

Charrette Summary

Based upon the community input workshops, steering committee review sessions, several key themes surfaced as preferred elements to be further investigated in developing a preliminary master plan draft.

Riverfront Connector

A stronger connection along the riverfront is proposed, with a continuous roadway facility that links the Page Avenue interchange through the core area and the ACF properties to the proposed Eco Park. This concept should be expanded to the planned New Town development north of the study area.

The roadway may be enhanced through minor improvements, such as key intersection enhancements, roadway identification and wayfinding, and beautification.

Don't Fight the River

Given the characteristics of the Missouri River, building along the river's edge will likely pose considerable challenges. Engaging the river's edge with development, however, may be appropriate in selected areas, such as the Lewis and Clark Boathouse, ACF and Frenchtown areas.

The former mobile home properties acquired by the City should not be redeveloped, nor should funds be utilized to modify it's 100-year floodplain. Appropriate strategies may include the expansion of the Eco Park or the sites designation as a local/regional mitigation area.

Frenchtown is Ready

Significant redevelopment opportunities to 'reinvent' Frenchtown have been primed, given the recent momentum of residents and by the nature and character of Frenchtown's existing physical framework. The opportunity exists in Frenchtown for planned mixed-use and infill development with strong connections to the riverfront.

Trails and Experiences

Expanding the trail network from the KATY Trail is an opportunity to engage the river's edge and provide a variety of recreational experiences. This includes linking elements in established parks, educational/interpretive opportunities within conservation areas, and enhanced connections into and through commercial, historical, and destination-oriented districts. Strong linkages to and from neighborhoods should be considered, furthering the concepts of neighborhood enhancement and interconnected multi-modal transportation.

Complement the Arena

The quarry site provides a variety of opportunities that enhance the sense of connection with the Arena and the development of destination-oriented recreational entertainment venues. This includes larger scale commercial or entertainment uses that support Arena events, recreational activities, and in some instances, create new residential opportunities.



Frenchtown affords a unique opportunity to reinvent a riverfront neighborhood along the Missouri River.



Existing Conditions

Main Street Sensitivity

Riverfront development strategies should be sensitive to the historic qualities along Main Street, particularly public parking, view corridors, and access to South and North Main Street.

Existing Conditions

A visual analysis was conducted by the charrette team to supplement previous area analysis and facilitate a more detailed investigation of areas that were previously identified as opportunities, challenges, and concerns.

The north portion of the riverfront corridor (north of Interstate 370) is generally flat, low level ground within the floodplain that extends approximately to Highway 94. Overall, the land remains vacant, with notable exceptions that include a salvage yard along the levee near Hawning Road, the Boeing facility, and park facilities. In addition, former mobile home parks purchased after the 1993 flood by the City and County have almost been completely cleared.

The central part of the riverfront corridor (south of Interstate 370 to Interstate 70) is the most highly urbanized area within the corridor. Key components include Point Dusable Park, the Sundermeier RV complex, Blanchette Landing and boat ramp, the KATY Trail, and the core City historic districts (Frenchtown, Main Street, and Historic Downtown), the Lewis and Clark Boathouse, and the Ameristar Casino. Along the riverfront, wooded conservation and mitigation areas also exist.

South of Interstate 70 to Page Avenue consists primarily of conservation areas, the Arena, quarry and cement operation, various residential properties, and institutional development.

Opportunities and Assets

The historic districts of St. Charles create a distinctive environment and a unique physical framework. Over the years, the building fabric along Historic Main Street has remained relatively intact for the district. Unique retailers and restaurants have created a regional shopping and entertainment enclave. Other attractions, such as the First Capitol Building and the Lewis and Clark Boathouse provide historical and heritage venues. The Ameristar Casino, south of the Main Street District, provides a regional entertainment attraction.

The ACF property has retained a significant number of warehousing structures. With proximity to the riverfront and the historic districts of Main Street and Frenchtown, this property provides a rare redevelopment opportunity for the adaptive reuse of architecturally significant structures. Recent initiatives include the development of a cultural/arts center within within the AFC property.

The Historic Frenchtown District is primed for an infusion of redevelopment initiatives. Although lacking the critical mass of historic structures found to the south along Main Street, Frenchtown provides a framework in proximity to the riverfront that can be mar-



Brick structures at the ACF present a prime opportunity for redevelopment of a mix of uses along the riverfront.



keted for significant reinvestment. In addition, it appears that community momentum is rising, with the recently adopted *Frenchtown Neighborhood Economic Enhancement Strategy (2003)*.

A variety of recreational destinations along the riverfront can be found throughout corridor.

The **KATY Trail State Park** traverses through the corridor, providing pedestrian and bicycle access eastward to the Corps of Engineer's Riverlands and the Department of Natural Resource's Confluence State Park, and to the KATY Trail terminus at the western end of the state.

The **Mississippi River Trail (MRT)** traverses the City's northern edge and travels through Point Dusable Park until it crosses the Missouri River at the Interstate 370 Bridge. The MRT provides a greater regional trail system which runs from Minneapolis to New Orleans.

The **Great Rivers Greenway District** is evolving. Opportunities for trail connections over the Interstate 370 and 364 bridges would link the St. Charles Riverfront to the North Missouri River Greenway which is planned to travel from the Columbia Bottoms Area at the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers confluence to St. Louis County's Creve Coeur Park. Additional connection opportunities for the St. Charles riverfront would contribute to a fully integrated system of greenways, linking the Dardeene Greenway, KATY Trail, MRT, and routes to the Illinois trails via the Golden Eagle and Grafton Ferries or on the Alton Bridge.

Challenges

There are perceptual barriers between many of the parks along the riverfront and with adjacent neighborhoods. Generally, parks on the riverfront tend to be isolated, disconnected, and lack a sense of 'eyes' upon them. Features such as dense vegetation and the wrought iron fence along Frontier Park present a physical and perceptual barrier to the sense of public 'ownership'.

The roadway framework along the riverfront also lacks cohesiveness. Roadway names change, awkward intersections exist, and the lack of wayfinding signage tends to weaken the vehicular connection and circulation from north to south along the corridor.

With the exception of parkland, a clear view of the Missouri River is not prevalent. Floodplain boundaries, the levee in the northern portion of the corridor, and conservation and mitigation areas all contribute to a sense of disconnection between the amenities of the river and the core area of St. Charles. In some instances, overgrowth and debris also detracts from the natural environment along the Missouri River.

Other than the ACF property in the Frenchtown District, existing parks, and the Lewis and Clark Boathouse, opportunities to engage the riverfront are lacking.



The characteristics of the Missouri River, floodplain, and multiple jurisdictions are some of the issues that effect riverfront initiatives.

