Redevelopment Concept Plan: Creating Destinations in Downtown Moline

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Field Problems in Planning II 102:210
Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning
The University of Iowa

Clients
Moline Centre Partners
City of Moline, IL
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the not too distant future, the City of Moline will be affected by the realignment of the I-74 Bridge. This realignment will open a large strip of land for re-development. In response to this opportunity to redevelop the areas immediately adjacent to the current I-74 corridor, the City of Moline and Moline Centre Partners asked us to prepare a concept plan for the I-74 Realignment Zone, with recommendations for implementation. The area is defined by the Mississippi river on the north, 7th avenue to the south, and between 18th and 23rd streets. As graduate students in the Urban and Regional Planning Program at the University of Iowa, our team has researched the planning issues facing Moline’s downtown. We have reviewed techniques used by communities across the nation for redevelopment of inner city areas facing blight and gentrification.

Based on our research, we believe that Moline has an opportunity to develop a niche in the Quad Cities as an affordable recreation and entertainment center for singles, families, young professionals, and retirees seeking an active urban lifestyle.

We started our research by conducting a reconnaissance study of the area as it existed in fall 2007. Emphasis was given to historical context, land use and zoning, demographic and economic factors, and real estate trends in Moline. Successful redevelopment projects conducted by other communities in the United States were identified and evaluated. Literature review provided insight into regulatory, financing, and marketing measures.

A focus group of residents, business owners, and other stakeholders was conducted during the latter half of March 2008 to solicit their opinions regarding redevelopment of the area. The views and suggestions received at the focus group meeting were valuable in formulating the redevelopment plan and recommendations.

Key Recommendations

We argue that Moline should define itself as a recreation-themed center that is affordable, clean, urban, and fun. We recommend that the area should be developed as a mixed use, mixed income residential and entertainment district. We have suggested a set of land uses for the space vacated by the bridge and other vacant and underdeveloped properties in the zone that will attract people to the area as development unfolds over time.

Our recommendations include a strategy of phased development. The core of the plan is the development of a recreational park zone by means of a modest public investment. The recreation zone would be the impetus for private sector development.

Central Park and Recreation Zone. Development should occur around a central recreational park. The theme for the park is Urban Recreation, in support of the concept “...Stay to Play.”
The park will feature outdoor urban recreation in the form of a multitude of games and activities, and can be developed along much of the corridor now occupied by the I-74 Bridge.

The abundance of vacant lots in the target zone creates an additional opportunity to develop extensive park space. Some lots will be converted into permanent green space; some may be temporary and available for development.

**Brownfields.** Formerly occupied parcels should be cleared and approved for redevelopment. Plant grass and trees on lots slated for later development to provide an attractive setting. If left undeveloped, these areas may become permanent green space.

**Housing.** A residential population with a mixed demographic will support a healthy, sustainable neighborhood. Residential development should be compatible with a traditional neighborhood style. This approach would include small lot sizes, wide sidewalks, and modest single family residences together with row houses, multifamily units and larger, more expensive homes.

**The Riverfront.** We support an expansion of the improvements already made along the river. The walkways and plazas near the river should be extended. Continue with placement of convenient outdoor seating.

**Access.** Ensure the connectivity of pedestrian routes and bike trails throughout the zone to connect the area to other trails and to downtown destinations.

**Mixed use development.** Commercial, retail, office and light industrial should be mixed with residential spaces. Buildings should be oriented with a focus on public spaces.

**Casual Entertainment.** Develop a Children’s Museum and Science center. Establish a small indoor water park. Install a permanent Ferris wheel overlooking the river.

**Central Market.** Establish a Market Place featuring locally produced food and other goods, through reuse of an existing warehouse. Additional space in such a building could be used as a “business incubator” for small-scale production and micro-manufacturing firms. Upper floors could be converted to live/work units.

**Implementation.** Offer incentives for homeowners and developers to rehabilitate existing stock and build new housing. Solicit support of local lenders. Market Moline’s downtown as a vibrant, safe, urban environment.

The recommendations made in this document will help Downtown Moline achieve a renewed vitality at a relatively low cost to the city. Strategic investment in recreational public space will attract private investment.
INTRODUCTION

Downtown Moline is expected to change dramatically in the coming years with the realignment of the I-74 Bridge. The existing bridge passes through Moline’s center, immediately east of downtown, and creates a division which has resulted in an under-utilized and under-valued area. Once the existing bridge is torn down, this large strip of land has the potential to further define Moline as unique from other Quad Cities towns - Bettendorf, Davenport, and Rock Island. We believe Moline can enjoy a niche in the region as a family-friendly recreation center.

The new I-74 bridge will be realigned along the eastern border of the downtown between 20th and 22nd streets, and will provide a unique opportunity for the City of Moline to stimulate new growth. Much of the property adjacent to the existing bridge is comprised of dilapidated residential buildings, vacated commercial property, surface parking, or empty lots. These are far from the highest and best uses for a downtown, particularly in a region where three other competing downtown localities are just minutes away.

In addition to the bridge realignment, the City of Moline is also anticipating Western Illinois University (WIU) will open a new campus just east of Moline’s downtown in a few years time. This will have a sizable impact on the life and vitality of the downtown. It is expected that WIU will increase Moline’s tax base through sales tax increases as well as secondary property tax appreciation effects.

The addition of students will also help to create much needed pedestrian activity within the district.

In anticipation of the opportunity for redevelopment of the area, we have been asked to prepare a concept plan for revitalization of the I-74 realignment zone. The redevelopment zone, for the purpose of our study, has been delineated by 18th street on the
west, 23rd street on the east and by 7th Avenue on the south, north to the river edge. We include a set of recommendations with the redevelopment concept plan for the land vacated by the realignment of the I-74 corridor. These recommendations have been phased to incorporate development over an extended time frame. We also outline an implementation strategy for a healthy and lively downtown as Moline moves into the future as a vital part of the Quad Cities’ regional economy.

PROFILE OF STUDY AREA

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Note: The following history is largely excerpted and paraphrased from the book *The Quad Cities: An American Mosaic* by Roald Tweet.

The City of Moline was originally planned as a manufacturing town by David Sears. In 1836, Sears and family settled near what is known today as 15th Street in Downtown Moline. Between 1837 and 1841, Sears and two partners began working to build a 600 foot dam across the Sylvan Slough, the body of water that runs along the south side of where the Rock Island Arsenal is located today. Sears built a mill on the shore in 1838 to saw wood, grind grain, and card wool. In 1843, the partners platted out the Town of Moline. The name for the new town reinforces the focus on manufacturing. There was a choice between Moline – from a French word for “mill,” or Hesperia – a name meaning Star of the west.

The Sears Dam provided enough power to run several mills and factories. In 1846, Atkinson’s sawmill was built on the dam itself. Mills and factories using the dam’s power were built on the island. The Fergus and Buford Foundry stood on the Illinois bank next to the Sears Mill. In turn, Buford’s water wheel brought power to “the most important of all users of the Sears Dam” - John Deere (Tweet 1996).

Roald Tweet refers to Moline as a no-nonsense manufacturing town, staid but dependable. In 1854, an editor of Moline Workman wrote “A much duller town could not be scared up this side of Sleepy Hollow” (Tweet 1996). Davenport was a busy commercial center, less dependent on the river.

Moline was built around the thriving industrial riverfront, and enjoyed a relatively stable manufacturing economy until the late 1970’s. After that, the City began to lose manufacturing jobs, especially during the 1980’s, and the trend has continued to the present time (EPA 2006). According to the EPA website, “this shift in the local economy was the result of global economic changes and facility expansion needs that could not be accommodated at the riverfront” (EPA 2006).

EXISTING CONDITIONS: I-74 CORRIDOR STUDY AREA

To establish an understanding of current conditions and redevelopment needs, a visual analysis of the study area was conducted. Existing land uses within this study area range from low-income residential, light industrial, to commercial. The
residential units lie within the Park Hill neighborhood and are largely low-density and in moderate to severe disrepair; commercial operations in the area are underdeveloped; and the area in general is disorganized, unattractive, and lacks cohesion. An overview of the functional and design characteristics of the study area follows. Based on this visual analysis, it is notable that the study area is ripe for redevelopment.

