the proposed redevelopment of Area 5, it would be appropriate to conduct a study of all access points within 1/4 mile of the South Grove Avenue and National Street intersection. Of particular concern would be the length of turn lanes, and/or timing of turn signals on existing street lights.



Elgin Child & Family Resource Center



National Armory Building

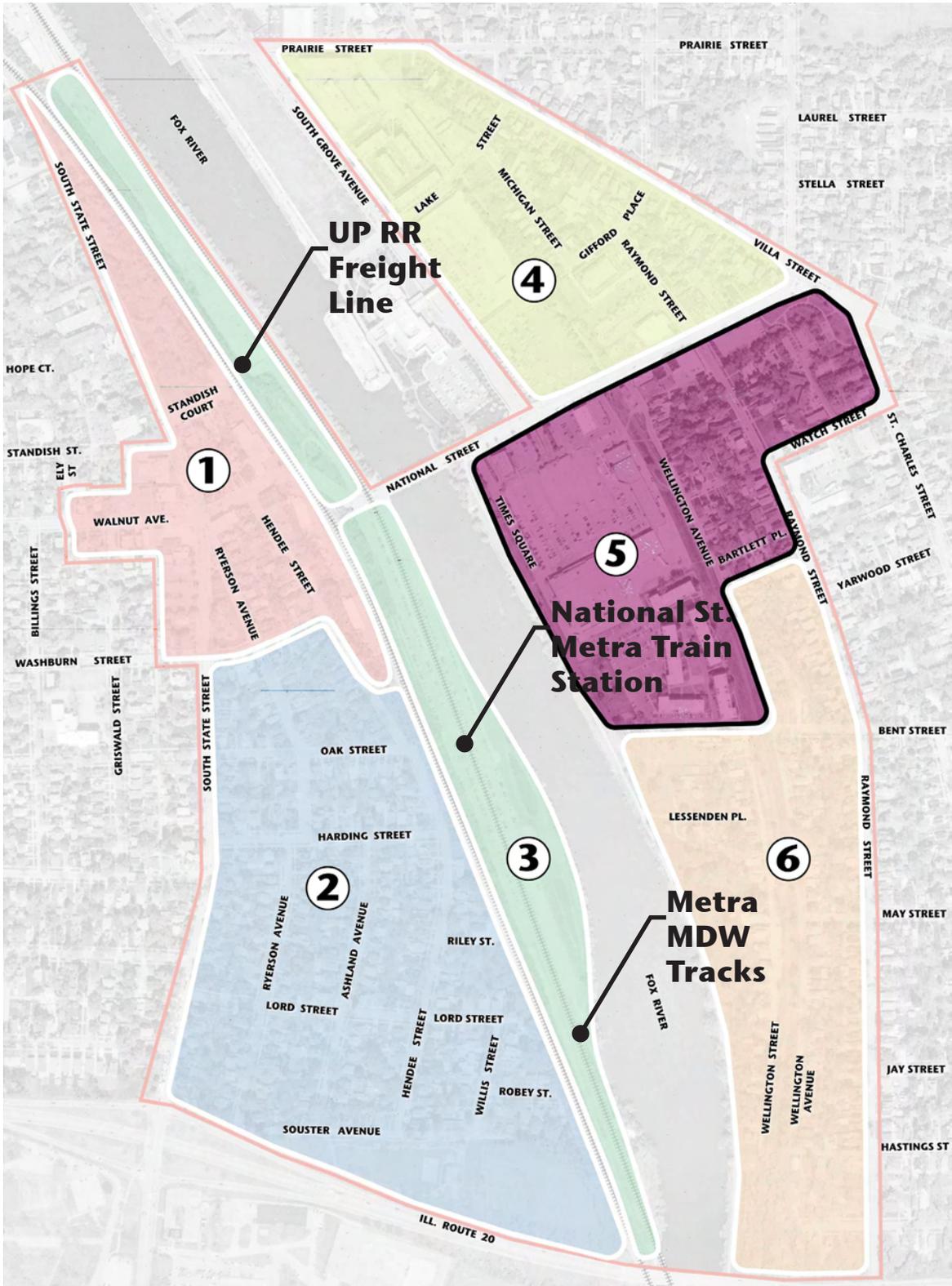


Casino surface parking lot



River Park Place Townhomes

Sub-Area 5



Sub-Area 5

Analysis

Sub-Area 5 is bounded by the Fox River on the west, National Street on the north and St. Charles Street to the east. The southerly boundary is a zigzag line from St. Charles and Watch Street to Bent Street and Wellington Avenue



Land Use/Existing Assessment

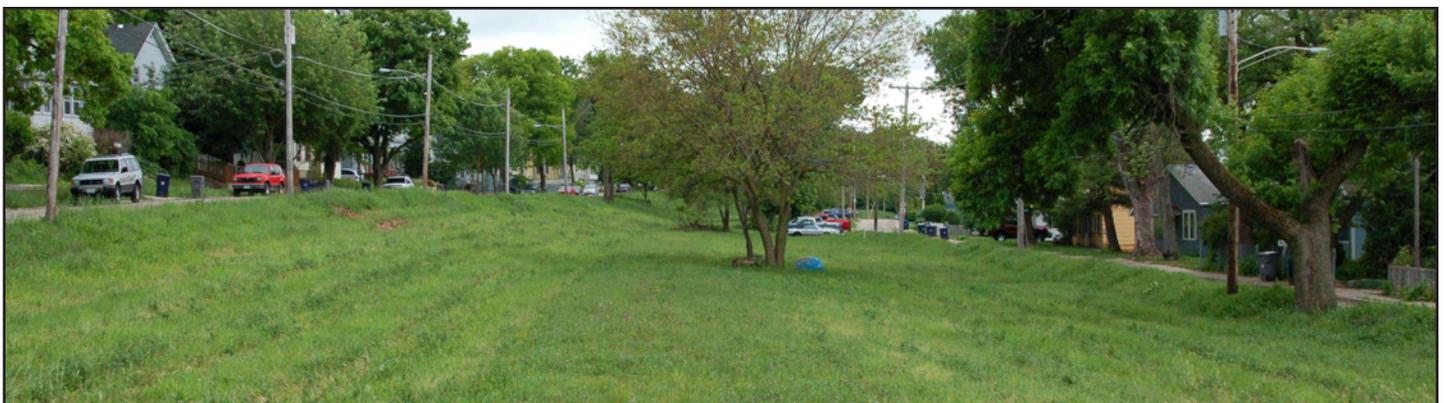
There are three distinct land uses in this Sub-Area. The majority of the site is commercial, followed by multi-family and single family. A small park exists at the corner of National Street and Villa Street. Streetscapes lack ample sidewalks, parkways and landscaping. Some streets were constructed as half streets and have remained that way. Bus transit is readily available, but access into the Train Station is challenging primarily due to crossing the river.

Marketing

This sub-area incorporates what we believe is the key redevelopment opportunity in the National Street Plan, focusing on the redevelopment of Clock Tower Plaza in a mixed use framework, allowing for either rental apartments or condominiums. Retail would be supporting in nature, anchored by the presence of grocery, as well as restaurants and services. As redevelopment of this site will be expensive, greater densities may be needed to offset development costs.

Transportation

National Street borders the north part of Sub Area 5. The National Street bridge has recently been reconstructed and the street infrastructure is in good condition, allowing good traffic flow into the Grand Victoria Casino facilities and other residential and commercial buildings in this area. All four signalized intersections along National Street, Grove Avenue, Raymond Street, Villa Street and St. Charles Street, operate well ranging between LOS B and C (limited congestion) during the a.m. and p.m. rush hours. All signalized intersections have marked pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals.



Existing Conditions thru the abandoned railroad right-of-way

Sub-Area 5

Sub Area 5 is bounded on the east by the St. Charles\ Villa Street\St. Charles Street intersection, a complicated intersection due to the offset of the three streets. Any attempt to reconfigure these intersections to meet as a five legged intersection would require major property and park land acquisition and is not recommended.

Observations

Sub-Area 5 includes approximately 40 acres of land and represents the single largest potential redevelopment opportunity within the entire National Street Station Area Plan boundary.

A number of items are notable to this Sub-Area:

Beginning with the abandoned Railroad ROW, that runs parallel to Wellington Street. It is a large area of open space that is not being used productively. It creates an obstacle for residents east of the ROW to access the shopping center or the river front.

Likewise, the large expanse of the Clock Tower Shopping Center parking lot, the lengthy rear/side walls of the strip mall and the large fenced area of the Rivers Landing Apartment complex make navigating west towards the river difficult. In order to access the river front, a resident from the east would have to use Wellington Avenue to National Street, to the river. The absence of a grided system of streets is noticeable.

The oversized block at the southwest corner of National Street and Villa Street does not function very well. Access for some parcels in this block is only through an alley. Several parcels have no frontage on a public roadway system.

Bartlett Place appears to be constructed as a half street. Right-of-way is deficient to expand this public street to a standard street cross section. Compounding the problem is that the roadway section traverses the bluff area, and from Raymond to Wellington there is a 30+ foot elevation change.



Watch Factory Observatory

Improvement Plan

For ease of discussion, this Sub-Area has been broken into halves, the east half and the west half. Each sub-section presents with unique issues and recommendations.

East Half

The east half of Sub-Area 5 is bounded by National Street to the north, St. Charles and Raymond Streets to the east, Watch Street and Bartlett Place to the south and Wellington Avenue to the west. The east half of Sub-Area 5 is an “L” shaped parcel that is predominately residential with a scattering of a few non-residential properties interspersed within the neighborhood. The frontage along National Street between Wellington Avenue and Raymond Street includes a mix of historic masonry row homes and mixed-use commercial buildings. The National Street Station Area Plan calls for these buildings to remain as is.

The residential block (between Wellington Avenue and Raymond Street) south of the mixed-uses fronting National Street, includes single family and multi-family structures. Many of the multi-family structures are the result of prior conversions from original single family dwellings. The Station Area Plan designates this block as Strategic Redevelopment-Mixed Residential (SR-MR) which calls for a combination of preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures, as well as strategic



Sub-Area 5

redevelopment of structures that are to be replaced or parcels to be redeveloped. Elgin's continued goal to "de-convert" original single family units, that are currently utilized as multi-family dwellings, is also a goal that is reinforced in this Station Area Plan.

To the east is an oversized block which includes a public parking lot at the southeast corner of National Street and Raymond Street, as well as a public park at the intersection where National Street and St. Charles Street terminate into Villa Street. While the geometry of this intersection and close spacing of two traffic signals creates traffic challenges, the northeast notched corner of the block is also a key focal point at this highly visible intersection. This intersection acts as a gateway for travelers entering Elgin's southeast side from both Villa Street and St. Charles Street. This is a well travelled intersection as Villa Street continues into the center city and beyond, changing names and becoming Dundee Avenue which has an interchange with Interstate 90 on Elgin's northern boundary.

At present the public park and parking lot are underutilized. The National Street Station Area plan recommends reinforcing the street-wall along National Street and turning the corner following the existing geometry around to St. Charles Road. This block is designated as Strategic Redevelopment-Mixed Residential (SR-MR). There are several significant historic homes in this block that should be preserved.

This block also contains the Elgin National Watch Company Observatory located at 312 Watch Street. The observatory is currently owned by the School District U-46 and remains a prized landmark where precise time of the movement of the stars was recorded to set time at the Watch Factory. This structure is very well preserved and sits prominently on a large lot with an expansive front lawn. The observatory will remain as a permanent fixture of this neighborhood anchoring this corner of the Station Area Plan.

The Elgin Housing Authority owns and manages a small apartment complex with access from Watch Street. The apartment site plan and building design does not conform to the context of the surrounding historic neighborhoods. With the Station Area Plans designation of Strategic Redevelopment-Mixed Residential (SR-MR) for this block, it encourages a detailed plan that can involve parcel consolidation and possibly new infrastructure to break down this oversized block into new development parcels for single family and/or multi-family dwellings.

By utilizing the public parking lot and a portion of the park space, the highly visible intersection of Villa/National/St. Charles, can be lined with residential facades with a narrower public green wrapping the

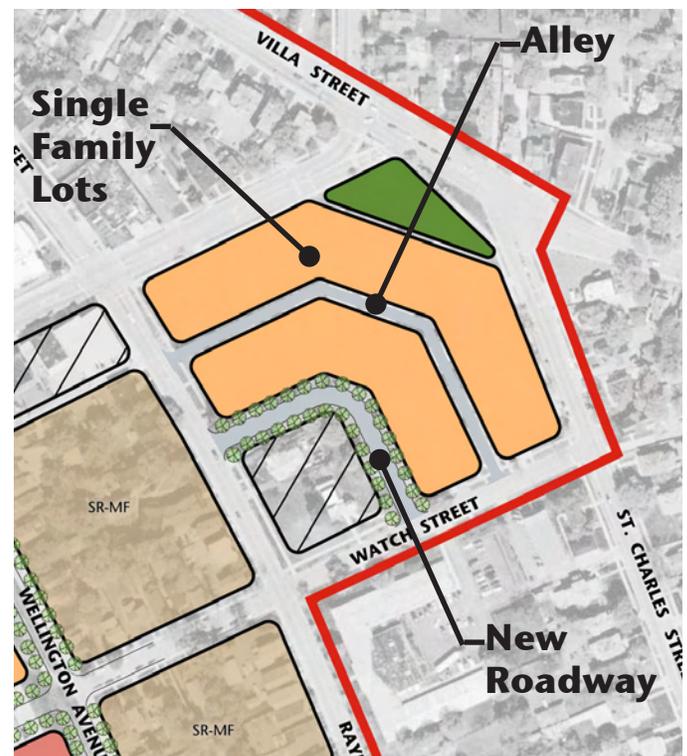
chamfered corner at Villa Street. Any proposal for the redesign of this block will need to start with the preservation of the observatory and other significant and contributing residential structures. A redesign of this block may offer the opportunity to provide new housing for the Elgin Housing Authority to complement the existing neighborhood.

Sub-Area 5 Easterly Section - Possible Solution

The most easterly section of Sub-Area 5 contains a wide variety of existing land uses. Surface parking lots, open space, the historic Observatory, Housing Authority Buildings, Single/Converted Single Family and Multi-Family structures all exist in a parcel less than 6.5 acres in size.

Given the width and depth of this area, it is difficult to create useful lots without adding some infrastructure in a street system. The option below, would add a short segment of street in the shape of an inverted "L", that would isolate the existing Observatory. An alley should be utilized so that curb cuts along the collector roads (National Street and St. Charles Street) can be avoided.

A wedge of open space can be maintained at the corner of Villa/National/St. Charles. This wedge may also be adequate to place a roundabout to resolve this circuitous intersection.

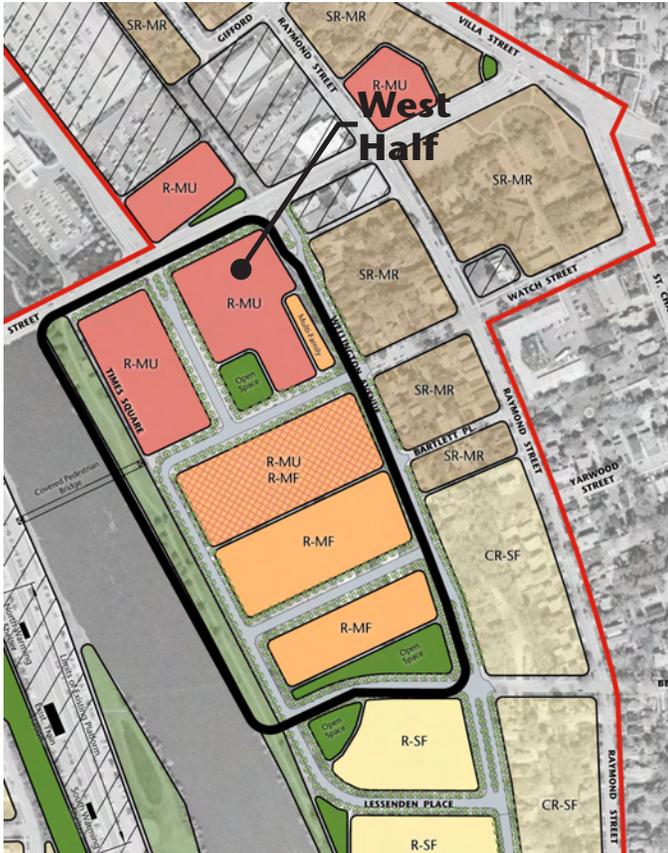


Possible solution to break down large block.

Sub-Area 5

West Half

The west half of Sub-Area 5 is a parcel of land south of National Street, west of Wellington Avenue to the Fox River and south to Bent Street including the existing Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center and the River Landing Apartments. This area represents approximately 26 acres and is owned by only three parties.

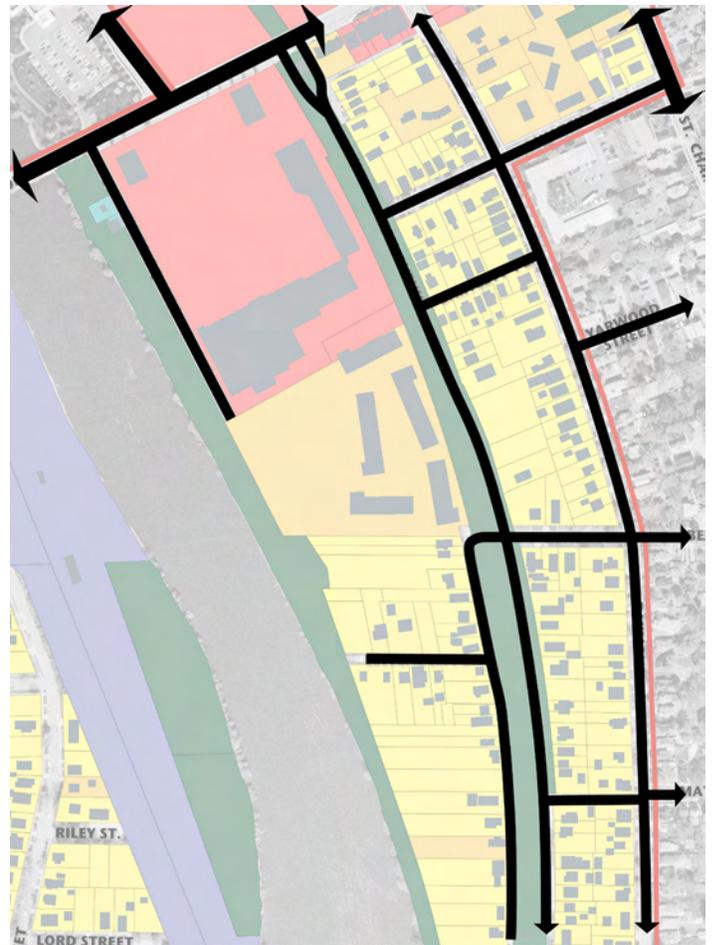


The front face of the Clock Tower Plaza shopping center has an unusually deep setback (600 feet ±) from National Street and creates an “L” shape that faces National Street and the Fox River. This configuration turns the back of the shopping center towards Wellington Avenue and the residential neighborhood blocks to the east. There is no access from the neighborhood to the shopping center other than from Wellington Avenue near National Street or at the main entrance opposite South Grove Avenue at National Street. This lack of access continues south along Wellington Avenue along the frontage of the Rivers Landing Apartments. The adjacent neighborhoods to the east, despite having very close proximity to the Fox River Corridor and the National Street Metra Station

Area, have limited access to the amenities other than via National Street.

In order to resolve the issue of limited access to the shopping or the National Street Metra Station, the plan illustrates a new grid system of roadways as follows:

- » Extend Watch Street west to the Fox River corridor and to a new river front roadway.
- » Extend South Grove Avenue to create a “T” intersection with Watch Street extended west.
- » Extend a new street from Wellington Avenue to the new riverfront roadway to create a residential block (Yarwood Street extended).
- » Extend Bent Street west to the new river front roadway.
- » Extend Lessenden Place (in Sub-Area 6) to the new river front roadway.



Existing Roadway Network at Sub-Area 5

Sub-Area 5

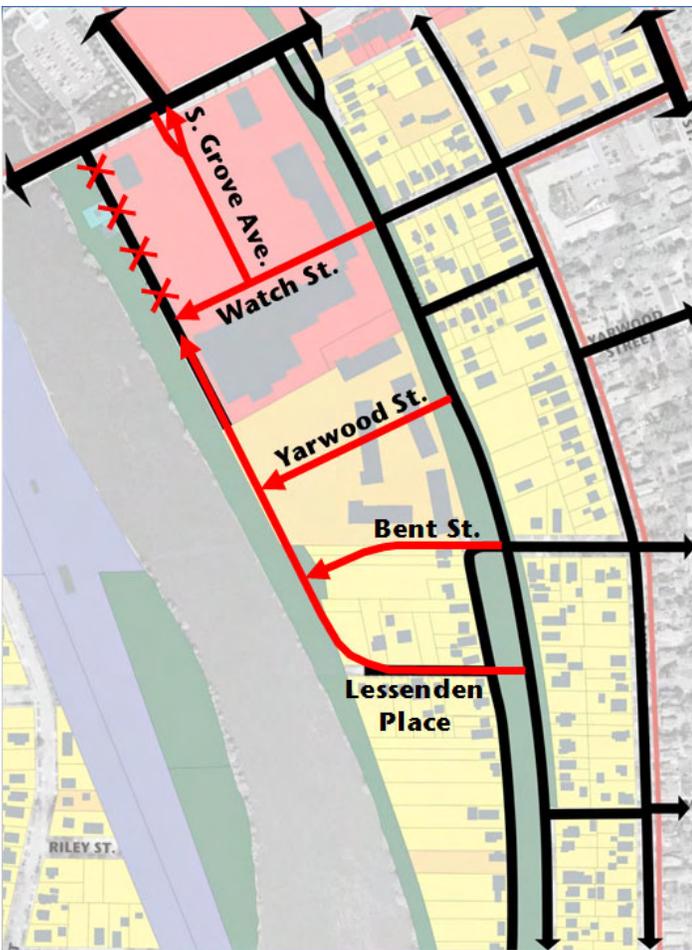
The opportunity for redevelopment of the entire west half of Sub-Area 5 lies with the potential to remake this area into a vibrant mixed-use community that would be integrated rather than segregated from the adjacent neighborhood.

As shown in the diagrams below, the installation of this street grid serves to breakdown the super block which inhibits vehicular and pedestrian circulation. The proposed street grid for this area of the Station Area Plan connects the existing neighborhood, moving up the bluff toward St. Charles Road, to the proposed redevelopment and to the Fox River Corridor. This allows for a substantial increase in circulation from the existing and proposed neighborhood area to the National Street Metra Station. The plan calls for a new pedestrian bridge in line with an extended Watch Street. This improvement lines up with planned modifications to the Metra platform pedestrian access locations.

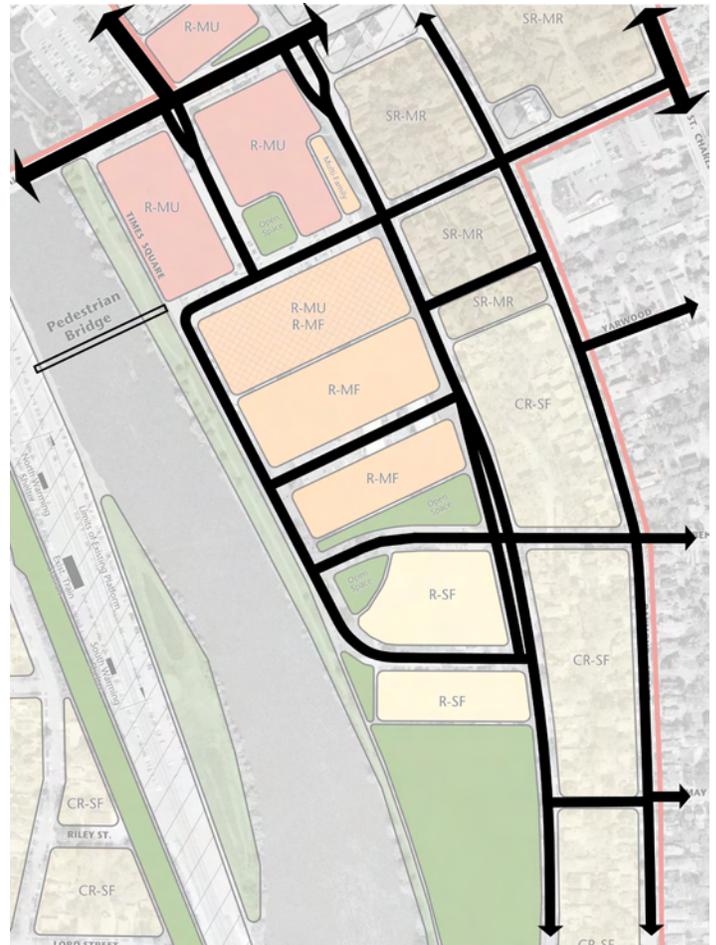
It should be noted that the National Street Station Area Plan anticipates the acquisition of the entire rail road

ROW, (approximately 8.5 acres from National Street to US Route 20.) The City of Elgin has previously purchased small areas of this ROW to facilitate specific projects. Previous communications from the railway agency following those smaller purchases have indicated that they desire to discuss acquisition of the balance of the ROW. Currently the ROW acts as an additional barrier between the redevelopment site/Fox River Corridor from the adjacent historic neighborhoods to the east. Acquisition of this abandoned ROW would also allow the reconstruction of Wellington Avenue to a urban cross section per the City of Elgin's Design Standards. This acquisition is key to facilitate the redevelopment as proposed and illustrated in the National Street Station Plan.

The owners of the Clock Tower Plaza shopping center have approximately 11.4 acres, the owners of the Rivers Landing Apartment own approximately 7.5 acres and the abandoned Rail Road occupies approximately 3.1 acres along Wellington Avenue within Sub-Area 5.



Existing Roadway Network at Sub-Area 5



Proposed Roadway Network at Sub-Area 5

Sub-Area 5



Blocked access to the Fox River Corridor by existing structures. This view is from Bartlett Place at Wellington Avenue looking northwest.



Blocked access to the Fox River Corridor by existing structures. This view is from National Street at Wellington Avenue looking southwest.

The land area inclusive of the Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center, the Rivers Landing Apartments and the adjacent portion of the rail road ROW is designated for Redevelopment Mixed-Use (R-MU) and Redevelopment Multi-Family (R-MF) in the Station Area Plan. While both the shopping center and apartments have high occupancy rates and remain commercially viable, they are aging and were designed and constructed in a manner that turns away from the adjacent neighborhoods and streets.

Due to the significant size of the combined infill parcels

in this location, a well designed and executed mixed-use development can be accomplished. This would transform this location at the south edge of the center city into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. The Station Area Plan preserves the existing Butera grocery store in place as well as the adjacent in line stores. A phased in, incremental redevelopment plan, can be coordinated in a manner that retains desirable businesses that currently lease space at this location. Similarly, the Rivers Landing Apartments site can be redeveloped incrementally in order to retain residents at this location.



Existing Conditions at Clock Tower Shopping Plaza. Long stretches of building prevent access to the river by the residents living east of the Shopping Center.

Sub-Area 5



Phase 1: Remove a portion of the storefront, and extend Watch Street through, aligning with the front of the existing Butera Grocery Store, and “T” into Times Square Road. Extend Grove Avenue south to intersect with the newly constructed Watch Street roadway.



Phase 2: Construct a new mixed-use building to anchor the southeast corner of Grove Avenue and National Street. This new construction can also begin to provide structured parking, thereby eliminating the expanse of surface parking.

Sub-Area 5



Phase 3: Create a pocket park on the northeast corner of Grove Avenue and Watch Street. This pocket park will be a passive park, creating space for residents to gather. Provide amenities such as benches, paved walkways and adequate landscaping.



Phase 4: Construct mixed-use buildings to line the edges of the pocket park. Behind the mixed-use structure, a row of townhomes can be constructed to face the existing residences along Wellington, thereby, creating a positive view for existing residents.

Sub-Area 5

The Station Area plan designates a shared public structured parking facility at the southwest corner of National Street and Grove Avenue, adjacent to the Fox River corridor trail system. This parking facility is envisioned to be on the lower floors of a vertically mixed-use structure that would accommodate retail, entertainment, office and residential uses. Most of the first level (surface level) parking would be designated for grocery store and/or short term retail parking only. It is anticipated that designated commuter parking will be incorporated into this facility as well as additional parking to serve the occupants of the balance of the building(s).

Commuter parking located in this proposed structure would allow for an increase in parking to address future demand. More importantly it would establish commuter parking on the east side of the Fox River. This will allow residents from the east side of the Fox River to park adjacent to the east bank of the river and walk across the National Street Bridge to the National Street Metra Station. The Station Area Plan calls for a new pedestrian bridge to directly connect this parking deck with the National Street Metra Train Station. Based on the current train station layout, parking at the proposed structured facility on the east bank of the Fox River will result in a shorter walk time and distance as compared to some of the existing commuter parking, in the long linear lots.

The number of parking stalls will be determined by the actual building plans. It is however, anticipated that 2 new parking decks on the Butera Grocery site, would generate a minimum of 500 stalls.

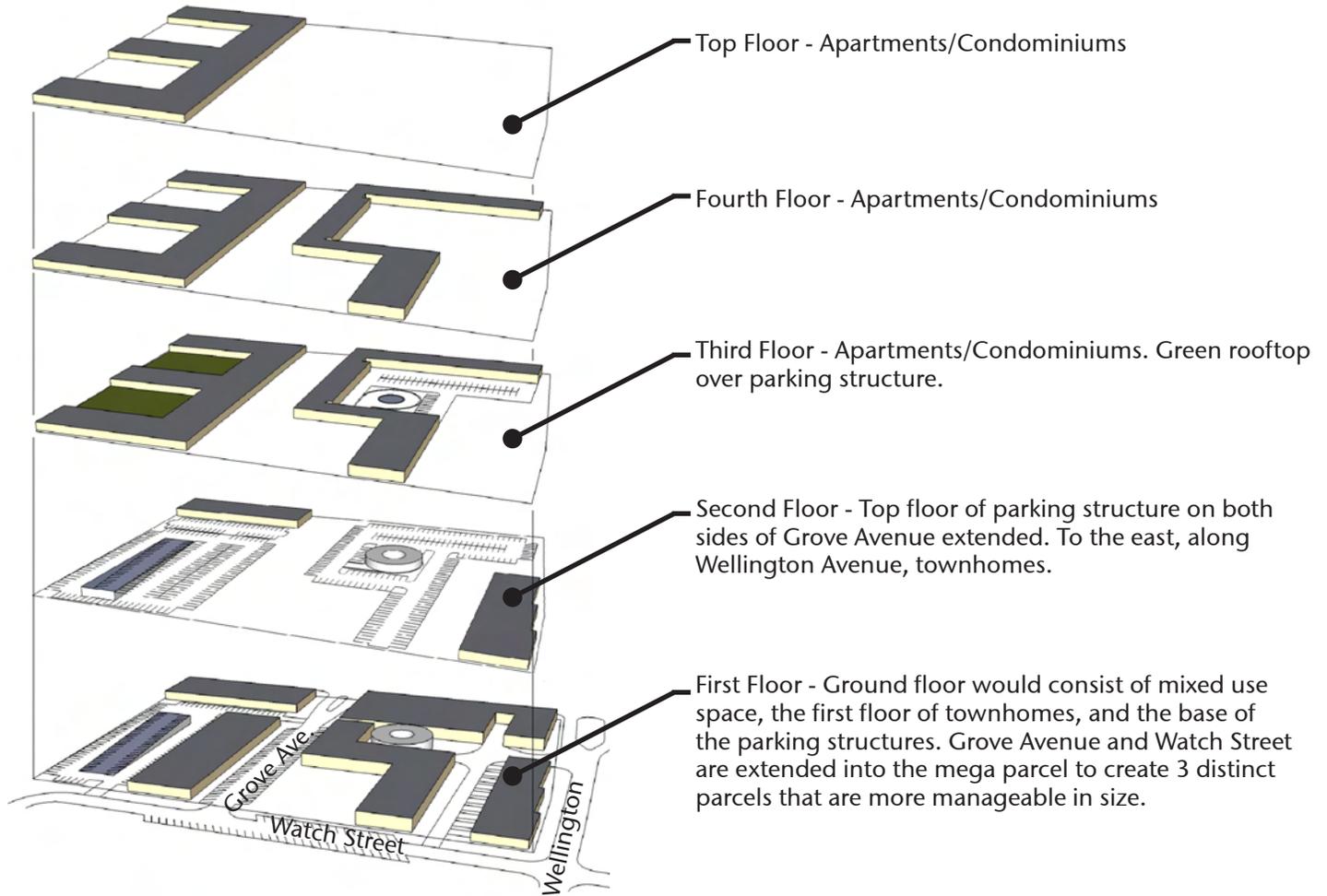


Possible pedestrian bridge over the river would provide easy access to the National Street Metra Station for residents and commuters originating on the east side of the river.



Phase 5: Construct a residential building on the southwest corner of National Street and Grove Avenue. This complex can have multiple levels of structured parking with residential units above. Parking can serve residents of the building, Butera Grocery, Metra Commuters, and visitors to events in the area. The construction of a pedestrian bridge, to link the east side of the river directly into the train station would encourage commuters to park in the new structure.

Sub-Area 5



The Station Area plan is calling for new structures to be designed to place facades along the streets to create a true sense of neighborhood and an attractive streetscape and pedestrian realm. Essentially the current one story retail center with a large surface parking lot would be transformed into a vertical mixed-use neighborhood. The existing Rivers Landing, three story apartments, built adjacent to the large parking lot would be transformed into an urban neighborhood integrated with the existing historic neighborhood to the east as well as the proposed mixed-use development to the north.

Reconstructed Wellington Avenue would begin in the form of a boulevard placing the historic Elgin train depot in the center island. Wellington Avenue would then continue south as a non-boulevard roadway adding the railway ROW into the redevelopment of the land.

It is envisioned that row homes/townhomes would line the west side of reconstructed Wellington Avenue to create a residential streetscape on both sides of

Wellington Avenue. Improvements in the aesthetics and uses along the west side of Wellington Avenue should be a catalyst to a renewal of the east side of Wellington Avenue as the current edge of the historic neighborhood.

The intensity and residential density of the combined redevelopment area would increase substantially from the current conditions in the west half of Sub-Area 5. The proposed mixed-use development has the opportunity to place additional residences within a very short walking distance to the National Street Metra Station while greatly increasing accessibility to the station area from existing neighborhoods. Beyond the transportation benefits, the redevelopment as envisioned will serve as a catalyst to additional neighborhood improvements on other blocks within the Station Area Plan boundary and beyond. Finally, the proposed new street system creates greatly improved access to the Fox River corridor and to the regional Grand Illinois Trail system.

Sub-Area 5



Phase 6: Reconstruct the existing apartments. These new residential buildings can be a mix of rental or owned units. Increasing the height from the existing buildings will allow more open space to be created, and therefore, more pocket parks for the residents.



Possible view from the intersection of Grove Avenue and National Street, looking southeast into new development

Sub-Area 5



Overall plan for all Sub-Areas combined.

Final Transportation Notes

In order to provide adequate access to existing and proposed land uses in the study area, it is recommended that there be a change to the roadway network within Sub Area 5. The existing street network lacks continuity, primarily in an east-west direction, prohibiting access to the riverfront. The proposed roadway network suggests extending Watch Street, Yarwood Street, Bent Street, and Lessenden Place east-west, with Lessenden Place also providing access north-south. Bent Street and Watch Street could be designated as the redeveloped area's major streets, since they extend to Raymond Street, which has a signal at National Street. Bent Street extends all the way to IL 25 and even further eastward to Villa, so it would be a very attractive route to get people in and out of this redeveloped area.

As part of the traffic control of this new street network, it may be beneficial to limit traffic on some of the new streets, depending on the density of the full build out of the proposed land uses. As necessary, Lessenden Place and Yarwood Street could potentially be westbound one-way roads; Bent Street and Watch Street would provide enough two-way access to

the area and since they lead to Raymond Street and would be considered the main roads leading into and out of the development. Parking could be fully or partially restricted on Bent and Watch to help establish these routes as the main roadways into and out of the redeveloped area near the river. Driveways into developments within this area should be placed in areas that do not conflict with other intersections.

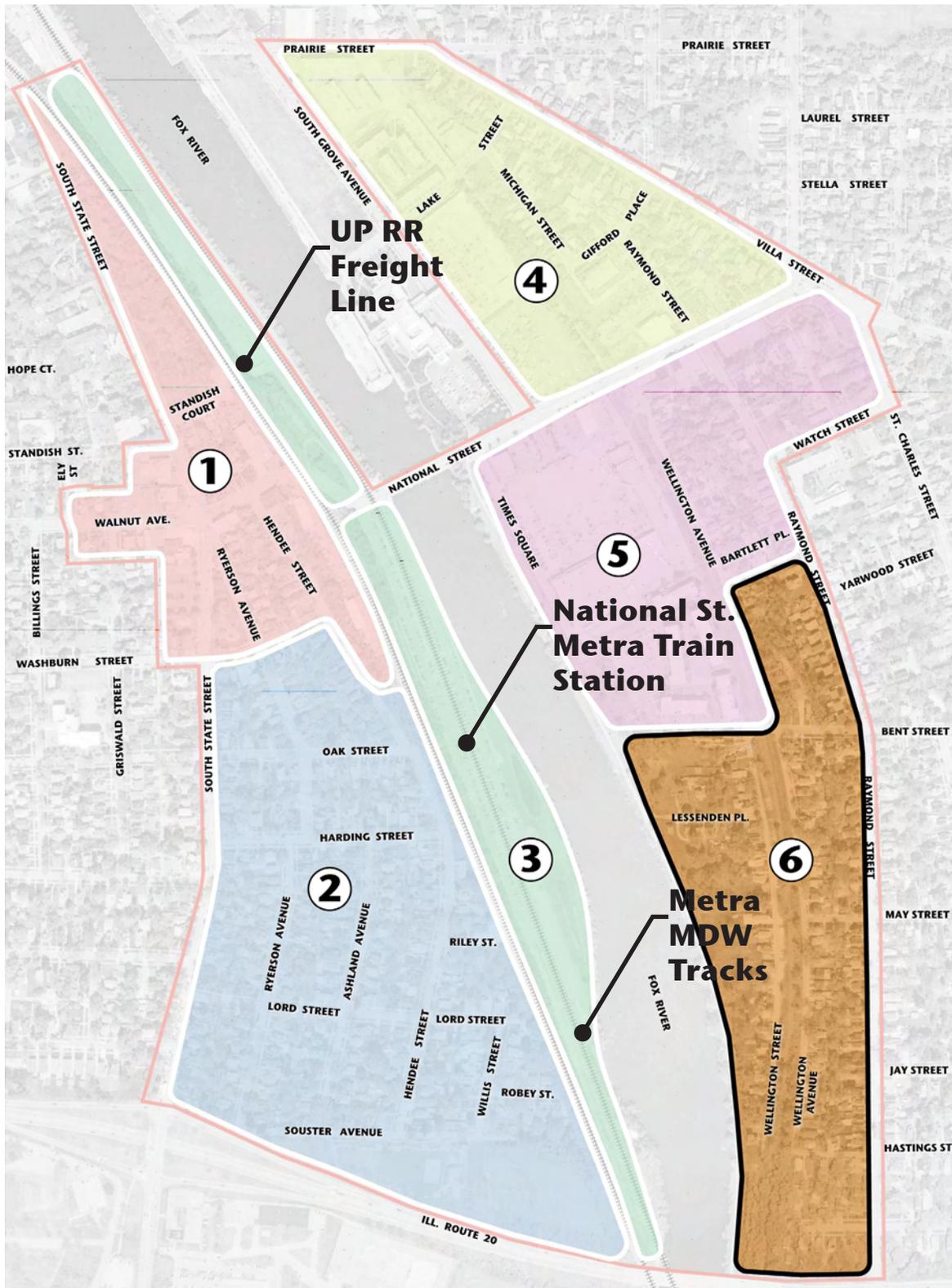
The extension of these streets would take the pressure off of National Street as the only east west access into the area as it currently exists. Allowing for additional east-west streets allows any traffic from the proposed developments to be distributed more evenly, reducing congestion on National Street.

The exhibit to the right shows the existing linear commuter parking area, two possible locations for future parking structures, a pedestrian bridge over the river, and the new street network for Sub-Area 5. The red dashed lines show possible pedestrian routes, while the black lines show vehicular routes. The new street system improves access to multiple points of interest for various modes of transportation.

