

# The Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor Redevelopment Plan

A Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative for Downtown Medina



March 2010



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# Participants

The Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor Plan would not have been possible without the guidance and commitment from the City of Medina. The tireless efforts of our Steering Committee and enthusiastic participation by involved residents of the City ensured the vision created for this important downtown neighborhood met the many unique needs each user group requires. The resulting plan is truly a community effort that evolved from a strong vision for a vibrant district. The Smith Road Corridor is an area of confluence that will continue to serve the City and its surrounding communities for generations. We would like to thank the following for dedicating their time and talent to the planning process:

## Members of the City and Planning Team that contributed to the following report include:

### City of Medina

**Mayors Jane Leaver and Dennis Hanwell**  
**Judge Dale Chase** – Medina Municipal Court  
**Greg Hannan** – Planning and Zoning Director  
**Linda Hoffman** – Media City Council  
**Mark Kolesar** – Media City Council  
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**Patrick Patton** – City Engineer  
**Chet Pucilowski** – City Planning Commission

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**Jim Duffy** – Medina Farmer's Exchange  
**Jim Gerspacher** – Gerspacher Real Estate  
**Jim Gowe** – 620 Construction  
**Roy Lehman** – James Lumber  
**Debra Lynn-Schmitz** – Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce  
**Dave Moreland** – Schwab Industries – Medina Supply  
**Anthony Ratajczak** – NOACA Bicycle Advisory Committee  
**Mike Rose** – Washington Properties  
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**Carla Santoro** – Traffic Engineer

### A special thanks to:

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**The many residents, business owners and individuals that completed surveys and participated in the community planning process.**

# Introduction

## The Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative and its Role in Downtown Medina

The Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor Plan is an initiative conceived with the purpose of analyzing a series of four development sites in the center of the city in a manner that takes into account future development fully integrated with multi-modal transportation enhancements. Through a federally funded program, the City of Medina applied for and won a grant from NOACA's "Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative" (TLCI) program. The program was created for the purposes of planning redevelopment sites in core communities, the design for enhancements to neighborhood streets and sidewalks and to promote walking, biking and the use of public transportation. This is a very unique and exciting grant program in that instead of using transportation funds to create new highways and auto related improvements, money is being allocated to plan for the vitality of our city's neighborhoods through the creation of development that promotes safer places to walk and ride bikes in conjunction with driving.

Through the TLCI program the Federal Highway Administration has recognized a need for a new emphasis in its transportation programs to make communities grow in a more sustainable way in the future. Many cities nationwide are embracing this new perspective, including within Northeast Ohio through the initiation, support and assistance of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA). Through the TLCI grant program, NOACA is able to help improve the overall quality of life in core, urban neighborhoods to retain and attract residents and businesses as well as encourage sustainable economic development. Through a community-based approach, the links between transportation and community planning, as well as infrastructure and development are strengthened, providing a mechanism that brings them together to nourish one another, foster a spirit of community and achieve a unified vision.

A community must meet a very specific set of requirements in order to be selected to participate in this program. The City of Medina was able to successfully apply for this TLCI grant given the fact that they have recognized a unique opportunity for the downtown community to grow in a manner that proactively plans for its future. The study outlined within this document focuses on the redevelopment of four sites within a few blocks, or a five minute walk, from Medina's historic town square. Each of these sites represents a unique opportunity to provide civic improvements, recreational amenities, the expansion of the commercial core, multi-modal transit enhancements, connections between neighborhoods or the diversification of the housing market. Furthermore, three of the four sites are currently listed for sale on the real estate market, making them a potential opportunity in the short-term for reinvestment in the community.

**Our primary objective for this  
TLCI study:**

**Create redevelopment that  
expands and supports  
downtown and the surrounding  
neighborhoods**

### Goals for the Transportation for Livable Community Initiative

The TLCI provides federal funding or technical assistance for the planning of transportation projects that meet the following goals:

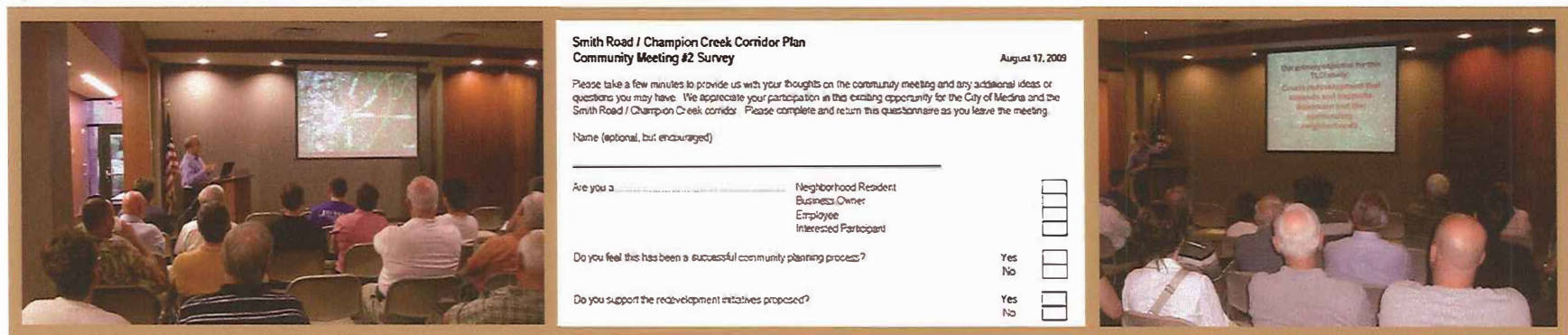
- Enhance the **economic viability** of existing communities within the region
- Enhance the region's **quality of life**
- Enhance a community's **identity**
- Foster **compact land use** development / redevelopment
- Facilitate accessibility by **improving the range of transportation choices** by adding or improving pedestrian, transit or bicycle facilities
- **Reduce air and water pollution** through best management practices
- Encourage **fuel and energy conservation**
- Promote a **healthier community** through planning and environmental linkages from an integrated transportation perspective
- **Preserve and enhance open space** , farmland and forests
- Assist the **redevelopment of urban core communities**
- Result in projects that can **compete at the regional level for capital funds** through NOACA's regional transportation investment process
- **Enhance the historic, archaeological, scenic and environmental elements** of the transportation system
- **Improve the safety and efficiency** of the existing transportation system

## An Interactive Community-Based Planning Process

The process that led to the recommendations within this report was a community driven initiative that placed a great deal of value in the thoughts and desires of the stakeholders. It has been the belief of this planning team that in order for a community based project such as this to be successful, it must be envisioned through an open and engaged community-lead process. In an effort to best meet these goals, a Steering Committee was created with members invited to attend regular meetings from a variety of governmental and city organizations, neighborhood institutions, property owners and stakeholders. This allowed the planning team to gather first-hand accounts of the daily use of the properties being studied, the streets that connect them and the surrounding neighborhoods.

In addition, two community meetings were held throughout the planning process to gather information from a wider audience. Within the first, the existing conditions of the neighborhood, traffic analysis and study sites were presented and attendees broke into three groups to discuss issues as they related to economic development, community planning and the transportation system. Initial proposals for redevelopment were presented to the Steering Committee based on the community feedback, and a new vision for the Smith Road / Champion Creek corridor was created. The vision for the future of the district was presented to the greater community at a second public meeting to gather any final comments prior to publishing this report.

Throughout the process the planning team was lead by a series of urban designers, architects and traffic engineers hired to work closely with the City Planning, Economic Development and Engineering Departments. This wide mix of individuals and expertise has allowed this project to be approached from a number of different viewpoints at once. The resulting analysis that has developed an understanding of the district, the rediscovery of its potential and subsequent envisioning of a plan for its future that will be detailed on the following pages has lead to the creation of a well rounded plan that will be supported by everyone that works towards its implementation.



## A three stage planning process

### I. Existing Site Investigation – *Understanding the Smith Road corridor*

- Analysis of existing conditions including zoning, land use, neighboring properties, etc
- Analysis of existing street network including lane configuration and traffic capacity analysis
- Review of previous studies
- Community meeting # 1

### II. Preliminary Focus Area Concepts – *Rediscovering the district*

- Opportunities for new / redevelopment within the four focus areas
- Opportunities for public space enhancement within the four focus areas
- Steering Committee meeting #2
- Development of zoning and district regulation recommendations

#### Preliminary Infrastructure Concepts

- Potential roadway enhancements based upon preferred site studies
- Potential alignment of trail extension along the railroad tracks and Champion Creek

### III. Final Redevelopment Plan – *Envisioning the future*

- Development of preferred land use scenarios for the four focus areas
- Integration of preferred infrastructure improvements
- Community meeting # 2

# Understanding Downtown Medina

## The Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor's Role Within the Greater Context

The City of Medina is the cornerstone of Medina County, and its historic County Seat. Due to the location of the County government offices and courthouses within the center of the City, the historic Public Square has remained a focal point for the community and a major attraction for visitors and residents alike. The City of Medina is the fastest growing community within the county, and was recently listed on *Money Magazine's* nationwide 100 Best Places to Live list.

Within the recent past, the City's popularity has attracted a great deal of suburban style residential and retail development surrounding the historic center-city neighborhoods. This has resulted in a change in the overall make-up of retailers surrounding the square. Many of the service retail facilities have left due to increased competition, and have been replaced by gift and destination stores and restaurants. Additionally, the residential neighborhoods at the center of the city are not as popular as they once were due to the older homes that are generally smaller than those in the newer developments.

However, the center of the city has many traits that make it a desirable place to live, work and shop. Its walkable nature provides retail, services, institutions, offices, entertainment venues, green spaces, the library and the Garfield Elementary School within a five to ten minute walk of a large number of homes. At the time of this study, the vacant space in the retail and office buildings surrounding the square is at a higher level than normal. However, in comparison to many other similar cities there are actually very few vacancies; with new retailers and restaurants continuing to successfully open within the city. Upon the completion of the expanded Medina Library, circulation and visitor rates within the branch are approximately three times higher than before, greatly expanding the number of visitors to Medina's central downtown core.

Downtown Medina is characterized by its historic town square surrounded by pedestrian-oriented mixed-use commercial streets and historic residential neighborhoods to the south and east.





The central core of downtown is characterized by...



...well planned, inviting green space...



...mixed-use commercial development...



...walkable streets...



...institutional stakeholders like the school and churches...



...as well as continued community investment...



...and historic residential neighborhoods.

## Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

The City of Medina's location with easy access to Interstate's 71 and 76 as well as the Ohio Turnpike has also provided a great deal of incentive for growth. The direct access has made Medina a growing hub between Akron and Cleveland for light industrial and business growth. A large industrial complex developed to the west of the town center, with smaller groupings of companies scattered throughout the area. Along with the business growth and convenient freeway access has also come an increase in truck traffic along the four state routes that pass through the historic core of the city and the study area. The effect that this traffic has on the district and its pedestrian environment is significant, and will be discussed in further detail throughout this report.

Despite the conflicts that are prevalent between truck traffic and other forms of transportation, bicycling has become an increasingly popular form of transportation within Medina. An update to the County's Bicycle Transportation Map prepared by NOACA was published in January 2009. The map designates routes throughout the county that are both on-street and designated off-street multi-purpose trails, as well as classifying roadways based on their suitability for bicyclists with varying skill levels. Given their current conditions, the main routes connecting surrounding neighborhoods to the center of Medina and the study area are classified in the NOACA study as suitable for bicyclists with an intermediate to experienced skill level. In addition there is currently a multi-purpose trail, the Roscoe Ewing Trail, which begins to the east of the study area with the potential to connect into a larger trail system in the future and eventually east to the Towpath Trail.

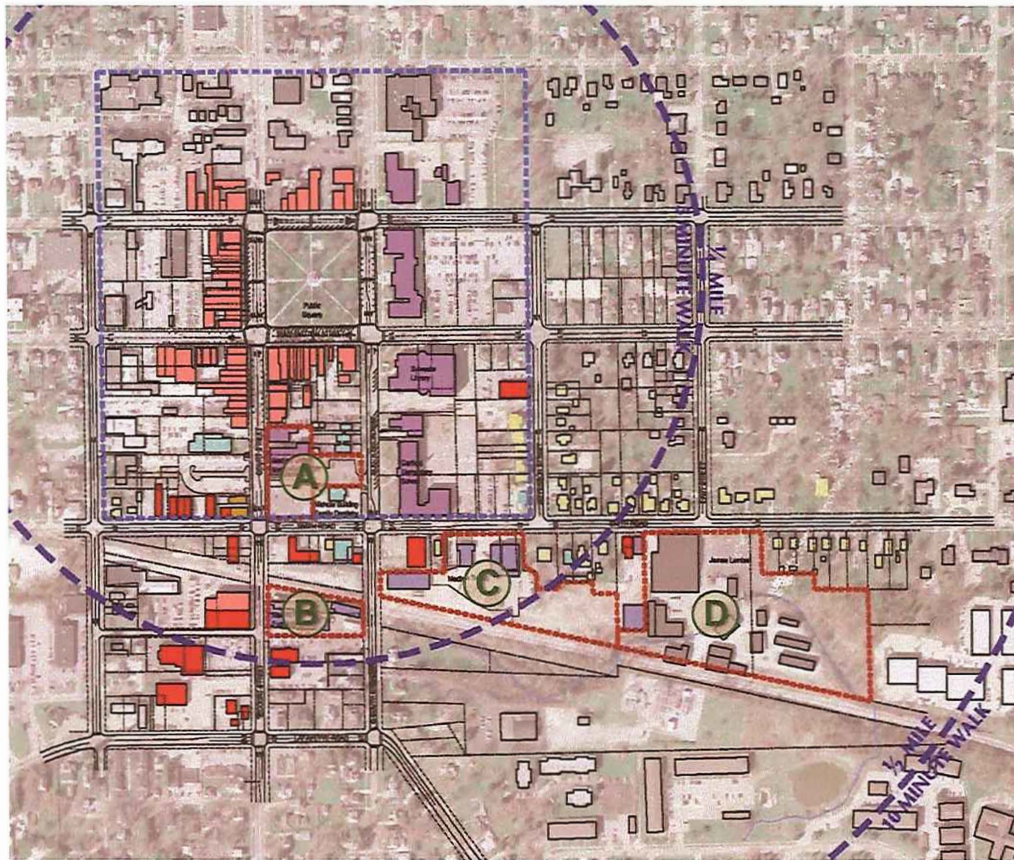
The center of the City is affected by the surrounding transportation system and development trends. The interstates and state routes provide easy access to Medina, but also bring trucks through the center of town due to the large industrial park to the west and commercial strips to the north and east.



## Potential Redevelopment Sites Along the Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

As mentioned previously in this report, there are four primary redevelopment sites that are being studied as a part of this Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative. The redevelopment sites include:

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| A) the Medina United Methodist Church site | C) the Medina Supply site |
| B) the Medina Farmer's Exchange site       | D) the James Lumber site  |



These four sites represent crucial linkages between the Public Square commercial core and the residential neighborhoods to the south and east. Each of the four sites represent an opportunity to fill a gap within the city's fabric that, if done correctly, will have the ability to create a more walkable environment, develop linkages between existing districts, fill a need for a different development typology, define the preferred characteristics for the future of the Smith Road corridor, re-energize interest in the older residential neighborhoods, grow the central commercial district and sustain the existing businesses and institutions.

Of the four sites, three are currently for sale; the Methodist Church, Medina Supply and James Lumber. This places a great deal of emphasis on this community driven planning process and the steps that will follow, as there is the true potential to have a substantial influence on the future of these sites in the short-term. Through working with a diverse stakeholder group that includes such individuals as local real estate developers and city officials, a plan can be put in place for these sites that depicts a future vision that can realistically be built while at the same time ensuring that any changes of use or zoning required to do so can be accomplished to support the vision.

### The Medina United Methodist Church Site

The Methodist Church site has a number of different influences that affect it in a unique manner. The site is comprised of the southern edge of the predominantly mixed-use block bordering the square and the historic pedestrian oriented buildings along South Court Street. This orientation provides the Methodist Church site with the most direct connection to Public Square of the four. However, when viewed in conjunction with development across Smith Road and the neighboring Nichols Family Dentistry Building, the site with its large parking lot at the southern edge give a very auto-dominant feeling to the Smith Road corridor. This is in stark contrast to the very pedestrian-oriented feeling at the northern edge of the site.