**Vehicular Circulation, Parking, Pedestrian & Bicycle Access**

Two one-way streets, Great River Road and 6th Avenue, carry the majority of Moline’s downtown vehicular traffic. Visitors to Moline are directed by way-finding signage to destinations such as the Rock Island Arsenal, John Deere Pavilion, and the Iowa Wireless Center. However, despite this signage, vehicular movements and way-finding can be somewhat difficult for visitors to navigate due to the one-way streets and convergence of wider lanes into narrower thoroughfares (this happens near John Deere Pavilion). Downtown parking is free of charge and available at on-street spaces and in parking decks with additional parking located in the rear of many the downtown establishments. Despite the wide driving lanes and plentiful on-street and lot parking, there is very little vehicular traffic in the study area and downtown Moline in general. The absence of vehicular traffic is an indication that downtown businesses may be suffering.
Pedestrian traffic is similarly absent from the streets of downtown Moline. The sidewalk network appears complete, albeit in need of repair. In addition, there is little to no grass in the right of way (i.e. area between the sidewalk and street) and minimal landscaping within the study area. What little landscaping there is surrounds a company parking area under the I-74 Bridge. The absence of landscaping and other pedestrians makes the streetscape uninviting and visually unappealing. The I-74 Bridge casts a shadow over the land underneath and has become a haven for trash and debris. The area lacks a sense of security to the pedestrian walking alone.

The Ralph B. Birks bicycle trail is a segment of the Great River Trail which runs along the Mississippi riverfront. This trail is an asset to Moline’s downtown; however, pedestrians and bicyclists are unable to easily cross busy one-way streets such as 6th and 19th to reach the bicycle trail. In addition, the railroad acts as a visual and physical barrier and restricts pedestrian and bicycle movements.

**Land Uses, Lot Coverage, and Density**

A small number of commercial businesses dot the study area; these are mainly auto-oriented and construction based. There is one neighborhood tavern, identifiable only by a Bud Light sign. The study area also includes several community uses such as the Salvation Army, Bethany for Children & Family, and a neighborhood church.

Residential units are typically large 2-2½ story single-family homes, some of which have been divided into multi-unit dwellings. Residential buildings were constructed in the early half of the last century. These buildings are clad with wood, stucco, masonry, or synthetic siding. There is one large, multi-story apartment building, the Le Claire Apartments, on 19th Street, just west side of the study area. Residential units are set close to the street and fill most of the parcel.

Commercial buildings are mostly 1-6 stories with exteriors of brick, stucco, or synthetic siding. Commercial buildings closest to downtown are situated adjacent to the street with no set-back. Commercial uses nearer residential units are situated on large lots with sufficient (or excessive) parking in the front of the building. The Biltmore Center demonstrates a typical L-shaped strip building with
front customer parking. The parking area appears to be larger than necessary to meet customer demand.

The exterior condition of the majority of commercial and residential uses ranges from deteriorating to abandoned and boarded-up. The relocation of businesses to the suburban fringe has been a consistent trend in many urban areas. This has happened in the Quad Cities as well. Moline has also lost businesses to the regional fringe areas.

Over the last two decades, the city has experienced a loss of manufacturing jobs. As a result, a large portion of the commercial businesses have closed their doors in downtown Moline. This has caused numerous vacancies and has left many lots sitting empty.

ZONING CODE

Downtown Moline, including the redevelopment zone (our study area), is zoned B-2 (Central Business District). This zoning designation is intended to create a compact, high-density, and pedestrian-oriented business, entertainment, and residential district. According to the zoning code, the area is characterized by a variety of sizes and heights of buildings, some of which are quite tall and most of which cover nearly the entire lot. Setback requirements are minimal. While the study area appears to comply with the fundamental requirements of the zoning code, some features do not serve the goals of a pedestrian-oriented business and entertainment district.

Residential uses with the B-2 zone are classified as R-6, multi-family residence district. R-6 allows up to 34 dwelling units per acre and buildings up to 12 stories or 150 feet in height. Permitted uses include: single-family detached, twin houses, two flat, duplex, townhouse, multiplex, and multi-family dwelling (City of Moline’s Zoning Code 2006). Per visual analysis, this area could benefit from the inclusion of high-density single-family units such as townhomes or stacked duplexes.
Characteristics of the I-74 Realignment Zone

- The Mississippi riverfront lacks any recreational facilities and can be developed into a focal family-oriented recreational area.
- The River Drive, which is a main arterial street, lacks adequate pedestrian crosswalks which makes it hazardous and potentially dangerous.
- Historic Structures, included in the National Historic Register (NHR), need to be preserved.
- Dilapidated housing structures along 5th Avenue.
- Large vacant lots make the area unattractive and results in an under-utilized downtown.
- Large significantly under-utilized surface parking lots result in inefficient use of land.

Legend:
- Yellow: Building Footprints
- Red: Proposed Development
- Gray: Historic Structures
- Light Blue: Surface Parking
- Black: Railroad
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

We collected demographic information on population, educational attainment, and median household income. The information was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau for the Quad Cities region – Bettendorf, Davenport, Moline, and Rock Island. A study of the percent change for each variable was done to give us a better understanding of the comparative situation in these areas. Our particular interest is to measure the competitive advantage as well as the overall performance of the City of Moline.

There is a common trend observed in population and median household income in the Quad Cities as shown in Table 1. Bettendorf and Davenport had the fastest growth in population and the lowest change in median household income from 1990-2000 while Moline and Rock Island had the lowest change in population and the highest change in median household income. This trend is particularly remarkable in Rock Island which lost population (-1.9%) from 1990-2000 but had the highest change in median household income. Bettendorf had the highest change in population age 25 years and older with a bachelor’s degree from 1990-2000, while Moline ranked the second highest. Population change in the study area was 22% between 1990 and 2000. The change in median household income for the study area was 15% between 1990 and 2000.

There was significant change (17%, see Error! Reference source not found.) in median household income for Davenport/Moline/Rock Island metropolitan statistical area from 2000-2006. From our base year in 2000, median household income increased continuously till 2006, except in 2003, where it decreased by a small margin from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Population, Educational Attainment and Median Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Attainment (population 25 years and older with a bachelor’s degree)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Household Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Study area median household income is an average of census tracts 216, 217, 223.

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, summary File 3
Note: *1990 income figures were converted to 1999 value (adjustment for inflation) using the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ CPI-U-RS.
the previous year’s figure. Most of the change occurred in 2000 and 2001 (8%), and the next significant change was in 2003-2004 (6%).

Table 2 shows housing units in the City of Moline in 1990 and 2000. During this time rental housing units decreased while owner occupied units increased. Also, vacancy rates for rental housing increased by a small margin but decreased for owner occupied units. Overall, the total housing units in the city increased by less than 2% from 1990-2000; vacant units increased by 2.5%.

Gross rent information in Table 3, shows that the number of people paying less than $499 in rent decreased significantly in 2000 (-70%) compared to 1990. In 2000, the majority of renters in Moline were most likely paying between $650 and $999 in rent while in 1990, about 90% of renters paid less than $499 in rent. This is particularly important considering that median household income increased by only 9.8% during this time period (1990-2000). Moline has the potential to capture more rental residents (if units are better marketed) since a significant number of rental units (59%) in 2000 were under $649. In Rock Island, where 60% (highest among the four cities) of renters pay rent below $649, about 1.4% pay $1,000 or more in rent, but in Moline, it is less than 1% (0.33%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Housing Characteristics in Moline, 1990-2000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Summary Files 1&3*
Table 3: Housing Gross Rent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bettendorf</th>
<th>Davenport</th>
<th>Rock Island</th>
<th>Moline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Rent 1990</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $499</td>
<td>1,985</td>
<td>13,097</td>
<td>5,307</td>
<td>5,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 to $649</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>1,233</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$650 to $999</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Rent 2000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $499</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>5,709</td>
<td>3,465</td>
<td>3,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 to $649</td>
<td>1,731</td>
<td>9,379</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>5,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$650 to $999</td>
<td>2,516</td>
<td>11,539</td>
<td>5,199</td>
<td>5,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 or more</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Change 1990-2000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $499</td>
<td>-97%</td>
<td>-129%</td>
<td>-53%</td>
<td>-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 to $649</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$650 to $999</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 or more</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Population and Housing, Summary Files 1 and 3

HOUSING STOCK

In a 2008 article in the River Cities Reader, Dan Carmody, Former Executive director of the Development Association of Rock Island, points out that “people who work downtown spend about $1500 a year in the central city, while residents typically spend $10,000 a year” (RCR 2008). Carmody also believes that there is a gap in the Quad City real estate market. He is reported to have said that single people make up the largest share of households in the QC area, but most of the housing being built is for families (RCR 2008). His view seems to be supported by the 2006 American Community Survey, published by the US Census Bureau (Fact Finder 2006).

