

Village of Union Grove

Downtown Redevelopment Plan

November 2005

Planning Assistance by:



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I. Opportunity Analysis

Executive Summary

Making the most of the Village's many economic development opportunities will require a proactive stance on the part of Village decision makers. They will need to put into place the legal and institutional mechanisms such as a Community Development Authority (CDA), Tax Increment District (TID), and statutory redevelopment plan(s) to carry out individual redevelopment projects, enter discussions with key property owners, and assist private developers in property acquisition and development. Professional assistance with developer recruitment, developer negotiations, project review and execution may also be needed.

Assets to be Leveraged

- Quality schools
- Small town setting
- Central location and access
- Proximity to regional attractions via a "Rustic Road"
- Historic building stock
- Affordable housing
- Wedding business cluster

Key Opportunities

- Infill development of several underutilized downtown sites.
- Ability to evolve the Highways 11 and 45 intersection into a "four corners" mixed-use district.
- Co-market with Racine County Fairgrounds, Great Lakes Dragaway, Bong Recreation area.
- Expanded programming of the fairgrounds.
- Connect regional bike trail to/through downtown, and the fairgrounds.
- Involved and civic-minded banking and real estate communities.
- Annexation/expansion potential.
- Ability to grow the wedding business cluster and spin-off businesses.
- Ability to network with RCEDC, CATI and other government and private entities.

The Bigger Picture

Many of the Village's opportunities stem from its bucolic setting in central Racine County and the quality of life features that are highly sought after by both families as well as businesses concerned about employee retention and housing affordability. By welcoming new businesses and residential growth, it is critical that the Village work to protect the very features that have and will attract these families and businesses in the first place, and that it carefully manages new development.

Recommended policies:

Historic Main Street

Encourage historically appropriate restorations of downtown buildings and require that new infill projects also adhere to these precedents.

Village in the County

New development will invariably be attracted to the Highways 45 and 11 corridors. It is important that the Village demand compact, mixed-use development that protects the Village's green borders and prevents these corridors from becoming "stripped out" with drive-up commercial uses. The Village should begin discussions soon with surrounding jurisdictions on boundary and annexation issues. Zoning should be updated.

Lifecycle/Lifestyle Housing

The addition of new downtown housing will be a key ingredient of improving the overall business climate there. The Village should seek a balance of housing types including quality multi-family and retirement

housing at various price levels that would have easy access to downtown services and provide more housing options for local households and seniors.

New Employment and Tax Base

The Village's existing business park is awkwardly sited and has limited expansion capacity. A new business park, with higher design standards, should be master-planned for the Village's east end. The Village should work with RCEDC and CATI to market this business park, and connect it with the support services provided by these entities.

Public Entrepreneurism

Quality development and new jobs are unlikely to fall into the Village's lap. The Village and the Chamber of Commerce should step up its co-marketing efforts with the County, RCEDC, the County Fairgrounds, the Great Lakes Dragaway and other communities on the Highway 11 "Rustic Road" corridor. The Village must also involve itself in the local real estate market by acquiring land for redevelopment and assisting private developers. Consideration should also be given to establishing new public/private businesses such as a farmer's market, or co-op.

Opportunity Driven Redevelopment

A number of properties in the Village could and should be used for "higher and better" uses; however the Village will not be able to take on multiple projects at once. Instead, the Village should make its long term intentions known through discussions with key property owners, developing land use plans, identifying potential relocation sites, changing the zoning to comport with the ultimately desired uses, and purchasing and land banking key properties when they become available.

Introduction

This document examines opportunities for new commercial development in the Village of Union Grove. It includes initial implementation steps to assist the Village with redevelopment. The Opportunity Analysis develops “big picture” ideas that are inspired both by the community’s present assets and by unrealized potentials identified in part through consultation with area stakeholders and experts. Preparation of this Opportunity Analysis also included consideration of the unique geography, history, economics, demographics, transportation systems, organizations, and stakeholders in the community. It is designed to take a fresh look at the community to identify the most effective combinations of community attributes to serve as catalysts for economic development.

In order to understand the current conditions research activities included:

- Review of the Village of Union Grove/Town of Yorkville Comprehensive Plan, the 2004 Racine County Strategic Economic Development Plan, the Village of Union Grove Zoning Ordinance, and the 2003 Park and Open Space Plan for the Village of Union Grove.
- Research of the regional economic landscape in order to develop a macro view of the region and the Village’s potential role in it. Research included stakeholder interviews and a business/property owner focus group.
- Visual survey of Union Grove site and building conditions and development suitability, consideration of downtown infill and rehabilitation sites.

Community Profile

The Village of Union Grove is a community of approximately 4,322 residents located about 15 miles from Racine and the shores of Lake Michigan, 30 miles from downtown Milwaukee, and 70 miles from downtown Chicago.

The following demographic data, from 1990 and 2000 Census data, shows the demographic profile of the Village, as well as some of the changes experienced in the community in the past decade.

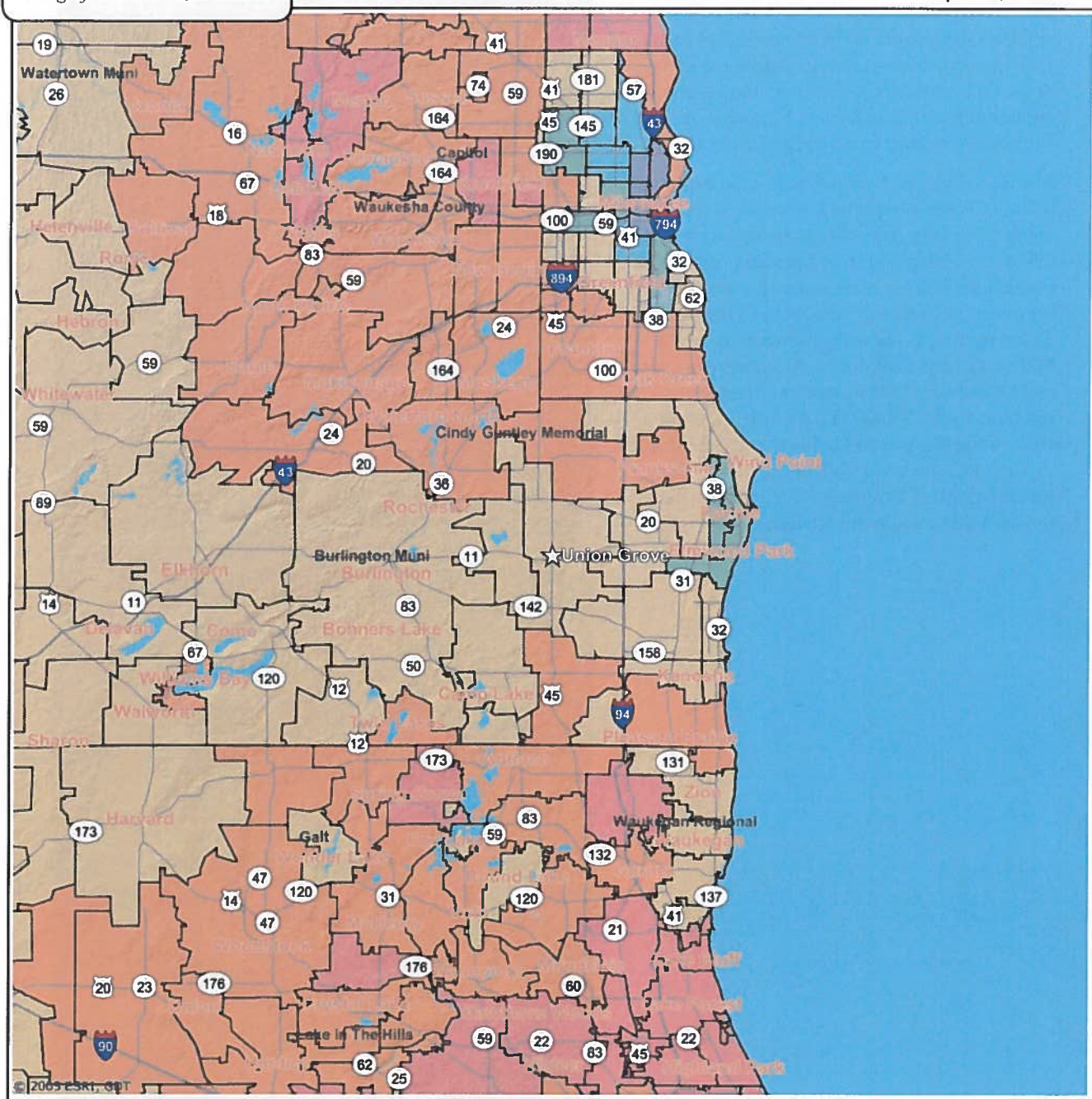
Union Grove	1990 Census	2000 Census	U.S. 2000
Total Population	3,669	4,322	
Total Households	1,289	1,631	
Median Age (Most decrease seen in age group 20-39 years)	32.2	36.5	35.3
Median HH Income	\$31,916	\$52,885	\$41,994
Median HH Owner’s Value (in 1999 Dollars)	\$80,305	\$120,645	\$119,600
Population 25+ by educational attainment: Bachelor’s Degree	8.5%	13.0%	24.4%

Union Grove is within a narrow band of affordable housing along the I-94 corridor. To the north and south housing is more expensive. This affordability component is an important feature for attracting new families and empty nesters to the community.

Recognition of the increasing median age in the community is also important for redevelopment planning. As the community ages Union Grove should plan for the transition of individuals from single family homes to condos or assisted living facilities.

Village of Union Grove, Wisconsin

April 15, 2005



by ZIP

- \$0 - \$55,300
- \$55,301 - \$75,000
- \$75,001 - \$95,100
- \$95,101 - \$138,300
- \$138,301 - \$200,000
- \$200,001 - \$1,000,000



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The average commute time for Union Grove residents, based on 2000 Census data, is between 1-23 minutes. Most residents who leave their homes for work either commute to neighboring communities such as Racine, Kenosha, or Burlington, or they work within Union Grove.

The desirability of Union Grove as a community is largely based on its small town, "town in the country" setting. The Village, while just 5 miles off of the I-94 corridor, is a genuine rural community with an authentic main street, quality housing stock and respected school district. These factors, along with its proximity to the Midwest's major employment centers of Chicago and Milwaukee, will continue to draw new residents to the Village. To provide a snapshot view of the lifestyle and consumer characteristics of Union Grove's population, ESRI Business Information's "Community Tapestry" analysis for the Village is provided below.

Community Tapestry of Union Grove

ESRI Business Information Solutions' Community Tapestry segmentation system classifies U.S. neighborhoods into 65 market segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition from 2000 Census data. Segments are combined to identify Life Mode summary groups with similar consumption and demographic patterns.

Union Grove 2004: Tapestry Groups in Ranked Order:

