2 Land Use Character and Community Growth

This overview of existing physical characteristics provides insight into the community's urban form, current uses of land, and supporting infrastructure and public facilities. This chapter and Chapter 3, Community Mobility, illustrate current and future land use patterns and identify issues for analysis. Planning for future land use and community character will depend, in part, on how Carbondale has grown and evolved in the past and where it stands today as a small city that still retains an historic and academic flavor. It will be important for community leaders and residents to appreciate how the physical development pattern of Carbondale is moving away from—or building upon and reinforcing—traditional practices and amenities. This may be accomplished through a series of recommended programs, ordinances, and capital projects, as well as through implementation of the Future Land Use Plan. In short, this chapter provides the missing link between ideals and action so that the vision of land use expressed by residents can become a reality.

2.1 Introduction

In many ways, residents seek to retain the small city atmosphere that has characterized Carbondale throughout its history. There has always been a sense of "place" associated with Carbondale as a city and a regional center in Southern Illinois. Carbondale residents identify with the City's historic Downtown and its different neighborhoods. There are many urban design and land use elements that combine to create this perception of Carbondale. Streets with extensive tree cover and local parks help to complete the picture. Likewise, Memorial Hospital and SIU assist with "place-making" by creating destinations that draw residents and visitors alike. Lastly, the large businesses that employ local residents are also landmarks and contribute to the overall impression of the City. The issues that relate to land use, development and redevelopment, community design and appearance, Downtown, and historic preservation are addressed in this chapter.

Most of the land within the corporate limits of Carbondale is developed, so the protection of existing neighborhoods is a critical issue for residents. This is such a critical issue that it occupied a majority of time for voicing resident opinions at the Community Symposium. Many of the housing and neighborhood issues fall into this category of addressing the already built-out areas of the city. A second major opportunity is addressing new development, the so-called "greenfield" development on the City's edges (and just outside its edges). Zoning for new development needs to encourage quality new development and protect neighbors from incompatible land uses. Lastly, redevelopment in the Downtown area that focuses on urban form and walkable spaces is an issue. The opportunity for Downtown redevelopment will be ripe once the proper financial and zoning incentives are in place. This is not

to say that the current districts and standards are wholly inadequate, but that this planning process must keep an eye to the eventual implementation mechanism. In short, the Comprehensive Plan is only as effective as it can be translated into project actions and established regulations.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the necessary guidance to enable the City to plan effectively for its future growth and redevelopment, while being mindful of existing land uses. Sound planning is essential to ensure the community is prepared to meet its future infrastructure needs, but also to establish and enhance its character. **(See Insert One: Goals)**

Land use and its context with the natural environment are integral components of this Comprehensive Plan. They are also important and influenced by the other elements of community growth, mobility, neighborhood preservation and integrity, utility infrastructure, and economic development. For instance, the transportation network provides access to land, which influences the type and density of development. The availability or lack of utilities may determine the amount, location, and timing of development. Design and development character impact community aesthetics and the perceptions held by residents and those considering economic investment in the community. Proximity to public facilities can impact health and safety and, as a result, impact the development potential of an area.

Given the above community desires and important planning considerations, this chapter is divided into three sections, as follows:

- Analysis of existing conditions related to the natural environment, existing land use, and utility infrastructure.
- Statements of land use, character, and community growth together with their implementation strategies and advisable actions and initiatives; and
- The plan for future growth and development including the land use designations and their relationship to the existing and proposed zoning districts.

A summary of the key focus areas and strategies is as follows:

Focus Area 2.1: Managing Future Growth

- **Strategy 1:** Provide additional attention and resources to promote infill development and redevelopment and to invest in the established neighborhoods.
- **Strategy 2:** Accommodation of Development and Redevelopment

INSERT ONE: GOALS

The intent of this chapter is to provide recommendations that will guide the City as it strives to:

- Effectively manage future growth to achieve a compact and fiscally responsible pattern of development.
- Preserve the community's rich and valued open spaces and environmental resources while forging more sustainable development practices.
- Strengthen the integrity and livability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate infill development and reinvestment.
- Develop and redevelop Downtown to become a local and regional destination of culture, entertainment, and community gathering.
- Preserve community heritage through historic restoration and neighborhood integrity improvements.
- Enhance the character and aesthetic attractiveness of the community and its neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.

- **Strategy 3:** Direct Future growth to occur in areas that are most suitable for development.
- **Strategy 4:** Continue to renovate and replace aging infrastructure components.
- **Strategy 5:** Upgrade service levels in areas currently served by rural water supply districts.
- **Strategy 6:** Water Supply Protection
- **Strategy 7:** Preserve the rural character of the City's periphery.

Focus Area 2.2: Quality, Sustainable Development

- **Strategy 1:** Continue to work with the Carbondale Park District and Green Earth on quality improvements to existing parks and expansion of the park system and natural areas through cooperative land acquisition agreements.
- **Strategy 2:** Protect and preserve environmental resources.
- **Strategy 3:** Adopt a community agenda for energy conservation.
- **Strategy 4:** Pursue more sustainable development outcomes through bonuses and incentives.

Focus Area 2.3: Downtown Renaissance

- **Strategy 1:** Strengthen Downtown as a viable place to conduct business.
- **Strategy 2:** Position Downtown as a unique local and regional destination.
- **Strategy 3:** Re-establish the traditional urban character of Downtown.
- **Strategy 4:** Improve connections to, through, and within Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Focus Area 2.4: Preserve Community Heritage

- **Strategy 1:** Preserve the historic character and integrity of the community.
- **Strategy 2:** Redevelop Town Square

Focus Area 2.5: Enhanced Community Character

- **Strategy 1:** Refocus the zoning ordinance to emphasize the character and form of development in applicable zoning districts.
- **Strategy 2:** Enhance the appearance of development and the compatibility between districts.

2.3 Existing Conditions

The Natural Environment

This Plan puts forward a vision related to overall livability and a high quality of life. Other elements of this Plan address future policy recommendations of continued economic growth or creating additional housing options. Carbondale has flourished for many years in large part due to its rich and plentiful environmental resources. The spirit of sustainability intends to preserve or improve these environmental resources for future generations. Decisive action at this time fulfills the shared responsibility of all residents allowing future generations the ability to enjoy continued environmental opportunities.

Sensitive areas, stream corridors, and forest cover remain core issues, but this summary also introduces contemporary concepts such as energy conservation,

Figure 2.1 | **NATURAL SETTING**

Carbondale residents enjoy the city life that is situated in a forested setting. Minutes from hunting and fishing as well as Downtown and University amenities. The Comprehensive Plan should protect those resources that contribute to this sense of a "city in the country."

building design, and alternative transportation recommendations. A sustainable city requires that each of these issues receives attention, but more importantly, that these recommendations lead to action. In the context of a unique community like Carbondale, this Plan must focus on topics such as jobs, housing, streets, education, municipal finances, and culture. At the same time that growth and impacts occur in these areas, an effort must be made to limit the negative environmental effects. This is not to say that other Plan elements are inherently incompatible with the environment, but, rather, that there is a need to understand the human impacts associated with these activities. These impacts are part of everyday life as Carbondale residents build homes, design neighborhoods, and commute to jobs.

Summary of existing natural environment conditions:

- In January 2007, the Mayor of Carbondale joined other mayors in signing the historic U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. This landmark document pledges to inventory climate-changing emissions, adopt strategies for reductions, and educate the public about the situation. Development/redevelopment activities, transportation decisions, purchasing patterns, and other behaviors directly contribute to the community's "carbon footprint." Climate change is a threat to the quality of life in Carbondale as increasingly volatile weather patterns will have an impact on the community.
- Carbondale enjoys a gentle topography that adds to its environmental character without the constraints of steep slopes to pose development problems or severe land erosion. As depicted in **Figure 2.1, Natural Setting**, the overall topography influences how residents perceive the city's character.
- The natural amenities offered by the gently rolling terrain, mature forests, and nearby water resources are highly desirable as a living environment. There is an attraction to this open, rural landscape, which without careful planning may be eroded by scattered development patterns and limits land use controls.
- As a riparian community with many stream corridors, Carbondale can be particularly susceptible to soil erosion and flooding. The City has taken steps through development standards and permitting procedures that are aimed at prevention and mitigation.
- The City has established stream buffers to protect water bodies and wetlands from damaging pollutants. A 50-foot riparian buffer along the edges of water bodies or wetlands helps maintain natural vegetation and serves to filter erosion and harmful contaminants.
- There are no endangered species within the City's planning area that warrant preservation of habitats. However, there are many opportunities to establish or enhance wildlife corridors, open spaces, and riparian corridors as native habitats.
- The City enjoys a substantial tree canopy, which significantly contributes to its

community character as typified in **Figure 2.2, Neighborhood Tree Canopy**. Many of the streets are tree-lined with stands of native vegetation within the City and throughout the planning area.

- The intensively developed commercial areas are largely impervious and, therefore, warrant improvements to avoid flooding and further damage to local waterways. The City should seek ways to incorporate sustainable practices into all new development projects.
- The City established the Sustainability Commission and an Energy Efficiency Task Force has already begun to implement changes including rehabilitation of the Eurma Hayes Center, efficiency improvements to the Civic Center, and a shift to LED lighting for traffic signals.
- The combination of increased runoff, reduced recharge, and increased water usage had created a condition of "water mining" in the aquifer resulting in the gradual lowering of the water table near Crab Orchard. In response, the City diversified its water sources so that it no longer contributes to this problem. The Cedar Creek watershed now provides most of the water supply for the City. Protection measures for the watershed are due to the City's ownership of much of the reservoir's shoreline, which could be expanded through subdivision authority.

Figure 2.2 | **NEIGHBORHOOD TREE CANOPY**

Many of the neighborhoods retain a perception of open space through the presence of trees. Tree canopy is an important community character factor as well as an environmental asset.

- Residents take an active role in environmental protection and management, including participation in events and programs ranging from removal of invasive plant species to participation in land conservancies, such as Green Earth, Inc., a local not-for-profit organization.
- The City's policy for utility extensions requires that development be annexed into the City in order to connect to sewer and water. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan identified defined growth areas but, there have not been any evaluation standards to determine the costs/benefits of proposed developments. Utility connections have been on a case-by-case basis so there has not been a mechanism to coordinate the pattern and timing of development or ensure cost efficiency of providing adequate public facilities and services.

Land Use and Community Character

The term "land use" literally relates to the use of land. However, the design of individual uses, districts, and neighborhoods influence the "look and feel" of development. Therefore, the character of an area is more distinctly defined by the intensity of development, the arrangement of buildings and parking areas, the preservation and use of open space, and other design features. For instance, Downtown has a grid street pattern, buildings mostly brought to the street, and sidewalks and street furniture, which differentiates it from the more auto-oriented nature of the University Mall. The mall is largely characterized by large setbacks and expansive parking areas, large-scale buildings and out-parcels, and signage. While also commercial in use, the mall produces a much different character of development than Downtown or other commercial strip centers.

It is this combination of land use and design that determine the compatibility and quality of development. Aesthetic enhancements, such as the design of buildings, landscaping and screening, sign control, and site amenities, also contribute to the appeal of Carbondale. It is each of the above considerations that collectively are responsible for the community's character and appearance and the impressions left on visitors and passers-by.

Examples of how design influences character within different land use types include:

- a single-family home situated on a large lot with mature trees and separated from neighboring homes versus a detached single-family home on a small lot with rear-alley access and minimal yard space and vegetation;
- a master-planned business park in a campus-like setting versus an office building on an individual site surrounded by a parking lot;
- storefront shops and small cafes in a walkable, neighborhood setting versus "big box" stores and pad-site restaurants and retailers in a large-scale shopping center with expansive surface parking and minimal landscaping; and
- a manufacturing facility that is nestled on a large site and among broad open space and mature trees and landscaping versus a more intensive industrial operation with outdoor activity and unscreened equipment storage.