#### Approximate Site Area:

1.5 Acres

31,000 sf complex

#### Existing land uses:

United Methodist Church

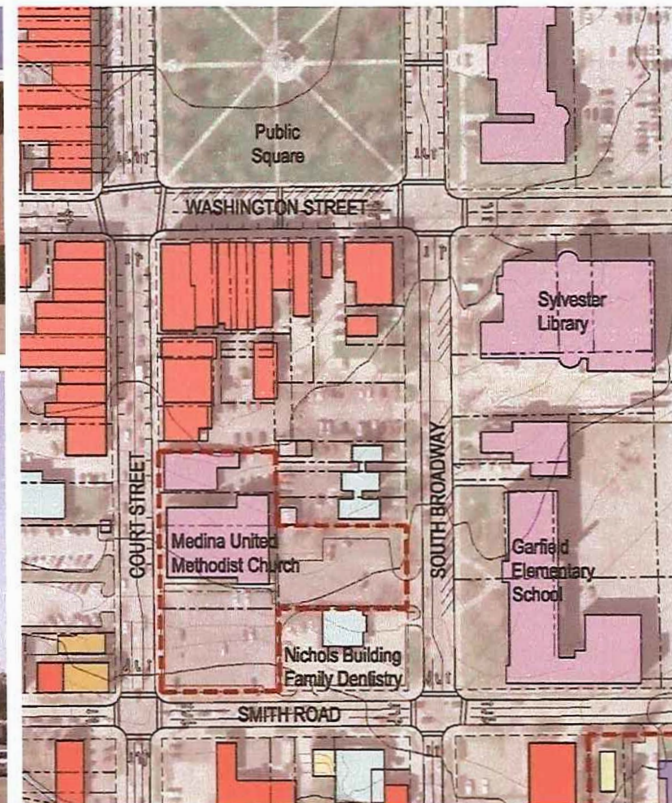
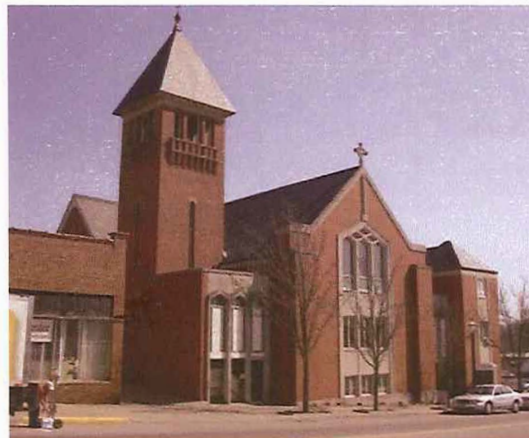
Youth Center

Parking

#### Existing Zoning:

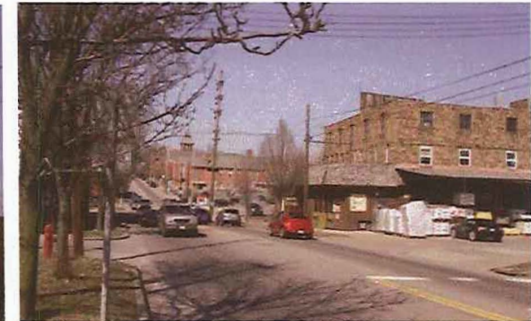
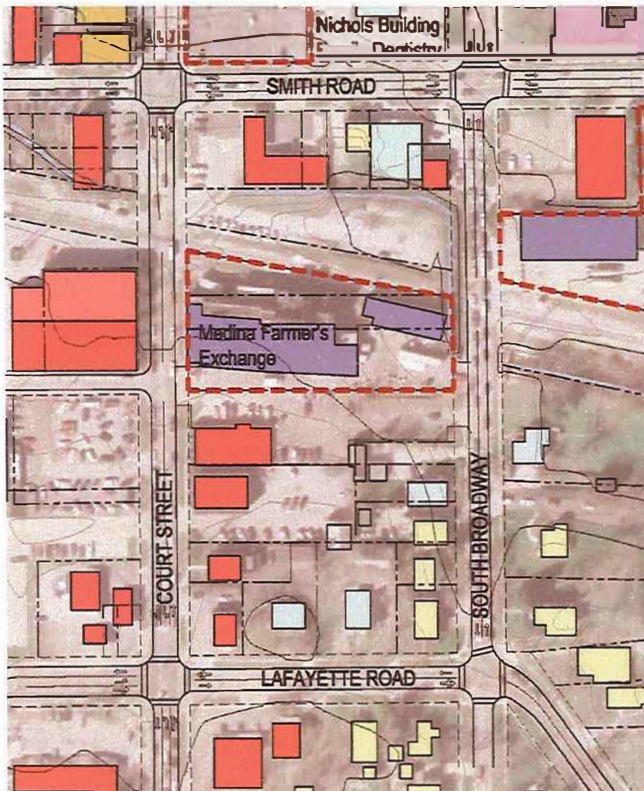
C-2 Retail Office

Historic Zoning District Overlay



**The Medina Farmer's Exchange Site**

Although not currently for sale, the Farmer's Exchange site is included within this study as a proactive measure to plan for the future should the business ever decide to move or sell the property. The Farmer's Exchange occupies a crucial site for connecting and filling both a physical and perceived gap between the historic commercial district and the southern residential neighborhoods. As a community icon, the building represents a significant piece of the community's history and a unique architectural design. However, due to its construction there are potential difficulties with renovation and reuse. From a site standpoint there are two influences that would affect an approach to redevelopment. A channelized section of Champion Creek flows along the eastern edge of the site separating it from Broadway and the Norfolk & Western Railroad runs to the north.



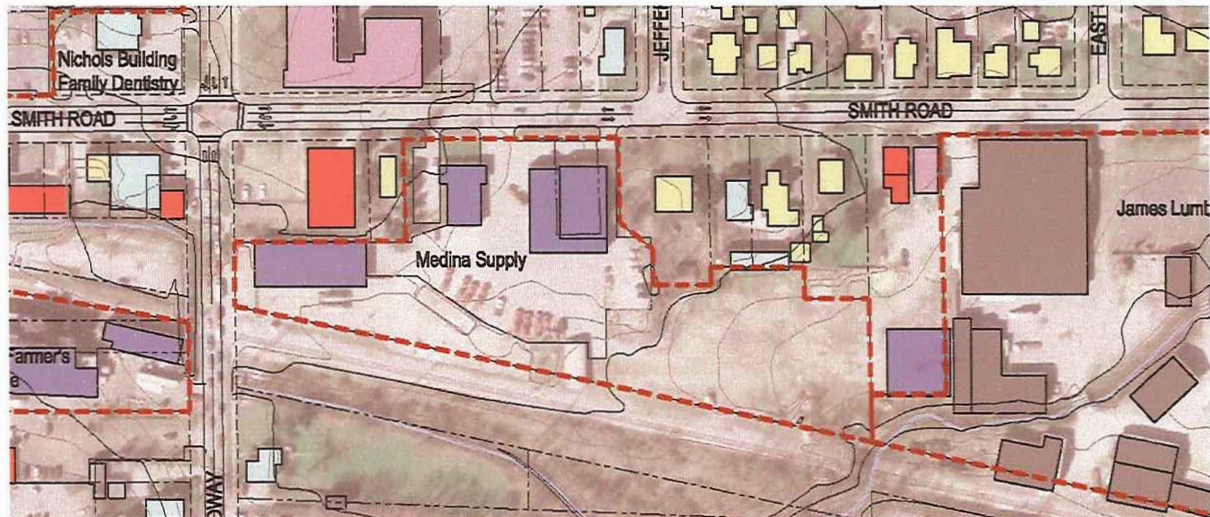
Approximate Site Area:  
 1.05 Acres

Existing land uses:  
 Medina Farmer's Exchange  
 Railroad  
 Champion Creek  
 Parking

Existing Zoning:  
 C-2 Retail Office  
 Transitional Corridor Overlay District

**The Medina Supply Site**

The Medina Supply site is currently occupied by the offices and vehicle repair / storage component of a concrete distribution company. The site is unique in that it has frontage on both Smith Road and South Broadway, but does not include the corner parcel where Family Video was recently constructed. The Garfield Elementary School, a neighborhood school where many students walk but many are also dropped off and picked up by their parents, is located across Smith Road to the north of the site. The street frontage of the site is minimal in comparison to the actual site area. The majority of the land is located behind the residential properties that line Smith Road, while the Norfolk & Western Railroad borders the full length of the southern property line. During the week days, there are approximately seven trains a day that use this line to access both local businesses and to travel between cities to the east and west.



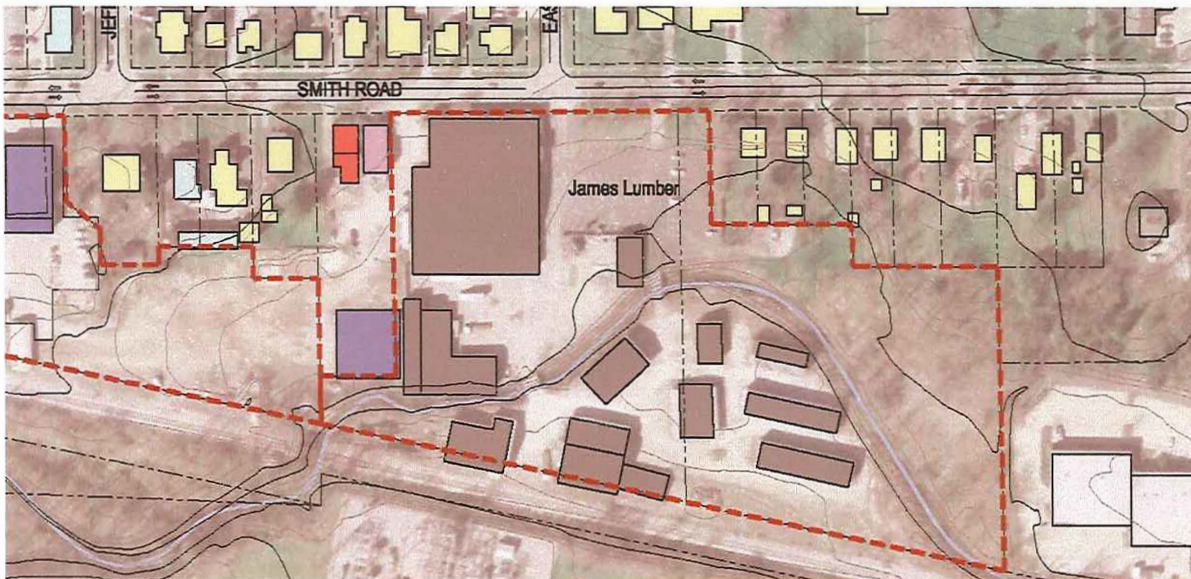
Approximate Site Area:  
 3.64 Acres

Existing land uses:  
 Medina Supply  
 Railroad

Existing Zoning:  
 I-1 Industrial  
 Transitional Corridor Overlay District

### The James Lumber Site

The James Lumber site is currently composed of a series of vacant warehouse buildings and a big-box style commercial structure. Similar to the Medina Supply site, there is only a very small strip of frontage along Smith Road in comparison to the size of the property that extends east and west behind neighboring businesses and homes. This rear portion of this site also connects with the Medina Supply site at the western edge, and the railroad line forms the southern edge. However, there is a large loop of Champion Creek that flows through the James Lumber property, effectively dividing it into three distinct areas. The creek is an active, free flowing waterway that lies in a recessed bed.



#### Approximate Site Area:

7.44 Acres

#### Existing land uses:

James Lumber

Railroad

Champion Creek

#### Existing Zoning:

I-1 Industrial

Transitional Corridor Overlay District

Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

## The Existing Transportation Network's Influence on the Neighborhood

Since redevelopment of the sites could potentially impact traffic operations on Smith Road, a traffic study was conducted. The intent of this traffic study is to provide a general assessment of traffic and traffic-related impacts in the study area. Site-specific traffic impact studies should be completed for each site when the redevelopment plans are moving forward and specific size and type of land uses are known. The study examined two intersections, South Broadway Street / East Smith Road and South Court Street / West Smith Road, to evaluate potential impacts associated with the redevelopment of the four sites.

The City of Medina has completed a number of traffic and related studies in and around the downtown area, as listed below:

- *Closed Loop System Report*. City of Medina, Medina County, Ohio. Perram Electric, Inc. 2009.
- *Central City Traffic Study*. City of Medina, Medina County, Ohio. Pflum, Klausmeier & Gehrum Consultants, Inc. September 14, 2000.
- *NOACA Goods Movement and Truck Traffic Planning Program: City of Medina Truck Survey*. Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), April 1986.
- *Report on Traffic for Mayor William Lamb*. Executive Committee on Traffic. June 1982.





### Traffic Analysis Methodology

The operational traffic analysis for this study was conducted using Highway Capacity Software (HCS) version 5.4, which follows Transportation Research Board's *Special Report 209 Highway Capacity Manual, 2000 (HCM)*. HCS was used to conduct intersection operation analyses. Measures of effectiveness included level of service (LOS) and v/c (volume-to-capacity ratio). LOS, a qualitative measure describing traffic operational conditions, was the main criteria for the traffic evaluation. LOS is a standard index of the service provided by a transportation facility and can range from A through F. LOS is based on the average delay in seconds per vehicle passing through the intersection. The specific delay thresholds for both signalized and unsignalized intersections are given in Table 1. LOS A represents free-flow conditions, LOS E represents operational capacity, and LOS F is over-capacity. The v/c ratio indicates whether an intersection is operating below, at or over capacity. A v/c ratio that is less than 1.0 indicates that the lane is operating below capacity. A v/c ratio of 1.0 indicates that the lane is operating at capacity and a v/c greater than one indicates over-capacity conditions.

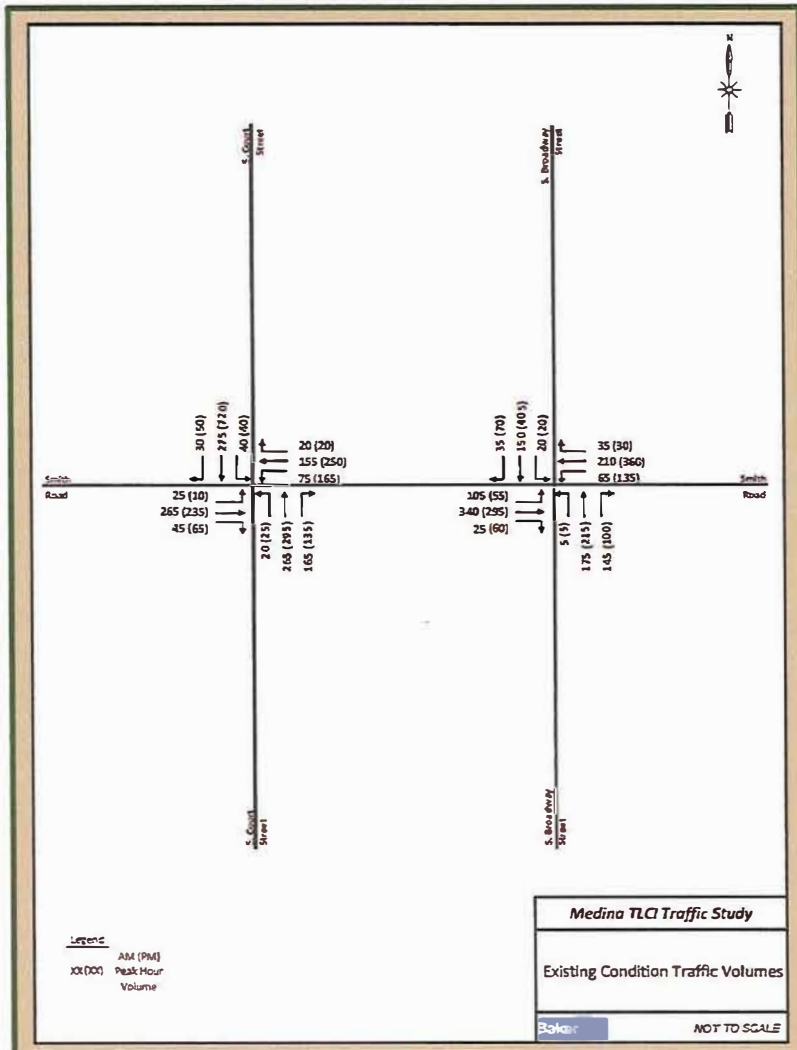
LOS	Signalized Intersection Average Delay (sec/veh)	Unsignalized Intersection Average Delay (sec/veh)
A	$x \leq 10$	$x \leq 10$
B	$10 < x \leq 20$	$10 < x \leq 15$
C	$20 < x \leq 35$	$15 < x \leq 25$
D	$35 < x \leq 55$	$25 < x \leq 35$
E	$55 < x \leq 80$	$35 < x \leq 50$
F	$80 < x$	$50 < x$

Due to the urban nature of the study area, a LOS D is considered the acceptable LOS threshold. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and NOACA consider LOS D to be acceptable for the region. For signalized intersections, unacceptable levels of service were based on the overall intersection operations rather than individual movements. The v/c ratio was also used as a measure of effectiveness with a v/c of 1.0 or more for any movement considered unacceptable.

### Existing Conditions Traffic Data

Traffic volume data and signal timing plans for the two study area intersections were provided by the City and used for the traffic analysis. Traffic volumes were recorded by the intersection vehicle detectors in November 2008. Volumes were averaged over three weekdays. Turning movement percentage distributions and vehicle classification were obtained from turning movement counts collected in February 2001, as provided by the City. The percent trucks, by intersection approach, are illustrated in the figure at the right. Traffic volumes were developed for the weekday AM and PM peak hours. The existing traffic volumes are illustrated on the following.





The two study area intersections are controlled by traffic signals, part of the City's networked signal system. Signal timing plans were provided by the City with an AM signal cycle length of 90 seconds and a PM cycle length of 110 seconds. Although the signalized intersections are adjacent to each other on Smith Road, they do not function as a coordinated system. In the study area, the north-south corridors are progressed (Court Street and Broadway Street), rather than the east-west corridor along Smith Road. This progression was developed as part of the recent signal optimization project and is based on traffic volumes and patterns.

**Existing Conditions Capacity Analysis**

Within the study area, Smith Road is a two-lane arterial with exclusive left turn lanes at the Court Street and Broadway Street intersections. Court Street is similarly configured in the vicinity of Smith Road. Broadway Street is a two-lane roadway with angled parking on the east side in front of Garfield Elementary School, north of the Smith Road intersection. As previously mentioned, HCS was utilized to model the intersections and assess their operations. The traffic analysis is based on the existing traffic volumes, with truck volumes as reported in the *Central City Traffic Study*, adjustments made for grades at the intersection approaches, and the existing signal phasing and timing plans, as provided by the City of Medina, with optimized splits. An overview of the capacity analysis results are shown in Table 2. Detailed results by approach and by movement for each intersection are included in the traffic report.

