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Design Concepts for Redevelopment of Downtown Davenport

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The Downtown Redevelopment of Industrial Sites for the City of Davenport, Iowa

Produced for the City of Davenport Design Center
Field Problems in Planning II 102:210
Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning
University of Iowa

Hilary Copeland, John How, Nathan Kraus, Christina Kuecker
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Executive Summary

Like many older riverfront cities across the Midwest, Davenport is working to transform a once industrial downtown into a thriving, mixed-use core. The City of Davenport Design Center would like to stimulate a creative discourse about potential uses of an industrial site owned by the W.G. Block Company adjacent to the downtown. To facilitate this process, the Design Center called upon the University of Iowa Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning to create a virtual reality model of the area and generate possible redevelopment scenarios.

 Redevelopment scenarios were determined by analyzing the design features and development feasibility of the surrounding areas including: downtown, the Crescent Warehouse District, the riverfront and the LeClaire Heights neighborhood. From this analysis, it became apparent that redevelopment of the W.G. Block property should draw on modern architectural styles that make use of materials frequently used in similar buildings within the surrounding areas. Land uses in the area will also complement and support the surrounding districts. These uses will provide a unique set of commercial ventures that will attract people from across the Quad Cities region.

The clients requested an eye catching, unique development that maximizes views of the waterfront while providing a sense of safety and enclosure for pedestrians. A development scenario was developed in 3-D using SketchUp, Google Earth and GIS to address the various aspects of the clients’ requirements. While this scenario will not provide architectural quality renderings of the buildings, the model provides the City with a representation to present to developers of what could take place on site. Additionally, the finished model can assist the City in the development review process by allowing development proposals to be inserted into the model and analysed in the context of the surrounding base-model buildings.

The process of developing the site plan began by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the site. One of the key weaknesses the development proposal addresses is the lack of connectivity between the study area and the surrounding neighborhoods. The scenario uses grid pattern streets wherever possible. However, existing road alignments and valuable structures did not allow for a traditional grid pattern. Many of the primary strengths and
weaknesses were a result of the site’s location and topography. The steep grade on site means that additional effort will be required to install necessary infrastructure, however the steep terrain also means that views of the waterfront – and potentially property values – are maximized on the site. The volume of rail and automobile traffic contribute to safety and pedestrian connectivity concerns, however that same volume of traffic makes the site more enticing to retail development. Particular care is taken to ensure pedestrian safety while still maximizing the visibility of new construction from River Drive. The riverfront location allows for valuable views, yet at the same time, poses constraints on development due to Davenport’s lack of formal flood protection. Additionally, interaction with the river itself is complicated by the industrial uses along the riverbanks as well as the presence of Lock and Dam 15 downstream from the site. As a result, the development concept proposes recreation and entertainment venues near the river, but no activities such as rowing or swimming will take place.

Land uses for the site were determined by access to streets and parking, as well as the site’s proximity to the surrounding neighborhoods. The residential neighborhood to the north has experienced some disinvestment, and the development proposal supports the neighborhood by placing two story live-work row-homes adjacent to the existing residential area. South of the live-work units is a pedestrian promenade running alongside a new east-west street. This will provide a place of refuge for pedestrians, who will enjoy outside dining in nearby cafes or watch films on the outdoor movie screen attached to the parking garage. This new parking garage is centrally located within the new development district, but will primarily serve the two higher-rise structures along 4th Street. Because recent loft conversions have been extremely successful and historic loft space is limited, these new buildings will provide additional urban-style living with breathtaking views of the Mississippi River and Davenport’s downtown. The largest structure will maximize profit potential with ground floor commercial under three floors of office space and eight floors of hotel. Finally, the corner of River Drive and 4th Street will house a large retail establishment with a regional draw.

Although the Block property is largely vacant, the site has significant links to Davenport’s history that the development concept highlights. The first rail-bridge across the Mississippi
terminated near the site, and the pedestrian bridge over River Drive linking the main site to the riverfront is modelled after this non-extant bridge. Further emphasizing Davenport’s history is a small local history museum housed alongside a restaurant in the existing 19th Century stable. The riverfront focuses on Davenport’s future by creating a park-like setting filled with fantasy representations of Davenport’s sister cities. These eye-catching structures will draw people to the riverfront, and offer a variety of active recreational activities.

