

US HIGHWAY 53 CORRIDOR STUDY



CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

March 2018



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



The USH 53 Corridor Plan was prepared with the assistance and cooperation of many people, including the following:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Summary

The creation of the Highway 53 Corridor Plan resulted from collaboration between the City of La Crosse and the Northside Community. A committee comprised of elected officials, business and property owners, neighborhood residents, business organizations and City representatives at large conducted the study over the past 12 months. The overarching importance of this corridor and adjacent neighborhoods cannot be overstated: for a large amount of visitors, this corridor will provide their first view and experience of La Crosse and its control influence on land use and impact in the City. The corridor plan includes analyses of land use, market conditions, parking, sidewalk width, transportation and traffic, and bicycle and pedestrian circulation.

The primary purpose of this Plan is to create a strategy to manage future growth within the corridor in a manner that will foster an attractive destination with strong businesses, vibrant neighborhoods, and beautiful surroundings. The Plan will focus on the strong interrelationship between land use and transportation and a corridor that is safe, comfortable, provides access to the natural amenities offered by the Black River, and is convenient for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

Background Studies

Prior to generating concepts and designs for the Highway 53 Corridor, the Project Team reviewed past plans, conducted research, prepared studies, and interacted with the community. The Project Team learned many important facts and opinions about the overall corridor and redevelopment opportunities through this research and studies. Other information gathered during analysis of specific plan elements included market analysis, land use/zoning, development patterns, transportation, urban design, environmental factors, and health impacts. The Project Team also thoroughly reviewed the outcomes of the UPTOWNE Summit.

Community Engagement

As the Plan will detail, the vision created for the Highway 53 Corridor was assembled with community engagement. The major forces, issues, and opportunities associated with the corridor have been defined through a series of interactive committee meetings, business owner interviews, community workshops, and interviews with developers. The public was invited to study the maps of what currently exists and to imagine what its future potential could be. Results included a connected corridor with identified pulse nodes of activities-areas of increased intense compact development, pedestrian-friendly, and designed to provide places where residents and visitors could meet, socialize, and find the goods and services they need for as a secondary downtown/neighborhood node system. Enhanced transportation modes were envisioned to include walkways, bike-ways, and improved public transit.

Corridor Plan Recommendations

Design Concept

The Pulse Node concept serves as the underlying guideline of the redevelopment plan for the entire Highway 53 Corridor. It can be envisioned as a string of high energy mixed-use and commercial areas that serve the neighborhoods and broader community within. Less intense land uses, such as mixed density residential and open space are located between, and provide a buffer with quieter amenities and living spaces.

Vision + Goals + Objectives

The vision, goals, and objectives for this planning process have been refined and adopted by the Highway 53 Corridor Master Plan Steering Committee and have driven the creation of this Master Plan. The Highway 53 Corridor and adjacent neighborhoods are on the path to be an even greater place to live, work, and play for all people.

GOAL #1

- ☒ Grow and enhance the Corridor as a location for businesses.

GOAL #2

- ☒ Establish a land use pattern that promotes community.

GOAL #3

- ☒ Improve all modes of transportation.

GOAL #4

- ☒ Create an enhanced gateway to the City of La Crosse.

Urban Design Principles

A series of urban design principles and a design concept were defined early in the planning process. They inform the development of designs and recommendations to assist in the prioritization of potential implementation strategies and projects.



PRINCIPLE #1: Advance Livability

Design to heighten the human experience and connection to the sense of place. Create enhanced connections between neighborhoods, businesses, recreation, and natural surroundings.



PRINCIPLE #2: Strive for Diversity

Encourage diverse uses, buildings, and environments to promote inclusivity and access.



PRINCIPLE #3: Promote Neighborhoods

Enhance the neighborhood character, access to the Black River, and create a memorable gateway to the City. Relate new developments to the physical scale and character of the neighborhoods. Create a corridor that residents and visitors can understand and easily navigate by creating memorable landmarks, destinations, aesthetics, and sense of place.

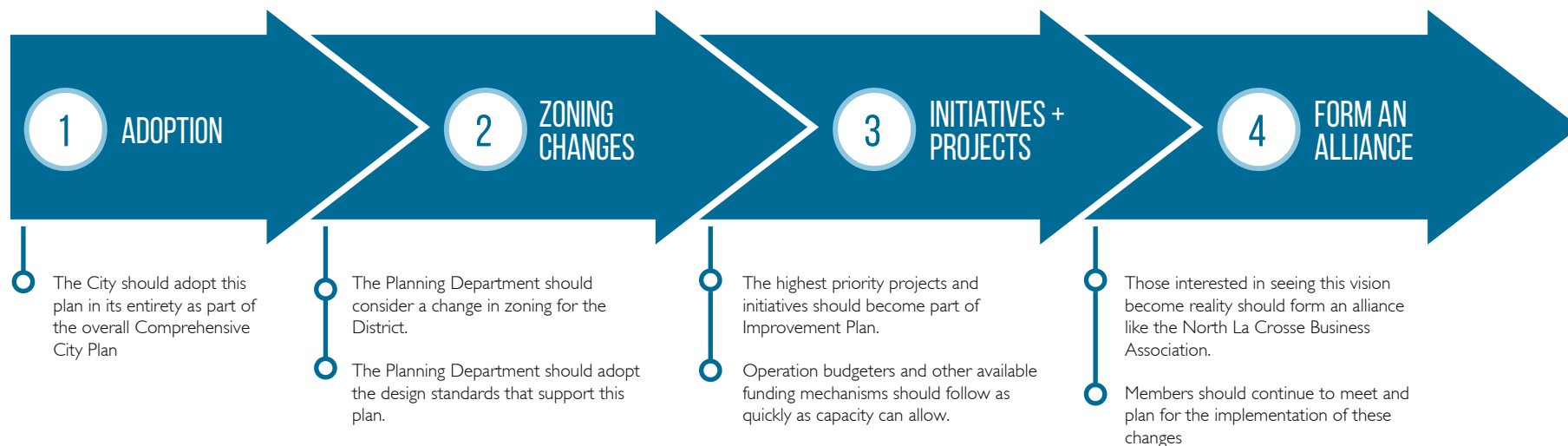


PRINCIPLE #4: Foster Sustainability + Resiliency

Create a social, economical, and environmentally sustainable corridor for the future by focusing on land use as the pertinent influencer of transportation corridors.

Implementation

The rate at which this plan's recommendations are implemented depends on community determination, political will, and funding availability. The Plan details many things that can and ought to be done, but there are four specific items that can and should be prioritized.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Highway 53 Corridor Master Plan?

The purpose of this Plan is to create a strategy to manage future growth within the Corridor in a manner that will foster an attractive destination with strong businesses in a sustainable and economic setting with vibrant neighborhoods, and beautiful places. It will feature gateway experiences with streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

When completed, what is the Community going to do with the Master Plan?

The Community will use the Master Plan to guide future changes towards the design concepts, vision, goals, objectives, and urban design principles contained within this document through much public engagement and input from community members, businesses, and other organizations having an interest in the studied area. This will hopefully be accomplished through a combination of grass-roots, community, and governmental efforts.

How is funding prioritized for the projects in the Master Plan?

The Master Plan contains an implementation section that gives many recommendations for achieving the vision of the Master Plan. There is further detail regarding the priority, cost, length of time to complete, and likely responsible parties/partners. Grass-roots organizations, community organizations, and governments should use this section to find efforts that fit their resources and capacity to successfully achieve the recommendations, typically focusing on high priority recommendations first.

How long does the Master Plan take to be implemented?

This Master Plan intends to provide the framework for necessary land use, redevelopment, and transportation decisions on the Highway 53 Corridor for the next 15-20 years. The Master Plan is meant to be adaptable to changing needs, yet contain concepts, vision, goals, objective, and urban design principles that remain relevant far beyond the time frame. The rate of implementation will depend on the amount of funding and resources available, the will of the Community, and adherence by future policymakers.

Can the Master Plan be changed once it is finalized?

Yes, the Master Plan is meant to be adaptable to the ever-changing needs of the Community and changes can be made formally or informally. However, significant changes to the concepts, vision, goals, objectives, and urban design principles could erode the effort that went in to creating this Master Plan.

Who reviews the Master Plan?

The steps and elements of the Master Plan were made publicly available through the planning and design process. It was further studied, scrutinized, and developed by the Steering Committee, City staff and policymakers, Community members, businesses, and other organizations who had an interest in the Corridor area.

Who sees that the Master Plan is implemented?

The recommendations in this plan will require the efforts of grass-roots, community, and government. The recommendations include empowering the Neighborhood Associations, North La Crosse Business Association, Steering Committee, City staff and elected officials, or a combination of the above to continue to advocate for and oversee the implementation of the Master Plan.

How can I participate?

Anyone can participate in the implementation of the Master Plan. You can become active in your Neighborhood Association, the North La Crosse Business Association, a community organization or reach out directly to your councilperson or other City representatives to participate.

If my property or home is marked for potential redevelopment, is it going to be demolished for redevelopment?

The purpose of this Master Plan is to create a strategy to manage future growth within the Corridor in a manner that will foster an attractive destination with strong businesses in a sustainable economic setting, vibrant neighborhoods, and beautiful places. It will feature gateway experiences with streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. Successful implementation of the plan will require some future development and/or redevelopment. There are no known plans for redevelopment or major public works projects scheduled at this time other than the Riverside North Development. Most successful developments or redevelopments take many years to acquire necessary properties and typically this is accomplished through willing sales of properties. Condemnation, floodplain removal, and eminent domain are methods that are sometimes used by communities to address land use issues, but they are typically used after many other methods are exhausted or found not to be feasible.



INTRODUCTION



Overview

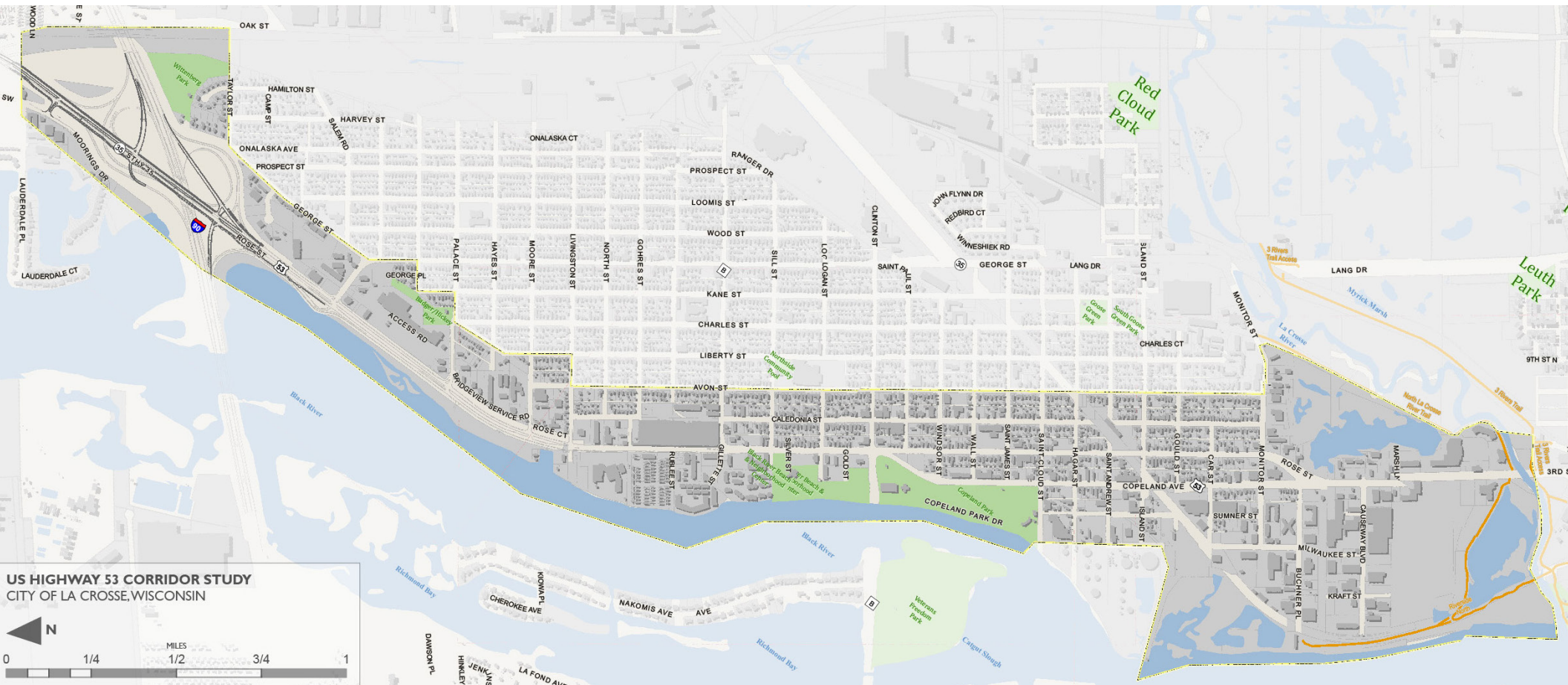
The Highway 53 Corridor plan represents a truly unique opportunity to shape the future of the gateway corridor through North La Crosse. Numerous redevelopment opportunities located at key corridor nodes, as well as a strategy to guide redevelopment in a manner that is sustainable, livable, economically viable and responsive to the community's vision for the corridor are illustrated in this Plan. Through the use of strategic land use shifts, this plan focuses on enhancing visitor experiences by creating nodal attractions, better traffic flow and access to transit and amenities, and further building the anticipation of the downtown destination and removing blight.

Community character is often defined by small projects in which the whole is truly richer than the sum of its parts. The design principles recommended in this Plan will foster incremental improvements that will shape Highway 53 into a more cohesive marketplace and focus of community activity.

Hwy 53 from I-90-Exit 3 is a primary gateway into the City of La Crosse and the development of a master plan has been a high priority for many years. This Corridor is also part of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway that runs from Northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. The resulting Highway 53 Corridor Plan documents the process, community engagement, final recommendations, and suggested tactics and strategies for implementation.

Study Area

The Highway 53 Master Plan study area boundary follows U.S. Highway (USH 53) from north of Interstate Highway 90 Exit 3 to the La Crosse River, a distance of approximately 3.8 miles. The boundary extends a few blocks to the east and west of the main highway.



Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to create a strategy to manage future growth within the Corridor in a manner that will foster an attractive destination with strong businesses in a sustainable economic setting, vibrant neighborhoods, and beautiful places featuring gateway experiences with streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and movers of freight. This plan is intended to provide the framework necessary for land use, redevelopment, and transportation decisions of this Corridor for the next 15-20 years.

To this end, the Plan:

- ✓ Offers a guide for growth that is flexible and will respond to fluctuating market conditions.
- ✓ Ensures that potential growth of private redevelopment and improvements to the public realm will be orderly, predictable, sustainable, and integrated.
- ✓ Responds to the shared vision desired by the community.
- ✓ Creates a distinctive entrance to the Corridor and Downtown La Crosse.
- ✓ Maximizes the potential for market synergy and reinforces urban design, redevelopment, and economic development objectives.
- ✓ Will improve the experience within the Corridor by creating pedestrian-friendly public realm and by strengthening the connections with nearby points of interest.
- ✓ Promotes design excellence in all aspects of the corridor.
- ✓ Outlines implementation strategies for amenities and infrastructure improvements.

Key Terms

Several key terms are used throughout this Plan to describe specific or unique concepts and/or ideas that are not typically used in everyday language. Those key terms are defined:

Best Management Practice (BMP)

A tactic or combination of tactics that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of accomplishing desired goals or outcomes.

Business Improvement District

A defined area within which businesses are required to pay an additional tax (or levy) in order to fund projects within the district's boundaries.

Floodplain

Any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source.

Floodway

The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to flood discharge.

Green Infrastructure

Stormwater BMPs that protect, restore, or mimic the natural water cycle.

Master Plan

A comprehensive or far-reaching plan of action.

Pulse Node

Area of high-intensity, mixed-use residential and commercial development at primary corridor intersections. These pulse nodes will be linked by a continuous transportation corridor with improved streetscape and residential uses. Different levels of activity will promote pedestrian activity and business vitality along the corridor and create a rhythm of development, which helps to segment the linear corridor into distinct areas that will now be inter-connected to create a greater sense of place.

Stakeholder

A person, business, or other organization with an interest or concern regarding the Master Plan and study area.

Zoning Code

A set of municipal regulations that control the physical development of land and the kinds of uses to which each individual property may be placed.

Project Structure

The creation of the Highway 53 Corridor Plan was a collaborative effort between the City of La Crosse, Northside and community stakeholders. The Project Team collaborated with the following teams to advise project staff and manage the planning process.

Highway 53 Corridor Master Plan Steering Committee (Steering Committee) made pivotal decisions and commented on major project deliverables. The Steering Committee comprised elected officials from the City of La Crosse, business owners, business organization leaders, and neighborhood residents.

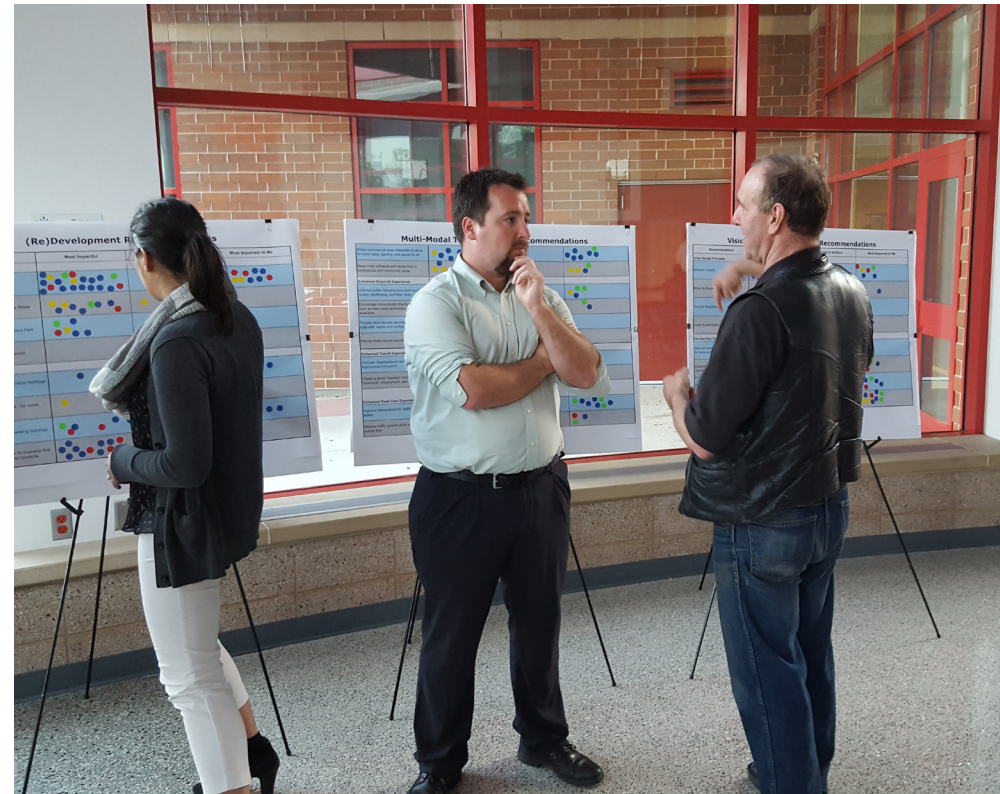
Project Management Team (PMT) coordinated day-to-day project activities and is comprised of the City of La Crosse Planning and Development Department Staff.

Community Engagement

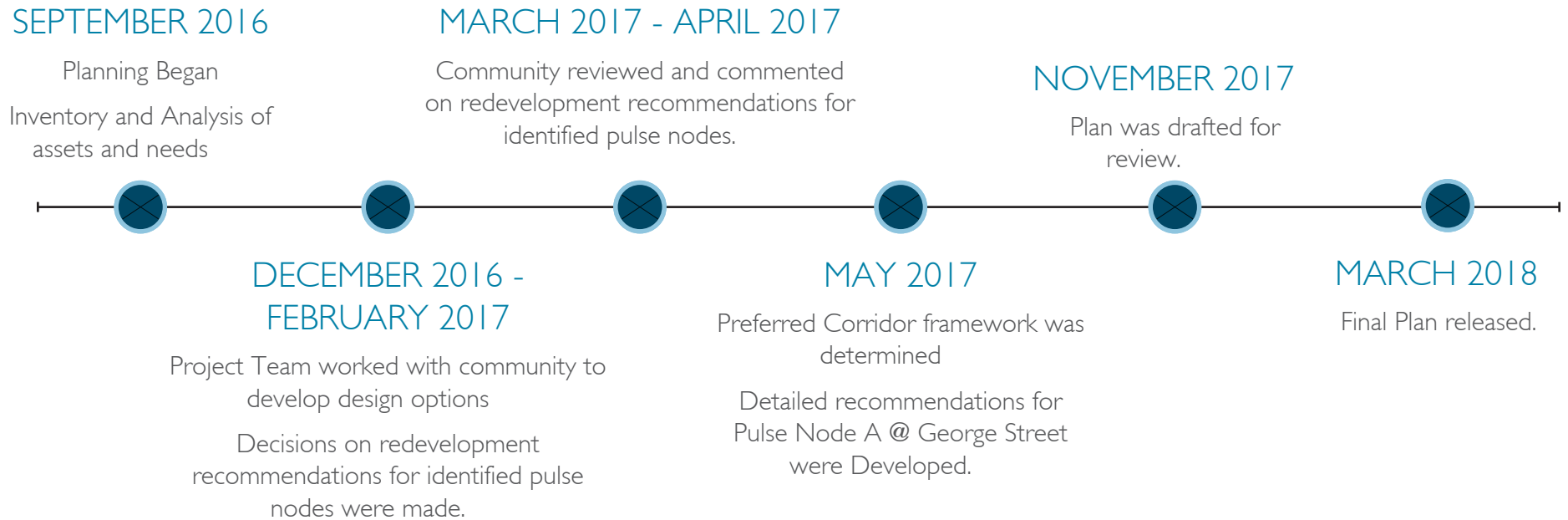
In addition to regular public meetings with the Steering Committee, the Project Management Team engaged the community by:

- ✓ Hosting three public workshops.
- ✓ Hosting one open house.
- ✓ Holding focus groups for input on various plan elements.
- ✓ Assembling business owners for stakeholder meetings.
- ✓ Attending community meetings and events, including: neighborhood meetings for the Northside Logan and Lower Northside Depot Neighborhoods and Lights Over North La Crosse.

More details and outcomes from the community engagement activities can be found in the Community Engagement Section of the Plan.



Project Schedule



How To Use This Master Plan

The following design guidelines serve as a tool for evaluating redevelopment proposals and making decisions about public and private investments along Highway 53. They will ensure that incremental site design and architectural, streetscape, and roadway projects contribute to the desirable image for the Northside of La Crosse. Illustrations and photographs are included within this plan to communicate the intent and character of the principles and guidelines.