Moline has an aging housing stock. According to the US Census 2000, about 91% of the housing in Moline was built before 1980 and 78% was built before 1960. In comparison, 86% of Davenport’s housing was built before 1980, and 50% before 1960. A total of 7.5% of Davenport’s housing was built in the years between 1990 and 2000, while only about 3.8% of Moline housing was built in those years (US Census 2000).

ECONOMIC PROFILE

The Quad cities area is economically significant to the larger area around it, which includes parts of Illinois and Iowa. Moline is part of Rock Island County in Illinois and has its special place in the Quad-Cities. Figure 2 represents the major industries in Rock Island County. We showed the average earnings and change in employment from 2000-2005, to determine which industries are performing better than the others. Only four industries (Transportation and Warehousing, Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific and Technical services) increased their employment size from 2000-2005. Although employment grew in
the manufacturing industry, it paid employees less in 2005 than in 2000 (8% change in average earnings). However, the services industry (administration, support, waste management, and remediation services) with the lowest employment size (a change of -28% from 2000-2005) had the highest change (39%) in average earnings. Industries with the lowest average earnings (accommodation and food services, educational services, retail and administrative services) also decreased the size of their employment from 2000-2005.

Total employment in the major industries in the county decreased by 5% from 2000-2005 (see table 2), but average earnings increased by 15%. The significant change in average earnings shows that young professionals may be attracted to the county and Moline could capture some of that market.

**Employment**

In 2007, the total number of people employed by the top ten employers in the region was 24,352 (Table 5). Deere & Company is the largest private sector employer in the city and its product is very important to the agricultural industry in the Midwest. In addition to its role as the major private employer, the company operates an agricultural museum that attracts over 300,000 visitors and tourists annually.

**Economic Base Assessment**

Several indicators can be used to assess industrial performance; one of them being a location quotient (presented in Table 4). This is an analysis that compares the local area economy to a reference area economy to show the degree and nature of specialization in the local economy. We calculated...
the location quotient for industries in the City of Moline in comparison to the Rock Island County economy. Our selection of industries (Table 4) was based on the ones for which we could obtain complete and uniform data for both the city and the county.

Overall, 1990 was better than 2000 in terms of how employment in our selected industries was concentrated compared to the county’s employment. A location quotient result equal to or greater than one indicates that employment in that industry is more concentrated in Moline than in Rock Island County. Four of the nine industries had a location quotient less than one in 1990. Only two of the industries had a higher location quotient in 2000 than in 1990. The manufacturing industry was the strongest sector, with a location quotient of 1.03 in 2000. This means that the industry not only serves the local needs, but it exports the excess product, thus bringing outside revenue into the community. The information industry is also a strong sector in Moline, with a significant location quotient of 0.94. In fact, the volume of the workforce employed in information technology has changed significantly (42%) from 1990 to 2000. Manufacturing and information industries made up 20% of the entire employed workforce in Moline in 1990 and 21% in 2000.

A location quotient less than one means that employment in that industry is considered non-basic. For results greater than or equal to one, employment in that industry is basic. Basic industries are the industries that export products and services from the region, while the non-basic sector depends on the consumption of products and services in the local economy (see Tiebout, 1956 for further explanation). The increase in the basic sector of a region will increase the total employment in that region through a multiplier effect (which measures the increase in the total number of jobs generated by additional employment).

The retail industry had the sharpest drop (a change of -34.4%) in the number of employees from 1990 to 2000, but it performed well in terms of its level of concentration in comparison to the county’s retail. The retail sector is usually not considered basic because it primarily serves the local residents and therefore the exchange of dollars exists within the community rather than generating new

### Table 4: Location Quotient and Change in Employment by Industry, 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Industry</th>
<th>Location Quotient 1990</th>
<th>Location Quotient 2000</th>
<th>% change in employment*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fin. &amp; Insurance</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Healthcare</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Admin</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau.

Note*: Change in employment was calculated for the City of Moline.
dollars from outside. Moreover, average earnings in retail jobs are often low. Many communities pursue retail jobs due to the incentives created by local tax structure, particularly the ability to generate taxable sales. To this extent, it makes sense for Moline to offer incentives to such businesses to locate within the community, with an emphasis on good concentration in the downtown area. However, this should be viewed as a revenue-generating strategy to support the fiscal need of the city as well as satisfy the needs of residents. A broader economic development strategy should incorporate other industries that can generate wealth-creating jobs that attract outside income to the region, as well as generate the need for other services like printing, insurance and office supplies.

From this analysis, we can conclude that most industries in Moline became less concentrated in 2000. However, the continuous rise in average earnings is an indication that lesser concentration has not negatively affected the city.

**QUAD CITIES REAL ESTATE MARKET**

We conducted interviews with local real estate professionals familiar with the entire Quad Cities region and specifically with properties in downtown Moline. These interviews revealed that Moline’s downtown is broken down into two distinct areas, the newer Bass Street Landing area and the older, more “traditional” downtown. Bass Street Landing is comprised of the Caxton Block building which houses IBM, Prudential, and Humana; Stony Creek Hotel; John Deere Pavilion; and the Iowa Wireless Center, which serves as the region’s venue for larger-scale entertainment events. The traditional segment of downtown consists largely of older office and retail spaces, a variety of restaurants, and a number of vacant lots. This area has also benefitted from Moline’s Façade Improvement Program and many of the historic structures now look “spruced up” and quite attractive.

**Office Space**

According to NAI Ruhl & Ruhl Commercial, office space in the Quad Cities is divided into three classes: A, newly constructed, B, typically

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**Table 5: Top Ten Employers in the Quad City area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Product/Service</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arsenal</td>
<td>Military/Manufacturing</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deere and Company</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>6,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesis Health System</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Regional Health System</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moline School District #40</td>
<td>Primary/Secondary Ed.</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Health Care</td>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Community College</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KONE</td>
<td>Elevators</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Moline</td>
<td>Municipal Government</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>Retail Store</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>24,352</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: City of Moline*
suburban locations, and C, aging, urban properties. Throughout the Quad Cities region, Class A office space rents for $13.50-$18.50 per square foot and Class B office space rents for $6-$17 per square foot. Office space in the older part of downtown Moline is typically considered Class C and ranges from $5-$8 per square foot (gross) or $3-$5 per square foot (net). According to Ruhl & Ruhl, the vacancy rate for commercial space in the Quad Cities region is currently 25%.

In Moline the vacancy rate is 18-20%. There is a 10-15% vacancy rate in the Bass Street Landing building.

Most of the new office development in the Quad Cities is generally occurring outside of the central business districts. The Iowa side of the Quad Cities has created a niche market in medical office space. In Moline, much of the new office development is occurring in the Bass Street Landing area, which is directly east of our study area. The majority of demand has been for smaller office suites (Ruhl & Ruhl 2007). Redevelopment in downtown Moline has mostly occurred with new buildings and the renovation of buildings along River Drive. Because of this investment, Ruhl & Ruhl expects that downtown Moline will attract and retain desirable office uses.

**Industrial**

According to Ruhl & Ruhl’s 2007 market report, there is an abundance of industrial development sites in the Quad Cities. Net rental rates for industrial space range from $1.50 to $6.00 per square foot. It is notable that demand for industrial space has been higher on the Iowa side. On the Illinois side, Triumph Foods is in the process of constructing a new $135 million pork-processing facility in East Moline. This property will sit on a 116 acre parcel and will employ 1,000 workers. It is expected to be up and running during the first half of 2009. Demand for manufacturing space in the Quad Cities has been practically non-existent and there has been limited new industrial construction (Ruhl & Ruhl 2007).

### Table 6: Rental Rates for Office Space in the Quad Cities Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Low Rental Rates</th>
<th>High Rental Rates</th>
<th>Average Rental Rates</th>
<th>Vacancy Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class A (Primary)</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$17.00</td>
<td>$14.50</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B (Secondary)</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class A (Primary)</td>
<td>$13.50</td>
<td>$18.50</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B (Secondary)</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulk Warehouse</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>$3.75</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$4.50</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tech / R &amp; D</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$18.50</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services Centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Centers (Big Box)</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Malls</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$26.00</td>
<td>$23.00</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: NAI Ruhl & Ruhl Commercial
Note: * Base rental rates do not include CAM or taxes*
Retail Space

According to Ruhl & Ruhl, the overall Quad Cities retail market has slowed down in recent years. Much of the new growth that is occurring in the region has taken place in Bettendorf and North Davenport, which is largely due to demographics and the availability of land on the urban fringe. In Bettendorf, the Duck Creek Plaza redevelopment project has been very successful and has experienced high occupancy levels. Duck Creek is home to Walgreens, Home Depot, and Schnuck's Market, a regional grocer. On the Illinois side, the major retail development activity is taking place along John Deere Road and River Drive in Moline. Recent projects include Hiland Retail Center (located next to Farm & Fleet), which houses Hiland Toyota, Marriott Residence Inn, Heritage Woods Assisted Living facility, and Kennedy Square Retail Center. Despite the recent slowdown of the overall commercial realty market, according to real estate professionals, the Quad City retail market is healthy and growing.

