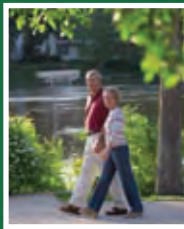


Redevelopment Framework and Phase 1 Implementation Strategies

Rockford, Illinois



Prepared For:



Prepared By:





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Introduction

A

This City Center Redevelopment Framework and Phase 1 Implementation Strategy is the culmination of a 10-month process undertaken by LiveWorkLearnPlay in collaboration with the Rock River Development Partnership, the City of Rockford, and a selection of Rockford public agencies.

City Center Redevelopment Participants



Introduction

A

The City Center Redevelopment Framework & Phase 1 Implementation Strategy is the third stage of an on-going process which combines significant public outreach and consultation with in-depth market research and planning.



Introduction

City Center Vision

Research on communities across America suggests that a thriving downtown, or City Center, is an important contributor to a variety of desirable social and economic outcomes. In addition to providing improved quality of life for area residents, **a functional and successful mixed-use commercial core will:**

- Promote local entrepreneurship, small business and job creation
- Contribute to job attraction
- Foster a stronger sense of community among Rockford residents
- Increase tourism frequency, duration, and economic impact
- Decrease 'leakage' of economic activity to neighboring communities
- Attract larger anchor uses including large corporations, higher education institutions, and hospitality uses

The long-term goal of the Rock River Development Partnership (RRDP) and LiveWorkLearnPlay (LWLP) is to nurture the redevelopment of a City Center that is home to a diversity of Rockford citizens and successful businesses, a gathering place for the broader region, and an engine for economic development.



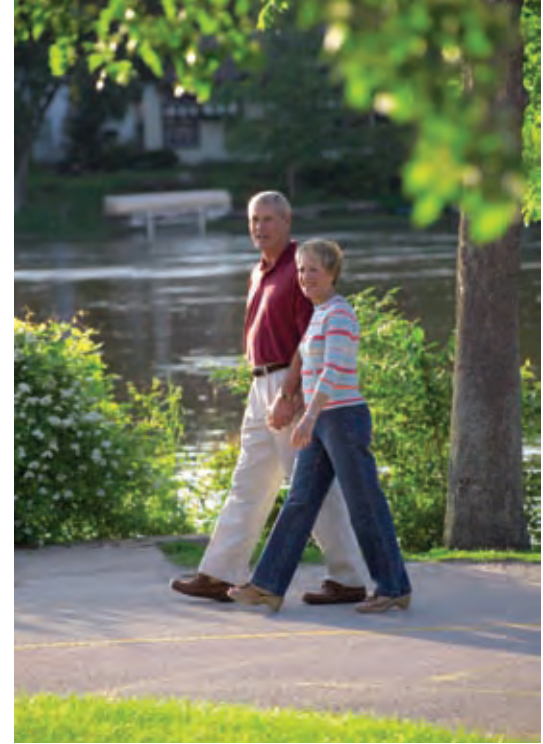
Small business attraction and job creation are expected outcomes of a revitalized City Center

City Center Vision

A thriving community closely connected to its historic downtown and natural assets is an achievable reality for Rockford. The City's remarkable natural advantages will be brought to the fore through a series of closely inter-connected public and private initiatives to encourage Rockfordians to use the river, parks, heritage properties, local businesses, and public spaces on a daily, weekly and annual basis.

The following defining attributes have been identified as cornerstones for Rockford's future brand identity:

1. Education
2. "Real/Original" – A Mix of Dynamic Shops, Food, and Entertainment
3. Urban Living
4. Creative and Innovative Commerce
5. Health and Wellness
6. Recreation and Fitness
7. Agriculture
8. Arts and Culture



Creating and reinforcing connections to the Rock River is a critical strategy



B

City Center Vision

Progress Report

Concurrent to the development of the plans outlined herein, a variety of initiatives were undertaken. These include:

City Market

Working closely with LiveWorkLearnPlay, the RRDП formed a working group to conceptualize, plan and launch a market for Rockford City Center. The opening event, held Friday, June 11th, drew over 1,000 attendees and 20 vendors. The weekly event is expected to draw significant visitation to the downtown area and showcase Rockford's local and regional entrepreneurs all summer long, for years to come.



The trolley system provides convenient access to many of the City Center's districts and attractions



Rockford City Market opening weekend

Trolley System

The trolley system, in conjunction with the Rockford Mass Transit Department, has been reactivated, providing transportation between several key districts, venues, and attractions in the City Center. Initially launched to run every Friday evening, both the operating schedule and route are targeted to expand, providing sensible transportation options in the City Center.



Progress Report

Consensus Building and Community Outreach

The City Center Redevelopment Framework and Phase 1 Implementation Strategy provides a series of initiatives and directions that require the support and participation of public and private stakeholders. To build that support, broad consensus among key stakeholders and the general public is critical. Outreach sessions were held in December, 2009, and January, March, April, and May of 2010. LWLP and the RRDP met with over 600 representatives of interested parties. One-on-one interviews, structured focus groups, brainstorming sessions, and public outreach sessions were held.



Over 600 Rockfordians were consulted during development of the plan

Communications Tools

Hundreds of Rockford citizens were consulted during the process of identifying the Phase 1 Focus Area Redevelopment Plan. The feedback received from these many involved citizens is reflected throughout the planning material. Ongoing input from the general public is essential to the success of redevelopment efforts. To facilitate that ongoing dialogue, an



The RRDP web site launched on June 16th, 2010

interactive and creative envisioning exercise was developed for use during public outreach sessions. The RRDP's web site will keep the public updated on the RRDP's efforts, while a survey feature will allow for continuous feedback on ongoing initiatives during the evolution of the City Center.

Progress Report

Inventory and Analysis of Local Commercial Operators

Bringing thriving retail, entertainment, and dining concepts in Rockford together in a vibrant, mixed-use setting, is a cornerstone of the broader revitalization strategy. Through extensive on-the-ground research, LWLP canvassed Rockford and the surrounding region for thriving local operators, and compiled the results into a database of the 'best of the best' small commercial businesses.



Rockford has many high-quality small businesses

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting	Stage 1 Revitalization Areas			
		East State St Corridor/ Market District	Riverfront Recreation District	State & Main	Museum District
Project Financial / Economic Impact					
Total Capital Investment					
Annual Investment					
Tax Revenue					
Job Creation					
Evidence of Need					
Project Viability					
City Center Redevelopment Impact					
Catalyst for Redevelopment					
Timing					
Pedestrian / Customer Traffic					
Project Concept					
Project Support/Consensus					
Community Impact					
Community Reach / Quality of Life					
Accretive Offering					
Population Density					

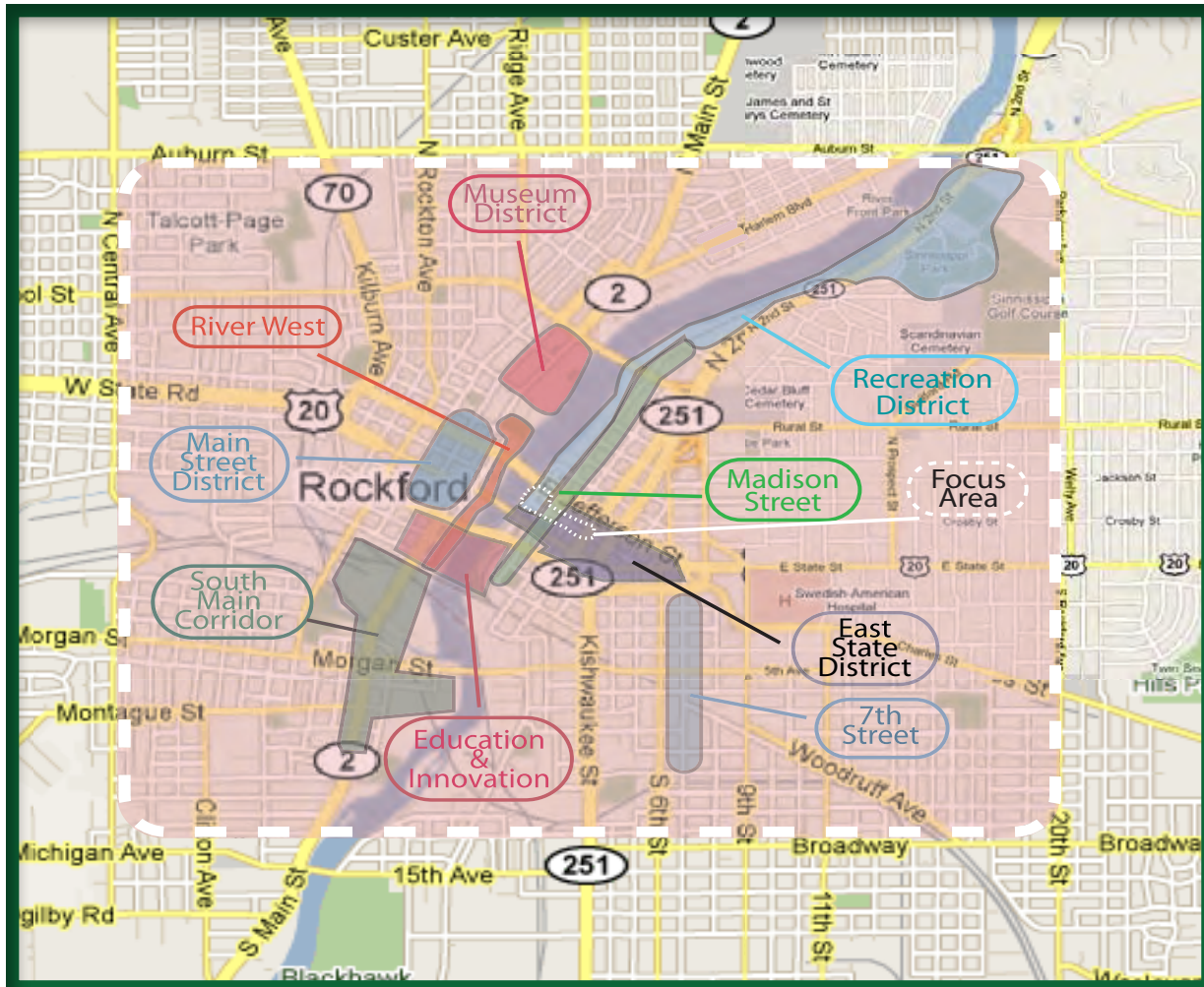
An evaluation tool for public funding applications was created