Intersection	Measure of Effectiveness	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Smith Road @ Court Street	Intersection LOS	C	C
	Average Delay	21.5 sec/veh	29.4 sec/veh
	Max v/c	0.72	0.84
Smith Road @ Broadway Street	Intersection LOS	B	C
	Average Delay	17.3 sec/veh	22.1 sec/veh
	Max v/c	0.59	0.66

The results of the existing conditions traffic analysis show that the two study area intersections are functioning at acceptable levels of service. This is the case for the intersection approach movements as well as the overall intersections. This indicates that redevelopment of the four sites could accommodate land uses that generate more peak hour trips than the existing land uses.

**Truck Traffic and Impacts**

Truck traffic makes a significant impact on the study area, affecting both the operational efficiency of the intersections and the walkability of the area. Field observations indicated a clear impact to traffic operations and safety at the study area intersections. The geometry of the two intersections is not designed to adequately accommodate turning trucks. This results in trucks turning slowly and frequently overtaking the opposing traffic lane(s) and/or rolling onto and over the sidewalk with the truck trailer tracking across pedestrian space. Intersection delay is caused by turning trucks, as well as safety issues to other vehicles at the intersection and pedestrians on the sidewalk. In addition to the field observations, the *Central City Traffic Study* summarized accident data for the downtown Medina area and reported a high percent of accidents involving trucks.

**Table 3: Existing Conditions with Reduced Trucks Capacity Analysis Results**

Intersection	Measure of Effectiveness	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Smith Road @ Court Street	Intersection LOS	C	C
	Average Delay	20.9 sec/veh	28.4 sec/veh
	Max v/c	0.68	0.80
Smith Road @ Broadway Street	Intersection LOS	B	C
	Average Delay	17.1 sec/veh	21.9 sec/veh
	Max v/c	0.58	0.65

The *NOACA Goods Movement and Truck Traffic Planning Program: City of Medina Truck Survey* reported more than 40% of the truck trips on SR 18 as being external trips. The *Central City Traffic Study* indicated that estimate was relevant to the downtown area. Rerouting of those external truck trips to roadways outside the downtown area would improve traffic operations and enhance the walkability of downtown Medina. As such, this study completed capacity analysis with a comparable reduction in truck trips at the two intersections in the study area. The results are given in Table 3. The overall reduction in delay reported by HCS are minimal, however, this is likely due to the inability of the software to reflect the impacts of the inadequate intersection geometry for turning trucks and the associated reductions in intersection capacity. Observed capacity improvements would likely be greater than what is indicated by the HCS analysis results.

# Rediscovering the Corridor

## Establishing the Community's Goals for Redevelopment

As a part of this community driven process, an initial community meeting was held at which a brief presentation was made outlining the scope of the project, what a TLCI study entails, an overview of the four study sites and the existing traffic analysis as outlined in the previous section of this report. Following a presentation, attendees divided into three groups to discuss their feelings regarding the study area, how they currently interact with it and how they could begin to envision its future. The meeting concluded with the full group of attendees coming together to present the individual discussions to one another. Although the groups focused on three specific topics; economic development, community planning and the transportation system; a number of themes began to emerge within all three groups that would guide the way in which the redevelopment and infrastructure recommendations have been approached within this report. These themes include:

- Utilize **Champion Creek** as an amenity that can be representative of new development.
- Create the **Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Trail extension** from Guilford Avenue into the study area with a trailhead that connects into downtown and the square.
- New development and streetscape designs will be pedestrian oriented to promote **north / south connections** between the neighborhoods and downtown.
- Redevelopment must **expand the atmosphere and sense of place** that is already established within the square and historic district.
- A **new courthouse** will be a strong community anchor and a catalyst to spur continued private development.
- Determine opportunities for **parks, green space and places for children** within the plan
- Address and **minimize truck traffic**, with a focus on the Broadway / Smith intersection as a key transit node.
- The **integration of housing** opportunities within the downtown district will help to create more activity on the street and **renew interest in the City's historic neighborhoods**.
- No matter what is planned and constructed, it must be **sustainably designed** and demonstrate green building and site planning techniques.

## Analyzing the Redevelopment Potential for the Four Sites

In the effort to begin to rediscover the potential that each site has to meet the community's goals and to guide future growth within the Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor, a series of density and land-use studies were conducted. The sketches that were created to depict development options demonstrate variations in land use, density, adjacencies to surrounding uses, the integration of multi-modal transit enhancements and the creation of public green space.

Each of the different site plans and their approximate statistics were presented to representatives from the city and the stakeholders in the Steering Committee. Discussions regarding the merits of different ways of utilizing the land and how the sites interact with one another began to define the creation of the plan. Although impossible to fully explore the potential for each site without considering the other three, the following pages outline the options presented and issues related to each that were discussed that lead to the final Smith Road / Champion Creek Development District master plan.

There are three primary strategies that must be addressed for successful redevelopment:

- **Land use**  
(Building placement, adjacencies, development districts, connections)
- **Marketability**  
(Economically viable alternatives, land control, real estate trends, commercial vitality)
- **Context**  
(Quality of life, recreation trail, pedestrian connections, TRUCK TRAFFIC)



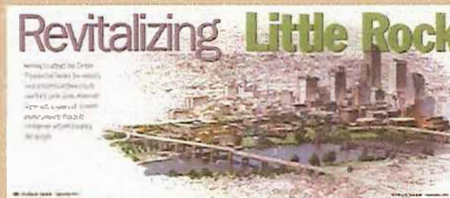
Developing next to railroad tracks



Market trends



Infrastructure to support development



Public Investment as a Catalyst



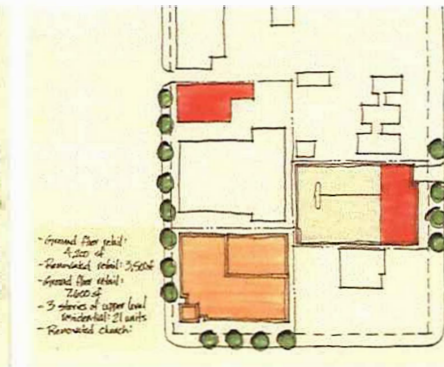
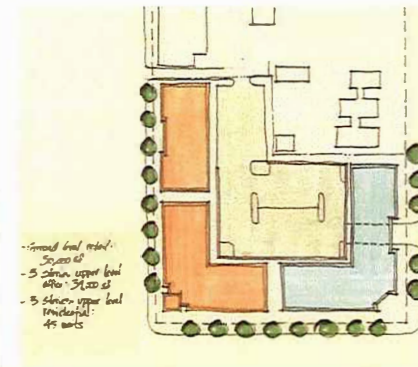
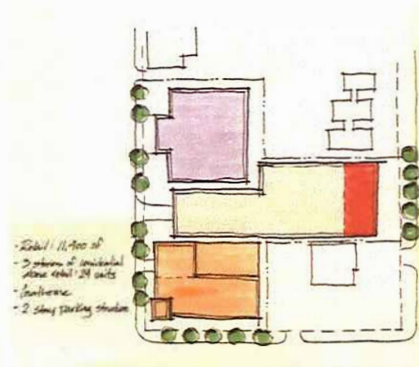
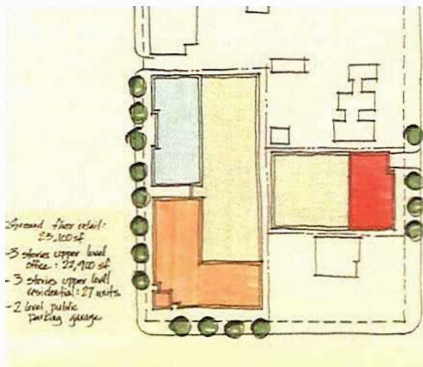
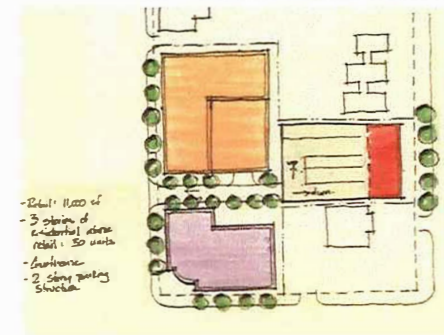
Reusing vacant commercial sites

# Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### The Medina United Methodist Church Site

When discussing the various scenarios presented for the Methodist Church site the following are the issues and influences that guided the conversation:

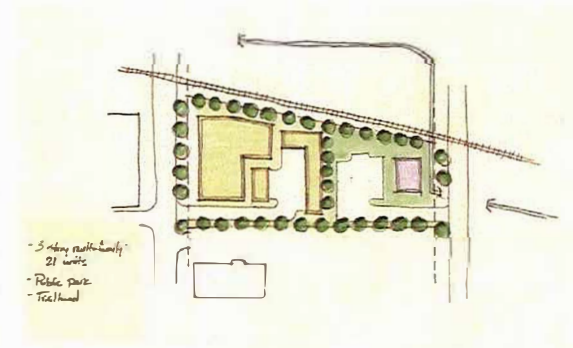
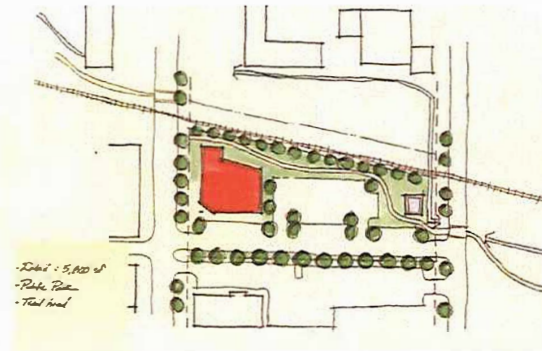
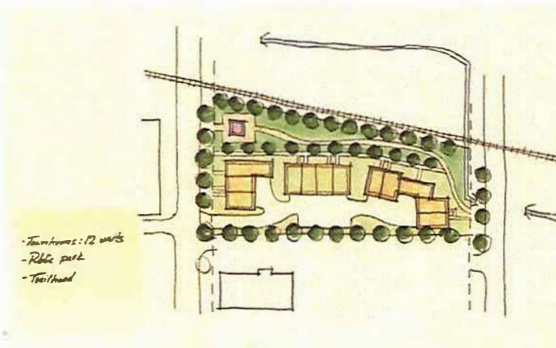
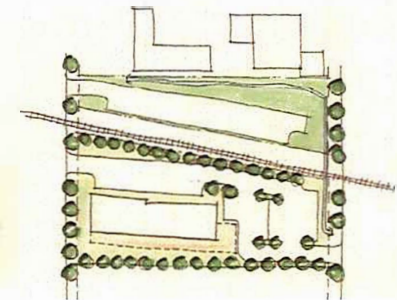
- A mixture of uses at a higher density can be used on this site to carry the feeling of the square south.
- The existing church building has the potential to remain as is, to be sold and demolished in favor of a new building or to have a new user demolish the educational addition and retain the sanctuary for an adaptive reuse.
- Through previous discussions between the City and developers, the site has been discussed for the construction of a Municipal Court.
- The Nichols Family Dentistry property is not currently a part of the redevelopment, but it may create a more meaningful overall block design should it be redeveloped in the future.
- The location of entrances to parking lots / garages will affect the street network and its relationship with Garfield Elementary School.
- As confirmed by the school district, Garfield Elementary is not planning on leaving the neighborhood. However, the current school lacks meaningful green space and creates a traffic problem when parents line up to along Broadway for student drop-off and pick-up.



### The Medina Farmer's Exchange Site

When discussing the various scenarios presented for the Farmer's Exchange site the following are the issues and influences that guided the conversation:

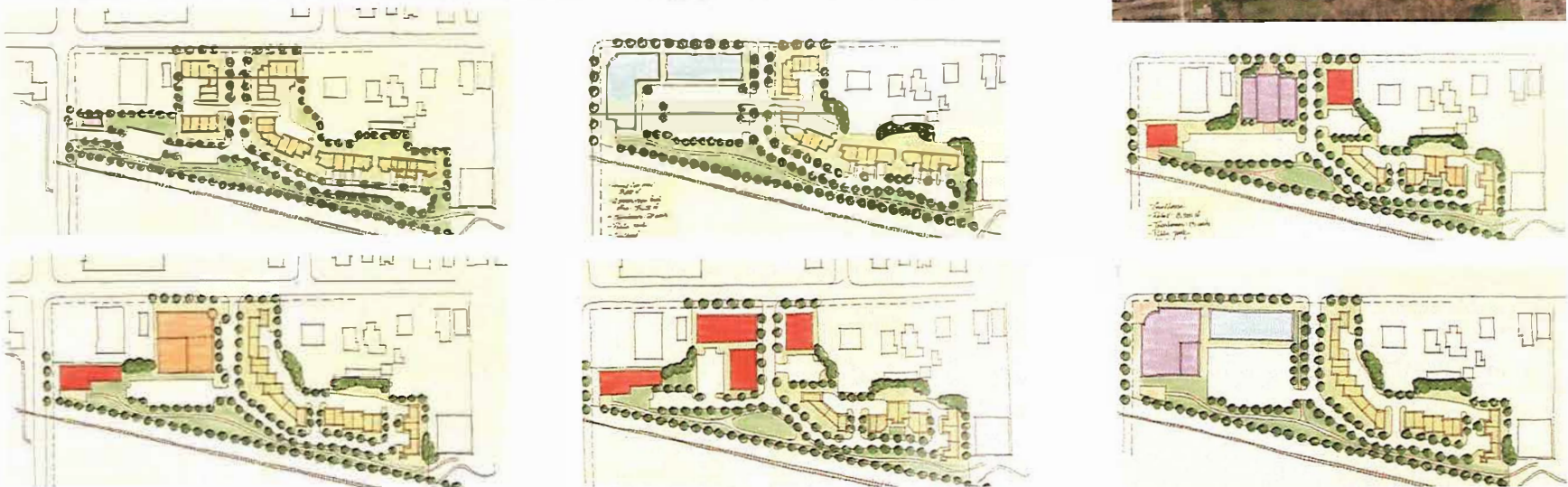
- The possibility exists to retain portions of the existing building for adaptive reuse. However, the methods used for its construction given its industrial / storage functions with thick exterior walls and low floor-to-floor heights will be limiting.
- Redevelopment of the site must address and bridge the perception of a gap along Court and Broadway between the southern neighborhoods and downtown where residents believe a 'dead zone' currently exists within the district.
- Surrounding the site are a series of small-scale commercial and office uses, many of which are in recently renovated buildings.
- A trail head for the proposed extension of the Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Path is needed to connect users with downtown. Should that be integrated onto this site it would require users to cross Broadway mid-block adjacent to the railroad tracks where no crosswalks or traffic signals exist.
- There is a lack of a quality hotel facility within the city center.
- The property immediately to the north of the Farmer's Exchange on the other side of the railroad tracks may be worth considering within this plan.



### The Medina Supply Site

When discussing the various scenarios presented for the Medina Supply site the following are the issues and influences that guided the conversation:

- Of the sites included within this study, this is the most feasible alternative for a Municipal Court should it not be incorporated into the Methodist Church site.
- The frontages along Broadway and Smith are along truck routes, which may hinder residential development.
- The appropriateness of a trail head was discussed as it would be a natural downtown terminus for the Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Path extension regardless of its location north or south of the tracks.
- Even if the trail extension occurs south of the railroad tracks, an arm of the trail and green space may be appropriate on this site as a linkage to parking, commercial services such as ice-cream or bike shops and existing neighborhoods to the east.
- New development is only feasible if there is an appropriate mix of public and private development.
- The train tracks may hinder private development immediately adjacent to the southern property line.
- The ability exists to create a connection between the Medina Supply and James Lumber sites.

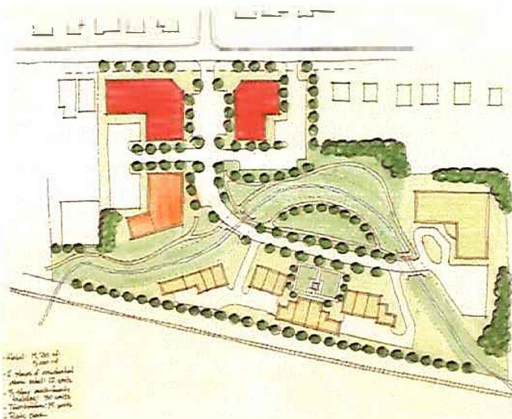
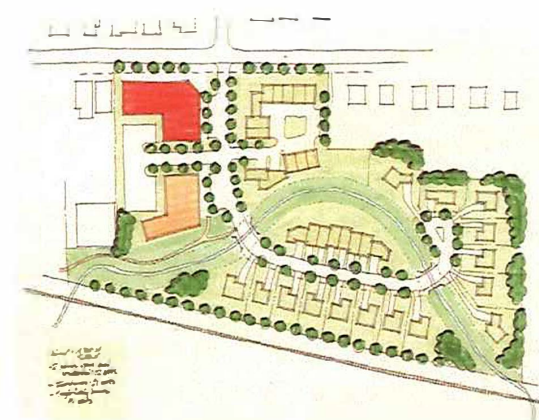
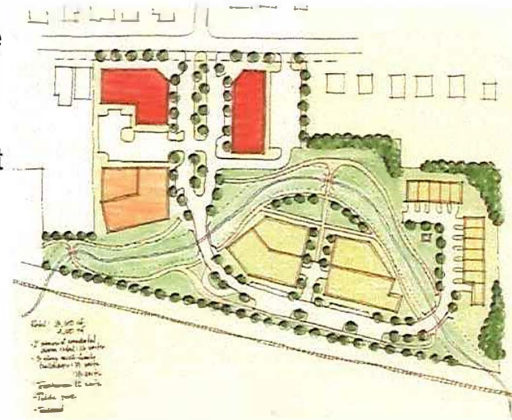




### The James Lumber Site

When discussing the various scenarios presented for the James Lumber site the following are the issues and influences that guided the conversation:

- Although this is the largest of the four sites, the retention of Champion Creek divides the land into three distinct areas.
- Of the four sites, the James Lumber site has the ability to fully integrate Champion Creek into a redevelopment plan.
- The type of development proposed along the Smith Road frontage will set the stage for how the street is used in the future.
- An extension of the Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Path and green space through the site to East Street will connect the trail to the existing family-oriented neighborhood.
- The train tracks may hinder private development immediately adjacent to the southern property line.
- The ability exists to create a connection between the Medina Supply and James Lumber sites.