Residential

Throughout the Quad City region the central business districts have been seeing an increase in residential growth. Consequently, there has been a significant amount of conversion of older office buildings and second story commercial spaces into residential uses. Based on our interviews, there have been little to no vacancies within these types of spaces. In Moline, the old Le Claire Hotel has been converted into a mixed income apartment complex. This building has also benefited from zero vacancies from its inception. National apartment developers are actively involved in helping transform the downtown area by creating residential lofts in the vacant buildings in downtown Davenport, Moline, and Rock Island (Ruhl & Ruhl 2007). This in turn has increased the demand for retail space and entertainment in the downtowns. However, although demand is increasing in these sectors, the critical mass to allow these types of businesses to be viable has yet to be formed in the downtowns. More residents are needed to populate the downtowns to make them truly vibrant and attractive residential areas. According to Dave Levin, the successes in Moline have been and will continue to be driven by attracting young urbanites to the downtown. As this demographic continues to grow essential services such as a grocery, drug store, laundry services, and a vibrant social scene will be required.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Focus Group

Members of Moline Center Partners and area residents were invited to participate in a focus group to discuss what sets Moline apart from the neighboring Quad Cities, what types of development should occur within the revitalization zone, what should be avoided, and what they believe to be Moline’s niche within the Quad Cities.

The focus group meeting was well attended by local residents, business owners, and members of different associations with functional interest in the city. Most of the participants were older (above 35 years) and have lived in the city for several decades and
therefore had a vested interest in the outcome of future development projects.

When asked about the positive attributes of Downtown Moline, most of the participants agreed that the downtown is centrally located within the Quad Cities and acts as a tourist destination because of the John Deer Pavilion and Iowa Wireless Center, which brings in large-scale events such as Cirque du Soleil, rock concerts, and sports. John Deere Pavilion attracts over 300,000 visitors annually. It was mentioned that of the other Quad Cities, Moline is the most accessible via the direct access of I-74. One participant suggested that “Moline is a unique center, with a nice workable Main Street initiative.” Another member noted that Moline’s slogan is, “Come to Eat, Stay to Play.” Participants agreed that one of Moline’s strengths is the abundance of restaurants downtown, over 22 of which draw people from outside the region. They also indicated that the downtown is fortunate to have the riverfront and the new Bass Street Landing development which has contributed a very attractive community gathering place with a nice boat house on the river.

It has been stated that Davenport’s niche is as the area’s commercial center, Rock Island caters more toward a youthful population with an active club scene, and Bettendorf has been described as a “bedroom” community. Participants agreed that what sets Moline apart is that it is a more family-oriented community. They agreed that Moline’s niche should continue to be centered on family-oriented activities and development that is accessible to this population. They would like to encourage more young professionals to live downtown.

Participants expressed an interest in preserving the historic townhomes that were once used as housing for John Deere executives. They suggest that this row of townhouses should be rehabilitated as the area attracts more young professionals and other residents.

Concerns about the new bridge are centered mainly on the fear that the scope and width of the bridge will affect the river front view. They also fear that the width of the bridge may result in illegal activities occurring under the bridge.

Participants were asked to specify what uses they would like to see in the study area. Most of them suggested that they need more grocery stores, a pharmacy, retail shops, and other services such as drycleaners. Participants want to see more festivals and entertainment activities to attract people to the downtown, especially families. Participants emphasized the importance of keeping the sidewalk network connected for pedestrian safety and ease of navigation, particularly those with small children. They also suggested that the existing riverfront bicycle trail be connected to new bicycle paths throughout the study area. A community park in the residential neighborhood would be an improvement to the neighborhood. One member suggested that the area under the bridge be utilized for a skate board park.
One participant stated that it was inevitable that the area west of the new bridge will be redeveloped. He suggested that future emphasis be placed on developing an information technology center near the John Deere facilities. He believes that the area east of the new bridge will support housing and amenities for the Western Illinois University campus. He emphasized that when the Western Illinois University campus opens, there will be an economic need for uses to complement the additional housing that the campus will generate, such as a strip mall and grocery store.

As a final question, participants were asked about personal housing choices. The comments about their ideal choice of housing type were particularly remarkable. Most of the participants expressed a preference for locating their residence within the city rather than in the suburbs. This may indicate the presence of a niche market for central city residential spaces.

**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS**

**Strengths**

The greatest asset of the area to be vacated by the I-74 Bridge is its close proximity to the Mississippi River and Downtown Moline. Moline Centre Partners have put much effort into creating a downtown that is inviting, attractive, with numerous recreational and social activities for residents and visitors. The newly renovated Plaza at Bass Street Landing offers a venue for music and outdoor events. From rotating public art, to façade improvements, and new horse and buggy rides, Downtown Moline is working towards becoming a destination for recreation.

The American Discovery Trail, a bicycle and recreation trail which extends from California to Delaware passes through Moline. This expansive trail system runs alongside the Mississippi River in Moline and draws regional and long distance bicycle enthusiasts.

In addition to the downtown and river amenities, the study area benefits from the presence of several existing properties, like the historic Wilson House, Bethany for Children and Families and the Salvation Army. These institutions play a significant supportive role in the community.

There are a number of historic properties around downtown Moline, such as the Wilson House, below. These are an asset to the city.

An additional bonus lies in the fact that municipal infrastructure is already in place. This may decrease the cost of redevelopment.

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**We asked participants to describe attributes of their ideal home location.**

**We received the following responses:**

- A connected, walkable urban neighborhood
- Access to schools, parks, and stores
- A location near a river or water
- Child friendly, walkable, with plenty of open space
- A neighborhood with a sense of history
- A penthouse loft or apartment
- Transit-oriented development

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Weaknesses

In its current form, the study area is uninviting. A significant amount of land is under surface parking, resulting in an underutilized and inefficient downtown. Connectivity for bicycles is incomplete and busy one-way streets make pedestrian crossing hazardous and potentially dangerous. Landscaping is incomplete and under maintained. Housing options are limited and there is a general sense of disinvestment in the neighborhood. These factors contribute to an overall lack of vibrancy in the area.

The existing I-74 Bridge bisects the study area and has likely contributed to the deterioration and disinvestment within the area. The design style of the income-producing uses (such as warehouses and auto shops) has a negative effect on the appearance of the study zone, discouraging residential development.

Threats

While Moline is working to define its niche in the context of the region, the city faces competition from the adjoining three cities and surrounding towns. The entire region has been affected by a changing economy and relatively static population. While it could be argued that adjacent cities are not necessarily thriving, places such as Davenport and Rock Island have taken proactive steps to improve their downtowns.

Opportunities

Relocating the bridge presents the opportunity to mend the neighborhood and make it cohesive. The timing of the I-74 Bridge reconstruction project, in conjunction with the construction of the new Western Illinois University Riverfront Campus, creates a prime opportunity for the City of Moline to open up the area to new residents. Revitalization of the neighborhood with a mixed stock of housing could attract families, young professionals, and retirees who will bring life and provide the critical mass needed to sustain the central city.
Redevelopment of this area will also extend Moline’s downtown and create economic development opportunities. In turn, the area will likely become a magnet for new investors and will ultimately increase land values.

Moline also has an edge over the adjoining cities by being the most appropriate location for an AMTRAK station in the downtown area. The bus station in Moline was designed as a multi-modal transportation center to accommodate bus and train interchange along with a vehicular parking garage. There has been ongoing discussion about the possibility of AMTRAK operating a connection between Chicago and Moline. If this materializes, downtown Moline has the potential of becoming a hub for family recreational activities.

LESSONS FROM LITERATURE REVIEW AND CASE STUDIES

Successfully revitalized downtowns throughout the nation share common features. The most successful seem to offer close proximity to mixed uses where residents may shop for groceries, get a haircut, find daycare, and work. Low-cost and casual entertainment options make these downtowns favorite destinations for a regional population. Other features of successful downtowns include standardized design guidelines that maintain the character of the area; small shops and amenities with a local focus; a large and diverse market place such as Pike Place Market in Seattle and the Curb Market in the Sweet Auburn Neighborhood of Atlanta, and unique destinations that draw in visitors and residents alike.