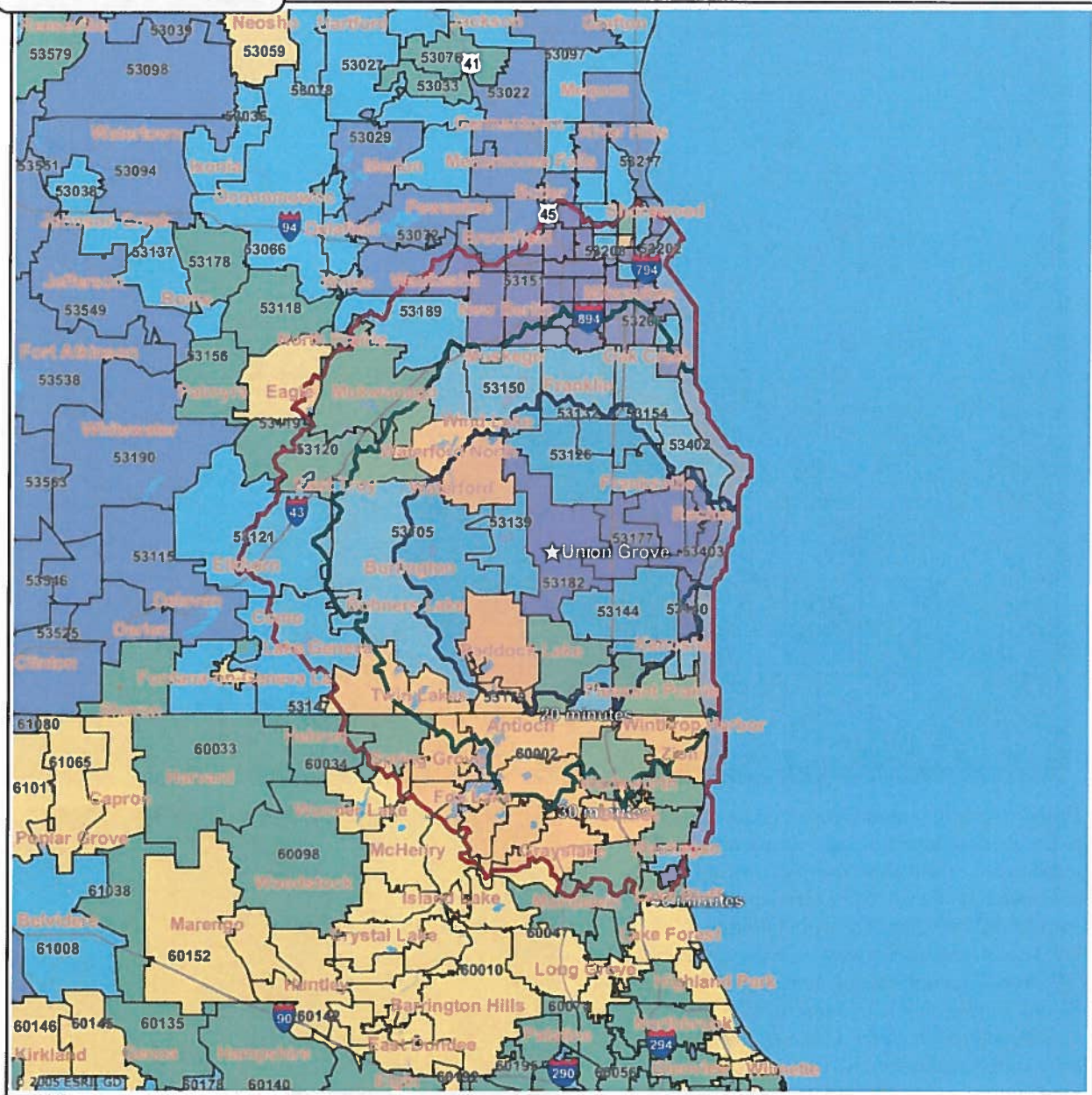
- 40.9% Green Acres** – Country living, upscale market on developing fringe areas, mostly in Midwest, generally blue collar baby boomers with children 6-17 years of age. Median household income of \$61,200 and median home value of \$168,000 are high compared to that of the United States.
- 39.5% Main Street, USA** – Residents profile the American population. Families with a growing mix of single households (household size 2.51) median age of 36 years, middle income with median of \$50,000. They are suburbanite/small town homeowners that take an active role in the community, and live in older single family homes with a market value of \$165,000.
- 10.5% Midland Crowd** – The largest Tapestry market, and the largest market in growing U.S. rural communities. Similar to the median nationwide, with a median age of 36 years and average family size of 3.1. Median household income of \$47,000 (just below U.S. median \$48,100). Neighborhoods are located mainly in rural areas.
- 8.9% Exurbanites** – Open areas with affluence define these neighborhoods and the resident households. Homeowners are older, primarily empty nesters, professionally employed, with many residents working from home. Median household income more than \$80,000, and median home value approximately \$235,000.
- 0.1% Sophisticated Squires** – Residents enjoy cultured country living in newer home developments with low density and a median value of more than \$214,000. These urban escapees are primarily families with children. College-educated, professionally employed and commute to maintain their semi-rural lifestyle.

TRAVEL TIME TO WORK

Village of Union Grove, Wisconsin

2000 Average Travel Time to Work for Workers 16+ Not Home by ZIP Code

April 19, 2005



2000 Average Travel Time to Work for Workers 16+ Not Home

by ZIP Code

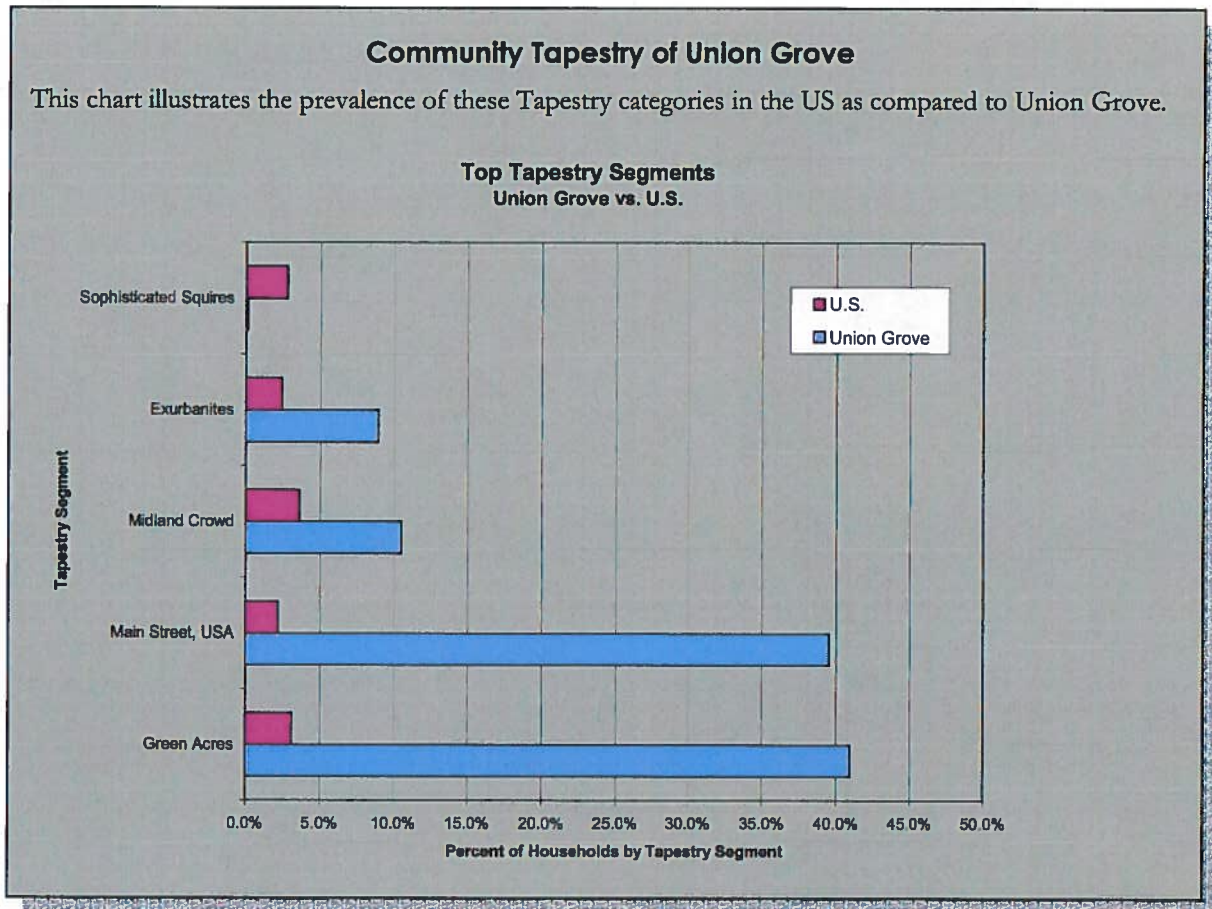
- 30 - 40
- 26 - 30
- 23 - 26
- 0 - 23

Drive Times

- 20 Minute
- 30 Minute
- 40 Minute

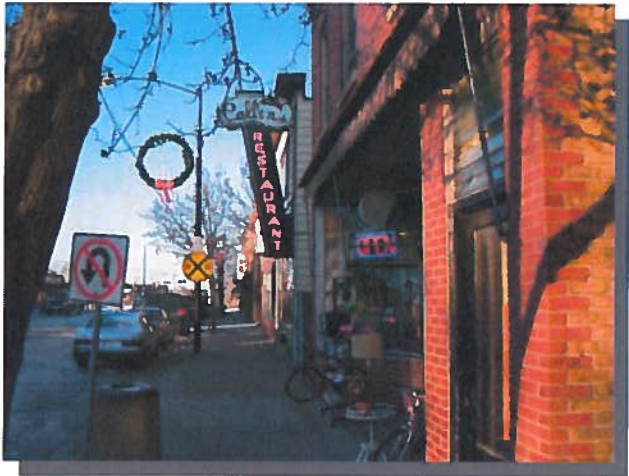


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From its origin, Union Grove's economy was primarily dominated by agricultural activity. The importance of this industry to the community is evidenced by the extensive farmland that still surrounds the Village today. In addition, Union Grove has a manufacturing base that reflects the I-94 corridor manufacturing economy predominant in Racine County and southeastern Wisconsin. The continued growth of the I-94 economy will increasingly make Union Grove an attractive location for new residential and business growth.

According to the Union Grove/Yorkville Comprehensive Plan, during the 1990s, the planning area experienced higher rates of population growth than the region or the county, and envisioned population growth rates for the planning area are slightly higher than those of the region and Racine County. Therefore, it is evident the Village of Union Grove will continue to face increasing growth pressures in the coming years. New residents bring new tax revenue to help support Village infrastructure and operating expenses, and can bring new jobs and non-residential tax base with them. Increased population also expands the market for new restaurants and other commercial businesses that may be desired in the Village. This period of expansion provides an opportunity for the community to shape its growth, to plan how and where new residential and commercial areas should develop in a cohesive manner.



Regional Assets

- **Location.** Union Grove's location is within the center of the Midwest's band of major urban development from Chicago to Milwaukee. This provides a range of opportunities for the community and commuters to these employment centers. Tremendous access to regional and national destinations is provided via multiple modes of transit.

The community is built around two regional highways. Traversing Union Grove north to south is US Highway 45 (Highway 45), also known as Main Street in downtown Union Grove. From east to west through Union Grove is State Trunk Highway 11 (Highway 11), also known as 15th Avenue in Union Grove. Average daily traffic volume through Union Grove via Highways 11 and 45 has been estimated at 7,000 and 3,500 per day respectively. In addition, Union Grove has ready access to all major types of transportation and options for the movement of people and materials, including rail, air, water, and ground transportation.

- **Economy/Economic Development.** In addition to its location within the region, Union Grove benefits from economic assets of the region. Along the I-94 corridor, and within Racine County in the communities of Burlington, Mt. Pleasant, Caledonia, Sturtevant and the City of Racine, economic revitalization continues to occur, bringing improved infrastructure, amenities, and new prosperity to these communities. Union Grove is in a position to take advantage of this dynamic economic environment and implement a self-guided redevelopment process tailored to local conditions.

Racine County's economic strength has traditionally been in its manufacturing base. While economic prosperity in the manufacturing industry has decreased across the country in recent decades, based on the County's 2004 Economic Development Plan, Racine County has focused its economic development energy on capitalizing on its manufacturing strengths through economic development Initiatives centered on technology and innovation in manufacturing.

The Center for Advanced Technology Innovation (CATI) was formed to implement this economic development strategy, to promote business development, workforce development and technology innovation in southeast Wisconsin. CATI is the result of a partnership among educational institutions, regional business development organizations, local and regional governments, and private industry.

Access to Transportation

Rail:

- **Canadian Pacific Railway** – The Canadian Pacific Railway runs east-west through downtown Union Grove.
- **Chicago Metra** – Union Grove has access to the Chicago Metra commuter rail, with service to downtown Chicago, via the Kenosha station 14 miles away. A 32 mile extension is planned for Chicago's Metra commuter rail line; the extension will run from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee. The line is anticipated to run seven roundtrips each weekday and three a day on weekends.
- **Amtrak** – Amtrak operates seven daily trains the "Hiawatha Service" between Chicago and Milwaukee, with stops along the way in Glenview, IL and nearby Sturtevant, WI. A new rail station has recently been constructed near Milwaukee's General Mitchell Airport and another station is in the early stages of construction at The Renaissance Business Park in Sturtevant, approximately one mile north of the existing Sturtevant station.