Overall, the development concept represents an extension of downtown Davenport with a distinctly modern yet inviting personality. The creation of a wide range of living units will support added commercial and retail development. In turn, these new residences will benefit from the proximity and access to the redeveloped riverfront, as well as improved infrastructure with an emphasis on multimodal transportation. Thus, residents living in the redevelopment area could have most of their daily needs met without leaving the site. However, residents from outside the area will be drawn to the comfortable yet impressive sense of place and mix of uses and activities not found elsewhere in the area.
Design Concepts for Redevelopment of Downtown Davenport

Introduction
The City of Davenport Design Center, Davenport One, and private property owners are in the process of determining ways to make better use of an underutilized area located in downtown Davenport. The area is identified in Figure 1. The City of Davenport Design Center has asked our group to create a possible development scenario for this area.

The project analyzes how the redevelopment of these parcels could

- Increase the overall economic health of downtown Davenport.
- Enhance the attractiveness of the built environment.
- Improve access to and within these parcels.
- Foster a unique sense of place for neighborhood residents and Davenport as a whole.

Context
Located in eastern Iowa along the Mississippi River, Davenport is the largest city in the Quad Cities. Davenport’s economy functions as a part of the greater Metro area’s economy, which includes Davenport & Bettendorf, Iowa and Rock Island & Moline, Illinois. Although Davenport’s downtown could benefit from this large market of approximately 380,000 people, it also faces competition from the other downtown districts. To achieve long-term revitalization, Davenport needs to create a sense of place that is distinct and unique when compared to other downtowns in the Quad Cities.

Challenges
Areas surrounding the development area present some different and unique challenges. Directly north of the development area is a residential neighborhood that has seen significant disinvestment and decay. To the west is the Crescent Warehouse Historic District, where warehouses and factories are currently being renovated into loft style apartments. These lofts
have succeeded in attracting new residents to the downtown Davenport area. Residents of these neighborhoods will be directly affected by whatever happens in the target area.

Davenport is the only major city along the Mississippi River that does not have any formal flood control measures. Parts of the development area are located in the one-hundred-year and five-hundred-year flood plains. This requires special consideration and affects potential land-uses for the parcels in the flood plains.
Figure 1: Map of Development Area
Source: Davenport GIS and Authors
Design Climate and Neighborhood Context

The districts surrounding the development area will have a profound influence on the development. Consequently, the development will also have a profound influence on its surroundings. The surrounding districts are shown in Figure 4 and the design climate and context of each district is described below.

Crescent Warehouse District

Located to the west of the W.G. Block site is the Crescent Warehouse Historic District. The area was developed because of its location near downtown Davenport and proximity to the elevated railroad viaduct of the former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. The Crescent Warehouse District illustrates Davenport’s commercial and industrial development during the first half of the 1900s. This period saw a transition away from a lumber-based economy in Davenport to a more diverse industrial and commercial base. The transition transformed the Crescent Warehouse District from a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood into a dense warehouse and factory district.

The Crescent Warehouse District has much of the character typical of warehouse districts throughout the United States. Although the old warehouses have become inefficient for industrial uses and have slowly been abandoned by those companies responsible for their construction, there are still clues to the industrial past. Large multi-story brick buildings, with oversized factory windows are present throughout the district. Rail spurs are still present in the streets and freight-loading doors are prominent on buildings (Figure 2).

The factories and warehouses are simple boxes or rectangle structures with one to six stories. The use of reddish brown brick with limestone details is the prominent architectural style in the Crescent Warehouse District. The largest building in the district is the Crescent Macaroni and Cracker Company Building at 426 Iowa St (Figure 3). It was designed with simple masonry and large expanses of glass, typical of most buildings in the district. The Davenport architecture firm of Clausen and Kruse designed this structure with the latest in fireproof construction in 1915.
Figure 4: Map of Design Climate Analysis
Source: Davenport GIS and Authors
During the early years of the 21st Century, the district has begun to see a rebirth. No longer useful as commercial or industrial buildings because of their height, the old warehouses are being transformed into new apartments. The Crescent Macaroni and Cracker Company Building was one of the first buildings to be renovated into apartments. The area has attracted many young professionals desiring a new housing option and a home close to downtown. The Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance awarded a Historic Preservation Award to the Crescent Warehouse Historic District in 2003.