Above are examples of the same use types that may assume different characters depending on their layout, design, and environmental context.

Figure 2.3 | **ZONING ORDINANCE STANDARDS**

The recent destruction of a local business required that it be reconstructed according to the new Downtown zoning regulations. Improvements in the zoning standards lead to changes on the ground that can be visible to residents.

The zoning ordinance plays a significant role in establishing the physical character of the community. After all, this ordinance determines the types of use and delineation of districts, together with the height and area requirements and standards for landscaping, open space, and signage. As a result, the zoning ordinance largely directs the development outcomes as highlighted in **Figure 2.3, Zoning Ordinance Standards**. This is important since it provides a regulatory context in which local land use decisions may be made to foster a sustainable environment, a prosperous economy, and a high quality of life. The City's development ordinances (zoning, subdivision, sign, landscaping, and building codes) represent the primary tools for implementing the recommendations in this document.

Examined in this chapter is the basic use of land, together with the standards and elements of design that lead to the appearance of neighborhoods, commercial areas, and corridors, and the compatibility among and between them. This includes such factors as density, intensity, building setbacks, height and lot coverage, amount of open space, and vegetation. Since the zoning and subdivision regulations direct the design of individual sites, they warrant special attention. However, there are many other "levers" that can be utilized to create appropriate development and encourage attractive redevelopment of existing sites. These tools must be fully utilized so that future development reflects the aspirations of Carbondale residents.

Table 2.1
Existing Use and Character Acreages and Proportions

Designation	City (ac)	% of Total	ETJ (ac)	% of Total	Total (ac)	% of Total
Vacant	416.4	4.2%	130.4	0.6%	546.8	1.7%
Natural	914.9	9.1%	5,402.2	24.6%	6,317.0	19.7%
Agriculture	731.9	7.3%	10,712.1	48.7%	11,444.0	35.8%
Estate Residential	0.0	0.0%	1,815.8	8.3%	1,815.8	5.7%
Suburban Residential	982.3	9.8%	2,263.2	10.3%	3,245.5	10.1%
Auto-Urban Single-Family Residential	746.5	7.5%	47.8	0.2%	794.3	2.5%
Auto-Urban Multi-Family Residential	406.8	4.1%	23.6	0.1%	430.5	1.3%
Auto-Urban Manufactured Homes	248.7	2.5%	254.6	1.2%	503.3	1.6%
Auto-Urban Commercial	866.4	8.7%	173.5	0.8%	1,040.0	3.3%
Urban Commercial	135.2	1.3%	0.0	0.0%	135.2	0.4%
Industrial	401.3	4.0%	231.7	1.1%	633.1	2.0%
Institutional	3,661.4	36.6%	685.1	3.1%	4,346.5	13.6%
Parks	502.5	5.0%	243.9	1.1%	746.4	2.3%
TOTAL	10,014.4	100%	21,984.0	100%	31,998.4	100%

SOURCE: KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE (MAY 2009)

Existing Land Use Inventory

Reflected in **Map 2.1, Existing Land Use Character**, is the current use of land in Carbondale and its one and one-half mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The inventory reflects both the use of land (delineated as vacant, natural, agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and parks), as well as its character. Carbondale can be divided generally into four character types as follows:

- **Urban** is unique to Downtown by reason of the intensity and form of development;
- **Auto-Urban** reflects the more densely developed single- and multiple-family neighborhoods, as well as the commercial use along each of the main corridors;
- **Suburban** includes the larger lot neighborhoods primarily on the fringes and outside the City; and
- **Rural** makes up the natural and agricultural areas around the periphery of the City.

Currently, U.S. 51 and IL 13 make up the two major thoroughfares that run through the city, attracting a large majority of "Auto-Urban Commercial" to the east and west sides of Downtown along the Highway 13 corridor. On the north side of the city, a substantial portion of Carbondale's "Industrial" land use is located along U.S. 51, while the Southern Illinois University campus is situated opposite, just south

of Downtown. Surrounding Downtown is a variety of higher-density residential uses, including largely "Auto-Urban Single-Family," with some "Auto-Urban Multi-Family," "Auto-Urban Manufactured Homes," and "Suburban Residential." The area surrounding the City limits is largely comprised of "Agriculture" and "Natural" land uses, with scattered lower-density residential development dispersed throughout. The quantities of the individual land use designations are exhibited in **Table 2.1, Existing Use and Character Acreages and Proportions**.

Findings

- Land use within the City totals approximately 10,014 acres (15.6 square miles), as shown in *Map 2.1, Existing Land Use Character*. This acreage excludes water bodies and rights-of-way.
- The area outside of the City limits is predominantly comprised of "Natural" (5,402 acres) and "Agriculture" (10,712 acres) land uses with pockets of Estate (1,816 acres) and Suburban Residential (2,263 acres). According to *Table 2.1, Existing Use and Character Acreages and Proportions*, approximately 55 percent of the land within the City and ETJ is "Natural" (19.7%) or "Agriculture" (35.8%).
- With Southern Illinois University being within the City limits, "Institutional" contributes a little over one-third of the City land area.
- "Suburban Residential," "Natural," and "Auto-Urban Commercial" comprise the next three largest categories, altogether totaling nearly 30 percent of the calculated land area within the City. "Vacant" (416.4 acres) and "Parks" (502.5 acres) together, account for roughly nine percent of the total acreage within the City limits.
- Commercial categories contribute to the local Carbondale character, but have vastly different acreages. "Auto-Urban Commercial" contributes approximately nine percent of the City's land use, with most of this development centered on IL 13. "Urban Commercial" in the Downtown area adds only about one percent.
- "Auto-Urban Single-Family Residential," "Auto-Urban Multi-Family Residential," and "Auto-Urban Manufactured Homes" make up the more densely developed residential uses and occupy nearly 15 percent of the City's land area.

Water and Wastewater Utilities

Water supply and distribution, along with wastewater collection and treatment, are essential services that will enable Carbondale to grow and develop over time. Along with the physical components of these utility systems, the City must also attend to the public policy arguments for fiscal responsibility in extending water and wastewater connections. In both respects, Carbondale is pursuing positive end goals: Investing in system maintenance and improvements while adhering to a policy of expansion only through annexation.

All areas within the City are provided water by either the City or a rural water supply district. Most areas within the City are served by the City's wastewater collection utilities. The surrounding areas, which are less intensively developed, are served by rural water supply districts and private on-site septic systems. With a few exceptions, primarily in the area formerly served by the Crab Orchard Water District, the City's systems can accommodate the current and anticipated service requirements. Additional detail on the current status of Carbondale's water and wastewater systems are described on the next page:

Summary of existing conditions:

- Cedar Lake was constructed by the City of Carbondale in 1974 as its main, long-term water supply. As an overall source of water, Cedar Lake provides 100 percent of the City's annual water supply, while the Carbondale Reservoir serves as an emergency backup if needed. Furthermore, Cedar Lake is reliable as a permanent water source during periods of drought as it is fed by springs, in addition to seasonal rainfall. A significant portion of the 1,750-acre spring-fed reservoir is located in the Shawnee National Forest, thereby affording protection to much of the shoreline and many of the lake's tributaries.
- The City serves as a wholesale supplier through contracts with rural water district providers (such as Lakeside, Buncombe, and South Highway) and to the SIU campus distribution system. Some of the areas served by the rural water systems are within the Carbondale municipal limits, and there are instances where the City water service areas appear to commingle and even overlap. It should be noted that the existing long-term water supply contracts govern issues related to rates and service areas covered by the rural water districts. Opportunities for implementing growth management policies through rural water providers would arise during the renegotiation period of a contract. At that point, pricing and service area coverage issues can be structured to benefit those residents living within the city limits.
- Water infrastructure has adequate capacity for the existing demands and service areas. At present, the water treatment plant pictured in **Figure 2.4, Water Treatment Facility**, is under capacity and could accommodate increased future demands.
- One short-term infrastructure improvement, a new three-million gallon water tower, is planned to address existing water distribution issues in the southeast quadrant. This improvement will alleviate low water pressure conditions that are currently being experienced.
- Carbondale has assumed responsibility for operating the Crab Orchard Rural Water District in order for this provider to continue meeting Illinois EPA standards. The City has formulated a nine-year improvements program to repair the system and bring it into conformity with EPA standards, enhance service to customers, and improve reliability by providing additional interconnections with the City water system.
- Wastewater is treated by two separate treatment plants, a newer facility in the southeast and an older facility in the northwest. The City updated the southeast wastewater treatment plant in 2006, and it is currently operating at an average 3 MGD. This daily flow leaves a significant surplus capacity for the future since the overall treatment capability of the plant approaches 6 MGD. Likewise, the northwest wastewater treatment plant averages about 2.6 MGD and has a peak capacity of 6.6 MGD.
- Due to Carbondale's location in four principal drainage basins, the City's wastewater collection system requires the use of 17 lift stations to convey sewage to the two wastewater treatment plants. While these pump stations are appropriately sized, the City's

Figure 2.4 | **WATER TREATMENT FACILITY**

Adequate long-term water resources and distribution is a critical planning issue. Current water supply and plant capacity is adequate to accommodate future growth.

Public Works Department could enhance the efficiency of operations through improved telemetry and control systems.

- As in every wastewater collection system with significant portions that were installed decades ago, flows within the piping system are increased by the infiltration of water through manhole covers, broken pipes, and faulty pipe joints (particularly at house connections), and especially during wet weather conditions. The phenomenon magnifies the flows entering treatment facilities and can lead to overflows at lift stations, among other system impacts. Carbondale is not immune to these inflow and infiltration (I & I) issues, but much work has been done to combat the effects. Future efforts are now being directed to reduce I & I issues at the remaining critical areas including the University's system.

Figure 2.5 | **DOUG LEE PARK (SUPERBLOCK)**

In general, the City's sewer and water infrastructure is well positioned to meet the City's long-term requirements and accommodate any anticipated growth. Because overall service areas are not expected to expand significantly, major investments should continue to be directed toward enhanced maintenance, upgrading of service levels, and improved efficiency:

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation facilities are an essential part of a healthy, quality, and vibrant community environment. They provide the necessary components for events outside of the home and after work and after school activities. Whether for passive or active use, parks and recreation facilities are an important part of everyday, active living — serving health benefits for children and seniors alike. The park system enhances the community's "quality of life" factor, boosting economic development efforts to recruit and retain a skilled workforce; build a strong tax base to finance system expansion, facility enhancements, and maintenance; and attract retirees.

The Carbondale Park District, which is a seperate governmental agency, is responsible for the operation of all parks and recreational facilities. The mission of the Carbondale Park District is to enhance the quality of life in the City of Carbondale by providing quality parks, facilities, programs, and services in the area. The Carbondale Park District is responsible for addressing the availability, quality, type, size, and location of recreation opportunities to meet the needs of Carbondale's residents and visitors to the community. Over the last three decades, the Park District has grown to about 500 acres of parkland, both developed and undeveloped, in 13 locations throughout the community. These parks are supplemented by the institutional resources of Southern Illinois University, and the nature preserves maintained by Green Earth, Inc. (see **Map 2.2, Park Service Areas**)

Neighborhood and Community Parks

The Carbondale Park District's function has to be able to respond to new and emerging community desires. While the identification of park projects, sites, and priorities are under the guidance of the Park District, there are opportunities for the City to remain engaged. For example, residents identified a new aquatic center as

a priority (along with many other park improvements). This facility might be sited at the Superblock site, **Figure 2.5, Doug Lee Park (Superblock)**, and will require some level of City support. Any City support, though undetermined as of yet, will need to come in many forms, possibly including a financial agreement to address construction costs.