Sub-Area 5



Sub-Area 6



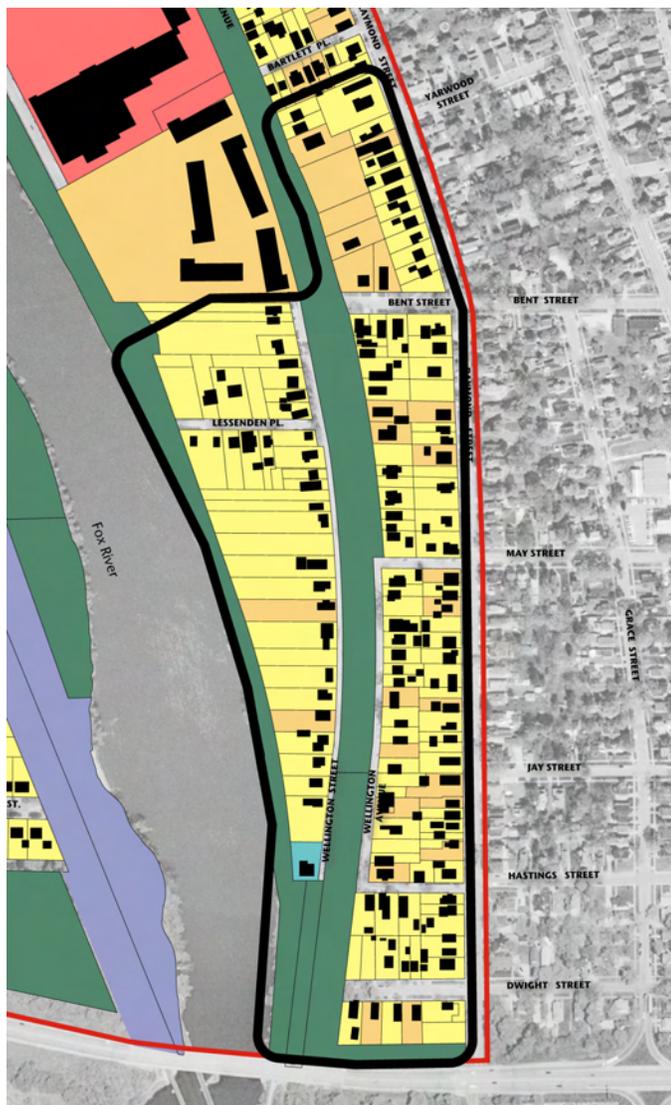
Sub-Area 6

Analysis

Sub-Area 6 is bounded by the Fox River on the west, Bartlett Place on the north, Raymond Street to the east, and US Route 20 to the south.

Land Use/Existing Assessment

This area is comprised solely of single family residences. No public parks exist within this Sub-Area. Streetscapes lack ample sidewalks, parkways and landscaping. Some streets were constructed as half streets and have remained that way. Bus transit is available on National Street, but access into the Train Station is challenging primarily due to crossing the river.



Marketing

Goals for this subarea reflect the need to both sustain older historic homes along Upper Wellington, while also targeting acquisition of homes along Lower Wellington to create an expanded park and open space along the river. This acquisition would need to be undertaken as part of a long term strategy.

Transportation

There is a lack of a street network and infrastructure in this part of the study area. At a minimum, streets need to be reconstructed to provide for adequate right-of-way, proper drainage, appropriately sized parkways, adequate sidewalks, and lighting.

Observations

There is a significant grade change between upper and lower Wellington and it has created two distinct neighborhoods. In some locations the upper and lower section of Wellington Avenue have a vertical separation of 30 feet in a distance of 100 feet or less.

Upper Wellington Avenue is a northbound one-way street beginning at Hastings Street and staying a one-way northbound street to Bent Street. Upper Wellington Avenue has a narrow width with parking on one side.

Lower Wellington Avenue is a southbound one-way street that terminates in a dead end where it is very difficult to turn around. It should be noted that the condition of lower Wellington Avenue is extremely poor. Parking is inadequate and in some areas residents have excavated into the hillside to create additional parking areas on gravel and dirt pads adjacent to roadway.

The residential lots along the west side of lower Wellington Avenue are narrow and deep lots extending down slope to the Fox River corridor and regional trail system. The lots continue to drop in elevation moving west to the river's edge. Some of the lower areas within the existing lots are subject to flooding.

Lessenden Place is a one block long existing street that terminates as a dead end without an adequate turn-around. While it is possible to walk from this dead end to the Fox River trail system, there is only a dirt path and overgrown shrubs which create an uninviting atmosphere. This however is the only opportunity for the public to access the river corridor from National Street to US Route 20, or a distance of 3600 feet.

It should be noted that there are several existing homes along Lessenden place that are significant and well preserved that should remain in place.

Sub-Area 6

Improvement Plan

The National Street Metra Station Area Plan designates three land-uses within Sub-Area 6 including Conservation/Rehabilitation Single Family (CR-SF), Redevelopment Single Family (R-SF) and open space/parks.

The Conservation/Rehabilitation Single Family (CR-SF) area is designated on the existing residential blocks between Raymond Street and upper Wellington Avenue. This land use designation begins just south of Bartlett Place and continues all the way south to US Route 20. This land-use designation calls for the rehabilitation of the neighborhood through conservation and rehabilitation of structures that have merit to remain. The designation also states that selective redevelopment may occur in the case where the existing homes lack historic and/or architectural integrity or are simply non-

contributing structures.

The Station Area Plan also designates two areas of Redevelopment Single Family (R-SF) located adjacent to the Fox River corridor just south of Bent Street extended and on both sides of Lessenden Place. As mentioned earlier, Lessenden Place includes several significant structures that should be further evaluated and located prior to creating any detailed plans for this area. New homes to be constructed in the R-SF area designated in the plan should be designed in context with the traditional residential architecture that is prevalent in the majority of Elgin's historic neighborhoods.

Lessenden Place is also shown extending west from the current dead end and curving into the proposed new Riverfront roadway that continues through the proposed redevelopment of Sub-Area 5 described earlier. This extension of current Lessenden Place eliminates the current dead end as well as opens up additional access to the Fox River corridor and regional trail system.

The most significant change to the existing conditions in Sub-Area 6 is the designation on the plan of a large park created by removing approximately 16 single family homes along lower Wellington Avenue, removing approximately 1300 feet of Wellington Street south of Lessenden Place, and incorporating the railway ROW into a consolidated open space/park following the Fox River Corridor. The proposed new park area including the railway ROW and combined with existing open space adjacent to US Route 20 would be approximately 8.5 acres in area. This is comparable with Central Park (approximately 7.2 acres) in size, and in fact, would have very similar topography.

In order to make this happen Lessenden Place would be extended east to T into upper Wellington Avenue. Upper Wellington Avenue would be reconstructed with a wider cross-section to become a two-way street and provide improved access for safety services and residents. As mentioned earlier in the description of Sub-Area 5, it will be necessary for the City of Elgin to acquire the entire railway ROW in order to execute the plan as illustrated for Sub-Area 6.

With all of the proposed changes to land-uses from existing conditions, coupled with the proposed infrastructure upgrades, the existing homes facing onto current upper Wellington Avenue would be looking over a significant bluff with dramatic views of the Fox River corridor. This neighborhood area in Sub-Area 6 will also greatly benefit with the potential for commuter parking located on the east side of the river as well as the improved access to the river corridor and regional trail system.



Design Guidelines

The design guidelines included below provide a framework for sustainable, context-sensitive, and aesthetic redevelopment of sites as well as encourage greater transit and pedestrian friendly amenities on public/private property within the National Street study area. The goal of the design guidelines is to provide clear and concise directives for the Community Development Department, elected officials, and the community to corroboratively achieve the city's transit oriented development objectives for the study area. The community input obtained as part of the Image Preference Survey, combined with the unique physical and socioeconomic characteristics of the study area have shaped the design guidelines.

The design guidelines are organized into two sections; the first section titled 'Redevelopment Guidelines' addresses private property improvements such as the built environment, off-street parking, vehicular access, and transit/pedestrian amenities. The second section titled 'Transit and Pedestrian Guidelines' deals with public improvements along major streets (e.g. National Street, State Street, Villa Street) in terms of transit and pedestrian access improvements and streetscape amenities.

Redevelopment Guidelines: Private Property

1.1 Block Face Design

Buildings along major streets within the study area should respect, reinforce, and enhance the entire blockface. Blockface design is essential to creating an attractive and pedestrian-friendly station area environment.

- » Consistent building frontage is encouraged for each block with structures located at the build-to-line.
- » Landscaping is encouraged along the block to establish continuity between buildings and define the blockface where buildings are absent.
- » Corner buildings should define the intersection with distinctive architectural and design features.
- » Building massing and site design should be coordinated with adjacent properties.
- » At each end of a block, structures should transition in height down to the height of adjacent areas and not exceed 5 stories in height.



Consistent building frontage to help define street edge



Corner buildings to hold and define intersection

Design Guidelines

1.2 Building Placement & Architecture

The location and design of individual buildings on redeveloped parcels within the study area help create the block character. These guidelines help new buildings and renovated buildings complement the character of adjacent buildings and create a transit/pedestrian-friendly environment.

Building Location and Orientation

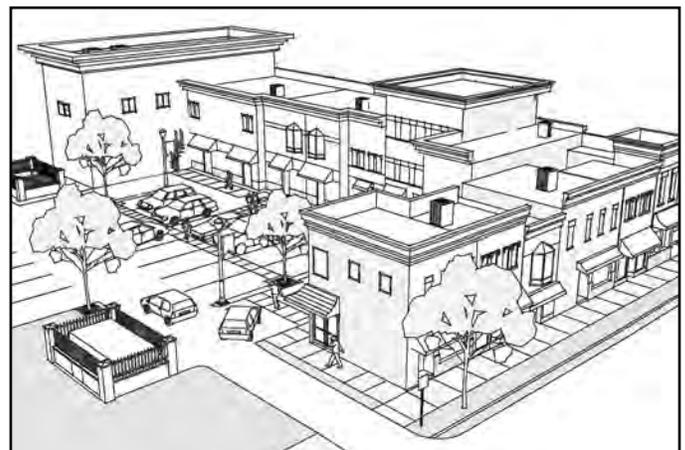
- » Redevelopment projects should utilize the concept of 'build to' lines versus setback lines. A build-to-line establishes the point to which buildings should be placed. Development projects should maintain a consistent build-to-line with adjacent buildings.
- » In instances where buildings are not located close to the build-to-line, the space should be occupied by an active use (outdoor seating, outdoor dining, or pocket park) to create a sense of place.
- » Building edges should be parallel to the street right-of-way.
- » Public entrances should be clearly defined and face the street. Porticoes, awnings and other entryway features that are integral to the building design are encouraged.
- » For corner buildings, the front of buildings should face the major street. The side of buildings can face onto the major street provided the orientation is required by the building use. All sides of the building visible from a major street should comply with the design guidelines.
- » Landmarks and focal points should be created by placing "signature" civic and institutional facilities in high visibility locations, such as at major intersections or at the end of prominent streets access.
- » Retail buildings along major streets should open directly onto pedestrian paths with mostly transparent facades on the first floor.
- » Clustered retail establishments rather than strip retail development are required for vehicle and pedestrian shopper convenience as well as traffic reduction. Transit can better serve clustered businesses utilizing one stop as opposed to segregated development.



Outdoor seating helps create an active public space in front of buildings



Buildings opening directly onto pedestrian paths



Service areas & loading facilities screened from public right-of-way

Design Guidelines

- » Service areas and loading facilities should not be visible from major streets or intersections. They should be enclosed, screened, and positioned to minimize their impacts on adjacent uses.

Building Height and Proportion

- » Variation in building heights should be encouraged to create an attractive roof line.
- » In general, the height of buildings should be complementary to surrounding uses, with a minimum height of 3 stories recommended for economic viability.
- » Corner buildings should be at least 3 stories in height so as to anchor major intersections. In cases where this is not possible, buildings should have extended facades and parapets to increase building height.
- » Building facades should be organized into three major components (tripartite composition):
 - Base- Ground level, where the building meets the ground
 - Body- Upper architecture, forming the majority of the structure
 - Cap- roof or parapet
- » Large buildings should divide their facades vertically with windows, columns, and other architectural features to avoid blank or windowless facades facing major streets.
- » Windowless expanses of wall on street facing facades are prohibited.
- » Roof forms should be integral to the massing of buildings and cover the entire width and depth of the buildings. Superficial roof forms such as 'mansards' affixed to the building façade are prohibited.
- » Structures should meet the ground with a strong base, preferably with the main floor appearing to be 1.5 stories tall.



Corner buildings to anchor intersections



Tripartite composition: Base, Body, and Cap



Roof forms integrated with building architecture

Design Guidelines

1.3 Access & Circulation

Vehicles

- » Access to buildings should provide for safe and convenient access by persons with disabilities, pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, transit customers and vehicles.
- » Vehicular driveways should be consolidated to limit curb cuts and points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.
- » Drive aisles for vehicles should be designed such as to allow transit to employ an efficient circulation route through the site.
- » Garage entrances, wide turning radii, driveways, and dedicated turning lanes should be avoided in main pedestrian areas.
- » Internal roadway networks for community and regional shopping centers should be designed to accommodate transit vehicles and provide access to major retailers.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- » The pedestrian system should provide convenient connections between public sidewalks and destinations such as shopping centers, schools, institutions, and recreational areas.
- » Walkway systems should be designed to provide direct pedestrian links from buildings to transit stops. Walkways and bikeways can be located through open space areas and along designated easements to provide direct routes from transit stops to buildings.
- » New residential development should provide breaks in walls or fences to allow for pedestrian access to transit stops.
- » Bicycle routes should be provided within and around developments to encourage cycling for commuting, shopping, and recreational purposes.



Well-defined pedestrian circulation and access for transit vehicles from driveways



Reduced pedestrian distance between building and sidewalk



Direct pedestrian connection from sidewalk to neighborhood park

Design Guidelines

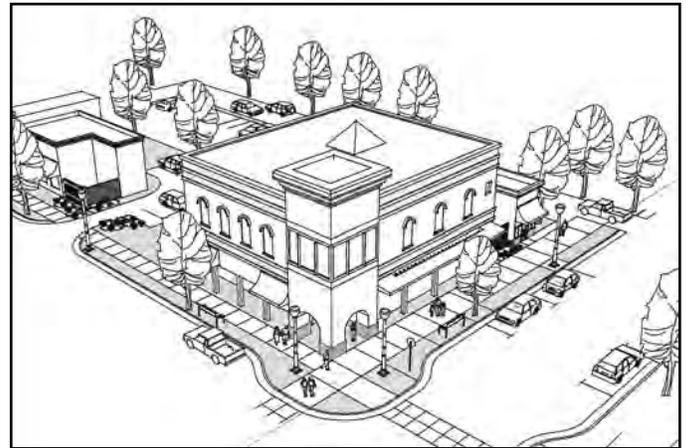
Parking

Location and Access

- » Parking areas and garages should be located to the side or rear of buildings, rather than in the front yards along major streets. Where this provision is not practical, a majority of the parking should be limited to a single bay between the building and street property line.
- » Parking garages should be designed to accommodate retail or other active uses on the first floor. Access to parking should be from the rear or side of the garage.
- » On-street parking should be encouraged along side streets and internal circulation routes to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- » Wherever possible, shared service areas should be utilized to access service and loading areas.
- » Service area access should be provided from an alley at the rear of buildings.
- » Parking facility design guidelines should be done in accordance with Metra's Parking Manual as well as City Guidelines.

Screening and Landscaping

- » Landscaping and site amenities should be considered an integral part of the overall design of a facility and should complement the building and other site improvements.
- » Street trees should be provided at least one every 25 feet. However, street tree planting should compliment and continue the planting scheme design for the site as a whole.
- » Retention ponds, where required, should be designed as landscape features.
- » Surface parking lots should provide landscaping in the form of shrubs and trees within off-street parking lots.
- » All parking areas should be screened from the street with ornamental fencing, dense hedges, and other plantings to soften the visual impact.
- » Fences and barriers should be constructed of high quality materials consistent and compatible with the building design.
- » Parking areas should be well lit in order to ensure safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.



Off-street parking located at rear of building



Landscape amenities integrated with built environment



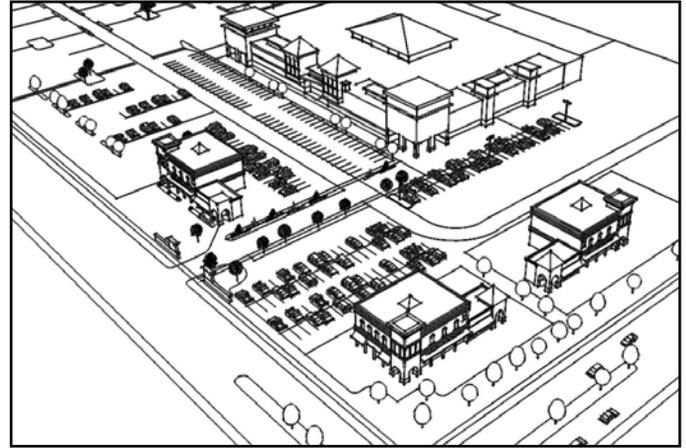
Planter beds used to soften visual impact of parking

Design Guidelines

- » Surface parking lots should be landscaped with planted islands every twelve (12) spaces or where parking rows abut drive lanes.
- » Long, unbroken row of parking should be avoided. Large parking lots should be broken up into smaller lots with landscaping.

Shared Parking

- » Shared parking areas are encouraged between commercial and mixed-use buildings.
- » Parking requirements for the major commercial users should be revised to provide greater density and diversity of uses.
- » Wherever possible, adjoining parking lots should be linked to provide internal traffic circulation and limit curb cuts along major streets.



Shared parking between buildings as well as division of large lots

1.4 Signage and Wayfinding

Signage should be in scale with building and site elements, and should complement, rather than compete with the overall design.

- » Signage should complement and enhance the architecture and streetscape character of the study area. In addition, well defined signage and wayfinding will ensure ease of identification and increased patronage for uses in the study area.
- » Free-standing signs should not be allowed except at the entrance of large commercial establishments.
- » Signs should not dominate the building to which they are affixed and should not obstruct pedestrian views.
- » Pedestrian-scale signage should be encouraged.
- » Signage should be lit through well designed building mounted light fixtures.
- » Information kiosks or booths should be provided at bus stops as well as major destinations within the study area with information regarding bus routes, timings, and events and activities in the community.
- » Wayfinding signage should be provided for public parking areas as well as key destinations along major streets.
- » Parking lots should include wayfinding signage but used sparingly and be of a consistent character and design with all other site signage.



Gateway signage

Design Guidelines

Transit and Pedestrian Oriented Guidelines: Public Property

2.1 Bus Stop Shelter Design

- » Transit shelters should be installed at all bus stops along major streets (e.g. State Street, National Street) to provide riders weather protection as well as seating areas.
- » External lighting should be provided adjacent to the shelter.
- » Benches should be installed at all bus stops including those that do not have a shelter. Location of the benches will require careful consideration so as not to interfere with pedestrians' use of the sidewalk and handicap accessibility.
- » Landscaping in the form of shrubs and planters should be provided adjacent to the bus stop and/or shelter to enhance the attractiveness of transit and level of passenger comfort.
- » Bicycle parking facilities may be provided at the bus stop for the convenience of bicyclists using transit.
- » Bus shelters should be encouraged to provide accessories such as information panels and electronic messaging systems.

2.2 Access & Circulation

Vehicular

- » Driveways and parking lots should be consolidated to limit the number of entry and exit points.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- » Walking distances for transit users should not exceed one-quarter mile, and in low density areas having less than 2,000 people per square mile, one half mile to a transit (i.e. bus stop or train station) stop.
- » While intense development efforts should focus on the 1/2 mile ring around National Street Metra Station, Metra's experience indicates that a significant number of Metra riders walk between 1/2 mile and 1 mile to the station.
- » Elements that restrict pedestrian movements should be minimized including meandering sidewalks, fences, walled communities, berms, sound walls, and expansive parking lots.



Existing lack of bus shelter and amenities for transit riders



Bus shelter with amenities for riders/users



Clearly marked crosswalks

Design Guidelines

- » Paved pedestrian pathways should be accessible to everyone using ramps, visual guides, signage, and rails where needed. ADA compliant curb ramps should be placed at each corner of an intersection.
- » Paved connections between the bus stop and pedestrian sidewalk should be provided for ease of access.
- » Pedestrian sidewalks should be at least five (5) feet in width.
- » Crosswalks should be marked and be clearly visible to motorists. Crosswalk materials should be noticeably different in terms of color and/or texture to clearly indicate where the crossing should occur.
- » Clearly defined mid-block crossings should be provided using materials with different color and/or texture.
- » Bicycle racks should be provided at regular intervals along major streets including key destinations such as bus stops, train station, commercial uses, and retail/employment centers. Design and placement of bicycle parking facilities should complement other transit furniture at these locations.
- » Dedicated and clearly marked bike connections should be encouraged between existing uses within the study area and the adjacent neighborhoods and communities.
- » Roadway widths at pedestrian crossings could be reduced using bump outs to slow down vehicular traffic and reduce the length of pedestrian crosswalks.



Colored interlocking pavers to help define crosswalk



Bicycle parking racks along at key destinations

2.3 Landscape and Streetscape

- » Streetscape design and amenities should have a strong pedestrian focus and should be coordinated with major, minor, and boulevard improvements.
- » All streets should provide enhanced parkways and streetscape treatments. Amenities will vary depending upon the location, but a palette of common visual elements should be used throughout the mixed-use development area.
- » Sidewalks should be separated from vehicular traffic by a landscape buffer (minimum 5') including trees, shrubs, bollards, and planters.
- » Pedestrian safety should be enhanced by



Landscape buffer separating vehicular and pedestrian traffic

Design Guidelines

providing clear sight lines for both vehicles and pedestrians at site entrances and between parking areas and public sidewalks.

- » Streetscape amenities including seating areas, planting areas, bike racks, street lights, and trash receptacles should be provided throughout the corridor.
- » View corridors should be terminated with distinct architectural/streetscape elements.
- » Accent lighting is encouraged on buildings with a greater amount of architectural façade detail.
- » Pedestrian scale lighting, seating, way finding elements, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks should be provided.
- » Parks, active recreational areas, and natural open space adjacent to the study area should be connected to it and other neighborhoods via extensive pedestrian and bike connections.
- » Pocket parks should be created along the corridor for informal activities and visual appeal.



Pocket parks for passive recreation

2.4 Signage and Wayfinding

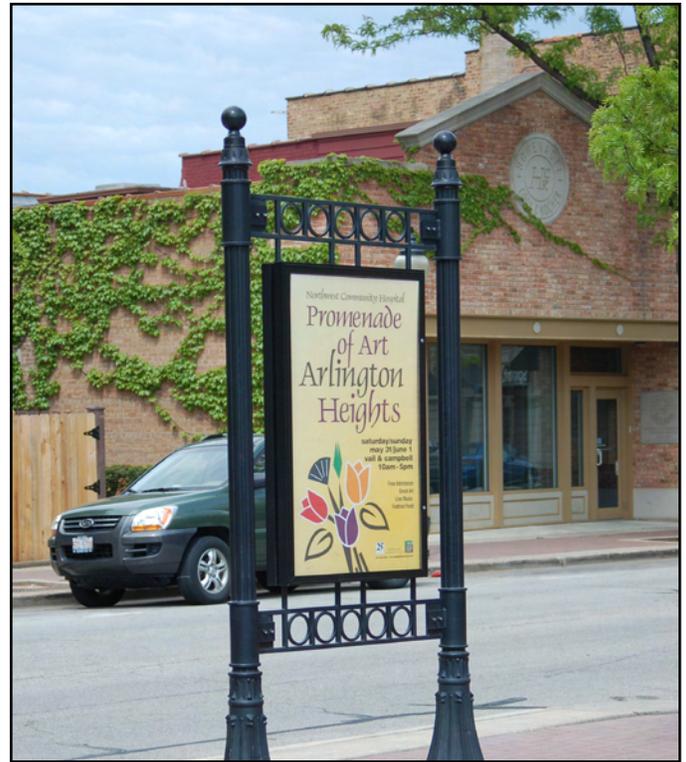
- » Trees, buildings, and other structures should not obstruct signs.
- » Signage for major commercial centers should be consolidated onto one ground mounted sign and contain the logos or names of each business to avoid signage clutter along the corridor.
- » Gateway elements should be created at the east and west end of the corridor as well as other major entry points.
- » Pedestrian-scale signage should be encouraged.
- » Billboards and free-standing signs that obstruct buildings and streetscape should be discouraged along the right-of-way.
- » Signage placed at the entrance of key destinations within the study area should not compete with one another and street trees, street lights, and streetscape amenities.
- » Maps should be used to supplement directional signage at key destinations to reduce the amount of directional signage.



Ground mounted sign

Design Guidelines

- » Reflective surfaces should be discouraged for signage as they hinder visibility and are difficult to read.
- » A common theme should be created and adopted for public signage including entrance signs, directional signs, wayfinding signs, and pedestrian kiosks. The theme could consist of common colors, materials, fonts, and logos.
- » Each bus stop should be marked with a sign indicating the transit operator and the routes that serve the stop.



Ground mounted sign with a design and color theme

Implementation Strategy

Introduction

Developing the desired transit improvement recommendations for the National Street Station Plan is the initial step in the planning process to enhance transit opportunities within the study area. To assist the City and its affiliates in prioritizing the diversity of advisory initiatives recommended within the plan, the key initiatives are summarized on the following pages.

These implementations are based on the long term development/redevelopment/rehabilitation that will occur surrounding the National Street Metra Station area. For the primary improvements listed within this report, we have charted the role need from the City of Elgin, and other agencies charged with monitoring its successful completion.

The conditions and variable upon which the transit improvements are built, are by their nature, fluid. They can not always be easily or accurately predicted. To ensure the plans assumptions and recommendations presented in this document continue to be representative of the community and their long range goals, these priorities should be periodically reevaluated. This reevaluation will allow necessary modifications and adjustments to the plan so this is kept current with the long-term vision and needs of the City of Elgin. It is encouraged that the plan be reviewed annually, with preparation of appropriate updates every five (5) years.

To ensure the success of the National Street Station Plan, the City will have to overcome continually changing priorities, budgetary constraints, facilitation difficulties among numerous public agencies and private interests in the area.

Preliminary Actions

Recommendations within this document are based on several activities that should be accomplished prior to undertaking the long range improvement. These activities vary from administrative in nature, to acquiring large tracts of land for roadway purposes. Each of these items should be in place prior to commencement of improvements.

Adopt the National Street Station Plan

The value and effectiveness of the National Street Station Plan is directly correlated to the City's willingness to embrace its recommendations and aggressively work toward their implementation. Approval and incorporation of the plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan is a definite first step in demonstrating the City's belief in and commitment to the positive benefits that the plan may provide the community.

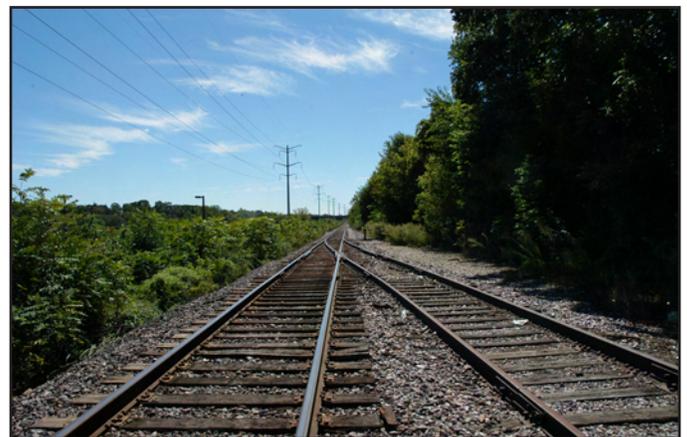
Acquire Property, Abandoned UPRR ROW

Ownership of the abandoned railroad right-of-way between Wellington Avenue (Upper Wellington) and Wellington Street (Lower Wellington) is a priority before any improvements can be made to the east side of the study area. The City had initially begun talks to acquire this strip of land, but ceased pursuit of the parcel. In order to improve Wellington Avenue, it will be necessary to acquire additional acreage for right-of-way.



Remove UP Freight RR Through Downtown Elgin

The existing freight rail line is a significant obstacle to access the National Street Metra Station. As of this writing, conversations had begun to encourage Metra and UP-RR to combine rails, and eliminate the freight line from the Fox River to the Big Timber Metra Station. The City needs to aggressively pursue these conversations. Elimination of the freight line, is an immediate benefit to the residents of Elgin. Numerous roadway/railway crossings can be eliminated, removing high maintenance costs, inconvenience of traffic conflicts, and addressing safety issues for such crossings. The existing right-of-way for the freight line can be utilized as part of a trail system, giving pedestrians additional access to various parts of the City.



Implementation Strategy

Acquire/Dedicate Property for ROW Purposes

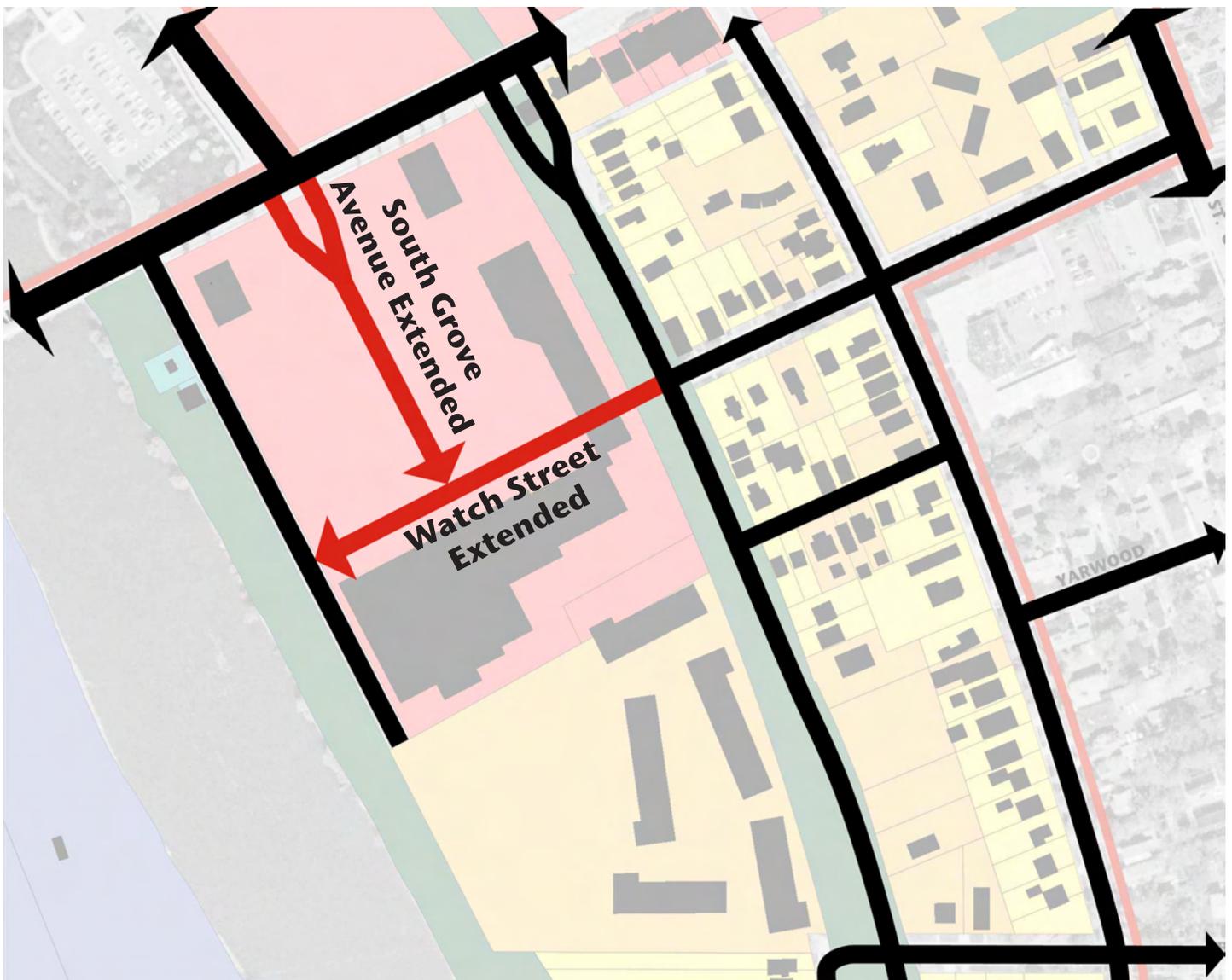
The extension of South Grove Avenue and Watch Street in Sub-Area 5 will be a first step in dividing the super parcel into reasonable, buildable lots. (Roadways shown in red in the exhibit below.) This initial work will begin the goal of extending the grid of streets to the river front. At minimum, the City needs to obtain the future right-of-way dedication.

Construction of these two roadways can begin anytime after the parcels have been dedicated for roadway purposes. The benefit to the residents of Elgin will be immediate. The new streets will create a comfortable walking atmosphere for residents north and east of the Clock Tower Shopping Center, encouraging residents

patronage for these retail businesses, access to the river, its walking trails and amenities.

Construction of these two roadways, can be initiated by either the City of Elgin, the current parcel owner, or a developer. The new roads may be constructed in sections or as one entity, anytime after the area is dedicated for roadway purposes. It is recommended that these streets become part of the public right-of-way system, and not be privatized, as they have the potential to become access points for multiple entities.

Once this initial grid is set, the parcels can be developed in any order that the market demands. This will become a vital tool for Elgin, Metra and Butera Foods to access the individual parcels where parking for both commuters and new development can be added.



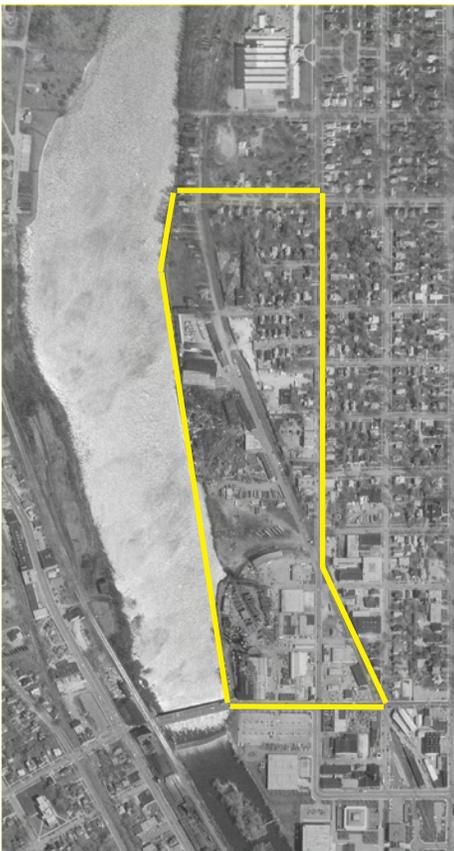
Implementation Strategy

Past Project Strategy

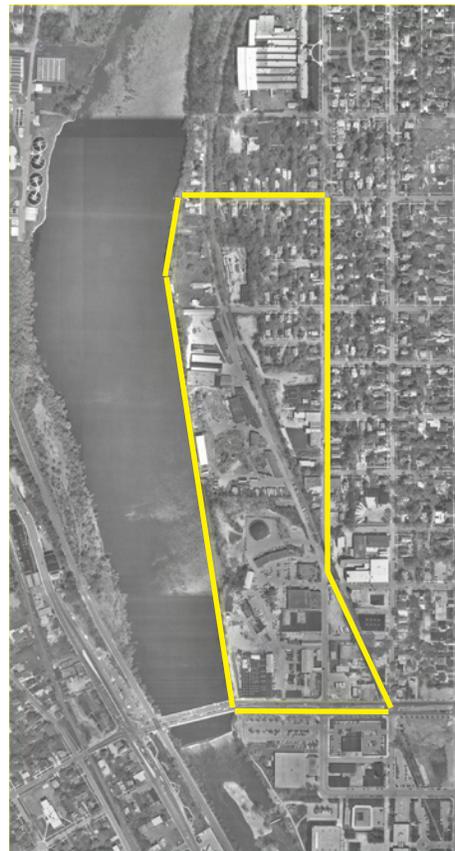
In the past, the City of Elgin has initiated and accomplished several redevelopments that have been choreographed over a long period of time.

Most recently, the City has completed plans for redevelopment of a parcel of land north of the Gail Borden Library. The aerials shown below demonstrate how over time, parcels were acquired, assembled, and can now be redeveloped per a master plan. To the right, is the current master plan that the City will move forward with in redeveloping this site.

As with the project north of the Library, the city does not intend on seeking eminent domain in order to obtain any parcels within this study. It is the intention of the city that private developers will be the driving force in obtaining distressed parcels, assembling the land, and redeveloping it per this report.



North of Kimball Street at Grove Street - 1980



North of Kimball Street at Grove Street - 1996



North of Kimball Street at Grove Street - 2008

Implementation Strategy

Project Priority

The National Street Metra Station Plan was designed to be flexible to the needs of the City, Developer, Property Owner and Residents. While this plan has been described in Sub-Areas, each area, and the sections within each Sub-Area, can operate independent of any other recommendations or proposed improvements. This allows the market and the economy to dictate the direction and the speed at which plans will be completed. The following is a summary of each Sub-Area and the improvements as they relate to Land Use, Transportation Enhancement, Pedestrian Circulation and Amenities.

Time Frame Key

Ongoing - Continual, most programs are currently running within the City.

Short-term - Finite/short length of time to accomplish task. It can begin and end at any point in time.

Long-term - Dependant on Market conditions, will take time to accomplish. Can begin and end at any point in time.

Responsible Parties Key

COE - City of Elgin

Dev - Developer

Owner - Current owner of the parcel

IDOT - Illinois Department of Transportation

Metra/Pace - Dependent on ownership

UPRR - Union Pacific Railroad

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>General, All Sub-Areas - Land Use and Development</i>			
Encourage buildings in new development and redevelopment projects to be configured along the street/front parcel line to create a well defined street edge.	COE	Ongoing	Implement/enforce design guidelines
Encourage development of housing in diverse price ranges	COE	Ongoing	Continual review of market demands
As parcels become available, and are identified in this plan as redevelopment, the City, in cooperation with private entities, should acquire and assemble parcels for future development.	COE Dev	Ongoing	Continual review of available parcels Establish funding designated for the procurement of land.
As parcels become available, and are identified in this plan as future open space or right-of-way needs, the City should acquire and compile parcels for those uses.	COE	Ongoing	Continual review of available parcels Establish funding designated for the procurement of land.
Encourage variable heights for buildings dependant on needs for parking and current market demand	COE	Ongoing	Remain flexible to zoning standards Encourage Planned Developments
Implement design guidelines per this report	COE	Ongoing	Continual review of conditions
Continue to encourage multi-family conversions to Single Family Residences	COE	Ongoing	Continual review of code and the enforcement of existing requirements. Continue to fund existing program.