**Davenport Riverfront**

One of Davenport’s greatest assets is the Mississippi River. Currently there is a mixture of historic symbols, park space, and industrial uses along the riverfront. Development along the riverfront has been minimal because of the City’s lack of formal flood protection. Two major hindrances to the development of Davenport’s Riverfront is the presence of a four-lane highway and active railroad. Both of these transportation lines run parallel to the river and are barriers to pedestrian movement towards the river. However, pedestrians and cyclists can access the riverfront through two bike paths. The Mississippi River Trail runs along the Davenport Riverfront, while the American Discovery Trail crosses through Davenport. These two cross-country bike trails intersect on the Davenport Riverfront.

West of the downtown is Centennial Park. Located within the park is the Davenport Skate Park (Figure 5). The skate park is not an architectural icon, yet it is easily identifiable and appears to be popular among the young people of Davenport.

Abutting Centennial Park is the Centennial Bridge (Figure 6). The Bridge connects Rock Island and Davenport. The bridge was constructed in 1940 and has five arches, one for each of the Quad Cities and another for John O’Donnell Stadium. The arches are made of steel, while concrete was used for the footings. The bridge is a historic icon and is clearly visible at night when its decorative lights are turned on.

John O’Donnell Stadium, recently renamed Modern Woodmen Park, is located at the southern edge of downtown Davenport and serves as a landmark for one end of the riverfront (Figure
Built in 1931, it is the second oldest minor league baseball stadium in the United States. The stadium is made of brick, has concrete arches and modern windows, and is pedestrian scaled. It abuts the Mississippi allowing for scenic views from both inside and outside the stadium. Centennial bridge can be clearly seen from within the stadium, giving this area a strong sense of place.

The environment east of the stadium is significantly different from the historic environment surrounding the stadium and bridge. The Rhythm City/Isle of Capri casino significantly detracts from the design atmosphere of the area due to its peeling paint and numerous flashing lights (Figure 8). The abundant parking lots add to the sterility of the area as there is little or no green space directly surrounding the casino. Between the casino and the stadium is LeClaire Park (Figure 10). This is a civic open space concentrated around the W.D. Peterson Memorial Music Pavilion. This area serves as the primary location of many events in Davenport, such as Bix Beiderbecke Days, Mississippi Valley Blues Festival, and Sturgis Mississippi River Motorcycle Rally.

Lock and Dam No. 15 seems to create a line between the Downtown riverfront and the industrial riverfront. The current industrial structures are not visually appealing and have no cohesive character (Figure 11). A sliver of green space separates the sites from East River Drive and has little functional use besides providing a space for the bike trail. However, the area does have one appealing feature – the Arsenal (or Government) Bridge, which connects Rock Island to Davenport. A portion of the bridge rotates to allow barges and other river traffic to pass underneath it. The current bridge is the fourth to be constructed at this area. The original bridge constructed in this area was the first bridge to span the Mississippi River.

The area between the industrial uses and the parking lots surrounding the Casino is essentially “dead” space (Figure 9). While this space may serve as a path for the bike trail, the area has little visual quality associated with structures. However, it provides incredible views of the river and Rock Island. While the space lacks any distinguishable design, it provides a great opportunity for pedestrians to access the river.
The majority of the central and upriver sections of the riverfront suffer from a sterile design environment as there an abundance of parking lots and grey fields. They offer little color and no design quality. Moreover, they also act as another barrier to accessing the riverfront because they separate the river from Downtown Davenport. While the riverfront may have a good bike trail that connects the southern end to the northern end, it does not have many access points to or from downtown.

The design climate of the Downtown Riverfront has some very evident landmarks and assets with John O’Donnell stadium, Centennial Bridge and the Skywalk. However, the riverfront suffers from a lack of connectivity to the rest of downtown. River Drive (Highway 67) and the railroad act as barriers to the riverfront. Conversely, because Davenport has no formal flood protection, there is an opportunity for people to interact with the river in a unique and appealing way.
**Downtown Davenport**

The physical and aesthetic character of downtown Davenport is a result of a long period of development. The character is also a response to the limitations imposed on architectural design because of a lack of formal flood protection along the Mississippi. As a result, the downtown contains a number of styles that are largely dependent on what was popular in cities throughout the Midwest, particularly in Chicago, at the time that structure was built.