Public Sector

- ✓ This document should be adopted as an addendum to the City's Comprehensive Plan, which will require submittal from the City Plan Commission.
- ✓ Any recommended changes to the Zoning Code should be codified and incorporated into the Zoning District Standards.
- ✓ City departments should refer to the concept designs as a basis from which to develop more detailed special area studies and implementation strategies.
- ✓ City departments should refer to objectives and recommendations in this manual to coordinate, design, and budget for Capital Improvements (CIP).
- ✓ The Planning & Development, Engineering, and Fire Departments should refer to the guidelines when reviewing individual development proposals. Each proposed development or renovation should reinforce the principles and comply with the guidelines.
- ✓ The City should consider the formulation or assignment of a board, commission, or committee to ensure that all development proposals within the Highway 53 Corridor comply with design guidelines.
- ✓ The City should consider a public/private partnership with a Business Improvement District (BID) or a nonprofit development corporation to assist with future management and implementation.
- ✓ A stand-alone document that summarizes the primary objectives and guidelines should be prepared and made available to prospective developers.
- ✓ The public should have access this Master Plan from the City's Official website.
- ✓ Elected leaders should thoroughly understand this Master Plan and use its guidance and recommendations throughout the intended life of the plan when making policy decisions to ensure the successful incremental implementation of the Master Plan.

Private Sector

- ✓ Developers should refer to this Master Plan in order to understand the community's overall goals and determine how potential development fits into the context of the corridor in which the project is proposed. Pertinent chapters in this plan may be copied in order to provide interested parties a summary of the objectives and guidelines for each district.
- ✓ Developers should refer to the Site Planning and Design Guidelines to understand the design intent and the minimum standards for quality expected.
- ✓ Developers, business owners, and other stakeholders should communicate their knowledge and of this Master Plan and their proposal's compatibility with this Master Plan to neighborhood associations, City staff, elected officials, the community, and other stakeholders to gain support for their proposals.
- ✓ Non-Profits should review this plan to find commonalities, overlaps, and adjacencies to their mission. Once identified, non-profits should reach out to the City and other organizations with responsibilities to interact and collaborate on common goals to achieve efficiency.
- ✓ Philanthropists / Foundations should review this plan to find commonalities, overlaps, and adjacencies to their mission. They should consider financial support of any recommendations in this plan that make a good fit, and prioritize the ones that most closely achieve their mission to gain efficiency.
- ✓ Neighborhood Associations should review this plan to find commonalities, overlaps, and adjacencies to their plans and goals. They should work with City Council members, City staff, and other stakeholders to prioritize common goals.

BACKGROUND



Overview

Prior to generating concepts and designs for the Highway 53 corridor, the Project Team reviewed past plans, conducted studies, and engaged with the community. This section summarizes what the Project Team learned about the overall corridor and redevelopment opportunities. This section also explains the information gathered during analysis of specific plan elements that were conducted as part of the planning process such as: market analysis, land use/zoning, development patterns, transportation, urban design, environmental factors, and health impacts. The Project Team also thoroughly reviewed the potential outcomes of the UPTOWNE Summit.



ECONOMIC VIBRANCY / SUSTAINABILITY



PAST PLANS



CORRIDOR DISTRICTS
AND THEIR UNIQUE URBAN DESIGN + LAND
USE + ZONING



MARKET ANALYSIS



DEVELOPMENT
PATTERNS



TRANSPORTATION



ENVIRONMENTAL
FACTORS



OUTCOMES OF
UPTOWNE SUMMIT



HEALTH IMPACTS

Past Plans for the Highway 53 Corridor

Over the years, the Highway 53 Corridor has been a part of several planning studies conducted at the regional, city, and neighborhood levels. Below is a summary of recommendations for the Highway 53 Corridor from studies that are still relevant based on public and participant input.

Confluence: The La Crosse Comprehensive Plan

- ☒ Initiate redevelopment efforts in the USH 53 Corridor, Riverside North, and the Lower Northside Depot Neighborhood.
- ☒ Improve transportation system safety throughout the corridor, especially high crash rate intersections.
- ☒ Improve existing transportation efficiency through - access management strategies, coordination of traffic signals, and improvement of intersections; decrease transportation demand through land use changes and demand management strategies; improve multi-modal transportation options; and accept traffic congestion.
- ☒ Include extra landscaping and beaming when installing public landscaping along the corridor and require private developments to do the same.
- ☒ Consider the creation of a parkway or boulevard in concurrence with road and utility projects.
- ☒ Establish a path or green-way from Riverside Park to Copeland Park.
- ☒ Seek opportunities to improve access to the waterfront through purchase of property or public easements along the Black River.
- ☒ Continue to implement the recommendations of neighborhood plans.
- ☒ Develop and evaluate options to protect properties located in the floodplain.
- ☒ Create dedicated funding sources for implementing the storm water management program and floodplain protection projects.

Coulee Vision

- ☒ Envision the implementation of land use and transportation policies that will focus growth as infill development both through targeting and development and adopting policies to restrict and prevent sprawl. In order to support infill development the region's transit system will need to be enhanced to accommodate the increased demand while improving the quality of life for the residences of the La Crosse/La Crescent area.

Economic Development Strategic Plan

- ☒ Explore acceptable future uses, density, urban design, and aesthetic issues for the redevelopment area from Interstate 90 to Downtown La Crosse.

Lower Northside Neighborhood Plan

- ✓ Encourage new housing to be consistent with historical character of neighborhoods.
- ✓ Identify and prioritize target areas to concentrate owner occupied housing and multiple unit dwellings.
- ✓ Develop and promote a positive image for the neighborhood.
- ✓ Encourage mass transit improvements to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use.
- ✓ Expand current off-street trails network.

La Crosse Transportation Vision

- ✓ Prioritize changes that result in outcomes like safety, walkability, bike friendliness, access, slower driving speeds, few vehicle-miles-traveled, complete streets, and beauty; and not prioritize conventional ideas such as reduced delays for motorists, high speed roads, high levels of service for motorists, abundant and low-cost automobile parking, and fighting congestion through road widening.
- ✓ Restore Rose Street and Copeland Avenues to 2-way functions.
- ✓ Reduce the overwhelming and unsustainable dependency on the single occupant vehicle as the primary mode of transportation and prioritize cycling, walking, public and private transit, telecommuting, land use changes, parking changes, and other supportive measures.

Highway 53 Corridor Enhancement Plan

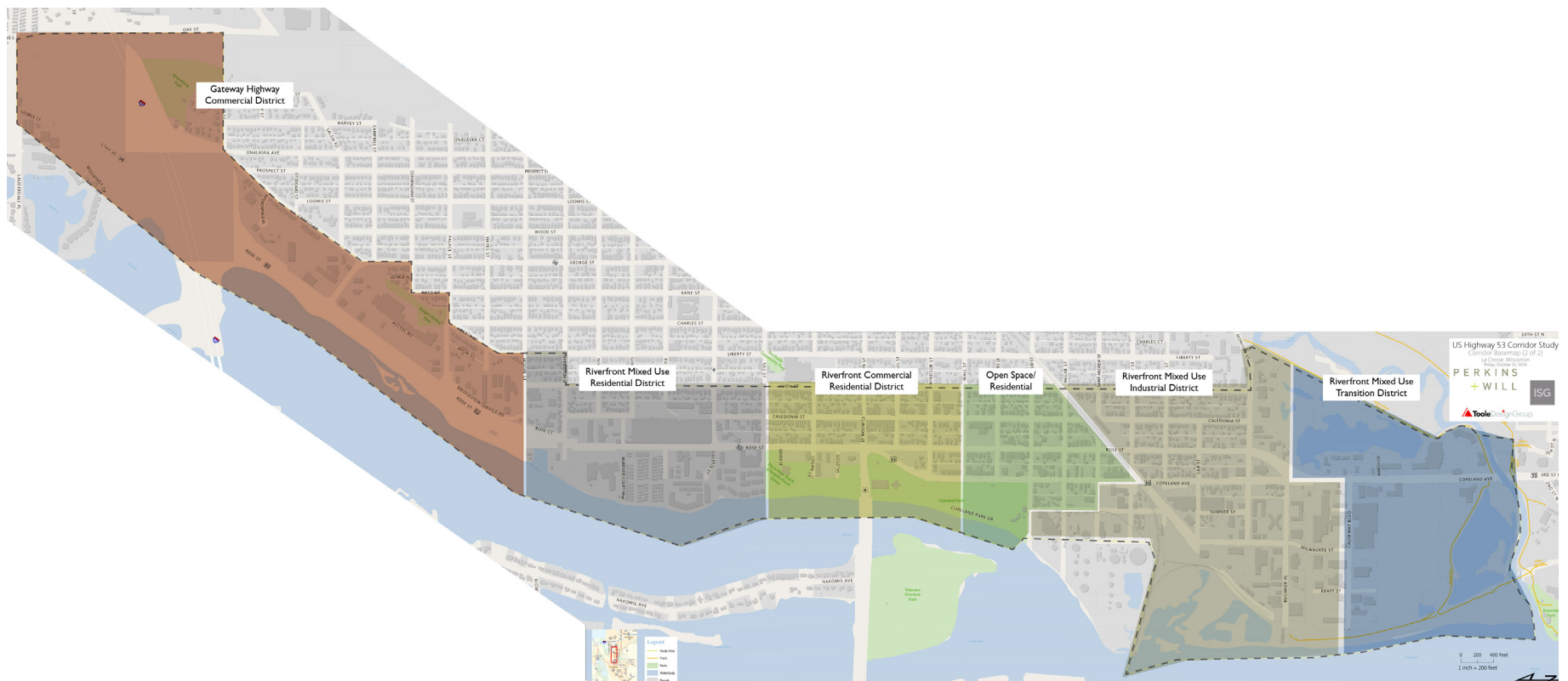
- ✓ Continue to add trees, decorative light poles, sidewalks, uniform wayfinding, and signage when roadway construction and developments take place.

2015-2017 Mississippi River Parkway Commission Strategic Planning Report

- ✓ Enhance and preserve the Great River Road National Scenic Byway and its amenities.
- ✓ Increase the economic impact of overnight travel on the Great River Road.

Corridor Districts

Five distinct districts have evolved along the Highway 53 Corridor, each representing a progression in era and development type from north to south. Each district is characterized by the components that shape the environment including: block patterns, land uses, lot sizes, building and parking lot placement, architectural typologies, traffic volumes, open space, vegetation, and land form. These districts are: the Gateway Highway Commercial District, located between Moorings Drive and Palace Street; the Riverfront Mixed-Use Residential District, located between Palace Street and Sill Street; The Open Space Residential District, located between Sill Street and railroad crossings along Rose Street and Copeland Avenue; The Riverfront Mixed-Use District located between the railroad bridge crossings and Monitor Street, north of Copeland Avenue and Causeway Boulevard; The Riverfront Mixed-Use Transition District, located between Causeway Boulevard and the La Crosse River.



Gateway Highway Commercial District

This District serves as the gateway to North La Crosse and Downtown La Crosse from Interstate 90. Portions of the Exit 3 interchange have recently been reconstructed and other portions will continue reconstruction through Fall 2017. The land use designations in this district are primarily commercial. The District is characterized by a rigid, auto-orientated suburban development pattern. The combination of buildings set back from the street, large lot sizes, architectural treatments and signage create a visually cluttered environment. Large parking lots are placed in front of businesses, creating a shapeless corridor and barrier to pedestrian access. The Bridgeview Plaza building and adjacent stand-alone retailers (restaurants and gas station) are an example of the existing built-form and set a negative image and character of this gateway area.

This District located at the I-90 Interchange is primarily comprised of retail uses. The primary land use identified within this District is commercial. Most of the commercial land use is located directly adjacent to Highway 53. At the eastern edge of the project boundary are single family residential land uses that transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods.



Riverfront Mixed-Use District

This District is characterized by a wide roadway, narrow sidewalks and a variety of incompatible land use. High traffic volumes, width of the roadway, and numerous access and turning points create an active but hazardous environment for both pedestrians and drivers. In certain areas, deep setbacks which afford more commercial opportunities, allow parking lots to dominate the street and a mixture of building types, setbacks, and signs create visual clutter. Signs are larger and higher to compete with other signs to be seen at higher traffic speeds.

A majority of the land use located adjacent to the Highway 53 Corridor is identified as commercial. There is a large multi-block area of general industrial along the Corridor, which is occupied by the Central States Warehouse (CSW) storage facility. Located along the Black River there are medium to high density land uses.

Riverfront Commercial/Residential District

This District serves a secondary gateway into the Highway 53 Corridor from the west along the Clinton Street Bridge. The most important feature in this District is Copeland Park, which serves as a community gathering space for celebrations and events and provides public access to the Black River. The development pattern in this District starts to transition away from the suburban auto-oriented orientation to a more traditional urban development pattern as Highway 53 splits into Rose Street and Copeland Avenue. Along these two roadways the development pattern is characterized by a 300-400 foot block size and small, shallow lots with some on-street parking. The land uses are balanced between single- and multi-family residential and independently owned commercial uses. This area of the Corridor is considered the most pedestrian accessible along the corridor due to the minimal setbacks and compact, pedestrian scaled buildings.

The primary land uses within this portion of the Corridor are park/open space and low density residential. Copeland Park is the largest individual land use within this District, with numerous identified commercial land uses located near the intersection of Clinton Street and Highway 53.



Riverfront Mixed-Use Industrial District

Similar to the Open Space Industrial District, this District has areas of more traditional development patterns located north of Copeland Avenue. These areas contain a mix of neighborhood scaled commercial and single-family homes.

The areas south of Copeland Avenue are almost exclusively commercial and industrial. This area is characterized by the heavy traffic volumes, large trucks/service vehicles, large street blocks and roadway widths, an overall lack of public realm and properties in the flood plain.

The two primary land uses that comprise this District are low density residential and general industrial. Generally, the industrial land uses exist west of Copeland Avenue with a few parcels located between Copeland Avenue and Rose Street. Most of the land uses along Rose Street are comprised of commercial uses and low density residential.



Riverfront Mixed-Use Transition District

This District is the transition from North La Crosse to the Downtown La Crosse. This is where Copeland Avenue and Rose Street merge together and is again characterized by a wide roadway, high traffic volumes and lack of a public realm. Recent redevelopment along the north side of the Corridor has started to change the overall character of this section, and future redevelopment opportunities associated with the Riverside North project, will continue the trend of improved design aesthetics and emphasis on the built form. Existing trails along the La Crosse River and the numerous wetlands in close proximity to the Corridor offer future visual and physical connection to natural features and amenities.

This last District is primary comprised of general industrial land uses and high-density land uses. Most of the recent redevelopment, and future redevelopment are located within the high-density land use areas.



Market Analysis Summary

A market study was prepared that assessed the potential demand for new development along the Corridor. Recent demographic and employment trends indicate a strong demand for housing and employment in close proximity to the downtown, such as the southern portion of the Corridor, or in neighborhoods with a variety of amenities, such as river access, river views, and pedestrian oriented retail featuring small shops, restaurants, and bars.

Market trends are equally promising. Rents in all real estate sectors have been rising for several years and vacancies are currently very low. Moreover, very little development has occurred among most sectors in recent years, which indicates a growing pent-up demand for new space.

Despite strong market indicators, the neighborhoods that comprise North La Crosse, where the Corridor is located, have below average incomes for the region. Therefore, certain types of development, especially at second tier sites, may require gap financing or would likely need to wait until catalytic projects alter the character of the immediate neighborhood.

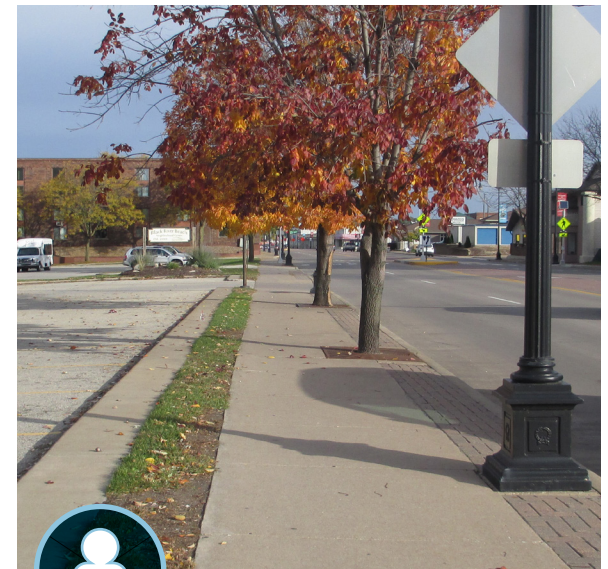
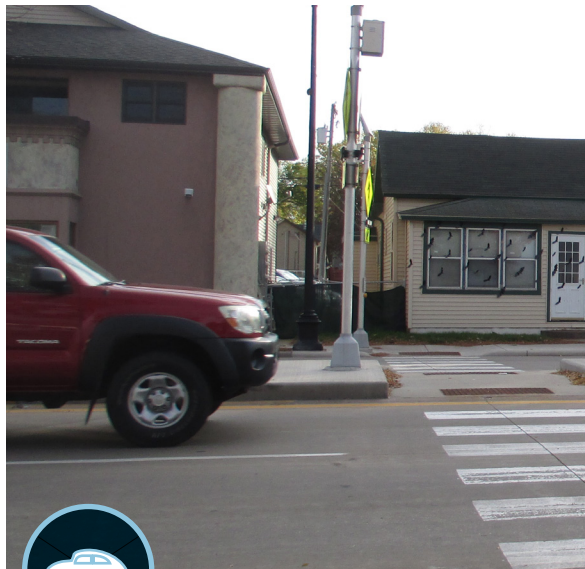
Calculations based on demographic and employment growth through 2030 indicate the Corridor and its adjacent neighborhoods could support up to 620 units of housing, up to 45,000 square feet of new neighborhood-scale retail, and up to 45,000 square feet of new office space.

Land Use + Development Pattern Evaluation

The Highway 53 Corridor consists of both traditional compact urban development patterns and conventional auto-oriented development patterns. The core area along Highway 53 between Gillette Street and the Canadian Pacific Railway is characterized as a more traditional development pattern which includes more closely-spaced buildings that collectively shape the street corridors and create a more compact, pedestrian-friendly environment.

The remainder of the project area is characterized by widely spaced buildings set back and isolated from the street in order to accommodate highly visible parking lots. In these areas, the land uses are compartmentalized. As a result, streets and signs have been designed to accommodate the motorists, creating a cluttered environment lacking a distinct sense of place.

The ultimate challenge for these areas is to balance, but also modify the functional needs of and reliance on vehicles with those of pedestrians, bikes, and transit and to create a sense of personal safety, comfort and nurture a memorable image.

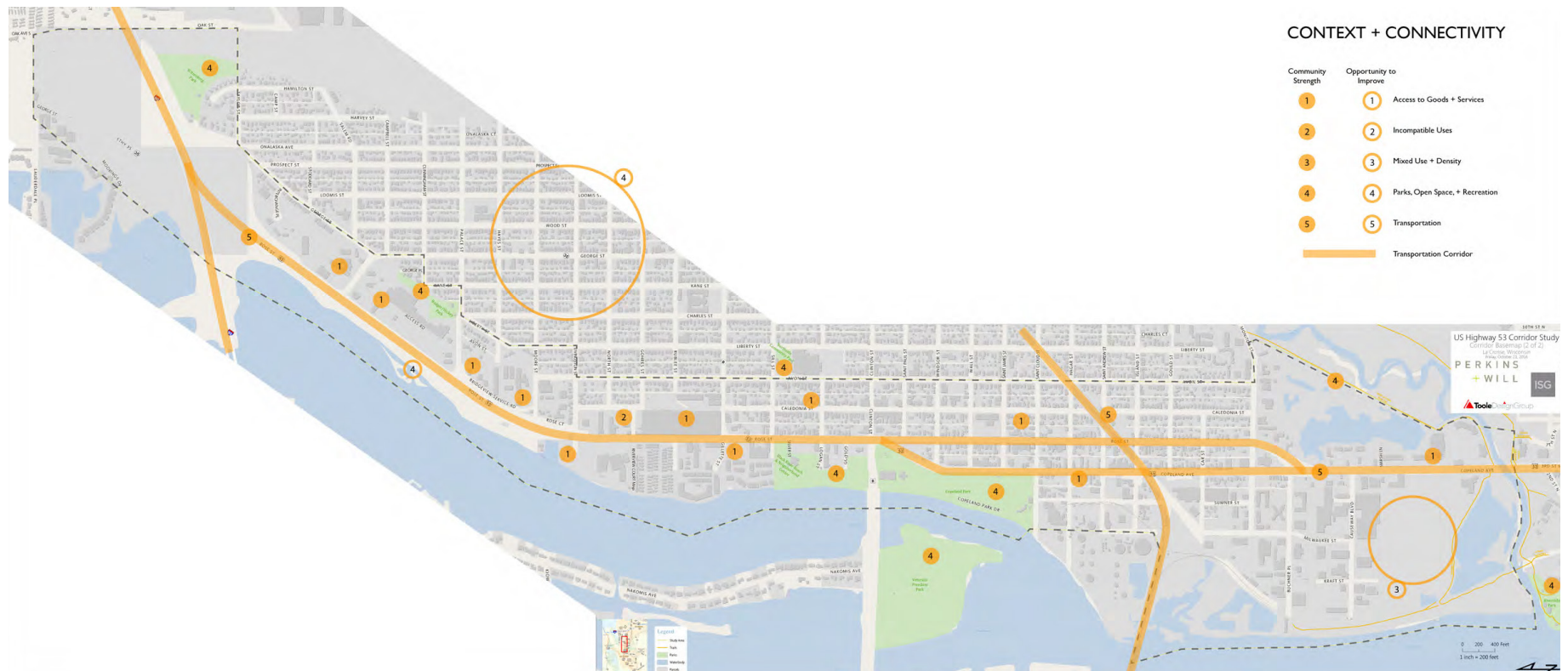


Transportation Evaluation

The Project Team was challenged with evaluating how the Highway 53 Corridor could become more pedestrian, bike, and transit friendly. Currently, the roadway and narrow sidewalks occupy almost the entire public right-of-way, limiting options for comfortable sidewalk widths, bicycle facilities and/or planted boulevards. The Project Team studied how the roadway is being used by each mode and forecasted how it might be used in the future. This chapter outlines what was learned through the analysis.