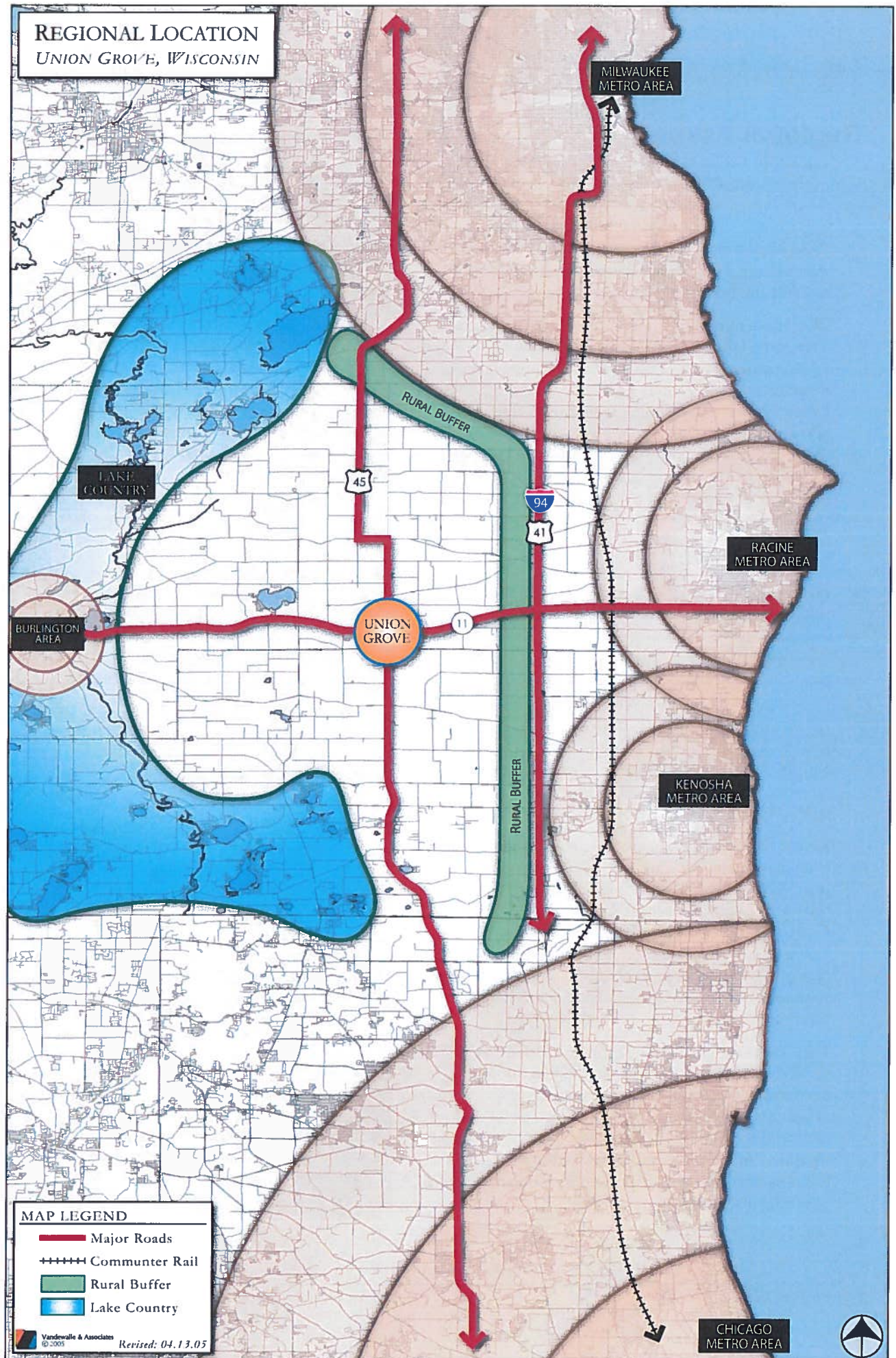
Airports:

- **Milwaukee General Mitchell International Airport** – located 23 miles northeast of Union Grove.
- **Chicago O'Hare International Airport** – located 60 miles southeast of the Village.
- **Sylvania General Aviation Airport** – located about 5 miles east of Union Grove in Sturtevant.

Water and Ground Transportation:

- **Port of Milwaukee** – The nearest port is located 28 miles northeast of Union Grove in Milwaukee.
- **Truck & Warehouse** – Within Racine County there are approximately 105 trucking and warehousing establishments.

REGIONAL LOCATION UNION GROVE, WISCONSIN



MAP LEGEND

- Major Roads
- Commuter Rail
- Rural Buffer
- Lake Country

Primary components of CATI are:

1. **Technology Incubation** – Incubation facility and virtual incubation services for firms to develop and market new technology products and services.
2. **Technology Transfer** – Commercialization of underutilized, orphan and non-core intellectual property through donations from private and public corporations across the U.S.
3. **Education** – In partnership with local colleges, universities and school districts, CATI's educational program provides project-based learning opportunities to students, entrepreneurs, and under/unemployed individuals.

Union Grove's proximity to CATI along Highway 11 allows it to position itself as a receiver area for CATI-spawned businesses, and provides local companies with nearby workforce training services.

- **Educational Institutions.** Educational institutions in southeastern Wisconsin connect training, education, and employment in the region, these include:
 - **University of Wisconsin-Parkside** – As part of the UW system UW-Parkside offers traditional paths of study, as well as a graduate level program with the School of Business & Technology.
 - **Carthage College** – Private liberal arts college located in Kenosha contributes to the advancement of the local economy with innovative programs including a minor course of study in The Entrepreneurial Studies in the Natural Sciences (ESNS) and technology.
 - **Gateway Technical College** – Gateway is southeastern Wisconsin's center for vocational and technical training. Gateway has full-service campuses in Elkhorn, Kenosha, and Racine and offers over 70 career and training options for students.

Educational opportunities at the expanded regional level include: University of Wisconsin campuses in Whitewater, and Milwaukee; Marquette University, Milwaukee School of Engineering, and the Medical College of Wisconsin all located in Metro Milwaukee. Union Grove's access to a significant number of educational institutions and educated workforce is an opportunity for the Village to attract both new residents and businesses to the community.

- **Recreation/Entertainment.** Southeastern Wisconsin is part of Wisconsin's "lake country" which extends both north and south along the western edge of Racine County. Recreational opportunities in the region include: Tichigan Wildlife Refuge, Root River, Lower Fox River, and many recreational lakes. This region is also bordered on the east by Lake Michigan, with recreational opportunities available including boating and fishing among other waterfront activities. Union Grove is geographically situated in between these recreational playgrounds with accessibility to all that they have to offer.

Area Recreation

Bicycle Routes: Racine County has over 117 miles of designated bicycle routes that circle the County with a combination of off-road trails and rural onroad bike routes. Off-road bicycle trails, totaling 17 miles include: the North Shore Trail, the MRK Trail (part of the Wisconsin Rails to Trails), the Burlington Trail, and the Waterford-Wind Lake Trail. In 1970, a 100-mile on-road bicycle route was established; this route (which runs through Union Grove) covers the entire county and identifies many historical and recreational sites along the way.

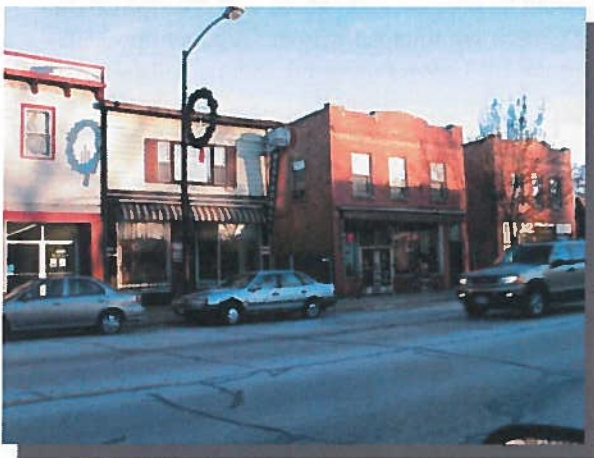
Richard Bong State Recreational Area: In 1974, the State of Wisconsin bought land to create the State's first designated recreation area, Richard Bong State Recreational Area (SRA). Bong SRA is open year-round and includes over 4,500 acres of rolling grassland, savanna, wetlands, and scattered woodland with 41 miles of trail for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, snowshoeing, and dirt bike racing.

Yellowstone Trail: The Yellowstone Trail passes through Racine along Lake Michigan. The Yellowstone Trail, originated in 1912, was the first transcontinental automobile highway in the United States through the northern tier of states from Washington through Massachusetts. Proponents of the new cross-country road marketed it as "A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound." Predating today's standard highway signage, the route was marked by yellow stones.

Great Lakes Dragaway: The Great Lakes Dragaway is located immediately south of the Union Grove village limits, at the Racine/Kenosha County line on Highway KR just past the 69th Drive intersection. Robert Metzler, a local celebrity known as "Broadway Bob," built the quarter mile asphalt track in 1956. Today races continue to be held five days a week from mid-April to November. Ongoing events at the Dragaway include: IHRA Drag Racing, the Summit Summer Series, Stunt Shows, Harley Drags, Real Street Drags, Wild Thrill Shows, Import Wars, Modified Super Stocks, Bugfest, Fun Racing, and a drag race training program. The Great Lakes Dragaway offers fans the opportunity to become competitors and actually race on the drag strip, it holds more events than any other track in the country, and is the longest continuously operating drag race track in the country, currently in its 50th year of operation.

Union Grove Assets

- **Downtown Commercial District.** Union Grove maintains a quaint, family-oriented, small town ambience. The Village is fortunate to have maintained much of its historic downtown commercial district, a compact, mostly intact group of buildings in relatively good condition. Main Street has a historic presence that clearly indicates arrival into downtown Union Grove – this is somewhat of a rarity along the I-94 corridor. While it is apparent the Village of Union Grove has a tremendous asset in its authentic Main Street downtown, there is an ongoing need for an increased level of commercial activity downtown.



- **Economy.** The Village, much like the surrounding communities in southeastern Wisconsin, is home to many manufacturing-based companies including machinery-based firms, distribution centers, and primary metals and products manufacturers. Other industries in Union Grove include health-based organizations, and a number of State of Wisconsin facilities.
- **Education.** Union Grove's school district is wellrespected in the region, an important feature of the community that draws new residents to the Village. The Union Grove School District has one combined elementary and middle school campus at the southern edge of the community and a high school at the northern edge of the community.
- **Recreation/Entertainment.** Union Grove is home to a number of recreational assets including parks, fairgrounds, and access to bike routes that are attractive to residents as well as visitors to the community.

Area Recreation

Racine County Fairgrounds: The Racine County Fairgrounds are located in Union Grove just south of Highway 11 west of Highway 45. The primary use of the Racine County Fairgrounds is the annual Racine County Fair which is held for five days at end of July. Regular features of the fair include grandstand entertainment with truck and tractor pulls, championship rodeos, draft horse pulls, country western music concerts, and a demolition derby. The fairgrounds are used for other events throughout the year including the annual Lions Club chicken barbecue and vintage car show, a circus, a rodeo, consignment auctions, company picnics, gem & mineral and jewelry show, and Fall Harvest Days that features antique tractors and gasoline engines. The proximity of the fairgrounds in Union Grove is an asset to the community, providing a venue for large events and public gatherings, and also an attraction that draws a large number of visitors to the community every year.

Old Settler's Park: A 13-acre county park adjacent to the Racine County Fairgrounds. The park is most often used for family and company picnics throughout the year and the Racine County Agricultural Society uses the park for the duration of the County Fair.

Union Grove Village Parks: In addition to the County Parks within the Village, there are six Village parks offering recreational opportunities including baseball, basketball, soccer, horseshoes, fishing, picnicking, and play areas.

100 Mile On-Road Bike Route: The county-wide 100-mile on-road bike route runs through Union Grove west to east, along Highway C (Spring Street) (crossing Highway 45) and heads south at 59th Drive (crossing Highway 11), resuming its path eastward along Highway KR.

Historic "Burlington-Racine Trail": The historic route that is today's Highway 11 connects Racine to Burlington and all of the communities along the way, including Union Grove situated mid-way between the two towns. The historic Burlington-Racine Trail is part of the heritage tourism connecting Burlington, Waterford, and Bong Recreational Area. This history of this route, and significance to the community of Union Grove was its prominence as the historic "union" of communities along the route which began with the establishment of Union School in Union Grove in the mid 1800s.

Union Grove's Opportunities

Union Grove is within easy reach of southeastern Wisconsin's many assets. Union Grove offers the chance for people to live in a small town yet access the employment, cultural, and entertainment networks available in larger urban areas. The Village is fortunate to have preserved its authentic character as it has grown over the years. The community can expect a continued steady growth as the larger metro areas of southeastern Wisconsin continue to expand and reach outward along the I-94 corridor.

To make the most of this region-wide expansion and still preserve the small town character the Village needs to revitalize its downtown, and carefully manage growth on its edges. The Village should promote compact development consistent in design with the historic neighborhood pattern of Union Grove. In addition, the Village needs to protect its valuable assets, which include the green edges and borders that surround the community.

Therefore, development in Union Grove should focus first on rehabilitation and/or re-use of existing parcels as well as infill development on underutilized sites. The highest redevelopment priority should be given to the historic downtown. Growth along Highways 45 and 11 should be planned carefully as well. To maintain its unique character, the Village should avoid the approval of generic commercial strip development projects—but instead challenge developers to design projects to complement Union Grove's traditional village character.