A number of the older buildings throughout the Davenport downtown are ornate, red brick structures. In coloration and materials these buildings are similar to those found in the Crescent Warehouse District, but the detailing is different. On some buildings the detailing is Victorian, and on others Romanesque. Buildings often make use of ground floor painted wood paneling, cornice moldings, arched or rectangular windows with a vertical emphasis, and intricate hand carved stonework accents. Buildings of this type include the Romanesque River Music Experience Redstone Building at 131 W. 2nd St (Figure 12) and the Victorian German Heritage Center building at 712 W. 2nd St. (Figure 16). The majority of buildings are seven to ten stories.

During the early 20th century, construction in the downtown included many larger stone buildings. The Union Arcade building at 111 E. 3rd St (Figure 15), designed in the Chicago Style by Seth J. Temple, dates from 1915 and 1924. During the 1930s, the art deco style was favored, and the building directly to the south of the Union Arcade was originally designed in the Romanesque style but was ‘updated’ to reflect the newfound interest in the art deco style.

Recent construction in Davenport has often strayed dramatically from the existing architectural character of downtown. The most notable example of this is the modern and imposing Figge Art Museum (Figure 14). Designed by David Chipperfield and opened in 2005, the massive, cubic structure is nearly 100,000 square feet contained within semi-transparent and opaque glass sheathing. The Figge is set upon a raised granite platform to provide flood protection. The building does not take up the full parcel on which it sits, but rather is located closer to the river, with a concrete plaza located on the north facing downtown. The courtyard
area is used to display large art pieces and advertisements for the current exhibitions, but is not in itself a destination or a place where people might linger.

Another underutilized courtyard (and a recent addition to the downtown) is the Skybridge Plaza. Despite having an attractive colored concrete patio area, as well as landscaping and shade trees, the courtyard is not a place that would attract pedestrians. The owner of the courtyard contributes to this by preferring that there be no permanent seating in the area. The Skybridge (Figure 13), by Holabird and Root, follows the modern aesthetics apparent in the Figge to a point. It utilizes a substantial amount of semitransparent glass and steel to provide a distinct space that does not appear to integrate itself into its surroundings. The bridge was a highly controversial project not only for its modern aesthetics, but also for the fact that it appears to lead to nowhere. It does currently provide access to a parking lot, and in the future will provide access to a riverfront park.

Although builders and architects of Davenport’s downtown used a number of different styles throughout the decades of the city’s development, commonalities exist among these buildings. Most are substantial in scale and present a strong, unified façade across the frontage of the lot. Materials are high quality and were chosen to reflect both the style of the day and to maintain that aesthetic for years to come. Brick is a common element of construction; however, buildings that are more modern incorporate glass and steel into the façade. New construction that would be complementary to this area would include aspects of modern design using high quality materials similar to those currently in the downtown district.
Le Claire Heights Neighborhood

The Le Claire Heights Neighborhood is loosely defined as the area surrounding the Antoine Le Claire house. The topography of the neighborhood is steep. It increases dramatically as one moves north, away from the river. The sharp increase in elevation terminates once you reach the edge of the bluff. North of the bluff line, the topography consists of gently rolling hills. This topography does present development constraints; however, it also allows for incredible views over the Quad City river valley. The gently rolling hills also provide panoramic views of the neighborhood’s tree canopy.

The neighborhood has many vacant lots. Many of these lots, in the northern portion of the neighborhood, were combined and turned into a neighborhood park. Vacant lots in the southern portion of the neighborhood remain problematic. However, these lots could be a viable resource if redevelopment occurs.

