



# RIVERSIDE

Comprehensive Masterplan

**BNIM** ARCHITECTS

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

ETC *Institute*



SHAFFER, KLINE & WARREN, INC.

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The Comprehensive Plan would not have been possible without the incredible amount of feedback and input provided by Riverside's citizens and city officials. A special thanks to the hundreds of individuals who freely gave their time and creativity in the hopes of building a better community.

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## INTRODUCTION

Planning is an act of optimism. It is the process of gathering all of the creative ideas and hopes that exist for a community and comparing those to economic realities and existing opportunities. By initializing the planning process, Riverside's leaders and citizens recognized the need to establish a strategy for future development. The primary goal of this Plan is to create a map of improvements for today and for the next 25 years that reflects the desires of citizens and business leaders. The Master Plan lays out strategies for preserving the core characteristics that make Riverside unique while improving the portions that detract from the community's vision for a better future.

The City of Riverside has tremendous potential. The amount of community support demonstrated throughout the master planning process makes this a very promising moment in the City's history. We have clearly seen momentum gather in support of shaping development pressure into a powerful force for beneficial change. By creating a Comprehensive Master Plan, Riverside establishes the rules of the game for potential development. The Plan will also provide leverage against unwanted or unwise developments and create incentives for projects that accomplish the goals identified by the citizens of Riverside during the planning process.

When taken together, all of the recommendations in this plan may

appear overwhelming. It is important to remember this is a long journey and over the last eight months good progress has already been made. By building on recent successes and identifying low hanging fruit—projects that are easy to carry-out and have the most noticeable impact—Riverside will improve its appearance and achieve a higher quality of life.

### A Vision for Riverside's Future

The Riverside community is unique in the Kansas City metropolitan area. The small town feel, proximity to the core of KC, unique funding resources, and scenic natural areas create a mix of characteristics and amenities that are not replicable. Despite these advantages, there is significant potential for further improvements that will greatly enhance the appearance, reputation, and efficiency of the City.

Riverside has been largely bypassed by many of the growth booms in the Northland of Kansas City. While Riverside would have liked to benefit from some of the new amenities built in neighboring communities, the development lag allows the City to learn from others' mistakes and to organize a strategy that effectively promotes growth without disrupting the elements of life that Riverside's citizens cherish.

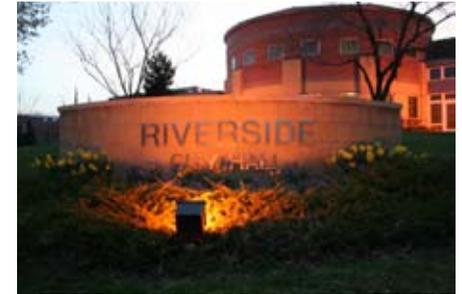
Riverside is now on the verge of extraordinary new development opportunities. With proper consideration and guidance from City officials

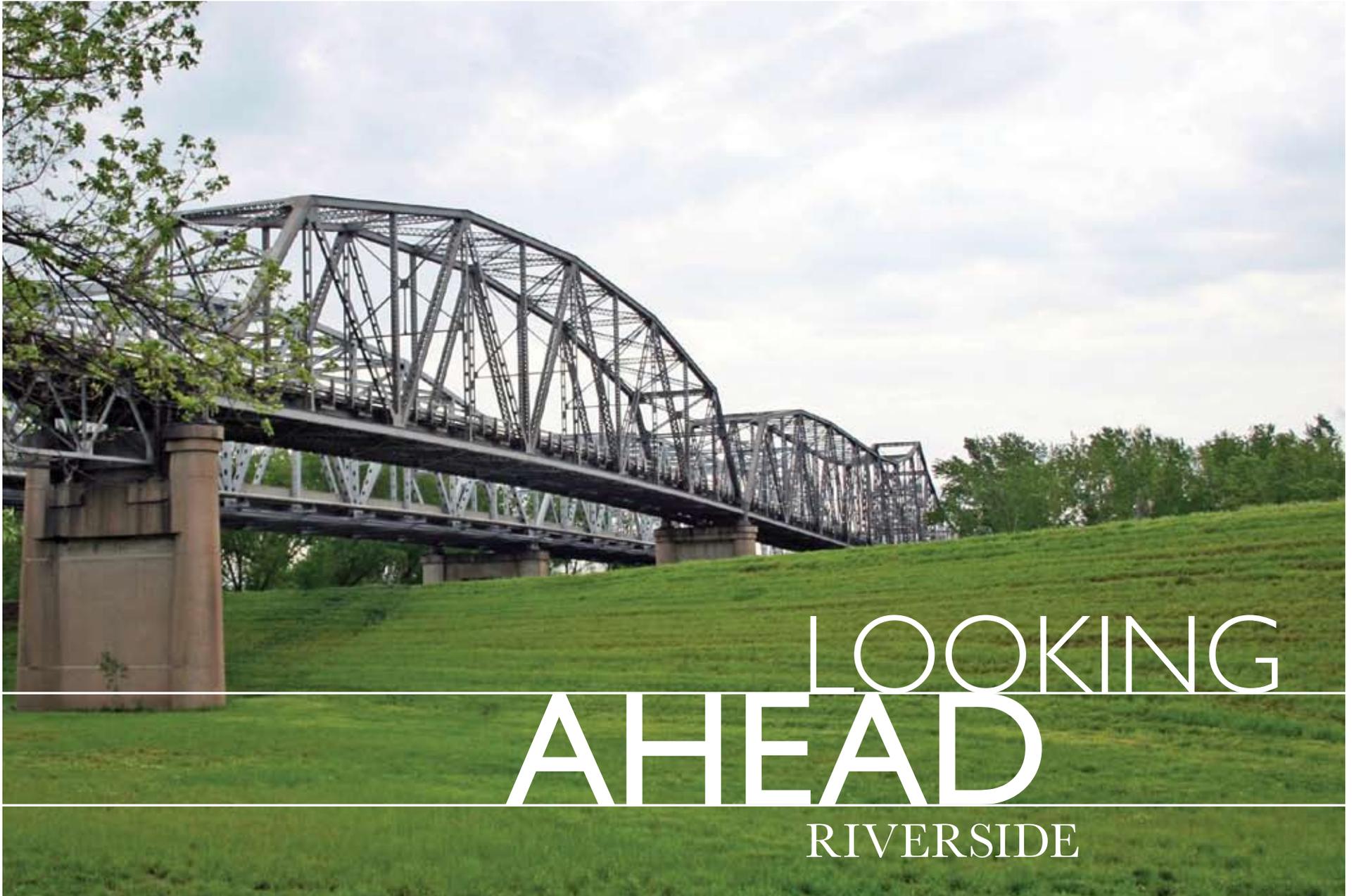
Riverside can have more amenities, provide a greater variety of shopping choices, protect its natural resources, and build a community that is proud of its character.

### Intent of the Master Plan

By undertaking the Master Planning Process, the City of Riverside made a commitment to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and to take a step back from the day to day operations to envision where the City should be in 20 years and beyond. This Master Plan document is a memorial of the countless interviews, meetings and analysis carried out by the team and the Riverside community. It should be used as reference for City officials and as a road map toward a vision for the future of the City. The plan can also be used to measure the City's progress by testing the established goals and recommendations against the implementation timeline.

It is important to note that every recommendation within the Master Plan came from the citizens of Riverside. There are no recommendations within this document that were not supported or promoted by the larger community. There were, of course, differing opinions and life-perspectives on many issues, but even where there were disagreements the challenges often times lifted the dialogue to a more thorough evaluation. It is the intent of the Master Plan to synthesize the hundreds of pieces of good advice into a comprehensive strategy for governing Riverside in the coming years.





LOOKING  
AHEAD  
RIVERSIDE

## THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

All opportunities come with great responsibility. The first moves made in large scale development or redevelopment projects often set the direction and quality for subsequent work. The City established a Master Planning Team to provide guidance and a strategic framework from which to lead development.

### The Team

In the early part of 2006, the City of Riverside put together an experienced planning team (Armstrong Teasdale, BNIM Architects, Shafer, Kline, and Warren Engineers, Cook, Flatt, and Strobel Engineers, ETC Community Surveyors, and Development Strategies Market Analysts) to help continue recent progress and to create a map for the next phase of the City's redevelopment in a Comprehensive Master Plan. Each of the team members contributed uniquely to the overall process.

ETC and the rest of the planning team created a questionnaire that went to every resident of Riverside. The feedback we received from the survey provided the baseline for many of the planning and community improvement recommendations. Development Strategies provided important information about the economic situation of

the region and about Riverside's niche in the regional market. Cook, Flatt & Strobel Engineers provided invaluable insight and critique to the large transportation improvements being proposed. Armstrong Teasdale, LLC contributed to the financial modeling and countless other implementation questions. Shafer, Kline & Warren has a long standing relationship with the City and their expertise and knowledge of Riverside has been critical. BNIM Architects was brought in to facilitate community participation, conduct design analysis, coordinate planning and design recommendations and distill the team's findings into a legible Comprehensive Master Plan.

### Community Involvement

From the start, community involvement was critical. Directed by the City of Riverside, the Master Planning Team incorporated extensive public feedback into every step of the process. During data collection, public opinion research, stakeholder interviews, and community workshops the general public and the Riverside business community played a major role in the creation of the Master Plan. The commitment of everyone involved instilled a great deal of confidence in the planning team, and demonstrated a commitment to implementation that will help carry the plan forward.



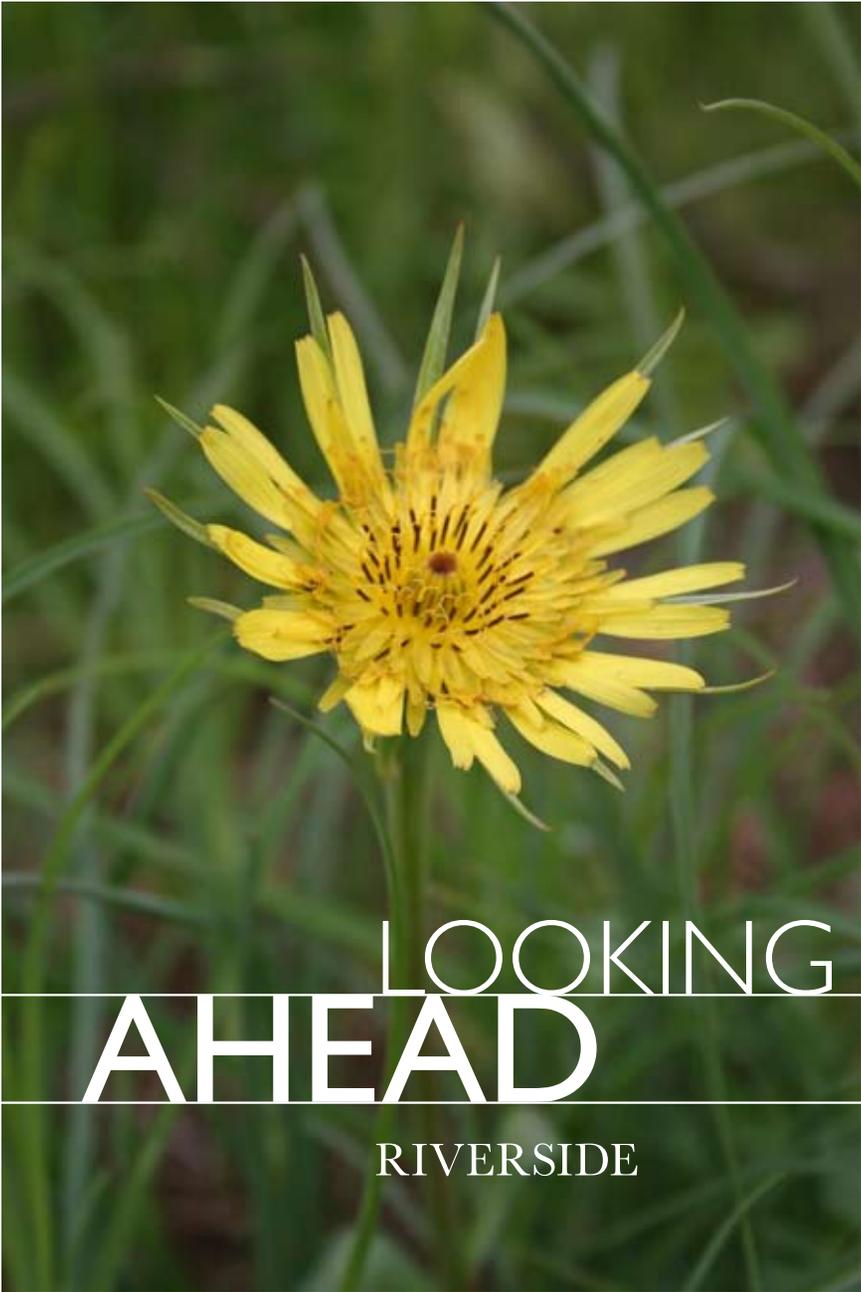
The new I-635 interchange will open the Horizons property to new development opportunities.



E.H. Young Park is one of the nicest parks in the metropolitan area and a great place to get a view of the Missouri River.



Community feedback was crucial to the creation of the Master Plan.



LOOKING  
AHEAD  
RIVERSIDE

## Project Phases

The Riverside Master Planning process was divided into 4 consecutive phases:

1. **Community Discovery and Community Voices,**
2. **The Vision,**
3. **The Plan, and**
4. **Implementation.**

During **Community Discovery and Community Voices**, the team gathered as much physical and numeric data as possible from a wide variety of resources. This information was distilled into a format that could be used as the basis for future physical planning, economic, and policy recommendations. This initial phase also included the most extensive public involvement.

The **Vision** phase translated the compiled interviews and surveys into a preliminary physical plan for Riverside. This stage developed the first rough draft of the Master Plan. It allowed the community to evaluate how well the planning team recorded their thoughts and hopes about the City. In most cases, we heard that we had gotten it right, but in some instances, revealing implications of different policies or designs led to a shift in community preferences.

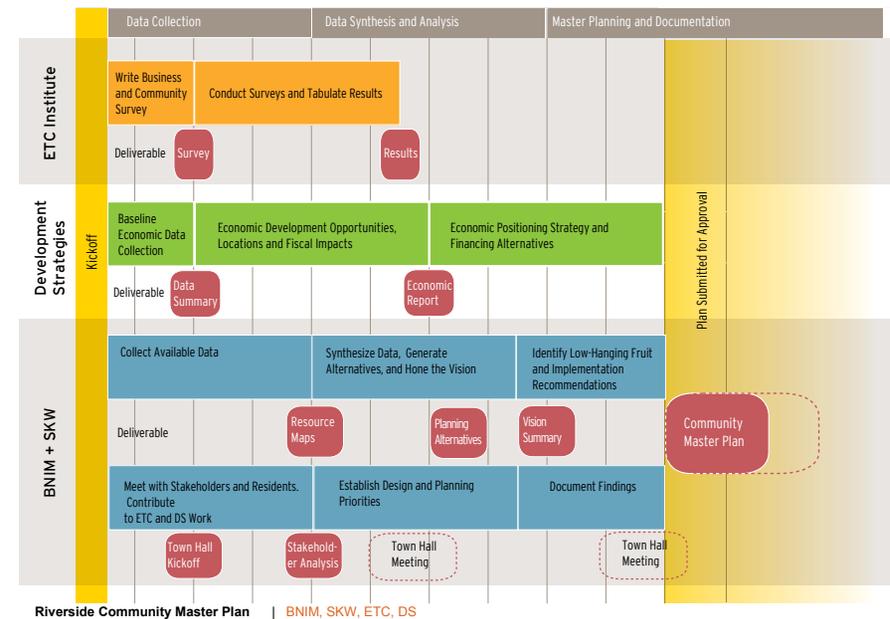
The **Plan** incorporates the feedback from the community workshops and a variety of other professional advisors into a final physical map for future development. The Plan is made up of hundreds of recommendations ranging

from policy changes to development characteristics. The Comprehensive Master Plan establishes the land-use to guide zoning, the design to improve existing conditions, and the direction and timing of City involvement.

The **Implementation** phase is where the ideas of the community recorded in the Master Plan are taken from two dimensional renderings into actual programs and projects within the Riverside community. Ultimately the implementation defines and qualifies the projects that will move Riverside toward the vision established by the community in the Comprehensive Plan. It is in this phase when all of the ideas and hopes are turned over to City officials. The implementation portion of the Plan is in an accompanying document. Implementation should be revisited and updated every year by the Planning Board.

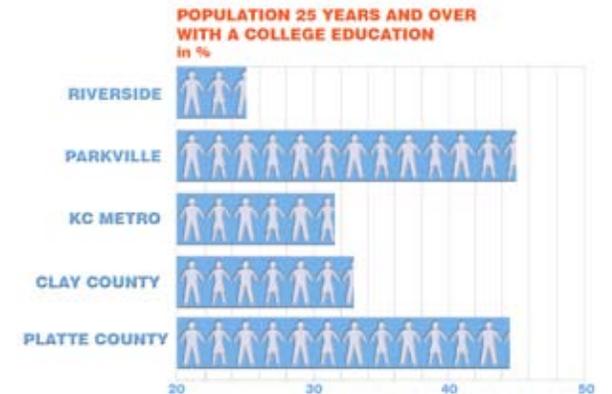
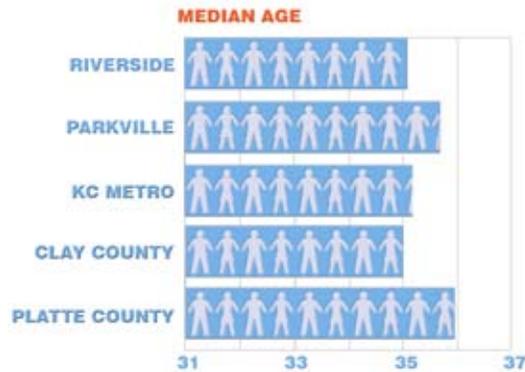
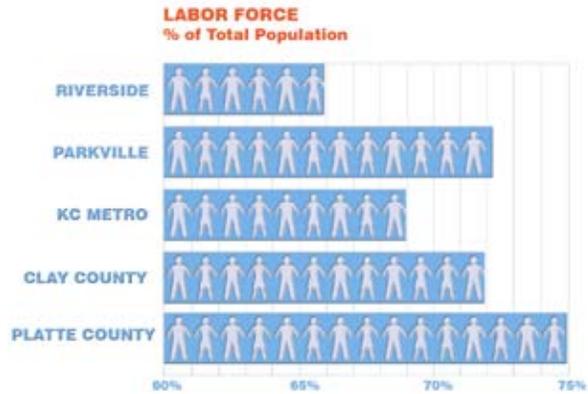
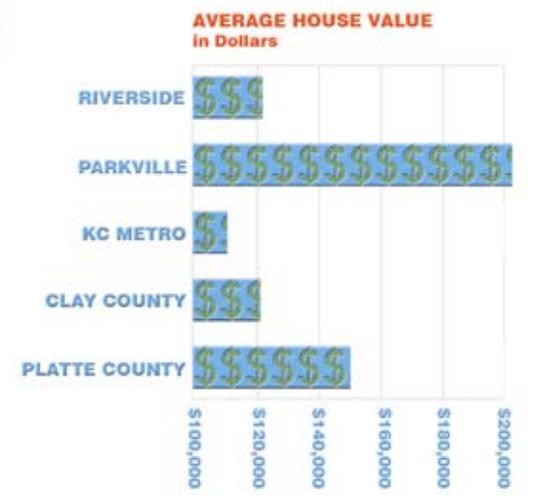
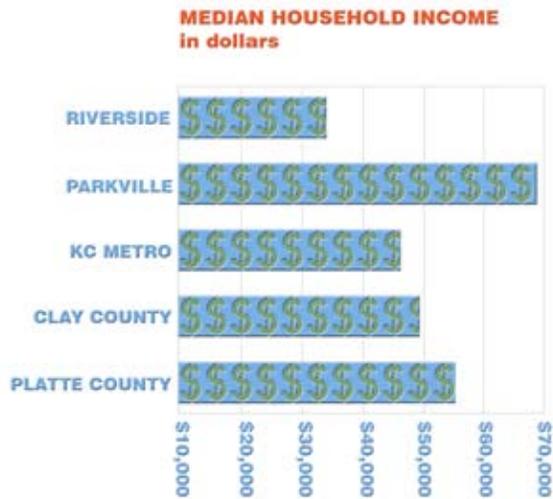
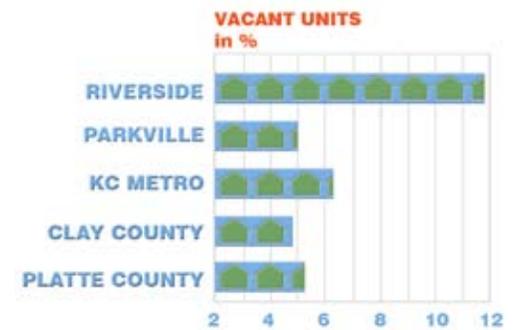


During a working session community members consider development alternatives.



The Planning team coordinated tasks and deliverables to accommodate the rapid timeline required.

# Existing Demographics



## COMMUNITY DISCOVERY

### Understanding the Issues

To fully understand the issues facing Riverside, the team undertook a comprehensive study of the City's physical, social, and economic existing conditions. This was done by conducting a community survey, talking to stakeholders, holding community meetings, evaluating market conditions, walking the City's roads and stream corridors and examining the long-term viability of proposed development alternatives. The results of these evaluations are recorded in the following paragraphs.

### Community Overview

The City of Riverside, population 3000, has undergone significant change in the last decade. A levee was built to protect approximately 900 acres from flooding, the Argosy casino allowed the City to carry out major infrastructure and civic improvements, and City leaders and staff have undertaken an ambitious redevelopment effort. Today Riverside is at an exciting crossroads. The City has many of the amenities that a great town would hope to have: access to a significant river, a highly accessible link to a major downtown core, beautiful views from its limestone hills, and a riverboat casino that generates significant tax revenue. The next major project is a new interchange on Interstate 635 that will soon provide

direct access to 600 largely undeveloped acres within a ten minute drive of downtown Kansas City. A majority of that land, called the Horizons Project, is owned by the City and is an important piece of Riverside's future development. However, an even larger piece of Riverside's redevelopment potential lies outside of the Horizons District. The Gateway Corridor, the downtown intersection, West Platte Road, and several residential areas are also ripe for redevelopment and improvement. These areas already have improved transportation access, and in some cases the existing building stock is near or past its useful lifespan.

Riverside is lagging behind its neighbors in a few key areas. Median household income is noticeably lower than several benchmark cities. While the median household income in Riverside is about \$33,000, the median for Platte County is \$55,000. The discrepancy in income is attributable to a variety of factors, but it is an indication that the City needs to be responsive to the needs of its particular income demographic. This may mean trying to create jobs that offer better pay or housing opportunities that provide residents with quality housing at a lower price point. Increasing the median household income should be a goal of City government, but care should be taken that progress in this regard does not come at the expense of lower wage earners.

One indication of a lower median income is the percentage of residents with a college education. According to the U.S. Commerce department, a college degree is worth \$900,000 more in lifetime earning potential than a high school diploma (\$25,900/year for a high school diploma vs. \$45,400/year for a college degree). The solution to this dilemma requires a continued dedication to the quality of Riverside's public schools and a renewed effort to provide the amenities and quality of life that retain and attract residents with a higher degree of educational attainment.

Another particularly interesting statistic is the vacancy rate and the preponderance of rental housing units over home ownership. These statistics are somewhat related in that rental properties typically have higher vacancy rates, because of a continuous turnover, than ownership housing. Another contributing factor to Riverside's high vacancy rate is the quality of existing building stock. Improvements in the appearance and quality of buildings in the community would help to lower existing vacancy rates. The split between owner and rental housing in Riverside is highly unusual and there is a persistent concern from the community that this ratio prevents the type of community involvement and permanence desired. Rental housing is an important niche in every housing market, but when it drastically exceeds the ownership market it is difficult to achieve the balance required to build a permanent com-



Highly visible properties have a large impact on the appearance of the city.



Recent infrastructure improvements will stimulate reinvestment and new development.



Some permanent structures are under-utilized during a majority of the year.



These images from the Wyandotte County Historical Society show Riverside on Race Day. On a good day, Pendergast's track would draw nearly 20,000 fans and gamblers to town.

munity identity. When these statistics are taken together, there is evidence of some social and market issues that could be shored up.

The team learned a great deal about Riverside from discussions with community members. Many of the concerns and issues will be covered in depth later in this document, but a couple of recurring concerns are worth pointing out at this time because they set the tone for the larger document.

Many residents discussed the need to create an identity or theme for Riverside. Another common concern is the dilapidated appearance of many businesses. There is a well-founded fear that run-down buildings are keeping the City from progressing as rapidly as it should. The planning team found these concerns to be accurate and much of our attention has been spent coming up with ways to address those issues. During our interviews the term “identity crisis” was used on several occasions to explain the need to create a clear and unique character for Riverside. Today there is a lack of consistency between development projects and a comprehensive strategy is needed to coordinate future efforts. Identifying all the opportunities to improve the character and fabric of development in Riverside requires a brief look into the history of the City.