Implementation Strategy

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>General, All Sub-Areas - Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Develop incentives for private property owners to include/allow amenities that are supportive of transit (e.g. bike racks, benches, trash receptacles, lighting, etc.)	COE	Ongoing	Implement design guidelines
Explore the possibility of constructing roundabouts along National Street at Grove Street, Raymond Street and Villa Street in lieu of traditional signalized intersections	COE	Long-term	Conduct study to determine if roundabouts are warranted to help manage traffic flow.
<i>General, All Sub-Areas - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Encourage pedestrian links into and out of the study area. Review locations of Bike Routes and ensure that they are well marked/identified.	COE	Ongoing	Continual review of existing conditions

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>Sub-Area 1 - Land Use and Development</i>			
Redevelopment of northeast quadrant of National Street and State Street to Open Space	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels Initiate detailed plan.
Redevelopment of southeast quadrant of National Street & State Street to Mixed Use	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Initiate detailed plan.
Redevelopment of southwest quadrant of Walnut Street & State Street to Mixed Use	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Initiate detailed plan.
Redevelopment of northwest quadrant of Walnut Street & State Street to Mixed Use	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Initiate detailed plan.
<i>Sub-Area 1 - Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Construct connector street from Ryerson Avenue to Hendee Street	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels Initiate detailed plan with engineering
Construct commuter/shared parking structure east of Hendee Street	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Initiate detailed plan.
Consider a restriction on turning movements from Hendee Street onto National Street to right-in, right-out	COE	Long-term	Monitor traffic conditions on National Street to determine if change is warranted
Implement a proposed bike route on Hendee Street, investigate potential connections with Metra National Street Station	COE	Short-term	Proceed with design engineering documents and bid project out for construction

Implementation Strategy

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>Sub-Area 1 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Provide access to National Street Metra Station - outside of National Street entrance	COE Dev	Long-term	Complete preliminary engineering study for outdoor elevation/stairwell if required.
<i>Project / Recommendation</i>			
<i>Responsible Parties</i>			
<i>Time Frame</i>			
<i>Action Steps</i>			
<i>Sub-Area 2 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Complete missing segments of sidewalk	COE	Short-term	Continual review of existing conditions
Create bike trail on former freight line right-of-way	COE, Dev UPRR	Long-term	Begin study to determine locations, beginning/ending points of trail system
<i>Project / Recommendation</i>			
<i>Responsible Parties</i>			
<i>Time Frame</i>			
<i>Action Steps</i>			
<i>Sub-Area 3 - Land Use and Development</i>			
Remove billboards from study area	COE	Short-term	Continue to explore ability to remove/relocate billboards to alternate location
<i>Sub-Area 3 - Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Address commuter parking needs	COE Metra UPRR Dev	Long-term	Continue to review need for improvements and/or additional commuter parking. Work with multiple agencies to secure new shared parking deck.
Make minor geometric changes at the west driveway entrance to Metra National Street Station to slow down right turning movements from National Street into the parking lot	COE Metra	Short-term	Prepare engineering design plans for entryway modification
Install enhanced signage indicating “Do Not Block Intersection” with flashing light at each side of the Metra National Street Station driveway entrances, and pavement restriping to make entrances more visible and facilitate access to and from the parking lots.	COE Metra	Short-term	Review existing conditions to determine location for signage.
<i>Sub-Area 3 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Sidewalks and paths	COE Metra	Long-term	Continue to review existing conditions of sidewalks and pathways on Metra site and within the City right-of way. Upgrade as needed to maintain compliance with current ADA standards.

Implementation Strategy

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>Sub-Area 4 - Land Use and Development</i>			
Acquire Copley Press site and continue River Park Place townhomes into the razed parcel.	COE Dev	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Initiate detailed plan.
Analyze the Casino's surface parking lot and determine if the northeast corner of Grove and National Streets can be redeveloped to Mixed-Use Development	COE Dev Owner	Short-term	Evaluation of existing conditions
Redevelop northeast corner of Raymond and National Street. Place new structures at the corner building line and provide parking behind the complex.	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels
Analyze feasibility of removing curb cuts along Villa Street, on the southwest side. Provide an alley for access for first block tier.	COE Owner	Long-term	Evaluation of existing conditions Initiate detailed plan and preliminary engineering
Analyze individual residential sites for rehabilitation or removal. Historic homes in repairable condition should be rehabilitated and returned to single family residences.	COE Owner	Long-term	Continual review of code and the enforcement of existing requirements. Encourage registration with Elgin Heritage Commission.
Preserve National Armory Building and Elgin Day-Care Family Resource Center	COE	Ongoing	Maintain existing conditions
Consider restricting turning movements to right-in/right-out into entrance of Grand Victoria Casino off of National Street once redevelopment occurs in the area	COE Owner	Long-term	Monitor traffic conditions along National Street
<i>Sub-Area 4 - Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Analyze need for surface parking at casino	COE Dev Owner	Short-term	Evaluation of existing conditions
Eliminate curb cuts along National Street and provide joint access for business located along the frontage.	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Evaluation of existing conditions
<i>Sub-Area 4 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Construct bike trail along vacated railroad right-of-way, leading to Fox River Trail/ downtown Elgin.	COE Dev	Long-term	Begin study to determine locations, beginning/ending points of trail system

Implementation Strategy

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>Sub-Area 5 - Land Use and Development</i>			
Construct Mixed-Use buildings in phases	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Obtain entitlements to initiate first phase, Complete preliminary/final plan Initiate construction
Construct public square (park)	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Complete final design to initiate construction
Upgrade the facade on the existing structures that are to remain.	Owner	Long-term	Complete final design to initiate construction
Construct new apartment complex in phases	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Obtain entitlements Complete preliminary/final plans, Initiate construction
Construct rowhomes facing Wellington Avenue	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Complete preliminary/final plans, Initiate construction
Analyze individual residential sites for rehabilitation or removal. Historic homes in repairable condition should be rehabilitated and returned to single family residences	COE Dev Owner	Short-term	Continual review of code and the enforcement of existing requirements.
Redevelop oversized block with mixed product residential	COE Owner	Long-term	Acquire parcels, assemble into larger parcels Complete final engineering Initiate construction
Preserve observatory	COE Owner	Ongoing	Coordinate with owner
<i>Sub-Area 5 - Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Construct remainder of streets extensions and grid assembly	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Complete preliminary/final plans for public streets as shown.
Base floors of Mixed-Use buildings to be structured parking	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	
Reconstruct existing streets to include adequate right-of-way, proper drainage, sidewalks, appropriate sized parkways and adequate sidewalks	COE	Short-term to Long-term	Prioritize improvements in Capital Improvement Plan; some street improvements dependent on other action items
<i>Sub-Area 5 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Construct pedestrian bridge to connect parking structure on east side of the river with National Street Metra Station	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Initiate feasibility study and cost analysis

Implementation Strategy

<i>Project / Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Action Steps</i>
<i>Sub-Area 6- Land Use and Development</i>			
Analyze individual residential sites along Lessenden Place for rehabilitation or removal. Historic homes in repairable condition should be rehabilitated and returned to single family residences	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Continual review of code and the enforcement of existing requirements.
Continue to encourage multi-family conversions to Single Family Residences for sites located between Raymond Street and Wellington Avenue (Upper Wellington)	COE Owner	Long-term	Continual review of code and the enforcement of existing requirements. Continue to fund existing program.
Reconstruct Wellington Avenue (Upper Wellington) to become a wider two-way roadway with parking on one side.	COE	Long-term	Complete preliminary/final plans, Initiate construction
Raze approximately 16 homes along Wellington Street (Lower Wellington)	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Acquire parcels, raze structures, convert to park land
<i>Sub-Area 6- Transportation and Parking Development</i>			
Eliminate Wellington Street (Lower Wellington)	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Complete preliminary/final plans for vacation, Initiate demolition and convert area to park land
Reconstruct existing streets to include adequate right-of-way, proper drainage, sidewalks, appropriate sized parkways and adequate sidewalks	COE	Short-term to Long-term	Prioritize improvements in Capital Improvement Plan; some street improvements dependent on other action items
<i>Sub-Area 6 - Pedestrian Circulation</i>			
Construct bike trail along vacated railroad right-of-way, leading to Fox River Trail/ downtown Elgin	COE Dev Owner	Long-term	Begin study to determine locations, beginning/ending points of trail system

Implementation Strategy

Funding Mechanism Alternatives

Financial attainability is among the most critical elements to implementation of the advisory recommendations of a Transit Oriented Development Plan. To assist the City of Elgin in identifying and applying for the monies necessary to implement the advisory recommendations over the next several years, an inventory of potential funding sources has been compiled. The funding

sources listed below are intended to serve only as an initial guide to the City of Elgin in undertaking the significant number of improvements for the plan. The potential funding sources are listed by program name and provide preliminary details on project eligibility, administrator, general applicability to the City of Elgin, and an internet link to acquire additional information.

<i>Application</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Administrator</i>	<i>Funding Type / Funding Ratio</i>
<i>Transportation & Infrastructure</i>	Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	CMAP	80/20
	Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)	IDOT	80/20 - 50/50
	Innovation, Coordination, and Enhancement (ICE)	RTA	80/20 - 50/50
	Transportation Enhancement Activities	USDOT FHWA	80/20 - 50/50
	Surface Transportation Program (STP)	CMAP	70/30
	Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) Grade Crossing Protection Funds	ICC	No set funding, varies per project
<i>Economic Development</i>	Community Development Assistance Program for Economic Development	IL DCEO	100
	Business Development Public Infrastructure Program	IL DCEO	Low - Zero Interest
<i>Brownfield Redevelopment</i>	Brownfield Assessment Pilot Grants	EPA	Multiple Types
	Municipal Brownfields Redevelopment Grant	IEPA	70/30
<i>Natural Resources, Parks, & Open Space</i>	Illinois Bicycle Path Program	IDNR	50/50
	Illinois Green Streets Initiative	IDOT	80/20

Implementation Strategy



<i>Corridor Application</i>	<i>Link to Additional Information</i>
Construction of new transit facility/hub, improvements to pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including creation of bicycle lanes, bicycle parking facilities, pedestrian walkways, and pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvement.	www.cmap.illinois.gov
Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles and streetscape improvements.	www.dot.state.il.us/opp/itep
Enhance/improve local or regional connection and physical modifications to facility transfers, signal priority improvements for transit, use of real time information to enhance mobility, Bus Rapid Transit applications, passenger amenities for customers transfers (shelters, benches, informational kiosks), passenger information applications.	www.ice.rtachicago.com
Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, landscape beautification, inventory, control and removal of outdoor advertising.	www.enhancements.org Note that this funding falls under ITEP
Roadway and intersection and crosswalk improvements along Lake Street.	www.cmap.illinois.gov
Potential funding source for consolidation/elimination of freight track in Sub-Area 1; funding tied into the elimination of grade crossings and enhances safety associated with fewer grade crossings	www.icc.illinois.gov
Economic development related infrastructure and enhancements.	www.commerce.state.il.us/dceo
Public improvements on behalf of businesses making major expansion or relation project resulting in significant private investment and creation/retention of numerous jobs.	www.commerce.state.il.us/dceo
Multiple grants available for funding brownfield assessments, cleanup , and revolving loans.	www.epa.gov/brownfields/pilot
Brownfield remediation investigation and planning.	www.epa.state.il.us/land/brownfields/grants
Acquisition and development of trail facilities	www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newtrail
Provision and planting of trees along rights-of-way	www.dot.state.il.us/opp/itep

National Street Station Area Plan

Appendix A - Existing Conditions

Visual Area Assessment

Issues and Observations

Background Data Review



Study Area Boundary



Existing Conditions

Study Area Boundary

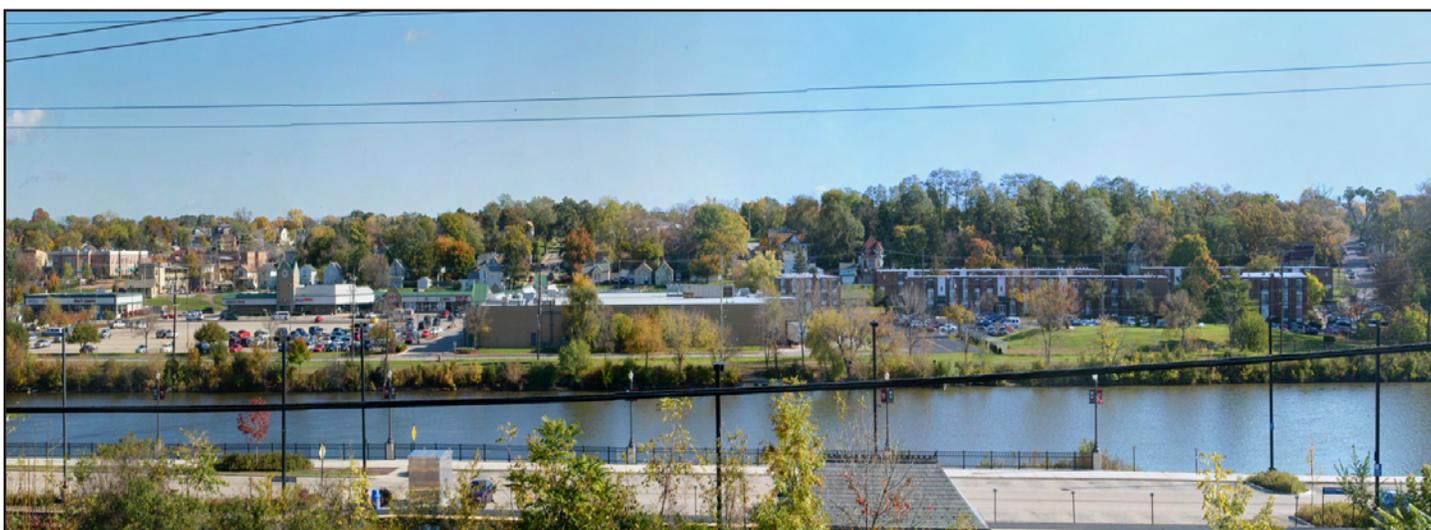
The National Street Station Area Plan boundary consists of approximately 290 acres generally located south of Elgin's historic central business district. The study area is bisected by the Fox River and has a boundary defined by existing collector streets centered on the National Street bridge crossing over the Fox River and the National Street Metra Station and parking area. The study area includes a combination of land uses and districts that have undergone significant change and evolution as well as neighborhoods/districts that continue to reflect their original character.

The former Elgin Watch Factory was located at the southeast quadrant of National Street and the Fox River. The site was transformed in the mid 1980's into a retail shopping center. The district north of National Street has seen a tremendous rebirth from the days of aged car dealerships and automobile services to become a vital residential neighborhood of attractive masonry row homes.

Beyond the key elements within the study area mentioned above there remains an eclectic mix of housing within the area. These residences consist of predominately historic structures original to the neighborhoods as they were constructed over time. The neighborhoods within the study area also include significant topography with pronounced slopes down to the Fox River that represent the landscape which gave Elgin its second name as the "bluff city".

While not included within the boundary of the study area, Elgin's Grand Victoria Casino riverboat and pavilion as well as the recently completed Festival Park are located immediately west of the study area. These two important and successful additions to the community impact the study area and were considered during the analysis and recommendation process.

The National Street Station Area Plan has been divided into six (6) Sub-Areas for detailed assessment. These six sub-areas are identified within the plan for their potential to evolve and impact future transit opportunities. Each sub-area and their respective characteristics are identified and described in this document and supplemented by representative photography of existing conditions.



Portion of Planning Area looking East towards Clock Tower Plaza

Regional Map



Existing Conditions

Regional Map

The City of Elgin is located approximately 40 miles north and west of the City of Chicago. Straddling two counties, Kane and Cook, the City is expected to approach a population of 200,000 by the year 2030.

Elgin has undergone numerous changes over the last several years. Parcels have been annexed north of Interstate 90, south to Silver Glen Road, west to Route 47, and east to Route 59.

There are three Metra Train Stations within the City Limits. These include: Big Timber, Elgin Station (at Chicago Street) and National Street Metra Station.



View looking west across the Fox River



Obelisk in front of Butera Market

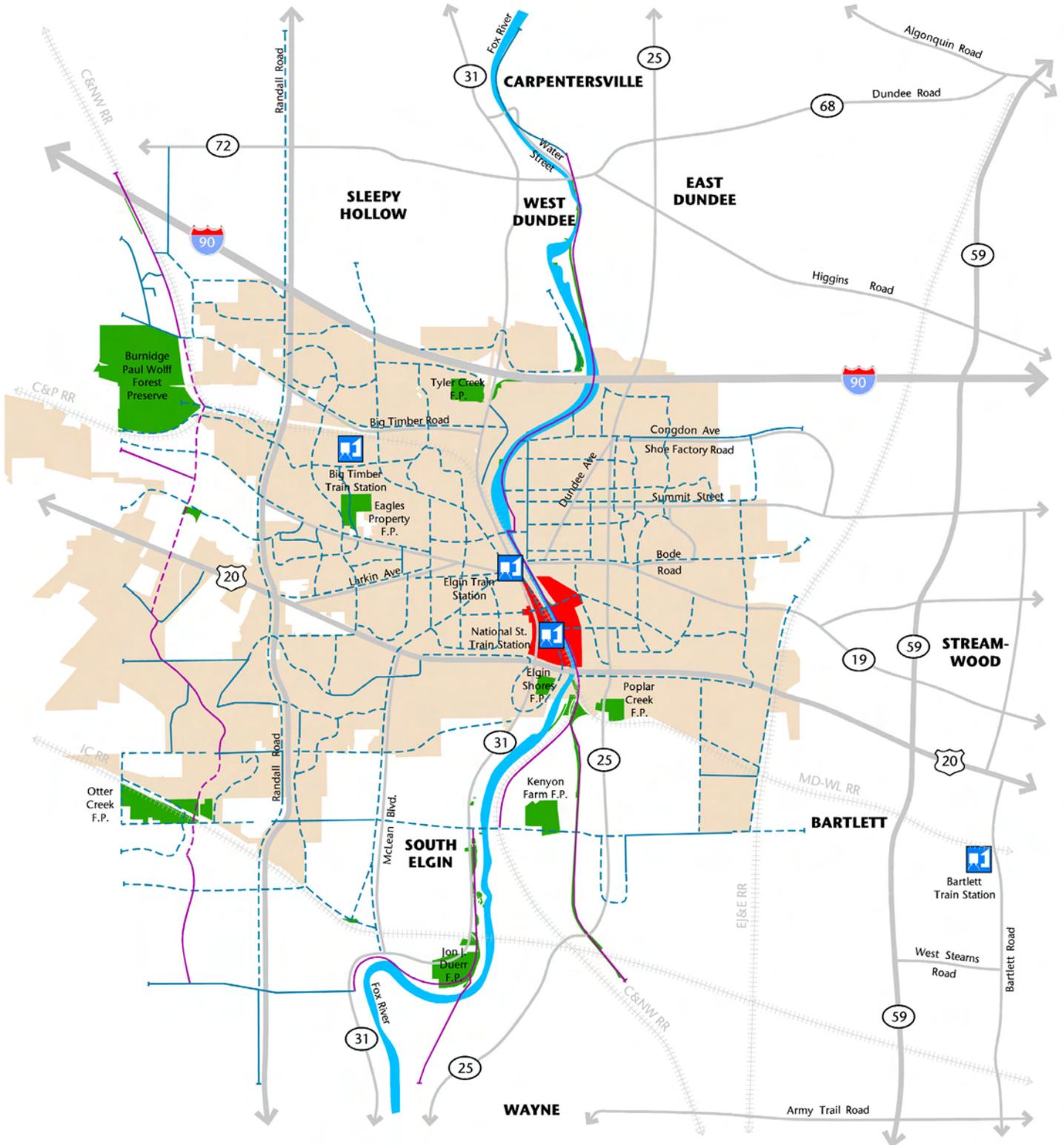


View looking east across the Fox River



View looking east across the Fox River

Regional Bike Trails Map



Existing Conditions

Regional Bike Trails

Multiple trails run into and out of Elgin. Some are posted as Bike Routes, the majority are unidentified paths. The City of Elgin continues to make great strides in an effort to create a bike friendly area for the residents.

On the map to the left, the dashed lines indicate locations where the City desires to create bike/trail routes. Existing trails are shown as a solid line. While connectivity has not been reached, having a plan in place allows for areas to be reserved for future trails.

There are several existing trails that have amenities such as trees, benches, planters, or other treatments which provide a calming and inviting atmosphere for pedestrians. Trails that run along the Fox River have additional resources for local and regional visitors (e.g. bike shops, restaurants.)

Most trails have a destination, whether it be part of the Forest Preserve, schools, or parks. Other trails simply run adjacent to the river. The existing Fox River Trail follows the east side of the river bank, and is included as part of this study.



Amenities along existing trails



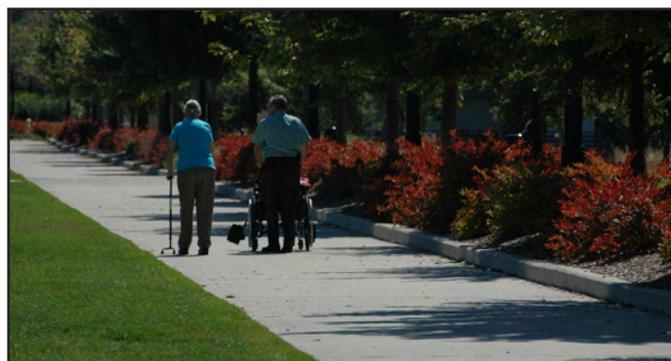
Entrance to Festival Park



Marked bike lane along Walnut Street



Fox River Trail



Along the Fox River Trail

Bus Routes Map



Existing Conditions

Bus Routes

There are twelve bus routes operating within close proximity of the study area boundaries. All Routes intersect the Pace Transportation Center, located on Chicago Street, just north of the Elgin Metra Train Station. From this point, all buses serving the Elgin metro area are accessible.

Bus routes that run through the study area include, Route 542, Route 801 and Route 546. None of these routes have direct access to the National Street Metra Station. Due to the unusual configuration of the parking lots within the National Street Station, it would be difficult for a Pace Bus to maneuver.

There are numerous stops posted along these routes, which are within walking distance to the National Street Metra Train Station.

-  Study Area Boundary
-  Bus Route 541
-  Bus Route 542
-  Bus Route 543
-  Bus Route 544
-  Bus Route 546
-  Bus Route 547
-  Bus Route 548
-  Bus Route 549
-  Bus Route 550
-  Bus Route 552
-  Bus Route 554
-  Bus Route 801
-  Bus Stop Location
-  Metra Train Station

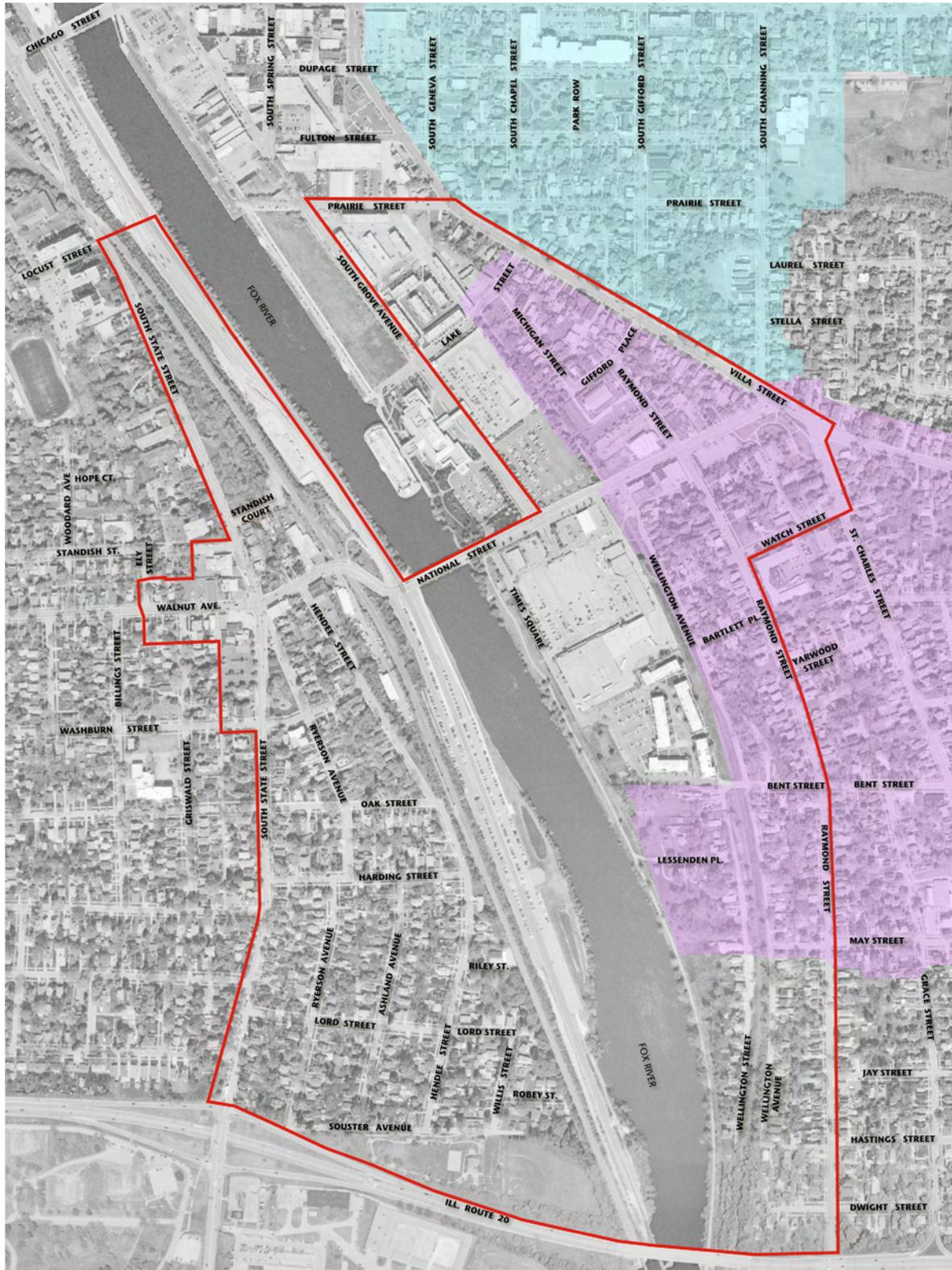


Pace Transportation Center



Pace Bus in route

Historic District Map



Existing Conditions

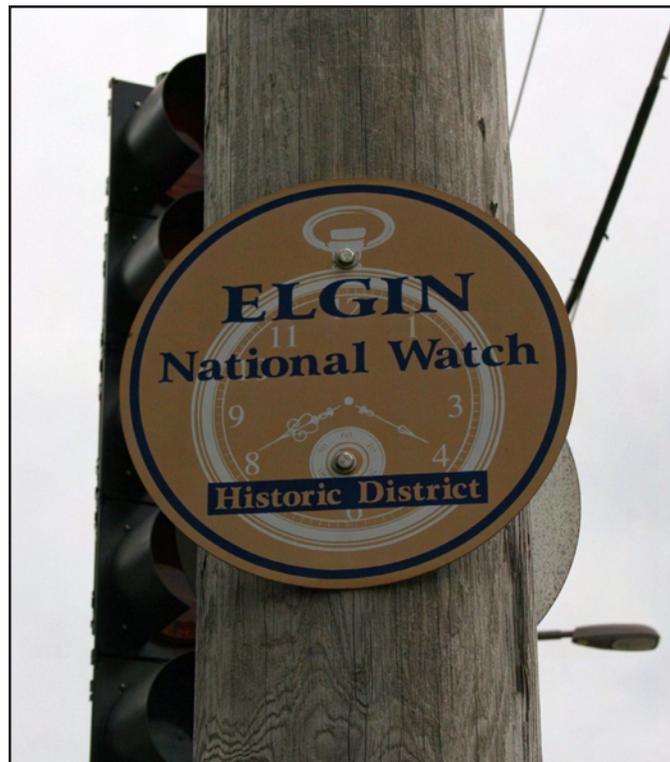
Historic District

Portions of the study area are within the Elgin National Watch Historic District, as shown in purple.

Notable structures within the study area include, the Watch Company Observatory, the Illinois National Guard Armory and the recently restored Watch Factory Depot.

A significant number of home sites within this district have been altered, several appear to be inconsistent with the guidelines established for the Historical Areas. Some of these homes have been remodeled to the point that reclaiming any historic preservation has been lost.

This District abuts the Elgin Historic District (areas shown in blue) which was recognized in 1983, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Capturing that same interest in preserving the National Watch Factory District should be a goal of the Planning and Neighborhood Services Department.



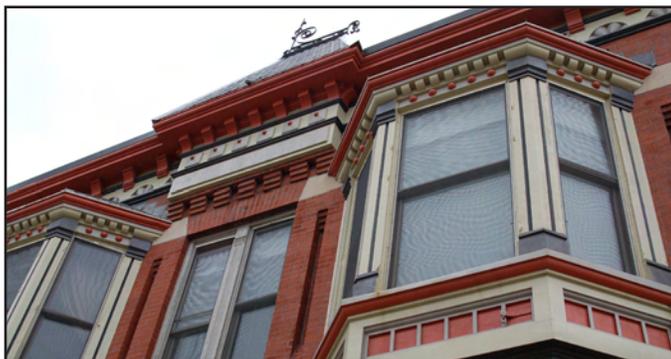
National Watch Historic District Marker



National Watch Observatory



Railing within the District

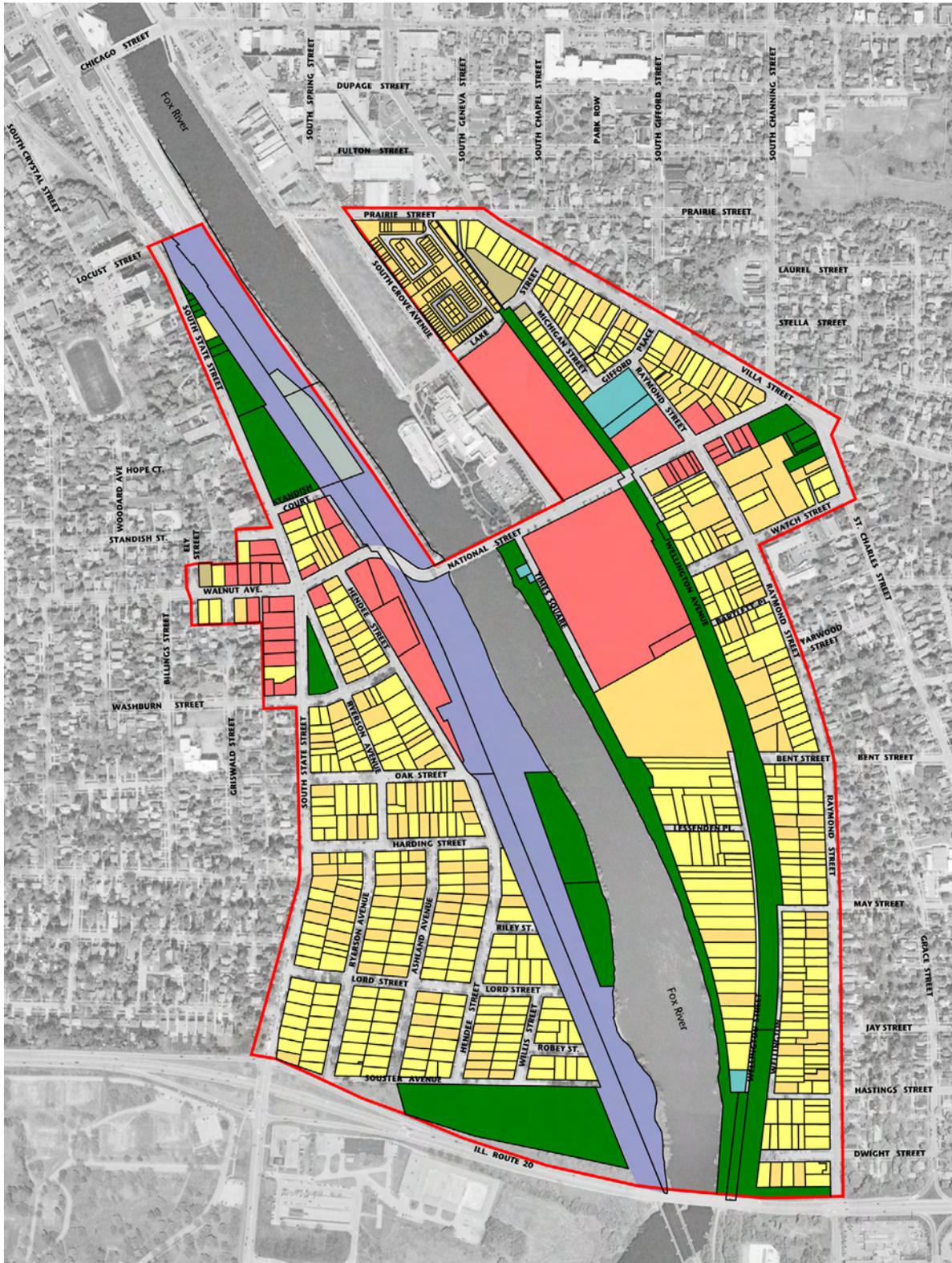


Structure within the District



Refurbished Train Depot

Land Use Map



Existing Conditions

Land Use

The current land uses were inventoried based on a site visit in May of 2009. Locations of commercial entities are primarily along collector roads, while residential sites line local roadways. A number of single family home sites have been converted to multifamily, and the conversion is not always apparent from a street view.

During subsequent site visits, ranging from late 2009 to July of 2010, it was noted that several commercial parcels had been vacated, and to date, remain unoccupied. This presents an opportunity for the City, as acquisition and assemblage of smaller lots into larger parcels may be attractive to new development.



Multi-Family Housing



Single Family Housing



Railroad Site



Commercial Site

Legend

— Study Area Boundary

Single Family Residences

Multiple Family - Residences

Retail/Commercial

Office

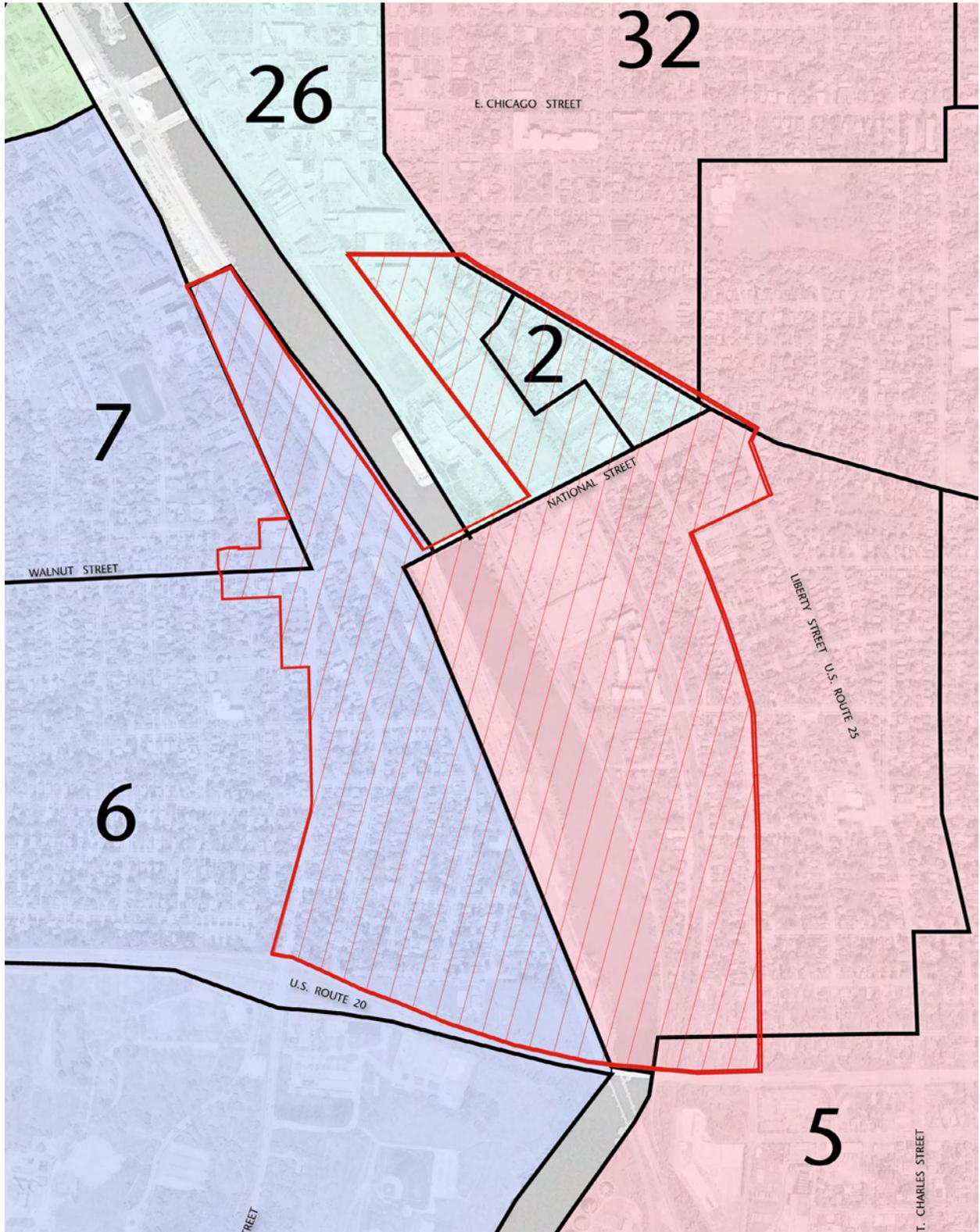
Parks/Open Space/Recreation

Civic

Railroad

Public Utility (not City)

Neighborhood Associations Map



Existing Conditions

Neighborhood Associations

The entire City of Elgin is associated with one of the Elgin Community Network (ECN) Districts. The individuals that make up the ECN, are an organized group of volunteers, whose primary purpose is to keep the residents informed of activities that effect their community. There are a total of five ECN Districts, and three are represented within the study area.

Within these Districts, there are also several Neighborhood Associations or Home Owner Associations (HOA) that are very active in issues that involve their community. This Study includes five such organizations; Michigan Triangle, Neighbors of Southeast Elgin, Southwest Area Neighbors, Near West Area Neighbors and Downtown Neighborhood Association.

The City of Elgin recognizes that it is in community involvement that programs can be initiated and successfully completed. These groups have been active throughout the length of this study.



ELGIN ♦ COMMUNITY ♦ NETWORK



Sites throughout the area of the Study



Sites throughout the area of the Study



Sites throughout the area of the Study

Legend

-  Study Area Boundary
- ECN Districts**
-  Southwest Area
-  Southeast Area
-  Northwest Area
-  Downtown Neighborhood Assoc.

- Neighborhood Associations**
- 2 Michigan Triangle
 - 5 Neighbors of Southeast Elgin
 - 6 Southwest Area Neighbors
 - 7 Near West Area Neighbors
 - 26 Downtown Neighborhood Association
 - 27 Grant Park Neighborhood Association
 - 32 Gifford Park Association

Existing Conditions

Pedestrian Transportation Zones

Using the National Street Metra Train Station as the center point, most of the study area is located within a half mile radius.

In a TOD (Transit Oriented Development) it is desirable to have the most densely populated areas within walking distance to the main mode of transportation. Unfortunately, for the National Street Metra Station, the Fox River creates a significant barrier for a pedestrian.

In general, conditions for a pedestrian are adequate. ADA requirements were observed at crossings, but most signalized intersections lack countdown displays for crossing.

While the majority of the sidewalks are contiguous throughout the study area, there are sections that dead-end. In addition, there are sections where the walks are directly adjacent to the curb or street. In some instances, this walk is very narrow, (less than 3 feet) and can create an uncomfortable condition for a pedestrian.

Oak Street at State Street (IL Route 31) is a school crossing and is in need of upgrade.



Sidewalk along National Street, at entrance to the Metra Station



Sidewalk along National Street, at entrance to the Metra Station



Sidewalk along National Street, at entrance to the Metra Station



Sidewalk along National Street, at entrance to the Metra Station



Existing Conditions

TIF Areas

At the beginning of this study, there were four TIF (Tax Increment Finance) Districts within the City of Elgin. Three districts are represented within the study area.

The Central District, shown on the map in yellow, is the largest area of the three, and the most established. Funding for this area has been so successful in the past, that the area is able to develop 5 year financial plans.

The US Route 20 TIF District, shown on the map in purple, only encompasses the Marie Grolich Park

The South Grove TIF District, shown on the map in blue, has recently been merged with the Central District. This reduced the total number of TIF's for the City of Elgin down to three.

Implementing a TIF on an area of development is a vital tool in encouraging new growth, and in turn, higher property values.

To date, the City of Elgin has been very successful in generating funds, along with the CBD (Central Business District) for improvements to infrastructure, facades, signage, etc. within the TIF Districts. As the Central District TIF will not expire until 2025, the City can continue to enjoy improvements that benefit the resident and the visitor.