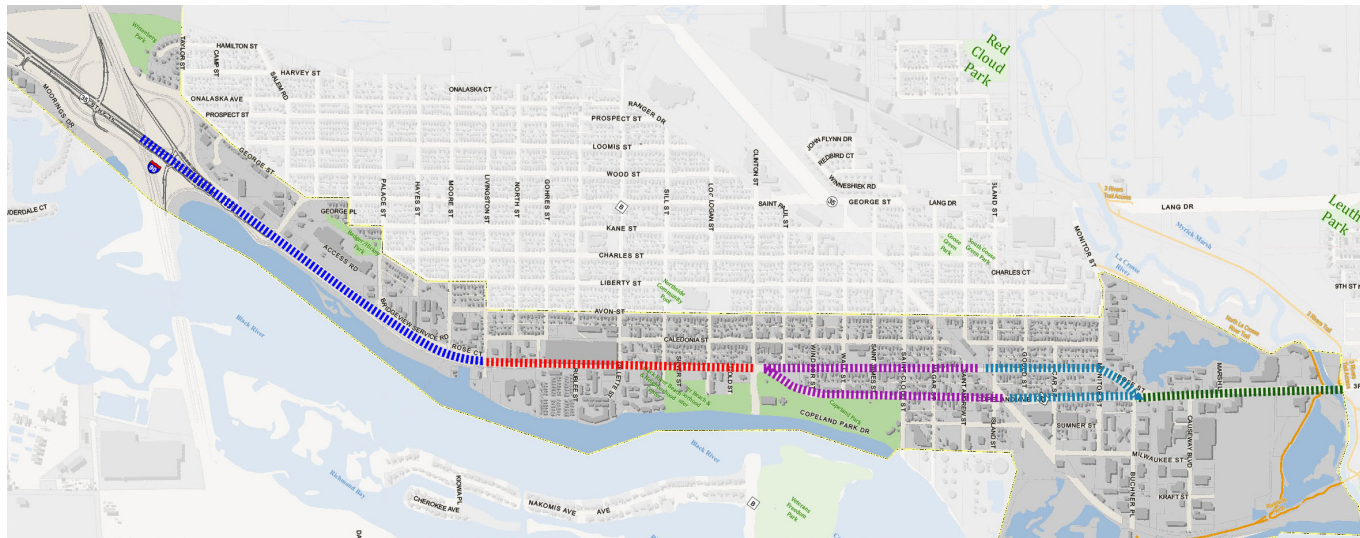
Regional Context

USH 53 is the second most highly traveled north-south corridor in the region behind only State Highway 16. However, it is unique in that the USH 53 Corridor is much more developed with neighborhoods, businesses, and industry. USH 53 is a gateway to the city for people traveling from the North. The Corridor is a very complex environment that needs to balance movement of goods, mobility of people, economic vitality, and quality of life all within a limited width.



Existing Roadway Configuration

Beginning at the Northern Study Area boundary, Highway 53 (Rose Street) is a divided highway with two lanes in each direction (plus turn lanes at intersections) and a rural cross section (no curb and gutter) with no on-street parking. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is currently reconstructing this section of the highway. Following reconstruction, the street will have an urban profile with curb and gutter, sidewalks on the east side of the street, and a shared use path on the west side of the street along the river.



AT LIVINGSTON STREET, Highway 53 (Rose Street) transitions to an undivided highway with two lanes in each direction and a two-way left turn lane with sidewalks on both sides of the street. The two-way left turn lane is red colored concrete. There is no on-street parking in this segment.

AT CLINTON STREET, Highway 53 separates with southbound traffic on Copeland Avenue and northbound traffic on Rose Street. Copeland Avenue and Rose Street both have two travel lanes (plus turn lanes at intersections) with parking lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street.

AT THE RAILROAD TRACKS (near Island and Gould Streets), both Rose Street and Copeland Avenue continue on bridges over the tracks. Each roadway consists of two lanes plus a sidewalk on one side of the street. The sidewalk does not provide adequate distances from either the street or the railing at the side of the bridge. There is no on-street parking in this segment.

SOUTH OF THE RAILROAD BRIDGES, Copeland Avenue and Rose Street both have two travel lanes (plus turn lanes at intersections) with parking lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street.

AT MONITOR STREET, Rose Street begins to curve to rejoin Copeland Avenue. Currently, both Copeland Avenue and Rose Street have sidewalks on only one side of the street and two travel lanes each. This segment of Rose Street does not allow for any parking or standing. On Copeland Avenue, parking is allowed on both sides of the street between Monitor Street and Buchner Place and no on-street parking is allowed to the south of Buchner Place.

AT THIS POINT, Highway 53 continues as Copeland Avenue. This section includes two travel lanes in each direction and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Portions of this segment include a two-way left turn lane, and a raised median is present at River Bend Road. No on-street parking is allowed in this segment.

Accessibility

The Highway 53 Corridor should be accessible to as many people as possible with guidance from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The age and condition of infrastructure as well as the space available for facilities throughout the Corridor creates challenges for accessibility. Some of the sidewalks are in poor condition with cracks and gaps that impede travel and contribute to difficult conditions. Curb ramps that provide accessible access to and from sidewalks at street intersections do not exist at many locations, and where they do exist, many curb ramps do not meet current ADA standards or have been poorly maintained. Many driveways have cross sidewalks throughout the study area and often create cross-slope that is difficult to navigate and/or appear to be ADA non-compliant. Many of the issues outlined below also detract from the corridor's accessibility.



Pedestrian + Traffic Crossings

Crossing Highway 53 as a pedestrian was frequently identified as problematic by the public. At un-signalized crossings, motor vehicle operators rarely yield to pedestrians attempting to cross the street. When they do, pedestrians are faced with a “multiple threat” condition where traffic in one lane may stop, but traffic in subsequent lanes does not. At signalized intersections, pedestrians have issues with turning traffic not yielding to pedestrians and with pedestrian signals that do not provide adequate time to cross the street, particularly for people with mobility issues.

In 2016, the City installed the Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) and pedestrian refuge island for pedestrians crossing Highway 53 near Sill Street and the Black River Beach Park. Residents report that compliance with the RRFB, that is motorists yielding to pedestrians, is generally good, and that the RRFB and pedestrian refuge island have assisted with crossing the street at this location. The 2012 La Crosse Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identified three pedestrian problem intersections within the project study area:

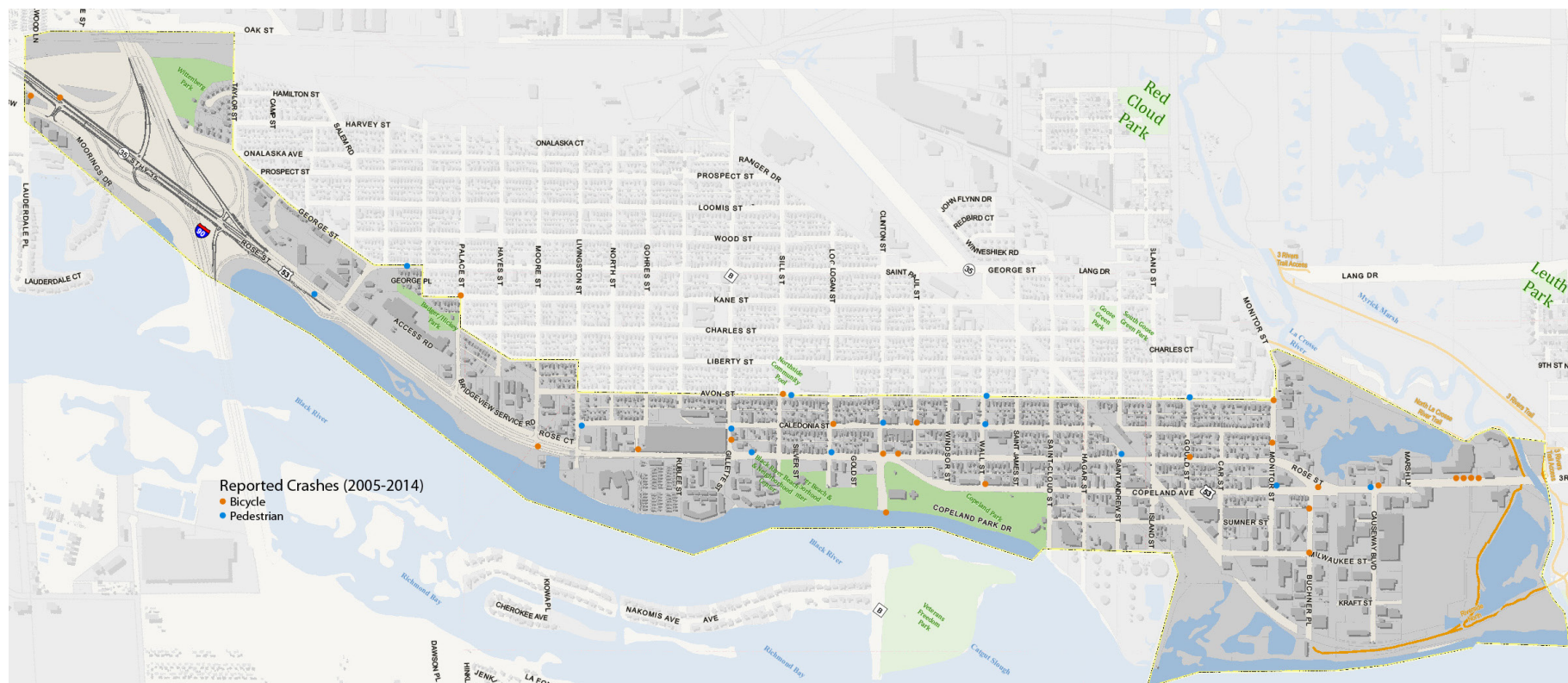
- ✓ George Street and Stoddard Street
- ✓ George Street and W George Street
- ✓ Rose Street and Logan Street

These intersections were mentioned by the public during public input sessions for this Plan, but it was also regularly noted that all crossings of Highway 53 are challenging. The 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan prioritized the need to install marked crosswalks at intersections throughout the city in order to improve pedestrian crossing conditions. Within the study area, the following intersections were prioritized:

INTERSECTIONS PRIORITIZED	PRIORITY LEVEL		
	1	2	3
Gillette + Liberty Street	●		
Avon + Clinton Street	●		
Sill + Caledonia Street		●	
Wall + Caledonia Street		●	
Copeland + Windsor Street		●	
Copeland + Wall Street		●	
Copeland + St. James Street		●	
Copeland + St. Cloud Street		●	
Copeland + Hagar Street		●	
All other unmarked intersections			●

Pedestrian Crashes

Within the study area, there were twenty-one crashes involving pedestrians between 2006 and 2016. Crashes were dispersed throughout the study area without any significant concentration of crash areas. However, twelve of the crashes occurred on or at an intersection with Highway 53, confirming the reports from the public about challenges crossing Highway 53 as a pedestrian. Additionally, four of the crashes occurred on or at an intersection with Caledonia Street, likely to greater pedestrian activity in the UPTOWNE/Old Towne North area.



21 crashes involving pedestrians between 2006 and 2016

12 crashes occurred on or at an intersection with Highway 53

4 crashes occurred on or at an intersection with Caledonia Street

Sidewalk Concerns

Throughout the Highway 53 Corridor, space allotted for pedestrian use is constrained within five to eight feet. Areas with larger setbacks contain usable pedestrian space up to 12 feet, but some of this space resides on private property. The approximate five-foot sidewalk area is being encroached upon by commercial parking lots and residential yards that have not been maintained and/or obstructed by power and sign poles. As a result, the sidewalk effectively becomes more narrow than the required four-foot pedestrian access route with some routes even more narrow at three feet.

As a result of this constrained environment, sidewalk treatments along the Highway 53 Corridor are inconsistent and vary block by block. There are very few blocks along Highway 53 that have sidewalk segments that include a grass boulevard areas between the sidewalk and roadway.

The portion of Highway 53 where Rose Street and Copeland Avenue split (between Clinton Street and Monitor Street) includes striped parking lanes that provides a buffer between pedestrians and travel lanes (i.e., the parked cars next to the curb provide a barrier, and when not occupied the space provides a buffer).

5' TO 12' current width of
pedestrian walkways



Inconsistent Development Setbacks

Typically, residential fences in the Corridor are at the edge of the sidewalk within the public right-of-way. A lack of a Frontage Zone minimizes the usable portion of the sidewalk. However, on commercial land uses, buildings are set back one or two feet to provide additional room. The images below illustrate the inconsistent development setbacks that occur along the Highway 53 Corridor. The first image illustrates a residential fence that creates a narrow feel of the sidewalk area, and the second image represents a new development that increased the sidewalk width in addition to providing a Frontage Zone by setting the building back from the edge of the sidewalk. Challenges related to accessibility follow and include sidewalk obstructions, snow, grades, and personal safety concerns.

Sidewalk Obstructions

Sidewalk obstructions such as sign posts, vegetation, utility poles, garbage cans, and temporary signs are prevalent along Highway 53 and narrow the walk zone. Above ground utilities, furniture, and vegetation would otherwise be placed in the Planting/Furnishing Zone if it was available.

Snow Removal

It has been identified that the sidewalks in winter are impassable in locations due to the lack of snow removal. Maintaining sidewalks during the winter is difficult due to snow storage space being nonexistent or limited. Snow from the roadway is plowed directly onto the sidewalks, creating difficulty for adjacent property owners to adequately maintain the sidewalks. La Crosse has an existing policy requiring snow removal from sidewalks by abutting property owners, but the policy needs stronger enforcement.



Curb Condition

In many sections of the Highway 53 Corridor, the deteriorating curbs provide little to no vertical separation from the roadway. This minimizes the barrier a curb can provide between vehicles and pedestrians, facilitating encroachment on the sidewalk for maneuvering or parking automobiles, delivery trucks, and buses.

Streetscape

The entire Corridor lacks greenery and wooded areas, furniture, pedestrian scale lighting, art, and wayfinding. Where furnishings are provided, they frequently interrupt the walkway and reduce the accessibility of the pedestrian access route. Non-fixed objects such as waste receptacles and newspaper boxes are particularly challenging as they can move from their intended space. The railroad bridges along Rose Street and Copeland Avenue provide narrow sidewalks for pedestrian travel that are not consistent for pedestrian use.



Bicycle Issues

No dedicated or marked bicycle facilities exist on Highway 53 or other streets within the Corridor. Bikers use the sidewalk or travel lanes with motor vehicle traffic.

Bicycle count data shows that Highway 53 has a higher rate of sidewalk riding than other count locations, which indicates this stretch of Highway 53 is not meeting the needs of people biking.

Although there are no designated bicycle facilities or routes within the study area, a few neighborhood streets provide suitable bicycle conditions. In particular, Caledonia Street and Avon Street provide long routes with relatively low traffic volumes. Avon Street provides a crossing of the railroad tracks, which is a key connection for people bicycling north to south in the area. North-South bicycle routes should be improved and safe and convenient East-West crossings and accesses to Highway 53 are lacking as well.

Shared use paths exist at the southern end of the study area near the La Crosse River. The path on the west side of Highway 53 connects Riverside Park across the La Crosse River to Riverside North and Causeway Boulevard. Just outside the study area to the east, paths run along both sides of the La Crosse River connecting Riverside Park, Monitor Street, West Avenue, and beyond. These bicycling and pedestrian paths facilities are widely used but are missing key connections that would enhance their utility and popularity.

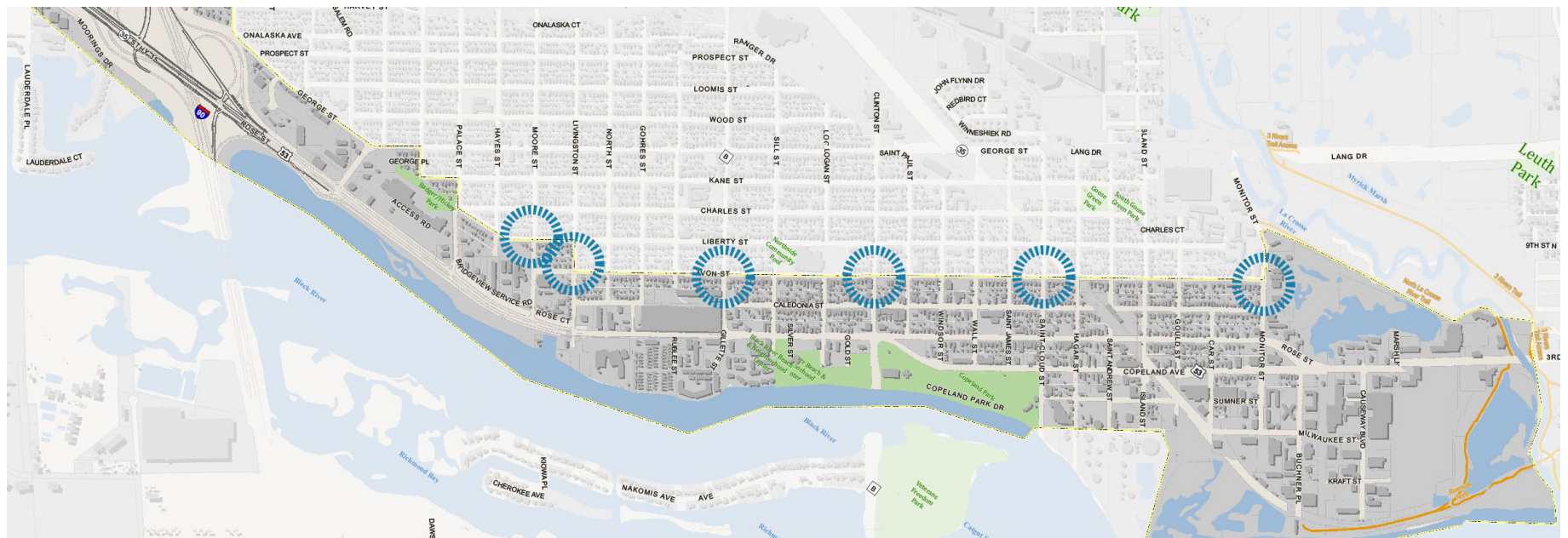


Bicycle Crossings

Crossings of Highway 53 and other streets in the study area were frequently cited as problematic by the public. The 2012 La Crosse Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identified problems with six bicycle intersections within the Highway 53 Corridor:

- 1 Rose Street and Livingston Street
- 2 Avon Street and Moore Street
- 3 Avon Street and Gillette Street
- 4 Avon Street and Clinton Street
- 5 Avon Street and Saint Cloud Street
- 6 Avon Street and Monitor Street

These intersections were mentioned by the public during input sessions, but it was also regularly noted that all crossings of Highway 53 are challenging.



Bicycle Crashes

Within the Corridor, there were 43 crashes reported to the police involving bicycles between 2006 and 2016. Thirty-three of the crashes occurred on or at an intersection with Highway 53; six of these crashes were at or near the intersection of River Bend Road, which leads into the River Bend Plaza. The high concentration of crashes along Highway 53 demonstrates that people are bicycling along or across Highway 53 even without the presence of a bicycle route. This is likely due to the high concentration of destinations along Highway 53. Because of the lack of bicycle routes on Highway 53, many people bicycle on the sidewalk. While legal, sidewalk bicycling is not safe, and crashes frequently occur at intersections with streets and driveways.

Bicycle Plans

The 2012, La Crosse Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan provided numerous recommendations for facilities, programs, and policies to improve bicycling in the study area and La Crosse as a whole. Bicycle facilities proposed by the plan for the study area include:

- Shared Use Paths: Riverfront Trail (I-90 to La Crosse River); Powerline Corridor (Proposed Riverfront Trail to Highway 53)
- Bike Lanes: George Street (Highway 53 to Gillette Street); Highway 53 (Livingston Street to La Crosse River); Monitor Street (Copeland Avenue to Lang Drive); Saint Cloud Street (Copeland Park Drive to George Street); Clinton Street (Black River to George Street); Gillette Street (Rose Street to River Valley Drive); I-90 shoulder through entire study area
- Shared Lane Markings: Moore Street (Highway 53 to George Street)
- Bike Boulevards: Avon Street (Moore Street to Monitor Street)
- Bike Routes: Logan Street (Black River Beach Park to Highway 53); George Street (W George Street to N Salem Road)

None of the facilities proposed above have been constructed, but the City is currently moving ahead with plans to provide a bicycle boulevard on Avon Street and to provide bike lanes on Monitor and Clinton Street.



Transit

The La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) provides bus service in the study area through the Route 6 Northside bus with regular service on weekdays and weekends. Limited service is also provided in the study area on weekdays via the Route 7 French Island bus and the Route 9 Onalaska bus. More detail about these routes is provided below:

6 Route 6: Northside

- Seven days a week service
- Weekday service every 30 minutes from 5:12 am until 5:42 pm
- Weekday service every hour from 6:42 pm until 9:41 pm
- Weekend service hourly until 6:42 pm on Saturdays and 5:42 pm on Sundays

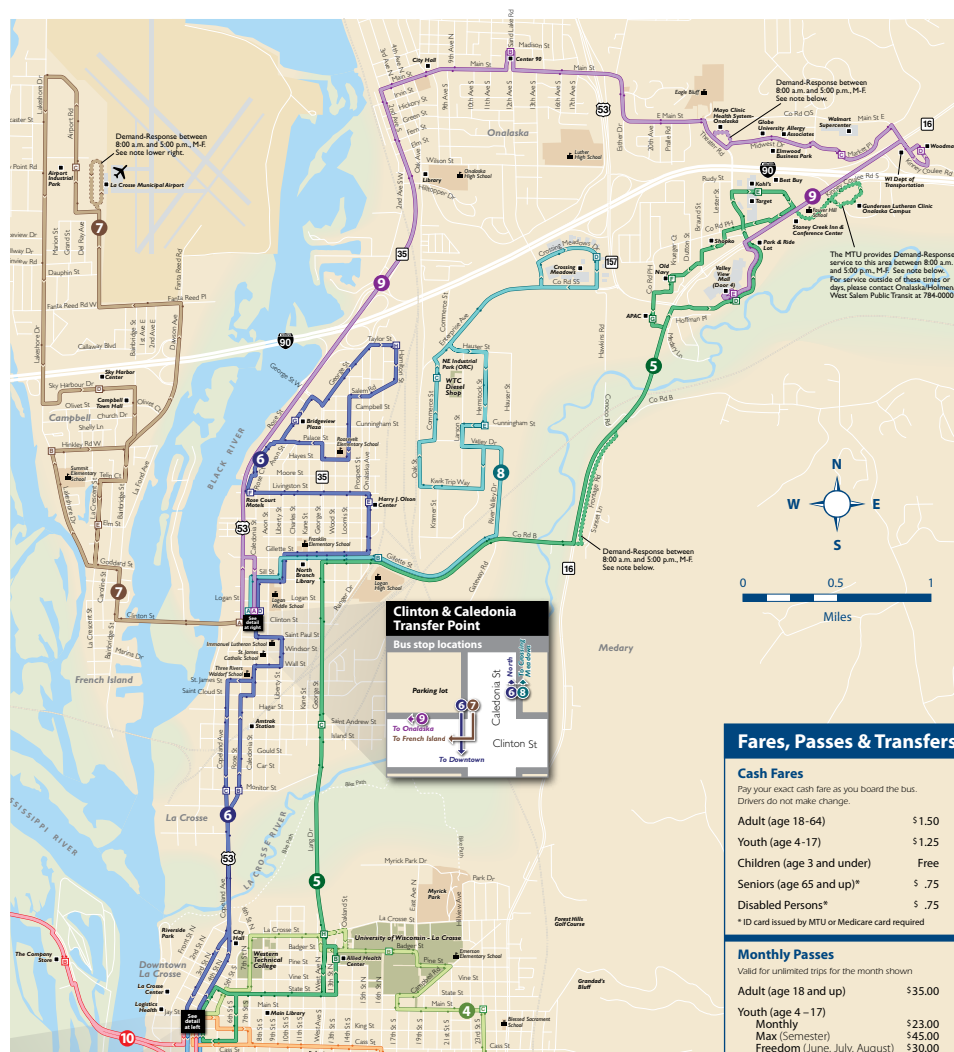
7 Route 7: French Island

- Limited service: Weekdays only
- Hourly service from 5:55 am to 5:25 pm

9 Route 9: Onalaska

- Limited service: Weekdays only
- Three full morning routes (once per hour), plus one partial morning route
- Five afternoon/evening routes (once per hour)

The majority of bus stops in the Corridor are single signs noting the location of a bus stop, with most bus stops lacking benches, lights, and shelters. While concrete pads exist at bus stops, snow removal in the winter is inconsistent and can make bus loading and unloading difficult. Passenger shelters are provided at the intersections of Copeland/Hagar, Copeland/Monitor, and Copeland/River Bend (both sides). Where benches do exist, they frequently add to the obstructions in the walkway due to inadequate space within the right of way. The consolidation of select bus stops and the addition of shelters is a possibility for the future.