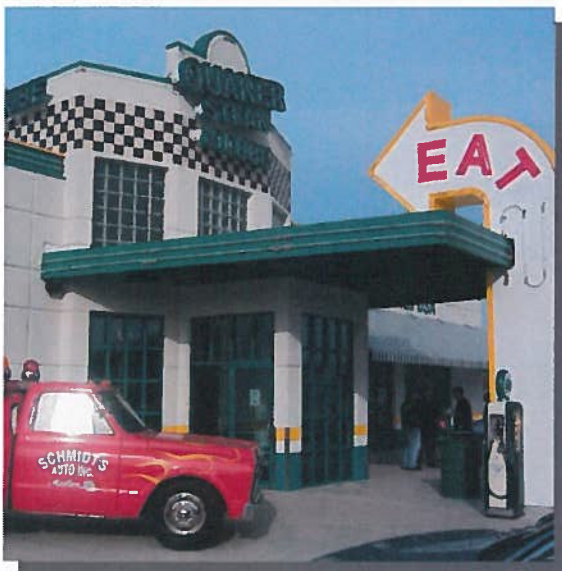
Utilize Current Assets

The following is a summary of Union Grove's primary assets instrumental in redevelopment planning for the community:

- **Geographic Location.** Location in the commuter shed of Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha and the northern suburbs of Chicago, midway between the region's "lake country" and the state's largest center of employment.
- **Active Economy.** The Village of Union Grove is fortunate to have access to a proactive county-wide economic development agency, the Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC). The RCEDC has been successful in promoting catalytic projects in the county. The Village should seize the opportunity to build off of the emerging market for commercial and technology manufacturing space along the I-94 corridor including the Mt. Pleasant business park, CATI, the upcoming Amtrak station in Sturtevant, and Burlington's downtown redevelopment success over the past decade. The Village should increase its effort to network with RCEDC and CATI, and increase its presence in regional promotional materials and events.
- **Authentic Main Street Downtown.** Towns across the U.S. create plans to develop a small town downtown atmosphere orchestrated to look like a downtown or "main street" from years past. Union Grove is fortunate enough to already have what these other towns can only replicate. Union Grove should capitalize on the existing infrastructure on Main Street through revitalization efforts of the downtown business district; in doing so Union Grove will have a town center that local residents will utilize for retail, service, entertainment, and restaurant destinations.



- **Recreation and Regional Bike Routes.** Union Grove has the opportunity to take advantage of its proximity to the many recreational attractions surrounding the Village. Efforts to co-market the Village to visitors of these local and regional attractions would provide additional activity for downtown businesses and result in the expansion of services and commercial uses for the residents of Union Grove.
- **Racine County Fairgrounds.** Proximity of the fairgrounds facility in Union Grove provides a vast amount of opportunity for the community. The Village should coordinate with the Racine County Agricultural Society to better utilize the Racine County Fairgrounds as well as comarket with their current events. Work with Village commercial organizations and leadership to co-market events and downtown businesses, as well as program the underutilized fairground space.
- **Great Lakes Dragaway.** The Great Lakes Dragaway has brought the regional and national spotlight to Union Grove throughout its history. Union Grove should capture the interests of the devoted market the Great Lakes Dragaway brings to Union Grove. Proximity to the race track provides a number of opportunities for co-marketing downtown Union Grove with the Dragaway. In addition, new businesses could be recruited to the area including race and auto-oriented retailers such as NASCAR and Harley Davidson, as well as other branded retailers and complementary businesses including themed restaurants and inns.



Area Recreation

The following events could supplement current fairgrounds programming:



- Farmers' Market with Regional Food Emphasis
- Art and/or Craft Fairs
- Renaissance Fairs
- Flea Markets
- Auction Events
- Equestrian Events
- Music Festivals
- Agricultural Tourism Events- Petting Zoo
- Experimental Vehicle Expositions
- Winter Carnival
- Sleigh Rides
- Dog-Sled Races/Rides
- Ice-Skating/Hockey Rink
- Ice Sculpture Exposition
- Cook-Off Events

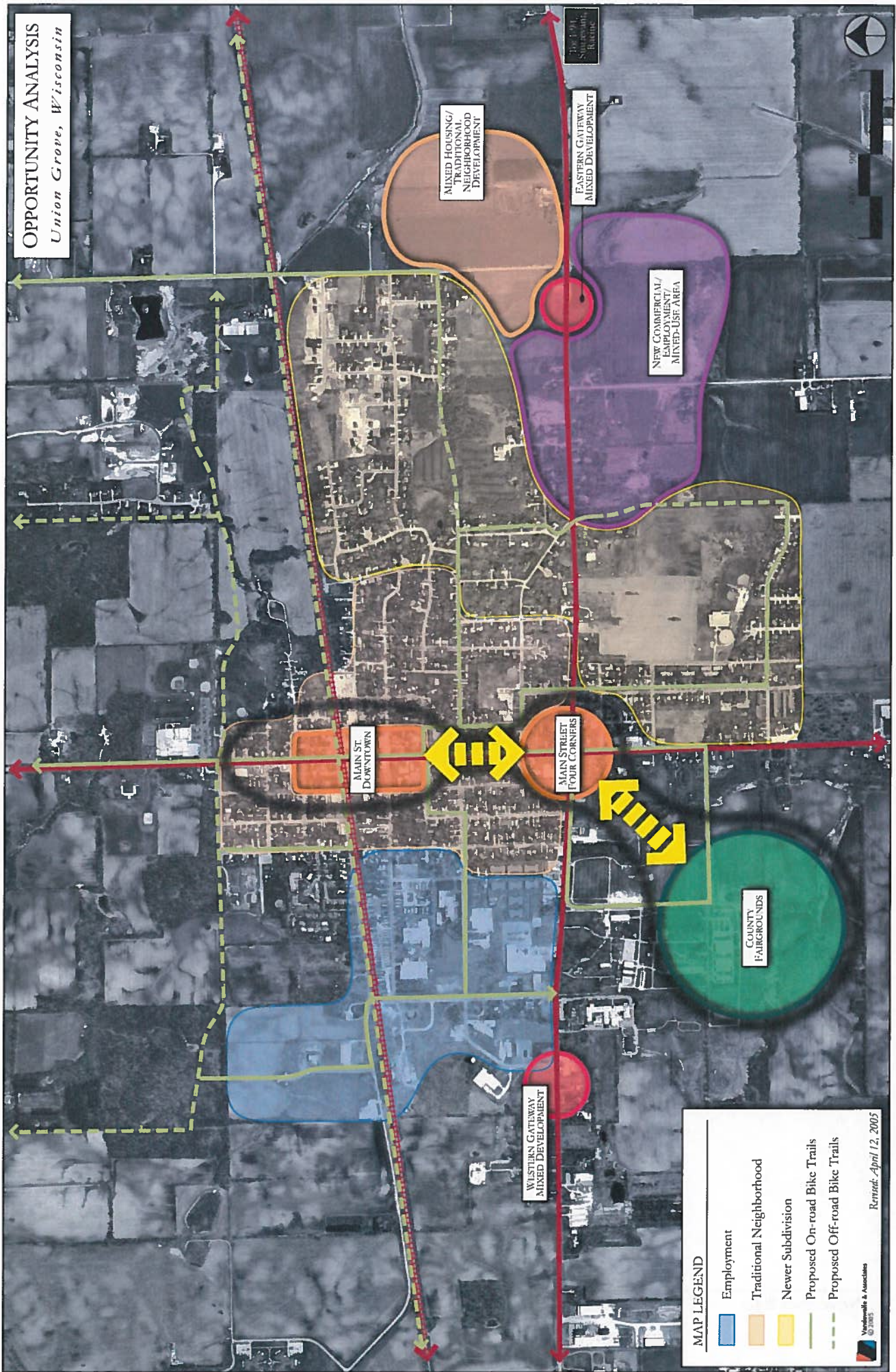
- **Wedding Business Cluster.** Expand the existing wedding business cluster in Union Grove by recruiting additional wedding related businesses and spin-off businesses. In addition, organize marketing efforts among the wedding businesses to increase their visibility in the region.

Wedding Related Spin-off

Additional wedding related and spin-off business in the cluster could include:

- Caterers
- Wedding Planners
- Ceremony & Reception Venues
- Travel Agents
- DJ and Live Musicians
- Stationery
- Videographers
- Limousines
- Carriage Rides
- Inns
- Restaurants
- Spas
- Hairstylists/Salons
- Equipment Rental/Decorations
- Gifts/Novelty Items

OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS Union Grove, Wisconsin



MAP LEGEND

- Employment
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Newer Subdivision
- Proposed On-road Bike Trails
- Proposed Off-road Bike Trails

II. Downtown Revitalization Plan

Redevelopment/Infill Areas

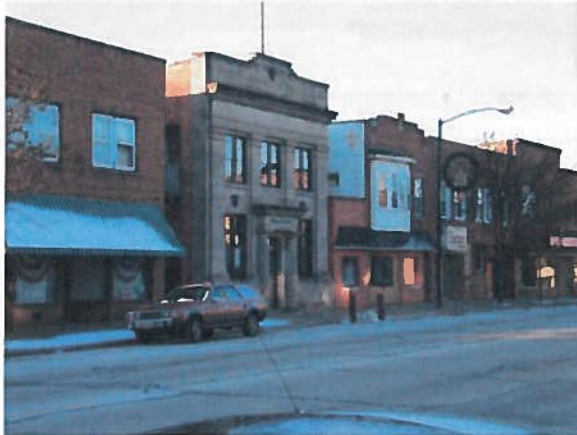
Analysis of Union Grove has led to the recommendation of the four following key redevelopment/infill areas in the Village.

Downtown Revitalization

A key component of a healthy community is a healthy downtown. Union Grove's downtown embodies much of the community's history and serves as one of the community's most important public areas. In spite of this, downtown suffers from a lack of activity and investment. Many storefronts in the downtown commercial district are currently vacant, and others are at risk of becoming vacant as business owners in the Village near retirement. While streetscape and façade improvement would certainly improve the aesthetic appeal of downtown, adding vitality to this area will require more than this. Some proactive steps to revitalize downtown beyond aesthetics might include the creation of a Community Development Authority, a Tax Increment Finance District, and the potential acquisition and redevelopment of properties along the commercial corridor.

Redevelopment/Infill Opportunity Area 1:

Main Street Business District: This is the core commercial area of downtown along Main Street (Highway 45), between 9th and 12th Avenues. The redevelopment strategy should include inducement of reinvestment in downtown properties, physical and programmatically connecting the downtown business district to the Four Corners District and the Racine County Fairgrounds.



Locating New Mixed Use Development

In order to further enhance the quality of life of Union Grove residents and prepare for population growth over time, the Village should first pursue Main Street business district revitalization, followed by development of a master plan for new mixed-use development at key locations on Highways 45 and 11.

The superior access, visibility, and large tracts of land available along these corridors will attract development in coming years. Furthermore, as the Village continues to add new housing the need for additional commercial land will increase. Planning for a mix of uses in redevelopment areas along the corridor will allow the Village to plan growth providing a variety of uses for new and existing neighborhoods. New development should promote walking and biking; and be linked to other neighborhoods and downtown. Without the presence of a quality master plan, development will likely result in an abundance of isolated, car-dependent, commercial strip projects. This type of development results in a great deal of wasted land, diminished roadway capacity, and an erosion of small town identity.

Redevelopment/Infill Opportunity Area 2:

Four Corners Union Grove: Further revitalization of Union Grove should occur at the 'Four Corners' intersection of Highways 11 and 45. This intersection is the original center of town on the Burlington-Racine Trail where the important foundations of the community were once located. A new "town center" has been developing in recent years with the proximity of Community State Bank's headquarters at the southwest corner, and the relocation of the Village Hall to the former Racine-Kenosha Joint County Training School for Teachers Building at the southeast corner of the intersection. Over time this intersection, as a town center, could be expanded through a combination of surgical redevelopment and infill mixed use community-oriented businesses.

**Redevelopment/Infill Opportunity Area 3:**

Eastern Gateway: Located around the intersection of Highway 11 at 69th Drive, this area should include high-quality mixed use development with an emphasis on service commercial uses. Specifically plan to complement recent commercial developments at Highway 11 and 69th Drive. Wayfinding signage should be located at the eastern gateway to indicate points of interest in the Village.

Redevelopment/Infill Opportunity Area 4:

Western Gateway: The western gateway to the Village on Highway 11 near Industrial Park Drive. Redevelopment planning should accentuate the western entrance into Union Grove and provide wayfinding signage to points of interest in the Village. Emphasize routes to surrounding companies and the Union Grove Industrial Park Annex just north of 10th Avenue.

Potential Redevelopment/Infill Sites

Several criteria were used to guide the identification of specific sites in Union Grove as feasible and potential sites to act as catalysts for Union Grove redevelopment. Best locations for redevelopment are those generally situated to:

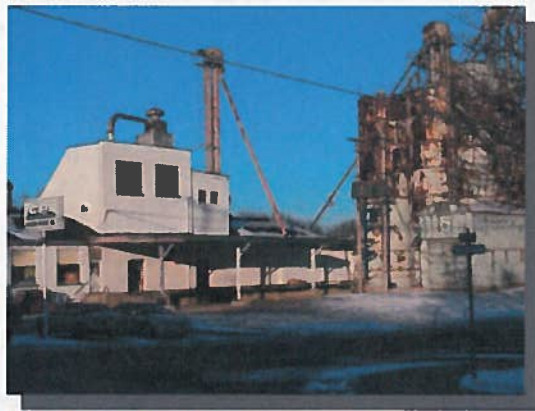
- Help stimulate the redevelopment and infill of marginal or underutilized lands downtown and along key corridors;
- Help preserve the small town authenticity of the Village;
- Draw business into town;
- Contain larger parcels that are already in the Village to minimize the need for multiple annexations and land purchases, and to prevent commercial “strip” development;
- Help establish a direct physical connection between the new commercial uses and downtown to enable mutually supporting activities, land use synergies, and community walkability;
- Minimize conflicts with, and displacement of, existing property owners and land uses;
- Minimize the disturbance of natural features and the breaking up of large tracts of prime farmland;
- Allow secondary points of access to and from new mixed-use districts from the local street network; and
- Establish strong community gateways and compact commercial frontage along Highways 11 and 45 that sets a tone for future development.