## History

It is indeed strange to hear about the identity crisis that exists in Riverside today while also reading about the extremely important historical elements that are part of the overall Riverside identity. Incorporating the history of the City into the view of the current City is critically important to creating a foundation for a community tied to its past and clear about its future.

Riverside has an interesting and colorful history. While the City has only been incorporated for 55 years, Riverside’s history goes back much further than that. There are a couple of historical landmarks that have informed our planning and deserve a short description. The Interurban rail line, the Native American archeological finds and Tom Pendergast’s Riverside Jockey Club are historical elements of national import. These landmarks have left an indelible mark on the City and should be embraced as part of the Riverside story. Furthermore, their physical remnants should be protected and enhanced. (For more information on Riverside’s history, please reference Dale Garrison’s 2001 written history.)

The Riverside Jockey Club was the setting for “Boss Tom Pendergast’s” thoroughbred horse races. In its heyday the Riverside track attracted 20,000 spectators a day and finagled its way past restrictions on gambling by accepting donations that could be refunded if the

right horse won the race. Over the years several other race facilities operated out of Riverside, but today a piece of the original Jockey Club Post is apparent along West Platte Road. It is our recommendation that this part of Riverside’s history be embraced and incorporated into redevelopment plans.

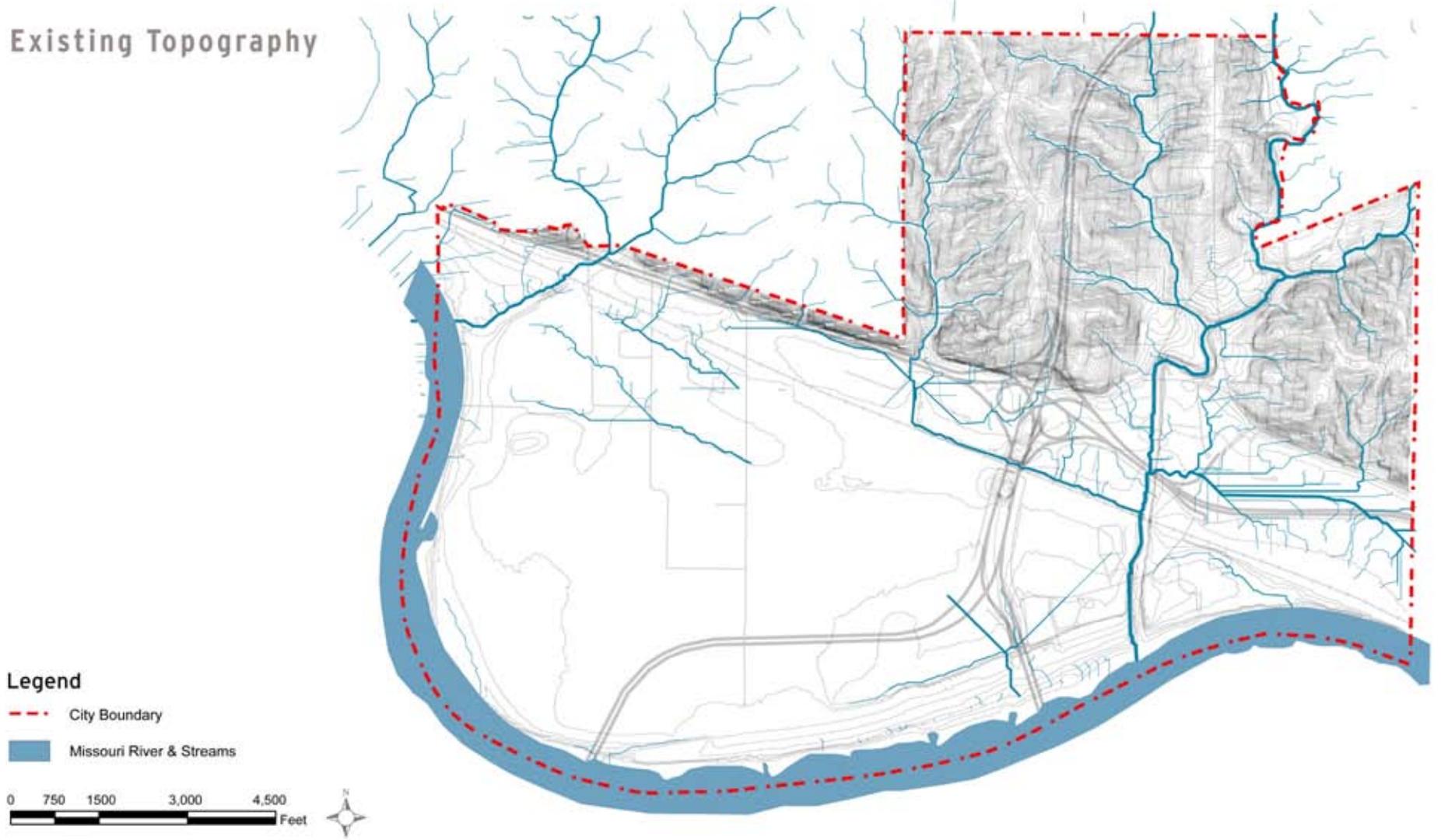
The Interurban Railroad ran from 1913-1933 and was an innovation in transportation. The electric commuter line enabled a quick trip from as far away as St. Joe into downtown Kansas City on a regular hourly schedule. The line went through a majority of Riverside and had two stops: one permanent station on the hillside across from the old post office, and one temporary station across the street from the race track where the Northside mobile homes are today. In parts of the City, the rail infrastructure and the path of the train still exist. The historical importance, scenic nature, and topography make the alignment a perfect possibility for the creation of a trail.

The American Indian mounds and village sites unearthed around Riverside represent another wealth of historical information. Nebo, Hopewell, and a host of other native cultures inhabited the Riverside bluffs for nearly 7,000 years. The quantity and quality of the artifacts recovered demonstrates the long-term importance of the City’s natural resources and the locational advantages that have made Riverside a good place to be for thousands of years. This extremely unique part of Riverside’s

story should be emphasized in a much more explicit fashion. According to Dale Garrison’s historical report, 3,000 museum quality artifacts were unearthed during excavations. Proper display and interpretation of these finds would go a long way toward paying proper respect to the importance of the findings and to demonstrating the character and significance of Riverside’s identity.

Later in the Master Plan, we will evaluate possible strategies for reinterpretation of Riverside’s historical elements, but some opportunities include a Riverside welcome center and historical museum. This structure may be something that the City could derive a good deal of benefit from. The facility could become one of the important City landmarks and would be the perfect place for interpretation of the City’s rich history.

## Existing Topography



Scenic bluffs and pristine valleys characterize the upland portion of Riverside. Future development must preserve select views and natural habitat while also focusing on innovative stormwater solutions.

## Natural Conditions

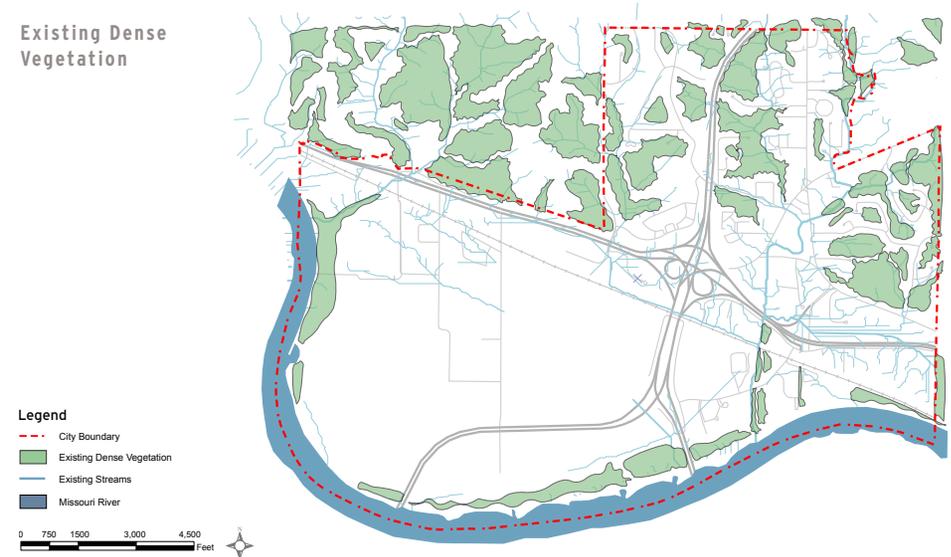
Riverside has several unique geographic conditions that will continue to effect the development of the City. The topography of the bluffs creates several moments of unobstructed views across the Missouri river and into downtown Kansas City. That topography also creates some interesting neighborhoods and natural areas but limits the amount and type of development possible. These bluffs and the accompanying streams that run between them are valuable natural resources and represent the natural character that many residents identify as the primary aesthetic characteristic of Riverside. By conducting a parallel conservation effort with redevelopment programs it will be possible to protect the excellent natural habitat that remains in Riverside.

Of primary concern is the fact that Riverside is at the bottom of its watershed and that poor stormwater decisions upstream directly degrade the quality of Riverside's natural areas. Due to poor management upstream, Riverside needs to be even more proactive about handling its stormwater in an appropriate manner.

Riverside is also blessed with established woodlands and large areas of contiguous wildlife habitat. The vegetation diagram shows nearly half of Riverside under a thick tree canopy. When thinking about preserving the

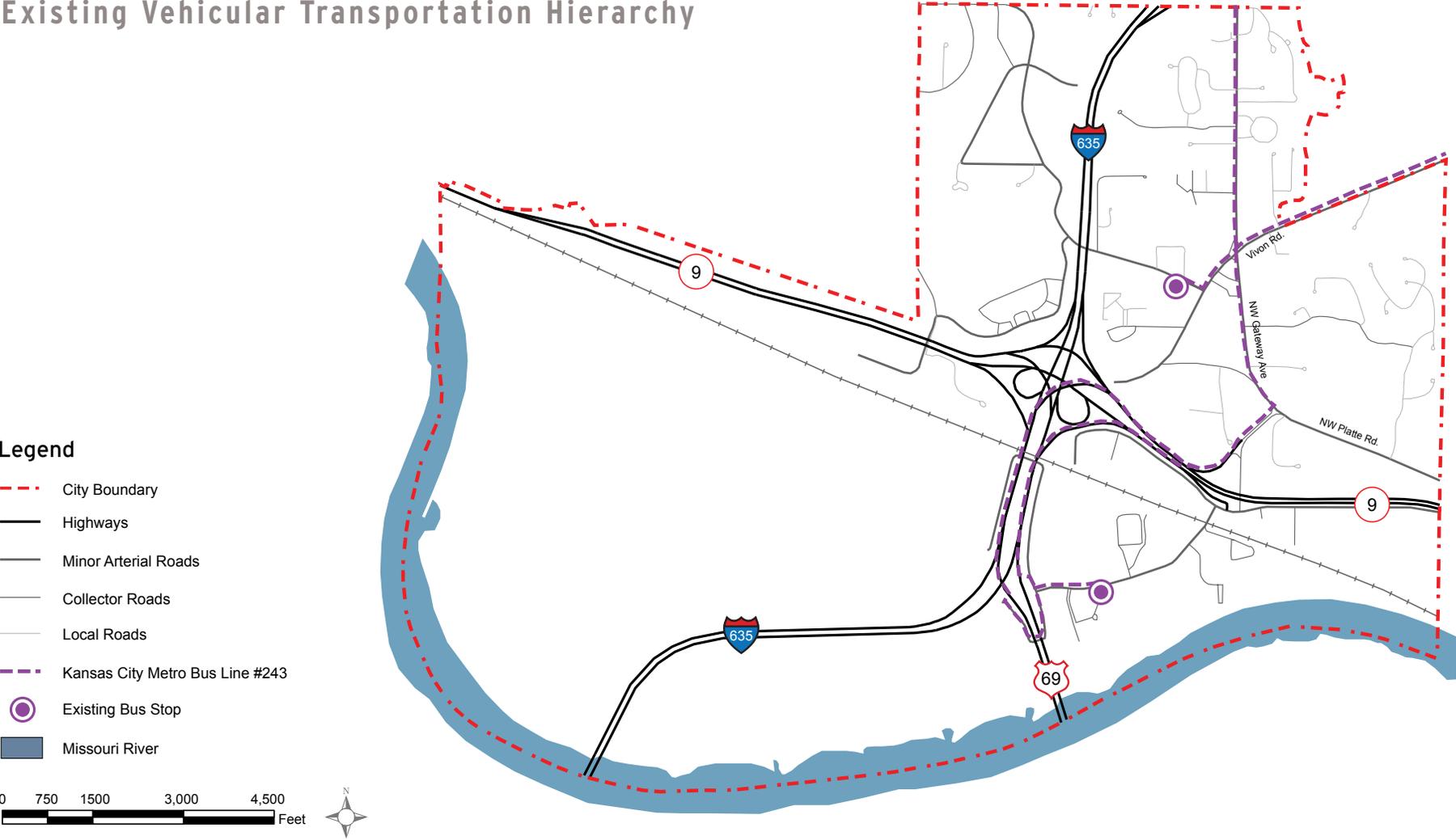
wildlife and natural look within Riverside, areas of contiguous habitat are very important. Fragmented patches of wild land do not provide the necessary cover for wildlife.

Existing Dense Vegetation



The existing dense vegetation scattered throughout Riverside should be considered a valuable amenity and the backbone of the open-space network.

# Existing Vehicular Transportation Hierarchy



The existing transportation network provides excellent access to the region, however there are a lack of physical connections between neighborhoods and limited public transportation opportunities. Transportation improvements should strengthen inter-city vehicular and pedestrian connections.

## Mobility Analysis

During one interview, an astute Riverside resident remarked, “anywhere you want to go from Riverside, you are half way there when you leave.” As you can see from the accompanying diagram, Riverside’s access to the regional transportation network is very strong and within a 15 minute drive it is possible to reach many of the area’s amenities. This access is an asset to both the City’s residents and to its ability to attract interest from a variety of potential employers and retailers. In fact, the community survey indicated 83% of respondents list the proximity and ease of access to Kansas City as important to their decision to live in Riverside.

Access from the KC metro into Riverside is another important factor. Only 14% of the daily workforce in Riverside resides within the City limits with the remaining 86% commuting from surrounding areas. This statistic indicates that Riverside is capable of drawing on neighboring communities for workforce needs, but it also indicates that if housing opportunities were created near employment Riverside may be able to capture some of the commuting workforce.

Existing transportation infrastructure also represents an opportunity to advertise Riverside’s character. The views from I-635, I-29, and Highway 9 are the visual character of Riverside that most people see. Redevelopment efforts

should be designed with those views in mind and additional beautification efforts on the part of the City should also target key view corridors along the roadways with the highest traffic counts.

Unfortunately, access to the regional transportation network divides Riverside into quadrants and makes connections across these barriers extremely difficult. The railroad right-of-way also presents challenges when looking for opportunities to knit neighborhoods and districts together. BNSF rail traffic will most likely be an increasingly frequent obstacle to at-grade vehicular crossings. Making connections across barriers and promoting alternative modes of transportation are issues that will continue to require attention from the City.



The I-635 interchange cuts Riverside into distinct quadrants and makes it difficult to make easy connections across town.

## 15 Minute Driving Distance

### Legend

- Major Highway Network
  - City of Riverside
  - Approximate 15 Min. Driving Distance
  - Landmarks
1. Downtown KCMO
  2. Kansas Speedway & Other Attractions
  3. Parkville, MO
  4. Country Club Plaza Shopping District
  5. Zona Rosa Shopping District
- River Network

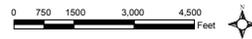


Riverside’s excellent access to regional transportation infrastructure means that much of the Kansas City Metro Area is within easy driving distance.

## BARRIERS

### Legend

- Highway
- Rail
- Levee



CITY OF RIVERSIDE, MO 17 April 2006  
BNIM barkebile nelson immenschuh mcdownett architects

Existing physical barriers divide Riverside into distinct segments. Making connections across these barriers is an important endeavor.

# Existing Figure/Ground



Existing development in Riverside is scattered and has a low over all density. There is currently no rectangular block patterns anywhere in town. Because of the existing character and low densities there are opportunities to strategically develop under-utilized parcels to boost amenities and quality housing stock while still showcasing the natural character of the city.

## Existing Built Environment

The amount of Riverside currently developed is relatively low. As you can see from the diagram, there are many remaining areas of open space left within the City. The topography of the bluffs and the flood risk associated with Horizons, before the construction of the levee, kept a majority of Riverside out of reach for development. That is changing rapidly. The new levee and an increased market for housing in the Northland have led to new demand. The bluffs adjacent to Riverside's are rapidly developing and there is little doubt among the planning team that there will be significant new development in both Horizons and in many other new infill sites.

Riverside will change dramatically regardless of whether or not everyone thinks it should. The key will be to proactively guide new development so that it becomes something that Riverside is proud of after it is built. The City is on the verge of a very important moment in its history. With or without a plan, new construction in Riverside is likely to dramatically alter the appearance of the City. Being prepared for the change will make the difference between perpetuating existing conditions and learning from prior missteps.

The existing built environment in Riverside has some defining characteristics that should be maintained and enhanced and others that need

improvement and a concerted effort by City development staff. The feeling of community exuded by Riverside's neighborhoods is one of most treasured characteristics of the City. Other positive characteristics of the built environment include the quality of new roadways, the appearance of City and school facilities, and the appearance of City parks.

Characteristics that would improve the built environment include further attention to upgrading streetscapes, replacing under-utilized buildings and buildings that do not meet code, filling vacancies, improving design standards, making better pedestrian connections, and creating new developments of the highest quality. Another development technique that deserves examination is the creation of a rectilinear street grid in a few key locations around town. Rectilinear street grids allow for a higher degree of land utilization and facilitate pedestrian activity while cul-de-sacs can isolate neighborhoods and limit emergency access.



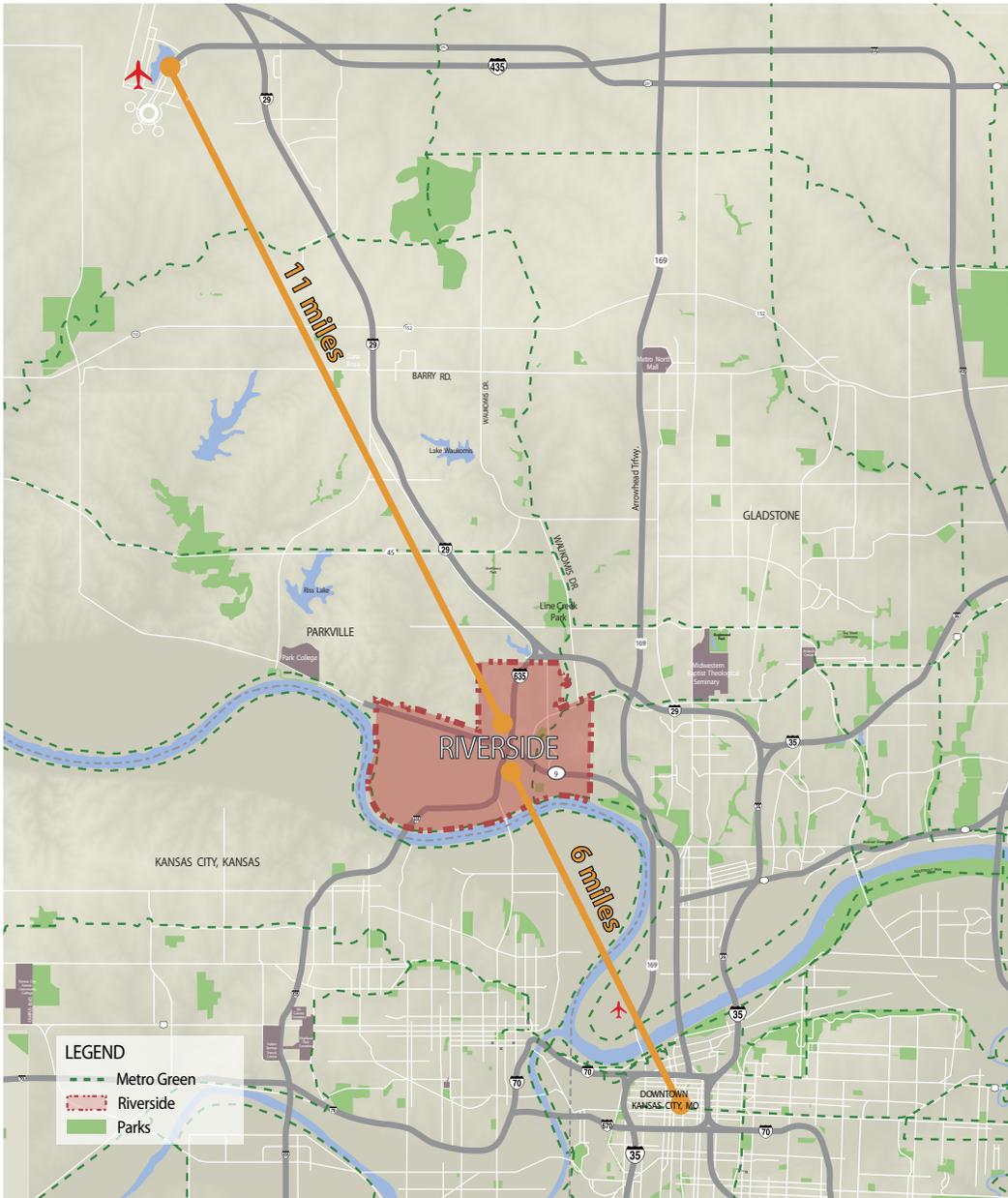
This Indian Hills home is part of Riverside's existing housing stock.



Downtown Riverside lacks consistent design. Large setbacks create very wide streetscapes.



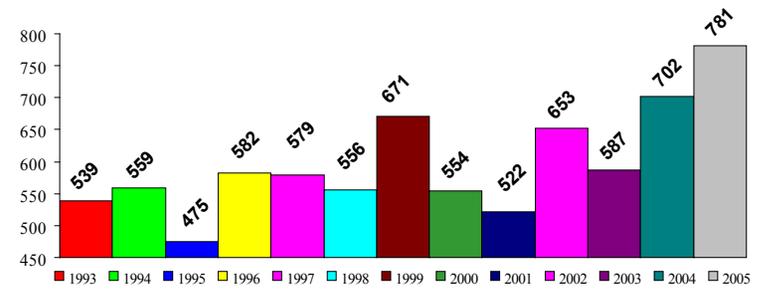
Managing storm water in a safe, ecological, and attractive fashion will continue to be a challenge.



Riverside is near downtown Kansas City and is an easy drive to the airport. Access to the Missouri River and the proposed Metro Green Trail Network will add to the locational advantages and increases recreational opportunities.

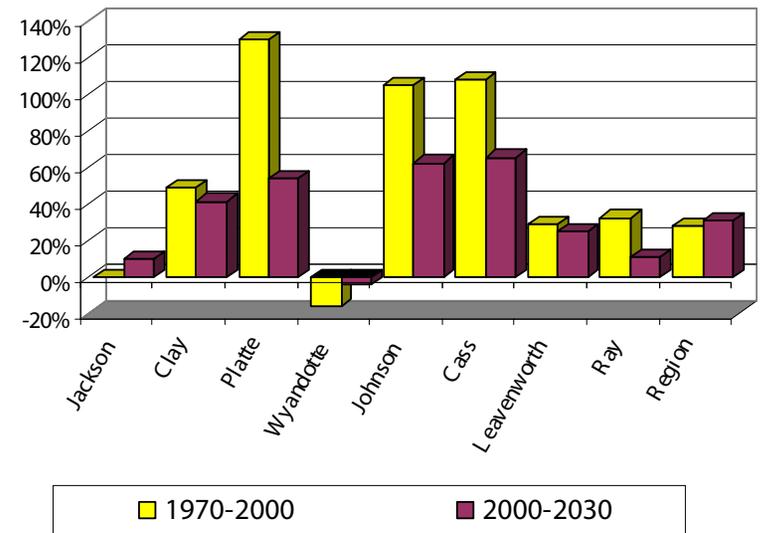
### Platte County Single Family Housing Permits

(Source: Home Builders Assoc. of Greater KC)



Housing demand in the Northland has shown steady growth and predictions for the future demonstrate a continued demand.

### 30-Year Growth Rates of Primary Counties in Metro Kansas City



Source: Mid America Regional Council

Platte County will continue its strong growth and Riverside is ideally situated to capture a large portion of that growth.

## Tax

Riverside has an unusual tax structure. The absence of a real estate tax forces the City to think about funding opportunities in an unconventional way and at times is directly at odds with the goals of the City. For example, a primary goal that emerged from the survey and the workshops is the desire to build a larger population base that would offset the rental population and encourage more retail opportunities. While the lack of a real estate tax may have a slight appeal to potential new residents, it also means that the City is responsible for providing services to a growing population without a corresponding boost to the tax base. This can dilute the per capita impact of casino revenue by spreading it out over a greater number of infrastructure requirements.