Most of the buildings in the neighborhood are single-family homes. Many have been converted into multi-family housing and are not owner-occupied. The structures in the neighborhood are older as most were built between 1880 and 1930. Though several architecturally significant homes are located in Le Claire Heights, these structures are the exception, not the norm. Most homes are not in good condition and are not aesthetically pleasing (Figure 17). The Antoine Le Claire house at 630 E. 7th St (Figure 18) and the Octagon house at E. 6th St. and LeClaire St. (Figure 19) are two significant structures in the area. Neighborhood amenities include Sacred Heart Cathedral and an elementary school within walking distance.
Republic Warehouse District

The Republic Warehouse District is a collection of manufacturing buildings and warehouses situated along Federal Street and Charlotte Street. The warehouse district is adjacent to the Le Claire Heights Neighborhood. Single-family homes are mixed into this district so it is difficult to distinguish where the warehouse district ends and the neighborhood begins (Figures 20 & 21).

The warehouse district has relatively flat terrain. The southern portion of the area is within the floodplain. Temporary floodwalls are installed during flood conditions to keep floodwater out of this area. Several large surface parking lots are also located within this area.

The majority of buildings in the Republic Warehouse District are brick structures. Most of the substantial buildings were constructed in the 1920s. Small pole buildings have been built as support buildings for the larger warehouses. Overall, the commercial buildings in this area have been maintained and are currently being used. One building, 735 Federal, is an exception and has not been maintained nor is it currently used.
**W.G. Block Property**

The primary focus of the redevelopment plan is the site of Block Ready Mix Group. This large site has been occupied by industrial uses throughout its history. Its location along the railroad is responsible for the site’s industrial history. However, with the redevelopment happening in the Crescent Warehouse district and the site’s proximity to Downtown Davenport, the industrial uses may no longer be the best use for the large tract of land. The railroad is not important for the concrete ready mix operations and the site’s industrial use is incompatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods (Figure 22).

There is one structure on the site worthy of note. It is a historic structure built prior to 1886 (Figure 23). The railroad used the structure as a stable and depot when lines heavily traversed the area. The structure is structurally sound and restoration is possible.

![Figure 22: W.G. Block Company Site](image1)
Source: Nathan Kraus

![Figure 23: Historic Stable/Depot on W.G. Block Site](image2)
Source: Adam Ralston
Technical Aspects

The technical processes used in creating our virtual reality model varied from simple tasks to complex processes. The majority of work was completed using applications from Google, including SketchUp and Google Earth Pro. We also utilized ArcGIS applications to analyze several sources of data for our site proposal. The following steps are a general guideline on the processes that we used to complete the virtual reality model. Please refer to addendum one for a more detailed explanation.

General Outline of Tasks Completed

- Generated a terrain for the site using ArcGIS Spatial Analysis
- Used GIS data to produce a functional map of land uses, street patterns and other data
- Created three dimensional buildings using Google SketchUp
- Utilized SketchUp to create existing buildings and proposed structures for development scenario
- Exported newly created buildings to Google Earth Pro
- Produced movies of proposed buildout in Google Earth Pro

Concept Plan

The development of the area identified in Figure 1 provides an opportunity for Davenport to create something new in the downtown area. The site could attract a large-scale developer due to its relatively large size. The development allows an opportunity to create an entirely new district in the downtown that supports and compliments the surrounding existing neighborhoods. A pedestrian focused development that integrates modern architecture aesthetics with the historic neighborhoods nearby will provide a new destination for visitors and residents of Davenport to gather and linger. The site also has a high amount of visibility to people entering Davenport from the east and currently is not a very attractive gateway for visitors. The new development should show people that something interesting is happening in the area and in Davenport. The Concept Plan Elements are addressed in greater detail below, with the site challenges and opportunities identified afterwards.
Assumptions about development
A few assumptions were made when developing the concept plan. These include:

- W.G. Block Company vacates site. The riverfront operations are still present, but the truck storage and reclamation pits are moved elsewhere.
- Republic Electrical moves out of the area. It is our belief that new buildings located closer to the interstate system would better serve their operations.
- The industrial uses on the riverfront besides W.G. Block Company will be vacating the riverfront leaving the area open for redevelopment by the Levee Improvement Commission.

Concept Plan Elements
A map of new land uses is shown in Figure 24.