Immediate Redevelopment/Infill Opportunities

1. **Mill Site and Old Village Hall:** The most immediate redevelopment site is the 3.1 acre “Mill Site” owned by Cooperative Plus, Inc. (CPI). In addition to the Mill Site, the two parcels (0.6 acre) across the street from the Mill Site contain the former Municipal Building and public works storage space and should be included in redevelopment planning with the Mill Site. Depending on viability for reuse of the buildings at the site, the old Mill could be renovated for use as an open air farmers’ market. If none of the buildings at the site are suitable for reuse, then the redevelopment strategy for the larger site should include clearing of the land and re-parceling with adjacent sites for high quality senior apartments or condominiums.

Another component of this redevelopment site should include street repair to improve pedestrian and auto traffic circulation between Main Street, S. 10th Street and Mill Avenue. Of additional interest near the Mill Site is the historic Union Grove Hotel which is adjacent to the Mill Site at the corner of Main Street and S. 10th Street. The hotel building should be rehabilitated to restore its historic charm and value to the community. Following restoration, the CDA/Village should market the property to developers for re-use as apartments or condominiums with ground floor retail.

Current Site

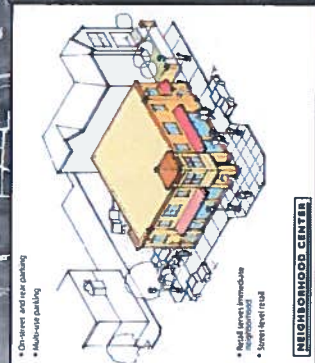
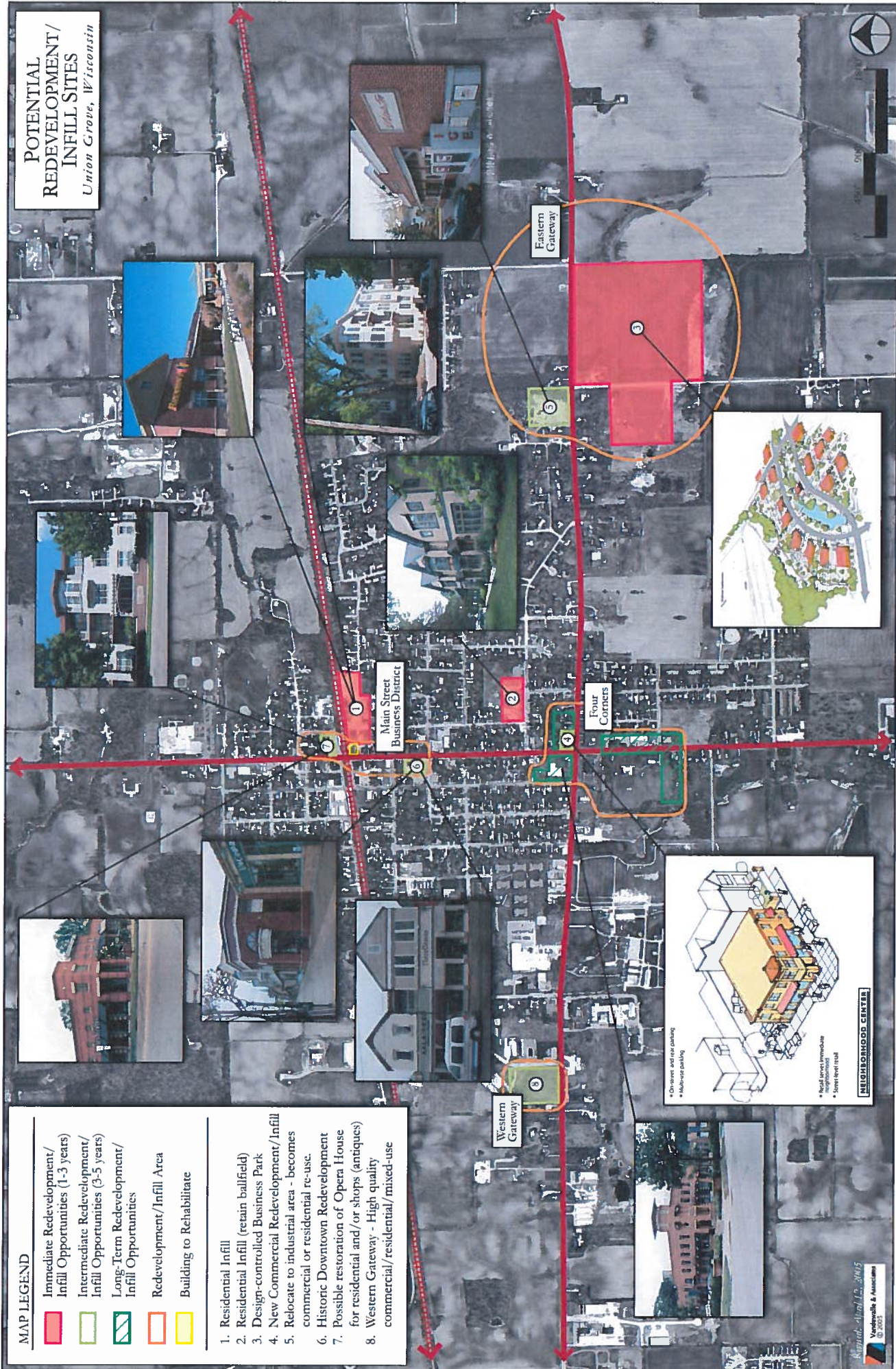


MAP LEGEND

- Immediate Redevelopment/
Infill Opportunities (1-3 years)
- Intermediate Redevelopment/
Infill Opportunities (3-5 years)
- Long-Term Redevelopment/
Infill Opportunities
- Redevelopment/Infill Area
- Building to Rehabilitate

1. Residential Infill
2. Residential Infill (retain bullfield)
3. Design-controlled Business Park
4. New Commercial Redevelopment/Infill
5. Relocate to industrial area - becomes commercial or residential re-use.
6. Historic Downtown Redevelopment
7. Possible restoration of Opera House for residential and/or shops (antiques)
8. Western Gateway - High quality commercial/residential/mixed-use

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT/ INFILL SITES *Union Grove, Wisconsin*

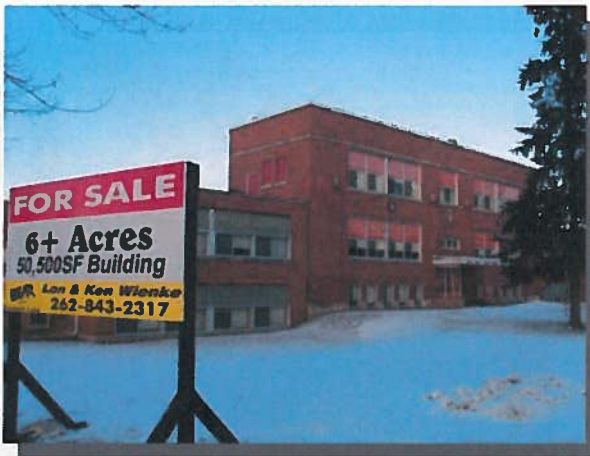


Potential Reconfiguration of Site



2. **Former Elementary School Site:** The former elementary school building is situated on a 2.5 acre parcel at the intersection of State Street and 14th Avenue. Since the building is no longer needed in the Village for educational purposes, the site could be redeveloped for infill housing, such as high quality townhomes. The adjacent 3.5 acres of open space, including the baseball diamond should remain a public park.

Current Site



Potential Reconfiguration of Site



3. **Business Park/Eastern Gateway:** A master plan for the Eastern Gateway Redevelopment Area would include the land south of the Highway 11/67th Drive intersection. The master plan for this area should consider development of a high quality business park at this entry point into the community. Development of a business park at this location requires Village annexation of the property and potential infrastructure improvements for business uses, such as broadband connections.

Potential Reconfiguration of Site



Intermediate Redevelopment/Infill Opportunities

4. **Highways 11/45 Intersection (Northeast Corner):** This intersection, as the focus of the Four Corners Redevelopment Area, is best suited for “town center” uses. The northeast corner of this intersection should be redeveloped for mixed-use commercial, professional office and upper-story residential.

Current Site



Potential Reconfiguration of Site



Current Site: Potential Reconfiguration of Site:

5. **Highway 11/69th Drive Intersection (Northwest Corner):** Union Grove Concrete occupies an important gateway site that would be better used for commercial or residential uses. This business should remain in the Village but should relocate to a location zoned for industrial use.

Potential Reconfiguration of Site



6. **11th Avenue/Main Street Intersection (Northwest Corner):** Located within the Main Street Business District Redevelopment Area, the southern end of this block currently contains a restaurant, vacant lot, former pharmacy building, and a bar. This site should be redeveloped in order to construct mixed-use buildings in a manner consistent in scale and style with the historic buildings of the downtown commercial district, which includes two-story mixed-use buildings.

Current Site**Potential Reconfiguration of Site**

7. **10th Avenue/Main Street Intersection (Northeast Corner):** Located within the Main Street Business District Redevelopment Area, the carwash located on Main Street is an inefficient use of land in the downtown commercial district. The former Opera House property, behind the carwash, could be restored or redeveloped in conjunction with the carwash, providing a total of approximately 0.4 acre for downtown mixed-use development with potential for residential and/or commercial use.

Current Site**Potential Reconfiguration of Site**

8. **Industrial Park Drive/Highway 45 Intersection (Northwest Corner):** Within the Western Gateway Redevelopment Area, this vacant parcel, currently zoned Highway Commercial at the Highway 45 frontage, and Heavy Industrial behind the frontage, should be developed in accordance with a larger master plan for the Western Gateway Redevelopment Area. Planned development should include a high quality mixed-use project, including potentially commercial and residential uses.

Long Term Redevelopment/Infill Opportunities

- **Highways 11 & 45 Intersection (Northwest Corner):** This intersection, as the focus of the Four Corners Redevelopment Area, is best suited for compact “town center” uses and should be rezoned for such. The current uses should be allowed to remain, but not expand, on-site. The car dealership should be encouraged to relocate elsewhere in the area particularly near the intersection of Highways 45 and C. The gas station should be reconfigured to make more efficient use of the property in conjunction with redevelopment of the larger car dealership property.
- **Highways 11/45 Intersection (Northeast Corner):** Also part of the Four Corners Redevelopment Area, this corner in the long term, should expand beyond the corner parcel to create a larger site for mixed uses at the “town center”.
- **East side of Highway 45 south of the Municipal Building:** These properties are located in the southern section of the Four Corners Redevelopment Area. Current uses include residential and highway oriented commercial businesses. These properties should be incorporated into the Four Corners area and redeveloped for compact, mixed use.
- **Vacant Land Surrounding St. Paul’s Lutheran Church:** Proximity to Four Corners intersection calls for better utilization of vacant land surrounding the church. Additional uses at the site would ideally include infill residential development, while allowing sufficient property for long term church expansion.