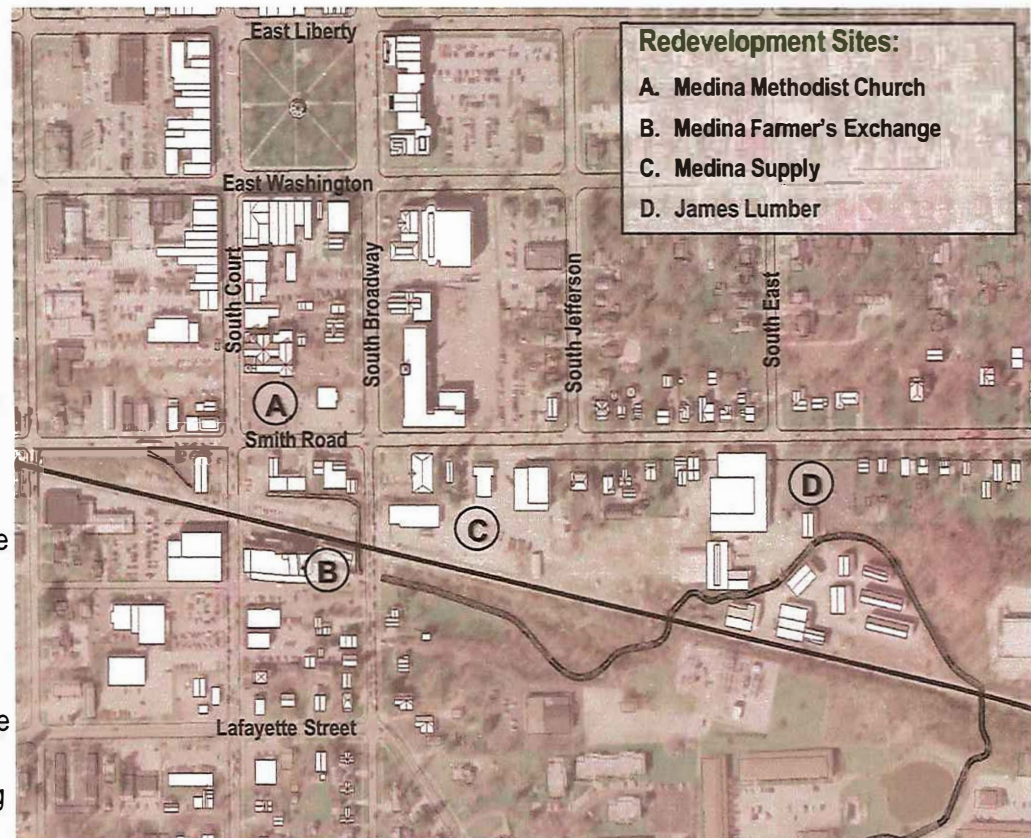
# Envisioning A Sustainable Downtown Neighborhood

## The Redevelopment Plan

The redevelopment plan for the Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor that has emerged throughout this planning process provides solutions to many of the challenges that are currently facing the district. Foremost, the design solutions determined for the reuse of the four study sites provide the opportunity to fill gaps that have been created over time along Smith, Broadway and Court in which the automobile has been prioritized over the pedestrian. By proposing a varied mixture of uses and building types that engage the street and enliven the public realm, the neighborhoods to the south and east of the square can once again be perceived as unified with the commercial and historic center of the city.

The redevelopment proposals outlined on the following pages also provide a number of physical connections to support the way in which residential and business districts interconnect. Providing multi-modal connections and enhancements throughout the study area is a priority of both this study as well as a Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative. Through the extension of the existing Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Trail into the downtown core, and its interaction with the new development, the groundwork is being created for a safer and more accessible pedestrian and bicycle network. In addition, the plan calls for a series of strategic traffic enhancements at intersections to eliminate conflicts that have arisen between the pedestrian environment and the turning radii of the local truck traffic.

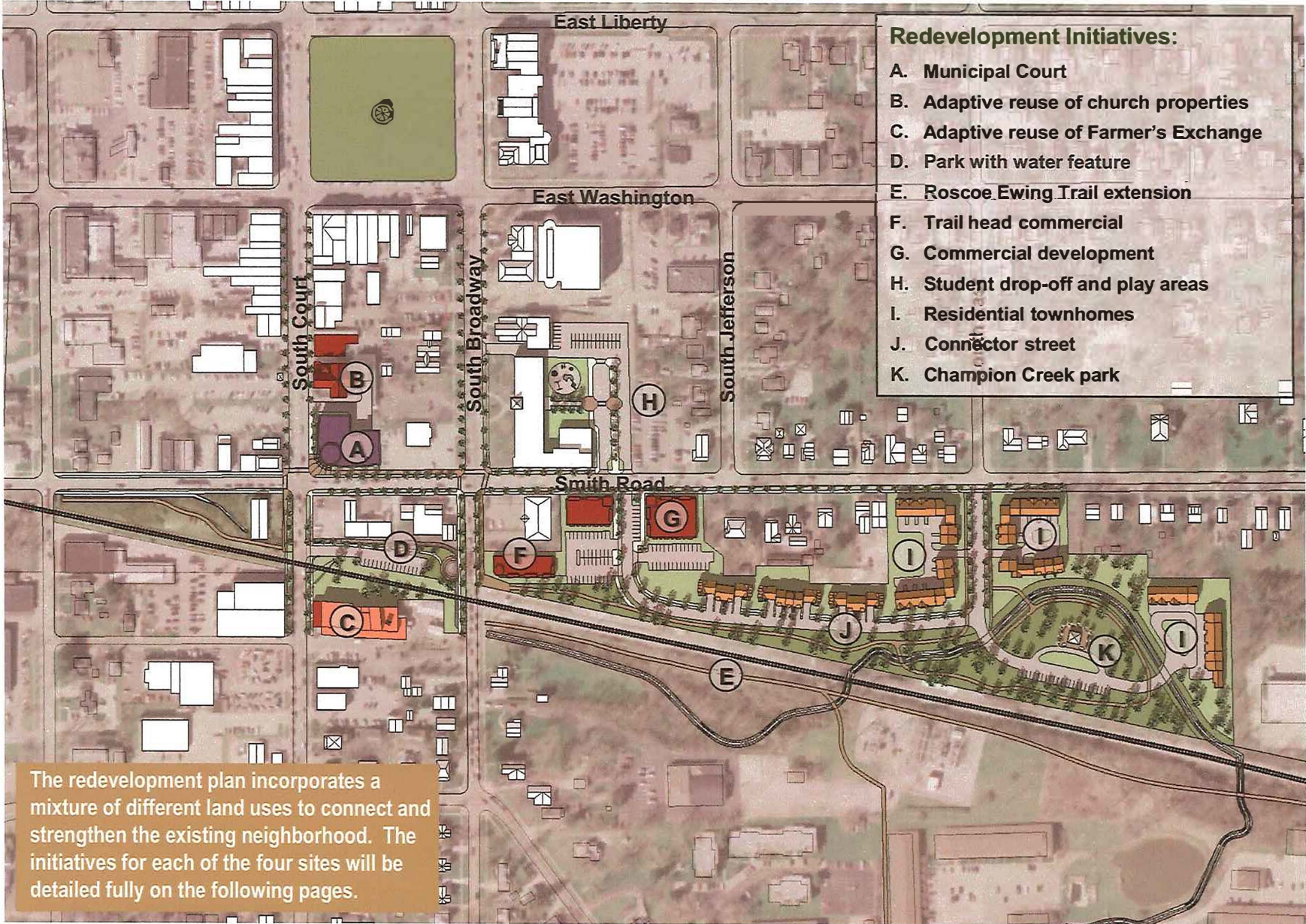
The public development, private development and infrastructure recommendations that are discussed within this section of the report have been conceived to create a renewed interest in the utilization and preservation of the assets the downtown business district and the surrounding neighborhoods have to offer. The following initiatives aim to strengthen and support the City, and help it to grow and evolve to remain a place that continues to retain existing residents while continually attracting new.

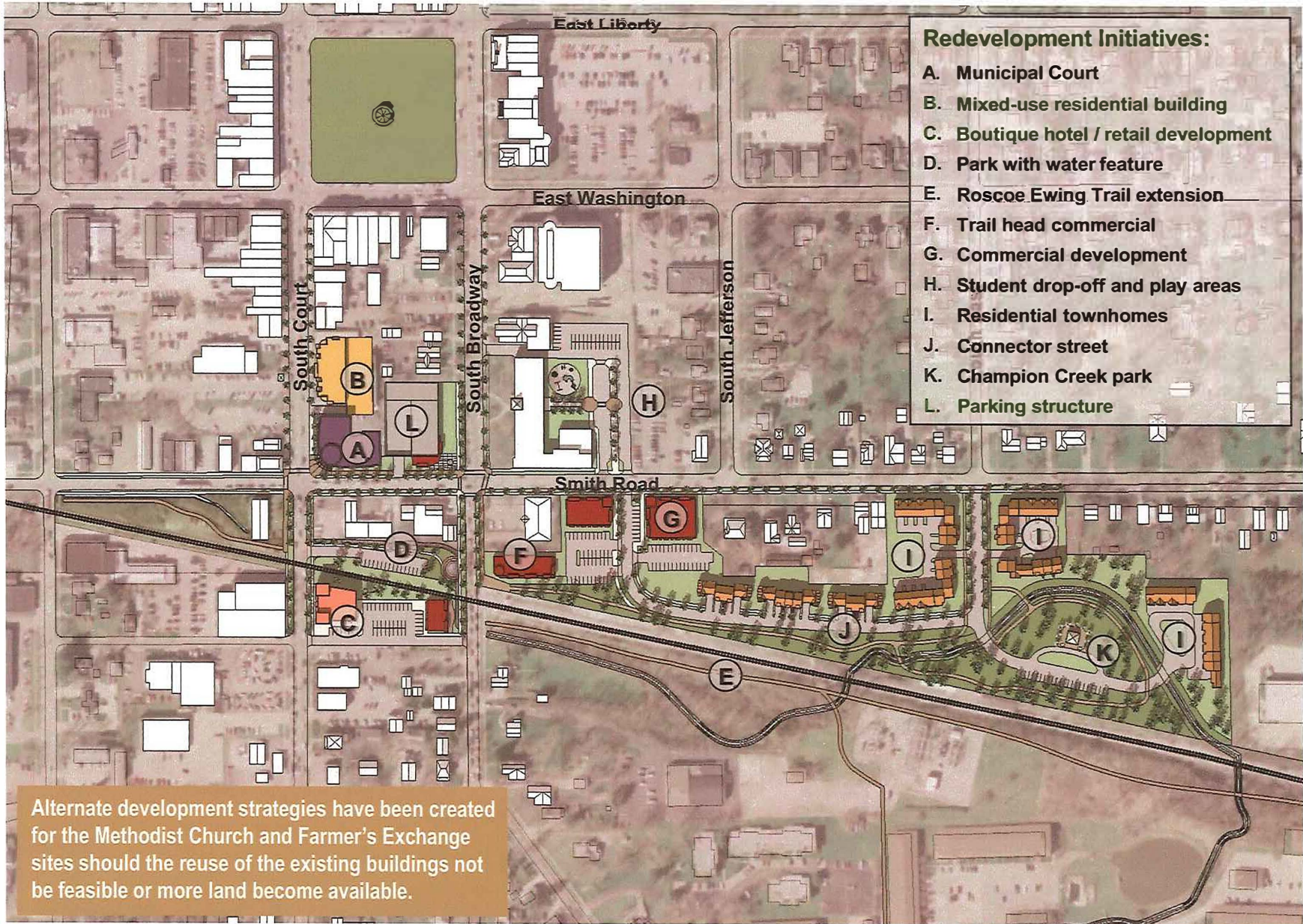




- The master plan has the potential to create:
- Municipal Court
  - Commercial Spaces – 39,000 sf
  - Residential Units – 67 homes
  - Boutique Hotel – 30 rooms
  - Parks / Green Spaces – 4.7 acres
  - Recreational Trail – 0.68 miles

## Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor





# Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### The Medina United Methodist Church Site

The proposal for the Methodist Church site utilizes a new municipal court at the intersection of Court Street and Smith Road as the cornerstone of the redevelopment. Although other options for a new court have been discussed, this site provides an opportunity to create a civic presence within the redevelopment demonstrating the City's commitment to establishing a connection between the Smith Road corridor and the historic central square. Although other sites were identified as options throughout this process, their immediate adjacency to the Garfield Elementary School became a negative factor in the decision process. In addition, the Smith / Court Street site provides the opportunity for development to set a precedent for high-quality architectural design that represents the character of the city center.

Throughout the process of developing this plan, there has been a great deal of discussion regarding the Methodist Church building. Through a renovation and addition to the building in the 1960s, the original historic façade of the church was demolished, creating a mixture of viewpoints regarding the historic integrity of the building. However, throughout Northeast Ohio and around the country a number of projects have demonstrated the ability to adaptively reuse a church's sanctuary to create very unique retail, restaurant, residential or office space.

Knowing that at the time of this study the property is currently for sale, should a future owner not wish to retain the existing sanctuary a mixed-use commercial and residential development is recommended. Through the integration of residential units within the downtown core, an increased level of pedestrian activity becomes possible along the streets, in turn helping to support the local businesses. The redevelopment plan calls for a three-story building with retail storefronts along the street and built to the right-of-way to remain in character with the surrounding buildings. The upper floors are envisioned as residential units, with parking for the units accommodated in an enclosed garage behind the building, the roof of which can double as a private green space for residents.

#### Site Statistics:

30,000 sf Municipal Courthouse  
plus  
9,500 sf of renovated commercial  
or  
8,800 sf of new commercial  
14 new residential condominiums

As the planning team discussed the parcel of land that is currently owned by the Methodist Church, the discussion often included the future of the adjacent site at the corner of Smith and Broadway occupied by Nichols Family Dentistry. Although not currently for sale, the layout of the property focuses on ease of access by car, and breaks the continuity of the pedestrian environment that exists on the northern end of the block. Should the property be redeveloped in the future, an alternative presented within this plan would be to construct a parking garage that would serve the new Municipal Court as well as employees of Garfield Elementary, create a commercial storefront addressing the corner and integrate a green space to reflect the lawn area across Broadway in front of the school. This would then eliminate the need for the court to use the existing city-owned parking lot on Court Street and create the opportunity to redevelop that site as a mixed-use building, once again strengthening the pedestrian environment within the commercial district.

Throughout this study, a recurring point that was addressed by the public is the traffic congestion that occurs along Broadway at the Garfield Elementary when parents are picking up and dropping off their children. This plan demonstrates a methodology for adding one-way drop-off and pick-up lanes behind the school that can be accessed from Smith Road and exit onto Broadway. As a part of planning for the lanes, the large expanse of asphalt behind the school is also converted into a green space and play ground for students, while maintaining employee parking at the north and east edges of the site.



The Methodist Church site today



Redevelopment with the adaptive reuse of the church sanctuary



Redevelopment with a mixed-use residential building



Expanded redevelopment scheme

Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### The Medina Farmer's Exchange Site

As with the Methodist Church site, discussions throughout the planning process for this redevelopment opportunity focused heavily on the debate of adaptively reusing the existing building versus the construction of new buildings on the site. The existing Farmer's Exchange building is unique within Medina due to its historic role as a hub for the collection and distribution of farm supplies and crops along with its unique architectural style. However, due to the nature of its previous uses, the upper two floors have low ceiling heights and extremely thick walls. Given the results of a future feasibility study and the costs associated with updating and renovating the existing building, it is believed that this site may make an excellent retail and hotel venue either through renovation or new construction.

A new hotel within Medina's downtown core may make sense for a number of reasons. The closest hotel options to the center of the city are in the suburban strip district where Interstate 71 and Route 18 intersect. There is a growing demand for hotel space due to the increasing number of industrial and business facilities within the City. In addition, the proposed initiatives may result in an increased demand for hospitality uses within the core of downtown Medina. A small-scale boutique hotel would offer the option for the City to market itself as a destination for historical tourism, as well as recreational tourism with the extension of the Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Trail.

Should a feasibility study demonstrate that it is not recommended to renovate the existing Farmer's Exchange building, this master plan calls for the demolition of the building with redevelopment occurring along the Court Street and Broadway frontages of the site. The plan calls for a boutique hotel with ground floor retail to be constructed along Court Street, with a smaller commercial building constructed fronting Champion Creek facing Broadway. Although this retail building will not directly abut Broadway, properly designed storefronts will add life and vitality to the eastern side of the Farmer's Exchange site where storage and support services exist today.

#### Site Statistics:

5,500 sf of commercial  
and  
30 boutique hotel rooms

To the north of the Farmer's Exchange site across the railroad tracks a triangular shaped parcel is currently the site of a gravel parking lot, with Champion Creek bordering the northern and eastern edges. This site offers one of the best opportunities for access to Champion Creek adjacent to the historic center of Medina. The creation of a central parking area and park space with a water feature that will allow access to the water will bring life to this underutilized parcel of land, continue the proposed green space network and continue to add vitality to the Court and Broadway corridors.