New development/improvements within the TIF District



New development/improvements within the TIF District

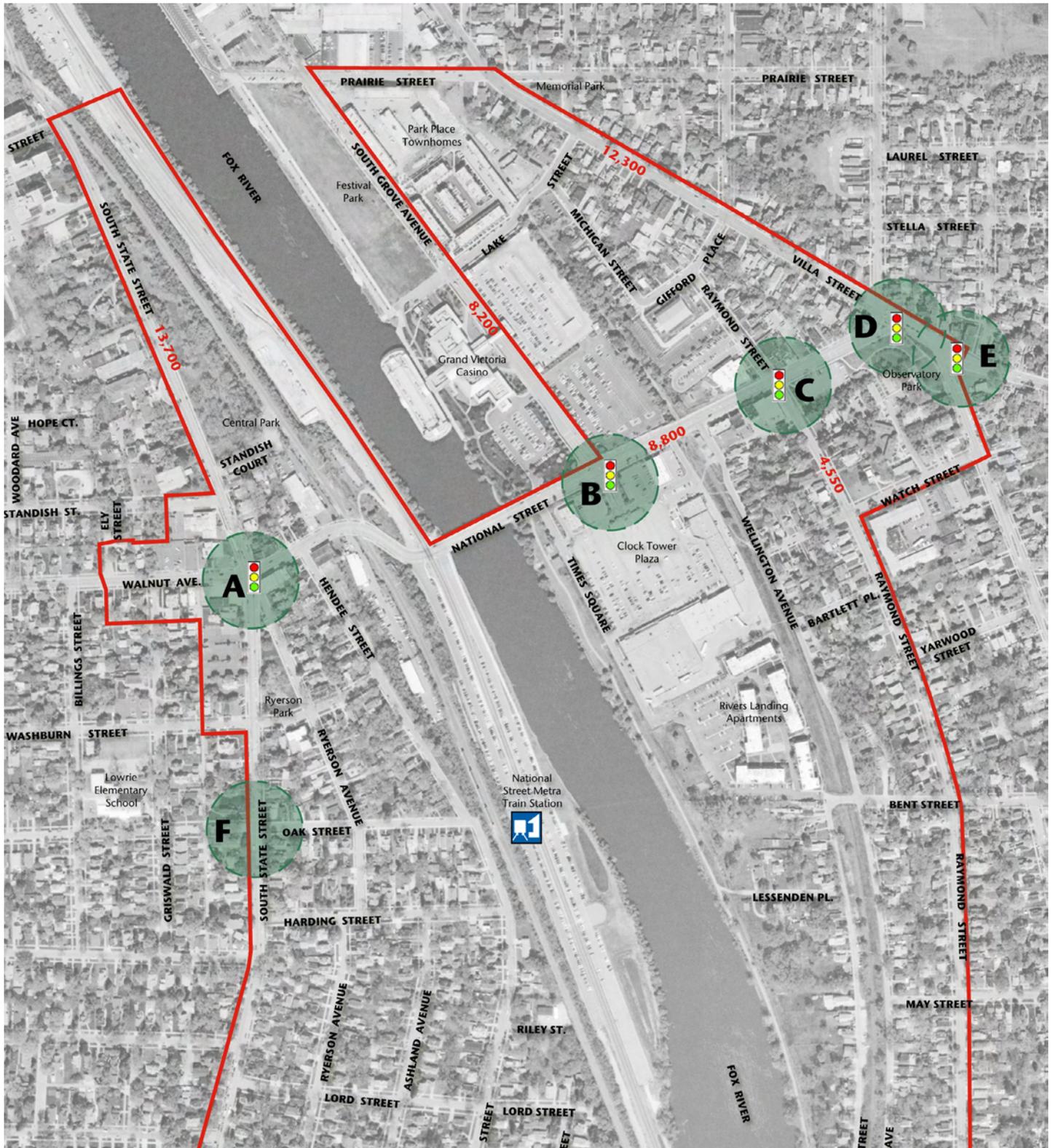


New development/improvements within the TIF District



New development/improvements within the TIF District

Key Intersections Map



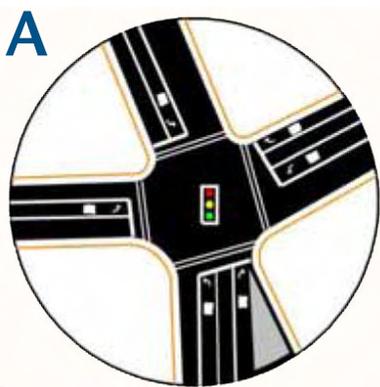
Existing Conditions

Key Intersections

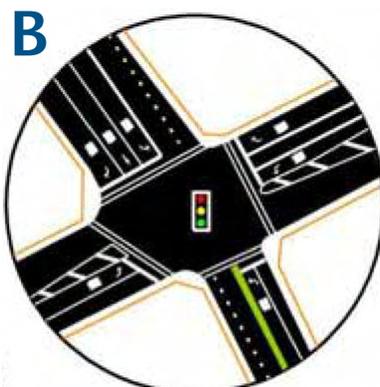
For purposes of evaluation, the key intersections are identified as those that currently have a signalized crossing. National Street has been identified as the only corridor within the Study Area that is signalized.

Vehicular and pedestrian movements throughout the corridor are impacted by the function of these intersections.

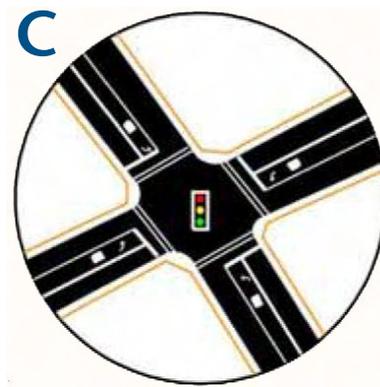
LOS (Level of Service) is a measurement system in which engineers determine how well an intersection works. LOS uses letters A through F, wherein, A is free flow (best) and F is breakdown of flow (worst). It is desirable to have the LOS for a signalized intersection between an A and C.



- Illinois Route 31 (State Street)
at National Street/Walnut Street
- » AM LOS=C (32.2 sec. delay)
 - » PM LOS=D (32.5 sec. delay)
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches



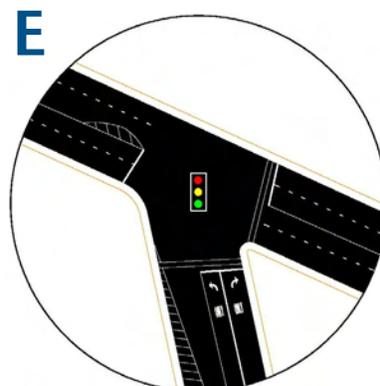
- South Grove Avenue/Clock Tower Plaza
at National Street
- » AM LOS=B (18.5 sec. delay)
 - » PM LOS=C (23.3 sec. delay)
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches



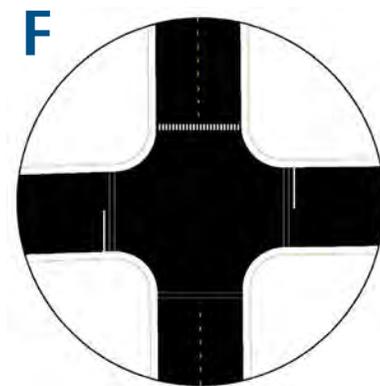
- Raymond Street at National Street
- » AM LOS=B (16.8 sec. delay)
 - » PM LOS=C (24.5 sec. delay)
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches



- Villa Street at National Street
- » AM LOS=B (16.0 sec. delay)
 - » PM LOS=C (17.8 sec. delay)
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches

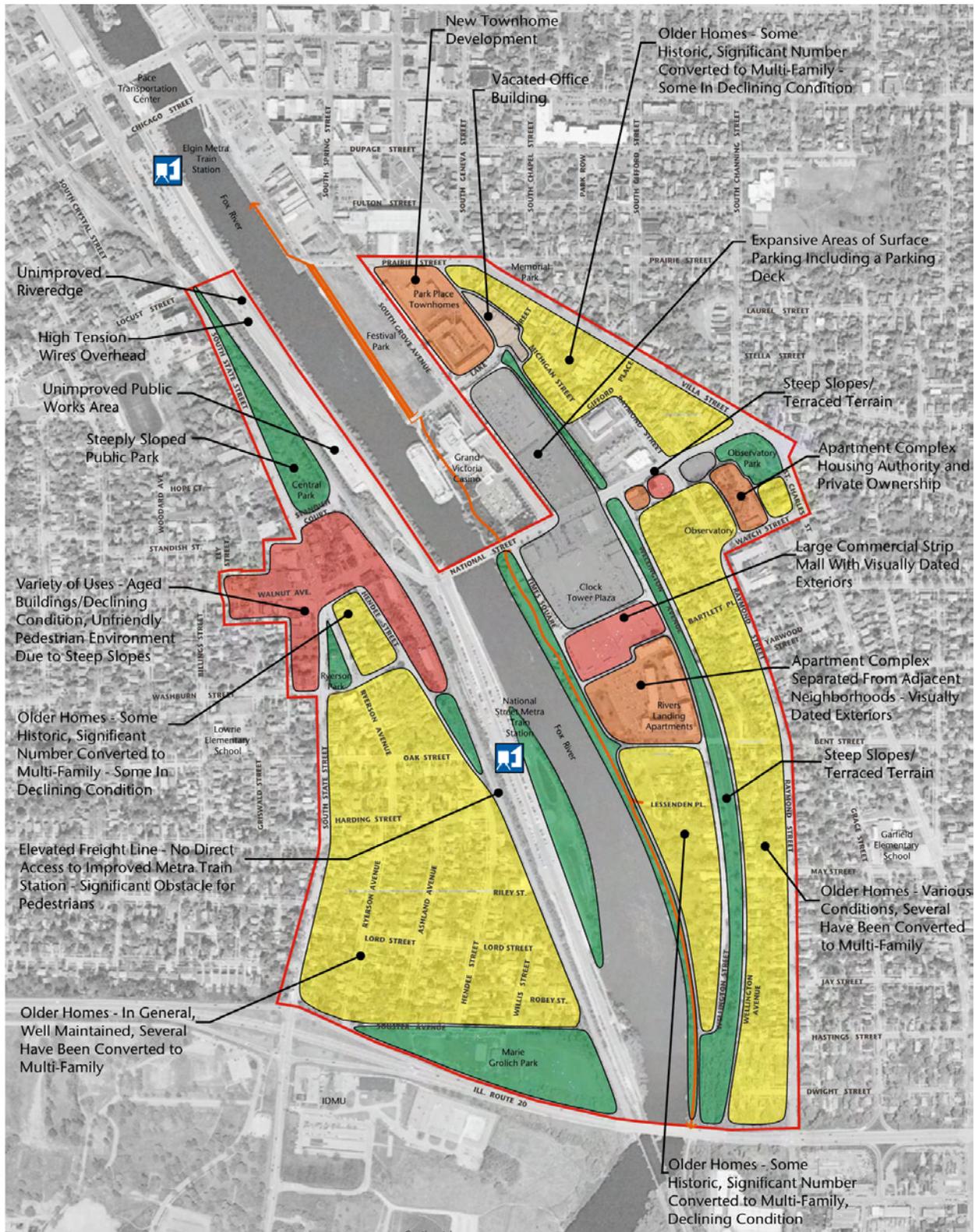


- Villa Street at National Street
- » AM LOS=B (11.3 sec. delay)
 - » PM LOS=B (14.5 sec. delay)
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches



- State Street at Oak Street
- » LOS has not been determined as there is no signal at the intersection
 - » Existing sidewalks all four quadrants
 - » Existing crosswalks and pedestrian signals on all intersection approaches

Notable Site Features Map



Existing Conditions

Notable Site Features

Despite the large area, common features, both positive and negative, run throughout the study area.

- » A number of single family homes in the area have historic value.
- » Several single family homes have been converted to multi-family, and not all the conversions have been beneficial to the neighborhood.
- » Limited parking exists at commercial sites west of the Fox River.
- » Expansive parking exists at commercial sites east of the Fox River.
- » Elevated freight lines and the Fox River present significant obstacles for access to the National Street Metra Train Station.

- » Steep terrain on either side of the river make pedestrian access challenging.
- » Access to Fox River Trail is limited due to lack of openings through private property.
- » Four public parks exist within the study area. Three are on the west side of the river, only one is on the east side of the river.
- » Significant open space exists on the east side of the river for additional park area.



Expansive parking

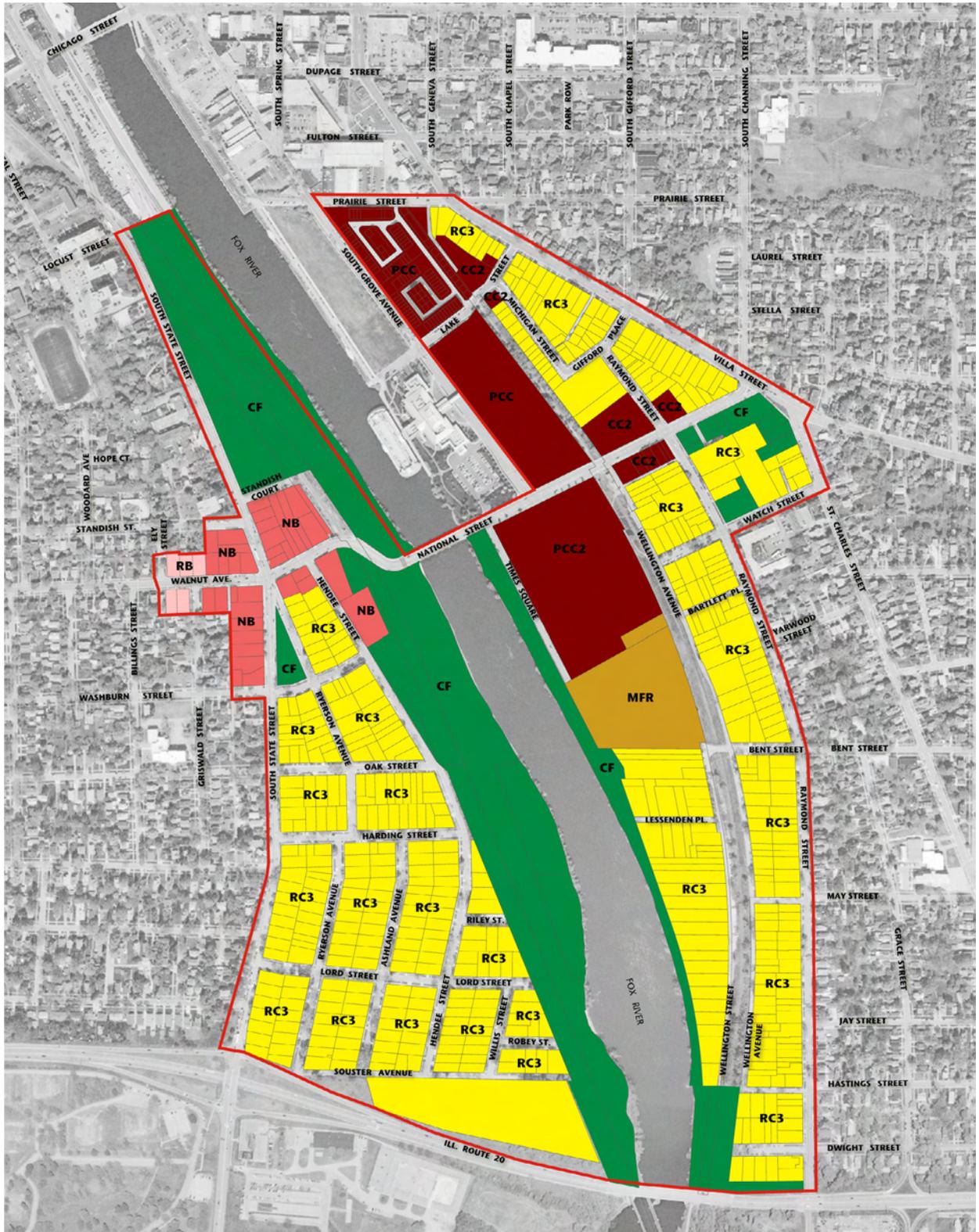


Unimproved open space at vacated RR



Recently rehabilitated home

Zoning Map



Existing Conditions

Zoning

The zoning classifications and their supporting regulations appear to aid in the promotion of transit supportive development.

Acquisition and assemblage of select smaller parcels will be needed to produce a parcel significant enough to support new TOD. This combining of parcels will involve the mixing of existing zoning classifications. Prior to redevelopment, these parcels will need to be rezoned to a singular type.

Legend

-  Study Area Boundary
-  RC3 - Residence Conservation 3
-  MFR - Multiple Family Residence
-  RB - Residence Business
-  NB - Neighborhood Business
-  CC2 - Center City 2
-  PCC - Planned Center City
-  PCC2 - Planned Center City 2
-  CF - Community Facility
-  PCF - Planned Community Facility



Corner uses should be set to building line



Lack of defined parking areas



Light Industrial Uses in NB or CF Zoning



Single family home in CF Zoning

Sub-Area 1

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 1 is bounded by Washburn Street at the south, Locust Street to the north, the freight line tracks on the east, South State Street and Ely Street to the west. This neighborhood presents an eclectic array of architecture. It includes a mix of uses, has close proximity to transit, neighborhood parks and open space along the high bank of the Fox River. The area has streetscapes that are pedestrian friendly, while other sections present an individual with multiple obstacles.

The hub of retail activity in Sub-Area 1 is located at the intersection of South State Street (IL Route 31) and National/Walnut Street. This intersection is a mix of commercial and residential uses. Some of the retail/commercial uses include:

- » Citgo Gas Station
- » Payday Loans
- » Custom Auto Image
- » Precision Body Works
- » Kendall's County Kitchen
- » Walnut Inn

Within this sub-area are two attractive open space elements which include Ryerson Park and Central Park. Ryerson Park is located on the east side of South State Street and remains a great example of a traditional neighborhood pocket park. A mix of housing product and commercial uses front all three sides of the park. The second city owned park is Central Park. This park is a linear open space located on a bluff north of National Street along the east side of South State Street. This linear park has grown in size over the years due to the acquisition of small single family lots at the north end of this property by the City of Elgin.

The site has significant topography changes, sloping down to the railroad tracks creating an overlook view of downtown Elgin. Central Park also has significant mature oak trees scattered throughout the site. There are no signs or markings identifying this space as a city park nor does it have any park amenities such as bus shelters, benches, parking and lighting.

The intersection of Walnut and South State Street contains a mix of one and two story buildings along with a variety of commercial uses. Several of the buildings are mixed-use with retail on the first floor and apartments above. Parking for retail uses fronting National Street is restricted to spaces adjacent to Ryerson Park and on-street parking on South State Street, north of National Street. Although the sub-area is serviced by Pace Bus Routes 546 & 801, there are no transit amenities such as bus shelters, bike racks or benches for users. Further east on National Street are car repair shops and body shops, which are located adjacent to the freight line tracks.



Ryerson Park



South State Street and National Street Intersection

Sub-Area 1

Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » The study area contains certain incompatible land uses located in close proximity, e.g. light industrial adjacent to single family residential along Hendee Street or Standish Court, east of State Street.
- » The gas station at the corner of Walnut Street and South State Street is not the ideal use of the site and could be utilized for higher density development.
- » Recreational amenities, such as Ryerson Park or Central Park, attract people from around the community to the study area.
- » The industrial parcels west of the river are poorly configured and not the best use, given their proximity to Fox River and the National Street Metra Station.
- » Most of the mixed-use buildings, a combination of old and new construction, are located along National Street. Several of these buildings do not have a retail tenant on the first floor, partly due to insufficient or nonexistent parking adjacent to the building.
- » There are pockets of under utilized and vacant retail parcels in the study area that could be redeveloped to higher and better uses.
- » The northwest side of the planning area is missing a significant open space element for active recreation.
- » There is a wide variety of housing types within this Sub-Area. A significant amount of single family housing has been converted into multi-family residences.



Intersection at Walnut Avenue and State Street - looking southwest



Single Family Residence within Sub-Area 1



Multi-Family Residence within Sub-Area 1



Intersection at Walnut Avenue and State Street - looking northeast



Monument sign at Ryerson Park along State Street

Sub-Area 1

Open Space/Landscape

- » Ryerson Park located along South State Street (IL Route 31) is a valuable and well-maintained city pocket park with a tot lot, play area, mature oaks trees, and streetscape amenities such as street lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and landscaping. This park has been upgraded in recent years and creates an attractive and memorable gateway entering into this area from the south.
- » Open space along Hendee Street is currently not utilized and is in need of maintenance.
- » Central Park is the largest public open space in this study area. Major topography changes and significant 100 year old oak trees make its use as an active park space limited for residents. No parking lot is provided for patrons, and the site has limited street parking.

Streetscapes

- » Insufficient and poorly designed signage makes it difficult for visitors to locate historic districts in the study area. In some cases existing signage is blocked from view (e.g. at the east end of the National Street Bridge).
- » Low level power lines along major streets obstruct views and impact streetscape character, (e.g. around Ryerson Park).
- » Notable lack of parkway trees throughout the Sub-Area.
- » Bill boards obscure the view into the Fox River.
- » High tension wires are visible throughout the Sub-Area
- » Streets have street lights throughout the Sub-Area.
- » Some sidewalks are of small widths and dead end.



Central Park



Local Street with powerlines that transverse right-of-way



Local Street with powerlines that transverse right-of-way



National Street at Rail-way crossing



Stand of Bill boards adjacent to National Street

Sub-Area 1

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The majority of retail/commercial construction is standard store front. The buildings are visually dated, and in need of maintenance. Several structures have been added onto in a circuitous manner which detract from the original structure.
- » Most residential homes in this Sub-Area have been converted from single family to multiple family. A significant number of structures are in deteriorating condition, some may be beyond reasonable repair.



Pace Bus southbound on State Street at Walnut Avenue

Transit

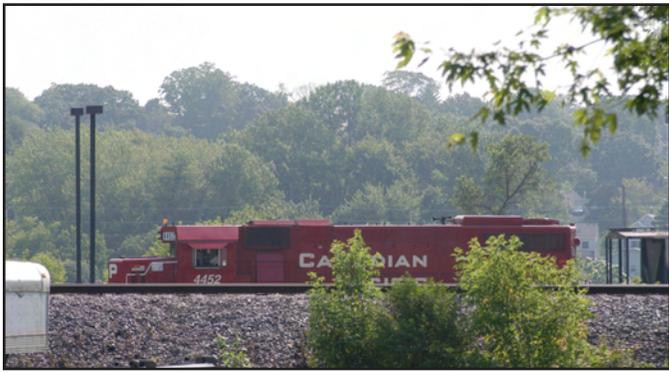
- » Pace route 542 may be accessed at National Street and Grove Avenue. Pace routes 546 and 801 can be accessed along South State Street (IL Route 31). All three routes provide transportation to the Pace Transportation Center, wherein, riders may access multiple connections that serve the greater Elgin area.
- » While the majority of this neighborhood is within walking distance to the National Street Metra Station, the walking distance is magnified due to the topographic changes, and street crossings that are not pedestrian friendly.



Existing structure within Sub-Area 1



Existing structure within Sub-Area 1



Freight line on Metra Commuter Rails



Existing structure within Sub-Area 1



Pace Bus stop at Walnut and State Street

Sub-Area 1

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

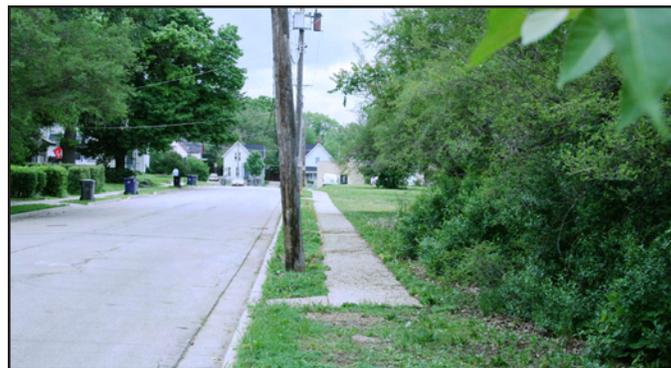
- » National Street, between the tracks and IL Route 31, has a sharp narrow curve due to grade issues between river level and IL Route 31.
- » Access to park/open space on north side of Standish Court, east of IL Route 31 (South State Street), is limited; Standish Court is in very poor condition (unimproved).
- » Local streets west of the railroad tracks appear to be in good condition and are laid out in a grid pattern.



Standish Court adjacent to Central Park



Ryerson Avenue dead-end at National Street and State Street



Dead end sidewalk



Intersection of Washburn and Ryerson looking east



Cut thru path created by residents

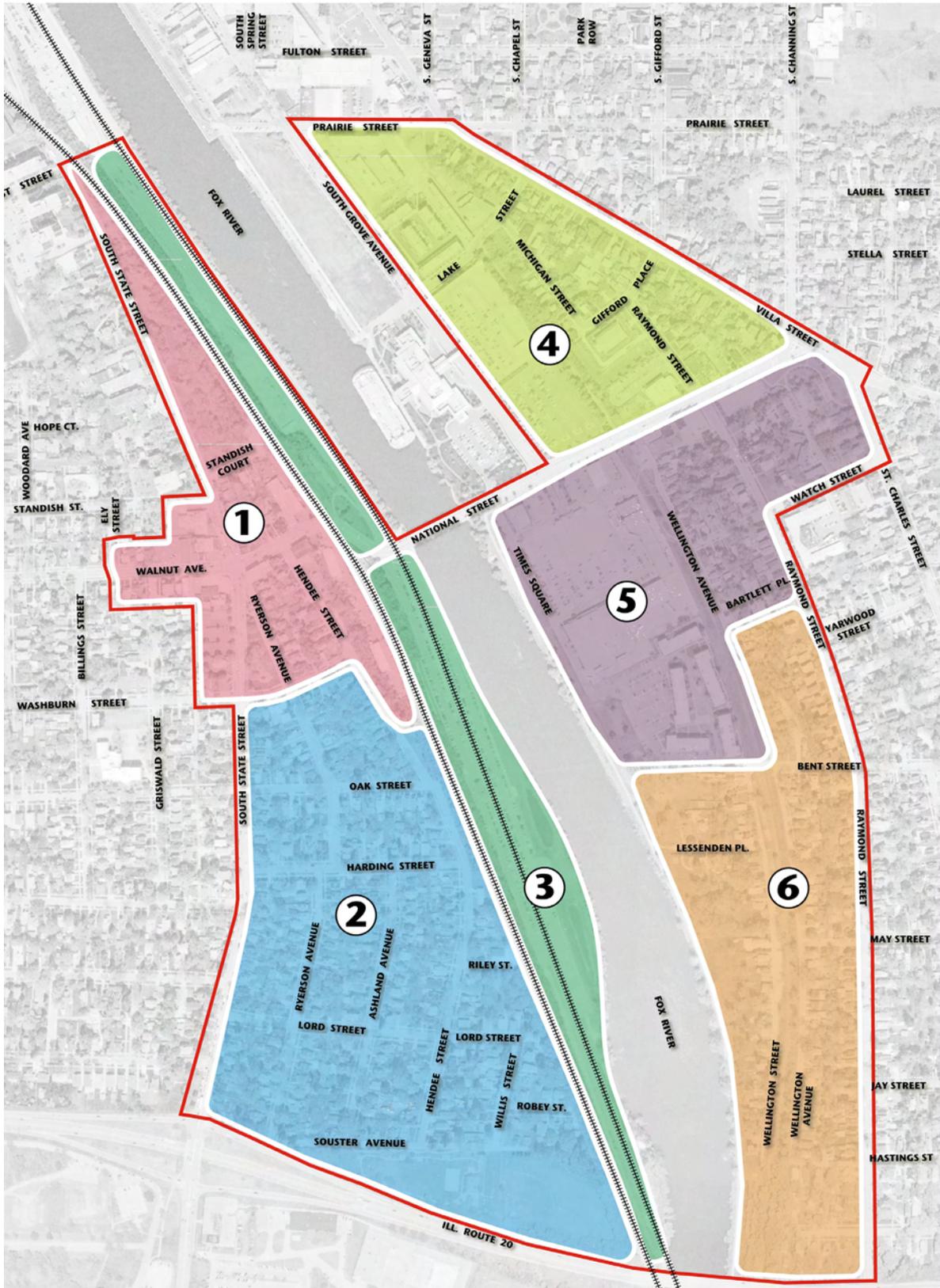
Bikeways

- » There is a marked bike trail going westerly along Walnut Avenue.
- » Most of the neighborhood utilizes the existing streets and sidewalks.
- » Sidewalk sections dead end at various locations within the Sub-Area.



Lack of bike paths and bike rack

Sub-Area Map



Sub-Area Map

Sub-Area 2

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 2 is bound by Washburn Street on the north, US Route 20 on the south, State Street (IL Route 31) to the west, and the freight line tracks on the east.

This area is comprised of single family residences. Throughout the Sub-Area, several homes have been converted to multi-family Residences. Some of these conversions have been in a manner that is contributory in nature to the overall appeal of the home. Other attempts at conversion have not been so successful. The need for stricter codes, and/or enforcement of existing codes, is apparent.

This neighborhood is an extension of the typical neighborhood grid system that is common in the original part of Elgin. Robey Street is the only street in this sub-area that is unimproved without sidewalks and curb and gutter.

Similar to residential areas further north, the Sub-Area lacks vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to the National Street Metra Station due to steep topography and dense vegetation. The freight line adjacent to some of these homes is elevated and creates a barrier to accessing the National Street Metra Station.

Located at the southern end of this Sub-Area is Marie Grolich Park. This park offers several amenities to the neighboring residents. A tot lot, exercise trail with various pieces of equipment, and open space for passive patrons. A parking lot within the site, and Souster Avenue appear to provide adequate parking spaces.

Residents of Sub-Area 2 are able to walk to Lowrie Elementary School. Access to the school is typically along Oak Street, and across State Street (IL Route 31). Concern for the safety of the crossing was frequently



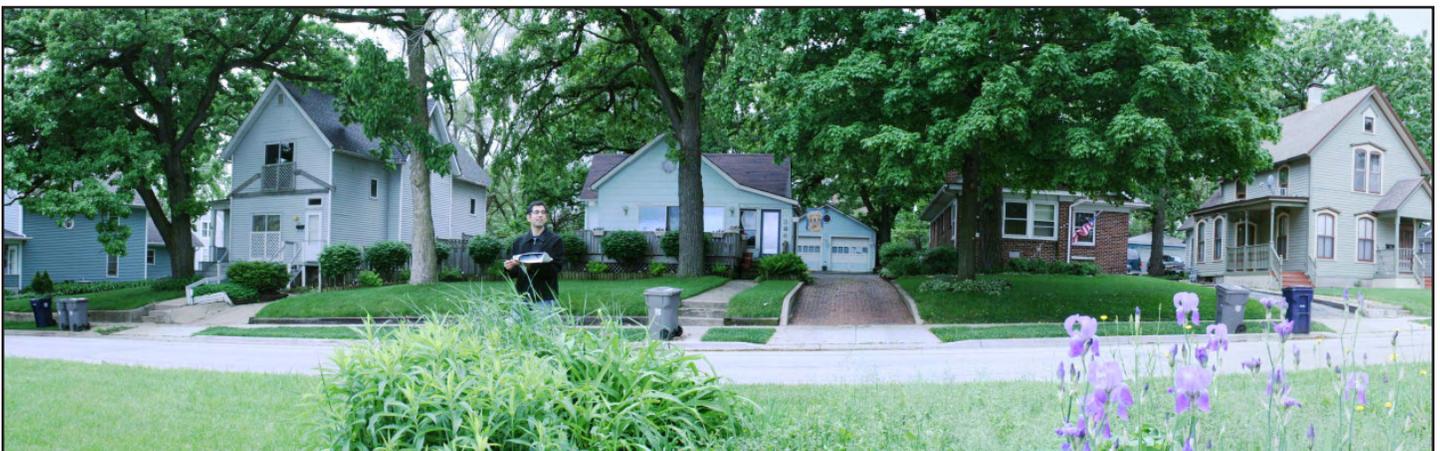
Marie Grolich Park

expressed in public meetings. Walkers expressed concern regarding an incident that involved a crossing guard and a passenger vehicle.

Concern was also expressed from the residents regarding combo sewers in the southeast quadrant of this Sub-Area. Several comments were received regarding the system and its history of flooding.



Example of existing Single Family Residence



Residential Homes along Hendee Street overlooking open space

Sub-Area 2

Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » The predominant land use within this Sub-Area is original single family homes with some structures converted into multi-family uses. The homes within this neighborhood are in primarily good condition and the neighborhood appears intact and stable.
- » It appears that some single family home sites are also serving as locations for home based businesses..
- » An active/passive park, Marie Grolich Park, is located at the southern end of the Sub-Area.



Example of existing Single Family Residence with a business attached



Example of existing Multi-Family Residence



Open area at Marie Grolich Park



Example of existing Single Family Residence



Example of existing Single Family Residence



Example of existing Single Family Residence

Sub-Area 2

Open Space/Landscape

- » The neighborhood is adjacent to Mary Grolich Park which is a significantly sized park serving several residential neighborhoods within Sub-Area 2. This park features multiple soccer fields, a tot lot and a jogging trail.
- » There are no bike trails into or out of the park.
- » Adjacent to Hendee Street, there is a wedge of open space that overlooks the Fox River/National Street Metra Train Station. This parcel is directly south of an industrial use (Precision Body Works) and does not appear to be within the Elgin Park District. Residents along Hendee Street appear to utilize a portion of the open space for garden plots.



Marie Grolich Park



View overlooking Fox River/Metra Station from Hendee Street



Exercise Trail system in Grolich Park



Open Space wedge east of Hendee Street



Exercise and volleyball court at Grolich Park



Open Space wedge east of Hendee Street

Sub-Area 2

Streetscapes

- » Most streetscapes are typical urban cross sections with sidewalks/curb and gutter on both sides and homes aligned to the street with a smaller front yard setback.
- » The streetscape creates a pedestrian friendly atmosphere throughout this sub-area.
- » There are areas with noticeable missing street trees in the public right-of-way planting strip.
- » There is a combination of “carriage” walks (poured adjacent to the street curb) and traditional four-foot (4’) wide sidewalks.
- » Street lights are located throughout the Sub-Area and appear to be adequate for a residential need.
- » Street signage is visible, and in good condition.
- » The southwest corner of the Sub-Area is bound by the intersection of US Route 20 and IL Route 31, both major arterials into the City of Elgin. At this time, there is nothing to identify the area as Elgin.
- » A school crossing exists at the intersection of IL Route 31 and Oak Street. When school is in session, this crosswalk is manned.



Example of existing Multi-Family Residence



Example of existing Multi-Family Residence



Typical street sign



Example of existing Multi-Family Residence



Robey Street - looking west



Disjointed sidewalk within Sub-Area 2

Sub-Area 2

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The homes in this Sub-Area are representative of the typical Elgin neighborhoods constructed in the early 1900's.
- » The architectural styles include Four Square, Dutch Colonial and Vernacular style one and two story structures.
- » There are homes in varying physical conditions and homes that have been altered from their original design. Most of the homes appear to be maintained well.
- » Some of the homes have been converted for use as two or three unit structures.

Transit

- » Residents of this sub-area are within walking distance to multiple bus route stops near the intersection of South State Street and Walnut/National Streets. All routes serving this area provide transportation to the Pace Transportation Center, wherein, riders may access multiple connections that serve the greater Elgin area.
- » While this neighborhood is within walking distance to the National Street Metra Station the walking distance is magnified due to the obstructions and severe topography changes that prevent direct access to the station platform.

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

- » The neighborhood grid street pattern provides access to South State Street to the west and to National Street to the north via Hendee Street.
- » Linkage to the US Route 20 by-pass is a short trip south along State Street from this sub-area.
- » There is no access to the south and east as Sub-Area 2 is just north of by-pass 20 and is adjacent to the bluff along the west bank of the Fox River.

Bikeways

- » There are no dedicated or separate bike paths within this Sub-Area.
- » Bicycle access is facilitated using the current roadways and sidewalks within the neighborhood.



Residences along Hendee Street



Residences along Hendee Street

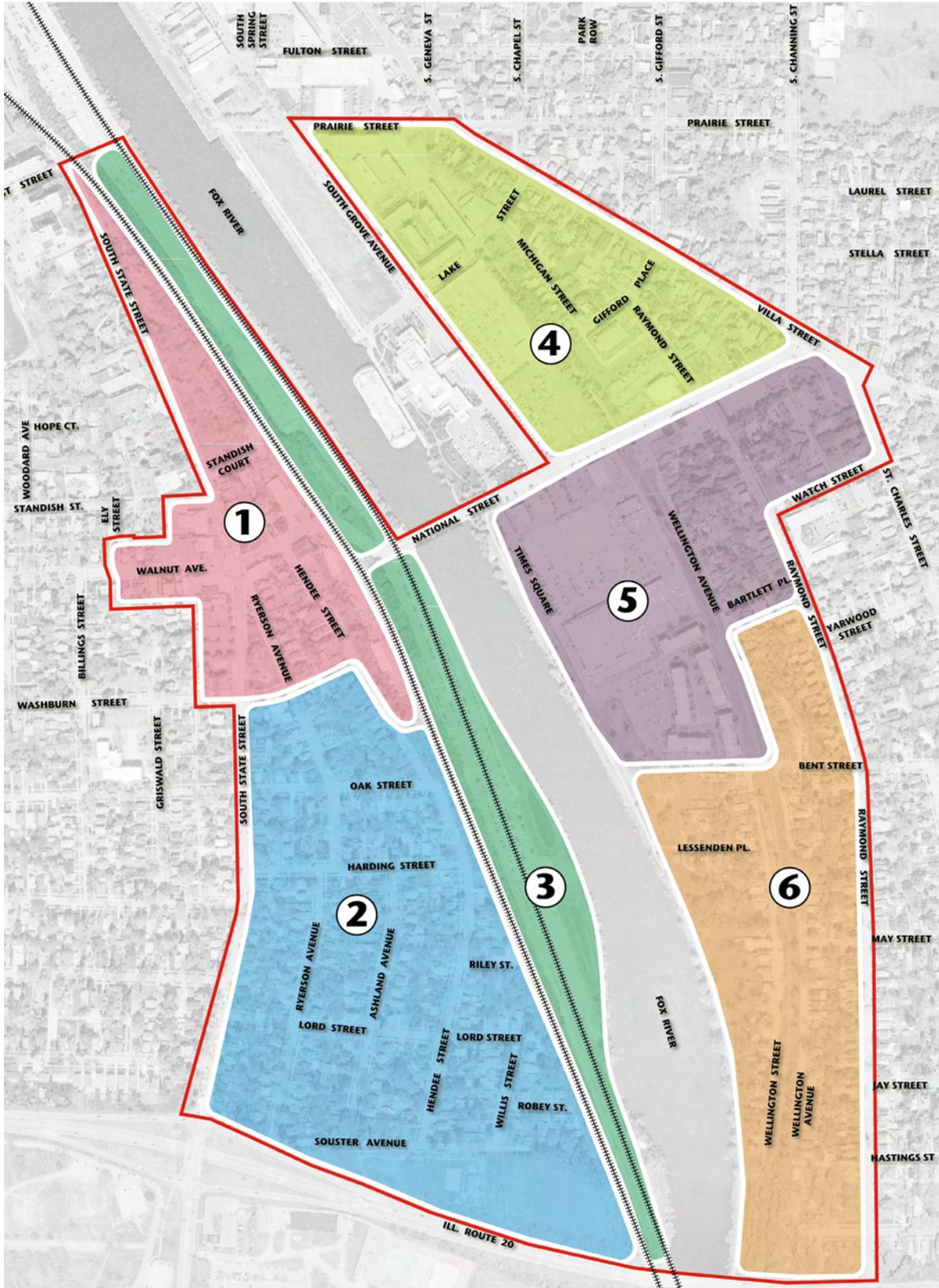


Freight line on Commuter tracks - visible from within Sub-Area 2



Intersection of IL Route 31 at US Route 20

Sub-Area Map



Sub-Area Map

Sub-Area 3

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 3 consists of the Union Pacific Railroad freight line, the National Street Metra Station and parking lots. The UP-RR tracks are only used by an occasional freight train. These tracks run parallel with and lie west of the Metra Commuter lines. There is a 30' plus elevation change between the Metra tracks and the UP-RR tracks.

In 2004, Metra constructed a new depot and two new warming shelters at this station. The project also included new platforms, lighting and landscaping as well as rehabilitation and expansion of the station's parking facilities. The Metra station site houses two detention basins and a brick plaza owned by the City of Elgin. The Metra station is serviced by two parking lots. One on each side of the Metra Milwaukee District West (MD-W) rails. Each of these lots have a singular access point, directly off of National Street.

There is no direct access to the National Street Station from Sub-Area 1 or 2 due to the severe topography change from Hendee Street down to the station. There are overhead high tension power lines between the freight line tracks and the parking for the Metra station. Lastly, there is a chain link fence that runs the length of the western property line at National Street Station. Residents can walk to the train station by utilizing sidewalks on either side of National Street.

For residents on the east side of the station, direct access

to the train station is difficult due to physical barriers such as the Fox River and site topography. Residents can still use the National Street Bridge, but walking distances result in residents driving to the station instead of walking. Just north of National Street is additional property that Metra controls. The property is adjacent to the Fox River and includes Metra's Elgin Coach Yard, which allows for overnight train storage, and a small Metra employee lot. A ComEd substation is also located on this property, as well as several obtrusive billboards that limit the view of the Fox River.