Intercity Rail

The La Crosse Amtrak Station is located at the intersection of Caledonia Street and Saint Andrew Street. Service is provided daily on the Empire Builder route which runs from Chicago to Seattle and Portland. The Amtrak Station provides an enclosed waiting area with restrooms and both short-term and long-term vehicle parking options.

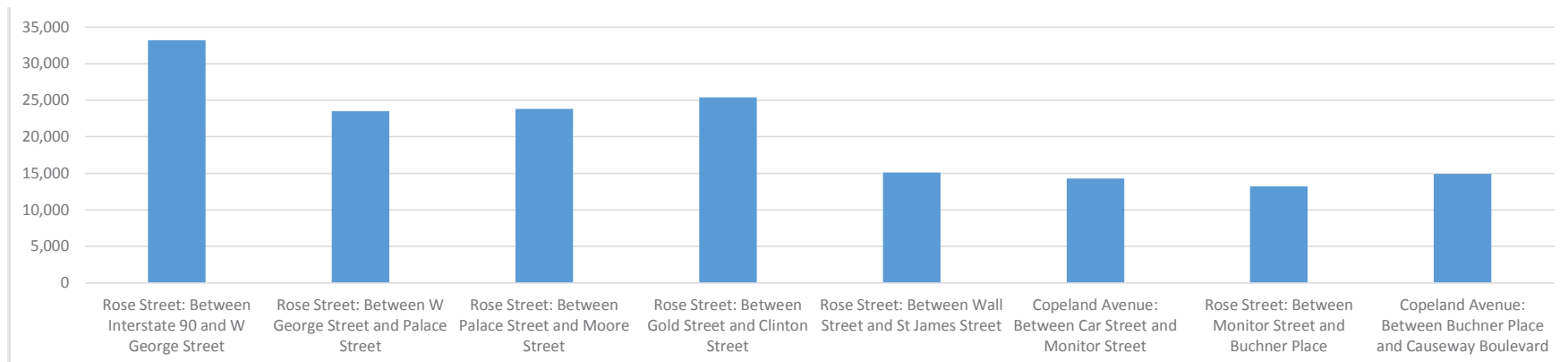
Existing Roadway Data

The overall Highway 53 Corridor was analyzed to better understand how the corridor might better serve people walking and biking and allow for redevelopment. This analysis looks at how the roadway is used (automobiles, pedestrians, bikes, transit, freight), how many motor vehicles the roadway can accommodate (capacity), who is using the roadway, how safe the roadway is (crashes), and how much it might be used in the future (forecast motor vehicle traffic volumes).

Early in the planning process, it became evident that improving the biking and pedestrian environments would require taking space from existing vehicle travel lanes. To gain an understanding of whether or not this would be possible, a planning-level review of the entire Highway 53 Corridor was necessary. This analysis looked at existing counts and crash history. Following are highlights of the current findings.

Average Daily Traffic Counts

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on Highway 53 ranges between 23,500 and 33,200:



The five-lane cross section of Highway 53 and the one-way pair of streets from Clinton Street to near Buchner Place provides adequate capacity for the level of traffic on the street. At most times of the day, traffic delays are minimal. During peak periods, there are minor delays and queuing at traffic signals throughout the corridor, but the observed levels of delay do not warrant any intervention.

Vehicular Crash Analysis

Within the Corridor, there were 1,639 motor vehicle crashes from 2006 to 2016; this total excludes crashes on I-90 and crashes involving bicyclists or pedestrians. Of these crashes, 1,253 or 76 percent occurred on Highway 53. Crashes are constant over the length of Highway 53 and George Street within the study area and significant concentrations of crashes also occurred along Gillette Street and Clinton Street.

The large number of crashes along Highway 53 is largely due to the greater traffic volume on the street than those surrounding. However, the crash numbers may also be high due to higher traffic speeds at the northern end where the street has a rural highway design. As motorists begin to encounter traffic signals and slowed traffic at George Street, crashes occur. The long distances between traffic signals in the corridor contribute to speeding, which also contribute to crashes when traffic does slow or stop. The large number of driveways and intersections in the corridor also contribute to many vehicles turning on and off of Highway 53.



1,639 motor vehicle crashes from
2006 to 2016

1,253 or 76% of crashes occurred
on Highway 53

Parking and Parking Demand

There is no on-street parking within two-way segments of Highway 53, but on-street parking is provided to portions of the one-way segments of the street and is allowed on most other streets within the study area. Along Highway 53, there is ample off-street parking at most destinations. The only concerns that were cited by the public about parking availability during certain times of the day in the UPTOWNE/Old Towne North business district (Caledonia Street from Clinton Street to Saint Paul Street). While substantial on and off street parking exists in this area, it is consistently occupied by local business patrons.



Truck Movements

A number of intersections in the study area have been designed to accommodate large truck movements. These intersections are designed with large curb radii to allow large trucks to make turns without encroaching over curbs and sidewalks. While this design allows for easier movements by large trucks, it contributes to drivers of smaller vehicles making turns at higher speeds. Large curb radii also contribute to longer pedestrian crossing distances. The longer crossing distances combined with vehicles making turns at higher speeds increases the likelihood of crashes between motorists and pedestrians.



Environmental Evaluation

Black River/La Crosse River Marsh

The USH 53 Corridor has several environmental and open space amenities within and adjacent to its boundary. The entire western edge of the study boundary has waterfront along the Black River. While improvements to waterfront public access and conditions are recommended, the Black River is already a cherished piece of the Northside Community. The southern portion of the Corridor is also adjacent to the La Crosse River Marsh. Connections to this amenity can be enhanced as recommended in later sections of this Master Plan while preserving its natural qualities.



Environmental Contamination

No environmental site assessments were conducted as part of this planning process. Because of the large number and area of current and past industrial land uses, environmental contamination can be expected to be encountered during future redevelopment activities. For example, a large and lengthy environmental assessment and remediation process was required to prepare the Riverside North redevelopment site.

Floodplain

Much of the Black River waterfront is within or adjacent to the flood-way, which can be expected to contain significant flow during flooding occurrences and should see limited to no development due to regulations. Northside redevelopment and current property owners are hampered by much of the land area located within the 100-year floodplain, which has significant impacts on existing and future conditions in the area. Floodplain regulations have the negative effect of limiting redevelopment opportunities by increasing the cost of planning, design, permitting, construction, and maintenance of property. Many property owners are required to purchase flood insurance that they are unlikely to ever make a claim on. Property owners are limited by the amount of money they can spend on improvements and general maintenance to their properties. Public safety and accessibility during flooding events are concerns. All of these issues and others are much of the reason for a continuous cycle of deterioration of property values and conditions.



Green Infrastructure

Limited amounts of green infrastructure exist along the Highway 53 Corridor due to lack of redevelopment. Most developments along the Corridor occurred prior to current federal, state, and local stormwater management regulations. Also, most street reconstruction occurred prior to adoption of the City's Green Complete Streets Ordinance. However, new developments and street reconstructions will be required to abide by these regulations and policies.

Future development of green infrastructure is necessary to preserve and protect many environmental amenities that currently exist within the Corridor. Green infrastructure can also improve existing areas over current conditions by reducing the frequency and impacts of localized flooding caused by limited storm sewer capacity and creative value-added real estate investment opportunities. Storm water that does not infiltrate will eventually flow into the Black River. Therefore, storm water management has direct impacts on the quality and sustainability of one of the corridor's most important environmental and recreational assets.

There are several challenges to implementing storm water BMPs in the Highway 53 Corridor due to extensive past development and drainage patterns. The City is in the early stages of taking the steps towards conducting a flood hazard mitigation plan, in cooperation with state and federal agencies. The purpose of this plan will be to inform the proper location, type, and size of structural and non-structural improvements to green infrastructure. A flood mitigation plan, this Master Plan, and other City plans and policies will aid in future development of storm water BMPs during redevelopment within the corridor.



UPTOWNE/Old Towne North

The “Next Great Place UPTOWNE Summit” was held in October 2016. To address current concerns and conditions of the community in “Old Towne North” regard economic development, transportation, redevelopment opportunities, historic preservation and community involvement and networking. The process focused heavily on community engagement and included local facilitators and facilitators from other communities across the nation. The process was community led and funded.

Many of the goals, opportunities, and tactics documented in the Workshop Outcomes report are included in this Master Plan as well through reoccurring themes as a result of community engagement and data gathering or incorporation. Both processes recommend a number of immediate, short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions, which can be found within the Implementation Section of this report.

Continuous investment in this district is critical to local economy and neighborhood livability along with continual reevaluation of the needs and commitments to the district.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Collaborative + Community Based Planning

The Community's greatest assets for this Plan are the knowledge, interest, and contributions that its citizens, businesses, local officials, and advisory commissions made to the development of the Community's vision and next-generation plan. The planning process provided opportunities for community involvement in creative and practical ways to help shape the future of the Highway 53 Corridor. The major forces, issues, and opportunities associated with the Corridor have been defined through a series of interactive committee meetings, business owner interviews, community workshops, open houses, and interviews with developers. The results of the community exercises have been synthesized into goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs to assist in shaping the vision for the Corridor and guide the creation of this Master Plan.

The City of La Crosse engaged the community to create the Highway 53 Corridor Plan from the I-90 – Exit 3 interchange to the La Crosse River crossing, south of Causeway Boulevard.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions from community members during the course of the project can be found in Appendix B of this report, along with corresponding answers from the Highway 53 Project Team.



Steering Committee

The City of La Crosse convened and engaged the Steering Committee throughout the planning process. The Committee made pivotal decisions and contributions to major project deliverables. The Steering Committee was composed of elected officials from the City of La Crosse, business/property owners, and neighborhood stakeholders.

Kick-Off Meeting: September 7, 2016

The Steering Committee, participated in three facilitated strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) exercises for Highway 53 at a kick-off meeting on September 7, 2016. Individual comments were recorded and posted for other participants to view and comment.



QUESTION #1

What is unique about the Highway 53 corridor and what aspects of the Corridor should be enhanced and/or maintained?

- River: waterfront access, eagle watch area
- Gateway/Entrance to La Crosse
- Development: improved housing, develop underutilized land, economic growth
- Traffic: enhance traffic flow, multi-modal improvements



QUESTION #2

What is problematic along the Corridor and needs improvement?

- Run-down/underutilized properties and buildings: poor condition, absentee landlords,
- Floodplain
- Improved identity and image
- Multi-modal access and circulation



QUESTION #3

What would substantial positive change (short term implementation or improvements) look like in five years along the Highway 53 Corridor?

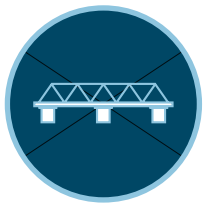
- Beautify Corridor and gateway
- Redevelopment of underutilized properties
- New branded image and change public perception



QUESTION #4

If a robust and realistic plan for the corridor was implemented, what would the Corridor look like in 20 years?

- Public and private sector growth: creating community strategic value
- Fully redeveloped corridor: new shops, housing, hotels and neighborhoods
- Improved River access and recreational amenities
- Sense of Northside pride



QUESTION #5

What one thing would you change about the Highway 53 Corridor?

- Removal of undesirable buildings/land uses along the Corridor
- Redevelopment of key parcels: Bridgeview Square Image

Focus Groups / Community Events



Stakeholder Groups



Public Workshops

First Public Workshop: Open House Overview: November 10, 2016

The first public workshop for the Highway 53 Corridor Plan was held November 10, 2016, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Northside Elementary School. The public workshop included a presentation on the overall purpose of the planning process and schedule, three stations that included interactive exercises that requested input related to corridor “identity”, and transportation and economic development. The participants in the workshop were asked to rotate through the three stations and provide responses to specific questions. Individual comments were recorded and posted for other participants to view and respond. The workshop was designed as a broad community conversation to gather feedback from residents, business owners, and others who use the corridor.

A summary of outcomes from the three topic break-outs follows:



IDENTITY



TRANSPORTATION



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Input:

- ✓ Enhance aesthetics, improved gateway experience and more welcoming
 - ✓ Maintain function of roadway but get people to stop
 - ✓ Enhance businesses
 - ✓ See and recognize businesses, get people to stop
 - ✓ Directions to/from corridor
 - ✓ Define landmarks along the corridor with signs and wayfinding
 - ✓ Enhance pedestrian and multi-modal access and circulation
- ✓ Provide safe crossings, enhance intersections, and consolidate driveways/curb cuts
 - ✓ Redevelop new and/or opportunities
 - ✓ Do not redevelop sites that support “good” businesses
 - ✓ Define opportunities to provide housing choices and business that provide living wages
 - ✓ Redevelop recommended needs to balance floodplain issues

Second Public Workshop: February 23, 2017

The second public workshop for the Highway 53 Corridor Plan was held February 23, 2017, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Northside Elementary School. The public workshop included three stations that displayed information on corridor redevelopment concepts, corridor design recommendations related to parks/trails/circulation, and a “What we Heard” slide show to share public feedback to date. The workshop was designed to share recommendations for improving the safety, multi-modal access and circulation, crossing improvements, corridor aesthetics, and growing the tax base through redevelopment at key nodes. The workshop was also designed to gather feedback from residents, business owners, and others who use the corridor.

REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

- ✓ Workshop participants shared their personal stories of living in the area and their experiences along the Highway 53 Corridor.
- ✓ Future redevelopment and roadway designs need to respect the historic resources and existing businesses along the corridor and accommodate the needs of the present and future community.

TRANSPORTATION/ STREETSCAPE/PARKS

- ✓ Safely accommodate all modes, especially pedestrians, along the corridor and especially at busy intersections.
- ✓ Providing safe and adequate space for the most vulnerable user — the pedestrian — will also enhance the overall public realm.
- ✓ Address the effects of motor vehicle traffic, including traffic calming.
- ✓ Many participants commented on the impact of motor vehicles along the corridor. The motorized traffic is not going away, but there are opportunities to accommodate motorized traffic, yet make the corridor a more pleasant and safe experience for all who frequent the area.

Third Public Workshop: May 16th, 2017

The third public workshop for the Highway 53 Corridor Plan was held May 16th, 2017, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Northside Elementary School. The public workshop included three stations that displayed information on corridor redevelopment concepts, corridor design recommendations, implementation strategies, and a “What we Heard” slide show to share public feedback to date. The workshop was designed to share recommendations for improving the safety, multi-modal access and circulation, crossing improvements, corridor aesthetics, and growing the tax base through redevelopment at key nodes. The workshop was also designed to gather feedback from residents, business owners, and others who use the corridor.

The project Steering Committee continually altered the process and corridor planning to address input received from all sources listed above. The recommended intersection improvements, enhanced pedestrian facilities, roadway improvements, and redevelopment scenarios all were significantly shaped by public and stakeholder input. The recommendations in this Plan were generally accepted by those engaged as the best options within the project’s constraints. Where participant desires could not be accommodated, the Steering Committee made its best effort to identify next-best options or mitigating measures.



PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS



Goals + Objectives

Goal #1: Grow and enhance the Corridor as a location for people and businesses.

“Set the stage” for and capitalize on development and redevelopment opportunities associated with the revitalization of the Corridor for the community and businesses through a corridor-wide land use strategy that positively influences transportation and redevelopment. Encourage partnerships among public, private, non-profit, philanthropic, property owners, and all people to make the Corridor competitive with other major activity centers in the region on the basis of livability and long-term economic viability and resiliency.

Goal #2: Establishing a land use pattern that promotes community.

Guide new development and redevelopment in a manner that strengthens “pulse” nodes and activity centers, improves local and external quality of life, and conserves natural features to meet the long-term needs of the community.

Goal #3: Improve all modes of transportation along the Corridor.

Seek opportunities to encourage and facilitate the expansion of all multi-modal transportation facilities to improve mobility for all people to all places.

Goal #4: Create an enhanced gateway to the City of La Crosse

Reinforce Highway 53 as the gateway into the City of La Crosse to create an aesthetically attractive corridor that projects a positive image of La Crosse.

Vision Statement

“Put the Highway 53 Corridor and adjacent neighborhoods on the path to be an even greater place to live, work, and play for all people through balanced strategies.”



Enhanced
Connectivity



Enhanced
Wayfinding



Enhanced Pedestrian
Experience



Landscape
Enhancement



Enhanced Development
(Commercial, Residential,
Mixed Use)



Strengthen Built Form
(Guidelines, Facades,
Ordinance)



Pulse Node Development

Four pulse nodes on Highway 53 were identified for this planning study, intersections at George Street, Gillette Street, Clinton Street and Monitor Street. These intersections were analyzed for redevelopment opportunities, bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements and enhancements to access and circulation. This section describes the redevelopment scenarios identified for each of the four pulse nodes. All scenarios are thought to be long term, taking up to 20 years to see the recommended changes. Whether the scenarios are pursued is dependent on the ability to purchase land from willing sellers. Gap financing may be needed if catalytic projects are not present.

The plan recommends the consolidation of existing services, retail, and office space around transit-served intersections to create pulse nodes which are defined as areas of high-intensity, mixed-use, residential, and commercial development at primary corridor intersections. The pulse nodes shall be friendly, attractive, walkable and differ from each other in overall scale, character, and function. It also envisioned that the stretches between the nodes will be comprised of existing commercial uses and other low intensity land uses or open space.

Private investment in the corridor can be spurred by land use predictability and an attractive destination with a strong sense of place, human scale, architectural cohesion, and vibrant neighborhoods. Scale, character, massing, and ethos of the Corridor's buildings contribute significantly to these elements. A project initiative is to promote sustainable design excellence in land use planning and resulting new development to allow new buildings architecturally fit into the surroundings, achieve energy and water efficiency, and respond to neighborhood transitions with building massing and vibrant adjacencies.



Pulse Node A @ George Street

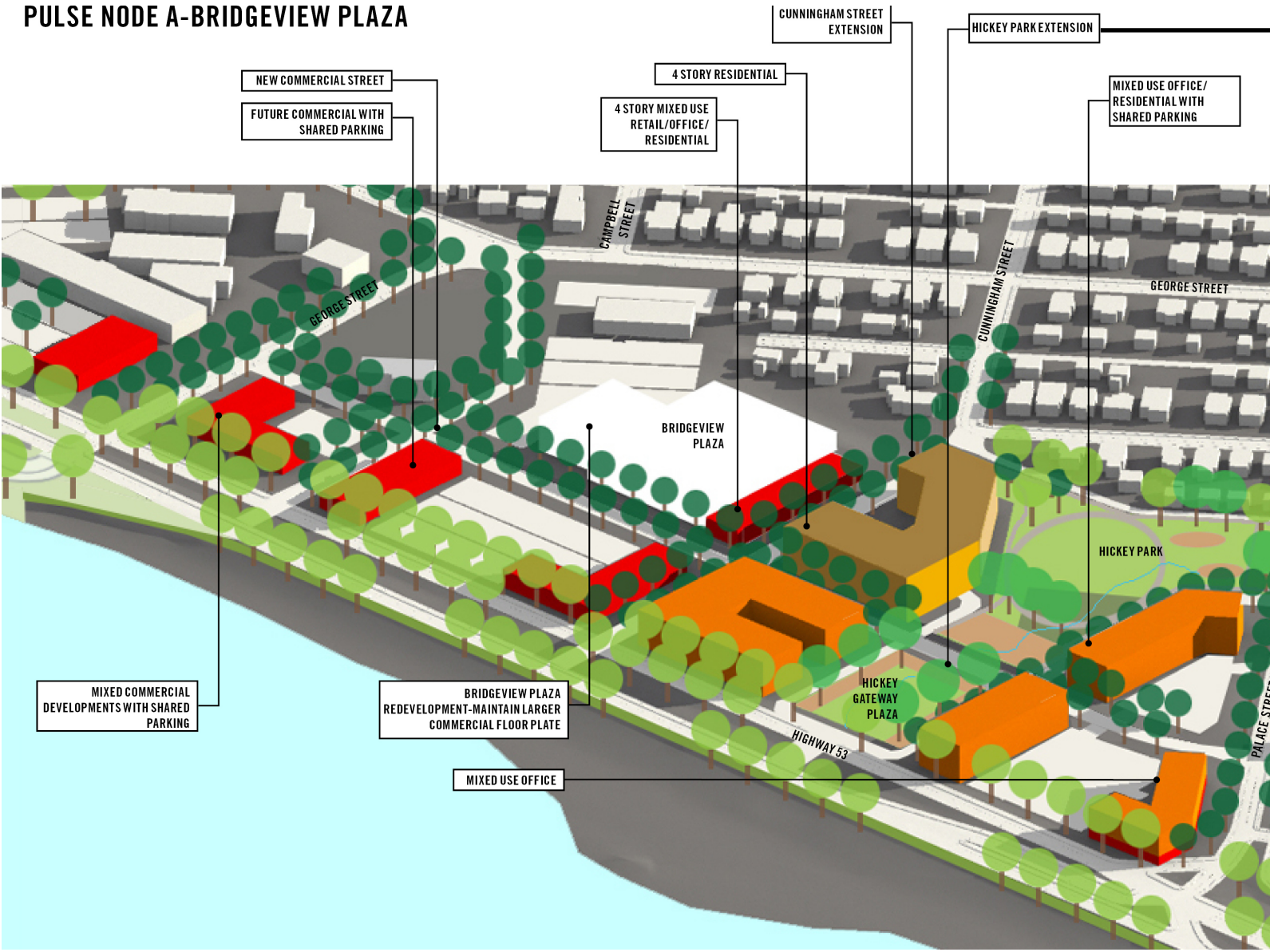
This node presents a great opportunity to create a mixed-use node by providing additional housing choices, restaurants, and businesses to serve surrounding residential neighborhoods. The pulse node is divided into two distinct redevelopment areas; the area north of George Street, and the area south of George Street, Bridgeview Plaza (area south of George Street).