We conducted background research which consisted of literature review and case studies. We encountered a variety of different urban infill projects in our background research from low-income housing projects to the application of temporary uses on vacant lots. We looked at several cities that have recently undergone successful downtown revitalizations. These include Bowling Green, KY, Lexington, KY, Scottsdale, AZ, Milwaukee, WI, and the Sweet Auburn Neighborhood in Atlanta. Based on these case studies and literature review, we have identified lessons and components of successful revitalization. These components include: adoption of a redevelopment plan; creation of a Redevelopment Authority; design guidelines; allowance of temporary uses; financing via private/public partnerships; and a marketing campaign.

Components of successful revitalization are outlined as follows:

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN. A redevelopment plan should include implementation strategies to execute the components stated above and should promote and prioritize redevelopment goals.

The implementation program of Milwaukee’s Downtown Redevelopment Plan has three parts: adoption and dissemination, regulatory review and the pursuit of the catalytic projects. Through adoption and dissemination, the plan aims at influencing private sector decisions regarding downtown development. The City’s decision to adopt the Redevelopment Plan as part of its Comprehensive Plan provided formal status to the Plan and established it as an official guide for public decision making.
Upon adoption of the Plan, the Department of City Development updated the City’s Downtown zoning and other land use regulations to conform to the Plan.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY. One of the key components of a successful redevelopment program is a functional and efficient institutional setup. It is essential that a Redevelopment Authority be set up in order to implement the redevelopment program and manage the component projects. Redevelopment Authorities, such as the Lexington Downtown Development Authority (LDDA), offer developers advice regarding grants and other financing opportunities. LDDA also coordinates the implementation of downtown redevelopment activities; establishes design standards and guidelines; and acquires, constructs, maintains, and improves any “public project” (LDDA 2008).

LDDA is comprised of a Board of Directors, advisory committee, and two staff members. The Board of Directors consists of nine appointed members on a four year term. Current board members represent local banking establishments, Kentucky Utility, University of Kentucky, Urban League, and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government.

DESIGN GUIDELINES. As we learned from the Bowling Green, Kentucky experience, design guidelines in a redevelopment process can help to ensure aesthetic continuity of structures and the area as a whole. Bowling Green’s redevelopment plan proposes several design guidelines to create a more livable area, foster economic growth, improve area aesthetics, and increase pedestrian activity. The guidelines include: provide buffers and soften the physical edges of existing buildings; add street furnishings, such as kiosks, benches, vending, and signage; provide greater visibility and orientation to civic destinations; provide appropriate pedestrian and street lighting; mitigate visual impacts created by existing surface parking; improve sidewalks and pedestrian rights of way; and define public space corridors via landscaping, pavement, lighting, and circulation improvements. These design guidelines also state that new development must complement and enhance existing architectural styles found in Bowling Green’s redevelopment area. Design guidelines are also intended to offer urban design guidance for future revitalization activities.

ALLOW TEMPORARY USES. According to an article in the December 2007 issue of Planning magazine, allowing temporary uses can benefit a city by drawing in tourists, supporting the incubation of small businesses, and allow for inexpensive experimentation with potential businesses. Allowing temporary uses of open space is one way to utilize vacant lots and undeveloped land; however, in order to do so, the zoning code may need to be updated to allow temporary uses.

In Manhattan, Seattle and San Francisco, tent theatre and trapeze schools are examples of diverse attractions that have been allowed temporary use of public spaces (Gerend 2007). Temporary uses such as street musicians and sidewalk vendors facilitate community building and contribute to a sense of place in that even though the
featured attraction may be different from week to week, the
destination itself is the same.

In two vastly different settings (one the urban West Coast, one the
rural Midwest) the two examples below share the quality of
inclusion. Even those on a fixed income can participate as readily as
those with cash. These examples also share a focus on small, local
talent and small, local business.

At the Los Angeles music center, a community program called Get
Your Chops Back encourages lapsed musicians and dancers to
perform in public spaces.

In Fairfield, Iowa, community leaders have organized an event they
call “1st Fridays - Art Walk.” This is a casual event held the first
Friday of every month – year around. Many storefronts on the
public square feature small shows of work done by local artists, and
stands are set up to display arts and crafts for sale. Local amateur
and professional music performers are scheduled into the
bandstand that is the focal point of the park in the center of the
public square. Fairfield enjoys a diverse population, and this event
is widely popular. Persons of every age and stripe mill around the
square, enjoy the social scene, and partake of food and drink
bought from small stands set up for the occasion; often making
purchases from open businesses. This event has grown into a
destination for people from surrounding towns as far away as Iowa
City. There is a wholesome party atmosphere which seems to
encourage a sense of community.

The city of Scottsdale, Arizona uses performance based sales tax
rebates tied to public infrastructure as an investment in incentive.
The city issues up to 50% of the new tax revenue generated for the
city to pay back the developer as revenues are generated. Rebate
eligibility is usually based on performance and it is capped for a
specified time frame-5-10 years. The city typically informs the
developer that the payback is dependent on their ability to generate
sales tax revenue during a specified time.

Lexington, Kentucky’s Division of Planning has developed a set of
financial incentives to encourage economic development in the
downtown. Some (such as TIF) are widely used, but others are quite
innovative.

The Tourism Development program provides a state sales tax
incentive program in which developers may recover 25% of the cost
of tourism related projects. On an annual basis, the Kentucky
Revenue Cabinet will return to developers of approved projects the
state sales tax paid by visitors to the attraction on admission tickets,
food and gift sales and lodging costs. The developer has up to ten
years to reach the 25% threshold (LDDA 2008).

The Downtown Housing Fund is a public/private investment
partnership that works to create housing in downtown Lexington.
The Kentucky League of Cities has extended $2 million for the
project and the LDDA functions to secure matching funds through
local lending agencies. Creation of this housing fund affords the
lending community a relatively low-risk opportunity to invest in the
downtown housing market, provides real-time comparables, and reduces upfront capital and risk for developers (LDDA 2008).

Lexington’s Live Where You Work program is a joint effort between the Lexington Downtown Development Authority, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, Fannie Mae, the University of Kentucky, and Samaritan Hospital to increase homeownership opportunities for Lexington’s workforce. The program allows employers the opportunity to offer eligible employees a forgivable loan up to $15,000. The initiative promotes urban revitalization by targeting homes in downtown Lexington (LDDA 2008).

Marketing Campaign. The Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) of Bowling Green, Kentucky underwent a master planning process in 2002. They hired RKG Associates to conduct a study and draft redevelopment recommendations for The District, also known as Bowling Green’s downtown. RKG recommended that the DRA promote and market their revitalization and economic development vision as well as the existing benefits of the downtown throughout the metropolitan region.
Revitalization Concept Plan for the I-74 Realignment Zone

- Riverfront Development
  - Extension of Riverfront Trail
  - Development of active public spaces
- Convert the existing Kone Towers building to a Children's Museum
- Central Public Square
  - Pedestrian activity area with a focal water feature
- Restaurants, outdoor dining, shopping
- Proposed 69 Live-Work units
- Retail / Office use building
- Site of a Five Star Hotel with convention centre and skywalk to the water park
- Parking Garage to serve the adjoining public spaces / Children's Museum, Restaurants & Shopping
- Convert the Speigle building to an Indoor Farmer's Market
- High-Rise Affordable Housing
- Indoor Water Park

Legend:
- Yellow: Building Footprints
- Red: Proposed Development
- Gray: Historic Structures
- Blue: Surface Parking
- Black: Railroad
REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

The Vision

We envision a livelier Moline – a 24 hour activity center that will attract residents and visitors to the downtown for food, retail, and most importantly, a place to play. We would like to boost Moline’s reputation as the place to take your children on a Saturday afternoon, a place for young professionals to relax and enjoy an exotic meal, or a place for active seniors to socialize and enjoy with their grandchildren. We feel that the City of Moline is faced with a unique and rare opportunity to redevelop a wide area of land. We encourage Moline to fully embrace this opportunity. Timing is in Moline’s favor – cities across the nation are revitalizing their downtowns and attracting a growing demographic of urban residents. Moline has the opportunity to jump on this bandwagon and capitalize on this growing trend.

The redevelopment plan we have designed will enhance the urban environment and make Moline the destination for entertainment and recreation in the Quad Cities. We are seeking to expand the menu of fun things to do by creating destinations for people of all ages and backgrounds. Downtown workers and residents can enjoy all the benefits of living and working downtown; be on the riverfront; and be right next door to all the recreation and entertainment opportunities offered by an urban environment.