Another example of a park improvement that might involve the City, would be the addition of a park in the Downtown area. While this park may only involve City planning and guidance, it will still need to be a group effort from start to finish. While it was noted that the City has established a number of Plazas in the Downtown, it is lacking a traditional park for young families to gather and socialize. While the Town Square Pavilion serves as a focal point for the community and provides a venue for public events, a Downtown park could provide a greater variety of options. In addition, a skateboard park could provide another gathering spot for local youth, though a location Downtown may not be the best option. There has also been public support for a dog park in Carbondale. While many residents are able to utilize the existing parks for dog walking purposes, they do not have a dedicated dog area. A dog park should be considered in any future park improvement plans.

Figure 2.6 | **TRAIL CONNECTIONS**

The Piles Fork Creek Trail currently provides a north-south connection between Grand Avenue and Walnut Street. Connections should be made that can continue the trail in both directions. Also, east-west connections along Grand Avenue are necessary to link the trail to nearby uses as well as the University campus.

Linear Parks

A system of parks and recreation areas is not complete without linear linkages between park facilities, neighborhoods, schools, and other public use facilities. Such linkages may boost accessibility to parks and other public spaces, thereby expanding the effective service area coverage of these existing parks. This then reduces the amount of public investment necessary to locate and construct parks throughout the community. In this planning process, residents expressed a desire for parks and other amenities to be within walking distance of home. In existing neighborhoods, it may be difficult to introduce parks to the built environment. However, linear parks or trails can allow those residents better access to existing parks. While trails enhance the entire system by connecting neighborhood parks and greenways to community parks, they also fill in the "gaps" on a micro level, connecting individual homes to neighborhood parks.

The fact that cities develop in an incremental fashion adds to the complexity of achieving a continuous system of linkages. This appears to be the historical and ongoing scenario for Carbondale, especially as it extends the Piles Fork Creek Trail as illustrated in **Figure 2.6, Trail Connections**. Without advance planning, these linkages will not happen naturally. To realize a comprehensive trail network over time, there must be a connectivity review at the stage of subdivision development, backed by the necessary requirements and standards for road continuity, sidewalks and trails within rights-of-way and easements, and other essential planning and design considerations, including safe intersection crossings, curb cuts, signage, and various other factors.

Carbondale Park District

The goal of the Carbondale Park District is to enrich the quality of community life through the diversity of healthy leisure pursuits and to heighten the appreciation of our natural world.

Facility Matrix

		Acreage	BBQ Grills	Basketball Courts	Child Care	Drinking Fountain	Fishing	Flower Bed	Game Tables	Garden Plots	Hiking/Walking	Multi-Use Fields	Natural Areas	Parking	Picnicking	Playground	Practice Green	Practice Range	Vending (Coke)	Concessions	Bar & Grill	Shelters	Ball Fields	Indoor Pool	Exercise Track	Soccer Fields	Restrooms
1	Attucks Park 400-800 N. Wall Street	27	X	X		X		X			X	X		X	X	X						X	X		X		X
2	Doug Lee Park/Superblock 601 S. Lewis Lane	26				X					X	X		X						X			X			X	X
3A	Evergreen Park 1205 West Pleasant Hill Road	60	X			X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X				X
4	Greenway/Bikeway Between E. Grand & E. Walnut	30							X		X		X														
5	Hickory Lodge 1115 W. Sycamore Street	3						X		X				X	X												
6	Hickory Ridge Golf Course 2727 W. Glenn Road	256						X					X	X			X	X		X	X						X
7A	Lenus Turley Park 109 N. Glenview Drive	4	X			X		X	X					X	X	X			X			X					X
7B	KIDS KORNER Child Care 101 N. Glenview Drive				X			X						X													X
8	Parrish Park 2500 West Sunset Drive	46				X					X	X	X	X												X	
8A	LIFE Community Center 2500 West Sunset Drive	7				X		X						X					X					X			X
9	Park Operations Headquarters 108 N. Williams Street	2						X											X								
10	Marberry Arboretum S. Wall & Pleasant Hill Road	25						X			X		X	X	X												
11	Oakdale Park 940 N. Oakland Avenue	5	X					X			X		X	X	X	X											
12	Alice Wright Early Childhood Center 2500 West Sunset Drive				X											X											
13	Tatum Heights Park Cedarview & E. Cindy Streets	8		X		X		X				X		X	X	X											

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As each trail component feeds into the larger system, consideration should be given to the level of safety and maintenance requirements. Some segments that are remote or poorly lit may need increased police patrols. Others may need to be located off street to prevent automobile and pedestrian collisions. It is acknowledged that trails are expensive and sometimes difficult to introduce and construct in already developed environments. However, some railroad rights-of-way may offer a readily available linkage that can be built out immediately. These are valuable opportunities that should not be overlooked. Therefore, a plan is warranted to identify the best and most efficient means for achieving the intent of a community trail network, which is to enhance pedestrian and other non-motorized mobility within the City.

Park Service Areas

Evaluating service areas is an effective means of determining if the parks are well-located relative to their users. While some communities have sufficient, or even an abundance of parkland, the location of these opportunities plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of the entire park system. This analysis allows identification of those areas of the community that have sufficient park areas available and, more importantly, those that are in need of parks and recreation areas and facilities in closer proximity to neighborhoods.

Depicted in *Map 2.2, Park Service Areas*, are service area buffers around all existing parks. The service areas are shown separately to emphasize the difference in service area coverage based on the type of park. In some cases, such as the Superblock / Doug Lee Fields, parks are multi-use destinations, serving as both a community park and a neighborhood park for nearby residents.

From a purely locational standpoint, the analysis indicates that, within the City limits, the developed areas of the eastern side of the community are fairly well served by the existing neighborhood parks system. On the west side, there is an availability of community level parks that serve the local neighborhoods. However, some of the older neighborhoods near the City core and the fringes of the community, especially in the northwest, are deficient in park resources.

Findings of the service area analysis for each park type include:

- Community parks have a primary service area of one mile, meaning that a majority of persons utilizing these area-wide parks generally reside within this radius. As illustrated by *Map 2.2, Park Service Areas*, Carbondale currently has four community parks. While their associated service areas cover most of the City limits, the central areas of the community have limited coverage. Since there is limited opportunity for creating a new community park in the near Downtown neighborhoods, the community park needs might be met through better access to the existing community parks. As future development takes place in these areas, it will be important that commensurate trail and bikeway improvements occur.
- Illustrated in *Map 2.2, Park Service Areas*, are the one-half mile service areas of the four neighborhood parks, as well as the one-eighth mile service areas of the natural areas maintained by Green Earth. The intent is to have well-distributed and evenly spaced neighborhood parks in close proximity to residential areas. As displayed, the current array of neighborhood parks provides good coverage in most places, with the exception of the original core of the City. However, under-served areas exist as pockets on the fringe areas of the City. For example, there is limited coverage along the spine of U.S. 51. Other areas currently under served are located in the northwestern and far western portions of the City. However, these areas are still sparsely developed and may not necessarily need additional neighborhood parks until more development occurs. As new residential development occurs throughout the periphery of the City, there will be a need for additional neighborhood parks to serve these new developments.
- As shown in *Map 2.2, Park Service Areas*, natural areas have a limited service area of one-eighth mile, and, by nature, they serve the needs of people living in their immediate vicinity. While these parks tend to benefit a relatively limited population, they provide an additional form of recreation for nearby residents. These passive park areas complement the Park District's more active

INSERT TWO: THE PRINCIPLES OF SMART GROWTH INCLUDE:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Take advantage of compact building design

SOURCE: SMART GROWTH ONLINE

recreation holdings. Furthermore, these natural areas are an asset since Green Earth Inc. not only acquires the site for public use, but also assumes maintenance responsibilities for the site.

- It should be noted that the University offers a number of recreational opportunities that are open to the public but are not categorized as parks. The walking trail around Campus Lake is a major recreational attraction. While the Frisbee Golf course, Thompson Woods, and the Skate Park attract visitors of all ages.

Parks and recreation facilities serve a number of purposes that relate to physical, social, and community well-being. One of the hurdles to fulfilling park and recreational needs is balancing resources with demands. With a diverse population there is a wide variety of recreational resources that the community may utilize. These resources may include everything from soccer and baseball fields, indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities, to community gardens. The challenge for the Carbondale Park District is to concede to popular demand while also accommodating specialized groups that otherwise could not participate in that activity. The City should continue to facilitate a relationship with the Park District in order to achieve a strong park system and meet the needs of its residents.

2.4 Plan Focus Areas and Strategic Recommendations

Throughout the planning process, a number of issues and concerns were expressed related to land use compatibility, community growth, corridor design and appearance, Downtown and neighborhood redevelopment, and historic preservation. These discussions formed the basis of the following focus areas, along with the analysis of existing conditions: review of current plans, ordinances, and practices; and an examination of the planning and development process. Following the identification of the Focus Areas are a series of strategies and their rationales, along with the advisable implementation actions and initiatives. The areas of focus are as follows:

Focus Area 2.1 - Managing Future Growth

The development form of the City and its 1.5 mile extraterritorial jurisdiction is mostly concentrated in each direction around the intersection of U.S. 51 and IL 13. Over time, neighborhoods and supporting commercial districts have radiated outward from the original Town Square. Over the last two decades, the pattern of land use has become increasingly fragmented, with both small and large-lot subdivisions unfolding throughout the periphery of the extraterritorial planning

area (see **Map 2.3, Growth Trends**). Therefore, the greater Carbondale area has a population that is actually much larger than the 26,367 persons estimated in 2007 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Based on City estimates, the population within the City and its planning area is approximately 33,197 persons.

The principles of Smart Growth (see **Insert Two**) advocate a more compact pattern of development. This is based on the notions of maximizing the efficiencies of the infrastructure systems (e.g. water, wastewater, storm sewers, and transportation) and the provision of services (notably police and fire protection). Other principles of Smart Growth include: retaining and growing employment within the City to produce tax revenue; shortening commuting distances and promoting alternative modes of transportation; protecting natural resources and preserving rural agricultural land; reinforcing the value and integrity, while promoting reinvestment in well-established neighborhoods; and, generally, forging a more sustainable and fiscally responsible growth pattern.

State law gives the City the authority to manage the type, pattern, and character of development within the City limits and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Within this area, the City may exercise its zoning regulations and subdivision Ordinance. The City's zoning ordinance includes Forestry (F) and General Agriculture (AG) districts for the purpose of conserving natural resources and agricultural lands and uses. While much of the extraterritorial area is zoned AG (see **Map 2.4, Current Zoning**), there has been an increase in the amount of request for low-density residential zoning, particularly in the less constrained areas to the southwest. These outlying subdivisions are not contiguous to the City limits and other existing development, nor are they within the City's water and wastewater service areas. In coordination with the Jackson County Health Department, the City allows subdivision development in the extraterritorial jurisdiction to include up to four, one-acre lots with any additional lots being a minimum of two and one-half acres each. However, developments may have lots below one acre in size when they provide their own community wastewater system. The City should re-evaluate this policy to curb sporadic development in areas outside of the preferred growth areas.

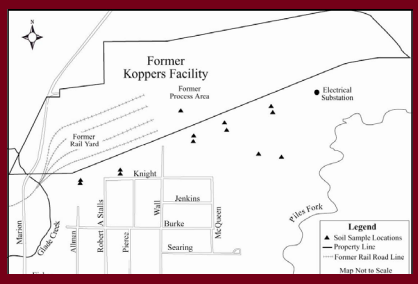
Strategy 1: Provide additional attention and resources to promote infill development and redevelopment and to reinvest in the established neighborhoods.

Rationale

A tenet of growing smart is maximizing the efficiency of the development pattern. This means contiguous development and land use patterns that capitalize on the availability of existing infrastructure. There are several sizeable undeveloped and underdeveloped parcels that provide opportunity for infill development where streets and utilities may be readily extended. There are also many individual lots that may be developed, particularly in northeast Carbondale. In addition, there are several areas that warrant consideration of redevelopment during the horizon of this Plan.