There are things that can be done to offset the impact, but the bottom line remains that the lack of a real estate tax attracts residents who don't feel like they should have to pay for the excellent services provided by the City. As another example, the City's large industrial users also take advantage of the City's infrastructure and put demands on City services but they are not responsible for paying any real estate tax. This is a large missed opportunity for additional funding that could go a long way toward making desired improvements. It is our opinion that the absence of a real estate tax is not in

the best long-term interests of the City. While it may not be politically feasible at this time, there should be a strategy in place to evaluate the benefits of a long-range tax structure amendment.

## Regional Impacts

It is no secret that the Northland has experienced exceptional growth in the last decade, and between 1970 and 2000 Platte County experienced the second largest amount of growth in the state of Missouri. Even though Riverside did not grow at the same rate as the rest of Platte County, development pressure has increased to the point that new development projects in Riverside are a near certainty. This pressure will only be intensified by the continued growth of North Kansas City and the housing that will be required by an influx of residents.

Growth in the Kansas City metropolitan area and a stronger and more vital downtown Kansas City will also increase the value of land in Riverside. According to the Metro Dataline, The Kansas City Metropolitan Area is expected to grow by 550,000 new residents in the next 30 years and Platte county is expected to grow by 70% over the same period. This is extraordinary new growth. The redevelopment of Downtown Kansas City will also benefit Riverside as proximity to the downtown core is of increasing value.

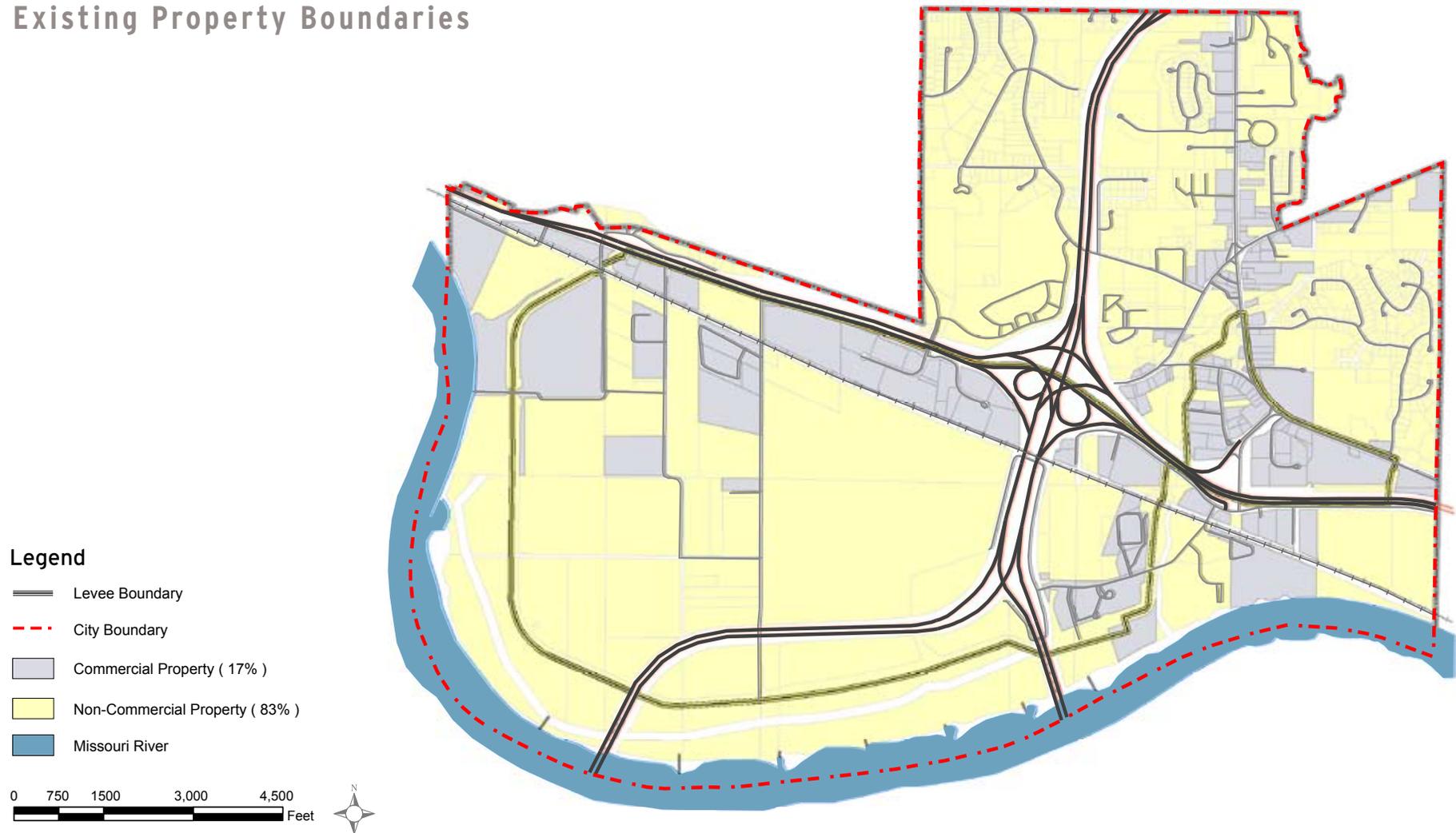
The Metro Green Trail Network will potentially have a very positive impact on Riverside. As the plan stands now, Riverside will be very well served by the trail and the City should become an advocate for completion of the system within City boundaries and throughout the larger community. If completed,

the trail network would provide a great recreational opportunity, an alternate means of commuting to downtown KC, and a strong connection to the Missouri River.

The commercial development already built in the Northland captured much of the current market potential. Zona Rosa, Briar Cliff, and other new projects will provide shopping alternatives that are currently lacking. The impact of these commercial developments softens the opportunity to do large scale commercial projects in Riverside. However, with a growing population, there will continue to be opportunities for well-designed smaller scale projects. It is with that mindset that Riverside should be focusing on attracting new retail businesses.

The BNSF rail line runs through Riverside in a path that roughly follows the Highway 9 alignment. Current traffic on the two lines is heavy and the pending development of an additional rail line will dramatically add to the frequency of train traffic. To mitigate traffic and noise conflicts, at grade crossings should be limited and Riverside should investigate the implementation of "quiet zones" like those under investigation in Parkville that allow train traffic to safely pass through town without excessive use of the whistle.

## Existing Property Boundaries



A sizable portion of Riverside's land is dedicated to commercial uses. Enhancing existing commercial sites and converting outdated areas to modern users is critical to improving the City's appearance.

## Development Regulations, Trends, and Pressures

Development Strategies was brought onto the master Planning Team to provide market research and economic data. The team used this information to guide our decision making and design strategies. The complete Development Strategies report should be referenced, but for the body of this plan it is important to call out the most relevant findings.

For a variety of reasons Development Strategies demonstrated much smaller demands for commercial space than was once hoped for in Riverside. The market for a large scale retail development is not currently strong, and recent developments in the Northland have captured much of the remaining potential. Office space demand is currently very soft all around Kansas City and there is only a small expectation for office development in Riverside over the next 20 years. By far the strongest demands for land demonstrated by Development Strategies were in regard to industrial and residential development. The growth of Kansas City and the strong growth predicted for the Northland in particular will continue to drive new housing starts throughout the region. The large availability of build to suit ground in the Horizons district also created an opportunity for Riverside to encourage further industrial development. The predictive numbers indicate that Riverside could

attract over 3 million square feet of new industrial development during the next 20 years.

In the past, development has not occurred as quickly in Riverside as in many of the neighboring communities. There are several reasons for this, but for the most part, the City has rectified the governmental discouragements and gone a long way toward improving the development environment in the City. Given those improvements, Development Strategies found the potential for significant economic expansion within Riverside, and the Planning Team expects greater demand for land after the completion of the Master Plan.

Another trend that will impact Riverside in a variety of ways is the high price of gasoline. Demand for gasoline has proven to be inelastic in the short term and driving habits have not adapted to a doubling or even tripling of prices. The possibility remains that prices will continue to increase and the general public will be more inclined to stay closer to home and avoid long commutes. Traffic congestion will also contribute to this trend and Riverside stands to benefit from home buyers that want to be closer to Kansas City.

Regardless of how demand responds to a diminishing supply, the City does have an obligation to promote alternative modes of transportation. The segment of the population that can least afford escalating gasoline prices is

the segment most in need of transportation alternatives. Expanding public transportation and providing alternative transportation opportunities will benefit community health, contribute to cleaner air, and serve disadvantaged residents.

Transportation costs are likely to contribute to the increase in demand for Riverside's property. It is crucial that the Board of Aldermen and the City staff and planning board manage new development to ensure that incoming businesses are in line with the types of development that are in the long-term interests of the City. Every business that encourages positive new development is a boon, but every new business that replicates the type of businesses Riverside is trying to replace sets the City back considerably. Diligent adherence to the design suggestions made in the following chapters will add value and improve the demand for currently vacant and under-utilized properties.



This new home is indicative of the type of housing now in demand in and around the City.



A variety of housing options are developing just outside the City limits.



New commercial amenities are accompanying neighboring residential developments.



Developments of all types are influencing the future of Riverside.



# LOOKING AHEAD

RIVERSIDE

## COMMUNITY VOICES

From the beginning of the planning process, community involvement was the primary guiding force behind all of the recommendations. It is critically important that the Master Plan reflect the thoughts and dreams of the Riverside public. Every effort has been made to elicit feedback and to capture the thoughts that were volunteered throughout the planning process. Involvement took several forms. The first outreach utilized a paper survey that went through the mail to every resident of Riverside. This information was used to form a baseline of knowledge and a general understanding that would lift the discussion over any one voice of opposition.

The planning team then engaged the community and an extensive stakeholder group of business leaders, political leaders, and community activists through individual stakeholder work sessions. The purpose of the stakeholder sessions was to foster engagement and facilitate an interaction between community leaders. The stakeholder meetings ran from February 2006 to May 2006 and involved more than 30 individual meetings with economic, political, and social leaders within the Riverside community.

After sufficient data was gathered to get a good feel for the needs and desires of the community, the planning

team held two community workshops that attracted nearly 100 individuals per meeting. These workshops were used as forums to relay the survey results to the community and illicit feedback and direction of the social, economic, spatial and environmental planning solutions developed by the Master Planning Team. The following sections are devoted to summarizing and recording the survey findings, stakeholder interviews, and community workshops.

### Community Survey

ETC Institute and the Master Planning team drafted a community survey questionnaire to help guide planning efforts and to identify the issues that were the most important to the citizens of Riverside. The Community Survey was sent to every resident of Riverside with the intention of identifying the things that are going well and the things that people most want to see changed. There was also space in the survey for citizens to write in their concerns if they were not adequately addressed elsewhere in the survey. In most instances, the surveys supported what we observed on the ground and what we were told by the stakeholders. We have summarized the most important findings in this chapter and attached the full survey results in the appendix.

In addition to the typical survey questions, there was also a place for citizens

to write in what they liked and disliked about Riverside. Almost 75% of the citizens returning the surveys took the additional time to share a few words about their favorite and least favorite parts of Riverside. We found these responses to be particularly helpful. Some characteristics were mentioned by nearly every respondent and some were only mentioned by one or two. We have divided the responses into 3 tiers based on the frequency of the response ranging from nearly unanimous (1st Tier) to occasionally mentioned (3rd Tier). Responses were divided into this format so they can be easily compared to the variety of responses the planning team received during different exercises. These responses are compiled and compared to all of the other responses on pages 32-33 of the Master Plan.

#### 1st Tier (Favorite Characteristics):

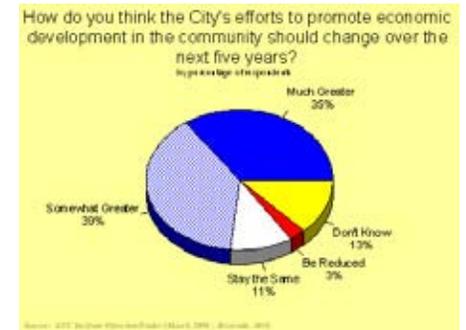
- Proximity to amenities - jobs, downtown KC, shopping and highways
- Friendly neighborhoods and a small town feel

#### 2nd Tier:

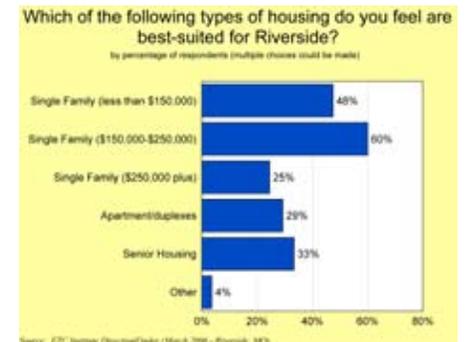
- Safety of the community
- Riverside is moving in the right direction and recent and future improvements are exciting
- Quality of the school district

#### 3rd Tier:

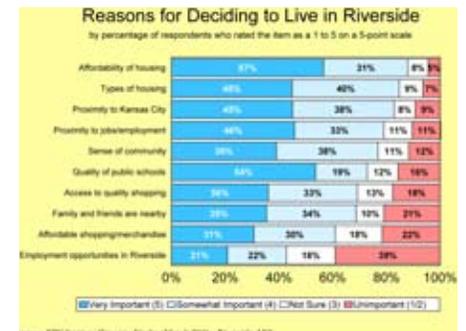
- No City tax or E tax
- Good police department
- The natural setting
- Riverside Library



Riverside residents are in strong support of city backed economic development initiatives.



Riverside residents prefer single-family homes but support a variety of housing types.

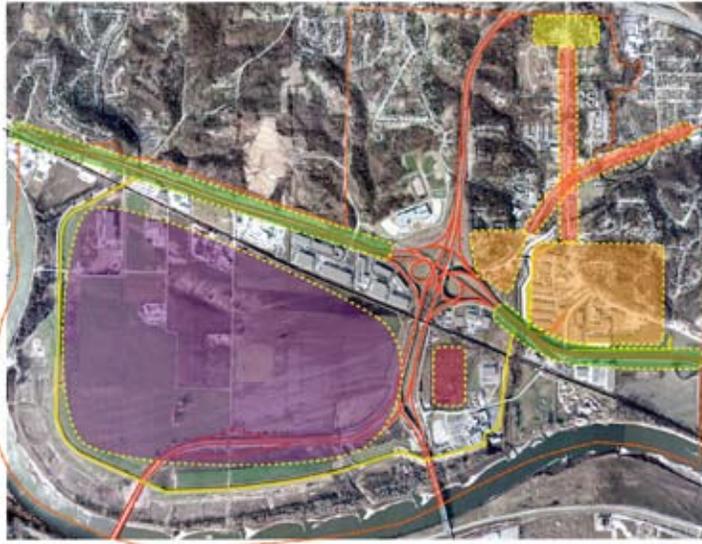


Affordability, school quality, and proximity are the primary reasons citizens choose to live in Riverside.

## OPPORTUNITY MAP

### Legend

- Lower Gateway - This visible and well-traveled part of town is made up of older industrial buildings in close proximity to the heart of Riverside.
- Downtown Corridor - Vivion and Gateway are the two major Riverside thoroughfares. These roads present an opportunity for better pedestrian connections and walk development.
- Upper Gateway - The northern entrance into Riverside has the potential to become an attractive asset to the community.
- Highway 9 Corridor - The community survey highlighted the need to improve the image of Riverside.
- Horizons - There is no larger piece of land closer to downtown Kansas City than the land in the Horizons District.
- Entertainment District - The Argosy Casino is a regional attraction. Over time, there may be enough demand to support a larger entertainment component in this area.



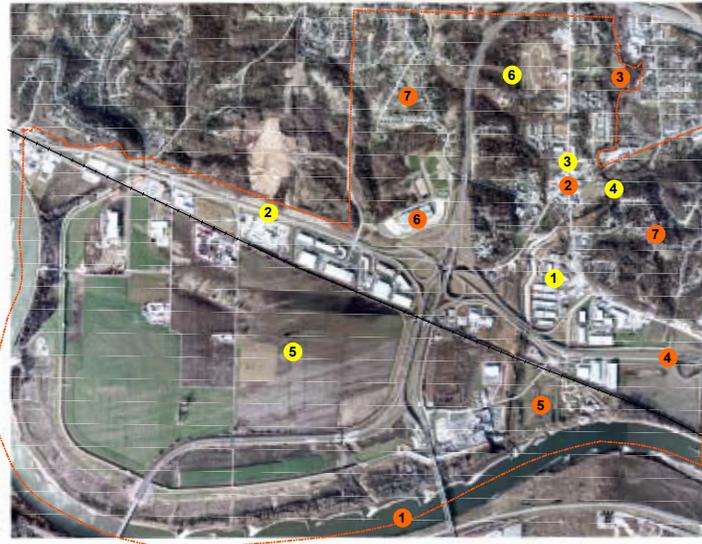
Separate districts within the city each represent unique opportunities. When these opportunities are evaluated collectively, there is the potential to address all of the concerns expressed by community members.

## COMMUNITY TREASURES

- 1 The Missouri River - The namesake of the town
- 2 Downtown Riverside
- 3 Natural Character
- 4 Access to Kansas City / Region
- 5 Quality of Public Parks
- 6 Parkhill School District
- 7 Sense of Community

## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 1 Improve the overall appearance of the city
- 2 Improve the overall image of the city
- 3 Maintain and revitalize downtown
- 4 Be proactive about protecting the city's streams
- 5 Create a "Riverside Identity"
- 6 Provide additional housing opportunities



This diagram represents the attributes most treasured by citizens as well as the attributes which they felt needed the most improvement.

### 1st Tier (Need for Improvement):

- Negative Reputation
- Dilapidated or run-down buildings
- Road Construction

### 2nd Tier:

- Not enough shopping and dining alternatives
- Need better police enforcement of speeding and drug issues
- Too much rental housing

### 3rd Tier:

- Not enough sidewalks or trails
- Fireworks
- Not enough parks

### 2nd Tier Dislikes:

- Not enough shopping and dining alternatives
- Need better police enforcement of speeding and drug issues
- Too much rental housing

### 3rd Tier Dislikes:

- Not enough sidewalks or trails
- Fireworks
- Not enough parks

## Stakeholder Interviews

Concurrently with data collection, field reconnaissance, existing Master Plan review and community survey distribution, the master planning team identified key social, economic and political stakeholders in the Riverside community from whom valuable information and guidance could be garnered.

Individual stakeholder interviews were conducted and lasted about one hour and thirty minutes apiece. The exact questions are attached in the appendix. We summarized the most important findings from the interviews below and ranked them using a 3 tier system as in the community survey findings summary. The entire data log of stakeholder findings is presented in the appendix.

### 1st Tier (Most Frequently Suggested improvements):

- Improve the appearance of Riverside's businesses
- Create consistent gateways or signage for Riverside
- Improve the reputation of the City
- Enforce codes and streamline permitting
- Develop complimentary entertainment opportunities near the Argosy Casino
- Provide more facilities and programs for children
- Improve the City's trail system

### 2nd Tier:

- Highlight the horse racing history of the City
- Provide better pedestrian access and connections
- Create a mixed-use development in Horizons
- Provide after school programming for school kids
- Increase the size of City staff
- Provide sewers in Horizons

### 3rd Tier:

- Create new athletic fields
- Protect the natural landscape of Riverside
- Eliminate excessive special use permits
- Make the Grant/Loan façade improvement program more accessible
- Provide better animal control
- Improve downtown Riverside
- City should be consistent with business owners
- Overhaul permitting so that City staff can deal with simple issues
- Improve Northwood Road
- Create a natural trail system on the wet side of the levee

## Community Workshops

### COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1: COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

In April and May the planning team conducted two community workshops to help shape the vision for the new Comprehensive Master Plan. The workshops were open to the public and were advertised in a variety of ways. Approximately 80 residents attended each meeting and participated in several exercises regarding the City's strengths and areas that needed improvement. During the first workshop a presentation of the survey results served as an introduction to the process and to the concept of the Master Plan. After the introduction participants broke into groups to brainstorm ideas. Most of the time was spent discussing the character of Riverside and identifying the largest opportunities for beneficial change.



### SCENARIO 1



### SCENARIO 2a



These preliminary scenarios were used to elicit feedback at the second Community Workshop.

The responses below represent where points of consensus were made. These responses are ordered at random.

**Things Riverside does well:**

- Riverside has consistently improved its appearance and infrastructure during recent years
- The school system is excellent
- The sense of community is strong

**Areas of Agreement:**

- The character of industrial buildings must be improved
- Existing natural areas should be expanded
- The City needs to become more pedestrian friendly
- There should be no single use that takes place in Horizons. The community would like to see a mixture of uses
- Residents should have access to housing near the workplace
- A south-bound connection to I-29 should be investigated
- There is no sense of arrival when you enter Riverside
- The City needs to improve its image
- The appearance of many buildings needs to improve and there should be a higher standard for design and code enforcement
- Heavy “smokestack” industrial is not appropriate for Riverside
- Annexation of the bluff west of town and North of Highway 9 would provide ground for new housing options
- A new grade school for the City would be a welcome amenity
- A variety of housing types should be

built so that citizens don’t have to go elsewhere when their housing needs change

- New development needs to help create a consistent theme for the City
- The Missouri River is important to the character of Riverside

**Areas of Disagreement:**

- Some residents thought the possibility of providing access to the River was a great idea and some thought it was too dangerous.

**Other Suggestions:**

- The City needs an expanded recreation center and more programming for children and seniors
- Parks should be easier to access.
- The residential character of Riverside is not compatible with typical sub-division design
- Downtown redevelopment should be focused on Gateway between Vivion Road and the Red X
- Buffers are a good technique to improve the existing industrial areas.
- New homes should be quality homes not big homes

**COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2: RESPONSE**

On May 8th, 2006, the Riverside community participated in a workshop to evaluate scenarios developed in response to the initial workshop input. During the small group breakout sessions community members had the chance to react to two master plan concepts depicting proposed spatial ar-

rangements of building massing, zoning, open space, development areas, and transportation linkages. The scenario concepts were based on the physical constraints, the guidance of the community survey, and the response from the April community workshop. The plans demonstrated two distinct visions for the future of the City and were crafted to foster a discussion among the community about the direction they would like to see Riverside embrace.

**Master Plan Scenario 1**

The first scenario most accurately reflected the market forces present in Riverside today. This scenario called for most of the City’s redevelopment energy to be spent on the Gateway and West Platte Road corridor. The Horizons area would be converted into a light-industry and logistics center and the ground to the north of Argosy Casino would be a possible entertainment zone expansion. Scenario 1 also called for a residential and commercial development to take the place of the industrial ground to the south of the Gateway and Vivion Road intersection.

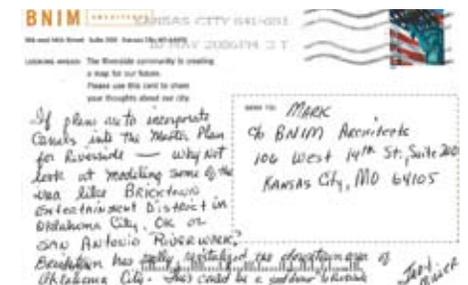
**Master Plan Scenario 2**

The second scenario was a response to the consistent request of Riverside’s citizens to add more housing and a population that could create more retail opportunities. This scenario creates a large residential community in Horizons. The proposal also accommodates a more modest light-industry expansion. Scenario 2 requires a more innovative

stormwater system that uses retention lakes and canals as community amenities. Scenario 2 placed a development emphasis on Horizons.

**Scenario Responses**

- Along with the suggestions put forth in the first community meeting these suggestions were made:
- Rejuvenating downtown and Gateway Road is a priority
  - Creating a pedestrian network is important
  - There should be a mixture of uses in Horizons and downtown
  - Smaller quality homes not bigger homes should be built in Horizons



The Riverside “Looking Ahead” postcard series captured some of the scenic moments around Riverside and provided an opportunity for additional feedback from the community.

# Riverside Town Hall Meeting

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 2

# LOOKING AHEAD

You are invited to help  
shape the future of Riverside.

The City of Riverside will conduct a Town Hall meeting on May 8th. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the results of the first community workshop and make decisions about the character of future developments. Please come and help us refine the vision for our future. Your contributions will strengthen our community and improve the quality of our lives.

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER

4498 NW HIGH DRIVE

MAY 8, 2006 6:30 PM



This poster was one of the advertising methods used to get the word out about the Community Workshops.