Pedestrian Access
Pedestrian access is important to the success of this scenario. There are both east-west and north-south pedestrian access routes. In the east-west direction, E 5th Street from Pershing Street to Iowa Street is converted into a pedestrian pathway. This road currently needs many improvements to become a viable vehicular roadway. The combination of railroad spurs and a brick street would produce an interesting and attractive pedestrian path in this area. The east-west pedestrian route continues along the proposed road connection between LeClaire and Charlotte Streets. On the northern edge of the road is an extra wide pedestrian area (Figure 25). This pedestrian pathway is bordered by small-scale mixed-use structures, with first floor retail and residential above and is buffered from street traffic.

The north-south pedestrian trail extends through the LeClaire heights neighborhood, through the park like area surrounding the LeClaire House and onto the development site. The path then joins the east-west path and proceeds over the bridge across River Drive and the railroad (Figure 26). The bridge crosses River Drive and the railroad tracks providing access from the...
Figure 26: Proposed Street Pattern
Source: Authors and Davenport GIS
site and surrounding neighborhoods to the revitalized riverfront park and the existing bike trail. The bridge is located at the site of the first railroad bridge to cross the Mississippi River.

**Vehicular Access/Street Extensions**

The development area has long been disconnected from the grid system prevalent in downtown Davenport. Several road extensions are present in the development that reconnect the area into the urban grid and allow for vehicular access into the site (Figure 27). Vehicular access is not only important for the customers and residents of the area, but also for the need for deliveries to the area. In addition to the new streets, the concept suggests that the city consider turning E 3rd Street and E 4th Street into two-way streets.

The new streets include the extension of Charlotte Street southward through the development site and connecting to E 4th Street. Also proposed is the extension of LeClaire Street northward through the development site. A new east-west street is also proposed. This street would be bounded on the north by an extra wide pedestrian walkway and would provide access to the retail operations along the pedestrian path. All the streets could be easily blocked off in the area for special events, such as flea markets, antique fairs, and music festivals. One prominent reason to block off vehicular traffic on certain nights is for outdoor movies to be shown on the wall of the proposed parking structure.

**Riverfront**

Industrial uses, that have inhabited the riverfront for many years, are in the process of vacating this space. This provides an opportunity for the Levee Improvement Commission and the City of Davenport to take advantage of one of its greatest natural assets. The Riverfront in this area of downtown is many visitors first impression of Davenport. A space that creates interest and intrigue is vital (Figure 28).

As vehicles enter Davenport from the east, they will pass under a bridge that is reminiscent of the first railroad bridge over the Mississippi River. The bridge also reflects many design aspect of the Centennial Bridge. These two bridges will book end Davenport’s downtown. The bridge...
extends over the river where a fishing platform provides a unique and interesting opportunity to experience the river in an urban landscape (Figure 29).

The Riverfront in this area of downtown can be viewed as more of a whimsical neighborhood park, rather than a grand civic space. Basketball courts, picnic areas, a playground, bocce ball courts, horseshoe pits, and chess tables will be surrounded by green space and fantasy structures inspired by Davenport’s Sister Cities of Kaiserslautern, Germany; County Carlow, Ireland; and Ilheus, Brazil. The construction of an amphitheater that is flood resistant will allow for outdoor performances overlooking the river as well (Figure 30).

Parking
Parking is integrated into the development in several ways. One large parking structure is located on the west end of the development site (Figure 31). This parking structure is designed to manage most of the parking needs for the development, as well as provide space for a covered farmers’ or flea market. The exterior of the parking structure will have screens for the showing of outdoor movies on weekends during the summer. Other parking needs will be addressed with underground parking areas and on street parking.

Uses
The development provides a variety of uses and housing types (Figure 24). This will result in a district that is vibrant throughout the day. There is ground floor retail throughout the development area. This retail takes the form of small-scale shops, restaurants, a movie theater, a small grocery, and a large-scale regional draw retail operation.

Residential uses include

- live-work units
- high end condos with views of the Mississippi River
- second and third floor rental units above first floor commercial
- converted Republic Warehouses into middle to upper income active senior housing
- converted Crescent Warehouses into low income and market rate rental units
On the corner of Federal Street, River Drive, and E 4th Street is a mixed use building with a large scale or regional draw retail operation on the first floor and residential above (Figure 32). This “big-box” store would serve as an attraction to the area, and could include such businesses as Trader Joe’s, IKEA, REI, or Expo Design Center. The stores would attract shoppers from the region, not just the Quad Cities. This building will be architecturally distinct and provide the passing car with a visual impact that something new and interesting is happening in this part of Davenport.