The Farmer's Exchange site today



Redevelopment with the adaptive reuse of the existing building



Redevelopment with new construction on Court and Broadway

# Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### **The Medina Supply Site**

The redevelopment of both the Medina Supply and James Lumber sites will have a lasting impact on the future character of the Smith Road corridor. Historically a residential street, there has been an increase in business and commercial development in the more recent past. However, beyond the development trends there are traffic implications that affect what will feasibly be developed. Currently, semi-truck traffic that passes through Medina travels in an east-west direction along Smith Road mainly to the west of the Jefferson Street intersection. Being along the path of this truck route, it is believed that commercial uses that would serve the needs of the local residents as well as act as a trail head for the Roscoe Ewing Trail extension should line the frontage for the Medina Supply site along Broadway and Smith Road.

With a trail extension intersecting Broadway and connecting to the center of Medina at the southern edge of the railroad tracks, the property immediately to the north of the tracks represents an opportunity to create a linkage that will draw recreational trail users into the center of the city. Within this trail head, a commercial building and adjacent public plaza provides an place for amenities such as a bike store, an ice cream shop, informational signage directing users to downtown and the square, bike racks, outdoor seating and landscaping. The remaining commercial uses shown along Smith Road are envisioned as a mixture of commercial services such as dentist or doctor's offices and amenity retailers such as the existing Family Video store constructed at the corner.

The interior of the site offers additional opportunities for new medium density residential housing. The master plan shows a series of townhome buildings lining a new street that enters the site from Smith Road, and turns to the east to connect with the redevelopment of the James Lumber site. Townhomes provide the opportunity to integrate a new housing typology into the central residential neighborhoods of Medina. It is important to provide a variety of housing opportunities in order to ensure that the needs of a wide variety of residents ranging from families of all sizes, to young professionals to empty nesters can be provided for within a community. Given the current growth of Medina, this is a critical time to ensure that there is a place for everyone within the community.

#### **Site Statistics:**

**20,000 sf of commercial**

**10 townhomes**

**0.8 acres of park space**

**Multi-purpose trail extension**

**Downtown Medina trail head**

As mentioned previously within this report, the rail line forms the southern boundary of the site. For this reason, the proposed new housing is placed north of the tracks, and buffered by the new road as well as a green park spine. This swath of land can become a public and community amenity through the inclusion of an extension of a leg of the Roscoe Ewing Trail from the trail head into the Medina Supply site, where it will have the ability to connect through the James Lumber site and north into the existing neighborhood.



The Medina Supply site today



Redevelopment with a new trail head, park, commercial and residential uses

# Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### The James Lumber Site

The approach to the redevelopment of the James Lumber site shares many traits with the neighboring Medina Supply site, but has been approached from a very different perspective. Being the largest of the four redevelopment sites, an extension of East Street across Smith Road and into the site has been proposed to provide access to the inner block areas. By intersecting with the roadway that provides access to the interior of the Medina Supply site, a continuous block network that extends the neighboring urban fabric can be attained. This will also allow for the extension of the leg of the Roscoe Ewing Trail to connect with East Street and the family-oriented residential neighborhood north of Smith Road.

Although viewed as a mixture of public and private uses similar to the Medina Supply site, the James Lumber site has been planned with the private development represented completely by medium-density residential. Proposed townhomes flank the entrance to the site at East Street, continuing the historical residential development trend along Smith Road, and blending with the surrounding blocks. The residential townhome sites depicted on the plan have the ability to be transformed into multi-family condominium, apartment or senior living buildings pending the market demands at the time of redevelopment.

#### Site Statistics:

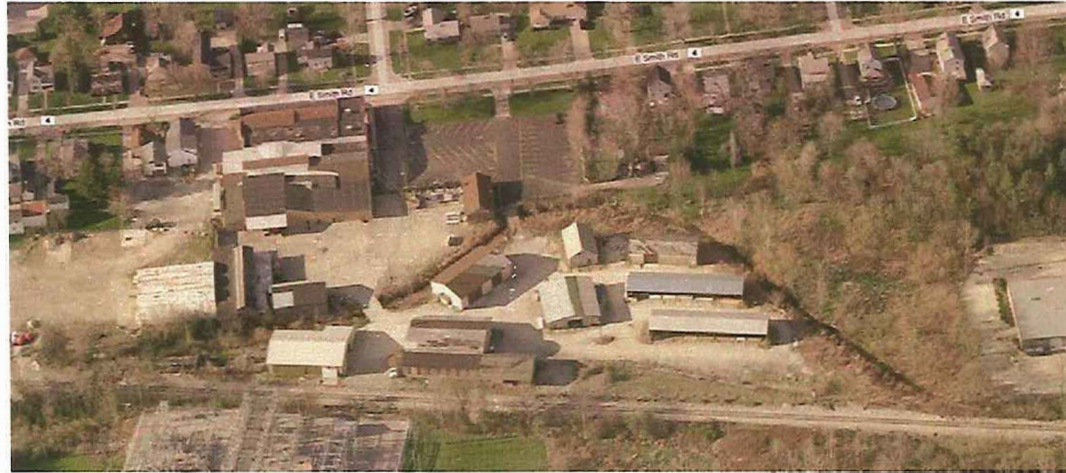
40 townhomes

4.0 acres of park space

Multi-purpose trail extension

Neighborhood trail head

An important feature with James Lumber site is the presence of a bend in Champion Creek that bisects the site. The plan proposed allows residents and visitors to take advantage of this natural amenity, while concurrently buffering the residential development from the adjacent train tracks. Within the bend of the creek a public park is envisioned that can become both a neighborhood amenity as well as an attraction to a broader array of visitors. Such things as picnic shelters, playgrounds, a skate park, access to the multi-purpose trail or large open grassy areas can serve the needs of neighborhood families and visitors alike. In addition, public parking facilities can allow recreational visitors a place to park their cars and access the Roscoe Ewing Trail.



The James Lumber site today



Redevelopment with a new trail head, park, commercial and residential uses

## Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

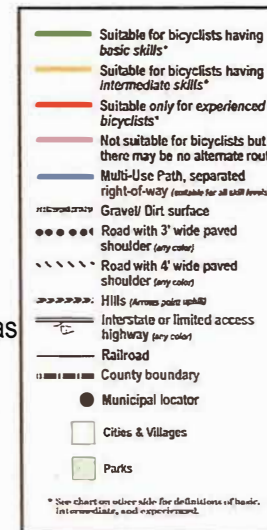
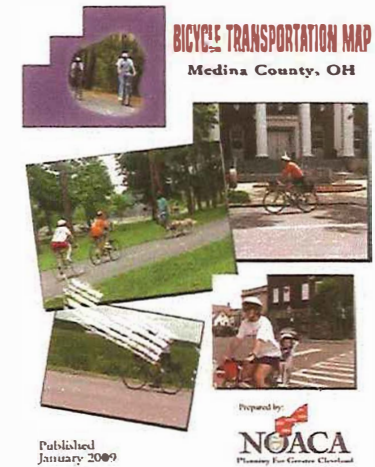
### The Roscoe Ewing Multi-Purpose Train Extension

The redevelopment plans for the four sites each incorporate the extension of the Roscoe Ewing Trail in one form or another. However, the routing of the trail from its current terminus at Guilford Boulevard west into the downtown district must also be planned. The study identified a number of pros and cons for routing the trail extension on both the north and south side of the railroad tracks. The decision was ultimately made to choose routing options along the south side of the tracks. Although the Medina Supply and James Lumber redevelopment sites could tie into a northern alignment, the existing industrial park to the east of the study area abuts the tracks, and has an existing rail spur connection that they wish to maintain for future uses.

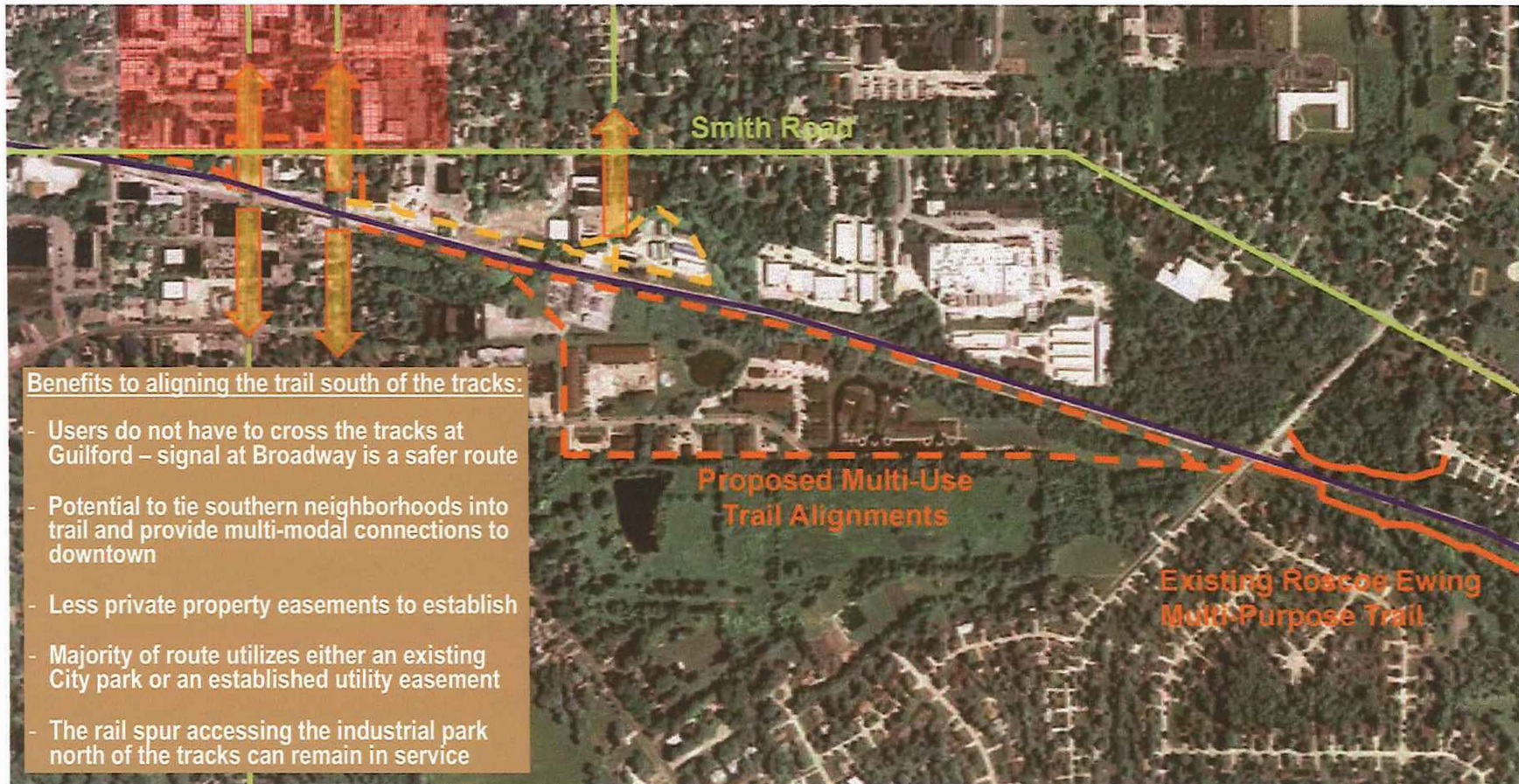
There are two potential alignments for the trail extension along the south side of the railroad tracks. The first and most direct route abuts the tracks using a utility access road for approximately the eastern two-thirds of the trail, and is the most direct route. However, at the end of the utility access road one encounters an electrical substation. At this point the multi-purpose trail must pass between the substation and the railroad tracks for approximately 270'. If this route is followed, the trail will have to be narrowed and built onto an elevated platform as a steep hill drops to the tracks, with walls on either side to shield recreational users from accessing the tracks or the power station. Once past the substation, the trail will continue east into downtown utilizing a portion of land that is a widened section of the railroad right-of-way through which Champion Creek flows.

The second alternative for the trail extension begins at Guilford Boulevard, but turns to the southeast through city-owned park land until reaching Springbrook Drive. At this point along this alignment, the trail would follow Springbrook Drive through the existing apartment buildings until reaching the back driveway to the Medina Community Church. From this point the trail can follow the route of the old driveway, around the western side of the substation, and connect through the expanded railroad right-of-way to Broadway. Although a longer overall route, this second option has the ability to connect another City park with the recreational trail, and the potential to create a trail head at Springbrook Drive that can serve as an entry point for residents of the surrounding blocks.

When the trail extension reaches Broadway, it is proposed that an off-street path continue through the city street grid that will connect from the trail head north to Smith Road and the Garfield

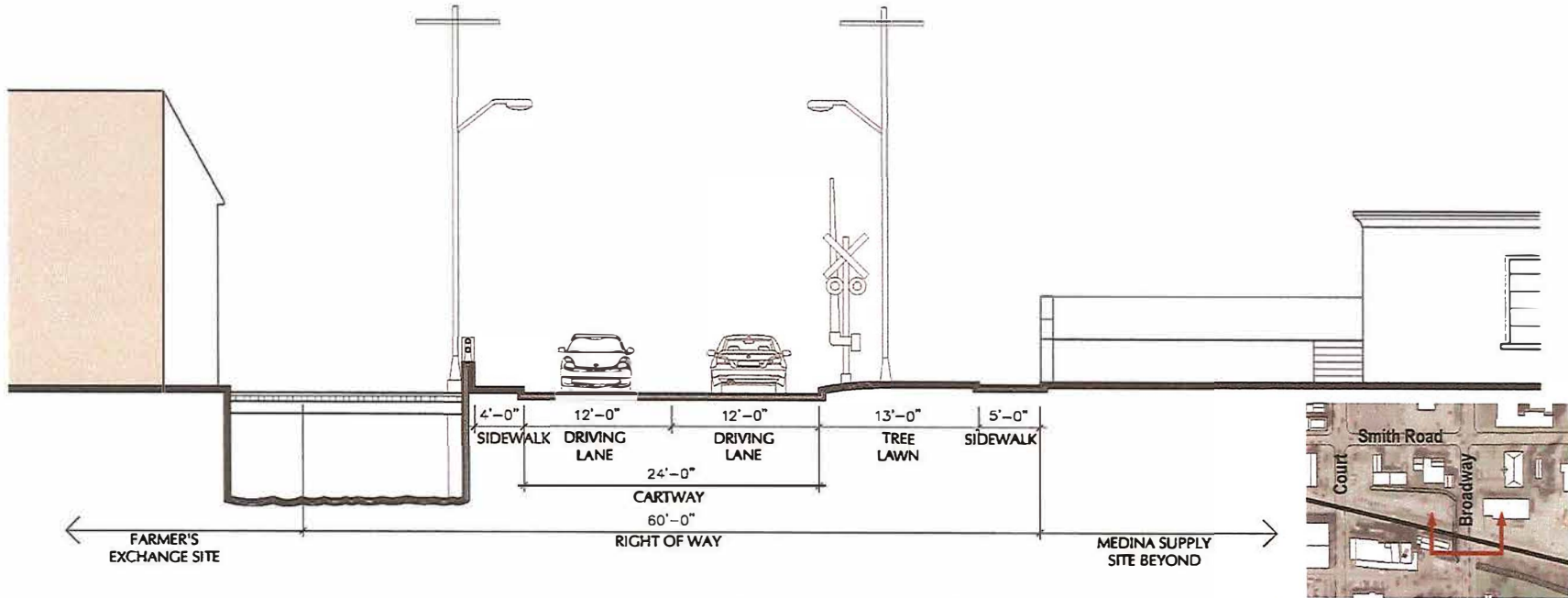


Elementary property, continue along the Methodist Church site frontage and then south on Court Street where an off-road trail can once again follow the railroad tracks and Champion Creek further to the west. The decision to place the trail along the city street network as opposed to continuing along the rail line through the Farmer's Exchange site serves two purposes. First, if the trail were to cross Broadway to continue along the Farmer's Exchange property, it would likely be a mid-block crossing which provides less protection to pedestrians than a signalized crossing. In addition, by continuing the trail along the city streets it provides recreational users the ability to interact with the commercial center and in turn support local businesses.