- There should be a recreation area on the wet-side of the levee
- A buffer zone should be created to decrease noise from the railroad and industrial areas
- An urban edge should be established along Gateway Road
- The park areas should include tennis courts
- The canal system in Horizons will create a unique identity for Riverside
- It is important to phase the plan
- Parkville should be integrated into the design
- A new boat launch should be considered
- A tree farm should be considered
- A fire station and an elementary school should be built in Horizons
- Amenities should be within walking distance of residential areas
- A small retail area should be located in the industrial area for workers
- Residents should have access to housing near the workplace
- It is important to maintain water quality in the new development
- Development should not overpower the natural beauty of the bluffs

#### Concerns

- Will the amount of train traffic negatively affect Horizons?
- How will landowners be compensated?
- How will Horizons be liked by development on the bluffs?
- Does Horizons have to develop prior to an entertainment district?
- Will the canals be hard to maintain?

- Is a connection to the river too dangerous?
- Will multiple retail areas hurt downtown?
- Will there be truck traffic in Horizons?
- Who will pay for the infrastructure?
- While a majority of residents favored the idea of a residential component to development in Horizons, support was not unanimous.
- There was some skepticism about the feasibility of a canal system.

#### Design Response

In addition to responses to the scenarios, the team compiled some general design guidance from workshop groups. Some of the most common comments are listed below:

- A theme is necessary to establish continuity between the retail and industrial areas
- Landscaping can be used to unify the design. Native plants, lighting, and pavers should be incorporated
- The friendly sense of community should be maintained
- The edge of the canals should be designed as public space
- Sidewalks should fit into the overall design and unify it
- A theme is necessary for downtown to create a good first impression
- The design of the light industrial area could be similar to Corporate Woods
- Green roofs should be implemented where possible in the industrial area
- The addition of 2,700 new for sale houses in Riverside would dramatically

shift the current owner/renter relationship in the City

#### COMMUNITY MEETING CONCLUSION

The Community Workshops provided a wealth of feedback for the planning team. In large part the message from the meetings was consistent with the community survey but the workshop format allowed community members to better engage specific issues and design implications. The participation and attendance was excellent and the discussions were lively. There were many areas of consensus and it is obvious that many residents care deeply about the future of Riverside. The most common call to action was for an improvement in the quality of buildings and design in Riverside. There was also a consistent desire to develop an image and character that residents could feel proud of.



#### Great Ideas

- Don't develop away bluffs
- Build up Riverside (in relationship to name)
- Environmental/Water Quality in relation to dev.
- Redevelopment
- Mixed use in downtown + Horizons

<b>Community Character (Best Characteristics)</b>	Community Survey	Stakeholder Interviews	Community Meetings	Total
Access to amenities - jobs, downtown Kansas City, shopping and highways	4	3	3	10
Consistently improved its appearance and infrastructure during recent years	3	3	2	8
Friendly neighborhoods and a strong community feel	4		3	7
The Missouri River is important to the character of the city	4		3	7
Riverside has a beautiful Natural Setting	2	2	2	6
It is important to maintain water quality	4		2	6
Housing is affordable	4			4
Riverside is a safe community	3			3
Heavy "smokestack" industrial is not appropriate for Riverside			3	3
Riverside Library	2			2
<b>Community Character (Needs Attention)</b>	Community Survey	Stakeholder Interviews	Community Meetings	Total
Improve the City's negative reputation	4	4	3	11
Repair or replace dilapidated or run-down buildings	4	4	3	11
Establish a pedestrian trail and sidewalk network	2	4	3	9
Provide more facilities for children	2	4	3	9
Improve downtown Riverside	4	2	3	9
New development needs to have better design and help develop a theme for the city	3	2	3	8
Create shopping and dining alternatives	3		2	5
Create new parks	2		3	5
Create more home ownership opportunities	3			3
Build housing near the workplace			3	3
Provide housing that appeals to all age groups			3	3
Buffer the existing industrial areas			3	3
Provide better parks access			3	3
Provide amenities within walking distance of residential areas			3	3
Create a sense of arrival when you enter Riverside			3	3
Create new athletic fields		2		2
Traditional sub-division design is not appropriate for Riverside			2	2
New homes should be quality homes not big homes			2	2
Landscaping can be used to unify the design			2	2
New lite-industrial should be of the highest quality			2	2

<b>Policy and Programming</b>	Community Survey	Stakeholder Interviews	Community Meetings	Total
Enforce codes and streamline permitting	2	4	3	9
Provide after school programming for school kids	2	3	3	8
Maintain the quality of the school district	3		3	6
Use annexation to influence neighboring development	3		2	5
Provide better animal control	3	2		5
Minimize road construction inconvenience	4			4
Strictly enforce speeding and drug laws	3			3
Avoid a city tax or E tax	2			2
Maintain the quality of the police department	2			2
Eliminate Fireworks	2			2

Each matrix records a level of interest in a project or program that, according to each group, is a perceived need for Riverside.

## Community Feedback Matrix

Based on the feedback from the Community Survey, the Stakeholder Interviews, and the Community Workshops the team compiled a list of frequently mentioned ideas to improve Riverside. We scored the feedback relative to how often it was mentioned, and condensed the comments down to a legible format. The following matrix breaks these projects into categories based on the frequency they were suggested to the team. Even though the projects are roughly divided according to frequency, it is important to note that every item on the matrix was mentioned several times in a variety of formats. A nearly unanimous response was given 4 points, 3 points were assigned to ideas with a very broad support base, and 2 points were given to concepts with a significant but not unanimous amount of support.

This matrix plays an integral role in the following sections of the Plan as the feedback and suggestions collected in the initial phase of the process are translated into programs and projects. The matrixes can also be used by City officials to help guide the timing and implementation of future projects.

Specific Projects	Community Survey	Stakeholder Interviews	Community Meetings	Total
Develop complimentary entertainment opportunities near the Argosy Casino		4	2	6
Create a mixed-use development in Horizons		3	3	6
A south-bound connection to I-29 should be investigated		2	2	4
Expand the recreation center and provide more programming for children and seniors		2	2	4
Increase the size of city staff		3		3
Provide sewers in Horizons		3		3
Create a wet-side trail/recreation area on the outside of the levee			3	3
Develop an urban edge along Gateway Road			3	3
Build new tennis courts			3	3
A canal system in Horizons will create a unique identity for Riverside			3	3
Investigate the feasibility of a tree farm for the city in Horizons			3	3
A fire station and an elementary school should be built in Horizons			3	3
Green roofs should be implemented in the industrial area			3	3
Improve Northwood Road		2		2
Multi-story residential is a possibility for Horizons, especially with parking on the ground floor			2	2
Build a new grade school for the city			2	2
Construct a new boat launch on the Missouri			2	2



LOOKING  
AHEAD  
RIVERSIDE

## THE VISION

### Identity Crisis

Several citizens spoke to us about the Riverside “Identity Crisis,” and nearly every person we interviewed mentioned the need to create a consistent image that Riverside could be proud of and project to passersby. However, the Riverside “Identity Crisis” is not nearly as serious as it sounds. The City recently turned 50 and is feeling a few growing pains. The good news is that all of the concerns about creating an identity for the City can be addressed and corrected. This is not said to belittle the critique, because it is warranted, but rather to illustrate the degree to which the major concerns of Riverside’s citizens and stakeholders are problems with answers. By identifying the areas of greatest concern and opportunity, Riverside can build identity and make immediate strides toward establishing a positive image.

### Opportunities and Constraints

It is important to understand the opportunities and constraints that frame future development within Riverside. Some of the most important constraints are the levee system and the perception of the levee, the stormwater problems that will be made worse by future upstream developments, the dilapidated quality of many businesses, the tax structure, the small size of the City staff, and physical barriers created

by transportation infrastructure. While these are substantial constraints, they are not an atypical list and could be applicable to many successful communities.

The opportunities for improvement that exist within Riverside are staggering in size and number. Every part of the City has a component that would benefit from investment or better design. The key to success will be identifying the projects that make the most impact and leveraging those opportunities to generate the necessary redevelopment momentum.

### Following Through

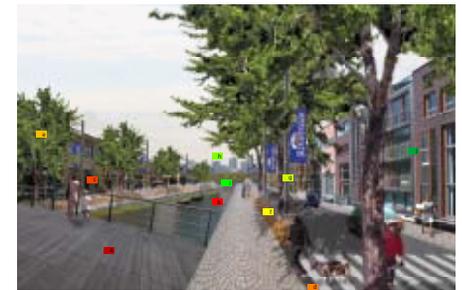
Riverside has been very fortunate to secure a funding source in the Argosy Casino. There is little doubt that without that source many of the recent and future improvements to the City would not be possible. Those funds change the rules of the game for what the City is capable of achieving. Riverside has the potential to pull off projects that other municipalities would have to shy away from. This is certainly not to say the City does not need to be careful about how it spends money. On the contrary, there is an obligation to spend the money wisely, but perpetuating the status quo will not move the City any closer to achieving the long list of goals identified by the community.

After the decision has been made to fund a project, there is always a tendency to complete the work with the least amount of cost. While that may

save some money, it often times cuts the quality away from the work. Some of the projects completed in Riverside have suffered from exactly that tendency. When deciding whether to fund a project, make the decision based on the cost to get exactly the desired end product and nothing short of that. To put this simply, if you can’t do it right, don’t do it at all. By funding a cheap solution, the final product will not advance the appearance of Riverside and may even cause further damage.

### Playing to Strengths

When thinking about how to improve a City, community leaders have a tendency to try to focus on improving their weaknesses. While addressing weaknesses is crucial to changing the perception of Riverside, another equally important strategy is to accentuate what the community does well and build on its existing strengths. In Riverside that means building on the sense of community, protecting the natural character, improving the connection to the Missouri River, maintaining quality public parks, and promoting good schools. These strengths are powerful attributes of a successful community. Building on these successes will go a long way toward establishing a positive identity and character for Riverside. Creating new developments that maintain a cohesive sense of community and incorporate quality public spaces will transform parts of the community that need attention into showpieces of Riverside’s new direction.

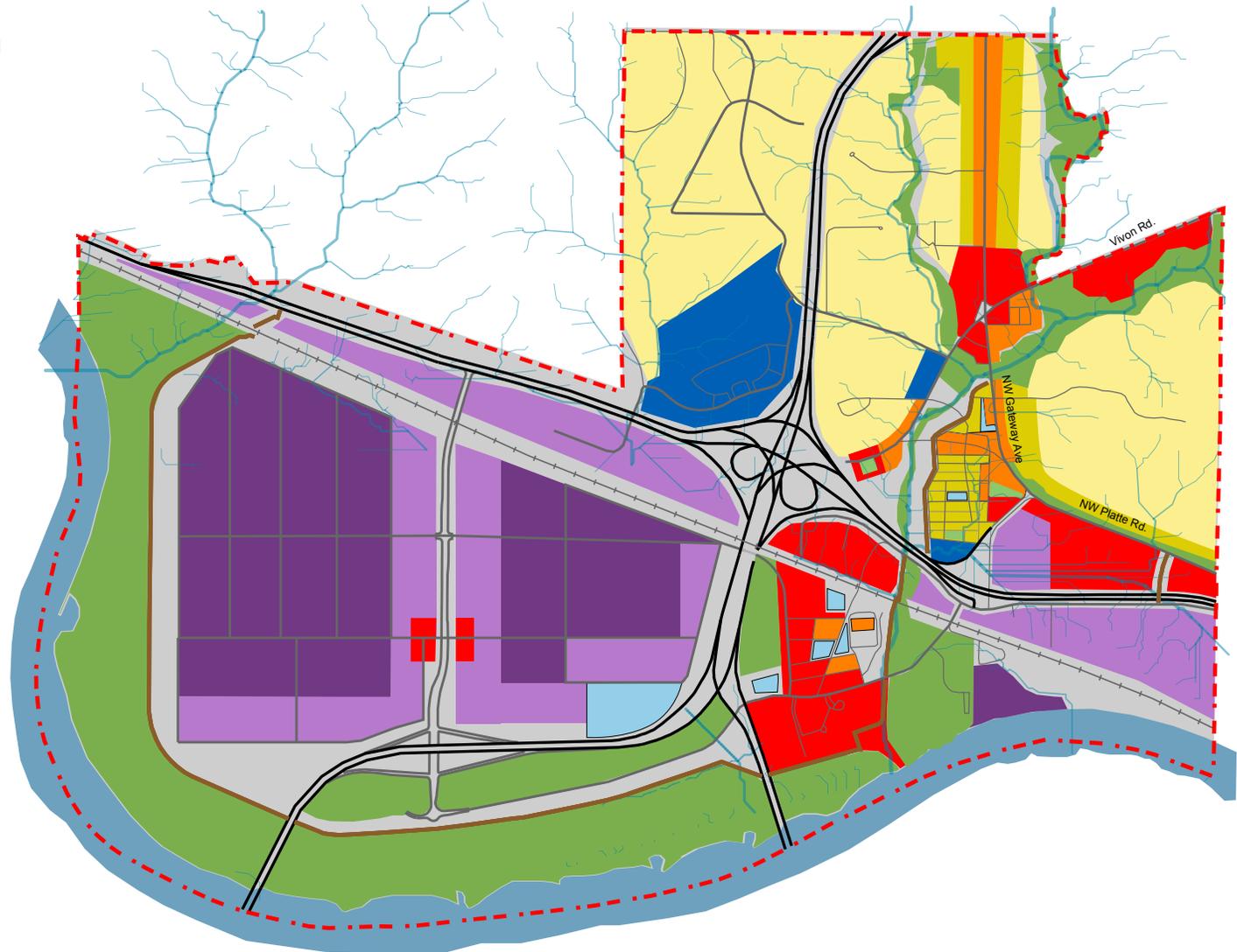
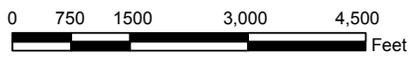


By locating pockets of density in strategic locations and by altering the form of future development it is possible to create environments that would improve Riverside’s appearance and provide new amenities to residents.

# Proposed Land Use Plan

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- Open Space
- Large Industrial / Distribution
- Light Industrial
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Civic
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Stormwater Management System
- Missouri River



The Land Use Plan will become the basis for the new zoning ordinance.

## THE PLAN

### The Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan is the basis for a much needed zoning update for Riverside. The Land Use map divides Riverside into a variety of land-uses based on location and characteristics. These land uses are meant to be a guide and in no way an absolute. While zoning can be a very useful tool, it can also prohibit mixing different types of development. That mixing is often times the richest and most vibrant part of a community. In this land use plan, the highest concentrations of mixed-use development are concentrated in areas with good access, a higher general activity, and in areas of symbolic importance to the City.

#### OPEN SPACE

These sites have been identified as potential areas of open space for either recreational or flood and stormwater protection. Every open space area is not necessarily a formal park but rather a portion of the community that is protected from development. The open space corridors that adjoin Riverside's streams represent flood plain areas that also correspond with the logical route for a trail network. Protecting flood plain areas from development will also provide Riverside with additional flood protection and a degree of mitigation against further deterioration of the City's streams. Some new formally planned passive and active recreation

parks may also be located in the open space area. Parks should be placed to best serve residents and protect scenic locations.

#### LARGE INDUSTRIAL / DISTRIBUTION

Riverside has characteristics – highway access, large pieces of available flat land, industrial know-how, and financial incentive – that make industrial development an attractive possibility. There are certainly portions of town that are ideally suited for large warehouse type industrial buildings. These facilities can provide jobs and will help to pay off debts on the levee and other infrastructure projects. The low-lying nature of the Horizons district makes it attractive to industrial developers but does pose some challenges to the City from an aesthetic viewpoint.

Horizons is a very visible portion of Riverside and excessive industrial development will not help to change the reputation of Riverside as an industrial town. There are ways to mitigate against environmental and visual impacts by employing a series of Best Management Practices (BMPs) like a variety of buffering and screening landscape berms, thick planting strategies, innovative stormwater capture techniques, proper materials disposal, careful site selection, sustainable building practices, and use of green roof technology.

#### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Industrial developments can have a wide variety of users and building types. This is especially true for light industrial. Many light industrial facilities resemble traditional office buildings. They can be heavily landscaped and should be well maintained. Light industrial development should be held to an even higher design standard than its larger counterparts. These facilities include small scale manufacturing operations and often times have front office facilities integrated into the development. Light industry can be used as a visual buffer against larger facilities and can also be strategically integrated into a residential community. Quality light industry can be developed to provide jobs near housing and to bring daytime activity to an area.

#### COMMERCIAL

Commercial land use areas include both retail and office users. Currently In Riverside, the portions of the community dedicated to commercial uses have excellent transportation access and are along the Vivion or Gateway corridor. Because Riverside's tax structure is dependent on sales tax revenues, commercial users should be encouraged to develop with possible incentives and strategic infrastructure cooperation by the City. New commercial developments will most likely mirror older developments in location, however final design, and the way the development adheres to the streetscape, should reflect the aspirations for the long-range

vision of the corridor. New commercial developments should positively impact Riverside by providing new shopping alternatives or quality jobs, and by contributing to the design characteristics and desired streetscape appearance.

#### MIXED USE

Mixed use is a term that is being used by many new developments. It means exactly what the name suggests: the development zone is composed of many different types of users with no single use that is an overwhelming majority. In these areas the layout and appearance of the buildings is more important than what the occupant is using the building for. There may be a row home next to a shop, a loft over an office, or a small office building near a single family home. Healthy mixed use areas function at all hours of the day and as one user arrives, another leaves. In an ideal situation, a mixed use development allows someone to live, work, and do a little shopping without having to get in a car. Mixed use developments also allow for shared parking (use ratios established by the ULI) to save costs and cut down on surface parking lots.

#### CIVIC

Civic uses include City government, schools, facilities and operations, fire and police stations, libraries, and any other facility run with public funds. In many cases Riverside's civic structures represent a higher quality of design

# Proposed Full Industrial Development

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- - - MetroGreen Trail Network
- Open Space
- Natural Wetland Park
- Large Industrial / Distribution
- Light Industrial
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Civic
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Stormwater Management System
- Missouri River



## CITY OF RIVERSIDE, MO

This proposal demonstrates a future development pattern in Riverside that adheres to the goals of the Master Plan.

that new projects should try to match. In the future Riverside may want to investigate expanding its current facilities or building a new location for a museum or visitor center.

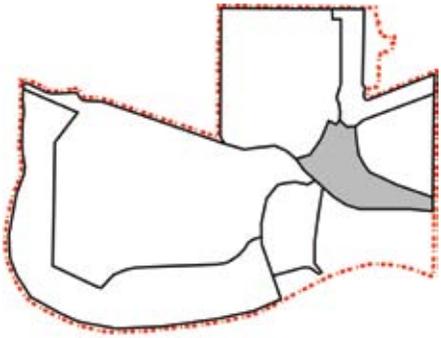
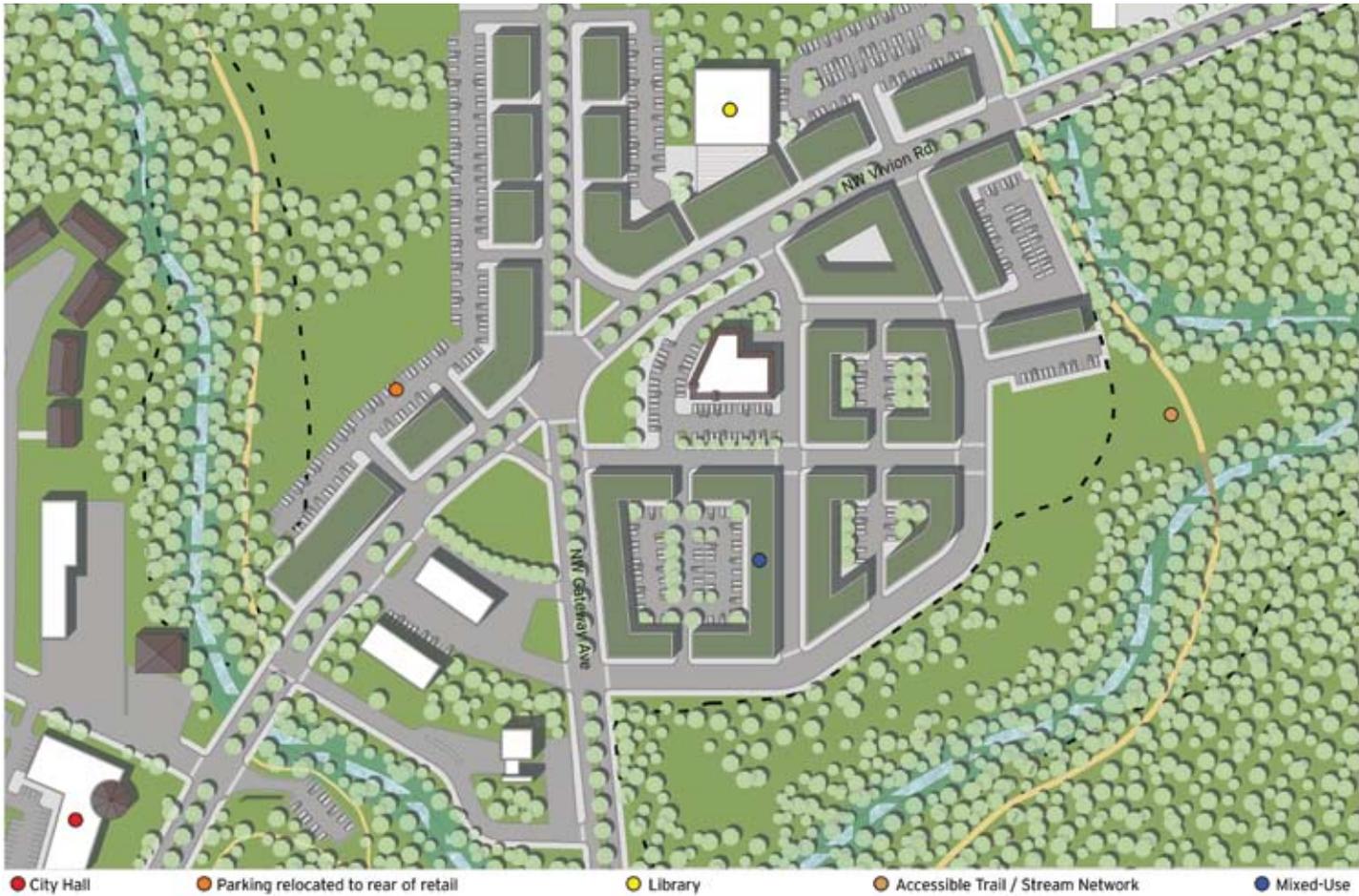
#### LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Much of Riverside's existing single family residential fabric can only be described as low-density. That is not to say that existing development follows the patterns of traditional sub-division development. Following the topography of the natural bluffs, many neighborhoods are connected in the landscape by a series of arterial roads that eventually tie into one of a couple collector roads. It is likely that a majority of Riverside's new housing developments continue to be made up of single-family sub-division housing. Riverside is in need of more home ownership and additional housing will move the community closer to that goal. New homeowners will also help bring new retail businesses into the town boundary. It is also important to remember that new low density housing developments will have a cost to the City. Low density developments require a higher per capita infrastructure investment than other scenarios that push housing into easily serviceable pockets. One alternative is to cluster new single family lots into areas where sharing the infrastructure burden will drastically reduce construction and maintenance costs. By cluster-

ing development and creating smaller lot sizes, it is possible to protect larger neighborhood open spaces that act as natural amenities to nearby residents.

#### MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Medium density residential is used to describe a variety of housing types that accomplish gross densities around 10 units per acre. Small lot single family homes, row houses, multiple occupancy mansion homes, granny flats, and even some condominium units can all be part of a medium density residential development. The densities achieved in these areas accommodate the necessary population to promote neighborhood businesses and pedestrian oriented development. Medium density areas are also likely to be more amenity rich than areas of lower density because of the increased population. A higher unit count often allows for larger investments in communal green spaces landscaping.



The drawing above represents a possible long-term design for downtown Riverside. Buildings with white roofs are existing structures and the green roofs represent new development. Notice how moving buildings closer to the street creates a classical downtown feel. Street width on Gateway is maintained and the planter is retro-fitted in the median. Center medians also offer an opportunity to filter stormwater runoff.

## Downtown Corridor

**GOAL: TO ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE AS THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY.**

The planning team received a consistent message from nearly every source suggesting Downtown Riverside needs to be significantly improved. Additionally, there was clear direction that downtown should not be neglected while other projects are pursued in earnest. There is an innate desire within the community to establish Downtown Riverside as a unique district with a character representative of the City. Downtown areas are indeed critical to the identity and vitality of any City. While they come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, downtown usually represents the part of a City that is unique. Transforming downtown Riverside into a vibrant activity center will not happen over night. It will be a long process of gradually improving the texture and appearance of development.

### REDEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

To improve downtown and create an environment that Riverside can be proud of, redevelopment should follow these guidelines:

### CREATE THE RIGHT MIXTURE OF USES

Downtown's are no better than the tenants who occupy them. Encourage businesses that facilitate pedestrian traffic and provide basic needs for the community. Downtowns support a

wide variety of users and it is often the diversity that makes them the most interesting. Residential development is an increasingly prominent part of downtown redevelopment. Lofts, condos, and other denser typologies often do well in downtown areas and will provide Riverside with a consistent street life and economic engine.