There will also be two high-rise structures along E 4th Street. These buildings will be high-end condominiums on the upper floors with views of the river, three floors of office space on the lower floors, eight floors of hotel space, and retail on the bottom floor. Parking will be in the nearby parking structure, as well as underground (Figure 33).

The remaining buildings will be smaller in scale and provide the area with a pedestrian scaled development. The historic stable/depot will be renovated as a focal point and showcase the history of the site (Figure 34). A restaurant and the Quad Cities History Museum will occupy the renovated stable. Other buildings will include a small-scale movie theater, small retail shops, restaurants, and bars. These will front the pedestrian path, but will also have delivery access via the new street system (Figure 35). Several live work units will also be built near the Crescent Warehouse District and along Federal Street (Figure 36).

In order for the development to be successful there will need to be continued investment in the surrounding neighborhoods. The city should continue to support the redevelopment of the Crescent Warehouse District into low-income and market rate rental units and begin to encourage ground floor retail space in the renovations (Figure 37). The Republic Warehouse District will become new owner occupied condominiums for middle to upper income active seniors (Figure 38). The concept plan also encourages investment in the LeClaire Heights neighborhood. Row homes should be encouraged on the underutilized and vacant lots. A park like atmosphere will be created around LeClaire House, with a trail extension, emphasizing the historic importance of the LeClaire House in Davenport’s development.
history. The LeClaire House should have a use that will excite and draw people to it. This could be a women’s club or an organization that would become stewards of the house.

**Architectural Style**
The buildings represented in the concept plan are only suggestions as to the styles and sizes appropriate for the proposed development. The physical features of the buildings provide a tie between a gleaming new district and the surrounding historic nature of the area. Buildings were chosen that reflected the use of high quality building materials already present in the surrounding areas, such as brick and limestone. The larger high profile buildings make use of modern architectural styles with the use of brick (Figures 32 and 33). These buildings give the development a new modern feel of a distinctly different district, but at the same time provide an opportunity for high profile architects to design iconic structures for Davenport. The high profile buildings will grab the attention of the casual passersby.

Small-scale pedestrian buildings were located to the north of the new east west street. These three story buildings have a more historic feel and are more predominantly brick and stone (Figure 35). This is an attempt to tie the new district in with the surrounding historic areas. The location of the pedestrian path and the small-scale buildings across the street from the high rise, high profile buildings provides and enclosed pedestrian path with glimpses of the Mississippi River between the larger buildings.

Along Federal Street are buildings that transition from the new uses on the development site to the residential uses of the LeClaire Heights neighborhood. These buildings are 2-3 stories and height and have the appearance of neighborhood commercial or residential structures.

**Phases**
The development should be implemented in three phases. The first phase requires significant public investment. This is required to show developers that the city is committed to the expansion of downtown Davenport and will support developers in the process. Phase One includes street improvements, construction of the pedestrian paths, construction of the parking garage, the bridge over River Drive and the railroad, renovation of the stable/depot,
creation of the Quad Cities History Museum, and development of the Riverfront park. Phase 1 also includes the continued encouragement of renovation in the Crescent Warehouse District.

Phase Two includes the attraction of a large scale, regional retail operation. The city may need to provide financing incentives to lure this sort of “big-box” store into the downtown area. Also included in Phase 2 is the construction of the high profile buildings along 4th Street and River Drive. The renovation of the Republic Warehouses into housing is included in Phase 2. These new residential units will help provide the customer base for the regional retail operation.