A second tenet is improving the integrity and desirability of existing neighborhoods. Specific strategies and implementation measures are outlined in Chapter 4, Housing and Neighborhoods. As related to land use, there are also initiatives pertaining to the compatibility of adjacent and nearby uses, preservation of neighborhood character, and convenient access to goods and services.

Figure 2.7 | **BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT**



The former Koppers Wood-Treating site, located in the northeast corner of Carbondale, dates back to 1902 when railroad cross ties, utility poles, and other wood products were treated. Until the plant closed in 1991, wood products were treated with chemical preservatives, including creosote. During the years the plant was operational, handling and storage of chemicals caused spills, resulting in the pollution of soil, ground water, and nearby surface water.

Beazer East Inc. - the current owner of the property - has conducted numerous studies of the site to learn more about the location, amount and type of contamination. As the site and surrounding area is decontaminated, there are potential redevelopment options than can be explored.

SOURCE: US EPA

Actions and Initiatives

a. Determine the appropriate zoning of the infill development tracts and initiate rezoning as appropriate. Care must be taken to ensure that the neighborhood character is preserved and compatibility with existing uses is observed.

b. Study the infrastructure needs of the infill opportunity sites and prepare a schedule of capital improvements, including the timing and methods of funding the improvements.

c. Incorporate bonuses into the zoning provisions whereby increased height and/or floor area may be achieved for meeting certain prescribed development standards. This may help to make infill development more feasible.

d. Consider re-establishing funding to the New Home Construction Grant program whereby fees may be waived and infrastructure improvement costs may be shared as a means to encourage infill and redevelopment. Also, establish criteria and procedures to simplify and streamline development approval.

e. In accordance with *Chapter 4, Housing and Neighborhoods*, define areas that warrant redevelopment and designate them as a redevelopment district. Subsequently, prepare a redevelopment plan to determine the type and general form of development, which may serve as a basis for design and implementation

f. Identify on the future land use plan the future character of the redevelopment areas. Subsequently, establish the zoning provisions necessary to achieve the intended development outcomes.

g. Review and amend the City's development ordinance to identify and resolve regulatory impediments to infill development and redevelopment. Incorporate standards that are unique and applicable to these sites versus greenfield development sites.

h. Solicit interest among the landowners to partner in establishing individual redevelopment authorities for the purpose of developing a transition plan and the means of financing and implementation.

i. Adopt interim zoning regulations for the redevelopment areas to ensure that development conforms to the future intent of the area.[1]

j. Create a locally-maintained brownfield inventory to establish a searchable listing of all sites that are known to contain soil contamination based on environmental testing (or already included on EPA brownfields list) or could potentially contain contamination.

k. Redevelop brownfield sites, as appropriate, while being mindful of the possibility of brownfield grants to aid in the

1 Chapter 2, Zoning, Section 15-2C-7, Interim Zoning

environmental remediation and site reuse. The Koppers Tie Plant is one such brownfield that could be a redevelopment site in the future, as explained in **Figure 2.7, Brownfield Redevelopment**.

Strategy 2: Accommodation of Development and Redevelopment

Rationale

As stated in the strategies and recommendations presented in other parts of this chapter, the amount of undeveloped land needed to accommodate future growth in Carbondale is not expected to be significant. Concentration, instead, should be on development in infill areas and redevelopment of established areas of the City. Development in this fashion will take advantage of the foresight of earlier generations by utilizing the facilities that they installed.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Discourage leap-frog (or even peripheral) development. Instead, utilize the adequate infill areas that exist within the City's current water and sanitary sewer service areas for accommodating new development.

b. In those cases where development of underutilized land is determined to be appropriate, the City should continue its current policy requiring developers to provide adequate water distribution lines and sewer extensions as a part of any new subdivisions or land development project.

Strategy 3: Direct future growth to occur in areas that are most suitable for development.

Rational

The City is projected to grow by an additional 1,848 persons by 2030. Assuming similar development patterns and densities, there will be a demand for an additional 409 acres to accommodate the projected population. This amounts to roughly two-thirds of a square mile. To reach the targeted population of 30,000 persons, a total of 1,380 acres would be needed. For land use planning purposes, the acreage requirements are commonly factored up by 30 percent to allow market flexibility. This means the City should plan for approximately 530 additional acres by 2030 (or 1,794 acres to meet the targeted population).

The areas that are most suitable for future growth include several infill sites and redevelopment tracts, as well as those properties that are outside of the floodplain and adjacent to the City limits where City water and wastewater is readily available(see **Map 2.5, Future Growth and Reinvestment Areas**).

Actions and Initiatives

a. Pre-zone the preferred future growth areas to be consistent with the future land use plan. Such zoning should allow flexibility as to the development type, provided the development character is compatible with the surrounding area.

b. Initiate annexation of the properties within the preferred future growth areas.

c. Develop a municipal service plan to establish the timing and means of infrastructure provision to the annexed properties.

d. Coordinate the Community Investment Program (CIP) to provide public facilities and municipal services to the preferred growth areas.

Strategy 4: Continue to renovate and replace aging infrastructure components.

Rationale

The City has invested wisely for many years to provide high quality and reliable water distribution and sanitary sewer services. As with all capital investments, these facilities wear out and eventually require refurbishment or replacement. Special attention should be given to areas that cannot adequately be served by the existing utilities.

Actions and Initiatives

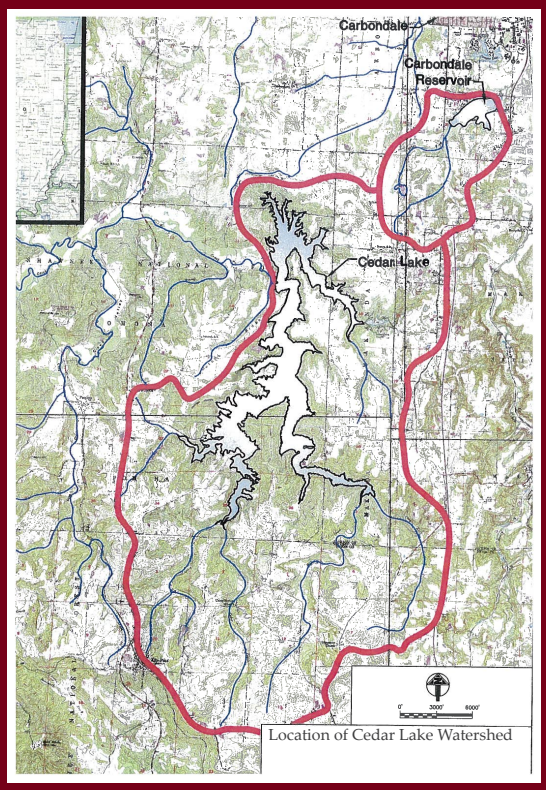
a. Renovate and replace aging water lines to maintain service levels and reduce leakage.

b. Renovate and replace aging sewers to adequately meet flow requirements while reducing infiltration and inflow.

c. Continue to enhance sewage lift station system controls and telemetry, utilizing the latest information technology to improve operational efficiency and provide timely financial reporting and control.

d. Continue replacing the existing waterlines within the recently acquired Crab Orchard Water District.

Figure 2.8 | **CEDAR LAKE WATERSHED**



Carbondale is largely separated from the watershed that acts as its drinking water source. The Cedar Lake watershed is located in the unincorporated areas of Jackson and Union Counties.

Strategy 5: Upgrade service levels in areas currently served by rural water supply districts.

Rationale

Rural water systems were never intended to accommodate the requirements of urban and suburban residents. Generally, the components of a rural water system are designed to provide minimum-cost water supplies over a wide geographical area. These include small-diameter, non-looped distribution lines that cannot handle fire protection demands.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Upgrade water distribution service levels in areas of the City that are currently served by rural water supply districts by eventual replacement of water lines and the provision of fire hydrants. Achieving this would entail adjustments of the rural water supply districts' service areas or their acquisition by the City at the districts request.

Strategy 6: Water Supply Protection

Rationale

Cedar Lake continues to provide an abundant water supply to the City while acting

as a valuable recreational and scenic resource to the region. While a substantial part of the reservoir is located within the Shawnee National Forest, large areas of shoreline and interior areas may be subject to future development pressures or intense recreational usage. It is important that the City maintains the integrity of its water supply as effectively as possible.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Continue to protect Cedar Lake by restricting development and land disturbance in non-federal shoreline areas. Explore measures that will ensure the long-term protection of those parts of the Cedar Lake watershed, including annexation or outright acquisition of strategic shoreline and interior land areas as illustrated in **Figure 2.8, Cedar Lake Watershed**.

Strategy 7: Preserve the rural character of the City's periphery.

Rationale

The pattern of land use around the City has in recent years become increasingly scattered with rural development. Continuing this pattern will have implications on the rural environment including an inadequate road network, urban-rural use conflicts, degradation of resources, costly service provision, and a likely shifting pattern of spending and investment. Since the City has zoning jurisdiction within mile and one-half, it may be necessary to re-evaluate its growth policies and regulatory framework.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Amend the provisions of the AG, General Agriculture, district to narrow the list of permitted and special uses. Also, consider increasing the minimum lot area from five to 10 acres or more.

b. Coordinate with the Jackson County Health Department to re-evaluate the subdivision regulations in the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

c. Undertake a zoning study to establish an appropriate designation for the areas currently un-zoned (see *Map 2.4, Current Zoning*).

d. Collaborate with Murphysboro to finalize an intergovernmental agreement to define the future planning area of both communities.

e. Consider provisions that encourage development clustering by way of density bonuses for reduced lot sizes together with an increased percentage of common open space.

f. Establish ordinance provisions requiring conservation easements for required open space within certain zoning districts.

g. Encourage agriculture or development of airport-related uses in the area surrounding the airport.

h. Discourage residential development that would interfere with the airport expansion and flight paths. While the noise contours for the existing airport operations are entirely located on airport property, there remain important considerations regarding building heights and uses in the surrounding area.

Focus Area 2.2 - Quality, Sustainable Development

The Southern Illinois region is well-known for its rich environmental assets and the quality of its natural environs. Carbondale enjoys beautiful natural scenery by

way of its woodland stands, rock formations, and its many creeks, wetlands, and lakes. In fact, this was cited by many residents as the reason for making this their home. It is this natural quality – among many other attractions – that significantly contributes to the aesthetic and character of the community. Residents greatly value the environment and expressed their desire to see it preserved and protected.

The areas of future growth are pretty well defined by way of natural features (Piles Fork, Little Crab Orchard, and Crab Orchard Creek and their floodplains), major land holdings and uses (Southern Illinois University), as well as the limits of municipal utility services. There is a significant presence of natural resources in the areas around the City. Therefore, as growth occurs and development is sought in or near these areas, the harmony of development and the environment will be essential to preserve community character and realize sustainable outcomes.

The City's current development standards have few provisions for the preservation of open space, protection of resources, and alternative development forms. Other than through application of the Land Use Intensity(LUI) system for the R-3, High Density Residential, district and planned unit developments, there are no minimum open space requirements in any of the residential districts. Also, since density is effectively determined by way of minimum lot sizes, the current ordinance leads to densely patterned development with little provision for open space. This results in maximizing the development site with minimal allowance for open space set aside to protect resource areas. To preserve environmental resources and to achieve sustainable outcomes, other regulatory options may be considered. A land use and zoning system that rewards good design and responsible development practices with density bonuses, streamlined approval, and increased certainty may help accomplish the vision expressed by residents.

While the pattern and form of development may greatly influence environmental conditions, so, too, may the design of buildings and sites. Green building practices may reduce energy consumption, reuse and save precious resources (e.g. water recycling), and mitigate off-site impacts such as stormwater runoff and flooding.

Strategy 1: Continue to work with the Carbondale Park District and Green Earth on quality improvements to existing parks and expansion of the park system and natural areas through cooperative land acquisition agreements.