Billboards on National Street



Metra National Street Station

Sub-Area 3

Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » The area is a thin linear parcel, that is bound on the east by the Fox River. It is primarily industrial/service in nature, and does not have any residential units within its limits.
- » The area is utilized for commuter parking and storage yards for Metra and ComEd utility.

Open Space/Landscape

- » As this Sub-Area's primary function is for railroad commuter activities, there are no designated green space areas. For reasons related to safety, Metra does not want to encourage the general public to be in or around trains, unless they are there for the specific means of transportation.
- » Two stormwater basins exist near the river front.
- » Very little planned landscaping exists within this Sub-Area.

Streetscapes

- » There is a need to improve pedestrian crosswalks, e.g. National Street and railway crossings. The steep slope of National Street east of State Street encourages high speed vehicular traffic and unsafe pedestrian crosswalks.
- » Signage clutter along National Street with several unattractive billboards.
- » Landscaping throughout the Sub-Area lacks any kind of design or planning.
- » Lighting in the parking facility is very good.

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The National Street Metra Station houses a new and aesthetically designed train station. However, the surrounding topography and vegetation make it difficult to see the structure.
- » The remainder of the Sub-Area is comprised of steel wall, industrial use buildings.



Retaining wall along the west bank of the Fox River



View of the National Street Metra Station



View along the north side of National Street at ComEd facility



Metra directional sign



Topographical challenges along National Street

Sub-Area 3

Transit

- » Parking availability at the National Street Station appears to be adequate. There are two parking lots. Lot 1 is located on the west side of the tracks and is 96% utilized; Lot 4 is located on the east side of the tracks and is 80% utilized (11/6/2008 Metra Parking Lot Survey).
- » Metra passengers can not access Pace Bus Service from within the National Street Metra Train Station facility. Pace route 542 may be accessed at National Street and Grove Avenue. Pace routes 546 and 801 can be accessed at Walnut Street and IL Route 31. All three routes provide transportation to the Pace Transportation Center, wherein, riders may access multiple connections that serve the greater Elgin area.
- » Vehicular access into the station is limited. There are two parking lots, one on each side of the rail lines, which do not have cross-access to each other. Each parking lot has its own singular access point located on National Street. During peak periods, congestion occurs while drivers are exiting or entering the facilities.
- » Station maintenance may need to be improved due to some complaints.
- » Average daily ridership at the Metra National Street Station is 742 (Metra Fall 2006 Boarding & Alighting Counts).
- » The parcels in the study area immediately west of the river provide severe topographic challenges and make it difficult to provide direct pedestrian connections to the train station.

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

- » The singular access points for the long, linear parking lots creates a bottleneck situation at the peak morning and evening commuter times.

Bikeways

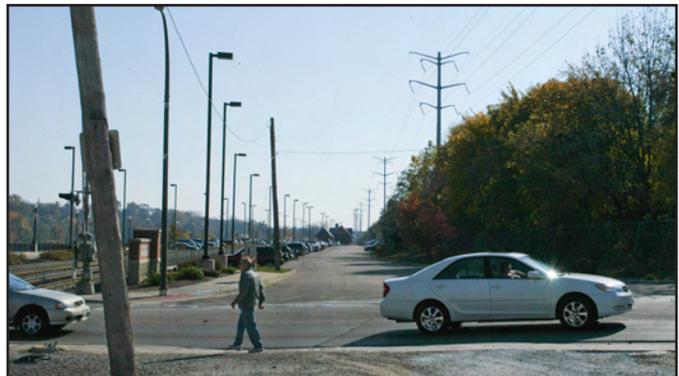
- » The Fox River Trail bisects the station area in a north south direction, on the east side of the river. It is a paved, multiuse path that extends through several Fox River Valley communities.



Entrance sign into Metra Commuter Parking Lots



Detention Pond on site at National Street Station

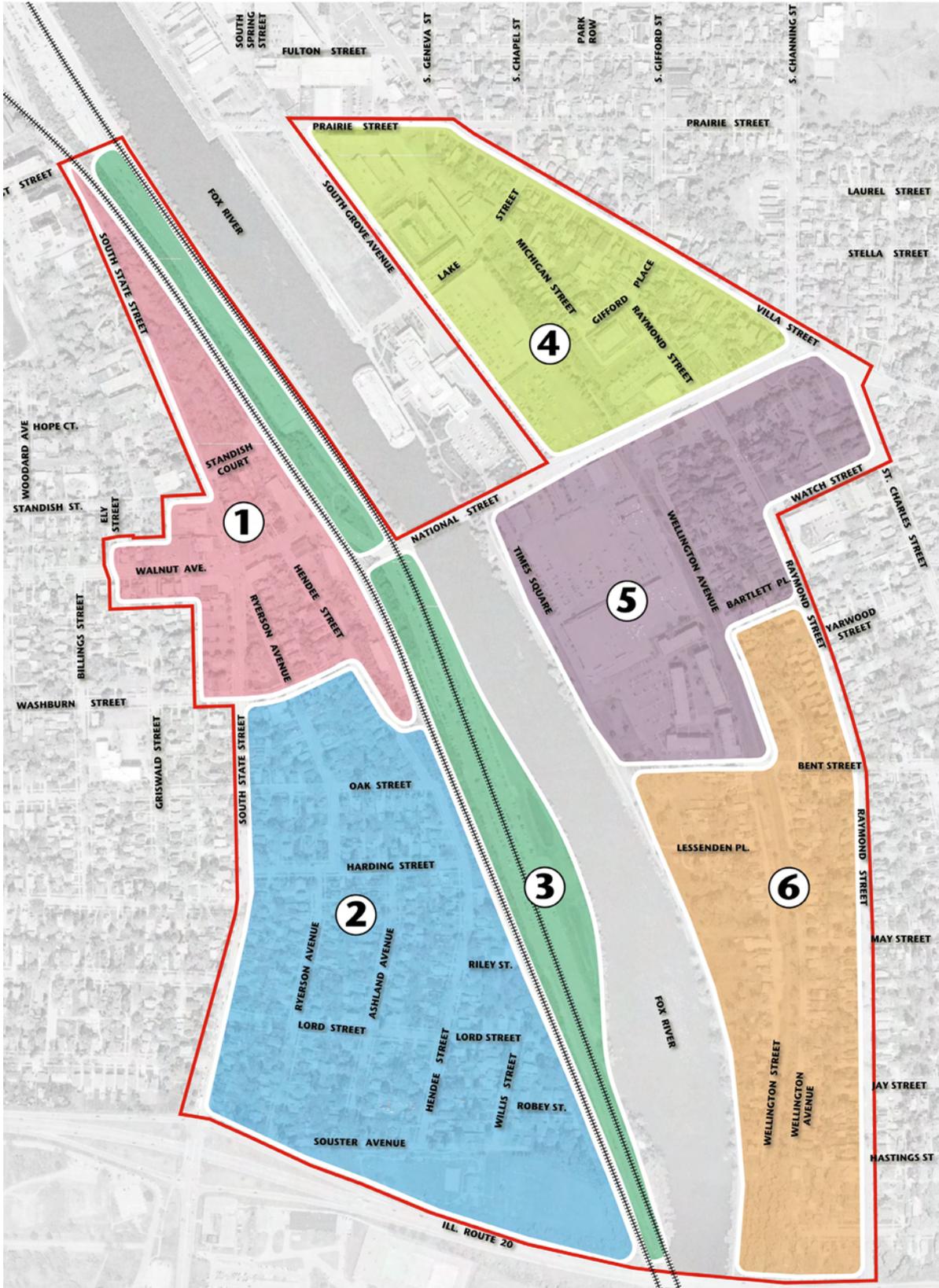


View looking down into the west parking lot.



Sidewalk crossing through Commuter Parking Entrance Drive

Sub-Area Map



Sub-Area Map

Sub-Area 4

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 4 is bounded by Prairie Street on the north, National Street to the south, Villa Street to the east, and South Grove to the west. This area has been historically referenced as “The Michigan Triangle” and is also within the “Elgin National Watch Factory Historic District.”

River Park Place townhomes, the parking deck and surface parking lot for the Grand Victoria Casino, as well as numerous single family homes are located in this area. Some of the homes are “plaqued” and have historic significance. Several single family residences have been modified into multi-family units. There is also a pocket of commercial properties within this Sub-Area. Elgin Day Care/Family Resource Center is a newer building located at the northwest corner of Raymond Street and National Street. On the east side of Raymond, there is a restaurant which operates as a banquet hall facility. The National Armory Station is directly north of the day care facility on Raymond.

As part of Elgin’s downtown revitalization plan, the establishment of the River Park Place townhomes has created a great example of transit-oriented development (TOD). This development is within walking distance to the National Street Metra Station, many restaurants as well as civic events at Hemmens, and to The Centre. Across the street from the River Place townhomes is Festival Park which is home to many city events. Adjacent to Festival Park is the Grand Victoria Casino.

Noticeably missing from this Sub-Area are parks or designated open space. There are however, parks in the general area. Festival Park lines the westerly boundary line of this Sub-Area, and Davidson Park (a small pocket park) lines the easterly line. Along the southern boundary, on the south side of National Street, is Observatory Park.

The intersection of Villa Street and National Street denotes the southeasterly corner of this Sub-Area. This intersection is in very close proximity of Villa Street and St. Charles Street (Route 25). During site visits, it appeared that the signal lights at these two intersections do not function well together.

In general, this Sub-Area has an eclectic mix of uses and building types. Further evaluation on a lot by lot basis may be worthwhile for the City of Elgin.



Entrance to the National Armory Station



Pedestrian Bridge connecting structured parking to Casino



River Park Place Townhomes

Sub-Area 4

Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » Within the Michigan Triangle area there is an eclectic mix of land uses, which include commercial, residential and civic uses.
- » Most single family homes have been converted to Multi-Family Units, often adding 3-5 units into the existing structure.
- » Along National Street, most of the single family homes are also being used for small businesses.



Existing Single Family in Sub-Area 4



National Armory Station



Banquet Facilities within Sub-Area 4

- » The westerly edge of the Sub-Area is all new development. It includes the River Park Place Townhomes and both structured parking/surface lot parking for the Grand Victoria Casino.
- » The vacated Copley Press Building also resides in the northerly center of this Sub-Area.
- » The Elgin Day Care/Family Resource Center is located along National Street.
- » The National Armory Station Building is located just north of the Elgin Day Care Center.



Multi-Family Residence in Sub-Area 4



Elgin Day Care Center



Parking structure visible between residential houses

Sub-Area 4

Open Space/Landscape

- » Within the Michigan Triangle area there is not a designated park or open space. There are, however, three parks that are along the south, east and west perimeter of the Sub-Area. These parks are Festival Park, Davidson Park and Observatory Park. Each park is easily accessible by residents of the Michigan Triangle, and each park offers different amenities.



Davidson Park



Festival Park



Davidson Park

- » While not part of Sub-Area 4, directly across National Street, is Observatory Park. This is an open space area with a tot lot. This is primarily for the residents that are south of National Street, but the space is open and available to all residents.



Planned landscape - open space along River Park Place Townhomes



Tot lot



Street sign within Historic District

Sub-Area 4

Streetscapes

- » Streetscape along major streets is generally unimproved except on National Street just east of the river near the Grand Victoria Casino.
- » Low level power lines along major streets obstruct views and impact streetscape character.
- » Notable lack of parkway trees throughout the Sub-Area.
- » Sidewalks along busy roadways are typically carriage walks.



Raymond Street at National Street



Carriage walk along Villa Street

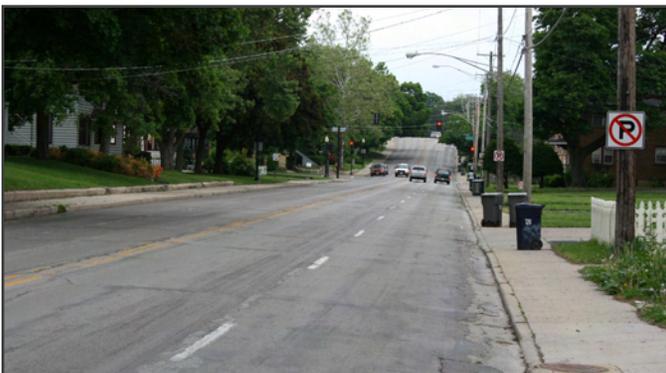


Sidewalk along Michigan Street

- » Location of the sidewalk varies within the residential section of the Sub-Area. Typically a parkway is present, but where the walk is along the curb and gutter, a retaining wall along the opposing side of walk is necessary.
- » Street lighting is provided, size and type varies based on the type of roadway it is illuminating. Existing lighting appears adequate.
- » Signage within the Sub-Area appears to be adequate.



Lake Street looking west



Villa Street



Limited access onto Villa Street

Sub-Area 4

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The Elgin National Watch Historic District located in the Sub-Area houses mostly simple cottage style homes built for the workers of the Elgin Watch Factory during the 1860s through 1920s.
- » There are numerous locations within the Sub-Area that contain a mix of housing typologies (i.e. duplex/apartment next to single family). In addition, several single family homes have been converted into multiple dwelling units.
- » Condition of the multi-family housing varies greatly. Several structures have been added



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4

onto in a circuitous manner which detracts from the original structure. A significant number of structures are in deteriorated condition, some may be beyond reasonable repair.

- » Enforcement of existing ordinances appears to be lacking. This Sub-Area is within the National Watch Historic District, and does have unique requirements for the structures.
- » Residential homes along National Street, near Villa Street, have been converted to, or are also serving as small business.



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4



Existing Residence within Sub-Area 4

Sub-Area 4

- » The National Armory (State of Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs) building is an architecturally well designed building located north of National Street.
- » The Elgin Day Care/Family Center is a newer building and is an attribute to the Sub-Area.

Transit

- » Residents of this sub-area are within walking distance to multiple bus route stops along National Street and Villa Street. All routes serving this area provide transportation to the Pace



Historic District Signage



Existing residence within Sub-Area 4



Residences along National Street

Transportation Center, wherein, riders may access multiple connections that serve the greater Elgin area.

- » While this neighborhood is within walking distance to the National Street Metra Station the walking distance is magnified due to the obstructions and severe topography changes that prevent direct access to the station platform from this sub-area.



Residence within Sub-Area 4



Existing residence within Sub-Area 4

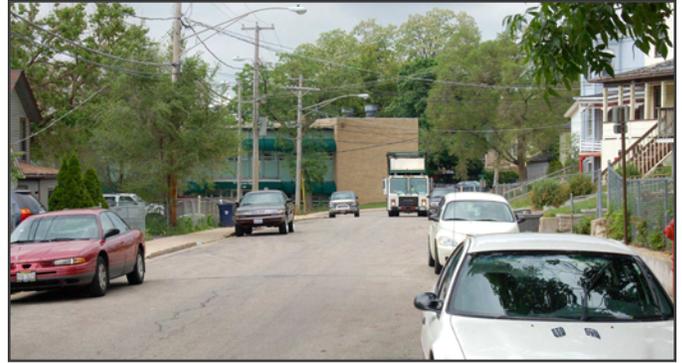


Residence within Sub-Area 4

Sub-Area 4

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

- » Expansive parking areas serving the Casino exist in both a multi-story structure and a large surface lot.
- » Single family/multi-family is serviced primarily with driveways and street parking.
- » The newly constructed townhome/rowhomes have parking within the development.
- » The Azteca De Oro restaurant is serviced by a surface lot on the south side of National Street, but also appears to use a lot located on the north side of National Street.



Michigan Street - One Way southbound



Alley and parking off Villa Street



Alley and parking off Villa Street

- » Signalization of the traffic lights along Villa Street, at National Street and St. Charles Street needs to be evaluated for the level of efficiency. At several site visits, they did not seem to be operating in a manner that would allow the traffic to flow.
- » Multiple curb cuts, serving individual residential homes along Villa Street, interrupt traffic flow, and have the potential to create safety issues.

Bikeways

- » Existing bikeways exist along Villa Street, and easterly of the Sub-Area at the river front.
- » Most walks within this Sub-Area are wider than 4 feet, and can be utilized for biking.

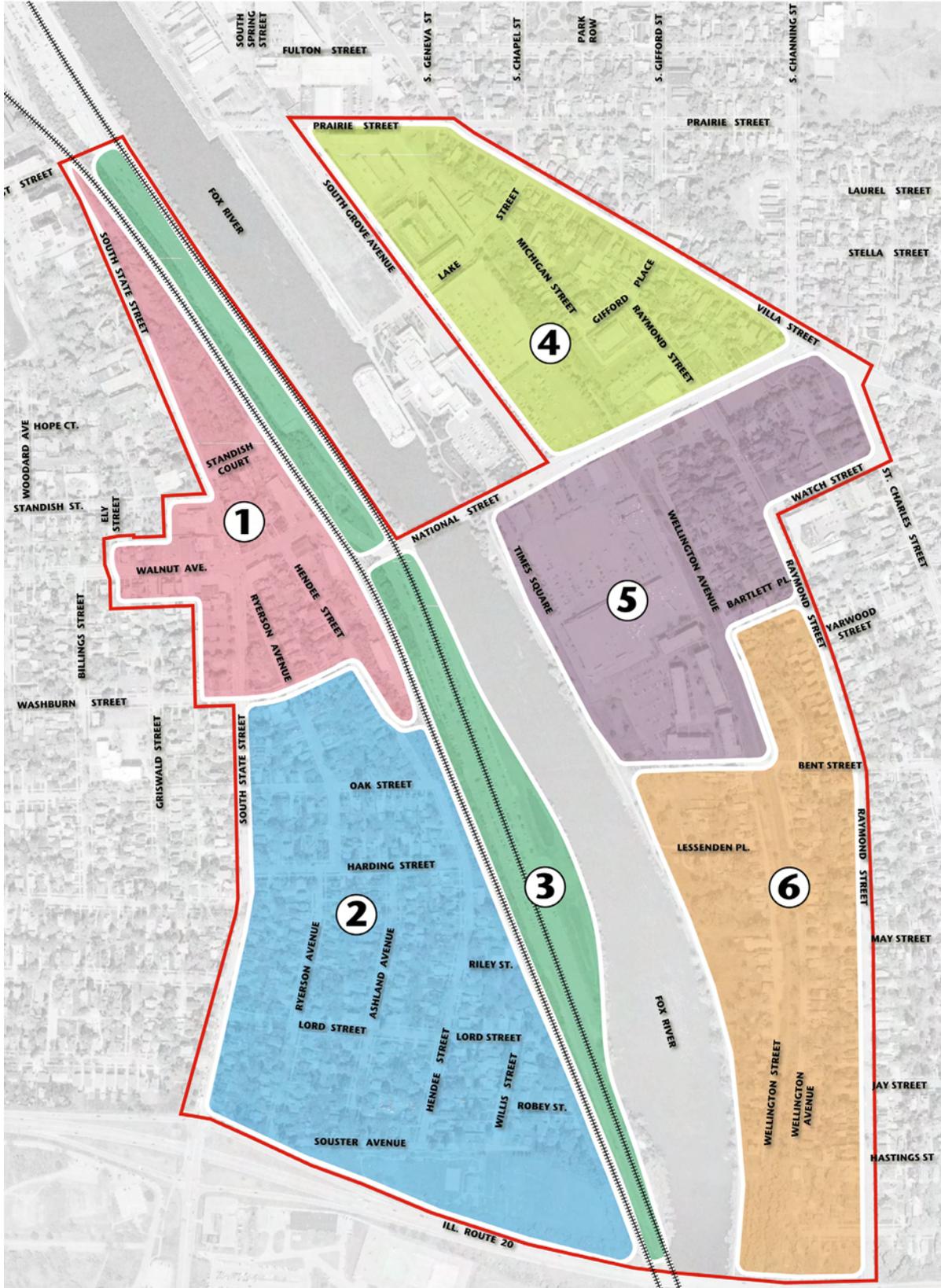


Alley and parking off Villa Street



Parking for the Casino

Sub-Area Map



Sub-Area Map

Sub-Area 5

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 5 is bounded by the Fox River on the west, National Street on the north and St. Charles Street to the east. The southerly boundary is a zigzag line from St. Charles and Watch Street, to Bent Street and Wellington Avenue. Located within Sub-Area 5 is Clock Tower Plaza. A few of the commercial uses within the plaza include:

- » Butera Supermarket
- » Payless Shoe Source
- » Nicks Liquors
- » Dunkin Donuts

The Times Square apartment complex is just to the south of Clock Tower Plaza and is accessed by Times Square Road. The second access off of Bent Street is completely fenced off, leaving only one vehicular access point into the complex. The residents seem to be isolated from the surrounding neighborhoods.

The restored Watch Factory depot is located off of Wellington on the south side of National Street. It is a focal point within the sub-area and emphasizes Elgin's, and the sites, heritage. There are several original and newer mixed use buildings along National Street such as the Cavitt building. The building adjacent to the Cavitt building, which has been in its current location since the late 1800s, is an excellent example of a mixed-use building that still functions today as it was intended with retail space on the first floor and apartments on the second.

There are several single family residences within this Sub-Area, and a significant number of them have been converted to multi-family. Most are in good condition, but some are in need of extensive maintenance.

From a pedestrian's point of view, walking to the National Street Metra Train Station is fairly convenient using the sidewalk that crosses the National Street Bridge. For residents living at the south end of Wellington Avenue/Street, there is no direct access to the station.

There are three open space elements within this Sub-Area. The first is the Fox River bike trail that runs along the eastern bank of the Fox River. There seems to be limited visual presence or trail markings that signify the location of the trail. The Fox River trail is walled off with a chain link fence along the Rivers Landing Apartment Complex.

The second open space element is the right-of-way greenbelt that the Union Pacific Railroad still owns. It runs the length of Wellington Avenue and is fairly wide. The slopes within portions of the railroad ROW are extremely steep and varies along Wellington Avenue.

Finally, there is Observatory Park located on the southwest corner of National Street and Villa Street. This is an active park, that primarily services the residents of the multi-family units located adjacent to the park.

At the northeast corner of Raymond Street and Watch Street, is the Observatory. This building is a historical site and needs to be preserved and maintained.



View looking west across the Clock Tower Plaza

Sub-Area 5

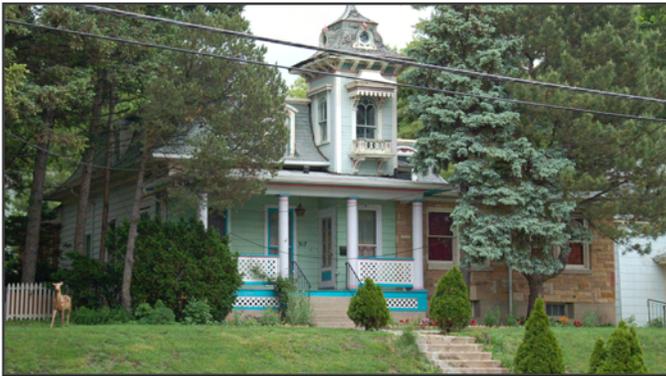
Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » A variety of land uses in this sub-area include traditional mixed-use structures oriented along streets, a visually dated retail center setback from the street system, a variety of styles of single family and multi-family residences, including the Rivers Landing Apartments. There is also a very attractive linear open space bike trail running parallel with and adjacent to the Fox River.



Existing Strip Mall within Clock Tower Plaza



Existing residence within Sub-Area 5



Mixed Use buildings along National Street

- » Large expanses of parking in front of significant development sites such as the Clock Tower Plaza require pedestrians to walk long distances to access the stores from National Street.
- » Elgin Housing Authority has several multi-family units within this Sub-Area. These units are visually dated and difficult to access.



Butera Grocery Store in Clock Tower Plaza



Housing Authority Residences



Apartment Complex - south of Clock Tower Plaza

Sub-Area 5

Open Space/Landscape

- » The linear bike trail along the Fox River is a great amenity, but is not easily accessible to the residents in this Sub-Area.
- » This neighborhood is within walking and biking distance of Festival Park.
- » Wellington Avenue includes a portion of the Union Pacific Railroad ROW (right-of-way) which is an under utilized linear open space. The ROW is bound on the east and west by existing roadways. Significant topographical changes exist from east to west.



The Observatory - Watch Street at Raymond Street



Bike Trail along the Fox River



Tot lot within Apartment Complex

- » Observatory Park, located at the corner of Villa Street and National Street provides the potential for a significant gateway into the downtown and center city. The park currently includes a tot lot and trails.
- » The Observatory, located on the northeast corner of Raymond and Watch Street is a historical site that will need to be preserved.
- » The apartment complex has its own private tot lot on site. This play area was notably used on the site visits.
- » The restored Watch Factory Train Depot offers a wonderful gateway opportunity, but lacks any planned landscaping.



Trail along the Fox River



Seating within Observatory Park



Open vistas to the river

Sub-Area 5

Streetscapes

- » Low level power lines along major streets obstruct views and impact streetscape character.
- » Notable lack of parkway trees throughout the Sub-Area.
- » Streets have street lights throughout the Sub-Area and appear to be adequate.
- » Sidewalks vary from 3 foot carriage walks, to wider walkways off the edge of pavement.
- » Bartlett Street (shown below) is a half street, limiting parking, walkways, and landscaping.



Bartlett Street - looking east



UP right-of-way



Gated entrance at apartment complex

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The Clock Tower Plaza located on the south side of National Street is the site of the former Elgin Watch Factory. The layout of this mall is typical of contemporary retail planning with a massive parking lot in front and a noticeable lack of landscaping. This type of design, along with a lack of defined sidewalks or paths that lead into the plaza create an unfriendly pedestrian environment. The architecture of the strip mall attempts to pay homage to the Watch Factory with its tower elements and inserted clocks.



Streets lack walks, landscaping, condition.



Expansive surface parking



Clock Tower in Clock Tower Plaza

Sub-Area 5

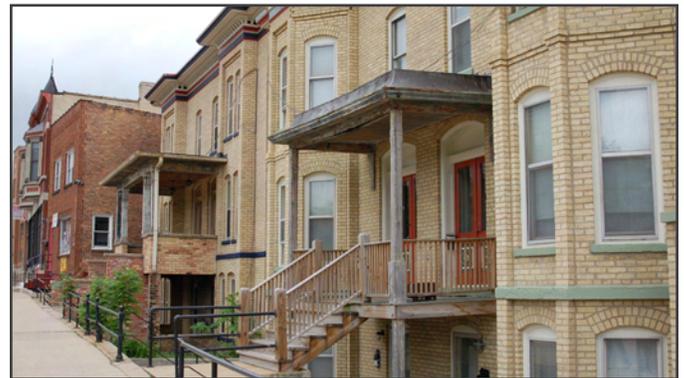


Watch Factory Depot

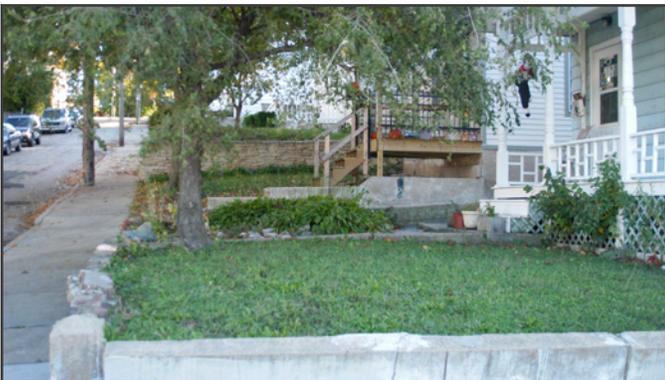
- » The original Watch Factory Depot which has been rehabbed is located adjacent to the Clock Tower Plaza facing National Street.
- » Most residential buildings are located close to the street, helping define street edge. However, major street intersections are not anchored by buildings and therefore create an unfriendly pedestrian environment (e.g. National Street and South Grove Avenue).
- » The Rivers Landing Apartments are located directly south of the Clock Tower Plaza. The



Mixed Use Buildings along National Street



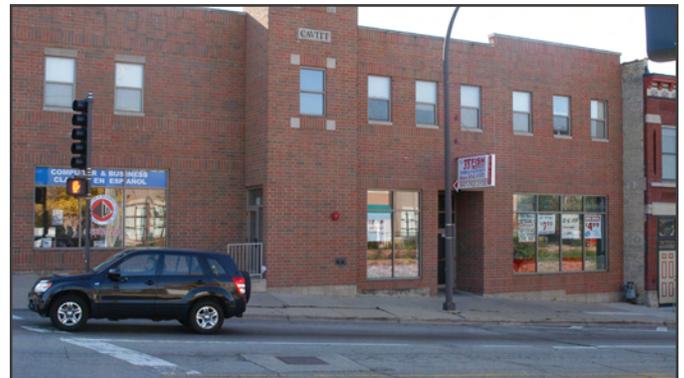
Multi-family Residence along National Street



Single Family along Bartlett Street

buildings were constructed during the 1970s and are mostly masonry construction. There is a small park with a playground in the center of the development. The overall condition of the complex is generally good.

- » Recent redevelopment has occurred along National Street on the east side of the Fox River. The Cavitt Building located on the south side of National Street is oriented toward the street and creates a strong corner presence, however, the architecture of the Cavitt building does not complement or respect the historic character and pattern of the area or the City.



Cavitt Building along National Street



Apartment Complex - south of Clock Tower Plaza

Sub-Area 5

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

- » Circulation patterns on the east side of the river, south of National Street, are limited due to large parcels of development – Clock Tower Plaza and Rivers Landing Apartment complex.
- » The access road on the west side of the shopping center (Times Square Road) empties into the apartment complex to the south, the alternate exit/entrance for this site is blocked by a locked fence. While this is designed to prevent through traffic, it limits the residents to a singular access point.



Parking adjacent apartment complex

- » St. Charles/Villa/National Street is a complicated intersection due to the offset alignment of the three arterials.
- » The Sub-Area has several large surface parking lots which are under utilized and unattractive.

Transit

- » Residents of Times Square Apartments and patrons of the Clock Tower Plaza can access the National Street Metra Station by crossing the National Street Bridge and walking south to the station area. The distance is magnified due to the barrier created by the Fox River.



Expansive Parking at Butera Lot



Existing Parking at Butera lot



Bartlett Place - looking west



Butera Grocery Store in Clock Tower Plaza - rear view



Butera Grocery Store in Clock Tower Plaza - east side view

Sub-Area 5

- » Residents of this sub-area are within walking distance to multiple bus route stops along National Street or Villa Street. All routes serving this area provide transportation to the Pace Transportation Center, wherein, riders may access multiple connections that serve the greater Elgin area.

Bikeways

- » The Fox River Trail also referred to as the Grand Trail, is an attractive linear open space amenity. It connects this neighborhood to the balance of downtown Elgin and surrounding neighborhoods. The trail provides a direct connection to a significant regional recreation trail system.
- » A portion of the trail system is fenced limiting access from the Rivers Landing Apartment complex.
- » Additional proposed bikeways within Sub-Area 5 include a north south bikeway on St. Charles Street and an east west bikeway on Bent Street. There is a lack of directional signage for these trail systems.



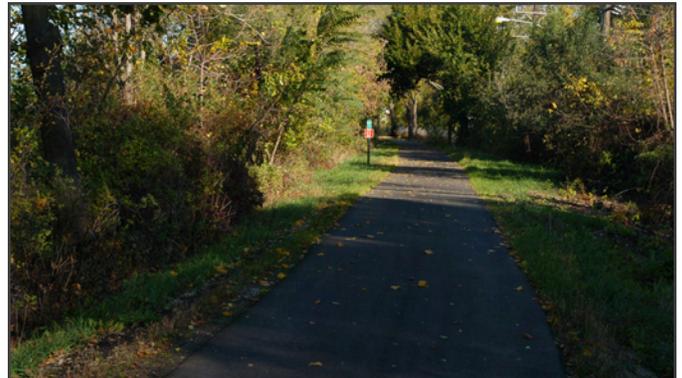
Pace Bus in route



Parking expanse at Butera Lot



Bike way along Fox River



Bike way along Fox River

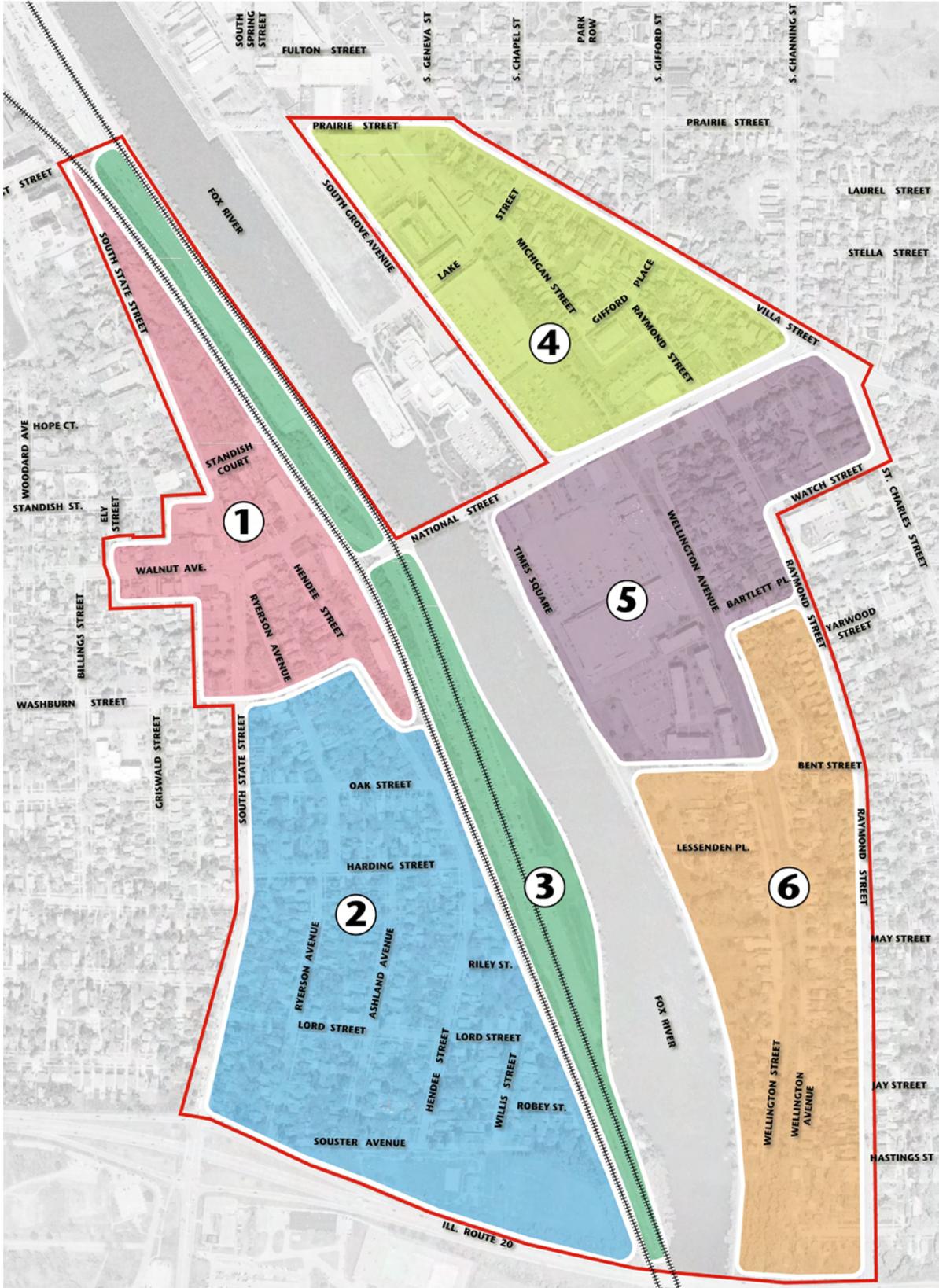


Bike way along Fox River



Access to Bike Trail fenced at Apartment Complex

Sub-Area Map



Sub-Area Map

Sub-Area 6

Visual Area Assessment

Sub-Area 6 is bounded by Bartlett Place to Wellington Avenue to the extension of Bent Street on the north, Raymond Street on the east, the Fox River on the west, and US Route 20 on the south.

This Sub-Area incorporates older single family homes, some that back up to the Fox River and bike trail. A number of the homes have been converted into multi-family dwellings. Some of these conversions have been in a manner that is contributory in nature to the overall appeal of the home. Other attempts at the conversion have not been so successful. The need for stricter codes, and/or enforcement of existing regulations, is apparent.

This neighborhood is on the western edge of the typical neighborhood grid system that is common in the original part of Elgin. Several of the streets appear to have been constructed as half streets, and have remained substandard. Others, possibly due to the restricted lane widths, have become one way avenues. Wellington Street (commonly referred to as lower Wellington) is a long dead end street with no means for adequate turn around. Large equipment, i.e. fire equipment, maintenance vehicles, will have a difficult time reversing direction.

Just as in Sub-Area 5, the Union Pacific Railroad's ROW continues south, past US Route 20 and contains a large open space area with severe topography.

A significant element missing from this Sub-Area is a public park. For residents living at the southern end of

this Sub-Area, the nearest public park is Drake Field. A resident, wanting to visit the park, would have to travel west, cross Route 25, and continue for approximately one-third mile, to arrive at Drake Field Park. All total, they would be walking over 1/2 mile to reach the park.

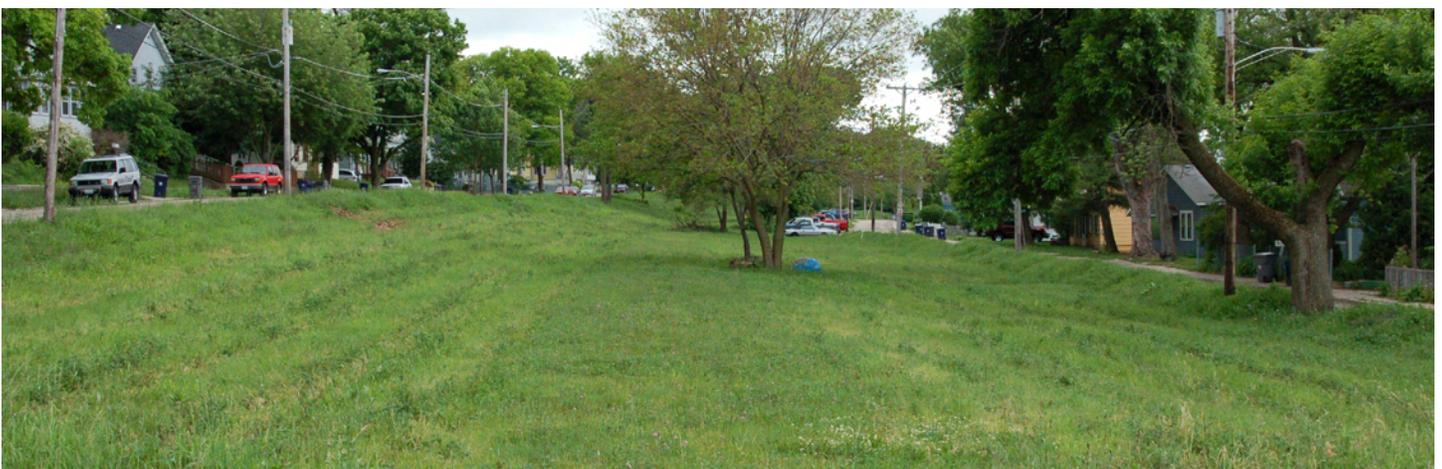
Residents living towards the northerly end of this Sub-Area could visit Observatory Park or Festival Park, but that too is still over a one-half mile walk.

The Fox River and its trail system borders the westerly side of this Sub-Area, but access to the path is very limited. Lessenden Place is currently the only location where there is a direct connection to the Fox River bike trail. The remainder of the river frontage is occupied by private entities.

Based on current FEMA maps, most of the residential homes along lower Wellington Street are within the flood plain of the Fox River. Standing water was observed on site visits in low areas on private residential lots.

At the public meetings, concern was expressed from the residents regarding combo sewers in this Sub-Area. Several comments were received regarding the system and flooding history.

At the southern end of the Sub-Area is the location of a pumping station for FORWARD (Fox River Water And Reclamation District).