- Create internal "ring road" by extending Salem Road from the neighborhood through redevelopment area to Taylor Street.
- Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.
- Create new mixed-use development area.
- Provide mixed residential (affordable, market rate and assisted senior living) multi-story buildings.
- Provide open spaces to the public, connected to residential developments.
- Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities.
- Extend Cunningham Street from the neighborhood out to Highway 53.
- Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.
- Create new mixed-use development area on the Bridgeview Plaza site.
- Provide mixed-use and multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street.
- Create new mixed-use developments to enhance the street network and expanded Hickey Park.
- Extend Hickey Park thru mixed-use development site and connect to Highway 53.
- Provide expanded neighborhood recreation amenities and programming.
- Provide flexible space to host a variety of recreational and community festivals.
- Provide local street network (with on-street parking) around Hickey Park.
- Remove the southern portion of Bridgeview Plaza building and re-purpose northern portion for commercial uses.
- Define new north to south commercial street by connecting George and Palace street to allow for enhanced connectivity within the mixed-use development area.





PULSE NODE A-BRIDGEVIEW PLAZA



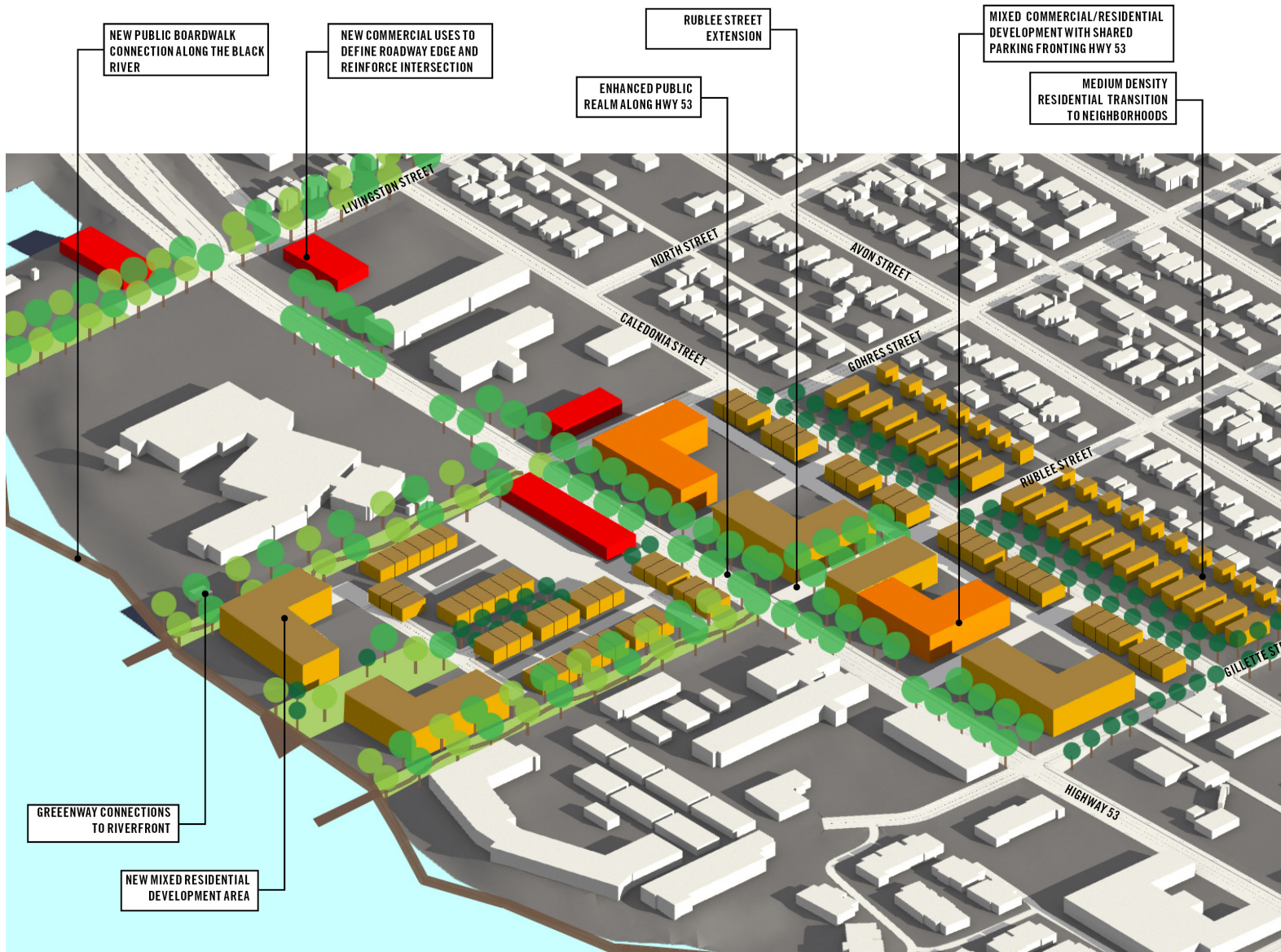


Pulse Node B @ Gillette Street

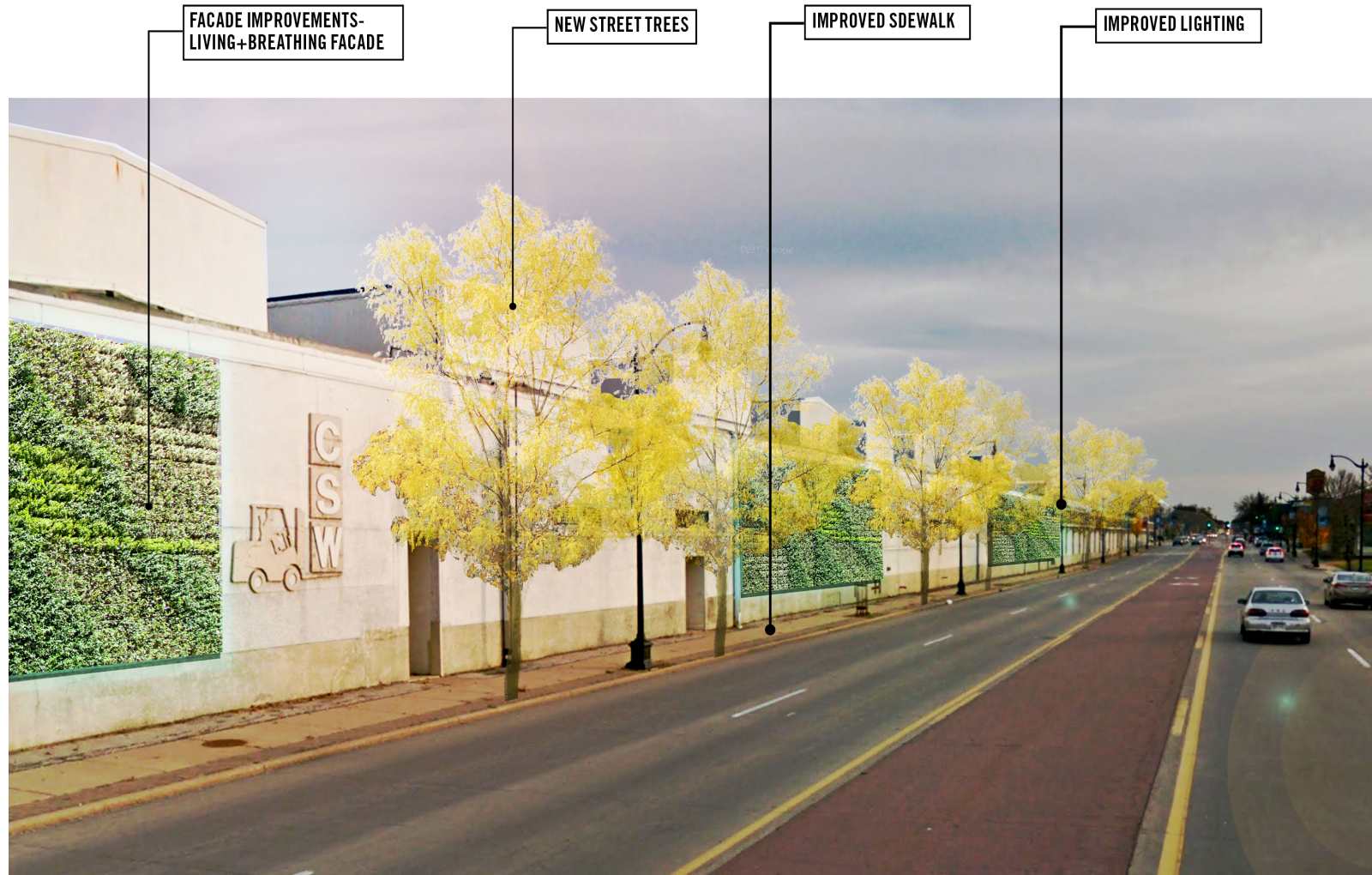
This node has the long-term opportunity to evolve into a mixed-use urban village providing more housing choices and neighborhood scaled businesses that serve the immediate neighborhoods.

- Create new mixed-use development areas within the pulse node.
- Provide mixed-use and multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street on the east side of Highway 53.
- Provide transitional residential densities along Caledonia Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.
- Provide mixed-use and multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street on the west side of Highway 53.
- Provide mixed residential housing along Black River.
- Provide commercial uses fronting Highway 53 with shared parking opportunities.
- Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the Livingston Intersection.
- Extend Rublee Street from the neighborhood out to Highway 53.
- Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.
- Provide “green” links from Highway 53 to the River along Livingston Street, Gohres Street, and Rublee Street.
- Incorporate new boardwalk access to the Riverfront.
- Create boardwalk from Livingston Street to Black River Beach House if feasible after further study of access, permitting, and cost considerations.





CENTRAL STATES WAREHOUSE-FACADE IMPROVEMENTS



CENTRAL STATES WAREHOUSE-FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

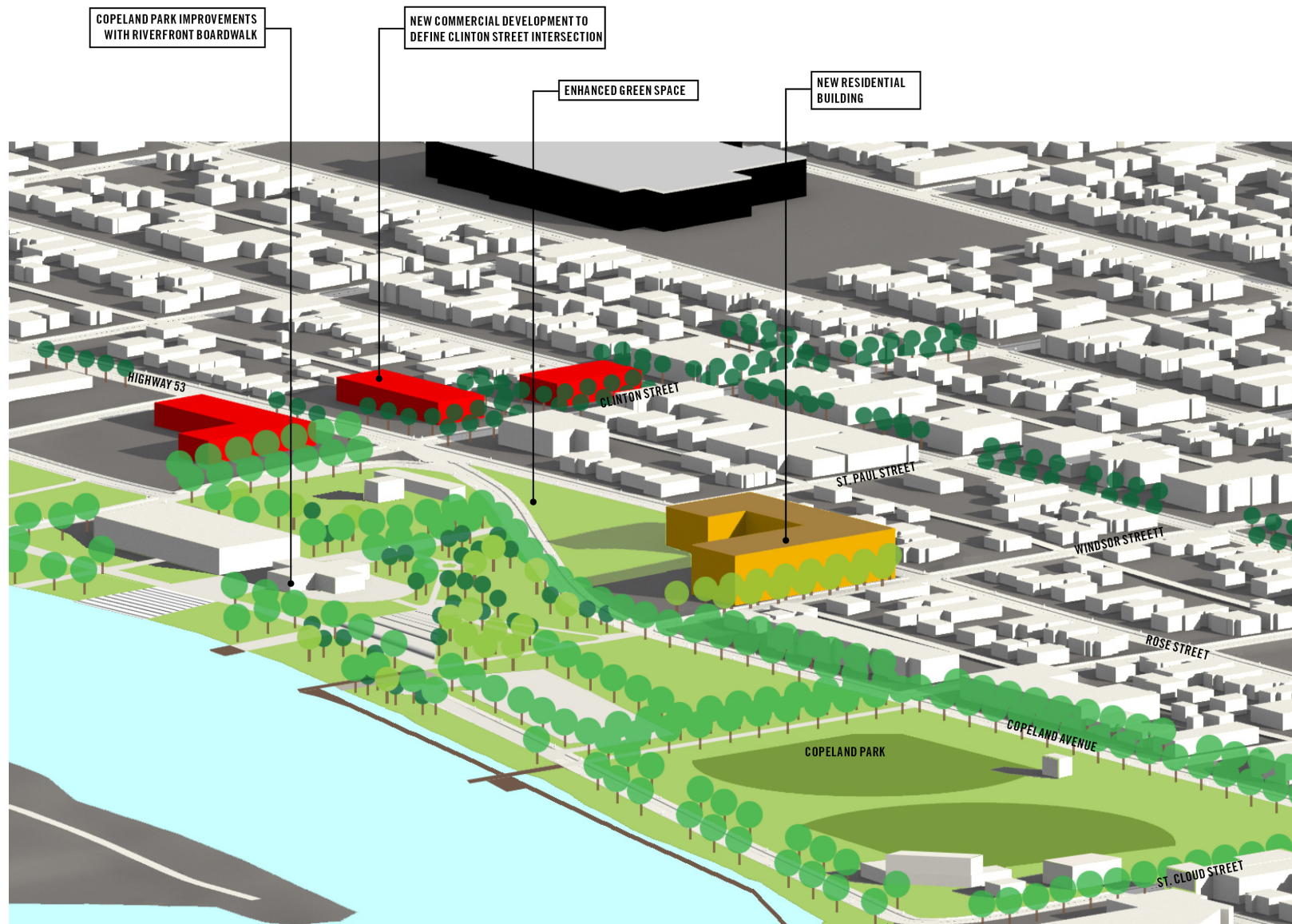


Pulse Node C @ Clinton Street

This node is at the primary Black River crossing in North La Crosse. This node is characterized by direct access to the Black River and Copeland Park. The intersection of Highway 53 and Clinton Street contains separate commercial uses in the three opposite corners. UPTOWNE/Old Towne North has the long-term opportunity to evolve into a mixed-use urban village providing more housing choices and neighborhood scaled businesses that serve the immediate neighborhoods.

- Incorporate recommendations from UPTOWNE Summit report.
- Create new redevelopment opportunities at the Clinton Street intersection.
- Provide a residential multi-story building in the triangle parcel fronting Windsor Street.
- Provide underground parking and enhanced pedestrian facilities along Windsor Street.
- Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the Windsor Street intersection.
- Improve connection from Copeland Park to public boat landing and Black River Beach House.
- Improve overall connectivity from adjacent neighborhoods to Copeland Park.
- Improve pedestrian crossings of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.
- Improve Copeland Park.
- Provide enhanced river connectivity from the park.
- Upgrade park recreational amenities and provide more flexible recreational/program space.
- Improve pedestrian circulation and access adjacent to public boat landing located on North Clinton Street.
- Expand Black River Beach House to include a Senior Center.
- Improve landscaping and connectivity to beach area.
- Provide mid-block curb extensions and crosswalk in 1200 block of Caledonia Street.
- Require removal of 4 parking spaces allowing for the addition of nice bike parking on both sides of street.
- Install sidewalk curb extensions: corner of Caledonia @ Clinton, corner of Caledonia @ St. Paul, and corner of Caledonia @ Windsor.





Pulse Node D @ Monitor Street

This node is the southern end of the change between one-way and two-way streets. This node is characterized by confusing street layouts and a struggling “no-man’s land” between the one-way streets. The area contains a mix of several commercial uses. If the street layout were improved, opportunities for commercial uses with better access and visibility could be achieved, and medium to high density residential uses could make use of the waterfront areas.

- Create new mixed-use development areas
- Provide multi-story mixed-residential and commercial buildings on South Monitor Street, east of Rose Street.
- Provide transitional residential densities along Monitor Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.
- Provide green space linking development opportunity sites with access to wetland boardwalk trails.
- Provide multi-story mixed-residential buildings on North Monitor Street between Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.
- Provide transitional residential densities along Rose Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.
- Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the intersection of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.
- Provide multi-story mixed-residential on South Monitor Street, west of Copeland Avenue.
- Provide multi-story mixed-residential and commercial buildings on the east side of Highway 53, across from Causeway Boulevard.
- Provide green space linking development opportunity sites with access to wetland boardwalk trails.
- Extend Sumner Street from Monitor Street to Buchner Place.
- Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.
- Improve streetscape and public realm amenities along Buchner Place.
- Provide new boardwalk system in wetland area east of Highway 53.
- Improve greenspace connection south of Buchner Place to link trails and Highway 53.





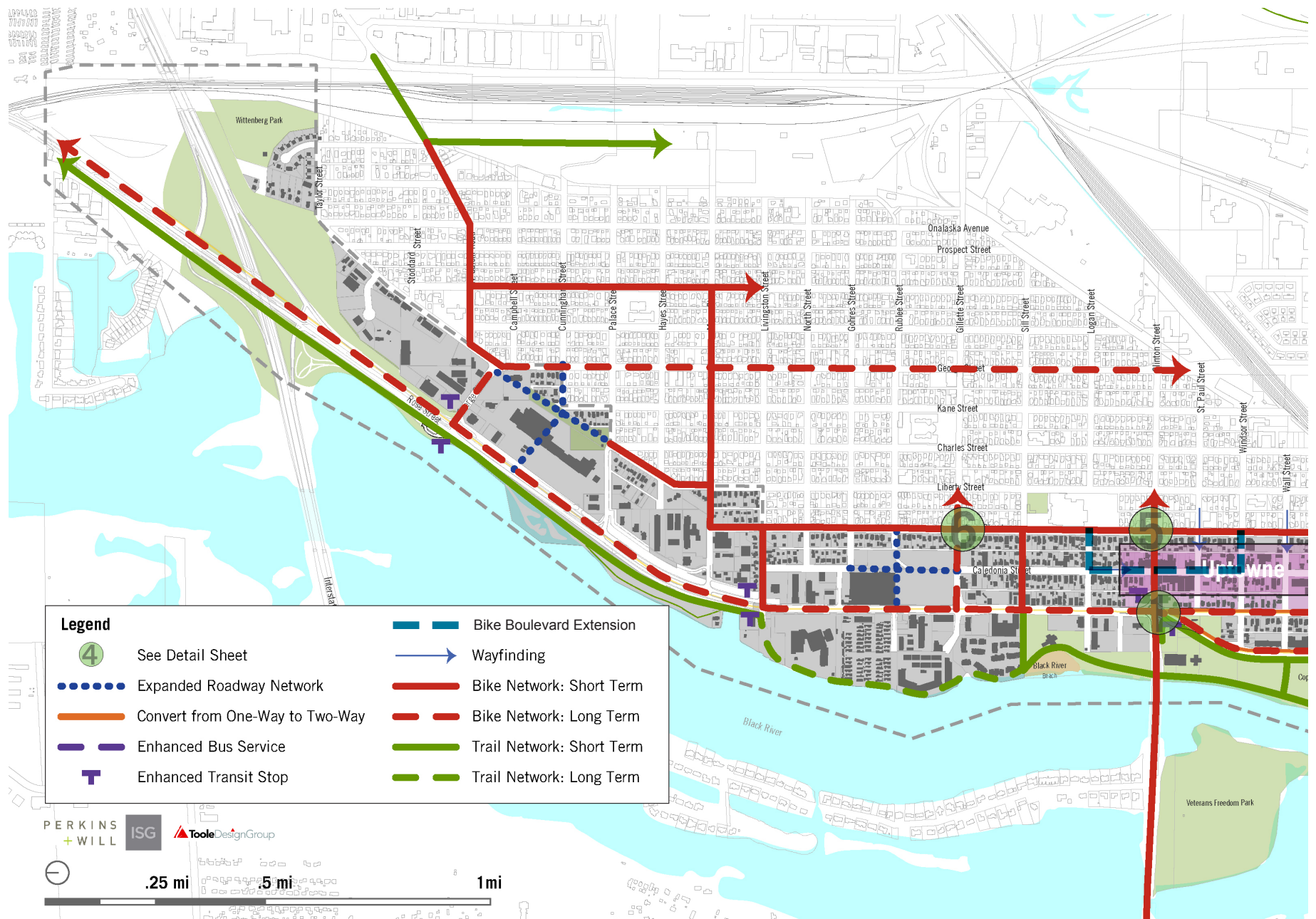
Neighborhood Considerations in Pulse Node Development Situations

The pulse node theory of development also requires careful consideration of development and improvement opportunities in the areas between the higher intensity nodes. These areas act as critical connections and transitions to allow for each high intensity node to be unique. It allows travelers within the Corridor a sense of reprieve, and establishes the discovery of the next unique area with the intention of increasing the energy and attachment to the community.

Low to mid-rise offices, low to mid density multi-family developments, and neighborhood scale retail should be encouraged adjacent to the highway in these areas. Lower density single-family re-development and preservation should be encouraged within the outer boundaries and adjacent to the Corridor. Open space and recreational areas should be located in appropriate areas and include undeveloped lands or areas where these amenities are simply desired or needed.









Multi-Modal Transportation

Walking, biking and transit are critical transportation modes in corridors such as Highway 53 and a major component of a livable community. Following are recommendations to promote safe and inviting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit experiences by creating or strengthening connections to nearby bicycle facilities, neighboring points of interests, shopping, the Black River, trails and open space.

Pedestrian Experience Enhancement Strategies

- Provide a minimum of 6-foot wide sidewalks (8 feet is preferred) throughout the Corridor where feasible.
- Eliminate sidewalk obstructions and gaps.
- Replace failed sidewalk and trail pavements.
- Improve snow removal expectations and enforcement.
- Improve pedestrian cross walks (could be more artistic crosswalks) to enhance safety at high volume locations.
- Install sidewalk curb extensions on adjacent side streets to decrease crosswalk distances, moderate vehicular speeds, provide increased sidewalk space, and define on-street parking bays.
- Extend pedestrian lights along the Highway 53 corridor.
- Incorporate streetscape elements such as monuments, public art, kiosks, and benches to create a more inviting and comfortable sidewalk environment and promote activity.
- Provide pedestrian scale wayfinding and signage.
- Consider times and locations to program “open streets”.
- Provide improved visual and physical connection to the Black River.