Rationale

The needs and desires of the citizens of Carbondale justify continued development of parks and recreation facilities and preservation of open space to meet the specific needs and requirements of the community. A variety of types and sizes of parks and recreation facilities and associated activities are recommended to satisfy the diverse interests of the population, to ensure adequate and equal opportunity for all persons, and, ultimately, to encourage use by all population groups.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Amend the City's subdivision regulations to establish a formal parkland and nature preserve dedication program

b. Coordinate with Jackson County, local school districts, and SIU to address potential joint acquisition of land, improvement and maintenance of park land and facilities, nature preserves and trails, and use and management of areas and buildings, especially to avoid duplication of efforts and services.

c. Improve accessibility to parks for disabled users by adding sidewalk curb cuts with ramps, wheelchair-accessible sidewalks, trails, and accessible facilities including play equipment, drinking fountains, and restrooms.

d. Adopt a policy for the potential conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors, under-utilized or vacant alleys, and other rights-of-way and easements as trails and walking connections.

e. Regularly submit grant applications to state and federal programs and other available resources to leverage funds for trails and bikeway planning and development.

f. Use the City's Development Regulations as another means to promote the gradual emergence of a city-wide trail and bikeway network.

g. Establish requirements for the dedication of easements or rights-of-way from new developments that adjoin or overlap the City's planned trail network.

Strategy 2: Protect and preserve environmental resources.

Rationale

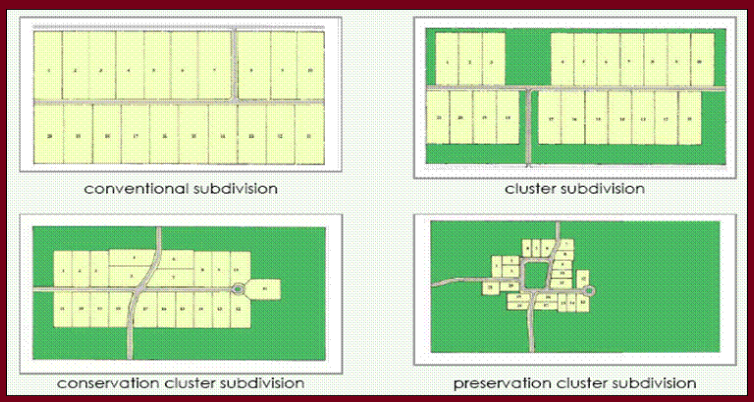
The natural environment is a significant contributor to the character and beauty of Carbondale. This City has made strides in the area of resource protection yet there is more that can be done. There must be a balance though, so as not to go too far in regulating environmental protection. This balance may be achieved through the use of incentives and increased development flexibility with a goal of encouraging better protection and more efficient development.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Modify the structure of the current zoning districts to allow increased flexibility through more development options that are each permitted by right. This approach would allow development in harmony with the environmental features of a site (see **Figure 2.9, Development Options**).

b. Consolidate and restructure the residential districts by recalibrating the lot sizes, percentages of minimum open space, and relative densities. Within each district, density bonuses should be offered commensurate with increased provision for common open space. For instance, R-1-15, R-1-12, R-1-8, R-1-8A, and R-1-5 may be consolidated into

Figure 2.9 | **DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS**



The above graphic illustrates the different development forms that may be accommodated while maintaining the same gross density and this character of development. While the form of development changes, the off-site impacts remain the same while the on-site impacts are improved relative to the preservation of open space and protection of resources.

INSERT THREE: U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS CLIMATE PROTECTION AGREEMENT

On February 16, 2005, the Kyoto Protocol, the international agreement to address climate disruption, became law for the 141 countries that have ratified it to date. On that day, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels launched this initiative to advance the goals of the Kyoto Protocol through leadership and action by at least 141 American cities.

Under the Agreement, participating cities commit to take following three actions:

- Strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their own communities, through actions ranging from anti-sprawl land-use policies to urban forest restoration projects to public information campaigns;
- Urge their state governments, and the federal government, to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the greenhouse gas emission reduction target suggested for the United States in the Kyoto Protocol -- 7% reduction from 1990 levels by 2012; and
- Urge the U.S. Congress to pass the bipartisan greenhouse gas reduction legislation, which would establish a national emission trading system.

an individual low-density residential district whereby there are increased open space requirements for the smaller lots to maintain comparable densities. (see page 2.23, **Table 2.2, Illustrative District Structure**)

c. Repurpose planned unit development as an option within the residential districts, which would allow mixed unit types and may also allow for mixed commercial use provided certain criteria are met.

d. Amend the landscape requirements for the purpose of preserving site resources, meeting landscape and buffering requirements, and providing for site drainage.

e. Incorporate site capacity provisions into the development regulations to control the amount of development that may be accommodated on environmentally constrained sites. With the approach shown in *Figure 2.9*, of allowing development options within each district, there would be flexibility to allow development of heavily constrained sites.

f. Undertake a resource inventory of the extraterritorial jurisdiction for the purpose of defining the boundaries of sensitive resources. Subsequently, initiate rezoning of these sites from AG, General Agriculture, to F, Forestry.

g. Amend the zoning ordinance to include provisions to preserve and enhance the existing tree canopy, including tree protection and replacement standards, as well as preservation of large trees.

h. Consider increasing the distance of structures from designated streams from 50 feet to 100 feet, or more.

Strategy 3: Adopt a community agenda for energy conservation.

Rationale

Beginning with the signing of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and continuing through the appointment and efforts of the Sustainability Commission, the City is committed to conserving energy and seeking ways to lessen their impact on climate change. Several initiatives are already underway; yet, there is a broad range of other proactive approaches that may have a collective, positive impact.

Table 2.2
Illustrative District Structure

District / Development Type	Average Lot Size	Minimum Open Space	Gross Density	Required Utilities	Minimum Site Area
Low Density Residential					
Estate (R-1-15)	15,000	0.10	2.0	public	5 acres
Standard (R-1-12)	12,000	0.13	2.3	public	5 acres
Cluster (R-1-8, R-1-8A)	8,000	0.20	3.1	public	5 acres
Planned (R-1-5)	5,000	0.30	4.2	public	10 acres

SOURCE: KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE (MAY 2009)

Commentary: The above example reflects how the current low-density residential districts may be consolidated into a single district. In this example, the minimum required open space is directly proportional to the lot size, thereby maintaining comparable densities while providing a density bonus for increased open space. The open space may fulfill parkland needs, provide for buffering of adjacent uses, and/or protect site resources such as woodlands or areas of the floodplain. Each development type would be permitted by-right subject to other performance standards to ensure compatibility.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Continue efforts to meet the provisions of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (see **Insert Three**), including:
   - Conduct an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions as a means to establish a baseline standard, as the premise of the agreement is based on improvement.
   - Establish an action plan for greenhouse gas reductions. This plan should identify the most promising strategies for greenhouse gas reductions, such as reducing the emissions from buildings and vehicles.
   - Implement the action plan to achieve the climate protection agreement goals.

b. Seek alternative transportation solutions at the local and regional levels to preserve air quality. Nonpoint source transportation impacts represent up to 40 percent of the pollution levels. Measures that may help reduce vehicle emissions include, but are not limited to:
   - Increased opportunities for bicycling and walking by way of complete streets and other pedestrian improvements.
   - Coordinating with SIU for the

INSERT FOUR: MUNICIPAL GREEN BUILDING (LEED) POLICY

Many companies and municipalities are committing to building green facilities as a matter of policy. Although the definition of a green building can vary, the most widely accepted benchmarks are established by the US Green Building Council (www.usgbc.org). These green design standards are collectively known as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system, which evaluates green buildings according to specific criteria. There are five general areas:

1. Sustainable site planning
2. Safeguarding water and water efficiency
3. Energy efficiency and renewable energy
4. Conservation of materials and resources
5. Indoor environmental quality

expansion of the Saluki Express to serve the transit interests of the broader public, as well as the gradual replacement of the vehicle fleet and purchase of new alternative-powered vehicles that are more energy efficient and produce lower emissions.

- Improve regional high-capacity connections via Amtrak and Greyhound through better multi-modal access.
- Reduce congestion at local intersections by making Transportation Systems Management (TSM) improvements, including dedicated left and right turn lanes, traffic signal synchronization, and transit vehicle pull-out bays, among others.

INSERT FIVE: INCENTIVIZING GREEN BUILDING IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Most incentives are based on a "bonus" system where there are relaxed standards as a reward for providing a public amenity. A logical area for inclusion would be the PUD standards that already include several incentive provisions. In such a project, the green design features would be considered a public amenity even though they are not public in the same sense as a plaza, fountain, or pedestrian walkway. The "bonus" can focus on the height of the buildings, floor area ratio (FAR) requirements, parking ratios, or setbacks. Adding an additional floor or allowing increased floor area can make a small incentive for the developer in exchange for the completion of green design.

c. Adopt a long-term municipal energy strategy to include an energy plan that enumerates reduction goals based on current energy usage.

d. Conduct an audit to evaluate the effectiveness of the current building code with regard to building energy efficiency. The City may consider encouraging higher levels of energy and water efficiency by encouraging voluntary best management practices and incentivizing such practices in site and building design.

e. Conduct a pilot energy efficiency project or seek LEED certification for new municipal buildings, such as the Public Safety Facility. Given the long lifespan of municipal facilities, the operational cost savings over the long-term would outweigh any additional upfront green building costs (see **Insert Four**).

f. Consider a City-wide policy that all new or retrofitted public buildings will meet a certain energy efficiency standard or achieve LEED certification.

g. Continue the efforts of the Sustainability Commission to identify energy saving measures, such as building lighting, street lights, building heating/cooling, building/window shading, and water usage/recapture.

Strategy 4: Pursue more sustainable development outcomes through bonuses and incentives.

Rationale

In recent years, there has been a renewed awareness and emphasis on sustainable development practices. There are many approaches to seek improved sustainability, one of which is in the design of building sites and developments. Infusing best management practices and providing incentives for good design will move the City toward more responsible development outcomes. This also has the benefit of enhancing community character.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Amend the development ordinances to integrate sustainability standards into the design and planning of both commercial and residential sites. This may include incentives for infill development, better defined regulations that allow for the on-site production of energy (e.g. wind and solar power), and an emphasis on mixed use developments. (see **Insert Five**).

b. Incorporate sustainability concepts into the site development standards such as:

- The use of bioswales and on-site water feature collection systems for stormwater management and water quality purposes.
- Use of green roofs as a method of stormwater mitigation, as well as reduction of the urban "heat island" effect.
- Reduced stormwater runoff through on-site retention, micro-storage such as water gardens and rain barrels, and pervious pavement.

c. Incorporate low-impact development provisions into the development ordinances. This approach uses site design techniques to store, infiltrate, evaporate, and detain runoff, which address runoff volume, frequency, and water quality. Examples of site design elements in **Figure 2.10, Low-Impact Development**, include on-lot micro-storage, functional landscaping, open drainage swales, reduced imperviousness, minimal grades, and depression storage.

d. Develop a campaign to educate citizens and community groups on the ways to reduce water consumption and waste, including do-it-yourself, low-cost measures such as residential water catchment (gutter collection) and water-efficient fixtures. Note: This is also a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirement.

e. Add trash disposal and recycling options in each park and other public facilities throughout the City.

Focus Area 2.3 - Downtown Renaissance

Downtown Carbondale was once the center of commerce and community activity. As in City centers across the country, the focus of Downtown has shifted away from its central retail activity to more offices, services, and government. The transition of Downtown has occurred over many years and is the result, among others, of the following key factors:

- An increased reliance on the automobile establishing

Figure 2.10 | **LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT**

Natural stormwater drainage options are possible low-impact strategies for addressing stormwater issues on individual sites. The stormwater examples above are from the 'green' Wal-Mart, which uses alternative approaches to detention or treatment.

Figure 2.11 | **DOWNTOWN CHARACTER**

These two adjacent blocks illustrate the difference between an urban (outlined in orange) and auto-urban (red) character, with the primary difference being the arrangement of on-site and street parking.

a market for auto-oriented strip shopping centers and malls. This draws retail out of the core of the city and to the fringe of the community.