The official slogan of Moline Centre is “Come to eat, stay to play.” To that end, the theme for our proposal is “Stay to Play.” Along with a dramatic expansion of recreational and entertainment activities, our plan includes a mixture of retail and office uses, and smart housing options for all income levels. We believe that our vision of the new downtown environment will give Moline a busier street life morning, noon, and night.

Proposal Components

The redevelopment area begins as an extension of the Bass Street Landing Plaza area and the Riverfront trail that has already been put in place, with a twist. The redevelopment zone will feature casual recreation, much of which can be developed at a relatively low cost. Our proposal features a central public square and plaza park. As any new brick or concrete is laid within this area, games may be laid into the brickwork. As one strolls along the plaza, you could skip through a hopscotch game or walk a labyrinth. We would also like to see a permanent Ferris wheel overlooking the river.

An unbroken and landscaped pedestrian pathway incorporated throughout the area would allow residents and visitors of all ages to easily and safely have access to downtown and the riverfront.

We propose that Riverside Park be expanded to join the newly created green space. As you travel through the entire area, formerly vacant lots could be temporarily transformed into recreational space. Lots slated for future development may be landscaped as green space. Small community gardens full of
flowers, food, and gardeners can be encouraged throughout the area.

After initial development is underway, we believe indoor destinations must be in place as well. A small indoor water park is one idea. A children’s museum and hands-on science center would be an attractive destination for families with children who need a fun way to spend the day.

Our vision of the housing in the area is for a mixture of multi-family and single-family homes with traditional neighborhood design patterns. Suggested building types include town homes, stacked duplexes, and row homes with front porches. We believe that a mix of market rate units, rental housing, and affordable housing will make Moline a more attractive residential destination amongst people of all income groups.

**RATIONALE FOR THE CONCEPT**

Our research shows that physical and aesthetic improvements stimulate private investors to take an interest in urban centers. We believe that our suggestions for relatively low-cost public investments in the I-74 Realignment Zone will trigger a natural increase in the vitality of the downtown, and that this strategy will result in an area that is much more attractive to both residential and commercial investors.

In the last two decades, Moline has had a nearly static or a slightly declining population. Amenities and activities are needed to draw in new residents. Like many Midwestern cities, Downtown Moline has experienced historic disinvestment. Because of this decline, many of the properties in our study area became unattractive, uninviting, and isolated for the residents who live there.

According to the US Census 2000, the fastest growing portion of the population in the nation is the single-person household. However, the majority of the new home construction in the Quad City region over the last several decades has been for families. Most has been built on the edges of Davenport in the form of attached single-family suburban homes.

There is a growing regional shortage of affordable housing. Moline has an aging housing stock. Rehabilitation of existing dwellings may not provide enough affordable or market rate housing for the current residents and new residents the city hopes to attract.

The real estate market in the entire Quad Cities region has been soft. Of the 905 building permits issued for the Quad Cities Housing Market Area (QCHMA) in 2005 (a particularly slow year), only 115 were for sites on the Illinois side of the river (QCHMA 2005). Very few of the new dwellings in the Quad City region have been built for moderate income home buyers.

Throughout the United States, a vital urban lifestyle is becoming more popular among members of diverse age groups. Trends show that both young professionals and retirees are moving into central cities. This is a growing demographic which does not embrace a suburban lifestyle. Traditional neighborhoods in many major cities,
formerly at the point of ruin, have been brought back to life by folks who want to experience urban living. This demographic typically seeks a safe, vibrant street life with multiple activities to occupy their time. Attracting this population will require a much different setting than the one that exists currently.

Once new residents have been attracted to the downtown, they will require vital services such as grocery and laundry. Unfortunately, the current population of Downtown Moline is not large enough to support a full service grocery. As an alternative, we suggest a large indoor marketplace such as Milwaukee Public Market or the Pike’s Place Market in Seattle. The addition of the public marketplace will attract tourists and residents from throughout the Quad Cities Metropolitan region, as well as the rural fringe area. This type of destination will not need to rely solely on residential uses for support.

In addition to an overall lack of services, there are few low-cost destinations in the region where one can entertain a small child on the average weekday or weekend. Moline can benefit from filling this gap in the Quad Cities market. Activities such as an indoor water park or the Children’s Museum and Science Center are ideal ways to entertain children and have been shown to be successful in other cities. These types of entertainment are usually affordable for most households. The public spaces we propose will be accessible to everyone. In particular, the hedge maze and Ferris wheel we propose will be unique attractions to draw in visitors.
**Phase 1**
- Extension of Riverfront Trail
- Development of Public square
- Indoor Farmer’s Market at Speigle building site

**Phase 1 (Housing)**
- Mix of multi-family and single-family housing
- Variety of Housing Styles to accommodate all income groups

**Phase 2**
- Children’s Museum at Kone towers site
- Restaurants and shopping south of Moline Water Treatment Plant
- 69 Live-Work Units west of Public Square
- Parking Garage south of Children’s Museum

**Phase 2 (Housing)**
- Ideal housing location for non-traditional students
- Mix of multi-family and single-family housing
- Neighborhood grocery store and pharmacy

**Phase 3**
- Mixed Use (Commercial / Office) building
- Hotel south of Public Square
- Indoor Water Park east of Hotel

**Phase 3 (Housing)**
- Riverfront residential development
- Market-rate high-rise housing units no more than 12 stories
- Architectural / engg. solutions to visually block the new I-74 bridge

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**Phasing Plan for the I-74 Realignment Zone**
PHASING PLAN

The redevelopment proposal has been structured into three phases discussed in the following sections. These phases will proceed based on market absorption of new commercial and residential uses.

Large-scale redevelopment usually begins with public investment. Once private businesses and interest groups see investment occurring in an area, they are more likely to invest in that area. As the first step to initiating public investment in the Realignment Zone, the City of Moline should work to create a Downtown Redevelopment Authority to administer and manage growth. The Downtown Moline Redevelopment Authority should include representatives from the City of Moline, Moline Centre Partners, The Moline Foundation, utilities, local realtors, and local development agencies.

PHASE 1

Phase 1 should begin with public improvements initiated by the Downtown Moline Redevelopment Authority (DRA). These improvements would occur immediately east of the water treatment facility, west of Kone Tower, and north of River Drive. Phase 1 improvements include extension of the riverfront trail, developing a central public square and plaza park, and developing an indoor marketplace. Improvements will also include installation of lighting and landscaping elements which will enhance the area’s aesthetic.

Extension of the Riverfront Trail

Phase 1 of the redevelopment plan would include the extension of the Ralph B. Birks riverfront bicycle trail, which currently ends at the Rodman Avenue and the Arsenal Bridge. The trail will be extended from the arsenal bridge east along the river over to 23rd street. The extension of the trail would provide a healthy recreation opportunity for families and individuals, and will serve as a pedestrian and bicycle link between the central downtown and the revitalization zone. The city may wish to encourage food vendors to locate along the trail, especially along the stretch of trail spanning.
from the Moline water treatment facility to the Kone towers facility. Adequate lighting and street furniture should be made available to make this zone more attractive and to allow resting places for users. We also recommend installation of coin operated telescopes at intervals along the Mississippi.

**Plaza Park and Public Square**

The sizable stretch of land between the Moline water treatment facility and Kone Towers, extending south to River Drive, is directly under the existing I-74 bridge. We propose this area be developed into a plaza and park with a river vista. Within this area, we propose that the block north of River Drive, between 19th and 20th Streets, be developed into a Public Square with a central focal feature. The Public Square will be located at the center of Phase 1 improvements, and ultimately at the center of Moline’s expanded downtown. This area would be open only to pedestrians and bicyclists and would connect directly to the riverfront trail. Adequate seating should be made available and appropriate landscaping should unify the plaza.

The segment of Plaza Park north of the Public Square should be developed into a large public playground with a Hedge maze and swings. The pedestrian pathways within the park and along the riverfront trail will attract people’s attention through educational plaques with historical and literary inscriptions. The park would also feature permanently affixed floor games like hopscotch and chess.
A facility to check out game pieces and outdoor game equipment would also be available. The park might also feature a small amphitheatre at its northern edge, adjacent to the river, which will be the site for events like artistic performances, musical evenings, or street plays. Rehearsals or additional shows of High School and Community Theater could be featured there with minimal props and be made available for free to a public audience.

Adjacent to the river we would like to see a permanent Ferris wheel installed. We believe the Moline riverfront Ferris wheel will become a fundamental experience for every visitor to Moline, as well as a highly visible icon for the city. It could be privately or municipally operated.

Indoor Marketplace

In the final stage of Phase 1 we propose the creation of an indoor public market. The block to the east of the proposed Public Square currently houses the old Spiegel warehouse. This property is underutilized and may be suitable for redevelopment. We propose it be converted into an indoor market, similar to the Pike Place Market in Seattle, or the Milwaukee Public Market. Both exhibit a variety of local vendors featuring fresh meats and produce,
independent merchants of arts and crafts, and unique eateries. Members of the community may buy and sell locally grown food, and such a location can act as an incubator for small businesses. Upper floors could be converted to live-work spaces where micro-manufacturing and other production of locally consumed goods could be encouraged.

By offering an indoor public marketplace, downtown residents would have the opportunity to purchase grocery items. The Market will rely on visitors as well as residents, enabling it to survive until a threshold population is reached. A grocer may require 800 to 1000 households from which to draw customers (Answers.com).

Allow Temporary Uses

As the public investment of Phase 1 unfolds, we recommend that vacant lots and underutilized parcels be made available for temporary uses. Temporary uses such as community gardens, art walks, craft shows, and even tastings hosted by local breweries can work to increase visibility and generate income for certain businesses. These uses will also increase the foot traffic in the downtown and add to Moline’s appeal as the place to “Come to eat, stay to play.”

PHASE 1 (HOUSING)

Demand for affordable and market rate housing options is expected to increase as redevelopment occurs in the realignment corridor. To meet this expected demand, we recommend a mixture of multi-family and single family housing options. A variety of housing styles should be encouraged to accommodate residents of all income levels. The zoning code allows a variety of housing types and styles within this district. Single family units should be affordable to median income levels and should consist mainly of row homes, town homes, twin homes, and stacked duplexes. Housing units should be situated close to the street, in a manner resembling a traditional neighborhood. We also recommend inclusion of front porches. A connection to the bicycle trail network should be included in the development plans for Housing Phase 1. This trail network should be continued and expanded upon with the addition of Housing Phases 2 & 3.
PHASE 2

It will be in Phase 2 in which the Downtown Moline Redevelopment Authority will create partnerships within the private and non-profit sector to initiate large-scale development projects.

Children’s Museum and Science Center

According to recent articles in the Quad Cities Dispatch, Kone has signed letters of intent to consolidate its Moline offices into a new 20-story mixed use building as proposed by developer, Rodney Blackwell. As these development plans proceed, we recommend that the Kone Tower and adjacent building be converted into a state of the art Children’s Museum and Science Center. The museum exhibits and components would be modeled after other successful child-themed museums such as the Minnesota and Indianapolis Children’s Museums. Educational exhibits will be constructed for children of every age bracket; from crawling tots to curious minded pre-teens. Traveling exhibits will keep the museum fresh and enticing for local residents to visit again and again.

It is expected that the Kone Tower building is sufficiently large to house the Children’s Museum and Science Center as well as an educational toy store, book store, café, coffee shop, and possibly an I-Max Theater. These revenue generating activities will help offset the not-for-profit operation of the museum.

Restaurant & Entertainment Zone

The block to the west of the Public Square should be reserved for development of restaurants and smaller entertainment venues, like a gaming arcade, a comedy club, or movie theater. Restaurants will be encouraged to develop outdoor dining facilities for their patrons. These would be located in the front of their properties facing the Public Square. Casual outdoor dining is popular in warm, summer weather.

PHASE 2 (HOUSING)

We anticipate that a number of student renters will move to Downtown Moline with the construction of Western Illinois
University’s (WIU) new Riverfront Campus. Construction of the new campus is expected to be completed within 3 years of release of funding. The WIU Quad Cities Campus will remain a commuter campus that is primarily attended by graduate, transfer, and adult non-traditional students. As such, WIU is not expected to provide student housing structures. It is likely that many of these students, some with families, could be attracted to the new housing development that will be occurring downtown. Family-oriented activities and the close proximity to campus will make Housing Phase 2 an ideal location for non-traditional students.

The recommended housing type in Phase 2 is similar to Phase 1. The market will determine the appropriate ratios of multi-family versus single family structures.

**PHASE 3**

With the commencement of Phase 3, we have great expectations that Moline will have created a mark on the map as a tourist destination for families. The combination of the John Deere Pavilion, the I-Wireless Center, the Public Marketplace, and the newly opened Children’s Museum and Science Center, will cause Downtown Moline to be the place for families and recreation enthusiasts of all ages. This could stimulate area tourism, and create a need for downtown lodging.

*Indoor Water Park and Resort Hotel*

We propose that the area on the south side of the Public Square and River Drive be developed as a five-star hotel and conference facility with an attached or neighboring indoor water park facility. The nearby Wacky Waters facility located west of Moline on I-80 has recently closed. This closure has created a regional vacancy in this type of recreation. It is our hope that an indoor water facility, similar to Wilderness Resort in the Wisconsin Dells pictured right, will draw regional tourists and local visitors year round. The city may rely on the hotel developers to integrate the indoor water park into development plans. We also encourage developers to construct a pedestrian walkway leading from the hotel to the water park. The water park will function as an integral part of the central theme of the redevelopment zone, recreation.
PHASE 3 (HOUSING)

It is expected that once redevelopment of Phases 1 and 2 have been in place for a number of years, the light industrial development adjacent to the river will no longer be considered the highest and best use for that land. Property values are expected to rise overall, and so is demand for residential developments along the riverfront. We propose that a mix of market-rate and luxury high-rise housing be developed east of the children’s museum. To comply with B-2 zoning, we propose that high-rise development not exceed 12 stories in height. Architectural and/or engineering solutions will be installed to visually block the new I-74 bridge. An intricate urban trail system constructed beneath the I-74 Bridge to also allow for pedestrian access to Plaza Park, Children’s Museum, Public Marketplace, or water park.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

According to Diane Suchman, in order for infill development to work, neighborhoods (or a downtown) must be improved through a strategy that includes creation of jobs, retail development, improved transportation, a streamlined regulatory process, community participation, and an aggressive marketing campaign.

Based on our focus group findings, realtor interviews, and background research, our team has developed a set of implementation strategies for the I-74 realignment zone. These recommendations address Moline’s regulatory framework, housing development strategies, land acquisition and assembly, land clean-up, financing and marketing strategies.

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DRA)

As the first step to initiating public investment in the Realignment Zone, the City of Moline should work to create a Downtown Redevelopment Authority to administer and manage growth.

The mission of the Redevelopment Authority will be to eliminate blighting conditions that inhibit neighborhood reinvestment, to foster and promote business expansion and job creation, and to facilitate new business and housing development. Toward that end, the Redevelopment Authority will:

- Prepare and implement comprehensive redevelopment plans
- Conduct feasibility studies for identified development projects
- Assemble real estate for redevelopment
- Be empowered to borrow money, issue bonds and make loans
- Condemn property (eminent domain) in furtherance of redevelopment objectives, if required.

The Redevelopment Authority will rely upon the Department of Planning or Economic Development for the professional, technical, and administrative support necessary to carry out its mission. The board members of the DRA would be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Ideally, the DRA should include representatives from the City of Moline, Moline Centre Partners,
The Moline Foundation, utilities, local realtors, and local development agencies.

REGULATORY RECOMMENDATIONS

The greatest tool at a city’s disposal to influence the location and type of development within the city are land use regulations. To strongly encourage infill development and deflect urban sprawl, the regulatory framework must be in line with those expectations. In the sections above, we have produced a development concept plan in which specific goals have been outlined: support a housing development that includes affordable, market rate, and luxury options and develop an entertainment and recreation zone. In order for this concept plan to become reality, the recommendations outlined above must comply with the City of Moline’s regulatory framework. In addition, these regulations must not be cumbersome or prohibitive to development; otherwise developers will be inclined to relocate their projects to the urban fringe or, worse still, outside of Moline entirely. To streamline the development process we recommend the following:

Review Moline’s regulatory framework (zoning ordinance, development regulations, building codes, etc.) to ensure that it will encourage infill development. This may require updating the framework to allow flexibility as infill development projects often occur at high densities and include large tracts of land as well as small, irregular parcels. Development standards must be flexible to allow the development of smaller parcels typical of older neighborhoods (Suchman 2002) and at densities consistent with urban living. In addition, we recommend an amendment to the zoning code to allow temporary uses in the B-2 zone.

In an effort to expedite redevelopment within the study area, we recommend the prioritization of development approvals and permit processing. Reducing and/or delaying development fees may also work as an incentive to attract developers. Waiving development fees for public utilities such as sewers, streets, etc., will add additional incentive for the developer.