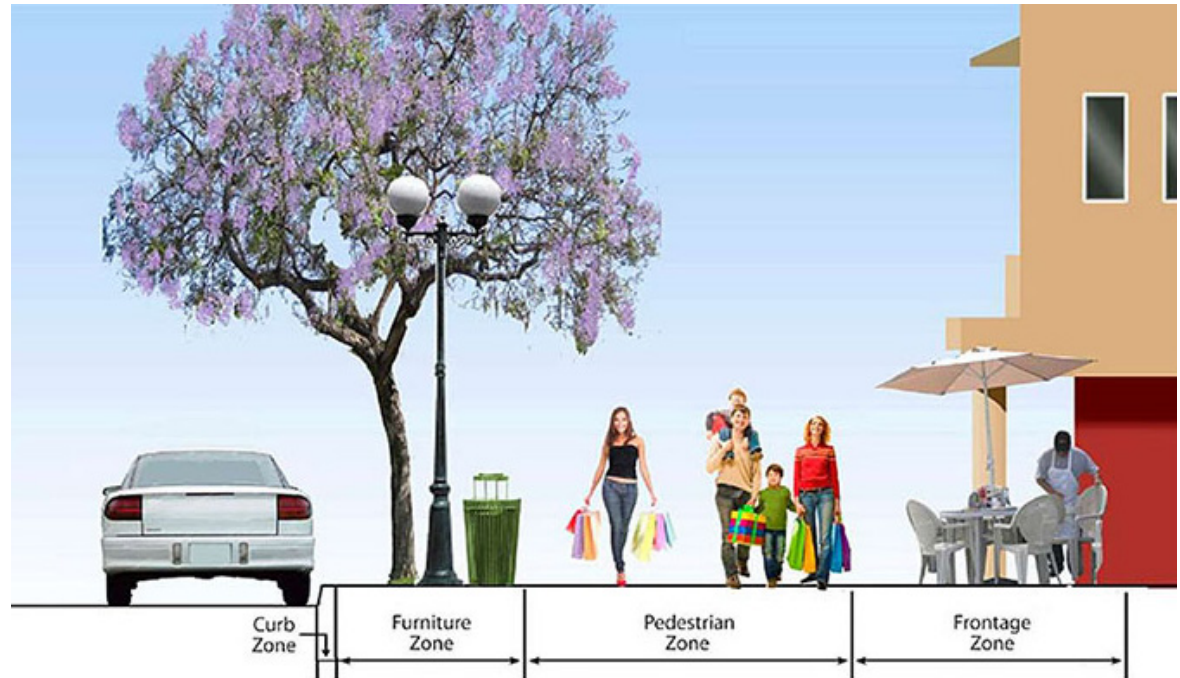




Sidewalk Enhancement Strategies

While sidewalks function as part of the transportation system, they also play a crucial role in urban design by enhancing the social and economic characteristics of a district while improving public health.

The Sidewalk Zone design includes four zones - Curb, Furniture, Pedestrian, and Frontage - which vary in width and character depending on adjacent land use, right-of-way, and intended function. The Pedestrian Zone system also provides an approach to support pedestrian activity and to balance the space needed for functions and objects while maintaining an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant pedestrian access route. The zone system should be applied to the sidewalk space and if adequate space is not available, careful consideration will need to be given to the design and programming of the space, with a priority on meeting accessibility and safety needs.



Curb Zone

This zone separates the pedestrian from the vehicular traffic. The buffer provides a physical barrier and also provides space for getting in and out of a parked car (where on-street parking exists).

Furniture Zone

This zone provides space for trees, benches, newspaper boxes, utility poles, hydrants, trash receptacles, signs, street lights, and snow storage.

Pedestrian Zone

This zone needs to be well defined and meet ADA standards, and maintained at all times. The recommended minimum width is 6 feet, but 5 feet can be acceptable.

Frontage Zone

This zone is at the edge of the walk zone adjacent to the property line to provide a safe and comfortable buffer from opening doors, walls, fences, and doorways.

Sidewalk Installation in Existing Areas

While the City of La Crosse has a policy requiring the installation of sidewalks when new development occurs, installing sidewalks in established neighborhoods can be a challenge due to funding constraints and concerns over maintenance responsibility by abutting property owners. In 2006, the La Crosse City Council passed a resolution that established priorities for sidewalk installation when a major street or development project is not occurring:

- 1** Install sidewalks on routes to schools and leading to city bus stops.
- 2** Install sidewalks adjacent to or along any worn path in grass or dirt on city property.
- 3** Install sidewalks on all arterial and collector streets.
- 4** Fill in sidewalks where blocks have partial sidewalks.
- 5** Install sidewalks on streets where no sidewalks exist on their side of the block only where more than fifty (50) percent of the owners request the sidewalk.

The 2012 La Crosse Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identified areas without sidewalks within the City, and ranked them as first, second, or third priority for sidewalk installation.

First Priority Locations

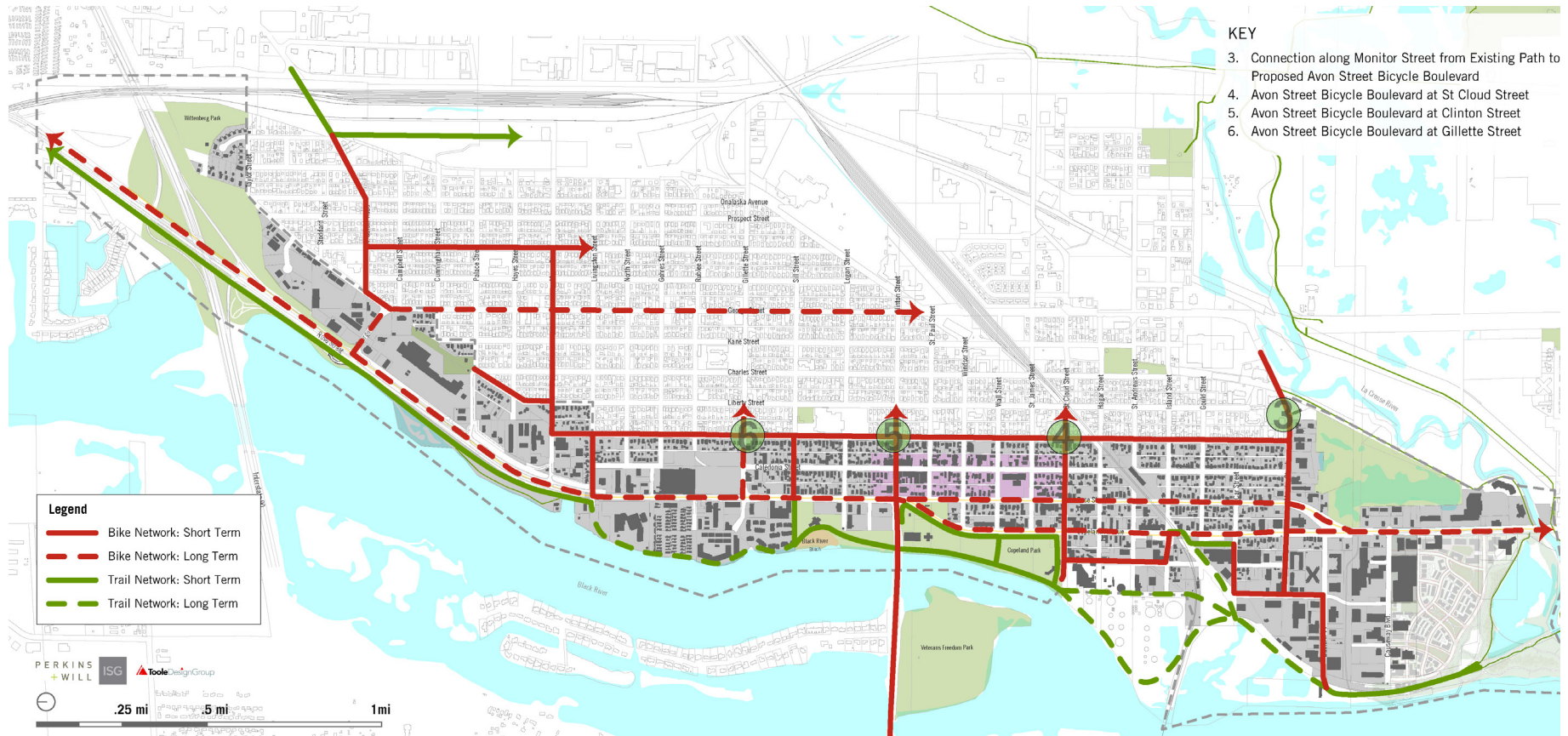
None within the study area

Second Priority Locations

West George Street
Ruble Street
Rose Street
Clinton Street
Sumner Street
Saint Cloud Street
Hagar Street

Third Priority Locations

Numerous locations throughout the study area



Bicyclist Experience Enhancement Strategies

- Eliminate barriers.
- Create frequent safe crossing opportunities.
- Encourage and facilitate classes to educate current and potential bicyclists and build confidence in the accessibility, reliability, and safety of the system.
- Work with community partners to encourage bicycling as a larger mode share by providing bicycling facilities in public and private locations and bicycling equipment to disenfranchised groups.
- Add public bike racks and other amenities near destinations such as schools, transit stops, employers, multifamily housing, shopping, and other biking locations.
- Continue comprehensive bicycle system planning.
- Install more bikeways to grow towards completing the network.

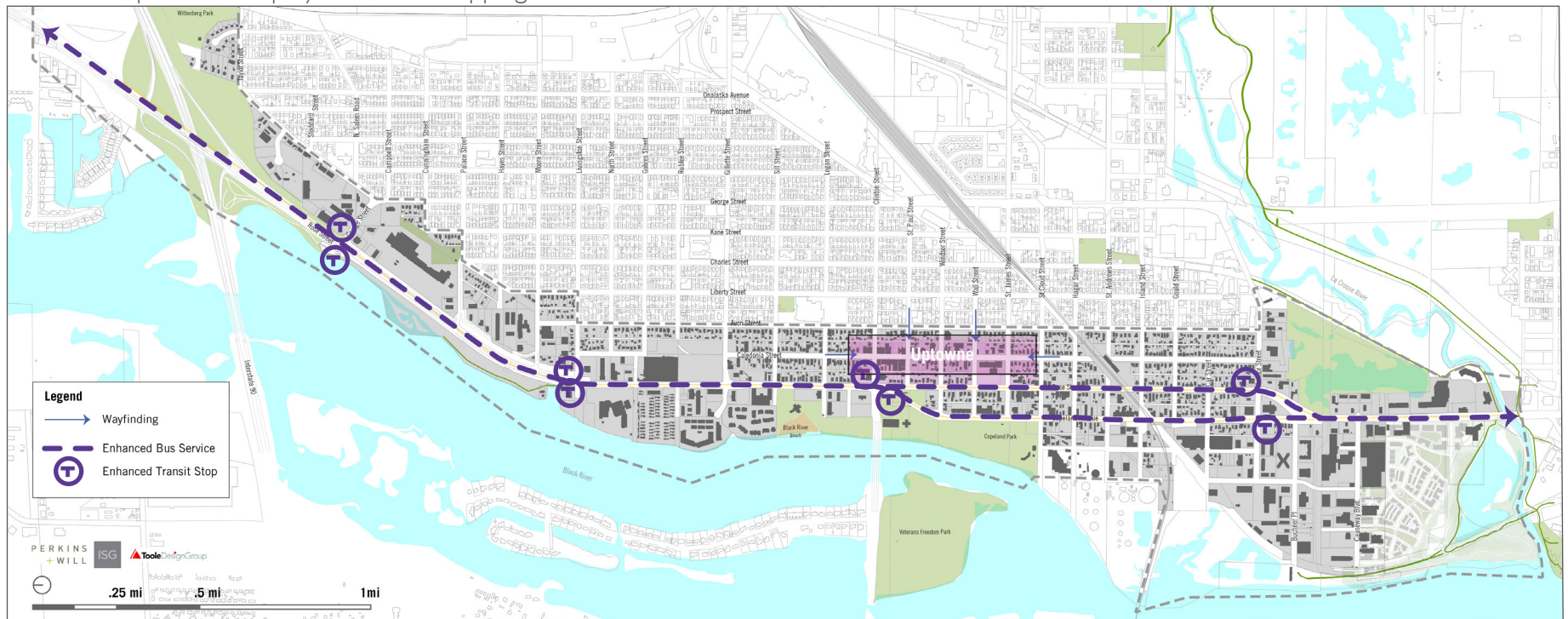
Encourage Private Bicycle Infrastructure

- Require functional bike racks, bike corrals, lockers, and/or indoor parking in new re-developments and assist existing private developments in obtaining them.
- Encourage employers to provide amenities such as employee showers and shared bicycle fleets.
- Expand the city's wayfinding system to Highway 53 and highlight access to the parallel and perpendicular bicycle routes.



Transit User Experience Enhancement Strategies

Transit stops are among the most active pedestrian gathering spaces and can provide identifying elements within the streetscape. Stops should be designed to be more comfortable and dignified to attract new users and better serve existing users. Bus stops along the Highway 53 Corridor should be well connected to the sidewalk network and bicycle facilities to allow convenient connections to neighborhoods, commercial nodes, the Black River, places of employment, and shopping centers.

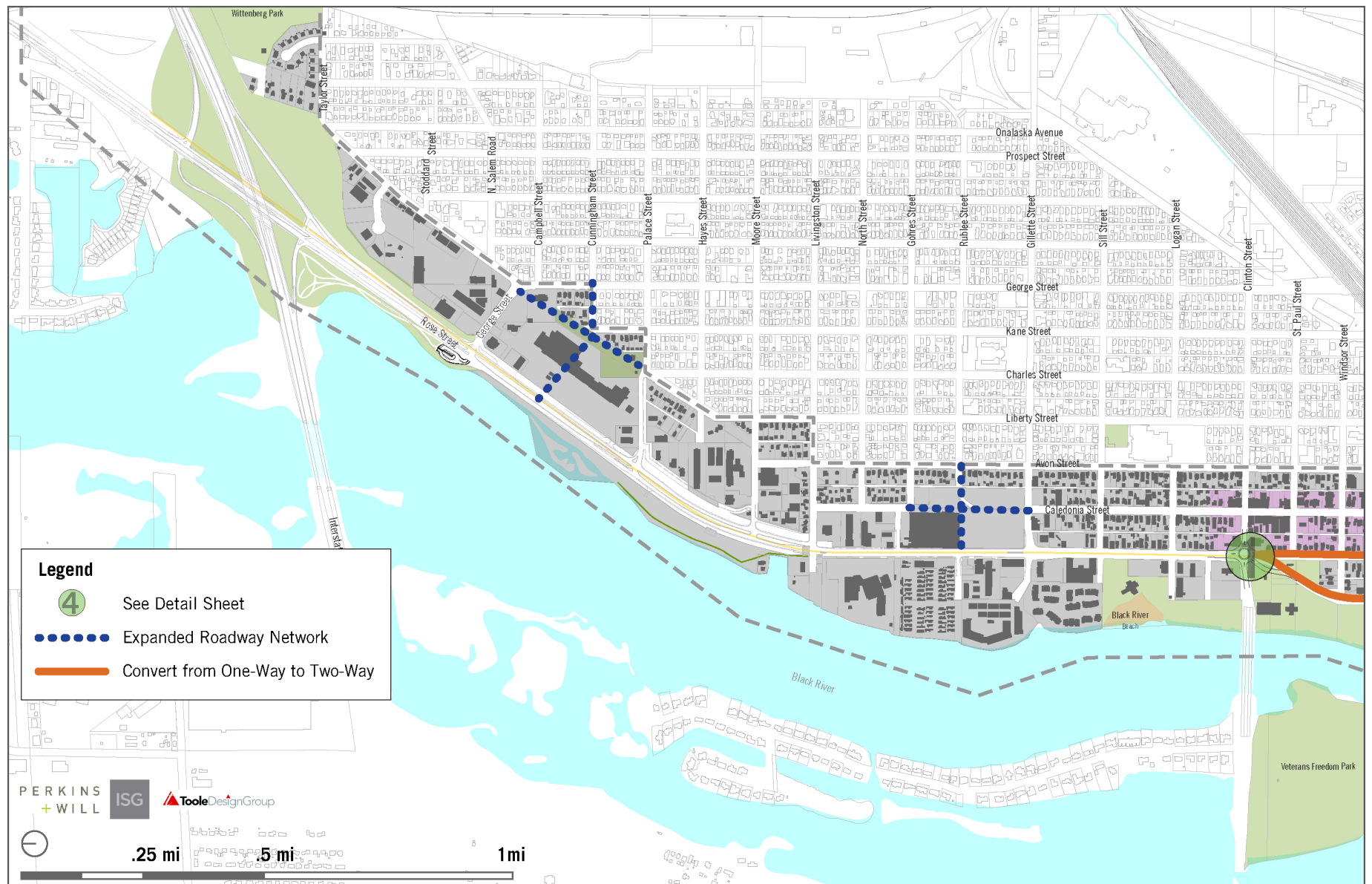


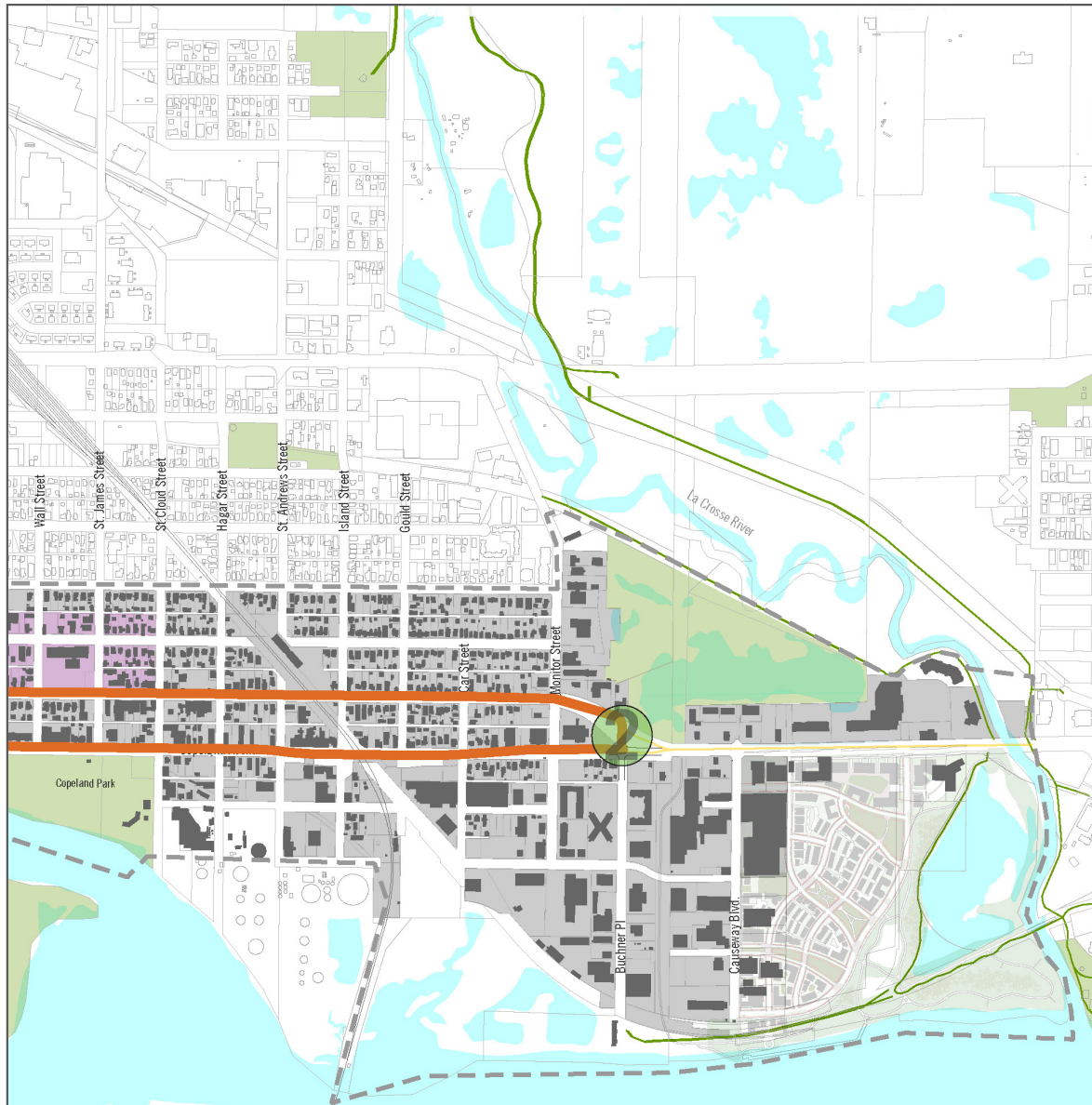
- Encourage/Facilitate Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
- Create a direct “express” route to shopping, Downtown, employment, and services to encourage transit oriented development along the route and make transit a more attractive option for users.
- Work with developers, employers, and institutions to increase the transit mode share.
- Evaluate neighborhood routes for improvement.
- Enhance the stops with the use of new shelters, kiosks, monument signs, decorative paving, newspaper corrals, and public art. New and relocated transit stops should be located in active and visible places to maximize personal security.
- Consider implantation of the Route 6 modifications from the LAPC Great River Transit Enhancement Plan 2015-2025.
- Bolster transit consumer densities on corridor for transit viability and sustainability.

Connectivity Enhancement Strategies

- Improve connectivity from adjacent neighborhoods to Copeland Park.
- Improve bike routes and trails connecting existing trails and bike lanes.
- Install Avon Street Bike Boulevard with Caledonia Street loop in the UPTOWNE area with minimal impact to businesses parking.
- Install additional Bike lanes (per bike plan and new recommendations).
- Define future traffic calming opportunities at intersections, cross streets, and parallel streets.
- Create detailed maps of safe routes to destinations for bicycling and pedestrians along the corridor.
- Create boulevards to serve as a buffer from traffic, planting spaces for trees, and space for snow removal.
- Improve intersections to provide safe and accessible areas for pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Improvements could include enhanced crosswalks, signalization, signage, and design techniques that encourage drivers to operate at an appropriate speed.
- Conduct a corridor wide traffic study along Highway 53 to address speeding, safety, and enhanced connectivity routes.
- Use signs/wayfinding strategies to direct multi-modal traffic between neighborhoods and the River and highlight access to the parallel and perpendicular bicycle routes.
- Create safe and visible connections between Highway 53 and alternative bicycle routes.
- Provide centralized, easy to access bicycle parking (such as on-street bicycle corrals) at convenient locations for bicyclists to park their bikes and walk to places along Highway 53 within designated pulse nodes.
- Improve transit stops and shelters locations along the Corridor.
- Include additional lighting and covered shelters at each transit location.
- In addition to the above strategies, consult the City approved National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) design guides when developing public and private transportation routes.