Phase Three includes the construction of the smaller retail/mixed use structures. These structures will bridge the gap between the Crescent Warehouse District and the areas developed in Phase 2. This will complete the redevelopment of the site.
Figure 38: Proposed Land Uses
Source: Authors and Davenport GIS

Proposed Land Uses
Downtown Davenport

- Existing Residential Neighborhood
- Mixed Use Area
  - Ground Floor Commercial
  - Residences Above
- High-Rise Mixed Use
  - Hotel
  - Residential
  - Office
  - Commercial
- Republic Warehouses
  - Senior Living
- Large Scale Retail Operation
- Mid-rise Residential
  - Ground Floor Commercial
- Riverfront Park
- Historic Stable – Converted into Museum and Restaurant
- Crescent Warehouse District
  - Residential
  - Ground Floor Commercial
- Mixed Use – Ground Floor Commercial with Residences Above
- Large Scale Retail Operation
- Historic Stable – Converted into Museum and Restaurant
**Site Challenges**

Although there are many aspects of the site that are appealing for development, there are also many challenges to be dealt with. These challenges are listed below, along with how each is addressed in the concept plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>How Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lack of access into the parcel   | • Extension of LeClaire Street through the site  
                                         • Extension of Charlotte Street  
                                         • Creation of a new east-west road between LeClaire Street and Charlotte Street                                                   |
| Sharp changes in elevation       | • Oriented buildings to make use of views created by the change in topography                                                             |
| Relocation of the W.G. Block     | • Vacant land in the area is available for truck storage  
                                         • Possible expansion of the Riverfront activity  
                                         • Many underused lots and parking areas north of the river site                                                                       |
| Company Operations               |                                                                                                                                              |
| Surrounding neighborhood’s       | • Land trust/bank for the vacant parcels  
                                         • Trail extension through neighborhood  
                                         • Encourage greater usage of the LeClaire House  
                                         • Target 100 Homes and Urban Homestead programs in the LeClaire Heights neighborhood  
                                         • Market forces should improve the surrounding areas once development begins                                                               |
| deteriorating condition          |                                                                                                                                              |
| Lack of pedestrian access        | • Trail extension from the north through the development site and connecting to the river front  
                                         • Streetscape improvements  
                                         • Encouragement of elements that enhance pedestrian safety – raised crosswalks, landscape buffering, on-street parking  
                                         • Close E 5th Street between Pershing Avenue and Iowa Street to make a pedestrian area  
                                         • Provide an extra wide pedestrian walkway with small scaled buildings along the new east-west road                               |
One-way streets

- E 3rd Street and E 4th Street will become two way streets

Relocation of Republic Electric operations

- Land is available closer to the interstates that would provide better transit connections

Railroad as a barrier

- Improved maintenance and lighting of the viaduct

River Drive as a barrier

- Pedestrian bridge over River Drive and the railroad to the riverfront

Lack of connection to downtown

- The area is to be viewed as a separate supporting district from downtown and as a destination

Lack of connection to the river

- Pedestrian bridge over River Drive and the railroad to the riverfront
- Creating a destination on the river that is appealing for people to visit
- Creating a link to the existing riverfront bike trail
**Site Opportunities**

Despite the above listed challenges, the site provides many alluring opportunities for development. Each opportunity or asset is listed, along with how it was taken advantage of in the concept plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>How utilized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large redevelopment parcel</td>
<td>- Allows for appropriate setbacks for high rises buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allows for flexibility of land uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allows for the opportunity to create an entirely new district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to reestablish the grid pattern</td>
<td>- Extension of LeClaire Street through the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Extension of Charlotte Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Creation of a new east-west street between LeClaire Street and Charlotte Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current investment and interest in the Crescent Warehouse District</td>
<td>- Increase in population will support added businesses in the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Capitalize on the momentum and buzz surrounding the Crescent Warehouse District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to the river</td>
<td>- Create a destination on the river that is appealing for people to visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide access to the river with a pedestrian bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Link to the existing bike trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- River views for the high rise residential units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to the downtown</td>
<td>- Capitalize on the recent investment and growth of Davenport’s downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic stable/depot dating back to the sites first uses as a railroad hub</td>
<td>- Providing a link to the historic nature of the site and Davenport in the railroad’s westward expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Building of a pedestrian bridge in the location of the first railroad bridge across the Mississippi river, which landed on the development site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High visibility to traffic along River Drive</td>
<td>- Capitalize on the visibility that businesses need for success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Concept plan takes advantage of the high traffic counts by placing the high profile structure in line with these roads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

Scott County Assessor

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Quad City River Bandits


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