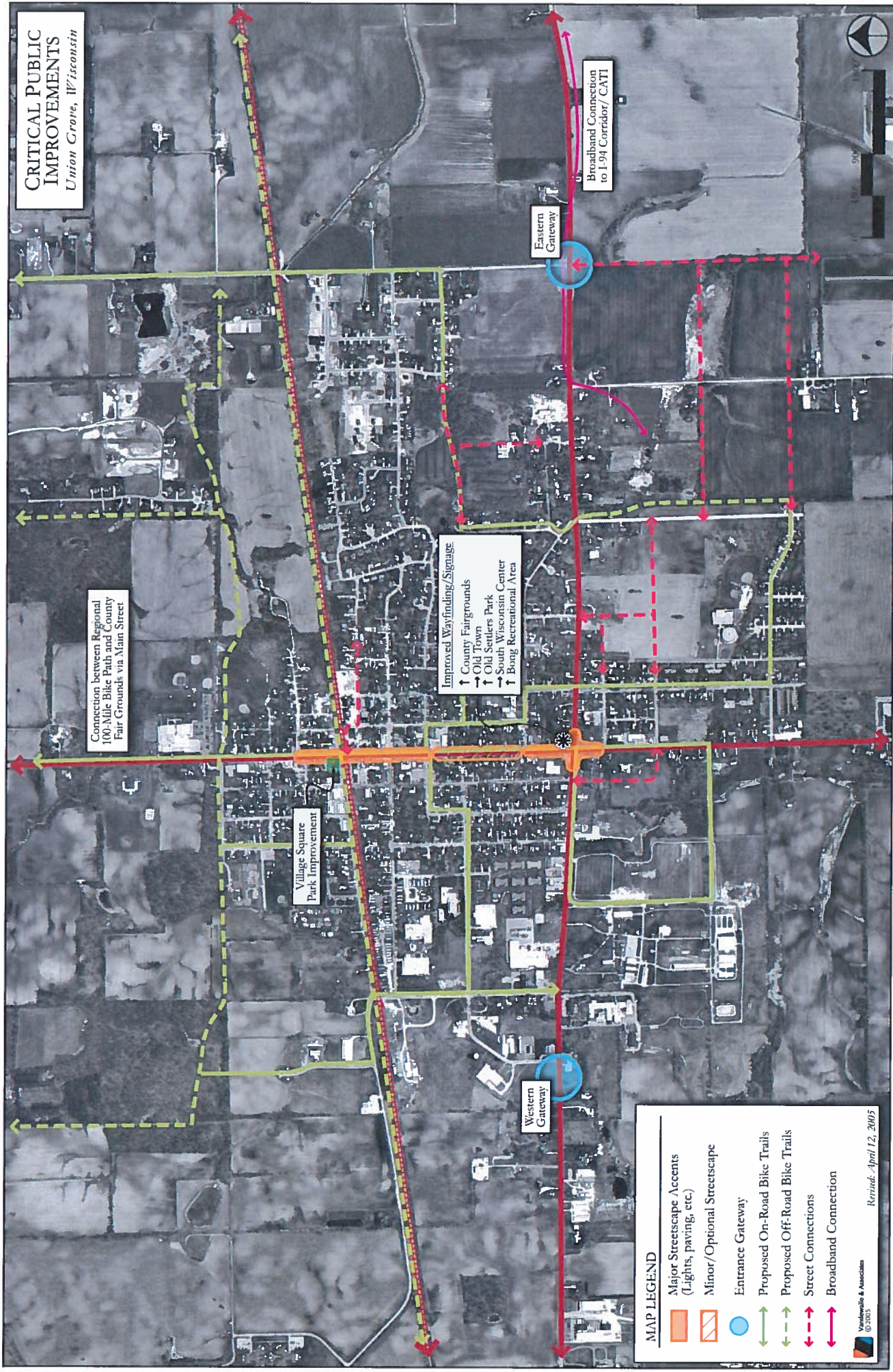
Public Improvements

Overall, implementation of the following public improvements will enhance the quality of life for Union Grove residents and visitors. Furthermore, these public improvements will better coordinate Union Grove's connectivity within the Village, its connectivity to the surrounding communities and local and regional assets.

These improvements will also enhance the business climate in Union Grove.

- **Downtown Connections:** Enhance the visual and physical connections between the Main Street Business district, the Four Corners area, and the Racine County Fairgrounds to create a vibrant downtown Union Grove.
- **Downtown Image and Wayfinding:** Implement a downtown image and wayfinding program to help guide residents and visitors to downtown Union Grove and ensure the easy identification of parking areas and other important downtown features and amenities.
- **Streetscape Improvements:** Create and implement a streetscape plan for the Main Street Business district in order to create an attractive, pedestrian-friendly commercial district that will draw Union Grove residents and visitors to the area. Could extend through the residential areas along Main Street to the Four Corners area.
- **Village Square Park:** Village Square Park is a 1-acre passive open space located in the northwest corner of the 10th and Main Street intersection. Village Square, the annual location for the Village Christmas tree should be used year round for community gathering events and to complement Main Street Business district activities. One concept for a public improvement project at the park entails development of a "splash ground," a public water fountain play area.
- **Western and Eastern Gateways:** Develop significant gateway features to create a distinct feeling of entry into the unique community of Union Grove.
- **Improved Street Connections:** Add connector streets to increase ease of circulation in the Village and promote a traditional street grid in both the developed and developing areas of the Village.
 - **13th Avenue:** create thru street from west to east.
 - **Lincolnwood Road:** Connect north to meet extended 13th Avenue.
 - **71st Drive:** Extend south from Highway 11 and create connector roads to meet 16th Avenue and 17th Avenue to the west.
 - **18th Avenue:** Connect 18th Avenue east to an extended 67th Drive.
 - **Shuman Drive:** Following south extension, extend connections west and east to meet 17th Avenue and new connector streets to the east.
 - **67th Drive:** Extend south at Highway 11 intersection.
- **Bike Trail Connections:** Provide opportunities for recreational transportation throughout the Village, also connecting to surrounding communities, through development of on-road and off-road bike trails in accordance with the 2003 Village of Union Grove Park and Open Space Plan.
- **Broadband Connection:** In conjunction with Redevelopment Site #3, implement infrastructure improvements to provide access to broadband connection for future tenants of the Union Grove Business Park.

CRITICAL PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS Union Grove, Wisconsin



Connection between Regional
100-Mile Bike Path and County
Fair Grounds via Main Street

Village Square
Park Improvement

Improved Wayfinding/Signage
 ↑ County Fairgrounds
 ↑ Old Town
 ↑ Old Settlers Park
 ↑ South Wisconsin Center
 ↑ Bong Recreational Area

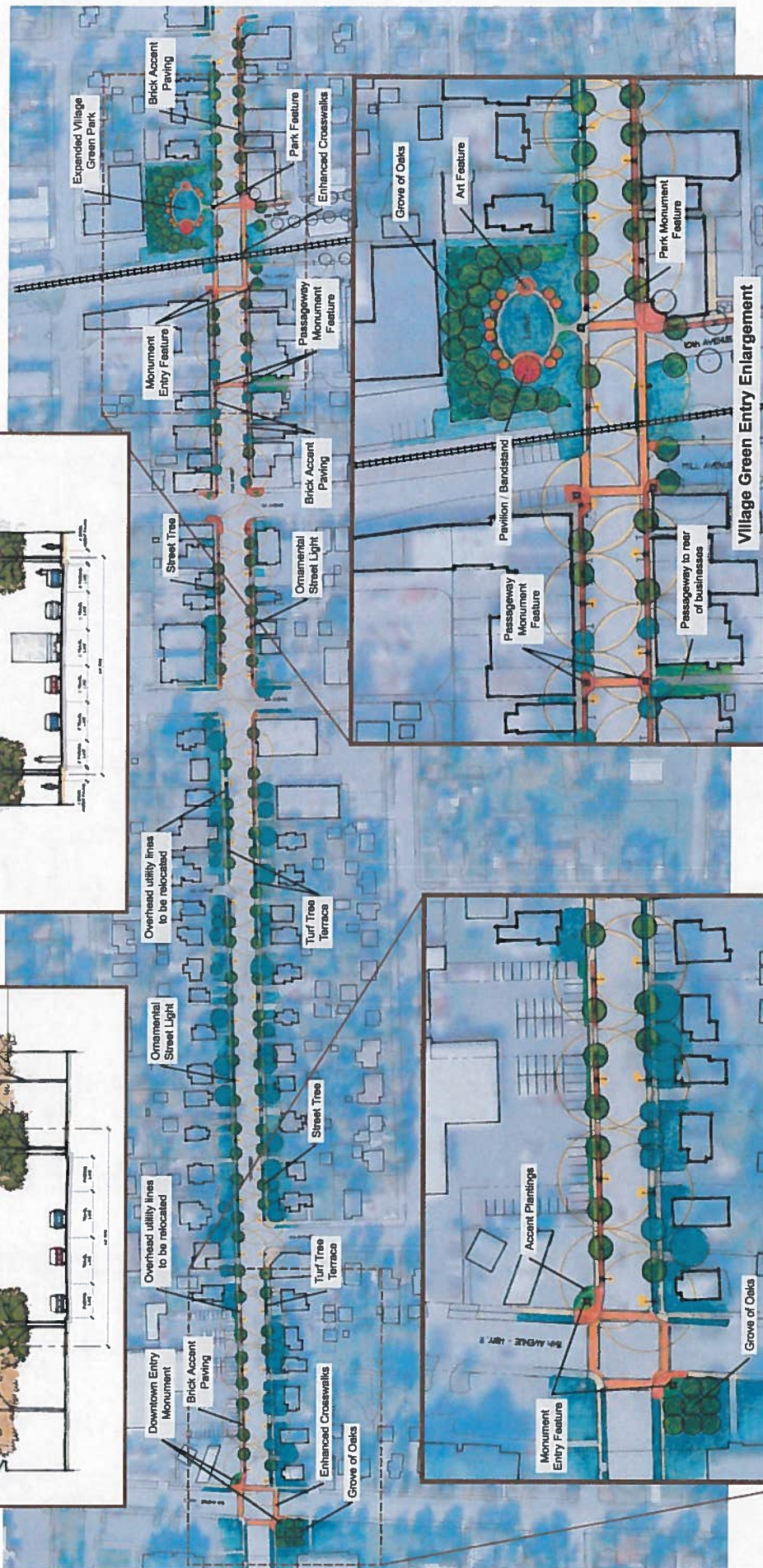
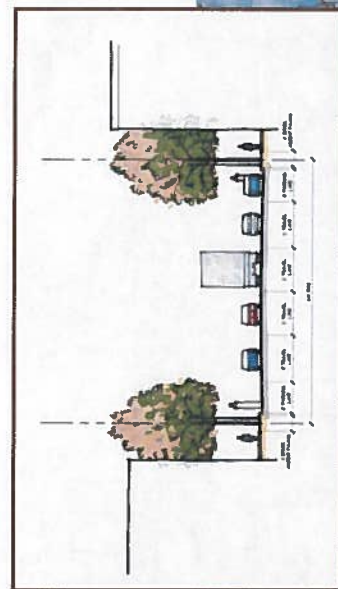
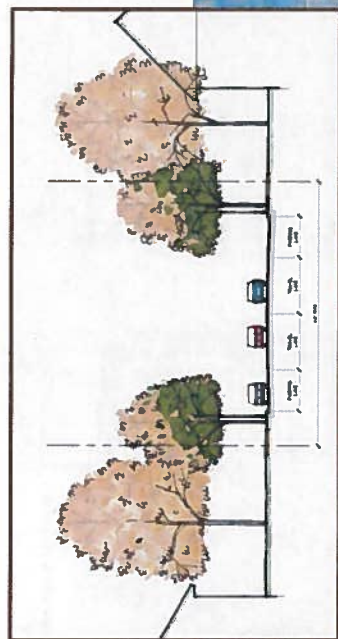
Western
Gateway

Eastern
Gateway

Broadband Connection
to I-94 Corridor / CATI

MAP LEGEND

- Major Streetscape Accents
(Lights, paving, etc.)
- Minor/Optional Streetscape
- Entrance Gateway
- Proposed On-Road Bike Trails
- Proposed Off-Road Bike Trails
- Street Connections
- Broadband Connection