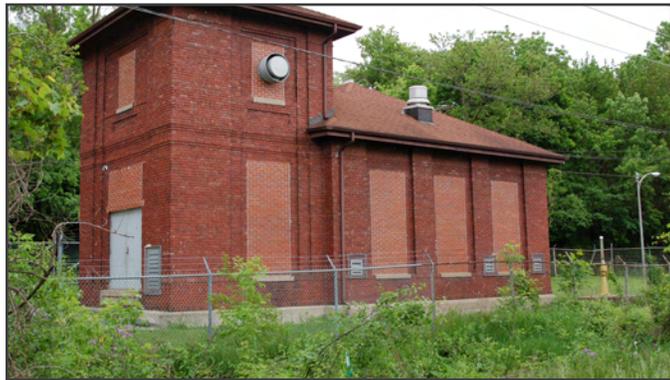
Existing Open Space between Wellington Avenue and Wellington Street

Sub-Area 6

Issues & Observations

Land Use

- » Open space that is owned by Union Pacific Railroad off of Wellington is under utilized.
- » The predominant land use within this Sub-Area is original single family homes with some structures converted into multi-family uses. The homes within this neighborhood are in fair to good condition and the neighborhood appears intact and stable.
- » It appears that some single family home sites are



Pumping Station

also serving as home based businesses.

- » Located at the most southern edge of the Sub-Area is a pumping station.

Open Space/Landscape

- » Despite the primary land use of this area being residential, there is not a City owned park within the Sub-Area.
- » Observatory Park is located on National Street at Villa Street, Festival Park is north of National Street on South Grove Avenue, both parks exceed one mile from the southern limits of this Sub-Area.



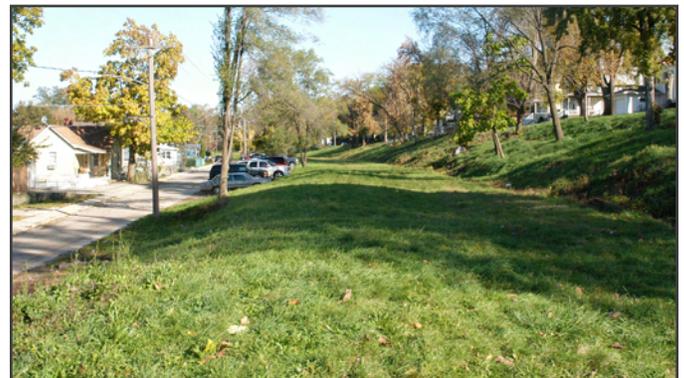
Existing residence within the Sub-Area



Railroad ROW between Wellington Street and Wellington Avenue



Existing residence within the Sub-Area



Railroad ROW between Wellington Street and Wellington Avenue



Existing residence within the Sub-Area

Sub-Area 6

- » Drake Field is located on Hastings Street at Lavoie Avenue and is more than 1/2 mile from the westerly boundary of this Sub-Area.

Streetscapes

- » The streetscapes are typical urban cross sections with sidewalks/curb and gutter on both sides and homes aligned to the street with a smaller front yard setback.
- » The streetscape creates a pedestrian friendly atmosphere throughout this sub-area.
- » Where a planting strip (parkway) is provided,



Dead-end at Lessenden Place

there is a notable lack of parkway trees.

- » There is a combination of “carriage” walks (poured adjacent to the street curb) and traditional four-foot (4’) wide sidewalks.
- » Street lights are located throughout the Sub-Area and appear to be adequate for residential uses.
- » Street signage is visible, and in good condition.
- » Low level power lines along streets obstruct views and impact streetscape character.
- » Dead end streets, i.e. Wellington Street and Lessenden Place, limit connectivity.



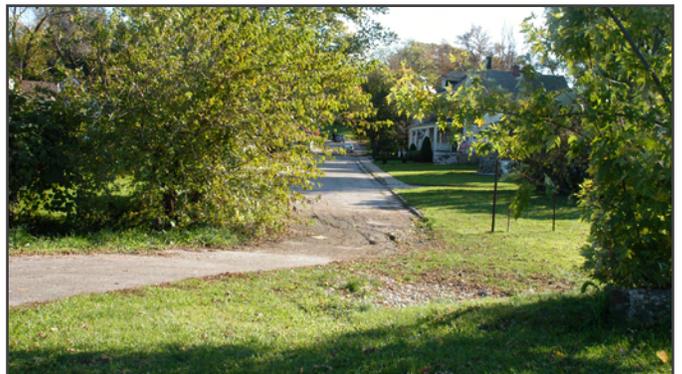
Existing residence within the Sub-Area



Fox River Trail



Existing street cross-section



Bikeway connection from Lessenden Place to the Fox River Trail



Existing residence within the Sub-Area

Sub-Area 6

Architecture & Built Environment

- » The homes in this Sub-Area are representative of the typical original Elgin neighborhoods constructed in the early 1900's. The architectural styles include Four Square, Dutch Colonial and Vernacular style one and two story structures.
- » There are homes in varying conditions and homes that have been altered from their original design. Most of the homes appear to be in need of maintenance.
- » Some of the homes have been converted for use as two or three unit structures.
- » Homes that sit on the bluff above Wellington Avenue have been constructed to accommodate the severe topographical changes.
- » Likewise, homes built adjacent to the Fox River have incorporated elevated living spaces into their design.

Transit

- » The unused land adjacent to Wellington Street and Wellington Avenue is currently owned by the Union Pacific Railroad. Although the site presents significant topographical issues, there



Rear yards of residences along lower Wellington Street



Rear yards of residences along lower Wellington Street



Lower Wellington Street

is an opportunity to utilize the land to create a boulevard, linear park system, linear water course, etc.

- » Due to the one way streets, the dead end streets and the slope of some streets in the planning Sub-Area, Pace bus operations are slightly limited during the winter months, e.g. Pace Route 542 recently stopped operating along Wellington Avenue and the portion to Bent St. between the river and Liberty, due to the condition of those streets during the winter months).



Railroad Right-of-way - topographical changes



Wellington Street - "cut out" parking spaces

Sub-Area 6

Vehicular Access, Parking & Circulation

- » Wellington Street (lower Wellington) is a narrow, dead-end street in poor condition. It dead-ends into the utility right-of-way (ROW) area with no way to turn around.
- » Wellington Avenue (upper Wellington) is a narrow street in poor condition on a steeper grade. From Hastings to Bent Street, the street is only wide enough for one way traffic, northbound.
- » Lessenden Place is a dead end street with no



Lower Wellington Street



Railroad Right-of-way - topographical changes



Hastings Street looking west

formal means of turning around.

- » Former railroad ROW provides open space between Wellington Street and Wellington Avenue but prevents east-west connectivity.
- » Lack of adequate street cross sections has forced the residents to “cut out” parking areas into the UPRR right-of-way.



Wellington Street - one way traffic

Bikeways

- » The Fox River Trail running along the Fox River through this sub-area is a great amenity as it is a very attractive linear open space. It connects this neighborhood to the balance of downtown Elgin and surrounding neighborhoods as well as providing a direct connection to a significant regional recreation trail system.
- » A majority of the trail system in this Sub-Area is not accessible by residents as it abuts private residential lots.
- » The only access point to the trail system for residents in this Sub-Area is off of Lessenden Place.



Wellington Street - one way traffic

Background Data Review

May 24, 2000



Riverfront/Center City Master Plan City of Elgin, Illinois

CITY VISION
ASSOCIATES

Schrieber/Anderson Associates, Inc.
Vanderwall & Associates, Inc.
Anderson Illustration Associates, Inc.

in association with

Hitchcock
Design Group

Creating Better Places™
TransSystems Corporation
Hey and Associates, Inc.

Comprehensive Plan & Design Guidelines

City of Elgin
2005



Background Data Review

Past Planning in the Study Area and City:

City of Elgin Wayfinding and Signage Phase 1.0

The City of Elgin hired the consultant team of Naughton and Associates and Smithgroup JJR in 2003 to create Phase 1 of a multi-phased city-wide signage and wayfinding program. The study's three main objectives included:

- » Identifying the City's character and defining its edges.
- » Providing directional and informational signage within the City.
- » Creating a user-friendly and functional City environment

The study divided the city into five (5) zones and provided wayfinding and sign location recommendations for each zone based on the unique mix of land uses, architectural character, and community desires. Zone 1 encompasses part of the study area for the National Street Station Area Plan. It identifies primary and secondary destinations for wayfinding signs (e.g. post office, train station, trails, casino, etc.) as well as forty-five (45) sign locations for vehicular directional signs and the content and type of signs. Representative images from neighboring communities are also included in the study.

Riverfront/Center City Master Plan

In the fall of 1999, the City of Elgin commissioned City Vision Associates and Hitchcock Design Group to prepare a comprehensive Master Plan for the Fox River and Center City. The study aimed to create a community-wide consensus based vision for revitalization of Elgin's riverfront and Downtown area. It also provided a roadmap for successful implementation strategies and established the beginning of a 10-15 year implementation process that would assist City officials and the private sector.

Within the report, the master planning area was divided into six (6) Districts: A through F. District E, named the Residential Mixed-Use District contains part of the study area for the National Street Station Area Plan and provides recommendations in the form of text and graphics for riverfront improvements and redevelopment of parcels. In addition, the report also outlines transit and transportation improvements relevant to the National Street Station Planning Area including bike improvements, pedestrian amenities, and transit infrastructure.

Pace Development Guidelines

The Pace Development Guidelines were created in 1999 to help municipalities and the development communities accommodate transit service early on in the development process. Pace, the suburban transit bus and paratransit provider for the Regional Transportation Authority, works with suburban Chicago communities to coordinate transit service needs, promote transit and pedestrian friendly land use planning techniques, and develop management policies to reduce rush hour traffic congestion.

The Development Guidelines manual contains three major sections:

- » Transit-Supportive Design Specifications (including Vehicle Characteristics, Roadway Design, and Bus Stop Zones)
- » Land Use Planning Considerations (including Residential, Retail, Office & Industrial, and Mixed-Use Centers)
- » Implementation and Process (including Service Review & Development, Technical Review Assistance Program, and Site Plan Review Procedures)

The Development Guidelines do not supersede the authority of local governments, employers, and developers, but provide complementary criteria for suburban area development and redevelopment.

Background Data Review

Zoning Ordinance

The City of Elgin zoning ordinance was adopted in 1992. Of the thirty (30) zoning classifications permitted in six (6) zoning districts in the City's zoning ordinance, nine (9) can be found within the National Street Station Area Planning Area. These include:

- » RC3 Residence Conservation District
- » MFR Multiple-Family Residence District
- » RB Residence Business District
- » NB Neighborhood Business District
- » CC2 Center City District
- » PCC Planned Center City District
- » PCC2 Planned Center City District
- » CF Community Facility District
- » PCF Planned Community Facility District

The permitted zoning classifications within the study area appear, with a few exceptions, to be appropriately positioned and complementary to adjacent uses. The Residence Conservation District and Community Facility District are the two (2) major zoning classifications in the study area, accounting for more than 51% of the total size.

The CF Community Facility District runs along the east and west edges of the Fox River and buffers residential and commercial districts from the railroad on the East side. This District encompasses open spaces ranging from passive and active parks, recreational areas, playgrounds, woodlands, and natural area including Central Park, Ryerson Park, Marie Grolik and Observation Park.

The PCC, PCC2 and CC2 Center City Districts are located exclusively on the east side of the Fox River along National Street, Times Square Road, South Grove Avenue, and Prairie Street. These districts contain a mix of large scale retail stores, offices, and multi-family residential buildings. River Park Place, the newer townhome development north of Lake Street is aesthetically designed and transitions into single family residential to the east. Surface parking is abundant in these districts and shared parking options should be explored between users.

The NB and RB Business Districts are located east of the River Street, primarily at the intersection of Walnut and South State Street. The buildings and uses on these parcels vary in condition from good to poor. The uses include offices, neighborhood retail, gas stations, and light industrial. The buildings in these districts are generally one to two stories high and abut residential neighborhoods. The development regulations in regards to height, setbacks, parking, and signage of the zoning classifications are typical for retail districts. However, some of the uses currently existing in the NB Business District should be restricted, e.g. gas stations.

The RC3 Residence Conservation District is located on the outer edges of the study area along Hendee Street, Souster Avenue, Wellington Street, Villa Street, Ryerson Avenue, and Washburn Street. The zoning regulations aim to conserve the historic character of mature neighborhoods in this district, developed as single family dwellings. Although the zoning classification seems to be appropriate in most locations, there are parcels which could potentially be converted to other uses, e.g. the parcels north of Lake Street along Prairie Street could be consolidated and converted to commercial or mixed-uses. The parcels east of the river at Bent Street and Wellington Avenue have the potential to be developed at a higher density into multi-family or Mixed-Use units. At present, MFR Multi-Family Residential District is located only on two parcels in the study area, south of National Street and east of Wellington Street. The district allows for the development of low density multiple-family dwelling units on a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet. The MFR district could be utilized in the study area to provide a transition between commercial and residential neighborhoods, thereby replacing R3 Residential Conservation District in certain areas. The existing zoning regulations discourage units from

Background Data Review

locating closer to the lot lines, resulting in layouts similar to the one in the study area. The Rivers Landing Apartment complex fails to capitalize on scenic views of the river to the west.

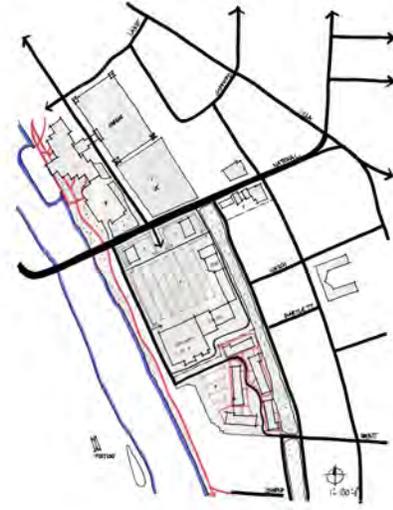
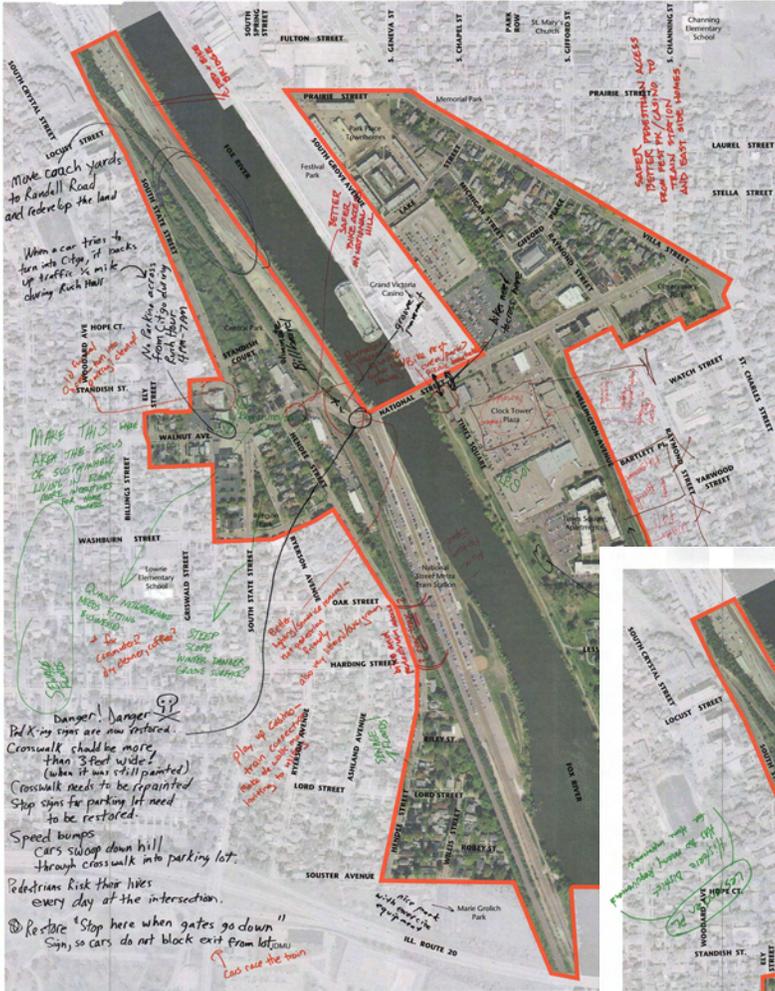
From an urban design standpoint, the large front and side setback requirements for commercial parcels and multi-family residential parcels, along with parking and loading areas provided within these setbacks create a lack of street edge. The buildings and landscaping fail to anchor the streetscape in several places, especially at intersections such as National Street and Grove Avenue. This results in a haphazard and unattractive streetscape profile as one travels along the major rights-of-way. In order to promote a more cohesive physical character which is pedestrian friendly and frames the street edges, setbacks should be reduced and parking and loading areas should be moved to the rear of parcels.

Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines

The City of Elgin hired the consultant team of HNTB Corporation, DLK Architecture, Wolff-Clements & Associates, and Real Estate Planning Group to create its Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines. Sustainability is a key component of the Plan, building upon the community's desire to grow in a sensible way by integrating open space with development, protecting natural resources, making full use of existing infrastructure, and improving transportation, economic, and housing options. The Plan outlines community-wide goals and objectives for the following categories:

- » Growth Management
- » Land Use
- » Revitalization and Redevelopment
- » Historic Preservation
- » Transportation Plan
- » Housing
- » Economic and Business Development
- » Community Facilities and Service
- » Parks and Open Space
- » Fiscal Impact of Development

The Plan calls for providing a vibrant community with a mix of uses and alternative transportation modes. The Future Land Use Map identifies the National Street Planning Area as a Neighborhood Mixed-Use area with medium density residential and traditional commercial areas that cater to the locals. The Design Guidelines help maintain the character of the community and ensure that new development meets certain standards. The Design Guidelines address each of the general land use categories – residential and residential neighborhoods, commercial, and mixed-use. The Guidelines utilized imagery and simple text to show examples of site layouts that enhance pedestrian activity and architectural character.



Study Area Boundary
National Street Station Area Plan



Study Area Boundary
National Street Station Area Plan



Public Interaction in the Review Process

Public Meetings

The City of Elgin recognizes that public involvement in a project has a direct link to whether or not the venture will succeed.

During the design process of National Street Station Area Plan, the public was invited and encouraged to contribute to the plan. Meetings, workshops, input via the web, were just some of the avenues that residents interacted with the process.

Throughout this endeavor, Land Vision worked closely with City Staff and representatives from various Home Owner/Community Groups, also referred to as The Steering Committee. Over the last 16 months, there were a total of five Steering Committee Meetings.

- » June 24, 2009
- » August 5, 2009
- » November 11, 2009
- » January 27, 2009
- » April, 2010

Each of the Steering Committee meetings functioned as a workshop. Concepts were presented, topics were discussed, input from community representatives was noted and revisions to the plan/report were made accordingly.

An Image Preference Survey was orchestrated to determine the pulse of the residents. The survey was seeking to find likes and dislikes on a number of different issues. Some of those issues are:

- » Architectural type of building
- » Amount of open space
- » Type of amenities provided
- » Building position (on street frontage or setback)
- » Parking

The results are included as part of this assessment. The opinions voiced in this survey, were part of the consideration for the final plan.

There were a total of three public meetings. The first was held on October 6, 2009. At this meeting a brief power point was given, which explained the purpose of the project. Following the presentation, residents were given sharpie pens and large aerial photographs of the site, and asked to write their comments on the

photos. A summary of the comments obtained that evening is shown on the following pages. As most of the participants live and work in the study area, the comments were considered valuable insight to the daily workings of the project area.

Following this public meeting, several workshops were held in which the design team could interact one on one with the residents. From these workshops, several concept plans were devised, analyzed, and compiled. The concept plans were reduced down to two options, which were presented at a public meeting held March 2, 2010.

At this second public meeting, options were presented to the public for their comment. In addition to comments received that night, reaction to the presentation was received by Land Vision via email, phone calls, and input through the web. All comments regarding the two options were weighed, and a single plan was presented to the City Staff and Steering Committee in April for their comment.

Based on those comments, a singular plan was presented to the public on May 4, 2010. That plan is the basis for this report.

Prior to the Planning Commission Meeting that was held on October 4, 2010, a draft report was sent to members of the Steering Committee. This report was also available on-line, through the Land Vision web site. Comments were received from multiple entities, and all comments were addressed.

Following the Planning Meeting in October, additional comments received from the public, staff and public entities were reviewed and the report was adjusted accordingly. That report was presented to the City Council for a first reading on October 27, 2010. Once again, the revised document was posted on Land Visions web site for the general public to view and present comments.

Public Comment - October 6, 2009

Make this whole area the focus of sustainable living in Elgin. More incentives for home owners.

Open up view to Downtown area

Groove pavement through curves

Eliminate Billboard

Make access safer for bicycles to National Street

Make crosswalks wider than 3', crosswalks need to be repainted

Better lighting/snow/ice removal. Area is littered and overgrown. Replace "drop down" stop signs for when lights are out.

Prostitution frequently on corner

Turn old funeral home into parking

When a car turns into Citgo, traffic backs up. Prohibit left turns into station from the south

Improve commercial corridor/ Improve gateway

No parking across from Citgo driveway during the rush hour.



Need Pedestrian Bridge

Move RR yards to Randall Road and redevelop the river front

Move Utility Yard and Public Works

Add Riverwalk to west side of River

Ramp Bridge to by-pass trains

Need more parking at the station

Depot needs updating/maintenance
Commuters need Dry Cleaners/ Coffee Shops, etc.

Play up Casino and Train access

Commuter lots need speed bumps

Pedestrians need better access to Depot from National Street

Stop signs for commuter lot need to be restored

Restore "Stop Here When Gates Go Down" signs. Cars race the train.

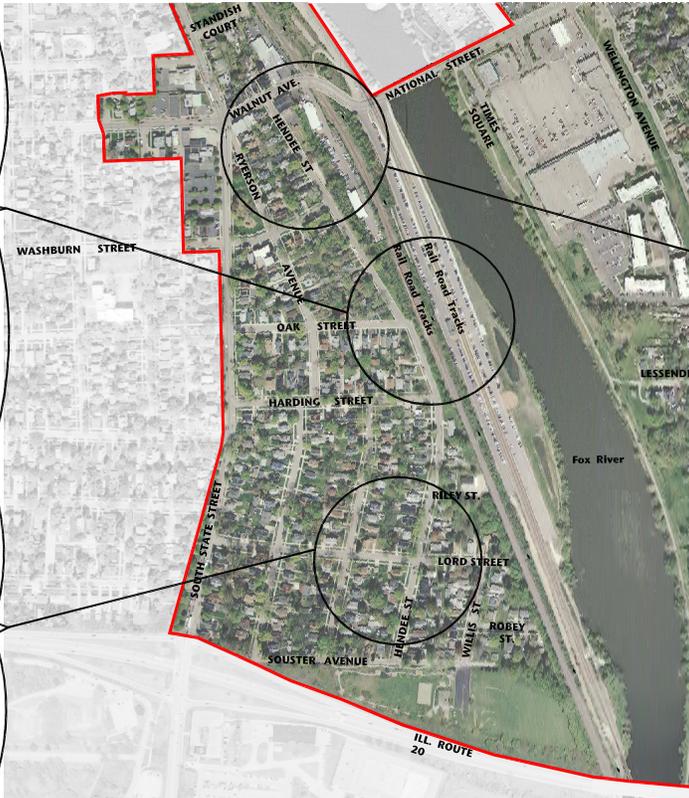
Train schedule needs to be coordinated with bus schedule

Residential area to South State Street should be added to study area. Should be made into a Historic Area

Need access to station for residents to walk to depot (note several comments against access to the depot from the neighborhood)

Provide metered parking for commuters along Hendee Street

Sewage back-ups/flooding in this area



Need Riverwalk to extend north

Quaint Neighborhood needs Retail/ Commercial that fits the area

Several homes in disrepair. Need to review Historic Requirements and help home owners

Parks and Open Space are not linked. Need connections between parks and to south of Rte. 20

Not enough parking for apartments in single family home sites.

Too many absentee owners

General:

Remove freight train line or combine with passenger lines

Traffic light signals along State Street and connections to Route 20 need to be improved. Congestion is heavy.

Public Comment - October 6, 2009



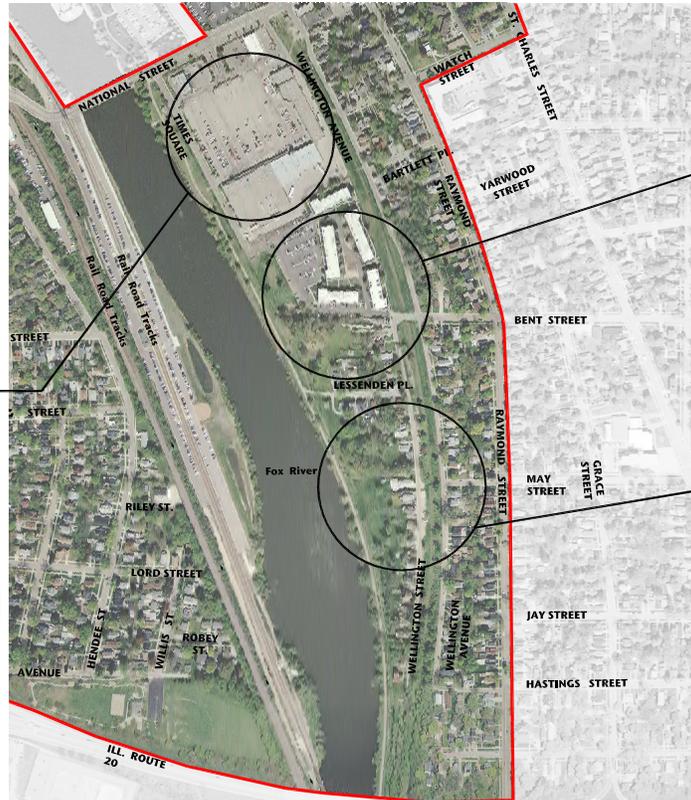
Why are streets one way in this area?

Signal light needs to be improved/ or timed better.

Need to preserve area.

Need safer access to the south and to the parks/casino.

- Exterior facades need to be updated
- Improve this area first
- Build Hotel for Casino
- Keep Grocery Store
- Improve safety in this area
- Too much parking
- Make Grocery Food-Coop
- Make Grocery Whole Foods
- Area has "pan-handlers"
- Incorporate the historic depot into the overall design
- Need streetscape
- Need improved bike paths across National Street
- Need to attract better businesses
- Buy old Railroad right-of-way
- Provide pedestrian bridge over river to train depot
- Need bus stop at front door of Grocery Store
- Convert to mixed use
- Provide better grading



- Need to keep low income apartments
- Improve facades / very dated
- Improve security
- Remove fencing
- Remove apartments and build townhomes/redevelop river front.
- Need more parks/better equipment
- Residential area needs better code enforcement
- Not a safe area/ need to improve
- Redevelop River front
- Need to make area Historic District
- Area has combined sewers. Need to improve. Floods.
- Complete street grid - need to improve parking/access.

Image Preference Survey - October 5, 2009



Image Preference Survey - October 5, 2009

Purpose

The Image Preference Survey helps to focus the planning and design issues, and define the most appropriate and inappropriate, building typologies and appearance for the areas future. When the Image Preference Survey results are presented to the public they facilitate public discussion of the critical development and design issues in the community. This process guarantees that the final product contains guidelines and regulations that portray a shared vision of the community.

On October 5, 2009, a public meeting was held with the goal of defining preferences of the residents of Elgin.

Residents were given a keypad upon entering the meeting, and were then shown a power point slide show with multiple images. As the images flashed on the screen for approximately 6 seconds, the participants were asked to rate the image on whether it would be a positive for the community or a negative.

The ranking scale for voting is as follows:

- » 1 is strongly negative (--) for the community
- » 2 is negative (-) for the community
- » 3 is neutral (+/-) for the community
- » 4 is positive (+) for the community
- » 5 is strongly positive (++) for the community

The image to the left was the first slide to be presented to the audience. This was shown as an example of how to register their preferences. All the slide shown had the same format, showing the question at the top, and the ranking schedule at the bottom. The tally from the vote was not shown at that time. Within this document, is the final tally for each of the slides.

The following are general comments that stress the positive:

- » Ranked as an overwhelming positive, was having green space, which allowed visitors to gather. The participants seemed to prefer that the space was part of a destination, perhaps a restaurant or shop, but having a large, landscaped, open area was viewed as a positive in the survey. Amenities such as park benches, paved walkways, trash receptacles, lighting, mature landscaping and fountains were also apparent in the images.
- » Participants seemed to prefer a building under 4 stories in height, that exhibited a historic

component to the structure. Variations through balconies, planter boxes or awnings were well received.

- » The participants preferred examples in which the building was set back from the street, with landscaped front yards and large sidewalks.
- » Appropriate scale for open space.

The following is an example of what the participants did not feel contributed positively to the community:

- » A contemporary building style was not very well received. Nor were taller buildings, especially when they lined both sides of the street. Buildings that lacked any articulation, and conversely, those that were highly articulated, ranked toward the bottom of the survey scale.
- » Prefabricated looking buildings, cheaply constructed and buildings in which the entrance was difficult to locate scored low in the survey.
- » Streetscapes that lacked mature landscaping did poorly as well as streets that appeared to be cluttered with vehicles. Narrow or very wide streets failed to meet the approval of the participants. Surface parking lots ranked at the bottom of the scale.

Image Preference Survey



Image No. 1

4.46

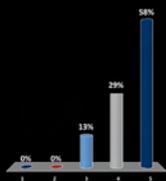


Image No. 5

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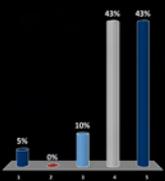


Image No. 2

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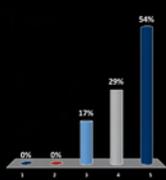


Image No. 6

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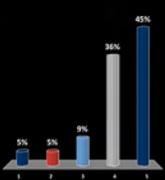


Image No. 3

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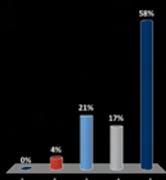


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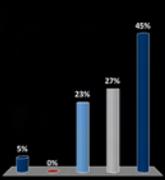


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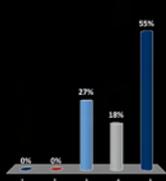


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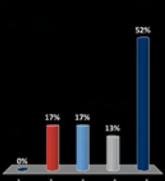


Image Preference Survey



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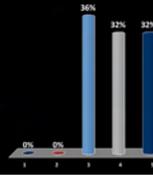


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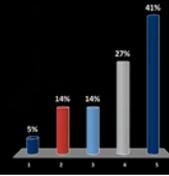


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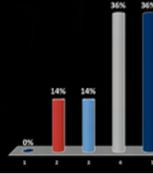


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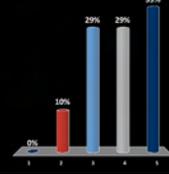


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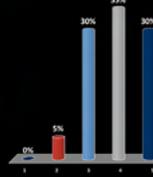


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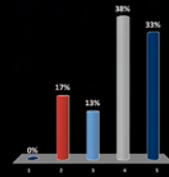


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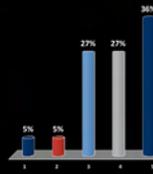


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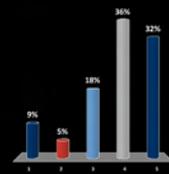


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3	30%
4	28%
5	30%



Image No. 21

3.62

Rating	Percentage
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2	10%
3	14%
4	43%
5	24%



Image No. 18

3.67

Rating	Percentage
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2	10%
3	24%
4	19%
5	38%



Image No. 22

3.60

Rating	Percentage
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3	10%
4	35%
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Image No. 19

3.65

Rating	Percentage
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4	25%
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Image No. 23

3.55

Rating	Percentage
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3	27%
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Image No. 20

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Rating	Percentage
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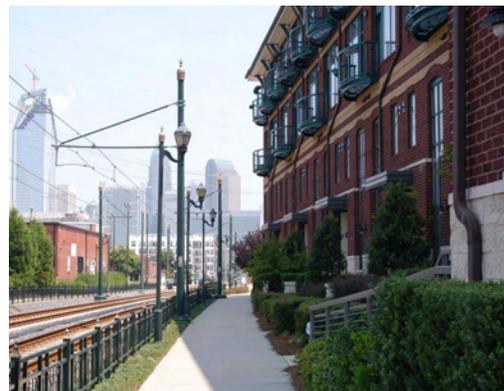


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Image Preference Survey



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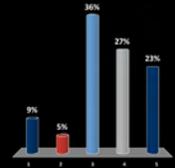


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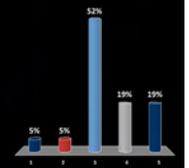


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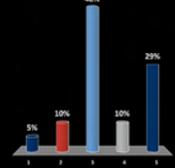


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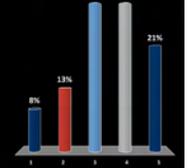


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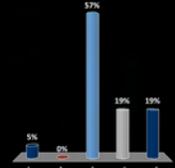


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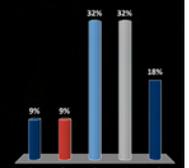


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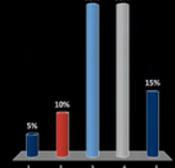


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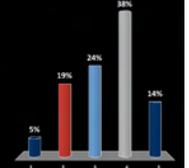


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Image No. 37

3.29

Response	Percentage
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3	38%
4	33%
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Image No. 34

3.37

Response	Percentage
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Image No. 38

3.30

Response	Percentage
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Image No. 35

3.32

Response	Percentage
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Image No. 39

3.29

Response	Percentage
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Image No. 36

3.30

Response	Percentage
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Image No. 40

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Response	Percentage
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Image Preference Survey



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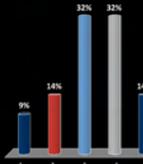


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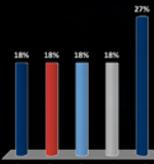


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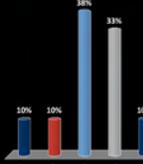


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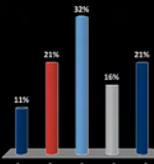


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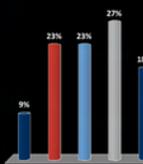


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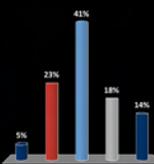


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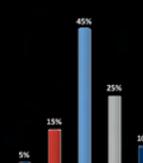


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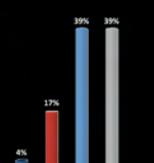


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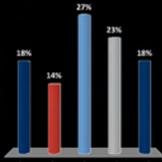


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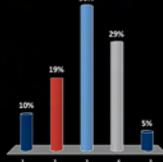


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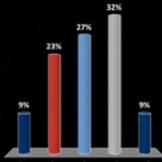


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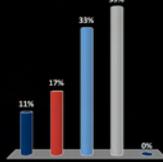


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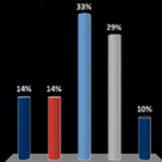


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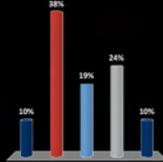


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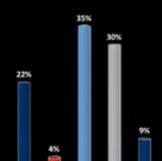


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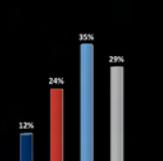


Image Preference Survey



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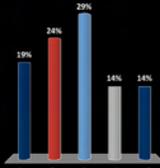


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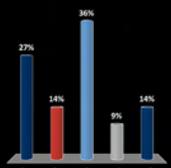


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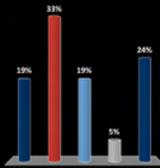


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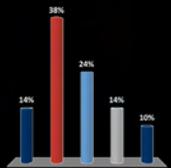


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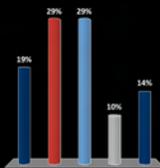


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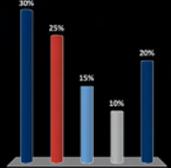


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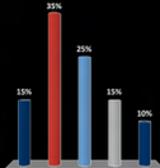


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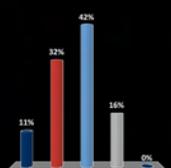


Image Preference Survey



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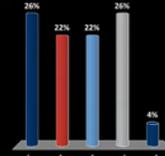


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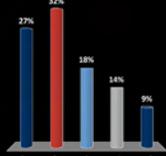


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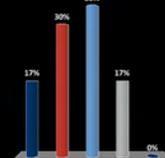


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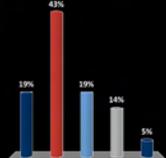


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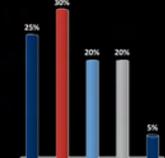


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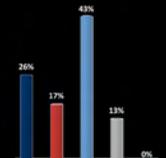


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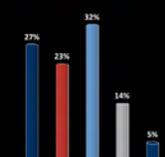


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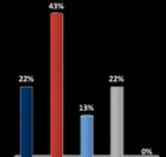


Image Preference Survey



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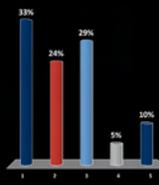


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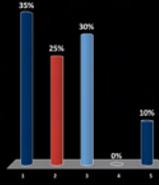


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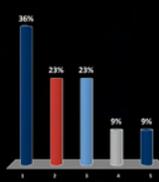


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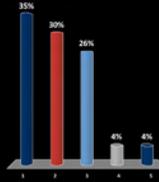


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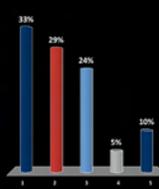


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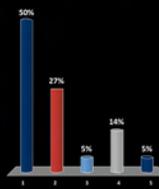


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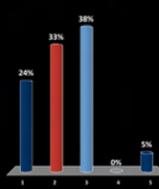


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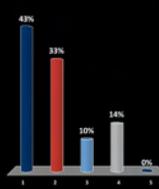


Image Preference Survey



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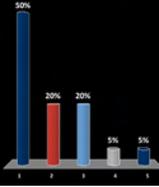


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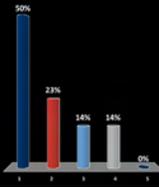
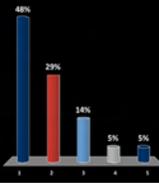


Image No. 83

1.90



National Street Station Area Plan

Appendix B - Marketing

Project Summary

Market Overview

Demographic Considerations

Housing Market Perspectives

Retail Market Perspective

Office Market Trends

Area Development Case Studies

Addendum



ERA | AECOM



Project Summary

Project Summary

ERA|AECOM was engaged as part of the Land Vision team to evaluate market opportunities for transit-oriented development (TOD) around the National Street Metra Station. The analysis shows that the National Street Metra Station area planning study is occurring in a complex regional and national landscape, influenced in large measure by the pace of recovery from the recession and a return to job growth. For Metropolitan Chicago and Elgin, the pace of recovery appears to be generally consistent with national trends, i.e. a slow recovery. At the same time, however, our experience shows that key underlying long-term trends remain in place, which will continue to influence areas such as the National Street train station area, in spite of the recession. These elements include:

- » Baby Boom aged household retirement and downsizing has only been delayed. As housing markets recover, we expect that interest in walkable and more urban locations will gradually shift into greater favor, covering rental and owner occupied housing.
- » While the recession has dampened growth in utility and energy costs, the nation remains dependent on gasoline in large measure, and prices will grow as the economy improves. In this context, sites that are suitable for mixed use and served by public transportation will benefit in the long run.

For Elgin and National Street, the analysis begins with the residential market. From 2000 to 2009, the city added a total of about 4,700 units, with about 300 in the downtown area. Moving forward to 2030 based on CMAP forecasts, Elgin is predicted to add an additional 26,000 housing units. Assuming that downtown sustains just 6% of total new units through 2030, that would amount to a further 1,700 housing units in the downtown area through 2030. This potential growth in units for the downtown area needs to be kept in perspective, as a total of 2000 projected downtown housing units in Downtown Elgin would represent only 3% of total housing unit demand forecasted for 2030 (57,740 housing units). Our analysis shows that while Elgin currently has fewer households that are interested in urban living compared to national averages (20% to 30% on average), the overall market opportunity (3% of housing downtown by 2030) remains equally modest in comparison. On a broader level, we believe that National Street can be part of broader efforts to improve

the competitive position of Elgin for a share of regional households that are looking for urban locations. From our perspective, the core concern is not the number of units built, it is the price of the units. Public sector efforts to manage the price of downtown housing have focused on the following:

- » Use of Density bonuses and other incentives to encourage affordability
- » Provision of lower cost land to encourage development of specific sites
- » Use of TIF and other standard incentives, linked with improving economic conditions
- » Use of zoning and planning tools, to include public provision of parking, as well as the allowance of higher density development

These tools remain relevant in managing the challenge of urban revitalization, which impacts communities larger and smaller than Elgin. Issues include:

- » Difficulty of getting financing for mixed-use projects
- » Perceptions of increased risk
- » Extended entitlement and development review policies

Our experience argues that several steps, all accommodated in the National Street Plan, are important in encouraging urban revitalization:

- » Build public consensus and involvement upfront
- » Secure preliminary entitlements for priority sites
- » Target infrastructure and access improvements and link them with transportation

Project Summary

Specific sub area recommendations follow:

Sub Area 1: Reflecting the historic and largely residential character of this area, with modest commercial development along State Street / US 31, the analysis argues for future mixed use development on an infill basis at the intersection of National Street and US 31, with emphasis placed on residential, with retail or office as a supporting use.