- The emergence of big box stores attracting fast food restaurants and small retailers to nearby sites away from Downtown.
- Specifically in Carbondale, perhaps the most significant influences were the Federal (U.S. 51) and State (IL 13) highway improvements creating one-way pairs through Downtown. This had the effect of increasing traffic and speeds and, in turn, deteriorating the pedestrian environment. (see **Figure 2.11, Downtown Character**).

Before the roadway widening and traffic improvements, Downtown had more of an urban character. Remnants of this pattern remain today, made visible by pedestrian-scaled block frontages along Illinois Avenue, on-street parking rather than large off-street surface parking lots, and mostly hidden rear parking and loading areas. While foot traffic remains, it is much less than it once was and less than what is most desired.

The major street projects have served to break the direct connections to the University and each of the nearby neighborhoods. This is due to major at-grade street crossings, deteriorating or missing sidewalks, and interruptions of pedestrian ways by driveways and parking lots. This has broken the ties and the natural synergies that underpin a sense of place and are common among successful downtowns.

There are great opportunities to repurpose Downtown. This is to say that it will not be what it once was, but it may be re-established as a destination for culture, entertainment, and community gathering, with a healthy compliment of local shops and eateries. Doing so will require a commitment to restore the market attraction and redesign the environment and reintroduce an urban fabric. This means a combination of economic initiatives and physical improvements to create a business-friendly environment that is both accessible and walkable.

A recent amendment to the zoning code now takes a step to preserve the streetscape and urban character. The Primary Business (BPR) district is intended to "protect the community created values by: encouraging uses serving primarily pedestrian-oriented traffic; discouraging uses requiring large areas of land in proportion to pedestrian traffic generated; and encouraging intensive use of land." This element of the zoning code advances several concepts that promote quality design; yet, there are additional changes to better equip the district to forge the desired character.

An appropriate mix of uses is essential, including vertically integrated residential over retail uses, as well as higher-intensity attached-living integrated within or on the immediate fringes of Downtown. Moreover, the boundaries of the Downtown may warrant realignment and expansion.

The "community created values" generally articulated by residents and stakeholders through the initial public involvement process included, among others, the following statements regarding Downtown:

- "Downtown needs to be turned inside out and made more walkable and attractive to students."
- "There need to be "free-moving" pedestrian corridors between the University and Downtown and within Downtown. Shopping and restaurants could be more accessible to students through a stronger connection."
- "We need a Downtown with more businesses and activities. There need to be more options for dining, shopping, and entertainment."
- "Carbondale's Downtown needs a defined "district" and a single identity. Downtown needs to serve students, as well as the whole community."
- "Downtown needs outdoor spaces together with a multitude of other activities and things to do. These spaces must be accessible and attractive.."

Therefore, it is apparent that the community seeks a renaissance of Downtown. The vision of Downtown and the general recommendations are expressed by this Plan.

Strategy 1: Strengthen Downtown as a viable place to conduct business.

Rationale

Presently, Downtown does not have an identity as a cohesive district. Rather, it has evolved as a collection of individual businesses without a strong synergy. As the renaissance of Downtown is initiated, the impediments for locating and operating long-standing and stable, economically viable businesses must be overcome. After all, there are many other possible choices that may offer better appeal for locating a business. There must be a reason for deliberately choosing Downtown, whether it is the dynamic of the University, hospital, or nearby neighborhoods; a draw to the heart and history of Carbondale; or attractive incentives. Other barriers may include land or lease rates, available floor space, obsolete buildings and code compliance issues, or access and parking, among others.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Leverage the Enterprise Zone to create incentive packages to attract the identified target businesses to locate, or relocate within Downtown.

b. Continue to provide grants through the Downtown Façade Improvement Fund, as well as the grants offered through Carbondale Main Street including the Facade with Signage Grant, Architectural Design Assistance Grant, and Rear Entrance/Alleyway Grant. Seek sources of funding through foundations, fundraisers, or state-sponsored programs to increase these and potential other grant amounts.

c. Seek tools and financing mechanisms to increase the amount of incentive that is available in Downtown, with a particular focus on those businesses interested in the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

d. Consider forming a new tax increment financing (TIF) district or expand the existing district(see **Insert Six**). The funds generated by the district may help reduce the extra cost and risk that private development may face in Downtown, which may make it more competitive relative to locations outside of the district. These funds may also be used for improvement projects that provide direct benefit to the district.

e. Consider forming a Business Improvement District (BID) to organize Downtown businesses and for the purpose of funding improvements to the district's public realm. The BID would also oversee the management of the district and address issues of common concern to district owners.

f. Review and make warranted changes to the permitted use types within the BPR, Primary Business, district. Reconsider some of the currently permitted uses such as drive through services, repair services, and automotive sales and service. Integrate height and floor area incentives into the regulations for placing non-retail businesses on the second floor or above.

g. Collaborate with Memorial Hospital to establish a plan for their long-term expansion, as well as other associated medical offices and service-related uses. This plan should be an integral part of the Downtown master plan and carefully designed so as to complement one another.

h. Encourage shoppers to patronize Downtown businesses through a buy-local campaign.

i. Incorporate nighttime shopping events and programming that can bring life to Downtown after 5:00 p.m., thereby encouraging a vibrant "24/7" nightlife. This type of activity will be particularly attractive to students and young adults and families who seek such amenities and cultural attractions in their community.

Strategy 2: Position Downtown as a unique local and regional destination.

Rationale

The circumstances of Downtown have changed dramatically over the years. The nature of business has shifted away from its traditional primary retail role to one of government, institutions, and offices, combined with a lesser amount of retail services. Since the retail focus has moved to the primary corridors, particularly in East Carbondale, Downtown must create a new identity that is solely unique to the community and region. It must position itself so as not to compete for the typical retail outlets, instead targeting a niche market with an orientation toward culture, entertainment, and community gathering. This will naturally attract complimentary retail uses such as restaurants, coffee shops, and unique local retailers.

Given its central location among the City's well-established neighborhoods and its proximity to the University, Downtown is well-situated to cater both to residents and students, as well as regional visitors and tourists. The nature of businesses and the types of activities and attractions must appeal to all sectors.

INSERT SIX: TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

TIF funds may be used for costs associated with the development or redevelopment of property within the TIF, allowing blighted, declining and underperforming areas to again become viable, and allowing these areas to compete with vacant land at the edge of urban areas. Typical projects include:

- The redevelopment of substandard, obsolete, or vacant buildings.
- Financing general public infrastructure improvements, including streets, sewer, water, and the like, in declining areas.
- The development of residential housing in areas of need.
- Cleaning up polluted areas.
- Improving the viability of downtown business districts.
- Providing infrastructure needed to develop a site for new industrial or commercial use.
- Rehabilitating historic properties.

SOURCE: ILLINOIS TAX INCREMENT ASSOCIATION

Actions and Initiatives

a. Perform a study to define the market potential of Downtown as to its regional economic capture, saleable/leasable square footage, and likely rate of absorption. Identify the range and preferred mixture of use types, along with a retention and attraction strategy and target marketing approach.

b. Solicit professional assistance in developing a brand identity for Downtown. This could include an advertising campaign and production of related media materials.

c. Through the course of the recommended master plan, identify a design theme for the Downtown district. This may include parameters of architecture, signage, lighting, streetscaping, and public art and amenities. The theme should allow individual expression while ensuring a semblance of design cohesiveness.

d. Prepare a multi-year implementation program to initiate the recommended strategies and improvements of the master plan and market, branding, and design studies. The program should outline implementation authorities and responsibilities, specific timelines, and the methods and means of funding for each individual project.

e. Based upon the design theme and branding studies, create new street signage that is unique for the Downtown district.

f. Design and install distinct monuments and gateway treatments at the primary entries to the Downtown district, along with unifying design elements like vegetated walls, decorative lighting, street and sidewalk patterns, and other unique design treatments.

g. Develop a public art program for Downtown that compliments the city-wide program. The program should implement the master plan recommendations as to the locations of art installations and the parameters of thematic design.

Strategy 3: Re-establish the traditional urban character of Downtown.

Rationale

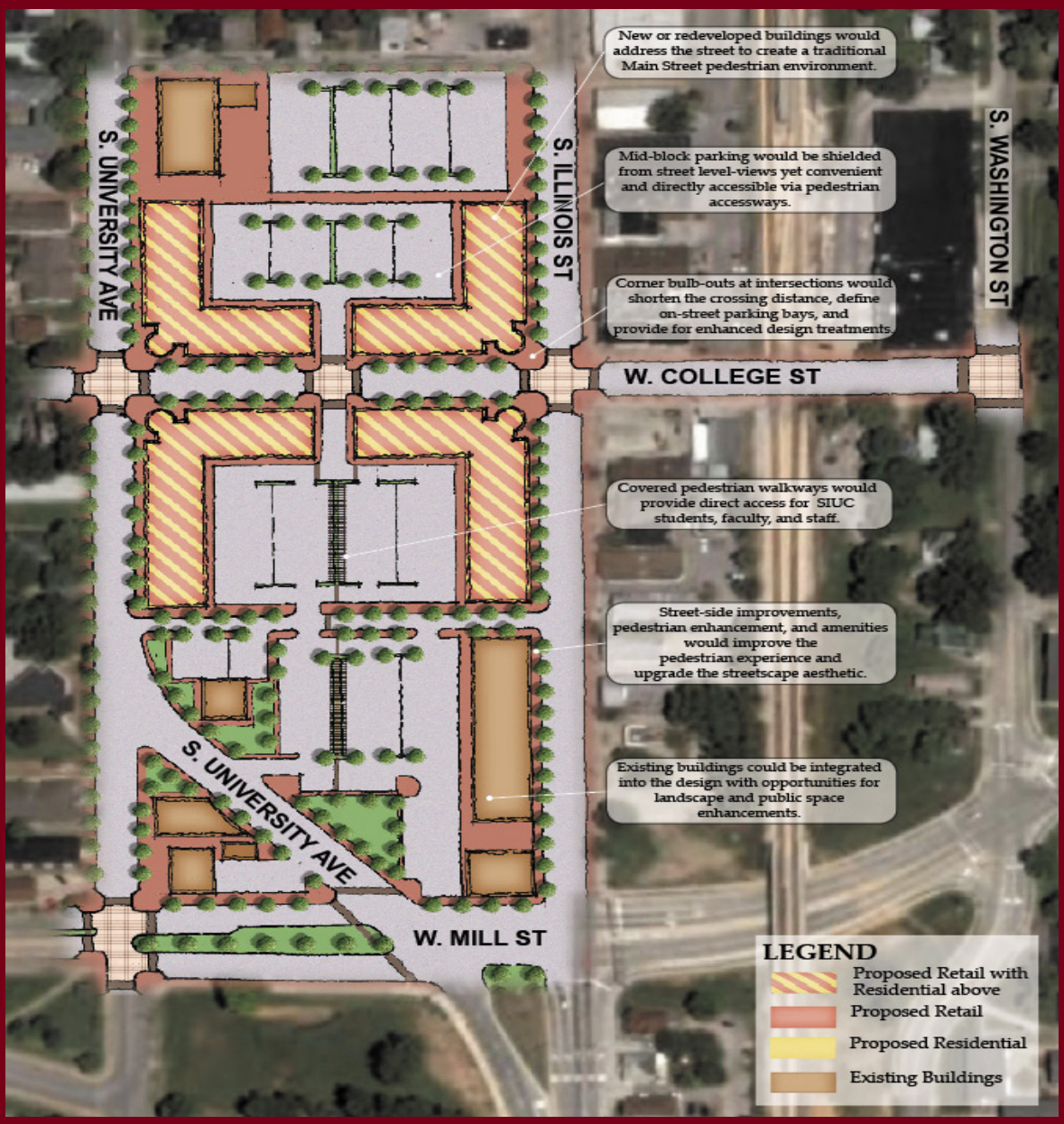
Over time, the pattern of buildings and parking lots has dramatically shifted the character of Downtown from an urban to an auto-urban character. This is caused by the placement of buildings relative to the street and the percent of highly valued Downtown property that is devoted to surface parking and accessways. As a result, the pedestrian orientation of Downtown has declined in favor of the automobile. If the City is to re-establish Downtown as a destination and seize its economic opportunities, it should reconsider the form and design of development and specifically how parking is handled and treated.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Prepare a Downtown master plan that is of sufficient detail to result in a regulating plan that illustrates the intended arrangement and form of development. This would include general lot and block arrangements, typical building footprints to reflect general character and scale, public spaces, and contextual relationships with existing uses and adjacent properties (see **Figure 2.12, Downtown Urban Enhancement Concept,** page 2.30).