HOUSING STRATEGY

For the redevelopment of the existing residential properties, the city should first give homeowners the option of redeveloping their properties on their own. The city can provide financial assistance to the homeowners from the CDBG grants that the city receives for community development projects.

It is recommended that the city provide an opportunity to residential property owners for developing the properties which are currently lying vacant. This may be done by declaring a definite time-frame within which the vacant lots would be required to be developed. After the expiration of the time-frame, the city will have the option of using eminent domain for acquiring the vacant properties. Such properties can then be made available to developers.
LAND ACQUISITION AND ASSEMBLY

Land ownership varies widely in Downtown Moline, from publicly owned parcels, to investors, to individual homeowners or commercial property deed holders. Expedience in redevelopment rests largely on the ability of the Redevelopment Authority to acquire and assemble land parcels to be developed according to the phases outlined above. A thorough inventory of publicly owned land can help the Redevelopment Authority identify parcels that can be converted immediately to temporary uses or be redeveloped according to the redevelopment proposal.

The Redevelopment Authority should also assist development agencies in the land acquisition process by making available foreclosed properties and other publicly owned land. If necessary, the city may also close and/or re-route streets to enable consolidation of land parcels as part of a land assembly effort (Suchman 2002).

If the Redevelopment Authority encounters difficulty in acquiring land from individual owners, as a last resort, the City may use the power or eminent domain to condemn the property. This is not recommended except as a last resort as the procedure of using eminent domain is highly political and may potentially land the city in a legal battle.

LAND CLEAN-UP

The potential for environmental contamination or brownfields exists in most urban infill projects. Brownfields are typically defined as sites with real or perceived environmental contamination. Although we have not specifically identified brownfield sites within the redevelopment area, some contamination may exist, particularly contamination issues associated with the presence of Interstate 74, such as high levels of lead embedded in the soil. Extensive testing and site studies can be conducted to determine the amount of contamination and mitigation measures required to clean-up the area. An environmental impact report (EIR) can be used to assess the impacts and determine mitigation measures needed for building a redevelopment plan (Suchman 2002).

We recommend that the Redevelopment Authority prepare a master environmental impact report outlining the parcels within the study area which may require clean-up. Such a report would be a precursor to site specific clean-up plans.

The EPA has selected Moline for a Brownfield assessment grant. The “funds will be used to conduct community involvement activities, perform Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments, enroll sites in the state cleanup program and develop priority sites in downtown Moline. Moline has identified 151 Brownfield sites in the downtown area” (EPA 2006). These sites must be clean and approved for redevelopment early in the process of revitalization.

FINANCING STRATEGIES

State and local governments participate in economic development programs to influence the location decisions of firms as well as to
promote a business atmosphere for the benefit of residents. Intense competition between regions makes it crucial for them to constantly review the distribution of public funds that is usually in the form of reduced tax or financial assistance. The justification for using various kinds of public investment is that it attracts new jobs, income, and taxes which are beneficial to the socioeconomic well-being of the community.

The City of Moline currently offers several incentive programs to promote economic development in the city. The incentives are targeted to help businesses, developers, and property owners to develop private-public partnerships. We recommend that the City of Moline continue to use their existing financing framework while picking up some of the strategies we have outlined in our background research.

An effective financing strategy for the development of our study area should involve multiple funding sources packaged along with private investment to accomplish the goals recommended in this report. There are several federal, state and local funding sources for infrastructure, housing, and other public improvements. The funding sources described below target specific funds that can be available for our recommended projects. It also describes some funding sources that have been used by other cities with similar characteristics to the City of Moline. We did not mention popular federal funds sources such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Low Income Federal Housing Credit (LIHTC) which may be applicable to special circumstances.

**TAX INCREMENT FINANCING.** Our study area is in one of four tax increment finance districts in the City of Moline. The TIF district in our study area (TIF District 1) was created in 1986 with a property and sales tax portion. The property tax portion will expire in 2021 while the sales tax portion expires in 2013. The TIF district was created to promote redevelopment, stabilization, and growth in the downtown. This ensures that funds are available for public capital improvements in the city central to achieve development of key spaces and business activities. It is targeted towards revitalizing the downtown riverfront business district, which suffers from high vacancies and blighted conditions. TIF funds could be used to support the public improvements needed to attract development. We recommend that the TIF funds be made available for the development of recommended capital intensive projects like the initial public space investment, as well as the hotel, museum, and the water park.

**FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.** Moline’s Façade Improvement Program was developed to provide funds for exterior improvements to businesses and commercial property owners. The program is targeted at improving the historic character of buildings. The program makes available a forgivable loan of about $10,000 or 1/3 of the project’s cost, whichever is less, for single or multiple façades. We recommend that the façade improvement program be extended to include the study area and applied to projects such as the proposed Market Place in the Spiegel building and the Children’s Museum in Kone Tower.
In the City of Eastport Maine, property owners in the city were reluctant to improve their façades either because they were risk averse about further investment, or they were unable to secure funding. The city then contacted and collaborated with the local bank to issue low-interest loans for façade improvement. This kind of initiative would provide a powerful incentive for current and potential property owners.

**SALES TAX REBATE.** We recommend a sales-tax rebate incentive be extended to developers in our study area as a means of attracting investments and promoting business image.

**PROPERTY TAX REBATE** A property tax rebate program could also be used as an incentive for building new single family units of affordable housing. According to recent publications, there appears to be developer interest in the Downtown Moline housing market. The February 27, 2008 issue of the River Cities Reader reports that Chris Barnard, chair and CEO of Blackhawk Travel and Blackhawk Performance Services, has stated that he has identified five projects that he would be ready to build in Downtown Moline if tax credits were available. Barnard has developed several projects in the downtown already (Ignatius 2008).

Rock Island, Illinois has used a strategy in which the property tax rebate is good for a period of 3 years and up to a set amount each year, such as $1500 (Rigov 2006).

**TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.** As utilized in Lexington, the Tourism Development program offers reimbursement of up to 25% of the project’s cost which is returned to the developer over a 10-year period. The reimbursement amount is determined by total sales tax generated by visitors to the development. We recommend that a similar tourism generated sales-tax rebate be implemented for the proposed Children’s Museum, hotel, and indoor water park.

**HISTORIC TAX CREDITS.** The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program (FHPTCP) provides federal income-tax incentive for the rehabilitation of historic income-producing properties. In the state of Illinois, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency is charged with the responsibility of administering FHPTCP for state properties. Under the provision of the act in 1986, commercial, agricultural, industrial or rental residential buildings that are certified as historic structures qualify for a 20% tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of their buildings. The city should encourage owners of certified historic structures and sites in our study area to apply for this fund. There is an overall benefit of this to the owner, city and the community; it encourages the protection of landmarks through the promotion, recognition, and designation of historic structures; increases the value of the rehabilitated property which in turn generates additional tax revenue to the city; and upgrades downtowns and neighborhood, which may attract more housing within the community. While rehabilitation is costly to and challenging to undertake, exploring the tax credit is the only option if the community of Moline wants to preserve its historical structure for future use as well as benefit from increased scale of return.
IN Volvement OF FiNANCIAL iNsiTiTUtiONS. Local financial institutions may participate in the process of affordable housing development through their alliance with “Freddie Mac.” A collaborative role for lenders could provide leadership and explore innovative ways to stimulate downtown development, assist with low interest loans, participate in interest rate buy-down and suggest other financial incentives that will be useful in the general revitalization process.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN

A successful downtown revitalization strategy will involve a significant level of marketing. Moline Centre has been a valuable resource for the city in marketing new downtown development.

Many cities pay less attention to marketing and “as a result, marketing is often undertaken in an uncoordinated manner, if it is not neglected entirely” (Beck and Higgins, 2001). The implementation of the marketing strategy will require active participation and collaboration by city officials and organizations focused on community revitalization.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our research shows that redevelopment in the study area is very likely to be successful over time and that new development should focus on recreation with the Mississippi River as a focal point.

Since the demand for industrial land has declined in the area, it will be prudent to utilize the land currently under industrial use for other uses. There is a growing demand for urban living and the City of Moline is well positioned to tap that market.

The City will need to ensure adequate pedestrian access throughout the residential areas and the core recreational zone. Essential services, such as a market, pharmacy, and a laundry will be important to new residents.

The proposal to connect Moline to Chicago and Iowa City through an AMTRAK passenger rail service will bring more people to the downtown. The time is just right for Moline to take advantage of the development opportunity offered by its unique situation in the I-74 Bridge Realignment Zone and we believe that this plan will help Moline achieve the vibrancy and vitality that it deserves.
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