Downtown Entry Enlargement

Village Green Entry Enlargement

Conceptual Streetscape Design Main Street Union Grove, Wisconsin

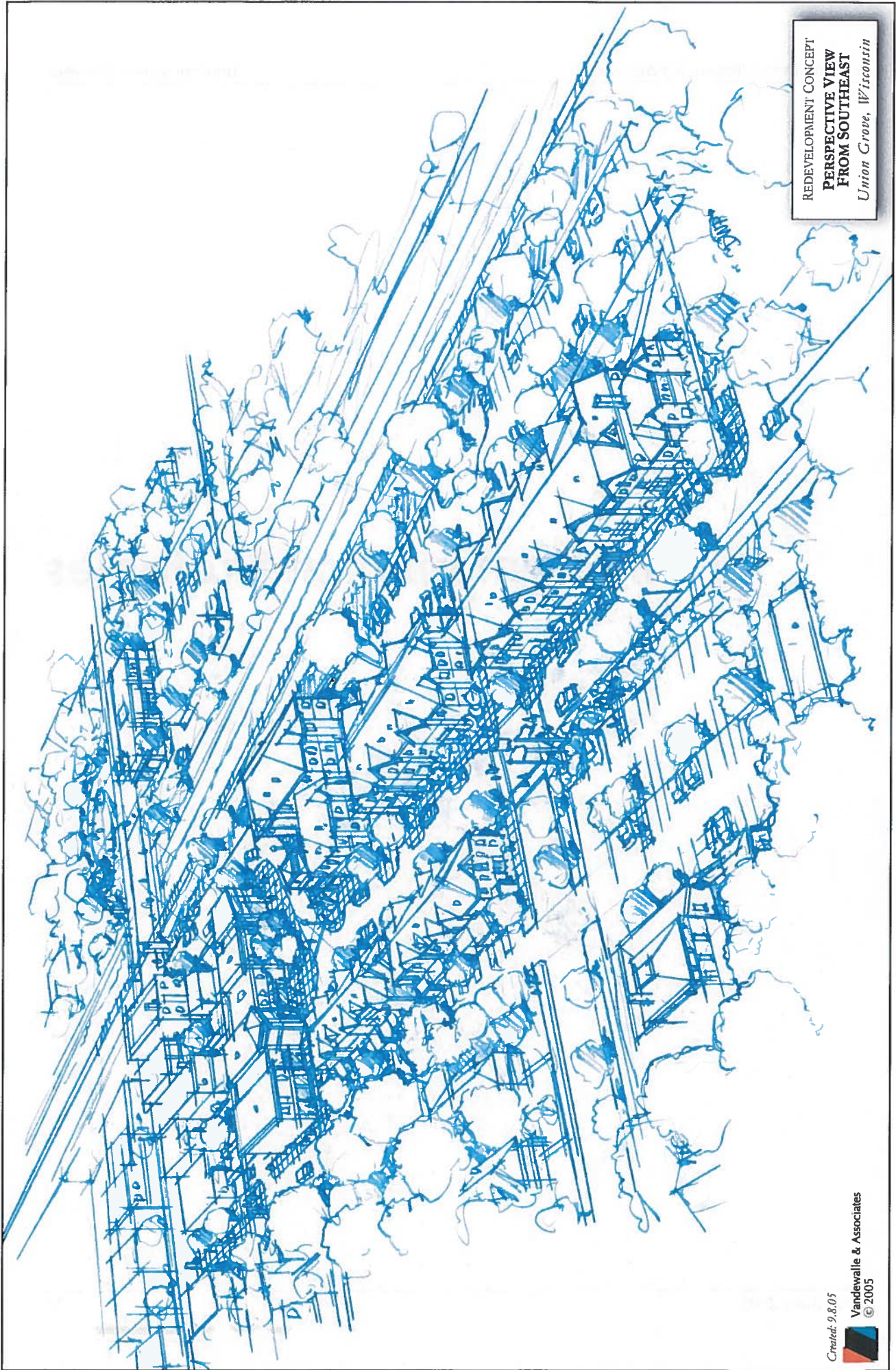


REDEVELOPMENT
CONCEPT
Union Grove, Wisconsin



Created: 2.8.05

 Vandewalle & Associates
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REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT
**PERSPECTIVE VIEW
FROM SOUTHEAST**
Union Grove, Wisconsin

Credited: 9.8.05

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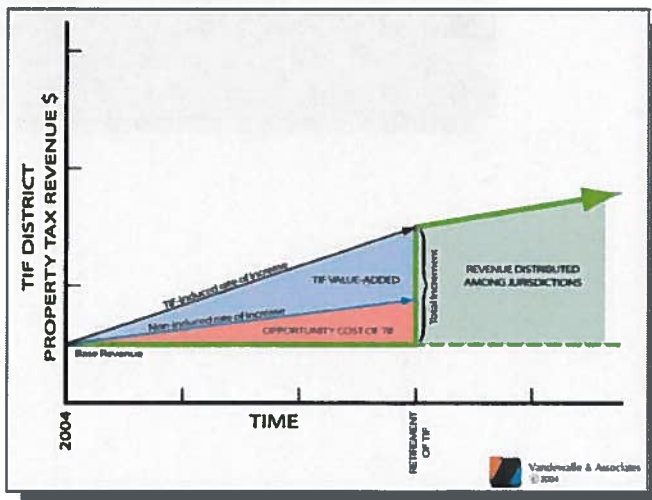


III. Implementation Strategies

Redevelopment Strategies

Implementation of a downtown revitalization plan should include the following elements:

- **Main Street Business District Development:** Preserve significant historic buildings; revitalize the core Main Street business district between 9th and 12th Avenues.
- **Downtown Business Development:** The market for new businesses downtown will expand as the number of residential units increase downtown and in the surrounding areas.
- **Community Development Authority (CDA):** Create a CDA. The CDA will provide the institutional mechanism to prioritize and carry out redevelopment work for the Village. This work should be done in conformance with a redevelopment plan and the Village's overall community development goals. (See Wisconsin Statute 66.1335).
- **Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District:** To 'pave the way' for new development in the Main Street Business District Redevelopment Area, the Village will have to finance some of the basic public improvements that will be sought by private developers. One of the most common ways of doing this is the creation of a tax increment finance (TIF) district. The creation of a CDA provides the Village with the where withal to carry out the plan. Simply put, TIF uses the increased tax revenues generated by new public improvements, and resulting increased property values, to provide the long-term financing for these improvements. The most common use of tax increment finance involves the issuance of bonds to initially finance the necessary infrastructure, with the bonds being backed by the incremental tax revenues that these improvements create. Once the bond is retired the increased tax revenues get distributed back into the Village's general fund.



CDA At a Glance

Definition of a CDA

- Created for the purpose of carrying out blight elimination and urban renewal programs and projects.
- Established to promote and participate in redevelopment activities.

Powers of a CDA

- Own, lease, sell, acquire and rent real property.
- Bond, borrow, invest and raise funds.
- Acquire, assemble, relocate, demolish and prepare sites for redevelopment.
- Recruit developers.
- Administer redevelopment projects.

Purpose of the CDA

- Blight elimination.
- Initiate and oversee redevelopment/revitalization projects and programs.

Role of the CDA

- To execute the plan.

Organizational Structure

- Seven commissioners appointed by the Village President/Mayor.
- Village residency required.
- Two Village Board members.
- Officers: Chair and Vice-Chair required; Treasurer and Secretary optional.
- By-laws must be adopted.

- **Business Improvement District (BID):** Create a Union Grove BID. Once the implementation process is underway, the BID will play an integral role in the revitalization process. A BID is an additional assessment that businesses in a determined area have agreed to pay in order to finance programs aimed at promoting, redeveloping, developing, managing, and maintaining the district. Wisconsin Act 184 gives Wisconsin municipalities the power to establish BIDs within their communities upon petition of at least one property owner within the proposed district. BID assessments can be used to finance a variety of activities, services, and improvements including: street lighting, parking, business recruitment programs, marketing materials, events promotion, security services, and snow removal.
- **Intergovernmental Agreements:** Coordinate intergovernmental agreements in pursuit of annexation of properties adjacent to Union Grove, specifically for the east and west gateway redevelopment areas.
- **Small Business Development Assistance:** Explore avenues for local entrepreneurial training and workforce development with local educational institutions and local banks. Promote assistance to help businesses with business startup and marketing plans. Involve local lenders in process.
- **Business Financial Assistance:** Encourage the use of available business financing mechanisms. Utilize business assistance resources offered through the RCEDC.
- **Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) Program:** Establish a FIG program to provide financial resources to assist Village businesses and building owners in their building revitalization efforts. FIG programs generally provide matching grants for the improvement of building façades in designated areas including a downtown commercial area or TIF district.

Business Financial Assistance

Village of Union Grove Revolving Loan Fund (RLF):

Businesses located in the Village of Union Grove are eligible for low interest loans from the Village of Union Grove RLF. The loan program offers participation loans to finance fixed asset purchases and working capital needs. Participation cannot exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs or \$300,000 whichever is less. Debt and equity financing provides the funds for the remaining project costs.

Small Business Administration 7(a)

Guaranty: 75% Guaranty of 80% guaranty for a loan less than \$100,000.

Small Business Administration 504

Direct Loan Program: Racine County for-profit businesses are eligible for low interest loans through the US SBA 504 loan program. The loan program offers participation loans to finance fixed asset purchases. Participation cannot exceed 40% of the total eligible project costs or typically up to \$1,000,000, whichever is less. Debt and equity financing provides the funds for the remaining project costs. SBA participation will be reduced if the applicant is a new business or if the project being financed includes a single purpose facility.

Small Business Administration

"LOWDOC" Guaranty: Total loan amount not to exceed \$150,000. Guaranty of 80% \$100,000 and 75% \$100,001.

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative

Corp: Total loan not to exceed \$25,000; not less than \$500.

Implementation Plan

Some implementation activities will be initiated and completed by the Village, while others will be initiated through individual, private redevelopment proposals. Accordingly, this plan is being adopted as an amendment to the Village's Comprehensive Plan so that it can be used to guide the following:

- The redevelopment of prioritized revitalization/infill sites;
- The investigation of funding mechanisms for various public improvements;
- The preparation of concept plans for various public improvements;
- The coordination of redevelopment activities with other governmental agencies; and
- The evaluation of individual redevelopment projects.

The following is a summary of the implementation and marketing requirements necessary to fully capitalize on Union Grove's assets and opportunities. These items are presented as top priorities for downtown revitalization:

General Implementation Strategies

- Adopt the Downtown Redevelopment Plan as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Conduct a joint meeting with Corporate Authorities and Plan Commission to review the Redevelopment Plan document, planning process outcomes and redevelopment expectations.
- Create the Downtown Redevelopment Project Management Team (PMT) comprised of selected Village staff, elected officials, Racine County EDC economic development specialists, and Village planning staff or hired planning consultants.
- Develop a Community Development Authority (CDA) to promote and participate in redevelopment activities as laid out in this plan.

Financing Mechanisms

- Develop a TIF district to capture increment from new development and assist in the financing of improvement projects.
- Develop a Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program for downtown property and business owners.
- Pursue state and federal economic development grants.
- Pursue state and federal transportation enhancement grants.
- Pursue state and federal Brownfields redevelopment grants.

Public Improvement Plans

- Develop downtown connections and wayfinding strategies to tie Main Street together and draw people from the Four Corners intersection to the downtown business district.
- Develop concept plans for downtown "gateway" features at key north and south locations on Hwy 45 in the Village.
- Further develop the streetscape concept plans for the Main Street corridor which should include:
 - Enhanced crosswalks at major pedestrian intersections at the Four Corners area as well as in the heart of Main Street.
 - Relocation of overhead utility lines underground.
 - Ornamental street lighting, street trees and plantings along Main Street (Hwy 45) starting at the Four Corners area and heading north.
 - Benches, bike racks, and garbage receptacles in the downtown business district.
- Develop concept plans for Village Square Park improvements.
- Develop bike trail connections through downtown leading to and through the Village from the surrounding area.

Marketing and Business District Improvement Strategies

- Create a downtown Business Improvement District allowing the local businesses to promote, maintain and manage the district.
- Develop marketing materials to solicit developers.
- Develop marketing materials to promote the business district and solicit new retail and commercial businesses.
- Co-market with area attractions including the County Fairgrounds and Great Lakes Dragaway.
- Utilize business assistance programs and funding including County loan and grant programs.

Property Owner/Developer Discussions

- Facilitate the redevelopment of Co-Op property to include possible site acquisition and clean-up.
- Facilitate the redevelopment/re-use of the elementary school building.
- Meet with Rich's Garage and car wash property owners.

Old Village Hall Redevelopment

- Acquire adjacent Co-Op properties to create a larger redevelopment area.
- Prepare Request for Qualifications to solicit developers.
- Select developer.
- Negotiate development plan and final price.

Appendices

Appendix A: Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Eight stakeholder interviews were conducted during February and March 2005.

Summary of Interviews

- There was general agreement across all of the interviews that there are some immediate and long term redevelopment opportunities in Union Grove, and especially in downtown which is underutilized by the community.
- Specific redevelopment sites in Union Grove were discussed and there seemed to be real interest in bringing new life to downtown.
- There also seems to be some doubt about the Village's ability to move projects forward- due to a lack of collaboration with the private market. There is a perception that the Village has a lack of interest in change or growth.
- Perception that the Village has not been proactive in facilitating business assistance.
- It is thought that the Village would not like to see new multi-family residential development.
- Rail line not really viable unless increased demand along the line (currently runs about once a week).
- Currently businesses that do not rely on foot-traffic, those that offer personal and business services are most successful downtown.
- Union Grove residents are not focused on a "shop local" mindset but perceive downtown businesses to be too expensive and believe that downtown business hours do not accommodate residents. People shop where they work, most people work in Racine or Kenosha.
- Older generation of business and property owners not motivated to expand business hours or implement business development concepts. Some property owners only operating rental properties above the storefronts, as absentee landlords, leaving storefronts vacant.
- Downtown Union Grove could support entertainment, sit down restaurants, elderly and first time homebuyer housing, recreational opportunities for children, and a larger medical facility.
- Union Grove does not currently have an "image" or a recognized identity.
- Threat to community: need to plan growth and development wisely, also need to plan for the residential units to help pay for the expanded sewage treatment plant.
- Union Grove has a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of its location on Highways 11 and 45, and 5 mile proximity to the I-94 corridor, proximity already attracts residents.
- Threats include resistance from political leaders to growth or improvement, political climate in Union Grove is stalling redevelopment progress.
- To make new businesses work downtown need a higher population, more residential units in Union Grove.
- Mill Avenue is carrying too much traffic, more so since the construction of Piggly Wiggly.
- There is ample interest from developers in potential downtown redevelopment projects.
- The Union Grove school system is attractive to families.
- Challenges include the high turnover rate of downtown businesses. Many new business owners do not realize what it takes to run a business.
- Downtown needs to do something to attract the subdivision residents to downtown.
- Union Grove needs to plan for long term improvement and start with an initial project to rally leadership and community support and spark additional redevelopment projects.
- Union Grove community is resistant to change because not sure what want to change to?
- Union Grove needs health and fitness facility, restaurants, upscale bars to attract young professionals to the area.
- Racine County housing \$20,000 less than surrounding counties on average.