Sub Area 2: This sub-area is entirely residential in nature. Strategy efforts emphasize the goal of rehabilitating and sustaining this area. From a market standpoint, homes in the area remain affordable, but are generally smaller and lack some modern conveniences. Proximity to Metra remains a key advantage, enhanced by improved access. As a result (and over time), we would expect there to be gradual pressure for housing teardown and replacement as well. Pressure for this can be offset by renovation programs (including sustainability measures), as well as clear standards for new construction in these areas. De-converting existing single family homes from multi-family status back to single-family status is a relevant goal.

Sub Area 3: Noted improvements to this area include the realignment of UP and Metra tracks, which will improve access into residential areas west of the train station, and create opportunities for parking enhancement and trail access.

Sub Area 4: This subarea includes a mix of both older and newer residential units, as well as parking facilities for the Grand Victoria Casino. As with sub areas 1 and 2, goals for this area allow for selected redevelopment of parcels, consistent with the character of adjacent use. From a market standpoint, we would expect to see the emergence of mixed use development along National Street east of the Fox River, offset by lower densities in adjacent neighborhoods. While the owners of the Grand Victoria Casino have made no public comments about their plans for this casino, we would assume that over time, they would be contemplating an array of land based facilities to support the casino.

Sub Area 5: This sub-area incorporates what we believe is the key redevelopment opportunity in the National Street Plan, focusing on the redevelopment of Clock Tower Plaza in a mixed use framework, allowing for either rental apartments or condominiums. Retail would be supporting in nature, anchored by the presence of grocery, as well as restaurants and services. As redevelopment of this site will be expensive, greater densities may be needed to offset development costs.

Sub Area 6: Goals for this subarea reflect the need to both sustain older historic homes along Upper Wellington, while also targeting acquisition of homes along Lower Wellington to create an expanded park and openspace along the river. This acquisition would need to be undertaken as part of a long term strategy.

Market Overview

Market Overview

In general, the National Street Planning Area has the potential to improve accessibility and provide new amenities. While current market conditions necessitate a longer redevelopment horizon, creating stronger and easier connections between transit options and considering redevelopment opportunities could enhance the value of the study area and improve ridership of transit options.

While the waterfront is considered a valuable amenity, topographical issues of the planning area along with the location of the Metra station right along the waterfront requires careful consideration in order to identify redevelopment options. The design of vehicular and pedestrian access as well as new parking options will all factor into the potential to successfully integrate new development into the fabric of the existing neighborhoods.

The Clock Tower Plaza is currently the only larger-scale retail development in the study area. This existing neighborhood retail center presents an opportunity for re-development in the area based on its location and land area. The center has seen a recent increase in vacancy and it is important that it be stabilized and revitalized in the future. Anchored by a successful supermarket that serves to the local neighborhoods, much of the center is additionally occupied by bargain retail. Avoiding increasing vacancies, upgrading and modernizing the appearance and condition in the near-term, with the potential for incremental redevelopment and increased density in the long-run is a recommended strategy. The creation of greater density on the site in the long-run helps to offset redevelopment costs and improve financial feasibility of such options. Opportunities to reconnect the larger land parcel into the surrounding neighborhood street network, is also recommended to create improved access benefitting the neighborhood and the retail businesses.

Downtown Elgin has seen several projects come online or proposed, such as River Park Place, Fountain Square, and Water Street Place. These recent condominium and townhome projects have been targeted at largely luxury and high-end markets, in the context of a surrounding community that is generally comprised primarily of moderate income households. While the fruition of these projects has been delayed by the broader economic environment, they are generally a step in the right direction. Future development should continue

to build on the current market strengths that these developments were based on – establishing a vibrant downtown and market place, continuing phases of development, and offering new housing options in the city center.

Ultimately, development and redevelopment within the area of the National Street Metra station to accommodate a cohesive package of mixed uses in a walkable neighborhood can help maximize the land from a land value perspective as well as from the perspective of continuing to maximize one of Elgin's greatest unique assets: the riverfront. The focus on establishing stronger green corridors or parks on either side of the river in the plan not only creates a valuable public amenity, it also can improve the quality of the neighborhood as well as strengthen property values in the neighborhood. Various studies have shown that homes located directly adjacent to neighborhood and community parks can achieve premiums in value.

The flexibility within the plan for multi-family residential development allows developers and the City to respond to changing market conditions as the greater planning area evolves. Consecutively, careful consideration within identified sub-areas to preserve single family housing can help to maintain the historic character of the area.

Additionally, creating connections to the National Street train station would make walking distance to the passenger rail platforms shorter, increasing the opportunity for people to walk to the station rather than use other means, as well as generally provide access to residents who may otherwise have disregarded the use of the Metra station because of its current perceived inconvenience. In opening up safe access to neighborhoods on either side of the river to the station, this also has the potential to make these neighborhoods more desirable in which to live and work, again creating an opportunity to strengthen property values in the larger neighborhood. It also contributes to synergy for mixed-use/higher density redevelopment to occur for properties like the Clock Tower Plaza site identified in the plan.

Demographic Considerations

Demographic Considerations

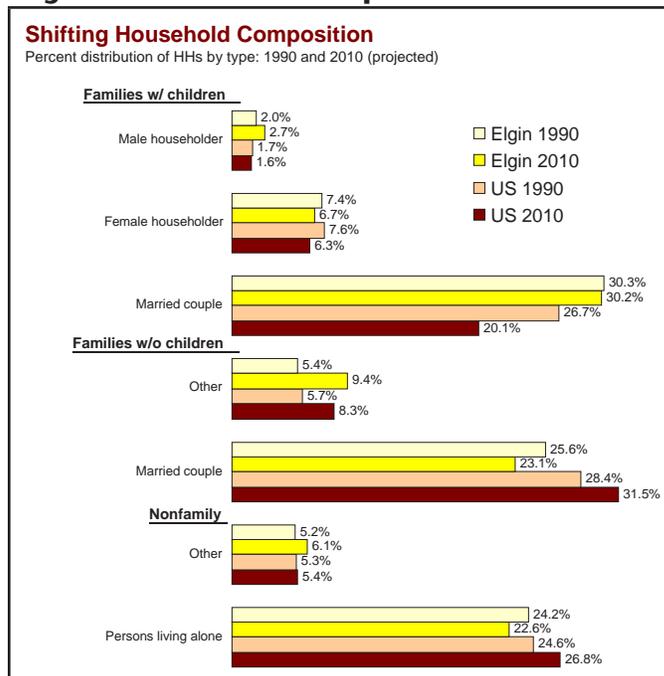
The demographic characteristics of households are closely related to lifestyle choices: residence location, housing type, community amenities, etc. The following section overviews demographic trends impacting the city of Elgin, surrounding communities, and the country as a whole. Long-term population and household growth projections by CMAP estimate that the City of Elgin is projected to grow by 26,199 households, nearly doubling in size, between 2000 and 2030. This means that downtown Elgin could accommodate an additional 1,500 housing units by 2030, to remain at roughly 5.5 percent of total city-wide population.

	2000	2030	Net Increase
Downtown Elgin			
Population	6,291	11,418	5,127
Households	1,729	3,252	1,523
Average Household Size	3.66	3.51	-
Elgin			
Population	94,487	167,375	72,888
Households	31,543	57,743	26,199
Average Household Size	2.93	2.90	2.78
Kane County			
Population	404,119	718,464	314,345
Households	133,901	244,247	110,346
Average Household Size	2.97	2.94	-

Source: US Census; CMAP; ERA|AECOM

While the traditional two-parent two child household is declining nationally, the distribution of married households with children by 2010 is expected to remain fairly stable in Elgin (see chart below), indicating the city's relative appeal and affordability to raise a family. Across the country, the share of households with two parents and children has declined considerably from a high of about 50 percent of households in 1950, to 27 percent projected by in 2020. Elgin is projected to experience similar growth in non-family households which would include households of unmarried, unrelated individuals, a trend which would drive demand for apartments, rental properties and smaller sized housing units.

Figure 1: Household Composition



Source: US Census

Demographic Considerations

Study Area Demographics

Approximately 20 percent of the population of downtown Elgin lives within one-quarter mile of the National Street train station with a total of 7,600 residents within a one-half mile radius. Population growth is projected to be relatively slow, with an annual growth rate of well less than 1.5 percent in the same area, although slightly above the average for the city.

	2000	2008	2013	CAGR 1/
Less than 1/4 Mile	1,379	1,498	1,588	1.09%
1/4 to 1/2 Mile	5,580	6,063	6,517	1.20%
Zero to 1/2 Mile	6,959	7,561	8,105	1.18%
City of Elgin	94,487	101,335	108,285	1.05%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

Similarly, the number of households in a one-half mile radius reflects the same pattern. However, the growth rate in the number of households is less than that of the overall population, in all instances growing at less than one percent per year.

	2000	2008	2013	CAGR 1/
Less than 1/4 Mile	463	481	506	0.69%
1/4 to 1/2 Mile	1,761	1,854	1,990	0.94%
Zero to 1/2 Mile	2,224	2,335	2,496	0.89%
City of Elgin	31,543	33,344	35,593	0.93%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

Since the 2000 Census, the average household size in the study area, as well as in the City of Elgin, has increased – a trend that is projected to continue through 2013. The growth rate in the study area has even exceeded that of the city with the projected growth rate of household size in a one-quarter mile area of nearly one-half percent.

	2000	2008	2013	CAGR 1/
Less than 1/4 Mile	2.98	3.11	3.14	0.40%
1/4 to 1/2 Mile	3.10	3.21	3.22	0.29%
Zero to 1/2 Mile	3.07	3.19	3.20	0.32%
City of Elgin	2.93	2.98	2.99	0.16%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

The area is approximately one-half minority population with close to two-thirds of the population comprised of Hispanic origin within a one-half mile radius of the National Street station. The percentage of minorities is projected to reach over half of the total by 2013, with 73 percent of the population being comprised of those of Hispanic origin. In comparison to the city as a whole, Elgin is comprised of approximately 36 percent minorities and 45 percent of which is of Hispanic descent. In both cases the population of Hispanics is projected to grow at an annual rate of 2.6 percent and 3.3 percent for the half-mile area and the city respectively.

1/2 Mile Radius				
	2000	2008	2013	CAGR 1/
White	58.9%	51.4%	48.1%	-1.55%
Black	9.1%	8.9%	8.5%	-0.52%
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	1.19%
Asian or Pacific Islander	2.1%	1.9%	1.7%	-1.61%
Other	26.4%	33.9%	37.8%	2.80%
Two or More Races	3.0%	3.2%	3.2%	0.50%
Hispanic Origin	52.3%	66.6%	73.3%	2.63%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

	2000	2008	2013	CAGR 1/
White	71.2%	63.9%	59.9%	-1.32%
Black	6.4%	7.2%	7.4%	1.12%
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.00%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.0%	4.4%	4.7%	1.25%
Other	15.2%	20.6%	23.8%	3.51%
Two or More Races	2.9%	3.5%	3.8%	2.10%
Hispanic Origin	33.7%	45.1%	51.6%	3.33%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

Demographic Considerations

Household income levels within a half-mile radius of the National Street Station are significantly lower than those of the City of Elgin as a whole. This disparity is even greater in the population under one-quarter mile from the station – average household income is only 70 percent of the citywide average and median income is only 63 percent of the citywide median. This gap is only projected to close marginally over the next five years.

Average Household Income				
	2000	2008	2012	CAGR 1/
Less than 1/4 Mile	\$49,977	\$54,841	\$66,839	2.26%
1/4 to 1/2 Mile	\$51,039	\$60,067	\$73,453	2.84%
Zero to 1/2 Mile	\$50,822	\$58,939	\$72,113	2.73%
City of Elgin	\$64,032	\$78,034	\$94,519	3.04%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

Median Household Income				
	2000	2008	2012	CAGR 1/
Less than 1/4 Mile	\$35,517	\$41,410	\$49,562	2.60%
1/4 to 1/2 Mile	\$41,025	\$51,139	\$62,371	3.27%
Zero to 1/2 Mile	\$39,863	\$49,125	\$60,902	3.31%
City of Elgin	\$53,211	\$65,969	\$78,227	3.01%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

While there are indications that the population within one-half mile and throughout the City of Elgin is aging, a trend seen across the United States, the majority of the population in the half-mile range of National Street Station is younger than the city as a whole. The percentage of the population under the age of 24 in the half-mile range is 44 percent versus 39 percent of the city and with 18 percent between the ages of 25 to 34 versus 16 percent for the greater city.

	1/2 Mile			City of Elgin		
	2000	2008	2013	2000	2008	2013
Under 15	27.3%	27.5%	26.5%	24.6%	24.6%	24.2%
15 to 24	17.6%	16.5%	17.4%	14.8%	14.0%	14.4%
25 to 34	19.1%	18.0%	16.1%	17.4%	15.7%	14.5%
35 to 44	14.2%	14.1%	13.4%	16.0%	15.2%	14.2%
45 to 64	14.4%	17.1%	19.0%	18.7%	21.9%	23.2%
Over 65	7.4%	6.6%	7.5%	8.6%	8.9%	9.4%

Source: ESRI, Inc. 2008 Estimates and Projections; U.S. Census Bureau
1/ CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate

Household Characteristics Comparison

In addition to factors such as age, income, education and family status, Tapestry Segmentation provides an insight into the potential demand for housing by dividing households into groups based on age cohort, income bracket, education level, spending habit and many other factors. Segments can then be identified as being more likely to choose a downtown living location or similar type of higher-density housing. Households in Elgin were compared with those in comparable cities around Metra stations: Arlington Heights, Elmhurst, Palatine, and Evanston. Four groups, Principle Urban Centers I, Principle Urban Centers II, Metro Cities I, and Metro Cities II (descriptions follow) are indicative of households that typically prefer densely populated metro areas.

Principal Urban Centers I

Residents share a lifestyle that favors apartments to single-family homes and public transportation to cars. High population density personifies city life with its attendant inconveniences such as high rents and higher mortgage payments and opportunities such as high-paying jobs. Households are younger and likely to be singles as married couples. Professional employment and diversity are typical.

Principal Urban Centers II

This is the youngest (median age of 28.3 years) and most diverse population among the Urbanization groups. The search for affordable housing has moved these residents away from high-rises and into row houses, duplexes, and relatively lower-density buildings. They are more likely to use public transportation and less likely to own their homes. Families are also more common in this group.

Metro Cities I

Upscale homeowners living in densely populated cities characterize the eight segments in Metro Cities I. Their distinction lies in the single-family homes in metropolitan cities. They embrace city living with the benefits of suburban single-family homes. Most householders are older than 35 years. Nearly 60 percent of the households are married couples, both with and without children.

Demographic Considerations

Metro Cities II

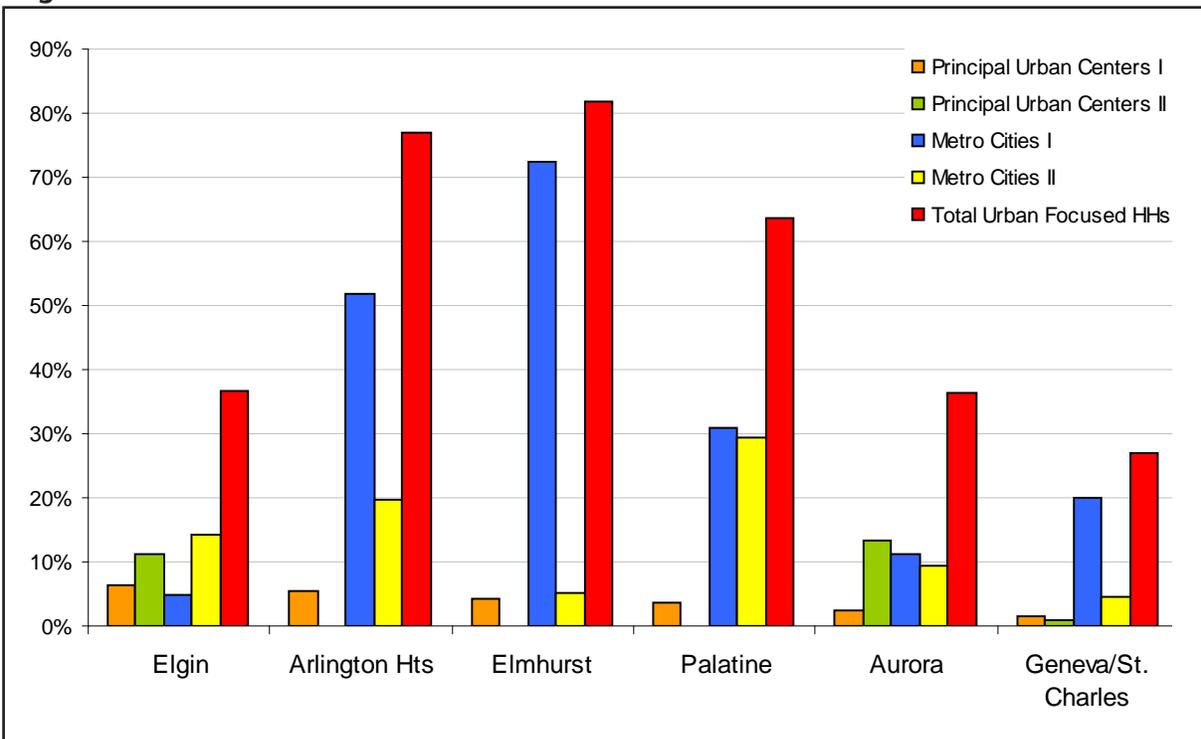
The eight markets in Metro Cities II are neighborhoods in transition including young, starter households; retirees; single-person households; and families. Most householders rent in multiunit buildings. The young population remains mobile. Many are enrolled in college; most are still trying different jobs. Household wealth varies from less than \$15,000 (Dorms to Diplomas) to \$172,000 (Retirement Communities), reflecting the wide range of age and lifecycle in Metro Cities II.

The following tapestry segmentation demonstrates the socio-geographic differences between the comparison cities and Elgin. A comparison of percent of households within these four urbanization groups indicates that 35-40% percent of Elgin’s households currently share characteristics associated with urban living, while about 75% percent of households in Arlington Heights and 80% percent of households in Elmhurst share these characteristics. The most significant gap between Elgin and comparable cities is observed in the “Metro Cities II” grouping of households. While Elgin’s households in this group comprise 4.9 percent of all households,

Arlington Heights (51.2 percent), Elmhurst (72.3 percent), and Palatine (31 percent) have far greater proportions of households in this category. The analysis indicates that Elgin has a greater concentration of households in the urbanization groups of “Principle Urban Centers I” and “Principle Urban Centers II” than Arlington Heights, Elmhurst, and Palatine. See the Appendix for details.

This analysis highlights two points about Elgin. First, in practical terms Elgin does have a smaller share of households that typically seek out urban housing compared to the benchmark communities. At the same time, our research shows that across the Midwest, urban housing remains a niche market, representing between 1% and 5% of total regional housing inventory. Notably for Elgin, downtown inventory currently represents about 3% of total citywide inventory, about 300 units. From this perspective, we believe that the key question moving forward for downtown and National street is less about the market opportunity and more about the pricing for units, and the need to balance residential offerings that are rental as well as owner occupied.

Figure 2: Shares of Urban Focused Households



Source: Standard & Poors

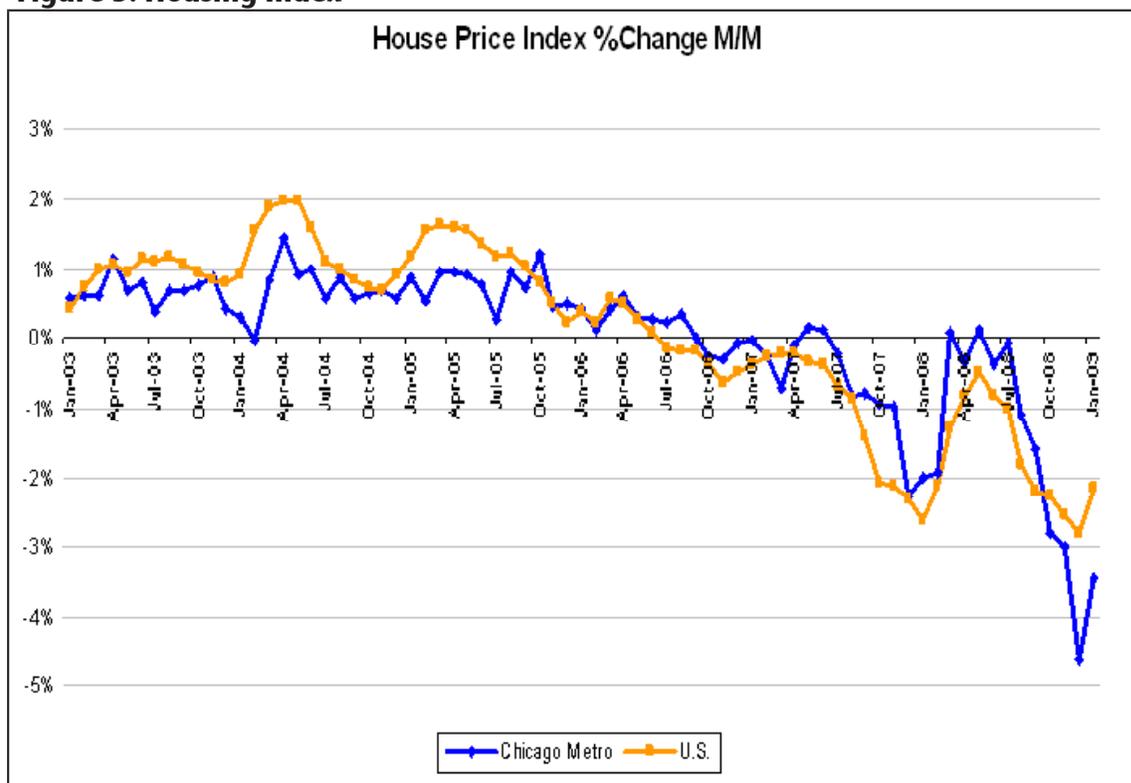
Housing Market Perspectives

Housing Market Perspectives

The national and regional economy has suffered significantly as a result of the current economic recession. Housing prices in the Metropolitan Chicago Area have fallen back to 2003 / 2004 levels in many cases. However, home prices have decreased at a slower rate in the Chicago area as compared to the nation, which suggests that the Chicago area avoided the worst of the national housing bubble, though it has not been by no means completely avoided.

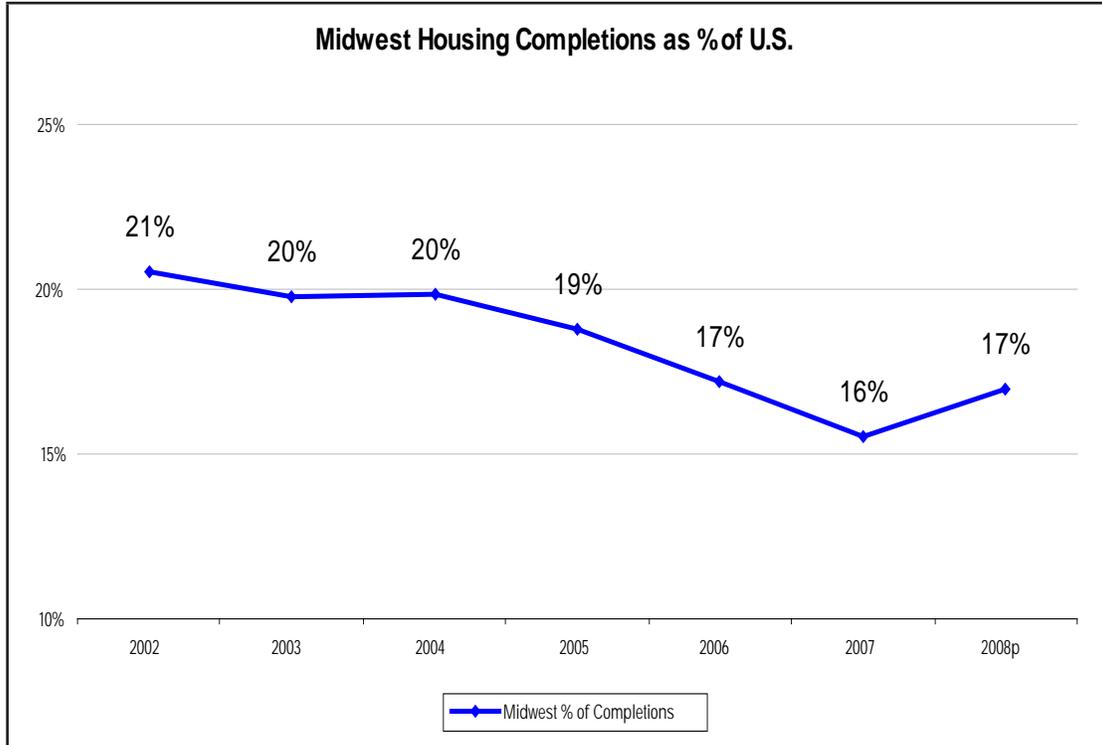
Although overall Midwestern housing completions for 2008 (139,000 units) remain well below 2002 levels (272,000 completions), completion rates have been relatively consistent for 2008, suggesting that a market correction is underway. Notably, the Midwest share of national housing unit completions has actually slightly increased since 2007 from 15.5% to 17% of total national completions, which shows improvement. (see chart on next page)

Figure 3: Housing Index



Source: Standard & Poors

Figure 4: Midwestern Completions

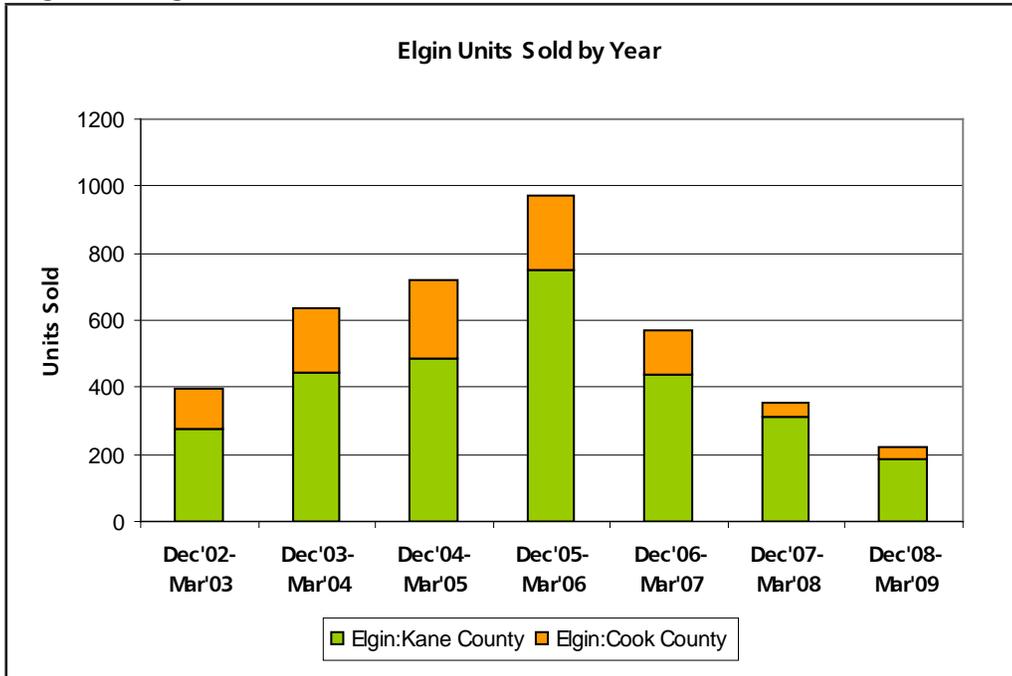


Source: Standard & Poors

Residential sales figures for Elgin reveal the impact of the housing bubble on the city's residential market. Housing sales in Elgin peaked during the period between December 2005 and March 2006 with a combined 971 units sold, the majority of which (77%) were in Kane County. During the period between December 2008 and March 2009, total housing sales had declined from their peak by 76% to just 225 units. As a percent decline, sales were off more dramatically on the Cook County side of Elgin (-83%) as they were in Kane County (-75%).

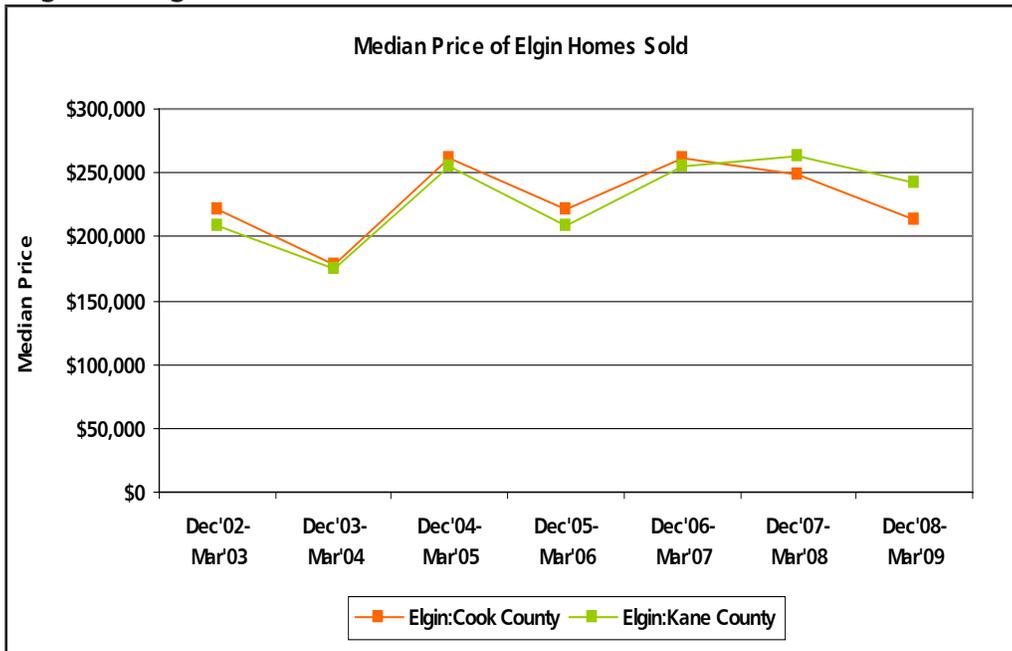
The impact of declining residential sales is evident in the median price of an Elgin home. Prices on the Kane County side of Elgin peaked just after the housing bubble between December 2007 and March 2008, with a median value of \$262,500. The market peak on the Cook County side of Elgin was more consistent with national trends, peaking between December 2006 and March 2007 at \$261,000. Since prices peaked, the decline in median price has been more dramatic in Cook County, where prices have declined by 18%. This is in comparison to a decline of 7.6% in Kane County.

Figure 5: Elgin Home Sales



Source: Chicago Tribune; Record Information Services

Figure 6: Elgin Home Sales Median Price



Source: Chicago Tribune; Record Information Service

Housing Market Perspectives

Housing Market Implications

The housing market across metropolitan Chicago has experienced a precipitous decline over the past several, and Elgin is no exception. Across Elgin, home sales prices continued to decrease through the fall of 2009. Values peaked in 2006 at about \$313,000, and have fallen significantly, to a 3rd quarter 2009 level of about \$192,000. The decrease reflects a core reality, which is that growth in valuation from 2001 through 2006 was dependent on construction of higher value residential units mostly across suburban areas of Elgin, construction of which ceased by 2007. The analysis indicates that overall home values have corrected back to levels last seen in 2002. The apparent good news is that home values across the Chicago Metropolitan Area seemed to have finally hit bottom during the 2nd quarter of 2009, and have started to stabilize and improve. From this perspective, it would appear that home value improvement in Elgin is lagging behind metro area trends.

While Elgin's downtown in particular had some momentum in the construction of higher value ownership units prior to the economic downturn, the return of the housing market will likely be incremental and modest. Housing market opportunities at regional and local levels (including National Street) will be limited through 2010 and 2011, primarily because housing values remain uncertain; as well, several key projects will need to go through "workout strategies", where by owners and lenders come to agreement on asset value and repayment plans on existing loans. Once values stabilize and begin to grow over the next 12 to 18 months, the path forward will clarify, and support for new construction will gradually emerge. It would appear that this process is beginning to happen, with permits for new construction in Elgin beginning to flow, albeit at a much slower pace compared to 2006. The neighborhood area in which the National Street Metra station resides is a dynamic neighborhood with a variety of household types accommodated within existing housing product. It will be important to further assess all housing market opportunities for site-specific options in order to maximize the residential development and redevelopment potential within the area. This includes not only ownership units but rental units (a more likely residential development option in shorter term) and opportunities to successfully and feasibly incorporate both market rate and non-market rate housing options.

Through 2010, we expect that new residential development will continue to be frustrated from a demand standpoint. Looking beyond the next 6-12 months, the neighborhood surrounding the National Street Metra station will continue to be a dynamic area, with a variety of generally affordable, but older housing types, but with clear opportunities for targeted renovation and infill development. Opportunities over the short to mid-term will link with an acknowledgment that boomer retirements will likely accelerate in coming years, raising interest in housing opportunities which are more walkable, affordable, and connected to alternative transportation options. Existing connections to recreational trails and amenities along the Fox River, as well as connections to the downtown and casino will also be supportive. While housing development options will vary based on specific site conditions, the following framework should be considered:

- » Ongoing efforts to encourage renovations of older homes and de-convert them back to single family status, with a specific focus on energy efficiency, on both sides of the Fox River.
- » Consideration of higher density mixed-use development on the Butera site, while sustaining a grocery store and supporting street level retail. Residential options should include apartments and condominiums.
- » Consideration of mixed use development at key nodes west of the Fox River, particularly at National Street and US 31.

Housing Market Perspectives

Retail Market Perspective

The retail options within a one-mile radius of the Elgin National Street Station are relatively sparse. There are a total of 22 retail properties within one mile of the National Street planning area. Most of the properties are older structures, built prior to 1990. The only significant development in recent times is the nearly 12,000-square-foot Premier Center, built in 2005 and the 5,000 square feet of retail completed as part of Phase I of Fountain Square at around the same time.

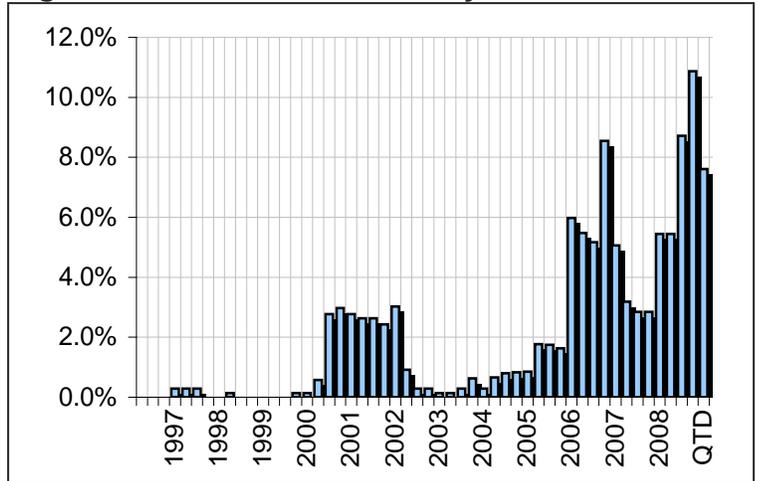
Like many smaller downtowns throughout the United States, the downtown retail market in Elgin had largely come under increased pressure by the mid 1980's, with the advent of the car and the suburban mall. Even so, the retail market within one mile of the National Street Station is still over 360,000 square feet, with the most recent additions to inventory coming in 2005. This level of total inventory is significant, particularly when supported by destination anchors such as the casino and Hemmens Performing Arts Center.

Prior to the second quarter of 2006, the overall occupancies remained fairly stable with nearly no vacancies. Since then, vacancies spiked to a high of 8.5 percent at the beginning of 2007 only to fall back to historic levels shortly thereafter. Vacancy rates again spiked with the current economic downturn to a high of almost 11 percent and 27,500 square feet, or 7.6 percent, remain on the market today.

It is important to note that of the 27,500 square feet of available space in the surveyed market, 26,000 square feet is reportedly in Clock Tower Plaza, directly across the river from the National Street train station, which means that over 22 percent of the aging strip center is vacant. While anchored by a reportedly successful Butera Finer Foods supermarket and Family Dollar, it points to an underlying weakness in the 116,000-square-foot center, possibly that grocery store traffic / sales are insufficient to sustain adjacent in-line stores.

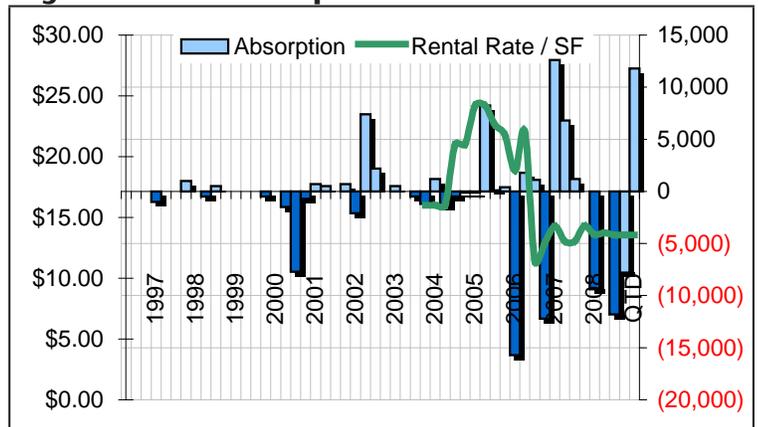
Likewise, both absorption and average rental rates have fluctuated, with rates reaching a high of nearly \$22.00 per square foot in 2006. Rates have since stabilized at an average of \$13.56 per square foot.

Figure 7: Historical Retail Vacancy



Source: Costar

Figure 8: Retail Absorption vs. Rental Rate



Source: Costar

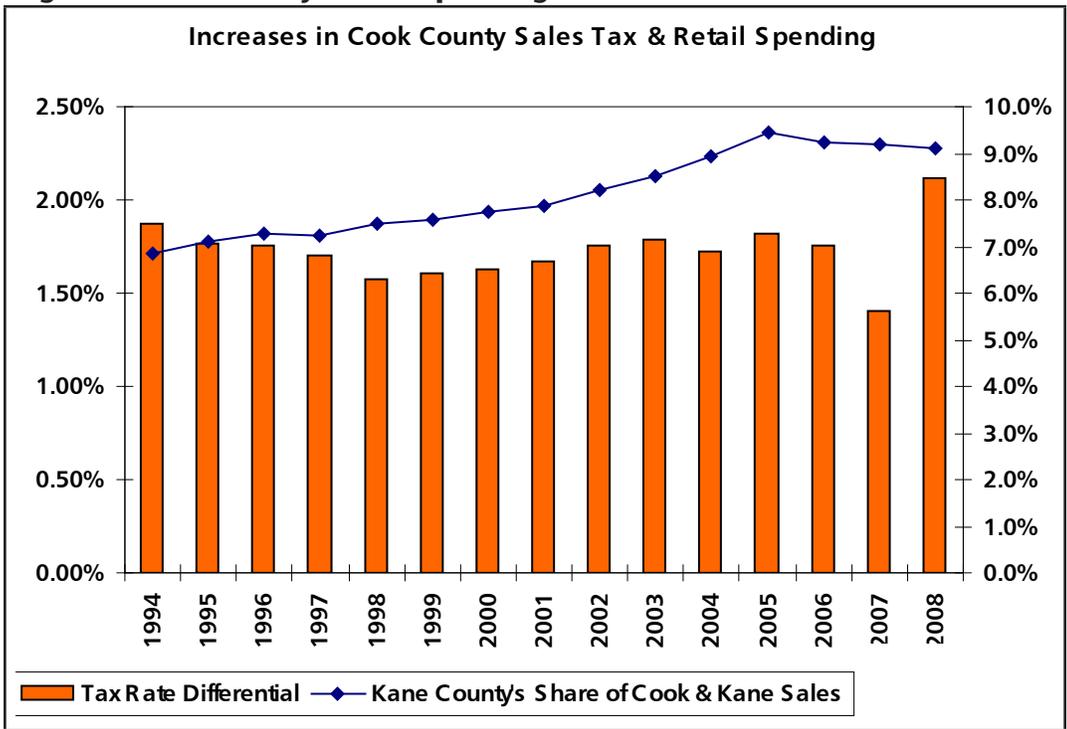
Housing Market Perspectives

Sales Tax Considerations

An interesting retail implication for the Elgin area is that the sales tax rate differential between Cook County and Kane County is the highest since 1994, fed by increases in the sales tax rates for the RTA and Cook County. Based on a weighted average (tied to sales by municipality), the 2008 sales tax rate in Cook County was 9.93%, compared to 7.81% in Kane County. Data suggests that this imbalance has driven retail sales over the Cook County line into Kane County, particularly between 1998 and 2005, as evidenced by the positive relationship between increases in the sales tax differential and increases in Kane County's share of Cook & Kane retail sales.