Public Funding Application Tool

Developed in collaboration with members of the RRDP Board, this clear scoring process provides a clear and objective method for evaluating public funding opportunities. A series of criteria and a weighting methodology was developed to ensure that funding applications were achieving the many stated goals of the City of Rockford, the RRDP and the funding agencies.

District Planning

The identification and prioritization of districts in the City Center is a critical prerequisite for efforts to plan and implement successful improvements to these areas. The segmentation of the City Center into defined districts supports the redevelopment of each area to have an identifiable and unique identity and purpose. These districts will help differentiate the areas of the City Center, resulting in unique competitive advantages for each district, while also creating brand awareness among Rockford residents and visitors. A core focus area was identified within each district. Success in each of the core focus areas is expected to have a catalytic effect on the revitalization of the larger districts and the City Center as a whole.



Identifying districts within the City Center was critical to planning redevelopment

District Vision

A series of criteria were evaluated to identify and delineate these districts, including:

- The presence of existing assets and uses that reinforce the vision for the District;
- The existing physical conditions such as grade changes, derelict buildings, environmental impairment, proximity to the Rock River, and condition of the streetscape;
- Access and transportation links with the rest of Rockford, and the availability of public infrastructure, such as parking;
- The desire to develop concentrated geographic areas. The objective is to nurture a distinct experiential identity for each district that is synergistic with the other city center districts (a district identity is likely to be diluted if the district area is too large). All attempts were made to delineate inclusive but implementable districts.
- The needs and desires of the Rockford community were critical in informing the types of districts that should be programmed in the City Center. In proposing the identity and location of districts, consideration was given to the breadth of the current City Center market offering, the history and culture of the City and Rockford's current and potential demographic profile.

Within each district, an initial core focus area for revitalization is identified, with a larger district also indicated. The core focus area represents the most likely area for improvement over the next 12-60 months. The broader district delineation represents the area that the district will grow into in the medium- and long-term. District rankings and descriptions in the following section correspond primarily to the core focus areas.



Over 60 people participated in the District Planning Workshop held at the Sullivan Center in January, 2010

District Vision

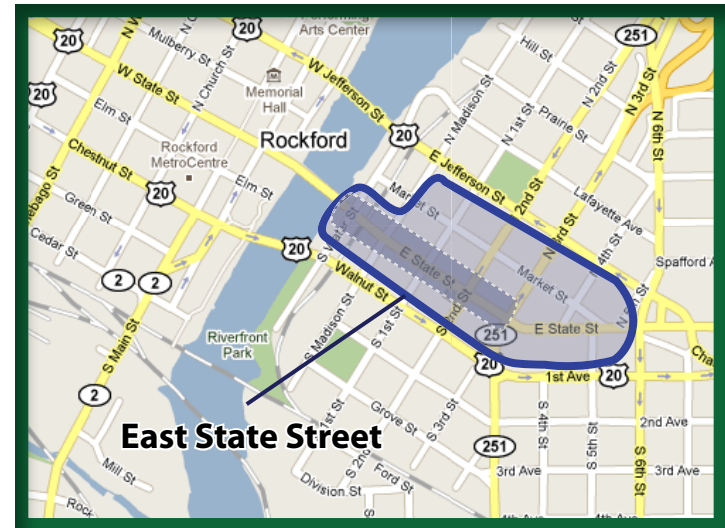
The stakeholder groups assigned scores to each district. The results were synthesized to arrive at the rankings outlined below. Amid healthy debate during the ranking process, a broad consensus emerged regarding the overall ordering and prioritization of the districts.

Collaborative District Rankings						
District Name	Short-term Feasibility	Percent Complete	Existing Assets	Community Impact	Consensus	Total
East State	10	15%	10	10	10	40
Main Street	9	15%	9	8	9	
Madison	9	5%	7	8	7	31
Recreation District	6	50%	8	7	6	27
Museum District	7	30%	6	5	7	25
Educational Campus	6	0%	4	6	5	21
Riverfront West	7	15%	4	3	5	19
South Main	5	5%	2	3	4	14
7th St	4	5%	3	2	3	12

District Vision

East State Street

The East State Street District, stretching from the Rock River to the 600 block, is a hub of activity in Rockford's City Center. Traditional neighborhood services, along with social eateries, art galleries, and unique retail shops bring energy to the ground floor of historic mixed-use buildings that are home to upper-story residences and offices. Street vendors sell tasty treats and children play in the new parks that have popped up in place of previously vacant lots. A new Rockford City Market brings together farmers, artisans, quality independent vendors, performers, and customers from across the region, while events such as a weekly beer garden and festivals encourage return visitation and make the City Market a ritual for Rockfordians. The East State Street District remains animated in the evenings, with families out for ice cream, young professionals enjoying an after-work drink on a patio, and couples dining at one of the many ethnic restaurants. The iconic boutique hotel provides locals and visitors with a one-of-a-kind lodging experience, with quality meeting space, in the heart of Rockford's vibrant East State Street District.



Potential Commercial Experiences:

- Boutique hotel
- City Market
- Arts and cultural retailers
- Restaurants:
 - Casual
 - Sushi
 - Tapas
 - BBQ
 - Mexican
 - 24-hr 'greasy spoon' diner
- Treats (e.g. candy store, ice cream shop)
- Karaoke bar
- Regional bakery
- Sports apparel shop(s)
- Redevelopment of Midway Theater
- Culinary and wine school
- Toy and hobby shop
- Apparel shops



East State Street has a vibrant mix of commercial businesses

East State Street: Anchor Uses

Boutique Hotel with Meeting Space

Seamlessly integrated into the pedestrian-oriented streetscape, this timeless boutique hotel will welcome guests from near and far with convenient and quality accommodations in the heart of Rockford. Business professionals, families, and couples will enjoy the hospitality and amenities offered by the most desirable hotel in the City. The hotel will offer 60-100 rooms, meeting space and a first-rate restaurant.



A boutique hotel is under consideration for several sites in the Phase 1 Focus Area

Rockford City Market

Located on Water Street between State and Jefferson, the Rockford City Market made its debut in June 2010. The market showcases local growers and vendors who sell natural products such as vegetables, fruits, eggs, meat, cheeses, flowers, herbs, baked goods, and wine, in addition to featuring local artisans and performers. Visitors of all backgrounds wander through the market while live music plays in the background and the aroma of freshly baked goods fills the air. An indoor facility will build upon the market's success in the warmer months and extend the market's operations through the winter.



The Rockford City Market has been programmed using best practices from markets across North America

District Vision

Main Street

Across the Rock River from East State Street lies the Main Street District. During the daytime, employees of nearby offices pick up a healthy meal from the new grab 'n go lunch market, which they enjoy outdoors at a local park with coworkers. In the evenings, friends come together for a night out at the Brew n View Theater, where they are able to unwind with a pint of their favorite beer. Unique local businesses, restaurants, and a hotel in the District enhance the visitor experience for those spending time at regional cultural attractions in this area, such as the Coronado Theater, the MetroCentre and the Sullivan Center. These complementary retail establishments keep the Main Street District lively at all times, offering enticing joint promotions and an abundance of activities to both Rockfordians and out-of-town visitors.



District Vision

Main Street: Anchor Uses

Conference Center Hotel

Offering breathtaking views of the Rock River, state-of-the-art amenities, and an intimate but stylish atmosphere, the hotel on Main Street will provide guests with an unparalleled experience. The hotel and conference center will fill an important niche for mid-sized meeting space and accommodations and will complement the programming at the MetroCentre and Coronado.



The Conference Center Hotel will be a major driver of commercial visitation and spending in the City Center



The Brew n View

Local residents and visitors will experience the ultimate way to kick back at the Brew n View. Customers will be able to order their beverage of choice while watching new or classic movies on the big screen. Themed nights including “girl’s night out” and drink specials make the evening all the more enjoyable.



The Brew n View Theater, potentially located in the Times Theater, will appeal to a broad range of Rockford residents



District Vision

Madison Street

Overlooking the Rock River, Madison Street is lined with tastefully restored historic buildings. Buildings previously used as factories have been redeveloped into live/work spaces for creative tenants. Public spaces and streets welcome the growing residential community with widened sidewalks, planters, and street furniture that reflects the character of Rockford. Madison Street's proximity to the East State Street District, chic retail concepts and traditional conveniences has made it a desirable urban address for young professionals, empty nesters, and families.