Appendix B: Focus Group Summary

Eleven Union Grove business and/or property owners participated in a focus group discussion on March 23, 2005.

Community Assets

- Location, proximity to large urban areas, yet separate small town (this asset noted by at least five participants).
- Blank canvass, ready for planned improvements downtown.
- Family-oriented town.
- US Highway 45.
- Safety of community.
- Perfect atmosphere, quaint small town.
- Influx of younger people (20-30 years of age) into community.

Community Threats or Problems

- Lack of aesthetic appeal downtown, no appealing streetscapes.
- Challenge to accept growth/expansion yet maintain unique community atmosphere.
- Negative attitudes in the community regarding downtown and local businesses.
- Fear of growth and change in the community.
- Lack of local support and awareness of local businesses.
- High vacancy rate of retail space downtown.
- Financial concerns – is there enough money to improve their community.
- Communication between government, chamber of commerce, property owners, residents.
- Signage – Some current signage is unnecessary, while other downtown wayfinding signage is lacking.

Who is Responsible for Change in Union Grove?

- Village should improve streetscape downtown including crosswalks, traffic calming measures, parking.
- Landowners need to be held accountable for blighted properties.
- Union Grove businesses need to organize efforts to increase knowledge of downtown businesses – some business owners have increased marketing and business visibility with Business Breakfast Alliance events.
- Village should increase visibility for visitors through improved signage leading to downtown.
- Village with CDA in place should assume role of property acquisition.
- Businesses should take advantage of their proximity to fairgrounds events.
- Business/property owners should improve the exterior of their buildings.

Should Union Grove Grow?

- Ten out of 11 participants said “yes” Union Grove should continue to grow as a community.
- The community is going to grow whether or not people want it to, it is better to have a plan in place to direct the direction of growth.
- Commercial activity on the edges of downtown might draw people away from downtown businesses.
- Since they will never be able to compete with Wal-Mart, downtown Union Grove needs to develop niche businesses, or clusters of complementary businesses that offer something different than large chain retailers.

Appendix C: Community Imaging Workshop Summary

On July 19, 2005, representatives from VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES conducted a community development imaging workshop with approximately 60 Union Grove residents and business owners to obtain their thoughts, opinions, experiences, and ideas about Union Grove in order to develop an economic development strategy and community development plan to guide future development. The imaging workshop began with a presentation of the Opportunities Analysis prepared by VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES in the first phase of the current planning process.

This review was followed by a Community Imaging Exercise. Workshop participants were asked to spend some time thinking about and answering the following questions individually. After 10 minutes each table discussed the questions as a group and recorded major points of discussion to report back to everyone at the meeting. Questions guiding the discussions included:

- What are some of the threats/challenges facing Union Grove both today and in the future?
- What are potential positive trends/opportunities for Union Grove both today and in the future?
- What is the current image of Union Grove's Downtown neighborhood?
- What should the role of Downtown be for the community; what function should it serve?

Community Imaging Exercise Summary Results

The following results will be used to guide development of economic and community development, and redevelopment strategies for Union Grove.

What are some of the **THREATS/CHALLENGES** facing Union Grove both today and in the future?

- Commercial decline yet residential growth causing bedroom community
- Controlled growth
- Business attraction and retention
- Losing sense of small town community
- Little to do downtown, core of Union Grove in decline while the perimeter grows
- Affordable housing and increasing cost of living
- Getting residents to do business locally, big box threat
- Lack of employment opportunity, need more industry in the Village
- Poor infrastructure/public service maintenance bad streets, lighting, parking
- High vacancy rate downtown, absentee landlords do not maintain occupancy of retail spaces
- Aging population, kids do not stay here or come back as adults
- Lack of public transportation especially for the elderly
- Growth of town increases threat of "urban problems"

What are **POSITIVE TRENDS/ OPPORTUNITIES** for Union Grove both today and in the future?

- Great schools, library, fire and rescue, parks and recreation services and programs
- Location of fairgrounds in Union Grove
- Growing community, attracting younger families
- Location in the region between Chicago and Milwaukee
- Quality of life, safe, small town community
- Active chamber, service clubs and banking community
- Opportunity for unlimited residential and business growth
- Opportunity and need for community gathering places for children, families, young adults
- Affordable housing, with the opportunity to develop more quality housing
- Opportunity to maintain historic building and redevelop downtown business district

What is the CURRENT IMAGE of Union Grove's Downtown neighborhood?

- Rundown, dreary, uninviting, sleepy
- There is nothing to do; no one around
- Too many vacancies, lack of retail and specialty shops
- Boring appearance needs streetscape enhancements
- Business hours make it difficult for people who work outside of the community to come downtown
- "No Loitering" ordinance keeps people from going downtown
- No reason for families or young adults to go downtown
- Festivity of trees and holiday lights

What should the role of downtown be for the COMMUNITY - what function should it serve?

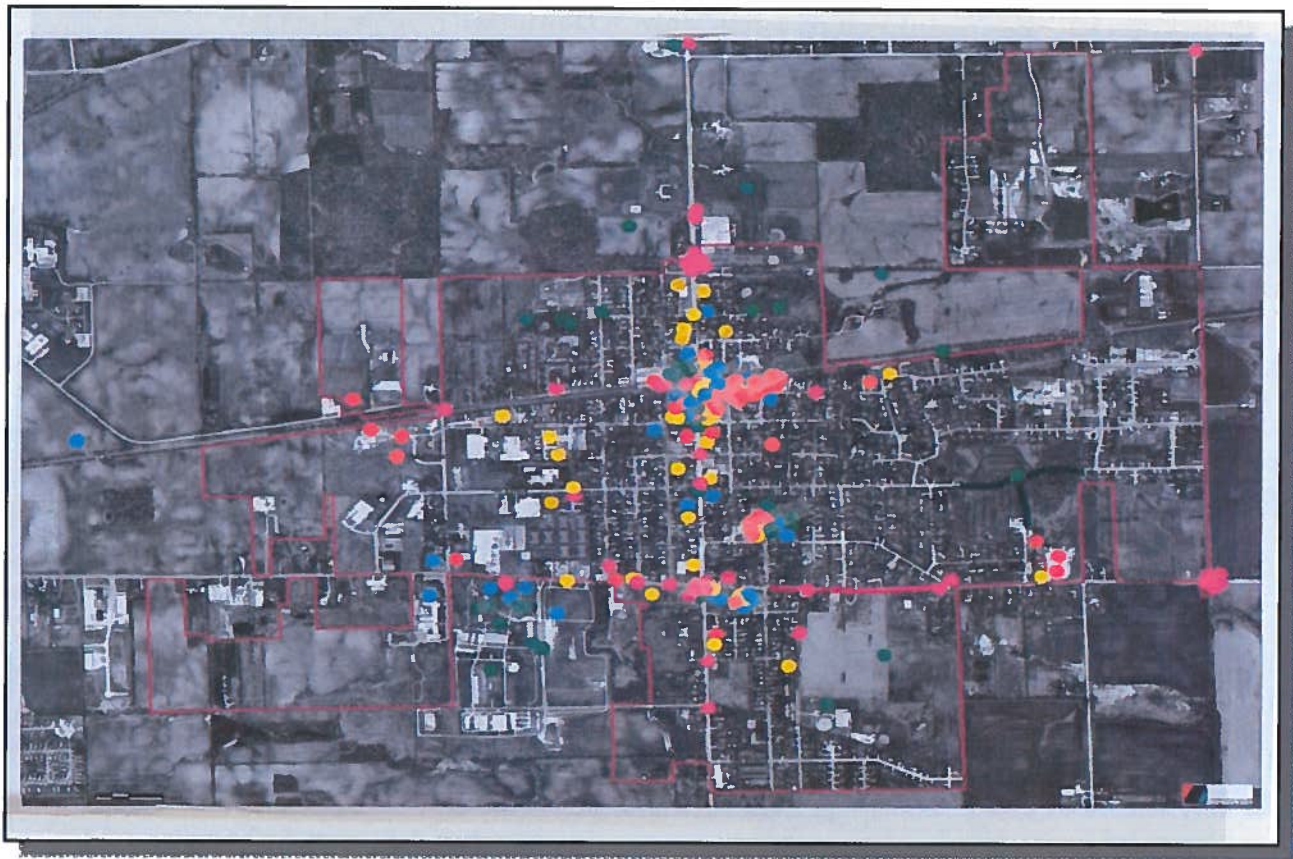
- Town center
- Convenient shopping and services for local residents
- Specialty, "niche" type businesses
- More Activities for all ages, including festivals and special events
- Residential and social center of Union Grove
- Appealing center of town with benches, flowers, parking, signage

Other comments or concerns

- Village should do more to promote Village assets
- Entryways need to have better signage and lead people downtown
- Whatever changes take place should be high quality
- Non-binding referendum on major decisions - give the community input
- Attract manufacturing to the Village
- Keep people from falling through the cracks, housing costs, healthcare, taxes, etc.
- Plan for better roads and road maintenance

Mapping Exercise Summary Results

The purpose of this exercise was to identify areas within Union Grove that the participants feel should be singled out for special focus in the community development plan. The groups were each given aerial maps of the Union Grove area as well as blue, yellow, orange, red, and green adhesive dots. Each person was asked to place their dots where they believe the concern or condition exists, corresponding to the color code. Dot grouping was prevalent in the downtown business district and at the intersection of Hwy 11 and 45. See the composite results below.



Downtown **preservation** sites (blue) identified in this exercise include historic buildings located in the downtown business district, the Municipal building, the park and baseball diamond at the former elementary school site, the antique store on Hwy 11 near the intersection of Hwy 45, and Old Settlers Park and County Fairgrounds.

Downtown **revitalization** sites (yellow) identified in this exercise include a the mobile home parks on 11th Avenue, the old Opera House, the former elementary school site, and numerous properties along Main Street especially in the downtown business district.

The most frequently noted downtown **redevelopment** sites (orange) identified in this exercise include the Co-Op site, the Union Grove Concrete property on Hwy 11, the former elementary school site, and industrial properties on the west end of the Village along the railroad.

Traffic “hot spots” (red) were identified at 67th Drive and Hwy 11, at the northern edge of the Village at the high school on Hwy 45, at the intersection of Hwy 11 and Hwy 45 and on Mill Avenue specifically at the Co-Op site around Main Street and S. 10th Street.

Downtown **public amenities** (green) sites identified in this exercise include the County Fairgrounds, development of road connections east to west along 13th Avenue, downtown area greenspace development and additional road connection improvements throughout the Village. Groups also indicated the need for public wayfinding and signage enhancements leading to and within the area to attract new people to the downtown business district as well as the need for streetscaping on Main Street especially in the business district.

Visual Preference Survey Summary Results

A Visual Preference Survey was conducted to gauge general public sentiment on the issues of site and building design as they might become a reality in Union Grove. Thirty-four photo image examples of

commercial, multi-family residential and mixed projects were presented by VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES and evaluated by the participants. Projects were rated on their overall appeal and appropriateness as well as the desirability of the building location, garage and parking locations, pedestrian amenities, site landscaping and sign qualities. Participants were encouraged to add specific comments where appropriate.

All responses, including both positive and negative opinions, were tallied and recorded. These results were evaluated statistically in order to observe similarities and variances among survey responses. Participants' common preferences emerged through the survey process. These preferences can be used to guide the development of alternative concepts for redevelopment projects in the Village.

Main observations are summarized below (also see attached visual preference survey scoring).

1. The small sample size and the dispersion of scores among similar building styles, makes it hard to draw solid inferences about the specific likes and dislikes of survey participants. This was complicated by the group's tendency to pan (or conversely, look favorably upon) images that have scored well (poorly) in other similarly sized communities. This could possibly be attributed to characteristics other than architectural styling weighing heavily in the scoring (e.g. landscaping, retail brand association or use, anti-development sentiments etc.).
2. Generally, very few images scored very highly or very poorly. Pictures that were purposely used to elicit a negative response did better than expected, while those thought to be 'dead ringers' did more poorly than expected.
3. The audience demonstrated an acceptance of high-quality, multi-family housing in lower-density formats (as evidenced by the fact that a multi-family image was the highest rated of all the images shown – average score 3.26).
4. Several suburban-generic buildings scored much better than expected
5. No consistent response to the size and placement of parking lots.

General Inferences (all categories)

- General preference for traditional styles and building materials: gabled or hipped roofs, dormers, bays, overhangs, pronounced entries and windows, varied roof lines/shapes, cottage and bungalow styles; mixed materials – wood, brick, stone. Smaller building sizes and highly modulated massing of larger structures. Buildings with a combination of materials generally did better than all brick or all wood buildings.
- General dislike of larger buildings and those with more contemporary styling.
- No building over 3-stories received a positive score.
- General dislike of large format retail buildings regardless of materials, styling