Discussion of sales tax differentials is important because it provides a permanent incentive for retailers to opt for sites in Kane County, which includes sites in the National Street train station area.

Figure 9: Cook County Tax vs. Spending



Source: In House Research

Housing Market Perspectives

Broader Trends

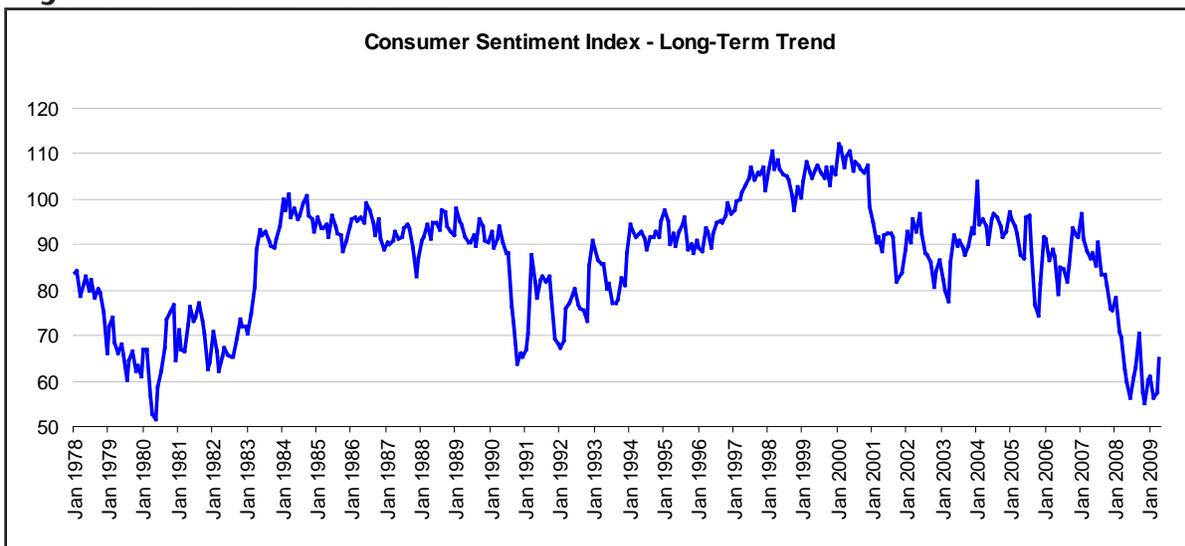
Since 2004, retail inventories across the Chicago area and across the United States have surged. Combined with a recent economic downturn, the retail market of late has been plagued by over supply, underperformance, liquidations and closings. Tight credits markets and declining sales have even led to a wave of bankruptcies among American retailers. Midsize chains such as Levitz and Sharper Image have filed for bankruptcy protection and larger chains such as Circuit City and Linen 'n Things have closed leaving thousands of storefronts empty. Others companies such as Office Depot, Lowe's, J.C. Penny, Ann Taylor and the jeweler Zales, have all announced that they are downsizing their operations. CoStar Group Inc. has estimated a net loss of 1,300 retail stores during 2008.

The worsening economy has brought with it increasing unemployment and a more cautious consumer. Discount retailers such as Wal-Mart, Dollar General, Family Dollar and other thrift stores have regained market share from their upscale competitors. Many full-services restaurants have also struggled as patrons turn to more price conscious fast-food and chain restaurant

options along with simply cooking meals at home. As the economic downturn continues to linger, retail sales may remain depressed. However, according to a report released by Grubb & Ellis, personal consumption rose in the first quarter of 2009 suggesting that rising consumer confidence is at least bottoming out, with the possibility of a rebound in 2010.

The increasing price of energy may play a role in future consumer spending patterns. The share of retail dollars spent on fuel has increased significantly in recent years. Between 1992 and 2003, sales at gasoline stations were fairly steady at approximately 11 percent of general retail sales but rose to reach 15.2 percent in 2008. Assuming that current trends hold, it is likely that fuel costs will eat into other retail sales and discretionary spending that may otherwise have been spent in the local area. We expect that over time, this trend will encourage development of transit oriented development projects.

Figure 10: Consumer Confidence



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

Retail Market Implications

The current economic environment has revealed several excesses that will take time to work through. Core lessons begin with the idea of building destinations that are fundamentally viable in the long run, rather than destinations that function only in the context of a precise short term financial context or short-lived development concept. As examples, we note the array of destination center retail projects that have been built across the region in recent history. While many of these projects seemed financially feasible at the time, they were conceived with specific, upscale tenants in mind in a market with unsustainable growth patterns - inexpensive construction with short-term expectations.

Thoughtful development strategies, combined with residential and commercial development should be used to help improve long-term functionality and success. Residential population growth, local employment growth, and local consumer spending habits should be carefully examined before moving forward with any new retail development. Effort should also be given to assist retail establishments that are already in place to maintain their near-term viability. Specific considerations include:

- » Consideration of higher density mixed use development on the Butera site, with a tenant mix that includes restaurants, as well as grocery and service businesses. Success of this project would be tied to the strength of the anchors (Butera) and the density of residential activity.
- » Broader retail market opportunities for the study area and downtown as a whole build from current streetscape improvements. Moving forward, we would advocate for the creation of a full time “downtown coordinator”, not dissimilar to the role played by Main Street organizations. While volunteers can assist, a full time coordinator would be well positioned to manage relationships between building owners and tenants, and actively recruit new tenants. The premise behind this approach is basic. At 360,000 square feet, downtown Elgin is about the same size as a large community anchored shopping center, or a small regional center. However, while these destination retail centers are under single ownership, property ownership in downtown Elgin is fragmented, making it more difficult to stitch together a cohesive package of tenants. A coordinator would be expected to address this challenge unique to downtown markets larger and smaller than Elgin.

- » The Hemmens theater program remains a crucial anchor for downtown activity, principally restaurants and bars. Research conducted for Hemmens confirmed that the venue draws considerable non-local visitation to downtown, including residents from affluent areas in the north and northwest suburbs. Efforts to renovate / reposition this venue will have implications for the performance of downtown merchants, restaurants specifically.
- » Discussions with the Casino operator to understand opportunities for their program. While current state level taxes in place on casinos have discouraged reinvestment, within 20 years we expect a majority of casinos will be land based, and supported by a greater array of supporting amenities, such as hotels and restaurants. While we have zero indications that the current operator is contemplating these kinds of changes, the long-term trend appears to favor land-based operations.

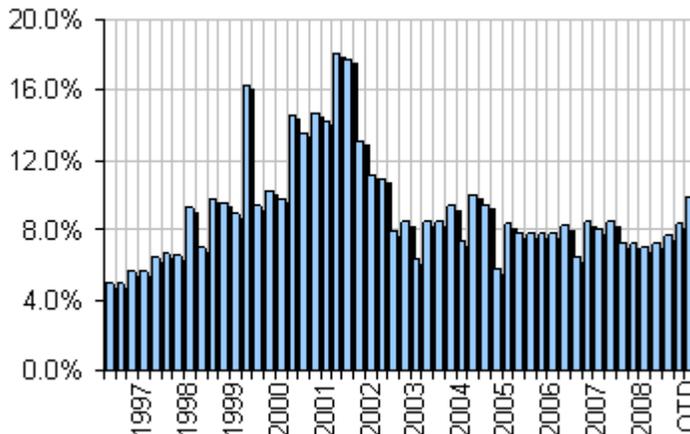
Office Market Trends

Office Market Trends

The office market within one mile of National Street Station includes 22 properties to provide a representation of the study area. Of the properties surveyed in the Elgin market, 9 are Class B and 13 Class C office buildings ranging from 2,400 to over 65,000 square feet in total leasable area. As is typical with many structures in the Elgin market, there has been no major office construction since the mid-1980's, with properties dating back as far as the mid-19th Century. The majority of the buildings have been renovated as recently as 2005, but without development of any new properties, the market is still lacking in Class A office space.

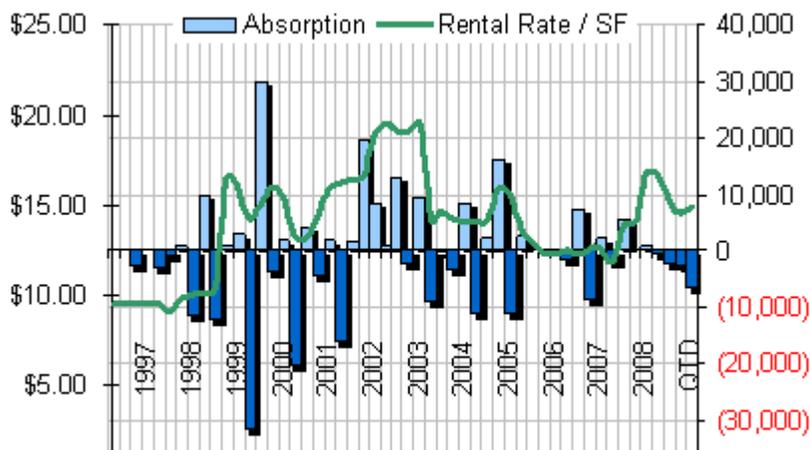
The total rentable building area in the market has been steady at nearly 430,000 square feet since 1996, with no inventory additions, construction or demolition of major office buildings. Vacancies have fallen from their 18 percent high in the third quarter of 2001 but began to rise again starting in the second quarter of 2008 to reach 9.1 percent by the second quarter of 2009. Overall absorption has fluctuated, seeing some stabilization coinciding with stabilization in average rental rates through the middle of 2007. The average rental rate per square foot spiked to a recent high of \$16.57 toward the end of 2008 but has since fallen to an average of \$14.98 per square foot, mirroring recent vacancies that have arisen.

Figure 11: Historical Office Vacancy



Source: Costar

Figure 12: Office Absorption vs. Rental Rate



Source: Costar

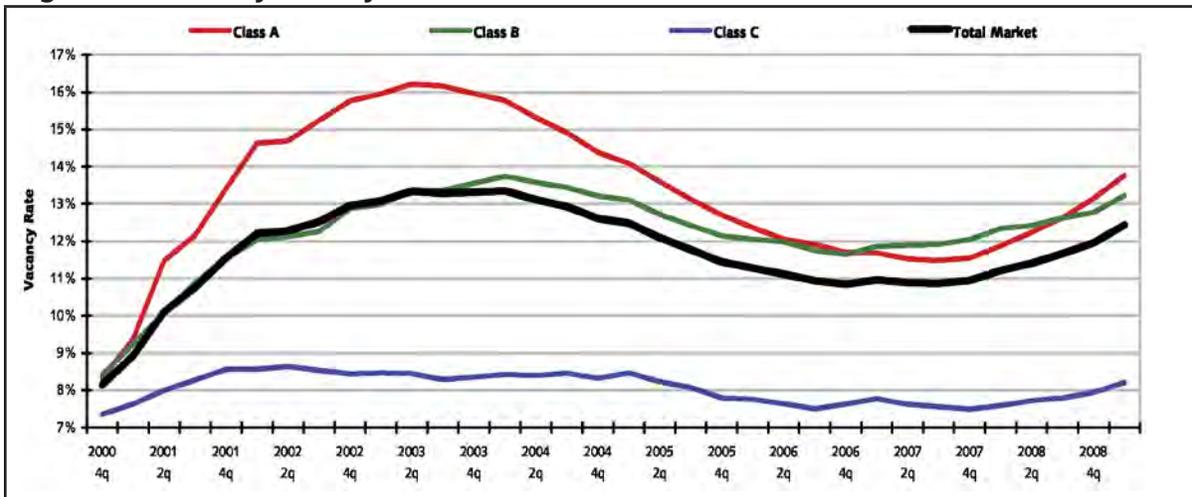
Office Market Trends

Broader Trends

The office market in the United States has seen increasing vacancies along with the economic decline, and the Chicago area has not been immune. Overall vacancies reached an average of 12 percent nationwide in the first quarter of 2009 with tens of millions of square feet of available. To exacerbate the problem, many buildings were started before the collapse of the real estate market meaning that an already strained market will continue to see increasing vacancies in the near-term. In the Chicago market alone, there is nearly an additional 2 million square feet of new office capacity under construction.

Bankruptcies of major companies such as Washington Mutual, Lehman Brothers, and Bear Stearns have left large blocks of unoccupied office space in major urban markets. As a result, not only have vacancies soared, but average rental rates have fallen considerably as well. Class A office space has been hit the hardest as many top echelon companies downsize with Class B following closely behind. Notably, Class C office space has fared the best with vacancies hovering around its 8 percent long-term average.

Figure 13: Vacancy Rate by Class

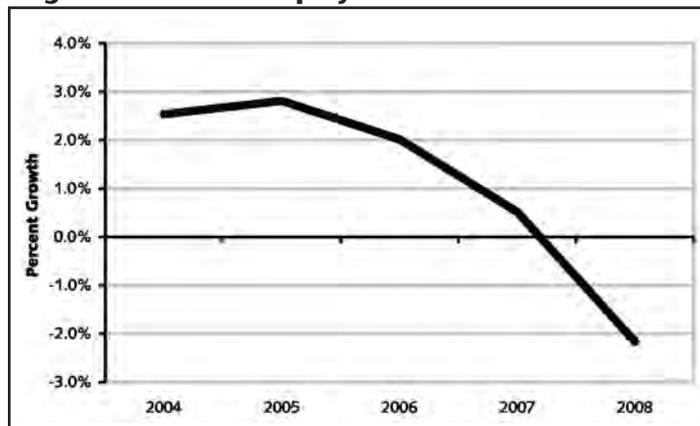


Source: Costar

Office Market Trends

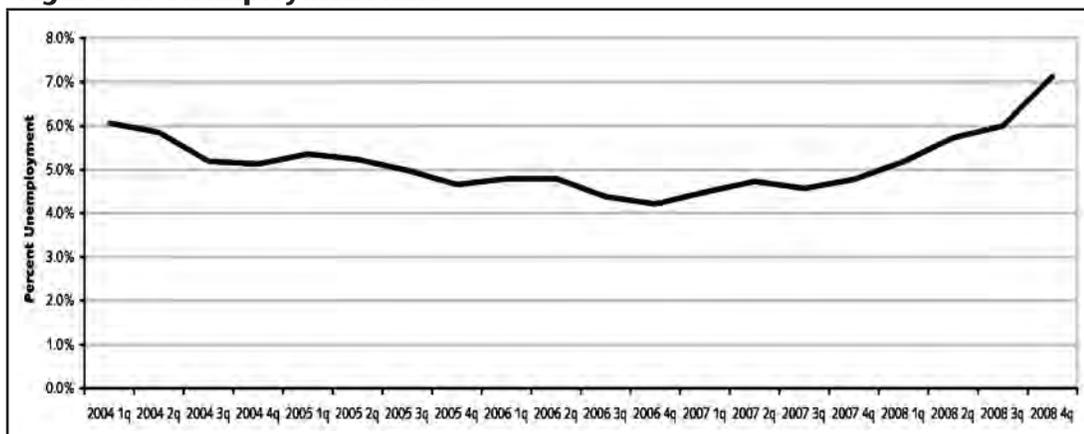
Future growth in the office sector will be determined by overall growth in employment and more specifically, growth in office jobs. However, BLS statistics show that office sector employment has steadily declined since 2005. Overall unemployment reached over 7 percent nation-wide at the end of 2008, with rates expected to spike as high as 10 to 11 percent in some submarkets.

Figure 14: Office Employment Growth



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 15: Unemployment Rate



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Implications

At a regional level, the slow pace of recovery from the recession will dampen near-term office market opportunities. Although the office market entered the recession in arguably better shape compared to other real estate sectors, the duration of the recession, as well as current challenges with distressed real estate and sluggish employment growth, suggest that recovery will be slow.

For the National Street train station study area, office market opportunities will remain limited to supporting service activities, as well as professional services that can operate within existing building footprints; architecture, engineering, and medical services firms are likely examples. For the near term, downtown office vacancies have trended upward in the past several years,

creating a relevant inventory of space to be re-absorbed as economic conditions improve. Opportunities for larger scale office development are limited by the historic character of the downtown area, as well as the related reality of few vacant sites in the downtown area that are vacant and ready to support new development.

Looking to the future, the National Street train station plan includes discussion of infill sites where larger office buildings could be developed, either stand-alone or as part of mixed use development, on parcels such as the Butera site. We anticipate that, over time, the TOD element will add value to this area for supporting office development, to the extent that employees can use Metra as opposed to driving to work.

Area Development Case Studies

Marketed as the “City in the Suburbs,” Elgin offers residents, among other amenities, two Metra stations, a symphony orchestra, the Hemmens Cultural Center, the Elgin Art Showcase, the Grand Victoria Casino, the new public library, a bike path and several historic districts in or near its downtown. Adopted in 2000, the Elgin Riverfront / Center City Master plan has been a guide for over \$250 million in investment over the past 10 years. The Centre of Elgin recreational facility, built in 2002, represents a \$37-million investment and the City continues to use its TIF district to fund additional infrastructure and streetscape improvements. Another such recently completed project, the \$11.5-million Festival Park, is adjacent to the National Street Station Planning Area.

The planning area includes several single-family low to moderate income residential neighborhoods, including a historic district, new development like the townhomes at River Park Place, and modest retail development (including the Clock Tower Plaza strip retail center, located across the river from the National Street Metra station).

Several new housing developments have already been started around Festival Park and along the Fox River in downtown with as many as 20 acres of riverfront property available for future development. Multiple redevelopment opportunities still exist throughout the East Side / Center City area, part of the National Street Station study area.

Area Development Case Studies

River Park Place

122 S. Grove St.
 Elgin, Illinois 60120
 847.608.8600
<http://www.riverparkplacehomes.com>



The recently completed Phase I of River Park Place is part of the development initiative identified in the Riverfront / Center City Master Plan, which calls for development of upscale residential projects to enhance the sales and property tax revenues in the downtown area.

River Park Place located at South Grove Avenue and Prairie Street, adjacent to Festival Park, will represent an estimated \$30-million investment once completed – the largest project since the development of the Grand Victoria Casino in 1994. It is a joint effort between Plote Construction Inc., Par Development, Inc. and REPCO that to includes 116 town homes in Phase I with an additional 60 condominium units and street-level retail space planned in a second phase.

The townhomes and condos have been targeted to appeal to a wide range of residents, those that would be interested in a walkable downtown community including regional transit trains, library, recreation center, and the Hemmens Cultural Center. On-site amenities for the two and three bedroom floor plans include private garages, courtyards, storage, balconies and optional rooftop decks.

Model Name	Bedrooms	Baths	Cars in Garage	Sq. Ft.
Augusta	2	2 1/2	2	1,875
Brookstone	2	2 1/2	2	1,970
Cornell	2	2 1/2	2	1,925
Dawson	2 or 3*	2-1/2 or 3-1/2*	2	1,900 or 2,400*

*optional 4th floor adds 500 sq. ft., 1 bedroom and 1 bath
 Source: River Park Place, LLC

Prices start for one bedroom condominium units start at \$240,000 and range over \$400,000 for the larger townhomes. Currently, only the townhome component of the development has been completed with 96 of the 116 units sold and 20 still available. Phase Two of the River Park Place development that features the 8-story, 60-unit, mid-rise condominium building is currently on hold until reaching a 60 percent presale lending requirement. While the initial pre-sales and condominium units under contract were strong, the slump in the housing market along with a constrained credit market has deterred continued sales and caused some buyers to relinquish their contracts.

Area Development Case Studies

Fountain Square

51 S. Grove Avenue
Elgin, Illinois 60120
847.931.9960
<http://fountainsq.com/>



Located to the north of National Street Station across the river from the Elgin Metra station in the central business district, Fountain Square on the River, located at 51 South Grove Street, is another prominent downtown housing development. Overlooking the Fox River, the eight-story, two tower project will offer one, two and three bedroom residences with more than 10,000 square-feet of retail space on the first floor. Developed by RSC & Associates through a public/private partnership with the City of Elgin, the project contains a total of 206 residential units, including 93 loft units, 97 traditional units, nine duplex units, seven townhouses and 392 parking spaces.

To date only Phase I of the project, which includes the 93 loft condominium units, has been completed. Prices begin at \$149,900 and range up to \$439,900 with 32 different one to three bedrooms options available. Marketed as luxury residences, amenities include granite countertops, hardwood floors, balconies and private heated underground parking. While 75 percent of the units were initially sold, many sales did not close due to the downturn of the real estate market leaving only 36 of the units currently occupied.

In order to increase occupancy, units are available for rent starting at \$1,100 per month. Rent includes gas, garbage, water, basic DirecTV, high speed internet, common area maintenance, liability, and parking. There are 26 units currently occupied by renters bringing the total occupancy of Phase I of the project up to nearly 67 percent. Phase II of the project is currently on hold given current economic conditions.

Area Development Case Studies

Water Street Place

RSC & Associates, in partnership with Ryan Companies, had proposed building an additional downtown condominium projected dubbed Water Street Place. Located at the north end of Center City at Kimball Street, on the site of the former Elgin Library, the \$53-million dollar project was proposed to offer 150 condominium units, 20,000 square feet of retail space and 350 parking spaces.

To help defer the costs, the City of Elgin offered to provide \$10.8 million in incentives using TIF financing to aid the project. However, with construction slated to begin in the spring of 2008, the project that included eight brownstone homes along Grove Avenue and pricing starting at \$450,000 has yet to get off the ground. This project remains in planning stages.

Rivers Landing Apartments

3 Times Square
Elgin, Illinois 60120
Phone: 866.751.7918

Located directly adjacent to the southwest corner of the Clock Tower Plaza shopping center is the Rivers Landing apartment complex. This five building, mid-rise complex contains a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units with rents ranging from \$589 to \$829. The complex is a gated community that includes parking, on-site laundry, heat, gas and water as part of its amenity package. The 214 units are also open to Section 8 subsidized housing, however it is estimated by the management that less than 10 percent of the units are currently HUD subsidized. Current occupancy is stated as being approximately 80 percent meaning that approximately 17 units are subsidized under federal housing programs.

The Housing Authority of Elgin, besides administering the HUD Section 8 voucher program, also manages 255 public housing units – a 150 unit complex for those aged 50 and above and seven other single family developments with a total of 155 units. 169 of those units are within one mile of the National Street Station. According to sources, the housing for older individuals is at maximum capacity with several availabilities in single family units.

Area Development Assessment

With an impressive offering of amenities for a small suburban city, Elgin is already well on the way to developing a burgeoning transit-oriented community. Current economic uncertainties have stalled several planned and proposed projects, and slowed the pace of revitalization. Once conditions improve over the next 24 months, we expect that projects will begin to move forward, although the structure of projects may change, possibly with greater emphasis on rentals rather than condominiums.

Addendum

Addendum

Table 8: Urbanization Groups by Percentage						
	Elgin	Arlington Heights	Elmhurst	Palatine	Aurora	Geneva / St. Charles
Principal Urban Centers I	6.3%	5.4%	4.2%	3.6%	2.5%	1.6%
08 Laptops and Lattes	-	-	-	-	-	-
11 Pacific Heights	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 City Lights	-	1.3%	4.2%	-	-	-
21 Urban Villages	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-
23 Trendsetters	-	-	-	-	-	1.6%
27 Metro Renters	-	4.1%	-	2.1%	-	-
35 International Marketplace	5.4%	-	-	1.5%	2.5%	-
44 Urban Melting Pot	-	-	-	-	-	-
Principal Urban Centers II	11.2%	-	-	-	13.3%	1.0%
45 City Strivers	-	-	-	-	-	-
47 Las Casas	7.9%	-	-	-	10.6%	-
54 Urban Rows	-	-	-	-	-	-
58 NeWest Residents	3.4%	-	-	-	2.1%	-
61 High Rise Renters	-	-	-	-	-	-
64 City Commons	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 Social Security Set	-	-	-	-	0.6%	-
Metro Cities I	4.9%	51.9%	72.3%	30.8%	11.2%	19.9%
01 Top Rung	-	-	-	-	-	-
03 Connoisseurs	-	2.6%	11.6%	3.0%	-	6.5%
05 Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	-	33.8%	26.2%	9.1%	-	1.3%
09 Urban Chic	-	-	-	-	-	1.2%
10 Pleasant-Ville	2.8%	4.7%	28.1%	4.3%	0.8%	5.0%
16 Enterprising Professionals	-	10.8%	-	11.9%	9.0%	1.1%
19 Milk and Cookies	2.1%	-	-	2.4%	1.4%	-
22 Metropolitans	-	-	6.5%	-	-	4.8%
Metro Cities II	14.2%	19.7%	5.2%	29.2%	9.4%	4.6%
28 Aspiring Young Families	7.5%	-	-	20.7%	4.0%	4.6%
30 Retirement Communities	4.2%	13.5%	5.2%	6.2%	-	-
34 Family Foundations	-	-	-	-	-	-
36 Old and Newcomers	-	1.9%	-	2.3%	4.6%	-
39 Young and Restless	-	4.3%	-	-	-	-
52 Inner City Tenants	2.5%	-	-	-	-	-
60 City Dimensions	-	-	-	-	0.9%	-
63 Dorms to Diplomas	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Urban Focused HHs	36.7%	77.0%	81.7%	63.6%	36.3%	27.0%

A Sample of definitions for these groups follows.

Addendum

Segment 01: Top Rung

Top Rung is the wealthiest consumer market, representing less than one percent of all U.S. households. The median household income of \$185,415 is three and one-half times that of the national median, and the median net worth of \$614,206 is more than five times that of the national level. The median home value is approximately \$1,078,501. These educated residents are in their peak earning years, 45–64, in married-couple households, with or without children. The median age is 41.9 years. With the purchasing power to indulge any choice, Top Rung residents travel in style, both domestically and overseas. This is the top market for owning or leasing a luxury car; residents favor new imported vehicles, especially convertibles. Avid readers, these residents find time to read two or more daily newspapers and countless books.

Segment 04: Boomburbs

The newest additions to the suburbs, Boomburbs communities are home to younger families who live a busy, upscale lifestyle. The median age is 33.8 years. This market has the highest population growth at 4.6 percent annually—more than four times the national figure. The median home value is \$308,700, and most households have two earners and two vehicles. This is the top market for households to own projection TVs, MP3 players, scanners, and laser printers as well as owning or leasing full-sized SUVs. It is the second-ranked market for owning flat-screen or plasma TVs, video game systems, and digital camcorders as well as owning or leasing minivans. Family vacations are a top priority. Popular vacation destinations are Disney World and Universal Studios, Florida. For exercise, residents play tennis and golf, ski, and jog.

Segment 08: Laptops and Lattes

Community Tapestry's most eligible and unencumbered market, Laptops and Lattes residents are affluent, single, and still renting. They are highly educated, professional, and partial to city life, preferring major metropolitan areas such as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, and Chicago. The median household income is \$100,428; the median age is 38.4 years. Technologically savvy, this is the top market for owning a laptop or notebook PC; they use the Internet on a daily basis, especially to shop. Their favorite department store, by far, is Banana Republic. Leisure activities include going to the movies, rock concerts, shows, museums, and nightclubs. These residents exercise regularly and take vitamins. They enjoy yoga, jogging, skiing, reading, watching foreign

films on VHS/DVD, dining out, and traveling abroad. They embrace liberal philosophies and work for environmental causes.

Segment 10: Pleasant-Ville

Prosperous domesticity distinguishes the settled homes of Pleasant-Ville neighborhoods. Most residents live in single-family homes with a median value of \$372,798; approximately half were built in the 1950s and 1960s. Located primarily in the Northeast and California, these households are headed by middle-aged residents, some nearing early retirement. The median age is 39.7 years. Approximately 40 percent of households include children. Home remodeling is a priority for residents who live in older homes. Shopping choices are eclectic, ranging from upscale department stores to warehouse or club stores. Sports fanatics, they attend ball games, listen to sports programs and games on the radio, and watch a variety of sports on TV.

Segment 12: Up and Coming Families

Up and Coming Families represents the second highest household growth market and, with a median age of 32 years, is the youngest of Community Tapestry's affluent family markets. The profile for these neighborhoods is young, affluent families with young children. Approximately half of the households are concentrated in the South, with the other half in the West and Midwest. Neighborhoods are located in suburban outskirts of mid-sized metropolitan areas. The homes are newer, with a median value of \$221,956. Because family and home priorities dictate their consumer purchases, they frequently shop for baby and children's products and household furniture. Leisure activities include playing softball, going to the zoo, and visiting theme parks (generally SeaWorld or Disney World). Residents enjoy watching science fiction, comedy, and family-type movies on VHS or DVD.

Segment 16: Enterprising Professionals

This fast-growing market is home to young, educated, working professionals, with a median age of 32.4 years. Single or married, they prefer newer neighborhoods with townhomes or apartments. The median household income is \$69,960. The Enterprising Professionals segment is ranked second of all the Community Tapestry markets for labor force participation, at 75 percent. Their lifestyle reflects their youth, mobility, and growing consumer clout. Residents rely on cell phones and PCs to stay in touch. They use the Internet to find their next job

Addendum

or home, track their investments, and shop. They own the latest electronic gadgets. Leisure activities include yoga, playing Frisbee and football, jogging, going to the movies, and attending horse races and basketball games. These residents also travel frequently, both domestically and overseas.

Segment 19: Milk and Cookies

Milk and Cookies households are composed mainly of young, affluent married-couple families. Approximately half of households include children. The median age for this market is 34.2 years. Residents prefer single-family homes in suburban areas, chiefly in the South, particularly in Texas. Smaller concentrations of households are located in the West and Midwest. The median home value is \$155,183. Families with two or more workers, more than one child, and two or more vehicles is the norm for this market. Residents are well insured for the future. The presence of children drives their large purchases of baby and children's products and timesavers such as fast food. For fun, residents play video games, chess, backgammon, basketball and football, or fly kites. Favorite cable channels include Toon Disney, Discovery Health Channel, ESPNNews, and Lifetime Movie Network.

Segment 21: Urban Villages

Urban Villages neighborhoods are multicultural enclaves of young families, unique to U.S. gateway cities located primarily in California. The median age is 30.4 years. All family types dominate this market. The average family size of 3.86 is the second highest of all the Community Tapestry segments. Many households have two wage earners, chiefly employed in the manufacturing, health care, retail trade, construction, and educational services industries. The median household income is \$61,888. Most residents own older, single-family homes with a median value of \$412,552, and multiple vehicles. Family and home dictate purchases. To maintain their older homes, time and money are spent on home remodeling and repairs. Leisure activities include playing soccer and tennis, renting foreign films, listening to Hispanic and variety radio, and visiting Disneyland, SeaWorld, or Six Flags theme parks

Segment 27: Metro Renters

Metro Renters residents are young (approximately 30 percent are in their 20s), well-educated singles beginning their professional careers in some of the largest U.S. cities such as New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The

median age is 33.8 years; the median household income is \$57,662. As the name Metro Renters implies, most residents are renting apartments in high-rise buildings, living alone or with a roommate. Their interests include traveling, reading two or more daily newspapers, listening to classical music and public radio programs, and surfing the Internet. For exercise, they work out regularly at clubs, play tennis and volleyball, practice yoga, ski, and jog. They enjoy dancing, attending rock concerts, going to museums or the movies, and throwing a Frisbee. Painting and drawing are favorite hobbies. Politically, this market is liberal.

Segment 28: Aspiring Young Families

Aspiring Young Families neighborhoods are located in large, growing metropolitan areas in the South and West, with the highest concentrations in California, Florida, and Texas. Mainly composed of young, married-couple families or single parents with children, the median age for this segment is 30.5 years. Half of the households are owner-occupied, single-family dwellings or townhomes, and half are occupied by renters, many living in newer, multiunit buildings. Residents spend much of their discretionary income on baby and children's products and toys as well as home furnishings. Recent electronic purchases include cameras and video game systems. Leisure activities include dining out, dancing, going to the movies, attending professional football games, fishing, weight lifting, and playing basketball. Typically, vacations include visits to theme parks. They use the Internet to visit chat rooms, search for employment, play games, and make travel arrangements.

Segment 29: Rustbelt Retirees

Most Rustbelt Retirees neighborhoods can be found in older, industrial cities in the Northeast and Midwest, especially in Pennsylvania and other states surrounding the Great Lakes. Households are mainly occupied by married couples with no children and singles who live alone. The median age is 44.6 years. Although many residents are still working, labor force participation is below average. More than 40 percent of the households receive Social Security benefits. Most residents live in owned, single-family homes, with a median value of \$134,314. Unlike many retirees, these residents are not inclined to move. They are proud of their homes and gardens and participate in community activities. Some are members of veterans' clubs. Leisure activities include playing bingo, gambling in Atlantic City, going to the horse races, working crossword puzzles, and playing golf.

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Segment 30: Retirement Communities

Retirement Communities neighborhoods are found mostly in cities scattered across the United States. The majority of households are multiunit dwellings. Congregate housing, which commonly includes meals and other services in the rent, is a trait of this segment dominated by singles that live alone. This educated, older market has a median age of 51.4 years. One-third of residents are aged 65 years or older. Although the median household income is a modest \$48,045, the median net worth is \$170,490. Good health is a priority; residents visit their doctors regularly, diet and exercise, purchase low-sodium food, and take vitamins. They spend their leisure time working crossword puzzles, playing bingo, gardening indoors, canoeing, gambling, and taking adult education classes. They like to spend time with their grandchildren and spoil them with toys. Home remodeling projects are usually in the works.

Segment 32: Rustbelt Traditions

Rustbelt Traditions neighborhoods are the backbone of older, industrial cities in states bordering the Great Lakes. Most employed residents work in the service, manufacturing, and retail trade industries. Most residents own and live in modest single-family homes that have a median value of \$107,222. Households are primarily a mix of married-couple families, single-parent families, and singles who live alone. The median age is 36.1 years; the median household income is \$49,579. Residents prefer to use a credit union and invest in certificates of deposit. They use coupons regularly, especially at Sam's Club, work on home remodeling or improvement projects, and buy vehicles. Favorite leisure activities include hunting, bowling, fishing, and attending auto races, country music shows, and ice hockey games (in addition to listening to games on the radio).

Segment 33: Midlife Junction

Midlife Junction communities are found in suburbs across the country. Residents are phasing out of their child-rearing years. Approximately half of the households are composed of married-couple families; 31 percent are singles who live alone. The median age is 41.1 years; the median household income is \$47,683. One-third of the households receive Social Security benefits. Nearly two-thirds of the households are single-family structures; most of the remaining dwellings are apartments in multiunit buildings. These residents live quiet, settled lives. They spend their money prudently and do not succumb to fads. They prefer to shop by mail or phone from catalogs

such as J.C. Penney, L.L. Bean, and Lands' End. They enjoy yoga, attending country music concerts and auto races, refinishing furniture, and reading romance novels.

Segment 35: International Marketplace

Located primarily in cities in coastal gateway states, International Marketplace neighborhoods are developing, urban markets with a rich blend of cultures and household types. Approximately 70 percent of households are occupied by families. Married couples with children and single parents with children represent 44 percent of households. A typical family rents an apartment in an older, multiunit structure. Most of the households are located in California and northeastern states. The median age is 30.3 years, and the median household income is \$46,380. Top purchases include groceries and children's clothing. Residents shop at stores such as Marshalls and Costco, but for convenience, they stop at 7-Eleven or other similar convenience stores. They are loyal listeners of Hispanic radio programs and prefer to watch movies and sports on TV.

Segment 38: Industrious Urban Fringe

Industrious Urban Fringe neighborhoods are found on the fringe of metropolitan cities. Approximately half of these households are located in the West; 40 percent are in the South. Most employed residents work in the manufacturing, construction, retail trade, and service industries. Family is central, and children are present in more than half of the households. Many live in multigenerational households. The median age is 28.5 years; the median household income is \$42,901. Two-thirds of the households own their single-family dwellings, with a median value of \$166,992. Necessities for babies and children are among their primary purchases along with toys and video games. Big movie fans, residents visit the cinema several times a month and watch movies at home frequently. They prefer to watch syndicated TV and listen to Hispanic radio.

Segment 39: Young and Restless

Change is the constant in this diverse market. With a median age of 28.9 years, the population is young and on the go. About 85 percent of householders moved in the last five years. Young and Restless householders are primarily renters, living in apartments in multiunit buildings. Almost 60 percent are single-person or shared households. This educated market has the highest labor force participation among all the Community Tapestry segments, at 75 percent, and the highest female labor

Addendum

force participation, at 73 percent. The median household income is \$43,645. Residents use the Internet daily to visit chat rooms, play games, obtain the latest news, and search for employment. They read computer and music magazines and listen to public radio. They watch movies in the theater and on VHS/DVD, attend rock concerts, play pool, go dancing, and exercise weekly at a gym.

Segment 46: Rooted Rural

Rooted Rural neighborhoods are located in rural areas throughout the country; however, more than three-fifths of the households are located in the South. Households are dominated by married-couple families, approximately one-third of who already receive Social Security benefits. The median age is 41.9 years. Housing is predominantly single-family dwellings, with a strong presence of mobile homes and some seasonal housing. The median home value is \$105,419. Stable and settled, residents tend to move infrequently. They are do-it-yourselfers, constantly working on their homes, gardens, and vehicles. Many families have pets. Residents enjoy hunting, fishing, target shooting, boating, attending country music concerts, and listening to country music on the radio. Many households have a satellite dish; favorite stations include Outdoor Life Network and CMT.

Segment 47: Las Casas

Las Casas residents are the latest wave of western pioneers. Settled primarily in California, approximately half were born outside the United States. Young, Hispanic families dominate these households; 63 percent include children. This market has the highest average household size (4.26) among all the Community Tapestry segments. The median age is 25.8 years, and the median household income is \$38,046. Most households are occupied by renters, although homeownership is at 42 percent. The median home value is \$321,086. Housing is a mix of older apartment buildings, single-family homes, and townhomes. This is a strong market for the purchase of baby and children's products. Residents enjoy listening to Hispanic radio, reading adventure stories, and playing soccer. Many treat their children to a family outing at a theme park, especially Disneyland. When taking a trip, Mexico is a popular destination.

Segment 52: Inner City Tenants

Inner City Tenants neighborhoods are a microcosm of urban diversity, located primarily in the South and West. This multicultural market is young, with a median age of 27.9 years. Households are a mix of singles and families.

Most residents rent economical apartments in mid- or high-rise buildings. Recent household purchases by this market include video game systems, baby food, baby products, and furniture. Internet access at home is not typical; those who have no access at home surf the Internet at school or at the library. Playing games and visiting chat rooms are typical online activities. Residents frequently eat at fast-food restaurants. They enjoy going to the movies; attending football and basketball games; water skiing; and playing football, basketball, and soccer. Some enjoy the nightlife, visiting bars and nightclubs to go dancing.

Segment 58: NeWest Residents

Most NeWest Residents members rent apartments in mid- or high-rise buildings in primarily major western and southern cities. California has the largest concentration of these households, followed by Texas. Families dominate this market. Children reside in 54 percent of the households, either in married-couple or single-parent families. Approximately half of the population is foreign-born. This young market has a median age of 25.5 years. Most of the employed residents work in service and skilled labor occupations. These residents lead a strongly family-oriented lifestyle. Budget constraints restrict their purchases to essentials such as baby food, equipment, and products as well as children's clothing. For fun, families go to the movies, visit theme parks, and play soccer. They like to watch sports on TV, especially wrestling and soccer, and listen to Hispanic radio.

Addendum

General & Limiting Conditions

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in this report are accurate as of the date of this study; however, factors exist that are outside the control of AECOM and that may affect the estimates and/or projections noted herein. This study is based on estimates, assumptions and other information developed by AECOM from its independent research effort, general knowledge of the industry, and information provided by and consultations with the client and the client's representatives. No responsibility is assumed for inaccuracies in reporting by the client, the client's agent and representatives, or any other data source used in preparing or presenting this study.

This report is based on information that was current as of March 2010 and AECOM has not undertaken any update of its research effort since such date.

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