### BUILD QUALITY STREETSCAPES AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Streetscapes with wider sidewalks, attractive lighting, street trees and other plantings, and a variety of street furniture provide a welcoming atmosphere for pedestrians and serve as visual cues about the larger development and the way it is to be used. Stormwater BMPs can be integrated into the landscaping strategy to provide an amenity that also mitigates drainage problems.

### DEVELOP AN URBAN BUILDING FABRIC

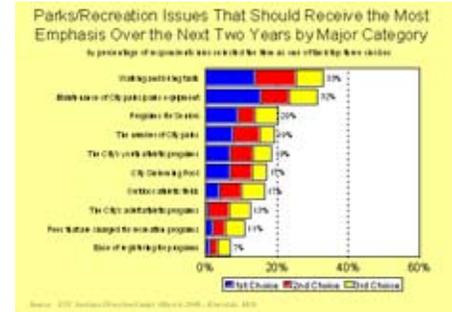
Successful downtowns have a few design rules that help us all know they are the center of a community. Moving building edges up to the sidewalk to create a "street wall" and moving parking to the side or rear of a development helps to define the street and gives a sense of scale to the development. Currently the distances between buildings on opposite sides of Gateway do not welcome pedestrian traffic and do not instill the sense of place that a successful downtown would.

### MAKE PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

Having good connections to the regional trail system and to area neighborhoods is an important aspect of a successful downtown. Considering the flow of pedestrian traffic with an equal amount of thought given to vehicular transportation will ensure that downtown is friendly to all types of transportation.

### DEMAND QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

The current quality and condition of many downtown buildings was a cause for embarrassment among stakeholder groups. Architecture can convey many things about the current and future use for a site and the architecture in downtown Riverside needs to be brought up to where it can be a point of civic pride rather than scoff. Old buildings must be encouraged to improve facades and new buildings should use quality building materials and have a high degree of ground floor transparency. Two and three story buildings will also drastically improve the scale and enhance the appearance of downtown development.



According to the survey, Downtown is near the top of the list of needed improvements.



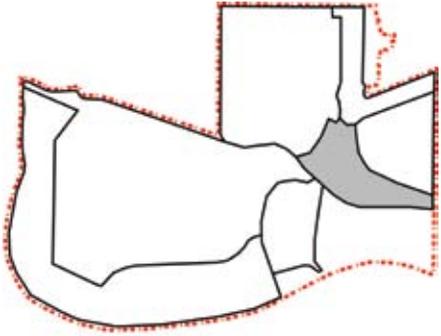
The Corner Cafe is the most prominent landmark in downtown Riverside.



One of Downtown's corner tenants is vacant. This space is important to the character of the City.



This new development combines ground floor retail with housing above to create a more attractive street character.



South Downtown is an opportunity for Riverside to create a pedestrian friendly block network and a more modern housing type. Notice how moving buildings closer to the street creates a classical downtown feel. Street Width on Gateway is maintained and the planter is retro-fitted in the median. Center medians also offer an opportunity to filter stormwater runoff.

## South Downtown

### GOAL: TO CREATE A COMPLIMENTARY DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD.

Downtown is currently thought of as the area immediately surrounding the intersection of Vivion and Gateway roads. It is likely traffic and development pressure will continue to build along the Vivion and West Platte corridor between the Gateway/Vivion intersection and the Red X. The Corridor represents an opportunity to coordinate development in a way that will expand and compliment downtown.

### STIMULATE REDEVELOPMENT

Existing development in the South Downtown district is nearing the end of its useful lifespan. Many of the concrete structures are wearing down and will be obsolete in the near future. That factor in conjunction with mounting development pressure makes this site ideal for a concerted redevelopment effort. The location also has good access to highway 9 and will be highly visible to passersby. This location is ideal for the implementation of a mixed-use development capable of providing housing, limited commercial shopping, and some small office availability. Development should be constructed with the intent of creating an urban neighborhood. Deep setbacks, large single family lots, and extensive parking lots are not appropriate.

### INCORPORATE HOUSING

This site should embrace a variety of housing types. Row homes, small single family lots, condos and some larger structures may be appropriate. The goal is to attract enough of a permanent population to foster a successful new neighborhood that is complimentary but distinctly different in function to the housing types that currently monopolize the Riverside market. One additional idea is to place garages along the flood wall that would serve row homes and could also accommodate a granny flat above the garage.

### INTERNAL STREET CHARACTER

The internal street character within South Downtown will be important. Very narrow streets should be the norm and parking should be broken up between on-street, center block, and other back of house solutions. Streets should have an intimate and neighborly feel. The ability to build a block network in this location makes it unique in Riverside and that opportunity should be capitalized upon.

### CREATE GREENSPACE

There is also a proposed new park within the South Downtown district. This site can be seen on the accompanying diagram and is strategically located to capture the sight-line when driving west along West Platte Road and would create a unique and attractive amenity

for the City. The park would open up the development and provide a needed green space to future residents

### USE STORMWATER AS AN AMENITY

One consistent theme for Riverside has been an approach to bring stormwater into new developments and to treat it as a community amenity and defining characteristic of Riverside. This may not be practical in every situation, but it would go a long way toward establishing a character for the City and for dealing with a variety of storm water issues. In South Downtown these retention amenities could be anything from fish ponds to fountains.



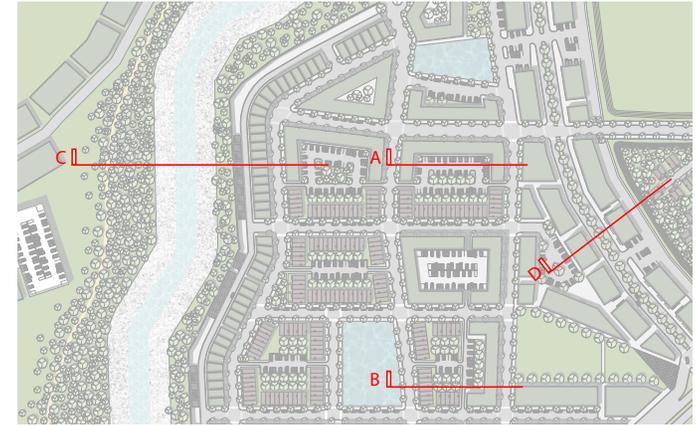
The view along Gateway Road looking North toward downtown.



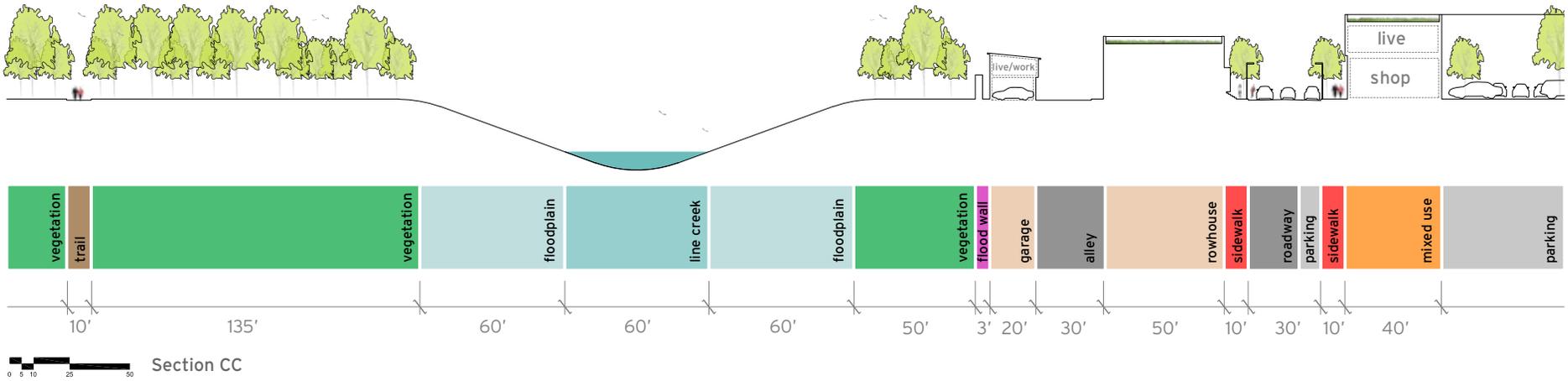
Existing buildings are nearing the end of their life-span.

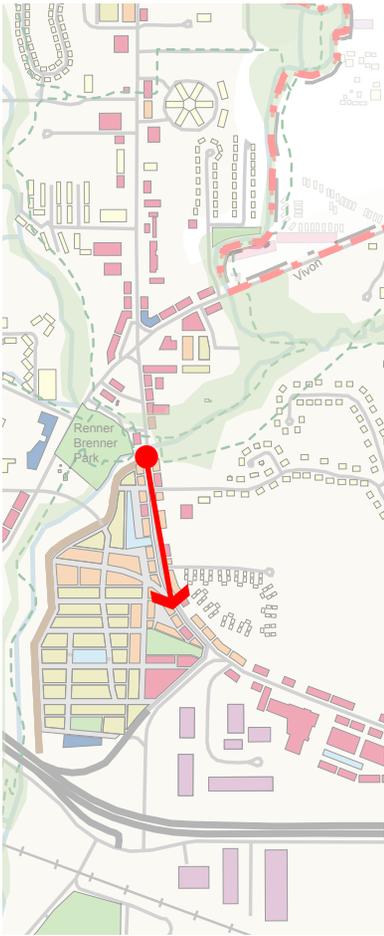


When outdated structures are replaced, good views to downtown Kansas City will become an amenity to future residents.



The section cuts above illustrate the layout of a new mixed-use community. While they correspond to a specific location in the South Downtown redevelopment, the widths and design recommendations can be adapted to other similar locations around town.





This stretch of Gateway Road could be developed as a compliment to the downtown intersection.

## Legend

- a** Open Space as Community Amenity
- b** Higher Density Residential Development
- c** Mixed-Use Development
- d** Pedestrian Oriented Streetscape
- e** Street Trees
- f** Native Plantings
- g** Attractive Street Lighting w/ Signage
- h** Buildings Provide Urban Edge at Street
- i** Bio-Swale as Traffic Median
- j** Small Scale Development ( 2-4 stories )



All of the strategies listed above contribute to an attractive city center. These strategies cannot be implemented over night, but a commitment to the design ideas will eventually transform the area.



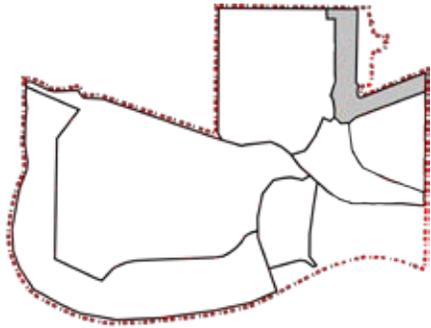
The completion of major road improvements will contribute to the viability of the South Downtown development.

## Legend

- a Open Space as Community Amenity
- b Higher Density Residential Development
- c Mixed-Use Development
- d Pedestrian Oriented Streetscape
- e Street Trees
- f Native Plantings
- g Attractive Street Lighting w/ Signage
- h Buildings Provide Urban Edge at Street
- i Bio-Swale as Traffic Median
- j Small Scale Development ( 2-4 stories )



By implementing a variety of planting and street furnishing strategies, inhospitable streetscapes can be made much more humane. In the rendering above, notice the view across the new park and into the South Downtown development.



## Upper Gateway / Vivion Corridors

**GOAL: TO FACILITATE INFILL AND NURTURE A POSITIVE IMAGE.**

The road improvements along Gateway are now complete and neighboring businesses are in the position to capitalize on the improved access and design aesthetics.

### RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT

Gateway and Vivion are the only major collector roads in Riverside. These two roads are thoroughfares capable of supporting commercial uses and medium density housing opportunities. There has been some limited redevelopment on both roads with more likely in the immediate future. East of Riverside, Vivion Road is rapidly developing and that development will likely feed a higher traffic count all along Vivion. The parts of Vivion and Gateway in Riverside, but outside of the area we are calling downtown, will likely develop along the lines of more typical corri-

dor developments. The high visibility of these corridors makes it important that codes are enforced and design of future projects is scrutinized.

### DESIGN INTENT

Many of the same design goals that are applicable to the downtown are also desirable in these areas. Building faces should be pushed closer to the street, street trees should be planted at regular intervals, and sidewalks should be built or maintained. However, these areas will most likely not see the same amount of infrastructure investment as within downtown and it may be desirable to hold businesses within these areas to a slightly lower standard as those within downtown.



Housing along the corridors can support quality medium density residential development.



Shops must provide a variety of parking options and remain accessible by foot.



Unique small scale shops and offices can create a pleasant street character.



Medium density housing can be attractive and efficient.

## Low Density Residential

**GOAL: TO PROTECT THE CHARACTER OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS.**

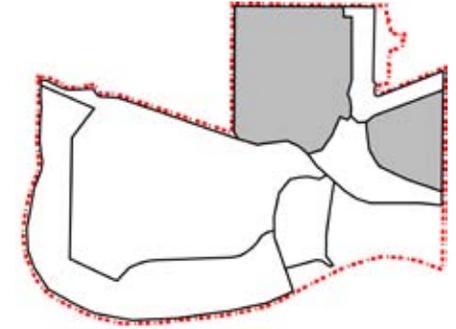
Riverside has several successful residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods house most of Riverside's civic leaders and represent the majority of Riverside's single family households. The strength and identity of these neighborhoods is very important to residents. The two defining physical characteristics that should be maintained in the future are the natural feel of the landscape, and where possible, the smaller scale housing footprint. The desire of the community is to promote slightly smaller home sites that place quality and landscaping in front of excessive home size.

### PROTECTING NATURAL AREAS

There are a wide variety of housing types in these areas, but they all share a rural character and access to natural amenities that would be a shame to lose. Pockets of these areas will continue to be subdivided, and some of these subdivisions may be appropriate, but an organized effort should be undertaken to protect existing pristine natural areas from over development. Stream corridor setbacks are a particular strategy discussed later in the Plan that can be used to protect existing natural areas.

### CLUSTER OR LARGE LOT ZONING

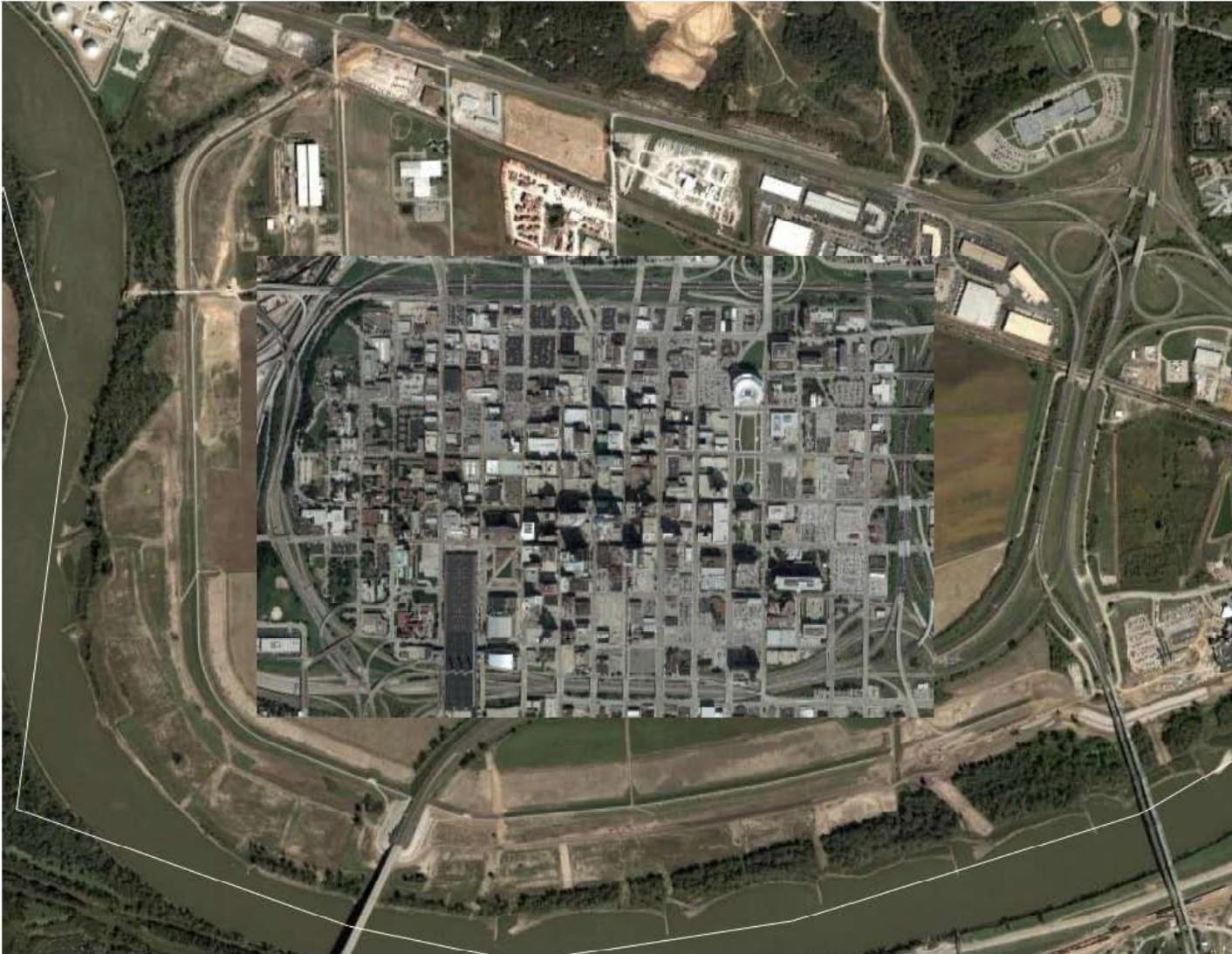
Some possible considerations to limit subdivision development include cluster zoning regulations or large lot zoning. These techniques use drastically different tactics to preserve open space. Under large lot zoning new housing units have to be built on a large lot size (5 acres for example). Under cluster zoning houses are consolidated and the space that would have become separate yards can be protected as communal open space. Cluster zoning allows for a greater population base and is probably more appropriate to Riverside's location. The UDO should be revised to allow this type of zoning.



This house is part of a cluster zoning development near Chicago.



House size is not necessarily an indicator of quality. This smaller house sold for 25% over the market norm.



The diagram above demonstrates that the entirety of downtown can fit within Horizons. There is no larger undeveloped property closer to downtown Kansas City.

## Horizons Development

### DECIDING ON A USE

The size and topography of the Horizons property makes it unique in the region. Ever since the flood of 1993 and the subsequent levee construction, the roughly 600 acres of undeveloped ground has drawn a large amount of development attention. The master planning team spent a good deal of time making sure we understood the complex issues behind the property and handling the hundreds of infrastructure and development requirements necessary to ensure Horizons develops efficiently and according to its best use.

After a very careful analysis and a rechecking of the prior studies for the area, it was determined that a commercial development of the scale previously imagined is no longer a feasible solution. However, because of the excellent access to the regional transportation network, the proximity to downtown Kansas City, the undeveloped state of the ground and a host of other factors there are other development solutions available. The Planning Team evaluated two different scenarios for build out in horizons. One concept promoted a high-quality industrial park and the other a mixed use community and integrated industrial component.

### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The topography of the ground, or lack thereof, and the new I-635 interchange make the site particularly attractive to industrial developers. There is little doubt in our minds that the ground in Horizons could support a large new industrial development. This type of development could bring hundreds or perhaps even thousands of new jobs to Riverside and would generate short term TIF revenues to pay off the Horizons infrastructure and the Quindaro Levee. Under every potential scenario, industrial development plays an important role in the build out of the district. The only remaining questions are in regards to the extent of the industrial development and in its execution.

### HORIZONS VILLAGE

Another possible vision for Horizons emerged out of the community meetings where there was a consistent desire for a mixture of uses in Horizons and a concern about the appearance of a large new industrial park. At these sessions the addition of a residential component received good support. The concept would be for a new highly pedestrian friendly village to be built complete with an extensive green network, an integrated storm water system and a variety of other communal amenities. The population density in the Horizons village would be higher than that of a typical sub-division allowing for more common open-spaces and

a larger variety of commercial opportunities.

### MAKING THE CHOICE

Based on the feedback from the community, and the general interest of the team, developers were invited to represent both the mixed use and the industrial scenarios. The developer input indicated that industrial development was indicative of a predictable and strong demand. Conversations with possible mixed use developers indicated that Riverside would need to be financially and managerially involved in the development. Because of the required monetary commitment, and because of the likely slower transfer of land from the City to the mixed use developer, the Board of Alderman and the Planning Commission indicated the high-quality industrial development was the appropriate use for the Horizon's project. A full debriefing of the interviews with both the industrial and mixed use developers can be found in the Master Plan Resource Packet.



The levee trail system will be an amenity for the region. It also gives access to some of Riverside's most scenic areas.



E.H. Young Park has been well maintained and will continue to be an asset for the city.

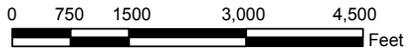


From the Horizons District the Kansas City skyline is visible in the distance.

# Proposed Partial Industrial Development

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- - - MetroGreen Trail Network
- Open Space
- Natural Wetland Park
- Large Industrial / Distribution
- Light Industrial
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Civic
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Stormwater Management System
- Missouri River



This alternative demonstrates a development scenario where industrial users occupy the western portion of Horizons and a new mixed-use community develops in the east.

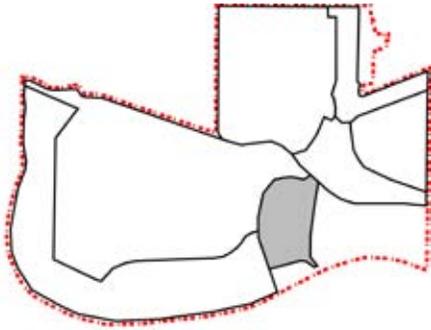
# Proposed Full Industrial Development

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- - - MetroGreen Trail Network
- Open Space
- Natural Wetland Park
- Large Industrial / Distribution
- Light Industrial
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Civic
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Stormwater Management System
- Missouri River



Under the full industrial buildout scenario, Horizons can hold over 7,000,000 sq.ft. of new industrial development.



## Entertainment District

**GOAL: CAPITALIZE ON THE APPEAL OF THE ARGOSY TO BRING IN ADDITIONAL AMMENITIES.**

The Argosy Casino is Riverside's largest regional attraction. Thousands of visitors pour through its doors every month. This is a tourist attraction that many cities would love to have. Its revenue is crucial to keeping Riverside moving forward and there appears to be the possibility of enhancing development at the Argosy with a complimentary entertainment district.

### OPPORTUNITY

The undeveloped property directly to the north of the Argosy has some stormwater, infrastructure, and access challenges. Despite those inhibiting factors, there appears to be a growing consensus that with improved access, some accompanying development is not only feasible but also desirable

Riverside is not large enough to support such a district on its own, but by leveraging the Argosy attendance, the City can boost its tax base and provide additional recreation opportunities to residents. A small movie theater, an outdoor space for Argosy performers, dining, shopping, or a variety of other entertainment based businesses are all legitimate opportunities.

### RESOLVE ACCESS

Currently access to the casino is less than ideal. The increasing frequency of BNSF train traffic severely limits access to the casino and it is starting to discourage customer attendance. Solving the access issue is an important consideration.

New access off of Tullison Road and perhaps from a new underpass to Horizons will eliminate reliance on the current at-grade train crossing and with the proper alignment will open land up to development.



The Argosy Casino draws thousands of visitors per day to Riverside.



A new entertainment district will provide a host of activities for visitors and residents.



## Industry, Manufacturing, and Logistics

**GOAL: PROVIDE JOBS AND IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY'S WORKPLACES.**

Existing industrial development in Riverside is largely outdated and unattractive. Many structures have neared the end of their natural lives and are in a state of deterioration. Unfortunately the degraded quality of some industrial businesses is hampering the rehabilitation opportunities of other neighboring districts and supporting the stereotype of the City as a harbor for dilapidated industrial buildings.

Riverside's industrial users run the gamut, from distribution facilities to heavy manufacturing. Newer users tend to be more aligned with light industrial uses and distribution or assembly facilities. Heavy manufacturing is not likely to

be a good fit for the highly visible sites available for development and is also not in line with the image Riverside's residents would like to cultivate. Recently the City adopted much more stringent design codes and the result is undeniably a significant improvement.

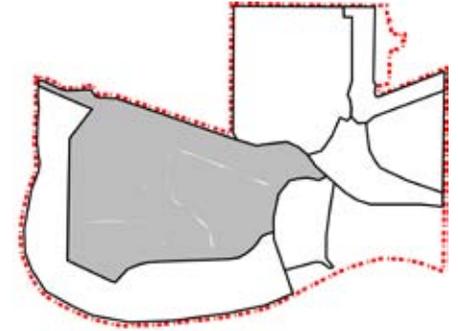
### IMPROVE THE VIEW

It is recommended that beautification of the Highway 9 corridor accompany new development. Intensive planting schemes will soften new development and dramatically alter the character of the corridor. When making planting decisions, take into account the elevation of the highway. It is recommended that a strategy for tree plantings be created and that a tall hardwood species be included in the plan.