b. Utilize the Downtown plan to amend the BPR, Primary Business, district to specify allowable parking configurations, such as mid-block only lots, as well as building form standards including building massing, height,

Figure 2.12 | **DOWNTOWN URBAN ENHANCEMENT CONCEPT**



The above illustration depicts redevelopment opportunities for Downtown that essentially bring the buildings to the front setback to address the street and place the parking within the mid-block areas to the rear. While this does not itself create an urban environment, it improves the pedestrian orientation of Downtown. Buildings form a traditional Main Street environment along W. College Street, which would be intensely pedestrian focused. This is to draw pedestrians from the highly trafficked S. University Avenue and S. Illinois Avenue. It could serve as a "college town" atmosphere for students and as an entertainment district to support the Varsity Theatre and nearby restaurants and shops. The drawing also reflects streetscape enhancements including landscaping, crosswalk improvements, and pedestrian pathways to reach SIU and the surrounding neighborhoods.

building placement, allowable frontage types and conditions, and allowable encroachments. The use of such standards may allow more general use types with a greater emphasis placed on design.

c. Integrate into the BPR, Primary Business, district floor area bonuses for vertical mixed use buildings, shared and/or structured parking, and LEED certified buildings. Also consider allowances and incentives for first floor retail and entertainment uses with upper floor office, institutional, and residential uses.

d. Include attached residential dwellings as a special use within the BPR, Primary Business, district. Additionally, consider rezoning the fringes of Downtown for more intensive urban residential uses. This may include housing for mature residents as a means for increasing the Downtown population while offering convenient access to community services and University activities.

e. In the interim, before the master plan and regulating plan are prepared, amend the BPR, Primary Business, district to require a site design study to evaluate alternative siting and configurations of parking, subject to the review and recommendation of a Downtown Advisory Board.

f. Appoint a Downtown Advisory Board for the purpose of overseeing the master plan process and to review and consider the appropriateness of development and redevelopment projects. The Board should include representatives of the Planning Commission, Preservation Commission, and Carbondale Main Street, as well as Downtown business and property owners and a design professional.

g. Develop design standards to guide the construction of new and improvement of existing buildings to ensure compatibility of the architecture and cohesiveness with the historic integrity of Downtown.

h. Conduct a Downtown parking study to evaluate the existing and planned use types[2] and their respective space requirements. Utilize the findings to determine the options to provide adequate parking. Study the alternatives and feasibility of public versus private and surface versus structured parking.

Strategy 4: Improve connections to, through, and within Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Rationale

While there are existing street connections from the surrounding neighborhoods to Downtown, many of them lack adequate sidewalks and street crossings. Also, due to the current design, speeds, and volumes of traffic on U.S. 51/University Ave/Illinois Ave and IL 13/Main Street/Walnut Street, there are significant barriers of access for pedestrians and bicyclists. Therefore, to aid in the success of Downtown, there must be improved linkages that are both direct and safe. Additionally, the existing rights-of-way need to become complete streets, meaning they are redesigned to better serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit vehicles. These improvements are particularly warranted in Downtown as its function and character are intended to be pedestrian-oriented.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Collaborate with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to identify alternatives and seek new solutions to improve the street cross-sections, pedestrian crossings, and streetscapes along U.S. 51 and IL 13. Also, coordinate with them in reviewing the Thoroughfare Plan (see *Chapter 3, Community*

2 The planned use types would be based upon the recommended business use study.

Mobility) as to possible alternatives to reroute tractor-trailer traffic out of Downtown.

b. Perform a design study to evaluate the options to reduce the crossing widths of Downtown streets. In many instances, the current widths are 70 feet or more, making it difficult and unsafe for suitable pedestrian crossings.

c. Use street trees, building canopies and awnings, covered walkways, and other design treatments as pedestrian shelter from inclement weather.

d. Improve the pedestrian experience in Downtown with active storefront displays, informational and interactive kiosks, public seating, pedestrian-scaled lighting, landscaped planters, public art displays, sidewalk cafes and displays, and points of historical references.

e. Create a plan for pedestrian precincts and civic spaces within the Downtown district with connections to a city-wide network of sidewalks, bike lanes, pathways, and green ribbons.

f. Reconnect each of the adjacent neighborhoods to Downtown by way of sidewalk maintenance, improvements, and/or construction; handicap accessibility improvements at intersections including curb cuts and ramps; pedestrian and bicycle actuated signal detectors; increased signal timing for pedestrian crossings; possible alleyway pathways; and on-street, striped bike lanes.

g. Identify improvement projects to create better pedestrian and bicycle linkages between Downtown and the University. Such improvements may include crosswalk improvements along Mill Street with an improved and widened (as possible) esplanade on Mill Street to act as a refuge for pedestrian crossing.

h. Provide adequate infrastructure and capital budget support for multimodal projects. An example of a strategic multimodal investment would be making the Washington Street corridor a "complete street," which may include an on-street bike lane, improved sidewalks, and streetscaping enhancements.

i. Identify commercial and residential properties that are experiencing, or at risk for experiencing, disinvestment and decline. Special emphasis should be placed on the corridors and entrances to Downtown.

j. Establish a targeted infrastructure improvement program with identified funding incentives and administrative assistance to aid in their redevelopment and aesthetic improvement.

k. Adopt and enforce provisions that reduce blighting influences on corridors and in neighborhoods.

Focus Area 2.4 - Preserving Community Heritage

A significant part of a community's identity and attractiveness as a place to visit is its history. In fact, heritage tourism is the fastest growing product type in the United States, with 92.5 million adult Americans visiting a museum or historic site or district while traveling: that's 46 percent of the 199.8 million trips taken over 50 miles from home. The Travel Industry of America reports that this $61.5 billion market grows at an average of 10 percent, while the tourism industry as a whole is growing at a rate between four and six percent.

The City was founded in 1852 as a station on the Illinois Central Railroad, which became a crossroad for what is now U.S. 51 and IL 13. This is where Carbondale's post office and first hotels and commercial businesses were established, which grew

during the late 19th Century and early 20th Century into a sizeable and prominent Downtown. Certainly, the founding of Southern Illinois Normal University and the 1869 charter of Southern Illinois University greatly strengthened and distinguished the growth of the original City area. From here, at a time when automobiles were less prominent and of less influence on town planning, neighborhoods were established on the edges of Downtown. The original neighborhoods were tight-knit and oriented around the train depot and the original Downtown businesses.

This is significant to the character of this community. The traditional development patterns were settled on a dense street grid and have since given way to curvilinear streets and a wholly different design and character of development. While the overall land use patterns and focus have shifted to the corridors and outlying areas, Downtown and the near-Downtown neighborhoods have mostly retained their character, albeit in want for conservation and reinvestment. The character of these areas is realized by the pattern, form, and design of development; recognition of the urban forest by reason of its mature vegetation and intense tree canopy; and the presence of historic and long-standing homes, businesses, and well-recognized public places. As these historic icons are removed or replaced, the area assumes a new meaning and a different character.

The Carbondale Preservation Commission was established in 1989 for the purposes of increasing awareness, providing historic education, and facilitating the process of historic preservation and restoration of locally significant structures. Along with the formation of the Preservation Commission, a Preservation District was added to the Zoning Ordinance. This district establishes the framework for preservation efforts and is intended to:

- Preserve and protect the character and vitality of traditional neighborhoods;
- Preserve the existing housing stock;
- Protect and enhance the attractiveness of the community;
- Prevent future urban blight and reverse current urban deterioration; and
- Encourage private ownership and use.

The City has designated 15 local landmarks on the Carbondale Register of historic Places and an estimated 300 additional properties are included on a list of potentially "architecturally significant" structures. The Preservation Commission has studied the feasibility of establishing historic districts including consideration of the Town Square Historic District, the West Walnut Street Historic District, and the SIU Campus Historic District. To date, these are yet to be locally designated.

In 2002, the Preservation Commission drafted a Preservation Plan that was formally adopted by the City Council. The Preservation Plan outlined the Commission's recommendations for necessary amendments to the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. The recommendations for the Zoning Ordinance were to amend the Preservation District to improve its terminology and user-friendliness, adjust the district designation procedures, and realize the establishment of both historic and neighborhood preservation districts. The district sets out the composition, powers, and duties of the Commission; establishes procedures for nominating and designating landmarks, historic districts, and neighborhood preservation districts; and establishes some limited guidelines for the alteration, construction, and demolition of structures within designated districts. While individual properties have been landmarked, no historic districts have been

designated on the Carbondale Register of Historic Places, and therefore, there has been little influence over recent alterations and removal of historic and locally significant structures. This Comprehensive Plan and its subsequent and intentional implementation provide the opportunity for the community to decide on its path forward.

Strategy 1: Preserve the historic character and integrity of the community.

Rationale

The community is well-organized to facilitate the preservation and restoration of historic landmarks, districts, and neighborhoods. The Preservation Commission is well-established (since 1989) and active. There is a Preservation district in the zoning ordinance that establishes the authority and jurisdiction of the commission; outlines the procedures for the designation of landmarks, historic districts, and neighborhood preservation districts; references design standards and architectural preservation guidelines; and includes regulatory provisions as to the alteration, construction, or demolition of structures in a designated district.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Conduct informational meetings with each of the potential historic and neighborhood preservation districts to discuss their interests and concerns as to their formal designations. Seek assistance from a historic preservation professional, as well as a plan implementation specialist, to provide education as to the different methods and means. Solicit their input toward the drafting of applicable guidelines and/or standards.

b. Establish, through official designation and amendment of the zoning ordinance and map, the foundational elements that apply across all districts. Subsequently, draft the alteration, construction, and demolition standards that may be applicable to each individual district.

Figure 2.13 | **HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

c. Amend the zoning ordinance to accomplish the following:

- Establish general city-wide standards pertaining to the procedures for alteration or demolition of potentially architecturally significant structures whether or not they are officially designated as a landmark or included in a historic district or neighborhood preservation district.
- Clarify the procedures that are individually appropriate for the designation of landmarks, historic districts, and neighborhood preservation districts, as each warrants unique consideration.
- Establish a neighborhood conservation district for stable, intact neighborhoods for which redevelopment is not contemplated during the horizon of this

Plan. This district is for the purpose of protecting the form and design character of neighborhoods while establishing allowances for investment and reinvestment. This district would protect the form of development, which may be supplemented by designation as a neighborhood preservation district to retain the historic structural and aesthetic integrity of individual structures.

d. Conduct a thorough review and critique of the 1996 Architectural Preservation Guidelines and, subsequently, update and codify them into the zoning ordinance. Where appropriate and applicable, seek to develop definitive standards rather than guidelines.

e. Upon designation, strengthen the organization of historic and neighborhood preservation districts through a centralized and official historic preservation organization for which technical preservation assistance may be offered and resources may be available. In this way, a professional staff person may serve as an advocate for preservation efforts who may provide assistance to owners in complying with the procedures and preservation standards.

f. Conduct an examination of the zoning ordinance and building code to correct any unintended impediments to rehabilitation, redevelopment, and/or preservation.

g. Publish educational resources to make information readily available as to appropriate preservation and modification techniques and the use of appropriate materials to allow neighborhoods to be historically reclaimed.