Potential trail routings between Guilford Boulevard and Downtown Medina

Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor



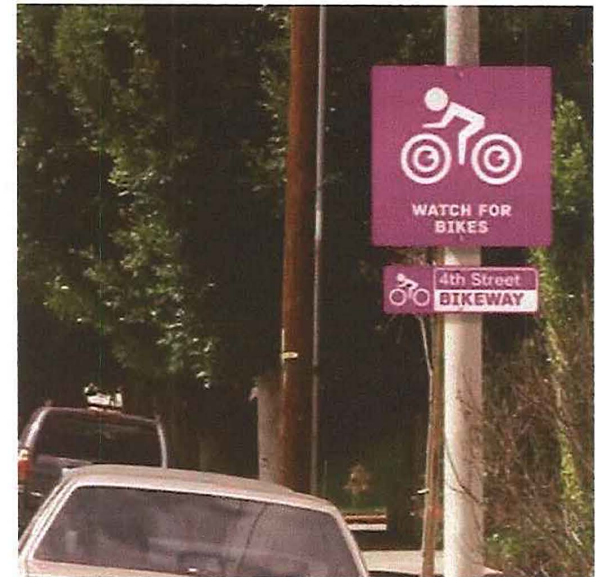
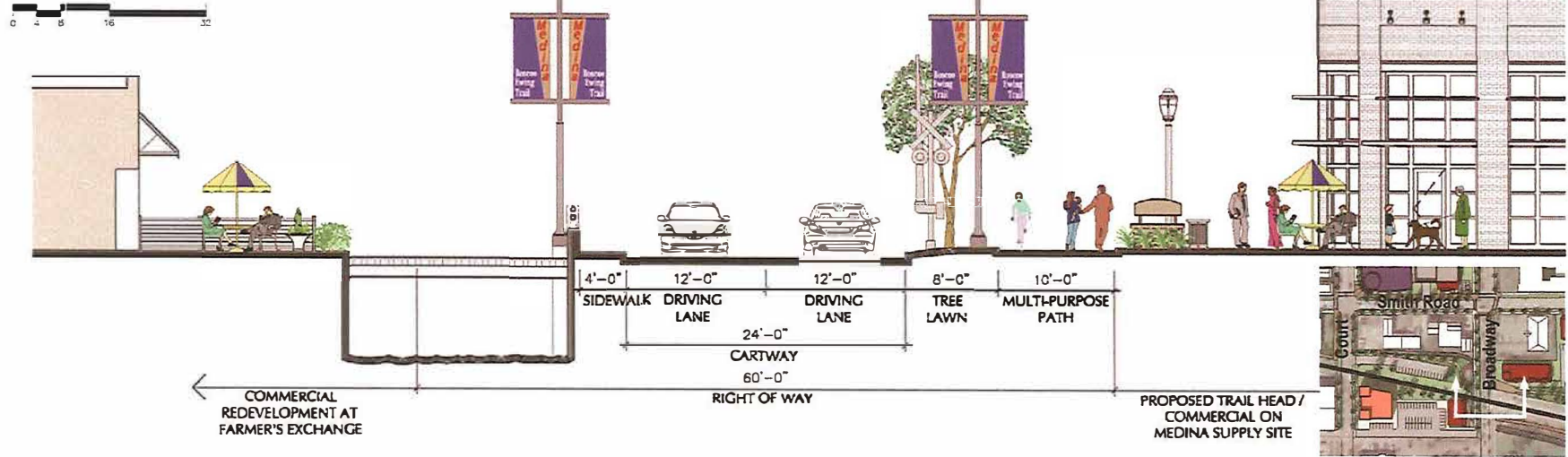
**BROADWAY - Existing Conditions**  
Between the Farmer's Exchange and railroad tracks looking north towards Medina Supply



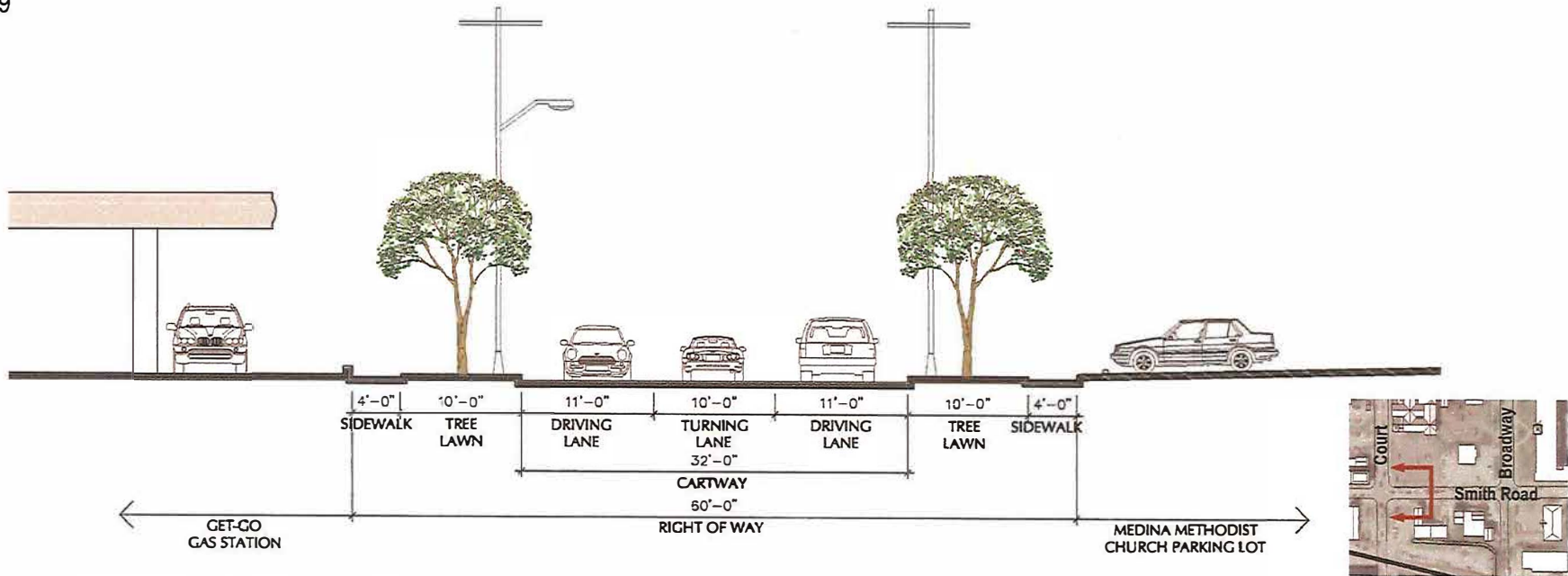


### BROADWAY - Proposed Reconfiguration

Between the Farmer's Exchange and railroad tracks looking north towards Medina Supply

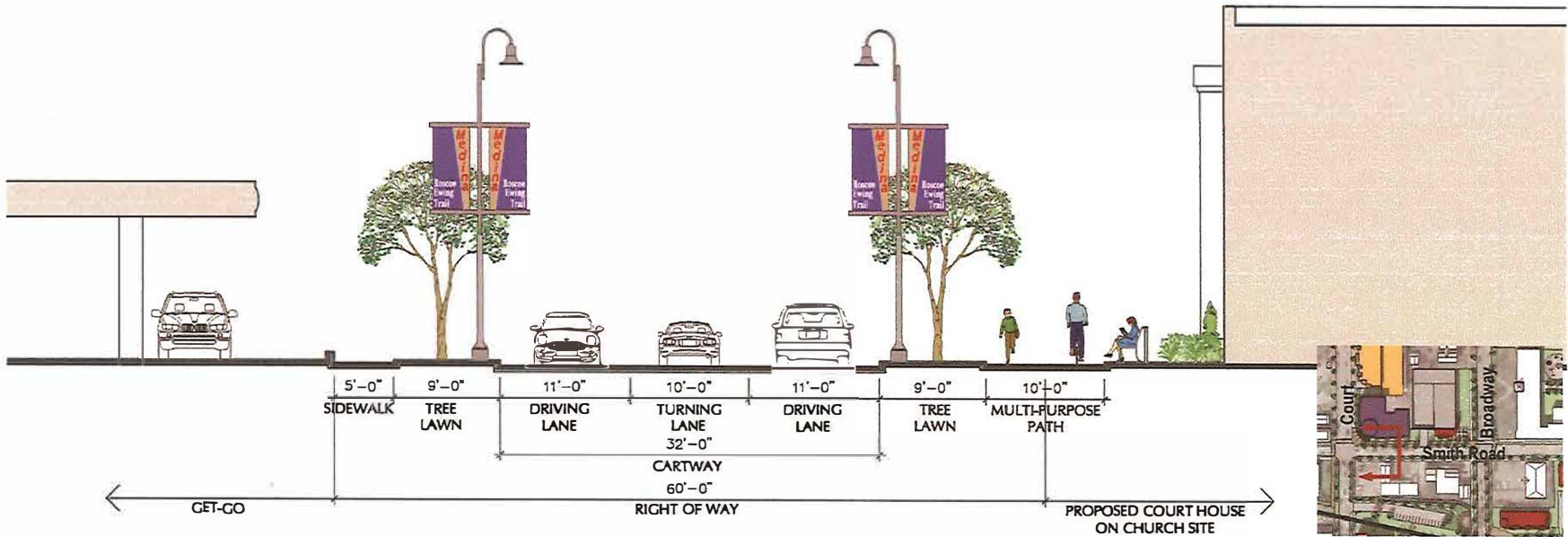


Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor



**SMITH ROAD - Existing Conditions**  
Between the Get-Go gas station and the Methodist Church parking lot





**SMITH ROAD - Proposed Configuration**  
Between the Get-Go gas station and the proposed Municipal Court on the Church site



**Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor**

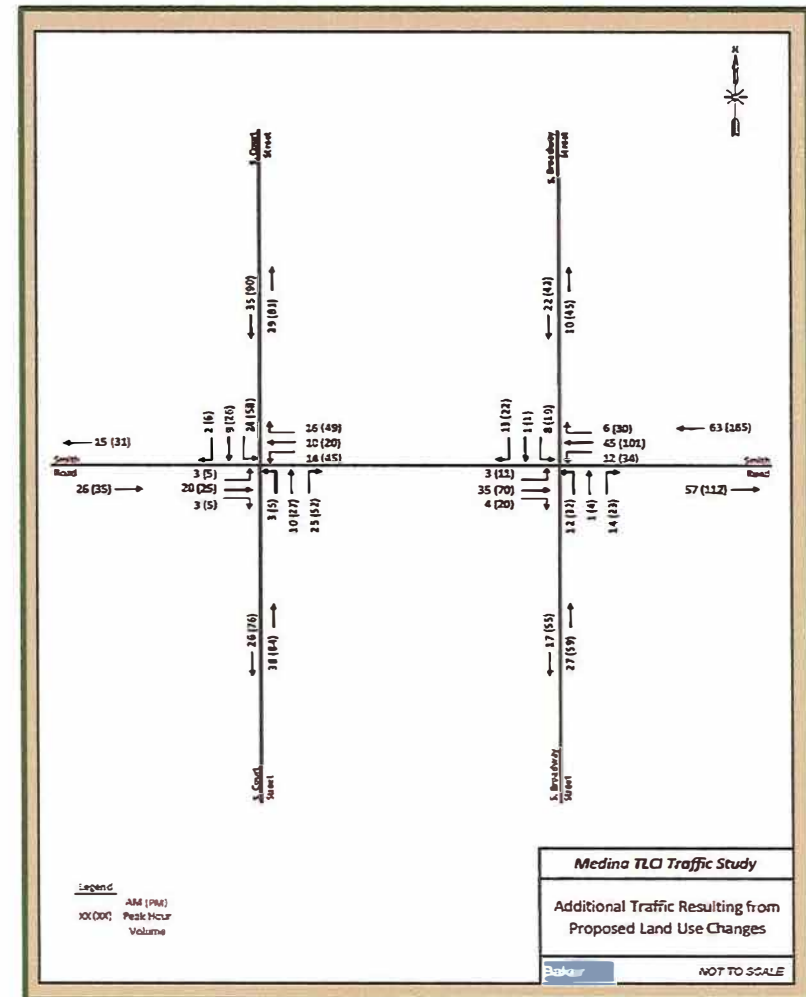
## Creating a Street Network that Supports and Enhances the Smith Road Corridor Redevelopment

### Proposed Changes in Land Use

As part of the community engagement process, the project stakeholders and the general public assisted with the development of preferred land uses for the four sites, as they are redeveloped in the future. The results yielded the following land use plans for each site, as shown in Table 4.

Site	New Land Uses	Size
Methodist Church	Municipal Court	15,000 square feet
	Retail	12,800 square feet
	Residential (condo/townhouse)	14 dwelling units
Farmer's Exchange	Boutique Hotel	30 rooms
	Retail	6,100 square feet
Medina Supply	Residential (condo/townhouse)	13 dwelling units
	Retail	10,000 square feet
	Office	10,000 square feet
James Lumber	Residential (condo/townhouse)	40 dwelling units
	Park	2.6 acres

Trip generation projections for the proposed redevelopment of the four sites are based on the industry standards provided in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation, 8th Edition. For the purpose of this study, trip generation projections for the redeveloped sites included an estimated 5% reduction for bicycle and pedestrian trips. In addition, a 10 percent reduction in PM peak hour trips was made for the retail land uses to account for pass-by trips. The estimated trip projections for the existing land uses were removed from the roadway network and replaced with the trip projections for the redevelopment land uses. Trip distribution patterns were based upon the existing traffic volume data and travel patterns for the study area. The total change in trips between the existing land uses and the proposed redevelopment are illustrated at the right.



**Future Traffic Conditions**

Future traffic conditions for the project area were projected and analyzed to assess the potential impact of redevelopment at the two study intersections. Future volumes are a combination the projected changes resulting from the proposed land use redevelopment and background traffic changes projected to occur exclusive of the proposed lane use changes. Background traffic was projected using the existing traffic volumes and data from NOACA's 2030 regional traffic model to determine a growth factor for the study area. The model does not anticipate traffic growth in downtown Medina for the planning horizon, so the background volumes for the future conditions match the existing conditions volumes. Changes in traffic volumes generated by the proposed redevelopment were added to the background volumes to project future peak hour traffic volumes as illustrated on the following page.

**Capacity Analysis**

A summary of the results of the capacity analysis for the future conditions are given in Table 5. Detailed capacity results, by approach movement, are provided in the traffic report. The future conditions analysis includes the traffic volume adjustments made by removing the traffic generated by the existing land uses from the roadway network, and adding the projected traffic made by the redeveloped land uses to the roadway network. Consistent with the existing conditions analysis, the future conditions analysis is based on the projected traffic volumes, with reduced (diverted) truck volumes, adjustments for grades at the intersection approaches, and the existing signal phasing and timing plans, as provided by the City of Medina, with optimized splits. The capacity analysis results show that the two intersections in the study area will function at acceptable levels of service, well above the design standard of LOS D. This shows that the proposed redevelopment can be accommodated on the existing roadway network.

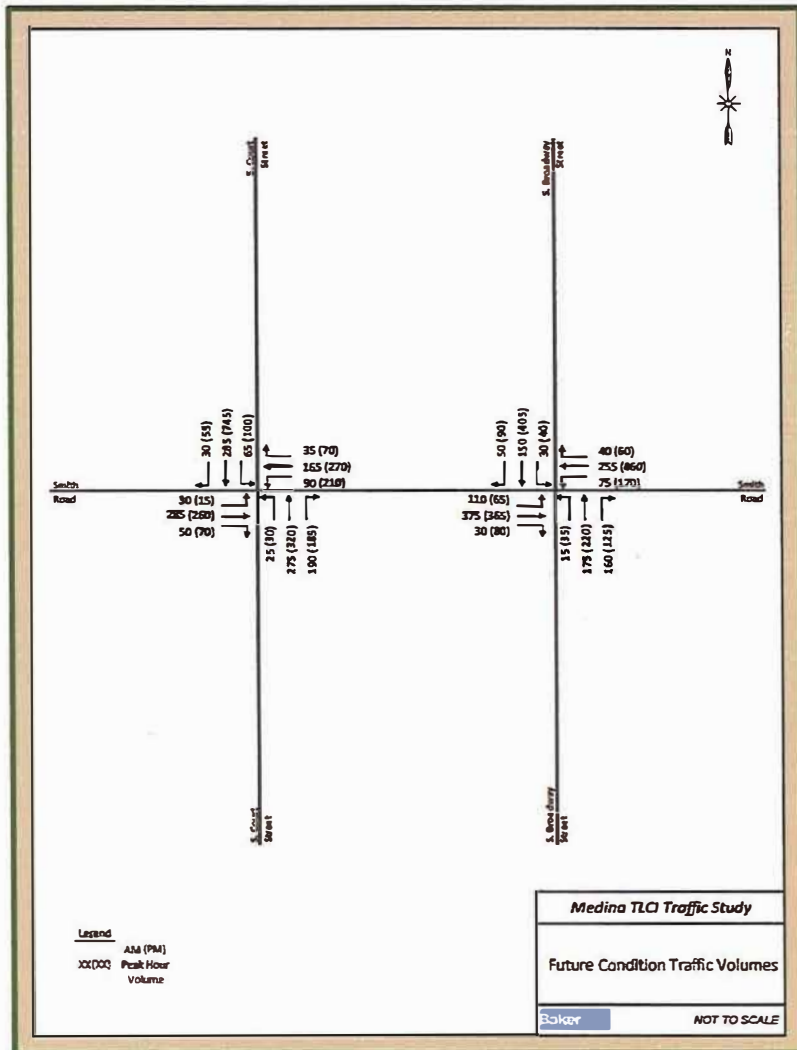
**Table 5: Future Conditions Capacity Analysis Results**

Intersection	Measure of Effectiveness	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Smith Road @ Court Street	Intersection LOS Average Delay Max v/c	C 23.8 sec/veh 0.78	C 34.7 sec/veh 0.93
Smith Road @ Broadway Street	Intersection LOS Average Delay Max v/c	B 17.3 sec/veh 0.59	C 26.0 sec/veh 0.72

**Table 6: Future Conditions with Improvements Capacity Analysis Results**

Intersection	Measure of Effectiveness	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Smith Road @ Court Street	Intersection LOS Average Delay Max v/c	C 29.1 sec/veh 0.86	D 36.4 sec/veh 0.90
Smith Road @ Broadway Street	Intersection LOS Average Delay Max v/c	B 17.1 sec/veh 0.58	C 25.4 sec/veh 0.70

Although the capacity results indicate acceptable operations, the intersection of Smith Road at Court Street was improved by providing a protected/permissive left turn for the southbound approach. This phase was added based upon field observations of vehicles turning left during the yellow and pushing into the red phase, a potentially unsafe behavior. Adding this phase results in a lower level of service, as shown in Table 6, however, it would likely provide safer operations.



### Traffic Study Conclusions and Recommendations

The potential redevelopment of the four sites near downtown Medina directly affects traffic at two Smith Road intersections: Smith Road / Court Street and Smith Road / Broadway Street, just south of the Medina's Public Square. The results of the existing conditions traffic analysis shows that the intersections operate at acceptable levels of service. Similarly, the intersections are expected to continue to operate at acceptable levels of service, even with the additional traffic that would be generated by the proposed redevelopment. The only recommended intersection improvement is the addition of a protected / permissive southbound left turn phase at the Smith Road / Court Street intersection. Although it has a negative impact on capacity, it improves operational safety and the intersection will continue to operate at an acceptable level of service.

As documented in a number of studies, Medina experiences a high volume of truck traffic. The large trucks affect the efficiency of traffic operations as well as the walkability of the downtown area. These conditions could be noticeably improved if external truck trips were shifted outside of downtown Medina. Due to the presence of nearby industrial facilities, it will not be possible to totally eliminate trucks from the central city area. However, it would be beneficial to consolidate truck traffic on an established truck route, better serving both trucks and other users of the roadway network. The current roadway network is not designed to accommodate turning trucks. Trucks regularly ride up over the curb or cross over into the opposing traffic lane to turn a corner. A defined truck route should minimize the number of required turns and geometric improvements should be made at intersections where turns are required to remain on the truck route. Such improvements would improve both safety and operational efficiency within the city's street grid.

Success of the proposed redevelopment relies on the walkability of the area; this applies to travel by bicyclists as well as pedestrians. Roadway crossing treatments should be developed to safely accommodate potential multi-use trail crossings at both signalized and unsignalized locations, in addition to the pedestrian crosswalks that are currently provided. Although beyond the defined limits of this project, the city may want to consider improvements to automobile, bus and pedestrian flow in and around Garfield Elementary school. Such improvements could include establishing separate bus and parent drop off/pick up areas behind the school beyond the playground area to improve traffic operations and safety during student ingress and egress, particularly in the vicinity of the Smith Road / Broadway Street intersection.

### Case Study in Complete Streets: Stratford, Ontario

The City of Stratford, Ontario has utilized a number of infrastructure and traffic calming measures to revitalize its historic downtown district. The City has enhanced its pedestrian environment to create safer and more welcoming sidewalks while maintaining a street network to support traffic to create 'complete streets.'



Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

# Implementing the Vision

## Considerations for Next Steps

This study is intended to serve as a first step in the process of revitalizing the Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor in downtown Medina. However, this is only the beginning of an ongoing process that will continue through the redevelopment of key properties, the construction of the Roscoe Ewing Trail extension, completion of a truck routing implementation strategy and as Downtown Medina continues to emerge as a growing, thriving, high-quality destination. As has been demonstrated through their commitment to this planning process that the City of Medina, local stakeholders and the greater community are committed to the proposed plan set forth in this document, and the vision it is based on. The following outlines the process in which steps will be taken to ensure that everyone shares this vision and the redevelopment plan becomes a reality.

### Policy Directives

- Create zoning code recommendations to present to the city administration that support the land use and development initiatives proposed.
- Present the plan recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption.
- Present the plan to NOACA's Transportation Advisory Committee (NOACA TAC) to ensure that transportation system recommendations are in place for available funding sources as they become available.
- Develop sustainability / LEED requirements to integrate into development agreements for infrastructure and private development projects.

### Development Activities

- Develop a working relationship between the City of Medina and current land owners to ensure that as properties are sold for redevelopment they are in line with the recommendations of the master plan.
- Write a joint RFP with landowners to accept development proposals for the land from potential buyers.
- Commission a Phase I Environmental Assessment of the properties to assist potential buyers / developers.
- Complete property appraisals to aid in the establishment of public / private land partnerships for purchasing, funding, etc.
- Through direct working relationships between the City and private developers determine redevelopment funding strategies.
- Determine ownership and maintenance of parks and property within redevelopment sites.
- Complete a subdivision plan as necessary to separate public and privately owned property.
- Continue to further define the program requirements for a new Municipal Court and build from the public input within this plan to garner support for the site and construction.
- Create a new marketing strategy for the study area that promotes it as an expansion of Downtown Medina.



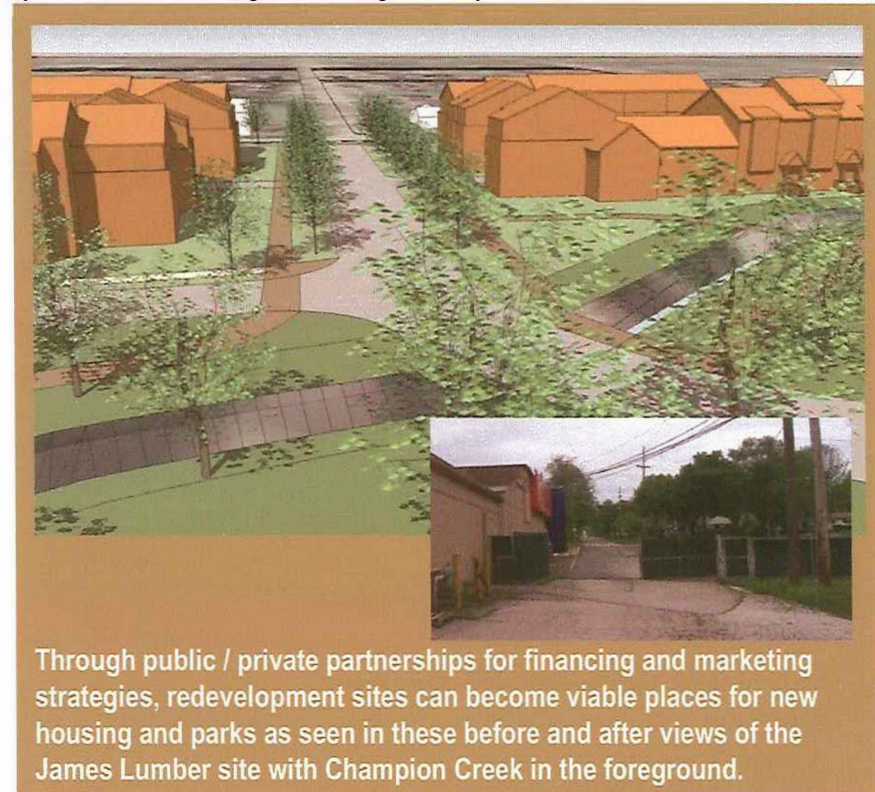
### Transportation Programs

- Develop truck routing strategies for both internal and external truck trips, considering both downtown Medina and regional truck travel and associated network needs.
- Redesign key intersections to safely accommodate necessary trucks and the pedestrian / bicycle network.
- Determine preferred routing for the Roscoe Ewing Trail extension and identify any land acquisition / right-of-way / easement issues that must be addressed.
- Perform an economic development analysis to determine if a TIF District would be beneficial in the construction of the new infrastructure / trail.
- Identify funding opportunities for roadway / infrastructure construction that may include TIF funds, general obligation city bonds, NOACA / ODOT enhancements funds, etc.

### Financing Considerations

As developer partnerships are created:

- Develop preliminary economic analysis
- Develop preliminary proforma based on budget allocations and estimated development costs
- Funding sources – investigate and identify potential
  - City, County, State grants
  - City, County, State low-interest loans
  - Brownfield funds
  - Clean Ohio funds
  - Tax-increment financing (TIF)
  - Tax abatement
  - Low-income tax credit funding (seniors and families)
  - Conventional financing
  - Private developer equity
- Develop alternative economic development analysis based on funding options
- Finalize development strategy, economic projections, financial commitments
- Commission detailed market study confirming product type, sales data and absorption rates



**Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor**

### Creating Successful Public / Private Investment Partnerships

Creating partnerships between public agencies and private developers / land owners can have a substantial impact on how a city grows and develops. When a successful public / private development partnership is formed it can benefit both parties immensely. From a private developers' point of view, a broader range of initiatives are possible as public money can be used for such things as new infrastructure, to market private-party interest in a property that is for sale or help to reduce the necessary overhead costs. From a public standpoint, a municipality can ensure that by being a partner it can help to define a redevelopment program to include land uses and public amenities that will benefit the greater community but are less profitable for a private developer.

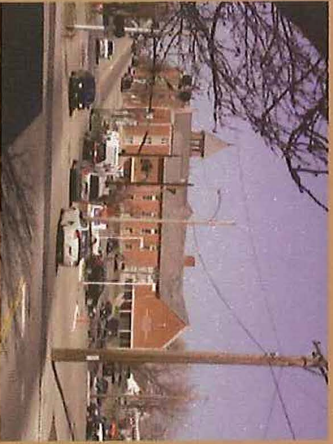
The initiatives proposed within this master plan envision a varied mixture of uses on each of the four sites. In order to ensure that redevelopment occurs in the manner and direction desired, public / private partnerships are an important tool to take advantage of. The most immediate opportunity to implement a public / private partnership that will have a lasting impression on the redevelopment of Downtown Medina will be the Municipal Court and the United Methodist Church site. A public / private partnership that results in a civic investment in the Municipal Court can benefit the City by:

- Becoming a physical anchor for a prominent corner site
- Providing an extension of the established historic fabric south of the square
- Setting a precedent for high-quality architectural design
- Providing a civic presence within the neighborhood
- Constructing a new building will add people and activity to the sidewalks
- Demonstrating the City's commitment to redevelopment

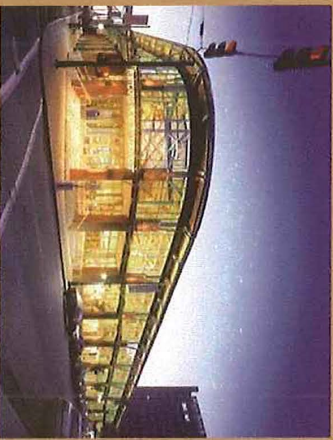
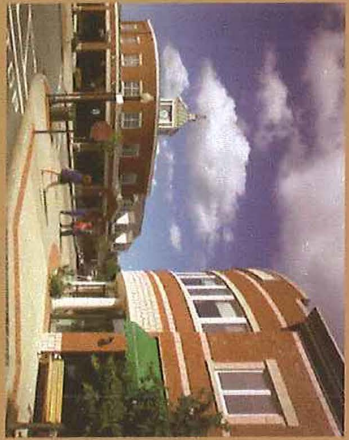
### Case Study: The Courtyards of Severance

Within the City of Cleveland Heights, a vacant business property that wasn't viable as an office complex adjacent to a commercial hub had been for sale. The City wanted an alternative land use for the property - new housing that would broaden the options for neighborhood residents and bring new life to this neighborhood. Through a public / private partnership, the City partnered with a prospective developer to determine the feasibility of an alternative residential land use. A preferred development scheme was selected, and the City assisted the developer in the purchase of the land. The proposal that was created envisioned a set of new market-rate townhome blocks on the site, accomplishing the municipality's goal for diverse housing opportunities. In addition, the private developer worked with the City to configure a financially feasible project in which the City provided incentives which aided in the construction of the public streets, helping to offset the higher land value and keep home sale prices at a reasonable level.





A successful public / private partnership can help to permanently alter the way in which the Smith / Court intersection connects the neighborhood to the south of downtown with Public Square. The images to the right depict the Methodist Church site looking north along Court Street with a new Municipal Court in the foreground and the reuse of the church building as a private development at the top and a mixed-use building below. The combination of public and private uses on the site extend the vibrant atmosphere of the square to the south and fill a gap at the core of Downtown Medina.



# Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### Marketing an Expanded Downtown Neighborhood

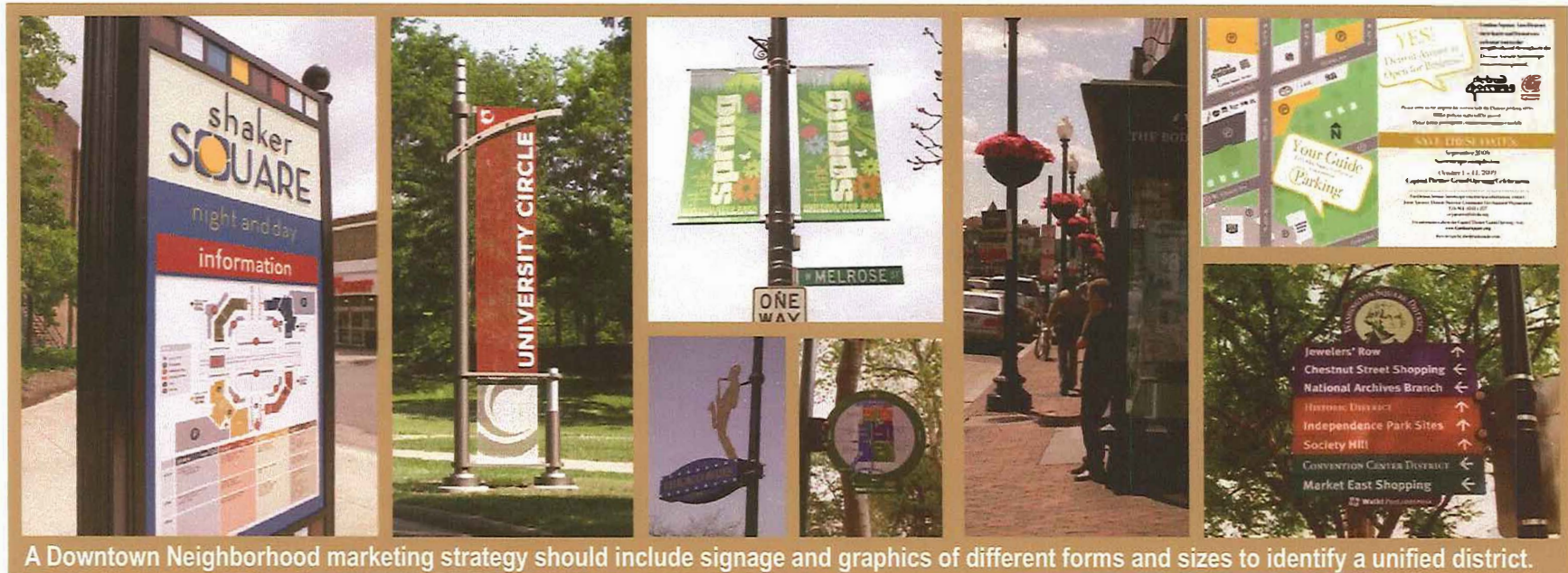
It is a recommendation of this report to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the greater Downtown district that includes the commercial core, new development and the existing historic residential neighborhoods. Through this planning process, the recent construction of the library and discussions regarding a new Municipal Court there has been a renewed interest in the Downtown core of the City. This provides an excellent opportunity to begin promoting the district as a mixed-use town center, and not just the blocks immediately surrounding the historic town square. A new marketing campaign can promote Downtown Medina as a place that will allow people to live, work, shop and dine within one walkable neighborhood. This type of marketing strategy will not only help to renew interest in the existing residential neighborhoods, but will also promote the redevelopment sites to private developers as well as potential home owners and commercial tenants.



Unlike today, the perception of the Smith Road Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods must be altered to be considered within the Downtown Medina district, and united with the Public Square historic commercial district.

When developing a marketing strategy for Downtown Medina a number of different sources must be considered. Not only should the City and Main Street Medina coordinate to create promotional materials both in print and on the internet, but signage and graphics throughout the Downtown District are important. Coordinated gateway signage, banners on light poles, wayfinding graphics and informational / educational materials demonstrate that this expanded downtown is one unified district.

The physical representation of a downtown neighborhood for the City of Medina will serve a number of different purposes for many groups of users. Existing residents will feel as though they are a part of a greater whole, potentially inspiring a greater level of investment and continued upkeep of properties. A comprehensive graphics and signage program will help visitors to learn more about the many great amenities Medina has to offer. As the Roscoe Ewing Trail extensions are completed and trail head constructed this will be especially important. In addition, the creation of a marketing campaign and physical branding scheme that defines Downtown may also help to unite business owners in an effort to create a stronger business district that acts as a singular group to enhance the overall commercial vitality.



Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor

### **Envisioning a Sustainable Neighborhood**

The City of Medina is committed to ensuring the redevelopment and infrastructure initiatives that are proposed within this report are constructed in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner. The development proposals outlined within this plan are inherently sustainable based on the fact that they are envisioned as the reuse of previously developed property within an established urban core community. Other than the streets created to access the larger development sites, very little new infrastructure is required to support the proposals in comparison to what would be necessary should the same development be constructed on a greenfield site at the outer edge of the City. By creating dense, mixed-use development proposals with interconnected pedestrian networks that create safer streets, multi-modal transportation options become a more viable alternative for a greater number of residents. In addition, the new park and green spaces that are woven throughout the plan increase the number of permeable surfaces on the sites, decreasing the amount of run-off and increasing the opportunities for natural water infiltration that will help to sustain the natural ecosystem surrounding Champion Creek.

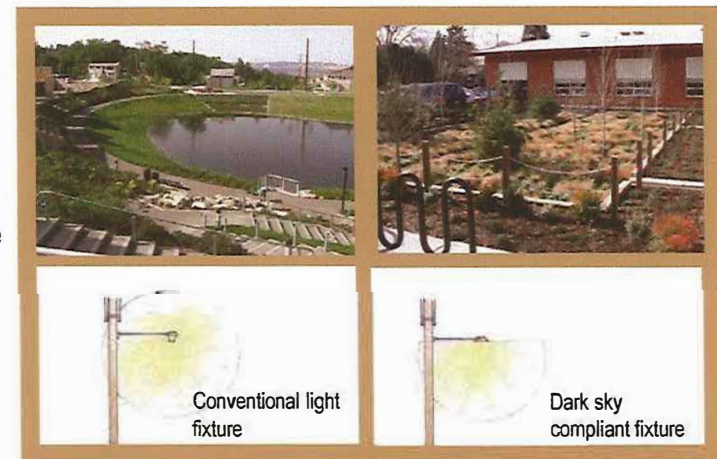
Both the infrastructure and development initiatives proposed can be realized in a manner that would allow them to become certified under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. Sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council, this is a program that recognizes sustainable practices in building and neighborhood development. The recommendations outlined within this document represent examples of current green infrastructure planning and construction techniques that may be employed through redevelopment. This does not represent a comprehensive list of the many initiatives that a development may aspire to. It is the recommendation of this plan that the City work closely with developers and designers to assure that these sites become models for the community that demonstrate an environmentally responsible approach to neighborhood development.

### **Rain Gardens**

Within the design of the public parks and open spaces associated with the redevelopment projects, rain gardens can be incorporated to filter water and runoff from surrounding buildings and parking lots. Rain gardens can be incorporated on a number of different scales. Some may occur to service individual buildings such as a new Municipal Court, while others may be larger bioretention cells that could be located in a green space to serve a new development such as proposed on the James Lumber and Medina Supply sites.

### **Dark Sky Compliant Light Fixtures**

Light fixtures specified within the design of the a site should be energy efficient, dark sky compliant fixtures. These are designed to focus all light downward, where it is needed, reducing the glare from above that is considered light pollution and wasted energy.



### ***Capturing and Utilizing Gray Water or Runoff***

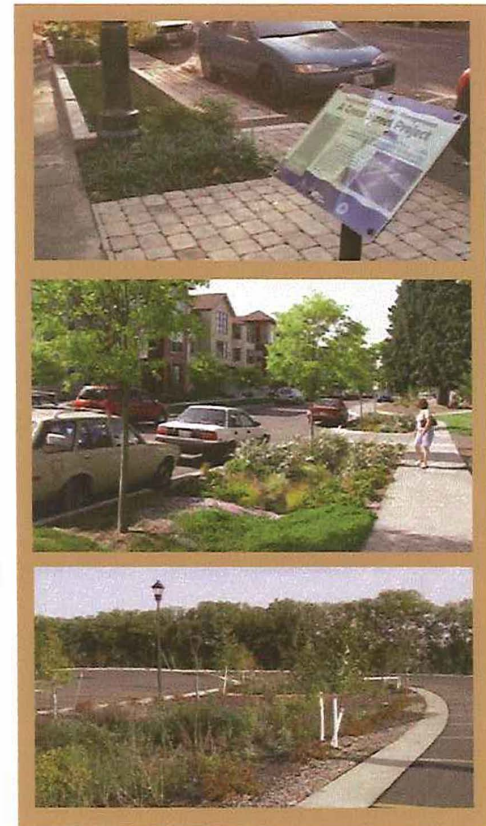
Within the design of the sidewalk and the planting beds, runoff from the street and sidewalk during a rain can be collected and reused as a part of the irrigation system for the street trees and additional plantings that will surround them. The type of vegetation specified for the planting beds can be chosen based upon its ability to work with a specific soil mixture to filter and clean the runoff water from the street as it settles through the planting bed prior to it reaching the water table below ground. This is a technique that can be employed along the proposed extension of the Roscoe Ewing Trail as it travels along City streets to better define it's routing and educate users about the importance of environmental sustainability.

Additionally, rain water can be captured and used within the irrigation system that will service the planters during times in which it is not raining. This can dramatically decrease the long term maintenance and utility costs that would be born by the City or a Business District associated with an irrigation system within a public right-of-way such as this.

### ***Green Parking Lot Design***

Parking lots are necessary to include within a new development, but can often negatively impact the surrounding environment. Within the design of the municipal and private parking lots, biofiltration areas can be incorporated that are similar to a rain garden. The design of the ground plane within areas between the parking spaces sometimes used for tree plantings can be designed as depressions and planted with specific, native vegetation that can purify the runoff from the surrounding pavement. In addition, the paving of the parking lot and pavers used in pedestrian walkways should be made of porous concrete and permeable pavers to allow water to seep into the ground where it can be directed to flow into the biofiltration areas.

The integration of these features into the design of the streetscapes and infrastructure will serve multiple purposes for the City and its residents. Over the lifespan of the investment, the incorporation of green building techniques will result in an overall decrease in the costs involved with maintenance and upkeep. In addition, the incorporation of green building techniques into a major municipal investments such as those proposed serve as an example to city residents that Medina is committed to creating a quality environment in which to live, shop, work and play. The redevelopment initiatives becomes a positive inspiration and teaching tool for individuals of all ages and backgrounds about the importance of preserving the overall health of the environment we all share, the ability for responsible practices to bridge the gap between public and private facilities and increase the overall quality of life for the community.



### Zoning Recommendations to Support Redevelopment

The most straightforward way for a City to control how a property is redeveloped is through zoning. Currently, the Medina Methodist Church and Farmer's Exchange sites are both included within the City's C-2 Retail Office category. The uses proposed for redevelopment within these sites fall within the C-2 Permitted and Conditionally Permitted Uses. However, the James Lumber and Medina Supply sites are both zoned I-1 Industrial. This classification does not correspond with the redevelopment proposals set forth within the proposed master redevelopment plan, nor with the City's vision for the future of the district.

**It is the recommendation of this report to rezone the James Lumber and Medina Supply sites from I-1 Industrial to C-2 Retail Office to be compatible with surrounding uses and allow for proposed redevelopment.** In addition to the C-2 zoning, the sites are also fall within the Transitional Corridor Overlay District (TC-OV), providing further building orientation and design standards.

However, aspects of the proposed redevelopment are not in compliance with the C-2 and TC-OV zoning regulations, or the regulations could be more specific to better accommodate the type of development desired. In some cases this may mean proposing a change to the current zoning code, whereas in others it may mean being aware of where a particular variance may be required if alternatives are not integrated in the code.

Within the **C-2 Retail Office District regulations** (Chapter 1135) the following issues have been identified:

- Some buildings shown in the master plan on the James Lumber and Medina Supply sites exceed the Maximum Building Size (1135.03 (d)) and Width (1135.03 (e)) allowed. Of particular concern are the townhome buildings and the potential for the trail head commercial buildings to exceed the Maximum Building Size of 5,000sf and Maximum Building Width of 50 feet. If the existing code remains, a variance would be required.
- In order to maintain the original intentions of the code and eliminate the need for a variance, the provision can be added that should a building exceed 50 feet in length, the façade must be broken into smaller segments at a maximum interval of 50 feet to



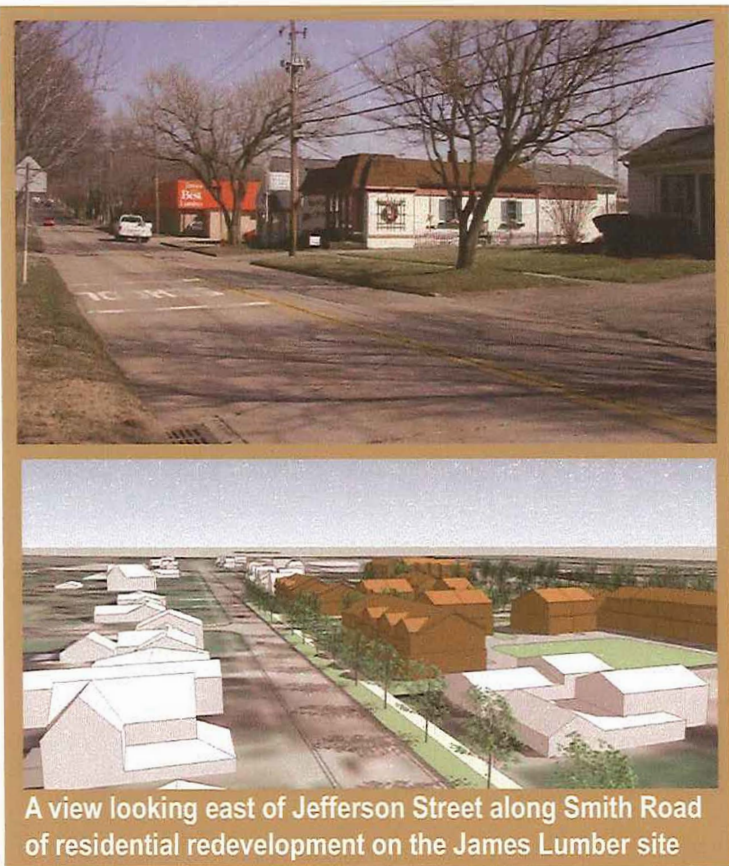
A view looking west of Jefferson Street along Smith Road of commercial redevelopment on the Medina Supply site



give the illusion that it is a series of connected structures. This could occur on townhomes between individual units, and allow commercial buildings to be designed with a series of storefronts similar to the buildings surrounding Public Square.

- A concern for the Medina Supply and James Lumber sites that cannot be addressed through the C-2 zoning regulations will be to follow the community and city's vision that redevelopment along the Smith Road corridor remain residential to the east of Jefferson Street and commercial to the west.

Although the properties lie within the TC-OV overlay, the overlay zoning can only suggest that residential uses be constructed. This is a case in which being proactive at establishing a strong public / private partnership between the City and a private developer is crucial to ensuring the land use goals of the plan are met.



A view looking east of Jefferson Street along Smith Road of residential redevelopment on the James Lumber site

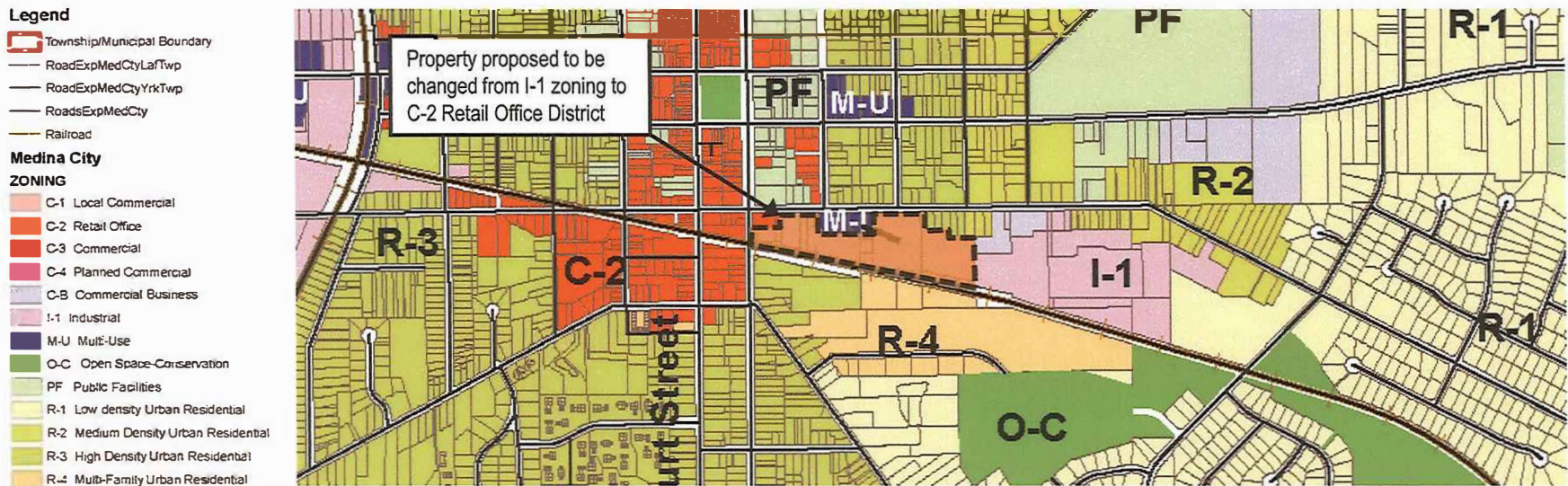
When not within the defined "Public Square Area" the C-2 District regulations call for residential uses to follow the guidelines in **Chapter 1127: R-4 Multi-Family Urban Residential District**. When reviewing the R-4 regulations in correlation with the proposed redevelopment of the James Lumber and Medina Supply sites, the following points may be addressed:

- The regulations provide for single-family, two-family and multi-family uses. However, in reviewing the site requirements for multi-family buildings, they do not support a traditional urban townhome development strategy. It may be advisable to add a residential category specifically allowing for a townhome, defined as a single dwelling unit, situated at ground level, with its own exterior entrance and attached to one or more other such units by fire walls or fire separation walls.
- To provide for feasible lot sizes and proportions that will support a traditional townhome development, the following requirements should be considered:
 

Minimum Lot Area:	2,000 sf per dwelling unit
Minimum Lot Width:	22 feet
Minimum Townhouse Unit Width:	22 feet
Maximum Lot Coverage:	60 percent by buildings
Minimum Front Yard Depth:	20 feet (can include drive if front loaded garage)
Minimum Rear Yard Depth:	20 feet (can include drive if rear loaded garage)
Minimum Site Yard Width:	15 feet

The **TC-OV guidelines** place more specific regulations on the sites in terms of building placement, massing and materiality. Upon reviewing the TC-OV regulations in Chapter 1116 Overlay Districts the following is recommended:

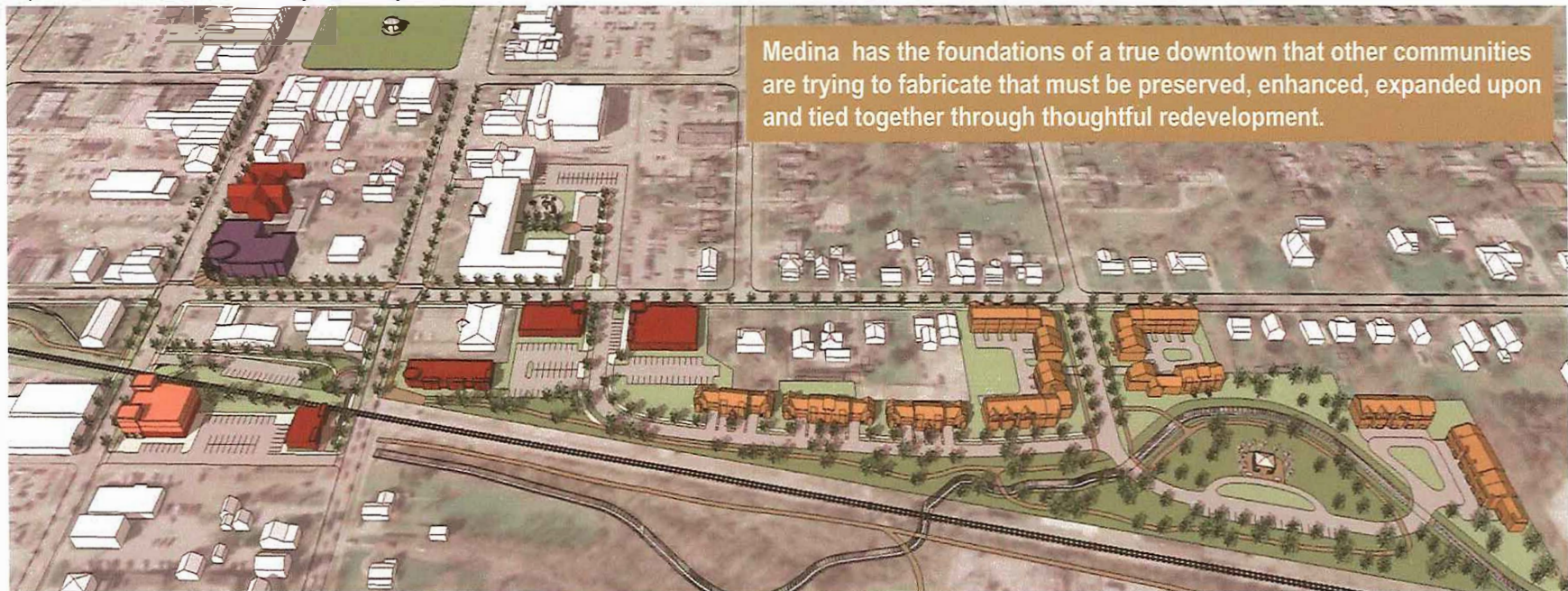
- When a commercial development is constructed along a Transitional Corridor it is suggested within the “General Design Guidelines Section 2 Vehicular Circulation and Access” that parking be placed to the side or rear of the building. However, there are no limitations for the percentage of a property’s frontage that should be building versus parking lot. In order to maintain an animated property line along a street that does not over-emphasize the automobile, limiting the extents of a parking lot frontage along the Transitional Corridor to a maximum of 40% of the lot’s frontage may be considered.
- Section 6 “Location, Orientation, Size and Shape of Buildings” discusses siting a new building on a property in relation to the setbacks of surrounding buildings and along a property line. However, it is recommended that an addition be made to the guidelines regarding buildings located on corner sites. When a corner site is being developed, a building should be oriented on the site so that a primary façade provides frontage along both streets, maintains the typical set back established by previous development along each street and that the site plan follow the parking requirements in Section 2 along both streets to minimize parking adjacent to a public right-of-way. The design of the recently constructed Family Video building meets the existing TC-OV guidelines for Smith Road. However, these new corner site requirements would mean that the building would have been sited differently so that it addressed Broadway as well as Smith, with the site plan mirrored so that the building would be along the western edge of the site and the parking to the east.



### Continuing the Momentum

Through this process and this plan, a vision has been identified that reflects the community's goals for the future of Downtown Medina and the Smith Road corridor. The redevelopment plans and transportation system recommendations that have grown from it are reflective of and consistent with the community's goals that were generated throughout this process. By actively involving stakeholders and residents, the initiative resulted in a collaborative effort that encompasses the ideas, concerns and visions of the people that truly value and are embedded in the establishment of a revitalized downtown neighborhood.

The Smith Road Corridor Plan is a tool for current and future community leaders, residents and stakeholders. While many of the recommendations are specific, the plan is intended to serve as a point of departure for future phases, provide flexibility and continue to evolve over time. Opportunities for change must continue to be addressed proactively and with an eye toward long-term results and benefits. The true intention behind this plan is to establish momentum and set a framework toward reinvestment in the district while setting a higher standard for redevelopment that lives up to the potential and aspirations that this community is worthy of.



Medina has the foundations of a true downtown that other communities are trying to fabricate that must be preserved, enhanced, expanded upon and tied together through thoughtful redevelopment.

Smith Road / Champion Creek Corridor