### QUALITY ENVIRONMENTS

Many new jobs and a variety of new structures will soon be created. These

sites will be an opportunity for the City to demonstrate its insistence on quality development. Creating a quality work environment should be as important to the City as creating quality living environments, and some short-term costs and headaches will likely pay long-term dividends. For example, a quality work environment for light-industrial users on the Horizons ground would include access to the levee trail, a quality streetscape, and a few commercial amenities. Improvements to industrial areas are critically important to improving the image and appearance of the City as a whole. By leading these developments down a path toward higher quality, the overall appearance and possibly even the resulting land values will be positively affected. High quality work environments are also more likely to hold their value.



An intensive planting scheme along Hwy 9 would improve the image of adjacent development.



This self-storage unit in Topeka is a beautiful addition to its neighborhood.



This warehouse in South Carolina is used by a trade school and a variety of local artists.



This strong planted buffer in E.H. Young Park is an excellent barrier to unsightly development.



Incorporating a variety of sustainable building and siting techniques with a higher design requirement dramatically improves the appearance of industrial development.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF INDUSTRY

It is important to note that industry still plays an important role in the national and local economy and it would be a mistake to try and eliminate this crucial sector from the City's economic portfolio. Furthermore, as noted in Development Strategies findings, industrial demand is by far the most predictable use for Riverside's undeveloped properties. It is the job of the City of Riverside to set the rules for development and to assure that new construction fits in with the long-term plan for the City and with the context of the surrounding area.

Industrial businesses have evolved a good deal and there are many attractive light industrial and even manufacturing facilities all over the country. These facilities provide jobs to residents and, depending on the tax structure, contribute to the City's financial health. It is the opinion of the Master Planning team that the development sites Riverside has to offer provide enough advantages that the City will be able to insist on quality in its new industrial developments. Given these advantages and the sizeable investment the City placed in Horizons, it is important that the area lives up to its potential. This means weighing quality and price for every offer on City owned ground. Because this is an investment, make sure the outcome is exactly what is desired.

## MAKING INDUSTRY SUSTAINABLE

Flexibility is important to the long-term success of any industrial area. Markets change and the ability to maintain a high degree of flexibility keeps a site viable. This means that developers should be evaluated for their ability to adapt and for their interest in building the overall community.



This structure is the only industrial building built to meet Riverside's new design guidelines.



Current development in Horizons is not up to desirable design standards.



## SQUARE FT. PER PERSON

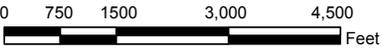


This graphic shows the amount of Industrial development per person in Riverside vs. the Kansas City metropolitan area. It will take much diligence to ensure development improves the quality of Riverside.

# Proposed Figure/Ground

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Development
- Levee Protected Property
- Missouri River



The proposed figure/ground map shows the amount of future development expected versus what already exists in town.

## New Built Environment

**GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE, SAFETY AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE CITY THROUGH THE SYSTEMATIC REMOVAL OF BLIGHT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS, STREETSCAPES, AND PUBLIC SPACES.**

Because of population growth and the natural lifespan of existing buildings, the fabric of Riverside's built environment will change dramatically over the next 30 years. According to the Brookings Institution, **half of the homes, offices, buildings, stores, and factories needed by 2030 don't exist today.** This means there is an enormous opportunity to completely reshape the built environment in Riverside over the next 25 years. It is important that future projects reflect a character Riverside can be proud of. It is the recommendation of the planning team that the following checklist be used to determine if a new building is going to make a positive contribution to Riverside:

### NEW DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

- Does the development improve Riverside's appearance?
- Does the development provide a needed amenity to Riverside residents?
- Does the development adhere to the goals and guidelines established in the Master Plan?
- Will the development be something Riverside will be proud of for the next 25 years and adapt to future needs?

### • Does the development contribute to the financial stability of the City?

A successful project will have affirmative answers for a majority or even every one of those litmus questions.

### ELIMINATE BLIGHT

The elimination of blight is a major goal for the City of Riverside. There are currently a large number of rundown and dilapidated structures within the City that are in need of repair or replacement. They are drastically impacting the image of the City and the ability to attract new businesses and residents. Another form of blight in Riverside is buildings of poor quality whose current use is incompatible with the desired larger use for the area. Replacing these structures with compatible users will allow the district to develop according to the desired use.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Ed., offers what may be the simplest definition of blight: *"something that impairs growth, withers hopes and ambitions, or impedes progress and prosperity."* The following text is taken from the American Planning Association policy guide and is intended to help define the types of blight that will be targeted by Riverside:

It has been well recognized that there are many events, conditions, and causes that lead to blight:

- Buildings in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work due to dilapidation; deterioration; defective design or physical construction;

inadequate utilities; lack of ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities; contamination by hazardous substances; or below minimum code;

- The predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
- Inadequate public improvements, parking facilities, or utilities;
- Obsolete buildings or inadequate parcels which hinder the economically viable use or capacity of property;
- Multiple ownership of properties which inhibits the assembly of economically viable properties that meet current development standards;
- Environmental hazards;
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- Deterioration of site improvements;
- Excessive land coverage and overcrowding of structures or community facilities;
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
- Conditions that retard the provision of housing accommodations;
- Constitutes an economic or social liability or a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;
- The incompatibility or deleterious use of adjacent land or buildings;
- Excessive vacancy, abandoned buildings, or excessive vacant lots within an area developed for urban use and served by utilities;
- Extraordinary local crime rate that

constitute a serious threat to the public safety and welfare;

- Extraordinary local decline in property values or tax delinquencies that diminish the equitable delivery of public services and improvements;
- Abandoned quarries, mines, railroads, or similarly extensive facilities that pose a threat to public health, safety, morals, or welfare;

It is the recommendation of the planning team that this definition and description of blight be adopted by the Planning Commission to identify blight and to determine if a redevelopment project is eliminating existing blight.



New development should encourage pedestrian traffic.



New development should be built to knit the community together.



## New Density

**GOAL: TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF HOUSING AND SHOPPING OPTIONS FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS.**

### SELECTIVELY INCREASE DENSITY

Density is an often misunderstood term used to describe the ratio of built development to unbuilt land or sometimes the number of people who live in a given area. For several decades, it was generally considered a good idea to spread things out as much as possible. Overcrowding was the primary concern and the days of cheap gasoline made commuting relatively inexpensive. More recently the social and economic costs of these decisions have made the clustering or densification of new development a much more attractive alternative. By placing shops, offices and homes closer together it is possible to achieve significant infrastructure savings and encourage pedestrian activity. By spreading homes, offices, and shops out over a large distance we have actually seen a decline in the sense of community and every day interactions between citizens and even neighbors. Medium density developments help to reestablish City centers. Medium density projects will also help Riverside move its home ownership numbers more dramatically with a smaller overall land development by providing more homes on the same amount of ground.

### GUIDE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development footprint we have shown is an estimation of the new buildings you are likely to see in the community in the coming years. This dramatic change in the amount of development reflects the estimation of growth potential calculated by Development Strategies. It is critically important to realize that the City will be changing dramatically regardless of what the citizens of Riverside would like to have happen. The opportunity is to guide future development so that it improves the appearance and vitality of the City rather than reacting to it after the fact.

### PROMOTE NATURAL CHARACTER

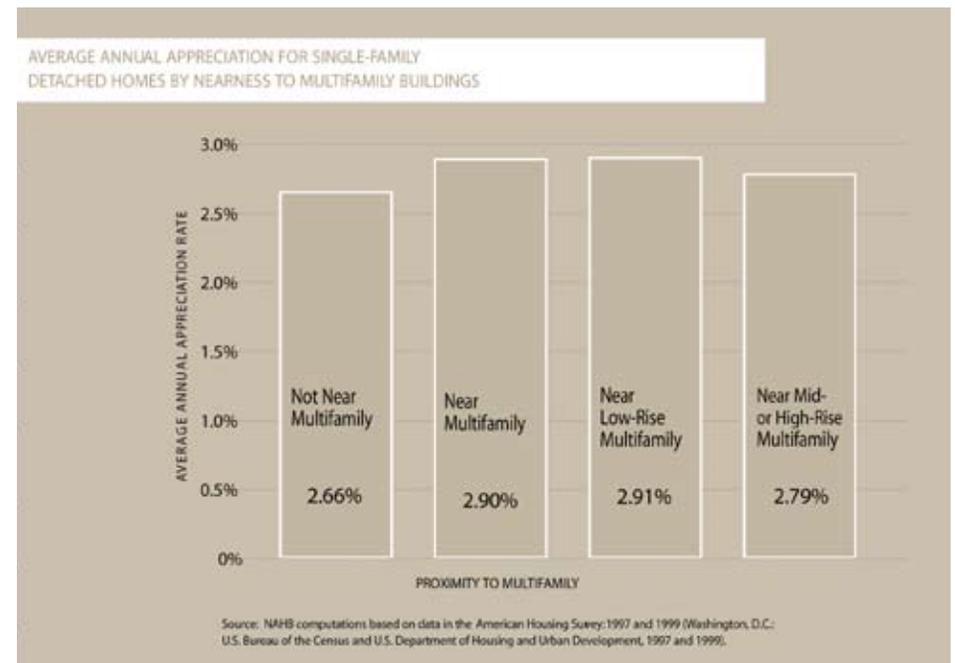
The schematic design included in this plan is designed to allow for future growth while protecting and enhancing the characteristics of Riverside that make the community unique. New developments represent a significant opportunity for the community, but it will also be crucial to protect the most important green spaces in order to keep the “natural” feel of the City. By densifying in identified locations and protecting the most environmentally important locations, Riverside will grow smart and bolster its identity.

It is important to note that development will not happen exactly according to this plan, but that with the proper guidelines and implementation procedures, final developments will accomplish the same goals as the design, and

will represent the best possible future for the City. Policy makers take note, it will require fortitude to insist that development adhere to the goals and guidelines established by the master planning process and recorded in this document. By holding firm, especially in the early years, it will be possible to alter the way development occurs in the City.

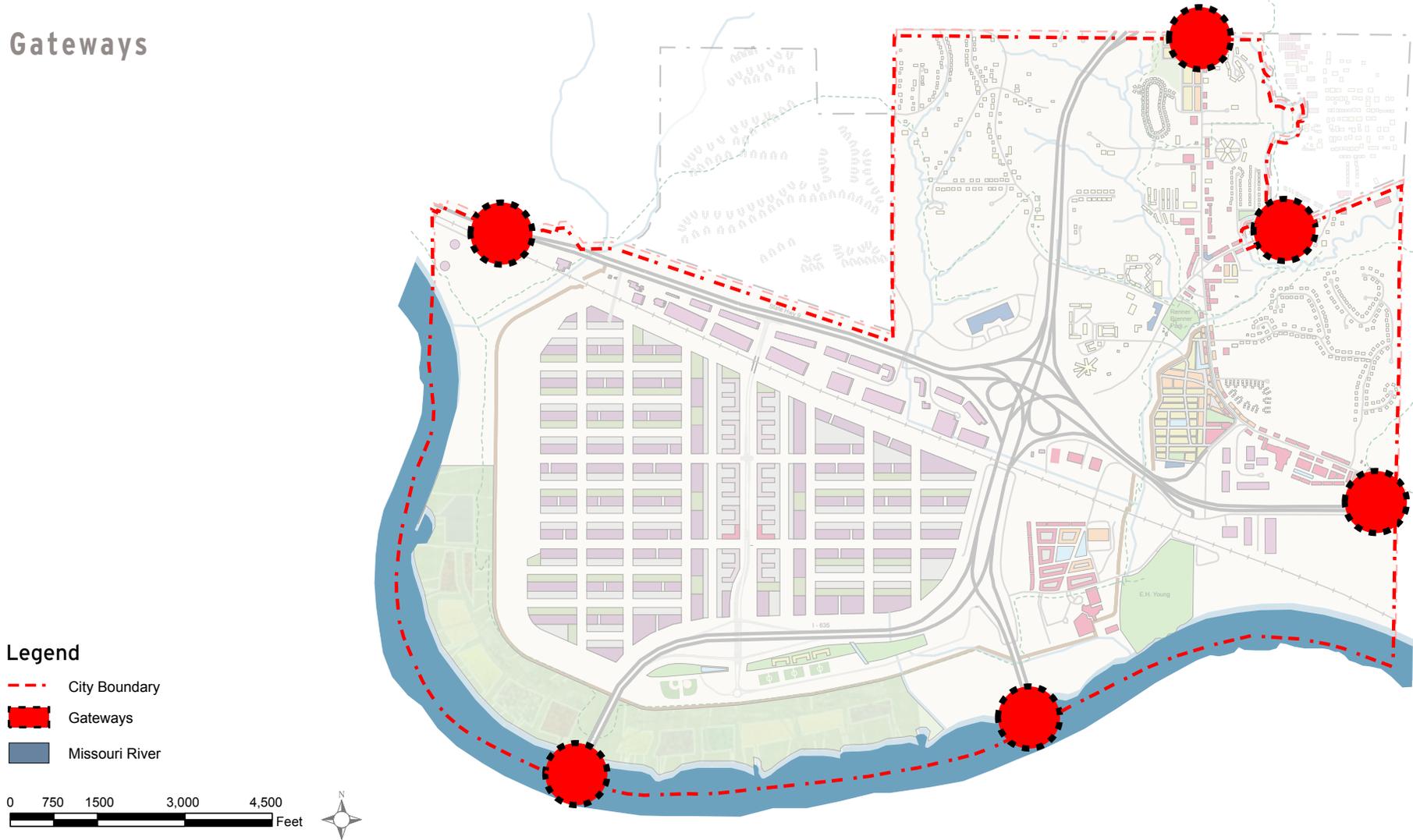


A variety of architectural styles may help capture a wider segment of the housing market.



Higher density developments have no negative financial impact on single family homes.

# Gateways



Riverside has six major access points. These locations are potential sites for Gateway improvements.

## Gateways

**GOAL: COMMUNICATE THE NEW CHARACTER OF RIVERSIDE IN A SNAPSHOT.**

One frequent comment from the community was that there is no way for visitors to know when they are physically within Riverside. Gateways, or entry points, to the City were recommended by many residents and stakeholders as an important component of raising the City's profile. The most common suggestion was to create some type of marker at the major entries to the City.

### LOCATING AND CREATING GATEWAYS

Selecting the location, timing, and appearance of Riverside's Gateways will be critical. If a monument or marker is chosen for a gateway, it is recommended that it not be erected until the City has made a move to signal the importance of the site. The most effective Gateways are established in concert with an accompanying City or development project. For example, a gateway at the northern border of Riverside on Gateway road would be much more effective if it was constructed along with a redevelopment of that area. That concurrent development will signify that the City is committed to improving Riverside and announce a new character for the City.

### UNDERSTAND ICONOGRAPHY

Gateway iconography can be notoriously hokey and there are hundreds of examples of signage or monuments that do more damage than good. While it is important to establish a character for Riverside, care must be taken to ensure the monument or sign reflects positively on the community. Usually the safest strategy is to go with something simple in design and somehow tied to the geography or history of the City.



The high volume of vehicular traffic that moves through Riverside represents an opportunity to demonstrate a new character to a large audience.



When driving into Riverside from Highway 9, there is no indication of where Riverside's boundary begins.

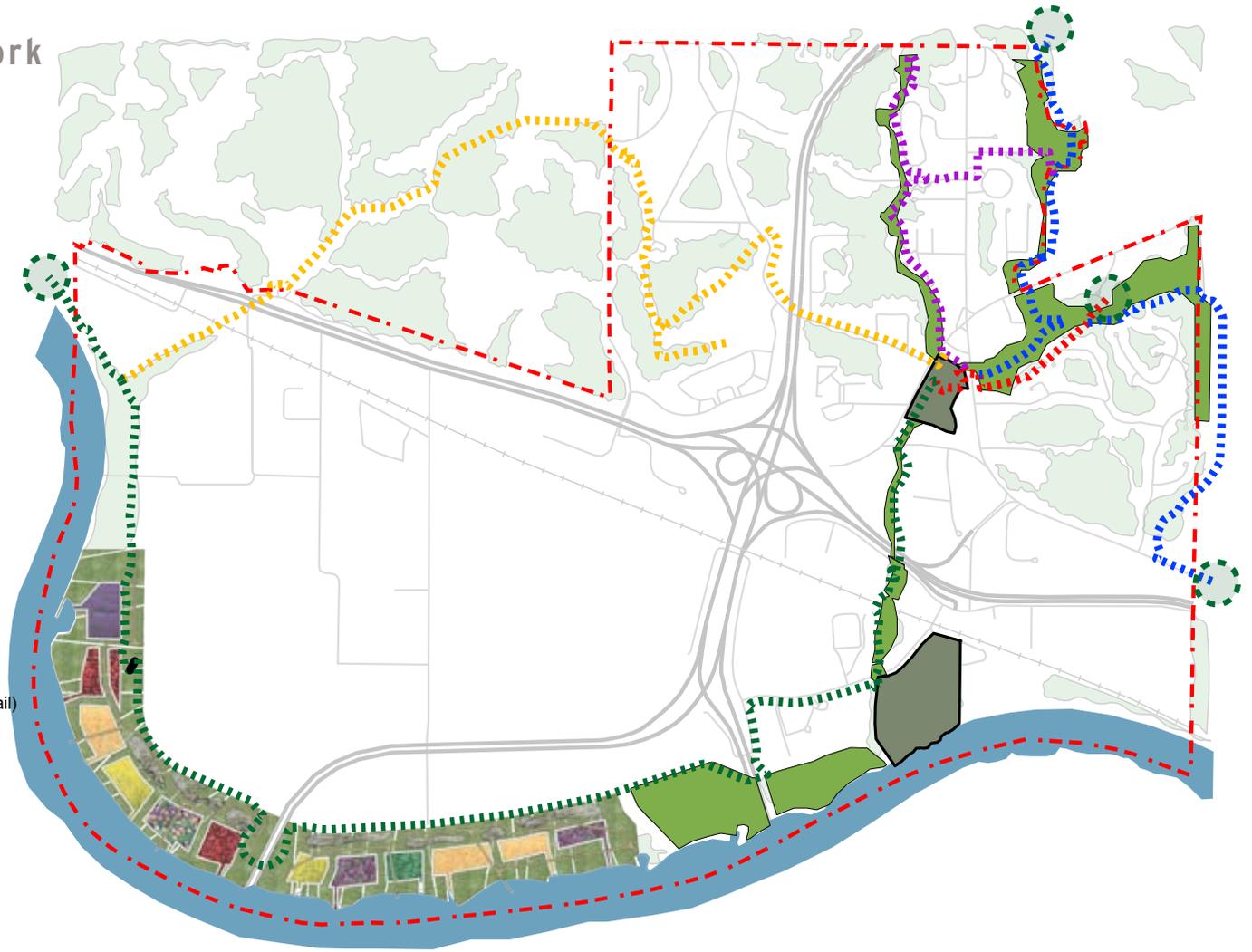


This bridge is an excellent architectural gateway into Riverside.

# Proposed Natural Network

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- - - Proposed Trail (West Loop)
- - - Proposed Trail (Jumping Branch)
- - - Proposed Trail (Line Creek)
- - - Proposed Trail (InterUrban)
- - - Proposed Trail (Lower Line Creek / Levee Trail)
- Existing Vegetation
- Proposed Natural Network
- Existing Parks
- Missouri River & Streams
- - -



By creating a natural loop trail and a wetland preserve, Riverside can capitalize on its existing vegetation and rich natural resources. The new green network will be an unparalleled amenity.

## Green Networks

**GOAL: CREATE PRISTINE NATURAL CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT RIVERSIDE.**

### HOLISTIC PARKS AND RECREATION

Natural character and recreational opportunities are an important part of every community. Fortunately, Riverside is blessed with an active and organized Park Board. The importance of natural environments and of an improved park system was a consistent call to arms in nearly every interview and survey. It is very clear that protecting pristine lands and creating additional recreation opportunities in Riverside is an important priority. By widening the net beyond the typical manicured parks and recreation tasks that typically fall into the parks and recreation realm to include natural areas and habitat protections, it is possible to take a holistic approach to planning and developing future natural and recreational systems. The City government must take an active role in identifying and protecting threatened natural areas. This comprehensive approach requires an excellent Park Board and a commitment by the Alderman to enforce regulations and grow the overall park system.

### GREEN CONNECTIONS

During the Community Workshops several participants suggested using a trail network to make connections across and around the existing transportation infrastructure as a method of recon-

necting separate parts of the City. This idea works nicely with the goals set out by the community, and fortunately, the City has many pristine natural corridors that would make an ideal trail system. As an additional bonus these areas also coincide with natural drainage ways that clean stormwater and prevent flooding.

Because of the consistent call to develop a trail network, the planning team spent a fair amount of time ensuring that a network of trails could be established in a manner that would satisfy the requirements of making connections across barriers, providing a community amenity, and protecting a natural resource. The existing riparian corridors, large forested stands and Interurban Rail Bed provide an excellent base for the development of a greenway system that weaves together the City of Riverside internally and links to adjacent municipal Metro Green trail heads. The following paragraphs describe the results of that work and the segments of a network that accomplishes our goals.

### Interurban Trail Spur

The current Northland Vision Trails plan includes a 12.5 mile hard surface off-road route from Riverside to Liberty via Vivion Road. It is recommended that the City coordinate with Platte County to augment the Riverside / Liberty route to include an existing Northland Interurban Rail Bed and concrete bridge that has been long abandoned. Renner

Brenner would be the trail head in Riverside and the Interurban would connect back into the planned Riverside / Liberty loop at 50th and Vivion. The interurban rail bed is situated on the upper fringe of the East Creek 100 year floodplain and has a beautiful view of the East Creek and Line Creek Valleys. An existing concrete arching bridge holds historic value for would be tourists.

### Line Creek Trail Spur

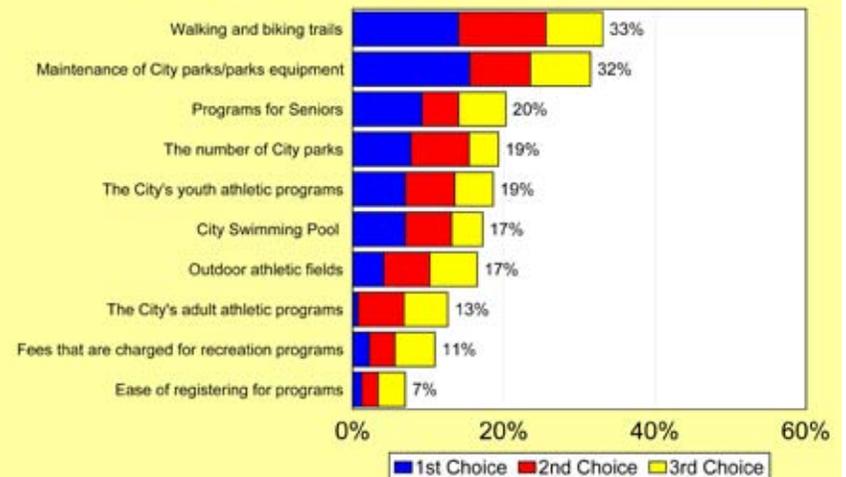
The current Northland Vision Trails Plan includes an 8.5 mile hard surface trail from E.H Young park to Tiffany Springs Parkway via the Line Creek Valley. It is recommended that the City create a Vivion Road pedestrian underpass



The new skate park in Renner Brenner is an unquestionable success

## Parks/Recreation Issues That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years by Major Category

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (March 2006 - Riverside, MO)



along the west bank of Line Creek to link Renner Brenner Park with the existing dirt two track trail in preparation for the hard surface improvements slated to occur with the Vision Trails Plan. Additionally, it is recommended that a hard surface trail be installed west of Line Creek from Vivion Road to Homestead Park to further facilitate the development of the future Line Creek Valley trail.

#### Jumping Branch Trail Spur

Jumping Branch Creek has been negatively impacted from upstream piping where I-635 crosses tributaries, from culvert channelization associated with a past development on NW 47th Terrace, and from unchecked trash disposal in the valley. It is recommended that an assessment and restoration study of Jumping Branch Creek be developed by the City in association with the installation of a hard surface pedestrian trail. Additionally, it is recommended that community groups adopt the stream for trash pickup.

#### West Loop Trail Spur

The area north of Highway 9 and west of I-635 has a high percentage of forested stands and undeveloped land. It is suggested that a trail alignment be developed to link the City to the proposed Jumping Branch trail to the proposed Levee Trail. The alignment should follow riparian corridors and be associated with a stream corridor setback. Such an alignment would complete a "loop" around Riverside

connecting English Landing Park, E.H. Young Park, and Renner Brenner Park. The loop would overcome the fragmentation brought on by Highway 9 and I-635 and provide a valuable connection throughout the City.

Each of these alignments would benefit from, if not require, the protection of the FEMA designated lands. By adopting a stream setback ordinance floodplain protection strategy, the quality of the trail network and of the larger ecological stormwater system would be defended.

#### GREEN STREETS

Street improvements and new development in Horizons will create landscapes in need of street trees. A variety of studies have shown that street trees cool the air, reduce pollution, and absorb storm-water runoff. Additionally, **property values are 7 to 25 percent higher** for houses surrounded by trees. **In commercial areas, consumers spend up to 13 percent more at shops near green landscapes.**

#### TREE NURSERY

One innovative idea for Riverside was to start an actual tree nursery. The nursery could be located in Horizons where ample ground water and easy access make it an ideal site. By starting to grow trees immediately, it will be possible to transplant them as needed into other parts of the City. The cost of balled trees on an as needed basis could easily offset the cost of this initia-

tive. There is also an opportunity to work in conjunction with local nurseries, arborists, garden clubs, etc. to develop an extensive seed bank of native vegetation. The region is currently underserved by native plantings nurseries and the City could further offset costs by incorporating for sale natives into the nursery stock. The nursery will also be a scenic asset and could be used as a buffer against development deeper within the property.



Historic Interurban Bridge



Line Creek Double Track



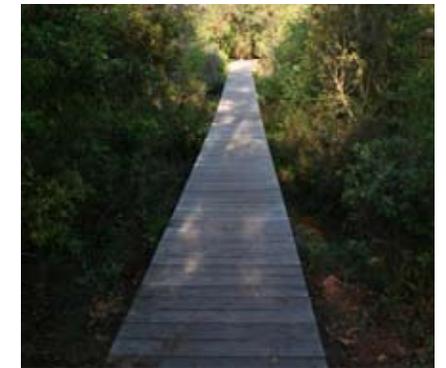
Jumping Branch Culvert



West Loop Forests



The Wetland Preserve will be an excellent spot for nature watching

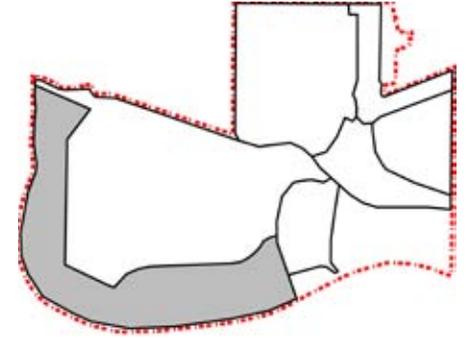


A system of trails will lead from the levee trail out into the preserve and back again.

## NATURAL WETLAND PRESERVE

The rich bottomland, extensive native wetlands, and bottomland hardwood species on the wet-side of the Quindaro Levee are well suited to passive recreation and natural restoration. The existing borrow pits are excellent habitat for native plantings and will help reinforce the function of the levee by extending their root systems throughout the bottomland, acting as a natural barrier against the increased forces of flood flows. This rich natural amenity is currently inaccessible and rarely thought of as a good connection to the Missouri River.

The creation of the Levee Trail will drastically improve visibility and accessibility of that natural area. Providing access to the natural environment on the wet side of the levee will create an excellent location for viewing wildlife, fishing, hiking, and connecting to the river. The Preserve can be outfitted with raised walkways, viewing platforms, and scenic overlooks of the KCMO skyline. This park system would be unique in Kansas City and could attract visitors from a wide area.

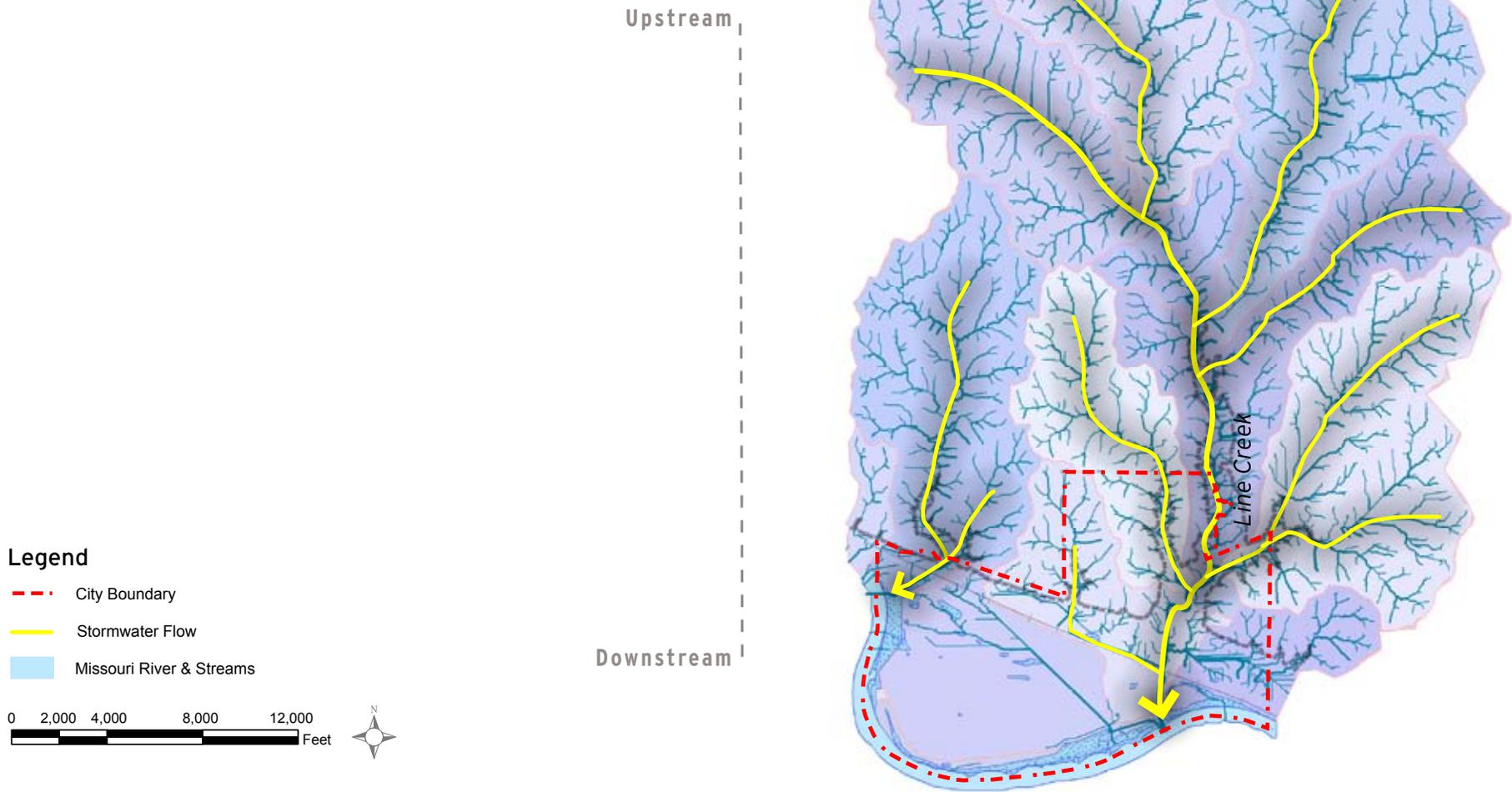


The Wetland Preserve will be an excellent spot to access the Missouri River.



The Preserve will connect the waterfront with other habitat corridors running through the city.

# Line Creek Watershed



Riverside is at the bottom of the Line Creek Watershed. Development pressure in the Northland will perpetuate stormwater problems.

## Stormwater Management

Being proactive about protecting water in Riverside's streams and rivers was the concern more of Riverside's residents agreed on than any other issue. This extraordinary result led the planning team to develop a variety of recommendations that will help the City responsibly deal with stormwater issues.

Riverside is located at the bottom of the Line Creek Watershed. This means that every drop of rain that falls in the watershed above Riverside flows toward the City. When development covers land with impervious surfaces, it increases the amount of runoff that has to be handled by the area's rivers and streams. Riverside's waterways show signs of damage, and flooding and further degradation will accompany the development that is expected in the Northland.

### PROTECT AND RESTORE

It is recommended that the City of Riverside take the following actions to protect and restore the existing stream channels, floodplains, and habitat corridors that are an integral part of the flood protection and natural character of the City:

1. Adopt the American Public Works Association (APWA) Section 5600 Guidelines for Storm Drainage Systems and Facilities (2002). This manual specifies application and design criteria for stormwater management, conveyance,

detention, and natural stream protection. The manual was written explicitly for the Kansas City metro region and thus is well suited to comprehensive stormwater management guidelines for Riverside. The adoption of the APWA Section 5600 will help improve all aspects of stormwater and groundwater protection, as well as ensure the most up to date engineered stormwater infrastructure and calculations are applied.

2. Adopt the APWA manual of Best Practices for Stormwater Management in Metropolitan Kansas City. The Best Management Practices (BMP) manual provides local government with the toolbox necessary to design comprehensive stormwater systems which protect water quality and reduce runoff quantity, encourage infiltration of surface water into the subsurface hydrologic system, promotes native vegetation for pollutant filtration and reduction of landscape watering, and champions natural systems restoration and management as the most effective means of comprehensive watershed stormwater management.

The toolbox is easily adapted by developers through the guidance of the City during preliminary plan phases, and helps ensure high quality smart site development. The BMP's are applied with a "Level of Service Method (LOS)" which allows the City to determine the level of investment into stormwater protection at a site by site or zoning basis, and

ensures that a minimum LOS is achieved for each development. The BMP manual provides guidance in the application of:

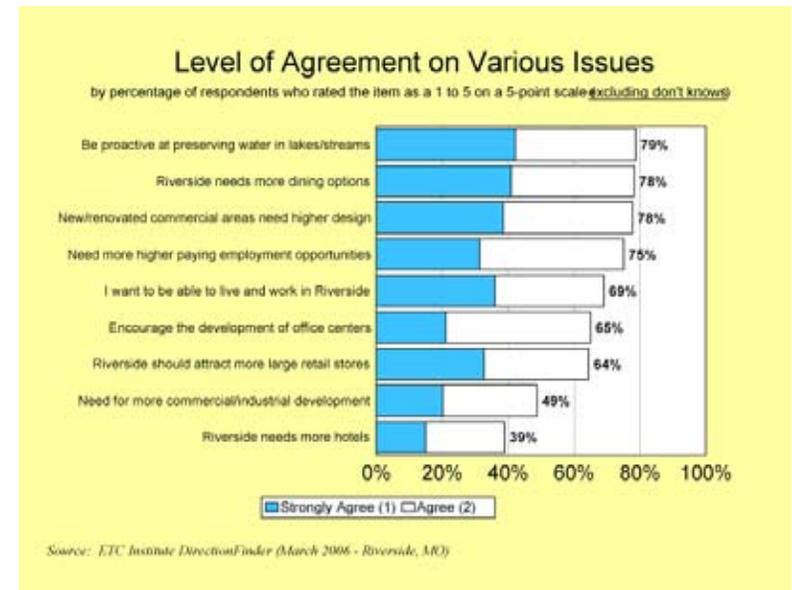
- A. Bioretention Strategies
- B. Stream Buffer and Setback Plans
- C. Reduction of Impervious Surfaces
- D. Native Plant Palette
- E. Stream Stabilization and Restoration

### CREATE STREAM BUFFER

In addition to the adoption of the APWA 5600 guidelines and BMP manual, it is recommended that the City develop a stream buffer plan and setback ordinance. A stream buffer plan provides additional watershed level detention capacity and ensures the protection

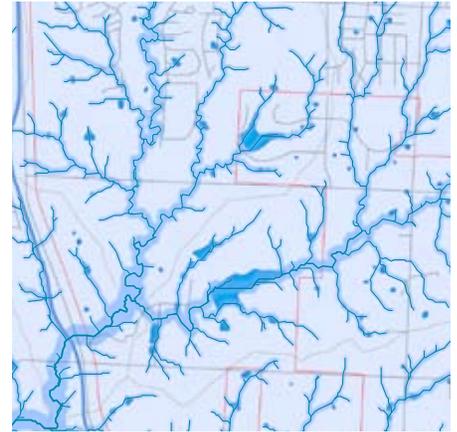
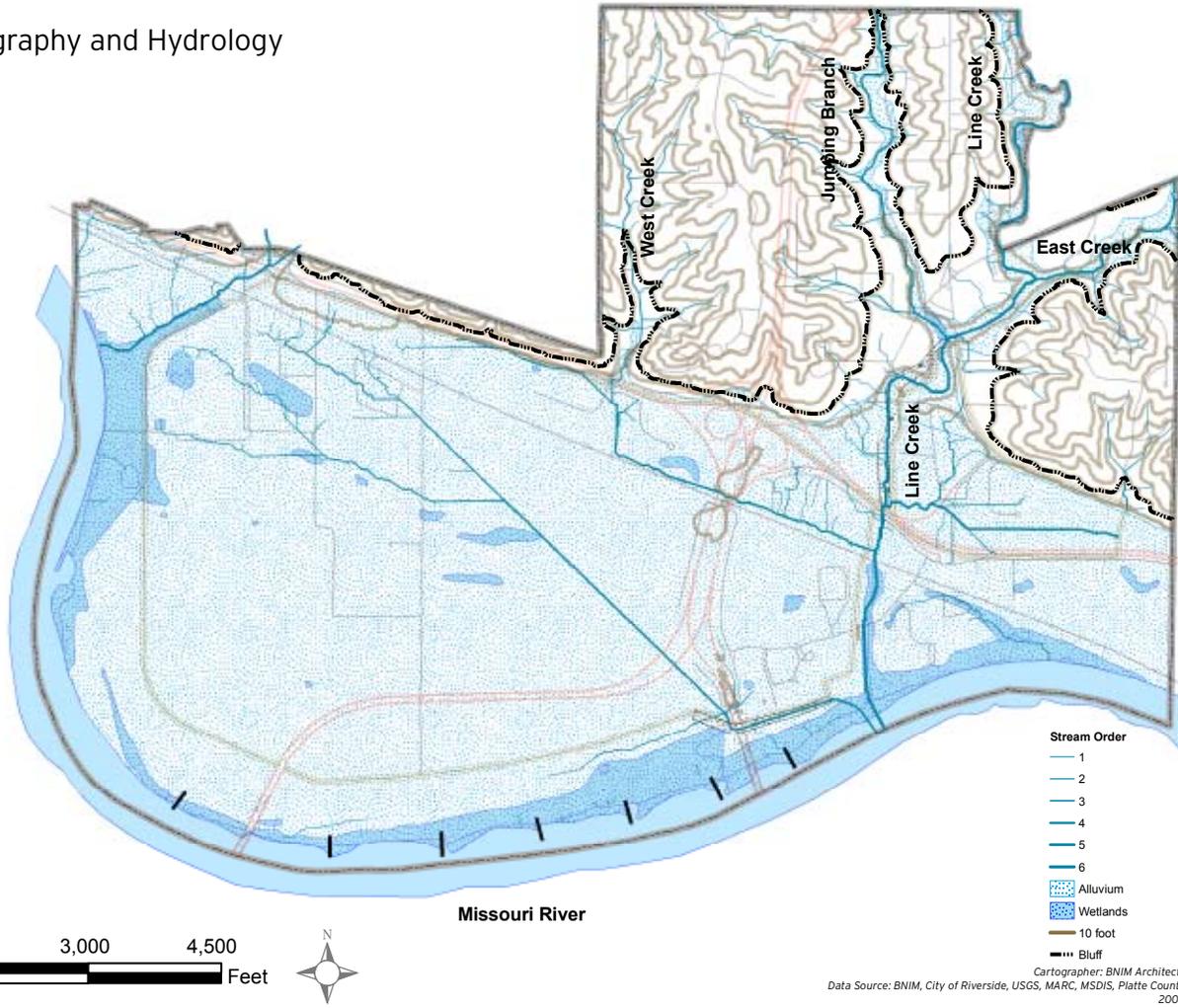
and quality of existing natural stream channels.

The application of a buffer plan within a municipality can be challenging due to the many land owners affected by every stream corridor. From the perspective of private developers or land-owners with the intent to develop, buffer plans or stream setbacks effectively "take away" land from possible development, thus taking away a measure of profit proportional to the land to be "set aside" for buffers.



More Riverside residents agree about the importance of preserving streams than on any other issue.

# Physiography and Hydrology



Buffer Plan



Best Management Practices



Native Plants

Horizons is composed of an alluvial soil mix and a sandy soil base.

To assist in the implementation of a buffer plan, it is strongly recommended that the City develop the following additional policy guidelines:

1. A stream setback ordinance to legally enforce the buffer system recommended in APWA 5600.
2. The addition of a conservation development classification to the zoning ordinance which specifies site design strategies and requires a higher "level of service" than recommended in the BMP manual.
3. Provide additional density credits for land owners who designate land to conservation easements, under which a land owner can increase development density on one part of a site in exchange for setting aside riparian corridor or high quality native vegetation in conservation.
4. Remind land-owners and developers that while the financial impacts of land development are short term and affect few people, the environmental impacts of insensitive development are long term and affect many people.
5. Avoid raising flood plains which leads to flooding and stream degradation.

## STORMWATER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

One method for controlling exponential growth of upstream stormwater drainage outside of Riverside is to implement a stormwater impact assessment. Under this policy, upstream developments are required to provide appropriate stormwater mitigation to their projects. If they are unable or unwilling to take mitigating steps, the developer is charged an assessment for the impact on Riverside. The impact assessment should be investigated and implemented if possible.



Many of the City's stream corridors are damaged from extensive stormwater run off.





This new billboard at City Hall in Kansas City, MO is a good example of the visual eye-sore billboards can become.



These 2 photos are before and after images after this Florida city adopted a sign ordinance.

## Design and Zoning Guidelines

**GOAL: TO ENSURE DEVELOPMENT ADHERES TO THE GOALS OF THE COMMUNITY EXPRESSED THROUGH THE MASTER PLAN.**

### ZONING

Zoning regulations should be reworked to comply with the goals for Riverside identified in this Master Plan. Regulations regarding setbacks, streetscapes, parking, pedestrian amenities, site plan review, land use, and design character should be updated to reflect the desire to create an attractive Riverside that is pedestrian friendly and proactive about directing development.

#### Develop and Update

When used effectively, zoning can shape growth in a City to adhere to the long-term goals for the site. However, traditional zoning does have drawbacks. Traditional code is complex and illegible for much of the general public, it regulates based on use, artificially separating users that may be better off in proximity, and it disconnects land use from urban form. It is the recommendation of the Master Planning Team that a form based zoning code be developed in concert with the update of the traditional code. This form based code concentrates on regulating the urban form of a development rather than the use.

Typical zoning codes include physical requirements for each zone, usually dictating a minimum lot size, desired setbacks from streets and adjacent lots,

and maximum building heights. Typically, the zoning code does not help to create a streetscape.

#### Street Character

In Riverside buildings should be placed to define stronger street edges thus creating more lively sidewalks and zones where activity can take place. Areas for cars should be located behind or at the sides of buildings where possible. The relationship of buildings to the streets and the physical character of the street should be defined. Public uses should occur at the street level, setting more eyes on the street, attracting people, and generating social intercourse.

#### The Form-Based Zoning Alternative

The arguments against traditional zoning do not mandate that the current system must be abandoned. It is an efficient, simple, defensible, and economic approach to planning, and it can be modified to encourage a different growth pattern than is currently supported. Other municipalities and entire states have successfully instituted "Smart Growth" policies that utilize various tools in conjunction with more conventional zoning strategies in an effort to create more vital, pedestrian friendly, higher density communities. It is tools like these that the City of Riverside must explore to generate more positive growth.

#### Transect Zoning Recommendation

This plan recommends the Transect Zoning approach, developed by Duany Plater Zyberk & Company. Their research of walkable, mixed-use commu-

nities led to the development of a code based on the characteristics of six zones, which form a Transect. Typically, the Transect is divided into zones, ranging from an undisturbed natural environment through an urban core. Within each zone, the characteristics of density, scale, open space and mix of uses can be described in a consistent manner and across the range of context zones one finds distinct choices for people with different preferences. One additional zone is reserved for special uses and industry.

Under the transect code, criteria are assigned for density, block sizes, public frontage, civic spaces, lot occupancy, setback, private frontage, building height, and basic guidelines for use; these criteria are detailed in each transect differently, to define the desired character. The zones are sometimes arranged in order of intensity, but it is entirely possible that an urban center or core could be juxtaposed to a rural or natural zone. Zones may even overlap. The code is a template, and is more graphic in content than verbal. This type of picture-book zoning forces a community to make decisions about the broad character they desire. The real advantage to Transect based zoning is its simplicity and ability to shape urban form. Both of those characteristics make it ideal for use in Riverside.

#### DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

A design review board is a group charged with maintaining the design standards of a community. The board would evaluate the architectural quality of incoming development proposals

and ensure that they adhere to the guidelines established for the particular type of structure. Riverside should consider assigning design review board duties to the Planning Board. This body could also represent redevelopment initiatives and potentially identify and go after development opportunities in cooperation with the appropriate developer.

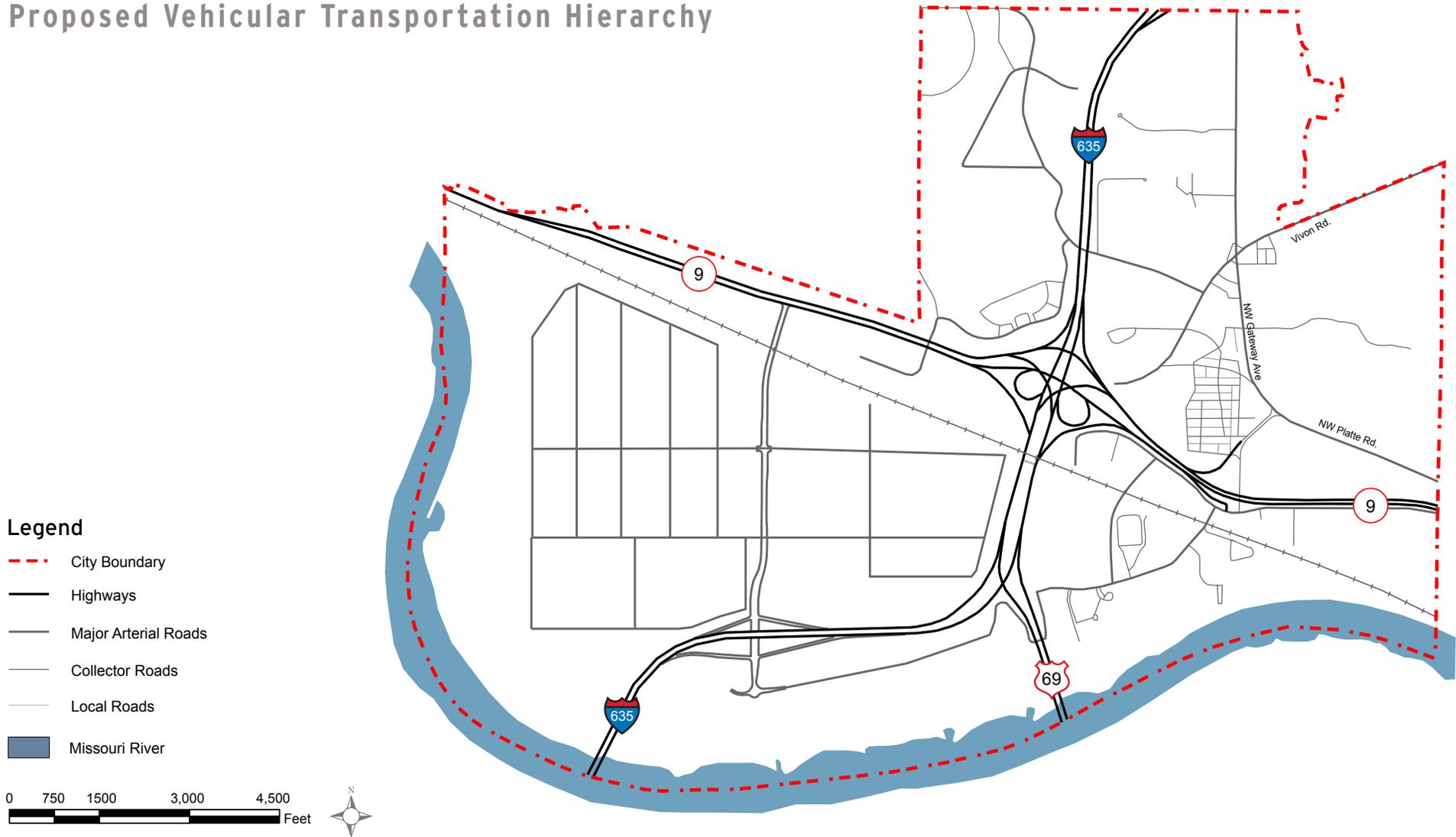
#### BILLBOARDS

Because of the persistent concern with the overall appearance and image of Riverside, the Master Plan recommends a ban on billboards inside Riverside City limits. Because of the zero real estate tax in Riverside there is no real incentive for allowing the construction of billboards. These signs clutter roadways and the most visible parts of communities across Missouri. A properly drafted sign ordinance will protect the City from billboards and the visual clutter that they create. It is recommended that such an ordinance is drafted and adopted.

#### PERMITTING

One item that the team heard in many of the interviews was the desire to have City staff handle routine permitting issues. It is the recommendation of the team that day-to-day routine permitting issues be delegated to City staff for approval. This will free up the Planning Board to concentrate on larger and more pressing issues.

# Proposed Vehicular Transportation Hierarchy



A new street system will create block structures and facilitate movement between disparate portions of the city.

## Transportation Network

**GOAL: TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION.**

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Transportation is an important issue in Riverside. One significant asset for the City is its proximity to regional draws and the connecting road network. Unfortunately, the infrastructure that provides the citizens of Riverside with access to the regional highway system also acts as a barrier dividing the City into four quadrants. Making connections across the separate quadrants is important to the long-term vitality of the City. The community survey demonstrated an interest in using a trail network in combination with new road proposals and new development corridors as methods for reconnecting separate parts of the City. Fortunately, the City has many pristine natural corridors that would make an ideal trail system.

### POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Some possible transportation projects include improving Northwood Road, creating a parkway along the Vivion corridor, completing the City's sidewalk network, starting the City-wide trails program, and integrating minimal bike lanes on appropriate arterial streets. These initial projects will begin to overcome the barriers that prevent the City from having an interconnected transportation network.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Riverside is under served by public transportation. A variety of potential users expressed an interest in using public transportation, but complained that service is not adequate. It is the responsibility of the City to ensure its residents have access to the regional transportation network. Expanding bus routes, creating new stops, and providing street furniture at current stops are ways Riverside can facilitate better ridership.

### TRAFFIC CALMING

Goal: To ensure vehicular traffic moves safely through the community.

There are a variety of traffic calming techniques that can be used to slow traffic. While slowing automobile traffic may seem counterintuitive, it is crucial to creating successful pedestrian friendly mixed-use developments. Research has shown that higher speed roads are uncomfortable for pedestrians and do not make good environments for commercial facilities.

- Raised crosswalks, neck downs, traffic circles and a host of other techniques can be used to slow automobile traffic to speeds conducive to pedestrian safety and productive commercial opportunities.
- On-street parking is another calming technique that should be used extensively.
- Planted bulb-outs can be used to slow traffic and create attractive on-street parking bays that provide parking for shopping opportunities.

### STREET LANE WIDTHS

Overall lane widths are also important to the success of mixed-use and even residential developments. Narrower streets actually create a more intimate sense of scale that appeals to shoppers and to residents. Using narrow streets where appropriate saves significant infrastructure dollars and is more fitting to many development types.

### PARKING

Parking is an often overlooked but crucial element in a successful City design. The amount of space dedicated to parking, the ease of finding a space, and the proximity of the spot to the destination are all important factors in how the final design performs. Additionally, lot design can have a significant impact on how a parking facility looks. There is no



Riverside residents have a shorter drive than most area commuters.



The at-grade train crossings cause back ups and deter business



The ground breaking of the I-635 interchange symbolizes the opening of the Horizons property to future development.

# Pedestrian Catchment Plan

This plan illustrates the walkability potential of Riverside. Each circle represents a 1/4 mile radius from its center. Basic services such as a corner grocer, trail access, etc. are within a five minute walk.

### Legend

-  City Boundary
-  5 Minute walking areas ( 1/4 mi. radius )
-  Missouri River

0 750 1500 3,000 4,500 Feet



reason all parking lots have to be ugly and often times a little thought can drastically improve the appearance and functionality of the facility.

In general, a smaller lot on the side or behind a development mixed with on-street parking provides the most attractive alternative for surface parking lots. Structured parking is another alternative but can be cost prohibitive. If structured lots are feasible, placing alternative uses along the façade (for example the lots lined by shops on the Country Club Plaza) creates a very effective solution.

#### WALKABILITY

Goal: To foster a healthy, convenient, and convivial community.

The City has done an excellent job of building and repairing the infrastructure that allows automobiles to travel quickly to anywhere in the region. It is the request of the Riverside community that the focus now be shifted to accommodate the most local transit, the pedestrian. This request is supported by the national finding that communities with strong pedestrian links have healthier residents.

Nationwide there is a movement to create better environments for the pedestrian. This can be largely accomplished by recognizing the differences in experience between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The goal is to design streets where both automobiles and

pedestrians feel equally comfortable.

A pedestrian friendly environment needs to consider the characteristics of successful urban walks. Trees, landscaping, lighting, slower automobile traffic, separation from automobile traffic, retail shops, restaurants, trail connections and street furniture all soften the pedestrian realm and make it a better place to stroll. According to the City's history, Vivion road is recognized as part of the national Lewis and Clark Trail. This fact lends credence to the desire to make the street friendly to pedestrians.



Slightly higher density development leads to more walkable neighborhoods.



Small scale shopping opportunities compliment walkable neighborhoods.

#### Public Transportation Network



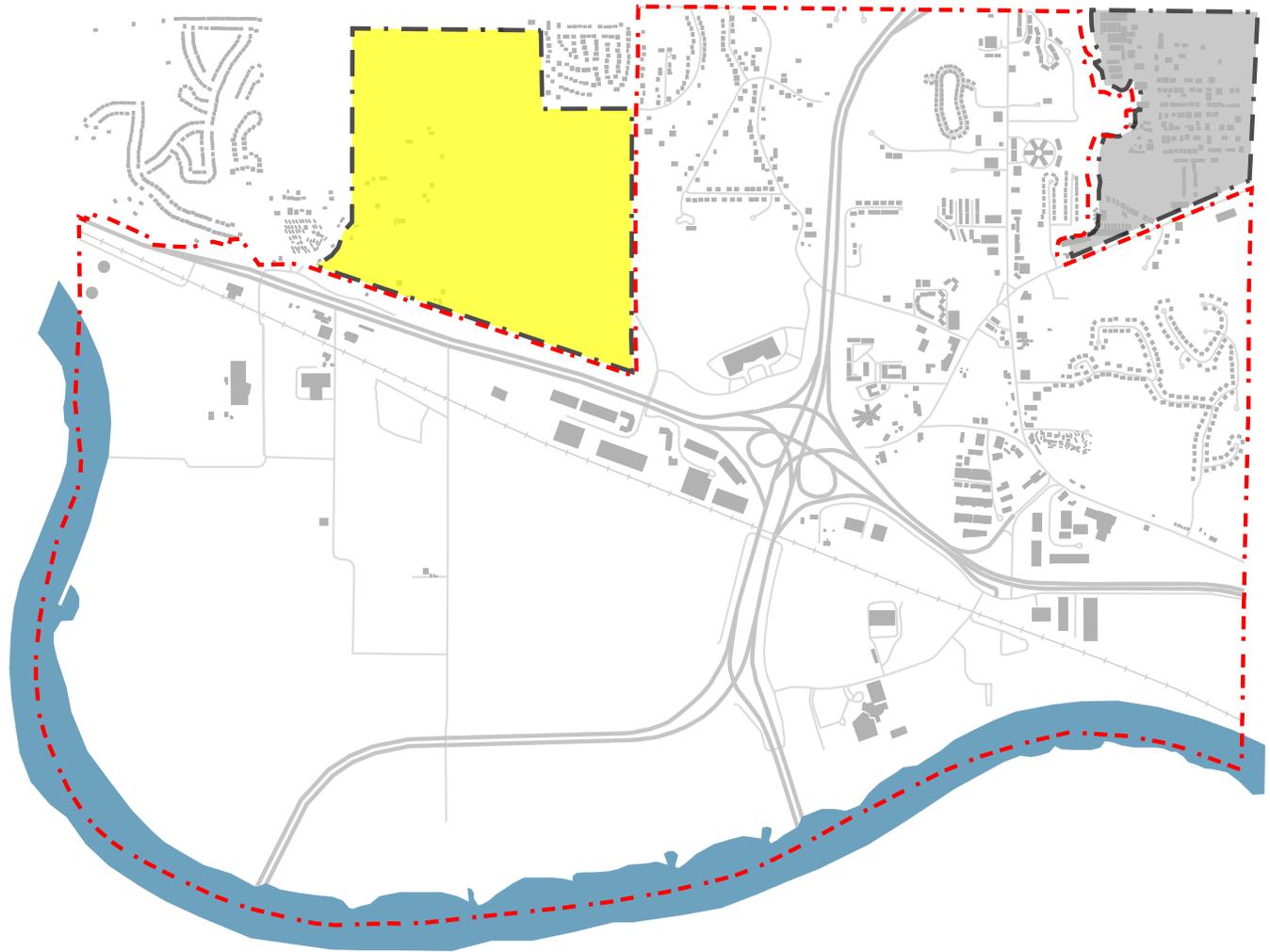
A new bus stop and perhaps a new bus route will dramatically improve existing public transportation.

# Proposed Annexation/ Consolidation

## Legend

- - - City Boundary
- Proposed Northwest Bluff Annexation Area
- Proposed Northmoor Consolidation Area
- Missouri River

0 750 1500 3,000 4,500  
Feet



Annexation or consolidation would give Riverside a much higher degree of control over the development in adjacent properties.

## Annexation / Consolidation

**GOAL: TO INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF RIVERSIDE'S NEIGHBORS.**

- According to the community survey, 60% of Riverside's residents are supportive of Annexation if it comes without a tax increase or a reduction in services to current residents.

### NORTH-WEST BLUFF ANNEXATION

Annexation and consolidation are hot topics for the community. As a whole, there was support for an annexation of the unincorporated ground North of Highway 9 and west of the Park Hill South High School. This undeveloped property represents a significant opportunity for new high-quality residential. Riverside is behind its neighbors in this category of housing adding some different housing stock is important.

### NORTHMOOR CONSOLIDATION

There is less consensus about the possible consolidation with Northmoor (population 400). There are significant advantages and disadvantages to this scenario. A consolidation with Northmoor would, initially at least, place a larger strain on the City's financial resources. Upgrading their infrastructure and providing maintenance to new properties will pose a long-term cost. However, a consolidation would also give Riverside control of both sides of Vivion road. Vivion will be an impor-

tant commercial corridor in the future and its development will be severely limited if it remains in its current state.

Another advantage of consolidation would be the control of a southbound interchange with I-29. This is something that several residents pointed out as a desire and improvements in Northmoor could spur new commercial opportunities along that interchange.



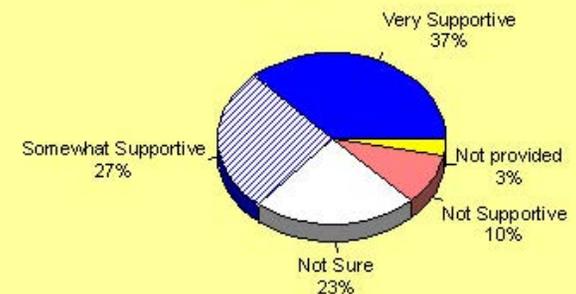
The bluffs that run along the northern edge of Hwy 9 have spectacular views of Kansas City.

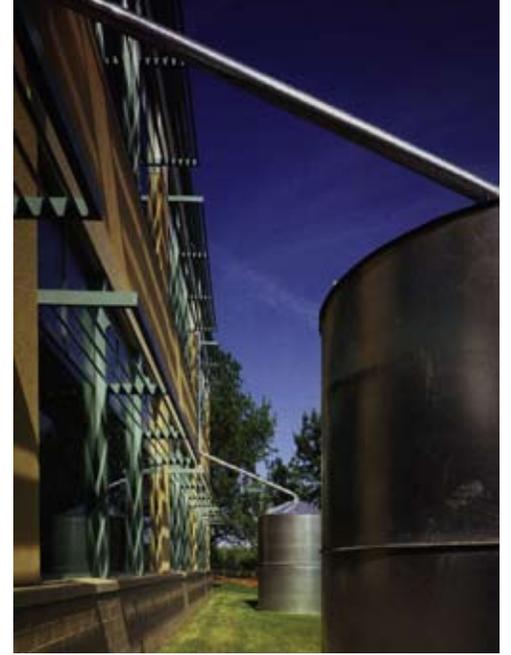


Consolidation would give City officials more control over neighboring redevelopments.

How Supportive are you of Annexation by Riverside When Services can be Provided to the Annexed Areas without an Increase in Taxes or a Reduction in Services to Current Residents?

by percentage of respondents





## Sustainability

**GOAL: TO MEET THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC NEEDS OF TODAY WITHOUT REDUCING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR OWN.**

Put simply, sustainability is the belief that every decision should be made considering the full long-term implications of the choice. This requires acting in a way that simultaneously benefits the social, environmental, and economic well-being of the City's residents. Thinking sustainably is an integrated process. Many strategies that improve Riverside's sustainability are interwoven throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

### SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

There are many ways to improve the sustainability and performance of our homes and cities. Building energy efficient buildings, creating walkable communities, protecting natural resources, building communal neighborhoods, and encouraging healthy lifestyles are all ways in which the sustainability of our lifestyles is extended. It is the responsibility of every citizen to adhere to these ideals and it is the role of the City government to take the long-view of these issues and encourage the correct behavior rather than succumbing to a "quick-buck" mentality.

The Riverside government is particularly responsive to its citizens. The ability to protect the long-term interests of every resident is a charge of the office

that requires thinking in terms of acting sustainably and responsibly.

These issues were expressed as serious concerns in both the community survey and the community workshops. It is generally accepted that the natural character of Riverside greatly benefits the quality of life in the City. Part of a sustainable solution for the City includes protections for the most valuable remaining open spaces.

### RIVERS AND STREAMS

The quality of Riverside's rivers and streams was a particular concern of residents as expressed in the community survey. 79% of Riverside's residents indicated that Riverside should be proactive in protecting its rivers and streams. This result is overwhelming. More than any other issue, Riverside citizens agree that protecting this important component of the City is critical. To do this properly requires an integrated approach to development that should be guided by the Stormwater section of the Master Plan.



## Housing

### GOAL: TO PROVIDE A QUALITY HOME FOR EVERY RESIDENT.

The City of Riverside is facing a serious housing problem. With 70% of the population living in rental accommodations, it is difficult to assure the type of permanent and engaged citizenry the City would like to achieve. Despite a moratorium on new apartments, the City has not yet been able to turn the corner on this issue. The most likely solution will come from the development of new housing opportunities. Fortunately, there is a projection for a strong housing market. **In Southern Platte County, housing is expected to grow by 17,600 homes between 2000 and 2030.** If increasing amenities by building a larger population base is a goal, it is important to realize that low density residential will not make as much of an impact as a medium density development.

The Housing stock in Riverside varies greatly. In some areas it is in excellent shape and in others it is dilapidated and even dangerous. Ensuring the safety of the housing stock is a particular concern and given the desire to reverse the homeownership trends in the City, it would be advantageous to bring non-conforming homes up to code.

Along with the expansion of new homes it is also important to ensure that there are affordable options for existing homeowners. It is often the tendency to create new housing for the wealthiest 10% of the population

without regard to the implications of that choice on existing neighborhoods or City residents. Fortunately, Riverside is not currently at risk of “pricing out” its existing residents, but care should be taken to ensure that new housing provides for the needs of all citizens. New homes that are built to suit customers from the highest ends of the economic spectrum often require more public infrastructure per unit and could be asked to contribute a portion of the required infrastructure costs through an Impact Fee.

### IMPACT FEE

It is recommended that a housing impact fee be levied on new housing starts in Riverside to fund upkeep, code enforcement, and improvements of existing residential units. This one-time fee would offer some flexibility to the City when it wants to improve living situations for residents at the lower end of the economic spectrum.

### APARTMENTS

The apartment ban in Riverside, though well intentioned, has not had the desired effect of reversing the owner to renter occupied ratio. Instead, it has kept older complexes from being replaced with a higher quality rental option. It is important to remember that new apartments in Riverside would look drastically different than the existing apartment stock. Here are a couple of important statistics to keep in mind: 40% of renters choose to live in apartments for lifestyle reasons, not because they have to.

- From 1999-2003 the fastest growing segment of renters was those earning \$50,000 or more. (Sources: Fannie Mae and the U.S. Census)

The apartment demographic can be a well paid, highly mobile citizenry that would help to bolster the City’s desire to increase commercial opportunities.

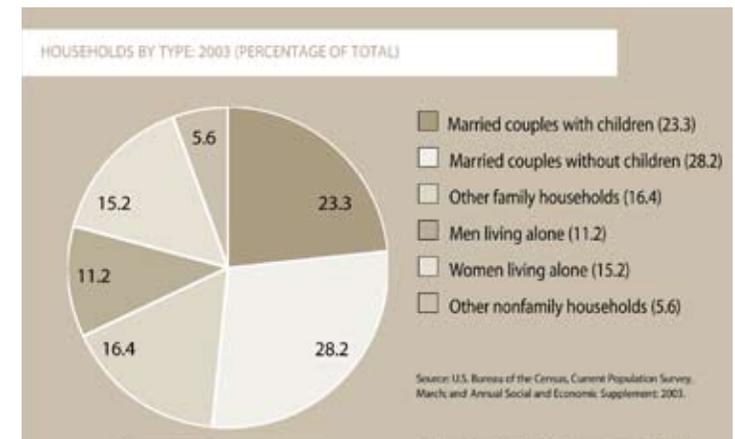
With a potential shift in the housing market on the horizon, it seems like a good time to reevaluate the effectiveness of the apartment ban.



This Riverside duplex occupies the same lot size as the development above.



Riversides housing stock is slightly older than many of its neighbors. This indicates the city has not been involved in recent housing booms.



Families with children only make up 23% of the households in the country.



## Incentives

**GOAL: TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT THAT MEETS THE GOALS OF THE COMMUNITY.**

A major function of City government is to incent redevelopment and promote projects that are in the best long-term interest of the greater City. There are many mechanisms with which to accomplish these development projects and the citizens of the City support their use. When asked how supportive they are of having the City use incentives to attract new businesses or expand existing businesses in Riverside, 70% of the population expressed support while only 10% reacted negatively to the question. There are opportunities for the City government to provide key tax incentives and infrastructure investments that will catalyze redevelopment and create a self-sustaining economic engine. When used correctly, incentives will often repay their investment both financially and in terms of an improved final development.

When utilizing incentives, care should be taken so that the final development is in-line with what the City really wants and needs. A typical mistake would be to incent a project enough to get it going but not enough to elicit the quality that the City would like. Under this scenario the City is in the very uncomfortable position of being responsible for the construction of a project that no one is truly happy with.

### IMPROVING THE FACE OF RIVERSIDE

The façade improvement program in Riverside should be expanded and made more accessible to participants. The program was widely considered to be a good idea, but the amount of funding available and the hurdles required to get at that money made applying for the grant unpopular.

### NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Incentives can take many forms and the lack of real estate taxes in Riverside requires some creative financing mechanisms for improvement projects. Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs) and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) can be used to create new amenities in development areas that require a significant amount of new amenities or infrastructure. These designations leverage new property owners to pay off improvements to the area. For example, a new planned residential development could utilize a NID to help pay for a park site or for other infrastructure improvements.

### TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

A Transportation Development District (TDD) can also be used to elicit funding for transportation needs from property owners. This program is particularly helpful in instances where transportation costs are high but improvements will significantly benefit the development potential of the district.

### TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

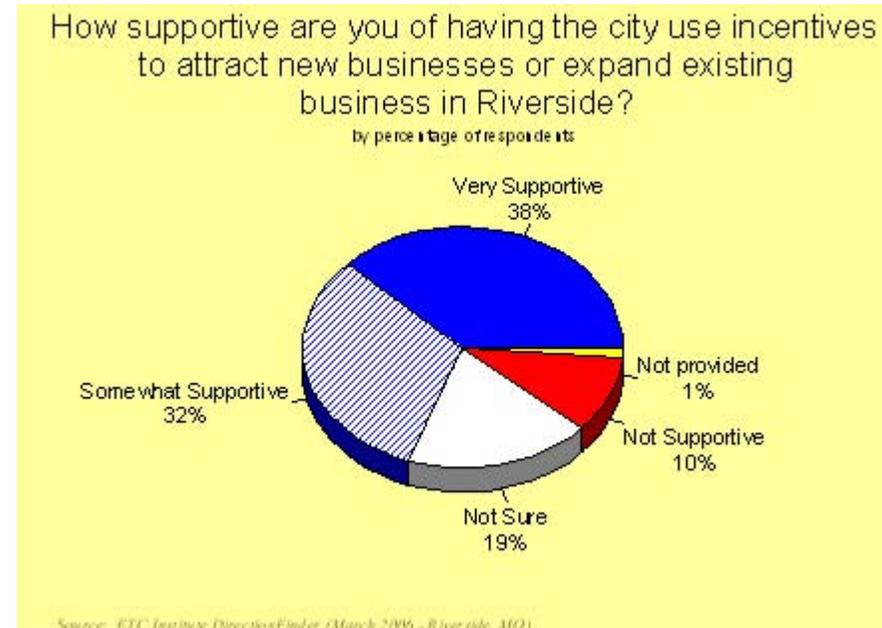
Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding in Riverside is widely used and widely understood. This type of financing is designed to capture the future value of a development site at an early stage so that the expensive “first costs” can be underwritten. This financing mechanism has been the tool behind thousands of redevelopment projects nationwide. Some in the planning field have even begun to argue that it is at times being overused, and it is not typically a good idea to use the program on projects that do not need the extra boost. However, the fact that Riverside does not have a real estate tax minimizes the risk of using TIF funding because the increment that the TIF captures would otherwise go directly to the county or state government.

### EXACTIONS

Exactions can be used on new development starts to pay for improvements or to allocate to other programs aimed at benefiting Riverside’s residents. An example would be an exaction on new housing starts that could be used to finance an affordable housing program.

### ENHANCED ENTERPRISE ZONE

The designation of an Enhanced Enterprise Zone is an incentive that the City staff has already begun to seek. This designation rewards employers for creating jobs in the zone and even gives a bonus for every Riverside resident that finds a job at the facility. This designation is most commonly associated with Industrial employers and is crucial to attracting new developers to the City.





## Institutional and Cultural Development

Many cities across the country are beginning to understand the importance of institutional or cultural facilities and programming to the City's reputation and quality of life. The Community Center and the Riverside Public Library are amenities that have provided the residents of the City with opportunities to gather and interact. In fact, the Riverside Public Library was mentioned by several citizens in the Community Survey as being their favorite part of living in Riverside. Facilities like these provide character to the City and are opportunities to shape the ways citizens interact with each other and with the City government. The reputation and quality of life in Riverside could be further enhanced by expanding these institutional and cultural offerings.

### COMMUNITY CENTER DEVELOPMENT

During the interviews some interesting ideas for possible cultural improvements were suggested and should be given additional thought. One common request was for an expansion of, or a new facility for, the Community Center. Some residents expressed a desire for a better facility for athletics and other activities for both children and adults. This could be done as an addition to the existing building or as a new structure in a redevelopment area that would catalyze future growth.

### HISTORIC EXHIBIT

Another interesting idea centered on the thousands of ancient artifacts that have been uncovered in the City. These relics tell a fascinating story about the history of Riverside and are an important part of the character of the City. The corner of Vivion and Gateway road is a heavily trafficked intersection and represents one of the most significant areas for noticeable improvement. The library's proximity to the intersection make it a good candidate for an expansion on the east side of the building. This new wing could house many of the artifacts uncovered by archeologists digging into Riverside's many mound sites.

### THE "BOSS" TOM MUSEUM

Riverside has a history of another kind that would also garner the interest of citizens and potential visitors from around the City and even the country. Boss Tom Pendergast had an extraordinary impact and legacy on the Kansas City metropolitan area. Pendergast's support of organized labor, strong-arm tactics, mob ties, civic influence and his proclivities for gambling transformed Kansas City. He ran Kansas City during the economically difficult 1930s and the City actually fared better than many of its contemporaries. However, his absolute power over the government and police force transformed the City into a wide open vice City replete with saloons and mob hangouts. His story is arguably the most compelling of any Kansas City resident's and his national

reputation has drawn the attention of history buffs and other interested tourists from around the country. Riverside has a very strong tie to Pendergast and his historic race track. In its heyday, the Riverside Park Jockey Club was drawing crowds to Riverside on the interurban rail line. On Memorial Day 1935 the two season track drew 17,000 spectators to watch the races.

There are still remnants of the race park in Riverside and there is a unique opportunity to capitalize on Boss Tom's ties to the City by creating a museum focusing on the life of one of Kansas City's most famous and glamorous characters. The City of Riverside could promote this museum and provide for its inception. While the museum would not likely ever be a direct money maker, its impact on the surrounding development, the perception of the City, and the number of visitors brought to town to feed local businesses would be significant.



The Riverside Library could hold some of the City's historic artifacts.



"Boss" Tom ran Kansas City in the 20's and 30's. His race track brought scores of visitors to Riverside.



This old concrete structure still flies the flag poles from the original Riverside Park Jockey Club.



# LOOKING AHEAD

RIVERSIDE