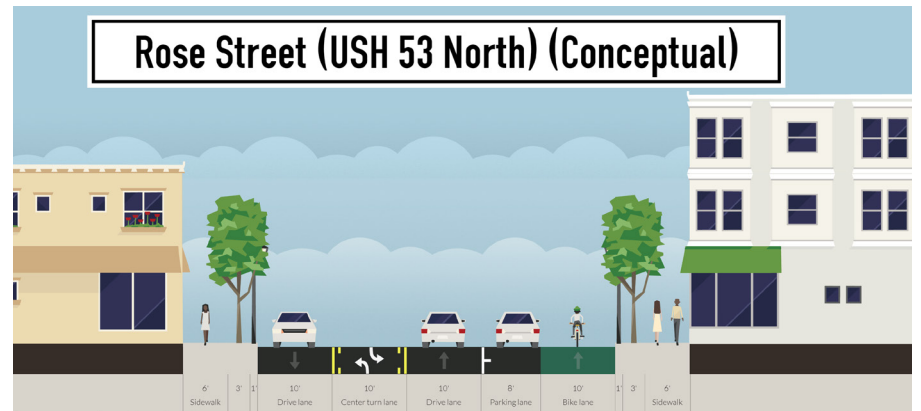
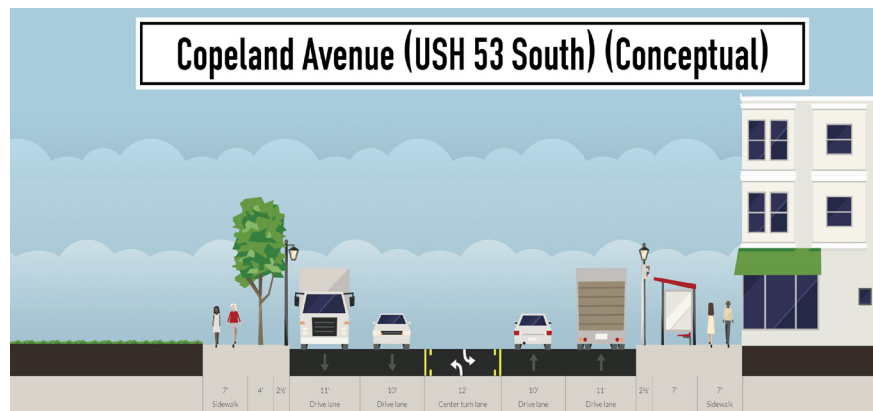
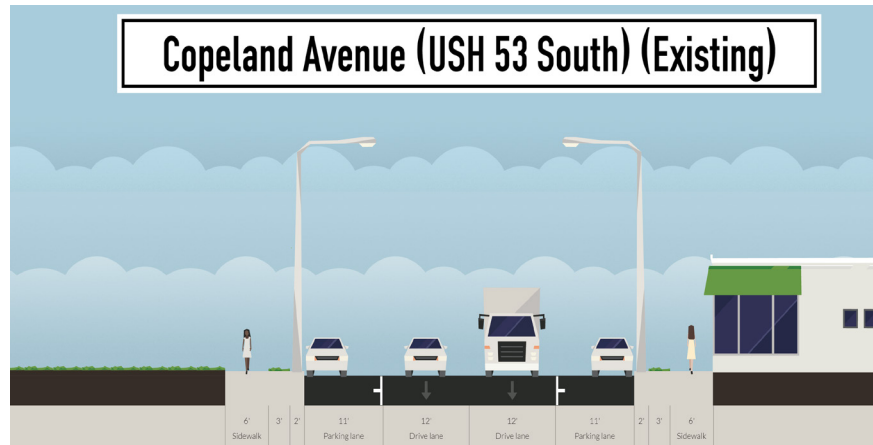






Roadway User Experience Enhancement Strategies

The following graphic illustrates short and long term options for reconfiguring the intersection of Rose and Clinton Streets, an option to reconfigure Rose Street at Buchner Place, and areas where the roadway network could be expanded to reestablish the grid system and allow for better circulation should redevelopment provide the opportunity. Redevelopment of the roadway system should be considered when redevelopment occurs and as bridges and roadways need to be replaced and/or updated. Rose and Clinton Streets should be redeveloped with the idea of shifting the majority of traffic to one of the streets vs. equally distributing the traffic as it is today. Shifting two-way traffic to one of the streets could allow for better neighborhood and commercial development along this section of the corridor, improved connection and relationship to the river and park system, promote multi-modal transportation, and increase pedestrian safety.



Vehicular Enhancement Strategies

- Reduce the reliance on single occupancy vehicles by focusing traffic demand management on the Highway 53 corridor.
- Maintain the efficient and cost-effective movement of freight along the corridor when making changes to accommodate other modes of transportation
- Focus roadway reconstruction on major intersections near developing pulse nodes to maximize the return on transportation investment dollars.
- Consider converting the one-way pair of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue in to two-way 3-lane and 5-lane streets respectively

Intersection Design Enhancement Strategies

The many intersections of Highway 53 Corridor have the opportunity to blend safety and aesthetics for its users and the environment. Following are recommendations for making these intersections more safe and easily accessible for those walking, biking, and driving.



Paving and Crossing Treatments

A hierarchy of crossing treatments should be applied to intersections based on the location and the volume of pedestrians and bicyclists. Special intersection paving treatments can break the visual uniformity of streets, highlight pedestrian and bicycle crossings as an extension of the public realm, and announce key locations. The hierarchy and appropriate locations include the following applications:

- Standard Markings — All crossings should be identified with parallel lines.
- Enhanced Markings — Ladder striping should be added for crossings of streets in the edge and edge zone.
- Special intersection paving treatments include integrated colors, textures, and scoring patterns. A red or dark gray or other appropriate color may be applied to the paving in crosswalks.

Advanced Stop Bar Markings

Stop bar markings extend across all approach lanes to indicate where vehicles must stop in compliance with a pedestrian crosswalk at an intersection. These markings reduce vehicle encroachment into the crosswalk and improve visibility of pedestrians.

- Advance stop bars should be considered at all primary signal-controlled intersections with marked crosswalks. The opportunity to locate the stop bars a maximum of 10 feet from the crosswalk locations should be considered at all primary signal-controlled intersections.



Curb Extensions/Bump-Outs

Curb extensions (also called bump-outs) should extend the sidewalk into the parking lane to narrow the roadway and provide additional pedestrian space at intersections along secondary cross-streets. Curb extensions can be used at both street corners and mid block. Curb extensions often are no larger than the crosswalk width, but can be widened to increase pedestrian visibility or to create public spaces, landscaped areas, or transit waiting areas. When on-street parking is provided, curb extensions should be provided at intersections where they do not interfere with bus pull-offs.



Accessible and Countdown Pedestrian Signals

Accessible pedestrian signals (APS) provide information in non-visual format (such as audible tones, verbal messages, and/or vibrating surfaces). Pedestrian countdown signals tell the time remaining to clear the crosswalk before the signal change.

Urban Design

A series of urban design principles and a design concept were defined early in the planning process to inform the development of designs and recommendations and to assist in the prioritization of potential implementation strategies and projects.



PRINCIPLE #1: Advance Livability

Design to heighten the human experience and emotional connection to the sense of place. Create enhanced multi-modal connections between neighborhoods, businesses, recreation, and natural surroundings.



PRINCIPLE #2: Strive for Diversity

Encourage diverse uses, buildings, and environments to promote inclusivity and access.



PRINCIPLE #3: Promote Neighborhoods

Enhance north side neighborhood character, access to the Black River, and create a memorable gateway to the City. Relate new developments to the physical scale and character of the neighborhoods. Create a corridor that residents and visitors can understand and easily navigate by creating memorable landmarks, destinations, aesthetics, and sense of place.



PRINCIPLE #4: Foster Sustainability + Resiliency

Create a social, economical, and environmentally sustainable corridor for the future to promote security and stability for the City.

Pulse Node Concept in Design

The pulse node concept serves as the underlying guideline of the redevelopment plan for the entire Highway 53 Corridor and can be envisioned as a string of high energy mixed-use and commercial areas that serve the neighborhoods and broader community. The streetscape and the physical thoroughfare itself serve to reinforce and support the connection between the pulse nodes. The pulse node concept seeks to replace the present fragmented commercial and residential frontage with a series of concentrated mixed-use and commercial activity nodes. These nodes will be linked by a continuous transportation corridor with improved streetscape and residential uses along it. The different levels of activity nodes will promote pedestrian activity and business vitality along the corridor. They will also create a rhythm of development along the corridor, which helps to segment the linear corridor into distinct areas that will now be inter-connected to create a greater sense of place. Pulse nodal development has the added benefit to traffic flows by guiding movement away from inefficient and underproductive strip commercial land use patterns, and improving local traffic flows through improved land use and redevelopment.



Landscaping + Streetscape Enhancement Strategies

- Improve riparian landscape edge along the Black River.
- Enhance landscape character throughout the corridor to reinforce as a gateway to the City.
- Plant additional trees along Highway 53 and adjacent streets to improve overall character.
- Screen existing and new at-grade parking lots with vegetation such as hedges and trees.
- Consider parking lot screens as potential zones for stormwater treatment and infiltration.
- Consider enhancing sidewalks and crossing treatments.
- Devote space to street furniture.
- Devote space to outdoor places such as cafes and small parks.
- Implement stormwater management best practices to improve stormwater, enhance aesthetics, and connect people to the urban ecosystem.
- Consider options for using landscaping to implement permanent and temporary traffic calming measures.
- Consider the addition of ornamental lighting, public art, kiosks, and visitors' guides and determine which community partners could take ownership.
- Develop a maintenance plan and sustainable funding source to maintain public landscaping and streetscape elements.



Stormwater BMP Enhancement Strategies

- Develop an area plan that promotes sustainability, resiliency, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of the current and future stormwater management systems.
- Focus BMPs towards street and land development design strategies that implement effective and easy to maintain systems that have minimal land area impacts and serve multiple purposes such as improving aesthetics and providing buffers for active transportation.
- Form partnerships with businesses, community organizations, large property owners, and environmental groups to operate, maintain, and promote healthy stormwater systems.
- Develop performance measures that show the value of investments and efforts that go beyond current requirements.
- Consider adoption of the Urban Street Stormwater Guide from the National Association of City Transportation Officials.



Wayfinding Enhancement Strategies

- Prepare a corridor wide wayfinding plan that is cohesive, unique to each context, multi-purpose, and contains several scales (cars, pedestrians, visitors).
- The designs of elements, directing people to key destinations and transit stops along the Highway 53 Corridor should be integrated into streetscape elements (e.g. light poles, transit shelters, monuments, signs) and reinforce a desired streetscape theme.
- Since there are no dedicated bike facilities recommended on Highway 53, wayfinding to alternate bikeways is particularly important.



Gateway Monument Enhancement Strategies

- Gateway monuments are typically larger structures that denote an entrance into a special area, neighborhood or district. These monuments should function as a major visual element that can be designed to reinforce a desired character or image of a district or neighborhood.
- Gateway monuments should be located within the amenity area of the public realm. The primary locations within the study area recommended for gateway monuments include:
 - Gateway Corridor area off of I-90.
 - Intersection of Clinton Street and Highway 53 at Copeland Park.
 - UPTOWNE (located at Clinton and Rose Street).
 - Split of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue near the intersection of Monitor Street.
 - Entrance to Downtown near the La Crosse River.



Utilities + Advertising Signs Enhancement Strategies

- To limit the number of utility poles that obstruct the pedestrian environment and to improve the aesthetics of the corridor, it is recommended that the overhead utilities be buried whenever possible.
- All signs shall meet the City's sign ordinance.
- Outdoor advertising signs shall be removed and eliminated as the opportunity exists to improve the aesthetics of the corridor.

Development Enhancement Strategies (commercial, residential, mixed use)

- Strengthen the Built Form (guidelines, facades, zoning ordinance).
- Create and adhere to City guidelines and standards for site design, building massing, façade treatments, building materials, signs, and sustainable design practices.
- Create mixed-use, multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street.
- Plan new construction in relation to the surrounding buildings using common elements from the façade and architecture of neighboring buildings (as appropriate). This will create a harmonious feel to the streetscape.
- Positively relate new construction to the street with building elements yet not infringe on the streetscape. Appropriate building setbacks will depend on building use.
- Design the first level (street level) to have a human scale with attention to items including the building entries, first floor storefronts, lighting, signage, and windows.
- Consider building setback from the sidewalk to provide a broader area for pedestrian activities. Where existing sidewalks are less than 10 feet wide, set buildings back a minimum of four feet (within the frontage zone) to create wider sidewalks for outdoor seating and streetscape elements.
- Encourage the reuse of positive contributing buildings where possible rather than new construction.
- Incorporate existing historical or character enhancing elements into redevelopment.
- Highlight major building entries.
- Create a sense of security by having building windows look onto the street.
- New developments should treat appropriate rainfall events on site by, for example, infiltrating rainwater in ponds, swales and rain gardens or storing it for reuse in cisterns.
- Use LED or other energy-efficient lighting for new development projects.
- Consider solar-powered LED lighting to light exterior spaces.
- Provide space for organic composting and residential uses on-site or nearby.
- Encourage constructing and renovating buildings to meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards of silver or better.

IMPLEMENTATION



Overview

Implementation of the Highway 53 Corridor Plan requires proactive leadership and collaboration of public agencies and stakeholders at multiple jurisdictional levels, including the City of La Crosse and the Northside Community.

Implementation of the plan is also dependent on the full support and participation of property owners, residents, businesses, and the development community. A concerted effort has been made throughout this plan to involve a broad cross-section of the community. Business owners, neighborhood residents, and community leaders have provided input and guidance. Even with a strong commitment, it will take several years before many of these recommendations take full shape. The magnitude of redevelopment may seem daunting, however change is constant and the vision for the Highway 53 Corridor will be the product of individual site redevelopments and street improvements. Every project is important and should help build toward the long-term vision.

The public improvements associated with the Highway 53 Corridor Plan will act as a catalyst for reinvestment and represent a positive step toward ensuring a vibrant long-term business climate and livability for the Highway 53 Corridor. The City has an important role to play in this process, but the success of this effort will not be possible without the full support and participation of landowners and the development community.

Your participation has improved the study and your continued participation and support will be critical in sustaining the community's vision for the Highway 53 Corridor over time. Please consider continuing to be a part of this process by contacting the City Planning Department, your Councilperson, or one of many community organizations.. This Corridor Plan is only a framework for the projects and plans that will successfully complete this vision .

This Implementation section includes actions that should be considered to integrate the improvements into an ongoing and community building strategy and to gain the most benefit from streetscape and other public improvements.

Redevelopment Approach

Key points listed below should be considered as the community begins the redevelopment process for the Highway 53 Corridor:

- **COMPREHENSIVE.** A single project cannot revitalize the corridor. Only an ongoing series of initiatives can build community support and create lasting progress.
- **INCREMENTAL.** Small projects make a big difference and they demonstrate that “things are happening.” Large projects can set the tone and establish precedence.
- **SELF- HELP.** Local leadership can breed long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- **PUBLIC+PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP.** The redevelopment program needs support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. For an effective partnership, each piece must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the other.
- **IDENTIFYING+CAPITALIZING EXISTING ASSETS.** One of the projects key objectives is to recognize and make the best use of the Corridor’s unique offerings. Local assets provide the solid foundation for a successful redevelopment initiative.
- **QUALITY.** From streetscape and storefront design to promotional campaigns and special events, quality must be the primary goal.
- **CHANGE.** Changing community attitudes and habits is essential to bring about a corridor renaissance. A carefully planned program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.
- **ACTION-ORIENTED.** Frequent, visible changes in the look and activities of the commercial district will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small but dramatic improvements accomplished early in the process will remind the community that the revitalization effort is underway.
- **INTERIM STRATEGIES.** Pilot-to-Permanent or Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper (LQC).

Determine which community partners could assist with programming, community events, and grass-roots improvements. Examples include, but are not limited to temporary wayfinding signs, parklets, moveable planters, additional/relocated pavement marking, and open street events.

Redevelopment Sites

At the four identified pulse nodes, this plan calls for reinvestment in Corridor-wide pedestrian improvements, alternate routing for people biking and walking, and improvements to critical crossings along Highway 53. The Steering Committee recommends beginning with a project that has the greatest potential for the convergence of investment in infrastructure and buildings, both public and private. Pulse Node A @ George Street intersection has the greatest potential for this convergence.

Pulse Node A @ George Street: Bridgeview Plaza Economic Analysis

The Bridgeview Plaza Property has been identified as a potential opportunity for redevelopment of types and scales that could impact market perceptions of North La Crosse and invite subsequent investment in the area. A high quality redevelopment concept has been developed and illustrated for the site, representing one plausible change scenario. Tangible Consulting Services have evaluated the redevelopment concept from a financial perspective and the findings are the subject of this memorandum.

The development concept represents an ambitious redevelopment of the property. It creates a storefront retail corridor of special character and it offers new public park/plaza spaces. The place-making characteristics of the project would result in maximizing the residential and commercial rents that could be achieved in this particular part of the City—with the caveat that development in this location is pioneering, and thus will not bring the level of returns that would be achieved in parts of the city that are already seen as highly desirable locations.

Findings

The analysis finds that the development concept is challenging but potentially achievable and requires significant public sector financial support. Utilizing a range of assumptions, our model estimated the total development cost to be around \$100 million, when all aspects of the project are accounted for. A developer, with typical financing, could support roughly 77% of these costs. This yields a financial gap of around 23% of project costs.

A good share of these costs could potentially be derived from capitalizing the future property taxes that the development would generate using a tax increment financing mechanism. Tax increment financing is an advantageous first choice for addressing a development financial gap such as this, since it doesn't add to the tax burden on La Crosse citizens or compete with the funding of other city needs. But the analysis suggests that tax increment financing will not be sufficient to meet the financial need. Additional public financial resources would need to be identified and employed to advance the project.

Project performance is highly sensitive to the rents that can be achieved by the development. Those rents can't be projected with a high degree of accuracy, because the prospective project is quite unique in its location, and in the context that would be built around it. There are no other developments in the City of La Crosse that are close comparisons. If future rental costs for the apartment component of the project turns out to be \$1.65 per square foot instead of \$1.75, the public contribution to the project would increase to 26% of project costs. By the same token, if future rents are \$1.85 per square foot, the public financial support that would be 20% of project costs.

Analysis

This analysis evaluated:

- The cost of the project
- The return of the project (in the form of the operating income that would be generated), and
- The amount of development costs that would be supported by a lender and the developer
- The projected rents that the project generates, after deducting operating costs, were used to estimate both the lender contribution and the developer contribution to the project. The estimated financial gap is simply the part of the total estimated project cost that exceeds the lender and developer contributions.

In reality, a project like this proceeds in multiple phases. To make it manageable, this analysis considered the development as a whole, so that total costs were incurred at a single point in time, and rents from all seven buildings were available after the project was completed.

Assumptions

The findings of this analysis are dependent on the accuracy of a wide range of assumptions, which are detailed in the last page. There will be errors in the assumptions, since a) the time available to gather information on each variable was not unlimited, and b) it is impossible to make perfect assumptions about costs, market conditions, developer or lender behavior, or what the future will hold. This analysis worked to avoid a pattern of errors, which would have the effect of producing an overly optimistic or pessimistic assessment of the financial viability of the development concept.

Development Costs:

Acquisition and Site Preparation	\$5,400,000
Development Cost—Streets and Parks	\$1,800,000
Development Cost—Seven Buildings	\$93,400,000
Total Development Cost	\$100,600,000

For the buildings, cost estimates were derived for construction (hard) costs, soft costs, and developer fees of each component (retail, office, or residential) of each of the seven proposed buildings.

Operating Income:

Residential Gross Rent	\$7,140,000
Retail Gross Rent	\$660,000
Office Gross Rent	\$1,450,000
Total Annual Gross Rent	\$9,300,000

Rental income was also estimated for each component of each of the seven buildings, based on the estimated rent per square foot for residential, office and retail areas in the buildings. The seven buildings combined were estimated to produce around \$9.3 million per year in rents, given typical vacancy rates.

Net Operating Income:

Residential Net Operating Income	\$4,020,000
Retail Net Operating Income	\$650,000
Office Net Operating Income	\$990,000
Total Net Operating Income	\$5,700,000

The net operating income was derived by estimating operating expenses for each of the three development types. After deducting for operating expenses, the annual net operating income (NOI) for all seven buildings is estimated to be around \$5.7 million.

Project Finance:

NOI	\$5,700,000
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	÷ 1.25
Debt Service	\$4,530,000
Development Loan	\$69,600,000

The net operating income provides a basis for estimating the size of a loan that project would receive from a lender. This analysis used assumptions for the lender's debt service coverage ratio and loan terms that are somewhat conservative, based on current lending norms. But in the timeframe of this project they could still prove to be overly optimistic, which would result in a greater financial gap.

The equity that a developer would bring to the project is based on a wide range of considerations, including financial return. A developer has choices about where to invest his or her resources and a financial cushion will be built into the project because new development is inherently risky. A key financial metric for developers is the projected cash flow of the development after the debt service has been paid (cash flow after financing). The developer's investment in a project (equity) will be partly based on the project's projected cash flow after financing.

NOI	\$5,700,000
Debt Service	-\$4,530,000
Cash Flow after Financing	\$1,130,000

Given an estimated 15% ratio between developer equity and its annual return, as measured by its cash flow after financing:

Developer Equity	\$7,550,000
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The estimated financial gap that the development faces is simply the remaining project cost, after the development equity and loan amount are accounted for. The financial gap represents around 23% of total project costs.

Total Development Cost	\$100,600,000
Developer Equity	- \$7,550,000
Loan Amount	- \$69,600,000
Financial Gap	\$23,400,000

Short Term Recommendations

It is important to establish short-term design steps for organizational and planning tools to implement the redevelopment recommendations, which include the following:

Build Design Standards into the Zoning Ordinance

Build design standards into the zoning ordinance for the most effective and legally sound strategy. If design objectives can be visualized and defined in quantifiable terms, they can be expressed in form-based codes that can be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. Definitive standards developed in response to reasonable goals and objectives are better for developers, less likely to be legally challenged, and more defensible in the event of legal challenges. This approach would be easiest to administer by the planning staff in the long term. However, in the short term, the formation and authorization of a separate design review committee will work with City Staff to review redevelopment proposals.

There are limitations to the results that can be achieved through zoning. Design standards help achieve a degree of continuity through an area and certainly prevent development that is truly incongruous and incompatible. However, it is also true that good taste cannot be legislated. Although zoning can help a community establish a level of quality and prevent discordant development, it cannot guarantee that development will be aesthetically pleasing.

Site Plan Review

In order for the City to effectively implement the design guidelines recommended by the Task Force and consultants, the City should empower itself to guide development by bolstering the newly adopted Site Plan Permit process for all development along the Highway 53 Corridor. The SPR “ensures developments conform to City goals, plans and regulations; preserves and enhances the natural environment; protects existing uses; enhances the economic, residential and institutional communities; grows the City tax base and beautifies the city.” Some of the factors considered in the SPR process are: consistency with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines adopted by the City, building setback and build-to requirements, consistent facades, minimum glass requirements, sign controls, minimized curb cuts, parking lot location and buffering, landscape and lighting plans, stormwater management plans, parking requirements and drive-throughs.