Potential Commercial Experiences:

- Historic Brewhouse redevelopment
- Rockford Design Center
- Community School for the Arts
- Café/Casual eatery
- Neighborhood services
 - Convenience store
 - Tailor
 - Laundromat



Redevelopment of the historic Brewhouse will become an important anchor use in the Madison Street District

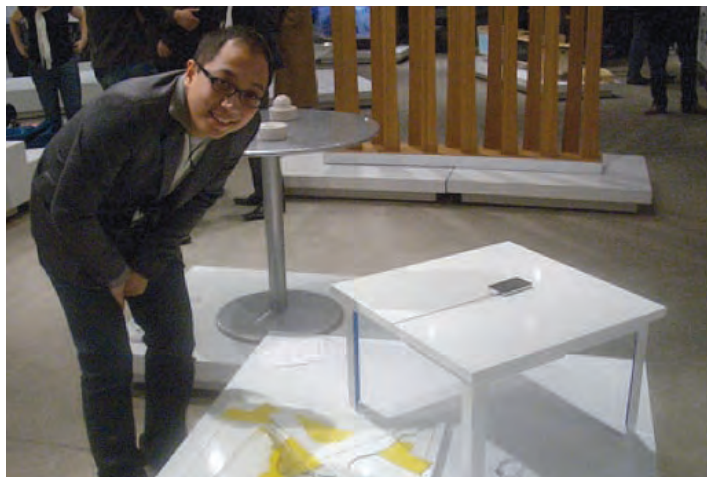
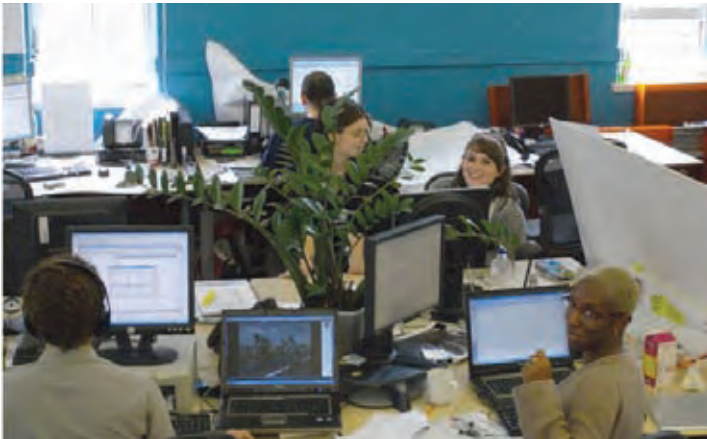
Madison Street has many opportunities for office and residential redevelopment projects

District Vision

Madison Street: Anchor Uses

Rockford Design Center

The Rockford Design Center is envisioned as a collaborative partnership between the City of Rockford, Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Rockford College, the Community School for the Arts, and Judson University to provide students with the opportunity to study urban planning, civic revitalization and urban design in a truly creative space. As an education and innovation anchor, the design center will be a catalyst in attracting similar uses to the Madison Street District, while also contributing vital urban design services to various projects across the City Center.



The Rockford Design Center will bring together regional and national design professionals to train and inspire students and the public

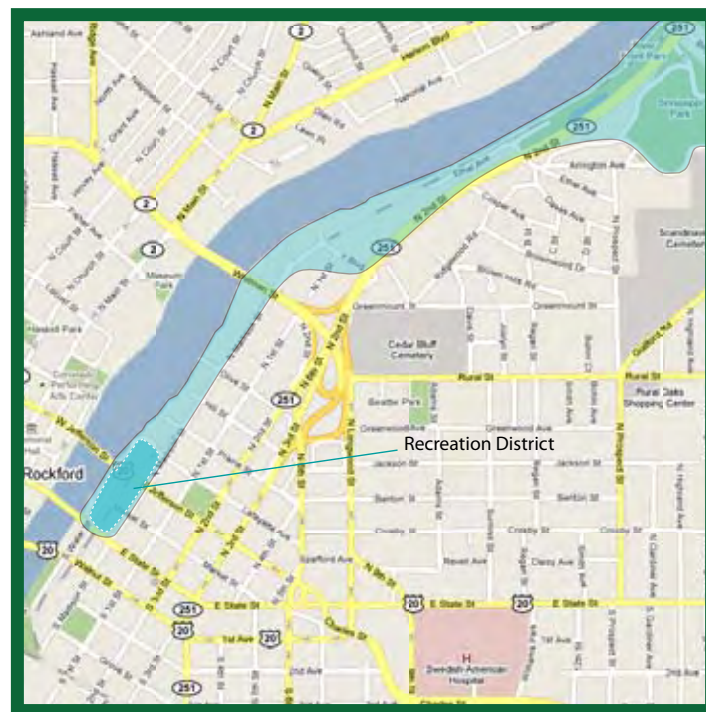
District Vision

Recreation District

With ice-skating in the winter, Spring Break nature discovery camps in the spring, beach volleyball in the summer, and bike riding along the scenic trails in the fall, the riverfront Recreation District is a year-round destination that caters to a diversity of visitors. Families can spend their day picnicking, playing mini-golf, and swimming, before they fold out lawn chairs for a movie night in the park. Under the Jefferson Street Bridge, a skateboard park and basketball courts surrounded by murals created by Rockford youth give young people a place to show off their talents. A group of friends break a sweat during a Pilates class at the fitness center, followed by lunch at the riverfront restaurant. Additional features, such as outdoor workout stations, kayaking, yoga in the park, and walking trails in the Recreation District ensure that all Rockfordians have access to world-class recreational facilities.



The recreation district will have a variety of entertainment and activities all year long



Potential Commercial and Recreational Experiences

- Community outdoor ice skating rink
- Rock climbing wall
- Mini-golf and driving range
- Water taxi
- Summer camp
- Arts and crafts cabins
- Recreational outfitter
- Iconic riverfront restaurant
- Satellite kiosks

Recreation District: Anchor Uses

Recreational Outfitter

The recreation district will have a high-quality, full-service outfitter run by a local enthusiast passionate about everything related to outdoor activity and exploration. The recreational outfitter is envisioned to provide a classic mix of outdoor gear and equipment suited to local land and water activities. It will become the center for organized boating, running clubs, bike excursions, ski and adventure trips to regional recreation attractions, and extreme sports such as BMX and skateboarding. Bringing together people of shared interests, the outfitter will help attract recreational participants and spectators to the City Center.



Riverfront Restaurant

Rockford's iconic riverfront restaurant will be a favorite for locals and tourists, who are able to dine on the terrace while feeling the breeze of the Rock River below. Tables will rarely stay empty for long at this casual yet beautiful venue, which will be on the leading edge of the Rockford culinary scene and will make use of local ingredients for its innovative dishes.



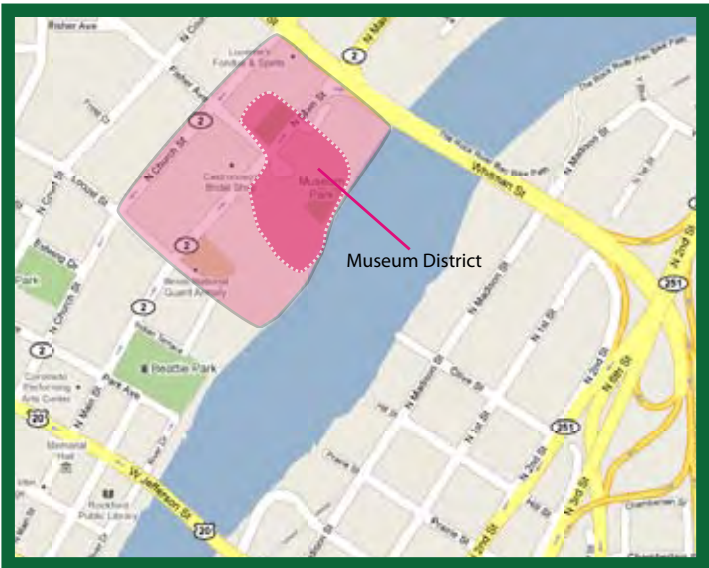
District Planning

D

- Family restaurant
- Grab n Go food and beverage options
- Art café
- Kiosks
- Children's bookshop
- Walking tours of outdoor art installations
- Aquarium or other re-use of Armory Building



Fun and learning will extend far beyond the walls of the museums



Museum District: Anchor Uses

Family Restaurant

This popular restaurant will be known for its exceptional service, inviting family-friendly atmosphere, great prices. With a variety of dishes for mom and dad, a special kid's menu and a senior's program, this restaurant will be a favorite for the entire family after spending a day at the museum.



Art Café

The Museum District Art Café will be a community café that highlights the work of local artists. During the day, the café will serve specialty beverages, delicious baked goods, and warm lunch specials to customers. By night, the café will turn into a cultural establishment, with live jazz performances, open mic and spoken word poetry nights.



District Vision

Education and Innovation District

Spanning the Rock River, the Education and Innovation District contains several large, abandoned industrial sites. The buildings, both grand in scale and located on beautiful riverfront land in the City Center, are prime locations for large corporate and institutional tenants moving to Rockford. The shared post-secondary education campus located in the Ingersoll Building focuses on research and development and environmental best practices. The entrepreneur incubation center in the adjacent Watch Factory brings the best from industry together with ambitious Rockford residents to commercialize nascent technologies and help local small businesses grow. Across the River, the Amerock and Tapco sites have become the new American On-Shoring Institute. This state of the art facility brings together a cluster of medium-sized firms practicing advanced manufacturing, construction, and design processes.

Thousands of workers, students, and faculty flood the City Center with activity. The recreation district is the location of choice for grabbing a quick lunch time workout. Students flock to East State and Main Streets for a bite between classes, or drinks with friends when the day is over. The success of the American On-Shoring Institute has attracted national media attention as an example of a City reclaiming its industrial heritage.



Potential Commercial Experiences

- Shared post-secondary campus
- The American On-Shoring Institute
- Business incubation center



The business incubation center will provide resources and mentoring for aspiring entrepreneurs

Education and Innovation District: Anchor Uses

Shared Education Campus

After opening small satellite facilities in the City Center, several of the area's leading educational institutions demonstrated their commitment to sustainability and the Rockford community by partnering in the Rockford City Center shared education campus. The facility, which offers a full range of post-secondary education, from skills training to four-year degree programs, is the place of learning for thousands of students. The participating schools market their location in the now bustling City Center as a key student recruitment strategy. Strong pedestrian and public transit connections with the rest of the City Center allow students to enjoy the nearby shops and restaurants on their lunch breaks.



American On-Shoring Institute

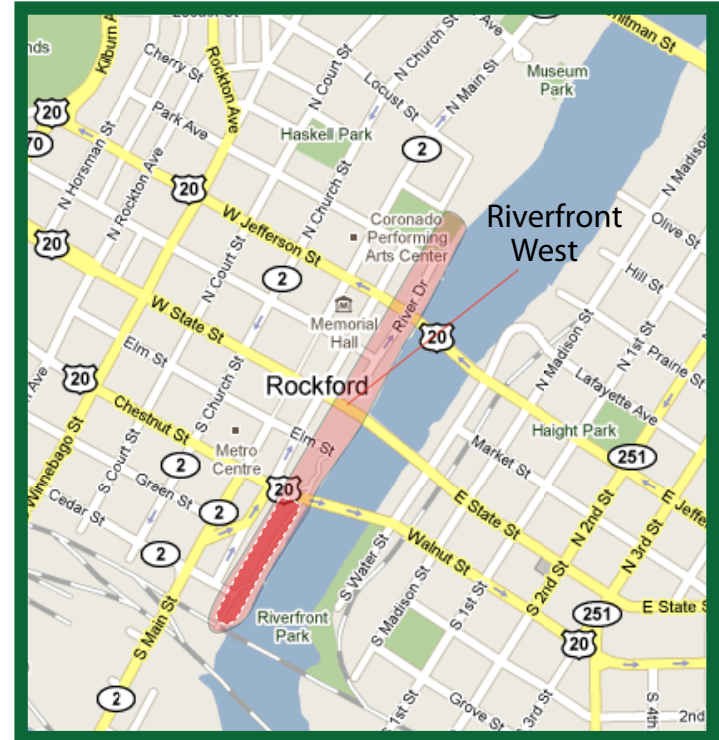
The first of its kind in America, the Institute is a public-private partnership dedicated to repatriating production processes lost to overseas markets. Participating educational institutions, including local colleges and nationally-renowned business schools, analyze supply chains across many industries to identify processes and components that can be competitively manufactured in America. Partner companies located in the institute produce high value-add goods for the domestic and international market. The firms have identified innovative production processes while also taking full advantage of Rockford's available labor, tax incentives and proximity to the Rockford Airport and O'Hare. Partnership programs with the education campus across the river help bring new technologies to market. This dynamic district thrives off the energy of the employees, students, professors, entrepreneurs, and bright minds who come here to connect, collaborate, and innovate.



District Vision

Riverfront West

The Riverfront West District, from Beattie Park in the north to the southern edge of Davis Park in the south, reconnects the west side of Rockford with the riverfront. A series of parks linked by a continuous riverfront walkway provide pedestrian connections between several of the City Center's key destinations. The scenic riverfront walkway highlights the Rock River, Rockford's greatest natural asset, and is popular with cyclists, joggers, and casual strollers. Urban waterfront parks are focal points for the District, and regularly bring the community together through regular events, such as little league games, chess tournaments, and tai chi in the park. A recently built outdoor venue at Davis Park hosts concerts, cultural shows, and other special events.



Increased access and active programming will attract people to the Rock River

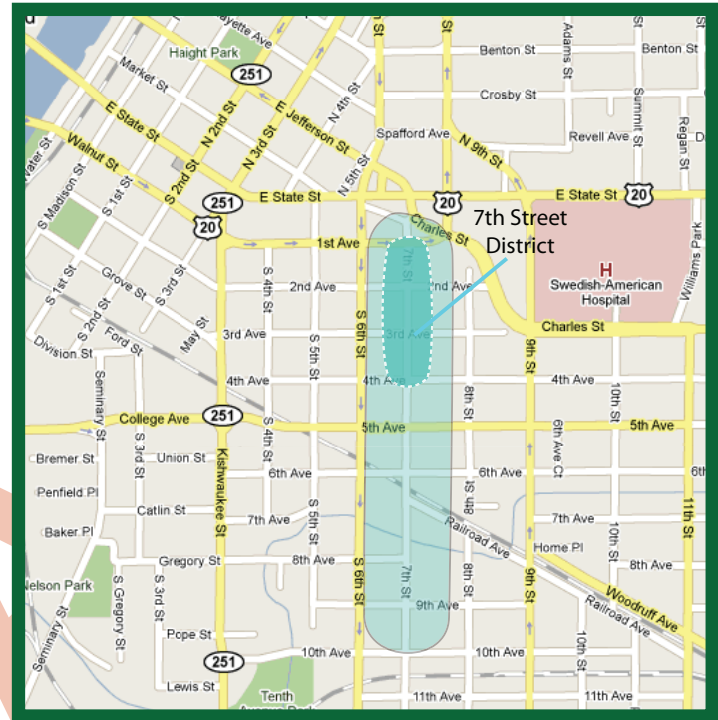
District Vision

7th Street District

Home to a number of successful mom and pop businesses, the 7th Street District is the convenient gathering place for the surrounding neighborhood. Widespread streetscape improvements have increased pedestrian traffic, attracted quality development and encouraged people to spend more time in the District. Residents are able to purchase their daily needs at the neighborhood center, which contains traditional retail and services. Friends catch up over coffee on an outdoor patio, and families shop at the small stores that have opened in the area. The thriving 7th Street commercial activity has contributed to the improvement of the surrounding neighborhood.



7th Street is the neighborhood gathering spot for area residents



District Planning

South Main Corridor

Major investment in the South Main corridor has created a pleasant arterial thoroughfare that connects the City Center with the southern end of the City and the Rockford Airport. Pedestrian and bike-friendly street design encourages people to use sustainable transportation methods and connects several of the district's popular attractions, such as the Klehm Arboretum and Tinker Swiss Park, with the City Center. The extension of the riverfront trail from Barber Colman south to Blackhawk is popular with area cyclists and nature enthusiasts.

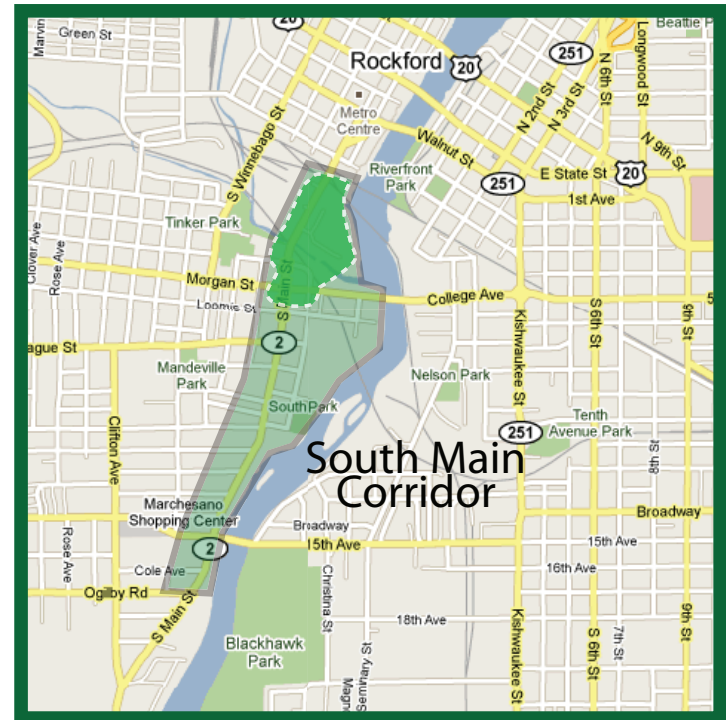
At the northern end of the district, two major development initiatives have had a dramatic impact on the City Center. The development of the Amtrak station brings Rockford residents and visitors to the southwestern City Center. The eventual redevelopment of Barber Colman into a new urbanist mixed-use village with significant riverfront parkland will bring a much larger residential population to the district. The gradual redevelopment of commercial space around the intersection of Kent and Main has brought a collection of neighborhood retail offerings to the neighborhood.

Potential Commercial Experiences

- Amtrak station
- Barber Colman mixed-use redevelopment
- Neighborhood convenience retail



The development of the Amtrak station and rail yards will remake the west side of Rockford



Neighborhood retail conveniences are ideal for adaptive reuse of buildings around South Main and Morgan Streets

Phase 1 Focus Area Implementation Strategy

Based on the district planning and prioritization, a phase 1 focus area was identified for further study and detailed planning. As detailed in Section 7 of the Rockford City Center Commercial Planning Study (CPS), concentrating redevelopment in the focus area while also developing City-wide frameworks and initiatives is critical to achieving success. This focus area was selected as it leverages existing behavioral and development trends and assets along East State Street, the Rock River and Madison Street.

A public design session was held with 12 representatives of Judson School of Architecture from May 3-6, 2010. During this time, both students and faculty studied a variety of challenges facing the Phase 1 Focus Area and developed creative solutions to address them.

The following redevelopment strategy segments the Phase 1 study area into three core sections: East State Street; the Recreation District (which includes a portion of the Riverfront); and Madison Street, highlighting the following elements:

1. **Core district vision**
2. **Existing assets**
3. **Existing challenges/barriers**
4. **Redevelopment targets (12-36-60 months)**
5. **Mixed-Use commercial program**



The Phase 1 Focus Area includes sections of East State and Madison Street and significant river frontage in the Recreation District



A planning workshop was held the week of May 3rd, 2010

East State Street

Phase 1 District Vision

East State Street is a distinctive historic mixed-use district that is a center of commercial activity in Rockford's City Center. Currently home to many of Rockford's popular dining and entertainment offerings, the Phase 1 district area stretches between the Rock River and the 600 block and features prime opportunities for commercial revitalization.

Center of Local Commerce

Building upon its current identity and character, the vision for this six-block area is to continue improving and expanding the district into a hub that celebrates small commercial businesses including social eateries, treats, evening entertainment, unique retail shops and traditional neighborhood services. These businesses should exude the vibrant and pedestrian oriented personality of Rockford, as well as connect people to the Riverfront. As well, the growth of new commercial businesses will further activate the streetscape and expand the mix of goods and services offered, creating a casual and fun-filled environment that attracts people to live and work in and around East State Street, Madison Street, and the Riverfront.



Shopping and dining will be an opportunity to experience true Rockford culture

An Entertainment Destination

A focal point of food and entertainment, East State Street pulsates during the day and evenings, with casual restaurants, ethnic cuisine, live music venues, and nightlife that attract a diversity of patrons such as families enjoying the child-friendly restaurants and treats, young urban professionals congregating for a drink after work, parents or singles looking for a night out, or empty-nesters enjoying the social environment. The restaurants and retailers spill out into the public realm, with sidewalks and rooftop patios bustling and thriving, along with quality merchandising and activated storefronts. The success of East State Street as the entertainment hub of Rockford will help attract new residents and a boutique hotel to the Street, thus generating more visitation and vitality to the area.



East State will build on its reputation as an entertainment destination

East State Street

The City Market

The City Market will become a cornerstone anchor in the Phase 1 focus area that connects people to people, and to a variety of rituals, activities, and products. The Market's strategic location on East State Street will encourage people to spend more leisure time in the broader area, enjoying the local shops, eateries, and recreational activities. Growing from its spring-2010 opening, the City Market will eventually bring farmers, artisans, retailers, restaurants, festivals, and performers to a diverse mix of customers, and operate on a year-round basis inside a permanent building in the Phase 1 Focus Area. Programming of events, performances, and a weekly beer garden on the upper parking deck will encourage repeat visitation by many Rockfordians.



The City Market celebrates the region's agriculture heritage

Arts and Culture

Since its founding, Rockford has had a thriving local arts community. Through theater and visual arts, to music and live performance, Rockfordians have expressed their creativity with enthusiasm. Performances by local bands can already be enjoyed in the bars and restaurants along East State Street. This tradition will grow, with recording studios and music equipment retailers joining the district. Other creative uses, such as art galleries, a culinary and wine school, and other arts and cultural retailers, could also locate along the street, lending energy and interest to the district.



Rockford has a long history of arts and culture

E

Phase 1 Focus Area

East State Street

Existing Assets:

- Mostly two- and three-story mixed-use buildings, with residential and office space above commercial
- Sporadic taller buildings such as City Hall, the Chase Bank building, the Rockford Register Star
- Parallel parking
- Existing vehicular traffic flow
- Existing traffic signalization and planters
- Riverfront gathering areas and recreation uses
- Quality Commercial businesses
- Afternoon/evening sunshine
- Proximity to higher-income east side neighborhoods



Rockford has preserved much of its historic building stock

Existing Challenges and Barriers:

- Water main location along State Street
- Redevelopment of lot at East State and 2nd Streets requires transformer relocation
- Low commercial rents impeding redevelopment
- Changes to Illinois historic tax credit structure
- Inactive store fronts, including City Hall and the Chase Bank, inhibit pedestrian flow
- Lack of parking management strategy
- Limited access to River
- General perception of downtown as an unsafe neighborhood (applicable for all downtown areas)
- Regulatory barriers to outdoor patios and seating



Improved streetscaping and pedestrian infrastructure will help combat negative impressions of the City Center

East State Street

Redevelopment Targets

12 Months	36 Months	60 Months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully-functional RRDP organizational structure Communications and marketing program Modification of codes/regulatory environment Set-up targeted leasing organization Incentive toolkit for mixed-use (re)development and business attraction Implement 1-3 pilot projects Lease-up 30-60% of vacant space within the RRDP property pool Implement initial public realm projects: lighting, flower boxes, façade program, trees, quality seating, patios and patio program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final streetscape improvements installed, parking program, events stages, police bicycle sub-station, parking deck upgrade Lease-up 90% to 100% of available ground floor commercial space 15-18 new projects and businesses Private investment of \$15MM or redevelopment of 150,000 sq. ft. of space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment of vacant parking lots 20-40 new projects and businesses East State Street attracts 450,000 visitors each year Private investment of \$60MM Boutique hotel opened on East State Street

Note: These targets apply to the entire Phase 1 Redevelopment Area

Commercial Uses

The table below highlights the current commercial occupancy for the street-level CRUs in the core district area.

Commercial Retail Units* (CRUs)	#	%
Leased to 3rd Party	14	40%
Owner Occupied	10	29%
Vacant	11	31%
Total	35	100%

**As at January, 2010*

East State Street

The table below outlines the existing businesses, along with recommendations for commercial uses targeted for the existing vacancies or new spaces that become available,

Category	Existing Businesses	Future Targeted Commercial Uses
Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Capri Restaurant● Kuma’s Asian Bistro● Red Lion Pub● Deli Italia● Bamboo● Brio● Irish Rose Pub● Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● American bistro● Diverse ethnic restaurants (Sushi, Chinese, Greek, Indian)● Tapas● Soul food● BBQ ribs & chicken● Mexican● Burgers and fries● Sushi
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Carlyle Brew Pub● Bar 3● CJ’s Lounge & Bar● The Office Bar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Karaoke bar● Sports bar● Evening entertainment (comedy, live music)● Dance club● Pool hall● Laser tag
Treats & Quick Serve Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Chocolate by Daniel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Coffee shop● Regional bakery/ Italian● Pastries● 24 hour diner (greasy spoon)● Delicatessen/sandwiches● Ice cream/candy

East State Street

Category	Existing Businesses	Future Targeted Commercial Uses
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nest-Home Décor & Gift ● Runner's Image ● Tattoo Parlor ● Pawn Shop ● Plush-Spa/Gift Clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Toys & video games ● Activity/hobby shop(s) ● Sports apparel shop(s) ● Targeted apparel shop(s) ● Shoe shop(s) ● Photo/scrapbooking shop ● Books, magazines, & cards ● Fishing and camping shop ● Wine experience & school ● Music instruments shop
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barber Shop ● Chase Bank ● Fuzion Hair Salon ● 5-Spa ● Pranayama Yoga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Convenience store ● Tailor ● Laundromat café ● Activity studio(s) (dance, pilates, arts and crafts, martial arts) ● Boutique fitness center
Office Hotel & Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Law offices ● East Side Center Offices ● Rockford Wellness and Diagnostic ● Spafford Square Offices ● James Moore Law Offices ● City Hall (Civic) ● Medicine Man 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health professionals ● Creative and innovative offices (design, media & technology, engineering, architecture) ● Recording studio ● Iconic boutique hotel with meeting space
Civic / Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City Market ● Market cooking school (2nd floor) ● School of Urban Design ● Police bicycle sub-station

E

Phase 1 Focus Area

Recreation District

Phase 1 District Vision

The Phase 1 Recreation District extends from East State Street to Lafayette Avenue, from the River to Madison Street. This area is a direct extension of the core area along East State Street which presents numerous opportunities for connections that will encourage people to spend more time in the Phase 1 redevelopment area. As well, the area's existing assets, including its extensive riverfront property, create fertile ground for recreational and mixed-use development.

Envisioned as an active area with strong connections to the Rock River, the Recreation District will offer an array of recreational uses that will complement the parks, facilities and public spaces. Whether kayak rentals or the public picnic area that fills up with families in the warmer seasons, there will be many reasons to visit this District often. Outdoor activity options include ice-skating, yoga in the park, a trail system that guiding bikers and joggers along the riverfront into adjacent districts, and more. Children of all ages will enjoy the outdoor game tables, beach volleyball courts, and outdoor workout stations. A skateboard park and basketball court located under the Jefferson Street bridge provide Rockford youth with outdoor recreation in a variety of weather conditions.

Events space along the river, and destination waterfront restaurants with patios overlooking the river, will offer unparalleled locations for dining and entertainment. Outdoor concerts and performances will be programmed on a regular basis. The waterfront recreation district will be a repeat destination that is at its peak during warmer seasons and on the weekends. With activities and entertainment year round, the recreation district will be complementary to the successful City Market, creating a range of activities to enjoy during a trip to the City Center.

The redevelopment of this recreation district will be a significant catalyst in attracting new residents to Madison Street, a prime location for living amid the riverfront activity and the growing commerce along East State Street.



Rockford is a well-known regional sports destination

Recreation District

Existing Assets

1. Two riverfront parks
2. City-owned parking garage
3. Several surface parking lots
4. Working Marina
5. New redeveloped residential buildings
6. The Park District trolley building
7. Riverview Ice House (public arena)

The broader district also includes:

1. YMCA
2. Historic Brewhouse
3. Lombardi Club
4. Verdi Club

Existing Challenges and Barriers:

1. Disinvestment by building owners
2. Parking management strategy
3. Limited access to River



Recreational programming and facilities, and events and festivities will bring people to the Recreation District

Recreation District

Redevelopment Targets

12 Months

- Detailed Redevelopment Plan which features new outdoor and possible indoor sports facilities
- Develop partnership(s) with recreational organizations to operate activities
- Modification of codes/regulatory environment
- Start 1-3 pilot projects (including the City Market)
- Extension of Riverwalk along Madison Street south of East State and north to connect to Sinnissippi Park

36 Months

- Public infrastructure improvements along the Riverfront installed
- New recreational and commercial businesses operating year-round
- Initiate redevelopment of residential and mixed-use properties on Madison
- Start 3-5 additional pilot projects

60 Months

- Continued redevelopment along Madison Street
- Continued redevelopment along the Riverfront to the north

F

Phase 1 Focus Area

Recreation District

Commercial Uses

Category	Existing	Future Targeted Recreational and Commercial Uses
Civic / Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riverview Ice House ● Working Marina ● YMCA ● Lombardi Club ● Junior Ice Hogs Training Facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-use recreational trail ● Riverfront fitness center ● Community ice skating rink (hockey and leisure) ● Basketball courts ● Rock climbing wall ● Skateboard park ● Community park with children's play amenities ● Events stage ● Mini-golf and driving range (onto the river) ● Boating activities (kayak, canoe, row, jet boat) ● Water taxi ● 1-mile infinity pool ● Zip line ● Hot air balloon ● Summer camp ● Arts and crafts cabins
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kite shop ● Recreational outfitter (sale and rental of hard and soft goods, including skates, bikes)
Food & Beverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iconic Riverfront restaurant (seafood/steak house) ● Satellite kiosks (ice cream, coffee, juice, treats)

Madison Street

Phase 1 District Vision

The Phase 1 Madison Street District extends from Walnut Street to Market Street, and encompasses the existing buildings and vacant lots fronting Madison Street. This area is a direct extension of the core area along East State Street, and presents numerous opportunities for connections that will encourage increased real estate development along Madison Street. Two market-rate residential projects were recently completed on and around Madison Street. Construction of The Market Lofts located at Madison and Market, was completed in 2009. A small residential building located at 214 Market Street was redeveloped into rental apartments in 2006. Both projects have demonstrated the market viability of residential development within the Phase 1 Focus Area. As the City Center becomes more vibrant and active, even more people will be attracted to the urban lifestyle available along Madison Street. Successful projects in this District will spur residential development in other areas of the City Center as well.

Redevelopment of the historical building stock will provide the majority of new residential units in the initial phase of redevelopment. The reduced cost base of the existing structures, as well as the ability to use historic tax credits and similar financing vehicles will greatly favor redevelopment over new construction. As the redevelopment of these buildings proves successful, and the stock of buildings located in the heart of the focus area is reduced, new development may also take place.

Residential buildings in the district will be modest in scale, with most between two and three stories. The grade separation between Madison Street and the Rock River will allow many upper-story units on Madison Street to offer views of the Rock River and the Westside skyline. Open-concept loft units with well-appointed kitchens and bathrooms, and exposed structural and mechanical building components, will appeal to young professionals and empty-nesters. Rental apartment units will also attract students and younger people to the City Center. Closed-bedroom floor-plans with good sound insulation will become a popular option for Rockford students and youth who want to share an apartment with roommates.

Madison Street

An education and innovation anchor in the Ingersoll building or Watch Factory will create the opportunity for other education and innovation uses in this district. The Rockford Design Center is envisioned to bring the process of urban planning, civic revitalization, and architecture to an open, public setting. Educational initiatives in collaboration with public and private schools would bring children and teens to the space to learn about how places are designed. Run as a partnership between a collaborative potentially including the City of Rockford, RMAP, Rockford College, and Judson University, the center would facilitate the development, sharing and implementation of best practices in Rockford and other cities. The storefront location would leverage the increased pedestrian traffic in the area by creating education displays that will draw passersby and members of the public into the space to learn more about the improvements being made to their community.



An educational facility in the Ingersoll building will anchor the southern end of Madison Street

New residents, education and innovation concepts, and the renewed vitality of East State Street and the Recreation District will help attract creative commercial tenants to the district. A small selection of professional-services firms (e.g. lawyers, doctors, accountants) and creative businesses (e.g. advertising agencies, design firms, architects) will occupy space along Madison Street. Redevelopment of buildings to house these concepts will improve the quality of the street while the owners and employees of these firms will provide more patrons for the businesses along State Street and surrounding area. The increased pedestrian traffic will make the area feel more safe and inviting.



Madison Street has many opportunities for adaptive reuse of public (orange) and private (yellow) lands

Madison Street

Existing Assets

- Newly redeveloped residential developments
- Historic building stock
- Parking lots and/or vacant lots available for development
- Views of the Rock River
- Existing commercial businesses

The broader district also includes

- The Ingersoll Building
- The Watch Factory
- Ingersoll Centennial Park
- Many available development parcels north of Jefferson Street

Existing Challenges and Barriers

1. Discontinuous street frontage
2. Low housing prices and rents create challenging residential building environment
3. Light-industrial character of portions of the street
4. Parking lots fronting directly on Madison Street



Madison Street has many historical buildings of architectural importance

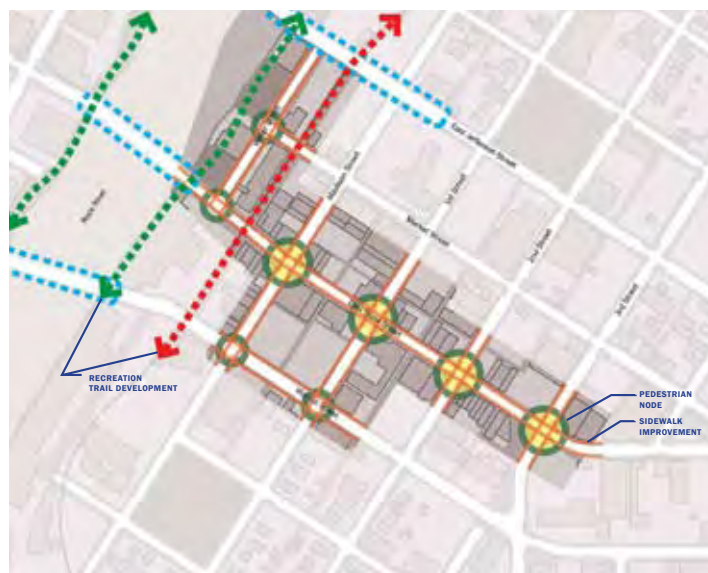
Redevelopment Targets:

Category	Existing	Future Targeted Commercial Uses
Civic/Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Working Marina● Project First Rate Union Craftsmen● Christian Growth Center Community Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Rockford Arts and Design Center
Retail / Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Furniture maker● Noah's Ark Animal Hospital● Billiard supplies and pool hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Dry cleaner
Food & Beverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Café

Strategic Recommendations

1. Concentrate the revitalization efforts and investments in a core geographic area. The breadth of opportunities for revitalizing and improving Rockford are numerous. Many areas of the City Center have wonderful under-utilized assets, and there are many worthwhile initiatives and programs that can be undertaken. However, these opportunities are dispersed throughout the City and span a geographic area several square miles in size. This recommendation to select a focus area in which to concentrate initial revitalization projects is expected to yield the greatest experiential and economic benefits for the larger City of Rockford, and will serve to propel the revitalization of subsequent geographic areas in the City.
2. Leverage existing assets. Rockford has many historic, natural, civic, and organizational assets that should be leveraged to strengthen the vibrancy and economic vitality of its community. Results can be achieved faster, and at lower levels of investment, by targeting existing assets in lieu of proposing new facilities and developments. More specifically, harnessing the potential of the riverfront, green space, building stock, cultural and civic institutions, and local businesses is critical to a successful revitalization.
3. Create linkages and physical connections. A key strategy to leverage Rockford's existing assets involves creating and reinforcing connections between amenities, destinations, and key public spaces in Rockford (e.g. Riverwalk, Rockford College, State Street, Main Street, the Museum Campus). Potentially, a public transportation system such as a trolley could be implemented to help accomplish this objective.
4. Develop Commercial* density to enrich and expand Rockford's experiential offering. Specifically, it is suggested to develop synergistic anchor and secondary Commercial uses at street-level that bring pedestrian traffic, economic growth, and desirable experiences.

** Commercial is defined as those businesses which operate retail, restaurant, entertainment, service, recreation, civic, small office, and cultural uses.*



A comprehensive transportation plan should promote walking and public transit

Strategic Recommendations

5. Leverage demographic and psychographic trends. Rockford is well positioned to offer experiences and amenities that are increasingly demanded by tourists, homebuyers and renters, business owners, and other stakeholder groups. These include a renewed interest in walkable communities, local and regional Commercial offerings, riverfront development, connections to nature, and a healthier lifestyle.
6. Celebrate Rockford's history. The most successful places embrace and embody their history and culture. Rockford's rich and storied past provides an excellent palette of historical references to be reinforced throughout the revitalization of the City Center.
7. Endorse and enforce the plan. Get explicit endorsements from all critical public and private stakeholders, and evaluate all investment and initiative decisions by how well they reinforce the plan.
8. Adopt a regulatory framework that promotes the activation of the streetscapes along mixed-use Commercial streets and areas. Specific regulations should address parking, storefront patios for food & beverage and retail businesses; streetscape design (including landscaping, street lighting and street furniture); storefront design; and operational regulations (e.g. trash removal, deliveries, snow removal)
9. Create a toolkit of incentives to promote development of new and historic buildings in the City Center. These public incentives should help close the financing gap that exists for City Center development projects that reinforce the vision for Rockford.



Rockford's unique character should be reinforced by celebrating its long history

Strategic Recommendations

Action Items By District

F

Strategic Recommendations

District	Redevelopment Strategy	Initiatives
East State Street	Augment and reinforce the existing local commercial experience while proactively driving visitation to the City Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a plan to improve the streetscape, way finding and parking signage ● Make appropriate modifications to the regulatory environment to permit the activation of the sidewalks and others public areas by Commercial businesses (sidewalk cafés, restaurant and rooftop patios, sidewalk retailing) ● Develop and implement a plan to activate and animate vacant lots (e.g. kiosks, new park space, public spaces) ● Develop and implement a City Center-wide Community Drivers and Animation (CDA™) program to drive visitation to the area ● Re-plan and activate the small park at Water and State Streets ● Conduct facade rehabilitation program and tree planting program ● Increase connections between this Commercial district and the riverfront, other civic anchors, a Rockford public market, a future city center education campus, and other city attractions and amenities
Main Street	Serve the daytime office worker population and visitors to the West Side entertainment venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create liner buildings along the parking lot ● Improve the corner of State and Main and its nearby street level activation by programming appropriate Commercial and civic uses ● Attract additional entertainment uses to the area, such as a “Brew and View” theater ● Develop a conference hotel facility
Madison Street	Build upon success of residential development and complement commercial vitality of East State Street. Pursue adaptive reuse of light industrial and vacant land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attract multi-family residential redevelopment ● Improve the quality of the streetscape ● Program active uses at the corner of Madison and State streets ● Create liner buildings or improve the streetscape on the east side of the street between State and Walnut ● Promote adaptive reuse with an incentive toolkit

Strategic Recommendations

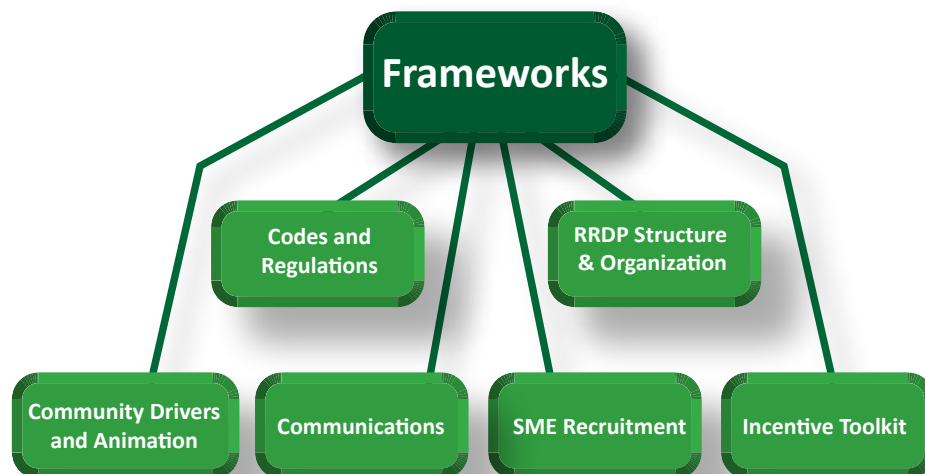
Action Items By District

District	Redevelopment Strategy	Initiatives
Recreation District	Connect Rockford residents to the waterfront by creating an active recreation district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop sports facilities in the district and reinforce connections to the Rock River ● Create partnerships with groups to program activities in the district ● Extend riverwalk to the North and South ● Create liner buildings along the parking lot
Museum District	Efforts in the Museum District are focused on improving the public space and properties in and around the facilities to evolve the area from a single-use museum area to a more balanced mixed-use district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop food & beverage amenities inside the District that serve an unmet customer demand ● Program and activate Wester Park ● Remove parking in front of the Museum of Art and create active park and develop a parking sharing program with users on the west side of North Main Street ● Convert some parking between the Discovery Center and Armory to public space ● Redevelop the Armory as complementary cultural/educational facility
Education and Innovation District	Attract large educational and corporate users to locate in the abandoned industrial facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recruit anchor user(s) for the district ● Develop a local business incubation center that develops and shares best practices with local entrepreneurs
Riverfront West	Improve access to the riverfront and connections between Main Street and the riverfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus investment on key access points and continually evaluate infill opportunities sites for programming and development ● Pursue opportunities to activate the riverfront with activities and recreation ● Collaborate with Rockford organizations to program the riverfront with events and rituals
South Main District	Create neighborhood-serving commercial cluster and leverage Amtrak Station development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a conceptual plan for the future Amtrak Train station and adjacent properties ● Focus efforts around existing Commercial buildings around the intersection of Morgan Street and South Main Street. Program Commercial uses targeted at West Side residents ● Focus investment on key access points and pursue opportunities to animate the riverfront with activities and recreation ● Create and extend a riverfront bike trail along the Rock River

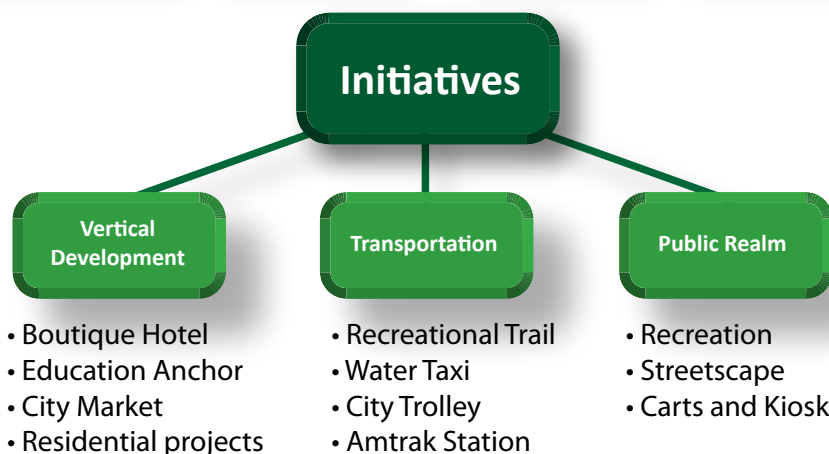
Redevelopment Roadmap

Action Plan

The redevelopment roadmap outlines the implementation actions required to realize the vision of a revitalized City Center. It should serve as a roadmap for organizing resources over the coming months and years. Action items are divided between Frameworks and Projects. This action plan and the recommendations contained herein should be reviewed periodically, ideally each quarter.



Frameworks are defined as broad initiatives that will effect change across the City Center. Frameworks are applicable across different locations and organizations.



Initiatives are tied to specific locations, projects, or development efforts. While more limited in scope than frameworks, projects can have a significant impact on the performance of the City Center.

Redevelopment Roadmap

Frameworks

A **Community Drivers and Animation** program consists of small, medium, and large activities and events that are designed to promote repeat visitation to the City Center by area residents and visitors. Daily and weekly activities and happenings attract a loyal following and take place frequently. Examples include dog-walking clubs, wine-tasting events, and yoga in the park. Events and festivities typically attract large crowds. These include existing events, like On the Waterfront and the Rockford Regatta, as well new events that will be programmed in the future.

Community Drivers and Animation (CDA)

Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Programming	Create list of events, festivities and activities that will attract consistent visitation to the focus area(s) and City Center	Initiatives, Customer Experience	RAVE, LWLP, city center business owners, CVB, RPD, RDA, The Element	Develop initial programming strategy	Update programming	Continuous improvement and development
Marketing plan	Strategies for communicating and driving visitation to events	Customer Experience	RDA, Chamber of Commerce, CVB	Develop marketing plan and implement initial marketing efforts	Implement full marketing program, refine as needed	Ongoing Marketing
Business plan and financial plan	Clearly identifies how CDA is implemented, paid for, measured, staffed	Initiatives, Finance	Chamber of Commerce	Develop business plans and financials	Measure performance against forecast, revise business plans	Transfer responsibility for business plan to organization running events
Implement activation initiatives	Events, rituals, and festivities	Customer Experience	RAVE, LWLP, City Center business owners, CVB, RPD, The Element	Launch Ph 1 CDA program	Evaluate events each quarter, modify and refine events to optimize customer experience, economic development, and repeat visitation	Shift responsibility to partner organizations including RAVE and the Chamber

**Financial plans include budgets and funding strategies*

Redevelopment Roadmap

Frameworks

Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Recruitment aims to create a healthy economic environment for small businesses and developers and proactively recruits them to locate in the target redevelopment area(s). A proactive leasing process canvasses the region for top tier commercial operators and recruits them to open small businesses in the City Center.

Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Recruitment

Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Create property a leasing/sales pool	Recruit property owners to participate in leasing process	Initiatives	City Center property owners including City of Rockford, EDC	Create initial property pool	Repeat in second district	Repeat process across City Center
Set up legal and financial documentation	Determine lease terms and conditions, feasible rents, create standardized lease	Initiatives, Finance	City Center property owners, EDC	Complete legal documents and proforma financial analysis	Modify legal documents and proformas for 2nd leasing initiative	Repeat process across City Center
Set up marketing for leasing/sales process	Collect all compelling facts and figures (zingers), create marketing material (brochures, web-based material, flyers)	Customer Experience	River District Assn, City Center property owners, EDC	Launch leasing marketing campaign	Launch campaign for 2nd leasing initiative	Repeat process across City Center
Implement leasing process	Recruit high-quality SMEs to locate in the City Center	Initiatives, Finance	Local area businesses, City Center property owners	Prospect Region 1, hold events for prospects, execute legal documents	Repeat for 2nd prospecting region	Repeat across subsequent prospecting regions

Redevelopment Roadmap

Frameworks

The appropriate **Codes and Regulations** will give developers and businesses in the City Center the highest likelihood of success. Codes should enforce compliance where critical, but allow for freedom and creative expression and marketing by City Center businesses.

Codes and Regulations						
Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Audit of codes and regulations	Evaluate codes and regulations to identify opportunities and challenges to promote profitable and active mixed-use development in City Center	Initiatives	City Center business and property owners	Conduct audit	Evaluate impact of changes to codes and regulation	Identify opportunities for further improvement
Inventory of best practices	Research other cities where development codes and regulations have been successfully rewritten	Initiatives	City Agencies	Conduct research and issue report		
Collaborative revision process	Rewrite codes and regulations in collaborative process	Initiatives, Customer Experience	Led by City of Rockford with collaboration from City Center business and property owners, City agencies, state and federal agencies, general public	Complete audit and outreach sessions	Complete rewrite of codes	Collect feedback, measure results

Redevelopment Roadmap

Frameworks

An **incentive toolkit** will create a range of financial and development incentives for developers and businesses looking to contribute to the revitalization of the City Center. The toolkit will create a transparent and equitable process for accessing the many available sources of funding for redevelopment projects.

Incentive Toolkit						
Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Identify goals and objectives of incentives	Identify stakeholders and funding requirements	Finance	Business and property owners, City of Rockford	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Audit available funding mechanisms	Catalog and score municipal, state and federal funding programs	Finance	City of Rockford, Winnebago County	Audit	Ongoing survey for new funding tools	Ongoing survey for new funding tools
Incentive playbook	Compile funding mechanisms into user-friendly and organized format	Finance	City of Rockford, Winnebago County	Draft	Revise based on user feedback and new funding tools	Revise based on user feedback and new funding tools
Liaison with developers, local businesses, public officials	Proactively identify funding opportunities for specific Rockford assets and opportunities	Finance, Customer Experience	City of Rockford, Winnebago County, business and property owners	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

Redevelopment Roadmap

Frameworks

An effective **Communications** strategy is critical to building and maintaining support for the City Center redevelopment efforts. Communications encompass traditional public relations and advertising efforts, as well as public outreach initiatives that actively solicit community input on an on-going basis.

Communications						
Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Communications plan	Identify key stakeholders, communication channels and rituals	Customer experience	CVB, Chamber, EDC	Create Communications plan	Update	Update
Community outreach	Create tools and outreach sessions that facilitate 2-way communication with stakeholders	Customer Experience	Rockford Register Star, River District	Hold 4 public outreach sessions, create survey tool for web site	Hold 4 public outreach sessions, implement social media strategy	Continue outreach and feedback mechanisms
Public relations	Proactively communicate with stakeholders through multimedia	Customer Experience	Rockford Register Star, River District	Create habitual process with local press, create internal process for issuing press releases	Pursue national press coverage of Rockford success story, continue local press initiatives	Pursue national press coverage of Rockford success story, continue local press initiatives

Redevelopment Roadmap

Projects

Public realm projects focus on animating and activating public space in Rockford. Developing seasonal recreational facilities, improved streetscape elements, and a carts and kiosks program will leverage Rockford's many outdoor spaces into venues that are used by Rockford's citizens.

Public Realm Projects

Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Develop conceptual plan(s)	Streetscaping site plan including: hardscaping, recreational amenities, plantings and greenspace, carts and kiosk spaces, seating and lighting	Initiatives, Customer Experience	City of Rockford, Rockford Park District, City Center property owners, landscape architects, Civic Design Advisory Group (CDAG)	Create streetscaping plan for recreation district, blocks 100-500 for East State Street	Create streetscaping plan for 2nd focus area, city-wide carts and kiosks program	Repeat process across City Center
Create business plan	Budgets, funding sources, phasing and roles and responsibilities to implement public realm strategies	Initiatives	City of Rockford, Rockford Park District, City Center Property owners, landscape architects, CDAG	Create business plan for recreation district and blocks 100-500 for East State Street streetscaping	Create business plan(s) for 2nd focus area streetscaping	Repeat process across City Center
Design development	Convert conceptual plans to construction drawings	Initiatives, Customer Experience	City of Rockford, Rockford Park District, City Center property owners, landscape architects, CDAG	Complete Schematic and Construction Drawings for 1st projects in Phase 1 Focus Area	Schematic & Construction Drawings for subsequent projects in Phase 1 Focus Area and City Center	Repeat process across City Center
Implement public realm projects	Construct streetscape components, attract recreational users, attract carts and kiosk operators	Initiatives	City of Rockford, Rockford Park District, City Center property owners, landscape architects, CDAG	Commence construction on Phase 1 projects	Complete Phase 1 projects, Complete Phase 2 projects	Repeat process across City Center

Redevelopment Roadmap

Projects

Vertical Development projects include all real estate development projects in the City Center. Redevelopment of existing buildings and new development are included in this category. **Several high priority projects include: a boutique hotel, an education anchor, the City Market, and market rate multi-family developments.**

Vertical Development Projects

Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Project evaluation	Assess project fit with vision for the City Center, RRDP and City's stated goals and objectives	Initiatives, Customer Experience	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Expand to other focus areas
Site selection and district planning	Develop site selection scoring criteria, evaluate project to determine ideal location in the City Center	Initiatives, Customer Experience	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Repeat process across City Center
Stakeholder management	Identify, convene, and oversee necessary stakeholders to realize project success	Initiatives, Customer Experience	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Repeat process across City Center
Create business plans	Clearly identifies how project is implemented, paid for, measured, staffed.	Initiatives, Finance	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Repeat process across City Center
Project financing	Secure public and private partners	Finance	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Repeat process across City Center
Design development	Create plans, Schematic and Construction Drawings for project	Initiatives	TBD	Phase 1 project(s)	Phase 1 & Phase 2 project(s)	Repeat process across City Center
Implement vertical development projects	Finance, construction and lease-up of vertical development project	Initiatives	City of Rockford, property owners, developers, architect	Commence construction on Phase 1 projects	Complete Phase 1 projects, Complete Phase 2 projects	Repeat process across City Center

Redevelopment Roadmap

Projects

Transportation projects focus on improving mobility within the City Center and the outlying areas of Rockford. Although public transportation, recreational mobility and pedestrian systems will be prioritized, vehicular access and convenient circulation in the City Center should also be promoted. Several high-priority projects include: **a new rail station with Amtrak service, a recreational trail system, a water taxi, and the trolley system.**

Transportation						
Action Item	Description	RRDP Committee	Partners	12 Month	36 Month	60 Month
Transportation system research	Assess existing conditions, end-user preferences, best practices	Customer Experience	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi, Amtrak TOD	Comprehensive City Center transportation Plan	City-wide plan
Transportation system plan	Conceptual plan including route, facilities, programming and activation, seasonality strategy	Customer Experience	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi	Comprehensive City Center transportation plan, Amtrak TOD	City-wide plan
Transportation system business plan	Clearly identifies how improvements are phased, paid for, measured, resourced	Commercial Projects, Finance	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi	Comprehensive City Center transportation plan, Amtrak TOD	City-wide plan
Project financing	Secure public and private partners	Finance	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi	Comprehensive City Center transportation plan, Amtrak TOD	City-wide plan
Design development	Create conceptual, schematic and construction drawings	Commercial Projects	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi	Comprehensive City Center transportation plan, Amtrak TOD	City-wide plan
Implement Transportation Plan	Construct improvements	Commercial Projects	City of Rockford, RMAP, RPD	Recreational trail, trolley expansion, water taxi	Comprehensive City Center transportation plan, Amtrak TOD	City-wide plan, Amtrak TOD