HERITAGE TREE

A Heritage tree is a tree that - because of its age, size, type, historical association or horticultural value – is of special importance to the City.

h. Supplement the materials already provided on the City's website to include other historic preservation library materials, including those outlined in The Carbondale Historic Preservation Plan.

i. Take steps to protect, preserve, and restore the urban forest, particularly in the older, well-established neighborhoods. This may include a preservation ordinance for heritage trees and/or tree protection requirements.

j. Continue to offer financial assistance for property owners through the façade rehabilitation program (Carbondale Main Street) to facilitate improvement of historic buildings. Also, seek to identify or create a source of funding to provide grant or loan assistance in preservation and restoration efforts.

Strategy 2: Redevelop Town Square

Rationale

Town Square is the site of the original town settled along the Illinois Central Railroad. Locally and historically significant buildings including The Dunaway Block and the F.A. Prickett Building, along with the Town Square Pavilion, remain (see **Figure 2.13, Historic Properties**). The recent demolition of the Tuscan Lodge changed – at least in the near term – the traditional fabric of this historically significant area. Near the same time, several other buildings on the east side of Washington Street, both north and south of E. Main Street, were removed, opening great new opportunities for returning Town Square to its glory days. Its location serves as a gateway to Downtown and its proximity to the railroad affords great opportunity.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Conduct a small area plan for Town Square, with boundaries extending from Oak Street on the north to Walnut Street on the south and from Illinois Avenue to Marion Street on the west and east, respectively. The purpose of the plan is to conceptualize its redevelopment as means for drafting standards to ensure an urban character.

b. Consider expansion of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to supplement the incentives available through the Enterprise Zone.

c. Evaluate the feasibility of installing permanent facilities necessary to support the operations of the farmer's market within the parking lot adjacent to the railroad and north of E. Main Street. An alternate site would be south of E. Main Street.

d. Transition the redevelopment with the adjacent businesses and neighborhoods through extended public improvements, on-street parking restrictions, and standards for rear elevations, buffering of loading and service areas, and light and noise.

Focus Area 2.5 - Enhanced Community Character

Carbondale is settled on an open landscape and nestled amongst a beautiful natural environment. Its location and environmental juxtaposition contributes to its macro-character – that is, its identity and recognition in a regional context. Within the community, defined here to include the 1.5 mile extraterritorial jurisdiction, different neighborhoods and areas exhibit their own micro-character. The differentiation of micro-character is due to: 1) the integration and design of the natural environment; 2) the patterns and form of development; and 3) the aesthetic and sense of place by way of amenities and the characteristics of urban design. The proximity of these areas and districts to one another and to the primary corridors is what forms the community's character.

The term community character relates to how the community is viewed by visitors and passers-by (at the macro-scale), as well as (at the micro-scale) its contextual and functional relationships between districts and areas. In short, it relates to the compatibility between adjacent uses.

As a University community that is also a regional retail, medical, and cultural hub, Carbondale has a broad range of uses and development types. For instance, there are more, larger-scale and greater-intensity, multiple-family developments than is common among comparably sized communities. For this reason, there are greater differences in intensities between adjacent and nearby uses, which, in turn, sometimes raises concerns of land use compatibility. This greatly affects values and community livability.

The City's zoning ordinance is based on the use of land, meaning that the delineation of zoning districts is driven by lists of permitted, conditional, and special uses, as well as building height and lot area standards. In the case of the residential districts, the densities are determined by a minimum lot size. Other than building heights and setbacks in the standard districts (excluding planned developments), there are no other standards that affect decisions as to minimum or larger lots, amount of open space, placement of garages and lot access, on-site parking, etc. As a result, the character of neighborhoods in the same zoning district, which are each allowed by-right, may be much different. The outcome is commonly either uniformity (or

monotony by reason of equal lot sizes and identical setbacks) or, in many cases, undesirable variability.

The character of the commercial districts is due to their design. For instance, retail uses including stores and restaurants are allowed downtown (Primary Business District, BPR) and along Main Street near the mall (Secondary Business, SB), although both reflect a very different character (see **Figure 2.14, Use and Character**). Likewise, whether a building is located adjacent to or set back from the street, or has moderate or no open space and landscaping, a different character may be exhibited. Therefore, if the community desires to enhance its appearance and change its character, a refocusing and restructuring of the zoning districts is necessary.

The role of the natural environment and the use of open space in the design of development are telling of the character. While the pattern – and even use or form – of development may change, its character may remain the same. This is to say, by way of example, that smaller lots that are surrounded by open space may be compatible and of the same character as larger lots (with less open space) by reason of comparable densities and increased buffering and separation from abutting or adjacent developments. This is essentially the intent of the land use intensity system for planned developments (which may be greatly simplified and more effective).

Figure 2.14 | **USE AND CHARACTER**

While the use is the same, their context and character are much different. Land use has little influence on character, as exhibited by these photos.

Through the course of the initial phase of public involvement, residents made known their views of the City and its character, as well as the designs of sites, buildings, and neighborhoods. They spoke of a lack of green space in development, preserving natural character, protecting environmental resources, Downtown and community aesthetics, auto-centric design, and property maintenance, among other references to their perspectives of the community. While these concerns must be balanced with those of economic development and property interests, this Plan and its implementation offer the opportunity to re-evaluate policies and practices and make reasonable adjustments to the current approaches and standards.

Strategy 1: Refocus the zoning ordinance to emphasize the character and form of development in appropriate zoning districts.

Rationale

The City's zoning ordinance includes many of the elements necessary to achieve good development outcomes. However, there are many opportunities to repurpose and recalibrate appropriate zoning districts to achieve the intended character of development without placing as much emphasis on land use. While use should remain a secondary consideration, the form and design of development may be more important if the City is to achieve enhanced character.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Revise the district purpose statements to define the intended character of the district, rather than general use types.

b. Recalibrate and consolidate, where possible, each of the existing districts. Revise the dimensional standards to produce the intended character. For instance, many of the districts have the same setbacks although the use types and densities are quite different. The dimensions should be changed accordingly.

c. Review and revise the lists of permitted and special uses in each district. Include development and performance standards that relate to the district character.

d. Adopt a housing palette that includes the dimensional standards for a variety of housing types. As a by-right planned development option, allow mixed housing types subject to district density restrictions and appropriate buffering.

e. Replace the land use intensity system with applicable performance standards in each district. The intent may be retained only with much simpler standards that achieve better quality outcomes.

f. For the purpose of procedural streamlining and to better focus the appropriate locations of uses, restrict the types and numbers of allowable special uses. For those uses with performance standards, make them a limited use whereby they are conditionally permitted subject to the standards.

Figure 2.15 | **ATTACHED HOUSING DESIGN CONCEPT**

Multiple-family design standards provide certainty to the neighborhood since there are specific standards included in the zoning ordinance.

g. Amend the current bufferyard requirements to tie them to the character of development, with variations as to their width, opacity, and means of buffering based on the density (residential) or intensity (nonresidential) of development. In this way, the buffers are commensurate with the impacts between abutting developments.

Strategy 2: Enhance the appearance of development and the compatibility between districts.

Rationale

The appearance of the City is, perhaps, the single most evident glimpse of the City's development standards and its pro-activeness. As the saying goes, you don't get a second chance to make a good first impression. The perceptions of the community are largely driven by the physical environment. As a result, decisions are made to live, work, or shop here; to invest in the community; or whether to return for another visit. For this reason, the quality of development is essential to the community's ongoing and future success. While many good standards are already in place, there are warranted changes and improved provisions to enhance the appearance of the City's districts and corridors and the compatibility between them.

Actions and Initiatives

a. Consider embellished gateway treatments with more significant monuments, landscaping, and lighting at the locations of greatest visibility, such as the community gateways along U.S. 51 and IL 13.

b. Integrate gateway and other street enhancements including lighting, signage, landscaping, street furniture, and paths into community investment projects. Enhancements may include pavement colors and patterns at intersections, crosswalk textures (particularly in and around Downtown), ornamental street fixtures (signal poles and mast arms), unique signage, green space, land contouring, street trees, and pedestrian paths and amenities. Coordination with IDOT will be required along state routes.

c. Require plantings along all parking and vehicular areas with frontage adjacent to public street rights-of-way, as well as major entrance drives. This screening may include shrubbery, earthen berms, walls, or a combination thereof.

d. Amend the zoning ordinance to require that walls and "sight-proof" fences be complemented by landscaping to soften the buffer between adjacent uses. In some instances, fences may be replaced by berms and a landscape buffer, which may enhance their effectiveness and appearance.

e. Require site design standards for temporary uses. Specify the percentage of site area that may be used for these uses and the display of outdoor merchandise, as well as their location on the site, means of defining the space, and the height of stacked materials, among other applicable requirements.

f. Establish design standards for the NB, Neighborhood Business, district. This district and the other business districts have different intents, yet they are mostly similar in their uses and bulk standards.

g. Prepare and adopt design standards for multiple-family developments as conceptually illustrated in **Figure 2.15, Attached Housing Design Concept**. These design standards should include building and parking lot siting and proximity to adjacent properties, variable building heights and façade setbacks, sustainable building and roofing materials, site lighting, landscaping and screening, and other applicable standards.

h. Establish industrial development standards that differentiate between those that are on the periphery and in public view and those within the interior of an industrial park. Standards relating to building façade enhancements, blank walls, building materials, and screening of outdoor storage areas should apply to those within public view, with lesser standards for those generally out of the public view.

i. Rewrite the sign regulations to restrict the number of signs, require a master sign plan for multi-tenant developments, establish clearer electronic message board standards related to animations, revise regulations pursuant to temporary and portable signs, and enumerate more definitive standards for the removal of nonconforming signs.

j. Strengthen and clarify enforcement language in the zoning ordinance relating to issues such as pedestrian and bicycle compatibility with parking lot design. The bike parking standards can be improved to include best practices in bike parking design, location, and access. The parking lot design standards should include pedestrian accessways and crosswalks that lead to the main entrance.

k. Continue to ensure that developments are accessible to people of all disabilities. This includes compliance with the Illinois Accessibility Code.

2.5 Future Land Use and Urban Design: Plan and Policies

The essence of land use planning is a recognition that Carbondale does not have to wait and react to growth and development. Rather, it can determine where growth will occur and what character this new development will reflect. Through active community support, this Plan will ensure that development meets certain standards and, thus, contributes to achieving the desired pattern of development and community character.

Carbondale Future Land Use Plan

As a guide for land development and public improvements, the Plan depicted in **Map 2.6, Future Land Use Plan**, captures and incorporates into the City's vision, the community's values regarding how, when, and where the City will grow over the course of the next two decades. This is significant since the findings and recommendations contained in this Plan provide the basis for the City's development ordinances as the primary tools to implement this Plan.

2.6 Implementation: Prudent Use of Development Regulations

Directly associated with the implementation of this Plan is the enactment of appropriate incentives, standards, and regulations to ensure compliance with the City's policies and overall community vision. While regulations impose certain restrictions on the use of land, in the interest of all persons and the community as a whole, they are an essential component for realizing many of the values and priorities expressed by individuals and groups during this planning process. Regulations that are enacted must be reasonable, fair, and equally applied – and

effective in achieving a specific public purpose. There must also be diligence in their enforcement so as to "maintain a level playing field" and protect the interests of all persons and not just those who are nearby or adjacent to the use.

There are a variety of methods available to enact control and, thus, manage development in a responsible manner. The approach taken is fully in the hands of the community and its leadership. While there are traditional means that are common among other communities, there are also creative variations that can be customized to address the specific issues and desired outcomes of Carbondale. The content of this chapter establishes a firm foundation and policy framework to support whichever implementation strategy the community chooses to pursue.