Develop a Corridor Wayfinding Plan

Wayfinding signs should be installed throughout the Corridor for those driving, walking, and bicycling to assist with finding destinations. Wayfinding should focus on two specific areas: highlighting destinations off of Highway 53 (for example, the UPTOWNE/Old Towne North business district), and highlighting destinations on Highway 53 for people who are walking or bicycling on a parallel neighborhood street. A wayfinding plan could focus specifically on this Corridor or could address the wayfinding more broadly of North of La Crosse.

Organization and Promotion

Currently, no civic organization and/or public bodies are involved in the management, promotion, and/or development of the Highway 53 Corridor. Organizing a diverse group of people to achieve the work tasks, build public/private partnerships, foster ongoing leadership, and provide a unified voice for the area will be the key to whether this plan succeeds or fails.

This section outlines a strategy for organizing interested residents and business owners into an effective advisory group whose mission is to see that redevelopment is implemented according to the goals and objectives of the plan, to act as an advocacy group for the corridor, and to coordinate promotional campaigns and small projects.

Corridor - Wide Ongoing Activities

Simultaneously with the phases identified above, the Project Team will undertake the following ongoing activities.

Coordinate Objectives with City Departments

The planning and engineering departments from both the County and City should refer to this document when considering development proposals along the Highway 53 Corridor. Developers should work with City and County Staff and refer to the plan when generating design concepts to better understand how their property fits into the Corridor Plan and expectations for public/private facilities. Proposed developments should follow the design recommendations in this Plan.

Develop a Financial Plan

The harsh reality of this Plan is that without viable financing, many of the recommendations will not be implemented. Therefore, it is imperative that the City of La Crosse and La Crosse County, along with the local business community, research and develop practical financing options to facilitate real change. Financing projects can be done by qualifying for grant money, borrowing, or bonding. The City and County should create a master schedule outlining when grant cycles start and are awarded and their relationship to agency capital budget cycles. The funding strategy should be flexible to take advantage of any unexpected opportunities.

Assemble Land

Pursue the acquisition of tax forfeit, foreclosed, or for sale properties identified as necessary to pursue the redevelopment vision created in this plan for the Highway 53 pulse nodes and could be acquired by the City of La Crosse or La Crosse County. Either entity will be cognizant of the Corridor Plan and the additional right-of-way needs at these intersections.

Help People Bike to the Highway 53 Corridor

Demand for bicycling is expected to increase along and adjacent to the Corridor, especially as redevelopment occurs. While dedicated bikeways are not recommended on Highway 53 as they are on parallel off-streets, additional destinations and anticipated increase in bicycling will generate demand to and along the Highway 53 corridor. Several steps can help people bike through and to the corridor.

- Create a wayfinding system for directing bicycle traffic to the defined pulse nodes along Highway 53. While the wayfinding should direct people to nearby destinations, it should also direct people from the alternative routes to destinations on Highway 53.
- Identify treatments connecting the alternative routes to Highway 53, especially at the four pulse nodes studied in this plan. Many of the people who bike on Highway 53 are trying to reach destinations on Highway 53. Creating safe connections to the corridor will mitigate the additional time, inconvenience, and decreased safety of directing people off Highway 53.
- Ensure that as the Corridor is improved adequate secure bicycle parking is provided at visible, safe and convenient locations.

Develop a Private Investment Incentive Fund

Create an incentive program that recognizes businesses making voluntary aesthetic improvements. Supplements such as painting and landscaping can visually enhance the appeal of an area and are encouraged.

Redevelopment Tools and Resources

Public Capital Improvement Programs

- Architectural and Engineering Analysis (A&E) Program
- Redevelopment Authority
- Sale of City owned properties
- City of La Crosse CIP
- Intergovernmental Revenue Sharing
- Lease revenues from City owned properties
- WisDOT Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)
- La Crosse Area Development Corporation (LADCO)
- La Crosse Industrial Park Corporation (LIPCO)
- La Crosse County Economic Development Fund (LCEDF)
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)
- Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

Public + Private Partnership Programs

- La Crosse Promise
- Challenge grants
- City Special Service Districts
- Community benefit agreements
- Parking Benefit District
- La Crosse Neighborhood Development Corporation (LNDC)
- Land Trusts
- Business Improvement Districts
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Business lending or micro-lending
- Crowd Sourced Development Equity
- Corporate sponsorship
- Philanthropic endowment
- Pre-disaster relief
- Brownfield Grants (WDNR)
- Floodplain Relief Program

Community Foundations

- La Crosse Community Foundation
- Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation

Federal Programs

- FEMA Pilot Projects
- EPA assessment and clean-up grants
- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Congressional Line Item Budget

Federal Transit Program

- Urbanized Area Formula grants
- Capital investment grants & loans
- Transit Enhancement Activity program

Property Tax Programs

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts
- Tax abatement
- Special assessments
- State and Federal Historic Tax credits
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) – probably available through WHEDA)
- Community Development Financial Institutions Fund - New Markets Tax Credit Program

Housing Programs

- Employer assisted Housing
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit
- Housing Improvement District
- Ownership Workforce Housing Fund
- Rental Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Grant Programs

- Floodplain Grant Program
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- DOT/HUD Partnership for Sustainable Communities, Community Challenge Planning Grant

Loan Programs

- Upper Floor Renovation Loan program
- Small Business Development Loan (SBDL)
- La Crosse County Micro Lending Fund

Non-Funding Tools

- Zoning change
- Form based code
- Strategic placement of new infrastructure
- Code enforcement
- Design guidelines
- Land assembly
- Site preparation such as demolition, grading, platting, rezoning
- Land write-down





A

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
1	Create internal “ring road” by extending Salem Road from the neighborhood through redevelopment area to Taylor Street.	High	Medium	Medium	Developer/City
2	Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City
3	Create new mixed-use development area.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
4	Provide mixed residential (affordable, market rate and assisted senior living) multi-story buildings.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
5	Provide open spaces to the public, connected to residential developments.	High	Low	Long	Developer/City
6	Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
7	Extend Cunningham Street from the neighborhood out to Highway 53.	High	Medium	Medium	City
8	Create new mixed-use development area on the Bridgeview Plaza site.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
9	Provide mixed-use and multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
10	Create new mixed-use developments to enhance the street network and expanded Hickey Park.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
11	Extend Hickey Park thru mixed-use development site and connect to Highway 53.	High	Medium	Long	Developer/City
12	Provide expanded neighborhood recreation amenities and programming.	High	Medium	Medium	City
13	Provide flexible space to host a variety of recreational and community festivals.	High	Medium	Medium	Developer/City
14	Provide local street network (with on-street parking) around Hickey Park.	High	Medium	Medium	Developer/City
15	Remove the southern portion of Bridgeview Plaza building and re-purpose northern portion for commercial uses.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
16	Define new north to south commercial street by connecting George and Palace street to allow for enhanced connectivity within the mixed-use development area.	High	Medium	Medium	Developer/City

Pulse-Node

Note: Cost (2018) | \$0 - \$100,000 = Low; \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 = Medium; >\$1,000,000 = High
Time | 1 Day - 1 Year = Short; 1 Year - 3 Years = Medium; >3 Years = Long

B

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
17	Create new mixed-use development areas within the pulse node.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
18	Provide mixed-use and multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street on the east side of Highway 53.	Low	High	Long	Developer/City
19	Provide transitional residential densities along Caledonia Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.	Medium	Medium	Long	Developer/City
20	Provide mixed residential housing along Black River.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
21	Provide commercial uses fronting Highway 53 with shared parking opportunities.	Medium	Medium	Long	Developer/City
22	Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the Livingston Intersection.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
23	Extend Rublee Street from the neighborhood out to Highway 53.	Low	Medium	Medium	City
24	Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City
25	Provide "green" links from Highway 53 to the River along Livingston Street, Gohres Street, and Rublee Street.	High	Medium	Medium	City
26	Create boardwalk from Livingston Street to Black River Beach House.	Medium	High	Long	City

Pulse-Node

C

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
27	Incorporate recommendations from UPTOWNE Summit report.	High	Medium	Short	City/North La Crosse Business Association/Neighborhood Associations/UPTOWNE Collective
28	Create new redevelopment opportunities at the Clinton Street intersection.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
29	Provide a residential multi-story building in the triangle parcel fronting Windsor Street.	High	Medium	Long	Developer/City
30	Provide underground parking and enhanced pedestrian facilities along Windsor Street.	Low	High	Long	Developer

C

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
31	Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the Windsor Street intersection.	Low	High	Long	Developer/City
32	Improve connection from Copeland Park to public boat landing and Black River Beach House.	High	Medium	Medium	City
33	Improve overall connectivity from adjacent neighborhoods to Copeland Park.	High	Medium	Medium	City
34	Improve pedestrian crossings of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.	High	Medium	Short	City
35	Improve Copeland Park.	High	High	Medium	City
36	Provide enhanced river connectivity from the park.	High	Medium	Short	City
37	Upgrade park recreational amenities and provide more flexible recreational/program space.	High	Medium	Medium	City
38	Improve pedestrian circulation and access adjacent to public boat landing located on North Clinton Street.	High	Low	Short	City
39	Expand Black River Beach House to include a Senior Center.	High	Medium	Medium	City
40	Improve landscaping and connectivity to beach area.	Medium	Low	Short	City
41	Provide mid-block curb extensions and crosswalk in 1200 block of Caledonia Street.	Low	Low	Short	City
42	Require removal of 4 parking spaces allowing for the addition of bike parking on both sides of street.	Low	Low	Short	City
43	Install sidewalk curb extensions: corner of Caledonia @ Clinton, corner of Caledonia @ St. Paul, and corner of Caledonia @ Windsor.	Medium	Low	Short	City

D

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
44	Create new mixed-use development areas.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
45	Provide multi-story mixed-residential and commercial buildings on Monitor Street, east of Rose Street.	Low	High	Long	Developer/City
46	Provide transitional residential densities along Monitor Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.	Low	Medium	Long	Developer/City
47	Provide green space linking development opportunity sites with access to wetland boardwalk trails.	Medium	Low	Medium	Developer/City
48	Provide multi-story mixed-residential buildings on Monitor Street between Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.	Low	Medium	Long	Developer/City
49	Provide transitional residential densities along Rose Street adjacent to existing single-family housing.	Medium	Medium	Long	Developer/City
50	Provide mixed commercial buildings with shared parking opportunities at the intersection of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue.	Medium	Medium	Long	Developer/City
51	Provide multi-story mixed-residential on Monitor Street, west of Copeland Avenue.	Low	High	Long	Developer/City
52	Provide multi-story mixed-residential and commercial buildings on the east side of Copeland, across from Causeway Boulevard.	Medium	High	Long	Developer/City
53	Extend Sumner Street from Monitor Street to Buchner Place.	Low	Medium	Medium	City
54	Provide enhanced streetscape and public realm amenities.	High	Medium	Medium	City
55	Improve streetscape and public realm amenities along Buchner Place.	High	Medium	Medium	City
56	Provide new boardwalk system in wetland area east of Highway 53.	Medium	Medium	Long	City
57	Improve greenspace connection south of Buchner Place to link trails and Highway 53.	Medium	Low	Medium	City

Multi-Modal

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Time | 1 Day - 1 Year = Short; 1 Year - 3 Years = Medium; >3 Years = Long

Pedestrian

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
58	Provide a minimum of 6-foot wide sidewalks (8 feet is preferred) throughout the Corridor where feasible.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City
59	Eliminate sidewalk obstructions and gaps.	High	Medium	Medium	City
60	Replace failed sidewalk and trail pavements.	High	Medium	Short	City
61	Improve snow removal expectations and enforcement.	Medium	Low	Short	Property Owners/City
62	Add mid-block pedestrian crosswalks to enhance safety at high volume locations.	Medium	Low	Short	City
63	Install sidewalk curb extensions on adjacent side streets to decrease crosswalk distances, moderate vehicular speeds, provide increased sidewalk space, and define on-street parking bays.	Medium	Low	Short	City
64	Extend pedestrian scale lighting along the Highway 53 corridor.	High	Medium	Medium	City
65	Provide pedestrian scale wayfinding and signage.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
66	Consider times and locations to program "open streets".	Medium	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
67	Provide improved visual and physical connection to the Black River.	High	Low	Medium	City
68	Use guidance on Page 83 of the Master Plan to develop sidewalk installation priorities.	Medium	Low	Medium	City

Multi-Modal

Bicycle

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
69	Create frequent safe crossing opportunities.	High	Medium	Medium	City
70	Encourage and facilitate classes to educate current and potential bicyclists and build confidence in the accessibility, reliability, and safety of the system.	Low	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
71	Work with community partners to encourage bicycling as a larger mode share by providing bicycling facilities in public and private locations and bicycling equipment to disenfranchised groups.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Multi-Modal

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Bicycle

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
72	Add public bike racks and other amenities near destinations such as schools, transit stops, employers, multifamily housing, shopping, and other biking locations.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
73	Continue comprehensive bicycle system planning.	High	Low	Medium	City
74	Install more bikeways to grow towards completing the network.	High	Medium	Medium	City
75	Require functional bike racks, bike corrals, lockers, and/or indoor parking in new re-developments and assist existing private developments in obtaining them.	High	Low	Short	City
76	Encourage employers to provide amenities such as employee showers and shared bicycle fleets.	Medium	Medium	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
77	Expand the city's wayfinding system to Highway 53 and highlight access to the parallel and perpendicular bicycle routes.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Multi-Modal

Transit

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
78	Encourage/Facilitate Transit Oriented Development (TOD)	High	Low	Long	City
79	Create a direct "express" route to shopping, Downtown, employment, and services to encourage transit-oriented development along the route and make transit a more attractive option for users.	High	Medium	Medium	City
80	Work with developers, employers, and institutions to increase the transit mode share.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
81	Enhance the stops with the use of new shelters, lighting, kiosks, monument signs, decorative paving, newspaper corrals, and public art.	High	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
82	Locate new and relocated transit stops in active and visible places to maximize personal security.	High	Medium	Medium	City
83	Evaluate neighborhood routes for improvement.	High	Low	Short	City
84	Consider implantation of the Route 6 modifications from the LAPC Great River Transit Enhancement Plan 2015-2025.	High	Low	Short	City

Network Connectivity

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
85	Improve connectivity from adjacent neighborhoods to Copeland Park.	High	Medium	Medium	City
86	Improve bike routes and trails connecting existing trails and bike lanes.	High	Medium	Medium	City
87	Install Avon Street Bike Boulevard with Caledonia Street loop from Wall Street to Logan Street with minimal impact to business parking.	High	Medium	Medium	City
88	Install additional Bike lanes (per bike plan and new recommendations).	High	Medium	Medium	City
89	Define future traffic calming opportunities.	High	Low	Short	City
90	Create detailed maps of safe routes to destinations for bicycling and pedestrians along the corridor.	Medium	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
91	Create boulevards to serve as a buffer from traffic, planting spaces for trees, and space for snow removal.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City
92	Improve intersections to provide safe and accessible areas for pedestrian and bicycle crossings, including enhanced crosswalks, signalization, signage, and design techniques that encourage drivers to operate at an appropriate speed.	High	Medium	Medium	City
93	Conduct a corridor wide traffic study along Highway 53 to address speeding, safety, and enhanced connectivity routes after completion of the Exit 3 reconstruction and any major redevelopments.	Medium	Low	Short	City
94	Use signs/wayfinding strategies to direct multi-modal traffic between neighborhoods and the River and highlight access to the parallel and perpendicular bicycle routes.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
95	Create safe and visible connections between Highway 53 and alternative bicycle routes.	High	Low	Short	City
96	Provide centralized, easy to access bicycle parking (such as on-street bicycle corrals) at convenient locations for bicyclists to park their bikes and walk to places along Highway 53 within designated pulse nodes.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Multi-Modal

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Vehicular

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
97	Reduce the reliance on single occupancy vehicles by focusing traffic demand management on the Highway 53 corridor.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
98	Maintain the efficient and cost-effective movement of freight along the corridor when making changes to accommodate other modes of transportation	High	Low	Short	WisDOT/City
99	Focus roadway reconstruction on major intersections near developing pulse nodes to maximize the return on transportation investment dollars.	High	Medium	Long	WisDOT/City
100	Consider converting the one-way pair of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue in to two-way 3-lane and 5-lane streets respectively	Low	Medium	Long	WisDOT/City

Multi-Modal

Intersections

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
101	All crosswalks should be identified with standard markings, enhanced markings, and/or special paving treatments.	High	Low	Short	City
102	Advance stop bars should be considered at all primary signal-controlled intersections with marked crosswalks.	Medium	Low	Short	City

Urban Design

Landscaping + Streetscape

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
103	Improve riparian landscape edge along the Black River.	Medium	Low	Medium	City
104	Enhance landscape character throughout the corridor to reinforce as a gateway to the City.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
105	Plant additional trees along Highway 53 and adjacent streets to improve overall character.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Urban Design

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Time | 1 Day - 1 Year = Short; 1 Year - 3 Years = Medium; >3 Years = Long

Landscaping + Streetscape

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
I06	Screen existing and new at-grade parking lots with vegetation such as hedges and trees.	Medium	Low	Medium	Developer/City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I07	Consider parking lot screens as potential zones for stormwater treatment and infiltration.	Medium	Low	Medium	Developer/City
I08	Devote space to street furniture.	Low	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I09	Devote space to outdoor places such as cafes and small parks.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I10	Consider options for using landscaping to implement permanent and temporary traffic calming measures.	High	Low	Short	Developer/City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I11	Consider the addition of ornamental lighting, public art, kiosks, and visitors' guides and determine which community partners could take ownership.	High	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I12	Develop a maintenance plan and sustainable funding source to maintain public landscaping and streetscape elements.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Urban Design

Stormwater BMPs

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
I13	Develop an area plan that promotes sustainability, resiliency, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of the current and future stormwater management systems.	Medium	Low	Short	City
I14	Focus BMPs towards street and land development design strategies that implement effective and easy to maintain systems that have minimal land area impacts and serve multiple purposes such as improving aesthetics and providing buffers for active transportation.	High	Low	Short	Developer/City
I15	Form partnerships with businesses, community organizations, large property owners, and environmental groups to operate, maintain, and promote healthy stormwater systems.	Medium	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Urban Design

Note: Cost (2018) | \$0 - \$100,000 = Low; \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 = Medium; >\$1,000,000 = High
Time | 1 Day - 1 Year = Short; 1 Year - 3 Years = Medium; >3 Years = Long

Stormwater BMPs

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
116	Develop performance measures that show the value of investments and efforts that go beyond current requirements.	Medium	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
117	Consider adoption of the Urban Street Stormwater Guide from the National Association of City Transportation Officials.	Medium	Low	Short	City

Urban Design

Wayfinding

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
118	Prepare a corridor wide wayfinding plan that is cohesive, unique to each context, multi-purpose, and contains several scales (cars, pedestrians, visitors).	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
119	Integrate wayfinding elements, directing people to key destinations and transit stops along the Highway 53 Corridor into streetscape elements (e.g. light poles, transit shelters, monuments, signs) and reinforce a desired streetscape theme.	High	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
120	Since there are no dedicated bike facilities recommended on Highway 53, wayfinding to alternate bikeways is particularly important.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Urban Design

Gateway Monuments

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
121	Locate gateway monuments within the amenity area of the public realm. The primary locations within the study area recommended for gateway monuments include: Gateway Corridor area off of I-90, intersection of Clinton Street and Highway 53 at Copeland Park, UPTOWNE (located at Clinton and Rose Street), split of Rose Street and Copeland Avenue near the intersection of Monitor Street, entrance to Downtown near the La Crosse River.	High	Medium	Medium	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective

Urban Design

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Utilities + Advertising

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
122	To limit the number of utility poles that obstruct the pedestrian environment and to improve the aesthetics of the corridor, it is recommended that the overhead utilities be buried whenever possible.	Medium	Medium	Medium	City/Private Utilities
123	All signs shall meet the City's sign ordinance.	Medium	Low	Short	Property Owners/City
124	Outdoor advertising signs shall be removed and eliminated as the opportunity exists to improve the aesthetics of the corridor.	Medium	Low	Long	Property Owners/City

Urban Design

Developments

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
125	Create and adhere to City guidelines and standards for site design, building massing, façade treatments, building materials, signs, and sustainable design practices.	High	Low	Short	City
126	Create mixed-use, multi-story buildings with first floor uses that activate the street.	High	High	Long	Developer/City
127	Plan new construction in relation to the surrounding buildings using common elements from the façade and architecture of neighboring buildings (as appropriate).	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
128	Positively relate new construction to the street with building elements yet not infringe on the streetscape.	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
129	Design the first level (street level) to have a human scale with attention to items including the building entries, first floor storefronts, lighting, signage, and windows.	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
130	Consider building setback from the sidewalk to provide a broader area for pedestrian activities.	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
131	Encourage the reuse of positive contributing buildings where possible rather than new construction.	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
132	Incorporate existing historical or character enhancing elements into redevelopment.	High	Low	Medium	Developer/City
133	Highlight major building entries.	Medium	Low	Medium	Developer/City
134	Create a sense of security by having building windows look onto the street.	Medium	Low	Medium	Developer/City

Urban Design

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Developments

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
135	Use LED or other energy-efficient lighting for new development projects.	High	Low	Short	Developer/City
136	Consider solar-powered LED lighting to light exterior spaces.	Medium	Low	Short	Developer/City
137	Provide space for organic composting for residential uses on-site or nearby.	Medium	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
138	Encourage constructing and renovating buildings to meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards of silver or better.	Medium	Medium	Short	Developer/City

Corridor-Wide

Zoning/Land-Use

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
139	Strengthen the built Form through updates to the zoning code.	High	Medium	Short	City
140	Combine the efforts of current and future floodplain programs to create a win-win for the corridor and the neighborhood and industrial floodplain areas.	High	Medium	Short	City
141	Consider elements to the zoning code that allow for positive externalities such as density bonuses and transfers of development rights.	High	Low	Short	City

Corridor-Wide

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Funding

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
I42	Develop public funds to incentivize private investment in existing properties, such as façade and business growth grants.	High	Medium	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I43	Create TIF districts as a tool for implementing public private partnerships - consider one in the Exit 3 area to Pulse Node B and one in the industrial areas between Riverside North and Copeland Park.	High	Low	Short	City
I44	Continue to monitor grants and other funding to improve public facilities and services such as parks and transit.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I45	Explore methods for the Redevelopment Authority to use and leverage funds for redevelopment projects along the corridor.	High	Low	Short	City/Redevelopment Authority

Corridor-Wide

Organization + Promotion

	Recommendation	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsible Party/Partners
I46	Create a body to provide corridor-wide organization and promotion and facilitate the implementation of this plan.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective
I47	Create a body to act as an ad-hoc City committee to provide suggestions to City Council and staff.	High	Low	Short	City/NLBA/NAs/UPTOWNE Collective



US HIGHWAY 53 CORRIDOR STUDY

CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN